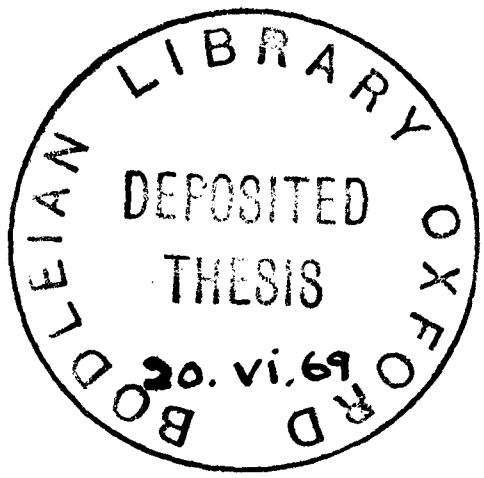
EMILE DURKHEIM: AN INTELLECTUAL BIOGRAPHY.

by

Steven Lukes.

(Thesis presented for the degree of
Doctor of Philosophy at Oxford University.)



Balliol College,
Oxford.

Trinity Term 1968. [i.e 1969] M1

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ABSTRACT OF D.PHIL. THESIS

EMILE DURKHEIM: AN INTELLECTUAL BIOGRAPHY.

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CHAPTER 1: Youth.

Durkheim's background is described: born into a rabbinical family in Alsace-Lorraine, he grew up in an environment of defensive social cohesiveness, austerity and moral severity. On the third attempt, he was admitted to the Ecole Normale Supérieure in 1879.

His reaction to the Ecole's largely classical and literary curriculum was unfavourable, but he excelled in philosophical and political discussions with his contemporaries (he was strongly republican) and, though critical of most of his teachers, he is shown to have been influenced by Boutroux and Fustel de Coulanges, as well as by the work of Renouvier. After his agregation, he became a lycee teacher of philosophy.

His early ideas about sociology are traced: in particular, his move from social philosophy to sociology, the formative influence of Comte, his qualified sympathy for Taine, his hostility to Renan, his adherence to scientific rationalism and strong opposition to all forms of dilettantism and mysticism, his early ideas about the practical implications of social science (and his hesitations in this regard), the development of his so-called "social realism" and the influence upon it of Comte, Spencer and Espinas respectively. Wishing to see social science at work, he visited Germany during 1885-6.

His reactions to this visit are considered: his admiration of German university life, his attitude to German philosophy and the implications he drew concerning philosophy teaching in

France, his approval of the Germans' organic conception of society, and, in particular, of the work of the social economists, the jurists and Wundt. Their influence on his thought is assessed. In 1887 he was appointed to teach social science and education at Bordeaux.

CHAPTER 2: Bordeaux.

His achievements during his fifteen years there are summarised, his academic and ideological ambitions specified, his influence on colleagues and students noted, and his attitude to philosophy teaching discussed.

His education courses ranged from the theoretical through the historical to the practical. The important course on moral education is discussed; it represented a clearcut stage in the development of his thought about morality. Also considered are his lectures on teaching morality in the primary school, on academic education and on the history of educational doctrines.

After considering his general programme for social science, the content of his first course, on social solidarity, is discussed; this eventually issued in The Division of Labour. The various influences on the latter are traced, especially those of Comte, Spencer and Tönnies, and Durkheim's arguments against them are outlined. The book's argument is analysed: as an explanation of social cohesion in pre-industrial and industrial societies, as a theory of social change, and as a study of the abnormal forms of industrialism.

The approach of his early lectures on the family is specified and their content indicated, along with the conclusions he drew concerning the social role of the modern, conjugal family. His subsequent work on kinship is also discussed, in particular the study of incest and the work on Australian section systems.

Durkheim's reasons for turning to the study of suicide are examined, an early article on suicide and the birth rate is discussed, and the argument of Suicide is considered, as fitting into a tradition of French thought, as an analysis, diagnosis and proposed cure for contemporary social dissolution, and as a model of social research.

The Rules of Sociological Method is described as a methodological treatise, a polemic and a manifesto; its argument is shown to be indecisive because it marked a transitional point in Durkheim's methodological development. That development is traced, from The Division of Labour to the extreme emphasis on collective representations in his last writings, paying particular attention to his critique of (but partial convergence with) marxism. He always remained alive to the interaction between social structure and consciousness.

Durkheim's early ideas about religion are traced and the importance of Robertson Smith in leading him to take up the sociology of religion is stressed. The first, pre-ethnographic stage of his work in this field is considered, during which he worked out a number of hypotheses and questions to be tackled. His treatment of religion was to become much more nuanced and

complex, as he turned to ethnographic material and as his interest in collective representations deepened.

His attitude to socialism is analysed, and his lectures on the history of socialism are discussed, in which he treated it as an ideology needing sociological explanation. It is shown that his critique of Saint-Simon's thought marks an important stage in the development of his own, as he sought a means of regulating industrialism.

This theme was pursued in the course entitled "Physique Générale du Droit et des Moeurs", which covered a wide range of subjects, dividing between the general and the more specific. There was some early criminological work, and also the study of punishment, which is analysed in detail. Consideration is then given to the second part of the course, which offered distinctively sociological answers to traditional questions in moral, political and legal philosophy: questions about domestic organisation and ethics; occupational ethics and the role of intermediary bodies; civic ethics, the nature and role of the state, the nature of democracy and the justifications for political obligation; and the rules prohibiting homicide, protecting property and regulating contractual relations.

Durkheim's changing interpretations of the history of sociology are traced, and his approach to his predecessors' ideas specified. The studies in depth, of Montesquieu and of Rousseau, are examined and the relations of their ideas to his own are indicated.

The aims of the Annee Sociologique are outlined, and its theoretical and organisational principles discussed.

The reception of Durkheim's ideas during his years at Bordeaux is significant, both as intellectual context and as a contributing factor to the development of those ideas. Among reactions considered are those of the Sorbonne philosophers, of Tarde (whose continuing debate with Durkheim over a range of issues is examined), of Herr, Peguy and Sorel.

Durkheim's attitudes to contemporary political, ideological and educational issues are examined and shown to form a coherent unity. An analysis is made of his characteristic attitude to socialism (and to the activism of his colleagues), of his view of the role of the academic in politics, of his views about and activities during the Dreyfus Affair, of his position vis-a-vis solidarism, and of his belief in secular education. He moved to Paris in 1902.

CHAPTER 3: Paris.

At the Sorbonne, Durkheim encountered both adulation and bitter hostility; the reasons for both are considered, and the polemics and recollections of both friends and enemies are examined. From this there emerges a picture of the man himself and the nature of his influence.

His course on the history of French secondary education is discussed and shown to be a major, if largely unknown, treatment of the subject. Stress is given to its educational context and his purpose in giving it, his explanatory method,

the various explanations advanced, and the generalisations and normative conclusions he derived from it.

The intellectual context of Durkheimian sociology is sketched in, emphasising pre-existing tendencies favourable to sociology and concurrent developments in France and abroad. Durkheim's sociological imperialism and methodological intolerance are indicated, though his fundamental respect for philosophy is revealed, and his hope to solve its most basic problems by sociological means.

In ethics, he aimed to do this through his sociology of morality, which was never systematically worked out. This is reconstructed and analysed: first, as a system of interdefined concepts; second, as an attempt to explain the genesis and functioning of moral codes (advancing an incipient theory of symbolism); third, as a means of deriving a set of rational value-judgments; and fourth, as a basis for the solution of perennial questions of moral philosophy - the nature of evaluation and moral judgment, the autonomy of morals, and the dualism of human nature (concerning which his ideas showed a convergence with those of the later Freud).

Durkheim's sociology of knowledge likewise sought sociological solutions to old philosophical questions. Aiming to avoid the pitfalls of both empiricism andapriorism, it is shown to have advanced six different claims, which Durkheim mistakenly thought to be logically related: that concepts are collective representations; that there is a causal relation between the social and conceptual orders; that there is a structural

correspondence between them; that the categories are functional to society; that belief-systems, especially primitive religions, are in part cosmologies; and that the fundamental notions of science are of a religious origin. The empirical basis of Durkheim's arguments is considered, his basic assumption criticised and his various claims assessed.

The influences on Durkheim's sociology of religion are traced, in particular those of the English anthropologists and the ethnographers in Australia and America. His view of totemism is shown to be backward-looking; and his methodological assumption shown to represent both his residual evolutionism and his heuristic wisdom as a social anthropologist, seeking to approach the complex through the simple. The approach of The Elementary Forms of the Religious Life is indicated, and the book is analysed into four clusters of hypotheses: that religion is the product of collective effervescences; that religion is a representation (cognitive and expressive) of social realities; that religion is a mode of communication and constitutive of social relationships; and that religion has certain consequences for society and the individual.

Durkheim's lectures on Pragmatism and Sociology raised the issue, central to the sociology of knowledge, of the relativity of truth; he aimed to preserve the essence of rationalism while answering the justified criticisms made of it by Pragmatism. A close analysis of the text shows that Durkheim in the end advanced two theses which he failed to separate because of a failure to distinguish between the truth

of a belief and its acceptance as true. These theses were: the philosophical thesis that there is a non-context-dependent sense of truth (as correspondence to reality); and the sociological thesis that beliefs have social origins and functions, and that their authority and content are socially determined.

Durkheim's ideas were always controversial, for they challenged both academic and religious orthodoxies. Detailed consideration is given to criticisms advanced (and Durkheim's reactions to them) in five areas: methodology (social realism), economics and sociology, the sociology of morality, and the sociology of religion and knowledge. Particular attention is paid to the criticisms advanced by contemporary anthropologists.

During his years in Paris, Durkheim brought his sociological perspective to bear on the discussion of current social and political issues. His views are examined concerning marriage and sex; the separation of Church and State; administrative syndicalism, the practical implications of socialism and the proper reorganisation of industry; and revolutionary syndicalism and antipatriotism.

When war came, Durkheim gave himself wholly to the national war effort, by writing and organising. His two pamphlets, on the origins of the war and on the "German mentality", are discussed, as well as his propaganda work within France. When his son was killed on the front, his mental and physical endurance gave way, and, while engaged on his long-projected book on morality, he died in November 1917.

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PREFATORY NOTE.

I wish to express particular thanks to the following persons for their help in the course of my research :- M. le Doyen Georges Davy, MM. les Professeurs Armand Cuvillier, Raymond Aron, Claude Lévi-Strauss and René Lacroze, Mme. Hélène Lévy-Bruhl and Mme. Yvonne Halbwachs, MM. Henri Durkheim, Etienne Halphen, Pierre Mauss and Raymond Lenoir, and the librarian of the Bibliothèque Victor Cousin. Among the unpublished sources I have used are letters from Durkheim to Xavier Léon and to Louis Havet, deposited at the Bibliothèque Victor Cousin and the Bibliothèque Nationale respectively; Durkheim's dossier at the University of Bordeaux; and the material reproduced as Appendices C, D and G. Unfortunately, it is almost certain that all Durkheim's papers and unpublished manuscripts were destroyed during the Occupation.

I have throughout used the earliest editions of Durkheim's works that were not subsequently modified, except where otherwise indicated. I have consistently given references both to the original text and to the English translation, where available, but the generally poor quality of the latter has made it necessary to provide re-translations in many cases, indicated by the addition of "(S.L.)".

PART ONE.

CHAPTER I.

YOUTH: 1858-1887.

(i) Childhood.

David Emile Durkheim was born on 15 April 1858 at Epinal, capital of the department of Vosges, in Lorraine. His father, Moïse Durkheim, was Chief Rabbi of Vosges and Haute-Marne, and his grandfather, Israël David Durkheim, had been a rabbi in Mutzig (Alsace), as also had his great-grandfather Simon Simon, appointed in 1784. It is likely that the family originally came from the small Palatinate town of Dürkheim, near the Rhine. His mother, Mélanie née Isidor, was the daughter of a trader in beer (or horses).[1] He grew up within the confines of a close-knit, orthodox and traditional Jewish family, part of the long-established Jewish community of Alsace-Lorraine that was notable for providing France with many army officers and civil servants at the end of the nineteenth century.[2] Durkheim, however, was destined for the rabbinate and his education was directed to that end; he studied for a time at a rabbinical school[3]. It was only, it seems, when

1. V. Appendix G.
2. V. Aubery, P., Milieux Juifs de la France Contemporaine (2nd ed., Paris: 1962), p.61 and Amchel, R., Les Juifs en France (Paris: 1946), p.18. Cf. Appendix G for a picture of a sample of this community's upward social mobility over six generations.
3. M. Etienne Halphen, personal communication.

at the Ecole Normale Supérieure that he finally made the painful choice not to follow the family tradition[1].

The Durkheim family's resources were very modest and its manner of life austere. The father earned the meagre sum of 2,500 francs a year and the mother was forced to open an embroidery workshop, like many other such wives in the Vosges, from which she earned the same as her husband. At the time of Durkheim's birth the embroiderers worked in the family house[2]. He grew up, with his brother, Felix, and two sisters, Rosine and Céline, in an atmosphere where "the observance of the law was precept and example, where nothing intruded that might divert one from one's duty".[3] This background, according to Georges Davy, marked him with several ineradicable traits: "scorn for the inclination to conceal effort, disdain for success unachieved by effort, horror for everything that is not positively grounded: the life of the individual within the framework of the group, truths through their rationally-established implications, conduct by its moral regulation."[4] From the time of his childhood, he retained an exacting sense of duty and a serious, indeed austere, view of life[5]; he could never

1. M. Georges Davy, personal communication.
2. M. Henri Durkheim, personal communication.
3. Davy, 1960a, p.15.
4. Ibid.
5. Davy, 1960b, p.6.

experience pleasure without a sense of remorse[1].

He undoubtedly experienced what he later described as "that tempering of character, that heightening of life which a strongly cohesive group communicates to its members". He held this to be peculiarly evident among religious minorities, obliged, "in order to combat hostility or ill-will from outside, to turn inwards"; among them, he wrote, social bonds are much tighter than otherwise, and "this increased concentration leads to a feeling of relief that is immeasurably bracing and sustains one against the difficulties of life"[2]. Especially was this so among the Jews, with their "need of resisting a general hostility, the very impossibility of free communication with the rest of the population"[3]. He later wrote of the typical Jewish community as "a small, compact and cohesive society with a strong feeling of self-consciousness and unity" and of Judaism as "a body of practices minutely governing all the details of life and leaving little free room for individual judgment"[4].

Durkheim went to the local school, the Collège d'Epinal, where he was an outstanding pupil, skipping two classes and gaining his baccalauréats with ease. While at school he

1. Bouglé, 1930, p.283.
2. 1925a, p.274; tr. 1961a, p.240. (S.L.).
3. 1897a, p.159; tr. 1951a, p.160.
4. Ibid., pp.159-60; tr. p.160. (S.L.).

experienced a brief crisis of mysticism, under the influence of an old Catholic schoolmistress, which he rapidly surmounted[1]. At a very early age he decided that he wanted to pursue his studies beyond school. His father agreed but made it clear that this would be conditional on his being serious and working hard. These conditions were fulfilled; his youth at Epinal was "studious and serious"[2].

During the Franco-Prussian war, when Durkheim was twelve years old, the Germans occupied the town of Epinal (which, after the armistice, became a French frontier-town). There is evidence that he witnessed, and was possibly subjected to, anti-semitism at this time, for he was later to write:

> [Anti-semitism] had already been seen in the regions of the East at the time of the war of 1870; being myself of Jewish origin, I was then able to observe it at close hand. The Jews were blamed for defeats.[3]

His experience of the French defeat may have contributed to a strong (though in no way militant) patriotism, a defensive sense of national decadence and a consequent desire to contribute to the regeneration of France - sentiments that were, in different forms, prevalent among intellectuals of his generation.[4]

1. Davy, 1919, p.183 and Davy, 1960b, p.6.
2. Davy, 1960b, p.7.
3. 1899d, p.60. Anti-semitism had had a long history on the Eastern border and found a ready target in the Yiddish-speaking Ashkenazim who had settled there. Cf. Byrnes, R.F., Antisemitism in Modern France (New Brunswick, N.J. 1952) vol.1, pp.260-1.
4. V. Digeon, C., La Crise Allemande de la Pensée Française (1870-1914) (Paris, 1959) ch.VIII, Ewart, K.V. The Sense of Decadence in Nineteenth Century France (The Hague, 1964)

(contd. over)

Having gained his baccalauréats in Letters (in 1874) and in Sciences (in 1875), and having been nominated in the Concours Général, it was necessary to leave Epinal for Paris in order to prepare for the Ecole Normale Supérieure, on which he had set his sights. At this period his father became ill and he had to take on the considerable responsibilities of being, in effect, the head of the family. Having little money, it was only after difficult financial negotiatinns that he was able to enter the Institution Jauffret. His time there was passed in daily anguish[1], partly because of the family responsibilities he carried and the insecurity of his own future, partly because of the uncongenial nature of the courses he had to follow, in conditions of the strictest discipline. His predilections were already scientific rather than literary; he suffered under the weight of the Latin verse and the principles of rhetoric which he had to master. At the and of the year he failed to be admitted to the Ecole and he transferred to the Lycée Louis-le-Grand to continue his preparatory studies. There was, says Davy, "only a single light in his sombre sky; it came from the professor of philosophy, Charpentier ...

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chs. V and VI and Girardet, R., Le Nationalisme Francais 1871-1914 (Paris, 1966).

1. Davy, 1960a, p.16.

Without having influenced the formation of his mind, this perspicacious philosopher advised him to persist in his design, sustained his courage, enabled him to enjoy domestic pleasures and helped him with many lessons"[1]. After the second year he was again unsuccessful. It was only after a third that he was finally admitted to the Ecole, in 1879.

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1. Davy, 1919, p.183. Andler describes Charpentier as a man of learning and integrity who had "reflected a great deal on Infinity and Quantity and on the fundamentals of various sciences": Andler, C., Vie de Lucien Herr (Paris, 1932), p.25. Cf. 1895b, p.129, where Durkheim writes caustically about the philosophy he was taught at the Lycee, with its emphasis on intellectual gymnastics and novelty.

(ii) The Ecole Normale Supérieure.

Henri Bergson had been admitted the year before, and so also had Jean Jaurès, with whom Durkheim had established a friendship while at the Institution Jauffret, which was to continue until Jaurès' death. In those early years he was often in the company of Jaurès[1]. There is some reason to believe that it was the combined influence of Jaurès and Bergson on Durkheim while at the Ecole that led to Durkheim's break with Judaism[2]. That break was painful but decisive; henceforth he was to regard religious beliefs, not simply as false, but rather as a confused and distorted form of morality, a set of moral beliefs expressed in a theological, rather than in a positive or scientific, idiom[3].

Durkheim suffered greatly from the strains of academic competition and the fear of failure. Davy writes that he experienced agonies at the pension Jauffret and during his first year at the Ecole, which were to begin again after his agrégation. During his visit to German universities in 1885-6, he almost returned home for fear of not meeting the expectations of those who had sent him there[4]. Even

1. M. Henri Durkheim, personal communication. It was Durkheim who influenced Jaurès to take a greater interest in social problems. V. Goldberg, H., The Life of Jean Jaurès, (Madison: 1962), p.16 and Mauss, 1928a, p.viii.
2. M. Etienne Halphen, personal communication. M. Davy has told me that this was "une rupture pénible". His first taste of pork made him feel great remorse - see his use of dietary laws to illustrate the moral, obligatory character of religious rules in 1887b, p.308 and 1902b, p.76: tr.1933b, p.107.
3. Pécaut, 1918, p.15. Cf. 1925a, pp.12-13: tr.1961a, p.11, where Durkheim speaks of science having the task of uncovering those moral forces which "hitherto men have only learned to conceive of in the form of religious allegories".
4. Davy, 1960a, p.17.

when he had been appointed to the Faculty of Letters at Bordeaux, "he spent his first year of teaching in the Faculty in dread of failure"[1]. At the Ecole, however, his anxiety was somewhat appeased after his first year by the gaining of his licence with maximum honours, though he remained apprehensive and always anxious[2]. Yet he already felt inspired by a mission. He had determined, says Davy, to be "a teacher and a scholar, but also an apostle, so vital did it seem to him to raise up the public spirit cast down by defeat"[3].

Durkheim's generation at the rue d'Ulm was a brilliant one: apart from Bergson and Jaures, it included, during his three years, a great number of future academics of distinction, among them the philosophers Gustave Belot, Edmond Goblot, Felix Rauh and Maurice Blondel, the psychologist Pierre Janet, the linguist Ferdinand Brunot, the historian Henri Berr, the Roman historian Camille Jullian and the geographer Lucien Gallois. Apart from these, a great many of the students went on to become professeurs de lycee, and a few into industry and journalism[4]. Here was the French equivalent of Jowett's Balliol. The students were "the choicest and keenest young men of the entire land, already well-equipped academically for honourable positions in life";

1. Ibid., the quotation is from a letter to Davy from Marcel Mauss.
2. Davy, 1960b, p.7.
3. Davy, 1960a, p.16.
4. V. Hyppolite, J., quoting speech of Lucien Febvre in Revue de Synthèse, 3e serie, no. 35 (July-Sept. 1964), p.156.

the Ecole Normale Supérieure "provided for these the most learned masters and best teachers to be found" and made them "free spirits roaming at will under wise and efficient guidance"[1]. Having begun as a teacher-training college, the Ecole had increasingly become an institution that was highly competitive and intellectually distinguished (as well as rigidly disciplinary and remarkably unhygienic) - a training-ground for the elite[2].

It was an exhilarating and closed world: as Jaurès was later to write, it was really "a prolongation of school - a sort of intellectual boarding-school, animated sometimes by a marvellous effervescence of ideas and giving the mind a passion for the movement of history, but in no way educating it by immediate contact with men and events"[3]. Durkheim was fired by the feverish activity of the normaliens, especially when it took the form of arguments and discussions, which were as often political as philosophical.

Indeed, Durkheim, in Davy's words, "did not conceive of a philosophy which did not end in a political and social application - nor, inversely, of a form of politics which

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1. Ladd, A.J., Ecole Normale Supérieure: An Historical Sketch (Grand Forks, N.D.: 1907), p.3, quoted in Goldberg, op.cit., p.15.
2. As its director, Perrot, was to write in 1898: "Democracy needs an elite to represent the only superiority it recognises, that of the mind. It is up to us to recruit that elite ..." quoted in Zeldin, T., "Higher Education in France, 1870-1940", Journal of Contemporary History, 2 (1967), p.74.
3. Jackson, J. Hampden, Jean Jaurès (London, 1943), p.28. For much of the time, the students were literally locked in the Ecole: v. Andler, op.cit., p.22.

did not have a philosophical basis". He was later to see sociology as the "philosophy which would contribute to giving the Republic a basis and inspiring in it rational reforms while giving to the nation a principle of order and a moral doctrine"[1]. He even formed the ambition to devote the first half of his life to pure, scientific research and the second half to politics[2]. He passionately enjoyed these discussions, at which he excelled in argument. Davy quotes the reminiscences of Durkheim's friend and contemporary, the Hellenist Maurice Holleaux:

> He was at the Ecole at the time of the ascendancy of Gambetta and the great reforms of Jules Ferry. At the Ecole these were the subject of incessant discussions. Durkheim sought out these discussions, often starting them and throwing himself into them with true passion ... I heard him discuss for hours with a logical fervour which was the marvel of his hearers - he could not have been more strained, more nervous, more eloquent. Yet he always remained on the summits and only debated principles. The political arena ("la cuisine politique") was always odious to him; he was unaware of questions of personalities and coteries. Gambetta was something of an idol to him; I believe he liked him so much for what he believed to be large and generous in him. Talking with him in 1914, I remember him saying that politics had become in our days "a thing so small and mediocre". He always wanted it to be a big thing; he saw it as such in his youth[3].

Twenty years later, Durkheim recalled this period of triumph over the monarchist and Catholic right in these words: "The men of my generation remember how great was our enthusiasm

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1. Davy, 1919, p.188.
2. Halbwachs, 1918, p.353.
3. Davy, 1919, pp.188-9.

when, twenty years ago, we at last witnessed the collapse of the last barriers that resisted our impatient demands. But alas! disenchantment came quickly..."[1]

The hot-house atmosphere of the Ecole did everything to encourage a view of politics from a high plane of principle. As Jaurès wrote, "In minds nurtured in that fashion, the most subtle and profound knowledge is found side by side with the most extraordinary ignorance. It is like a vast secluded room where the light penetrates dimly ... In my case ... I did not know that there were Socialist groups in France and a whole agitation of propaganda and fervour of sectarian rivalry, from Guesde to Malon"[2]. Durkheim, like Jaurès at that time, was entirely persuaded by the rhetoric of republicanism and convinced of the need to establish a national creed based on "liberty, equality, fraternity"; they both admired Gambetta as the spiritual embodiment of the Republic and thus as "the heroic defender of the good society, who worked for justice at home and peace abroad"[3]. Durkheim is reported to have spent the entire day demonstrating in the Paris streets during the Fourteenth of July celebrations of 1880[4].

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1. 1898c, p.12.
2. Jackson, op.cit., p.28.
3. Goldberg, op.cit., p.19. For a discussion of Jaures' republicanism, v. Brogan, D.W., French Personalities and Problems (London, 1946), ch.XI.
4. Davy, 1919, p.188.

Evidence is lacking concerning Durkheim's precise views about Jules Ferry's anticlerical educational reforms, which sharply divided the students at the Ecole. Among the most controversial was Ferry's measure forbidding the administration of schools by unauthorised religious orders. Durkheim was presumably sympathetic, as was Jaurès, to the republican, positivist Ferry and his aim of creating a national system of secular education. He must have argued fiercely against the minority of the normaliens known as the "Talas" ("ceux qui vonT A LA messe"); but we do not know whether, with the majority, he supported Ferry's measure, or whether he supported Jaures in the view that the beliefs of others should be respected. Nor do we know whether he agreed with Jaurès in deploring Ferry's dismissal of the Catholic philosophy professor at the Ecole, Olle-Laprune, for protesting against the measure, on the grounds that "professors ... were entitled to their freedom".[1]

Durkheim's main preoccupations, however, were academic. He was a serious student and had no time for the irony and literary banter common among the normaliens; he hated all superficiality and dilettantism. As Holleaux writes,

> I have seen him ardently wishing for the end of the year, the vacation time, the moment when he would be allowed to live again among "good simple people" (his own expression). Being absolutely simple,

1. Quoted in Goldberg, op.cit., p.20, q.v. for an account of these debates at the Ecole.

> he detested all affectation. Being profoundly serious, he hated a flippant tone. Few people truly knew him. Few realized what an almost feminine sensibility was concealed by his severity and what treasures of tender goodness were hidden by that heart, hostile to easy outpourings[1].

His fellow normaliens tended to regard Durkheim with some awe. In Holleaux' words,

> It was in November 1879 that I made the acquaintance of Emile Durkheim. Physically he has changed very little in the course of his life. In 1879 he was 21 years old, the average age of his contemporaries, but he still seemed markedly older than most of them. His maturity was precocious. He already had that serious air which we have always known. Thus the nickname of the "Metaphysician" which he was given[2].

Holleaux writes, about a paper he delivered in his first year, that

> We had the distinct feeling that the author far surpassed his contemporaries in maturity of mind. The style had already acquired that concentrated force and sober brilliance which one was to rediscover in all his later writings. But it was above all in his lectures that Durkheim showed from those early days

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1. Ibid., p.187. Cf. Jaures' letters to Charles Salomon in Levy-Bruhl, L., Jean Jaurès, Esquisse Biographique (Paris, 1924), expressing very similar sentiments. Durkheim's closest friends at the Ecole were, apart from Jaurès and Holleaux, Lucien Picard (another classical scholar) and, above all, Hommay, who died in 1887. Of his friendship with Hommay, Durkheim wrote: "I no longer know how we came to be linked. One must believe that it happened by itself, little by little, for I cannot recall any particular circumstances giving birth to a friendship which soon became for me the sweetest intimacy. Throughout our three years at the Ecole, we truly lived the same life: we worked in the same room, we pursued the same studies, we even spent together almost all our days of freedom. In the course of these long conversations, what plans did we not make, each for the other, which I can no longer recall without sadness and bitterness." (1887d, quoted in Davy 1919, pp.187-8).
2. Ibid., p.184.

> what he was and would be. He was at once the teacher and the orator which he remained throughout his career. He spoke volubly, virtually without notes, with a passionate ardour and an imperious decisiveness. Those who had once heard him could not doubt his superiority[1].

Bergson was, however, less generous. He spoke of him as bearing the marks of the future metaphysician and stunning dialectician:

> His conversation was already nothing but polysyllogisms and sorites. Having [subsequently] taken as premises the Totem and the Taboo, I am not surprised that he has been able to deduce the whole world from them. On the steps of the staircase and even at lunch-time, he would immobilise us with four-forked dilemmas[2].

Although he was very devoted to the Ecole and afterwards felt greatly attached to it[3], he was also disappointed by it and severely critical of its style of education, which he found too humanistic and literary, and too hostile to scientific attitudes. Mollenaux writes that Durkheim's first year at the Ecole, most of which had to be devoted to Latin verse and Greek prose, brought him great disillusionments:

> It was not only the rhetoric, which was bad enough, for it was imposed on young men already saturated with rhetoric. They also had to apply themselves to the most mediocre exercises of an qntiquated humanism: Latin verses and Latin or French dissertations on more or less far-fetched witty conceits. Exercises of this sort were odious to Durkheim;

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1. Ibid., p.185.
2. Maire, G., Bergson, mon Maître (Paris, 1935), pp.143-4.
3. In 1905 he was opposed to projected measures that aimed to reduce the autonomy of the Ecole, and he wanted his son to go there: v. Davy, 1960a, p.16. He later wrote of his time there as "the happy time of the Ecole": 1887d.

> they cost him a great and painful effort, which did not always meet with success. I saw him groan and vent his indignation over Latin verses from which he could not extricate himself[1].

He found Bersot, the Director of the Ecole until 1880, too literary and unmethodical, and he was critical, on similar grounds, of Ollé-Laprune and the literary scholar Delacrulouche. None the less, Hollèaux reports that Durkheim read to his class towards the end of the first year a dissertation he had composed on the phrase of Schiller's Don Carlos, "May you never despise the dreams you had in your youth!", which won admiration, and he also wrote a distinguished study of the Jews in the Roman Empire for Ernest Desjardins. His first year was completed by his <u>licence</u>, when he is said to have astonished Mézières by an ingenious oral improvisation on the genius of Molière[2].

His second year was more secure. It was spent largely in personal research, under Gaston Boissier, who had a great ascendancy at the Ecole, but in his case too Durkheim reacted against the brilliant literary manner. He wrote for him a paper on Stoic morality among the Romans, which was greatly praised. He also gave a paper on the self which Emile Boutroux found so striking that he reminded Durkheim of it during his doctoral defence. He was greatly attracted by philosophy and psychology, though the latter he approached from a purely philosophical point of view, and was afterwards

1. Davy, 1919, p.185.
2. <u>Ibid</u>.

to complain of having learnt nothing of the experimental research that was gaining much currency in France at that time; it was only after his agrégation that he came to know of the work of Charcot and Ribot in France and Wundt in Germany[1]. Indeed, for some time he intended to pursue psychological researches on "quantity and quality"[2] but soon abandoned the idea, probably during the second year, and turned to the study of morality and society, and eventually to sociology.

The writings of the neo-Kantian, or "neo-criticist", Renouvier[3] excited him greatly and "marked him with an imprint that he never erased"[4]. It was the thought of Renouvier, whom Taine called a "republican Kant", (rather than that of Kant himself) that exercised the strongest influence on him at this important period of his intellectual development[5].

1. Ibid. V. Reuchlin, M., "The Historical Background for National Trends in Psychology: France", Journal of the History of the Behavioral Sciences, 1,2 (1965) pp.115-122.
2. Léon, 1917, p.750.
3. On Renouvier, v. Picard, R., La Philosophie Sociale de Renouvier (Paris, 1908); Parodi, D., Du Positivisme a l'Idéalisme (Paris, 1930); Seltau, R., French Political Thought in the Nineteenth Century (New York, 1959), pp.306-321; and Scott, J., Republican Ideas and the Liberal Tradition in France, 1870-1914 (New York, 1951) Pt.1, Ch.1.
4. Davy, 1919, p.185.
5. According to Davy, he "mistrusted" Kant (Davy, 1919, p.186); but it is clear that he was always well-disposed towards Kantianism. As he wrote, in 1887, "of all the philosophies Germany has produced, Kantianism is the one which, if wisely interpreted, can best be reconciled with the needs of science" (1887a, p.330). Bouglé wrote: "Le Durkheimisme, c'est encore du Kantisme, revu et complété par de Comtisme" (Bougle, 1930b, p.283).

He was later to say to Maublanc, "If you wish to mature your thought, devote yourself to the study of a great master; take a system apart, laying bare its innermost secrets. That is what I did and my educator was Renouvier"[1]. Maublanc thinks that Durkheim owed most to Renouvier, and Davy writes that his Renouvierism was even to be increased later at Bordeaux, where he was much influenced by the Renouvierist philosopher Octave Hamelin[2].

It would be hard to exaggerate Renouvier's influence on French liberal republicans at the end of the nineteenth century; indeed, it is not too much to say that his philosophy was "the system from which the political culture and the official metaphysics of the Third Republic derived"[3], especially between 1870 and the turn of the century. It was particularly influential among academics, and especially philosophers. One can discern what Durkheim valued in Renouvier: his central concern with morality; his neo-Kantianism emphasising the compatibility of the determinism

1. Maublanc, 1930, p.299. Cf. 1955a, p.76, where Durkheim calls Renouvier "the greatest contemporary rationalist".
2. Davy, 1919, p.185. Cf. O. Hamelin, Le Système de Renouvier (Paris, 1927).
3. Mariça, 1932, pp.3-4. Cf. Parodi, 1919, p.33: "... this singular and powerful system ... has had so much influence in our time ..." Louis Prat wrote that "the most distinguished thinkers at the end of the nineteenth century were influenced by [Renouvier's] thought": quoted in Scott, op.cit., p.76.

of nature with the freedom presupposed by morality; his Kantian concern with the dignity and autonomy of the individual together with his theory of social cohesion based on the individual's sense of unity with and dependence on others; his notion of existing society being in a state of war and his view of the State's role being to establish "social justice" in the economic sphere; his advocacy of associations, such as producers' co-operatives, to be independent of the State; his case for secular, republican education in state schools; his underlying purpose of reconciling the sacredness of the individual and the existence of social solidarity[1]. One must also suppose that Durkheim found Renouvier's celebration of the bourgeois virtues congenial: "respect for rights and obligations, regard for national traditions and customs, sincere attachment to the rule of law, and the observation of moderation in all things."[2] It could, indeed, be argued that the essential political role of Renouvier's philosophy was to consolidate the Republic and to contain what were seen as its enemies, on both the right and the left. Mauss wrote of his period at the Ecole that "by vocation and in an atmosphere animated by political and moral interests, and together with Jaurès and his other friend Hommay ... he dedicated himself to the study of the social question."[3] The ideas that guided them were, in large part, Renouvier's.

1. Cf,: "No society can be moral which does not recognise as the basis of all moral order the individual's conscience, his right, his reason": Renouvier, C., Science de la Morale (Paris, 1869), p.298.
2. Quoted in Scott, op. cit., p.66.
3. Mauss, 1928, p.v.

He also, as he later wrote, derived from Renouvier the axiom that a whole is greater than the sum of its parts, an axiom which he held to be presupposed by his own "social realism"[1] (though Renouvier himself did not use the axiom in this way; indeed he criticised the social realism of Saint-Simon and Comte). A second principle that was to be central to his methodology he derived from Boutroux, also a neo-Kantian, who believed that philosophy should be "in direct touch with the realities of nature and life" and "more particularly ... should be grounded in the sciences".[2] Boutroux followed Comte in arguing that the field of each science was irreducible to that of the preceding one, and Durkheim assimilated this as entailing the principle that if social science was to exist, it must have its own distinctive subject matter and its own principles of explanation. As he later wrote,

> I owe [the distinction between sociology and psychology] in the first place to my teacher M. Boutroux, who, at the Ecole Normale Superieure, often repeated to us that each science must explain by "its own principles", as Aristotle put it: psychology by psychological principles, biology by biological principles. Very much impressed by this idea, I applied it to sociology. I was confirmed in this method by reading Comte, since, for him, sociology is irreducible to biology (and hence to psychology), just as biology is irreducible to the physico-chemical sciences.[3]

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1. 1913a(ii) (15), p.326.
2. Boutroux, E., La Contingence des Lois de la Nature (Paris, 1874): tr. as The Contingency of the Laws of Nature (Chicago & London, 1916), pp.v-vi. On Boutroux, v. Parodi, 1919, ch.VI.
3. 1907b, p.613, repr. in Deploige, 1911, p.402. Cf. esp. 1895a, ch. 5 and 1898b.

Boutroux also taught that science proceeds by means of hypotheses and that its laws hold true generally but not necessarily of all particular instances - whence, possibly, Durkheim derived his tendency to identify the social or collective, the general, and the objective. But Boutroux' influence on Durkheim went further than this: as Davy writes, "Boutroux ... revealed to him the great philosophers of the past ... and, in his penetrating and objective fashion of reconstructing and rethinking systems, revived and presented scientifically before his pupils the history of philosophy"[1].

Durkheim was influenced by two other teachers at the Ecole: the historians Gabriel Monod and Fustel de Coulanges, who became its director in 1880. He admired their rigorous historical methods, although he was later to criticise the latter for inadequate use of the comparative method[2]. He also derived from Fustel de Coulanges a certain scepticism towards unrestrained philosophical speculation, which the latter used to call "thinking as one wants".[3] His influence

1. Davy, 1919, p.187. Andler records that Boutroux was an exacting teacher who "pushed his students to extremes of personal effort"; op. cit., p.25.
2. 1898a (i) p.ii; tr. 1960c, p.342.
3. As he remarked to a doctoral candidate in 1910; v. RBM, 18, Supp. Jan., p.30 (v. Appendix B). Zeldin has written that Fustel de Coulanges "abhorred dilettantism and indifference; he incited his students to engage in controversy, to avoid generalization, to make detailed studies of small subjects based on original sources. He never spoke to them about their examinations; his lectures did not contain long recitals of facts, but enthusiastic extempore arguments, propounding one or two ideas." art. cit., pp.72-3.

on Durkheim's thought was, in fact, profound, though delayed. La Cité Antique is a study in the role of religion, in particular the ancestor cult, in Greece and Rome, emphasising the centrality of the phenomenon of sacredness in the operation of their institutions and beliefs, and the predominant important of ritual - the very features that Durkheim's sociology of religion was to emphasise.[1] But Durkheim did not turn his attention to the study of religion until 1895.

After successfully taking his agrégation in 1882 despite a serious illness during his last year at the Ecole (he came second to last in his year), he became a philosophy teacher, first, in October, at the Lycée de Puy and then, in November, at the Lycée de Sens[2]. The philosopher André Lalande was in his class there and recorded that he was an excellent and conscientious teacher (the latter exceptional at that time among ex-normaliens), who gave his pupils a remarkable example of "systematic order in investigations and ... well-organised ideas: at the end of each lesson he turned to the blackboard and reconstructed its plan, composed of titles and short, ordered formulae, which made concrete for his hearers the structure, always precise and well-constructed, of what he had just expounded in a free and continuous fashion".[3] His

1. V. the discussion by Nisbet in Nisbet, 1966, pp.238-43.
2. Durkheim's dossier, Bordeaux.
3. Lalande, 1960, p.22.

pupils had a great admiration and respect for him and were, indeed, "deeply attached to his person and his teaching",[1] some of them even following him to the Lycée de Saint-Quentin, where he moved in February 1884 to be nearer his family.

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1. Ibid., p.23 (V. Durkheim, 1967a).

(iii) The New Science of Sociology.

Durkheim had already decided by the time of his agregation that the general area of research for his principal doctoral thesis was to be that of the relations between individualism and socialism[1]. Yet, though he had by this time read Comte[2], he had not yet identified this field of interest as peculiarly sociological; he still defined it quite abstractly and philosophically. Sociology was in some disrepute in France at this time; it was, not unjustifiably, associated with the latter-day disciples of Comte, both orthodox and dissident[3], and, apart from Le Play's monographic studies of the socio-economic aspects of family life, it had not yet gone beyond philosophical generalities[4]. It was in 1883 that he turned from the analysis of theories to the study of reality, defining his subject as "the relations between the individual and society" and then, finally, as "the relations of the individual personality to social cohesion"[5]. It was between the first plan in 1884 of what was to become The Division of Labour and

1. Mauss, 1928, p.v. Cf. Meyer, 1960. At that time doctoral candidates had to submit two theses, the subsidiary one being in Latin.
2. Davy (Davy, 1919, p.186) is unsure of the date, but thinks that it was during 1880-1 or soon after. This is corroborated by 1913a(ii) (15) p.326.
3. V. Ch.2 of Simon, 1963 and Charlton, D.G., Positivist Thought in France during the Second Empire, 1852-1870 (Oxford, 1959).
4. V. 1915a; repr. and tr. 1960c. This was, as Mauss observes, true of Comte, Spencer and Espinas, as well as of the Germans, Schaeffle and Wundt; Mauss, 1928, p.v. V. infra.
5. 1902b, p.xliii; tr. 1933b, p.37 (S.L.).

its first draft in 1886 that, "by a progressive analysis of his thought and the facts, ... he came to see that the solution to the problem belonged to a new science: sociology"[1]. During this period he set himself the task of establishing that science, of "giving it a method and a body"[2].

It was an aim peculiarly appropriate to the period, which one writer has described as follows:

> Let us recall the intellectual atmosphere round about 1884 ... One attitude of mind, one doctrine dominated and excited French intellectual life: scientistic positivism, issuing from Auguste Comte, and brilliantly represented at that time by two "leading lights": Taine, the well-known "cacique" [top scholar] of [the Ecole] Normale, and Renan, the "priest of science". The original ideas of comtism had taken on the hues of darwino-spencerian evolutionism, as they were subsequently to take on those of durkheimian sociologism. What, essentially, did comtism claim? That a new era is unfolding; that the positive method is henceforth to guide human thought, that, if science has issued from religion, scientific knowledge is now replacing primitive imaginary beliefs. Philosophy itself is rendered null and void by science, for the latter is the sole instrument capable of resolving philosophical problems.[3]

This attitude of mind was certainly shared by Durkheim, though he never maintained it as uncritically or in so extreme a form as did Comte, Taine and Renan[4]. Durkheim, as we shall see, owed a great debt to the influence of

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1. Mauss, 1928, p.v.
2. Ibid., p.vi.
3. Bouvier, R., "Henri Berr et son Oeuvre", Revue de Synthèse, 3e Série, no.35 (July-Sept. 1964), p.40.
4. For an excellent discussion of the scientism of Comte, Taine and Renan, v. Charlton, D.G., Secular Religions in France, 1815-1870 (London, 1963) Ch. III: "The Cult of Science".

Comte (a debt which he always freely acknowledged[1]), though that influence was very much a formative rather than a continuing one. Its most important element was precisely the extension of the scientific attitude to the study of society: as he wrote in his subsidiary doctoral thesis, a study of Montesquieu's contribution to the rise of sociology:

> No further progress could be made until it was established that the laws of societies are no different from those governing the rest of nature and that the method by which they are discovered is identical with that of the other sciences. This was Auguste Comte's contribution.[2]

Yet though Comte argued for the possibility of sociology, the sixth and last to enter the Hierarchy of the Sciences, its "crown and pièce maitresse",[3] his own practice and cast of mind denied that very possibility. As John Stuart Mill put it,"[i]t is one of M. Comte's mistakes that he never allows of open questions"[4]. Once sociology had been founded,

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1. E.g., in 1914, Durkheim said, "I have always acknowledged what I have derived from Comte": 1914b, p.35. For discussions of Comte's influence on Durkheim, v. Simon, 1963, pp.144-5; d'Aranjo, 1899; Fink, Y., Etude Critique de la Notion de Loi chez Comte et de son Influence (Paris, 1907); Lacombe, 1926a; Duprat, 1932; Delvolvé, J., Reflexions sur la Pensee comtienne (Paris, 1932); Hubert, 1938; Parsons, 1937; Bougle, 1924; Davy, 1949 and 1950; Nisbet, 1952 and 1965; Ranulf, 1955; Peyre, 1960; Marjolin, 1937 (all mainly affirmative); Brehier, E., Histoire de la Philosophie (Paris, n.d.); Deploige, 1911; Pécaut, 1921; Brunschvicg, 1927; Beurubi, 1933; Alpert, 1939; Gouldner, 1953 (all mainly negative); Richard, 1932. For further references and details on this point, v. Simon, loc. cit.
2. 1892a, p.113; tr. 1960b, pp.63-4.
3. 1905d, p.259.
4. Mill, J.S., Auguste Comte and Positivism (2nd ed., London, 1866), pp.14-15.

it was to become "the universal science, and in consequence a philosophy", since "the other sciences can be regarded as great sociological facts"[1]; it was the key to a complete systematisation of experience and the basis for a doctrine, a morality - even, in the end, a religion. Comte's own sociology was essentially dogmatic, above all in claiming that the Law of Three Stages applied to all aspects of human life; the progression of stages, from theological to metaphysical to positive, was inevitable and the differences between societies ignored. As Durkheim later wrote:

> Now, social dynamics, as he explained it, presents in no degree "that continuity and fertility" which, according to the criteria of Comte himself, constitute "the least equivocal marks of every truly scientific conception". For Comte considered the science as virtually completed by himself. In fact it is wholly contained in the law of the three stages; and this law once discovered, it is not easy to see how it would be possible to complete it, extend it, and still less what laws other than this could be discovered. The science was brought to a conclusion with its foundations barely laid ... A science cannot live and move when it is reduced to a single and unique problem, on which a mighty intellect sets his seal for ever and ever.[2]

As for that remarkably versatile psychologist, historian and critic of literature, art, philosophy and politics, Hyppolite Taine, science, rather loosely conceived, was both a method and a metaphysics, from which he ultimately hoped to derive "a new art, morality, politics, religion ..."[3].

1. Lévy-Bruhl, L., La Philosophie d'Auguste Comte (4th ed., Paris, 1921), p.403.
2. 1905d, p.264.
3. Taine, H., Histoire de la Litérature Anglaise (Paris, n.d.), vol. iv, p.390 quoted in Charlton, Secular Religions in France, op. cit., p.63.

He sought to synthesise German idealism and British empiricism, in the belief that one could arrive at knowledge that was "absolute and without limits".[1] Durkheim was sympathetic to Taine's popularisation of scientific attitudes, though he criticised him for lacking sufficient vigour of mind, comprehensiveness of vision and scientific culture, as well as for being too literary and too sympathetic to "English empiricism".[2] In Durkheim's view, Taine had introduced into France a philosophical tradition originating with Aristotle and passing through Hobbes and Spinoza, which Durkheim called "rationalist empiricism" and whose fundamental principles he accepted[3]. These, as Durkheim interpreted them, amounted to the claim that phenomena are intelligibly related and can be rationally explained, while at the same time asserting that the sensible world is the real one, that science must concern itself with particular, concrete phenomena in all their complexity and must resort to observation and experiment. Taine, Durkheim thought, had provided a brilliant popular exposition of these ideas; as a result, they had become prevalent and in consequence "one of the factors of our philosophical life".[4] He also admired Taine's application of them in the context of experimental psychology, thereby showing how mistaken the

1. Taine, H., De l'Intelligence (16th ed., Paris, n.d.), vol. ii, pp.383-4 quoted in Charlton, ibid., p.61.
2. 1897f, passim.
3. Ibid., p.290.
4. Ibid.

introspectionist school were to suppose that the mind was simple and easy to understand, that "it could be reduced to a small group of clear ideas and distinct states"; on the contrary, it had "profound and hidden depths, into which, however, the light of reason can gradually penetrate".[1] Yet there is no evidence of any direct influence of Taine on Durkheim, nor of any relationship between them. Indeed, Durkheim regarded Taine's attempted synthesis of rationalism and empiricism as ultimately a failure; he had juxtaposed rather than logically united these two tendencies and the task of reconciling them had to be taken up again. Taine's philosophy was, in the end, a dogmatic metaphysical system; as we shall see, Durkheim was to offer a sociological solution to the problem of reconciling rationalism and empiricism.

