

## Book Review

### ***Pasión romántica: Más allá de la intuición, una ciencia del amor***

[Romantic passion: Beyond intuition, a science of love].

Author: Rozzana Sánchez Aragón. Mexico: Mexico City, 2007

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(Facultad de Psicología) and Miguel Ángel Porrúa.

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Reviewer: Agnaldo Garcia – Federal University of Espírito Santo, Brazil

The book “Romantic passion: Beyond intuition, a science of love” (in Spanish) by Rozzana Sánchez Aragón has been just published in Mexico, with a preface by Elaine Hatfield. The author proposes to contribute to our knowledge of passionate love, investigating passion from a social psychologist point of view. Although the social psychological approach, the book is of interest for different knowledge areas such as anthropology, psychiatry and others, in fact, for all those who have already lived a romantic passion, or those who would be interested in the matter. Rozzana Sánchez Aragón has already published other books on the topic, such as “Psychology of love: an integral approach to couple relationship”, with Rolando Díaz-Loving (in Spanish). This new book brings a theoretical and empirical contribution to the area of love, specifically passionate love, with data from Latin America, particularly from Mexico. The book is divided in four chapters, with an appendix and bibliography.

The first chapter, about roots and bases of passionate experience, reviews definitions of passion in Psychology and the Social Sciences reminding that passionate love presents positive and negative aspects. It discusses the nature of passionate experience (the ‘falling in love’) and its course. The conception of passionate love is discussed as well as different approaches to the subject (psychoanalytic, opponent-process theory, reinforcement, neuroanatomic and neurophysiological approaches, theory of emotion in close relationships, evolutionary theory of love and the continuum of passionate love). The author still discusses passion measurement and presents a new proposal for measuring it. In sum, emotional and cognitive aspects, besides physiological, psychological and social approaches to passion and its measurement, are object of discussion.

The second chapter examines the emotional essence of romantic passion, defining and characterizing emotion and passion. The author also related emotion theory and the experience of Mexican people. She discusses the taxonomic organization and the structure

of emotions (passion) and the measurement of passion in Mexico, examining the emotional quality of passion. The author gives examples of emotion qualities, recognizing the affective character of passion and its relationship with emotional taxonomies widely recognized. Following, the structure of passion is explained, based especially on the approach of Frijda, employed in studies developed in Mexico.

The third chapter is about personality profiles of passionate lovers. In this chapter, the author analyses personality characteristics attributed to passionate lovers and how they are measured, discussing, among other points, the continuum flexibility-rigidity, fragility, vulnerability and learned distress, self-control and self-realization. The author then describes factors that trigger the passionate experience including extroversion and romanticism, mania, and obsession-compulsion. Finally, she discusses the pathological trends which may result from a disturbed passionate love, as neuroticism, anxiety, depression and guilt.

In the fourth chapter, the author presents reflections on passion and passionate experience, relating this with positive and negative characteristics of personality. She retakes information of previous chapters, proposing and confirming hypotheses regarding the way different passion aspects are related to personality profiles of passionate lovers in her/his experiences, motives, emotional intensity, phase or type of passionate love, stability and strategies to maintain the relationships with the passion source.

The book examines an attractive field of research (passionate love) articulating theoretical review of relevant points and empirical research in a complex investigation area in personal relationships. One aspect to be highlighted is the author's contribution to the knowledge of Mexican people, an under investigated population, in empirical terms. Another characteristic of the book is its concern with methodological procedures. The book presents interesting results from research conducted in Mexico, contributing to the internationalization of research in personal relationships and, particularly, on passionate love. The advancement of relationship research in Latin American countries is an important and necessary target. The author presents a particular approach, contributing especially to the knowledge of passionate experience among Mexicans. However, due to the amplitude of the subject, we hope that new investigations in Latin American countries may contribute with other aspects as well, such as historical and cultural aspects of love, not only in Mexico, but in other Latin-American countries as well.