

SUMMARIES

E. SGROI, *Demand of credit and supply of usury between tradition and modernity.*

In pre-industrial societies, usury was both a «sin» and primitive form of credit. In modern urban-industrial societies it is considered as a historical indicator of abnormality in a system of cash economy. All this could be synthesized by the saying: I am — I have — I consume. Recently in the Italian society the phenomenon of usury has grown exponentially, by spreading across different social strata and involving a new typology of victims and predators. The Italian phenomenon must be placed within a large sphere of widespread illegality. Moreover police inquiries connect it with organized crime (*i.e.* Mafia, Camorra). The prevalent forms of these illegal circles of credit/usury of capital, consumer usury, usury of social risks indicate the particular aspects of the Italian case, characterized, as it is, by the weakness of the economic system and the backwardness of banks and small business. These are factors which play a major role, particularly in the South. The social alarm raised by the mass media becomes effective thanks to more severe laws against usury and voluntary service or self-protection by the entrepreneurial associations.

D. BRAMANTI, *Voluntary organizations in Italy: their relationship to the third sector.*

Voluntary organizations today constitute a specific sub-set of the third sector. This phenomenon is, from a sociological point of view, very interesting: in fact, it is a paradigmatic example of the mediating structures, both public and private, of the society, which connect the individual to the macro-societal institutions. The contribution depicts, from recent research data, how every day life is, at various levels, challenged by voluntary action.

G. ROSSI, *Social cooperation.*

The phenomenon of social cooperation has reached a great development in Italy both in the number of cooperatives and in the services offered. The distinctive feature of social cooperation is the fact that it offers social services together with entrepreneurship. Some specific phenomena have favoured its development within the non-profit sector in Italy. On the one hand, there has been a growth of the third sector in general and of voluntary actions in particular and on the other hand, the return of cooperatives to social services has been registered. Among the various factors which will determine the future of social cooperation, the two most important are: I. the degree of autonomy (dependence in relation to public institution); II. the degree of collaboration between different organisations.

L. BOCCACIN, *Pro-social foundations: an emerging area of the Italian third sector.*

Pro-social foundations belong to the third sector since they share its fundamental features (*i.e.* having an explicit structure and organization based on non-profit activities, using the solidarity as primary medium, producing a very special kind of common good, named «relational good»). Considering the operative profile, pro-social foundations can be considered part of the third sector since: 1) they have a

definite juridical formalization; 2) they are autonomous under the managerial and organizational point of view; 3) they have to respect the non-distributional constraint, that is they cannot distribute profits to the members; 4) their action has to be of public interest. Aim of the paper is to identify those characteristics of the pro-social foundations which make them sociologically relevant and to increase, through this identification, the third sector knowledge.

A. MASSA, *Towards a managerial revolution? Management and the Italian transition.*

In the Italian economic system a deep change is going to be realized, due both to the slow decline of the so called family capitalism and to the privatization of state owned corporations. While this process is going on, a new actor is growing in the Italian economic system in: that is, large corporations in which a clearcut separation between property and control is recognizable. In such a context, the Author looks back at the solid American tradition on this topic. The article focuses on two main perspectives: the managerial theory and the critical theory.