Durkheim had considerably less sympathy for Ernest Renan, who had made science into a new religion with its own creed, morality and priesthood[2] and had subsequently become the conservative and dilettante "lay saint of French literary life".[3] As Maurice Barrès wrote, "Renan's task was to find some provisional solution conciliating religious feeling and scientific analysis; he discovered the way of enabling the modern mind to keep the benefit of that wonderful Catholic

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1. Ibid.
2. E.g.: "Science is thus a religion; science alone will henceforth provide symbols; science can resolve for man the eternal problems to which his nature imperiously demands the solution": L'Avenir de la Science - Pensées de 1848 (28th ed., Paris, 1929), pp.31, 108, quoted in Charlton, Secular Religions in France, op.cit., p.58.
3. Peyre, 1960, p.30.

sensitiveness most of us cannot do without".[1] Renan's Romantic celebration of science and progress, a sort of surrogate theology, had little to do with genuinely scientific or even empirical inquiry - though the very great popularity of Renan's writings doubtless contributed to the popularity of the idea of science and the spread of positivism[2]. Durkheim had first read Renan at the Ecole Normale and had found the experience distasteful; Halbwachs reports that he spoke of him with "decided antipathy"[3]. He always thought of Renan as "the author in whom one is sure of finding a number of assertions which clearly contradict one another"[4]. He particularly disliked Renan's cult of great men, his belief in an elite of superior minds holding itself aloof from the ignorant mass of men whose minds were "invincibly refractory to science"[5]. He rejected Renan's view that the latter's ideal - "the coming of reason and the reign of truth" - must be confined to "a small number of privileged minds", that "reason will only be incarnated in a few superior men who will realise the ideal and will thereby constitute the final end of human evolution"[6]. To these views

1. Le Figaro, 3rd October 1892, quoted in Soltau, op.cit., p.227.
2. Cf. Lévy-Bruhl, La Philosophie d'Auguste Comte, op.cit., p.21: "Renan and Taine, without being positivists, have perhaps done more to spread the ideas and method of Comte than Littré and all the other positivists together". In fact, Renan's view of science had more to do with philology than with any of the natural sciences.
3. Davy, 1919, p.185.
4. Ibid., p.186. I can see no basis for Peyre's statement that "[I]n spite of his frank distaste for Renan's writings, Durkheim was influenced by them more than any historian of ideas has yet shown": Peyre, 1960, p.28.
5. 1967a, p.26.
6. Ibid.

Durkheim opposed an optimistic and universalised rationalism, reminiscent of John Stuart Mill. In a prize-giving speech to the lycéens of Sens[1] he countered Renan's view that "the understanding of most men is not and will never be capable of receiving the truth", observing that "one sees in history the innumerable sequence of ideas that [the human mind] has already traversed, rejecting successively all those whose falsity has been demonstrated to it and thus advancing, laboriously but continuously and persistently, towards the truth ..."[2] Despite setbacks and resistance to such progress, there was no justification for Renan's aristocratic pessimism: "all individuals, however humble, have a right to aspire to the higher life of the mind"[3].

Bouglé has aptly characterised Durkheim's perspective as "rationalism impregnated with positivism"[4]. Durkheim, however, always spoke of himself as a rationalist, never as a positivist. He also always objected to being labelled as either a "materialist" or a "spiritualist":

> the sole [label] that we accept is that of rationalist. Indeed, our chief aim is to extend scientific rationalism to human behaviour, by showing that, considered in the past, it is reducible to relations of cause and effect - relations that a no less

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1. 1967a.
2. Ibid., p.28.
3. Ibid. Durkheim continued, in a manner still reminiscent of Mill: "Everyone has the right to aspire to this noble sorrow, which has, in any case, its own compensations; for once one has tasted it, one no longer even desires other pleasures that one henceforth finds to be lacking in savour and charm" (ibid.).
4. Bouglé, 1938, p.31.

> rational operation can then transform into rules of action for the future. Our so-called positivism is nothing but a consequence of this rationalism.[1]

This position, he stressed, "must not be confused with the positivist metaphysics of Comte and M. Spencer".[2] Indeed, he explicitly denied any kind of dogmatic scientism:

> We do not make science into a sort of fetish or idol, whose infallible oracles may only be received on bended knee. We see it merely as a grade of knowledge, but it is the highest grade and there is nothing else beyond it. It is distinguished from the humbler forms of knowledge only by greater clarity and distinctness; but that is sufficient for it to be the ideal to which all self-critical thought aspires.[3]

Moreover, unlike so many nineteenth- (and twentieth-) century social scientists, he made no overweening claims concerning the foreseeable possibilities of social science: "we do not delude ourselves", he wrote, "by the hope that, in the near future, the various sciences of man can arrive at propositions that are as certain and indisputable as those of mathematics and the physico-chemical sciences."[4]

The undogmatic character of Durkheim's "scientific rationalism" is doubtless partly to be explained by his early exposure to the similarly undogmatic ideas of such philosophers of science as Claude Bernard[5] and Boutroux, and of Renouvier.

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1. 1901c, pp.vii-viii; tr. 1938b, pp.xxxix-xl (S.L.).
2. Ibid.
3. 1895b, p.146.
4. Ibid., pp. 146-7.
5. V. 1885a, p.98: "The great service Claude Bernard rendered to physiology was precisely to free it from all forms of domination, from that of physics and chemistry as much as from that of metaphysics, putting off the time for generalisations to the distant future. One should proceed with similar prudence in the study of societies." For a brief discussion of Bernard and Durkheim, v. Aimard, 1962, pp.115-7.

It is, in particular, most probable that he absorbed from Bernard and Boutroux a sense of the crucial role of hypothesis in science, and from all three thinkers his frequently-reiterated assumption that determinism, seen as an indispensable principle of scientific method, did not preclude the possibility of free-will[1].

However, though his attitude towards science was undogmatic, his rationalism was quite uncompromising - if rationalism means that "there is nothing in reality that one is justified in considering as fundamentally beyond the scope of human reason" and entails that "there is no reason to set a limit to the progress of science".[2] It was at once the most basic and the most unchanging element in his thought - a cartesian passion for clear and distinct ideas combined with a firm belief in scientific method[3]. Its systematic application to social life (as opposed to the idea of doing so) was at that time still both novel and controversial, and Durkheim was to apply it to the most controversial areas of social life - to the study of suicide, crime, the family and, above all, religion. He relished the challenge of putting "received opinions"[4] to scientific test: as he wrote, "one must have faith in the power of reason if one dares to undertake the task of submitting to its laws this sphere of social phenomena, in which events,

1. V., e.g. 1888a, pp.27-8; 1953a, pp.38-9: tr. 1960b, pp.10-11; 1902b, p.xxxvii: tr. 1933b, p.32; 1901c, p.173: tr. 1938b, p.141; 1897a, p.368n: tr. 1951a, p. 325n.
2. 1925a, pp4 and 304: tr. 1961a, pp. 4 and 265.
3. Cf. 1900b, p.651.
4. 1901c, p.v.

because of their complexity, seem to shun the formulae of science".[1].

The corollary of this attitude was a marked hostility to all forms of thought that appeared to fall short of or conflict with the rigorous standards of scientific inquiry. Durkheim's two most bitter terms of abuse were "dilettante" and "mystical". As we have seen, he had from his earliest years as a student reacted against the lack of rigour, the aestheticism, what he later called the "anarchic dilettantism"[2] of traditional French philosophy, which derived ultimately from the eclectic Victor Cousin. This philosophy, he thought, was too literary[3]; it could not put the mind into sufficient contact with reality for it to form an adequate conception of it[4]. As to the charge of mysticism, he was to advance it against all those thinkers whom he saw as a threat to clear scientific thinking - and there were many such in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. This was the period of the Symbolist poets, with their cult of the mysterious; of the anti-positivist and often pro-Catholic, reaction of many writers

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1. 1900b, p.651.
2. 1895b, p.133. This article is a forceful critique of the current state of French philosophy and a statement of Durkheim's proposed remedies: a concentration on scientific method and the study of psychology and sociology to elucidate the nature of morality. (It is probable that Durkheim's attitude to philosophical dilettantism was greatly reinforced by Fustel de Coulanges).
3. 1887a, pp.438-9.
4. 1890a, pp.455-6.

such as Bourget, Brunetière and Huysmans, Barres and Péguy; and of Bergson and bergsonisme. Always Durkheim's view was that such thinkers were not only mistaken but dangerous. In subordinating science "to some other source of knowledge", they were mixing "shadows with the light on the pretext that the light is not bright enough".[1] Instead of speculating on the lack of a science that might guide human conduct "to the advantage of mystery and obscurantism", one should seek to construct such a science[2]. Durkheim often wrote of living in times of "renascent mysticism"[3]; he was continually conscious of a threat from the forces of irrationalism.

We have seen that Durkheim held scientific rationalism to entail not only that human behaviour was reducible to relations of cause and effect, but also that, by "a no less rational operation", these relations could be transformed into "rules of action for the future". He regarded the denial that science could provide such rules as a prejudice[4]. Science was in principle of immense practical significance. Though the social sciences were as yet "much too young to form the basis for practical doctrines"[5], this was a role they would ultimately fill. Indeed, as he wrote in the preface to the Division of Labour:

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1. 1895b, p.146.
2. 1897f, p.291. The hero of Bourget's Le Disciple, both aware of the sciences and amoral, was "a sad character, ... a mediocre mind, a bad student..." (ibid.).
3. 1901c, p.viii: tr. 1938b, p.xl.
4. 1902b, p.xxxix: tr. 1933b, p.33.
5. 1928a, p.7: tr. 1958a, p.7 (S.L.).

> We would not judge our researches to be worth an hour's trouble if they were bound to have no more than a speculative interest. If we take care to separate theoretical from practical problems, this is not in order to neglect the latter; it is, on the contrary, to enable us the better to resolve them[1].

Anxiety about the uses to which science might be put was common among Durkheim's contemporaries. Andler has written of "the young men of that generation" of Octave Hamelin, Lucien Lévy-Bruhl, Jean Jaurès, Félix Rauh, Lucien Herr, Durkheim and himself:

> We believed in the future of science ...[but] there remained one final anxious preoccupation: that the resources of science should not be used to assist oppression and war. We needed, therefore, in addition to science, a doctrine which would justify science through reason and prescribe for it human ends ... everyone awaited a doctrine of action.[2]

Durkheim, in the mid-1880's, came to regard science itself- that is social science, or sociology, and in particular the scientific study of morality - as promising to provide the basis for such a doctrine. The day would certainly come, he believed, "when the science of morality will be sufficiently far advanced for theory to govern practice".[3]

How did Durkheim conceive the role of science as a guide to action? How could social science itself provide "rules of action for the future"? What relation did Durkheim see between theory and practice? The answer to these questions

1. 1902b, p.xxxix; tr. 1933b, p.33 (S.L.).
2. Andler, op. cit., p.35.
3. 1887c, p.284.

is not simple, and in any case it was not fully worked out at this early stage of his intellectual development. Moreover, as his ideas on this point became more complex, he also became more critical of his society. Between the mid-80's and the mid-90's he developed his conception of social pathology, of the sociologist as diagnostician, testing the social order against a conception of "normality", or health; during the same period he moved from a rather conservative liberal republicanism to a position close to the reformist socialism of Jean Jaurès.

However, the influence of Comte (and, behind this, that of Saint-Simon) was evident from the beginning. Like Comte, Durkheim believed that sociology could in principle identify the processes of social change and the conditions of social order, and further that it should be used to alleviate the former so as to achieve the latter. Yet he was always very far from Comte's conception of social order, with its positive valuation of hierarchy and ideological conformity, and its negative valuation of individual freedom and autonomy; and, as we have seen, he was never tempted, like Comte, to make a secular religion out of science. His view of social order, with respect to his own society, was governed by the ideals which he took to be operative, or at least immanent, in that society.

At this period he conceived of those ideals somewhat negatively. This was, after all, a time of republican

consolidation, after the Republic's precarious and inauspicious beginnings. That consolidation was already threatened by increasingly evident corruption in high places under the regime of the "Opportunists", by lack of loyalty to the Republic of nearly half the electorate (as shown in the elections of 1885) and by mounting attacks on it from the Right that were to culminate in Boulangisme and ultimately in the Dreyfus Affair. Like very many others, Durkheim was preoccupied with the need to save the Republic and what it seemed to stand for: that meant, above all, establishing a liberal, secular, republican ideology, a new civic morality to be taught in all the nation's schools[1]. This preoccupation and this concern with civic morality never ceased actively to engage him; throughout his career, it took up much of his time and energy.

Durkheim's conservatism in this early period is well illustrated by the following strikingly Burkean passage, written in 1887:

> ... one has the right to say to young people and even to their elders: our moral beliefs are the product of a long evolution; they result from an unending sequence of trials, struggles, rebuffs, experiments of all sorts. Because their origins are distant and very complex, we too often fail to see the causes which explain them. We ought, none the less, to submit to them with respect, since we know that humanity, after so much suffering and travail, has discovered nothing better. We may be certain that there is more wisdom accumu-

1. V. Weill, G., L'Histoire de l'Idée laique en France au XIX^e Siecle (Paris, 1925).

> lated here than in the mind of the greatest genius. It would be quite puerile to wish to rectify, through our small and particular judgment, the results of human experience.[1]

Furthermore, in the 1880's Durkheim was emphasising a view of morality as essentially a form of discipline. As he wrote in 1886, morality must be a form of social discipline[2]; individuals in society must be bound together by solid and durable bonds. This conservatism and this view of morality remained as a central and essential element of his thought. Yet, by the mid-90's they were tempered by a critical concern for social justice and the advocacy of extensive social change, as well as by a wider definition of morality, involving explicit reference to social ideals as well as social discipline, to values as well as norms.

As to the manner in which theory should relate to practice, Comte's view had been refreshingly simple: science

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1. 1887c, p.284. Cf.: "We are afraid to put men to live and trade each on his own private stock of reason; because we suspect that this stock in each man is small, and that the individuals would do better to avail themselves of the general bank and capital of nations and of ages."; Burke, E., Reflections on the Revolution in France in Works, Vol.II, p.359 (London: 1790: ed. of 1882).
2. 1886a, p.75. Cf. Durkheim's advice to the schoolboys of Sens: "Whenever you feel that a man is superior to you, do not be ashamed to accord him a suitable measure of deference. Without false modesty, make him your guide. There is a manner of letting oneself be guided which in no way detracts from one's independence. In a word, know how to respect all natural superiority, without ever losing respect for yourselves. That is how the future citizens of our democracy must be." (1967a, p.32).

would be the handmaiden of an enlightened elite that would impose order on society. On this issue Durkheim was as yet undecided. He experienced doubts about the possibility of achieving a rational, enlightened citizenry; perhaps progress merely increased the number of men's prejudices[1]. In any case, how could a population of thirty to forty million persons have an adequate understanding of the conditions of social life and a rational concern for the public interest? If one eliminated people's instincts and habits by education, making them purely rational, how would they then be able to understand patriotism and the beauty of sacrifice and disinterestedness? "A voluntary and reasoned faith", he wrote in 1885, could not be socially cohesive[2]. These doubts were to reappear, especially after Durkheim had turned his attention to religion. On the whole, however, it was an attitude of democratic optimism that chiefly characterised his thought; sociology would pervade social consciousness and ideally the diagnosis and cure would be self-administered.

The immediate task, however, was to establish its credentials - to give sociology "a method and a body". The first requirement appeared to be a distinctive and independently identifiable subject-matter. This is what was postulated by Durkheim's doctrine of "social realism" (as it

1. Ibid., p.69.
2. 1885a, pp.99-100.

came to be called by its opponents). We have Durkheim's own explicit authority that he was directly influenced in adopting this doctrine, well before 1885, by three thinkers: Comte, Herbert Spencer (then at the height of his influence in France) and Alfred Espinas[1].

To see the point of this doctrine for Durkheim, one must ask what he took it to be denying. If the first step towards the foundation of a positive science of sociology was to see society as similar to the rest of nature in being subject to laws, the second step was to see it as distinct: to regard social phenomena as real, causally operative forces. The classical economists had taken the first step; indeed they had been "the first to proclaim that social laws are as necessary as physical laws, and to make this axiom the basis of a science".[2] But they had stopped short of the second step; for, according to them,

> there is nothing real in society except the individual; it is from him that everything emanates and it is to him that everything returns .... The individual ... is the sole tangible reality that the observer can attain, and the only problem that science can pose is that of discovering how the individual must behave in the principal circumstances of economic life, given his nature. Economic laws and more generally social laws would not then be very general facts which the scientist induces from the observation of societies, but rather logical consequences which he deduces from the definition of the individual.[3]

1. 1907b; repr. in Deploige, 1911, p.401.
2. 1888a, p.25.
3. Ibid., p.28.

Moreover, not only did the economists' method exclude the observation of reality; it seriously distorted it by abstracting "from all circumstances of time, place and country in order to conceive of the abstract type of man in general; but, in that ideal type itself, they neglected all that did not relate to strictly individual life". All that remained was "the sad portrait of the pure egoist".[1]

The step that needed to be taken was to abandon this "abstract and deductive"[2] approach - typical, in Durkheim's view, of French economists and moralists[3] - with its unacceptable postulate of "man in general". Real man, on the contrary, was far more complex:

> he is of a time and a place, he has a family, a city, a nation, a religious and political faith, and all these factors, and many others besides, mingle and combine in a thousand ways, interacting with one another in such a way that it is impossible to say at first glance where one begins and the other ends. Only after long and laborious analyses, as yet scarcely begun, will it one day be possible to estimate the part played by each[4].

Social science needed "a nature to observe".[5] It was, in Durkheim's view, Comte who gave social science "a concrete reality to know".[6] There is some truth in this view, though

1. Ibid., p.29.
2. Ibid.
3. V. 1890a.
4. 1888, p.29.
5. Ibid.
6. Ibid., p.30. He later (rightly) came to regard this as Saint-Simon's achievement, developed and systematised by Comte: v. 1915a; tr. 1960c.

it is also true that the according of priority in explanation to collective phenomena was common to a number of counter-revolutionary thinkers who were reacting against what they saw as the "abstract", simpliste, radical theories of the Enlightenment[1]. Certainly it was Comte who had erected this into a principle of scientific explanation: a society, in his view, was "no more decomposable into individuals than a geometric surface into lines or a line into points"[2]. For Comte, Durkheim observed, society was "as real as a living organism",[3] though he recognised that it could not exist apart from individuals: Comte saw that the whole was greater than the sum of its parts, but also that without them it would be nothing. Likewise,

> in coming together under a defined framework and with durable links men form a new being which has its own nature and laws. This is the social being. The phenomena which occur here certainly have their ultimate roots in the mind of the individual. None the less, collective life is not simply an enlarged image of individual life. It presents sui generis features which the inductions of psychology alone would not enable one to predict. Thus customs, and the prescriptions of law and morality would be impossible if man were incapable of acquiring habits; but they are still something other than individual habits[4].

Thus Comte gave "the social" a determinate rank in the chain of being - indeed, the top rank, in virtue of its

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1. Cf. de Bonald, de Maistre and Hegel. On this subject, v. Wolin, 1960 and Nisbet, 1943, 1952, 1965 and 1966.
2. Comte, A., Système de Politique Positive (Paris, 1851), vol. II, p.131.
3. 1888a, p.30.
4. Ibid.

greater complexity, and because it implied and included all other ranks. As Durkheim noted, it was not reducible to, and thus could not be deduced from, any other: "to know it, one must observe it".[1] Thus with Comte sociology had found "an object which belonged to it alone and a positive method for studying it".[2] Moreover, Comte had a keen sense of the interconnectedness of social phenomena - "that universal consensus which characterises the various phenomena of living bodies and which social life necessarily manifests to the highest degree".[3] Yet Durkheim was also critical of Comte's version of social realism: sociology had an object, but "how indeterminate it remains!"[4] Comte made the mistake of fixing on Society, not societies classified into types and species; he thought only of one social type - humanity - indeed he used the words "society" and "humanity" interchangeably. In the end, Durkheim concluded, Comte's sociology was "less a special study of social beings than a philosophical meditation on human sociability in general".[5]

Spencer's contribution to Durkheim's social realism chiefly lay in the greater specificity of his explanations, resulting from his application of the organic analogy

1. Ibid.
2. Ibid.
3. Ibid.: quotation from Comte.
4. Ibid., p.32.
5. Ibid.

to societies. Comte had merely postulated the social as being distinct from other levels of being; Spencer regarded society as a sort of organism, as "itself an organism transformed and perfected",[1] continuous with, but also distinct from, the biological organism[2]. Thus Spencer was able both to get the most out of the analogy and to qualify it where necessary[3]. As opposed to such extreme, literal organicists as Lilienfeld, Spencer was able to use the analogy as an explanatory instrument, as a "treasure of insights and hypotheses".[4] Thus in this early period, Durkheim tended to regard Spencer's theory as fruitful, chiefly because Spencer applied it to "different social types which he classifies into groups and sub-groups"[5] and because he investigated "special questions"[6] and

1. Ibid., p.34.
2. For a discussion of the respects in which Spencer's Social Darwinism led him to violate the requirements of the analogy, v. Simon, W.M., "Herbert Spencer and the 'Social Organism'", Journal of the History of Ideas, 21 (1960), pp.294-9. On Spencer generally, v. Rumney, 1934 and Burrow, J.W. Evolution and Society (Cambridge: 1966), ch.6.
3. E.g.: "The structures and functions of the social organism are obviously far less specific, far more modifiable, far more dependent on conditions that are variable [than those of the individual organism]" (The Study of Sociology (New York, 1906), p.52) and, most relevantly to Durkheim's differences with Spencer in the Division of Labour, "One cardinal difference is that while, in the individual organism there is but one centre of consciousness ... there are, in the social organism, as many such centres as there are individuals, and the aggregate of them has no consciousness ..." (Essays: Scientific, Political and Speculative (London and Edinburgh, 1891), vol. III, p.411); both quoted in Simon, art. cit., p.296.
4. 1888a, p.35. Cf. Evans-Pritchard's claim that Spencer's biological analogy "did much to further the use of the concepts of structure and function in social anthropology": Social Anthropology (Oxford, 1954), p.51.
5. Ibid. But v. infra.
6. Ibid.

particular institutions. On the other hand, Durkheim felt that, like Comte, Spencer was essentially a philosopher, whose sole concern was to verify "the grand hypothesis he has conceived and which must explain everything",[1] namely the law of universal evolution; indeed, this vitiated his sociology, which was never specific enough, but always too hasty with facts, offering "a bird's eye view of societies".[2] He also felt that Spencer offered an extreme laissez-faire view of individual liberty in industrial societies because he failed to appreciate that as societies grew larger, the scale of social action grew alongside that of individual action; Spencer had missed the properly social aspect of modern societies[3]. What Durkheim assimilated from Spencer was basically his organic perspective involving the examination of institutions in the light of their functions and the classification of societies into genera and species; he remained unimpressed both by Spencer's overall hypothesis and by his particular social theories, especially his view of industrial society.

Yet Spencer was still too general and philosophical. It was in the work of Alfred Espinas that Durkheim found the first example of the "studies of detail and precision"[4]

1. Ibid., p.36. T.H. Huxley put it simply: "Spencer's definition of a tragedy was the spectacle of a deduction killed by a fact" (quoted in Gardiner and Preble, 1961, p.43).
2. Ibid.
3. V. Ibid., p.37.
4. Ibid., p.38. For Espinas, society was a "natural organised body, to which a special science must be attached": quotation in Bougle, 1938, p.25.

that were necessary. Espinas' Les Sociétés Animales[1] (written under the influence of Spencer) treated animal societies as consisting of living elements bound together in simpler types by material ties and in more complex types by psychological ones. Durkheim regarded Espinas as "the first to have studied social facts in order to construct a science of them rather than to preserve the symmetry of a great philosophical system".[2] He had confined himself to

> the study of one social type in particular; then within this type itself he distinguished between different classes and species, describing them with care, and from this painstaking observation of the facts he derived a number of laws, whose scope he was careful to restrict to the special order of phenomena just studied.[3]

For these reasons, Durkheim thought, Espinas' book constituted "chapter one of sociology".[4]

Sociology had a subject matter. Social phenomena were real; they could be studied as analogous, though not identical, to organs performing functions within societies that were to be fitted into a general scheme of classification; and this study was to be detailed and precise. By 1885 Durkheim was a proselytising sociologist. As he wrote in his first publication, a review of a book by the German

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1. Paris, 1877.
2. 1888a, p.38.
3. Ibid.
4. Ibid.

sociologist Albert Schaeffle, "Sociology has now emerged from the heroic age .... Let it establish itself, become organised, draw up its programme and specify its method".[1] To these tasks he henceforth applied himself.

He greatly admired Schaeffle's "laborious and patient" work, which was a massively documented examination of modern European societies. He admired it because it was full of "erudition, details and observations" - features absent from French sociology, which was "too thin, too meagre, too fond of simplicity".[2] Schaeffle's dominating concern was to "place himself as near as possible to the social facts, to observe them in themselves, to see them as they are and to reproduce them as he sees them".[3] His book was "guided throughout by a properly scientific method" and constituted "a genuine treatise of positive sociology".[4]

Durkheim was looking for examples of sociology at work, face to face with the "infinite complexity of facts".[5] It was entirely natural that he should turn to Germany, and that during the academic year 1885-6 he should spend a term visiting several German universities, among them Berlin, Marburg and Leipzig.

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1. 1885a, p.98.
2. Ibid., p.97
3. 1888a, p.38.
4. Ibid., p.39.
5. 1885a, p.97.

(iv) Visit to Germany.

The Ministry of Public Instruction had for some time - since the année terrible of 1870 - made a point of awarding scholarships to the brightest of the young agrégés to visit Germany and become acquainted with the latest scholarly and scientific work there[1]. On the whole, these young scholars were highly critical of what they saw: they were far from ready to grant German superiority either in content of research or method of instruction[2]. But Durkheim was impressed and wrote two articles[3] on his return that were full of admiring, though not uncritical, observations on the teaching of philosopny and the state of the social sciences in Germany, together with corresponding lessons that the French might profitably draw.

He admired the German universities for being "alive": there was a sense of community and corporate life, which

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1. Andler, op.cit., p.30.
2. According to Digeon (op.cit., p.303), "the era of exuberant admiration was over. The German universities no longer played a dominating role for the young minds of continental Europe ... [they] had lost their halo ...." However, many still agreed with the sentiments of Renan, who had written that "Germany's victory was the victory of science .... If we wish to recover from our disasters, let us imitate the conduct of Prussia. The intelligence of France has declined; we must strengthen it. Our system of teaching, above all in higher education, is in need of radical reforms." La Réforme Intellectuelle et Morale (Paris, 1872), pp.55ff. It was for long widely held that the "Prussian Schoolmaster" had triumphed at Sedan.
3. 1887a and 1887c.

contrasted favourably with the French "striving for individual distinction and originality".[1] French philosophers worked apart as though they were alone in the world and as though philosophy were an art: in this respect they had much to learn from Germany. It was, he wrote, "scarcely contestable that what we most need at the moment is to reawaken in ourselves the taste for collective life"[2] and this applied equally to intellectual and academic activities. (He also admired the "hard-working habits" held in honour in German universities by students, and above all by their teachers.) He criticised the Germans for their lack of centralisation and general organisation of courses and their excessive vocational specialisation (leading, he said, to an absence of interest in politics and trust in their rulers), but these were the consequences of their virtues: the living, complex, evolving character of their universities.

In general, he was struck by the generality, eclecticism and low level of German philosophical teaching and its hostility to the experimental spirit. He approved of the pervasive influence of Kantianism, though it tended to separate unduly "the psychic from the logical life" and to militate against the empirical observation of the "higher

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1. 1887a, p.437.
2. Ibid.

forms of the understanding".[1] It was, however, the philosophy of law and, above all, ethics, that constituted the really fruitful and living sector of German philosophy, though here it drew its sustenance more and more from neighbouring sciences - from political economy, law and history. Moreover, it benefited, as did those sciences, from the absence of the typically French confusion between such inquiry and immediately applicable practical doctrines.

The article ends with a striking rationale for the teaching of philosophy, as he conceived it, in France: it should serve "national education". "We wish", he wrote,

> above all to know the <u>raisons d'être</u> of national sentiments and patriotic faith; whether they are founded in the nature of things or whether, as is maintained, openly or not, by so many doctrinaire persons, they are only prejudices and survivals of barbarism. Now these problems concern psychology. To answer them one must teach students to appreciate the nature of sympathy and sociability, and get them to see their reality and usefulness. It is necessary to explain to them that our personalities are for the most part composed of borrowings, and that when taken out of the physical and social environment which surrounds him, man is only an abstraction. It is necessary, finally, to show them that sympathy is only exercised within groups that are unequally extensive but always confined and closed, and to indicate the place of the nation among these groups. To the teacher of philosophy also belongs the task of awakening in the minds that are entrusted to his care the concept of a law; of making them understand that mental and social phenomena are like any other phenomena, subject to laws that the human will cannot upset simply by willing, and therefore that revolutions, taking the word literally, are as impossible as miracles. [2]

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1. <u>Ibid</u>., p.329.
2. <u>Ibid</u>., pp.439-440. Cf. 1895b.

It was, he thought, right to teach such things, as part of moral education, to schoolchildren in lycées; but that required that the science of morality should first be well-advanced in the universities. It was "astonishing that we make so little effort to produce an enlightened public opinion, when the latter is the sovereign power amongst us."[1] Politicians mostly came from Faculties of Law, but they learned nothing there about "the nature of law, moral codes, customs, religions, the role and relations between the various functions of the social organism, etc.".[2] It was odd, he thought, that the Germans attributed importance to the moral sciences, when it was the French who had undertaken to govern themselves democratically.

It was, however, what he saw as the German contribution to the nascent science of sociology that mainly excited him. In general, he viewed with favour what he called the new organic conception of society which he found there, interpreting it as entailing that the "individual is an integral part of the society into which he is born; the latter pervades him from all sides; for him to isolate and abstract himself from it is to diminish himself".[3] This, he observed, is how one should understand it, if one is to understand "certain German political conceptions". Moreover, one must not judge these

1. Ibid., p.440.
2. Ibid.
3. Ibid., p.337.

> with our French ideas. If the German conceives the State as a power superior to individuals, it is not because of mysticism or servility. It is merely that the State is not for him as it is for us a vast machine destined to repress that multitude of unsociable beings pictured by Rousseau and in which, to our misfortune, we continue to believe ...; it is a spontaneous product of social life; though distinct from it, it results from it.[1]

An "acute sense of collective life, of its reality and its advantages" seemed to have become the essential feature of German social thought . Perhaps this was because of the "grave events" besetting Germany, in comparison with which incidents in French political life seemed superficial; the Germans had "a rich store of facts to observe".[2]

More particularly, he was impressed by various examples of "the positive science of morality" that he discovered in Germany. First there were the social economists, the Socialists of the Chair, in particular Wagner and Schmoller. He valued their critique of the Manchester school for taking no account of social context and only treating of "individuals ... who exchange their products ... like Rousseau, they see in the social bond only a superficial form of association determined by meetings of interests".[3] He valued their insistence on the reality of society, with its "conscience sociale", in which the whole is greater than the parts, but which is in part explained by how the parts are assembled;

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1. Ibid., pp.337-8.
2. Ibid., p.338.
3. 1887c, p.37.

their denial of the possibility of radically separating moral from economic phenomena (for example, economic activities could become obligatory) and their assertion of the mutual influence of moral and economic causes;[1] and their moral relativism, postulating different moral codes for different societies. On the other hand, he criticised them for having too much faith in the possibilities of legislation and a predilection for "authoritarian" means. They underrated the complexity of social phenomena and failed to take account of "the obscure causes, unconscious sentiments and motives unrelated to the effects they produce" that underlie social processes.[2] (Schaeffle, he felt, in recognising the organic character of law and morality, avoided this error, but was still too intellectualistic). He thought highly too of the jurists, in

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1. E.g.: the need for increased production requires greater personal incentives and thus the legal and moral recognition of personal liberty; but then a growing sense of the importance of individual dignity opposes the exploitation of women and children, thereby changing economic relations, and ultimately replacing men by machines.
2. 1887c, p.45. He subsequently denied having been influenced by these ideas: "Basically, I have, on the contrary, an aversion for socialism of the chair, which itself has no sympathy for sociology, whose principle it denies" (1907b; repr. in Deploige, 1911, p.403). Their effect was almost certainly entirely negative, reinforcing Durkheim's animus against the methodology of the liberal economists.

particular Jhering, who advanced the hypothesis that all phenomena which persist and become widespread are useful, and who treated law as a necessary condition of social life, integrating the study of it with that of morality and custom.

It was, however, in the work of Wilhelm Wundt that he found the greatest evidence of advance in the sociological treatment of morality. He also greatly admired Wundt's experimental work in psychology, with its concentration on "precise and restricted" problems and its avoidance of "vague generalisations and metaphysical possibilities".[1] But it was Wundt's sociological work[2] that excited, and influenced him the most. Wundt had a sense of the independent reality of social causes and the unimportance in explanations

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1. 1887a, p.433. Cf. 1898b: repr. in 1924a (1951 ed.) pp.45-6. Wundt's teaching was at this time very fashionable in France, and generally among foreigners completing their philosophical education (cf. 1887a, pp.314 and 331, and Andler, op. cit., pp.32-7). For an interesting discussion of Wundt's influence on Durkheim v. Gisbert, 1959, where it is argued that "Wundt's psychological system is the key that will lay open the philosophy of Durkheim". Gisbert argues that Durkheim took over Wundt's "principle of actuality" (that mind is process, not substance), his "principle of creative synthesis" (that new syntheses can emerge from component elements), his tendency to hypostasise a group-mind and personality (though both thinkers denied doing this), and his "principle of relating analysis" (that analysing a whole into its parts brings out the part's relation to the whole and the special collective properties of the whole). All these ideas can be found in Durkheim's thought, but there is no particular evidence that they came directly from Wundt. (On Wundt's psychological work, v. Boring, E.G., History of Experimental Psychology (2nd ed., New York, 1950), pp. 334-7).
2. Wundt was at this time engaged on his Ethik (Stuttgart, 1886).

of individual calculation and will, while at the same time holding that collective phenomena do not exist outside individual minds: "Everything occurs mechanically, and customs produce moral consequences, without the latter having been either wished or foreseen".[1] Durkheim was also impressed by Wundt's view of an original fusion of morality, custom and religious practices and their subsequent separation; his view of the progressive development of individuality; his notion of the first form of community resulting from the affinity of like for like, powerfully reinforced by religious sentiments, and the subsequent development of a more impersonal morality, based on a transcendent ideal of humanity. But he disagreed with Wundt's explanation of the obligatory force of morality in terms of men's need for a durable social ideal, an unattainable ideal that is ever-receding, arguing that morality should rather be seen as a social function, offering an attainable ideal that is a function of a particular society and enables men's inclinations to be satisfied. Against Wundt's postulate of a single ideal to which all religions and moralities tend and approximate more or less, he argued that "there are as many moralities as there are social types, and the morality

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1. 1887c, p.120.

of inferior societies is as much a morality as is that of cultivated societies".[1]

Finally, he commended the attempts of all these German writers to give inductive accounts of complex, sui generis moral phenomena by means of observation, analysis and comparison, and thus to produce a social science of morality (only Leslie Stephen, he wrote, had attempted this outside Germany), but he still criticised them all for being, none the less, too general: they were still too concerned with arriving at the fundamental principle of morality. They did not go into the necessary detail of considering, for instance, the right of property, contract, crime, punishment, and so on. Only Albert Hermann Post had studied these detailed questions. Everything, in fact, remained to be done; and the method must be strictly scientific, using methodical comparisons and establishing classifications of human societies. The science of morality, he concluded, was in the process of being born.

Durkheim was inspired by what he found in Germany, but it would be a mistake to argue, as the Catholic apologist

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1. Ibid., p.142. Lucien Herr also objected to Wundt's evaluation of societies against a single moral ideal. This led, he wrote, to "the idea that peoples like men are only worth what they represent. Whence the ideas of superiority and inferiority, of wars justified by their results, of force representing law, ends justifying means, etc. Very Prussian and pretty old hat!": Andler, op. cit., p.37.

Simon Deploige did in a polemical attack on Durkheim[1], that his main ideas were basically all of German origin. It is true that he was influenced by these German writers, but, essentially, they clarified and reinforced existing tendencies in his thought. As he himself was to write,

> Personally, I owe much to the Germans. It is in part from their school that I acquired the sense of social reality, of its organic complexity and development. After contact with them, I understood better the exiguity of the conceptions of the French school, whose importance, however, I do not mean to belittle in saying that I recognise, in comparison with others, its excessive simplisme.[2]

This seems to be an accurate assessment, although he was afterwards to write of sociology as an exclusively French science[3]. The main lines of his sociological and methodological views were drawn before his German visit, but they were somewhat indefinite and wavering; he was clear about the independent reality of social phenomena, but not entirely sure of the relation between the whole and the parts and the extent to which sociological explanation was

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1. Deploige, 1911 (first publ. in the Revue Néo-Scolastique, 1906-7). This view is taken over by F.A. Hayek in The Counter-Revolution of Science (Glencoe, Ill., 1952) pp.187 and 205.
2. 1902d, p.647. Cf. Bouglé's similar estimate (Bouglé, 1938, pp. 26-8); and also Durkheim, 1907b: "I am certainly in debt to Germany, but I owe much more to its historians than to its economists ...." (repr. in Deploige, 1911, 403.).
3. 1900b, p.609; 1915a: tr. 1960c. ~~see below Pt.III, "Durkheim and French sociology"~~.

independent of reference to individuals[1]: he was inclined to see the "conscience collective" as a mere "reflection" and was not yet prepared to grant it any autonomy[2]; he was clear that societies were held together by rules, custom, habit, prejudices and sympathy as opposed to reason and interests[3], but he was unclear about the extent to which these socially cohesive forces must remain irrational[4]; he

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1. V. 1885c, pp.632,633: "since there are in society only individuals, it is they and they alone that are the factors of social life"; "But, it is said, the individual is an effect, not a cause; he is a drop in the ocean, he does not act but is acted upon and it is the social environment which controls him. But of what is this environment composed if not of individuals? Thus we are at once active and passive, and each of us contributes in the formation of this irresistible current on which he is borne"; "The whole can only change if the parts change, and to the same extent".
2. V. 1886a, p.67: "We believe that the role of the conscience collective, like that of the conscience individuelle, is reduced to recording phenomena without producing them. It produces more or less faithfully what occurs in the depths of the organism. But it does nothing more than that." The Greeks, for example, abandoned their religion, he says, because it could no longer ensure the equilibrium of the larger communities that resulted from the Roman conquest.
3. V.1885b, p.453: "[For Fouillée] social harmony would result from the spontaneous accord of wills. There would be a sort of mild and enlightened democracy ... unfortunately one fears that such an organisation would be very precarious. Sentiments, however splendid, are fragile bonds. A society which is not more solidly cemented would risk being carried away by the first tempest"; 1886a, p.69: "A society without prejudices would resemble an organism without reflexes ... there is a need for custom and habit"; p.75: "There must be social discipline .... Individuals in a society must be bound by solid and durable links"; p.77: "Men are drawn together by sympathy".
4. V.1885a, pp.100-101: "We begin to feel that all is not clear and that reason does not cure all ills. We have reasoned so much!"; 1886a, p.69: "Progress can only augment the number of prejudices" and religion would survive the attacks on it.

was clear that morality, law and religion had the function of ensuring social equilibrium[1] and that morality was a form of discipline and not a means to individual happiness or perfection[2], but had not yet explored these hypotheses in any detail; he was clear that the organic analogy had some value[3], but was not sure quite what - whether, in fact, it "masks reality"[4], or provided a mass of fertile hypotheses.[5]

Some of these matters were clearer to him after his return in 1886. He had a firmer grasp of observable and comparable elements of social life - customs, moral and legal codes, religious beliefs and practice; he had become more keenly aware of the interdependence of economic and moral phenomena; he was clearer about the importance of

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1. V. 1886a, pp.67, 69: "Now law and morality have the aim of ensuring the equilibrium of society, of adapting it to the surrounding conditions. This must also be the social role of religion"; "Law, morality and religion are the three great regulating functions of society".
2. V. 1885c, p.632: "Social morality has the essential function of allowing the greatest possible number of men to live in common intercourse, without using external constraint"; p.75: "Morality cannot have objective authority if it only aims at happiness and individual perfection. It is nothing if it is not a social discipline".
3. 1885a, p.98: "We freely admit that society is a sort of organism ...."
4. Ibid., p.99: "These metaphors and analogies had their usefulness in the early stages of the science [of sociology]; following an expression of Spencer, they are useful scaffolds, but they mask reality from us. Is it not time to cast them aside and confront things directly?"
5. V. 1886a, p.78: "Economic phenomena, the State, morality, law and religion are functions of the social organism ...."

looking for unintended consequences and at causes of which men are unconscious; he was even more firmly convinced of the usefulness of the organic analogy[1]. More generally, he was convinced of the basic importance of the scientific study of morality (by which he at this time chiefly meant obligatory social rules). As he was to say soon afterwards, morality was "of all the parts of sociology, the one to which we are attracted by preference".[2] This preoccupation was to remain central with him; as Davy has written, "morality was the centre and the end of his work".[3]

After his return, in October 1886, he was appointed philosophy teacher at the Lycée de Troyes. His articles on philosophy and social science in Germany attracted attention and in 1887 he was appointed chargé de cours of social science and pedagogy, a post specially created for him, at the Faculty of Letters at Bordeaux. He was appointed partly as a result of pressure by Louis Liard, the director of Higher Education in France (and former student of Renouvier), whom he had impressed with his republican idealism and his desire to establish a secular morality based on science[4], and who strongly felt that the

1. V. 1888a, p.35: "Spencer's theory, if one knows how to use it, is very fertile in application".
2. 1888a, p.45.
3. Davy, 1920, p.71.
4. Lenoir, 1930, p.294. He had, in fact, gone to Germany as a result of a conversation with Liard on the need to introduce the social sciences into higher education and to bring about considerable changes in the philosophy course for the agrégation at the Ecole Normale (ibid.). Cf. 1895b. On Liard, v. Lavisse, E., "Louis Liard", Revue Internationale de l'Enseignement, 72 (1918), pp. 81-99.

national interest demanded that German universities should not be allowed to retain their monopoly of the social sciences. There is, however, reason to think that the original initiative for the appointment came from Espinas at Bordeaux[1].

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1. V. Lacroze, 1960a, p.1 and Alpert, 1937.

CHAPTER 2.

BORDEAUX: 1887 - 1902.

(i) Durkheim at Bordeaux

In 1887 Durkheim married Louise Dreyfus, whose family came from Wissembourg in Alsace and whose father ran a foundry in Paris[1]. His marriage, according to Davy, could not have been happier, both personally and in creating an atmosphere conducive to his work. His first year at Bordeaux, however, was one of considerable strain, for he worked ten hours a day[2]. He had two children, Marie and Andre, and of his domestic circumstances Davy has written that the domestic ideal that is evident in his writings (the family being his favourite subject of study and lecturing) was most clearly represented by his own home life[3]. Mauss writes, similarly, that his wife "created for him the respectable and quiet familial existence which he considered the best guarantee of morality and of life. She removed from him every material care and all frivolity, and for his sake took charge of the education of Marie and Andre Durkheim".[4]

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1. V. Appendix G.
2. Davy, personal communication.
3. Davy, 1919, p.198.
4. Mauss, 1927a, p.8. Mauss adds that she never left his side, and that, being well-educated, she even collaborated with him in his work; she copied manuscripts, corrected proofs and shared in the administrative editorial work of the Annee. M. Davy has kindly permitted me to quote from a letter to him from Mauss, which describes Durkheim's working and domestic life. Mauss, who was Durkheim's nephew, wrote: "[My aunt] was a saint - and she was cheerful as well. My uncle made her lead a life that was more than

(contd. on next page)

Durkheim's fifteen years at Bordeaux were immensely productive. Some idea of the scale of his activity can be obtained by looking at the bibliography of his writings during this period. Apart from all his reviews and incidental articles, he published the following major studies: his two theses, the Division of Labour and the study of Montesquieu; the Rules of Sociological Method; Suicide; and the articles on incest, on individual and collective representations, on the definition of religious phenomena, on the "Two Laws of Penal Evolution" and on totemism. By 1902 he had founded, edited and abundantly contributed to the first five volumes of the Année Sociologique. He lectured during these years on a vast range of subjects, including "social solidarity", moral and intellectual education, the history of pedagogy, the family, suicide, legal and political sociology, psychology, criminology, religion, the history of socialism and the history of sociological theories[1]. Finally, he took an active part in university administration and educational reform, in the movement for secular education and, in a restrained but positive way, in the campaign of the Drefusards.

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austere, but she led it with gaiety. It was only when Marie and André were growing up that they drew my uncle out of his domestic and academic circle. A little gaiety and fresh air then came to refresh him. He only returned to the theatre, which he loved, in order to take André there". M. Henri Durkheim, who lived with his uncle at Bordeaux, has told me that he worked according to a rigid timetable: he would talk at mealtimes, but not afterwards.

1. V. Appendix A for complete list of Durkheim's courses.

The appointment of the young social scientist to the traditionally humanist Faculty of Letters caused a considerable stir. Espinas, the new Dean of the Faculty, officially welcomed him in the following words:

> This is a great event, if one is to judge by the emotion it has caused ... May social science be far from a supererogatory study here ... it is - and one must say so boldly - the common basis of all the studies to which you devote yourselves ... it is probable that sociology - since one must call it by its name - will assume a more and more important place in all our studies.[1]

Durkheim's opening public lecture staked out large claims for his subject; his arguments were both intellectual and moral. He began by saying, disarmingly, that sociology was a science that had just been born and that he proposed to develop it in the process of teaching it. He would regard his audience as collaborators. It was best to begin modestly, rather than indulging in abstract discussions about whether sociology is possible or not. After a comprehensive review of its history and subdivisions, he ended the lecture by urging that sociology was useful

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1. Lacroze, 1900a, p.1. Espinas had had a famous battle with his examiners when he defended the first sociological doctoral thesis in France (Les Sociétés Animales) in 1877. He was forced to suppress his introduction to the first edition, because it discussed the ideas of Comte, and a reaction from the ecclesiastical authorities was feared; also the publisher added, without the author's knowledge, the sub-title: Essay in Comparative Psychology, so that his future career would not be adversely affected (v. Espinas, A., "Etre ou ne pas Etre: ou du Postulat de la Sociologie", RP, 51 (1901), pp.499ff and Essertier, 1930, p.6.).

to philosophers, historians and lawyers. Philosophy, after all, was "in the process of splitting into two groups of positive sciences: psychology on the one hand, and sociology on the other".[1] Moreover, social science was particularly relevant to problems that had hitherto belonged exclusively to philosophical ethics. These should be treated scientifically: that is, "observed as a system of natural phenomena which we will subject to analysis and whose causes we will seek"[2]. It was clear that "before discovering what the family, property and society should be, one must discover what they are, to what needs they correspond, and to what conditions they must conform in order to exist".[3] As to history, it was not merely descriptive; it required "inductions and hypotheses".[4] In selecting his evidence, the historian needed "a guiding idea, a criterion which can only be found in sociology. It alone will teach him what are the vital functions, the essential organs of society"[5]; sociology would pose the questions that would limit and guide his researches. The student of law also needed to learn "how law is formed under the pressure of social needs, how it gradually becomes established, through what degrees of

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1. 1888a, p.45.
2. Ibid.
3. Ibid.
4. Ibid., p.46.
5. Ibid., p.47.

crystalisation it successively passes and how it is transformed".[1] The lawyer should be aware of how such great juridical institutions as the family, property and contract had been born, what were their causes, how they varied and how they were likely to vary in the future.

