

Fromm, Archer and the Sources of Emotions: A Comparison

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The papers in this session all reflect in some way on how Erich Fromm's thought can be useful, enlightening, or otherwise relevant in contemporary sociological investigations, and in turn, how it can be enriched by contemporary sociological reflection. One of the areas where I have been considering Fromm's relevance to my own work is around the relationship between emotions and culture, especially as emotions arise around particular moral and political questions. To this point my theoretical interests have been drawn in two different directions – critical realism and psychoanalysis – and this paper is a result of my own investigations into where these two traditions might overlap and contribute to one another around sociological analysis of the emotions. In this paper, I compare Margaret Archer's and Erich Fromm's theories of emotion. I discuss Archer's view of the emotions as consciously appraised "concerns" related to human interaction with the three orders of reality: the natural, the practical and the discursive. I then turn towards Fromm's view of the emotions as part of character structures relating to assimilation and socialization. While Archer's view of the emotions relies on reflexivity – social emotions in the discursive and practical orders only become motivations as they are modified by consciousness – Fromm shows that not all social emotions are conscious.

Why the comparison? For my own work, Archer's thinking has been quite useful, as her critical realism offers a way to conceptualize the relationship between culture, structure and human agency that avoids the deterministic elements of other theoretical traditions that articulate this relationship (neo-Durkheimian, Symbolic Interactionist, Social Constructionism, Bourdieu, and so forth). Nevertheless, as I work with Archer's ideas, I notice a conceptualization of the human condition and emotion that seems eerily like Fromm's work. In many ways, Archer surpasses Fromm, in her detailed analysis of cultural struggles, her conceptualization of structure and agency, and finally her conceptualization of social change through the "morphogenetic lens." In other ways, however, Archer seems to miss something. As I describe in this paper, her conception of emotions is firmly rooted in reflexivity, which for her entails a conscious, deliberative aspect. This conception of emotion is in tension with the psychoanalytic conception of the unconscious, as well as contemporary cognitive sociological findings about implicit motivation. To me, psychoanalysts are still the experts when it comes to working with and theorizing the unconscious, so I go to Fromm in this paper to enrich Archer's conception of emotions, potentially moving towards a more complete understanding of how they emerge from social context.

The Central Problem: Heteronomy and Autonomy in the Human Condition

The reasons for this comparison go beyond personal preference, to the similarities between Archer's and Fromm's projects. Archer's and Fromm's thought both have roots in Marx, both situate their projects against extreme constructionism and determinism, and both see individual psychology as the lynchpin in the articulation of social structure, culture and individual behav-

jour. Although Archer and Fromm were technically contemporaries, Archer began her career in Fromm's twilight years. The extent of Archer's familiarity with Fromm's work is unclear, but quick index searches of her central trilogy, which includes *Culture and Agency: The Place of Culture in Social Theory*, *Realist Social Theory: The Morphogenetic Approach*, and *Being Human: The Problem of Agency*, yield no mention of Fromm or his works, and psychoanalysis is mentioned only in passing a few times. Yet, like Fromm, Archer commits herself to Marx's statement "that men make history but not under circumstances of their own choosing," (Archer 1996:xxvi) which she sees as "the central sociological problem." (Archer 1995:1 emphasis in the original). Archer's pronouncements suggest that at very least, she and Fromm have a common ancestor; as is well known, Marx's ideas are one half of the core of his entire project. A brief comparison of Fromm's comments on Marx's historical materialism (In *Marx's Concept of Man, Escape from Freedom*, *Social Character in a Mexican Village*, and elsewhere) Fromm's comments on his own project, illustrates that the problem of human self-production was at the centre of Fromm's work (Cheliotis 2011) just as it is in Archer's.

