



**Massimo Cerulo and Adrian Scribano (Eds.), The Emotions in the Classics of Sociology. A Study in Social Theory, New York: Routledge, 2022**

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## REVIEWS

PAULINA SABUGAL

**Massimo Cerulo and Adrian Scribano (Eds.), *The Emotions in the Classics of Sociology. A Study in Social Theory*, New York: Routledge, 2022**

This book, edited by Massimo Cerulo (ordinary professor of sociology at Federico II University in Naples) and Adrian Scribano (researcher and sociologist at the National Council for Scientific and Technical Research in Argentina) offers a fresh and new look at the role of emotions in classic sociological authors such as Émile Durkheim, Max Weber, Gabriel Tarde, Charles Horton Cooley, Harriet Martineau, Karl Marx, Norbert Elias, Vilfredo Pareto, George Herbert Mead, Ibn Khaldun and, of course, Georg Simmel. Cerulo and Scribano's text is not only innovative in its content but also in the way the book is structured. The editors have had the sensitivity and attention to bring together men and women who are researchers, scholars and professors from different countries around the world who engage in dialogue with classic authors from various historical periods. This effort also allows us to see the richness of dialogue between the global south and north through terms, concepts and theories that have accompanied classical sociology from its beginnings to the present day.

The book begins with a chapter dedicated to a woman: Harriet Martineau. This chapter is written by Argentine sociologist and researcher Angélica de Sena. The text not only shows the reader the

legacy of one of the “mothers of sociology” but also allows us to reflect about the sociology of emotions from a gender perspective. This is useful especially for phenomena currently facing contemporary society such as the deconstruction and reconstruction of gender roles, the so-called “crisis” of the traditional family (a topic also addressed by Karl Marx and which Scribano will discuss later in another chapter), and the new configurations of love relationships that have been studied by various researchers, including Ulrich Beck<sup>1</sup> and Eva Illouz<sup>2</sup>, and more recently Swen Seebach with his book *Love and society: special social forms and the master emotion*<sup>3</sup>, to name but a few.

In Martineau’s work on emotions, de Sena emphasizes the relationship between morals and society, specifically in the book that Martineau called *Morals and Manners*, which is considered today as one of the founding books of the methodology of social research. Martineau’s text on morality is reminiscent of what the French researcher Didier Fassin has called “moral economy”<sup>4</sup>. As Fassin understands it, the term moral economy reflects the idea that emotions are not free-floating forces above us, nor are they something that “we” individually possess. It describes them as more or less fluid social aggregates, which can be divided by tensions and contradictions, and which evolve according to circumstances and

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<sup>1</sup> Cf. Beck, U., & Beck-Gernsheim, E. (2014). The global chaos of love: Toward a cosmopolitan turn in the sociology of love and families. *The Wiley Blackwell companion to the sociology of families*, 547-559. Beck, U., & Beck-Gernsheim, E. (2013). *Distant Love*. Hoboken: John Wiley & Sons.

<sup>2</sup> Illouz, E. (2012). *Why love hurts: A sociological explanation*. Cambridge: Polity Press. Illouz, E. (1997). Consuming the romantic utopia: Love and the cultural contradictions of capitalism. *COMMUNICATION RESEARCH TRENDS*, 17, 25-25.

<sup>3</sup> Cf. Seebach, S. (2017). *Love and Society: Special Social Forms and the Master Emotion*. London: Routledge.

<sup>4</sup> Cf. Fassin, D. (2009). Moral Economies Revisited. *Annales. Histoire, Sciences Sociales*. 64 (6), 1237-1266.

configurations. What a moral economy allows us to do is to examine how specific emotions can play a role within governmentality, how they relate to various power structures that connect to interpersonal interactions or organizational bureaucratic structures. Undoubtedly, works like those of Harriet Martineau lay the foundations for a contemporary sociology.

Another chapter that catches the reader's attention is the one dedicated to Karl Marx, where Adrian Scribano, one of the editors, takes the risk of thinking of the great German scholar as "a classic of the sociology of emotions". The chapter might at first seem slightly stilted, but gradually the author demonstrates how Marx's work could be linked to this field of sociology. Scribano's thesis is that Marx's interest in emotions is through the role of the body. Scribano calls it "embodied emotions". For the author, Marx speaks of a body that feels in terms of flesh, bones and muscle and demonstrates that this is visible in major texts such as *The Capital*. Scribano invites us to reflect about the emotional dimension of Marx's texts from the point of view of the body, specifically, the body of the proletariat as worker. This approach recalls several studies that have been done in relation to body-emotion. In particular, Sara Ahmed's text *The Cultural Politics of Emotions*<sup>5</sup> comes to mind, in which she takes an approach similar to Scribano's, where emotions are necessarily lived and manifested through body language. Ahmed explores, for example, how emotions shape the "surfaces" of individual and collective bodies in given contexts. The body, Ahmed argues, takes on a certain form from the contact it has with objects and the others, and this is precisely what Scribano glimpses in Marx's work when he speaks of cruelty, for example. Undoubtedly, Karl Marx's work is permeated by passions, affections and emotions and as Marcello Musto mentions in his