In a final peroration, he observed that sociology was further needed in order to enlighten opinion, for "we live in a country recognising no other master than opinion". That master threatened to become an unintelligent despot for "the spirit of the collectivity is weakened among us":

> Our society must regain the consciousness of its organic unity; the individual must feel the presence and influence of that social mass which envelops and penetrates him, and this feeling must continually govern his behaviour ... [sociology] will enable the individual to understand what society is, how it completes him and to what a small thing he is when reduced to his own powers. It will teach him that he is not an empire enclosed within another empire, but the organ of an organism, and it will show him what is valuable in conscientiously performing one's role as an organ.[2]

These ideas, he concluded, would only be truly efficacious when "they are spread throughout the deepest levels of the population", but before that they must first be "elaborated scientifically within the university".[3]

What his audience made of this manifesto it is impossible to know. Certainly the opposition within the university did not abate, for in the following year, in the opening lecture

1. Ibid.
2. Ibid., p.48.
3. Ibid.

of his course on the sociology of the family, he was still defensively arguing the case for sociology's usefulness to philosophers, historians and lawyers and appealing for an end to the battle raging between the Faculties of Letters and of Law over which should accommodate sociology: "Let us," he said, "not divide our forces and wrangle over details of organisation. Let us work together."[1]

Durkheim was, understandably, from this early stage open to the charge of sociological imperialism, as well as to the graver charge of "collectivism", for reasons that will be evident from the foregoing quotations. As we shall see, he was to be attacked on these grounds, as well as on many others, throughout his career. The latter charge, to which the Division of Labour was held to be especially open by both moralists and liberal economists, led to his being excluded for a long time from professorships in Paris, to which he aspired[2]. The former charge was often made by aggrieved specialists, but, none the less, he soon gained the sympathy and even to some extent the allegiance of colleagues at Bordeaux. In particular, the distinguished legal theorist Léon Duguit came under his influence, even proclaiming himself a disciple[3], and in 1891 began a seminar on sociology for advanced students[4]. Also sympathetic to his

1. 1888c, pp.280-281.
2. Mauss, 1928, pp.vii-viii.
3. Davy, 1960b, p.9. V. Hayward, 1960; cf. also Lévy-Bruhl,H., 1960, p.40 for a discussion of Duguit's attitude to Durkheim. Duguit never accepted Durkheim's "social realism".
4. V. Duguit, 1893.

ideas were the rationalist philosopher Octave Hamelin and (from 1894) Louis Rodier, the specialist on Greek philosophy and Aristotle. These two, together with Durkheim, formed a brilliant and celebrated trio, linked by close ties of friendship and by a common devotion to rationalism and "a common hostility to those philosophies of life and action which they accused of putting the intellect in shadows"[1]. Espinas, on the other hand, became increasingly less sympathetic[2].

Durkheim's influence at Bordeaux was considerable. Mauss writes:

> The few philosophy students of the Faculty of Letters at Bordeaux were not the whole of Durkheim's audience. His lectures were public and well attended. There were jurists, students of law, several colleagues - a public that was, fortunately, sufficiently demanding, on the one hand. But, on the other hand, there were also teachers, students of divers subjects and, finally, that vague body of persons that peoples the benches of the amphitheatres of our large provincial Faculties. Durkheim, who was not only a marvellous lecturer, but even loved lecturing, sought at the same time - and it cost him much effort - both scientific truth and didactic effectiveness"[3].

His lectures were, indeed, reported as being of "an unsurpassable clarity"[4].

Since his appointment was a joint one in social science and pedagogy, he decided from the beginning to give public lectures on sociology and separate pedagogy lectures (the

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1. Lacroze, 1960a, p.2.
2. Bourgin, 1938, pp.90-91.
3. Mauss, 1925a, p.16.
4. Lacroze, 1960a, p.3.

content of which will be indicated below).[1] In addition to this, however, he took seriously the business of preparing his students for the agrégation in philosophy. He felt very strongly that the literary and unscientific character of philosophy as it was normally taught for this examination was pernicious; it made students prize dialectical skill above the patient and systematic understanding of facts, so that knowledge became a useless impediment and originality was at a premium. This was pernicious partly because it led to irrationalism; the dangers of dilettantism and mysticism were once more in evidence. Philosophy became "a form of symbolism or impressionism" and "le règne de bon plaisir" prevailed in the world of the mind, while anti-scientific doctrines found ready recruits among the students, being, indeed, "most evident in those who are the elite of our school-teachers"[2]. To counter these tendencies, from 1888 onwards Durkheim gave special tuition on prepared texts by selected authors (which he helped to choose, as an examiner for the agregation), along with his philosopher colleagues. Mauss wrote that the textual commentaries which he drew up for this tuition were

> a model of direct exegesis, of the author interpreted by the author himself - of that exegesis which has, at last, under the impetus of a healthy philology and a healthy philosophy, under the impetus of Hamelin, Durkheim, Rodier and others, replaced the brilliant but irrelevant interpretationsin which young philosophers used to allow themselves to indulge[3].

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1. V. Durkheim's dossier, Bordeaux, letter written Sept. or Oct. 1887; "My intention is to give a public course in Social Science and a series of lectures on pedagogy. It would be good, I think, to separate the two titles on the notice, since the public course will for a long time be devoted only to Social Science".
2. 1895b, pp.129-133.
3. Mauss, 1925a, p.15.

Durkheim gave such courses on two books of Aristotle's Politics, on one book of the Nicomachean Ethics, two courses each on two books of Comte and on one book of Hobbes' De Cive[1], but none of these has survived the Second World War.

Furthermore, as can be seen from his article on the teaching of philosophy for the agrégation, he believed that philosophy students should be taught about human and social phenomena as objects of science (for "it is not by discussing whether the moral law is a priori or not that we will make citizens informed of their duties and ready to perform them with discernment"[2]) and that they should become aware of science, its procedures and its methods by direct experience of scientific study; instead of problems of transcendent metaphysics, they should be taught to reflect on the nature of "a type, a species, a law, an organ and a function, classification, mathematical reasoning, etc."[3]. While "not intending to disparage the study of the humanities", Durkheim believed that in his time there was

> much less need for refined minds, capable of appreciating beautiful things and of expressing themselves well, than for men of sound judgment, who, not letting themselves be perturbed by the storms which menace us, are able to look fixedly ahead and mark out the direction that must be taken. Now one may be forgiven for supposing that the study of languages and literary masterpieces is not the best means of

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1. Ibid.
2. 1895b, p.138.
3. Ibid., p.141.

> arriving at such a result. Doubtless, philosophy alone would not be enough for such a task; all the same, the role it has to play is of the first importance.[1]

Like Boutroux, he saw philosophy as essentially dependent upon science, and he held, further, that all meaningful philosophical questions (in particular those of epistemology and ethics) were answerable and that the conclusions of sciences were relevant to the answers; whereas those which could not be answered ("tous ceux qui visent au delà de l'expérience"[2]), were not meaningful, or at least not important, and a fortiori not worth teaching for the agrégation. Moreover, the most important part of philosophy was ethics and hence "morality should constitute the object par excellence of the scientific teaching we would like to see given in classes of philosophy" and, since "social questions are in large part moral questions", social science, by "showing how humanity has formed its basic beliefs and practices", must form an essential, indeed, the fundamental part of a training in philosophy[3]. Durkheim put these ideas into practical effect by proposing a resolution to the Faculty of Letters, which was passed in 1891, the effect of which was to include social science in the programme for the agrégation in philosophy. At the

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1. Ibid., p.147.
2. Ibid., p.141.
3. Ibid., pp. 138-9.

same time, he proposed a similar addition to the programme for the agrégation in law.[1]

1. Durkheim's dossier, Bordeaux. As he explained in a letter to a local paper, he was against introducing an examination in sociology, either for students in philosophy or for those in law: it was a science still in the making. It should merely be included as part of the programme for each agrégation (ibid.).

(ii) The Theory and Practice of Education[1].

The title of Durkheim's Bordeaux appointment was "Chargé d'un Cours de Science Sociale et de Pédagogie" (becoming a chair in Social Science in 1895). The course in pedagogy had begun in the Faculty of Letters in 1882, the first such course to be offered in France; and the State began to support it in 1884, as part of the national drive for a new system of republican, secular education. Espinas, who was in charge of it, started to give lectures which involved discussions on the practical questions of teaching with schoolmasters and schoolmistresses. It was, in the first place, specially to provide this teaching in succession to Espinas that Durkheim was appointed; this was the cover under which sociology was first officially introduced into a French university. Indeed, it was only as a special favour that he was allowed to add the word "Sociology" to "Pedagogy" in the Faculty List[2].

He gave lectures on education, in some years two a week, and these ranged from the more theoretical through the historical to the strictly practical. His audience regularly consisted of more than fifty young primary school-teachers. Durkheim found the sympathy, enthusiasm, and

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1. Much of the historical information in this section comes from the Revue Internationale de l'Enseignement - especially for 1888. On Durkheim's pedagogical work as a whole see Fauconnet, 1922, Mauss, 1925a, pp.17-19 and Halbwachs, 1938a; also Rueso, 1911, Case, 1924, Jacovella, 1925, Mackensie, 1925, Jyan, 1926, Ouy, 1926, Ottaway, 1955, Lear, 1961, Wilson, 1961 and Morrish, 1967.
2. Mauss, 1925a, p.17.

intellectual liveliness of these young men and women highly congenial. He had, according to Mauss, a keen sense of the extent of his influence on them[1]. None the less, this teaching was a burden; he always felt, both at Bordeaux and Paris, that it meant a fragmentation of his intellectual efforts. Indeed Mauss writes of "... this obligation he was under, for the whole of his life, to interrupt his preferred studies, those in which he felt himself alone to be responsible and in advance of everyone, in the interests of work that was less urgent, less important"[2]. Week after week, he had to devote at least a third, sometimes two-thirds, of his lecturing-time to this teaching[3], and he did it with great conscientiousness. Mauss writes that he brought to it "the same spirit, the same originality, the same personal, yet at the same time exclusively positive, thought that he brought to everything"[4].

The most important of the education courses was that on moral education. Its importance lies partly in its close relation to Durkheim's central sociological concerns, and partly in its central place within his educational thinking; it was delivered fairly regularly between 1889 and 1912,

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1. Ibid.
2. Ibid.
3. Fauconnet, 1922, p.1; tr. 1956a, p.27. V. Appendix A.
4. Mauss, 1925a, pp.17-18.

both at Bordeaux and Paris[1]. As Mauss observed, it was in this course that Durkheim "connects his discoveries concerning the general nature of moral phenomena with his doctrine of education, itself a social phenomenon, and derives therefrom the consequent precepts of pedagogy"[2]. He viewed pedagogy as "neither the educational activity itself, nor the speculative science of education", but rather as "the systematic reaction of the second on the first, the product of thought which seeks in the findings of psychology and sociology principles for the practice or for the reform of education"[3]. It was here that he sought to put the scientific study of morality to applied use.

During the years at Bordeaux, this course developed into a clearly-structured whole in which the bearing of sociological theory on educational practice was fully brought out. Both education and morality, Durkheim maintained, are

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1. 1889-90, 1898-9, 1899-1900 (Bordeaux) and 1902-3, 1906-7, 1911-12 (Paris): v. Appendix A. Cf. Fauconnet's discussion (Fauconnet, 1922, pp.15-21: tr. 1956a, pp.39-46). As of 1902-3, it consisted of 20 lectures, the first on the relations between pedagogy and sociology (1903b: repr. 1922a: tr. 1956a), the second on pedagogical methodology (extinct) and the remaining eighteen published as L'Education Morale (1925a: tr. 1961a). However, M. Davy has told me that the text of this latter is a combination of the texts of various courses of different dates (I believe that M. Henri Durkheim possesses lecture-notes taken at an early delivery of this course, but I have not been able to make use of these). The following (very summary) discussion is based on the published texts listed above (unchanged after 1902-3).
2. Mauss, 1925a, p.18.
3. Fauconnet, 1922, p.11: tr. 1956a, p.36 (S.L.). Cf.1911c (3).

social phenomena: both are relative to the needs and social structures of particular societies and both are open to systematic observation. He saw education as "the means by which society perpetually recreates the conditions of its very existence"[1]; it consists of "a systematic socialisation of the young generation"[2]. He thought it possible to distinguish analytically (though not in reality) between all those mental states which are private to the individual and "a system of ideas, sentiments and practices which express in us ... the group or different groups of which we are part; these are religious beliefs, moral beliefs and practices, national or occupational traditions, collective opinions of every kind"[3]. The aim of education was to constitute that system within individuals.

What, then, was morality? This question was especially acute in the context of advancing secularisation, and in particular its attempted enforcement by the State in the nation's public schools. It was no good merely stripping away the religious elements in traditional beliefs and practices: morality and religion had been "too inextricably bound together in history ... for the separation to be so easily consummated"[4]. The need was to "discover the rational substitutes for those religious notions that for a long time

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1. 1922a, p.119: tr. 1956a, p.123.
2. Ibid.: tr. p.124.
3. Ibid., pp.119-120: tr. p.124.
4. 1925a, p.9: tr. 1961a, p.8.

have served as the vehicle for the most essential moral ideas"[1]. It was "not enough to cut out; we must replace"[2]. In order to do this, it was crucial to provide a rational, not a symbolic or allegorical, explanation of the nature of morality; one could then discern what moral rules and ideals were latent in and appropriate to the contemporary social situation. What was required was a reform of educational methods in the light of sociological inquiry that would discover within the old moral and religious system "moral forces hidden beneath forms which concealed their true nature"[3]. Such inquiry would "reveal their real character and establish what they must become under present conditions"[4].

Durkheim's account of morality underwent a number of changes, as we shall see, but by the end of the Bordeaux period he had reached a clearcut position, well expressed in the published version of these lectures. He distinguished three elements in morality. The first element, the spirit of discipline, identified the imperative quality of moral rules: morality, he argued, is "a system of rules of action that predetermine conduct"[5]. Far from being deduced from a general principle within a philosophical system, such rules were to be seen as "so many moulds, with given structures,

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1. Ibid., p.10: tr. p.9.
2. Ibid., p.12: tr. p.11.
3. Ibid., p.16: tr. p.14 (S.L.).
4. Ibid., (S.L.).
5. Ibid., p.27: tr. p.24.

which serve to shape our behaviour"[1]. Arguing against Bentham, the utilitarians, the classical economists and the "major socialist theorists", Durkheim postulated social and individual functions for discipline, which he saw as presupposing regularity and authority. As to its social function, regularity was essential to social life: it was necessary that "at each moment the functioning of domestic, professional and civic life be assured" and that "norms be established determining what these relations ought to be and that individuals submit to them"[2]. Its individual functions were no less important: it contained the latent anarchy of insatiable desires, affording mental equilibrium by preventing anomie - the Faustian "malady of infinite aspiration"[3]; it provided behaviour with "a clearcut objective, which can be attained and which limits it by determining it"[4]; it constituted a precondition not only for happiness and moral health, but for "all liberty worthy of the name"[5], since liberty was "the fruit of regulation"[6]. Indeed, it performed "an important function in forming character and personality in general"[7], since "the most essential element of character is the disposition to self-mastery, that capacity of restraint or, as they

1. Ibid., p.30: tr. p.26 (S.L.).
2. Ibid., p.42: tr. p.37.
3. Ibid., p.45: tr. p.40.
4. Ibid., p.46: tr. p.40 (S.L.).
5. Ibid., p.51: tr. p.45.
6. Ibid., p.62: tr. p.54.
7. Ibid., p.52: tr. p.46.

say, inhibition, which allows us to contain our passions, desires, habits, and subject them to law[1]".

The second element of morality concerned not the form but the content of morality: Durkheim called it "attachment to social groups". He answered the question "what kind of acts are moral?" by specifying certain sorts of goal as peculiarly moral. This was a sociological kind of answer, rather than an a priori or stipulative one, since he sought it by asking "What ways of behaving are approved as moral and what are the characteristics of these modes of behaviour?"[2] The answer he came up with was that "moral goals are those the object of which is a society. To act morally is to act in the light of a collective interest";[3] indeed, "the domain of the moral begins where the domain of the social begins"[4], and "we are moral beings only to the extent that we are social beings"[5]. Of course, the relevant groups to which individuals could be morally attached must vary from society to society; one could, however, discern a progressive universalisation of morality, from tribal morality to a sort of higher patriotism (since, in the absence of a world society, the state was the most extensive and highly organised form of human organisation in existence), the latter being committed

1. Ibid., (S.L.).
2. Ibid., p.63: tr. p.55.
3. Ibid., p.68: tr. p.59 (S.L.).
4. Ibid.: tr. p.60.
5. Ibid., p.73: tr. p.64.

to such universal ideals as justice, peace and the sacredness of the individual. Durkheim believed that "[n]ew ideas of justice and solidarity are now developing and, sooner or later, will prompt the establishment of appropriate institutions" and that currently "the most pressing goal of moral education is to work to unravel such notions, still confused and sometimes unconscious, to induce children to cherish them without provoking in them sentiments of anger against ideas and practices deriving from the past which were the precondition for those now forming before our eyes"[1].

These first two elements of morality, discipline and the collective ideal, Duty and the Good, were reconciled in Durkheim's conception of authority. What, he asked, gives moral rules their peculiar authority? He regarded his answer to this question - "society" - as reaching behind traditional mythical and symbolic forms to "grasp the reality behind the symbolism"[2]. Many critics, as we shall see, regarded this answer as merely a new form of sociological myth-making, a hypostasisation of society in place of the supernatural beings who had traditionally formed the source of authority[3]. It is, however, more accurate to see it as a break-through in social theory; for by "society" Durkheim identified that supra-individual element in social life, elsewhere called the

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1. Ibid., pp.117-8; tr. pp.102-3 (S.L.).
2. Ibid., p.102; tr. p.90.
3. E.g.: "it was Durkheim and not the savage who made society into a god": Evans-Pritchard, E.E., Nuer Religion (Oxford, 1956), p.313.

conscience collective, consisting of collective sentiments and beliefs, which was necessary to explain the authority of imperative rules and desired ideals.

The third element of morality, autonomy, concerned the state of mind of the moral agent; it had become a crucial element in morality only as a result of secularisation and the advance of rationalism. To act morally,

> it is not enough - above all it is no longer enough - to respect discipline and to be attached to a group; beyond this, we must, when deferring to a rule or devoting ourselves to a collective ideal, have as clear and complete an awareness as possible of the reasons for our conduct. For it is this awareness that confers on our action that autonomy which the public conscience henceforth requires of every truly and fully moral being. Hence we can say that the third element of morality is understanding morality. Morality no longer consists simply in performing, even intentionally, certain given actions; beyond this, the rule prescribing such behaviour must be freely willed, that is freely accepted, and this free acceptance is nothing else than an enlightened acceptance[1].

Durkheim saw this striking conception of autonomy as constituting "the principal differentiating characteristic of a secular morality"[2], for religions put morality within the "realm of mystery, where the ordinary procedures of scientific inquiry are no longer appropriate"[3]. Henceforth teaching morality would be"neither to preach nor to indoctrinate, but to explain"[4].

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1. 1925a, pp.136-7: tr. 1961a, p.120.
2. Ibid., p.138: tr. p.121.
3. Ibid., pp.138-9: tr. p.121.
4. Ibid., p.137: tr. p.120.

The second half of the course consisted of pedagogy proper, eliciting "principles for the practice or for the reform of education" from the foregoing analysis. The school should serve as "intermediary between the affective morality of the family and the more severe morality of civil life".[1] The schoolmaster was the secular successor to the priest, deriving his authority from that wider morality which he represented in the school: like the priest,

> he is the instrument of a great moral reality which extends beyond himself and with which he communicates more directly than does the child, since it is through his intermediation that the child communicates with it. Just as the priest is the interpreter of God, so he is the interpreter of the great moral ideas of his time and country.[2]

What, Durkheim asked, was the best way to impart the elements of morality to the child in the France of his time? He went on to examine discipline in the school, the use of punishments and rewards, constantly emphasising the need for the exercise of authority to be seen as legitimate and suggesting that it be used in a way that would elicit group sentiments and loyalties (e.g. by collective punishments and rewards); he even applied in this context his sociological theory of punishment as the symbolic affirma-

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1. Ibid., p.171: tr. 149.
2. Ibid., p.177: tr. p.155 (S.L.). It is certainly relevant to observe that Durkheim nowhere satisfactorily explains how the teacher is to acquire this moral authority, when it is lacking. V.Floud, J.E., "Teaching in the Affluent Society", British Journal of Sociology, 13 (1962), p.300.

tion of important social values, arguing that the best punishment was the most expressive and the least expensive. Turning to the second element of morality, he examined ways of teaching the child "the love of collective life" by getting him to "live it, not only in his thoughts and imagination, but in reality"[1]. This was a particularly acute need at that time, Durkheim believed, because of the excessive individualism of French morality, the weakness of the "spirit of association" and the absence of a network of secondary groups (other than the school) mediating between the family and the state. Although extensive social changes were needed, involving legislation, it was vital that "the spirit of association come alive ... in the deep mass of the population"[2]. Durkheim even treated the teaching of science, art and history in this connexion: science should provide a sense of the real complexity of things and even had a role in the formation of moral character; art could eliminate self-centredness, opening the mind to disinterestedness and self-sacrifice; while history could give a sense of continuity with the past and of the principal traits of the national character.

As for autonomy, its particular implications for education were clear: the task was to make the child "understand his country and times, to make him aware of its needs, to initiate

1. Ibid., p.262: tr. p.229 (S.L.).
2. Ibid., p.273: tr. p.238.

him into its life, and in this way to prepare him for the collective tasks which await him"[1]. He needed, in short, to be taught about morality: about "the nature of the social contexts in which he will be called to live: family, corporation, nation, the community of civilisation that reaches towards including the whole of humanity; how they were formed and transformed, what effect they have on the individual and what role he plays in them"[2]. These ideas resulted in a course on "The Teaching of Morality in the Primary School", which he developed at Bordeaux and was later to give at Paris[3]. In this course he aimed to show teachers how to communicate to children the results of his sociological study of modern societies, which he called the physics (and sometimes the physiology) of law and customs. As Fauconnet wrote, this course was "the popularisation of the science des moeurs to which he devoted, elsewhere, the major part of his writings and his lectures"[4].

This course is of considerable interest, because it shows in detail how Durkheim conceived of the various contexts of morality and how he proposed to make children aware of them and of their relations to one another. His picture of the

1. Ibid., p.141: tr. p.124 (S.L.).
2. 1922a, p.21: tr. 1956a, p.45 (S.L.).
3. This course is reproduced in Appendix C, q.v. for further information relating to it. It is worth noting here that the English translation of Fauconnet, 1922 (1956a, p.45) misleadingly renders the title of this course as "Moral Education in the Primary School", thereby confusing it with 1925a (tr. 1961a). (I am grateful to Mrs. J.E. Floud for having drawn my attention to this.).
4. Fauconnet, 1922, p.21: tr. 1956a, pp.45-6 (S.L.).

modern family is particularly interesting. It was still, he thought, "an essential organ of moral life", affected by all aspects of its members' lives and itself constituting a source of attachment, while imposing a whole range of rights and obligations on its members: it even imposed a kind of egalitarian justice in opposition to the inequalities of the wider society. He stressed the need for the various levels of social organisation to balance one another so as to afford the individual a greater measure of freedom and justice; the state, for example, should prevent primary and secondary groups from being too oppressive to individuals. There is a characteristic lecture on "The Country", which argues for the possibility of a non-exclusive patriotism committed to internationalist ideals; one on the state, stressing its role as the conscious centre of an organised society's life; and another on democracy, arguing against Rousseauist conceptions and in favour of a view of democracy as a well-functioning system of communication between society and state.

Perhaps the most striking of the lectures, and the most revealing about Durkheim's own moral views, is that on "Duties of man towards himself". Here he argues that each man embodied a socially given ideal, "something which goes beyond him and imposes respect", rendering him sacred. This was Durkheim's secular account of the soul: it explained the prohibition both of murder and of suicide. And Durkheim specified other duties - "not to abandon oneself to the propensities of the senses, to

resist them, to make efforts, to be master of oneself"; there was, he thought, "no civilisation without effort ... to be excessively sparing towards oneself is to be lacking in dignity". The tone throughout this course is that of a severe secular moralism, tempered by a concern for social justice and a respect for individual dignity and rights.

Durkheim also gave a course of lectures on academic education (l'éducation intellectuelle)[1]. Mauss describes this course as "powerfully original in parts" but "less worked out and complete than other courses", for "Durkheim, at the time he drew it up, was not yet the master of his thought concerning the social origins of reason, and he never had the time to develop [this material] in depth to the point where science can meet practice"[2].

As in the moral education course, the first part concerned the general question of objectives. What was the aim of academic education? This required a sociological account of "the intellectual type which our society is

1. 1888-9, 1890-1, 1900-1 (Bordeaux) and 1905-6, 1910-11 (Paris): v. Appendix A. Cf. Fauconnet's discussion in Fauconnet, 1922, pp.21-6; tr. 1956a, pp. 46-51 (on which I rely in the following discussion) and Mauss, 1925a, p.18 and Halbwachs, 1938a. None of this was ever published. Fauconnet wrote of "a complete manuscript" parallel to that on moral education and constructed according to an almost identical plan". But he adds that "Durkheim was not satisfied with it; he found it difficult to reach an acceptable level of formulation in this work" (Fauconnet, 1922, p.21: tr. 1956a, p.46 (M.L.).
2. Mauss, 1925a, p.18.

attempting to realise"[1]. Durkheim approached the problem by studying the origins of primary education and the way in which it had become conscious of its nature and role (in particular, he sought to trace the formation of this ideal in the writings of Comenius and Pestalozzi). He concluded that the intellectual ideal required of contemporary Frenchmen necessitated the acquisition of a given number of basic mental dispositions, or "categories, master-conceptions, foci of understanding, which are the frameworks and tools of logical thought"; such concepts as cause and substance, but also more particular ones such as "our idea of the physical world, our idea of life, our idea of man, for example". These "govern our interpretation of reality" and "are in harmony with the fundamental sciences as they are presently constituted"[2]. These were "collective ideas" that were to be transmitted to the child, and they were to be based on science. In arguing thus, Durkheim was opposing that tradition of educational thought reaching back to Montaigne and the Humanists which emphasised the purely formal virtues of literary study: the mind was rather to be trained through the acquisition of knowledge in a scientific form. This theme was pursued through lectures on the development of memory and of perceptions, the various species of concepts (représentations), the development of the principal faculties, attention, judgment and reasoning, and the growth of understanding in the child[3].

1. Fauconnet, 1922, p.21: tr. 1956a, p.46 (S.L.).
2. Ibid., p.22: tr. p.47.
3. V. Halbwachs, 1938a.

The second part of the course was devoted to the derivation of practical principles of use to the educator. Here Durkheim dealt with the various disciplines in turn: among them, mathematics and the categories of number and form; physics and the notion of reality; geography and the notion of the natural environment; history and the notions of historical time and development[1].

In addition to this, Durkheim lectured frequently at Bordeaux on the application of psychology to education[2]. Finally, there were his lecture-courses on the history of pedagogical theories[3], ranging from Antiquity to the nineteenth century. According to Mauss, the history was discontinuous, discussing in succession all the great writers in the field, and concentrating on the French[4], and Fauconnet

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1. Fauconnet, 1922, p.24: tr. pp.48-9 (s.L.).
2. 1892-3 and 1901-2: v. Appendix A. None of this material has survived. Cf. Appendix B (1), (10) and (12). (Fauconnet singles out his work on attention as being particularly noteworthy: Fauconnet, 1922, p.22: tr. 1956a, p.46). He was to some extent influenced by the American psychologist James Sully (v. 1925a) and by Herbart and Ribot (v. Appendix B (5)).
3. 1886-93 (Bordeaux) and 1902-4, 1903-10, 1915-16 (Paris): v. Appendix A. It was composed as follows:- Greek and Roman education; Rabelais; Montaigne; Comenius; Port-Royal and the Jansenists; Locke; Fenelon; Mme. de Maintenon; Rousseau; Pestalozzi and his school; German education in the eighteenth century; Kant; Herbart; and Spencer (Halbwachs, 1938a); also, according to Mauss, Condorcet and (possibly) Froebel (Mauss, 1925a, p.18). (He gave a special course at the Sorbonne in 1903-4 on Pestalozzi and Herbart). These lectures were never published (except for those on Rousseau: 1919a) and have not survived. Cf. Appendix B (5).
4. Mauss, 1925a, p.18.

wrote that he did not consider the theories he discussed purely analytically, but treated them rather as facts, using them to "reveal the social forces that animate a system of education or work to modify it".[1] Thus he sought to bring out the relation between the success of Emile and the prevailing tendencies of eighteenth-century European society[2], the way in which the theories of Jouvency and Rollin "reflect the pedagogical ideal of the Jesuits or the University of the seventeenth century"[3], and the significance of the two currents of Renaissance educational thought represented by Rabelais and Erasmus. At Paris he was to develop this work further in his course on the evolution and role of secondary education in France, to be considered below[4].

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1. Fauconnet, 1922, p.31: tr. 1956a, p.55 (S.L.).
2. V. 1919a.
3. Fauconnet, 1922, p.31: tr. 1956a, p.55 (S.L.).
4. In Chapter 3.

(iii) Social Solidarity and the Division of Labour.

It was, however, the public courses in "social science" that were the focus of Durkheim's teaching during the years at Bordeaux. It was here, every Saturday morning, that his major ideas were expounded and developed. It was, together with his other duties, a tremendous burden. Mauss has written:

> To entirely new subjects where no-one had ever worked in this fashion; to problems which even today [1924] have been touched on by no-one but him, and by an entirely new method; to facts which he was often the first to study: to all this it was necessary to bring, week after week, with a crushing and astonishing regularity, an intellectual content that was not only elaborated with a concern for the truth, but was also digested for the purposes of teaching — teaching that was itself very extensive in scope. Durkheim never weakened. For instance, his lectures on "Rule-governed Authority" and on the "Rules concerning Contravention" (1891-2) - what suffering they cost him! He had to be ready every Saturday. Once there was a serious objection - which he had raised himself - to which it was necessary to reply immediately if his whole "Theory of Sanctions" was not to be called in question. The agony of [the prospect of] the lecture-hour compounded that of uncertainty. It was by the violence of continuous meditation maintained day and night for several weeks, that the solution was found in time, so that the plan of the lectures could be followed. It forms a simple passage in the Division of Labour.[1]

From the beginning, Durkheim kept to the promise made in his opening lecture: to engage in specialised studies of particular social phenomena, from the point of view of their functions, asking how, and how far, they perform them.

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1. Mauss 1925a, pp.16-17. M. Davy has told me that Durkheim was weighed down by his lecture-preparation.

The age of the synthetic genius, he suggested to his first audience, was over; it was only by becoming more specialised that science became "more objective, more impersonal and in consequence accessible to the variety of talents, to all workers of good will"[1]. He even offered his audiences a tentative classification of fruitful areas for specialisation, listing, first, "social psychology" (the study of "common ideas and sentiments passed from one generation to another which ensure both the unity and continuity of collective life")[2]; second the science of morality (which sought "the causes and laws" of "maxims and moral beliefs"[3]); third, the closely-related science of law, both penal and non-penal; and fourth, the study of economic phenomena, transformed into a branch of sociology.

There were, he thought, two alternative approaches open to the social scientist, as to the biologist: he could study functions (as in physiology) or structures (as in morphology). Durkheim firmly declared that "it is to the study of functions that we must above all apply ourselves"[4], his reason being that in societies, unlike organisms, structures were flexible.

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1. 1888a, p.41. He was later to write gratefully that his situation at Bordeaux had enabled him to abandon the over-general questions that had preoccupied Spencer, Mill and Comte, in order to "embark on a number of particular problems" (1901c, p.2: tr. 1938b, p.lx. S.L.).
2. Ibid., p.42.
3. Ibid.
4. Ibid., p.45. V. Pierce, 1960.

Institutions and practices performed different functions in different societies; indeed, the forms of social life were secondary and derivative, and structure could be seen as "function consolidated, that is action which has become habitual and crystallised".[1]

His first lecture-course, entitled "Social Solidarity", sought to apply these principles[2]. In it he set out the argument of what was to become the Division of Labour. Though that argument was conducted at a fairly high level of generality, it advanced hypotheses within the four areas of specialisation he had identified, and, further, it sought to establish the interrelations between them. Moreover, it was predominantly concerned with functional questions. Briefly, it advanced the claim that the functions once performed by "common ideas and sentiments", were now, in industrial societies, largely performed by new social institutions and relations, among them economic ones; that this change involved a major change in the nature of morality; and that all these changes were best observed through studying changes in law.

The general problem on which he embarked in this first course was nothing less than the nature of social solidarity itself: "what are the bonds which unite men one with another?"[3] This, indeed, was the problem that remained central to the

1. Ibid.
2. For a summary of the 1887-8 course, v. 1888c, pp.257-9.
3. 1888c, p.257. Cf. Alpert, 1941 for a discussion of Durkheim's use of "solidarité" in an objective, relational, non-ethical sense, distinct from that of the Solidarists (on whom see below).

whole of Durkheim's life work. At this early period, it posed itself as a question of determining the nature of social solidarity in industrial societies, as opposed to that in traditional or pre-industrial societies and of accounting for the historical transition from the latter to the former. Later he was to turn to the study of "elementary" or tribal societies, and in particular primitive religion, in order to determine the nature of social solidarity in general.

The form the problem took at this stage is made clear in a passage from the Division of Labour:

> As to the question which gave rise to this work, it is that of the relations between the individual personality and social solidarity. What explains the fact that, while becoming more autonomous, the individual becomes more closely dependent on society? How can he simultaneously be more personally developed and more socially dependent? For it is undeniable that these two developments, however contradictory they may seem, are equally in evidence. That is the problem which we have set ourselves. What has seemed to us to resolve this apparent antinomy is a transformation of social solidarity due to the steadily growing development of the division of labour.[1]

Durkheim's account of this transformation, from mechanical to organic solidarity, was influenced by many thinkers and intellectual traditions. Quite apart from the general assumption, characteristic of Enlightenment philosophies of history, of a broad movement from religious traditionalism to secular rationalism, one can also detect the influence of Saint-Simon's

1. 1902b, xliii-xliv: tr. 1933b, p.37 (S.L.).

view of the growth of organisation in industrial societies and his view of the post-medieval period as "critical" and temporary, that of the classical economists' account of the economic significance of the division of labour and the German jurists' of the cultural significance of law, that of Maine's theory of "the movement of the progressive societies ... from Status to Contract"[1], and that of a view, ultimately derived from German romanticism, of the historical process as the progressive unfolding of individuality from an initial primitive stage when the individual was indistinguishable from the group. Moreover, in assimilating all this, Durkheim was not free of an evolutionary perspective, though he constantly denied any simple unilinear evolutionism and was increasingly to shake it off. In all these ways Durkheim's thought was rooted in the nineteenth, and indeed in the eighteenth, centuries.

There were, however, three particular theories of which Durkheim was most clearly aware in developing the thesis of the Division of Labour: those of Comte, Spencer and Ferdinand Tönnies. By reacting against them, he was able partially to work out his relationship to the various intellectual traditions which they respectively embodied: French positivism and authoritarianism; English utilitarianism and laissez-faire liberalism; and German state socialism.

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1. Maine, H.S. Ancient Law (7th ed., London, 1878), p.170.

Comte, Spencer and Tönnies all faced the basic question confronted, but only partially resolved, in the Division of Labour: if pre-industrial societies were held together by common ideas and sentiments, by shared norms and values, what holds an industrial society together? Or is it perhaps not being held together at all, but rather in the process of disintegration?

Comte's position was equivocal. On the one hand, he held that it was "the continuous distribution of different human occupations that principally constitutes social solidarity and which becomes the primary cause of the extent and growing complexity of the social organism"[1]. As Durkheim pointed out, Comte's view was that modern large-scale societies "can only maintain themselves in equilibrium through occupational specialisation": in their case, "the division of labour is the source, if not unique at least principal, of social solidarity"[2].

On the other hand, Comte laid great stress on the dispersive effects of the division of labour. It had, he thought, "a natural tendency to extinguish the sense of community, or at least seriously to impair it"[3]. Moreover

> from the moral point of view, while each individual is thus made closely dependent on the mass, he is naturally drawn away from it by the nature of his

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1. Comte, A., Cours de Philosophie Positive (2nd ed. Paris, 1864), IV, p.425 quoted in 1902b, p.27: tr. 1933b, p.63 (S.L.).
2. 1902b, p.26: tr. p.62 (S.L.).
3. Cours, IV, pp.428-9 quoted in 1902b, p.348: tr.p.357 (S.L.).

> special activity, constantly reminding him of his private interest, which he only very dimly perceives to be related to the public.[1]

There was thus a paradox: "the same principle that alone has enabled society in general to advance and grow, threatens, from another point of view, to decompose it into a multitude of unconnected corporations which scarcely seem to belong to the same species."[2]

Comte's solution was to point to the role of the state as a unifying force. The "social destiny" of government was "sufficiently to contain and so far as possible arrest this fatal disposition to the fundamental dispersion of ideas, sentiments and interests": it would have to "intervene appropriately in the daily performance of all the various functions of the social economy, to sustain continuously the idea of the whole and the sentiment of common solidarity"[3]. Government was, properly speaking, "the reaction ... of the whole upon the parts", and it naturally gained and required an authority, not only "material" but also "intellectual and moral", which was to be provided by the positivist philosophy.

Spencer took a quite opposite view. He held that industrial societies naturally cohered as a result of the unhindered play of individual interests and required neither generally

1. Ibid., tr. pp. 357-8 (S.L.).
2. Cours, IV, p.429 quoted in 1902b, pp.348-9: tr. p.358 (S.L.) Durkheim quotes Espinas to the same effect: "Division ... is dispersion" (ibid.).
3. Cours IV, pp.430-1 quoted in 1902b, p.349; tr. pp.358-9 (S.L.).

shared beliefs and norms, nor state regulation; indeed these would seriously undermine their equilibrium. In Durkheim's words, social harmony in Spencer's 'industrial societies' "essentially derived from the division of labour" and consisted in "a co-operation which occurs automatically simply because each individual pursues his own interests"[1]. This co-operation consisted in universal free exchange of goods and services: as industrialism progressed; "the sole link which remains between men is absolutely free exchange"[2].

On Spencer's view there had been a progressive decline in the regulation of individual behaviour in all spheres of life - and especially the economic - as societies had advanced from the militant to the industrial type, and this development would continue as societies became ever more purely industrial. The role of the State was in decline and would finally be merely administrative. Social solidarity would eventually be

> nothing other than the spontaneous accord of individual interests, an accord for which contracts are the natural expression. The typical social relation would be the economic, stripped of all regulation and resulting from the entirely free initiative of the parties. In a word, society would be merely the bringing together of individuals who exchange the products of their labour, without any genuinely social influence coming to regulate that exchange.[3]

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1. 1962b, p.177: tr. p.200 (S.L.). v. Spencer, H., The Principles of Sociology vol.III (London, 1896), pt. VIII for Spencer's fullest treatment of industrialism.Cf. Burrow,J.W., Evolution and Society (Cambridge, 1966) ch.6, esp. pp.225-6.
2. Ibid., p.178: tr. p.201 (S.L.).
3. Ibid., p.180: tr. p.203 (S.L.).

Spencer's pure industrial society was a vast system of bargaining - and the assumption that it would be a system as opposed to a chaos was merely Spencer's inheritance from Adam Smith and the Manchester School.

Tönnies's Gesellschaft was in some ways very close to Spencer's industrial society; contract had replaced status, competing individual interests operated freely, traditional beliefs were succeeded by freedom of thought, common by individual property, and commerce, large-scale industry, free exchange and cosmopolitanism had grown apace. In the Gesellschaft, as opposed to the Gemeinschaft,

> we find no actions that can be derived from an a priori and necessarily existing unity; no actions, therefore, which manifest the will and the spirit of the unity ... On the contrary, here everybody is by himself and isolated, and there exists a condition of tension against all others ... nobody wants to grant and produce anything for another individual, nor will he be inclined to give ungrudgingly to another individual, if it be not in exchange for a gift or labour equivalent that he considers at least equal to what he has given.[1]

If the Gemeinschaft was organic, the Gesellschaft was mechanical, an aggregate resulting from the juxtaposition of its parts.

Yet, unlike Spencer, Tönnies painted a sombre picture of capitalism, borrowing, as Durkheim pointed out, from Marx and Lassalle. Like them he held that it required a very strong state "to ensure that particular agreements are carried out,

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1. Tönnies, F., Gemeinschaft und Gesellschaft (Leipzig, 1887), pp.46, 47; tr. as Community and Society by Loomis, C.P. (E. Lansing, Mich., 1957), Harper Torchbook ed. (1963), p.65, quoted in 1889b, p.419.

to back ... contractual law with sanctions, to prevent all that might harm the general interests of society"[1]. The State needed to be strong "to keep within bounds all those particular wills, all those individual interests that are no longer connected with one another, all this unchained greed"[2]. But such a social and political system, a form of State-regulated capitalism which was Tönnies's version of socialism, could not endure; rather, it was the prelude to a final dissolution. As Durkheim, interpreting Tönnies, wrote,

> By an altogether artificial coercion, [the State] can for a time hold in check all the internal contradictions, all the destructive conflicts which beset the society, but sooner or later these will eventually tear it asunder. The State has no real power except insofar as it represents common ideas and common interests. Now, as the Gemeinschaft regresses, the number of these ideas and the importance of these interests progressively declines. The state of war which society conceals in its bosom must some day come to a head, bringing with it its natural consequences, namely, the breaking of all social bonds and the decomposition of the social body.[3]

Durkheim took exception to all three views. Comte's view, insofar as it entailed the need for a detailed regulation of economic life by the State, took, he argued, no account of the naturally-achieved solidarity of an independently functioning system of activities: that "spontaneous consensus of the parts", that "internal solidarity which not only is as indispensable as the controlling influence of higher centres, but is even a necessary condition for their operation"[4] (this

1. 1889b, p.420.
2. Ibid.
3. Ibid., pp.420-1.
4. 1902b, p.351: tr. p.360 (S.L.).

being true both of "organised societies" and of organisms). Even more important, insofar as the Comtean view stressed the need for moral consensus in industrial societies, it was anachronistic: such a uniformity "cannot be maintained by force and against the nature of things"[1]. Functional diversity "entails an inevitable moral diversity"[2]; and

> Collective sentiments thus become more and more powerless to contain the centrifugal tendencies which, it is claimed, the division of labour engenders, since these tendencies increase as labour is more divided, while at the same time the collective sentiments themselves grow weaker.[3]

The Spencerian view was rejected on very different grounds. In the first place, Durkheim argued, the free play of individual interests could not be a sufficient explanation for social solidarity in industrial societies. Indeed it would produce instability, for interest only relates men momentarily and externally: in the process of exchange, men are "only in superficial contact; they do not interpenetrate, nor do they adhere strongly to one another".[4] More generally, every so-called "harmony of interests" turns out to "conceal a latent or merely deferred conflict",[5] for

> where interest alone holds sway, since there is nothing to curb men's egoism, each individual finds himself on a footing of war with every other, and any truce in this eternal antagonism could not last long.[6]

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1. Ibid., p.352: tr.p. 361.
2. Ibid. (S.L.).
3. Ibid., pp. 352-3. (S.L.).
4. Ibid., p.181: tr. p.203 (S.L.).
5. Ibid. (S.L.).
6. Ibid.: tr.p.204 (S.L.).

Thus, far from being a social cement, interest could "only give rise to transient relations and passing associations".[1]

The second argument against Spencer was an appeal to empirical evidence to show that, far from the social regulation of individual behaviour having declined with the growth of industrialism, it was rather the case that, as social and economic life had become differentiated and specialised, and grown in complexity and volume, so had the laws and rules governing its operation grown in complexity and volume. Finally, Durkheim argued, Spencer's account of the typical social relationship of industrialism, contract, was misleading: even so seemingly private and individual a thing as contract was a product of society, which gives it binding force and defines the conditions of its operation. These non-contractual elements in the contract must form part of any satisfactory sociological account of contractual relations.

The case against Tönnies was that his theory of Gesellschaft accounted for social solidarity in terms of a temporary and artificial mechanism: the controlling influence of the State. Durkheim agreed with Tönnies's classification of societies into two great types and he agreed that the Gemeinschaft was historically prior; he also accepted (at least in 1889) "in its general lines the analysis and description he

1. Ibid.

gives of Gemeinschaft"[1]. Tönnies's Gesellschaft, however,

> would essentially be a mechanical aggregate; the only truly collective life remaining in it would result, not from any internal spontaneity, but from the entirely external impulsion of the State. In a word, ... it is society as imagined by Bentham. Now, I hold that the life of the great social agglomerations is just as natural as that of small aggregates. It is neither less organic nor less internal. Apart from purely individual movements, there is in our contemporary societies a genuinely collective activity which is just as natural as that of the less extended societies of earlier times. It is certainly distinct; it constitutes a different type. But between these two species of a single genus, however diverse they may be, there is no difference of kind. To prove this would need a book ...[2]

That book became The Division of Labour[3]. It sought to develop an explanation of social solidarity in industrial or 'organised' societies that was consistent with Durkheim's objections to Comte, Spencer and Tönnies: that is, an explanation which did not, like Comte, exaggerate the role of consensus and conformity, of shared beliefs and sentiments[4], and of uniform patterns imposed on individual behaviour, and

1. 1889b, p.421.
2. Ibid.
3. For illuminating discussions of it, v. Bouglé, 1903, Merton, 1934, Parsons, 1937 and 1960, Alpert, 1939, Friedmann, 1955, Schnore, 1958, Pizzorno, 1963, Nisbet, 1965 and Barnes, 1966; also v. Bernstein, B., "Open Schools, Open Society?", New Society, no. 259, 14 Sept. 1967, pp.351-3 for a brilliant application of its main ideas to the contemporary sociology of education; and, among many other current discussions, Gibbs, J.P. and Martin, W.T., "Organisation, Technology and the Division of Labour", ASR, 27 (1962), pp.667-677.
4. This aspect of Durkheim's argument in the Division of Labour is stressed in Gouldner, 1958.

which allowed for increasing differentiation of occupation, beliefs and behaviour; an explanation, secondly, which did not, like Spencer, assume a harmony of interests, but postulated a complex social regulation of individual behaviour; and an explanation, finally, which, unlike Tönnies and also Comte, detached such regulation from the State, linking it rather to the "internal" functioning of society, and to the processes of social differentiation.

Durkheim's central thesis was that "the division of labour", by which (like Comte) he meant occupational specialisation, "is more and more filling the role that was once filled by the conscience commune; it is this that mainly holds together social aggregates of the more advanced type"[1]. Thus the argument, quite logically, divided into three sections: an analysis of how the conscience commune and the division of labour contributed to mechanical and organic solidarity respectively; an account of the historical development from the one to the other; and an examination of the respects in which contemporary European societies diverged from the "normal" condition, or ideal type, of organic solidarity.

In contrasting organic to mechanical solidarity, Durkheim was consciously opposing the dichotomy between modern and traditional societies characteristic of German social thought, and of Tönnies in particular. His own distinction was partly

1. 1902b, p.148; tr. 1933b, p.173 (S.L.)

a way of stressing the social differentiation of "organised" societies, involving interdependent and multiplying specialised roles, as opposed to the undifferentiated unity of uniform beliefs and sentiments and rigid social control, found in "segmental" societies[1]. "Mechanical" and "organic" referred, none too seriously, to an analogy - that of "the cohesion which unites the elements of an inanimate body, as opposed to that which makes a unity out of the elements of a living body": in mechanical solidarity, "the social molecules ... could only operate in harmony insofar as they do not operate independently", whereas, in organic solidarity, "society becomes more capable of operating in harmony, insofar as each of its elements operates more independently"[2]. More revealingly perhaps, organic solidarity can be seen as an echo of the saint-simonian notion of organic periods, of which emergent, organised industrialism was to be the next example.

Durkheim's ideal type of mechanical solidarity (heavily influenced by the ideas of Wundt[3]) involved an abstraction of certain social mechanisms held to be characteristic of pre-industrial societies but of progressively less preponderance in the course of (western) history. Crucial to it was Durkheim's theory of crime and punishment: crime was punished because it offended common sentiments (or else the organ of the conscience

1. Durkheim's broadly evolutionary classification of social structures (as opposed to his distinction between types of solidarity) was strongly influenced by Spencer's similar scheme. Cf. Rumney, 1934 (esp. p.87).
2. Ibid., pp.100, 101: tr. pp.130, 131.
3. Cf. 1887c, pp.120-1.

commune) by violating important social values, but the very process of punishment itself reinforced those sentiments and reaffirmed the values (hence the social function of crime). He regarded this as a striking instance of the interdependence of cause and effect in social life[1]; but its significance with respect to mechanical solidarity was to indicate the mechanism by means of which the conscience commune, conceived of as a force acting upon individuals, maintained their solidarity. That force

> which is shocked by the crime and which suppresses it is ... one and the same; it is a product of the most essential social conformity and it has the effect of maintaining the social cohesion which results from that conformity. It is this force which penal law protects from being weakened, by simultaneously requiring from each of us a minimum of conformity without which the individual would threaten the unity of the social body, while imposing on us a respect for the symbol which expresses and sums up that conformity at the same time that it guarantees it.[2]

Durkheim thought of organic solidarity as having progressively taken the place of mechanical solidarity[3]. The difficulty here was that, by putting the matter in this way, he strongly suggested that it was a form of social integration independent of collective beliefs and sentiments, and the corresponding mechanisms of social control. He did make it clear that, with the loosening of traditional ties

1. 1901c, p.118: tr. 1938b, p.96.
2. 1902b, p.75: tr. 1933b, p.106 (S.L.). In this passage I have (I think reasonably) rendered "similitudes" as "conformity".
3. V., e.g. ibid., p.356: tr. p.364.

binding the individual "to his family, to his native soil, to traditions inherited from the past, to collective group practices", and with increasing individual mobility and independence, "the whole conscience commune does not, for that reason, disappear"[1]; there would always remain "at the very least, that cult of the person, of individual dignity ... which today is the unique rallying-point of so many people"[2]. Yet, he continued, "what a small thing this is, especially when one thinks of the ever-growing extent of social life"[3]; in any case, it was "not a truly social link"[4]. A new source of cohesion was required - presumably a source independent of the conscience commune. Durkheim located it in the division of labour. Through it, he wrote, "the individual regains an awareness of his dependence on society; from it come the forces which keep him in check and restrain him"[5].