Fromm and Archer both take up Marx's core premise about social construction by seeking a middle ground that acknowledges human autonomy while also accommodating the power of social structure to shape life. A judgment of each author's success in this endeavour is beyond the scope of this paper. Nevertheless, the way that Fromm and Archer seek a middle ground place them in similar territory. Although writing in different intellectual and social contexts, Fromm's and Archer's identification of the problem of social construction specifically caution against excessive determinism and social constructionism. Fromm's comments come in the context of ethics, where the question is how to establish ethical criteria based on the human condition rather than metaphysical or transcendental principles (Fromm 1947, 25). Fromm sees the modern philosophy of his time as offering two choices for establishing such an ethics: 1) authoritarianism, in which ethical principles are derived from a fixed human nature (Fromm 1947, 21), and 2) progressivism, in which any ethical principle is contingent, and thus open to contestation, due to the "infinite malleability" of human nature (Fromm 1947, 21). Fromm argues for a humanistic ethics rooted in the properties of humanity, which he sees as emerging from human interaction with the world (Fromm 1947:20-23). We will return to this point shortly, but for now, suffice it to say that Fromm's conceptualizes his project as a establishing a "science of man," which, by virtue of its ability to track the adaptation of human capacities to specific social conditions, can serve humanistic ethics.

Archer's goals are different than Fromm's. While the latter conceives of his project as critique – and perhaps found its audience in both academics and the broader public – Archer's project is aimed specifically at sociologists, and it thus couched in primarily abstract terms. Still, Archer's theoretical goals are not altogether different from Fromm's. For Archer, the central problem of sociology has led to a split between paradigms, one that occludes human agency and one that occludes structure. In downwards conflation, social structures are thought to determine individual action, without any qualification (Archer 1995:81); in this view, actors "hydraulically" (Archer 1995:249) replicate social conditions. The opposite paradigm, "upwards conflation," which encompasses rational choice theory, symbolic interactionism and other theoretical strands that focus on individual action, construes society as a the constantly produced outcome of unfettered individual action – social structure has no power. In opposition to these two paradigms, Archer proposes analytic dualism, which is an epistemology and ontology that assumes structure and culture, being characteristics of human groups, must be taken as distinct from the characteristics of individual human beings (*Realist Social Theory*, 15). The basic idea here is that societies have different properties from human beings; each of these "levels" has different aspects that call for distinct concepts to characterize them (*Realist Social Theory*, 183-185). One conceptualized distinctly, Archer argues that it is possible to grasp how humans act within the constraints

of past social structures to produce new ones, or how they reproduce the old structures through action that is essentially structure-maintaining.

Differences in time-period and terminology aside, what we see are two theorists responding to the same sociological problem, as it manifests in ethics and sociological theory. Archer's reflections on the central sociological problem, in fact, shed light on the ethical problem with which Fromm is wrestling. About authoritarian ethics, Fromm writes, "[it] can be distinguished from humanistic ethics by two criteria, one formal, the other material. Formally, authoritarian ethics denies man's capacity to know what is good or bad; the authority is always a norm giver transcending the individual." (Fromm 1947:10). In the same way that authoritarian ethics denies the human capacity to know what is good or bad, Archer argues that downwards conflation strips human beings of the capacity to act autonomously in social context. Although Archer's argument against downwards conflation is from a theoretical, rather than ethical standpoint, she takes aim at the same tendencies as Fromm. Taking Parsons as the exemplar of this kind of thinking, she notes that in Functionalist theory, human communication and meaning is entirely subjected to the "patterned" order of norms that prevails at the systemic level (Archer 1996:35). Downwards conflation thus encompasses authoritarian ethics, or rather, authoritarian ethics, when applied in the social sphere, relies on downwards conflation to remove the human capacity to make genuine ethical decisions.

Archer also refutes upwards conflation, the view that structure is the ephemeral product of human agency. In upwards conflation, the "Individual" is assumed to be the "ultimate" constituent of social reality. This has consequences for the upwards conflationist conception of social structure, which always in principle denies social structure any properties that cannot be reduced to individuals (Archer 1995:34-42). Cultural properties too become mere after-effects of individual action, without any power of their own (Archer 1996:62). In upwards conflation, sociology is reduced to the cataloguing of contingent relations between persons and the creation of meaning that results from such relations: statements about overarching, structural or cultural powers are not possible. Fromm, for his part, notes a similar problem in ethics: "The growing doubt of human autonomy and reason has created a state of moral confusion where man is left without the guidance of either revelation or reason. The result is the acceptance of a relativistic position which proposes that values judgments and ethical norms are exclusively matters of taste or arbitrary preference and that no objectively valid statement can be made in this realm." (Fromm 1947:5). In Fromm's view, ethical inquiry in the relativistic mode is reduced to noting different ethical positions, without being able to decide between one or another. The problem Fromm confronts in ethics is thus analogous to the one Archer confronts in social theory. For Archer, upwards and downwards conflation reduce the possibility of a full understanding of social construction, since each denies the properties of social structure and human individuals, respectively. For Fromm, authoritarian and relativistic ethics deny the possibility of ethics, because they either surrender morals to transcendental principles or to individual and cultural caprice, respectively.

