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Nota di contenuto	Chapter 1. Reason and Rationality in Sociological Thought: Interpreting Human Action as a Problem -- Chapter 2. Superseding the Structural Dichotomy of the Holistic and Individualistic Approaches: Attempts and Statements -- Chapter 3. The Interpretation of Rationality in Human Action from Talcott Parsons, to Alfred Schütz and Jürgen Habermas -- Chapter 4. Rationality, Environment, and Complex Systems in the Theses of Niklas Luhmann -- Chapter 5. Rationalism, Irrationalism, and Pseudo-rationality in the Thinking of Karl Marx and Karl R. Popper -- Chapter 6. The theory of rational choice: potential and criticality -- Chapter 7. Towards the Supersession of Utilitarianism -- Chapter 8. The Upsurge of Postmodern Society and The Contributions of Bauman,

Sommario/riassunto

The essay already published in Italian and Spanish, analyzes the role played by rationality in the history of social sciences, in order to propose a basically problematic interpretation of human action. In this perspective, various theories of rationality connected to the various attempts to provide an "interpretative perspective" useful for a more adequate understanding of individual organizational and institutional action are examined. For this purpose, the works of numerous classics are examined including Dahrendorf, Mannheim, Marx, Popper, Weber and, in a different perspective, the contributions of Habermas, Luhmann, Parsons and Schütz. A reflection is then proposed on the concrete theoretical perspectives opened by the criticisms of the theory of rational choice, taking into consideration the observations and proposals advanced by Antiseri, Boudon, Sen, Simon. The contributions of Ardigò, Alexander, Cesareo and Machiavelli and Pareto are studied in depth, regarding the "extra rational" and value dimension in human action. Furthermore, the perspectives outlined by Bauman, Beck, Sennett are analyzed, in order to get to deepen the "liquid rationality", the Risikogesellschaft and the Risikoleben, but also the development of uncontrolled flexibility and the consequences on personal life. Finally, we wonder about the reasons for unexpected action and through the contribution of Nussbaum and Piketty on the strategic role played by ethics, rationality and skills in postmodern societies. The evolution of the concept of rationality is analyzed, starting from the dichotomy between holism and individualism; The problematic nature of the interpretation of human behaviour is discussed in the light of the contributions of many social scientists shifting the focus from a utilitarian to a value-oriented approach; It describes the increasingly complex and unpredictable scenario that determines an open future based on unexpected behaviour and actions.

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