The argument is unclear at this point. How did these forces "come from" the division of labour? What was their nature? How did they relate to "collective beliefs and sentiments"? He made one feeble attempt to answer the first of these questions, in terms of the functional interdependence of activities which become habitual and give rise to rules

1. Ibid., pp.395-6; tr. p.400 (S.L.).
2. Ibid., p.396; tr. p.400 (S.L.).
3. Ibid. (S.L.).
4. Ibid., p.147; tr. p.172.
5. Ibid., p.396; tr. p.401 (S.L.).

of conduct[1], but this carries little conviction. The trouble was that, in contrasting the functional and moral diversity of industrial societies with the supposed homogeneity and conformity of traditional, pre-industrial societies, he temporarily lost sight of the connexion between the norms regulating behaviour in a differentiated society and the beliefs and sentiments prevalent in such a society. He was thus able to write that "normally, the division of labour produces social solidarity"[2] and to attribute the evident lack of such norms in the industry of his own society to the fact that "all the conditions for the existence of [organic solidarity] have not been realised"[3]. But he soon abandoned this position for one which stressed the need to introduce new norms of behaviour into the industrial sphere, in the form of occupational groups[4], in accordance with emergent ideals of social justice. This change went with a clearer sense of the independent role of collective beliefs and sentiments[5];

1. Ibid., pp.357-8; tr. pp.365-6 (S.L.).
2. Ibid. p.343; tr. p.353.
3. Ibid., p.356; tr. p.364 (S.L.).
4. V., e.g., the introduction to the 2nd edition of the Division of Labour (1902). The argument was first advanced in the lectures on socialism (1895-6).
5. This can be dated from the mid-90's, when he turned to the study of religion (v. below). Cf., e.g., the rather shallow account of the change from repressive to restitutive law offered in the Division of Labour, and the relatively crude attempt to relate these to types of solidarity, with the much more penetrating analysis of the evolution of penal law in 1901a(i), which precisely seeks to relate that evolution to changes in "collective beliefs and sentiments".

and the explanatory role given to these was henceforth to loom greater and greater in the course of his intellectual development.

The theory of social change advanced in the Division of Labour has been much misunderstood[1]. It was, primarily, a sociological explanation of the growth of differentiation[2]. Increased population size, Durkheim argued, was a necessary but not (as Spencer thought) a sufficient cause; in addition, one needed an increase in "moral" or "dynamic density", by which he meant a higher rate of social interaction. That, in turn, was a function of "the real distance between individuals" and was thus increased by urban concentration and technological developments in transport and communication. The increased interaction, he claimed, involved heightened competition, which was resolved by the division of labour, thanks to which

> rivals are not obliged to eliminate one another, but can coexist. Also, in proportion to its development, it provides the means of maintenance and survival to a greater number of individuals who in more homogeneous societies would be condemned to disappear.[3]

Secondly, and more generally, Durkheim sought to identify the "secondary factors" that were conducive to this

1. As Schnore has quite correctly observed, "a whole generation of American sociologists have been given an essentially incorrect image of one of Durkheim's most important theoretical contributions": Schnore, 1958, p.626, q.v. passim., for a clear and accurate exegesis and critique of Durkheim's argument.
2. As opposed to an allegedly "biologistic" one. Cf. for examples of this mistaken interpretation: - Sorokin, 1928, p.480; Parsons, 1937, p.323; Alpert, 1939, p.91; Benoit-Smullyan, 1948, p.508, etc.
3. 1902b, p.253: tr. 1933b, p.270 (O.L.).

development. Taken together, these form a broad account of the pre-conditions for industrialisation: among the factors specified were the "progressive indeterminacy of the conscience commune", secularisation and the rise of science, the weakening authority of age, tradition and custom, the declining significance of heredity in the allocation of individuals to social functions, and in general the decline in the pressure of the group on the individual and the emergence of the autonomous individual personality.

The third section of the argument, the examination of "abnormal forms", rested on the assumption that anomie, or the absence of accepted regulating norms, in industry, and the consequent anarchy and conflict of industrial relations, was due to the rapidity with which industrialisation had occurred, together with the "still very great inequality of the external conditions of the conflict" of interests[1]. These interests had "not yet had the time to achieve equilibrium"[2]. Likewise, the "forced division of labour", due to the misallocation of individuals to occupations and the consequent failure of social inequalities exactly to express natural inequalities, and the poor technical and administrative organisation within industry - these also were transitional and remediable phenomena. However, as we have seen, Durkheim was soon to move

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1. Ibid., p.362: tr. p.370 (S.L.).
2. Ibid. (S.L.).

towards a more activist view of the remedy, and would no longer count on the natural emergence of appropriate rules and institutions. This change was crucial to the development of his ideas about moral education and to his move towards socialism.

(iv) The Family and Kinship.

Durkheim's second public lecture-course in sociology at Bordeaux was on the family, and it was repeated several times at Bordeaux and later at Paris[1]. According to Mauss, it was, together with his courses on Morality (which we will consider below) his most cherished work. Indeed, the manuscript of 1890-2 was "so full of facts and ideas and so precious that Durkheim himself treated these pages with respect and for several years kept them with him even when travelling"[2]. He always intended to take the subject up again systematically in his later years. He intended to devote the latter part of his life to a historical and comparative history of the family and marriage up to the present, and planned to spend several years of research on it with Mauss[3]. Throughout his life, he always followed the course of research and writing on this subject very closely, as can be seen from his many reviews in all twelve volumes of the Annee Sociologique,

1. 1888-9, 1890-2, 1895-6 (?) (Bordeaux) and 1905-6 (?), 1907-8, 1909-10 (Paris); V. Appendix A. Durkheim's work on the family is seriously under-represented in his published works. Apart from his introductory lecture of 1888 (1888c) and the concluding lecture of the 1891-2 lecture course (1921a: tr.1965a) his researches were never published and although his manuscripts survived him, they no longer exist. It is a pity that Mauss never followed up his half-promise to contravene Durkheim's wish that they should not be published posthumously. However, v. Davy's study based on these lectures (Davy, 1925).
2. Mauss, 1925a, p.13.
3. V. ibid.

in which he always edited the section on "Domestic Organisation". Unfortunately, his early death prevented his work on the family from ever reaching completion.

He approached the subject from the evolutionary, historical and comparative perspective common to such contemporary writers on the family as Morgan, Westermarck, Maine, Bachofen and others. In the opening lecture of the course, he stressed the need to establish the principal family-types and ascertain the causes for their appearance and their survival, using the comparative method as a form of indirect experiment. By studying the whole historical development of the family, one would be in a position to understand the modern family, for, as he subsequently wrote,

> In order properly to understand a practice or an institution, a legal or a moral rule, it is necessary to trace it back as near as possible to its origins; for there is a close relation between what it is now and what it was in the past. Doubtless, since it has been transformed in the course of its development, the causal conditions on which it originally depended have themselves altered; but these transformations in turn depend on what the point of departure was.[1]

Initially he saw the most suitable method as being the historical study of laws and customs, for these represented what was common and constant in individuals' behaviour in any

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1. 1898a (ii), p.1; tr. 1963a, p.12 (S.L.). Cf: "... as soon as it is a question of explanation, the genetic method imposes itself on the sociologist - namely, that which, in order to explain the facts, begins by indicating their place in the course of development. For an institution is always, in part, the product of the past ..."; 1898a (iv)(2), p.327; also 1901c, p.169; tr. 1938b, p.139.

given society; as in the Division of Labour, he thought of them as the best indices of changes in social structures, since, in a sense, they constituted those structures. He also, from the beginning, saw the value of statistical, especially demographic, study in relation to the contemporary family[1]. But it was not until after he had come upon the English and American ethnographic work on religion in the mid-90's that he grasped the relevance of ethnography to the study of the family[2]. From that time on, he immersed himself in the writings of ethnographers and came to see very clearly both the possibility and the theoretical importance of applying a rigorous interpretation to their findings. Although he never finally and definitively threw off his evolutionary preconceptions, he came increasingly near to

1. V. 1888c, p.271.
2. In the opening lecture he had been scathing about the biased accounts of visitors and natives, and in 1894 he contrasted "the confused, hastily-made observations of travellers" with "the precise texts of history" (1901c, p.163 ; tr. 1938b, p.133 - S.L.) - still, it would seem, under the influence of Fustel de Coulanges. The sociologist, he continued, should "take as the principal material for his inductions societies whose beliefs, traditions, customs and laws have taken shape in written and authentic documents. To be sure, he will not spurn the information offered by ethnography (there are no facts which may be disdained by the scientist), but he will put them in their true place. Instead of making them the centre of gravity of his researches, he will in general use them only to complement historial data, or, at least, he will seek to confirm them by the latter" (Ibid., pp.163-4: tr. pp.133-4 - S.L.). Cf., however, the following statements from The Elementary Forms of the Religious Life:- "the observations of ethnographers have often been veritable revelations, which have renewed the study of human institutions"; and "... nothing is more unjust than the disdain with which too many historians still regard the work of ethnographers. On the contrary, it is certain that ethnography has very often brought about the most fruitful revolutions in the different branches of sociology" (1912a, pp.3,9: tr.1915d, pp.6, 7 - S.L.). On the significance of this change in Durkheim's attitude to ethnography, v. Lévi-Strauss, 1960.

doing so[1]; and the theoretical contributions he made to the understanding of kinship systems result in large part from features of his approach that were independent of his evolutionism. Conversely, as one writer has put it, it is "not fanciful ... to suppose that Durkheim might have pioneered the formal analysis of relationship-systems had he not been sidetracked by his pseudo-evolutionary theorising"[2].

His starting-point was a firm assertion of the view that the family and marriage are social institutions, and that there is a definite relation between these and other forms of social organisation[3]. Far from accepting Westermarck's account of the family as based on marriage (an account he criticised as largely biological and Darwinist[4]), and the prevalent picture of kinship as based on consanguinity, he concentrated on the sociological character of these institutions and relationships, defining them as systems of rights and obligations, themselves ordered by systems of terminology. For there to be a family, he wrote

> It is not necessary that there should be cohabitation and it is not sufficient that there should be consanguinity. But in addition there must be ... rights

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1. The nearest he came to doing so was in the introduction to the Elementary Forms: "Primitive civilisations constitute ... privileged cases, because they are simple cases"; they offer us "a means of discerning the ever-present causes upon which the most essential forms of religious thought and practice depend": 1912a, pp.8,11: tr. 1915d., pp.6,8 (S.L.).
2. Maybury-Lewis, 1965, p.259.
3. V. 1895d, p.622.
4. V. ibid.

> and duties, sanctioned by society and unifying the members of which the family is composed. In other words, the family only exists insofar as it is a social institution, at once legal and moral, placed under the protection of the surrounding collectivity ... when one seeks to trace the history of the human family, it is with the family as a social institution that one is concerned.[1]

In seeking to trace that history, Durkheim elaborated an evolutionary scheme ranging from the amorphous, exogamous clan to the contemporary conjugal family. It was, he held,

> through laborious and complex transformations that, little by little, from the midst of the confused and unorganised clan there emerged families more and more restricted in extent, along definite genealogical branches and with an ever greater degree of organisation.2

The clan, based, he maintained, on totemism, was thus the primitive family, united by mystical beliefs; to be a member it was "necessary and sufficient to have in oneself something of the totemic being, that is, of the deified object which serves as a collective emblem for the group"[3]. Not only were all the members considered as descended from a single ancestor but "the relations which they maintain with one another are identical to those which, in all times, have been regarded as characteristic of kinship"[4]. From this original politico-

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1. 1898a (iv)(2), pp.329-30.
2. Ibid., p.331.
3. 1898a (iv)(1), p.317. The connexion between totemism and exogamy had been propounded by Sir James Frazer. In 1886, Lucien Herr, the Librarian at the Ecole Normale, directed Durkheim's attention to Frazer's article on "Totemism" (Mauss, 1927a, p.9). Frazer, however, unlike Durkheim, subsequently abandoned this hypothesis.
4. 1898a (ii), p.9.

familial group, a process of contraction could be traced:

> As it becomes settled on the ground, the totem loses its primitive character; it ends by becoming no more than a collective emblem, a particularly venerated name. The clan becomes a village; that is to say that its character as a domestic society is no longer anything more than a memory.[1]

There developed, in the context of a more stable political organisation, an extended, largely consanguineous family, of which the community of patrimony was the essential bond (i.e. Maine's "joint-family" of the "zadruga" type, with agnatic or uterine descent and several collateral branches). Thence there derived a still narrower zone of kinship: the patriarchal family (of which the Roman was the most perfect example); here the absolute and monarchical paternal authority was the unifying bond[2]. A separate process of development, Durkheim argued, occurred within Germanic and Christian civilisations leading to the so-called "paternal" or "cognate" family, in which paternal and maternal descent were put on the same footing and in which there was a kind of fusion of kin and of patrimony[3]. Finally, out of the patriarchal and paternal families there emerged the modern conjugal family, based on marriage and consisting of husband and wife together with minor and unmarried children[4].

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1. 1898a (iv)(2), p.331.
2. Davy describes the account of this family-type as "without doubt, one of Durkheim's most original insights": Davy, 1925, in Davy 1931 (1950 ed.), p.112.
3. V. 1905a (ii)(18), p.429.
4. V. 1921a: tr. 1965a.

The conjugal family, though essentially consisting of this "zone" or central circle of kinship, was also surrounded by "secondary" zones, which Durkheim described as survivals of earlier stages. As the final stage of the process of contraction, it represented only the vestiges of family communism (i.e. co-ownership of property) and an ever-growing freedom for its members, since "the same causes that led to the contraction of the family circle are responsible for the emergence of the personalities of family members ... Each person takes on more of an individual physiognomy, a personal manner of feeling and thinking"[1]. Whereas originally the solidarity of the family had primarily derived from things rather than persons, it now became "completely personal. We are attached to our family only because we are attached to our father, our mother, our wife, our children"[2]. Accordingly, rights of succession had been increasingly curtailed and eventually all rights of hereditary transmission would be abolished: just as offices and status could no longer be so transmitted, hereditary wealth would also disappear, for this "injustice, which strikes us as increasingly intolerable, is becoming increasingly irreconcilable with the conditions for existence of our present-day societie"[3].

1. Ibid., p.8: tr. p.533 (S.L.).
2. Ibid., p.9: tr. p.533.
3. Ibid., p.10: tr. p.534.

In general, whereas the family had formerly "kept most of its members within its orbit from birth to death and formed a compact mass, indivisible and endowed with a quality of permanence"[1], it was becoming increasingly short-lived: apart from the period of child-rearing, it was reduced to the married couple alone. The "hereditary name, together with all the memories it recalled, the family house, the ancestral domain, the traditional situation and reputation"[2] - all this was disappearing. Yet men needed to have collective ends relevant to their daily activities; personal ends were not a sufficient motivation for work, since "our work has meaning only insofar as it serves something beyond ourselves" and indeed, "when [the individual] takes himself as his end he falls into a state of moral misery which leads him to suicide"[3]. Thus there was a need for a functional alternative to the family: something "other than personal and domestic interest must stimulate us to work" deriving from "some other group outside the family, more circumscribed than political society, nearer to us and touching us more closely"[4]. Marriage was too impermanent to provide such an object of attachment, since it was dissolved by death in each generation. The only group which could perform this function was the occupational or professional group:

1. 1897a, p.433: tr. 1951a, p.577.
2. Ibid. (S.L.).
3. 1921a, p.11: tr. 1965a, p.534.
4. Ibid.: tr. pp. 534-5.

> Only this group, in my view, is able to perform the economic and moral functions which the family has become increasingly incapable of performing ... Men must gradually become attached to their occupational or professional life. Strong groups relative thereto must be developed. In the hearts of men professional duty must take over the place formerly occupied by domestic duty.[1]

On the other hand, the family, though it "plays a smaller role in life"[2], would continue to be an important centre of morality, a basis for moral education, a centre of moral security and a source of attachment and regulation for the individual[3]. Indeed, since the conjugal family was based on marriage, extra-marital sexual unions became all the more serious: where they existed, the children reared in such environments showed "moral defects ... A child cannot have a moral upbringing unless he lives in a society whose every

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1. Ibid., p.13: tr. pp.535-6.
2. 1897a, p.433: tr. 1951a, p.377.
3. "It is not only the framework which socially sustains the individual and constitutes the organised defence of certain of his interests. It is also the moral environment where his inclinations are disciplined and where his aspirations towards the ideal are born, begin to expand and continue to be maintained. In presenting him with domestic duties and affections ... which ... are obligatory like moral imperatives; in showing him the continuous operation of ... an altruism dictated as much by necessity as by instinct; in offering husband and wife the most propitious opportunity for the most intimate physical and moral union which is also the most permanent; ... in providing a place of refreshment where effort may be relaxed and the will reinvigorated; in giving this will and effort ... and end going beyond egoistic and momentary enjoyments; in forming, finally, a refuge where the wounds of life may find their consolation and errors their pardon, the family is a source (foyer) of morality, energy and kindness, a school of duty, love and work - in a word, a school of life which cannot lose its role"; Davy 1925 in Davy, 1931 (1950 ed.), p.119. Cf. Bellah, 1959 in Nisbet, 1965, pp.162-3. Also cf. the similar account of the modern family in Parsons, T. and Bales, R.F., Family, Socialization and Interaction Process (New York, 1955) ch.1.

member feels his obligations toward every other member"[1]. Moreover, the bonds of kinship became more and more indissoluble in the conjugal family, protected by the state which intervened more and more in determining and enforcing domestic rights and obligations. Thus the family, while becoming more concentrated and individualised, and while its centrality declined as the contexts of social interaction widened and multiplied, retained an essential role in modern societies.

Durkheim's subsequent work on kinship took a somewhat different turn, chiefly as a result of his immersion in ethnography. He became involved in and made notable contributions to debates on ethnological issues - such as the interpretation of marriage-systems and the various rights and duties they involve[2] (stressing a view of marriage as a contract[3]), on the position of women[4] (questioning the assumption that matriliny necessarily grows out of or otherwise implies matriarchy[5]) and, above all, on incest and exogamy[6] and on Australian section systems[7].

1. 1921a, p.14; tr. 1965a, p.536.
2. 1899a (iv)(19) and (22); and 1908a (ii)(12) and (13).
3. 1901a (iii)(25).
4. 1899a (iv)(7).
5. 1899a (iv)(23).
6. 1898a (ii)
7. 1902a (i) and 1905a (i); also v. 1903a (i), pp.7-21; tr. 1963b, pp. 10-26. For a brief discussion of some of this work, v. Maybury-Lewis, 1965.

The study of incest was a curious mixture of evolutionary speculation and incisive analysis. Seeing the connection between incest-prohibition and rules of exogamy, he justified this in terms of going back "to the very origins of this evolution, as far as the most primitive form which the repression of incest has historically taken; namely, the law of exogamy"[1]. What, then, was the nature of exogamy? He saw it as intimately linked to the nature of the clan[2] - of which Durkheim's account has been well described as postulating a "sort of Ur-group, omnipresent in the early history of every society"[3]. From its original elementary form in the uterine clan, the rule of exogamy thereafter changed in its scope of application in accordance with the evolution of the family. But it was itself to be explained in terms of "the religious beliefs of lower societies"[4]; indeed, it was "merely a particular case of a much more general religious institution, found at the basis of all primitive religions, and indeed, in a sense, of all religions - namely, taboo"[5]. This was Durkheim's alternative to the various speculative explanations of incest of McLennan, Lubbock, Spencer and Morgan and the prevalent "instinctive aversion" types of explanation, such

1. 1898a (ii), p.2: tr. 1963a, p.14 (S.L.).
2. V. ibid., p.9: tr. p.25.
3. Maybury-Lewis, 1965, p.257.
4. 1898a (ii), p.39: tr. 1963a, p.69.
5. Ibid.: tr. pp. 69-70 (S.L.).

as that of Westermarck (which were, Durkheim wrote, really a refusal to explain[1]). Durkheim argued that the totemic beliefs underlying exogamy imparted a "sentiment of religious horror"[2] to blood, which was closely related to the totem, itself immanent in the clan, and that this sentiment naturally extended to woman, who "so to speak, passes a part of her life in blood"[3], and thence to sexual relations with her. The relation of this account to exogamy was that sexual prohibitions applied exclusively to members of the clan, since "the totem, in effect, is only sacred for its followers"[4].

He went further, relating contemporary rules concerning incest to these original exogamous practices, which had contracted in scope, while the family continued to inspire a kind of religious respect ("it is always the holy arch which it is forbidden to touch, precisely because it is the school of respect and respect is the religious sentiment par excellence"[5]). Although the original beliefs justifying the sentiments and practices relating to incest had long disappeared, these latter had entered the mores and survived as

1. V. 1898a (ii) p.38: tr. p.63.
2. Ibid., p.44: tr. 76 (S.L.).
3. Ibid., p.53: tr. p.89.
4. Ibid., p.54: tr. p.90.
5. Ibid., p.60: tr. p.101.

a crucial element of our morality. Indeed Durkheim advanced the bold hypothesis that this explained a whole set of contemporary beliefs and practices relating to women, as well as the dichotomy between sensuality and familial morality, and, more generally, that between sex and morality[1]; he can even be seen as offering a sociological, or cultural, account, as opposed to Freud's bio-psychological account, of "the eternal antithesis between passion and duty"[2].

Durkheim's ensuing work on Australian section systems was more technical in character; indeed, its interest and importance largely reside in the method employed. Sur le Totemisme[3] was an analysis of the material presented in Spencer and Gillen's The Native Tribes of Central Australia[4], in opposition to Frazer's second theory of totemism[5], which sought to deny that matrimonial (and alimentary) prohibitions were essential to it. The kernel of Durkheim's argument was an attempt to show that the Arunta, in which such prohibitions

1. Cf. "Love ... excludes all idea of obligation and rule. It is the domain of freedom, where the imagination moves unhindered, where the interests of the parties and their gratification are almost the dominant law:" ibid., pp.60-1; tr. p.101 (S.L.).
2. Ibid., p.67; tr. p.112. This might, he argued, have taken a different form (ibid.).
3. 1902a (i).
4. London: 1899 (cf. 1900a (8)).
5. Expounded in his "The Origins of Totemism", Fortnightly Review, April and May 1899.

were lacking and which Frazer thought of as primitive, had in fact developed out of an originally exogamous clan. In particular, he argued that the Arunta's eight-section system could be explained in terms of a shift from matriliny to patriliny;[1] and in a subsequent article[2] he added the further hypothesis of the joint operation of the principles of territoriality and descent. Quite apart from the question of empirial evidence for this case[3], the significant thing was the formal character of the argument, pursuing the internal logic of the system[4]. Durkheim's approach was, in this respect, distinctly modern, foreshadowing, for example, the kind of analysis to be found in Levi-Strauss's Les Structures Elémentaires de la Parenté[5]. Indeed, Durkheim wrote in conclusion to his article on Australian matrimonial organisation:

> one cannot but be struck by the remarkable logic with which the ideas that are at the basis of this matrimonial organization develop across the various circumstances of history. In fact, one can, by a simple calculation, construct the system of classes of a tribe as a function of the mode of descent which is in practice there ... It is as though we were following the discussion of a mathematical problem ... Is this not one more proof that these

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1. As Maybury-Lewis points out, he went on to over-generalize from this, using this shift to explain too much: v., e.g., 1904a (14); 1905a (ii)(4); 1907a (11) and (12); and 1913a (ii) (18), (19) and (22). V. Maybury-Lewis, 1965, p.258.
2. 1905a (i).
3. V. below, p.482 for Durkheim's correspondence with Radcliffe-Brown on this question. Cf. Maybury-Lewis, 1965, p.258.
4. For an illuminating discussion of this, v. Peristiany, 1960.
5. Paris: 1947.

classes and phratries are not simply social categories (*cadres*), but also logical categories, subject, no doubt, to a special logic, different from ours, but which nonetheless has its own definite rules. [1]

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1. 1905a (i), p.147. Cf. 1903a (i): tr. 1963b.

(v) Suicide.

Closely connected with his ideas concerning the moral functions of the modern family was Durkheim's intensive work on suicide. This began with an article on suicide and the birthrate[1] and was followed by a whole year's lecture-course on suicide - the third public course in sociology of 1889-90[2]. He continued to work on the subject for the next seven years, collecting and interpreting statistics[3], in which task he was greatly helped by Mauss, who came to Bordeaux to study under his uncle in the early 1890's. The final result of all this work was Suicide, published in 1897[4].

Why did Durkheim turn to the study of suicide? For two centuries it had been a subject of widespread and continuing debate[5]. Having originally been treated largely as a moral problem in the eighteenth century[6], it came to be regarded in the nineteenth as a growing social problem requiring empirical explanation. Statistical and interpretative work on variations in the suicide rate multiplied in France,

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1. 1888d.
2. V. Appendix A.
3. He contributed a statistical map of suicides in France to the International Exhibition held at Bordeaux in 1895, along with a phylogenetic schema of the evolution of the family (Lacroze, 1960a, pp.4-5).
4. 1897a: tr. 1951a.
5. V. Giddens, 1965.
6. V. Crocker, L.G., "The Discussion of Suicide in the Eighteenth Century", Journal of the History of Ideas, 13 (1952), pp.47-52.

Belgium, Germany and Italy[1]. A number of statistical correlations were established and hypotheses advanced relating differential suicide rates to social factors, such as occupation, urbanisation, religion and the rate of social change, and to non-social factors, such as heredity, race and climate; and there was an unresolved dispute as to whether or not suicide was related to mental disorder. There was also general agreement that the overall rise in suicide rates was due to the passing of the traditional social order and the growth of industrialism. Here, then, was a subject peculiarly rich in systematically recorded and comparative evidence, in explanatory hypotheses, and in wide-ranging implications.

Secondly, it was concrete and specific, offering the researcher "groups of facts clearly circumscribed, capable of ready definition, with definite limits"[2]. This, in Durkheim's view, was the kind of front on which sociology should advance. As he wrote in the preface to Suicide:

> Suicide has been chosen as [the present work's] subject ... because, since there are few that are more precisely delimitable, it seemed to us peculiarly timely ... by such concentration, real laws are discoverable which demonstrate the possibility of sociology better than any dialectical argument.[3]

Moreover, it was a subject which, though restricted was directly related to the institutions and the general features of the wider society.

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1. Cf. Durkheim's own bibliography in 1897a, pp.16-17; tr.1951a, pp.52-3; and Giddens, 1965.
2. 1897a, p.vii; tr. 1951a, p.36.
3. Ibid., p.viii; tr. p.37.

Thirdly, as he observed in the same preface, it offered an excellent opportunity for demonstrating the principles set out in the Rules of Sociological Method[1]. In particular, he claimed that Suicide vindicated social realism, proving the existence of "realities as definite and substantial as those of the psychologist or the biologist"[2]. The existence of these became evident

> [w]hen each people is seen to have its own suicide-rate, more constant than that of general mortality, that its growth is in accordance with a coefficient of acceleration characteristic of each society; when it appears that the variations through which it passes at different times of the day, month, year, merely reflect the rhythm of social life; and that marriage, divorce, the family, religious society, the army, etc., affect it in accordance with definite laws, some of which may even be numerically expressed....[3]

The relevant explanatory variables were "real, living, active forces which, because of the way they determine the individual, prove their independence of him"; although each individual was "an element in the combination whence these forces ensue", they "control him once they are formed"[4].

Fourthly, since the essence of Durkheim's diagnosis of the ills of his own society consisted of an analysis of those forces (so that anomie, for example, resulted precisely from

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1. 1894a: repr. 1895a.
2. 1897a, p.xi: tr.p.39.
3. Ibid., pp.x-xi: tr.pp. 38-9.
4. Ibid., p.xi: tr.p.39.

"the lack of collective forces at certain points in society"[1]), the study of suicide offered a means of approaching "the causes of the general malaise currently being undergone by European societies", since it was "one of the forms through which the collective malady from which we suffer is transmitted". And it even offered suggestions "concerning remedies which may relieve it"[2].

Finally, and perhaps most significantly, suicide was peculiarly well suited to the task of establishing Durkheim's claims for sociology, for two further reasons. In the first place, it was, on the face of it, the most private of acts - "an individual action affecting the individual only", which "must seemingly depend exclusively on individual factors, thus belonging to psychology alone"[3]. Explaining it, or, more precisely, explaining differential suicide rates, sociologically would be a singular triumph. In the second place, it had the most direct bearing on the initial question of Durkheim's sociological work - "what are the bonds which unite men one with another?" - for it offered the clearest case of the dissolution of those bonds.

The early article on suicide and the birthrate reveals how strong was Durkheim's sense of the contemporary social "malaise" and of the role of sociology as in part social

1. Ibid., p.440; tr.p.382.
2. Ibid., pp.viii-ix; tr. p.37 (S.L.).
3. Ibid., p.8; tr. p.46.

pathology (for, as he had learnt from the philosopher-psychologist Theodule Ribot, explaining the pathological is a means of explaining the normal). Beginning from the assumption that the suicide rate is an index of social health or illness, he advanced the hypothesis that the birthrate is a function of the suicide rate and that in any given society there is a normal zone for the birthrate, such that, if it is too low (or too high), there is a rise in suicides, indicating a deeper social malaise. The decline in the birth-rate (which was, in fact, only temporary) was a matter of widespread concern in France at this period. It was discussed and lamented by philosophers, statisticians, economists and novelists, crusaded against by conservatives and Catholics, who were joined by many liberals, Radicals and socialists, and there were vast numbers of publications on the subject, from the scientific to the popular; there was even a large organisation, the Alliance pour l'Acroissement de la Population Française, founded to alleviate this alleged sympton of national decadence[1]. Durkheim offered a characteristic explanation: the high and rising suicide rate and the low and falling birthrate were both to be attributed to the nature of the "social milieu"[2]. They both resulted from a

1. V. Swart, K.W., The Sense of Decadence in Nineteenth-Century France (The Hague: 1964), pp.172-8.
2. It is worth noting that in this article, Durkheim explicitly argued that the birthrate depends on social practices and ideas ("moeurs et idées"), offering a further proof of the error of seeing his account of demographic change as "biological": V. p.108 above.

regression of "domestic sentiments"; when men lose "the taste and habit of domestic solidarity" and when "families move" (in particular from the countryside to the towns) and "individuals are less close", then the "cold wind of egoism freezes their hearts and weakens their spirits"[1].

Suicide[2] was a systematic generalisation of these preliminary insights; it generalised them by seeking to identify the areas and growing points of social dissolution in contemporary societies, and it was systematic in doing so within a coherent theoretical framework.

The theme of social dissolution was a pervasive one in nineteenth-century French thought. Deriving from the counter-revolutionary reaction of the early nineteenth century, it was taken up by conservatives, Catholics, socialists and radicals. All agreed in condemning "l'odieux individualisme" - the social, moral and political isolation of self-interested and acquisitive individuals, uninterested in social ideals and unamenable to social control[3]. Some attributed it to

1. 1888d., p.463.
2. For useful discussions of Suicide, v. Fauconnet, 1898, Tosti, 1898b, Bayet, 1922, Halbwachs, 1930, Blondel, 1933, Parsons, 1937, Gold 1958, Selvin, 1958, Dohrenwend, 1959, Madge, 1962, Johnson, 1965, Giddens, 1965 and 1966, and Douglas, 1966 and 1967; also v. Gibbs, J.P. ch. on Suicide in Merton, R.K. and Nisbet, R.A., Contemporary Social Problems (rev. ed. New York, 1966).
3. Cf. Swart, K.W., op.cit., passim and "Individualism' in the Mid-Nineteenth Century (1826-1860)", Journal of the History of Ideas, 23 (1962), pp. 77-90; Wolin, 1960; and an article contributed by the author to the forthcoming Dictionary of the History of Ideas, to be published by Charles Scribners' Sons, New York. The author is also engaged in a larger study of individualism, to be published by Pall Mall Press, London and Frederick A. Praeger, New York.

the "intellectual anarchy" consequent on the "negative" thought of the Enlightenment, others to the Revolution, others to the decline of the aristocracy, or of the power of the Church, or of traditional religion, still others to the rise of industry or the competitiveness of capitalism; but all agreed in seeing it as a threat to social order. Horror of it dominated the thought of the French theocrats, such as de Maistre and de Bonald; and both Saint-Simon and Comte sought to combat it by means of social organisation and the establishment of secular religions. It was Tocqueville who first called it "l'individualisme"("a recent expression to which a new idea has given birth"), referring to a set of beliefs and attitudes, close to egoism, held to be characteristic of democratic society and ultimately to threaten the very maintenance of social order - "a deliberate and peaceful sentiment which disposes each citizen to isolate himself from his fellows ....[which] at first only saps the virtues of public life, but, in the long run ... attacks and destroys all others and is at length absorbed into pure egoism"[1] The Catholic thinker Louis Veuillot wrote of individualism as the "sickness plaguing France", adding that it was

> not difficult to understand that a country in which individualism reigns is no longer under the normal conditions of society, since society is the union of minds and interests, and individualism is division pushed to the infinite degree.[2]

1. De Tocqueville, A., De la Democratie en Amerique in Oeuvres Complètes (Paris, 1961) t.1., pt.II, ch.ii, p.105.
2. Veuillot, L., "Lettre à M.Villemain" (August 1843) in Veuillot, L., Mélanges, 1ère serie, t.1, pp.132-3.

And the early French socialist Constantin Pecqueur wrote that "... the remedy is in association precisely because the abuse springs from 'individualism'"[1]. In short, Durkheim's notions of "anomie" and "egoism" were rooted in a broad tradition of discussion concerning the causes of imminent social disintegration and the practical measures necessary to avoid it.

Yet it is worth noting here that, quite apart from his own account of these causes and measures, his diagnosis differed in one crucial respect from those of preceding thinkers in this tradition. Whereas they had held that the cure for anti-social beliefs and attitudes on the part of individuals was to achieve a new conformity of belief and behaviour, that the solution to "individualism" was "collectivism", Durkheim maintained that a new set of beliefs had become institutionalised in modern societies, which rendered the individual sacred, attached moral value to individual autonomy and justified individual freedom and rights - and it was this which he chose to call "individualism"[2]. Thus he could write of individualism as "itself a social product, like all moralities and all religions"[3]. He now attributed

1. Cited in Dubois, J., Le Vocabulaire Politique et Sociale en France de 1869 à 1872 (Paris, 1962). Cf. the Utopian Socialist Etienne Cabet's equation of "individualism" with "egoism" and "personal interest", opposing it to "communism", entailing "association" and the "public interest" (ibid.).
2. V. below, p.231 sqq.
3. 1898c, p.12.

a much greater social influence to this "cult of the individual" than he had in the Division of Labour. As societies grew in volume and density, in complexity and differentiation,

> the moment approaches when there will be nothing in common between the members of a single human group except that they are all men. Under such conditions the body of collective sentiments inevitably attaches itself with all its strength to its single remaining object, communicating to this object an incomparable value by so doing. Since the human person is the only thing that appeals unanimously to all hearts, since its enhancement is the only aim that can be collectively pursued, it inevitably acquires exceptional value in the eyes of all. It thus rises far above all human aims, assuming a religious nature.[1]

Whereas he had originally regarded these beliefs as "not a truly social link"[2], he now saw them as essential to the laws and practices of contemporary societies, being "impersonal and disinterested ... above all individual personalities" and providing "the aim on which all social activity depends"[3]; he was later to observe that the progressive emancipation of the individual "does not imply a weakening but a transformation of social bonds"[4]. Thus Durkheim's advance over the "anti-individualist" thinkers who preceded him was to argue that it was possible, indeed necessary, to find a remedy to the dissolution of social bonds within a special context characterised by pluralism and shaped by liberal values.

1. 1897a, p.382; tr.1951a, p.336 (S.L.).
2. 1902b, p.147; tr. 1933b, p.172 (S.L.).
3. 1897a, p.383; tr. 1951a, p.337.
4. 1906b in 1924a (1951 ed.) p.106; tr. 1953b, p.72.

At the core of the argument of *Suicide* was Durkheim's conception of social solidarity and of morality. If suicide represented the extreme point of dissolution, and if the suicide rates characteristic of different social contexts expressed differences in their relative degrees of "solidarity" (a small number of suicide-prone individuals reacting to a general social condition), then the explanation of differential suicide-rates required an analysis of the nature of social solidarity, or the operation of social bonds - and, in consequence, of the manner of their dissolution. In fact, by the time of writing *Suicide*, Durkheim had abandoned the language of "solidarity", together with the non-analytic distinction between mechanical and organic types; instead, he used the concepts of "egoism" and "anomie", since these were able analytically to identify the ways in which social bonds related to individuals. Briefly, "egoism" (and its opposite, "altruism") picked out that which ties an individual to a group, to socially-given values and purposes; while "anomie" (and its curiously shadowy opposite, "fatalism") picked out that which holds an individual's desires in check, regulating and moderating them. Thus, though egoism and anomie "[b]oth spring from society's insufficient presence in individuals", the one involved a lack of "object and meaning" in social activity, whereas the other left "individual passions ... without a curb to restrain them". Egoistic suicide resulted from "man's no longer finding a basis for

existence in life", anomie suicide from "man's activity lacking regulation and his consequent sufferings"; and anomie differed from egoism "in its dependence, not on the way in which individuals are attached to society, but on how it regulates them"[1]. Here were the two sides of the notion of "social bond", equivalent, it will immediately be seen, to Durkheim's first two elements of morality: the "spirit of discipline" and "attachment to social groups"[2].

These two analytical modes of social dissolution were, of course, empirically closely related to one another: they had "a peculiar affinity for one another" and indeed were "usually merely two different aspects of one social state"[3]. Nevertheless, Durkheim used them to distinguish distinct "suicidogenic currents", affecting different groups and classes in society and corresponding to different social conditions and processes. If egoism primarily affected Protestants (rather than Catholics and Jews), educated circles, intellectual and professional occupations, unmarried men and persons without families, and anomie those engaged in business and trade, the divorced and indeed all men in a society where divorce was frequent; if egoism was reduced by "great social disturbances" and "popular wars" and anomie was "chronic" in the "sphere of trade and industry", occurring especially

1. 1897a, p.288: tr. 1951a p.258 (S.L.). For a discussion of Durkheim's account of social bonds and its relation to his underlying theory of human nature, v. Lukes, 1967.
2. V. above ch.2 (ii).
3. 1897a, p.325: tr. p.288.

during booms and slumps; if, in general, egoism was an inevitable correlate of contemporary individualism[1], while anomie accompanied social and economic progress - then one was in a position to specify both the ways in which society should be reformed and the limits to such reform. A certain degree of egoism and anomie, and consequently a certain number of suicides, was "normal" for any given social type (for what "is morbid for individuals may be normal for society"[2]), but the current rate, especially in the industrial and commercial sphere, but also among married men, was pathological, indicating "a state of crisis and perturbation"[3]. Hence one needed to organise economic life around occupational groups which would "tighten and strengthen" the "social fabric, the meshes of which are so dangerously relaxed"[4], providing individuals with centres of attachment and regulation; while the conjugal family should be made more indissoluble (and the status of women enhanced, so as to increase the moral benefits they derived from marriage). The proposed cure followed from the diagnosis, and the diagnosis followed from the analysis of the data.

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1. "Individualism is of course not necessarily egoism, but it comes close to it; the one cannot be stimulated without the other being enlarged": ibid., p.416: tr. p.364.
2. Ibid., p.418: tr. p.365 "For a current to have a certain strength in most of the country, it therefore has to exceed or fail to reach this strength at certain points". However, if "the spirit of renunciation [corresponding to "altruism"], the love of progress, the taste for individuation have their place in every kind of society, and cannot exist without becoming generators of suicide at certain points, it is further necessary for them to have this property only in a certain measure, varying with various peoples". (ibid., p.417, 420: tr. pp.364, 366.).
3. Ibid., p.423: tr. p.369.
4. Ibid., p.438: tr. p.381.

That analysis has been described by a contemporary mathematical sociologist as "still a model of social research"[1]. Durkheim's principal advance over previous writers on suicide in this connexion was his handling of various factors affecting suicide rates, not one by one, but rather as jointly operative and mutually interrelated. Despite the criticisms that can, and have, justly been made of Durkheim's actual results (pointing to the possible unreliability of the data[2], to specific mistakes in interpretation[3] and to invalid inferences, such as his resort to the ecological fallacy, deriving relations between properties of individuals from those between properties of groups[4]), his method was broadly sound. He was one of the first to use multivariate analysis, as well as internal and external replications; many of his results have been broadly confirmed by subsequent research[5], and, despite some pertinent theoretical criticisms[6], his

1. Selvin, 1958 in Nisbet 1965, p.113. Selvin continues: "Few, if any, later works can match the clarity and power with which Durkheim marshalled his facts to test and refine his theory. The stature of this work is even more impressive when one remembers that Durkheim lacked even so rudimentary a tool as the correlation coefficient. Yet the methodology of Suicide, is important to those now engaged in empirical research, not merely to historians of sociology. Durkheim recognised and solved many of the problems that beset present-day research" (ibid.).
2. V. Douglas, 1966 and 1967.
3. V., e.g., Selvin, 1958 in Nisbet, 1965, p.118 sqq.
4. V. ibid., pp. 125 sqq.
5. V. Halbwachs, 1930, Blondel, 1933, Wilson, 1963, Giddens, 1965 and 1966, and Gibbs, art. cit, V. also: Pierce, A., "The Economic Cycle and the Social Suicide Rate", ASR, 32 (1967), pp.457-462 and Sainsbury, P., Suicide in London (London, 1955).
6. V. Douglas, 1966 and 1967, Johnson, 1965 and Henry, A.F., and Short, J.F., Suicide and Homicide (New York, 1954).

hypotheses continue to provide the reference-point for current sociological (though not psychological) research into suicide.[1]

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1. Cf.: "Advance in suicide theory since Durkheim published Le Suicide has been limited indeed; writers have offered substitute terms to embody, often in less precise formulation, Durkheim's major concepts; but little had been added in extension of his theory" (Giddens, 1965, p.12).

(vi) The Method and Subject-Matter of Sociology

If Durkheim saw Suicide as the best kind of proof of sociology's distinctive, even exclusive, power to explain, he still felt the need to provide arguments to defend this claim and to support his own view of what the explanations should look like. He felt this need for a number of reasons. First, there was the rationalist, and indeed philosophical, tendency in his own intellectual temperament: if something was to be proved, it could and should be argued for; and the argument should systematically explore the presuppositions and implications of the position adopted - that is, it should be philosophical. Secondly, he had a strong desire to persuade the hostile and the sceptical (whose reactions we will consider below[1]); he was not content to pursue his own path independent of the views of others, since he was ready to see such views, where they were resistant to the claims of social science, as irresponsible and sometimes dangerous. He always had the sense of living through a period of social crisis, and he saw the enemies of social science as real obstacles to its alleviation. Thirdly, he wished to found a school: a body of scholars engaged in co-operative research, who would engage in specialist studies in a way that would ultimately transform all the specialised social sciences into the systematically-organised branches of a unified social science. For this purpose, one needed a programmatic set of

1. In chapter 2 (xii).

principles providing guidelines for future research. Accordingly, the Rules of Sociological Method was at once a treatise in the philosophy of social science, a polemic and a manifesto[1].

The arguments advanced in the Rules partly concern the method and partly the subject-matter of sociology, and Durkheim obviously thought of the method he proposed as "adapted to the particular nature of social phenomena"[2]. Yet, though he saw all his rules of method as dependent on "our fundamental principle : the objective reality of social facts" (for "in the end, it is on this principle that all else is based, and everything comes back to it"),[3] it was precisely in its treatment of the nature of social phenomena that the Rules was least probing and decisive. The reason for this is that, written between the Division of Labour and the first lecture-course on religion, it marked a transitional point in Durkheim's intellectual development. He had formulated the basic problem of his sociology: the nature of social solidarity.

1. 1894a, repr. as 1895a; 2nd ed. 1901c: tr. 1938b. Among the numerous discussions of this book, and of Durkheim's methodology generally, v. Mauss and Fauconnet, 1901, Bayet, 1907, Davy, 1911a, Deploige, 1911, Gehlke, 1915, Bureau, 1923, Bougle, 1924, Lacombe, 1925 and 1926 (q.v. for an especially rewarding discussion), Essertier, 1927b, Parsons, 1937 (ch.IX) and 1960, Gurvitch, 1938, Alpert, 1939a, b and c, Benoit-Smullyan, 1948, Gisbert, 1959 and Aimard, 1962.
2. 1901c, p.3: tr. 1938b, p.lx. (S.L.).
3. Ibid., p.xxiii: tr. p.lvii (S.L.). For a discussion of this principle, treating Durkheim's position as part of a debate reaching back at least to Hobbes, v. the author's forthcoming article, "Methodological Individualism Reconsidered", British Journal of Sociology, June, 1968.

he had determined his central theoretical interest: the social role and historical development of morality, in its widest sense. He had focussed on a range of empirical concerns: changes in social structure and the corresponding changes in institutions, practices and beliefs. He had developed a method: asking functional questions within a broadly evolutionary framework. The step yet to be taken was one that was implicit in what had gone before, and indeed in the Rules itself, but was only to become fully explicit in 1895: namely, the analytical separation of socially-given ideas, concepts, values and beliefs - or "collective representations" - as a crucial and relatively independent set of explanatory variables.

In the Rules Durkheim formulated procedures to be followed in the collection and interpretation of evidence, in the construction of explanatory hypotheses and in their validation. These procedures - for the elimination of bias, the construction of initial definitions and the choice of indicators; for the specification of normality relative to social type, the construction of a typology of societies and the identification of social causes and functions; and for the use of the comparative method, in particular that of concomitant variation, whether within a single society, within different societies of a single type or across different types - all, in Durkheim's view, presupposed the specificity of the "social" element in social phenomena. Indeed - and here the polemical nature of

the argument influenced its content - Durkheim took the specificity of the social to entail the exclusiveness of sociology, and the irrelevance of psychology[1]. In this he was a good disciple of Comte, who had banned psychology from the hierarchy of the sciences; but, unlike Comte, who had subjected the psychology (or "idéologie") of his time to detailed criticisms on the grounds that it "mutilated" man[2], Durkheim never attempted a critique of contemporary psychology. He even used the term to mean different things[3] - all of them, however, allegedly irrelevant to sociological explanation. Very many of his critics, both contemporary and posthumous, have regarded this exclusion of psychology as his major theoretical failing; and it certainly led him to rely all too often upon unexamined psychological assumptions[4]. Yet it

1. "Consequently, every time that a social phenomenon is directly explained by a psychological phenomenon, we may be sure that the explanation is false": 1901c, p.128; tr. 1938b, p.104.
2. In the forty-fifth leçon of the Cours de Philosophie Positive. For a discussion, v. Essertier, 1927b.
3. Viz.: (1) the study of the mental aspects of the "individual organism" (1902b, p.31: tr. 1933b, p.67; 1901c, p.xvi: tr. 1938b, p.xlix); (2) the scientific and objective study of "indiyidual representations", the laws of their association, etc. (1901c, pp.xvii-xviii: tr. 1938b, pp.xlix-li; 1898b: tr. 1953b); and (3) (most often) the vaguest and most general sense of unscientific and popular notions about human nature ("prenotions"), which are no more explanatory than Molière's virtus dormitiva (1901c, p.124: tr. 1938b, p.100; 1898a (ii): tr: 1963a, pt.II. Cf. Alpert, 1958). For a good discussion of Durkheim's attitude to psychology, v. Essertier, 1927b and also Filloux, 1965.
4. E.g. in Suicide and the Elementary Forms, (cf. re. the latter, Lévi-Strauss, 1962a: tr. Needham, London, 1964, pp.70-1).

could equally well be argued that it sprang from a sound instinct, since it enabled him to concentrate on a level of explanation hitherto virtually unexploited.