Fromm and Archer then each struggle with the problem of human heteronomy and autonomy. For Archer, this problem is the central one for contemporary sociological theory, while for Fromm the problem is central to ethics.

Each having identified the problem of autonomy in their intellectual contexts, Fromm and Archer provide alternative social theories. Fromm develops his "science of man" that grounds humanistic ethics, while Archer develops a morphogenetic theory to enable practical sociological theory. Thus, even though Fromm and Archer develop their social theories for different purposes, the core structure of the problem of autonomy forces them to develop similarly structured social theories. Each must accommodate the notion of structural power while also making room for human decision-making, without which the emergence of society would not be possible.

The key to developing such a solution, for each of the theorists, lies in positing what I call an “open” universal: a property of the human condition that structures human development. Open universals can be contrasted with closed universals, which are substantive characteristics thought to be every where and always present in human beings. While open universals are formal, closed universals are substantive. By positing open universals as the ontological ground of their social theories, Archer and Fromm solve the problem of autonomy. For Fromm, the problem is to develop a social theory that avoids 1) positing universal, substantive features of humanity (a closed universal) and 2) taking humanity as “infinitely malleable” or capable of generating infinite possibilities of human being. For Archer, the problem is to develop a social theory that neither negates the possibility of structural powers *acting upon* human beings, nor the possibility of human beings *acting autonomously* in the context of structure. In both cases, the problem consists of grounding a moderate constructionist epistemology, such that both sociology and ethics can grasp human beings as alternately subject to ethical or structural powers *and* possessive of the power to create new ethical and structural formations.

Fromm’s Solution: The Quest for Meaning as the Human Condition

Fromm argues that although human nature is to a certain extent “malleable”, it is not “infinitely” so. Fromm assumes that “specific human qualities” must be the epistemological “point of departure” (Funk 1982, 57). Fromm identifies these specific qualities as “reason and self-awareness” (Fromm 1994b, 127), which are developed in the absence of rigid instincts (Fromm 1947, 39). Yet, for Fromm, reason and self-awareness here are open universals. Reason structures human becoming by posing the problem of meaning: “By the very fact of his being human, he is asked a question by life: how to overcome the split between himself and the world outside of him in order to arrive at the experience of unity and oneness with his fellow men and nature.” (Fromm 1994b, 127). Thus for Fromm the only immutable feature of physical, material humanness is its causal power to pose an ontological dilemma that precipitates a transformation of the world into a place where human becoming can continue:

(...) uncertainty is the very condition to impel man to unfold his powers. If he faces the truth without panic he will recognize that there is no meaning to life except the meaning man gives his life by the unfolding of his powers, by living productively; and that only constant vigilance, activity, and effort can keep up from failing in the one task that matters—the full development of our powers within the limitations set by the laws of our existence. (Fromm 1947, 45).

Thus, the “laws of our existence” – namely, reason and self-awareness – paradoxically are the imperative to the generation of physical life as well as to create meaning for that life (Funk 1982, 49-50). Prima facie, this conception seems to only unleash an excessively constructionist ontology, since it means that there is in theory an infinite number of ways, provided by culture, to answer the question of meaning. Yet, what matters to Fromm is not that there are many ways to answer the question of meaning – in fact, this is already implied in the diversity of human culture – but rather that any culture is a way of providing for the human need for meaning. Moreover, the task of social psychology, as Fromm understands it, is to analyze the psychological effects of a specific culture’s existential provisions.