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<sup>5</sup> Ahmed, S. (2013). *The Cultural Politics of Emotion*. London: Routledge.

magnificent work *Karl Marx. Biografia intellettuale e politica (1857–1883)*<sup>6</sup>:

(...) Marx liked to spend a lot of time with his family, which was sustained by a rare emotional and political-cultural partnership. (Musto, 2016: 189)<sup>7</sup>

In conclusion, Adrian Scribano's work, not only in this chapter but in other innovative and interesting texts such as his paper *Con el sudor de tu frente: una sociología de los cuerpos/emociones en Marx desde la comida y el hambre* (With the sweat of your brow: a sociology of bodies/emotions in Marx from food and hunger)<sup>8</sup>. In this article, he allows us to think about Marx from another perspective. Through this approach there is an exchange that goes in two directions: on the one hand, it allows us to read and study one of the world's most important classical authors from a dimension that includes the emotions, the senses and the body. On the other hand, the study of Marx's work in this way helps to set the basis for a contemporary sociology of emotions.

A chapter that could not be missing is precisely the one dedicated to Georg Simmel, written by another of the book's editors, Massimo Cerulo, and professor Antonio Rafele, professor of communication at the Federico II University of Naples. Georg Simmel is considered one of the founders of sociology and is also seen as the father of the sociology of modernity. He is also one of the scholars who laid the foundations for the sociology of emotions. The chapter summarizes Simmel's work on various terms that are

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<sup>6</sup> Musto, M. (2016). *L'ultimo Marx: 1881–1883. Biografia intellettuale e politica*. Roma: Donzelli editore.

<sup>7</sup> In Italian: "Infine, Marx amava trascorrere molto tempo con la sua famiglia che fu sorretta da un raro sodalizio sia affettivo che politico-culturale." (Musto, 2016, p. 189).

<sup>8</sup> Scribano, A. (2013). Con el sudor de tú Frente: Una sociología de los Cuerpos/emociones en Marx desde la Comida y el Hambre. *Controversias y Concurrencias Latinoamericanas*, 5(8), 78-85.

linked to the emotions, such as pity and gratitude, and emphasizes Simmel's texts on love<sup>9</sup>. The authors get to the heart of Simmel's work when they say that emotions are elementary forms of sociality and recall Patrick Watier<sup>10</sup> with the following quote:

(...) it is important to make it clear that emotions play an ambivalent role in modernity: they are both a means of communication and identification with others, and an instrument of self-understanding and thus of personal identification. They are elementary forms of sociality, bridges between the individual and society, because although the latter is certainly based on certain socio-structural assumptions, it could not take root without relying on feelings, beliefs, imaginary representations, desires and aspirations (Cerulo, 2022: p. 87).

It is interesting that for a sociologist studying modernity, the emotion that most attracted his attention was precisely love. Nowadays, the theme of love in the social sciences is still in vogue and, as mentioned above, several researchers have worked on this topic. Such is the case for Olga Sabido Ramos in Mexico and her text "Simmel and Marx: complementary relational approaches to romantic love. a feminist revisitation", Adele Bianco and her article "Georg Simmel: le forme dell'amore" and of course, the magnificent work of Guy Oakes "Georg Simmel: On Women, Sexuality and Love"<sup>11</sup>.

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<sup>9</sup> Cf. Simmel G. (1909), *Psychologie der Koketterie*, in "Der Tag. Moderne illustrierte Zeitung", No. 344, 11 May, pp. 1-3 and No. 347, 12 May, pp. 1-3 (trad. it. *Psicologia della civetteria*, Genova: Graphos 1993). Simmel G. (1921), *Fragment über die Liebe*, in "Logos. Internationale Zeitschrift für Philosophie der Kultur", vol. X, issue 1 (trad. it. *Frammento postumo sull'amore*, Sesto San Giovanni: Mimesis 2011).

<sup>10</sup> Cf. Deroche-Gurcel, Lilyane & Watier, Patrick (2002). *La Sociologie de Georg Simmel (1908): éléments actuels de modélisation sociale*. Presses Universitaires de France - PUF.

<sup>11</sup> Cf. Sabido Ramos, O. (2021). Simmel and Marx: complementary relational approaches to romantic love. A feminist revisitation. *Simmel Studies*, 25(2), 115-149.

Today, love has disappeared from public discourse, at least in its political sense. However, in the modern imaginary, from Valentine's Day to romantic comedies or, as Simmel said, in the "objective culture", love is always present, often sweetened, stilted and in line with the dictates of the romantic love narrative created at the end of the 18th century, which made a clear distinction between love and marriage, based on the fact that marriage was a contract and that "true love" had to be sought. In fact, the literature and poetry of this period often makes a constant apology for infidelity. Today, relationships seem to be crumbling. Statistics tell us that we no longer marry; divorces are on the rise, and there is less and less sex. While the media feeds false versions of romance, in our everyday relationships the individual has become increasingly skeptical. Not only is it difficult to find and keep "love, but it has also become unpopular: everything is a flurry of cynical and disenchanted discourses about how love is stupid, useless or boring." But these discourses are now circumscribed by the logic of capitalism that sociologists like Eva Illouz would later explore and Simmel would pioneer.

