

## Introduction to Pareto's Sociology \*

As is known, the *Trattato di sociologia generale* was born after a long gestation as a work which can only be described as "monstrous" (1), the word "monster" being used in the triple sense of "prodigy", "deformed creature" and, neutrally, "unusual event". Prodigious in the *Trattato* is the breadth of design and research; from an introduction to economics, the sociology, as a result of subsequent additions, became a detailed analysis and a complete reconstruction of social equilibrium and of the factors which determine it. The analysis is based on a mass of facts, particularly of ancient and modern history, which have been gathered as a result of a varied and haphazard reading of classics and newspapers. The reconstruction is entrusted to an ambitious description and classification of the constant motives of social action and to a testing based on ample passages of historical interpretation. Pareto put into the *Trattato*, seemingly in utter confusion, but in reality by following an ideal order whose design was clearly impressed in his mind, everything that happened to occupy his thoughts concerning the vicissitudes of human society and the meaning of history in the most intense period of his intellectual activity. The exposition is continually interrupted by digressions, and by digressions within digressions, some of which are small treatises in themselves. We find in them, for instance, a minute description of the magic practices for causing or preventing storms, a long and sharp criticism of natural law, an analysis of Bentham's utilitarian theories and of Kant's categorical imperative. Pareto accumulated like a miser and spent like a megalomaniac. He possessed to an exceptional degree two qualities which are usually divorced from each

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\* This essay was written on the occasion of the new edition of the *Trattato di sociologia generale* published by Edizioni di Comunità, 1964.

(1) Bousquet, one of his most fervent admirers and followers, describes the *Trattato* as "un magma monstrueux" (*Pareto, Le savant et l'homme*, Lausanne, Payot, 1960, p. 149).

other and which characterize two different types of researchers: an analytical talent bordering on pedantry, a curiosity for facts (helped by an exceptional memory) akin to gossip. He had the passion of the collector as well as that of the classifier: one helped the other, and both contributed towards producing a work which astounds and tires the ordinary reader and frequently arouses two contrasting attitudes among the critics of Pareto's works, that of the most naïve enthusiasm and that of the most deep-seated aversion.

The deformity of the *Trattato* is so obvious that there is no need to dwell on it: moreover, all has been said about it. To put things in a nutshell, the *Trattato* conveys an impression of great slovenliness. Pareto was well aware of this, but being the obstinate man he was, pretended not to attach any importance to the matter and became annoyed when his attention was drawn to it. On being shown a review which deplored the bad distribution of matter between text and footnotes, he unburdened himself to Sensini in this way: "I am anxious to find those uniformities, but I could not care less about putting them in the text, or in the footnotes, in chapters which are 'mastodontic' or of the right length, in 'digressions' or eloquent speeches. Luckily no one has yet criticized the format of the book, the paper, the print, the type etc." (2). It is not as though he had no continuous thread, but he willingly lost sight of it in order to follow his inspiration, his moods, his resentments, or merely his mania for collecting outstanding episodes, with the result that he was forced every now and then to revert to his theme by recapitulation, to dot the text with references to the ground already covered and to that still to be covered, to draw up those long tables of contents which are an indispensable guide to the rational perusal of the work. Pareto was wrong in taking offence at the pin-pricks he had received from those who had criticized the formal structure of the *Trattato*: the *Trattato* is and remains

(2) *Corrispondenza di Vilfredo Pareto*, Padova, Cedam, 1948, p. 105. There is a similar outburst in a letter to PANSINI: "The old Italian second-rate professorial class has detected a great flaw in the work, namely that the parts which should be in the footnotes are in the text, and *vice-versa*. Here you have an author who says, repeats, repeats again until he becomes tiresome like the flies, that he is *only* concerned with seeking the uniformities of the facts; and the critics discover — goodness knows with how much trouble! — that he was concerned *only* with that, without bothering to divide conveniently the matter between text and footnotes... Another has criticised the indices! No one has yet criticised the format, but with a little patience I hope to read even a similar criticism", (*Carteggi pareiani*, Roma, Banca Nazionale del Lavoro, 1962, p. 115).

a work which ruins weak stomachs and paralyses the strong, and has, by the very reason of this unpleasant aspect, been more tasted than assimilated, more sniffed at than tasted, and almost fifty years since it was first published parts of it still remain to be rediscovered.

The aspect worth dwelling upon at greater length is that indicated by the third meaning of *monstrum*: the *Trattato* is unlike any other book bearing the same title, and it cannot be included, except with a certain effort, in the classical way of thinking through which sociological research has developed in Europe and America in the last hundred years. It was no mere coincidence that the "guild" of sociologists, with few exceptions, repeatedly repudiated him. Traces remain in the *Trattato* of two classical problems of nineteenth-century sociology (and which nineteenth-century sociology had inherited from the philosophy of history), the problems of factors and progress, even if Pareto prefers to refer in a less compromising manner to elements rather than to factors; as to progress, he disavows it completely by conceiving the historical movement as a wave-motion. On the other hand, the problem of the nature of social life is completely alien to him, together with the connected problem of the typology of the various forms of society, which are the two problems by means of which sociology, in particular, had been building and rebuilding its own autonomy. The only time the problem arose of distinguishing between the individual and the social was when he agreed to discuss the compulsory theme of the 1904 Philosophical Congress; but he glided over the basic question by showing clearly that he had no specific interest in the problem. In the *Trattato*, the problem of the nature of social life which is the problem of the objective delimitation of the field of sociology, is not even touched upon: starting from the mechanistic instead of the organicistic model, Pareto regards society as a system in equilibrium of which it is essential to seek the forces that compose, decompose and recompose it; these forces are always manifestations of inclinations, or instincts, or individual sentiments, that is, of separate individuals taken singly. As to social morphology, Pareto takes no interest in it because the only type of society he has in mind is the political society, characterized by relations between rulers and the ruled, to the extent that nowadays he appears to be far more a continuator of Machiavelli than a contemporary of Durkheim. As has already been pointed out by

Schumpeter, among others, his sociology was mainly "a sociology of the political process" (3). He conceived sociology as an elaboration of categories, schemes, concepts for a more adequate interpretation of past history (meaning political history, of course) and, whatever his protestations of lofty unconcern, for a more honest approach to the political struggle of which he was a spectator. This explains why he preferred the company of historians to that of sociologists: a glance at the indices of names which he himself had insisted upon is enough to make one realize that his sources, besides the theologians, who will be mentioned later, are the great historians, from Thucydides to Mommsen. On reaching the last chapter, he makes an attempt (and a rather questionable one at that, to tell the truth), at providing an empirical (Pareto, mistakenly, always uses the word "experimental") verification of previously assumed and illustrated hypotheses by means of a lengthy analysis of Roman history.

