

SUMMARIES

L. RIBOLZI, *From the powerful structure to the dominance of meaning: the educational sociology between institutions and processes.*

Diffused only relatively late and under the influence of practical educational activities, the sociology of education in Italy has been traditionally linked to the evolution of the sociological theory as well as of the field of analysis. Beyond the dualism between conflict and integration, nowadays the most relevant division is among those who have a structural orientation and those who speak of subjective significant; the former school of thought focusses its attention on the institutions; the latter on the processes. Nowadays deterministic paradigms are refused in favour of the individual purposiveness both in the marxist paradigm (which points out the centrality of the human agency) and among the economists of the human capital. The most satisfying heuristic model is offered by multivocal theories, derived from Weber and developed by Collins, which try to link together macrosocial processes and individual biographies, beyond rigid disciplinary boundaries.

G. GASPARINI, *Waiting: an interstitial time?*

The author argues that waiting is a phenomenon to be taken into consideration by social scientists. In fact, waiting in western societies is an interstitial time which is not conceptualized in recent social analysis on time. After having specified the link between waiting and expectation, the author discusses three meanings of waiting time: waiting as provisory block of individual action; as time in which parallel or substitutive meanings are attributed; as a meaningful experience in se. After having considered waiting time and queue in services, the author suggests that micro waiting times in ordinary life are linked to the search for meaning pursued by the social actor.

E. CARRÀ, *Risk: analysis of a sociological concept.*

This paper aims to bring out the advantages deriving from using the notion of social risk in order to analyze a number of typical situations of contemporary life: the tendency to look at our society as a very risk one; the difficulties in locating the boundaries of deviance; the spreading of voluntary risky behaviours, in which the individual chooses the risk as such. So the risk in the sociological theory has to be described as the (macro and micro social) context in which the social actor is subjected to continuous challenges, press by the environment in which he is living and surrounded by resources to be employed.

S. SCANAGATTA, *Old and new poverties: a reflexion on modern state.*

One of the main aspects put in question by recent advances in social theory and empirical research concerns the way in which social problems are generated. Criminality, nomadism, drug addiction, psychical diseases, immigration, all are new chapters of social pathologies which entich traditional ones. The articles aims to understand how these new social pathologies are generated and above all why some of them stem from situations in which material welfare is not lacking. In front of this new phenomenology, the whole welfare state theory is put in question. Moving from some considerations concerning the present conditions of the welfare state — viewed as the attempt to solve traditional forms of



poverty — the article shows the inadequateness of the old model in front of the emergence of new poverties.

A.M. ZOCCHI DEL TRECCO, *Elderly and work: reflections on retirement.*

The author analyzes the position of the elderly in the preindustrial and industrial society, focusing on the institute of retirement. She describes the policy followed in the US and in several European countries, putting in evidence the necessity of a revision of a rigid retirement age and criticizing recent measures taken by the Italian government. The author recognizes that the extension of the working period could avoid social exclusion, but she also argues that retirement should be a free choice, though activity is not necessarily connected with work.