The position of the Rules concerning the nature of social phenomena was indecisive in at least two respects. In the first place, their supposedly identifying characteristics of "exteriority" and "constraint" were highly ambiguous (external to the observer, to any single individual observed, or to all such individuals? constraining in virtue of being obligatory, or traditional, or the only means to a given end, or simply causally efficacious?)[1]. In the second place, the argument of the Rules was noticeably inconclusive concerning explanatory priorities. If social phenomena ranged from the most "crystallised", or morphological, phenomena of social structure through laws to moral maxims and thence to "currents of opinion" (those "free currents of social life which have not yet taken any definite form")[2], where were sociological explanations in general to stop? At first sight, Durkheim seemed to give a clear answer: "the facts of social morphology ... play a preponderant role in collective life and, in consequence, in sociological explanations .... The first origin of every social process of any importance must be sought in the

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1. Cf. Lacombe, 1926 for an excellent discussion of these ambiguities, esp. pp. 28 sqq. For a passage in which the meaning of "constraint" perceptibly changes, v. 1901c, pp.6-7: tr. 1938b, pp.2-3.
2. 1901c, pp.18, 19: tr. 1938b, pp.11,12 (S.L.).

constitution of the internal social environment"[1]. In particular, Durkheim alluded to his own explanation, in the Division of Labour, in terms of "the number of social units or, as we have also called it, the volume of society, and the degree of concentration of the mass, or what we have called dynamic density"[2]. While disclaiming "having found all the features of the social environment which are able to play a role in the explanation of social facts", he remarked that "these are the only ones we have discerned and we have not been led to seek others"[3].

He hastened to add that this explanatory priority did not imply that one should see the social environment as "a sort of ultimate and absolute fact beyond which one cannot go"[4]: it should rather be seen as primary simply because

> it is general enough to explain a great number of other facts ... the changes which occur within it, whatever their causes, have repercussions in all directions throughout the social organism and cannot fail to affect in some degree all its functions.[5]

Yet, even on this qualified interpretation, it is not at all clear that Durkheim could justifiably claim to have identified a set of social facts with explanatory priority. For, earlier

1. Ibid., pp.137-8: tr.pp.112-3. (S.L.).
2. Ibid., p. 139: tr. p.113 (S.L.).
3. Ibid., p.141: tr. p.115 (S.L.).
4. Ibid., p.142: tr. p.116 (S.L.).
5. Ibid. (S.L.).

in the same book, he had argued that morphological phenomena were "of the same nature"[1] as other social facts, that the political divisions of a society were essentially "moral", that a society's organisation was determined by "public law" and that if "the population crowds into our towns instead of dispersing into the countryside, it is because there is a current of opinion, a collective pressure which imposes this concentration on individuals"[2].

Thus the Rules stood at a point of transition. Previously to it, Durkheim had been tempted in the direction of singling out a subset of social facts, characteristic of the structure or "milieu" of a given society, as basic. Although, since his return from Germany, he had never explicitly excluded ideas and beliefs from that subset[3], he nevertheless tended to consider them as, in a broad sense, derivative and without any major independent explanatory significance. After the Rules he was to give them greater and greater significance - so that by 1914 he was writing of the "ideas and sentiments that are elaborated by a collectivity" as having "an ascendancy and an authority that cause the particular individuals who think them and believe in them to represent them in the form of moral forces that dominate them and sustain them", and of "states of consciousness" which "come to us from society, ... transfer society into us and connect us with something that surpasses us"[4].

1. Ibid., p.19; tr.p.13.
2. Ibid., pp.17-18; tr. p.11 (S.L.).
3. V. supra, ch.1 (iv).
4. 1914a; tr. 1960c, pp.335, 337.

Here was a remarkable development, the principal stages of which may briefly be noted. The Rules already marked an advance from the Division of Labour with respect to "material" and "moral" density: the Division of Labour had represented the former as an exact expression of the latter, whereas the Rules made it clear that the latter was defined "as a function of the number of individuals who are effectively related not merely commercially but morally; that is, who not only exchange services and engage in competition, but live a common life"[1]. Again, in the Division of Labour Durkheim had written, in criticism of Fustel de Coulanges, that "it is [social arrangements] that explain the power and nature of the religious idea", arguing that Fustel de Coulanges had "mistaken the cause for the effect"[2]; subsequently he was to adopt a less unilateral view.

By 1897, in a review of a marxist work on historical materialism, he expressed himself as follows:

> We regard as fruitful this idea that social life must be explained, not by the conception of it held by those who participate in it, but by profound causes which escape consciousness; and we also think that these causes must be sought chiefly in the way in which the associated individuals are grouped. We even think that it is on this condition, and on this condition alone, that history can become a science and sociology in consequence exist. For, in order that collective representations should be intelligible, they must come from something and, since they cannot

1. 1901c, p.139; tr.1938b, p.114 (S.L.). (V. esp. the footnote to p.139; tr. p.213.).
2. 1902b, p.154; tr.1913b, p.179.

> form a circle closed upon itself, the source whence they derive must be found outside them. Either the conscience collective floats in the void, like a sort of inconceivable absolute, or it is connected with the rest of the world through the intermediary of a substratum on which, in consequence, it depends. On the other hand, of what can this substratum be composed if not of the members of society as they are socially combined?[1]

He distinguished this position from economic materialism ("we reached it before knowing Marx, by whom we have in no way been influenced"[2]). Historians and psychologists had long been aware that one had to look elsewhere for explanations than to ideas held by individuals, and it was natural to extend this to collective ideas, but he could not see "what part the sad conflict of classes that we are currently witnessing can have had in the elaboration or development of this idea" and he denied that the causes of social phenomena "come back, in the last analysis, to the state of industrial technique and that the economic factor is the motive-force of progress"[3]. Economic materialism pretended to be the key to history, but it had not begun to be systematically verified; quite the contrary:

> Sociologists and historians tend more and more to agree in the common view that religion is the most primitive of all social phenomena. It was the source, through successive transformations, of all other manifestations of collective activity: law, morality, art, science, political forms, etc. In the beginning, all is religious.[4]

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1. 1897e, p.648. For a discussion of this passage, v. Winch, P., The Idea of a Social Science (London, 1958), pp.23 sqq.
2. Ibid., p.649.
3. Ibid.
4. Ibid., p.650.

Indeed, so far was anyone from showing how religion could be reduced to economic causes, that it seemed altogether more likely that the latter depended on religion. However, he added, this anti-marxist case should not be pushed too far: if the "different forms of collective activity" derived in the last instance from their "substratum", they then became "in their turn, original sources of influence", with "an efficacity of their own", and they "react upon the very causes on which they depend"[1]. Thus the economic factor was far from an epiphenomenon: it had "an influence that is special to it; it can partially modify the very substratum from which it results". Nonetheless, everything led one to the view that it was "secondary and derivative"[2].

This new view of the preponderance of religion, and of the partial autonomy of the "different forms of collective activity" relative to their "substratum" formed the basis for the subsequent development of his thought - with an ever-growing explanatory role for religion and an ever-growing autonomy for the "collective representations". In the same year (1897) he wrote that it was "clear that essentially social life is made up of representations. Only these collective

1. Ibid., p.651.
2. Ibid. This review is the only place in which Durkheim explicitly states his theoretical position vis-a-vis marxism (but v. also 1902f). Cf. Engels' letter to Bloch: "The economic situation is the basis, but the various elements of the superstructure ... also exercise their influence upon the course of the historical struggles and in many cases preponderate in determining their form". (Marx and Engels, Selected Works (Moscow, 1962) vol.ii, p.488).

representations are of quite another character from those of the individual"[1], illustrating the point by reference to religion - "Religion is, in a word, the system of symbols by means of which society becomes conscious of itself; it is the way of thinking characteristic of collective existence"[2]. The point was taken up and systematically argued for the following year in the article on "Individual and Collective Representations"[3]. Here Durkheim sought to demonstrate the relative autonomy of the latter vis-a-vis their social substratum (relying on a parallel though shaky argument concerning the relative autonomy of mental phenomena vis-a-vis the brain)[4]. Thus, though initially dependent on "the number of social elements, the way in which they are grouped and distributed, etc.", collective representations became "partially autonomous realities which live their own life"[5]. They had "the power to attract and repel each other and to form amongst themselves various syntheses, which are determined by their natural affinities, and not by the state of the environment in the midst of which they evolve": representations were caused by

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1. 1897a, p.352: tr. 1951a, p.312.
2. Ibid. (S.L.).
3. 1898b: repr. 1924a: tr. 1953b.
4. He also used (from about this period onwards) a number of arguments by analogy to support this position, esp. the argument from the origin of life (existing in the cell, but not in its component elements - v., e.g., 1901c, p.xv: tr. 1938b, pp.xlvii; 1925a, p.303: tr. 1961a, p.264) and the argument from chemical synthesis (e.g. 1901c, p.xvi: tr. 1938b, p.xlviii; 1900b, p.649). This all went back to Boutroux's conception of different levels of nature.
5. 1924a (1951 ed.), p.43: tr. 1953b, p.31.

others, and not by "this or that characteristic of the social structure"[1]. The evolution of religion, he observed, gave "the most striking examples of this phenomenon";

> It is perhaps impossible to understand how the Greek or Roman Pantheon came into existence unless we go into the constitution of the city, the way in which the primitive clans slowly merged, the organisation of the patriarchal family, etc. Nevertheless the luxuriant growth of myths and legends, theogonic and cosmological systems, etc., which grow out of religious thought, is not directly related to the particular features of the social structure.[2]

The article ended by asserting the "hyper-spirituality" of social life - so that "collective psychology is the whole of sociology"[3]. And we may note that, by 1899, his view of the relative explanatory position of social morphology had changed accordingly from a primary, determining cause to something more like a precondition: "the constitution of [the] substratum affects, directly or indirectly, all social

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1. Ibid.
2. Ibid. (S.L.) Greek mythology posed a problem for Marx, and it is interesting to note that he treated it in a way that is closer to Durkheim's (and Fustel de Coulanges') account than to the stricter, and cruder, versions of historical materialism: "Known - that Greek mythology is not only the arsenal of Greek art but its foundation. Is the view of nature and of social relations which lies at the basis of Greek imagination and therefore of Greek mythology possible with self-actors and railways and locomotives and electric telegraphs? ... All mythology overcomes and dominates and moulds natural forces through the imagination, disappears therefore with actual domination over these [forces] ... Greek art presupposes Greek mythology, i.e. Nature and social forms already worked out by folk imagination in an unconsciously artistic form ...": Marx, Grundrisse der Kritik der politischen Oekonomie (Dietz Verlag, Berlin: 1953), pp.30-1. V. the discussion of this passage in Kamenka, E., The Ethical Foundations of Marxism (London, 1962), pp.135 sqq. Kamenka rightly observes that Marx's view here is that the "existence of Greek social organisation ... [is] necessary for Greek art and mythology, but not sufficient" (p.135).
3. Ibid., p.47: tr. p.34 (S.L.). Cf. 1898a (ii), p.69: tr.1963a, p.114 (S.L.): "One cannot repeat too often that everything

(contd. over)

phenomena, just as all psychological phenomena are, directly or indirectly, connected to the state of the brain"[1].

The rest of Durkheim's career consisted of pursuing the implications of this new position, notably in the study of primitive classification and the Elementary Forms of the Religious Life. His methodological writings on the way echoed this preoccupation - in particular, the preface to the second edition of the Rules[2](stressing the "representational" aspect of sociology's subject-matter), the essay on "Value Judgments and Judgments of Reality" (the principal social phenomena, religion, morality, law, economics and aesthetics, are nothing more than systems of values and hence of ideals. Sociology moves from the beginning in the field of ideals. The ideal is in fact its peculiar field of study ... It ... accepts them as given facts, as objects of study, and it tries to analyse and explain them"[3]) and the essay on "the Dualism of Human Nature" (in which the individual is pictured as split between two conflicting "states of consciousness": "the sensations and sensory appetites, on the one hand, and the intellectual and moral

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which is social consists of representations, and therefore is a product of representations."

1. 1899a (iii).
2. 1901b.
3. 1911b: repr. 1924a (1951 ed.), pp.140-1; tr. 1953b, p.96. V. last footnote to this section.

life, on the other" - the latter being "social and nothing but an extension of society"[1]). From the initial position in the Division of Labour, where he had been tempted to write that "everything occurs mechanically"[2], Durkheim had by the time of his latest writings come very close to maintaining that symbolic thought is a condition of and explains society[3]. In place of the original concentration upon functionalist explanations and structural determinants, he could write that a "society cannot be constituted without creating ideals. These ideals are simply the ideas in terms of which a society sees itself ... To see society only as an organised body of vital functions is to diminish it, for this body has a soul which is the composition of collective ideals[4]. Yet, through-

1. 1914b: tr. 1960c, pp.338, 337.
2. 1902b, p.253: tr. 1933b, p.270.
3. Cf. Lévi-Strauss, 1945, p.518: "Society cannot exist without symbolism, but instead of showing how the appearance of symbolic thought makes social life altogether possible and necessary, Durkheim tries the reverse, i.e. to make symbolism grow out of society". I think that Durkheim in fact did both. M. Lévi-Strauss apparently now also takes this view. He has recently written that Durkheim ("at his best") admitted that "all social life, even elementary presupposes an intellectual activity in man of which the formal properties, consequently, cannot be a reflection of the concrete organisation of the society". (Lévi-Strauss, 1962a, tr. Needham, p.96). He notes that the theme of the Elementatary Forms, together with the preface to the second edition of the Rules and the essay on Primitive Classification, "shows the contradiction inherent in the contrary view, which is only too often adopted by Durkheim when he affirms the primacy of the social over the intellect". In short, Durkheim's thought was "torn between two contradictory claims" (p.97).
4. 1911b: repr.1924a (1951 ed.). pp.135-6: tr. 1953b, p.93. Durkheim used "ideals" in a very wide sense, including "concepts" as a sub-class (this is the gist of 1911b): in the case of judgments of reality, "the ideal is a symbol of the thing so as to render it assimilable to thought"; in the case of value-judgments, "the thing is a symbol for the ideal, representing it to different minds" (ibid., p.140: tr. pp.95-6 - S.L.).

out this development, and despite this major change in emphasis, he always remained alive to the interaction between social structure and consciousness.

(vii) The Sociology of Religion - I.

Durkheim recognised the importance in his intellectual development of the 1894-5 lecture-course on religion:

> it was not until 1895 that I achieved a clear view of the essential role played by religion in social life. It was in that year that, for the first time, I found the means of tackling the study of religion sociologically. This was a revelation to me. That course of 1895 marked a dividing line in the development of my thought, to such an extent that all my previous researches had to be taken up afresh in order to be made to harmonise with these new insights .. [This re-orientation] was entirely due to the studies of religious history which I had just undertaken, and notably to the reading of the works of Robertson Smith and his school.[1]

And this is corroborated by another of his rare autobiographical passages (written in rebuttal of Deploige's "accusation" that his thought was essentially German in inspiration):

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1. 1907b; repr. in Deploige, 1911, pp.402-3. These studies made him see old problems in a new light: "Religion contains in itself from the very beginning, even in an indistinct state, all the elements which in dissociating themselves from it, articulating themselves, and combining with one another in a thousand ways, have given rise to the various manifestations of collective life. From myths and legends have issued forth science and poetry; from religious ornamentations and cult ceremonials have come the plastic arts; from ritual practice was born law and morals. One cannot understand our perception of the world, our philosophical conceptions of the soul, of immortality, of life, if one does not know the religious beliefs which are their primordial forms. Kinship started out as an essentially religious tie; punishment, contract, gift and homage are transformations of expiatory, contractual, communal, honorary sacrifices and so on. At most one may ask whether economic organisation is an exception and derives from another source; although we do not think so, we grant that the question must be kept in abeyance. At any rate, a great number of problems change their aspects completely as soon as their connections with the sociology of religion are recognised."; 1899a (i) pp.iv-v: tr. 1960c, pp.350-1.

> it is known what a preponderant place the study of religion has taken in our researches. Now, the science of religion is essentially English and American: not at all German. It is to give a systematically mutilated 'genesis' of our thought to neglect all that we owe to Robertson Smith and to the works of the ethnographers of England and America.[1]

I have not been able to discover any extant account of the 1894-5 course, but one may suppose that it included a discussion of Robertson Smith's theory of the clan cult of totemism as the earliest and most elementary form of religion, necessarily linked to societies with the simplest form of social structure, the clan segmentary system. Smith's theory presented religion as a social phenomenon, maintaining the values of the group and consisting in the idealisation, indeed divinisation of the clan, which was seen as composed of men, animals and gods bound together by ties of blood and was symbolised by the totem. Hence the communion meal as the most ancient form of sacrifice which renewed this bond; from it there developed property rights, the idea of taboo and further forms of sacrifice. That this theory must have been a considerable revelation to Durkheim can be judged from the thinness and inconclusiveness of his previous observations on religion. In 1886 he had written of religion as having, together with law and morality, the role of assuring the equilibrium of society and adapting it to external conditions and of its being a "form

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1. 1913(a) (ii)(15), p.326. On Robertson Smith, v. 1912a pp.126-7; tr. 1915d, pp.89-90.

of social discipline", merely a form of custom; he also saw the idea of divinity as serving to "symbolise traditions, cultures, collective needs" and argued that the sociologist must look at "what the symbol conceals and translates"[1]. By 1887 he was writing of religion as springing from the sentiment "attaching the individual to the whole social being", still emphasising its essentially moral character, and calling the primitive gods social rather than personal[2]. In 1893, in the Division of Labour, there was a general identification of repressive law and religious law in primitive societies ("offences against the gods are offences against society"[3]) and of primitive religion and mechanical solidarity ("religious consciences are identical there ..."[4]), and there was also an inconclusive and un-pursued definition of religion in terms of the high intensity of shared sentiments producing a sort of "reverential respect" for certain beliefs and rules[5]. It can easily be seen that with these half-formulated ideas, together with the notion that religion was best studied in its "primitive" forms, for "religion tends to embrace a smaller and smaller portion of social life" whereas "[o]riginally, it pervaded everything"[6], he was likely to be deeply impressed by

1. 1886a, pp.68, 66.
2. 1887b, pp.309-11.
3. 1902b, p.60: tr. 1933b, p.93.
4. Ibid., p.105: tr. p.135.
5. Ibid., pp.142-4: tr. pp.168-70.
6. Ibid., p.143: tr. p.169.

Robertson Smith's sociological theory of the religion of the Semitic societies of ancient Arabia[1] - especially its emphasis on the social functions of totemic rituals and its central idea of the divinisation of the community.

The work of Robertson Smith and his school offered Durkheim an overall perspective on religion, which he then transformed in the light of his own theoretical preoccupations. As Malinowski observed, Smith was one of the first to see that religion should be accounted for in terms of its social nature[2], and, in particular, this meant concentrating on ritual practices: in Smith's words, early religions "consisted entirely of institutions and practices"[3]. The attractiveness of this approach for Durkheim can be appreciated if it is set beside the profusion of psychological theories of religion, especially primitive religion, that was characteristic of the time - illusionist theories, especially animism, as propounded by Spencer, Tylor and Frazer; nature-myth theories, typified by the work of Max Müller; and theories, such as Lang's, deriving religion from the idea of God[4]. In this intellectual climate, religion was a peculiarly challenging subject for Durkheim: how was religion to be explained sociologically?

There are really two stages in Durkheim's development of an answer to this question, marked respectively by the essay

1. W.R. Robertson Smith, Lectures on the Religion of the Semites: First Series (Edinburgh, 1889; 3rd edition, London, 1927).
2. Cited in Kardiner and Preble, 1961, p.82.
3. Op.cit., p.16 (cited in Evans-Pritchard, 1965, p.53).
4. For Durkheim's extensive critiques of these various types of theories, v. 1899a(ii), pt. II and 1912a: tr. 1915d, Book 1, chs. 2 and 3.

"On the Definition of Religious Phenomena"[1] and the Elementary Forms of the Religious Life. The first stage (to be considered in this section) was largely pre-ethnographic; Durkheim had no yet become "saturated"[2] with the technical and first-hand literature, and in particular he was not yet, as he later became, "a veteran in Australian ethnology"[3]. Indeed, the great period of Australian ethnographic work, which attracted an immense amount of interest among European scholars, really dated from the late 1890's[4]. At this early stage, Durkheim's approach was largely formal and rather simpliste: he worked out a number of hypotheses about the nature of religion and its role in social life, and he set out a range of questions for the sociology of religion to confront. Subsequently, his treatment of religion was to be considerably more nuanced and complex, and in contact with a rich and detailed mass of empirical material; he then tested modified and extended his hypotheses and, further, sought to generalise his conclusions to give sociological answers to the most fundamental philosophical questions concerning the bases of morality and knowledge.

"On the Definition of Religious Phenomena" was a first, rather groping attempt to see religion as a social phenomenon, indeed, the primitive social phenomenon, from which others subsequently emerged. Characteristically, Durkheim saw the first step as the construction of a definition, to "delimit the

1. 1899a (ii).
2. Lowie, 1937, p.211 (cited in Stanner, 1967, p.217).
3. Goldenweiser, 1915, p.719 (cited in ibid.).
4. In particular, there were the publications of Roth, Spencer and Gillen, and Howitt.

the circle of facts on which research will concentrate"[1]. Again characteristically, he sought that definition, not in the content (which was infinitely variable and waiting to be explored), but in "the exterior and apparent form of religious phenomena"[2]. Following Robertson Smith, he turned first to the cult, which consisted of "practices, that is of definite ways of acting"[3]. What was the general distinguishing criterion marking out those that are religious rather than moral and legal? Being obligatory was clearly not enough and a supernatural reference would not do, since there were cults without gods. Interestingly, Durkheim at this stage also ruled out reference to sacred things as an identifying criterion (observing that, since the sacred was the religious, this was to beg the question at issue). The answer he proposed was in terms of the obligatory character of the beliefs lying behind the practices ("Not only does the Israelite believe that Jehovah is God, that He is the only God, the creator of the world, the revealer of the Law; but he must believe it"[4]). There was "a pressure exercised by a society on its members to prevent them from deviating from the common faith"[5]. Indeed, "the more religious [the beliefs], the more they are obligatory"[6]. In short, "Religious phenomena consist of obligatory beliefs united with definite practices which relate to the objects given in the beliefs". Religion was "a more or less organised

1. 1899a (ii) p.1.
2. Ibid., p.16.
3. Ibid.
4. Ibid., p.17.
5. Ibid., p.18.
6. Ibid.

and systematised collection of phenomena of this sort"[1].

Durkheim saw this definition as achieving a number of aims. First, he took it as marking off religion from law and morality (obligatory practices without obligatory beliefs), from science (in which it was sensible but not obligatory to believe) and from collective beliefs of a modern, secular sort, such as those in progress and democracy (obligatory beliefs which "while exercising a very general influence on conduct, are not tied to definite ways of acting, which express them"[2]). There were, of course, half-way cases, such as beliefs relating to "the flag, the country, this or that political organisation, or hero, or historical event"; these were "to some degree indistinguishable from properly religious beliefs"[3]. What characterised religion was the inseparable unity of thought and action: it corresponded to "a stage of social development at which these two functions are not yet dissociated and established apart from one another, but are still so confused with one another that it is impossible to mark a very clear dividing-line between them"[4].

In the second place, Durkheim pursued what he saw as a number of assumptions and implications of this definition. Religious beliefs and practices were obligatory; "all that is obligatory is of social origin", and conformity to religious rules involved the individual's deference to the moral power of society:

1. Ibid., pp.22-3.
2. Ibid., p.22.
3. Ibid., p.20.
4. Ibid., p.22.

> The state of perpetual dependence in which we are towards [society] inspires us with a sentiment of religious respect for it. It is therefore it which prescribes to the believer the dogmas he must believe and the rites he must observe; and if this is so, it is because the rites and dogmas are its creation.[1]

Moreover, it followed from this that the determining cause of religious phenomena lay in "the nature of the societies to which they relate, and if they have evolved in the course of history it is because social organisation has itself been transformed"[2]. On the other hand, Durkheim wrote of religious "representations" as the work of the "collective mind" ("the manner sui generis in which men think when they think collectively") and subject to "laws of collective ideation"[3], yet to be discovered. Hence the distinction between sacred and profane - here rather crudely expressed as that between what is collectively conceived and of general interest, on the one hand, and what is individually conceived (constructed out of "quite naked individual impressions"[4]) and the result of empirical observation, on the other. And he went on to link this with the distinction between temporal and spiritual, individual and social, psychology and sociology (so that, historically, socialisation was for long accompanied by "initiation into sacred things"[5]). Finally, he argued that individual, private religions were secondary and derivative from collective, public ones: they were merely the "subjective

1. Ibid., p.23.
2. Ibid., p.24.
3. Ibid., p.25.
4. Ibid., p.26.
5. Ibid.

aspect of the external, impersonal and public religion"[1].

Durkheim saw this definition as giving the science of religions a determinate direction and enabling it to become "truly sociological"[2]. In particular, the sociology of religion should examine the "social forces" dominating the believer - forces which were the "direct product of collective sentiments which have taken on a material form"[3]. It should investigate:

> What are these sentiments, what are the social causes that have awakened them and have determined their expression in this or that form, to what social ends does the social organisation which thus arises respond?

In short the sociologist of religion must observe "the conditions of collective existence"[4].

For the next thirteen years Durkheim delved into these questions[5]. He eventually came to regard this initial definition of subject-matter, not as inaccurate but as "too formal" and neglecting "the contents of the religious representations too much"[6]. Moreover, he observed that while their "imperative character is really a distinctive trait of

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1. Ibid., p.28.
2. Ibid., p.23.
3. Ibid., p.24.
4. Ibid.
5. He lectured on "The Elementary Forms of Religion" in 1900-1 (Bordeaux) and subsequently as "Religion: Origins" in 1906-7 (Paris): v. Appendix A. He contributed numerous reviews of ethnographic studies and writings on primitive cults in the volumes of the Année. In addition, he encouraged Mauss to take up the study of primitive religion (v. Appendix E).
6. 1912a, p.66: tr. 1915d, p.47.

religious beliefs, it allows of an infinite number of degrees; consequently, there are even cases where it is not easily perceptible"[1]. Just as he had gradually abandoned exteriority and constraint as criteria for social facts, he similarly dropped obligatoriness from the definition of religious facts; these developments coincided with a deepening interest in the operation of "collective representations" in social life.

In the context of the sociology of religion, that interest took the form of marrying a particular view of totemism to the growing mass of Australian material. As Frazer put it, the central Australian tribes appeared to be "humanity in the chrysalis stage", which was assumed to be identical with "the totem stage"[2]; in particular, the Intichiuma ceremony (in which the totemic animal is eaten) seemed to be "the actual observance of that totem sacrament which Robertson Smith, with the intuition of genius, divined years ago, but of which positive examples have hitherto been wanting"[3]. Frazer later abandoned this view, but Durkheim did not. It has been well said that Durkheim was "clearly captivated by what seemed an extraordinary primitivity"[4]. He took a position in the current debate on totemism - an extreme position at odds with many of his contemporaries - and he interpreted, with considerable plausibility, a certain specific range of Australian

1. Ibid.
2. Frazer, J.G., "The Origin of Totemism", the Fortnightly Review, April-May, 1899, p.638 (cited in Stanner, 1967, p.219).
3. Ibid. Cf. 1912a, p.485; tr. 1915d, p.339: "By an intuition of genius, Smith had an intuition of all this [ie the Intichiuma], though he was not acquainted with the facts".
4. Stanner, 1967, p.219.

ethnographic material on that basis. He wanted to find an instance of an extremely primitive group united by the same name and emblem and participating in the same cult. He thought he had found it among the aboriginal tribes of Australia, and that these constituted the crucial experiment which validated his theory of religion.

(viii) The History of Socialism[1]

In 1895-6 Durkheim gave a lecture-course on the history of socialism. In formulating his diagnosis of the ills of contemporary European societies and in proposing cures he was naturally concerned to make his position clear in relation to the various sorts of socialism that were current. As we have seen, the original title of his doctoral thesis had been "the Relations between Individualism and Socialism" and throughout his early writings up to the mid-90's, although he had abandoned the direct study of socialism, one can discern a constant concern to distil what he saw as acceptable in socialism from what he saw as unacceptable. He had emerged from the Ecole Normale an ardent republican, preoccupied with "social questions"; indeed, Mauss reports that it was Durkheim who "turned [Jaures] away from the political formalism and the shallow philosophy of the Radicals"[2]. But he did not just become a socialist: none of the available varieties of socialism in France in the 80's seems to have attracted him - neither Vaillant and the Blanquistes, nor the Guesdistes, nor the Possibilistes, nor the workers' movements, mostly in favour of direct action, nor, above all, the anarchists. His attention was turned rather towards Germany,

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1. For a fuller discussion of Durkheim's attitude to socialism, v. infra, Ch. 2 (xiii).
2. Mauss, 1928, p.viii: tr. Durkheim, 1958b, p.3.

where the theoretical level of socialist thinking was, in any case, much higher[1]. He particularly admired Albert Schaeffle's Die Quintessenz des Sozialismus[2], (already familiar in France through Benoit Malon's translation), which advocated the rational planning of production and which he saw as "revealing the social side of economic questions"[3]. He approved of Schaeffle's approach, as formulated in the question: "Until now economic life has only been a collection of reflexes; what would it become if it were attached to the conscious centres of the social organism?" and he endorsed Schaeffle's view of the state as "an organ which concentrates and expresses the whole of social life"[4]. In 1888 he corresponded with Schaeffle and even wrote an article praising and defending Schaeffle's socialism against the charges of "collectivism" and pro-bureaucratic authoritarianism. He valued this version of socialism chiefly because of its attempt to "combat ... the dispersive tendencies engendered by the practice of individualism", and he called it "organised socialism, that is to say, where the industrial forces are grouped around centres of influence which regulate their co-operation"[5]. He had studied Marx (on the advice of a Finnish friend, Neiglick, during his stay at Leipzig[6]), but he preferred the ideas of Schaeffle which, he held, freed socialism from

1. V. Lichtheim, G., Marxism in Modern France (New York and London, 1966), Ch.1.
2. Gotha: 1875.
3. 1886a, p.77.
4. Ibid.,pp. 76, 79.
5. 1888b, pp.4-5.
6. V. Mauss, 1928, p.viii: tr. Durkheim, 1958b, p.3. He was evidently familiar with Das Kapital: v., e.g.: 1902b, p.388: tr. 1933b, p.393 and 1928a, pp.5-6: tr.1958b,pp.6-7.

internal contradictions. Even the idea of occupational groups is to be found in Schaeffle, but Durkheim did not seriously take this up until the mid-90's.

In 1893 he published a "Note on the Definition of Socialism" in which he argued that all socialist doctrines had in common an attitude of protest against the existing economic situation and the aim of organising, regulating and unifying economic life, in a society where labour is very divided, thereby introducing morality into the economic sphere. Socialism, which he distinguished sharply from communism, always involved the claim that the moral transformation depended on a prior transformation in economic organisation. By eliminating unorganised competition and the unregulated distribution of economic functions, one would be able to "socialise" economic forces and introduce a "higher morality". Thus, his definition of socialism was "a tendency to make the economic functions, which are in a diffuse state ... develop, suddenly or gradually, into an organised state"[1]. This definition impressed both Guesde and Jaurès, who declared themselves to be in agreement with Durkheim, but he, as we shall see, remained uncommitted to socialism as a movement. As Mauss put it, "all his life he was loath to adhere to socialism in the true sense only because of certain features it possessed: its violent character, its class character - more or less purely working-class - and also its political, even politician-like tone"[2].

1. 1893c, p.511.
2. Mauss, 1928, p.viii: tr. Durkheim, 1958b, p.3 (S.L.).

He felt the need to examine the causes giving rise to socialism and the needs to which it offered (preliminary) solutions. Thus, in 1895, at a time when it was undergoing a considerable revival in France, with some of his most brilliant students turning to socialism of the Marxist, even Guesdist variety[1], he began what he intended to be a comprehensive course on the history of socialism, treating it as an ideology requiring sociological explanation. He examined it, Mauss wrote, "from a purely scientific point of view, as a fact which the scholar should look upon coldly, without prejudice and without taking sides". To do this it was necessary to "analyse the social pressures which caused men like Saint-Simon and Fourier, Owen and Marx to develop new principles of morality and of political and economic action"[2]. This first course of 1895-6, which had great success, was, in Mauss's words, "a model of the application of a sociological and historical method to the analysis of the causes of an idea"[3]. By giving it, Durkheim "satisfied at the same time the demands of both his moral and his scientific thought. He wished to take a stand and to justify it"[4]. Indeed, he took up these studies to "justify himself in his own eyes, in those of his students, and one day in the eyes of the world"[5].

1. V. ibid., p.viii; tr. pp.2-3. These students formed a Circle of Social Studies, where Marx's Capital was discussed in the way that others discussed Spinoza. According to Mauss, Durkheim sensed their hostility to liberalism and bourgeois individualism. In a lecture in 1893, organised by this Circle and the Workers' Party, Jaurès enthused about Durkheim's work (ibid.).
2. Ibid., p.vii; tr. p.2 (S.L.).
3. Ibid. (S.L.).
4. Ibid. (S.L.).
5. V. Ibid. p.ix.; tr.p.3.

That he felt this need is indicative both of the contentious political climate of the time and of his personal sense of intellectual responsibility.

The 1895-6 lectures developed and explored the implications of the definition already reached, and discussed the origins of socialism from the eighteenth century through Sismondi and Saint-Simon to the Saint-Simonians[1]. He had prepared a course for 1896-7 on Fourier and Proudhon (whose works he had studied), and he intended to devote a third year to Lassalle, of whom he knew little at that time, and to Marx and German socialism (with which he was very familiar)[2]. But he abandoned these projects and in 1896 "returned to pure science"[3] by founding the Annee Sociologique. Mauss records that Durkheim "always regretted his inability to continue or resume" his "History of Socialism"[4].

Durkheim aimed to study socialism "as a reality"[5], as "an unknown phenomenon, yet to be explored"[6], seeking "to determine what it consists of, when it began, through what transformations it has passed and what determined those transformations" - studying it "in the same way that we studied

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1. For discussions referring to this course (1928a: tr.1958b), v. Cuvillier, 1959b, Neyer, 1960, Aron, 1962 and Filloux, 1963. It has been unduly neglected, probably because of the seemingly idiosyncratic definition of socialism Durkheim used. In fact, as a study of the technocratic strand in socialist thought, it is of both historical and contemporary interest.
2. V. Mauss, 1928, p.ix: tr.p.3. None of this material survives.
3. Ibid.
4. Ibid.
5. 1928a, p.11: tr. 1958b, p.10.
6. Ibid., p.26: tr. p.20 (S.L.).

suicide, the family, marriage, crime, punishment, responsibility and religion"[1]. He approached it, not as a scientific theory or a "sociology in miniature"[2] to be evaluated for its truth or plausibility, but rather as a "practical" doctrine, a "plan for the reconstruction of present-day societies"[3] and a "cry of anguish, and, sometimes, of anger, uttered by the men who most keenly feel our collective malaise"[4].

Durkheim's definition of socialism was a bold attempt to seize the essentials of a historically specific ideology:

> We define as socialist every doctrine which calls for the connection of all economic functions, or of certain among them which are currently diffuse, to the directing and conscious centres of society .... Secondly, we also define as socialist theories which, while not relating directly to the economic order, are nonetheless connected to theories of the preceding type.[5]

He stressed that "connection" did not mean "subordination" ("Socialists do not demand that economic life be put into the hands of the state, but rather into contact with it"[6]) and also that his definition referred neither to the class war nor to bettering the workers' lot: the latter was "only one of the results socialism hopes for from the economic reorganisation it demands, just as the class war is only one of the means by which this concentration may result"[7].

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1. Ibid., p.11; tr. p.10. For a discussion of his work on crime, punishment and responsibility, v. Ch.2 (ix).
2. Ibid., p.6; tr. p.7.
3. Ibid., p.4; tr. p.5 (S.L.).
4. Ibid., p.6; tr. p.7 (S.L.).
5. Ibid., pp.25, 37; tr. pp.19,28 (S.L.).
6. Ibid., p.28; tr.p.21 (S.L.).
7. Ibid., p.31; tr. p.23 (S.L.).

Socialism as a response to industrialism, demanding that it be organised - this was Durkheim's working definition, which he used to encompass both "workers' socialism", coming "from below" and "State socialism", coming from "the higher regions of society"[1]. It was "bound up with a particular state of society", revealing itself from the beginning "in the form of a social and enduring current" and expressing sentiments which were "general" and "manifest themselves simultaneously at different points in society and assert themselves persistently so long as the conditions which created them have not disappeared"[2]. In particular, it arose out of three sets of pre-conditions: first, industrialisation and secularisation, especially of social institutions ("it was necessary, on the one hand, that economic functions acquire greater social importance, and, on the other, that social functions acquire a more human character ... that commerce and industry become more essential wheels of the collective machine, and that society cease to be regarded as a transcendent being, towering high above men ..."[3]); second, a sufficient development in the influence of the state for its further extension into the economy to be conceivable; and third, a sufficient growth of industrial concentration ("the regime of big industry must be established"[4]). Socialism, in short, was "essentially a process of economic concentration and centralisation".[5]

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1. Ibid., p.35: tr. p.26 (S.L.). (Socialism, he wrote, "is essentially a movement to organise" (ibid., p.30: tr.p.23).
2. Ibid., p.53: tr. p.39 (S.L.).
3. Ibid., p.57: tr. p.41 (S.L.).
4. Ibid., p.58: tr. p.42 (S.L.).
5. Ibid., p.74: tr. p.54.

This clear-cut view of socialism allowed Durkheim to distinguish it from classical economics: both assuming industrialism, deriving from the same source and corresponding to the same state of society, which they expressed differently, the one sought to organise economic interests, while the other, illogically, refused "to submit them to any collective control", believing that "they can order and harmonise themselves henceforth without any prior reorganisation"[1]. Likewise, he contrasted socialism, thus defined, with communism, by which he meant utopianism - radical demands for justice or equality, occurring sporadically throughout history, and typified by Plato, More and Campanella. Communism was anti-industrial (putting "industrial life outside the state"[2]), in favour of private production and communal consumption, ascetically opposed to all wealth and abundance, and in favour of small-scale, homogeneous societies in which desires are few and horizons narrow. All that socialism and communism had in common was a shared hostility to the exaltation of private interest: both opposed "radical and intransigent individualism"[3].

Durkheim first examined the pre-history of socialism in the eighteenth century. Beginning with the "communist" systems of Morelly, Mably and Rousseau, he emphasised the "positive efflorescence"[4] of such systems during this period,

1. Ibid., p.285: tr. p.196 (S.L.).
2. Ibid., p.42: tr. p.32.
3. Ibid., p.55: tr. p.40.
4. Ibid., p.68: tr. p.49 (S.L.).

as well as their new and distinctive tone: they were more morally imperative, more saddened, disturbed and discouraged by their own societies and they betrayed a stronger and more generalised concern for social justice. Here was a historical link with socialism: "though born under quite other influences and responding to quite different needs, socialism, just because it naturally came to take an interest in the working classes, found itself quite naturally and especially susceptible to these feelings of pity and fraternity..."[1] He traced a development of concern with economic realities and industrial life, through Linguet, Necker and Graslin; always, however, the conclusions were, in his view, timid and conservative - "a hope for a more just social order and an idea of the rights of the State, which, together, are the seeds of socialism, but which were limited at the time to only rudimentary wishes - that is all we find in the eighteenth century"[2]. These were the principles of 1789, but "in order for these factors to produce their social or socialist consequences they had first to produce their political consequences[3]".

After considering the ideas of Sismondi, as identifying disequilibrium in the economy and expressing "the need for a more regular and stable industrial life"[4], Durkheim turned to a detailed examination of Saint-Simon and saint-simonisme.

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1. Ibid., p.76; tr. p.55 (S.L.). Durkheim also observed that socialism by no means met the problem posed by communism: "Should the socialisation of economic forces be an accomplished fact tomorrow, [the sentiments to which communism responds] will be opposed to the excessive inequalities that will obtain then as now" (ibid - S.L.).
2. Ibid., p.91; tr. p.65 (S.L.).
3. Ibid., p.96; tr. p.68.
4. Ibid., p.114; tr. p.81 (S.L.).

Given Durkheim's definition of socialism, it is clear that Saint-Simon would be bound to take a central place in his socialist tradition - Saint-Simon, the half-mad prophet of a planned industrial society and the first organisation theorist[1], of whom Engels wrote that almost all the ideas of later socialism were "contained in his works in embryo"[2]. Durkheim presented Saint-Simon, first, as the real founder of positivism (and thus of sociology); second as the historian and "apostle of industrialism"[3], who foresaw "the coming of a new form of collective life, the first attempts at a social organisation resting on an economic base"[4], and argued that "modern societies will finally be in equilibrium only when completely organised on a purely industrial basis"[5]. Thirdly, he showed Saint-Simon in his latter, quasi-religious phase, concerned about impending social dissolution and propounding his pantheistic "New Christianity". Durkheim argued that these three sides of Saint-Simon were linked. They"only express the same social state in varied ways" and contained "the germ of all the great intellectual currents produced during the nineteenth century"[6]: the science of history, the positivist philosophy, socialism and "those aspirations for a religious revival which, in spite of periods of apathy, never

1. V. the author's chapter on Saint-Simon in Founders of Social Science, Penguin Books, forthcoming.
2. Cited in ibid.
3. 1928a, p.197: tr. 1958b, p.137.
4. Ibid., p.181; tr. 127 (S.L.).
5. Ibid., p.188; tr. p.131 (S.L.).
6. Ibid., p.281; tr. p.193 (S.L.).

remained completely foreign to the spirit of the century"[1]. All these flowed from what Saint-Simon called the principle of industrialism. Saint-Simon epitomised the spirit of his time, but the substance of his thought was too rich to continue within the confines of a single, unified system, and his legacy was fragmented.

Durkheim's critique of Saint-Simon's thought marks an important stage in the development of his own. Saint-Simon's error, he argued, "consisted in wishing to construct a stable society on a purely economic base"[2]. He had commented approvingly on Saint-Simon's view of industrialism, in the course of his exposition, as follows:

> in our great contemporary societies, where economic relations form the basis of common life, social unity is above all the result of the solidarity of interests; it is therefore due to internal causes, to the bonds of interdependence which unite the various parts of society ... Each people today forms a cohesive whole ... because it is a system of functions, inseparable from one another and mutually complementing each other.[3]

This, of course, is organic solidarity, as in the Division of Labour, seemingly without any conscience collective, half-seen as operating without unifying beliefs and norms. However, when Durkheim subsequently turned, later in the argument, to criticism of Saint-Simon, he argued that "economic functions cannot co-operate harmoniously nor be maintained in a state of equilibrium unless subjected to moral forces which surpass, contain

1. Ibid.
2. Ibid., p.336: tr. p.230.
3. Ibid., p.214: tr. p.148 (s.l.).

and regulate them"[1]. Saint-Simon had made the mistake of supposing that "the way to realise social peace is to free economic appetites of all restraint on the one hand, and on the other to satisfy them by fulfilling them"[2]. Such an enterprise was contradictory; appetites could only be appeased by being limited, by being "subordinated to some end which surpasses them"[3]. Otherwise, even in conditions of maximum and universal abundance, men's potentially unlimited and competitive desires would lead, then as now, to individual torment and social disorder.

Saint-Simon, Durkheim maintained, in arguing that "industry should be organised without subordinating it to anything"[4], had been mistaken "about what, in the present situation, is the cause of the malaise, and in proposing, as a remedy, an aggravation of the sickness"[5]. His latter-day, somewhat artificial religiosity, and the posthumous degeneration of his doctrine into "a mystical sensualism, an apotheosis of comfort, a consecration of excess[6]" - Durkheim took all this as confirmation of the validity of his criticism. What was needed if social order was to reign in contemporary industrial societies was "that the generality of men be content with their lot"[7]; this required "social forces, moral authorities, which must exercise this regulating

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1. Ibid., p.287: tr. p.197
2. Ibid., p.290: tr. p.199.
3. Ibid.
4. Ibid., p.295: tr. p.202.
5. Ibid. (S.L.).
6. Ibid., p.344: tr. p.235 (S.L.).
7. Ibid., p.291: tr. p.200 (S.L.).

influence, without which appetites become deranged and economic order disorganised"[1]. Where were these contemporary moral forces to be found that would be capable of "establishing, making acceptable and maintaining the necessary discipline"[2] As we have seen, Durkheim's answer was occupational groups, which were in touch with industrial life, close to individuals' interests and capable of acting as a moral force. He developed that answer most fully in his lectures on professional ethics, which formed part of the general course on law and social practices, to which we now turn.

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1. Ibid., p.293: tr. p.201 (M.L.).
2. Ibid., p.296: tr. p.203.

(ix) The Study of Law and Social Practices[1].

"The essential thing", Durkheim wrote in 1899, "is to get [pupils in Lycées] to reflect upon the nature of society, the family, the State, upon the principal legal and moral obligations, and upon the ways in which these different social phenomena are formed ... I began here, in about 1896, a course entitled "Physique Générale du Droit et des Moeurs" ... in which all these questions are treated sociologically"[2]. This was the content and purpose of the public lectures in sociology that Durkheim delivered twice at Bordeaux between 1896 and 1900. The future teachers of philosophy who attended them would acquire a "sociological culture" and would then be able to "treat all the questions of sociology to which it is suitable to initiate pupils"[3]. The old philosophical questions, the problems of ethics, would come to be seen in a new light, as largely empirical questions amenable to scientific inquiry. Durkheim's lecture-course even followed "exactly, or almost so, the classical divisions of lycée courses" in moral philosophy[4]. Mauss describes the 1898-1900

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1. This seems the best translation for "Droit et Moeurs". By "moeurs" Durkheim meant, quite generally, norms governing behaviour.
2. 1899c, p.679.
3. Ibid.
4. Ibid.

version as a "complete Ethics ["Morale"]"[1]. It was divided into two parts, following the "classical" division of French philosophy teaching. The first year of the course corresponded, in Mauss's words, "to what is improperly called "Theoretical Ethics" ["Morale théorique"]". Durkheim, "operating in the concrete", preferred to call it "Theory of Obligation, Sanction and Morality". The second year, according to Mauss, corresponded to "what is popularly and quite improperly called "Practical Ethics" ["Morale pratique"]"[2]. The first concerned questions relating to society as a whole ("Morale de la Societe") and the second those bearing on particular contexts within the wider society ("Morale des Groupes Spéciaux de la Société").[3] In sum, Mauss described the whole course as providing "a complete picture of all moral phenomena". Durkheim had established the "Science des Moeurs" for his students - "that science on which so many philosophers still discourse, and of which he not only provided the idea but also began to fill out the framework with content"[4].

1. Mauss, 1925a, p.11. Mauss adds that the 1898-1900 draft was "the definitive draft of this series of lectures" (ibid). This is the draft subsequently published, in part, as 1937a and 1950a: tr. 1957a. The information which follows, concerning the remaining, unpublished parts of the course (the manuscripts of which have not survived), comes from Mauss, 1925a and Mauss, 1937. The course had first been given at Bordeaux in 1890-1 (of which the manuscript has disappeared). The content of that early version, according to Mauss, went into the Division of Labour (ibid).
2. Ibid.
3. Ibid., p.12, but v. infra.
4. Ibid., pp.12-13.

The first part, dealing with "moral facts in general"[1], was concerned with both law and morality. It examined the nature of moral and legal rules and the classification of these, breaches of them, criminality, repression, responsibility, morality, suicide and anomie[2]. It began with a definition of moral facts, which was followed by what Mauss described as "two capital parts of the work; two essential pieces of Durkheim's system"[3]; the first being the theory of moral obligations and of moral obligation in general, together with a classification of obligations; and the second, Durkheim's theory of sanctions, with a classification of these. All this corresponded to the "general physiological study of law and social practices"[4], concentrating on the "functioning" of these within the total society. All these lectures remained unpublished and are now extinct. For this reason, and because Durkheim's sociology of morality underwent considerable development during his years in Paris, we will leave the consideration of his ideas on this subject until a later stage[5].

