

SUMMARIES

S. BURGALASSI, *The sociology of religion in Italy today.*

By means of thorough review of the studies published since the war, the author discusses the state of the art in the sociology of religion in Italy in the late '80s. The author analyzes attempts made by Italian scholars to adopt positivist and marxist approaches to study religion. In particular, he focuses on theories and analytical concepts, research lines and schools. In the final part, the author points out some scenarios for the religious experience in Italy, foreseeing the emergence of a «common front» against the radically libertarian normative system.

A. FADDA, *Law and sociological knowledge.*

Law repeatedly examines itself but nevertheless there is no satisfying definition of what law is. Positive law is a rational and extremely precise corpus. Yet it does not succeed in ordering complex and ambiguous social relations. Law regulates each potential conflict; yet, instead of restoring a peaceful conditions it produces new conflicts. Moving from these contradictions. This essay examines the possibility of a sociological approach which takes into account the day-by-day dimension of this aspect of the social life. In this way the separation between the ethical and the cognitive side is overcome.

G. ROSSI, *From interaction to social relation.*

This essay analyzes the notion of interaction, communication and social relation with reference to three main sociological schools: symbolic interactionism, communicative and relational approach. According to symbolic interactionism, the notion of interaction impinges on social action and social structures: social reality is a system of individual and collective symbolic interactions which are repeatedly modified by social actors. Luhmann, instead, argues interaction is closely related to communication. Since social interaction is given only within a communicative system, there is no place for the subject. Turning upside down the symbolic interactionist approach, he considers interaction subordinated to communication. The third element - social relation - is the bridge linking social action and the social system. It involves an external-objective dimension (relation as structural constraint) as well as an inter-subjective side. From this point of view, the relational approach seeks to keep into account the ongoing interactions without leaving out social actors who produce them.

G.B. SGRIFFA, *The growth of the adolescent: between family and limited socialization.*

In this essay, the growth of the adolescent is analyzed both from the social and the biological point of view. Rites of passage are crucial to understand the links between these two dimensions since they confer a symbolic value to biological growth: that is why it is possible to argue that the biological



growth is subordinated to cultural meanings. The A. argues adolescence is a social category, a structural and integrated component of the society. Accordingly, it should be studied in relation to previous generations and other stages of the life-cycle. Comparing the Italian situation with those existing in other advanced countries, some specific traits, such as the longer permanence within the family and the greater cultural dependency of adolescents are identified. Cultural (the family attitude to care members for a long time) as well as structural (the peculiar type of the Italian economic development) reasons may explain this observation. The A. argues that this situation deeply affects the kind of social relationships experienced by the adolescent. In particular, the A. stresses the limited socialization adolescents have with other persons of the same age. Having extended its educative role, the family opens new problems: adolescents find themselves in a difficult position without any trustworthy and illuminating guide since the family, extending its role, is unable to satisfy all their demands and exigencies.

A. MONTANARI, *Revolution, rationalization and terror.*

Revolution implies a complete upheaval of values and norms regulating society in the name of an idea-myth (*i.e.*, society without classes). The introduction of a revolutionary, new ideological system involves a process of rationalization which leaves out of consideration the ethical dimension since what matters is the attainment of the revolutionary goals not the lawfulness of the means employed. This process of rationalization does not concern only the present but the future too. Obstacles impeding the attainment of the final goal have to be eliminated before they may even occur. In other words, terror - by eliminating the objective enemy - is the triumph of pure rationality. By the same token, our society enhances rationality which is interested more in efficiency than in values, and which substitutes morality for efficiency. Anomy originating from this situation creates what we may call terror in modern societies: alcoholism, drugs abuse, suicide, violence, criminality, neurosis, are on the increase. Terror in modern societies, hits all those who do not accept the ruling myth.

D. PACELLI, *The problem of legitimization in G. Ferrero.*

This essay deals with the dramatic separation between individuals and institutions in modern societies, a topic at the core of G. Ferrero's (1871-1942) work. Moving from an elitistic point of view, Ferrero argues that the dominant class cannot avoid to adhere to shared values: in fact, only these values may assure the interiorization of rights and duties. Although recognizing the role of the person in collective phenomena, Ferrero underlies the ethical dimension of politics. The process of legitimization neutralizes political and psychological fears, making power relationships be structured on reciprocal trust. According to Ferrero, democracy seems the political system most suitable for modern societies since it is the only one able to deal with rapidly changing social expectations.

S. PROSERPIO, *Teachers in daily newspapers: images and representations.*

Recent school and social changes have deeply affected teachers' attitudes and features. Since the early '80s, there has been a remarkable numerical growth in the Italian teaching body which produced heterogeneity (in terms of age, ideology...) and a weak group identity. During the recent wage bargaining, teachers stressed the need for requalification both for state schools and for their professional role, demanding economic and legal improvements. Having being rudely advanced (blockage of marks assignments and examinations), such claims have drawn the attention of the media which have constructed an image of the teaching body. By analyzing articles appeared in two major Italian daily newspapers between 1987 and 1988, the A. sees how teachers, their dissatisfactions and their claims have been represented by the media.

S. TABBONI, *French revolution's times*.

This article is an attempt to show how the tools created by the sociology of time may facilitate the understanding of some processes and features of the French Revolution. The discussion illuminates: 1) How resistance is encountered by any revolutionary project, partly depending on the temporal basis of legitimate power; 2) How feast days and festivals serve to reinforce collective identification and re-create fresh energies; 3) How temporal strategies for strengthening identity are brought about by social forces involved in revolutions, linking collective memory or tradition with an innovative project.

M.T. TORTI, *Scholastic dispersion and social marginalization: the case of Liguria*.

Although Liguria's school enrolment percentages are among the highest in Italy, the regional educative system appears to have inadequate levels of efficiency. Moreover scholarization shows a contradictory trend. Moving from some empirical research, the author analyzes these phenomena with particular attention to scholastic dispersion and its effects on dropouts. The author identifies a new typology of this social group, examining the process of social marginalization too. Being amid the anticipated interruption of their school career and the entrance in the labour market, these youngsters are trapped in a marginal condition between work and non-work. In fact, this is a long-term condition sustained by structural factors as well as by subjective attitudes.