SEEKING MULTIDISCIPLINARY WAYS OF THINKING IN THE SOCIOLOGY OF EMOTIONS

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ABSTRACT

This paper argues compellingly for incorporating emotions into sociological research, challenging the traditional focus on rationalism that has prevailed in the social sciences since the Enlightenment. The *cliché* approach that sacrifices or at least neglects emotions in favor of rationalism has been reviewed by reference to the recent scientific developments demonstrating that emotions and reason are not antagonistic but work in concert. Subsequently, to illustrate how a potential sociology of emotions might be feasible, the paper briefly reviews several theories of the sociology of emotions that can be considered in symbolic interactionism. Finally, the paper seeks a plausible explanation for whether the remarkable similarities between Pierre Bourdieu's relational sociology concepts and several neurological components offer us an alternative, interdisciplinary way of thinking. The exploration of the intersections between Pierre Bourdieu's sociological concepts and neurological insights could be viewed as an effort to enrich the sociology of emotions and to seek new possibilities for addressing the complex aspects of social life from a broader perspective.

Keywords: Emotions, Symbolic Interactionism, Habitus, Interdisciplinarity, Neurosociology

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INTRODUCTION

The 17th century is acknowledged as a pivotal era, marking Europe's significant departure from medieval Clerical culture and initiating the construction of secular/modernist thought. This period notably encouraged individuals, such as theologians and physicists, to develop their own autonomous styles of thinking (Toulmin, 2002:19). During this period, Descartes aimed to transform philosophy into absolute knowledge using a mathematical method, distinguishing secular knowledge based on pure reason from divine knowledge. Instead of prioritizing one over the other, he diplomatically delineated them as distinct domains of expertise. In doing so, Descartes, who endeavored to understand the mechanical processes of the material world through reasoning, effectively granted epistemology a prioritized position over ontology (Cevizci, 2009:483-510). This secular/modernist philosophy, which compartmentalizes humans, nature, and the universe to examine them through pure rationalism and a mechanical approach, undoubtedly signaled a significant paradigm shift. This shift was not only evident in the natural sciences, which dominated by a positivist understanding of science, but also rapidly influenced the social sciences, marking a noteworthy transformation. Therefore, over the past few centuries, the positivist paradigm that has dominated European natural and social sciences has consistently neglected themes such as emotion, intuition, desire, and value, dismissing them as metaphysical speculations beyond rational explanation or empirical verification. In other words, throughout all epistemological inquiries into the source of knowledge conducted by philosophers, the assumption that reason and emotions are antagonistic "step-siblings," constantly seeking opportunities to undermine each other, has been unchallenged for a long time (Solomon, 2016). Since the late 20th century, significant advancements in scientific and technical measurement tools have largely rendered obsolete the epistemology based on numerous Cartesian dualisms, such as theory-practice, reason-emotion, and body-mind.[2] Hence, a new scientific ethos, non-Cartesian in nature, emerges on a foundation of applied rationalism[3] seeking to harmonize intellect and emotion, theory and practice, and science with poetry. Due to this long historical journey, the empirical

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[2] By the late 1970s, the emergence of the 'cultural turn' movement within the Western intellectual sphere can also be marked as the commencement of a shift towards emotions (see Jameson, 2009).

[3] The works of French philosopher Gaston Bachelard are referenced for their attempts to transcend Cartesian dualities such as objectivity-subjectivity, theory-practice, and subject-structure in the philosophy of social science (see Bachelard, 2008, 2009).

demonstration by science of reason and emotions working together as a whole has been possible in relatively recent times.[4] On the other hand, the habit of labeling emotions as mere byproducts of rational activity, emerging as instantaneous reactions, and relegating them to a secondary status, is undoubtedly influenced by the inherently difficult to define and ambiguous nature of emotions themselves. However, we will touch on this point shortly. First, let's attempt - despite its challenging nature - to identify the components that constitute an ideal definition of emotion.

The Challenges of Addressing Emotions

Johnmarshall Reeve, in his detailed and meticulously prepared study titled "Understanding Motivation and Emotion," appears to have achieved a comprehensive and functional definition. Reeve bases emotions on four key characteristics: a) subjective, b) biological, c) purposeful, and d) interactional expressions. Emotions are subjective because they are feelings experienced on a phenomenological level in terms of intensity and meaning, among other aspects. Emotions are biological because they involve bodily responses tied to hormonal systems. Emotions are purposeful because they provide the necessary motivational drive to cope with current conditions. Thus, the individual ends up having a logical explanation for what they do and why they do it. Finally, emotions are based on interactional meaningful expressions because individuals communicate to each other how they are situated in a condition through meaningful behaviors such as facial expressions, vocal tones, and body postures (Reeve, 2021:340). Displaying reasonable behavior in response to any event requires the mutual interaction and coordination of this quadruple mechanism. Under Reeve's framework, for instance, a skier facing a threat and feeling fear—an emotional aspect—prepares to act—a physiological response—motivated by a desire for self-protection—a purposeful aspect—and manifests this through tension around the eyes and mouth—a meaningful expression (Reeve, 2021:341). Yet, attempting to define and subsequently classify any emotion in absolute terms remains a highly arduous and complex endeavor. Even when we know what we are feeling, articulating it often proves challenging as words tend to fall short.

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[4] For example, neuroscientist Antonio Damasio conducted experiments in 1994 on individuals whose brains had suffered damage solely to the areas responsible for emotional processing due to accidents, injuries, tumors, etc., while retaining their ability to rationally compare options and calculate outcomes in decision-making. This research revealed that the subjects lacked the emotional motivation necessary for settling on a choice, thereby demonstrating an indifference towards the options presented (see Damasio, 2004).

There are several reasons for this. The first one is the ongoing habit within social science circles influenced by classical theories to simply label emotions as a gray area outside the scope of rational action: "Throughout much of history, both popular opinion and orthodox science have essentially regarded emotions as irrational, not by definition, but due to their effects that impair judgment and the disastrous outcomes they produce often" (Solomon, 2016:14).