The first part of the course continued with two special studies of the operation of social norms ("moeurs"). The first

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1. Mauss, 1937, p.528.
2. Ibid.
3. Mauss, 1925a, p.12.
4. Ibid.
5. V. infra: ch. 3(iv). It can reasonably be assumed that Durkheim's discussion of morality in the Moral Education course, considered above in ch. 2(ii), represents an accurate summary of his views at this period (v. Mauss, 1937, p.528)

of these was a study of their infringement and the nature of crime, which included some statistical work, subsequently abandoned, that was, according to Mauss, comparable to that in Suicide. In the course of this work, Durkheim made a point of drawing the distinction, then unfamiliar, between violent crime, against persons (found among "backward classes and peoples") and "mild" crime, against property, such as swindling and breach of confidence (to be found among "the commercial classes, and urban and civilised populations")[1]. However, having made this promising start in criminology, Durkheim left the work to be continued by his students; none of his empirical work in this area survives. On the other hand, his sociological theory of crime was firmly and clearly expressed in the Rules of Sociological Method[2] and it was one of the chief points at issue in Durkheim's sharp polemical exchanges with the sociological statistician Gabriel Tarde, in particular his claim that a certain crime rate should be seen as normal for a given society, rather than as intrinsically pathological[3]

Finally, concluding the first year's lectures, there was a study of the genesis and evolution of punishment, which developed into an article written for the fourth volume of the

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1. Mauss, 1925a, p.12. Cf., e.g., Sutherland, E.H. White Collar Crime (New York, 1949).
2. V. esp. 1901c, pp.vi, 45, 81-91: tr. 1938b, pp.xxxviii, 35-6, 65-74.
3. V. infra: ch. 2(xii), q.v. for an account of Durkheim's theory of crime.

Année Sociologique on "Two Laws of Penal Evolution"[1]. That article advanced two important arguments - important both in themselves and in the context of Durkheim's thought. The first implied that political power has a certain independence of the social structure. In the Division of Labour, Durkheim had argued that "governmental power [is] an emanation of the life inherent in the conscience collective" and that "the power of authoritarian governments does not come from themselves but derives from the very structure of society"[2]. The Division of Labour had claimed that penal law, and generally the degree of repression, had progressively declined with the recession of mechanical and the advance of organic solidarity; and that this decline was a function of the growth in social complexity, organisation, administration, specialisation and individual autonomy, and an increasing respect for justice, equality and individual rights. Durkheim now argued that the "intensity" of punishment, or the quantity of severe punishments, "is greater insofar as societies belong to a less advanced type - and insofar as the central power has a more absolute character"[3]. Thus the initial hypothesis of the Division of Labour was qualified: governmental power was an

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1. 1901a (i). It also formed the basis for Paul Fauconnet's subsequent work on responsibility (Fauconnet, 1920). All these ideas on crime and punishment presumably developed out of Durkheim's lectures on criminal sociology given between 1892 and 1894: v. Appendix A. It is striking that these ideas, and in particular the study of penal evolution, have been universally ignored by later sociologists and writers on Durkheim (but v. Richter, 1960 and Tiryakian, 1964b).
2. 1902b, pp.172-3, 172: tr. 1933b, p.195 (S.L.). I have translated "force" by "power" in this quotation.
3. 1901a (i), p.65.

independent variable in determining the intensity of punishment. The concentration or "hypercentralisation" of power, with no countervailing power "regularly organised in order to moderate it"[1], was a historically contingent phenomenon and was not dependent on this or that social type. The influence of governmental organisation could neutralise that of social organisation. Durkheim provided a broad comparative survey of societies, beginning with Ancient Egypt and ending with his own, to verify this law of qualified evolution. It was a suggestive qualification with rich possibilities. As one writer has observed, it might "have led him to consider the possibility of authoritarianism in modern society"[2]. As we shall see, he did consider this possibility much later, in reaction to the thought of Treitschke and the condition of Germany at the time of the First World War[3]. However, it remains broadly true to say that, in this respect, this first law of penal evolution remained "an unexploited insight"[4].

The second important argument in this article implied the crucial relevance of collective sentiments and beliefs to the explanation of social practices. How was one to explain the two laws of penal evolution, of which the second was that the "deprivation of liberty and of liberty alone, for periods of time varying according to the gravity of the crime, tends increasingly to become the normal type of repression"[5]?

1. Ibid., pp.68, 67.
2. Richter, 1960, p.193.
3. V. infra: ch. 3 (x).
4. Richter, 1960, p.193.
5. 1901a (i), p.78.

Durkheim maintained that the second law depended in part on the first, since the "various modalities of detention" gradually replaced, and were indeed "the natural and necessary substitutes for", the other harsher penalties that were disappearing[1]; and they obeyed the same law of declining intensity. The question therefore reduced to explaining "how it is that punishments become milder as one goes from less to more advanced societies" (since Durkheim assumed that the factor of political power played "the less important role" and could provisionally be abstracted)[2]. The key to his answer lay in his view of the relation between punishment and crime; "[s]ince punishment results from crime and expresses the manner in which it affects the public conscience, it is in the evolution of crime that one must seek the cause determining the evolution of punishment"[3].

The argument rested on the claim that "the manner in which collective sentiments react against crime has changed, because these sentiments have changed"[4]. Durkheim classified crimes into two fundamental categories: those directed against "collective things",[5] such as the public authority and its representatives, customs and traditions, and religion; and those only injuring individuals, such as murder, theft, violence,

1. Ibid., p.84.
2. Ibid., p.85.
3. Ibid., p.86.
4. Ibid., p.92.
5. Ibid., p.86.

and frauds of all kinds. The first category he labelled "religious criminality", since "offences against religion are the most essential part of it and ... crimes against traditions or heads of state always have more or less religious character"[1]; the second he called "human criminality". The first, he argued, covered almost the whole of the penal law of less advanced societies, but they regressed as one advanced in evolution, while offences against the human person gradually took their place. The crimes characteristic of less advanced societies had the character of sacrilege: they offended sentiments that were directed towards transcendent and superhuman beings, inspiring reverential fear. Such crimes were seen as "exceptionally odious"[2], and pity for the criminal could not "serve as an effective counterweight to the indignation aroused by the sacrilegious act, nor, in consequence, appreciably moderate the punishment". The two sentiments were too unequal: what was "an individual's suffering when it is a question of appeasing a god"?[3] However, the case was quite otherwise with the collective sentiments which had the individual as object. Durkheim here gave the fullest and clearest account available in his writings of the collective psychological forces underlying "individualism". The "sentiments protecting human dignity"[4], leading us to "respect the life and property of our fellows" arose, not out of

1. Ibid.
2. Ibid., p.88.
3. Ibid.
4. Ibid.

calculations of individual advantage, but out of "the sympathy we have for man in general"[1]. They recalled Kant rather than the utilitarians: the object of the sentiments was general, involving an abstraction of "the concrete and diverse forms under which it offers itself to observation"[2]. However, that object was closely related to real men: it offered "the model of which we are the varied specimens"[3]. It was an ideal whose transcendence was much less marked; each person realised it in part. It remained essentially human and to some degree immanent.

The nub of the argument concerned the difference between the beliefs accompanying the two types of sentiment. In the latter case, pity for the criminal and for his victim were of the same sort:

> That which tempers the collective anger which is the soul of punishment is the sympathy we feel for every man who suffers, the horror which all destructive violence produces in us; now, this is the same sympathy and the same horror which incites that very anger. Thus, here, the very cause which sets in motion the repressive apparatus tends to halt it. The same mental state drives us to punish and to moderate the punishment. Hence, an attenuating influence cannot fail to make itself felt ... there is a real and irremediable contradiction in avenging the human dignity offended in the person of the victim by violating it in the person of the criminal. The only way, not of removing the antinomy (for it is strictly insoluble), but of alleviating it, is to alleviate the punishment as much as possible.[4]

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1. Ibid., pp.88, 89.
2. Ibid., p.89.
3. Ibid.
4. Ibid., p.90. This type of explanation, in terms of the logic of a set of beliefs modifying social practices, is strongly reminiscent of Max Weber's account of the relation between puritan beliefs and capitalist practice: v. Die protestantische Ethik und der "Geist" des Kapitalismus in Archiv für

(contd. over)

Thus, as crime became more human and less religious, punishment became generally less severe. This was not simply an explanation in terms of increasing human sympathy: that would lead rather to increased severity toward crimes against persons. The point was that "the compassion of which the victim is the object is no longer overborne by contrary sentiments that do not allow it to exercise its influence".[1]

Durkheim held that this broad explanation in terms of the gradual replacement of religious by human criminality applied to all types of crime, including those against collectivities ("We no longer hypostasise the family or society as transcendent or mystical entities"[2]). Moreover, this transformation was useful, "in harmony" with the conditions of modern societies, as collective coercion diminished and grew less exclusive of free thought, giving greater room for individual spontaneity, initiative and reflection.

Finally, Durkheim turned to the independent variable of political power. He sought to assimilate this to his general explanation by claiming that, as governments became more absolute, so they became invested with a kind of religiosity: where absolute governments existed, political offences were seen as sacrilegious and were violently repressed, and all offences tended to become political and to be seen as attacks

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Sozialwissenschaft und Sozialpolitik, xx-xxi (1904-5); tr. as The Protestant Ethic and the Spirit of Capitalism by Parsons, T. (London, 1930).

1. 1901a (i), p.91.
2. Ibid., p.92.

on the sovereign. Thus "the gravity of most crimes is raised by several degrees; as a result the average intensity of punishments is very greatly strengthened".[1] This, one might say, was Durkheim's theory of charisma, and the nearest he came to developing a theory of totalitarianism.

Durkheim's study of penal evolution thus explained a transformation in social practices or institutions in terms of a transformation in collective sentiments and beliefs; this is true despite his claim that the former had been "produced mechanically" by "new forces" which had "come into play"[2]. It followed, importantly, that punishment was not destined to disappear, as many believed (and continue to believe): the penal system was ultimately a function of the moral beliefs of society, and it was fair to predict that the list of human crimes would lengthen, and that they would be punished less severely, but punished nonetheless. The penal law of all civilised peoples was in a state of crisis:

> We have arrived at a point where the penal institutions of the past have either disappeared or only survive through the force of custom, without others being born which respond better to the new aspirations of the moral conscience.[3]

1. Ibid., p.94.
2. Ibid., p.92.
3. Ibid., p.95.

The second part of the lecture-course on law and social practices covered a number of areas, of gradually increasing scope. It appears to have been organised as follows. First, there were lectures on "the moral and legal rules applying to the relations of the individual with himself"[1], followed by a set of lectures devoted to "domestic organisation and domestic ethics"[2], which was, according to Mauss, "a more popular and moralistic version of his work on the family"[3]. Then there followed three lectures on occupational ethics, six on civic ethics, and, finally, nine on "Duties in General", independent of any particular social grouping, covering homicide, property and contract[4]. These latter constituted

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1. 1950a, p.52: tr.p.42. Durkheim described these rules as having the function of "fixing in the individual's conscience the fundamental and general bases of all morality" (ibid., p.8: tr. p.3 - S.L.). (The text of these lectures is extinct.)
2. V. Mauss, 1925a, p.11. Mauss places these lectures in the second part of the second year, but that is contradicted by what Durkheim wrote, in 1950a, p.8: tr. 1957a, p.4, where they are referred to as having been delivered before those on occupational ethics (and indeed in the first year). However Mauss makes clear that they were separate from the first, theoretical part of the course (Mauss 1937, p.528), and this accords with the available texts.
3. Mauss, 1925a, p.13. Before his death, Durkheim gave instructions that only this form of his work on the family should be published (ibid.), but it never was. (The manuscript does not survive.) It probably fell half-way between the lectures considered above in ch.2 (iv) and the lecture on the family reproduced in Appendix C.
4. This set of 18 lectures is reproduced in 1950a: tr. 1957a. (This is the complete version of this part of the course). For discussions, v. Davy, 1950, Cuvillier, 1954, König, 1956, Richter, 1960 and Nisbet, 1965; also Bendix, R., "Social Stratification and Political Community", European Journal of Sociology, 1, 2 (1960), pp.181-210: reprinted in Laslett, P. and Runciman, W.G. (eds.), Philosophy, Politics and Society: Second Series (Oxford, 1962) and Bendix, R. and Lipset, S.M. (eds.), Class, Status and Power (2nd ed.,

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the "culminating part" and the "highest point" of ethics, concerning the relations men had to one another solely in virtue of being men[1]. The other categories of ethics (apart from the first) were dependent on particular types of institution or grouping, this "moral particularism" being at a maximum in the case of occupationalethics[2].

In these lectures Durkheim turned to a range of traditional questions in moral, political and legal philosophy, to which he sought distinctively sociological answers: to the question of the nature and limits of men's obligations with respect to various social groups, from the family to the state; to the issue, previously treated by Montesquieu and Tocqueville, of secondary groups, or corps intermediaires, in society; to the definition of the state, the relation of the state to the individual, and the nature of and justifications for democracy; to the so-called natural rights, and their correlative duties, protecting life and property; and to the nature of contract, its rights and obligations. While approaching all these questions in a new way, his discussion of them is also within an old, indeed venerable, tradition of discourse.

New York, 1966). Durkheim repeated them at the Sorbonne between 1903-5, 1909-11 and 1914-16. Cuvillier recalls that Durkheim "made them the basis of all his teaching of ethics" (Cuvillier, 1954 , repr. p.238).

1. 1950a, p.8: tr. 1957a, p.3 (S.L.).
2. Ibid., p.10: tr. p.5. It will thus be seen that only the middle sections of this second part of the course are strictly consistent with Mauss's description of it as concerning "Morale des Groupes Speciaux de la Societe".

The novelty of Durkheim's approach lay in his recasting of the old, seemingly timeless and a priori problems of ethics, political theory and jurisprudence into a set of hypotheses about the presence or absence in particular social contexts of operative rules and ideals, or (to use a more modern idiom) of norms and values. As he later observed, concerning the whole of this second part of the course, his aim was to conduct a careful review of "the details of moral rules (domestic, occupational civic, contractual)" and to show "both the causes which have given rise to them and the functions which they fulfil".[1] Yet, despite these strictly descriptive and explanatory aims, his argument incorporates the central features characterising much of traditional social and political theory, from Aristotle and Plato to his fellow nineteenth-century liberals, J.S. Mill and T.H. Green: a predilection for large themes (justice, liberty, obligation, order) and abstract definitions, an underlying view of human nature and of the relation of man to society and of both to the state, and a concern to specify the nature and pre-conditions of the good society and, in general, to draw prescriptive conclusions

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1. 1924a (1951) ed.), p.55: tr. 1953b, p.39 (S.L.). Cf. 1950a, p.5: tr. 1957a, p.1 (sqq.), where he observes that comparative history and ethnography are relevant to the genesis of the rules, and comparative statistics to their functioning.

relevant to the times[1].

In the lectures on domestic organisation and ethics, Durkheim traced the history of the family's declining role and the causes of that decline in terms of social differentiation and industrialisation. He also outlined its present reduced but essential functions in maintaining social stability and as an agent of socialisation: a source of moral life, of regulation and attachment, for individuals.[2] It was in the lectures on occupational ethics that he explored the implications of his view that the economic life of an industrial society needs to be organised around occupational groups or corporations. These would take over some of the moral functions once performed by the family and "moralise economic life"[3], specifying the rights and duties of individuals' working lives and providing a continuous, collective and relevant focus for their loyalties, while at the same time playing a central role at the national level in the operation of a planned and organised socialist economy[4]. In this way

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1. Cf. Wolin, 1960 for an outstanding recent study of that tradition and also Lukes, 1967 (esp. part IV) for an account of Durkheim's place within it. Mauss describes Durkheim's approach in these lectures as pragmatic, in the aristotelian sense of the word, seeking answers to practical problems by "starting from solutions to general and theoretical problems" (Mauss, 1937, p.530).
2. V. supra: ch.2 (iv).
3. 1950a, p.37: tr. 1957a, p.29 (S.L.).
4. For a discussion of how Durkheim envisaged the structure and functions of these corporations, v. infra: ch.3 (ix). Apart from the lectures of this course, he also discussed them in the course on socialism (1928a, pp.296-7: tr. 1958b, pp.203-4); in the conclusion to Suicide (1897a, pp.434-51: tr.1951a, pp.378-92); and in the preface to the second edition of the the Division of Labour (1902b, pp. i-xxxvi: tr. 1933b, pp. 1-31).

Durkheim sought to provide practical solutions to the problem of anomie identified in the Division of Labour and Suicide - solutions which went beyond the purely materialistic perspective considered in the lectures on socialism.

Durkheim's strategy here was, first, to identify the morbid state of anomie among the "economic functions, both industry and trade"[1]. There were no rules, let alone obligations enforced by sanctions, determining "the relations between the employee and his employer, the worker and the boss of the company, between manufacturers in competition with one another, and between them and the public"[2]. The result was an anarchic state of disequilibrium in which "nothing remains but individual appetites, and since they are by nature boundless and insatiable, if there is nothing to control them they will not be able to control themselves"[3]; the unchaining of economic interests had been accompanied by a decline in public morality, so that "the manufacturer, the businessman, the worker, the employee, in carrying out his occupation, is subject to no influence set above him which contains his egoism, nor to any moral discipline, and, as a result, he dispenses with all discipline of this kind".[4] Such a situation,

1. 1950a, p.14: tr. 1957a, p.9.
2. Ibid., p.15: tr. p.9 (S.L.).
3. Ibid., p.16: tr. p.11.
4. Ibid., p.18: tr. p.12 (S.L.).

Durkheim argued, was abnormal, for "[i]t is not possible for a social function to exist without moral discipline"[1]. Moreover, he advanced a further, normative argument against those classical economists who celebrated this anarchic state of <u>laissez-faire</u> and for whom "productive output seemed to be the sole and essential aim of all industrial activity"[2]. It might indeed appear that "from certain points of view, production to be intensive, does not require to be regulated; that, on the contrary, it is best to leave individual initiatives and particular interests to stimulate and inflame one another, rather than try to contain and moderate them"[3]. However,

> production is not all, and if industry can only bring its output to this point by maintaining a state of chronic warfare and perpetual discontent among the producers, there is nothing to balance the evil it does. Even from a purely utilitarian point of view, what is the use of increasing abundance, if it does not succeed in calming the desires of the greatest number, but, on the contrary, only serves to arouse their impatience. It is forgotten that economic functions are not their own justification; they are only a means to an end; they constitute one of the organs of social life, and that social life is above all a harmonious community of endeavours, a communion of minds and wills working toward the same end. Society has no <u>raison d'être</u> if it does not bring men a little peace, peace in their hearts and peace in their mutual relations. If industry can only be productive by disturbing that peace and by unleashing warfare, then it is not worth the cost.[4]

1. <u>Ibid</u>., p.16; tr. pp.10-11.
2. <u>Ibid</u>., p.22; tr.p.15.
3. <u>Ibid</u>.; tr. pp.15-16.
4. <u>Ibid</u>.; tr.p.16. The Galbraithian echoes of this argument are remarkable: v., e.g., Galbraith, J.K., <u>The Affluent Society</u> (Boston, 1958), esp. ch.IX, and Veblen, T., <u>The Theory of the Leisure Class</u> (New York, 1899).

Durkheim next turned to a historical study of the role of occupational groups in other societies, in particular Ancient Rome and medieval Europe. He argued that if "from the origins of the City until the height of the Empire, and from the birth of the Christian societies until the French Revolution they have been necessary, this is probably because they respond to some permanent and profound need".[1] Their "radical suppression" at the time of the Revolution had itself been a "morbid phenomenon"[2] and resulted from the fact that the guilds, being local and municipal institutions, had failed to adjust to the demands of large-scale industrialisation. The guild had been "too slow in transforming itself, so as to adjust to these new needs, and that is why it was destroyed ... by the eve of the Revolution the craft guild had become a sort of dead substance or foreign body, which only survived in our social organism by the force of inertia. And thus a point came when it was violently ejected"[3]. Then, finally, Durkheim spelt out his own image of a future in which "the guild will be restored, but in an entirely new form"[4], in order to play its role "in the present conditions of collective existence"[5]. There is no hint of Fascist corporatism about that image, as some have suggested[6], nor is it merely an expression of medieval

1. Ibid., p.26; tr. p.19 (S.L.).
2. Ibid.
3. Ibid., p.46; tr. pp.36-7 (S.L.)
4. Ibid., p.47; tr. p.37 (S.L.). V. infra, ch.3 (ix).
5. Ibid., p.35; tr. p.27.
6. V., e.g., the review of 1950a in C.I.S, 14 (1953), p.181, fn.

nostalgia[1]. Indeed, both the critique of the ills of capitalism and kind of centralised guild socialism proposed as their remedy are, at almost every point, strikingly similar to the arguments of R.H. Tawney - another socialist thinker within a quite different, but equally moralistic tradition[2].

Durkheim identified the area of civic ethics as that of "political society", which he defined as "a society formed by the union of a more or less considerable number of secondary social groups, subject to a single authority which is not itself under the jurisdiction of any other superior authority properly constituted"[3]. The operative rules, or norms, to be studied here were "those determining the relations of individuals with this sovereign authority, to whose influence they are subject"[4]. In particular, if the "state" referred to "the agents of the sovereign authority" and "political society" to "the complex group of which the State is the eminent organ", then "the principal duties of civic ethics are clearly those which the citizens have to the State, and, reciprocally, those which the State has to individuals"[5].

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1. V., e.g. Nisbet, 1965 and 1966.
2. Cf. The Acquisitive Society (London, 1921). For an account of the intellectual tradition from which Tawney's thought stemmed, v. Williams, R., Culture and Society, 1780-1950 (London, 1959). The parallelism between these two thinkers' views of capitalism and socialism even extends to their imagery (sickness and health) and their broad conceptions of economic history. There was one respect, however, in which Durkheim was nearer to solidarism than to Tawney and guild socialism: his attitude to the employers. They would continue to play a crucial part and would be represented in the industrial corporations (v. infra, chs.2 (xiii) and 3 (ix), and Barnes, 1920, p.251).
3. 1950a, p.55; tr. 1957a, p.45 (S.L.).
4. Ibid., p.58; tr. p.47 (S.L.).
5. Ibid., p.59; tr. p.48 (S.L.).

Durkheim's definition of the state was in terms, not of authority or power, nor of ethical purposes, but rather of function: the state was a collection of special groups "qualified to think and to act instead of and on behalf of society"[1]. Government and parliament constituted an organising centre of thought and decision, sometimes influenced but not determined by public opinion in the wider society. The state was "a group of officials of a special kind, within which ideas and decisions are evolved which involve the whole society without being the creation of society"[2]. Thus it was essentially deliberative (this being true both of the executive and legislative branches); execution was, strictly speaking, the task of administrative agencies of all sorts. The difference between the latter and the state was analogous to "that between the muscular system and the central nervous system"[3]. In brief, the state was "the very organ of social thought"[4].

As to the purposes of the state, Durkheim approached this time-honoured question of political theory with care; he

1. Ibid., p.60; tr. p.48. The English translation of 1950a, pp. 59-60, is completely misleading; at certain points the English states the reverse of the French.
2. Ibid., p.61; tr. pp.49-50 (S.L.).
3. Ibid., p.62; tr.p.51. There is a very close but seemingly unwitting, parallel between this view of government (and, indeed, Durkheim's account of democracy), on the one hand, and the very similar ideas of Karl Deutsch and his followers, on the other; cf., e.g. Deutsch, K. The Nerves of Government (New York, 1963).
4. Ibid.

wished to pose it as a sociological and not as a philosophical question. Thus he put it as follows: "what end does the State normally pursue, and in consequence ought it to pursue, in the social conditions of the present time?"[1] He answered this in two ways. First, and negatively, he examined and rejected two traditional theories of the state. The first of these, the liberal-individualist view (found in Spencer and the classical economists, on the one hand, and in Kant, Rousseau and the Idealists, on the other) accorded the state a decreasing and ideally minimal role of safeguarding individual rights; but this was contradicted by the uninterrupted historical growth in the functions of the state. The second traditional theory was what he called the "mystical solution"[2], which he associated with Hegel. This argued that the state should pursue a truly social end, peculiar to each society, which did not concern individuals and of which they were the mere instruments; the individual must work for the glory, grandeur and wealth of society, and in return he would receive "some of the rays of that glory", which would be sufficient recompense for his pains[3]. Durkheim observed (it was at the height of the Dreyfus Affair) that this doctrine, "profiting from the present confusion of ideas"[4], was about to undergo a kind of rebirth: France, which had hitherto been hostile to it, seemed ready to welcome it.

1. Ibid., p.63; tr. p.51 (S.L.).
2. Ibid., p.66; tr. p.54.
3. Ibid.
4. Ibid.

The second, positive answer Durkheim offered to the question of the proper ends of the state was in terms of the specific requirements of modern societies, which he saw as largely dictated by the values normally characteristic of those societies. Thus the modern state existed alongside the modern cult of the individual; indeed the growth of the former coincided with and partly explained that of the latter. Durkheim argued that the individual was "in certain respects, the very product of the State, since the activity of the State [is] essentially liberating for the individual"[1]. The historical evidence allowed one to accept "this relation of cause and effect between the advance of moral individualism and the advance of the State"[2]. Except in abnormal cases, "the stronger the State, the more the individual is respected"[3].

Durkheim's pursuit of the implications of this idea led him to develop a liberal political theory that was reminiscent at the same time of T.H. Green and of Alexis de Tocqueville, with a strongly interventionist state offset by a plurality of countervailing secondary groups. It was the state which "creates and organises and makes a reality" of the individual's "natural" rights[4], indeed its "essential function" was to "liberate individual personalities"[5], by offsetting the pressure on them of local, domestic, ecclesiastical, occu-

1. Ibid., p.71: tr. p.57 (S.L.).
2. Ibid. (S.L.).
3. Ibid.
4. Ibid., p.74: tr. p.60.
5. Ibid., p.77: tr. p.62 (S.L.).

pational and other secondary groups; the latter, on the other hand, offset the potential tyranny of the state. It was "out of this conflict of social forces that individual liberties are born".[1] Hence, in a society characterised by social pluralism and individualist values, the state had "the right and the duty to play the widest possible role in all spheres of collective life, without, however, becoming a mystique".[2]

This theory entailed an incisive critique of the view of the state, held by utilitarian and Kantian individualism, as confined to "the functions of a supreme arbiter, of the administrator of a totally negative justice"[3]; on the contrary, Durkheim held that the state "must deploy energies proportionate to those it must counterbalance"[4]. Likewise, it implied a critique of theories of natural rights: the right of an individual depended not on the notion of the individual as such, but on "the way in which society puts [the right] into practice, conceives it, and appraises it"[5]. Social beliefs were progressively expanding the scope of these rights and everything "leads one to foresee that we will become more alive to what concerns the human personality"[6]. Accordingly, the "fundamental duty of the State" was, as for Green, essentially moral, not to say religious: it was to "progressively

1. Ibid., p.78; tr. p.63.
2. Ibid.; tr. p.64 (S.L.).
3. Ibid., p.79; tr. p.65 (S.L.).
4. Ibid. (S.L.).
5. Ibid., p.81; tr. p.67 (S.L.).
6. Ibid., p.83; tr. p.68 (S.L.).

call the individual into moral existence", to maintain the religious cult of the individual, "to organise the cult, to watch over it, to ensure its regular functioning and development"[1]. In particular and in practice, this meant

> planning the social environment so that the individual may realise himself more fully, controlling the social machine so that it will bear less heavily on individuals, guaranteeing the peaceful exchange of services and the co-operation of all men of good will aiming at an ideal which they pursue peacefully and in common ...[2]

The state had special responsibility to impose rules of justice on economic exchanges, to ensure that "each is treated as he deserves, that he is freed of all unjust and humiliating dependence, that he is joined to his fellows and to the group without abandoning his personality to them"[3]. The state was "above all, the organ <u>par excellence</u> of moral discipline"[4].

Durkheim continued the argument by examining the relations between state, society and individual under democracy. He took democracy to be the ideal form of state within a modern industrial society - that is, the form normally most appropriate to its collective beliefs and sentiments. His contribution to democratic theory lay both in his definition and in his justification for democracy. Rejecting as unhelpful Montesquieu's definition in terms of the numbers of those governing, and as "primitive" the view of democracy as "the

1. <u>Ibid</u>., p.84; tr. pp.69-70 (S.L.).
2. <u>Ibid</u>., p.86; tr. p.71 (S.L.).
3. <u>Ibid</u>., p.87; tr. p.72 (S.L.).
4. <u>Ibid</u>. (S.L.).

political form of a society governing itself, where the government is spread throughout the milieu of the nation"[1], he chose rather to classify political systems along a continuum ranging from one extreme at which "the governmental consciousness [conscience] is as isolated as possible from the rest of society, and has a minimum range" to the other at which the extent of this consciousness and the degree of communication between state and society are at a maximum. The latter point represented the maximisation of democracy; in general, the defining characteristics of democracy were "1) the greatest extension of governmental consciousness; 2) the closest communication between this consciousness and the mass of individuals"[2]. From the first of these there resulted a diminution of traditionalism and of resistance to change: matters that were formerly obscure "increasingly reach the clear region of the social consciousness, namely the governmental consciousness"[3]. Democracy thus appeared as

> the political form by which society arrives at the purest consciousness of itself. A people is more democratic insofar as deliberation, reflection and the critical spirit play a more considerable role in the conduct of public affairs. It is less democratic insofar as unawareness, unconsidered practices, obscure sentiments and, in brief, unexamined prejudices are predominant. [4]

1. Ibid., p.99: tr. p.82.
2. Ibid., p.107: tr. p.88. (S.L.).
3. Ibid., p.106: tr. p.87 (S.L.).
4. Ibid., pp. 107-8: tr. p.89 (S.L.).

Thus Durkheim argued for the "moral superiority" of democracy in contemporary societies: it was "a system based on reflection, it allows the citizen to accept the laws of his country with more understanding, and thus with less passivity"[1]; and, further, it was "the political system that conforms best to our present-day notion of the individual"[2].

From these arguments Durkheim derived a critique of the mandate theory ("The role of the State ... is not to express and sum up the unreflective thought of the mass of the people but to superimpose on this unreflective thought a more considered thought ..."[3]), which he traced back to Rousseau and which he believed to be partly responsible for the degeneracy of Third Republic politics: the idea that "the government is only the translator of general wills" was "current among us" and, with certain qualifications, lay "at the basis of our parliamentary practices"[4]. Thus he concluded with a number of practical proposals whose aim was to interpose "secondary cadres ... between the individual and the State". Such bodies (regional and, hopefully, occupational) would increase the autonomy of the government, while preserving "continuous communication between it and all the other social organs"[5]. Ultimately there might be two-stage elections, with the revived occupational groups serving as the intermediary electoral units.

1. Ibid., p.110: tr. p.91 (S.L.).
2. Ibid., p.109: tr. p.90.
3. Ibid., p.111: tr. p.92.
4. Ibid., p.114: tr. p.94 (S.L.).
5. Ibid., p.121: tr. p.101 (S.L.).

Finally, Durkheim drew from this account of democracy a new set of justifications for political obligation. The obligation to respect the law did not follow from having willed it (here Durkheim echoed Hume); what was crucial was rather

> the way in which [the law] is made, the competence of those whose function it is to make it and the nature of the specific organisation rendering possible their execution of that function. Respect for the law depends on the value of the legislators and the value of the political system. The particular advantage of democracy in this respect is that, thanks to the communication established between government and citizens, the latter are in a position to judge the way in which the former fulfils its role and, knowing the facts more fully, are able to give or withhold their confidence[1].

The duty to vote in present conditions was a real duty, though the time might come when appointments to public bodies might result from the pressure of opinion in other ways. As it was, in the present abnormal situation in which it was "on the mass of individuals that the whole weight of the society rests"[2], each citizen had "to some extent to turn into a statesman"[3]. As things were, the only agents of public life were "the multitude of individual forces"[4]. The urgent task and "primary duty" was to bring this anomic and disorganised state to an end, by "creating those secondary organs which, as they take shape, will at the same time liberate the individual from the State and the State from the individual, while increasingly dispensing the latter from a task for which he is not fitted"[5].

1. Ibid., p.129: tr. p.108 (S.L.).
2. Ibid., p.130: tr. p.108.
3. Ibid.
4. Ibid.
5. Ibid. (S.L.).

The remaining lectures of the course, concerning "Duties in General", consisted, in effect, of comparative historical surveys relating changing norms of behaviour to changing systems of values, and of studies of the contemporary functioning of those norms. Thus rules prohibiting homicide were a function of collective ideas and sentiments concerning the value of human life; with the progressive divinisation of the latter, the former had become more severe. In examining the contemporary functioning of these rules, Durkheim rather questionably argued that the statistical evidence showed a downward trend in the rate of mortality by homicide in civilised countries (except during wars, which were a reversion to a more primitive type of collective state). His consideration of the rules protecting property began with a critique of the influential theories of Locke and Mill, deriving property from the labour of the individual. ("To derive property from labour is to accept that the value of things results from objective and impersonal causes, independent of all evaluation. But this is not so. Value depends upon opinion and is a matter of opinion")[1]; and he went on to attack the equally a priori theories of Kant and Rousseau. He advanced instead a theory of property which assumed that it was "the opinion of each society which makes certain objects susceptible to appropriation, and others not"[2]. His explanation of the origins of property rules was in terms of primitive religious beliefs and

1. Ibid., p.149; tr. p.125 (S.L.).
2. Ibid., p.164; tr. p. 138 (S.L.).

an original link between property and taboo. The moral and legal bond between owner and thing possessed had originally been a collective, religious bond specifying the sacred possessions of the group (sacrifices had been the first taxes). Originally, property had been primarily related to land and associated with mystic beliefs; it had become progressively individualised and secularised[1] and was becoming increasingly dependent on contract rather than inheritance. Finally, in his discussion of the rules of contract, he sought to account for the changing nature of these rules in different societies by looking at the changing "non-contractual element in the contract" - the beliefs characteristic of those societies, which were themselves partly to be explained by relating them to features of the social structure. Thus, blood covenants and communion rites, incorporating individuals to social groups in certain ways, were to be explained in terms of sacred beliefs relating to kinship and clan structure. Real contracts were to be explained in terms of (changing) beliefs about property. Consensual contracts were to be explained in terms of beliefs about the rights and freedom of individuals, that were themselves related to the contemporary stage of industrial society, in which the economy was not yet subject to moral rules. And, finally, what Durkheim called contracts of

1. "... the individualisation of property occurred because landed property lost its sacrosanct quality, which was absorbed by man, and because other forms of property which did not themselves have this quality developed sufficiently to establish a distinct and separate set of legal rules" (ibid., p.199; tr. p.168 - S.L.).

equity, which he saw as increasingly in evidence (implying a "whole recasting of the rules of property"[1]) were to be accounted for in terms of emerging ideas about justice and equality. ("It is not sufficient that the contract be consented to; it must be just ..."[2]). These ideas were linked to the social order which he believed to be emerging and which needed to be brought into being in the face of the anarchic forces of unregulated capitalism - an order that was, in the ways we have considered, at once socialist, liberal and democratic.

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1. Ibid., p.252: tr. p.215.
2. Ibid., p.243: tr. p. 207 (S.L.).

(x) The History of Sociology

The last public course in sociology which Durkheim delivered at Bordeaux was entitled "History of Sociological Doctrines"[1]. He valued these lectures, seeing them virtually as a kind of homage to his scientific ancestors[2]. On the other hand, the relatively meagre published evidence of his work in this field[3] indicates a tough-minded and critical approach to the social and political theories of the past - an approach determined by the single desire to specify and appraise the ideas they contained that were of sociological significance.

Mauss wrote in 1925 that there then existed manuscripts of series of lectures on Hobbes, on Rousseau (whose "socio-logical spirit" he had discovered, a "spirit very different from the anarchism ordinarily said to originate with Rousseau"), on Condorcet (for whom he had a "keen admiration", whose writings he "knew thoroughly" and whose influence on Saint-Simon and Comte he noted), on Saint-Simon and Comte themselves, and finally a manuscript of lectures of a much earlier date on "The Sociology and Ethics of Spencer"[4] According to Mauss, Durkheim intended to publish most of this material in a volume under the title The Origins of Sociology. In 1925 Mauss

1. 1901-2; v. Appendix A. All that survives of this course is 1918b; repr. 1953a; tr. 1960b. V. infra.
2. V. Mauss, 1925a, p.15.
3. E.g. 1890a, 1892a, 1895e, 1900b, 1903c, 1915a, 1918b and 1925b.
4. Ibid. The lectures on Comte were taken up again at the Sorbonne in 1915-16 (v. Appendix A), but no manuscript survives of that course (but v. Appendix C).

wrote, "We will endeavour to realise this wish"[1]. But he never did, and the manuscripts no longer exist.

Durkheim's interest in the history of sociology was constant throughout his life, though his interpretations of that history changed, even while at Bordeaux. In 1886 he had written of sociology's always having existed in a "latent and diffuse" form and of the "simplistic" conceptions of Rousseau and the classical economists that the state is artificially conjoined to society, rather than emanating from it[2]. Two years later, in his inaugural lecture, he summed up his account of the history of sociology by observing that the subject had been "born with the economists, established with Comte, consolidated with Spencer, delimited with Schaeffle and led to specialise with the German economists and jurists".[3] In 1892 he wrote that it was "Montesquieu who first laid down the fundamental principles of social science"[4]; and, as we have seen, his attention increasingly turned to the history of the subject in France, so that by 1900 he was writing:

> To determine the part played by France in the development of sociology during the nineteenth century is, in large measure, to write the history of that science; for it is amongst us and during that century that it was born, and it has remained an essentially French science.[5]

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1. Ibid.
2. 1886a, pp.77-8.
3. 1888a, p.41.
4. 1953a, p.110; tr. 1960b, p.61.
5. 1900b, p.609.

And he continued that same article by tracing the theoretical development from Montesquieu and Condorcet (whose efforts remained "brilliant personal works", which were "unable to serve as the point of departure for a scientific tradition"[1]) through Saint-Simon (the "first to have formulated" the "idea of social science"[2]), Comte (with whom "the great project conceived by Saint-Simon began to become a reality"[3]) and Cournot (whose work, however, remained an eclectic "philosophy of history"[4]) to Espinas (who found in society "an organisation of ideas" and showed that "sociology's essential object is to discover how collective representations form and combine"[5]) and thence to his own work and that of his colleagues and contemporaries[6].

The only two studies in depth in this area which survive relate to the pre-history rather than the history of sociology, though they both concern thinkers with a claim to being considered French. The first, the study of Montesquieu, was Durkheim's Latin thesis of 1892[7]; the second, the study of Rousseau's Social Contract, was the manuscript of Durkheim's lectures on Rousseau in 1901-2, published posthumously by Xavier Léon[8]. Both advance original and still controversial interpretations of their subjects.

1. Ibid., p.610.
2. Ibid.
3. Ibid., p.611.
4. Ibid., p.613.
5. Ibid., p.648.
6. V. infra: ch. 3 (iii).
7. 1892a: tr. into Fr. 1937b and 1953a: tr. into Eng. 1960b.
8. 1918b: repr. 1953a: tr. 1960b.

It was entirely natural that, in his search for sociological ancestors, Durkheim should turn to the author of "The Spirit of the Laws, with his keen sense of the variability, complexity and interdependence of social phenomena, his conservative view of the link between the scientific understanding of society and the danger of seeking its radical reconstruction, and his sensitivity to the diversity of societies. Above all, Montesquieu had a feeling for the specificity of social phenomena; as Durkheim put it, he "understood with a wonderful lucidity that the nature of societies is no less stable and consistent than that of man and that it is no easier to modify the types of a society than the species of an animal"[1].

Durkheim offered both an exegesis and a critique of Montesquieu's sociologically relevant ideas. His general view was that Montesquieu had made social science "aware of its subject matter, its nature and its method" and laid the "groundwork" on which it was to be established; indeed, no-one had "perceived so clearly the conditions necessary for [its] establishment"[2]. He singled out two ideas, implicit in Montesquieu's thought, as crucial: the notions of type as applied to societies and of law as applied to social phenomena. Concerning the first, he admired Montesquieu's own typology, regarding it as expressing "not without some truth

1. 1953a, p.52; tr. 1960b, p.21.
2. Ibid., p.28; tr. p.2.

the real division of things"[1], but he criticised its political emphasis (for "the nature of the supreme power can be modified, while that of society remains unchanged, or conversely it can remain identical in societies which differ in the extreme"[2]) as well as his inconsistent view that the despotic type was intrinsically abnormal. He regarded Montesquieu's conception of law as recognising a "fixed and necessary order" in social phenomena and denying that "societies are organised according to man's caprice and that their history depends on accidents"[3]; but he criticised its teleological character and his tendency to apply it to "relations between ideas rather than between things"[4]. More generally, Durkheim criticised Montesquieu for confusing laws concerning efficient causes, according to which "social institutions follow from the nature of things"[5], with laws relating to final causes, which "can only exist by being established through the special will of a legislator"[6]. To this conceptual ambiguity he traced what he

1. Ibid., p.111; tr. p.62 (S.L.).
2. Ibid., p.69; tr. p.33 (S.L.).
3. Ibid., p.112; tr. p.63 (S.L.).
4. Ibid.
5. Ibid., p.81; tr. p.40.
6. Ibid., p.82; tr. p.41 (S.L.) "In Montesquieu's work ... the lawgiver emerges as the indispensable maker of the laws ... If we assume, however, that the laws are produced by efficient causes of which men may often be unaware, the function of the lawgiver is reduced ... Laws are not devices that the lawgiver thinks up because they seem to be in harmony with the nature of the society. They spring most often from causes which engender them by a kind of physical necessity." (ibid., pp.81, 84, 84-5; tr. pp. 40, 42, 43).

saw as a fundamental ambiguity in Montesquieu's method between deduction and induction: Montesquieu's method was essentially deductive, and he used evidence merely to illustrate its conclusions. In addition, Durkheim criticised Montesquieu for being blind to the idea of progress: he "does not suspect that these different kinds of society [Republic, Monarchy, Despotism, and the democracy of barbaric peoples] descend from the same origin and succeed one another"[1] and he failed to see that

> a society contains within it conflicting forces, because it is gradually emerging from a previous form and is also gradually tending towards another to which it will give birth. He fails to recognise the continuous process by which a society, while remaining true to its nature, constantly becomes something new.[2]

Thus he overstressed the role of concomitant environmental conditions and ignored the dynamic of history - the "vis a tergo that drives societies forward"[3]. This criticism, which was the opposite to that which he advanced against Comte, was later to be advanced, with some justice, against Durkheim's own method as set out in the Rules.

Durkheim found much else of sociological value in Montesquieu's ideas. While himself drawing a sharp distinction between "science" and practice, or "art" ("The sharper the distinction between science and art, the more useful science

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1. Ibid., pp.106-7: tr. p.58. Durkheim qualifies this evolutionism by denying its unilinearity, preferring the image of "a tree with branches spreading in different directions" (ibid., p.106: tr. p.58).
2. Ibid., pp.107-8: tr. p.59 (s.L.).
3. Ibid., p.108: tr. p.59. Cf. Davy, 1949.

can be to art"[1]), and criticising Montesquieu for failing to do so, he clearly approved of Montesquieu's approach to the problem of practice:

> Since, for each social body, salus populi is the supreme law, and since society cannot survive without taking care to safeguard its specific nature, it suffices to describe that nature to be in a position to determine what should be aimed at and what avoided: for sickness must be avoided at all costs and health is always desirable.[2]

He further approved of Montesquieu's relativism ("Montesquieu understands that the rules of life vary with the conditions of life ... What monarchy should seek, democracy should avoid"[3]), though he rightly discerned in Montesquieu a residual belief in natural law. He approved of his classification of societies as being based, not merely on political factors, but also on "the number, arrangement and cohesion of their elements"[4]; indeed, he saw mechanical solidarity in Montesquieu's republic and organic solidarity in his monarchy (in which the famous "separation of powers" was merely a particular form of the division of labour, preserving freedom through mutual balance[5]). Durkheim even attributed

1. Ibid., p.34: tr. p.7 (S.L.).
2. Ibid., p.46: tr. p.17.
3. Ibid., pp.47-8: tr. p.18 (S.L.).
4. Ibid., p.58: tr. p.26 (S.L.).
5. Thus, there was unity, homogeneity, equality and no division of labour in republics: the "social spirit" existed in the minds of all, and there was little individuality. In monarchies, however, the division of labour was at its maximum, inequalities and personal interests developed, but the "very diversity of the component parts makes for cohesion" (ibid., p.65: tr. p.30). Hence (social) virtue characterised the former and (individual) honour the latter.

to Montesquieu what he currently saw as the crucial determining role of the volume of society, on the grounds that the principle peculiar to each of Montesquieu's types "ceases to operate if the population increases or diminishes excessively"[1] (though Montesquieu had failed to see the importance of dynamic density). Finally, he endorsed Montesquieu's use of the comparative method and his emphasis on "the reciprocal relations between social phenomena"[2]. Without drawing the conclusions implied by his own principles, Montesquieu had, in Durkheim's view, "paved the way for his successors"[3].

Durkheim's interest in Rousseau is no more surprising than that in Montesquieu. Cuvillier records that he was "fully aware of having been influenced by Rousseau, who was one of his favourite authors"[4], and, indeed, it has been suggested by a recent writer that his work contains the "purest restatement of Rousseau" and that "Durkheim has been the medium, so to speak, by which Rousseau has left his mark on modern social science"[5]. This is too strong: the continuities between the two thinkers are balanced by their equally suggestive divergences.

1. Ibid., p.78: tr. p.38.
2. Ibid., p.104: tr. p.57 (S.L.). "Montesquieu, however, saw quite clearly that all these elements form a whole and that if taken separately, with reference to the others, they cannot be understood." (ibid., p.103: tr. p.56.)
3. Ibid., p.105: tr. p.57.
4. Ibid., p.121: tr. p.143 (fn.).
5. Wolin, 1960, p.372.

Durkheim's ideas are certainly close to Rousseau's at a number of points. He shared Rousseau's concern to counteract the individual's "particular will", his potentially anarchic egoistic desires, by placing him securely within the context of a group and a system of impersonal and rationally justifiable rules; these rules would induce internal satisfaction by providing the individual with an external, and just, framework of order. For Durkheim, as for Rousseau, the multiplication of self-interested desires was psychologically and socially harmful; the remedy for both thinkers lay in the internalisation of norms accepted as rational and just[1]. Secondly, there is an obvious parallel between the *conscience collective* and the General Will: they are both collective in source, impersonal in form and authoritative with respect to individuals. Like the General Will, the *conscience collective* was the "work of the community"[2] embodying "something

1. Wolin is, however, mistaken to argue that Durkheim postulated a society in which "[a]s in Rousseau's community, no tension existed between self and society; there was only the *moi commun* of perfect identification" (*op. cit.*, p.372). In fact, as we have seen, Durkheim regarded some degree of anomie as indispensable to industrial societies and came to express a view close to Freud's of the painful (and growing) personal consequences of social repression. Cf.: "We must ... do violence to certain of our strongest inclinations. Therefore, since the role of the social being in our single selves will grow ever more important as history moves ahead, it is wholly improbable that there will ever be an era in which man is required to resist himself to a lesser degree, an era in which he can live a life that is easier and less full of tension. To the contrary, all evidence compels us to expect our effort in the struggle between the two beings within us to increase with the growth of civilisation." (1914a: tr. 1960c, pp.338-9)
2. 1887c, p.119.

other than the totality of individuals composing it"[1]. Thirdly, Durkheim's social realism was, in part, foreshadowed in Rousseau, who at one point wrote of society as "a moral entity having specific qualities distinct from those of the individual beings who compose it, somewhat as chemical compounds have properties that they owe to none of their elements".[2] Durkheim saw this "remarkable passage" as showing that "Rousseau was keenly aware of the specificity of the social order. He conceived it clearly as an order of facts different from purely individual facts"[3].