Moreover, as is known, the analysis of the social system occupies only the last two chapters, or approximately one fourth of the *Trattato*. The subject matter of the other ten chapters has nothing in common with what is normally studied by sociologists, and if anything, it comes nearer to social psychology: the analysis of the motivations of man's behaviour in society. Furthermore, the material used by Pareto in elaborating a theory of motivations consists not so much of individual social behaviours as of theories concerning social behaviours which have been elaborated by means of non-logico-experimental procedures. The *Trattato*, not unlike *Systèmes socialistes* (and in this one is able to discern the continuation of a dominant motive), is mainly a critical analysis of ideologies chosen at random in the enormous field of religious, philosophical, political, juridical and social thought. What had impressed Pareto in observing the social behaviour of mankind and induced him to take up sociology (or at least what he understood by sociology) was the prevalence of non-logical actions over logical ones. In the wide sphere of non-logical actions Pareto included what an old moralist would have described as the world of passions. Hobbes, in *Leviathan*, had likewise preceded the study of society and of the State by an analysis of passions. Pareto's work is primarily a treatise of pas-

(3) J. A. SCHUMPETER, "Vilfredo Pareto (1848-1923)", in *The Quarterly Journal of Economics*, LXIII, 1949, p. 168.

sions, brought up-to-date as far as methodology and nomenclature are concerned, and written by a firm believer in the experimental method. As has been pointed out frequently, and particularly so by La Ferla, who described Pareto as a Voltairian character (4), Pareto had the unpleasant scoffing habit of the moralist who scrutinizes human beings and lays bare their vices rather than their virtues, their weaknesses, their vanity and stupidity, not in order to disprove or flay them, but in order to enjoy the spectacle from above. He did not have the makings of a moral reformer, nor those of a preacher, but he did have those of a moralist in the classical sense of the word, i.e. of the dispassionate investigator of other people's passions. And if it is true, as has been pointed out, that moralists are born "when confidence in mankind starts to dwindle" (5), Pareto's vocation as a moralist was born when political delusions had caused him to lose all hope that human nature could be improved. He knows his Montaigne well, and whereas he normally quotes his sociologist colleagues merely in order to make fun of them, he willingly has recourse to the common sense of a practical man like Montaigne, "an antidote against the faulty reasoning of authors who write disconnectedly about natural rights (§ 446) (6). The first and major source of the theory of non-logical actions was not provided by the psychologists of his time, whom he had never read, and even less so by Freud, of whom he has no notion and to whom he was likened on many occasions for the theory of "residues" but by Pierre Bayle, whom he regards as superior to Rousseau as Kepler's astronomy is superior to that of Cosma Indicopleuste (§ 365). He assures us that in Bayle's works there are "various theories of non-logical actions, and it is surprising to read in this author truths which are ignored even today" (§ 358).

Between the moralists' analysis and that of Pareto there was nevertheless a difference in the observation material used. Pareto neglected literary works; he did, it is true, examine theories in which men appear as the direct protagonists with their actions and feelings, sometimes openly confessed, sometimes only implied, but he was fond above all of examining the works of reflected thought,

(4) G. LA FERLA, *Vilfredo Pareto filosofo volteriano*, Firenze, La Nuova Italia, 1954. Giacalone-Monaco describes Pareto as a "puritan sociologist": *Pareto e Sorel*, Padova, Cedam, 1961, Vol. II, p. 68.

(5) G. MACCHIA, *La scuola dei sentimenti*, Caltanissetta-Roma, Sciascia, 1963, p. 24.

(6) A further reference to Montaigne's "common sense" is found at § 1681.

from the ancient cosmogonies to the theologies of the Cristian era, to the modern philosophies of history, from the theories of natural right to the recent theories of utilitarianism, socialism, solidarity, in which human action is the subject of a more or less rational interpretation and justification. Pareto had been struck, not only by the agitated play of passions in the theatre of history, but also by the varying and captious way in which these passions had been hidden, simulated, masked by pseudo-rational constructions. The classical contrast between passion and reason no longer appeared to him as a contrast between the inferior and the superior part of the human soul, but between natural instinct and its falsification, between spontaneousness and fabrication. The function of reason was by no means that of dominating the passions, regarded as the servile part of man, but merely of disguising them in order to make them more acceptable (but not less offensive). In studying the social theories of his time, he had been forced to convince himself that even doctrines which proclaimed themselves to be scientifically founded, such as that of Comte, or Spencer, or Marx, were inspired by certain sentiments, that their ultimate aim was to inculcate them in others, that in the final resort they had placed reason at the service of passion. In examining closely the rôle of reason in history, one could only be struck by the small part it played in the task, usually considered to be of primary importance by the incorrigible or interested exalters of the rational human animal, of collaborating with the senses for the discovery of truth. This small part it played solely in connection with the logico-experimental theories, which had made some progress in the study of nature, but little or none in the study of mankind and society. Into the heterogeneous, badly defined category of non-logico-experimental theories, defined, moreover, like the non-logical actions, only negatively, Pareto put a considerable part of the products of human thought, from theology to metaphysics, from philosophy to pseudoscience. And he prepared himself for the task of investigating its intimate structure in order to extort its secret, and in so doing he went back from the pseudological justifications to the motives which had caused them, from manifest reason to hidden sentiment. The analysis of the non-logico-experimental theories was one way, even if it meant a detour, of arriving at the analysis of sentiments. Hitherto the moralists had faced the enemy in the open field; Pareto meant

to outflank him and attack him in the rear with a better chance of success.

Pareto devotes two chapters, the fourth and fifth, to the study of the non-logico-experimental theories. This detailed examination may seem out of all proportion to the nature and purpose of the work if one fails to understand that it is not its purpose to clear the ground for the theory it is proposed to champion after having criticized the theories it is proposed to reject, and hence it is by no means the *pars destruens* of the *Trattato*; its aim is rather to arrive at the root of the problem, i.e. to grasp the nature of the forces that move society through ascertainable facts which reveal these forces with greater clarity. And these facts, these "experimental facts", as Pareto calls them (§ 7), are precisely the non-logico-experimental theories "by means of which we can have full knowledge of the forces which exert their influence on society, i.e. of the dispositions and inclinations of mankind" (§ 8). The non-logico-experimental theories are, as has been stressed with particular insistence by Parsons, the research datum itself, i.e. the prime or raw material from which inductive analysis starts in order to arrive at the uniformities. Only this can explain the very special construction of a work so different from other sociological works. Pareto, in the development of the *Trattato*, himself draws a distinction between the inductive and the deductive method (§ 370); the inductive method is the method which, by analysing the non-logico-experimental theories, discovers the forces operating in society and permits of the elaboration of the theory of "residues" and "derivations", which occupies the greater and central part of the *Trattato*; the deductive method is the method which, once it has established the nature of these forces and suggested their classification, turns to the study of history in order to verify their validity. Thus the study of history, which in traditional political science comes first, is last in this case, in consequence of the fact that the primary source of research are not historical narratives, but the so-called non-logico-experimental theories. Among the latter an important position is occupied by books on theology, which, incredible though it may seem, end up by becoming, side by side with a number of historiographical classics, the main source of the *Trattato*, that is, the first being the source of the initial movement (the search for uniformities and work hypotheses), the second, of the final move-

ment (confirmation of the uniformities and empirical verification of the hypotheses).