For Fromm, the universal search for meaning manifests not only in the imperative to cognitively apprehend both material objects and other people, but also in the affective, psychological dimensions of the development of cognitive capacities. That is, for Fromm, the intellectual capacity to identify objects and people distinct from oneself presupposes a psychological capacity to recognize oneself as a distinct entity: “How is one to know the world? How is one to live and react properly if the very instrument which is to act, which is to decide, is not known to ourselves? We are the guide, the leader if this ‘I’ which manages in some way to live in the world.” (Fromm

1998, 45) This self-knowledge emerges through a process of individuation in which culture and social structure transform the innate need for meaning. He writes: “man is not a blank sheet of paper on which culture can write its text; he is an entity charged with energy and structured in specific ways, which, while adapting itself, reacts in specific and ascertainable ways to external conditions.” (Fromm 1947, 23). More specifically, Fromm singles out narcissism as the psychodynamic force with which the social process interacts (Cheliotis 2011, 453).

Every human infant, in the process of material and social survival, transitions from primary narcissism, a state in which “the libido of the small child is wholly self-directed and does not yet extend to material objects in the outside world,” (Fromm and Maccoby 1996, 75, Funk 1982, 43), to a state in which “it experiences a world outside itself.” (Fromm 1969, 41). Fromm refers to this transition as “individuation” (Fromm 1969, 40), and explains how it involves a move away from narcissism. As children grow, they learn through activity how to be in the world – how to “relate” to it physically, mentally and emotionally, which they are driven to do by the need to survive (Fromm 1969, 32-33). Their capacities to manipulate objects, to think and to feel become unified in a “self.” This transition, however, involves a severing of primary ties; the child ceases to perceive the world as fundamentally part of itself, and learns that it is comprised of objects, both animate and inanimate. This severing of ties is both liberating, in that its product is a relatively autonomous self, and isolating, since it is at this point that the child’s quest to find a new coherence with the world has begun: “The primary ties offer security and basic unity with the world outside oneself. To the extent to which the child emerges from that world it becomes aware of being alone, of being an entity separate from all others (Fromm 1969, 44-45).” According to Fromm, this feeling of loneliness, a kind of existential anxiety arising from the separation between the individual and the world, creates a new drive, a “[striving] for the experience of unity and oneness.” (Fromm 1947)

Following individuation, people are confronted with “an unbearable feeling of isolation and loneliness.” (Fromm 1969). Culture, in Fromm’s view, provides a way of alleviating this feeling, as it serves as a secondary source of meaning. In theory then, it is possible to analyse cultures on the basis of how they alleviate the feeling of isolation and loneliness. Fromm argues that once this analysis is in place, it is possible to judge social configurations based on their psychological effects. Through a brief excursion into ancient Greek philosophy, Fromm argues that social and cultural configurations that “frustrate” or block the deep, emotional sense of unity that can only come from an autonomous engagement with the world, are “bad,” while those that encourage this unity are “good” (Fromm 1947). Fromm’s success in providing an ethical philosophy are, once again, left up to other scholars to determine. What is important for us here is Fromm’s insistence that the human quest for meaning, driven by reason, is the universal condition on the development of self-awareness.

Archer’s Solution: Practice and Self-Awareness

Like Fromm, Archer’s task is to provide a social theory that solves the problem of autonomy. Archer’s object is not ethics – she is concerned more with a sociological serviceable theory than an ethical programme. Nevertheless, like Fromm, she forwards a bounded or limited constructionist position based on the open universals at the heart of the human condition, one that allows her to avoid upwards and downwards conflation. Although Archer is perhaps most well-known for her advocacy of a “morphogenetic” approach to the problem of structure and agency, which she developed in the context of critical realism (Morgan 2007), her work is also contains a fully-developed social psychology (Sharrock and Tsilipakos 2013), in which she outlines the process of onto- and phylogenetic process of human becoming.

The bedrock of Archer’s social psychology is a conception of human existence based on the open universal of practical self-awareness. Although she avoids using the term “reason,” proba-

bly for its rational-choice associations in her intellectual context, she, like Fromm, fully embraces self-awareness and its concomitant quest for meaning as the human condition. Interestingly, she notes that self-awareness is shared by all mammals, it is not a specifically human quality, but rather one we share with our wilder ancestors (124, Archer 2000). The key difference between Archer and Fromm's notions of the development of self-awareness, however, is that for Archer, self-development pre-exists the social, in the sense that the development of self-awareness requires only an interaction with the physical environment, and not the interpersonal one.

