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978-0-521-87423-6 - Making our Way through the World: Human Reflexivity and Social Mobility

Margaret S. Archer

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## Making our Way through the World

How do we reflect upon ourselves and our concerns in relation to society, and vice versa? Human reflexivity works through ‘internal conversations’ using language, but also emotions, sensations and images. Most people acknowledge this ‘inner dialogue’ and can report upon it. However, little research has been conducted on ‘internal conversations’ and how they mediate between our ultimate concerns and the social contexts we confront. Margaret Archer argues that reflexivity is progressively replacing routine action in late modernity, shaping how ordinary people make their way through the world. Using interviewees’ life and work histories, she shows how ‘internal conversations’ guide the occupations that people seek, keep or quit; their stances towards structural constraints and enablements; and their resulting patterns of social mobility.

MARGARET S. ARCHER is Professor of Sociology at the University of Warwick. She has written over twenty books including *Structure, Agency and the Internal Conversation* (Cambridge, 2003) and *Being Human: The Problem of Agency* (Cambridge, 2000).

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To the memory of  
Luminița Caibăr

Who made her way lovingly through the world

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