Notwithstanding the abundance of material and the irregularity of the layout, it must be admitted that the design of the work is fairly clear and, as has been repeatedly pointed out by Bousquet (7), extremely simple. After a preliminary chapter on method, the research is developed through six logically connected stages. *First stage*: distinction between logical and non-logical actions (to which the second and third chapters are devoted). The term logical actions is applied to actions which have the dual characteristic of establishing a link which is objectively adequate for the purpose, and of being achieved with the awareness of this adequacy. All the others are non-logical actions. Non-logical actions therefore include actions which establish means that are objectively inadequate for the purpose, as for example making sacrifices to Neptune in order to have a smooth passage, and those which establish adequate means but of which the agent has no awareness (these are instinctive actions typical of the animal world). This distinction is important, because only the discovery that the world of human actions which determine the social movement is of the second type opens the door to a real, or even realistic analysis, of society. *Second stage*: the best way to arrive at the enucleation and description of non-logical actions is to commence with the study of their verbal manifestations, i.e. with the non-logico-experimental theories, which are divided into theories that transcend experience (fourth chapter) and into pseudo-scientific theories (fifth chapter), according to whether the intervention of the non-experimental principles is explicit or merely implicit, and hence more or less disguised. It is perhaps needless to point out that the distinction between logico-experimental and non-logico-experimental theories is a duplication of the distinction between logical and non-logical actions, although it is not quite the same thing: the non-logico-experimental theories are the verbal manifestations of the non-logical actions, but it does not follow that they themselves are non-logical actions, i.e. subjectively and objectively inadequate for the purpose it is proposed to achieve. Unfortunately, the problem of the relationship between the two basic distinctions of the *Trattato* has not been discussed expressly by Pareto, who seems not to realize the dual plane on

(7) G. H. BOUSQUET, *Pareto, le savant et l'homme*, p. 151.

which his work is constantly moving: the analysis of the social forces, including the theories, and the analysis of theories only as material for the study of social forces. *Third stage*: the analysis of non-logico-experimental theories has served to underline the two elements of which they are composed: the slightly variable part, which is a manifestation of basic sentiments, and the more variable part, which includes the sum total of all the more or less logical reasoning with which man attempts to rationalize his impulses or instincts, or interests, or inclinations (Pareto's language in this very delicate and fundamental matter is, as has been pointed out on more than one occasion by his critics, indecisive and not very precise). The first part consists of the "residues", which are divided into six classes (to which are devoted three chapters — the sixth, seventh and eighth); the second part consists of the "derivations", which are divided into four classes (to which are devoted two chapters — the ninth and the tenth). These five chapters represent the heart of the work, i.e. the systematic analysis of the forces which act in human society, i.e. in a society of beings who are both instinctive and symbolic (in the sense that they adopt symbols to communicate with each other). *Fourth stage*: the principal outward expressions of the forces which act in a social system having been recognized as "residues" and "derivations", their way of acting must be conclusively examined by studying their respective importance, the relationship of their reciprocal influence and the effects of their varied combination on the composition and development of a social system. The eleventh chapter dealing with this matter is the longest and also the most confused: it represents a bridge between the analysis of the simple elements of every social system and their recomposition in the theory of social equilibrium; its main purpose seems to be to prove, by means of the varied distribution and the complex integration of these simple elements, that every system is heterogeneous (theory of social heterogeneity) and that the more striking and permanent aspect of this heterogeneity is the distinction and the continuous interchange between the rulers and the ruled (theory of the *élites* and of their circulation). *Fifth stage*: the preceding study of the various forces acting in a social system permits of the construction of a theory of social equilibrium in which the elements (to which must be added the self-interest category typical of economic action) so far examined operate in various ways and can be reduced to the following four: (a) "resi-

dues"; (b) self-interests; (c) "derivations"; (d) heterogeneity and social circulation (§ 2205). The theory of the general form of society is dealt with in the twelfth chapter, which is likewise long and composite and contains various treatments badly connected with each other, the best-known of which (not for its scientific value, but because it reveals the author's political moods) is the one concerning the nature of political power, which is a diagnosis as well as a judgment of contemporary society. *Sixth stage*: after the construction of the theoretic model we have the empirical verification, which in this case becomes the historical test (thirteenth and last chapter).

The formal structure of the *Trattato* can be condensed even more concisely into the following traits and links: a basic observation (the prevalence of non-logical actions), or moment of *hypothesis*, is verified by examining a material to which sociologists have hitherto devoted little attention (the non-logico-experimental theories), or *critical* moment; this examination permits of the identification and classification of the original elements of a social system, or moment of *analysis*, which is followed by the construction of a theoretic model of social equilibrium, or moment of *synthesis*, and, lastly, by historical test, or moment of *verification*. It is obvious that this separation into moments is approximate and must be accepted with considerable caution: its faults are oversimplification (the subject-matter of the *Trattato* is overflowing vast; and there is no dam that will contain it), and exaggerated schematization (the *Trattato* is one of the most untidy, convulsive and farraginous books ever written).

What the recapitulation and the brief outline adequately reveal is the novelty of the book to which Pareto devoted himself for years in the isolation and solitude of Céligny. As we have seen, he waged war on the sociology of his time from the very start. He was never on good terms with official sociology. Of the great German sociologists of his time, from Ferdinand Tönnies to Max Weber, there is no trace either in the letters or in the *Trattato*. We know that he did not read German, notwithstanding Eisermann's assumption to the contrary (8), and despised everything German (9).

(8) G. EISERMANN, *Vilfredo Pareto als Nationalökonom und Soziologe*, Tübingen, Mohr, 1961, pp. 56-57.