For Archer, the human sense of self, the pre-condition of reflexivity, is rooted in practical, non-discursive knowledge of the world. The sense of self is not to be confused with the "concept of the self," which is an intellectual product and is culturally bounded (Archer 2000:124-25). Archer bases her argument for the link between practice and the self on Maurice Merleau-Ponty's phenomenology, as well as on cognitive neuroscience and her own realist readings of these two theories (Archer 2000:125-26). Following Merleau-Ponty, Archer describes how the sense of self emerges from human embodied action in a sensory environment: "The origins of the self/other distinction derive from our embodiment in the world, for our incarnation involves a theory of perception. (...) [The] body's powers are directed at itself as well as at the world, and it is in the asymmetries of these experiences that the subject/object distinction arises." (Archer 2000:129-30). As people move about, touch and see the world around them, they gain the sense of being separate from the world: the world moves around them, and objects are sensed in relation to a relatively constant point of observation – the body: "the body is permanent, to the self, in contrast to objects which may disappear from the visual field, and the presence of the body is the condition for other objects presenting themselves at all." (Archer 2000:131). The sense of other objects and even other people thus emerges as an intuition from embodied human action in a physical, natural world.

Thus, for Archer the natural and practical order are "foundational." Each of these orders works similarly: it is experienced as constraints to human action. In the natural order, forces like gravity and buoyancy "instruct" us by providing corrective forces to actions, such as falling, or sinking, through which we learn to move in particular environments (Archer 2000:163-64). Gravity, light, air, as well as our own bodies and process constitute this order. Subjective human knowledge of nature is embodied in memory (Archer 2000:140-41); to lift one's arm, which is a manipulation of nature as it involves acting within the constraints of gravity, typically does not require a declarative statement about gravity. Rather, it relies on years worth of automatic, implicit action in an earthly environment – a practical knowledge of how one moves on earth.

The practical order, on the other hand, is the province of non-discursive culture. Archer gives the example of a piece of music: as culture artifacts, musical pieces constrain the musician to manipulate the natural order – time, air, vocal chords, as well as any auxiliary elements from the practical order, like drums or a flute – to produce sounds in the correct sequence, pitch and so forth. A mistimed note or out-of-time rhythm will produce sounds, but these sounds will not be identified by the listener as the same piece of music. The properties of that piece, like its time-signature, key, tempo and dynamics, consequently act as a set of practical procedures that must be done properly to produce the effect inherent to that that piece as a cultural object. Practical manipulations in the human world typically occur at the interface of the natural and practical orders, since the practical order implies a bodily manipulation that always has at its core physical laws and biological regularities. Unlike in the natural order, where knowledge is gained through simple repetition, practical knowledge requires a higher cognitive input; it has to be approached deliberately as a skill to be learned, after which point it must become implicit or part of a "second nature" to be done correctly (Archer 2000:170)

The third order is the propositional or discursive order. This is the sector of reality that contains structural and cultural propositions about what can be done or cannot be done. Suffice it to say that knowledge about this order is “declarative;” it consists of propositions about what the world was, is or should be. For Archer, theories, beliefs and other ideas contain within them logical properties that emerge from their relation to other ideas. In an analogous way to the constraints nature and material objects place on human action, these properties constrain discourse: “These effects mould the context of discursive relations and in turn condition different patterns of ideational development.” (Archer 2000:174).

In Archer’s developmental theory, the emergence of self-awareness happens first in the natural order. She argues that the human sense of self is predicated primarily on bounded interaction with the natural world and its forces. In concrete terms, there is overlap between the natural and practical orders. An infant today, for example, will interact with cultural objects. For the infant, however, these objects still comprise the natural order, as they are *experienced* as part of the natural world – in Schutz’s sense with the “natural attitude” or taken-for-granted attitude – rather than as cultural objects with their own procedures that need to be learned. The movement of a bassinet or jolly jumper are not approached as cultural procedures to be learned, only as natural resistances on the child’s movements. Nevertheless, these resistances are enough to provide children a sense of distinction from the environment around them.