Fourthly, Durkheim and Rousseau were alike in seeing an analogy between the satisfaction of man's organic needs through an equilibrium in the natural environment (Rousseau's state of nature) and the satisfaction of his moral needs through an equilibrium in the social environment. In Rousseau's state of nature, as Durkheim wrote, "so long as man has relations only with the physical environment, instinct and sensation suffice for all his needs"[4], while in the ideal society specified in the Social Contract, "civil man, though differing profoundly from natural man, maintains the same relation to society as natural man to physical nature"[5]. One might compare this most plausible interpretation of Rousseau with the following passage from Suicide, concerning the over-

1. 1924a (1951 ed.), p.73; tr. 1953b, p.51.
2. Cited in 1953a, p.136; tr. 1960b, p.82.
3. Ibid.; tr. p.83.
4. Ibid., pp.127-8; tr. p.75.
5. Ibid., p. 149; tr. p.93 (S.L.).

coming of anomie:

> A regulative force must play the same role for moral needs which the organism plays for physical needs. This means that the force can only be moral. The awakening of conscience interrupted the state of equilibrium of the animal's dormant existence; only conscience, therefore, can furnish the means to re-establish it.[1]

Finally, there is a close similarity between Durkheim's and Rousseau's conceptions of liberty, deriving no doubt from their common relation to Kant. Rousseau's man was free through collective and impersonal forces liberating him both from personal dependency on others and from his own imperious desires: "The truly free man desires only what is possible and does as he pleases"[2]. Man for Rousseau and Durkheim, "is free only when a superior force compels his recognition, provided, however, that he accepts this superiority and that his submission is not won by lies and artifice. He is free if he is held in check"[3]. As Durkheim frequently said, "liberty is the fruit of regulation"[4].

Against these points of convergence, however, one must set their differences, marked by Durkheim's criticisms of Rousseau. First, Rousseau used an essentially individualistic method of explanation; his natural man was "simply man without what he owes to society"[5], and he held that since "nature ends

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1. 1897a, p. 275; tr. 1951a, p.248.
2. Quotation from Rousseau, cited in 1953a, p.144; tr.1960b, p.88.
3. Ibid., p.144; tr. p.88.
4. 1925a, p.62; tr. 1961a, p.54.
5. 1953a, p.116; tr. 1960b, p.66.

with the individual, then everything that goes beyond the individual is bound to be artificial"[1]. The state of nature was a "methodological device", a sort of Cartesian intellectual purge, which misconstrued the entirely natural character of social phenomena and social causation[2]. Secondly, and closely related to this, Durkheim saw a contradiction in Rousseau between "the conception of society as a product of reason and the conception of society as an organism"[3]. Rousseau had, Durkheim thought, been led to this contradiction by failing to see that society, while being "superior" to individuals, was external to them. He had failed to make the intellectual leap necessary in order to "widen the circle of natural phenomena"[4]. Thirdly, Durkheim pointed to the individualist character of Rousseau's account of obligation, authority and sovereignty. Despite his awareness that "the individual is dependent on society", he saw "society as a mere instrument for the use of the individual"[5]. Rousseau thus found himself unable to give

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1. Ibid., p.117: tr. 66.
2. On the other hand, it can be seen as making an important sociological point: as Robert Derathe has put it, Rousseau "showed that the intellectual and moral development of man is a result of social life" (Jean-Jacques Rousseau et la Science Politique de son Temps (Paris: 1950), p.379, cited in ibid., p.121: tr. p.143 - S.L.). Cf. Durkheim's observation that the "great difference between man and the animal, that is the superior development of man's mental life, can be reduced to man's greater sociability" (1902b, p.338: tr. 1933b, p.347 - S.L.).
3. 1953a, p.138: tr. p.84.
4. Ibid., p.139: tr. p.85.
5. Ibid., p.166: tr. p.108.

a sociological account of obligation[1]. Fourthly, and in consequence, the General Will was entirely closed in upon itself, moving within a realm of universals, unable to express itself concretely, because "Rousseau sees only two poles of human reality, the abstract, general individual who is the agent and objective of social existence, and the concrete empirical individual who is the antagonist of all collective existence. He fails to see that, though in a sense these two poles are irreconcilable, the first without the second is no more than a logical fiction"[2]. Finally, Durkheim observed how precarious was Rousseau's social cohesion, both with respect to actual, historical societies and to the ideal society he wished to establish:

> just as he fails to explain how social life, even in its imperfect historical forms, could come into being, he has great difficulty in showing how it can possibly cast off its imperfections and establish itself on an ideal basis. So unstable is its foundation in the nature of things that it cannot but appear to us as a tottering structure whose delicate balance can be established and maintained only by an almost miraculous conjunction of circumstances.[3]

Rousseau's problem had been "to find a form of association ... whose laws can be superimposed upon the fundamental laws inherent in the state of nature without doing violence to them"[4]. He had succeeded in showing that such a form of

1. Cf.: "the rousseauist conception of obligation is unrelated to Durkheim's: it is rigorously individualist. Political authority has its basis in the act by which the individual commits himself to obeying the general will. The primary source of sovereignty is the individual himself"; Derathe, op. cit., p.239 (cited in ibid., pp.165: not translated in 1960b).
2. 1953a, p.191: tr.p. 131.
3. Ibid., pp.197-8: tr. pp.137-8 (s.L.).
4. Ibid., p.115: tr. p.65.

association was conceivable, and that in this sense social life was not in principle "contrary to the natural order"; what he had failed to show, Durkheim argued, was "how it is possible"[1].

To show this was, as we have seen, the first and fundamental problem of Durkheim's sociology from the time of his first lecture-course on "Social Solidarity", which had begun by asking "what are the social bonds which unite men one with another?"[2] His reflections on the pre-history of sociology led him to a very clear perception of the inadequacy of non-sociological approaches to the problem. He saw that for Hobbes the explanation of social order was entirely individualist: for Hobbes it was

> an act of will which gives rise to social order and an act of will, that is constantly renewed, which maintains it. Societies are formed because men desire, in order to escape the horrors of the state of war, to submit themselves to an absolute sovereign; and societies are maintained because that sovereign prevents them from breaking up. It is he who makes the law, and it is men's submission to his sovereign will that constitutes the entire social bond. They must obey him because he commands. Of course, they consent to this dependence because it is in their interests, but those interests do not explain all the details of social organisation. Once the State is established, it is the head of the State who makes the law, accepting no check to his power.[3]

He regarded Montesquieu's explanation as no less inadequate: it could only account for the relation of "appropriateness" between specified social conditions and the laws appropriate to them. The laws were instituted by the legislator - a

1. Ibid., p.197: tr. p.137.
2. V. supra: ch.2 (iii).
3. 1953a, pp.195-6: tr.p.136 (t.l.).

picture as individualist as that of Hobbes. What Montesquieu saw was that there were certain laws which were required by "the conditions prevailing in society"[1]. He did not explain the genesis and operation of actual laws and social practices, whether appropriate or not. Rousseau, Durkheim thought, was even less concerned to provide such an explanation. His conception was of an (ideal) society in which the "social system is based on an objective harmony of interests and on the state of public opinion, mores and customs, and the law can only express this state of affairs"[2]. Rather than providing empirical explanations, his aim was to "shape men's minds in such a way that resistance [to the sovereign] does not occur"[3]. Durkheim's interpretation of Hobbes, Montesquieu and Rousseau clearly implied that it was only within a sociological perspective, first fully articulated by Saint-Simon and Comte and first put to work by himself and his colleagues, that the problem of social solidarity could appear as an empirical problem amenable to the procedures of science.

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1. Ibid., p.196: tr. p.136.
2. Ibid.: tr. pp.136-7 (S.L.).
3. Ibid., pp.196-7: tr.p.137.

(xi) The Annee Sociologique

The range of Durkheim's teaching at Bordeaux implied a view of the scope of sociology that was neither modest nor unambitious. Yet the many-sidedness of his scientific work contrasts with a cardinal principle he often expressed: that in modern societies, work, including intellectual work, must become more and more specialised, while remaining an organic part of a total system[1]. What was needed was a massive programme of collaboration, based on an intellectual division of labour. Therefore in 1896, instead of continuing his work on socialism, he decided to establish, along with a small number of colleagues and pupils, a new journal, the Année sociologique, that would not only provide an annual survey of the strictly sociological literature, but also, to quote the preface to the first volume (1896-7; published 1898), "regular information concerning studies which are being carried on in the special sciences - the histories of law, culture and religion; moral statistics; economics; and so on - for it is these special sciences that offer the materials out of which sociology must be built"[2]. In addition, there would be

1. "... in advanced societies, our duty is not to extend the area of our activity, but to concentrate and specialise it"; "as [the different sciences] become specialised, these grand syntheses can no longer be anything more than premature generalisations, for it becomes increasingly impossible for one human mind to gain a sufficiently exact knowledge of this immense mass of phenomena, laws and hypotheses which they must contain" (1902b, pp.396, 353: tr. 1933b, pp.401, 362 - S.L.).
2. 1898a (i), p.1: tr. 1960c, p.341.

original papers (Mémoires Originaux) that would contribute directly to this task of construction[1].

Durkheim and his fellow editors[2] thus treated the business of reviewing and, indeed the very organising of their material under classifications, as a creative task; one of the chief purposes of the Année was "gradually to work out the natural divisions of sociology"[3]. As Durkheim wrote in the Preface to the first volume:

> Our role as critics must be to extract from the works we study the objective residue, that is, the suggestive facts and the fruitful views - whether they be interesting for their intrinsic value or because of the discussions they evoke. The critic must be the collaborator of the author, his grateful collaborator; for whatever little remains of a book after critical evaluation, that much is gained for science ... Since many of [the works with which we have to deal] are not explicitly sociological, we could not be satisfied with giving their contents, with merely expounding, as it were, the materials they contain; as far as was possible, we had to submit them to a preliminary elaboration which would indicate to the reader what information contained in them is useful to the sociologist ... all analyses of works which refer to the same question have been grouped together in such a way that they complement and illuminate each other. By themselves, these groupings already constitute comparisons which may be useful[4].

The classifications used underwent significant changes during the first five years of the Année[5]. As Célestin Bougle

1. From volume XI (1906-9; publ. 1910) the Mémoires Originaux were published separately (v. 1910a (i)). For a discussion of the organising principles of the Année v. Bougle, 1907, appendix ("Note sur l'Année Sociologique"). Davy has described the Année as "the laboratory in which [Durkheim's] method was made precise, flexible and broad" (Davy, 1919, p.196).
2. V. appendix F.
3. 1901a (ii) (1), p.433.
4. 1898a (i), pp.vi-vii; tr. 1960c, pp.346-7.
5. V. esp. Durkheim's notes; 1898a (iii), 1899a (iii), 1901a (ii) (1) and (2), 1902a (ii), 1903a (ii) (1) and (2), 1910a (ii) and 1913a (i) (1),(2), (3) and (4). V. also Bougle, op. cit.

put it, the fundamental task of the Annee was "to develop lasting frameworks for future analyses and syntheses, which follow the essential relations between social phenomena, the truths accumulated by ths historical sciences, and thus to organise the latter, no longer from outside, imposing on them the conclusions of detached speculations, but from within by assimilating their conquests"[1]. Thus to trace the changes in the organisation of the various sections of the Annee is at the same time to trace the development in theoretical grasp of the various areas in question. For example within the first few volumes, the economic sociology section (edited by François Simiand) progressed from a chronological classification to an analytical one[2]; and the religious sociology section (edited by Mauss and Henri Hubert), which in the first volume had divided up the field into "general treatises", "primitive religions in general", "domestic cults", "beliefs and practices concerning the dead", "popular cults in general, especially agrarian", "ritual", "myths", "organisation of the cult" and "various notices on the great religions in general", had by the twelfth volume recast the study of religious phenomena into the following categories (themselves subdivided): "general treatises - religious philosophy", "religious systems of lower societies", "national religions

1. Op.cit., p.166.
2. One, incidentally, which distinguished between "régimes" and "formes" of production, thus implying, as Bouglé points out, a criticism of the marxist notion of the "mode" of production, which does not distinguish between the technical and legal aspects of economic phenomena (v. Bougle, op.cit.).

systems", "universalist religious systems", "religious systems of secondary groups", "special cults", "beliefs and practices called popular", "beliefs and practices concerning the dead", "magic", "ritual", "objects and places of the cult", "religious representations", and "religious societies, their law and morality"[1]. Moreover, from the second volume onwards, a section on social morphology was included, dealing with the "exterior form of societies" (their "material substratum") which poached on geography, history and demography[2].

Durkheim's founding of the Annee was a new departure on the organisational as well as the theoretical level. It was the first example in France (apart from that of the Le Playists) of systematic collaborative work in social science, and here the German influence must have been strong, particularly that of Wundt, whose psychological laboratory in Leipzig had impressed him[3]. From the beginning he recruited promising

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1. Cf. 1899a (ii) and infra: Appendix E.
2. Bouglé, op.cit., p.170. Cf. 1899a (iii), pp.520-1: "It is, we believe, worth drawing these fragmentary sciences out of their isolation and putting them in contact by reuniting them under one rubric: they will thus achieve a sense of their unity". Cf. Mauss and Fauconnet, 1901, pp.175-6.
3. V. 1887a, pt.II, esp. p.433. Cf. Bouglé, 1930b, p.283: "... what I was able to see of German intellectual organisation made me clearly understand the degree to which a collective effort could benefit French sociology, an effort in groups that Durkheim would guide. I was thus fully prepared to offer him my collaboration, to recruit collaborators, for him, in order to swell the ranks of the "Ecole de Bordeaux" that he had formed". (For Durkheim's attitude to Bouglé, v. Davy 1967).

young students (usually philosophers) to the group[1]. He always encouraged them to specialise, within the framework of the methodological principles laid down in the Rules, and elaborated in Mauss and Fauconnet's celebrated encyclopedia article on sociology[2] and in various methodological notes in the volumes of the Annee. He regarded these principles as specifying the conditions for scientific and impersonal achievements. Hitherto sociology had been "closely related to the personalities of particular scholars", yet "science, because it is objective, is an essentially impersonal affair and cannot progress except through collective labour"[3]. Thus when a hostile reviewer of the Annee in the Revue de Metaphysique et de Morale singled out Durkheim's methodological views for criticism, Durkheim wrote a very angry letter to Xavier Leon, the editor of the Revue, protesting that "'my sociologism', 'my method' are presented as impediments of which my colleagues are invited to disembarrass themselves". "What I deplore", he continued, "is precisely that [your reviewer] should have thought it necessary to give a personal character to the criticism of a work that is essentially collective and impersonal and which I try to keep as impersonal

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1. Of the Durkheimian school Hubert Bourgin (a member of it for a time) wrote: "it had a great power of capturing and keeping [recruits] and it firmly retained those it had seized; moreover, it chose them well." (Cinquante Ans d'Experience Democratique (1874-1924) (Paris: 1925), p.45).
2. Mauss and Fauconnet, 1901.
3. 1898a (1) p.vii: tr. 1960c, p.347.

as possible"[1]. On the other hand, Durkheim kept a firm control over the editorship of the journal and formed a focus for the intellectual integration of the group, many of whose members were dispersed throughout France in provincial lycees. He revised almost all the copy and even supervised the setting up in proofs[2]. Davy has recorded that he would send back even the smallest reviews to their authors, with suggestions for revision and that he "insisted on examining everything in the smallest detail"[3]. Davy also writes of "the clan of the Annee Sociologique", whose unifying spirit Durkheim "created and maintained ... without the least tyranny, leaving to each his entire liberty. He exerted influence only through the immense superiority of his mind and his method. Everyone liked to go and see him and, while receiving his advice, experience the affectionate interest he had for all. But there were no committee meetings, no gatherings, no watchword"[4].

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1. Letter dated 21 Sept. 1902. Durkheim took this matter so seriously that he temporarily refused to allow Leon to publish his inaugural lecture at Paris (1903b).
2. Davy, 1960b, p.11.
3. Davy, 1957, p.viii.
4. Davy, 1919, p.195. Cf. Faublee, 1964, p.69 and Le Bras, 1966, p.53: "... a perfect liberty of thought permitted diversity of opinions". Espinas, however, had, from the outside, a different view: he saw the Durkheimians as a "militia" and "secret society" which used "its mysteries to conceal its ambitions" and operated with "its police, its reports, its admissions, its white and black lists". (quoted in Bourgin, 1938, p.91). Bourgin himself later

contd. over.

described his former colleagues thus: "[Durkheim] had been able to gather round him a group of workers - of whom many were first-rate - devoted to the work, convinced of its importance and intelligently compliant to his direction ... He had the right to think that he would achieve what he had resolved he would achieve: a positive sociology, gradually extending to all the forms and manifestations of social life. But thinking this, and knowing that this work was to be his, he experienced and indeed cultivated the strong and exalted feeling of the obligations this work imposed - obligations of honesty, of precision, of critical judgment, of reason, which he, for his part, assumed. He also had to inspire his colleagues to observe them, though they were sometimes less punctual, less active, less rigorous than they should have been" (ibid., pp.217-8).

(xii) The Reception of his Ideas

Durkheim's aggressive claims for sociology and their implied, and usually explicit, criticisms of existing disciplines and scholars were not calculated to endear him to the wider academic establishment. Davy has written of "the militant period of the early days when [Durkheim] was the target of so many arrows and his imperious doctrine was passionately denounced by many"[1]. It is worth examining the hostilities and polemics of the Bordeaux period in some detail, because they formed part of the intellectual context within which Durkheim's thought developed, and because they were themselves a contributing factor in that development.

The reception of his doctoral theses by the Sorbonne philosophers at his oral defence[2] gave some indication of future hostilities. According to Bougle, Boutroux accepted Durkheim's dedication of the Division of Labour to himself with a grimace and Paul Janet at one point smote the table and invoked the name of God[3]. On being asked to give an account of the Division of Labour, Durkheim emphasised that he had not departed from an absolute "mechanicism", or determinism, and that he had discovered a constant index of the division of labour in the legal system: his was a "purely

1. Davy, 1967, p.8.
2. The account I have used is to be found in the Revue Universitaire, 2e annee, t.1 (1893), pp. 440-3. (It is very partially summarised in Alpert, 1939a, pp.45-6).
3. Bougle, 1930b, p.281.

scientific thesis". Marion remarked that Durkheim should have ignored morality altogether, saying, "Your thesis is not acute enough to reach morality. It is a thesis on the physique des moeurs". To this Durkheim replied by justifying his moral starting-point by a "historical argument" (he had begun from the insufficiency of existing moral codes) and by a "polemical argument" (moralists attacked sociology and it was necessary to put them right). Paul Janet took up Marion's objection, arguing that Durkheim had substituted function for duty. Durkheim replied that for the modern and informed conscience, to specialise was a duty: "to be more of a man today is to consent to be an organ". Waddington then said, "You bring us nothing that is new: we are in the lower realm of morality ... You ignore liberty and you do not believe in Duty in general". To this Durkheim replied, "That was not my subject. Why ask me questions with which my thesis is not concerned?"

Hitherto the discussion had borne entirely on the relation of Durkheim's work to systems of formal ethics and not at all on its scientific claims; but this, as the writer of the account we are following observed, was in part Durkheim's own fault, "considering the moral importance which he himself attributes to his researches". Boutroux, however, then turned to this aspect and asked Durkheim whether his use of indices ("the signs of realities") did not detract from the value of his work, making its results less certain.

Durkheim replied as follows: 1. The signs are brought ever closer to living reality; there is a continuous approximation; 2. consequently, concerning the division of labour, we have every day new and more veridical signs; 3. and, as each sign encompasses less and less, we see through them more and more". Boutroux then observed, concerning the law that the increase in the division of labour is a direct result of the density and volume of population, that this was not the only possible solution to the problem. "I did not wish", replied Durkheim, "to show that my law was the only possible consequence, but rather that it was a necessary consequence. There are others, but they are secondary and weak". Brochard then returned to the earlier theme and remarked, "Your main argument against the systems of formal ethics is that none of them can explain charity . How do you yourself explain it? You explain solidarity, not charity". To this Durkheim replied, "I do not see the distinction. I define charity as the attachment of a man to something other than himself. Solidarity and charity are related as motion is to force. I am a scientist: I study motion". Then after a factual objection concerning the law of the division of labour, to which Durkheim briefly replied, Seailles ended by expanding on "interior morality" and on the latent idealism of Reason. Durkheim, according to the account, showed throughout, though somewhat impatiently, "a simple and sincere eloquence". This was a thesis-defence in which "the upper hand was almost constantly taken by the candidate. M. Durkheim is not only a scholar of great value, he is the surest and most agreeable of orators. He will be a master".

The defence was widely reported and acclaimed: it was taken to indicate a victory for the new science of sociology over the traditionalists at the Sorbonne, who had been compelled, despite their views, to grant a doctorate with unanimity because of the quality of the candidate. La Petite Gironde in Bordeaux carried the following report of Durkheim's "brilliant success":

> .... we are happy to state that, thanks to M. Durkheim, sociology has finally won the right to be mentioned at the Sorbonne. It was received with great favour by the eminent professors charged with judging M. Durkheim's work and, it may be said, with enthusiasm by the many members of the public who had the good fortune to hear the explanations exchanged in the course of the defence. It was indeed an event of great importance. It could not fail to concern both those interested in the progress of social science and those who are concerned for the good name of our University of Bordeaux, of which M. Durkheim is one of the most hard-working and distinguished members.[1]

The Division of Labour was widely discussed by the students[2]. It was a period of widespread unease: young men actively sought ideals, whether these were religious, secular-religious or political. Durkheim, like T.H. Green at Oxford, offered them an ideal that claimed to be both spiritually appealing and socially relevant, though many found it deeply objectionable. It was not surprising that "appearing in this context of moral uneasiness, the initial impact of the Division of Labour was one of shock"[3]. Its

1. From Durkheim's dossier, Bordeaux.
2. Bougle, Les Pages Libres, 5 Oct. 1897, quoted in Lasserre, 1913, pp. 136-7.
3. Ibid.

message was striking: as Bougle put it:

> "The origin of your malaise", the author seemed to say, "is elsewhere than at the bottom of your hearts. To restore equilibrium you must establish new social relations. Encourage the normal effects of specialisation. Equalise the conditions of competition between individuals. We must rebuild anew professional groups. Salvation lies without and this is how it may be achieved".[1]

Both Durkheim's method and his solution struck many as disconcerting. Bougle writes of one student, who was something of an aesthetic individualist, "walking off his indignation in the corridors of the Sorbonne, denouncing such formulae of Durkheim's as 'Man must be taught to play his role as an organ'"[2]. But others were strongly attracted - Bougle himself, Simiand, Fauconnet and the others who were to form the select band of disciples grouped around the Annee Sociologique. Of them Bougle writes that "obsessed ... by the problem of national reconstruction, of secular emancipation, of economic and social organisation, and seeking, on the other hand, a path equidistant from over-abstract speculation and over-minute erudition, [they] chose to take their stand with him, and work under his direction to advance the scientific understanding of societies."[3]

The opposition of the Sorbonne moral philosophers was largely due to Durkheim's own hostility to the purely a priori discussion of moral questions. From an early date, as has been seen, he opposed the methods of "the large majority of

1. Ibid.
2. Ibid. (The student was Henri Vaugeois.)
3. Bougle, 1938, p.35.

contemporary French moralists and economists"; they began "from the abstract, autonomous individual, depending only on himself, without historical antecedents or social context" and thence deduced "how he is able to conduct himself, whether in his economic relations or in his moral life"[1]. And indeed, Mauss states that it was the opposition of moralists and economists that kept him away from Paris for so long[2].

The Division of Labour caused "a great noise in the philosophical world"[3], but it was with the publication of the Rules in 1894 that the polemics really began. The boldness and intransigence of Durkheim's style, evident in both works, led many of his first readers to react strongly against what they saw as his hypostasisation of the group and his emphasis on what seemed to be mechanical and sui generis social forces that could only be known externally by their effects, of which individuals were unaware and before which they were powerless. As he wrote in the preface to the second edition of the Rules in 1901:

1. 1890a, p.451. Cf. 1902b, p.380; tr. 1933b, p.386.
2. He resented his exile from Paris. After being passed over for an appointment at the College de France, he wrote to Leon of his great regret at "seeing myself separated sine die from Paris, where I would find resources and means of action that I do not have at Bordeaux" (letter dated 19 August 1897). The appointment was a chair in Social Philosophy and the successful candidate Jean Izoulet: v. Journal Officiel, 4 Aug. 1897.
3. Sorel, 1895, p.1. It also commanded much admiration. Lucien Herr, for example, wrote that it denoted "an understanding that is as yet rare of the social realities of our time" (Herr, 1893).

> When this book appeared for the first time, it aroused lively controversy. Current ideas, disconcerted, at first resisted so fiercely that for a time it was impossible to make ourselves understood. On the very points on which we had expressed ourselves most explicitly, views were freely attributed to us which had nothing in common with our own, and we were held to be refuted when they were refuted. Although we had repeatedly asserted that the conscience, both individual and social, was for us in no way substantial, but only a more or less systematised collection of phenomena sui generis, we were charged with realism and ontologism. Although we had expressly stated and abundantly repeated that social life is constituted wholly of representations, we have been accused of eliminating the mental element from sociology.[1]

Such interpretations of his thought were evidently offensive, especially to moralists and philosophers in the neo-Kantian philosophical atmosphere of the time. He was quite widely regarded as an obscurantist and an anti-individualist.

The most notable and persistent of these attacks came from Gabriel Tarde, a magistrate, criminologist, statistician and sociologist, who was from 1894 director of the criminal statistics office of the Ministry of Justice (and in that capacity the provider of some of the statistical data for Suicide). Tarde had for twenty years been engaged in a one-man campaign against the various forms of biologism in sociology - darwinism, organicism, transformism - that he found in the work of such writers as Spencer, Espinas, Worms (whom he actually converted), de Greef, Gumplowicz, Novicow, Lombroso, Lilienfeld and Roberty. At the same time he had been developing his own system of sociology, founded entirely on psychology, or, as he was later to call it, "Interpsychology", and, in

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1. 1901c, p.ix; tr. 1938b, p.11 (S.L.).

particular, on the notion of imitation. Within this elastic concept Tarde proposed to encompass the whole of social behaviour, analysed at a microscopic level. For Tarde, it has rightly been said that "[e]verything in the social world is explained in terms of beliefs and desires that are imitated, spread and susceptible of increasing and diminishing, and these rises and falls are measured by statistics".[1] All is reduced to the "elementary social fact" of imitation, supplemented by spontaneous, and unexplained, "inventions", random products of genius (the "supreme accident") to supply the deus ex machina of social change. Despite the poverty and superficiality of his explanatory framework, and despite the fact that he did not attempt a psychology of imitation but rather took it as his starting point, Tarde's work is full of striking and suggestive observations and had (it is worth adding) a notable influence in America.[2] Tarde's sociological system reached its maturest expression[3] at precisely the time that Durkheim's first original writings were appearing, and it is

1. Essertier, 1930, p.204. On Tarde, v. the sections on him in Essertier, op. cit. and Barnes and Becker, 1938; M.M. Davis, Gabriel Tarde (New York, 1906); Parodi, 1919, pp.117-9; Bougle, C., "Un Sociologue Individualiste: Gabriel Tarde", Revue de Paris, 15 May 1905; Worms, R., "La Philosophie Sociale de Gabriel Tarde", R.P., 1906; and Hughes, E.C., 'Tarde's 'Psychologie Economique': an unknown Classic by a forgotten Sociologist", AJS, 1961. On Tarde versus Durkheim, v. Essertier, 1930, Barnes and Becker, 1938, Benoit-Smullyan, 1937, pp.488-510, and Blondel, 1928.
2. In particular on E.A. Ross, J.M. Baldwin, C.H. Cooley and F.H. Giddings; and also on the sociologists of the Chicago school, as well as on many American anthropologists, especially Franz Boas.
3. V., e.g., Les Lois de l'Imitation (Paris, 1890), Tarde, 1895a, L'Opposition Universelle (Paris, 1897), Tarde, 1898a and Tarde, 1898b.

not surprising that, given Durkheim's methodological views, Tarde should have reacted strongly against them, as he had previously reacted against biologism, and that he should have waged a protracted and highly polemical battle against them. Tarde wrote as a methodological individualist; everything in society could be reduced to and explained in terms of individuals. As Bougle wrote of Tarde, "In his eyes, everything stemmed from the individual, and everything came back to him: the individual is the first and last piece of the edifice; he is the alpha and omega of the system".[1]

Durkheim defended his views against Tarde with considerable vigour and indeed his formulation of them was to some extent determined by the terms of the debate laid down by Tarde. He did not, however, enjoy these polemics. Characteristically, but not entirely unjustifiably, he held that Tarde misconstrued his thought[2]. Thus he wrote to Léon in 1898, asking him to publish his article "Représentations individuelles et Représentations collectives"[3] as quickly as possible because "Tarde has announced to me his intention of attacking me again, but I have definitely decided not to reply any more, judging that this debate has lasted long enough. I would therefore have preferred that the little work I am sending you should not appear after the attack, so that it would not look like a reply"[4]. Moreover, certain personal factors no doubt aggravated the

1. Art. cit., p.313. Cf. Lukes, S. "Methodological Individualism Reconsidered", BJS, June 1968, forthcoming.
2. According to Davy, "... he viewed with ... genuine suffering certain criticisms relying on a distortion of his thought" Davy, 1960a, pp.17-18.
3. 1898b.
4. Letter undated.

controversy. Tarde was something of a dilettante, who dabbled in literary activities and frequented salons; he was also hostile to socialism and in favour of an intellectual aristocracy. His purportedly scientific writing was often fanciful and epigrammatic and his intellectual activity was far from single-minded and systematic. Indeed, when Tarde was appointed to the chair in modern philosophy at the Collège de France, Durkheim wrote to Léon in the following acid tones: "I deeply regret, for the sake of both sociology and philosophy, both of which have an equal interest in remaining distinct, a confusion which shows that many good minds still fail to understand what each should be"[1].

The first shot was fired by Tarde in a generous and respectful review of the Division of Labour[2] (a "remarkable and profound study"), which he criticised on three counts. First, its account of social evolution left out "wars, massacres and brutal annexations"[3], considering only intra-national and not international relations. Changes in social structure were rather the result of annexations and conquests, which were caused by "ambition, cupidity, love of glory, proselytising fanaticism"[4]. Second, the division of labour was "the daughter of genius", resulting, not from the increasing volume and density of societies, but from the presence of inventiveness,

1. Letter dated 7 February 1900.
2. Essais et Mélanges Sociologiques (Paris, 1895), pp.187-99.
3. Ibid., p.187.
4. Ibid., p.190.

creating new branches of activity. Thus Durkheim "took too little account" of "the accidental, the irrational, ... the accident of genius"[1]. Third, and most interestingly, he questioned Durkheim's opposition of mechanical and organic solidarity, arguing that the division of labour as such could neither socialize nor moralize men, and that in fact it merely "has the constant effect of developing and strengthening, under new forms, [the] intellectual and moral community [of beliefs and sentiments] by multiplying the objects of this common fund and notably facilitating their diffusion"[2]. Differentiation presupposed community.

There followed an attack on Tarde by Durkheim in the first chapter of the Rules, where, after defining a social fact in terms of its power of external coercion and observing that if it is general, that is, common to members of a society, it is only so "because it is collective (that is, more or less obligatory"), he remarked in a footnote how remote his definition was from that which was at "the basis of M. Tarde's ingenious system". His researches, he wrote, did not support Tarde's view of the preponderant influence of imitation in the genesis of collective facts, and, in any case, the diffusion of social facts, which the notion of imitation purported to explain, was itself the consequence of their obligatory character. ("No doubt, every social fact is imitated ... but

1. Ibid., p.187.
2. Ibid., p.193.

that is because it is social, i.e. obligatory"). He added that "one may wonder whether the word "imitation" is indeed fitted to refer to a propagation due to a coercive influence. Under this single term one is confusing very different phenomena which need to be distinguished"[1].

Tarde reacted strongly to Durkheim's definition of social facts, with a number of arguments[2]; the externality of the social fact does not apply to all individuals taken together; he could not make sense of Durkheim's notion of the social fact as being "external to its individual manifestations"; social phenomena <u>are</u> transmitted from individual to individual (Durkheim admitted it); and the defining notion of constraint is based on a narrow analogy that led Durkheim to recognise as social bonds "only the relations of master to subject, professor to student, parents to children, without having any regard to free relations among equals" and imitation arising from spontaneous interaction[3]. He accused Durkheim of reifying the social group ("Are we going to return to the realism of the Middle Ages?"[4] and argued that the social whole was an illusion and that Durkheim's "social realism" was counterfactual, mystical, metaphysical and

1. 1901c, pp. 14-16; tr. 1938b, pp.9-11 (S.L.). Cf. Durkheim's critique of Tarde's use of "imitation" in <u>Suicide</u>, Ch.4.
2. In Tarde,1894; repr. in Tarde, 1898a, pp.63-94; also Tarde 1895a, pp. vi-vii and Tarde, 1895c, <u>passim.</u>
3. Tarde, 1895a, p.vi; cf. Tarde 1898a, pp.71-72. This objection resembles that of Piaget, 1932.
4. <u>Ibid.</u>, cf.: "M. Durkheim confronts us like a scholastic. Sociology does not mean ontology". (<u>ibid.</u>) According to Albert Thibaudet, this charge against Durkheim of scholasticism was to become a commonplace at the Sorbonne in the early 1900's (<u>La République des Professeurs</u> (Paris, 1927), p.223).

incompatible with positivism. Social phenomena were immanent in the consciousnesses and memories of the associated individuals and were no more exterior to them than was the wave to the drops of water which composed it[1]. The source of Durkheim's illusion, wrote Tarde, was his assumption (derived, as we have seen, from Boutroux) that there were distinct levels of reality. Ultimately, Tarde believed, everything would be explained in terms of "... cells, ... molecules, ... atoms"; Durkheim's "postulate that the simple relation of several beings could itself become a new being superior to others" was "a chimerical conception"[2]. To Durkheim's slogan: "every time that a social phenomenon is directly explained by a psychological phenomenon, we may be sure the explanation is false"[3], Tarde replied, "in social matters, every clear explanation must necessarily be erroneous"[4]. To Durkheim's principle that psychological explanations left out the specifically social element, Tarde replied: "yes, if one wants to account for collective phenomena by the psychology and logic of individuals alone, and only of existing individuals but not if one has regard also for the psychology and logic of masses and of the dead"[5]. (sic.) To Durkheim's objection that psychology could not explain the evolution of societies, Tarde replied that this could be reduced to the imitation of ideas of genius[6].

1. Tarde, 1898a, p.73.
2. Ibid., p.76.
3. 1901c, p.128; tr. 1938b, p.104.
4. Ibid., p.77.
5. Ibid.
6. Ibid., pp.77-8.

Against Durkheim's view that social phenomena could be isolated and methodically observed, he wrote that "in sociology we have, through a rare privilege, intimate knowledge both of that element which is our individual conscience and of that compound which is the sum of individual consciences"; and to Durkheim's maxim: "remove individuals and society remains"[1] he countered: "remove the individual and nothing remains of the social"[2]. To these latter two statements of Tarde, Durkheim responded in Suicide. To the first he replied that mental phenomena are not directly knowable and must be reached "little by little by devious and complex procedures like those used by the sciences of the external world"; to the second, which he called "arbitrary", he replied that "proofs supporting this statement are lacking and discussion is therefore impossible", but that it would be only too easy to oppose to it the feeling of many that society is not a "form spontaneously assumed by individual nature as it expands outwards, but ... an antagonistic force restricting individual natures and resisted by them". Moreover, if Tarde were right, if "we had really only to open our eyes and take a good look to perceive at once the laws of the social world, sociology would be useless or at least very simple"[3]. But the evidence here was against Tarde; distinctively social causes could not just be directly observed, but they could be discovered by the use of scientific procedures.

1. 1895a: tr. in 1938b, p.102 (S.L.).
2. Quoted in 1897a, pp.350-1: tr. 1951a, p.311. (S.L.) from Tarde 1895c, repr. in Tarde, 1898a, p.75. Cf. Tarde, 1895a, p.vi: "Remove the professors and I do not see what remains of the university".
3. Ibid. (S.L.).

As we have seen, Durkheim saw no point in continuing this dispute with Tarde; but the 1898 article and the second preface to the Rules (1901) are to be seen as comprehensive replies to Tarde and Durkheim's other critics, discussed below.

He crossed swords with Tarde in a much more acrimonious fashion in connection with his own views about the normality of crime ("a factor in public health, an integral part of all healthy societies"[1]), which were regarded by many contemporaries as both startling and offensive. As Georges Sorel put it, Durkheim's principle that "it is normal that there should be criminality, so long as this attains and does not exceed a certain level" scandalised "moral persons"[2]. Tarde disputed[3] that it might be justifiable to seek to suppress what does good, and that the normal may be defined in terms of the general (the morbid is most often the general, while the normal is the highest state a given being can attain, which for society is "the ideal .... peace in justice and light, ... the complete extermination of crime, vice, ignorance, poverty, corruption"[4]), and he also disputed that human ideals can be determined by means of science which was, in the hands of Durkheim ("mon subtil contradicteur"), the "cold product of abstract reason,

1. 1901c, p.83; tr. 1938b, p.67. Cf. "Crime ... must no longer be conceived as an evil that cannot be too much suppressed" (ibid., p.89; tr. 72).
2. Sorel, 1895, p.176.
3. Tarde, 1895b.
4. Tarde, 1895b, p.160. "What," said Tarde, "about the old distinction between good and evil?" (ibid.)

alien, by hypothesis, to every inspiration of the conscience and the heart"[1]. More specifically, Tarde disputed the following propositions which he attributed to Durkheim: 1) that the contemporary increase in crime was normal; 2) that crime was useful because it prevented the moral conscience from being too severe on insignificant acts; 3) that if certain crimes became rarer, the corresponding punishments would increase; 4) that crime and genius were two aspects of the same mental state; and 5) that one should be exclusively concerned with "low and rampant crime, that is hated and condemned".

Durkheim's reply "Crime and Social Health"[2] was sharp and bitter. First, he denied that he had asserted any of these five propositions and agreed with Tarde ("mon éminent critique") in judging them false. He then restated his views on crime, arguing that crime was normal because it was "linked to the fundamental conditions of all social life", for in all societies some individuals must diverge from the collective type, among which divergences some must be criminal; and that the existence of crime was generally useful, either indirectly or directly: indirectly (as in most cases) because it "could only cease to exist if the conscience collective dominated individual consciences with such an ineluctable authority that all moral change would be rendered impossible"[3]; and directly

1. Ibid., p.161.
2. 1895c.
3. Ibid., p.321.

(and rarely) when the criminal was an innovator, the precursor of a new morality. Tarde was too preoccupied with contemporary morality; in a wider view the normality of crime seemed less paradoxical and was a condition of changes in morality. Moreover, Durkheim arguod, morality was a social function and, for the sake of social equilibrium, must be limited in influence (e.g., too much respect for individual dignity rendered military discipline impossible). Finally, Durkheim disposed of two minor arguments of Tarde ("mon ingénieux contradicteur") against his definition of normality: to the objection that illness is general, he replied that illnesses vary, and it is a limited resistance to illness that is general; and to the objection that an inferior society composed of inferior people could not survive but would have to be called healthy, he replied that such a society would itself be abnormal, that "it is socially normal that in every society there should be psychologically abnormal individuals" and that the normality of crime is only a particular instance of this general truth. The conditions of individual and social health were very different, even contrary to one another. This, he observed, followed from his own position that there was "a deep dividing line between the social and the psychological"[1], but it could also be seen in the simple fact that the succession of generations implied death.

In conclusion, Durkheim turned to the origin of the dispute between Tarde and himself. It sprang, he wrote,

1. Ibid., p.323.

"above all from the fact that I believe in science and M. Tarde does not"[1]. Tarde wished to "reduce it to being nothing more than an intellectual amusement, at best capable of showing us what is possible and impossible, but incapable of use for the positive regulation of conduct. If it has no other practical utility, it is not worth the trouble it costs". Tarde gave too many hostages to the enemies of science and thus allowed there to be placed above reason "sensation, instinct, passion, all the base and obscure parts of ourselves". To condone this was mysticism - "the rule of anarchy in the practical order, because it is the reign of fantasy in the intellectual order"[2].

Tarde replied to this[3], insisting that Durkheim (<u>"le savant professeur"</u>) had no objective basis for deciding what was a <u>normal</u> crime-rate and arguing that Durkheim's identification of crime and deviance was an <u>a priori</u> dogma. He reacted to Durkheim's bitter charge that he did not believe in science, by insisting on the distinction between science and the intellect, on the one hand, and moral character and the heart, on the other. Scientific knowledge, he wrote, "enlightens both the good and the wicked and serves all ends, good and bad" and "if mysticism consists in not giving science and reason their due - and I am certainly not guilty of this - then anti-mysticism, calling itself positivist but scorned by Auguste Comte under the name of "pedantocracy", anti-mysticism

1. Ibid.
2. Ibid.
3. Tarde, 1898a, pp.158-161.

which consists in not giving their due to the heart, to love, to national loyalties, and also to imagination, the source of hypotheses and theories as well as of poetry and art, that is more disastrous still. And indeed, what can my eminent adversary have in mind but this personified abstraction of Science, pure Science"[1]. He was himself, Tarde added, too well-disposed towards science and reason to adore them.

The hostilities continued, with particularly strong attacks by Durkheim on Tarde in the course of Suicide and in the second of the 1900 articles on the history of French sociology, in which he repeated the charge that Tarde's work was unscientific, putting chance and contingency at the centre of social life, and being rather "a very particular form of speculation in which imagination plays the preponderant role and thought does not regard itself as constrained by the regular obligations of proof or the control of facts ... caprice ... is permitted to thought"[2]. In 1901, Tarde

1. Ibid., p.160.
2. 1900b, p.650. Cf. also 1906a (1), where Durkheim offers a brief and incisive critique of Tarde's system, arguing that Tarde's notion of "interpsychology" was "arbitrary and confused", that the study of individual interactions must lead to a search for some means of observing them objectively and discovering the conditions of their variation, and that Tarde's thought moved within a vicious circle: "imitation, the source of social life, itself depends on social factors; it presupposes what it produces". Thus: "One imitates superiors, but superiority is already a social institution, so that 'imitation' is empty and non-explanatory. One must know why men imitate; and the causes which lead men to imitate and obey are already social" (pp.134-5).

published an article on "Social Reality"[1], arguing that there was indeed a social reality, but it was composed of psychological states and that sociology should concern itself with "belief, desire and imitation"[2]. He rejected the charges of "caprice and the negation of science", arguing that sociology "must show the emptiness of sham formulas, of sham historical laws which would place insurmountable obstacles in the way of individual wills"[3] and he once more rejected Durkheim's account of the external and constraining character of social phenomena (such as a religion, language or custom), insisting that they were rather to be seen in terms of "the similarity and simultaneity of multiple central imprints produced by an accumulation and a consolidation of individual actions"[4]. Tarde added, in a sly footnote, that he was glad to see that "the learned professor of sociology" had, since the foundation of the Année, come much nearer to the psychological conception of social facts[5].

This drew a reply from Durkheim, in the form of a letter to the editor of the Revue Philosophique[6]. If Tarde meant by this last suggestion that he shared the view that social phenomena could be immediately explained by individual mental states, not a line of his supported it: "I always see the same dividing-line between individual psychology and sociology and the numerous facts we have had to catalogue every year in the

1. "La Réalite Sociale", R.P., 52 (1901), pp.457-479.
2. Ibid., p.468.
3. Ibid., p.464.
4. Ibid., p.461.
5. Ibid., p.460.
6. 1901d.

Annee Sociologique only confirm me in this view". If, however, Tarde meant that social life was "a system of representations, of mental states, providing it is understood that these representations are sui generis, different in nature from those which constitute the mental life of the individual, and subject to their own laws which individual psychology could not predict", then this was indeed his view, and always had been. Sociology was "a special psychology, with its own object and a distinctive method"[1].

The final confrontation between Tarde and Durkheim came in 1903-4 at the Ecole des Hautes Etudes Sociales de Paris, when Durkheim and Tarde each gave a lecture on "Sociology and the Social Sciences" and, at a third meeting, debated with each other, maintaining, according to the published report, "with much heat their respective theses"[2]. Durkheim's lecture argued that sociology was the daughter of philosophy ("born in the womb of the Comtist philosophy, of which it is the logical completion"[3]) but must now specialise in studies of complex, concrete phenomena, rather than seeking abstract, general laws. Special disciplines must become truly sociological sciences, becoming infused with the ideas evolved by social philosophy. Tarde's lecture argued that the study of social phenomena had to refer to "elementary acts" studied by "intermental psychology", or "elementary sociology", which was presupposed by, and an indispensable guide for, the special

1. This, as we have seen, was the view set out in the article on "Individual and Collective Representations" (1898b) and had, in fact, been fully developed only after the first edition of the Rules.
2. 1904b, p.86.
3. Ibid., p.83.

social sciences. Elementary sociology, thus understood, was both general and central: the special social sciences would become objective as they were "psychologised"[1].

In their joint discussion, Tarde began by admitting the value of deriving general laws by means of the comparative method, but insisted on the importance of the microscopic study of intermental psychology. Durkheim replied that general sociology could only be the synthesis of the results of particular sciences and as yet one could not prejudge these results, nor whether they would be obtained by intermental psychology. He went on,

> M. Tarde claims that sociology will arrive at such and such results; but we are not able to say what the elementary social fact is, in the present state of our knowledge. We know too little, and the construction of the elementary social fact in these conditions can only be arbitrary. Whatever the value of this intermental psychology, it is unacceptable that it should exert a sort of directing influence over the special disciplines of which it must be the product.

Tarde replied that laws could be formulated without sciences being definitively constituted. The social sciences did not owe their progress to certain rules of objective method, but to the extent to which they had moved in the direction of psychology. Tarde then proceeded to repeat that there was nothing in social life except acts between individuals. Did M. Durkheim think otherwise?

> If you do think so [Tarde continued], I understand your method: it is pure ontology. The debate between us is that of nominalism and scholastic realism. I am a nominalist. There can only be individual actions

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1. Ibid., pp. 85-6.

> and interactions. The rest is nothing but a metaphysical entity, and mysticism.

Durkheim retorted that M. Tarde was confusing two different questions and refused to say anything about a problem which he had not touched on and which, moreover, had nothing to do with the discussion[1].

We have covered the Durkheim-Tarde debate[2] in some detail, not only for its intrinsic interest and importance, but also because Tarde's reactions to Durkheim's ideas were identical to those of many of the first readers of the Rules. Thus, for example, among early reactions, the socialist historian of German thought, Charles Andler objected to Durkheim's social realism (calling it "mysticism"), observing that it was just a sociological version of the mistaken economic "chosisme" of Marx[3], and declaring himself quite unconvinced by Durkheim's claims for sociology; Marcel Bernès also disputed Durkheim's account of social reality, and in particular his emphasis on externality and constraint, arguing that he should have considered the beliefs and desires of individuals[4]; James Tufts and Gustavo Tosti, in the

1. 1904b, p.86-7. Tarde died in 1904. Eleven years later, Durkheim could be more generous: v. 1915a: tr. in 1960c.
2. This has nowhere been fully reconstructed hitherto (though Benoit-Smullyan, 1937 and 1938 offer partial summaries).
3. Andler, 1896a, esp. p.258. But v. Durkheim, 1896a, where "without wishing to prolong the discussion", he "rejects absolutely the ideas which M. Andler attributes to me".
4. Bernès, 1895, esp. p.239.

United States, argued similarly[1], the former quoting John Stuart Mill against Durkheim ("Men are not, when brought together, converted into another kind of substance"[2]); Alfred Fouillee observed that "the concept of society as existing outside individuals is pure metaphysics"[3]; while Sorel criticised Durkheim's "mysterious alchemy"[4]. Even Durkheim's fellow editor of the Annee, Francois Simiand offered a mild criticism of his "sociological metaphysics"[5]. Another critic wrote that "this pursuit of pure ontology, despite its avoidance of hypostasising the social, personifies it none the less ..."[6]. In Germany, Ferdinand Tönnies observed that Tarde, while he was mistaken in failing to recognise that social phenomena must have features independent of individual consciences, was right in criticising Durkheim for constructing sociological concepts without psychological foundations[7].