(9) An accurate source study can only be made after Pareto's personal library, which is said to have been entirely neglected at Lausanne University, has been reorganised and opened

The greatest of French sociologists and a contemporary of his, Emile Durkheim, is never quoted; but a recently published letter to Claparède reveals fairly clearly what he thought about him: "Il est pourtant de mon devoir de vous avertir que je crains fort ne pas me trouver d'accord sur ce sujet avec Mr. E. Durkheim" (10). Of Lévy-Bruhl he recalls with praise, in an article published in 1907, *La morale et la science des mœurs*, but in the *Trattato* this work is not mentioned. In his sociological readings he went little farther than the hardly very recent sociologists writing in French, Letourneau (born 1831), Le Bon (born 1841), De Greef (born 1842) and Tarde (born 1842). He occupied himself with the latter in his very first articles on sociological matters, which appeared in 1897 and 1899 (11). In the *Manuale d'economia politica*, quoting two of this author's books, *Les lois de l'imitation* (1890) and *L'opposition universelle* (1897), he says: "... they are lacking in scientific precision to a very extraordinary degree" (12). Le Bon is often quoted in *Systèmes Socialistes*. He does Letourneau the great honour of quoting him together with Comte and Spencer, as one of those who passes off his personal religion as scientific sociology (§ 6). Of the English-speaking sociologists, in addition to Spencer he had read Giddings (born 1855), whose main work, *The Principles of Sociology*, had moreover been translated into French by one of Pantaleoni's friends, Viscount Gaëtan-Guillaume Combes de Lestrade (13).

As to the two fathers of sociology, Comte and Spencer, he must have known them, particularly the latter, fairly well. Pantaleoni wrote in the obituary: "If we were to attempt to discover

to the public. But the information provided by Bousquet in *Pareto, le savant et l'homme*, pp. 149-50, should not be overlooked.

(10) G. BUSINO, "Pareto au Congrès International de Philosophie de Genève", in *Archiv für Geschichte der Philosophie*, XLVI, 1963, p. 35.

(11) "Il compito della sociologia fra le scienze sociali", p. 52, and "I problemi della sociologia", p. 155, in *Rivista italiana di sociologia*, where, in referring to Tarde's work, he says: "They are extremely valuable studies, but we are still far from a general theory".

(12) *Manuale d'economia politica*, Milano, Società editrice libraria, 1906, p. 103. Tarde's influence is stressed in particular by Antonucci, who also adds RIBOT, *Alcune lettere di V. Pareto*, published and commented by A. Antonucci, Rome, Prof. P. Magliione editore, 1938, p. 12.

(13) Concerning whom see note 1 in letter 455 in the collection of *Lettere a Maffeo Pantaleoni*, Roma, Banca Nazionale del Lavoro, 1960, II, p. 316. The French title of GIDDING'S work is *Principes de sociologie*, Paris, Giard et Brière, 1897; Pareto refers to him in a letter to Pantaleoni of April 9th 1897 (*Lettere*, II, p. 51). Pareto had made Giddings's personal acquaintance at Lausanne, as is shown by another letter to Pantaleoni of July 8th 1896 (*Lettere*, I, p. 459).

some of the main sources of Pareto's culture — apart from mathematics — we would have to quote, in addition to Comte, three writers whose works he always liked to have within his reach: H. Spencer, Darwin and Bain" (14). But in the *Trattato* he repeatedly pointed to them as outstanding examples of non-scientific sociology. His philosophical and methodological leanings he undoubtedly derived from Comte, as was revealed by Pantaleoni in the article quoted above. But already in *Systèmes Socialistes* he had dwelt at length of the *Système de politique positive* in a critical and caustic spirit. In the *Trattato* he casts off Comte's philosophy with this amusing utterance: from *Cours* to *Système*, to *Synthèse*, Comte gradually proceeds from experimental to metaphysical and theological explanations, thereby revealing "an evolution in direct contrast with the one he supposes in human societies" (§ 1537). For several years he had counted Spencer among his favourite authors, but subsequently he changed his mind, to the great disappointment of Pantaleoni (15). Frequent traces of his old predilection are found in the earlier letters he wrote to Pantaleoni. Writing to his friend in 1897 about what he had been reading, he observed that "Spencer soared above all the others like an eagle" (16); in January 1898 he repeated that "he is the only writer who has turned out a really scientific work in sociology" (17); in the 1899 article he speaks of the evolution of political society "so skilfully expounded by Spencer" (18). But already in *Systèmes Socialistes*, even amid much praise and in spite of the statement that from the scientific point of view he is "tellement au-dessus de Comte qu'il ne peut en aucune sorte lui être comparé" (19), Pareto insinuates that Spencer, too, like John Stuart

(14) M. PANTALEONI, "In occasione della morte di Pareto: riflessioni", in the *Giornale degli economisti e rivista di statistica*, LXV, 1924, p. 15.

(15) "As to Spencer, as long as Pareto lived in Italy, only one other person extremely well known to me [evidently himself] was able to compete with Pareto in his estimation for this writer. Then, in Switzerland, he partly changed his opinion; I do not know how this came about because of a break which occurred at that time in our relations in consequence of the distance and the amount of work which fell upon us both. Prof. Linacher, on being invited to produce a pen-portrait of Spencer at Venice... sent Pareto an outline of the text, expecting the latter to give him support in extolling Spencer's virtues. To his great astonishment he received a list of Spencer's shortcomings" ("In occasione della morte di Pareto: riflessioni", p. 15).

(16) *Lettere*, II, p. 61.

(17) *Lettere*, II, p. 146.

(18) "I problemi della sociologia", op. cit., p. 153.

(19) *Les Systèmes Socialistes*, Paris, Giard et Brière, 1902, II, p. 207.

Mill, after criticizing Comte as not being sufficiently positivist, ends by embracing a kind of metaphysical religion (20). His shafts are directed primarily against the work *La Morale des différents peuples* (this is how Pareto cites it in the French edition), which does not seem to have been written by the author of *Principes de sociologie* (as he terms it), packed as it is with moral precepts and thus absolutely incompatible with the scientific spirit. In another place he complains that the scientist gradually disappears in Spencer "pour faire place au moraliste dogmatique" (21). A few years later he severely criticizes in the *Manuale* the *Morale evoluzionista* (sic) as well, and accuses its author of having betrayed the ideal of science in order to chase after the moralist's ideal. In the *Trattato* the idol is definitely shattered. Paragraph 112 begins like this: "Herbert Spencer's positivism is simply metaphysics". There is no longer any difference between Comte and Spencer: the identical criticism is levelled against both of them. Their alleged scientific systems are "different religions, but even so are always religions" (§ 6).

Separate treatment could be accorded to Pareto's relations with Darwin, referred to by Pantaleoni in the piece quoted earlier, or to describe them more exactly, to his relations with social Darwinism which, with the predominance it gave to instincts in the phenomenology of society, and with its doctrine of evolution through struggle, had opened up a vein of realistic social thought, for the use of strong minds, which has much in common with Pareto's crude, sometimes ruthless conception of social development. Pareto speaks of social Darwinism, on the whole with sympathy, at several points of the *Trattato* (§§ 828, 1770, 2005, 2142); he regards it as a corpus of doctrines "very well put together" (§ 828) but incomplete (and, what is more, with the pretension that it is complete) because it does not determine the forms of institutions but only the limits that the latter must not overstep (22), and ambiguous because it does not make clear the difference between the "fittest" for individual welfare and the "fittest" for the welfare of the species. But in a footnote added to the French edition, Pareto

(20) *Systèmes Socialistes*, II, p. 197.

