



Ö F A I

Österreichisches Forschungsinstitut für
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Emotion in social interaction

A view from outside

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Overview

- A social-constructivist view of emotions
- The example of affect control theory
- Towards affective rationality

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„constructivist“ or „constructionist“?

- „social constructionism“ <-
Berger/Luckmann: The social
construction of reality (1960)
- „constructivism“ <-
epistemology
- both used interchangeably

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Emotion definition

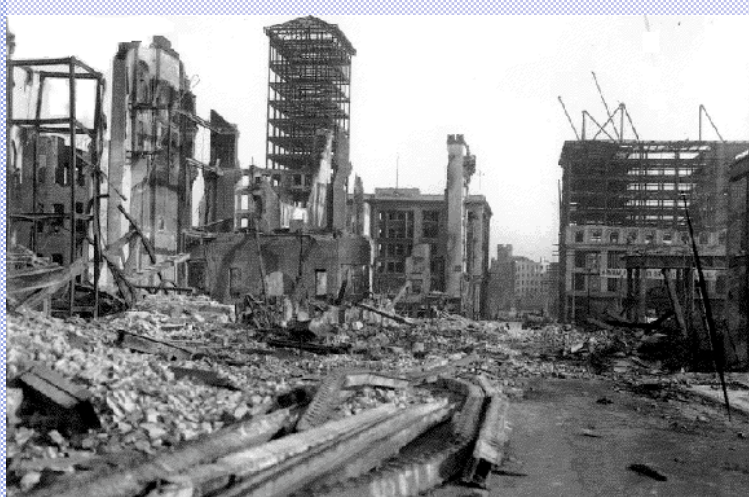
- „Emotions are episodes of massive, synchronized recruitment of mental and somatic resources allowing to adapt to or cope with a stimulus event subjectively appraised as being highly pertinent to the needs, goals and values of the individual.“ (from D3c)

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What is social in the emotion process?

- „stimulus event“
 - # meaning
- „subjectivity“
 - # intersubjectivity
- needs, goals and values of the individual
 - # culture

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Culture and subject

- "The genius of culture is to create an ontological system so compelling that what is inside and outside of a person are viewed as of a piece, no seams and patches noticeable."
- "Cultural psychology-What is it?" Cultural Psychology, 1990, quoted by Richard Shweder

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Affect Control Theory (ACT)

- The „self“ is realized in interaction in varying roles (identities) that the individual takes on according to the situation and the others present.
- The central concern of the interactants is to confirm the affective meaning of their identity in the interaction.

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What ACT can and cannot do

- Planning
- Personality
- „Objective“ goals
- + Prediction in interaction
- + „Sociometer“
- + Typical role behaviour
- + Structural emotion

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Towards Affective Rationality

- key concept: **meaning** ...
- ... is shared & learned
- ... includes affective connotation
- ... extends to beliefs, goals, values ...

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