The second one is the relatively recent emergence of the claim - and, of course, the empirical studies supporting this claim - that emotion and reason work in a complementary and coordinated manner; that is, an emotion contains some rationality, and rationality also encompasses some emotion. Professor Eyal Winter[5] and his colleagues have conducted a series of empirical studies that disprove the classical claim which viewed emotion and rationality as separate phenomena - traditionally considering cognitive activity as something that requires thorough calculation and therefore time-consuming, whereas emotions are seen as reflexively triggered in response to events, prompting an immediate reaction and thus often working autonomously and/or in opposition. These studies demonstrate that this traditional view is no longer valid today (see Winter, 2018). Undoubtedly, the first thinker to draw sharp distinctions between reason and emotions in the classical sociology literature is Max Weber. Captivated by the allure of rationality, Weber did not even consider emotional action as a theme warranting thorough examination when classifying social action. Weber viewed capitalism as a human condition reflecting the most rational form of social and economic organization. In his renowned work "The Protestant Ethic and the Spirit of Capitalism," he sought to understand and explain how and why this new human condition emerged in the West. He ultimately found that the motivation necessary for the development of capitalism lay in individuals deeply committed to a particular type of Protestantism (Calvinism), who adopted a lifestyle in accordance with their spiritual emotions. This lifestyle, aimed at gaining God's grace by eschewing worldly pleasures and finding salvation through a strict work ethic, was crucial to the emergence of capitalism (see Weber, 2002). At the outset of his work, Weber had defined his main objective as investigating the "psychological motive that originates from religious belief and religious life practice, which directs and shapes the lifestyle and firmly holds the individual

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[5] The director of the Center for the Study of Rationality at the Hebrew University of Jerusalem, Winter and colleagues are conducting intriguing experiments that approach reason and emotions from a "choice" perspective.

there" (Weber, 2002:77). At this point, regarding emotions, the following question may be significant: In attempting to demonstrate that a rational system eventually emerged from practical principles governed by a spiritual emotion, was Weber not, in a sense, also proving that emotion and rationality fundamentally work together? If people have established a rational system while thinking that they are fulfilling the necessity of religious emotion, then "the distinction Weber makes between rational and emotional action loses its meaning when emotion is not confined to a single action but manifests in all actions." (Barbalet, 2020:229).

The third reason for the difficulty in defining emotions is *linguistic*; namely, this tells us the complex nature of the meanings conveyed by the notion of emotion and the ambiguities contained in the words that communicate this complexity. In the academic world dominated by English, there are many words in circulation corresponding to the notion of emotion. Briefly examining some of the leading terms can be helpful in illuminating the nature of this complexity. Among the primary ones, we can list the words *emotion, feeling, sentiment, affect,* and *mood.* "Emotion" and "feeling" are often used interchangeably due to a subtle nuance between them that is difficult to grasp. The general meaning covered by these words corresponds to the classic dictionary definition of a feeling that develops in response to a certain stimulus, either internal or external - for example, the acceleration of heartbeats when excited or blushing when embarrassed - accompanied by physiological responses. As for "sentiment", it refers to the judgmental emotions we possess based on the way we feel about something[6]; in other words, as defined by Gordon (1981:566-567), it describes "the cultural meanings organized around a social object, expressive gestures, and socially structured patterns of sensation." On the other hand, "affect" refers to the emotional response or impact that an event has on us, while "mood" corresponds to the general atmosphere dominating our emotional state at the moment, in old terms, to the mood or spirit.[7] We can say that many researchers in emotion studies - even though they frequently use these words interchangeably in their work - mostly refer to "sentiment", meaning emotional decisions or judgmental emotions. Since the broad meaning covered by this word emphasizes the

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[6] The definitions of the terms in question are obtained from the Cambridge Dictionary Online (https://dictionary.cambridge.org/).

[7] And also, for an intriguing study that delves into the reflections of the European secularization process on the gradual evolution of these words from ethically charged meanings to those of a neutral value, and argues that emotions have essentially a two-century history, see Dixon (2003).

interconnection between emotion and rationality, it offers researchers in the field a much more functional opportunity.

Undoubtedly, it is not surprising that researchers attempting to define and/or classify emotions face a wall of ambiguity due to numerous reasons. Moreover, it is understandable that researchers might deliberately avoid the task of defining and classifying emotions in absolute terms: "Imagine being asked to describe the difference between the pain you feel in the little toe of your left foot and the deep grief you experience when your closest friend dies. Or the difference between the pleasure of eating melted Belgian chocolate and the feelings you have when your love for your spouse makes you feel like your feet are not touching the ground" (Winter, 2018:3).

Consequently, viewing individuals as mechanical subjects who aim solely to maximize their self-interest, as in rational choice theory[8], focusing on a cold calculation of profit/loss regarding the options before them, not only misses the human dimensions of social reality but also reflects a significantly incomplete model of it. On the other hand, considering individuals as agents who, under any condition, completely turn their backs on logical arguments and act impulsively based on momentary emotional surges - and therefore in an unpredictable manner - is equally implausible. Furthermore, recent technical advancements in biology and neurology (such as fMRI scanning techniques) offer evidence that the human brain cannot be divided into rational and emotional parts; instead, these two mechanisms work together in coordination as a single mechanism (Solomon, 2016). This implies that it is time to retire the cliché that humans' rational and emotional sides are fiercely battling enemy camps and that emotions generally obstruct making the right decisions. For instance, despite a Turkish proverb stating that human memory is inherently flawed with forgetfulness *(hafıza-i beşer nisyan ile maluldür)*, we only recall certain decisions out of the thousands we have made in the past; specifically, those moments that were *truly pivotal for us*. If so, what distinguishes the memory associated with this prominent decision from the thousands of other decisions consigned to the wastebin of the mind? The answer to the question is actually quite clear: It is due to a specific emotion involved in making an important decision. When we push ourselves to think a bit more clearly, we discover that the specific and striking emotion that not only embedded the memory (decision) in our mind but also keeps it vividly alive there. As the

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[8] For more detailed information on this theory, see Warms & McGee (2013).

writer Hasan Ali Toptaş (2017:146) aptly put it, "we know that some sounds, some scenes, some colors, or some sentences can become etched in a person's mind like a nail." In essence, the main idea discussed and emphasized in this section is clear: Although we tend to contrast what is 'rational' and 'emotional' in our daily lives, of course, giving priority to the former, "we are essentially under the influence of forces that operate beneath our level of awareness and direct our behaviors" (Greene, 2021:13).