(21) *Systèmes Socialistes*, II, p. 436, note 1.

(22) An identical criticism had already been made in the *Manuale*, § 77.

points out that the criticisms made of this theory were by no means intended to deny its importance (23).

Those who wish to discover the sources of Pareto's inspiration must seek them rather a long way from the paths trodden by official sociology. His greatest sources of inspiration were Machiavelli, Marx and Sorel. Griziotti relates that when he reached Lausanne in 1907, Pareto was giving sociology lessons on Machiavelli explaining the scientific value of *Il Principe* (24). Pareto says of Machiavelli, who is often given honourable mention in the *Trattato*, that "he soars like an eagle over the multitudes of ethical historians" (§ 2532), a compliment which, as we have seen, he had reserved for Spencer in the years of his fervour for the English sociologist. Marx and historical materialism had been amply dealt with by Pareto in *Systèmes Socialistes*, where he affirmed that he preferred Marx's sociology to his economic theory: having rejected the common interpretation of historical materialism according to which the economic factor would by itself and in the end determine the whole movement of history, he had accepted the learned (*savante*) interpretation according to which history is a quest for facts and for relations between facts, which can be objectively determined; and not for the notions which men form about them (the ideologies). The theory and the critique of "derivations", which take up so much of the *Trattato*, are simultaneously an interpretation and an extension of the Marxian critique of ideologies. He likewise shared the Marxian interpretation of history as the scene of the class struggle, even while mistaking it for and confusing it with Darwinism (a confusion which, for that matter, was a commonplace with both the defenders and the detractors of the latter). In connection with that interpretation he declares that one must "admirer l'énergie et la force de caractère que Marx a déployées pour la défendre envers et contre tous" (25). In two paragraphs of the *Trattato* (829 and 830) he clearly summarizes his attitude towards historical materialism and the class struggle: he launches against them the same reproach already directed against the majority of the theories — that they had made complex phenomena far

(23) Now § 2142, note 1.

(24) B. GRIZIOTTI, "Alla scuola di Vilfredo Pareto e Maffeo Pantaleoni", in *Vilfredo Pareto. L'economista e il sociologo*, Milano, Rodolfo Malfasi, 1949, p. 340.

(25) *Systèmes Socialistes*, II, p. 393.

too simple. In opposition to the thesis of the single factor and the dependence upon the economic phenomenon of the other phenomena, he upholds the thesis of the plurality of factors and of their mutual interdependence. But he gives to historical materialism that praise of which usually he was very sparing: "... it marked a noteworthy scientific step forward, since it has helped to underline the contingent character of certain phenomena, such as the moral phenomenon and the religious phenomenon, to which was attached, as is largely true still today, an absolute character" (§ 829) (26). Pareto had a long and close friendship with Georges Sorel, documented by, among other things, Sorel's letters recently published by De Rosa (27), who prefaces them with an instructive parallel between the two men, who resembled each other in many of their external features, their moods, their likes and dislikes, opinions on contemporary society, and were unanimous on how to interpret Marxism, even if they disagreed about the way of utilizing it, both of them as much ruthless destroyers of old (and often beneficial) myths as they were indefatigable inventors of new (and harmful) myths, iconoclasts, prophets of doom, interpreters and at the same time architects of the "destruction of reason". Like Machiavelli and Marx, Sorel is regarded by Pareto as one of the few sages who have approached the study of social facts without prejudice but in a scientific spirit, leaving all empty talk to preachers and politicians. A note in the *Trattato* reads: "Certain university professors... who confuse science with pedantry... who when dealing with a theory do not go beyond insignificant details or other similar stupidities, completely lack the intellectual capacity necessary to understand the work of a scientist such as Sorel is" (§2193<sup>a</sup>). Pareto, in his speech of thanks on the occasion of the honours paid to him by the Lausanne University in 1917, after expressing the debt of gratitude he owed to Italian and foreign economists, from whom he had drawn inspiration and guidance, mentions one name only of the sociologists and economists, Georges Sorel, on account

(26) The problem of relations between Pareto and Marxism has been dealt with several times. Cf. R. MICHELS, "Pareto e il materialismo storico", in *Giornale degli economisti e rivista di statistica*, LXV, 1924, pp. 110-113; O. WEINBERGER, "Die Marx-Kritik Vilfredo Paretos", in *Kyklos*, III, 1949, pp. 219-234. The first aims at emphasizing what Pareto took from Marx; the second, what he refused.

(27) *Carteggi paretiani*, Banca Nazionale del Lavoro, Roma, 1962, pp. 3-48.



of his works that were "si puissamment scientifiques" (28). Pareto was not fond of wasting time in quoting sources and cheerfully ridiculed the mania of compiling complete bibliographies (§ 538). After Sorel he recalls several sociologists, among whom there is not one of the great names of the sociology of his day. He cites Ostrogorski and Michels for the political parties, Lombroso and Ferri for criminal sociology, Colajanni and then the old Fustel de Coulanges and Henry Sumner Maine for what he calls "sociologie historique". And he ends up by actually eulogizing that great foe of sociology, Benedetto Croce, who, although himself a "metaphysician", had contributed to scientific progress in Italy "débarassant le terrain des idéologies positivistes et humanitaires" (29).

According to Parsons, when Sorokin was once questioned at a meeting of eminent scholars of social science, he declared that the greatest contemporary sociologists had been Max Weber, Durkheim and Pareto (30). But unlike the first two, whose authority has never been challenged, Pareto the sociologist (his fame as an economist has never been questioned) was the object of the most conflicting opinions. Pareto, praised, exalted, eulogized by enthusiastic — and generally mediocre — disciples who had to disturb the shades of the great such as Aristotle or Machiavelli or Vico to find terms of comparison sufficiently worthy of their teacher, while ignored by the philosophers whom he had derided, was kept at a respectful distance by the scholars of social science, whose labours he had almost always thought he could disregard. Even though Croce appreciated Pareto the economist, his opinion is well known: when the *Trattato* appeared he defined it as "a case of scientific tautology" (31). It is less known that more than 30 years later Croce, now an old man but no less pugnacious, during a series of lectures given at Naples between 1948 and 1950, speaking of sociology and the scanty interest displayed in it in Italy, re-stated his old opinion that a reader of the *Trattato* could exclaim in Baconian style *numeratae pecuniae nihil* "because no truth could be got out

(28) *Jubilé du professeur V. Pareto*, Lausanne University, Lausanne, Imprimerie Vaudoise, 1920, p. 56. A brief but convinced eulogy of Sorel by Pareto also in *La rivoluzione liberale*, I, No. 37, December 14, 1922, in an issue wholly devoted to Sorel.

