

SUMMARIES

L. BOVONE, *Micro-macro: a congenital controversy for Sociology*

In this essay some stages of sociological theory are revised in order to trace back source of the micro-macro dilemma to the origin of the itself. A widely unitarian solution is identified in the classical sociology (Durkheim, Weber, Parsons) whereas a clear polarization of the micro-macro dichotomy is to be found in contemporary sociology. The latter in fact reveals its incapability to make up the two levels of analysis an in varied way it draws away from the 3 main cornerstones of classical sociology: i.e. sociology as an empirical and generalizing science, the capacity of sociological knowledge to grasp the intentional meaning of action, the rational and moral order of existence. The complementarity of both approaches is nevertheless considered as necessary for a methodological progress of the discipline.

I. VACCARINI, *Macrosociological profiles in the contemporary sociological theory*

The most organic polarization in the macro-sociological field is represented by Luhman's contemporary theory. Therefore a comparative study is presented here between Parson's « The social system » that is the highest expression of the sociological theory in the period previous to the contemporary one and Luhmann work. Hence the antithesis between Parsons approach that is pivoted upon the concept of institution and Luhmann's approach that is pivoted upon the concept of organization. M. Crozier's theory is then examined; it is considered as complementary to Luhmann's theory, since it analyzes the macro-sociological level from the point of view of the social actor.

Finally the theorization about social communication are examined: they seem to mitigate the radicality of the micro-macro dualism.

B. BARBERO AVANZINI, *A micro-perspective: the symbolic interactionism*

The article examines the main authors that have contributed to the construction of symbolic interactionism. In particular G. Mead's thought is explored: in the 20's it offered the conceptual basis for interactionism, Blumer's and Kuhn's thought that produced the theoretical developments between the 30's and the 50's; Goffmann's dramaturgic theory, that recalls the interactionist thought of the 60's; the labeling theory that applies its principles to deviancy and the phenomenological sociology as defined by Schutz, Berger and Luckman.

In the final section the main critical positions to interactionism are examined and the concept of identity emerging from that approach is explored, with reference to other contributions to the same theme, that were made by other authors such as Parsons, Luhmann and Habermas.

S. CORTELLAZZI - I. PICCOLI, *The etnomethodological approach*

Among the many tendencies of contemporary sociology, etnomethodology represents a meaningful and important approach particularly for its epistemological implications.

The objective of etnomethodology is to explore and analyse the meaning of daily action, as they are experienced and interpreted by all social members by means of the methods and practices that belong to the so-called micro-sociology. In the first part of the article both the epistemological implications and the cultural and philosophical references of etnomethodology are pointed out. In the following sections the basic concepts, the research techniques and the main achieved results of this discipline are critically described.

V. CESAREO, *Some issues concerning contents and methodology in the micro-macro polarity*

The substantial and constant polarity that is between micro and macro sociology leads a different interpretation of some basic concepts of sociology, such as « role » and « social order ».

The « role » tends in fact to be outlined as a normative imposition by macro theories and as the product of negotiation among the single actors by micro theories; the « social order » represents an objectively central element according to the former theory and becomes instead a subjectively marginal element according to the latter one. Yet such conceptual contrapositions produce complementarity, because in concrete phenomena the micro and macro sociological dimensions are often both present as two real interwoven of social life.

Sociological analysis must therefore make every effort to identify not only the differences but also problematic links existing between micro and macro sociology.

G. ROVATI, *The survey: a possible transfer from micro to macro*

From its very origins the tradition of social survey has made reference to the epistemological and methodological paradigm of the natural sciences, which is based on the circular relation among the formulation of hypotheses, their empirical control, the definition of general propositions in the form of theories and laws.

The survey has therefore been the particular target of the debate about comprehension-explanation and of the criticism of phenomenological, linguistic and hermeneutic currents.

The thesis that is suggested in this article is that such criticism contributes to improve the proceeding of the survey rather than to deny its validity.

The survey can get rid of positivistic objectivism and of arbitrary subjectivism, and therefore it represents a valid though limited way to acquire general knowledge, probabilistic but empirically founded, about macro aspects of human social actions by moving from micro information.

E. BESOZZI, *The circularity between theory and empirical research: a contribution by R.K. Merton*

This paper examines the problem concerning the relationship between social theory and empirical research, taking into account the contribution by R. K. Merton. Merton's theory about the reference group is taken as an example, in order to demonstrate the strict link between theory and empirical research.

The following hypothesis is explored: the stricter the link is, the easier the solution of the micro-macro dichotomy becomes.

R. STRASSOLDO, *Micro-macro: ecological aspects*

In the first part of the paper, dichotomies in general are criticized, and the problem of « levels » or « scale » of social reality are mentioned, also with reference to disciplines other than sociology. It is remarked that the « micro-macro » antinomic couple is often confused with the « subjective-objective » one, from which it should, on the contrary, be sharply set apart. The former seems much less important and useful than the latter.

In the second part the connections between the « micro-macro » and the « research-action » « theory-praxis » distinctions are emphasized, with concrete examples from experiences in the field of environmental sociology (social ecology).