An Overview of Theories of the Sociology of Emotions

In 1990, a young man named Christopher McCandless, living in the state of Georgia, USA, graduated top of his class from Emory University with a degree in history and anthropology. McCandless, born to a well-educated, middle-class family, was on the verge of making a vital decision that would radically change the course of his life. He decisively donated the $25,000, which a family friend had given him for his postgraduate studies, to a charity under a pseudonym and then left his family and friends. Later, as we learned from his diaries, he chose to leave behind all the privileges he had in modern urban society and devoted himself to the wild nature of America. Over the next two years, he hitchhiked on the roads, made river trips by canoe, and led a hunter-gatherer life to survive. In relatively mild climate conditions, he spent his time reading books and keeping diaries. One day, when he decided to end his extraordinary adventure and to return, he found himself trapped since the river he needed to cross had raised, making the pass-over impossible. So, this left him stranded inside an abandoned bus where he had been staying. By the time he realized he had been poisoned by the plants he ate to survive, he had already started to shiver and to see hallucinations just before dying (Krakauer, 2019). At this point, is it possible to interpret the story of Christopher McCandless, whose life was made into a film titled 'Into the Wild', showing dramatically how to turn his back on modern society, from the perspective of the sociology of emotions? To illustrate the point better here, another example is the tragedy of Heath Ledger, the famous young Australian actor who inspired the dystopian tendencies of the young generations with his portrayal of the character Joker. In an interview, he succinctly summarized the Sartrean nausea, felt by nearly everyone in a strictly rationalized modern society, with these striking words: "Everyone you meet constantly asks you if you have a career, are married, or own a house, as if life were a grocery list. But no one ever asks if you are happy

or not."[9] Shortly after this interview, Ledger was found dead in his home. Now, at this point, of all the current sociological theories, which one(s) could provide a genuine and satisfying explanation for social motivations inherent to his *sentimental* decision that dramatically ends his life? Shall we only attribute their life stories - and of course, many others - to a search for ontological meaning triggered by a sort of Weberian disenchantment? Undoubtedly, both stories are extreme examples selected to highlight the impact of our emotions on the decisions we make within the everyday life and to uncover the shortcomings of classical social theory.

From the beginning of sociology to the present day, numerous sociologists have meticulously focused on a plenty of phenomena that surround the individual, such as family, neighborhood, professional associations, and religion. However, emotions such as shame, fear, anger, etc., which directly affect human relations, have attracted the attention of only a few researchers attempting to understand and explain social relations on a rational basis. The notion of emotion has always been present 'within,' 'at the edge of,' or 'right beside' sociological theory throughout its earliest days and it did not become a central research topic until the 1970s, remaining, instead, as an epiphenomenon. Marx ultimately based his analysis of capitalism on the greedy profit motive of the bourgeois class, who owned the means of production. Most probably, it was an emotional driving force that led Durkheim to make the term 'suicide' one of the central themes of his sociological imagination that had been affected by the suicide of his closest friend, Victor Homay (Wallace ve Wolf, 2020:50). Comte declared sociology a 'religion of humanity' as a solution to meaning crisis of modernity since he saw the salvation of society in spiritual emotions. Yet, who can claim that Weber's sociological vision was unaffected by his mother's Protestantism? In other words, couldn't the methodology issue, which has caused intense debates among social scientists from the beginning and still has not reached any consensus to date, be seen as an 'emotional problem' in itself? Efforts to define and classify emotions began to surface only after the positivist approach to social science, heavily influenced by the natural sciences, started to significantly diminish. Namely, this implied that the inclusion of emotions within the central agenda of sociological theory had to wait until the 1970s. During this period, the discipline of sociology, much like other disciplines, experienced a trend towards specialization, leading to a shift

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[9] For Heath Ledger's tragic biography, see O'Brien, C. (Jul 25, 2018). The Heath Ledger I Knew. Medium.

from macro-theoretical approaches to meso and micro approaches. Thanks to this division into sub-branches, the sociology of emotions, just as other micro-sociologies did, announced its independence. Thus, the time from the mid-1970s to the present day has witnessed an enormous increase in the number of studies that could be classified within the sociology of emotions.[10] Over the last forty years, researchers have been tracing the various aspects of emotions in a multidisciplinary manner, ranging "from neurons to neighborhoods"[11]; from gender to power and status; from cultural rituals to morality, justice, and social movements. At this juncture, an important question arises: How do these researchers associate emotions, which have uninvitedly entered the agenda of intellectual interest, with mainstream sociological perspectives? In other words, what does a potential sociology of emotion look like?

First of all, when dealing with a phenomenon *sociologically*, sociologists are tend to take three main components and the relationships among them into consideration: social class, culture, and power. Therefore, As we will see later, the initial studies attempting to position emotions within the scope of sociology have often evaluated them in terms of social stratification in order to understand and explain what kind of roles emotions undertake within various social hierarchies. (see Stets & Turner, 2006, 2014). Researchers studying social stratification frequently make use of some parameters that describe individuals' social coordinates, such as income, wealth, and status, since social stratification, in its clearest expression, refers to the unequal distribution of scarce resources among individuals, which differentiates their own life chances according to the existing socio-economic conditions in a society (see Amman, 1995; Sunar, 2019). This unequal distribution also triggers various emotions such as jealousy, hatred, inferiority, or admiration among individuals based on their different positions. For instance, individuals with fewer life opportunities might harbor anger or resentment towards the upper classes, attributing their adverse living conditions to these societal elites. Or, it is likely that, in many public institutions or companies, some managers may trigger feelings such as anger, hatred, or envy

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[10] The seminal works on the topic have been diligently edited by leading authorities Jan E. Stets and Jonathan H. Turner, and are published in two volumes under the title *Handbook of the Sociology of Emotions* (2006, 2014).