(29) P. 57.

(30) T. PARSONS, *The Structure of Social Action*, New York, 1937.

(31) B. CROCE, *Conversazioni critiche*, Serie IV, pp. 167-170 (I quote from the second edition).

of it that was not some tautology or other" (32). As to the sociologists, whose interest in the *Trattato* was aroused only when the English translation appeared at New York in 1935 (33), (in Italy the tradition of sociological studies had by then been interrupted, while in France, where a French translation had appeared as early as 1917, the *Trattato* was an utter failure, from what Bousquet tells us) (34), Leopold von Wiese, in Germany, reacting violently to the "Pareto-fever" of certain American circles, demolished the *Trattato* as the work of a bright amateur and called Pareto, not altogether without reasons, "Philosoph der Rebarbarisierung" (35); Ellsworth Faris, in the United States, considered Pareto's attempt to construct a scientific sociology a miserable failure and praised in comparison Sumner's work (36); William McDougall, who in 1908 had published his *Introduction to Social Psychology*, which in certain respects may be compared to the *Trattato*, after accusing Pareto of being behind the times — "midvictorian" — of having written a treatise on sociology with a psychological basis (the theory of "residues") without possessing a knowledge of psychology, of not having defined the principal terms of his construction and of having transformed the classification of the "residues" into a "hodge-podge" of heterogeneous items, accused Pareto's admirers of inducing young people to waste one or two years of their life in an endeavour to extract "some grain of wisdom from a crazy book" (37); Raymond Aron, in France, bluntly defined the *Trattato* as "une

(32) *Terze pagine sparse*, Bari, 1955, vol. I, p. 93.

(33) See a study by the translator, ANDREW BONGIORNO, "A Study of Pareto's Treatise on General Sociology", in *The American Journal of Sociology*, XXXVI, 1930, pp. 349-370, where the *Trattato* is defined as "a seminal book" and compared with Newton's *Principles*.

(34) G. H. BOUSQUET, "Pareto sociologue", in *Revue d'économie politique*, LIX, 1949, pp. 545-554. He also remarks that the French economists, pupils of Walras, felt no sympathy for Pareto the sociologist.

(35) L. VON WIESE, "Vilfredo Pareto als Soziologe", in *Zeitschrift für National Ökonomie*, VII, 1936, pp. 433-446. This slashing criticism was replied to by O. WEINBERGER, in a moderate article, "Metodologia paretiana", in *Giornale critico della filosofia italiana*, XIX, 1938, pp. 363-373.

(36) E. FARIS, "An Estimate of Pareto", in *The American Journal of Sociology*, XLI, 1936, pp. 657-678.

(37) W. MCDUGALL, in *Journal of Social Philosophy*, I, 1935, pp. 36-51. The whole issue is devoted to a "Symposium on Pareto's Significance for Social Theory". Among those who deny any scientific validity to the *Trattato* C. MURCHINSON, *Pareto and Experimental Social Psychology*, pp. 53-63; M. MILLIKAN, "Pareto's Sociology", in *Econometrica*, IV, 1963, pp. 324-337. For a critique of the *Trattato* from the ethical point of view, J. H. TUFTS, in *Journal of Social Philosophy*, I, 1935, in the "Symposium" mentioned pp. 67-77.

immense dérivation, dont les résidus sont les haines politiques et le souci exclusif des relations entre gouvernants et gouvernés" (38).

More balanced and substantially fairer opinions were not lacking, as that of Morris Ginsberg in England (39), and well-argued apologies like that of the American physiologist, L. J. Henderson, who held for a time at Harvard a seminar for advanced students on Pareto and wrote a long essay with the aim of demonstrating the originality, the brilliance, and what is more, the high scientific value of the *Trattato* (40). But in the United States about 1936, as for that matter in Italy about 20 years before, the virulence of the attacks was often a reaction to the exaggerated tone of the panegyrics, which laid emphasis on the more striking and disconcerting (even detestable) aspects of the *Trattato* (41), the daring nature of its political views, the discovery of the irrational forces that make history, the necessity to meet violence with violence, the result being that Pareto was variously described as another Machiavelli, the Nietzsche of sociology (42) or the Marx of the middle classes (or of fascism) (43). Certainly no good was done to Pareto's scientific standing (nor, for that matter, to Nietzsche's fame of philosopher) by the curious attraction he exercised through the intemperance of his polemics upon a few queer personages of the intellectual world, who were eager to give a welcome to his doctrines and hand them on. Among the personages who cannot be classified as mediocre (no matter what opinions may be held about their work and their highly

(38) "La sociologie de Pareto", in *Zeitschrift für Sozialforschung*, VI, 1937, p. 518. But in a recent article Aron's opinion of Pareto is far more impartial: "La signification de l'oeuvre de Pareto", in *Cahiers Vilfredo Pareto*, I, 1963, No. 1, pp. 7-26.

(39) M. GINSBERG, "The Sociology of Pareto", in *The Sociological Review*, XXVIII, 1936, pp. 221-245.

(40) *Pareto's General Sociology. A Physiologist's Interpretation*, Cambridge, At the University Press, 1937.

(41) This attitude is clear in HAROLD A. LARROBEE, "Pareto and the Philosophers", in *The Journal of Philosophy*, XXXII, 1935, pp. 505-515.

(42) For an attempt at making a comparison between Nietzsche and Pareto cf. O. ZIEGLER, "Ideologienlehre", in *Archiv für Sozialwissenschaft und Sozialpolitik*, LVII, 1927, pp. 657-700. The circulation of the *élites* is regarded as the sociology of the eternal return.

(43) This denomination, which met with great success in the United States, was relaunched by R. V. WORTHINGTON, "Pareto. The Karl Marx of Fascism", in *The Economic Forum*, 1933. But it is already to be found in an old article published in the official review of the fascist regime: VOIR [pseudonym of Vincenzo Fani], "Uomini d'Italia: Vilfredo Pareto", in *Gerarchia*, II, 1923, pp. 974-977. The article begins: "Vilfredo Pareto could almost be described as the Karl Marx of Fascism" (p. 974); though immediately afterwards it is added that this definition must be taken with a grain of salt.

diverse personalities) it is sufficient to recall Giovanni Papini, who according to Pareto himself was one of the few who had understood the *Trattato* (44), and Filippo Burzio, a fervent disciple of Pareto (45).