Cerulo and Rafele remind us that under Simmel's basic principle that emotions such as love create social interactions, other sociological research has emerged to study this issue that has preoccupied modern society since the German philosopher's time. To point out just a few wonderful texts are Sara Ahmed's "Sociable Happiness" where she explores how happiness is "felt" in certain contexts and with certain people, such as being happy on your birthday or "Polyamor or Polyagony? Jealousy in Open Relationships" by Jillian Dery which explores the theme of jealousy in new love configurations<sup>12</sup>.

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Bianco, A. (2011). Georg Simmel: le forme dell'amore. *SocietàMutamentoPolitica*, 2(4), 51-63. Oakes, G. (1984). *Georg Simmel: On Women, Sexuality, and Love*. New Haven: Yale University Press.

<sup>12</sup> Cf. Hunt, A., Walby, K., & Spencer, D. (Eds.). (2012). *Emotions matter: A relational approach to emotions*. Toronto: University of Toronto Press.

The authors of this chapter remind us how Simmel, like other classic authors of social theory, did not make a distinction between “emotion” and “feeling”. However, they all agree that “there can be no modern individual who does not ‘feel’, who does not perceive emotions in the course of his social interaction” (Cerulo, 2022: 81).

Finally, I would like to comment on the chapter dedicated to Émile Durkheim, written by Juan Pablo Vázquez Gutiérrez, a Mexican professor at the Iberoamerican University in Mexico City. Starting from the fact that Durkheim did not deal strictly speaking with emotions, Vázquez Gutiérrez takes up the challenge of exploring an author of such magnitude and importance for sociological theory by using the term “emotional dimension”. The first part of his text explores the normative world and its emotional dimension, reminiscent of other current texts such as Anne D’Aoust’s “In the name of love: Marriage migration, governmentality, and technologies of love”<sup>13</sup> where he analyzes precisely how there are “technologies” (in Michele Foucault’s terms) that regulate true, correct and legitimate love. In fact, Vázquez Gutiérrez also cites Arlie Hochschild, in his analysis of “feeling rules” to talk about the normative aspect regulating emotions, an area in which Durkheim was interested through thinking about traditional society, discipline and morality. For example, when Durkheim analyzes suicide he recognizes that:

Thus, society is seen as a power that regulates and a moral means that integrates “... society is not only something attracting the sentiments and activities of individuals with unequal force. It is also a power controlling them” (Durkheim, 2002: 201).

In the structure of the chapter, Vázquez Gutiérrez decides to adopt a system of “points” in which he seeks to link the work of the

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<sup>13</sup> D’Aoust, A. M. (2013). In the name of love: Marriage migration, governmentality, and technologies of love. *International Political Sociology*, 7(3), 258-274.



French sociologist with this emotional dimension and I think the result is fortunate. However, it seems that the author delves a little deeper in each of the three sections in which he divides his text: the first, where he refers to the Durkheimian analysis of the emotional foundations of the normative world; the second, in which he summarizes a reconstruction of the main aspects of the Durkheimian diagnosis of modern societies; and the third, which considers the Durkheimian analysis of the symbolic institution of society and the role of the sacred in the processes of social integration and change, reviewing its emotional expression in the processes of collective effervescence. Each section could be a chapter in itself, and the topics selected by the author are vast and complex. However, the effort he makes to recognize the emotional dimension in an author of Durkheim's complexity is remarkable.

Throughout this book it is revealed how, once again, it is important to rework, from a fresh and new perspective, the main concepts through which European modernity became aware of both its crisis and its possible transformations. Thus, key words such as "understanding," "critique," "alienation," "imaginary," and "individual," among others, acquire a new light thanks to the sociology of emotions.

The study of European modernity in all its dimensions can only be understood and enriched through comparison. This book brings together researchers from diverse geographical origins and with varied disciplinary backgrounds to explore and analyze the work of authors who have founded classical sociology and laid the foundations for a sociology of emotions that continues to transform and grow. The dialogue reflected in this text is a concrete contribution to contemporary sociology, social theory and the sociology of emotions. This text will surely be of interest to those of us who deal with emotions, affects and feelings in the social phenomena that society faces today. However, I believe it is a useful text for all social scientists who are interested in further analyzing and studying the classics and the concepts that founded contemporary sociology.

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VINCENZO MELE

**Marco Santoro, Mafia Politics, Cambridge: Polity Press, 2022.**

Is there a politics of the Mafia? Is it possible to consider the Mafia a historical institution like feudalism, city states, and empires, which pursues political functions – not necessarily noble ones – such as the welfare of its associates, the control of the territory in which they live, and the persuasion (peaceful or violent) of others regarding the legitimization and justification of its power? Italian sociologist Marco Santoro’s book brings together a mature reflection, the result of years of research on a fundamental and much-debated topic in the Italian and international social sciences.