[11] A reference is made to an analogous expression used by Louis Cozolino, the author of *The Neuroscience of Human Relationships: Attachment and the Developing Social Brain* (2014), to describe his interdisciplinary approach. Here, for the references of this book, Turkish translation is preffered, see (Cozolino, 2020).

among the workers they manage, not only because of their own personal traits, but also conflicting social positions between them. Members of a prosperous minority may be inclined to attribute the harsh living conditions of the lower classes to their own reckless decisions and/or personal incompetence. Such a way of thinking is likely to trigger and legitimize feelings of contempt or pity. In contrast, it can be expected that individuals in similar social positions may experience feelings of belonging, trust, and love. Indeed, a 'principle of reciprocity', according to Bourdieu, operates within hierarchically organized societies, primarily serving to reinforce harmony among its classes. Regardless of whether individuals are in a managing or managed position, there exists reciprocity between individuals' capacities of seeing and dividing things. While the upper classes often attempt to assert dominance over the lower classes using condescending language, the lower classes tend to share a fatalistic perception of acceptance that corresponds to an unconscious admiration for the upper class. Due to the overlapping, or mutuality between social and mental structures, this asymmetric relationship seems "natural" to everyone. In reality, this situation stems from the upper classes having the power to spread and naturalize the language they use to establish symbolic domination (Bourdieu & Wacquant, 2021).

Randall Collins (2005) is one of the first thinkers to draw attention to the fact that emotions, just like power, prestige, and material well-being, are distributed unequally within and between social classes. In his book called *Interaction Ritual Chains*, Collins argues that people's control over resources has a significant impact on encounters at the micro-level. According to him, interaction rituals experienced in all areas of life such as home, work, leisure, politics, etc., trigger certain emotions, and these emotions profoundly affect people's viewpoints. For instance, individuals in the upper echelons of the social class structure, having greater access to valuable resources such as power, material well-being, health, and prestige, experience positive self-feelings, thereby increasing their self-confidence. By contrast, members of the lower class are more likely to experience negative emotions such as anger and hatred, due to several reasons such as poor nutritional habits, heavily working in the jobs with low prestige and/or high danger (Turner, 2009:350). Obviously, it is a cut-throat competition, one of the prominent components of modernity, that, on the one side, urges people to struggle for the sake of gaining power and prestige (status), and that, on the other

side, triggers a wide range of emotions, including ambition, jealousy, anger, shame, and admiration, among others.

Another researcher who has delved into this subject is T. David Kemper, with his book titled *A Social Interactional Theory of Emotion* (1978). Essentially, Kemper's theory depends on a rather simple formula: Individuals will experience positive emotions such as satisfaction and self-confidence if they possess power, and conversely, they will experience negative emotions such as anxiety, fear, and anger if they lose power. Kemper later strengthened his theory by adding the concept of 'status expectations' to it. According to this, people's expectations regarding gaining power, maintaining it, or losing it play a significant role in determining the emotions they will ultimately experience. If individuals expect to gain power but fail to do so, they experience negative emotions such as anxiety, fear, and anger, and lose their self-confidence. Conversely, if individuals gain power without having expected to do so, they feel happy and their self-confidence increases. Kemper applies the same formula to status as well: If individuals expect to gain status but fail to do so, and as a result, regard themselves as responsible for not obtaining respect from others, they will feel intense shame and sadness. However, if they hold others responsible for the respect they did not gain, they will then experience high levels of anger (Kemper, 1978). Therefore, understanding an emotion requires grasping the conditions within which it arises in social relations in the first place, because "in a relationship, insufficient power is likely to lead to fear, excessive power to guilt, an excessive position to feelings of shame, and an insufficient position to depression" (Barbalet, 2020:230).

From the moment of birth, individuals are immersed in two interwoven types of struggles for existence. Firstly, they engage in a struggle with the nature to secure their own basic needs for survival in the world. And concomitantly, they enter into a second struggle with other humans with the aim of accessing more resources and achieving a better standard of life in the shortest time possible (Kongar, 2010:23). In class-based modern societies, individuals pursue wealth, qualified education, high income, and professional careers with the aim of expanding their comfort zones and ensuring life satisfaction. No matter how life satisfaction is obtained, at the core of the issue lies the individual's need for respect from others. Modern societies have linked being respected to an individual's ability to demonstrate certain distinguishing characteristics as proof of success. In other words, success is the key to individuals' achievement of life satisfaction. This means that the social system, on the one hand, promotes success among

individuals, while concurrently pushing them into the fear of failure, on the other hand.

But in this race, how much respect must one receive to achieve life satisfaction? Undoubtedly, there cannot be a universal answer that applies to everyone. Some individuals find life satisfaction upon becoming corporate executives, doctors, or lawyers, while others attain it as teachers or police officers. It is also likely that some may never achieve it at all. Moreover, there is no 'respectometer' capable of measuring individuals' subjective expectations. Therefore, in such complex situations where subjectivity prevails, feelings of anxiety and/or jealousy are quite likely to emerge. In other words, under the ambiguous circumstances of modernity, individuals, faltering in the status race, are compelled to constantly make comparisons with those around them, who are regarded as their closest rivals, relatively equal in terms of life's risks and opportunities. In this regard, individuals are likely to experience persistent anxiety, as attaining and maintaining a certain status through life is precarious (de Botton, 2008:54-55).

When individuals find themselves lagging behind the reference group with whom they compare themselves in terms of life opportunities, they may feel compelled to act hastily in an effort to escape the negative emotions such as unease and jealousy. In *Democracy in America* [1835], Alexis de Tocqueville mentions that Americans, who would normally be expected to be happy due to their material wealth, are instead constantly living in a state of anxiety and jealousy:

> The inhabitant of the United States clings to the possessions of this world as if he were never to die. He is in such a hurry to grasp the things within his reach that he seems to be afraid of dying before he can enjoy life. He catches at everything, but holds nothing fast, and soon lets them go to chase after new pleasures. In the USA, a person carefully builds a house to spend his later years in, but then sells it almost as soon as the roof is on; he plants a garden with fruits and vegetables but rents it out just after, as if he had tasted its produce; he prepares a field for planting but soon leaves the harvesting to others. He settles in one place, but moves on after a short while to satisfy his changing desires (Tocqueville, 2019:573-574).