Pareto's not always very clear relations with fascism were likewise of no help in ensuring a calm discussion of his thought. His champions try to show, by quoting from documents (his last articles and a few letters), that his adherence to fascism was circumspect and full of reservations; but the question is not as simple as this. Pareto died too soon — only a few months after the march on Rome — to be able to give a conclusive opinion on the new political regime. Many authoritative representatives of Italian culture, beginning with Croce, who were later to become stern opponents of fascism, were in those early months more inclined towards adherence than towards aversion. The problem is a different one: was there any connection between the political conceptions often expressed by Pareto, right from the years of his contributions to *Regno*, and fascist ideology? This connection is undeniable: Pareto missed no opportunity of lashing democratic ideals, humanitarianism, pacifism, regarding them as hypocritical expressions of less noble interests or sentiments; he extolled the force that dominates the world; convinced that in history the bellicose aristocracies are destined to prevail, the weak to succumb, he foresaw that the European bourgeoisie, that of Italy in particular, tyrannized over by the "speculators" (the breed he detested most), would be overthrown if they did not meet violence by violence. The kernel of fascist ideology was the historical and moral legitimization of bourgeois violence (46). § 2480 of the *Trattato* has several times been cited from the fascist side as a possible source of its doctrine: "It can be said that the ruling class's resistance is effective only if it is ready to carry it to extremes,

(44) In a letter to Pansini of April 23, 1917, published in *Carteggi paretiani*, p. 112; and with almost the same words in a letter of the same date to Sensini, *Corrispondenza*, p. 104; finally, also in a letter of June 28, 1917 to Carlo Placci, in T. GIACALONE-MONACO, *Vilfredo Pareto, Dal Carteggio con Carlo Placci*, Padova, Cedam, 1957, p. 93. Regarding relations between Papini and Pareto, cf. my essay "Vailati e Pareto", in *Rivista critica di storia della filosofia*, XVIII, 1963, pp. 479-480. While Papini's review was praised in flattering terms, other reviews by illustrious scholars, such as Einaudi and Ricci, were the object of Pareto's scorn. For Einaudi's review, cf. *Carteggi paretiani*, p. 118; T. GIACALONE-MONACO, *Vilfredo Pareto*, p. 93. For that of Ricci, again *Carteggi paretiani*, pp. 149-152-154.

(45) I have dealt with relations between Burzio and Pareto in the essay "Democrazia ed élites", in *Moneta e Credito*, Banca Nazionale del Lavoro, XV, 1962, pp. 3-22.

(46) The most impartial and substantially correct analysis of relations between Pareto and fascism was made by Aron in the article already cited, pp. 518-519.

regardless of everything whatsoever, using when necessary force and arms, otherwise it is not only ineffective but can, indeed, help, and sometimes greatly help, its adversaries". But Pareto's thought was ambiguous, like that of Machiavelli, and provided answers that differed according to whether it was accepted purely and simply as a salutary lesson of political realism (which is equally useful to either side engaged) or as a factional system of precepts. The fact is that Pareto repeatedly declared he was an impassive spectator of the political struggle that was developing before his eyes, almost as if he wished it to be believed that he was indifferent to the *élites* happening to be in power, content to know and reveal the secret of their rise and their fall. Certain it is that his teachings were accepted by both the parties engaged and there were fervent Paretoians on both sides: fascists such as Fani, De Stefani, Morselli, Scalfati (47); antifascists like several contributors to *Rivoluzione liberale*, Gobetti, Dorso, Burzio himself (48). The Piero Gobetti publishing firm printed in 1924 the first monograph on Pareto, by Alberto Cappa, who strove to show that Pareto was really neutral in face of the vicissitudes of his time and how impossible it was to find in this any confirmation that he favoured authoritarianism (49). The editor of a combative antifascist review of the 'twenties, Oliviero Zuccarini, has written recently, on the occasion of the publication of Pareto's letters to Maffeo Pantaleoni, a true and proper *apologia pro Pareto*, defending him against all posthumous accusations and generously presenting him as a faithful friend of democracy (50).

Hitherto the *Trattato* has been a subject for apologies and denigration rather than an object for critical studies. Of the great contemporary sociologists, one of the few who have openly admit-

(47) VOLT [pseudonym of Vincenzo Fani], "Vilfredo Pareto e il Fascismo", in *Gerarchia*, I, 1922, pp. 597-601; *Uomini d'Italia: Vilfredo Pareto*, op. cit., pp. 974-977; A. DE STEFANI, "Vilfredo Pareto", in *Gerarchia*, II, 1923, pp. 1187-1189; E. MORSELLI, *Scienza ed arte politica in Vilfredo Pareto e i fasti della nuova politica italiana*, Alessandria, 1924; STANISLAO G. SCALFATI, "Pareto e il Fascismo" (1930), in *Studi paretoiani*, Roma, 1932, pp. 93-133.

(48) Cf. again my essay "Democrazia ed élites", in *Moneta e Credito*.

(49) A. CAPPA, *Vilfredo Pareto*, Torino, Piero Gobetti publisher, 1924, pp. 12-13 and 66-67.

(50) O. ZUCCARINI, "Politica e sociologia di Vilfredo Pareto", in *Comunità*, No. 94, November 15, 1961, pp. 84-101.

ted owing a debt of gratitude to Pareto is Sorokin (51); the only one who has attempted to penetrate the clouds of incense raised by the disciples in an effort to make a critical study of the *Trattato* and extract from it an analytical scheme, is Talcott Parsons (52). His studies, however, date back to almost 30 years ago. Perhaps it is only now, with the gradual fading of the clamour raised by political controversy, that a propitious time has come for a discussion at once calmer and deeper from the critical point of view. Two balanced and simultaneously authoritative articles by Schumpeter and Jannaccone, published on the occasion of the centenary of Pareto's birth (53), may be regarded as premonitory signs of a new turn, the introduction to which could be an article of 1952 by Demaria, which suggests that economists should study Pareto's sociology and affirms that in order to understand the scientific fertility of Pareto's contributions to economics it is necessary to go back "to the kernel of his sociological conception" (54). Meanwhile the path towards a critical re-examination has been opened, as always happens, by the discovery and publication of unpublished material, particularly frequent in recent years, the greatest credit for which is due to Gabriele De Rosa (though the contributions in previous years of Giacalone-Monaco must not be forgotten, and now that of Busino, who has brought out the "Cahiers Vilfredo Pareto", published by the Librairie Droz of Geneva, which have already devoted, and will in the future continue to devote, still more space to the study of Pareto's personality). The time is ripe for a complete new edition of his works, both the greater and the

(51) P. SOROKIN, *Les théories sociologiques contemporaines*, Paris, Payot 1938 [the American edition is of 1928], p. 68, note 1. Regarding the reception accorded to Pareto's sociology, cf. F. N. HOUSE, "Pareto in Development of Modern Sociology", in *Journal of Social Philosophy*, I, 1935, pp. 78-79. This writer affirms that out of 14 European and 19 American sociologists (all mentioned in a note), only four — Oppenheimer, Sombart, Sorokin and Paris — had more than a superficial knowledge of the *Trattato*. On Pareto's reception in Germany, G. EISERMANN, "Vilfredo Pareto in Deutschland", in *Kölner Zeitschrift für Soziologie und Sozialpsychologie*, VIII, 1956.

