

## **BOOK REVIEW**

### **Temporal Love. Temporality and Romantic Relationships**

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Moshe's book entitled *Temporal Love. Temporality and Romantic Relationships* deals with a classical but fashionable part of sociological studies, namely the sociology of emotions. As the third in a series dealing with this challenging topic, the book is a valid proof for Moshe's interest in how emotions develop and influence various aspects of people's lives. In an era which "enables us to perceive different time dimensions simultaneously" (p. vii), the author aims at addressing the role of time in shaping both people's ideas about romantic relationships and the relationships themselves. In this context, time is regarded as a major moderator influencing people's subjective perceptions about the efficiency of their emotional investment (i.e., if a romantic relationship proves to be either a "temporal loss" or a "temporal profit"). Thus, in the attempt to unveil and better understand the psychological nature of romantic relationships, the author builds on the idea that human experiences are strongly linked to the notion of psychological time, which is responsible for the divide into past, present and future time frames. These three layers of time perspective or temporal orientation breed different types of romantic relationships; understanding temporality with reference to romantic relationships might contribute to more realistic representations about love and romance.

The volume includes five chapters, structured in the form of five separate, yet interconnected sections. The first chapter, *Temporal Orientation and Romantic Relationships*, offers insights about people's attitudes towards time. Specifically, the role of this chapter is to set the background for the following ones, dealing with how temporal orientations (i.e., present, past or future) shape the magnitude and direction of romantic relationships. The second chapter, *Romantic Relationships and Love in the "Here-and-Now"*, mainly refers to the present temporal orientation, which is often described as hedonism. People experiencing this type of romantic relationship are those seeking to "maximize pleasure for their own benefit" (p. 17). However, due to high technological advance and the evolution of virtual romantic relationships, the "here-and-now" characteristic of romance is seriously questionable since it might determine unrealistic and inconvenient relationships. The third chapter, *Romantic Relationships and Love in the "There-and-Then"*, offers a comprehensive understanding of how references to both past and present have an impact on how people perceive their romantic relationships. Unlike the "here-and-now" perspective, the "there-and-then" one is more realistic because it integrates complementary issues such as "past and present, fantasy and reality and cause and effect" (p. 31). Nevertheless, "temporal secrets" might represent a relevant point marking the intersection between these two perspectives; by telling a secret (i.e., by making the unknown known), people bring to present some important things from their past. Within this third chapter, the author also underlines two significant concepts related to temporal love, namely (a) temporal honesty or deception and (b) temporal dramas. While honesty and deception might represent real signs for either continuing or breaking the

relationship, dramas are not always traumatic – they often depend on the age and experience of the partners involved. The next chapter, *Taking a Break: Romantic Relationships, Love and the Notion of “Time-out”*, offers clarifications about one possible technique for overcoming an emotional crisis, namely *taking a break*. Moreover, within the same chapter, the author explains possible steps from taking a break to breaking up a relationship; for both, time and temporal orientation as well play crucial roles. In the last chapter in this book, *Romantic Relationships and Love for Ever and Ever*, the author advances the idea that romantic relationships are to be found at the crossroad of happiness, time and eternity. Happiness and well-being depend on people’s perception of time; due to their wide time horizons, young people have different aspirations compared to older ones, generally having limited time horizons.

The book offers a well-documented academic perspective on the way time influences both the nature and magnitude of romantic relationships. Therefore, the added value of this book resides in its approach. By combining both theoretical and empirical findings from previous studies on the sociology of emotions, Moshe emphasizes relevant characteristics of romantic relationships, in an attempt to offer clues of assessing and interpreting what works and what does not work in a romantic relationship. Moreover, the book is an important contribution to the field of socio-psychology of emotions, since it does not provide recipes of how to effectively use time in building perfect romance, but rather offers documented pictures and reality-based considerations about how time influences people’s understanding of love and romance and their romantic relationships as well. Another strong point of this book resides in its inspired use of concepts, which allows for an easy yet valuable reading for both specialists and non-specialists. Nevertheless, there is one aspect which might need refinement. Although there are references to empirical studies and even to concepts used in psychological therapy (such as “here-and-now” and “there-and-then”), sometimes the discourse and arguments lack in-depth critical assessment of how empirical results confirm or not the literature in the domain. The book almost implies a need for continuation by a second part (or a second book), containing research on the rich literature about the sociology of emotions. However, this does not minimize the value of the book, which could be used as starting points for future empirical studies focusing on how time impacts love and romantic relationships.

In conclusion, *Temporal Love. Temporality and Romantic Relationships* represents a thorough radiography of how time leaves its marks on the interactions between people, namely on their romantic relationships, regarded as prerequisites for happiness and well-being. In the book, the author explains in rather uncomplicated terms the complex nature of and the interplay between temporality and romantic relationships. Thus, the author’s main merit is that of portraying, in a concise but comprehensive manner, the complexity of two types of investment concerning romantic relationships – the temporal and the emotional one. Understanding how romantic relationships work with reference to time frames means taking a step further towards making them work better and, thus, towards actively contributing to personal and social development.

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