Therefore, it is natural for an individual to feel jealousy when their neighbor moves into a more luxurious house than before, their close friend upgrades their car to a newer model, or a colleague at work receives a promotion. Why, then, do

individuals succumb to feelings of jealousy without any decrease in their own amenities? In fact, the fundamental cause of jealousy is the sensation of 'relative deprivation' experienced by the individual, stemming from even a modest improvement in the life chances of others accepted as a reference group, who are their equals in the social hierarchy. As expressed in Tocqueville's remarks, "when inequality is the common law of a society, the most glaring inequalities do not catch people's attention; however, when everything is approximately on the same level, even the smallest inequalities become wounding." (Tocqueville, 2019:575). For example, in the static life of the European Middle Ages, there was no reason for anyone to be discontent with being the person they were at that moment, because inequality was perceived as a natural and unalterable characteristic of that society. On the other hand, modern society, built on the rhetoric of constitutional equality of opportunity, showed people not just who they were, but who they could be, thereby raising their expectations. Consequently, in such competitive societies, status is not merely a grand prize, synonymous with success, but also the source of endless anxiety and jealousy, triggered by the conflict between who we are and who we could be in the future (de Botton, 2008: 62-63).

The limited number of theoretical works we have discussed so far should not be seen as sufficient in themselves for the differentiation of the sociology of emotions as a specific field. There are also micro-level studies in the literature, which could be partially regarded as symbolic interactionist, where emotions are directly at the center of field research. An example of these applied studies is based on a field study by Arlie Hochschild [1983] titled *The Managed Heart: The Commercialization of Human Feeling*. Hochschild focuses on two distinct occupational groups that are required to manage their emotions during their work hours: Flight attendants and bill collectors. Despite the long working hours and problematic customers in the aviation sector, flight attendants are always expected to maintain a smile on their faces. Furthermore, the aforementioned personnel are hired after being trained in 'feeling rules' and emotion management in a manner that aligns with the commercial objectives of the airline company. Indeed, the emotional atmosphere that flight attendants create for passengers is currently a component of the product sold by the company. In contrast, bill collectors are required to project a harsh, authoritative, or unpleasant emotional demeanor to their counterparts in order to collect taxes. As a result, people engaged in these professions for their livelihood find themselves in a position where they must conceal their genuine emotional expressions and become estranged from their true

feelings. Emotions have now been commercialized; neither the flight attendant's smile is her own, nor is the bill collector's unpleasantness his own (Hochschild, 2012). However, adopting a false emotional expression requires special effort. Hochschild refers to this as 'emotion work'. Emotion work involves recalling or imagining a similar moment from the past that we have experienced, in order to evoke a specific emotion demanded by the current business environment. Besides, due to professional obligations compel the person to stay in the workplace even when an inappropriate emotion is triggered. "If the person begins to feel an unseemly pleasure from someone else's failure, he or she is likely to recall a similar failure from the past. If this emotion work is successful, that person will suppress the feeling of pleasure and evoke the more appropriate emotion of sympathy" (Ritzer & Stepnisky, 2019:368). Although this precisely describes the case of the capitalist system, the situation is similar in our everyday lives as well. For instance, we may not feel sadness to the same extent as a friend who has lost a loved one. But the feeling rules of friendship expect us to share our friend's grief, and we can feel obliged to evoke a certain degree of the same emotion in ourselves by recalling a similar experience that happened to us in the past. This is akin to the performance rehearsed by theater and cinema actors.

A significant aspect of Hochschild's work is her development of Goffman's ideas by distinguishing between 'surface acting' and 'deep acting'. Firstly, emotions, just like other commodities, are subject to exchange among interacting individuals, and, whether the exchange between parties occurs through surface acting or deep acting is determined by the structure of the interaction environment that the interacting people are in. For instance, the behaviors exhibited by a politician towards his or her voters are expected to constitute surface acting, just as the emotional exchange between a couple in love is supposed to involve deep acting (Ritzer & Stepnisky, 2019: 367-369).

Another field study by Hochschild on emotions focuses on the comparisions of emotions felt in "home" and "workplace" within contemporary American society. She has obtained interesting results from this study. The data collected from the research indicate that in America, home/family life, which used to represent rest, personal comfort, close and intimate relationships, has itself become a "job" or "work." Conversely, the workplace, previously associated with tension and stress, has become more like a "home" under the leadership of companies seeking to increase productivity (Hochschild, 2003: 198). According to her analysis, this shift signifies a transformation in the emotional system in the USA, closely

intertwined with its pervasive capitalist system. The rise of economic value within the service sector of the capitalist system, as opposed to productive labor, has ushered in a distinct culture of emotions into the marketplace. Traditionally, feeling rules were organically produced through daily interactions, but contemporary feeling rules align with a marketable 'emotion culture' that can be produced and reproduced to suit the capitalist system's fluctuating conditions. Yet, what exactly is encompassed by the term 'emotion culture'? She posits that it entails a set of norms governing emotions, alongside beliefs and rituals about feelings that not only prioritize emotional engagement but also invoke a sense of the sacred (Hochschild, 2003:203). For example, could the global spread of Valentine's Day celebrations, originating in the West, be considered a manifestation of such an emotion culture?

At the beginning of the 21st century, American sociologist Thomas J. Scheff sought to clarify the relationship between the feeling of shame and social bonds. To this end, he first meticulously analyzed the thoughts of theorists such as Simmel, Cooley, Elias, Sennett, and Goffman. These scholars did not explicitly come up with a theory of shame, but yet, shame was a fundamental social emotion that had infiltrated into their work in some way. According to Scheff, secure attachments with others facilitate solidarity, whereas insecure attachments lead to alienation. Therefore, pride and shame are crucial emotions for understanding social interaction (Scheff, 2000:84-97). In other words, when individuals receive respect from others, they engage in positive self-evaluation and feel pride in themselves. Consequently, the healthy social bonds they form with others reinforce solidarity. However, when they do not receive respect from others, they develop a negative perception of themselves and experience shame. Shame is a painful emotion that undermines the integrity and value of the self and consistently threatens the social bond (Turner, 2009:345). For instance, the emotion of fear can be felt even without the presence of others, as it is perceived as a threat to the body. Therefore, fear is often not considered a social emotion. In contrast, shame gains its meaning in relation to a broad social network:

> By shame, I refer to a broad family of emotions that encompasses many kin and variants; the most notable among these are feelings related to embarrassment, humiliation, failure, inadequacy, or reactions to rejection engendering shyness, etc. What unites all these related emotions is their inclusion of a sense of threat to the social bond (Scheff, 2000:96-97).