For both Fromm and Archer, the sense of self-awareness arises through practice in the material world, but with one key difference. For Fromm, there is a primary emotional component to the sense of self that arises from the severing of primary ties. The sense of self in Fromm’s theory is primarily inter-personal, or social, in ways that Archer’s sense of self is not. We will return to this point shortly in the discussion of emotions.

Emotions in the Context of the Human Condition

For both authors, emotion is an emergent phenomenon that arises because of human interaction with the natural and social environment. Initially taken from the philosophy of science, emergence in generally refers to the property of a whole being “[irreducible] to some function of the behavior of its components.” The idea here is that something new and entirely distinct arises out of a set of component parts (Batterman 2009). For both Fromm and Archer, there are basic emotions like hunger, fear and so forth that are simple responses to environmental stimuli and are thus universal. Nevertheless, the most important emotions arise as basic human capacities – the necessity of material work and relatedness in Fromm’s case, the sense of self in Archer’s – meet the environmental conditions of history.

Fromm’s view of Emotion

Fromm sees the emotions as the product of human interaction with the world. The basic, “narcissistic” element of human psychology is one of the first emotions that the infant faces, and as such, sets the stage for future emotional development. As the sense of self emerges, it is accompanied by a deep sense of loneliness, of being severed from the “primary” ties that bound the infant to its caregivers and neonatal environment. For Fromm, every human being is thus driven, at a primordial level, to resolve the emotional disjuncture that the sense of self-awareness brings. This is again the problem of meaning, one that is resolved by social structure and culture. For Fromm, social structure, first experienced through the family, provides a sense of order that fulfills the desire to be unified with the world. Emotions, structured into specific “character orientations,” are the result of this early socialization, which Fromm refers to as “dynamic adaptation.”

Emotional clusters, or social character, emerge from human interaction with the material and social worlds. For Fromm, the need to subsist (a basic feature of mammalian life) and the need to relate oneself to others (the product of the withdrawal from primary narcissism) are universal aspects of humanity (Fromm 1969:31-32). The individual has universally to both “acquire and [assimilate] things” and [relate] himself to people” (Fromm and Maccoby 1996):

When man is born, the stage is set for him. He has to eat and drink, and therefore he has to work; and this means he has to work under the particular conditions and in the ways that are determined for him by the kind of society into which he is born. Both factors, his need to live and the social system, in principle are unalterable by him as an individual, and they are the factors which determine the development of those other traits that show greater plasticity” (Fromm 1969:33). What emerges from this dynamic adaptation are particular traits, for example, “the lust for power”, which “develop as a reaction to certain life conditions. (Fromm 1969:31)

Thus Fromm notes that character structure is formed in relation to distinct orders of reality, one related to practical existence in the world, and the other related to human bonds and ties. When a cluster of emotions is shared within a social group, it becomes “social character” a common “‘character matrix,’ a *syndrome of character traits which has developed as an adaptation to the economic, social, and cultural conditions common to that group*” (Fromm and Maccoby 1996:16).

Based on clinical work and sociological studies like *Social Character in a Mexican Village* (Fromm and Maccoby 1996), *Escape from Freedom* (Fromm 1941) and *The Working Class in Weimar Germany*(Fromm 1984), Fromm identifies the emotional clusters relating to each of these orders. He constructs an ideal-typology (Fromm and Maccoby 1996, 69) of character structures of assimilation and socialization; in the category of assimilation he includes the receptive orientation, the exploitative orientation, the hoarding orientation, the marketing orientation, and the productive orientation, while in the category of socialization he includes masochism, sadism, withdrawal-destructiveness, narcissism and love (Fromm 1947:111, Fromm and Maccoby 1996:73). Each of these character structures features a distinct orientation to the world of objects and the world other people that structures how people think, feel and act.