(52) T. PARSONS, "Pareto's Central Analytical Scheme", in *Journal of Social Philosophy*, vol. I, 1936, pp. 244-262. And above all the ample analysis of Pareto's thought contained in the work *The Structure of Social Action*, New York, 1937.

(53) J. A. SCHUMPETER, "Vilfredo Pareto (1849-1923)", in *The Quarterly Journal of Economics*, LXIII, 1949, pp. 147-173; P. JANNACCONI, "Vilfredo Pareto, il sociologo", in *Vilfredo Pareto, L'economista e il sociologo*, Milano, Rodolfo Malfasi, 1949, pp. 20-34.

(54) G. DEMARIA, "L'opera economica di Vilfredo Pareto", in V. PARETO, *Scritti teorici*, Milano, Rodolfo Malfasi, 1952, pp. VII-XXX.

lesser, and to this end the new Italian edition of the *Trattato* by *Comunità* appears as a forerunner and a stimulus.

The *Trattato* still today makes irksome, often irritating reading, but now it can be read with greater detachment and in a cooler frame of mind. For that matter, the theories that made it famous and aroused love and hate are perhaps the most transient. There remains the rare example of a lucidity so ruthless as to border on perversion. But in face of the rhetoric of ideals, the triumphs of misrepresentation, and the treacheries of the "fausse conscience" (55), the perverse is better than the falsely naïve. The desecration of ideals is the price that a corrupt society pays for the nonchalant practice of their persistent abuse. The *Trattato* has also been described as a guide for those who wish to find their bearings in the domain of human folly (56). For the men of my generation, at least, Pareto was not the inventor of human folly: had he lived another ten years he would, if at all, have had to blame himself for having been too moderate. Further, in spite of the agitation that his anti-humanitarian outbursts arouse in the reader who does not penetrate beyond the surface, the *Trattato* should not be read under the misconception that its author is Machiavellian, a cynic, since this approach to the work, while the most frequent, will in the end be found a mistaken one (57). The true and proper monument of the *Trattato* is the theory and critique of ideologies, in the sense that has been grasped and developed in recent years, for example by Topitsch (58). Lévi-Strauss recently declared that he had learned from Marx that "men are always the victims of their own

(55) J. GABEL also availed himself of Pareto's theory of the "derivations" in his recent work *La fausse conscience. Essai sur la réification*, Paris, Les éditions de Minuit, 1962; see especially pp. 53-55, where it is stated that Pareto "est l'un des principaux théoriciens de la fausse conscience" (p. 53).

(56) M. S. HANDMAN, "The Sociological Methods of Vilfredo Pareto", in *Methods in Social Science*, edited by S. A. Rice, The University of Chicago Press, 1931, pp. 139-153. The passage quoted is on p. 153.

(57) Again recently E. FAUL, in his book *Der moderne Machiavellismus*, Cologne and Berlin, Kiepenheuer und Witsch, 1961, devotes a chapter to Pareto, pp. 259-295. Previously, although in the context of a different interpretation of Machiavellism, cf. the well-known work of J. BURNHAM, *The Machiavellians* (II edition 1943).

(58) I have dealt more amply with this point in the essay "Pareto e la critica delle ideologie", in *Rivista di filosofia*, XLVIII, 1957, pp. 355-381. Cf. E. TOPITSCH, *Sozialphilosophie zwischen Ideologie und Wissenschaft*, Neuweid, Hermann Luchterhand Verlag, 1961, *passim*, especially p. 38. Of the same author cf. also *Vom Ursprung und Ende der Metaphysik*, Vienna, Springer Verlag, 1958.

and others' deceits, and that if one wants to study the humanities, one must begin by refusing to allow oneself to be deceived" (59). Well, Pareto, following Marx's footsteps, has with his *Trattato* carried out the first grandiose attempt to elaborate a phenomenology and a typology of the various "disguises" behind which man hides his instincts, and to indicate the ways and effects of the "unmasking". His famous realism is not only a mood, but the basis of a theory and of a new science.

Except in the last two chapters where, as Pareto himself observed, a study is made of the social effects of the elements, found to exist by their appearance in the non-logico-experimental theories, the real object of the *Trattato* is man as an "ideological animal". Right from the beginning (§ 13) Pareto is at pains to point out that the theories can be studied from three different standpoints: from the standpoint of their truth or falsity, from the standpoint of their persuasive power, and from the standpoint of their social utility. The systematic design of most of the work is contained in § 15 where the first eleven chapters are arranged on the basis of an outline focusing on the theories and nothing but the theories.

That Pareto began with the idea of writing a book on social equilibrium in the image and likeness of the one he had already written on economic equilibrium cannot be doubted. But from the start of his researches on society he encountered the difficulty — to which other sociologists, Marx excepted, had not paid sufficient attention — of separating verbal statements from real motivations in the documents that the sociologist must take into account. As he progressed with his researches, this procedural difficulty grew to gigantic proportions, to the point of becoming the dominant stimulus and the principal object of his reflections. While the social equilibrium theory underwent no radical changes from the first writings on it, the study of the non-logico-experimental theories grew beyond measure, was the origin of the two great themes of "residues" and "derivations", of which there is almost no trace in the first writings, and ended by forming the quantitatively most conspicuous and the qualitatively most original part of the *Trattato*. With regard to the persuasive power of the theories, Pareto offered

(59) "Intervista a Claude Lévi-Strauss", edited by Paolo Caruso, in *Aut Aut*, No. 77, September 1963, p. 41.

us also a first, ample outline of a true and proper theory of argumentation, which is the most interesting historical precedent of today's *nouvelle rhétorique* movement (60). There is this difference, however, that while the present rediscovery of rhetoric is being made under the banner of a new rationalism, the theory of "derivations" meant for Pareto a confirmation, however paradoxical, of the intrinsic irrationality of history.

Pareto himself had provided the key to the way in which he wished the work to be read, when he said: "The whole of the present work is a search for the reality that is concealed behind the derivations, revealed to us by the documents" (61). But for some odd reason or because of an inadvertence he buried the key in the *Index to the Contents* under a sub-heading of the item *Derivatives and derivations*, from where no one has ever unearthed it. Not that the wish here is to throw a veil over the social equilibrium theory. The only aim is simply to turn the attention of new readers, especially those who belong to the new generation, to the theory and critique of ideologies, a subject that stands on its own and is susceptible of further development. I believe that only those who turn to the *Trattato* bearing this interpretative approach in mind will realise that far from being a field that has been over-ploughed, the work is a still unexplored mine.

*Turin*

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(60) Cf. my essay "Pareto e la teoria dell'argomentazione", in *Revue internationale de philosophie*, No. 58, 1961, part. 4.

(61) p. xxvi.