The stronger individuals within an interaction feel and convey to each other their understanding, the more robust the social bond between them becomes. Therefore, the core argument of Scheff's theory, based on pride and shame, rests on the claim that people continually strive to align with each other's cognitive and emotional states in an effort to maintain a strong social bond during their interactions with others (Ritzer & Stepnisky, 2019:365).

Another analysis related to shame pertains to the 'bigger picture'. According to de Botton, in competitive modern societies where everything is measured by tangible success, the meritocratic system defined by equal opportunity inherently poses a threat to individuals' social bonds. In such a system, successful individuals learn to legitimize and naturally accept pride in themselves, while unsuccessful individuals learn to see feeling shame as legitimate and natural:

> In the meritocratic order, individuals who fail to achieve material success encounter a sense of shame unfamiliar to the deprived farmers and the poor of the past. In the new meritocratic era, answering the question of why a person is still poor despite being good, intelligent, and talented ignites a much sharper pain and sense of shame in the hearts of those deemed unsuccessful (de Botton, 2008:99-100).

Thus far, we have attempted to demonstrate the topics of interest within the scope of the sociology of emotions, how these topics are approached, and what can be practically achieved in this field. To summarize, a potential theory of the sociology of emotions would examine emotions such as shame and pride, love and hate, fear and curiosity, distress and melancholy, and pose questions about how these emotions are culturally patterned, experienced, acquired, transformed, incorporated into daily life, and legitimized through narratives (Marshall, 2020:166). On the other hand, researchers delving into such a multifaceted phenomenon have yet to find a definitive answer as to whether emotions are socially constructed 'from the outside' or stem 'from within' on a biological basis. Researchers who adopt the organismic model tend to link emotions to physiological elements guided by instinct, independent of the cultural environment, while those who adopt the interactionist model point out that emotions are influenced by the socio-cultural environment, giving primary emphasis to intersubjective social construction processes (Ritzer & Stepnisky, 2019:363-364).

Another significant issue pertains to where emotions should be positioned within the dichotomy of universality and locality. Can we speak of the existence of universal emotions that do not vary from culture to culture? Researchers seeking answers to this question often seem to agree that four basic emotions could be universal. These are anger, fear, sadness, and happiness. It is assumed that other emotions are derivatives that develop in relation to these four basic emotions (Turner, 2009: 343).

> One of the main issues here is our tendency to view emotions as individual psychological events because we name them individually ('anger', 'love', 'jealousy', 'shame', etc.). However, an emotion is a complex process that encompasses not only a person's physical well-being, actions, gestures, expressions, feelings, thoughts, and experiences of kinship but also their interactions and relationships with other people, covering various aspects of their life (Solomon, 2016:19).

Therefore, in today's conditions where interdisciplinary boundaries are becoming blurred, we can no longer reduce emotions to psychic phenomena that occur spontaneously within us, ignoring the impact of what happens in our socio-cultural environment. The fundamental point that delineates the boundaries of the sociology of emotions as a sub-discipline is that emotions operate across many different levels of reality, including neurological, biological, behavioral, cultural, structural, and situational (Turner, 2009:341). Therefore, when it comes to emotions, it is clear that excluding one approach in favor of another is not appropriate, in keeping with the spirit of an interdisciplinary approach.

Undoubtedly, there is no mathematical method of dealing with emotions that aligns with the cold face of science. However, this does not mean that emotions cannot be approached scientifically. On the contrary, what might initially appear as a disadvantage could be seen as an opportunity to move beyond the fixed and black-and-white methods of a given discipline; it allows for accessing a multi-colored reality of emotions that can be dealt with by taking advantage of different disciplines. In other words, this new sub-field attempts to position emotions at the center of sociological theory, without neglecting to benefit from the epistemological accumulation of various disciplines. Jonathan Turner highlights the need for sociologists to learn to view through the enlightening windows of different disciplines if they wish for the sociology of emotions to make analytical and empirical progress. He calls on sociologists to set aside their groundless

prejudices and antipathies towards the biological causes of emotions, and to be open to a kind of collaboration between the natural and social sciences (Turner, 2009). Furthermore, we believe that a potential sociology of emotions should not neglect the moral dimension, in addition to the collaboration of biological and cultural (symbolic) perspectives. Indeed, as Solomon has pointed out, "a good theory of emotions should not only make us smarter but also better people" (Solomon, 2016:200).

Finally, in terms of the methodology so crucial to this inqury, it would be missing not to mention Bourdieu, who uses interdisciplinary accumulation of knowledge as complementary opposites in his works. In other words, Bourdieu's methodological approach operates like a kind of 'free market' that significantly erodes the artificial boundaries between social sciences, ranging from philosophy to anthropology, and from social psychology to history. According to Bourdieu, above all, human practice possesses a certain logic. This logic is based on the strategic adaptation of action in response to conditions. However, action here is not always shaped entirely on behalf of an autonomous, rational, and calculating mind; it is also given place to the fact that the social actors always have a cultural repertoire operating in the unconscious background. On the other hand, action in his theory is not reduced to determinism; this is because situations/conditions provide the actor with the opportunity to use intuitive maneuverability (improvisation). Therefore, he consistently urges researchers to adopt a reflective mode of thought. This entails continual reassessment of their methodological arsenal and critical examination of their own subjectivity to shed light on actions of an indeterminate nature (Calhoun, 2007:77-129). In other words, Bourdieu invites researchers grappling with the challenging ambiguities of individual-society dichotomies to undertake a self-analysis that allows them to critically update both their theoretical perspectives and the research techniques at their disposal at every phase of the investigation. Hence, the methodological significance of Bourdieu's sociology lies not only in its capacity to 'learn from practice' and distance itself from speculative theory and polemical debates but also in providing researchers with the flexibility to extend the discipline's boundaries into other scientific areas, whether social or natural.

Neurosociology: Toward Multiple Ways of Relational Thinking?