For Fromm, the character orientations have an adaptive function. He writes that: “although the individual is psychically different from the members of his own group, because of his individual constitution and personal life experiences (...) a large sector of his psychic structure is the product of adaptation to the situation of his class and the whole society in which he lives” (Fromm 1994c, 63). To exist successfully (in the sense of meeting biological needs) in a given time or place, people have to be emotionally “adjusted” (by their families) to the culture surrounding them (Fromm 1947, 60). Elsewhere, he writes that: “if an individual’s character more or less closely conforms with the social character, the dominant drives in his personality lead him to do what is necessary and desirable under the specific social conditions of his culture.” (Fromm 1969, 309-310). Fromm theorizes what has since been confirmed empirically; people ascribe to cultural frameworks that match their emotional needs: “If man were only a disembodied intellect his aim would be achieved by a comprehensive thought-system. But since he is an entity endowed with a body as well as a mind he has to react to the dichotomy of his existence not only in thinking but also in the process of living, in his feelings and actions.” (Fromm 1947, 47). Because human beings, specific, material, individual human beings, are socialized in different ways, they develop different, affect-laden ways of cognitively ordering their worlds. In the long run, culture is variable and has a causal effect on socialization; for example, the “psychic agency” of the family, the specific mode of assimilation and relatedness it teaches its members is dependent on class, conceptions of gender, race and place. Nevertheless, in the span of an

individual's lifetime, she is equipped with a particular character that will push her towards some cultural materials, and not others.

Archer's view of the Emotions

According to Archer, emotions are the means through which we register our concerns in the three orders of reality. The reflective process is emotional, as it is emotions that serve as the medium through which people become aware of their concerns in the three orders of reality: the natural, the practical, and the discursive (Archer 2000:195). When events in reality affect our visceral bodies, our sense of competence, and our normative commitments, respectively, we feel something about our bodies' relation to the environment, our relations to material objects, and our relations with other people (Archer 2000:199). She writes, "emotions [are] the commentaries made upon our welfare in the world. Distinctive emotional clusters represent different types of commentary upon the inexorable human concerns attaching to those three orders [practical, natural, social] in which we live our lives." (Archer 2000:10) For Archer these three orders are sectors of existence, each which brings its own "imports," and which emerges from distinct relations between humans and the world around them (Archer 2000:197-98). Emotions in the natural order arise from the relations between our bodies and our environment. They become conscious¹ to us as visceral concerns, for example hunger, thirst or physical pain. These emotions are, by Archer's account, an emergent property; it has a causal power on our actions, because once it becomes conscious to us, we try to adjust our body's relationship to the environment (Archer 2000:205-06). Similarly, our emotions in the practical and discursive orders cause us to modify our behaviour – frustration at learning an instrument or sport might cause us to take a break, abandon the activity, or seek out additional instruction. In the discursive order, anger at an utterance might compel us to refute it, while a feeling of discomfort at a political proposition incapacity to accurately capture our own experiences might cause us to seek out an alternative proposition.

Archer distinguishes between "first order" emotions – emotions that are caused immediately by real events – and "second order emotions" – emotions generated by thoughtful reflection on first order emotions (Archer 2000:199-200). For Archer, reflections on first order emotions leads to the formulation of life-priorities, the set of which comprise personal identity. Once this personal identity is in place (and it can and does change over the life course), it becomes a virtual "fourth order" of reality, from which concerns can also emerge. Although Archer does not single out guilt, I find it a apt example of a second-order emotion. Guilt arises from specific actions, inaction or even the hearing of admonitions, like in the case where "what you said made me feel really guilty." Guilt in this sense arises when we perceive ourselves as not living up to commitments that we have made earlier in time based on our first-order concerns. Thus, for example, I can feel guilty for not practicing a language that I had previously committed to learning based on my practical frustrations and feeling of shame in a foreign-language situation. The point here is that the source of the guilt, even though experienced as a reaction to a real situation, lie in one's personal identity, in one's previously worked-out sense of what one should be doing or not doing. It is thus a second-order emotion because it is based on concerns about personal identity and not directly about the three orders of reality.

¹ Although these concerns can become conscious, they need not be linguistic. To know that I feel hungry, I need not say "I am hungry" – the feeling suffices, and the action of noticing hunger and satisfying can be carried out without discursive intervention, as infants do.

