

## SUMMARIES

P. AMMASSARI, *Crisis of democracy or crisis of its instruments?*

Crisis of democracy or crisis of its instruments? Crisis of the democratic ideal or crisis of the institutional framework in which this value has been historically realized? This is the basic issue of this essay. Moving from a critique of a purely procedural notion of democracy — as a context in which formally correct rules are assured — the author stresses the pivotal and delicate role played by the notion of political representation in the historical evolution of the democratic institutions. According to the author, in the last decades, there has been a deep change in the notion and practice of representation which has become more and more linked with economic and social interests. But, because of the increasing complexity of the modern political scenario, the result is that the increasing inability of the traditional political groups — that is the party — to mediate different and usually diverging interests. In this perspective, the crisis of the political system is basically viewed as the crisis of political representation.

L. FRUDÀ, *Scientific method, logic and sociology. From the «Tractatus Logico-Philosophicus» of Wittgenstein to the Physicalism of Neurath and the «Logik der Forschung» of Popper.*

The Author shows the relevance of Neurath's work in contemporary sociology. The article argues that Neurath's epistemological position, shaped by the confrontation with the *Tractatus Logico-Philosophicus* of Wittgenstein and alternative to Popper's rationalism, represents a contribution which is from a methodological as well as disciplinary point of view part of the sociological tradition. This is because Neurath makes a positive heuristic relation between the sociological, philosophical and historical-anthropological approaches possible.

S. SEGRE, *Socialization process and change of the domestic and family community. A comparison between weberian and functionalist-evolutionist sociologies.*

This article sets out to argue the existence of a textual and epistemological incompatibility between Weber's interpretative and Schluchter's functionalist and evolutionist sociology, in spite of the latter's attempt to rest his own analysis of the family community upon Weber's. To this end, reconstructions have been formulated of the functions and change of the family community according to both sociological perspectives. The differences in their sociological analyses concern the scope of the explanatory schemes as well as the conceptual precision of the categories and the logical consistency of the argumentation. These differences illustrate by way of comparison the theoretical fruitfulness of Weber's interpretative sociology.

D. BRAMANTI, *Towards a redefinition of family boundaries: some strategies in front of new challenges.*

Nowdays two opposite trends seem to characterize the Italian family: a growing privatization, towards the «autopoietic» family which is reduced to pure expressive relations; an increasing regulation by the state. Both these processes touch family boundaries in so that they redefine tasks, functions, responsibilities. The article outlines the new morphogenesis of the family in the Italian experience. In particular, three diverging phenomena are identified: i) the strengthening of the internal boundaries, by reducing communication with the external social context and promoting a tendentially autopoietic

model; ii) the weakening of the family boundaries by a complete destructuration and fragmentation of the family life; iii) the intensification of the interchanges by combining a strong internal family culture and identity with the capacity to cope with the requests from the outside world.

A. ISSA, *Ibn Khaldun, Montesquieu and the theory of climate.*

Ibn Khaldun lived in the XIV but his major work — *al Maquddimah* — should be considered a forerunner of the sociological theory which was developed some centuries later. One of the main points pointed out by Ibn Khaldun in his analysis of the social world concerns the role played by the climate in affecting the social life. As it is well known, a similar interest was shown by one of the recognized founding fathers of the sociological thought, that is Montesquieu. By comparing Ibn Khaldun and Montesquieu, the article aims to show the similarity in the ideas expressed by these two authors and thus to prove the place of honour due to Ibn Khaldun in the history of the social sciences.