Imagine in Kenya's Amboseli National Park, a Thompson's gazelle, separated from its herd of family and friends, tentatively drinks water from a small puddle, its feet barely moistened. During this moment, indistinct rustlings are heard from behind the nearby large-leaved bushes. The gazelle ceases to drink and attentively directs all its senses towards the source of the sounds. As the rustling is accompanied by the movement of leaves, the gazelle swiftly vanishes from sight on its agile and graceful legs without learning the source of the danger. What prompted the gazelle's flight? Perhaps a hyena stealthily stalking its prey, or maybe a harmless rabbit. Why did the gazelle choose to protect itself with an immediate reflex without even ascertaining whether the danger was real? It is because "we all feel fear without fully comprehending what the danger is, or even without knowing whether there is any danger at all" (Solomon, 2016:55) Had the gazelle taken its time to verify the accuracy of the information, it might have paid with its life.

In the brains of all living species, including humans, there exists an organ called the amygdala, responsible for issuing the 'fight or flight' command during moments of danger. When the amygdala is activated, the adrenal glands situated above the kidneys secrete the hormone cortisol into the bloodstream. Known also as the stress (or fear) hormone, cortisol significantly sharpens all senses within the body, thereby providing the organism with the necessary muscle strength and motivation to either flee or confront extraordinary situations (Cozolino, 2020:208). Undoubtedly, this characteristic is beneficial for the survival of natural wildlife inhabitants. However, for modern humans, this trait possesses a significant disadvantage: the release of stress-inducing hormones substantially suppresses the process of thinking in depth. Therefore, people in panic often make incorrect decisions. Although a certain amount of stress can be lifesaving for anyone, living in an environment filled with stimuli that continuously trigger stress is undoubtedly unsuitable for both mental and physical health (Canan, 2020:176). Individuals' ability to manage ongoing stress is largely dependent on securing their basic needs essential for survival. However, modern life encompasses relationships far more complex than those in the natural world. After biologically ensuring the means of survival, individuals face another struggle for existence: the battle for a better quality of life. Factors such as a good income, quality education, foreign language proficiency, a suitable partner, and a respected profession (status) are components of social competition that promise more satisfying lives. Herein lies a significant contradiction: as we strive for happiness

amidst the chaos of modern life, stress continues to be a dominant element in our lives (Sayar, 2018).

Undoubtedly, the most fundamental cause of stress is the fear of death, as it is directly connected to our survival instinct. Essentially, every living being exists to meet the need for 'ontological security'[12]; that is, living according to the principle of avoiding pain and pursuing pleasure.[13] This implies that while fear itself may not be social[14], all other social emotions (such as love, trust, shame, etc.) can only be healthily experienced in the absence of fear or at least at a tolerable level. For example, as the Persian poet Saadi Shirazi said, 'love and fear are like glass and stone.' (Mor, 2017:48).

The biological cycle of living beings is predicated on avoiding stress, fear, and pain associated with cortisol, and chasing the secretion of hormones such as dopamine, endorphin, oxytocin, and serotonin to feel good. Cortisol compels action through the negative emotions it triggers such as stress, pain, and fear. By contrast, when we act and achieve something, dopamine is secreted; when we hug someone, oxytocin is released; when we earn the respect of others, serotonin is released; and when we dance or exercise, endorphins are secreted. As a result, our mood improves, and we feel good. However, this state does not last long, as these hormones that provide happiness are quickly absorbed in the metabolism, and after a while, cortisol comes into play again. This dialectical relationship between contrasting emotions constitutes the biological cycle of life (Breuning, 2019). This also provides a reasonable explanation for why happiness is not a permanent state. For instance, if you enjoy the smell of coffee, the first time you enter a shop where coffee is being ground, the aroma of fresh coffee hitting your nose makes you feel wonderful, as it triggers the secretion of hormones that make you happy. However, for employees who have to work in the same shop every day, the same pleasure does not apply. Likewise, the need for drug addicts to increase the dose each time to achieve the same high artificially is also underpinned by this habituation/acclimatization phenomenon. Our happiness-inducing hormones are precious neurochemicals that are sensitive to extraordinary moments, much like a rarely seen rainbow or melodies that rarely capture us deeply and warm our

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[12] A concept used by Anthony Giddens. It has been employed to refer to an extensive discussion conducted around the axes of habits, routines, and death fear (see Giddens, 1991).
[13] For the claim that the biological structure is based on a cyclical foundation of pleasure and pain, see (Frijda, 1986).
[14] Additionally, for a phenomenological perspective that argues even fear is oriented towards external social events, see (Solomon, 2016)

insides. Therefore, our brain prefers not to make this hormonal investment in situations it has become familiar to. Many contemporary researchers delving into the neurological underpinnings of the habituation/acclimatization phenomenon agree that the principal neural circuits, which will steer an individual's subsequent life experiences, are substantially established by the age of seven (Cozolino, 2020; Breuning, 2019; Zeman, 2017). It is clear that we learn to habituate *before* we learn to think. These unique experiences of habituation in childhood are what enable the 'meaningful' organization of millions of neurons in our brain and the formation of neural networks specific to us through social interactions.[15] In this context, the biological background of emotions intertwines with the social experience of habituation: "Emotions are often habits; they are to some extent learned, but they are also the product of practice and repetition" (Solomon, 2016:41).

Recent interdisciplinary research within the sociology of emotions has evolved into a novel field known as neurosociology. This area aims to elucidate how brain functions and interactions between the brain and its environment influence social behaviors, relationships, and societal structures (see Franks & Turner, 2012; Iorio et al., 2022). In this context, I will attempt to explore potential parallels between Bourdieu's relational sociology concepts and the biological underpinnings relevant to the sociology of emotions. Pierre Bourdieu is renowned for his significant contributions to sociological theory, particularly through his concept of *habitus*. This concept corresponds to the cultural equivalent of neurological networks, constructed through the process of habituation. As Bourdieu mentions, "individuals are equipped with a set of internalized schemes that mediate their perception, understanding, appraisal, and evaluation of the social world" (Ritzer & Stepnisky 2019:518). In other words, habitus is a concept used for "a set of acquired patterns of thought, behavior, and taste" (Marshall, 2020:291). To provide a concrete example from everyday life to clarify it more:

> Individuals who are accustomed to their home, the arrangement of furniture, and the layout of rooms, can accurately navigate themselves in darkness. For instance, they might walk through the dark corridor of the house they are familiar to and, with an estimated movement, find the light switch to illuminate the space.