The Consequences of Practice

When it comes to the emotions, Archer and Fromm share a common-ground by placing practice at the centre of self-awareness. They diverge, however, in how the role they accord to emotion in this practice, especially in their developmental accounts. For Archer, self-awareness emerges without incident; no doubt the process of practical learning is full of first-order, basic emotions like pain and fear, but these are transitory and attached to the physical events that happen over the course of learning to walk or run, for instance. Yet Fromm argues that in addition to these basic emotions that are no doubt part of the process of “assimilation” – or learning to subsist in the material world – there is also an all encompassing emotional tinge to the process of become self-aware that is tied up with the break from primary caregivers. In Fromm’s view, the process of self-development, while driven by practical needs, is also intertwined with first-order, “social emotions” that emerge from the relationship to primary caregivers.

Fromm’s and Archer’s different conceptions of the emergence of self-awareness have consequences for how each conceptualizes the function of emotions in adult life, and specifically, the function of emotions as mediating between the individual and the social or cultural levels. By setting out the natural order as the source of the sense of self, and thus cutting out powerful, primary interpersonal emotions like loneliness from the formation of selfhood, Archer constructs an account of emotions in which self-conscious subjects experience emotions as objective stimuli in the internal conversation. Emotions present themselves to self-awareness as concerns that can be consciously sorted out to form a personal identity. In Fromm’s account, on the contrary, emotions do not often present themselves in such a manner. Rather they emerge from a primary socialization of the desire for cohesion with the material and social world. Consequentially, complex emotions – that is, emotions that are not related directly to basic bodily functions like thirst and hunger – do not confront the subject as stimuli, but rather, structure self-consciousness itself. Deliberation about these emotions, in Fromm’s view, is simply not possible (outside of the therapeutic process), as the character structure occludes those emotions from consciousness. Thus, whereas Archer insulates self-consciousness from emotion by positing it as a function of emotion-less practice, Fromm does not make this same move. In Fromm’s psychoanalytic view, self-consciousness itself is open to the play of character, since practice is tied up with interpersonal emotions from the very beginning.

In some ways, the relationship between Archer’s and Fromm’s views of the emotions parallels Dan Jones comparison between Mead and Freud. Essentially, Jones argues that Mead’s theorization of the social self as fundamentally rational is actually the end point that psychoanalysis strives for: a self that is able to take itself as an object (Jones 1980). That Archer and Fromm would replay this relationship around the emotions is unsurprising, since Archer, while distancing herself from Mead, does find some affinity with the notion of the I and the Me. She also draws heavily on pragmatist Charles Peirce in her concept of the internal conversation (Archer 2003). Fromm, of course, adopts the Freudian notion of the unconscious as structuring conscious thought. Ultimately, the role played by early, interpersonal emotion leads to two different conceptions of emotion. One where emotion can be considered rationally in terms of how it accords with personal identity, another where it structures deliberation itself.

Conclusion

In this paper I compared Fromm’s and Archer’s theories of the emotion. I suggested that the different emphasis placed on practice as the source of self-awareness leads two different accounts of emotion, one where self-consciousness is insulated from emotion, the other where it is not. Where does this leave us in a theorization of the emotions? In the first place, this might be one of the situations where the problems of theoretical sociology can be resolved by looking to cognitive science (Turner 2007). The answer to the question of “how social” the early develop-

mental process is, is potentially already available. Nevertheless, in this vein, the meeting between Archer and Fromm begs us to look again at empirical studies of the relationship between identity and emotion, such as those by Stets and Carter (Stets and Carter 2012, Stets 2010) as well as studies of embodiment, emotion and cognition (Ambrasat et al. 2016, Ignatow 2007, Lizardo and Strand 2010). Secondly, however, it raises the possibility of allowing Fromm's and Archer's approaches to inform one another. For Archer, Fromm complicates the tidy conception of self-consciousness, in which emotion is always considered consciously and objectively. For Fromm, Archer introduces a much more rigorous framework linking structure, culture and social dynamics, within which we might start to reconsider the concept of social character. In either case, the meeting of Fromm and Archer, I think, is a starting point rather than an end-point in the social theory of emotions.

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