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[15] Therefore, therapists aim to take their patients back to childhood memories; thus, to explore those initial experiences that established the neural networks and to uncover the hidden emotions accompanying these experiences.

However, if individuals find themselves in darkness in a stranger's house they are visiting for the first time, they may experience a sense of unease not shared by the residents of that house, due to the absence of mental maps regarding that house and its layout. For them to navigate with ease in this new environment, they would need to have visited the house multiple times before, acquiring some knowledge about its internal structure to store in their memory. Habitus, therefore, refers to the entirety of knowledge and predispositions that not only enable individuals to find their way in their own home in the dark but also guide them to solutions when facing challenges in various social fields they are part of (Baran, 2013:10).

Habitus functions as a model, template, framework, or background knowledge containing our habituation/acclimatization experiences.[16] It is the meeting point between external social structures and the dispositions historically built in the mind. Therefore, the point I wish to emphasize here is the remarkable overlap between what Breuning refers to as the neural guidance system and Bourdieu's concept of habitus. Moreover, Bourdieu's characterization of the habitus as the "dialectic of the internalization of externality and the externalization of internality" (Ritzer & Stepnisky, 2019:519) not only underscores the significance of the background in which our socio-emotional experiences are rooted but also reflects his policy of relationality that serves as a shield againts the risk of falling into a theoretically untenable biological determinism. In this type of relationality, individuals occasionally conform to certain elements of their innate biological dispositions through acts of suppression, while at other times, they strategically take advantage of these dispositions. In other words, habitus functions as a guiding framework for legitimate principles, subtly making individuals feel when to give in and when to assert control. It is a kind of intuition, but does not serve as its definitive, one-way determinant. Perhaps the predispositions that shape habitus could be regarded as merely *potential* actions awaiting the activation of relevant emotions for their actualization.

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[16] Giddens also addresses the experiential processes of this habituation/acclimatization through 'routinization,' another concept he deems important in the context of societal construction. In doing so, he expands the boundaries of Structuration Theory to encompass Eriksonian developmental psychology (Giddens, 1986).

Bourdieu has proposed the concept of habitus originally to transcend dualities such as theory/practice, individual/society, and action/structure. This concept may potentially be applied in the future to overcome the dichotomy between genetics and epigenetics. However, for now, let me confine myself to briefly emphasize the similarities between his sociological concepts and neurological components. Here is the crucial question: When the abovementioned hormones are considered in conjunction with their roles in social interactions, could we speak of the existence of an *emotional habitus*? In other words, the emotional repertoire associated with habitus seems to possess a neurological counterpart that aligns with Bourdieu's understanding of relational sociology. Bourdieu has identified four types of capital that constitute an advantage for social actors competing in a certain field: economic, social, cultural, and symbolic (Bourdieu, 1986:241-258). Interestingly, it seems that these types of capital have hormonal equivalents in neuroscience. Dopamine, which motivates us to take action towards achieving a specific goal (*illusio*[17]), appears to be associated with the symbolic capital we stand to gain in return, such as medals, plaques, titles, diplomas, etc. The socialization hormone oxytocin, which is released through behaviors such as hugging, touching, and kissing people within our circle of trust, appears to be associated with social capital, while the status hormone serotonin, which is released upon gaining social superiority in a certain matter and receiving respect from others, seems to be more closely related to cultural and economic capitals. According to health professionals, light daily exercises, such as walking, are often recommended for individuals under intense stress because exercise facilitates the release of endorphins, soothing feelings of distress and unease. In fact, endorphins were secreted primarily to assist in temporarily alleviating physical pain to ensure an individual's self-protection during pre-historic times. However, in today's modern world where physical pains are less prevalent but social pains more so, endorphins, just like the other hormones, appear to have taken on new social roles (Breuning, 2019:43). However, the transition to neurosociology requires a more arduous cooperation, including empirical data, between sociologists and neuroscientists so that Bourdieu's theories can be operationalized within a neuroscientific framework.

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[17] Bourdieu employs this concept to denote a social actor's engagement in a game deemed worthy of participation, emphasizing the importance attributed to the game and an interest in the game's proceedings (Bourdieu, 2015:143).

Bourdieu's relational sociology represents neither the first nor the last instance where neuroscience findings align with sociological theories. To cite another example in short, a scholarly article argues that the looking-glass self theory, proposed by the symbolic interactionist Charles H. Cooley over a century ago, is, to a great extent, the same as the concept of mirror neurons, whose existence was only discovered in the late 20th century thanks to advanced techniques in neuroscience (see Waters, 2014:616-649). In the future, other researchers could uncover new inspiring links between recent neurological discoveries and sociological theories, thereby contributing to the blossoming of the sociology of emotions.

CONCLUSION

For the past forty years, the intellectual and social world has been dominated by a "cultural turn" climate, rising with the loss of power of rational modernity that advocates Enlightenment values and fundamentally nourishes identity politics. This cultural atmosphere has undoubtedly deeply affected the fate of sociology. Since the 1970s, some thinkers have been arguing that Western sociology is in a serious crisis. Discussions related to the discipline have often revolved around themes such as value-free approach, positivist research techniques that overlook subjective experience, excessive fragmentation into sub-disciplines, and an elitism indifferent to the real problems of society (Gouldner, 1970, Horowitz, 1994). The entry of emotions into the agenda of sociology in a postmodern process where rationality is questioned is no coincidence. With local cultures, religious and national identities increasingly occupying the agenda of social problems, the sociological importance of emotions also began to emerge. Over time, the influence of emotions on our choices escaped from the outmoded view of classical psychology and settled into the center of social interaction. The turn of the century has widened the scope of sociology of emotions toward new develements from other disciplines such as anthropology, neuroscience, leading to a mixture of the biological and cultural dimensions of emotions. Therefore, in this study, we briefly attempted to draw attention to the remarkable similarities between neurological components and Bourdieu's concepts of relational sociology, through the another way of thinking that an interdisciplinary approach provides us.

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