Lucien Herr, the eminent and immensely influential socialist librarian of the Ecole Normale (who in 1886 had

1. Tufts, 1896 and Tosti, 1898a and 1898b. Cf. Durkheim's reply (1898d) to Tosti's charge that he had not realised that "a compound is explained both by the character of its elements and the law of their combination" : "I do not at all deny that individual natures are the components of the social fact. It is only a question of knowing if, in combining ... they are not transformed by the very fact of the combination"
2. A System of Logic (9th ed. London, 1875) vol.II, p.469.
3. Le Mouvement Positiviste et la Conception Sociologique du Monde (Paris, 1896), p.248.
4. Sorel, 1895, p.19.
5. Simiand, 1898. Cf. Gaston Richard (at this time still a Durkheimian), in the first volume of the Année: "Let us beware of sociological metaphors" (p.405).
6. Mazel, 1899, p.677.
7. Tönnies, 1898.

brought an article by Sir James Frazer on Totemism to Durkheim's notice[1]) summed up the substance of all these criticisms in a magisterial review of the Rules in the Revue Universitaire. He began by insisting on his profound admiration for Durkheim's sincerity, character and mind and on the extent to which he agreed with Durkheim's critique of contemporary sociology, with his scientific aims for sociology and his view of methodology, but he then continued:

> when he goes on to define the elementary social fact, when he discerns in it a reality exterior and superior to individuals, because exterior and anterior to one individual, when he attributes to rules, that is to generalised abstractions, to signs or symbols, that is to conventions between individuals, an imperative and coercive power, when he affirms that an emotion common to a collectivity of individuals has for its substratum not the sum of these individuals taken one by one, but the collectivity of those individuals, when he poses as a principle of this new science ways of acting, thinking and feeling external to the individual, that is to say to all individuals, and when he provides sociology with the subject-matter of social facts thus defined, then not only do I no longer give my support, but I no longer understand, and I refuse to recognise as scientific anything that will be built on this basis, with these materials. I am certain that M. Durkheim will himself be horrified by the phantom of the old realist metaphysics, the day he clearly perceives it behind his formulas and images.[2]

These sorts of criticism were frequently to be advanced, throughout Durkheim's career and subsequently[3]. Moreover, Durkheim brought the best out of his critics. As one writer has justly observed, "It is from the individualists that the

1. Mauss, "Notice Biographique: Lucien Herr", AS, n.s.2 (1927) p.9.
2. Herr, 1894, p.487.
3. V. Esserтier, 1927b and Lukes, "Methodological Individualism Reconsidered", loc. cit., for references. There is a broad anti-social-realist tradition stretching from Tarde to Popper and Homans.

most acute and cogent criticisms of the Durkheim school have come. In fact, the best statements of the individualistic position are to be found in the large literature of Durkheim criticism in France."[1]

In addition, Durkheim's views on crime met, as we have seen, with strong opposition[2]. His general scientific aims also came under attack from a number of quarters: some objected to the implied determinism, others to the extent of his scientific ambitions. Still others, such as Gustave Belot[3], objected to the narrowness of his characterisation of morality. Suicide and the first volumes of the Année provoked many similar such criticisms, though they also induced widespread admiration in France (and much incomprehension abroad[4]).

In the pages of the Revue Socialiste, Charles Péguy advanced a characteristic and distinctively socialist critique of Suicide, which is of both historical and intrinsic interest. After criticising Durkheim for writing of theft without considering "the unceasing theft of surplus labour committed by the majority of employers", Péguy referred to Durkheim's assertion

1. Benoit-Smullyan, 1938, p.51.
2. In addition to Tarde's critique, v. that of the Italian criminologist, Enrico Ferri in Sociologia Criminale (Turin, 1900; 5th ed. 1929), vol.1, pp.137-8 and 193-202; and L'Omicida (Turin, 1895; 5th ed. 1925) pp.445-7.
3. Belot, 1894, pp.414-5.
4. V. esp. Small, 1898, 1899, 1900, 1902a, 1902b, etc., Hinkle, 1960, and the reactions to Durkheim's views from scholars from many countries to be found in Sociological Papers (the Sociological Society: Macmillan, London, 1905), pp.204-256 (in response to Durkheim, 1905c). (For list of these scholars v. footnote to 1905c in Bibliography of Durkheim's publications). Cf. infra.: ch.3 (viii).

that egoistic suicide, seen as a social sickness, had been greatly aggravated in "our western civilisation" since the beginning of the nineteenth century. Durkheim's remedy was to reconstitute society, and, wrote Péguy,

> doubtless he regards it as sufficient to reconstitute corporate groups into true communities. M. Durkheim forgets that it is not in vain that men have acquired the taste for universal harmony and lost the taste for more particular harmonies. In order that the baker of today should desire to form a close association with his neighbouring bakers, it is necessary that he sense, above his single corporation, the single and harmonious City of which his corporation will merely be an organic part. The time is past when one could hope to build out of particular justices and harmonies what is, in the end, a total injustice.[1]

Finally, another socialist critic of Durkheim is worth special mention: Péguy's friend, Georges Sorel, who published a long study of the Rules in 1895 in his socialist journal Le Devenir Social. Sorel was at this time a self-proclaimed though unorthodox marxist and his criticisms of Durkheim from this perspective have much interest.

Socialism, wrote Sorel, had in M. Durkheim, an adversary of the first order: the forces of conservative democracy had found a "theoretician who is, at the same time, a metaphysician of a rare subtlety and a scholar fully armed for the struggle"[2]. Sorel first criticised Durkheim's view of science as being too ambitious for determinate solutions: all sociology could hope to establish was the patterns of the principal social changes and one should be sceptical of deriving generalisations from

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1. Peguy, 1897, p.636.
2. Sorel, 1895, p.2.

statistical regularities. Secondly, Durkheim's account of social facts was not sufficiently mechanistic, for the notion of constraint was itself in part psychological. Thirdly, Sorel approved of Durkheim's account of the development of the division of labour in terms of a struggle for existence, but he pointed out that Durkheim left classes out of the picture - if he had included them his account would have been more historically concrete, instead of being purely logical and schematic. Next, Durkheim's use of the notion of the social milieu came under attack as being non-explanatory: it should be "defined in a materialist manner and viewed as a field of forces"[1]. Fifthly, Durkheim's principles of classification were attacked as insufficiently materialist, and as deriving ultimately from an idealist theory of progress. Sixthly, Durkheim's morphological explanations, in particular the notions of volume and density, were criticised as being unduly **simpliste**, and as leaving differential class relations out of account ("groups, their tendencies, the general character of their movements"[2]), so that there was an undue emphasis on the growth of modern states and a failure to "penetrate the principle of the political state"[3]. Seventhly, Durkheim's account of normality in terms of "the general conditions of collective existence", misdescribed the latter by "stop[ping] before the marxist philosophy"[4]. Lastly, Sorel argued that if

1. Ibid., p.181.
2. Ibid., p.168.
3. Ibid., p.171.
4. Ibid., p.177.

one was to seek to satisfy Durkheim's aim of aiding the statesman by indicating to him where he should yield to the pressure of circumstances, it was necessary to abandon the theories of classical sociology and turn to socialism for its theory of the class struggle; the statesman would then yield to revolutionary forces. Sorel concluded by observing that Durkheim had pushed his investigations as far as he could without entering into socialism, and by asking whether he would advance further and pass through "the frontier which separates him from us". If he did that, Sorel proclaimed that he himself would be "the first to acclaim him as my master", for "[n]o thinker is as well prepared as he to introduce the theories of Karl Marx into higher education"[1]. But in this connection, as in most others, Sorel's hopes were to remain unfulfilled.

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1. Ibid., pp.179-80. Sorel's opinion of Durkheim was to grow much more hostile.

(xiii) Socialism, the Dreyfus Affair and Secular Education

Sorel was right to see Durkheim as an enemy on the left, but quite mistaken to see him as a potential ally. Durkheim was for him the theoretician of "[t]he new ideas on conservative democracy, establishing more justice in economic relations, favouring the intellectual and moral development of the people, encouraging industry to develop in more scientific directions", who was "for the intervention of the State and for organisation".[1] This description was broadly accurate.

Indeed, Durkheim was in his sympathies a late nineteenth-century French socialist closer to Jaures than to Guesde, and to German Socialism of the Chair than to any form of marxism or revolutionary syndicalism. He was also a liberal, a passionate Dreyfusard and an anti-clerical. His views about the political, ideological and educational issues of his time, together with his conception of his own role in relation to those issues, form a fascinating object of inquiry. He viewed these issues in a single, coherent perspective; they were all for him, in a sense, parts of the same issue. His socialism formed the general perspective for his views about the reform of his society; the Dreyfus Affair provided the principal context in which those views were worked out and applied; and his attitude to education (and his role as an educator) determined the nature of his own practical concerns and activities.

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1. Ibid., p.2.

Socialism.

Durkheim, as all those who knew him testify, was always above all, a moralist. As Hubert Bourgin wrote, "sociology was for him the means, unique and certain, of reconstructing morality"[1], and, in consequence, politics also. Bourgin recalls that one day Durkheim told him "with a moving simplicity how, at a certain moment of his spiritual life, he had had to admit to himself that he was a socialist"[2]:

> While meditating on the state of his research, his science and his practical influence, he had one day arrived at a new understanding and had become aware of the new obligations which this revelation imposed upon him, with an emotion which I could sense on the occasion when, in his serious and subdued voice, he recounted this memory to me. He considered that a society transformed by the methods and practical applications of the sciences, including his own, was ripe for a great legal reconstruction, responding to its moral regeneration, and it was this reconstruction, proceeding from science, carried out with a method as rigorous and prudent as that of scientific research, which he called socialism.3

At the height of the First World War he was to write to Leon of the "rich vitality" in the country and the powerful feeling which united it. When peace came, he wrote, this moral enthusiasm should be maintained. This would not be easy, for "all these mediocre parties will want to throw themselves on their prey. Our salvation lies in socialism discarding its out-of-date slogans or in the formation of a new Socialism which goes back to the French tradition. I see so clearly what this might be!"[4]

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1. Bourgin, 1938, p.218. Cf. Bougle, 1938, p.32: "... behind the scientist, there was always the moralist...".
2. Bourgin, 1942, p.75.
3. Bourgin, 1938, pp.219-20. It must be stressed that Bourgin's memoirs, of which the present work makes extensive use, should be viewed with caution; by the time he wrote them, Bourgin had become an extreme right-wing and anti-semitic polemicist. (Another Durkheimian who was to move to the extreme right was Marcel Deat).
4. Letter dated 30 March 1915.

In consequence, his socialism was of a peculiarly idealistic and non-political variety: he embraced the ends of socialism, conceived, in a manner that was characteristic of him, in terms of society as a whole, but he never preoccupied himself with short-term questions of political means. Furthermore, he had little interest in the economics of socialism - a weakness then characteristic of French socialists in general. In Bourgin's view, he "desired the advant of a socialist government, meaning by socialism what he meant by it ... He constructed his political and social edifices with the materials of the mind, and not with those of actual, living humanity".[1] Yet this very aloofness freed him from some political illusions characteristic of the time. He had faith neither in the activities of politicians in parliament nor in the possibilities of a proletarian revolution; least of all did he believe in the internationalism of the working class. He was, as Mauss put it,

> deeply opposed to all war whether of classes or of nations; he desired change only for the benefit of society as a whole and not that of any one of its parts, even if the latter had numbers and force. He regarded political revolutions and parliamentary developments as superficial, costly and more theatrical than serious. He therefore always resisted the idea of submitting himself to a party and its political discipline, above all an international one. Even the social and moral crisis of the Dreyfus Affair, in which he took a great part, did not change his opinion. Even during the [First World] War, he was among those who put no hope in the so-called internationally organised working class. Thus he always remained on the middle ground; he "sympathised", as they now say, with the socialists, with Jaurès, with socialism. He never gave himself to it.[2]

1. Bourgin, 1938, p.220.
2. Mauss, 1928, p.viii; tr. Durkheim, 1958b, p.3 (S.L. - Eng. tr. omits part of this passage, from "Even" to "class").

None the less, Bourgin records that

> he did not hide his active sympathy for the socialist party, and, more particularly, for certain of its leaders, such as Jaures. By public acts,[1] he was not afraid to exhibit this sympathy ... He did not think that his science, which he kept sheltered from political influences, condemned him to neutrality and abstention. He appeared, therefore, in the political field, as a certain kind of socialist, with a particular allegiance, that of the Jauresian reformists ... [yet] he retained full freedom of thought and action with regard to the party that he honoured with this sort of pragmatic confidence; and, if he showed himself favourable to projects of reform that were analogous to those advocated in Germany by professors of the school of Schmoller and Wagner, he was energetically hostile to demagogic activities and to revolutionary struggles. At the time of the events that resulted from such activities and struggles, I remember having heard him say, with force, but without emphasis, these simple words: "I fear a reaction".[2]

Durkheim's socialism was strongly reformist and revisionist. He was opposed to agitation which "disturbs without improving", and above all to social changes which "destroy without replacing"[3] He applauded the efforts of those socialists, especially in Germany, Belgium and Italy, who were seeking to "renew and extend the formulae of which they have for too long been the prisoners".[4] In particular he cited "the doctrine of economic materialism, the marxist theory of value, the iron law [of wages], [and] the pre-eminent importance attributed to class conflict"[5]. These "disputable and out-of-date hypotheses", though they still served as propaganda for the party, in fact compromised the idea of socialism. Moreover,

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1. For example, Durkheim made a point of openly carrying a copy of the socialist paper L'Humanite under his arm at his Sorbonne lectures (M.A. Cuvillier: personal communication). He wrote in socialist journals and, in general, moved in socialist circles.
2. Bourgin, 1942, pp.75-6.
3. Fauconnet, 1922, p.14; tr. Durkheim, 1956a, p.39.
4. 1899e, p.433. It can probably be inferred that Durkheim, unlike Jaures, sided with Bernstein against Kautsky.
5. Ibid.

"anyone who is familiar with the present state of the sciences and their orientation cannot easily rest content with them"[1]. More generally, he held that it would, above all,

> be a mark of considerable progress, from which everyone would benefit, if socialism finally ceased to confuse the social question with the working-class question. The first includes the second but goes beyond it. The malaise from which we suffer is not located in a particular class; it is general throughout the whole of society. It affects employers as well as workers, though it takes different forms in the two cases: an anxious and painful restlessness in the case of the capitalist, discontent and irritation in that of the worker. The problem is thus immeasurably greater than that of the conflicting material interests of the classes; it is not simply a question of diminishing the share of some so as to increase that of others, but rather of remaking the moral constitution of society. This way of putting the problem is not only truer to the facts; it should have the advantage of divesting socialism of its aggressive and malevolent character with which it has often, and rightly, been reproached. Socialism would then appeal, not to those feelings of anger that the less-favoured class nourishes against the other, but to those feelings of pity for this society which is suffering in all its classes and all its organs."[2]

In addition, Durkheim was opposed to what he called "unilateral solutions" to the problem of realising socialism, holding that "it is quite certain that the societies of the future, whatever their nature, will not rest on a single principle: the old social forms always survive beneath the new ..."[3] After all, the former responded to social needs which could scarcely suddenly disappear without trace; the new needs could only relegate them to second place, not "eliminate them radically". Thus,

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1. Ibid.
2. Ibid., pp.437-8.
3. Ibid., p.438.

> However future society is organised, it will contain alongside one another the most diverse forms of economic management. There will be a place for all.[1]

On one issue, however, he was quite clear: the role of the state would be very great. As societies advance, "its functions become more numerous and increasingly permeate all other social functions which it thereby concentrates and unifies".[2] The state was not as such antagonistic to the individual (a view common to orthodox economists, and anarchists): it was "rather the liberator of the individual", for

> it is the state which, as it has grown in strength, has freed the individual from the particular and local groups which tended to absorb him - family, city, corporation, etc. ... Not that the state may not become despotic and oppressive ... the social force which it contains must be neutralised by other, counteracting social forces. If the secondary groups can easily become tyrannical when their influence is not moderated by that of the state, conversely that of the State, if it is to remain normal, also needs to be moderated in its turn. To arrive at this result, there should exist in society, outside the State but subject to its influence, groups that are more restricted ... but strongly constituted and possessing an individuality and an autonomy sufficient to permit opposition to the encroachments of the central power. What liberates the individual is not the elimination of a controlling centre, but rather the multiplication of such centres, provided that they are co-ordinated and subordinated one to another.[3]

Thus the "anarchist tendency which has impaired the thought of [socialism's] greatest thinkers" was for Durkheim quite unacceptable - "a veritable sociological heresy"[4], which quite misunderstood "the true nature and role of social

1. Ibid.
2. Ibid.
3. Ibid., p.439.
4. Ibid., p.438.

discipline", the "very core of collective life"[1]. It would be impossible to arrive at "a more perfect and more complex justice" in society without an ever more powerful and active, though greatly transformed, state.

Durkheim, as we have seen, made a sharp distinction between the existing varieties of socialism, on the one hand, and sociology, on the other. His general view was that, ideally, socialism could in the future become the application of the remedies proposed by sociology. It would then become "the social and political art which complemented the social and political science constituted by sociology"[2]. But as things were, while recognising how the history of socialism "blends with the very history of sociology"[3], he firmly held that "[of] socialism, viewed as a theory of social facts, the sociologist can say but one thing: from the point of view of method and consistency he must refuse to see it as a scientific enterprise"[4]. On the other hand, sociology must take socialism very seriously, for it "expresses a state of society. It does not express this accurately ... Socialism is above all the manner in which certain sections of society, particularly subject to collective sufferings, represent these to themselves. But it at least bears witness to the existence of a social malaise, and although not an adequate expression of it, it can help us to understand it since it derives from it ...

1. Ibid., p.439.
2. Bourgin, 1942, p.73. Cf. Aron, 1960, p.31: "... He conceived sociology as the scientific counterpart of socialism"
3. 1928a, p.4; tr. 1958b, p.6.
4. 1897d, p.204.

its formulae are symbols"[1]. It was by means of sociology alone that one could "look at the needs to which it responds", although "the [political] parties have ready answers to the problem"[2]. Socialism, in its historical and existing forms, embodied a sort of primitive and pre-scientific sociology. Durkheim's diagnosis of the malaise, and his remedy, arrived at by the methods of sociology, have already been considered. His principal concern was with economic anarchy and injustice, and anomie in the industrial and commercial sphere, where "latent or acute, the state of war is necessarily chronic"[3], and his principal remedy, developed in the mid-90's, was the economic and moral reorganisation of industry through the systematic re-creation of occupational groups, supervised by but independent of the state (for "[a]nomie ... springs from the lack of collective forces at certain points in society; that is, of groups established for the regulation of social life"[4]). More generally, he wished to "complete, organise and

1. Ibid., p.205. Cf. supra: ch.2 (viii) and esp. 1928a, p.6: tr. 1958b, p.7.
2. Ibid. "One would not ask a sick man about his ailments to discover their causes, nature and remedy ... we need research, information, methodical comparisons in which the confused and passionate intuitions of the common conscience should have no place". (ibid.).
3. 1902b, p.iii: tr. 1933b, p.3. (S.L.).
4. 1897a, p.440: tr. [illegible] 1951a, p.382. Mauss refers to this as the "idee maitresse of Durkheim's specifically moral and political work", entailing that "a part of the ancient political and property rights formerly held by domestic groups must be transferred to the occupational group, if the individual is not to be alone in face of the State and live a life alternating between anarchy and servitude". Mauss adds that this idea was influential: Sorel (whose "mind was penetrating, if not learned or just, whom we knew since 1893") took it up in some articles in Le Devenir Social, and later "revolutionary syndicalism was in part nourished by it"; "we were", Mauss continues, "some of us at least, more than observers in this connection between 1893 and 1906" (Mauss, 1928, pp.vi-vii:

(contd. over)

extend individualism"[1], to establish absolute equality of opportunity for all[2], "to organise economic life and introduce more justice into contractual relations", and "to alleviate the functioning of the social machine, that is still so harsh to individuals, to put within their reach all possible means of developing their faculties without hindrance, to strive to make a reality of the famous precept: 'to each according to his work'"[3].

If Durkheim's attitude to socialism was sympathetic but politically somewhat aloof, that of his disciples, the group of the Année, tended to be much more engagé. As Bougle has recorded,

> the majority, indeed almost all, of the contributors to the Annee Sociologique ... great friends of the famous librarian of the Ecole Normale ... Lucien Herr, were members of the Socialist party and more than one was a contributor to L'Humanite.[4]

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tr. Durkheim, 1958b, p.2 - s.L.). For a brief discussion of Durkheim's influence on Sorel, v. Goriely, G., Le Pluralisme Dramatique de Georges Sorel (Paris: 1962), esp.p.187. For Durkheim's attitude to syndicalism, v. infra: ch.3 (ix).

1. Cf. Jaures: "socialism is the logical and complete individualism": Revue des Deux Mondes, 121 (1894), p.499.
2. " ... there cannot be rich and poor at birth without there being unjust contracts..." 1902b, p.373: tr. 1933b, p.384 (cf. Bk.III, ch.II passim.).
3. 1898c, p.13.
4. Bougle, 1938, p.34. "Herr had begun his thirty-eight-year directorship of the library of the Ecole Normale in 1888 Equipped with a staggering mastery of sources and endowed with great personal warmth, Herr, who had become socialist by 1889, directed successive generations of normaliens to the important treatises on socialist theory. 'Here was the man, whom the public did not know', Leon Blum once exclaimed, 'yet under whom the socialist universitaires were formed ...' Goldberg, H., The Life of Jean Jaurès (Madison, 1962), p.62. Mauss wrote of Herr that he was always "for all of us a constant and welcome advisor" A.S., n.s.2 (1927), p.9.

Indeed, Mauss and Simiand, together with Lucien Lévy-Bruhl (who was very close to the Durkheimians but not one of the inner group) were among that paper's founders. Many of the Durkheimians (such as Mauss, Simiand, Fauconnet and Emmanuel Lévy) lectured to workers in the École Socialiste, in which they"sought a basis for socialism in sociology"[1]; and most of them "used up whatever time and energy their teaching and research left them in the ... Universités Populaires ... [while] others, like Mauss, devoted themselves to the organisation of co-operatives"[2]. They took part in strikes and election campaigns and they published their sociological work in abridged and popularised form in socialist tracts[3].

1. Andler, Vie de Lucien Herr, p.163.
2. Bougle, Les Pages Libres, 5 Oct. 1907, quoted in Lasserre, 1913, p.179. On the people's universities, v. Goldberg, op. cit., pp.269-70. The first was founded in April 1898 and for several years the movement flourished in the working class districtsof Paris. Within a few years, however, "the initial enthusiasm of workers and intellectuals waned [and] the people's universities disappeared" (p.270). Cf. Jackson, op.cit., pp.94-5.
3. V. Bourgin, 1938 and 1942, passim. The socialist tracts were in a series called Cahiers du Socialiste, founded a few years before the First World War by Francois Simiand, Robert Hertz and Hubert Bourgin. (Bourgin, 1942, pp.127-9). Also, between 1900 and 1906, Simiand, with Herr's help, published a journal called Notes Critiques - Sciences Sociales, a sort of socialists' Annee Sociologique, to which Durkheim occasionally contributed (see bibliography). The following were contributors to Notes Critiques:- Charles Andler, Léon Blum, Hubert Bourgin, Durkheim, Paul Fauconnet, M. Ostrogorski, Charles Rist, Charles Seignobos, François Simiand, Lucien Lévy-Bruhl, Georges Bourgin, H. Lazard, Albert Thomas, Louis Gernet, Robert Hertz, Maurice Halbwachs and Arnold van Gennep. In 1903 Lucien Herr wrote, "I know of no collective enterprise that gives so strong an impression as this does of vigour, of certainty, of bold and prudent firmness"(N.C. IV, p.262). Cf. Andler, op.cit., pp.159-60. The slim but inaccessible volumes of the Notes Critiques are indeed full of interesting and valuable reviews and notes, many of them well worth republishing.

During the Dreyfus Affair, many of them campaigned with Péguy and Herr, organising Dreyfusard agitation on the Left Bank, circulating petitions and writing political pamphlets[1]. In particular, a notable group formed around Herr, which for a few years ran a socialist publishing house[2]. The group consisted of Herr, Simiand, Hubert Bourgin, Mario Roques and Léon Blum, and it called on the aid of many others including most of the young Durkheimians. (It was founded as a rescue-operation for an earlier venture of Peguy's that had gone bankrupt - but Péguy soon quarrelled violently with the new regime and left to found the Cahiers de la Quinzaine). This group formed a real centre for socialist intellectual activity. Bourgin records that Durkheim's attitude to this publishing venture was critical:

> From the heights of his doctrine, the theoretician of the Division of Labour, the moralist of professional specialisation, had declared that it would collapse[3], for it contravened the laws of industrial and commercial organisation, which did not permit professors suddenly to become publishers; and he deplored the fact that so much energy was swallowed up in this way, and was thus lost to scientific work and achievement, which was their true occupation and function.[4]

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1. V. Goldberg, op.cit., p.478.
2. This was Péguy's Librairie Georges Bellais, which, on being rescued by Herr and the others, became La Société Nouvelle de Librairie et d'Edition. For various versions of the story, v. Andler, op.cit., pp.151-67, Bourgin, 1942, pp.110-16 and Peguy, C., Pour Moi in Oeuvres en Prose (Paris, 1959), 1,pp.126ff.
3. As indeed, it very soon did, in 1902, when the business manager absconded to America with all the funds (Andler, op.cit., p.165).
4. Bourgin, 1938, p.117.

The socialism of the Durkheimians was abstract, intellectual, evolutionary, reformist, optimistic, inspired by large ideals of co-operation and organisation with an over-riding respect for social science. They believed that the critical and constructive tasks of socialism demanded "precise scientific data, investigations, statistics, comparative studies of history and geography ..."[1]. As Bourgin recalled,

> ... most of those amongst us who adhered to socialism, to bring about the transformation not only of the relations between "capital" and "labour", but the total reforms of the State, considered economic phenomena to be the most important; philosophers, historians, students of literature and language, turned themselves, so as to be better and more useful socialists, into economists and sociologists ... First, there was to be the organisation of producers; the regulation and harmonisation of the relations between workers and bosses, employees and employers, businessmen, entrepreneurs and financiers ... wishing to solve [what others called 'the social question'] with the double aim of saving humanity from slavery and bondage and protecting industry against disorder, anarchy, idleness, parasitism, paralysis, we sought our method in a combination of positivism, applied to take account of all existing forms of organisation, and democratism, determined to discover and develop, in a society troubled and weakened by disorder, the possibilities of consciousness and action. Also it was necessary to organise the consumers. That form of society, which ... would manage commercial and financial interests, saving, mutual insurance , even production itself, adapted to the positive needs of consumption, and developing, so it seemed, before our very eyes, in all sectors of urban and rural life - this vision had a great, seductive power over us.[2]

Bourgin wrote (sourly) of their ideals as follows:

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1. Challaye, F., Péguy Socialiste (Paris: 1954), p.97.
2. Bourgin, H., Cinquante Ans d'Expérience Démocratique (Paris: 1925), pp. 51-2.

> In a society transformed by the division of labour, specialisation, large-scale production and the anonymous management of enterprises, where the old status-system of employer, artisan and wage-earner had broken up, bringing the ruin of the system of professional ethics that was linked to it, new types of group were necessary which could, with the infinitely fragmented and atomised working-population, rebuild 'consciences communes', 'ames collectives' that were indispensable to the mobilising of efforts and to output. In face of the weakening of old beliefs and of the 'secularisation' of most institutions, it was the morality of work, of the vocation, of the professional association, in accordance with the absolute law of the division of tasks and the hierarchy of functions, that seemed to offer a means of salvation: it seemed that this form of organisation, as yet in chaos and confusion, could bring about a world we imagined ourselves capable of controlling.[1]

The Academic and Politics.

Durkheim shared his disciples' aims and ideals, but he did not share their commitment to practical party politics. Apart from his role in the Dreyfus affair, during which "Durkheim and the sociologists were everywhere in the mêlée"[2], it was his pedagogy lectures to future schoolteachers and his efforts to develop a national system of secular education (which we will consider below) that constituted his only direct contribution to the social regeneration he wished to bring about. He considered day-to-day political activity to be an unsuitable, even a harmful, pursuit for academics, above all participation in party and parliamentary politics. Certainly writers and scholars had, as citizens, a "strict duty to participate in public life"[3]; the question was what form this participation should take. As "men of thought and imagination", they were not generally

1. Ibid., p.55.
2. Besse, 1913, p.238.
3. 1904e, p.705.

suited to a political career, which "demands above all the qualities of men of action"[1]. Great physiologists were generally poor clinicians and the sociologist was likely to make a poor statesman. Intellectuals should be represented in parliament, to provide information and "defend the interests of art and science"[2], but they need not be numerous. Besides, with rare exceptions (Durkheim was perhaps thinking of Jaures), it was doubtful whether a politician could remain a scholar. It was, he wrote,

> by means of books, lectures and contributing to popular education that our influence should be exercised. Before all else we should be <u>advisers</u> and <u>educators</u>. Our function is to help our contemporaries to understand themselves through their ideas and their feelings, rather than to govern them; and in the state of mental confusion in which we live is there any role which is more useful? Moreover we will perform it much more satisfactorily if we limit our ambitions in this way. We will gain popular confidence much more easily if we are suspected less of ulterior motives. The lecturer of today must not be seen as the candidate of tomorrow.[3]

His conception of the political role of the academic bears a certain resemblance to that of Max Weber[4]. The academic had a right, indeed a duty, to take a stand on major political issues, but he must not use his academic authority for political ends. He was later to say, in this connexion:

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1. <u>Ibid</u>.
2. <u>Ibid</u>.
3. <u>Ibid</u>., pp.705-6. According to M. Henri Durkheim, his uncle never wished to enter active politics (personal communication).
4. Weber, M., <u>Wissenschaft als Beruf</u> (Munich, 1919) tr. as "Science as a Vocation" in <u>From Max Weber; Essays in Sociology</u> tr. and ed. Gerth, H.H. and Mills, C.W. (London and New York, 1946). Cf.: "It is said, and I agree, that politics is out of place in the lecture-room ... the true teacher will beware of imposing from the platform any political position upon the student, whether it is expressed or suggested ... the prophet and the demagogue do not belong on the academic platform" (<u>From Max Weber</u>, pp.145-6).

> I consider that a professor who, even outside the context of his teaching, seeks to exercise any political influence over his students thereby often puts himself in a delicate position. For he is making use of the authority which is inherent in his post for purposes that are foreign to it. That authority is not his personal property; he cannot just use it as he pleases.[1]

There was a certain ambiguity here. Much of Durkheim's teaching presupposed and entailed evaluations that were political in the widest sense - even if he himself saw such evaluations as scientifically justified. Moreover, twice in his life, when issues that seemed to transcend ordinary politics were in question, during the Dreyfus Affair and the First World War, Durkheim became an intensely active partisan. The key to his attitude lies in his low estimation of current politics as a superficial game of parties and personalities. In such circumstances, the academic should without question abstain from taking part in political campaigns and controversies. Only when great moral and social questions were matters of public debate, and above all when the very ideals of the Republic were threatened, should his voice be raised. When this happened he should come to "advise" and "educate" his contemporaries. In other words, the academic could be an ideologist, but not a mere activist. He should propagate ideas which he held to be true and important, leaving the practice of politics to others.

The Dreyfus Affair.

A revealing instance of Durkheim's practical interpretation of this principle occurred during the course of the Dreyfus Affair. In January 1898, after the publication of

1. 1907d, pp.142-3.

Emile Zola's famous letter headed "J'accuse" addressed to the President of the Republic, a local Bordeaux paper carried the following news item:

> We are told that two professors, MM. Durkheim and Waitz have written to M. Zola a letter of warm congratulations and have asked their students to countersign the letter.

There subsequently appeared in the same journal the following report:

> M. Durkheim and Waitz declare that they have never written to Zola, still less urged their students to do so. M. Durkheim has explained that, on the 21st January two of his students came to him to ask his advice. He told them that "personally he thought that one ought to protest against the grave illegalities that appeared to have been committed during the trial of 1894, but that he explicitly refused to offer them the slightest advice on what their conduct should be". He even added that, on principle, he preferred to see students abstaining from these sorts of demonstration, whatever their import.
>
> For their part, a delegation of students brought to the Nouvelliste [the paper concerned] a letter in which they protested and made it clear that their two professors had in no way solicited their signatures.[1]

Durkheim's attitude to the Dreyfus Affair itself was entirely consistent with his general view of politics. Like Péguy, he regarded it as "un moment de la conscience humaine" and saw it as introducing into political life a new degree of moral seriousness and public participation. In 1904, in the long shadow cast by the Affair and in the midst of the Combist anticlerical crusade which so disillusioned Péguy, he compared the intense activity of the intellectuals provoked by the

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1. Durkheim's Dossier, Bordeaux (emphasis in dossier).

Dreyfus Affair with their pronounced political apathy during the first twenty years of the Third Republic. The latter had been due, he held, to the fact that no "great moral and social problem" had been presented before the country. Politics had been

> pitifully engulfed in questions of personalities. Divisions were about who should have power. But there was no great impersonal cause to which one could devote oneself, no elevated end to which men's wills could adhere ... But, as soon as a grave question of principle was raised, one saw the scientists leave their laboratories and the scholars their studies, and they drew near to the crowd, took part in its life; and experience has shown that they knew how to make themselves heard.[1]

Durkheim held that this "moral agitation" was necessary and that it should continue. The apathy that had previously existed was "abnormal" and dangerous. Like the Saint-Simonians, he saw the period since the fall of the Ancien Regime as a "Critical Period" which had not ended; "The hour of rest has not sounded for us". There was

> too much to do for it not to be indispensable that we should keep our social energies, as it were, permanently mobilised. That is why I believe the politics of these last four years preferable th that which preceded it. For it has succeeded in maintaining a constant flow of collective activity, at a certain pitch of intensity. Of course, I am far from thinking that anticlericalism is enough; I long to see society adhering to more objective ends. But it is essential not to let ourselves relapse into our previous state of prolonged moral stagnation.[2]

Durkheim's was the authentic attitude of the Dreyfusard "intellectual". It was precisely this high-minded attitude

1. 1904e, p.706.
2. Ibid.

on the part of many of the academic supporters of Dreyfus that so incensed the anti-Dreyfusards, from the hooligans who broke up their lectures to sophisticated men of letters who scorned them in print. Catholic polemicists pilloried the "ignoble race of these academics ... who spend their lives teaching error and in corrupting souls, and, in due course, society as a whole".[1] They were the "atheistic educators of the young, agents of social harm ... the main source of evil, the true enemies of social order".[2] For Maurice Barres

> The great culprits, who should be punished, are the "intellectuals", the "anarchists of the lecture-platform", the"metaphysicians of sociology". A band of arrogant madmen. Men who take a criminal self-satisfaction in their intelligence, who treat our generals as idiots, our social institutions as absurd and our traditions as unhealthy...[3]

To Ferdinand Brunetière, the literary historian and critic, and one of the immortals of the strongly anti-Dreyfusard Academie Française, the very word "intellectual" proclaimed "one of the most ridiculous eccentricities of our time - I mean the pretension of rising writers, scientists, professors and philologists to the rank of supermen".[4]

1. Renaud, La Conquete Protestante, p.378 cited in Soltau, op. cit., pp.354-5.
2. Ibid.
3. Barres, M., Scenes et Doctrines de Nationalisme (Paris, 1902), vol.1, p.209.
4. Paleologue, M., Journal de l'Affaire Dreyfus (Paris, 1966), pp.90-1. For further discussions of the Dreyfusard "intellectuals" and attacks on them, v. Brombert, V., The Intellectual Hero 1880-1955 (London, 1962) ch.2; Coser, L.A., Men of Ideas (New York, 1965), pp.207-226; Gauthier, R., Dreyfusards (Paris, 1965); and also Kayser, J., The Dreyfus Affair (tr. London, 1931), p.183 for a useful list of the leading Dreyfusard intellectuals.

Indeed, early in 1898, Brunetiere published an article entitled "Après le Procès"[1] in which he defended the army and the social order, threatened by "individualism" and "anarchy", and poured scorn on "various intellectuals" who had presumed to doubt the justice of Dreyfus's trial. After Zola's "J'accuse" (indicting Esterhazy's judges, the officers who had directed the investigation of Dreyfus, the chiefs of the general staff, the handwriting experts and various departments of the War Ministry) the intellectuals had publicly declared themselves - artists, men of letters, scientists, lawyers and professors. The "Manifesto of the Intellectuals" published in L'Aurore the day after "J'accuse" stated:

> We the undersigned protest against the violation of judicial procedure and against the mystery surrounding the Esterhazy affair and persist in demanding Revision.[2]

A few days later, various members of the Institut presented a petition to the Chamber of Deputies in support of Zola. The second, ultimately victorious, phase of the Dreyfusard campaign had begun. Brunetiere took up the battle with the intellectuals with enthusiasm.

He addressed himself to three questions: the causes of anti-semitism, the place of the army in a democracy, and the claims of the "intellectuals". Concerning the first, he advanced the remarkable argument that it was science, or

1. Revue des Deux Mondes, 4e période, t.146, 67e année (15 March 1898), pp.428-446.
2. 14 January 1898.

rather pseudo-science, that had first given rise to anti-semitism by postulating the inequality of races: anthropologists, ethnographers, linguists, historians and critics had lent their authority to this hypothesis which had then passed into the popular imagination. He argued, further, that the prejudice against Freemasons, Protestants and Jews was a natural and legitimate reaction to their "domination" in the spheres of politics, law, education and administration, and that the Jews themselves were partly responsible for antisemitism.

Secondly, Brunetière argued that the army was vital for French security, prosperity and democracy. It was incompatible only with individualism and anarchy, such as that advanced by Herbert Spencer, who argued that the military profession was an anachronistic survival of barbarism in the age of industry and commerce. On the contrary, war and diplomacy were still "the keystone of social equilibrium".[1] The mass of the people had rightly sensed during Dreyfus's trial that "the army of France, today as of old, is France herself ... our armies have made us what we are ... it is in their blood ... that national unity has been formed, cemented and consolidated".[2] Its composition was truly national, its spirit honourable and its discipline humane; with national service it had even become a "school of equality".[3]

1. Art. cit., p.437.
2. Ibid., p.440.
3. Ibid., p.441.

The individualism and anarchy which threatened the army and all that it represented were primarily to be found among "various intellectuals" - persons who, in virtue of some specialised knowledge, were assumed to have some special authority in all matters, including "the most delicate questions concerning human morality, the life of nations and the interests of society".[1] Such an assumption was unfounded and dangerous, and the danger was only increased by their appeal to "science" to support their purely individual opinions. Grand phrases like "the scientific method, aristocracy of intelligence, respect for truth" only served to conceal the pretensions of "Individualism", which was

> the great sickness of the present time ... Each of us has confidence only in himself, sets himself up as the sovereign judge of everything and does not even allow his opinion to be discussed. Don't tell this biologist that human affairs are not amenable to his scientific "methods"; he will laugh at you! Don't confront this palaeographer with the judgment of three court-martials; he knows what the justice of men is, and, anyway, is he not the director of the Ecole Nationale de Chartes? And this man, the first person in the world to scan the verses of Plautus, how can you expect him to bend his "logic" at the word of an army general? One does not spend one's life in studies of that importance in order to think "like everyone else"; and the true intellectual could not behave like just anyone. He is Nietzsche's "superman" or "the enemy of laws" who has not made for laws but rather to rise above them; and we others, mediocre as we are, have only to admire and be grateful! I am merely pointing out that when intellectualism and individualism reach this degree of self-infatuation, one must expect them to be or become nothing other than anarchy; - perhaps we are not yet at this point, but we are rapidly approaching it.[2]

1. Ibid., p.444.
2. Ibid., p.445.

For the past hundred years, the intellectuals had caused a great deal of harm and they were "capable of causing us still more".[1] Moreover, recent events had shown "the ways in which their self-satisfaction is truly anti-social".[2]

Durkheim replied to Brunetiere in an article entitled "Individualism and the Intellectuals"[3], in which he took up the issue of principle: "the state of mind of the 'intellectuals', the fundamental ideas to which they adhere".[4] They had refused to "bend their logic at the word of an army general"; they were "putting their own reason above authority, and the rights of the individual appear to them to be imprescriptible".[5] "Let us", he wrote, "forget the Affair itself and the melancholy scenes we have witnessed. The problem confronting us goes infinitely beyond the current events and must be disengaged from them".[6] Durkheim's article is of considerable interest. It offers a conclusive refutation of a certain interpretation of him as fundamentally anti-liberal and anti-individualistic, as a right-wing nationalist, a spiritual ally of Charles Maurras and a forerunner of twentieth-century jingoistic nationalism[7] - an interpretation that relied on a

1. Ibid., p.446.
2. Ibid.
3. 1898c. This is to be republished, translated and with an introduction by the present author, in a forthcoming issue of Political Studies.
4. Ibid., p.7.
5. Ibid.
6. Ibid.
7. Cf. e.g. Parodi, 1909 and 1919, pp.149-50, Benda, J., La Trahison des Clercs (Paris, 1927) 3, 3 and Mitchell, 1931. In C.J.H. Hayes A Generation of Materialism (New York and London, 1941) Durkheim is described as one of a number of "sources ... of totalitarian nationalism" (p.247). For a more moderate view, v. Coser, 1960. For the contrasts between Durkheim and Maurras, v. Fonsegrive, G., De Taine à

(contd. over)

selective misreading of certain of his writings and, in some cases, a mistaken importation into his centralised guild socialism of the connotations of fascist corporatism. Here, in effect, is a Dreyfusiste manifesto and and eloquent defence of liberalism, stated in the categories of Durkheim's sociological theory. It was an attempt to give a sociological account of "individualism" as a set of operative ideals, moral beliefs and practices, indeed as a religion in which the human person becomes a sacred object. This attempt sheds considerable light on Durkheim's thought in two respects. In the first place, it shows how he came to conceive of the <u>conscience collective</u> in a modern industrial society. Such a society required a "religion", in the sense of a "system of collective beliefs and practices that have a special authority"[1]; this religion, deriving from Christianity, sanctified the values of liberalism and pointed towards those of socialism. In the second place, Durkheim's sociological account of individualism is the clearest instance of the way in which he saw sociology, or the science of ethics, as going beyond the philosophical ethics of the past, by treating moral beliefs and practices as social facts. Individualism was

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<u>Péguy: L'Evolution des Idées dans la France Contemporaine</u> (Paris, 1920), pp.287-8. E.g. "... having started from the same principles, M. Durkheim and M. Maurras reach very different conclusions: M. Durkheim is a loyal supporter of the present Republic; M. Maurras sees no solution for France except through the restoration of the monarchy, and what he calls 'integral nationalism'" (p.287).

1. 1898c, p.10.

> itself a social product, like all moralities and all religions. The individual receives from society even the moral beliefs which deify him. This is what Kant and Rousseau did not understand. They wished to deduce their individualist ethics not from society, but from the notion of the isolated individual.[1]

Thus, Durkheim maintained, it was "possible, without contradiction, to be an individualist while asserting that the individual is a product of society".[2]

He began by drawing a sharp distinction between "the narrow utilitarianism and utilitarian egoism of Spencer and the economists... that narrow commercialism which reduces society to nothing more than a vast apparatus of production and exchange" and "another individualism", that of "Kant and Rousseau, that of the idealists, that which the Declaration of the Rights of Man sought, more or less successfully, to translate into formulae, that which is currently taught in our schools and which has become the basis of our moral catechism"[3]. Utilitarian individualism was indeed anarchical (an "apotheosis of comfort and private interest, [an] egoistic cult of the self"[4]) though it was fast losing adherents. The other individualism, however, saw personal motives as the very source of evil and held that "the only ways of acting that are moral are those which are fitting for all men equally, that is, which are implied in the notion of man in general"[5].

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1. Ibid., p.12.
2. Ibid.
3. Ibid., pp.7-8.
4. Ibid., p.8.
5. Ibid.

Indeed, it pointed towards an ideal that went

> so far beyond the limits of utilitarian ends that it appears to those who aspire to it as marked with a religious character. The human person, whose definition serves as the touchstone according to which good must be distinguished from evil, is considered as sacred, in the ritual sense of the word. It has something of that transcendental majesty which the churches of all times have given to their Gods. It is conceived as being invested with that mysterious property which creates an empty space around holy objects, which keeps them away from profane contacts and which draws them away from ordinary life. And it is exactly this feature which induces the respect of which it is the object. Whoever makes an attempt on a man's life, on a man's liberty, on a man's honour inspires us with a feeling of horror in every way analogous to that which the believer experiences when he sees his idol profaned. Such a morality therefore is not simply a hygienic discipline or a wise principle of economy. It is a religion of which man is, at the same time, both believer and God.[1]

This individualism was uncompromising in its defence of the rights of man: there was "no reason of State which can excuse an outrage against the person when the rights of the person are placed above the State"[2].

It was, however, far from anti-social: the cult of which man was both object and follower addressed itself to "the human person wherever it is to be found, and in whatever form it is incarnated"[3]. Such an end was "impersonal and anonymous", placed above particular consciences and able to serve as a "rallying-point" for them[4]. All that societies require in order to hold together, Durkheim argued (in contrast to the argument of the Division of Labour) is that "their members fix their eyes on the same end and come together in a single

1. Ibid.
2. Ibid., pp.8-9.
3. Ibid., p.9.
4. Ibid.

faith"[1]. The object of that faith need not be remote and unconnected with individual persons. Individualism thus understood was "the glorification, not of the self, but of the individual in general" and its motive force was "not egoism but sympathy for all that is human, a wider pity for all sufferings, for all human miseries, a more ardent desire to combat and alleviate them, a greater thirst for justice".[2]

This "cult of man" had "for its first dogma the autonomy of reason and for its first rite freedom of thought"[3]. What then of the argument that intellectual and moral anarchy was the inevitable consequence of liberalism? Durkheim answered this argument, "which the perennial adversaries of reason take up periodically"[4], by observing that liberty of thought (the "first of liberties") was compatible with respect for authority where that authority was rationally grounded; reasons had always to be given to show why one opinion was more competent than another. The case of Dreyfus was one where submission could not be justified in this way; it was "one of those questions which pertain, by definition, to the common judgment of men", for "in order to know whether a court of justice can be allowed to condemn an accused man without having heard his defence, there is no need for any special expertise. It is a problem of practical morality

1. Ibid.
2. Ibid.
3. Ibid., p.10.
4. Ibid.

concerning which every man of good sense is competent and about which no-one ought to be indifferent"[1]. The intellectuals had refused to assent to the legally suspect judgment of Dreyfus, not because they claimed any special expertise or privileges, but because they were exercising their rights as men, and because, accustomed to withold judgment when not fully aware of the facts, they were inclined to "give in less readily to the enthusiasm of the crowd and to the prestige of authority"[2].

At this point in the argument, Durkheim executed an ingenious and effective inversion of the characteristic anti-Dreyfusard argument that the unity, indeed the very survival of the nation were being threatened for the sake of one individual's rights. Individualism, he argued, was "henceforth the only system of beliefs which can ensure the moral unity of the country"[3]. As societies grew in volume and spread over vaster territories, traditions and practices adapted to social change by becoming more plastic and unstable; social and cultural differentiation had developed almost to a point at which the members of a single society retained only their humanity in common. The "idea of the human person", given different emphases in accordance with the diversity of national temperaments, is therefore the sole idea that survives, immutable and impersonal, above the changing tides of particular opinions"[4]. The communion of minds could no

1. Ibid.
2. Ibid.
3. Ibid.
4. Ibid., p.11.

longer form around "particular rites and prejudices"; individualism was "the doctrine that is currently needed"[1]. In order to hold back its progress,

> we would have to prevent men from becoming increasingly more differentiated from one another; we would have to reduce their personalities to a single level, bring them back to the old conformism of former times and arrest, in consequence, the tendency of societies to become ever more extended and centralised, and stem the unceasing growth of the division of labour. Such an undertaking, whether desirable or not, infinitely surpasses all human powers.[2]

Individualist morality was the natural successor to Christian morality, out of which it had grown. In these circumstances, outrages against the rights of an individual

> cannot rest unpunished without putting national existence in jeopardy. It is indeed impossible that they should be freely allowed to occur without weakening the sentiments they violate; and as these sentiments are all that we still have in common, they cannot be weakened without disturbing the cohesion of society. A religion which tolerates acts of sacrilege abdicates any sway over men's minds. The religion of the individual can therefore allow itself to be flouted without resisting, only on penalty of ruining its credit; since it is the sole link that binds us one to another, such a weakening cannot take place without the onset of social dissolution. Thus the individualist, who defends the rights of the individual, defends at the same time, the vital interests of society ...[3]

It was thus the anti-Dreyfusards who were threatening the nation with moral anarchy by seeking to destroy individualism, which had "penetrated our institutions and our customs" and become "part of our whole life"[4] But that individualism itself needed to be completed, organised and extended. Durkheim

1. Ibid.
2. Ibid.
3. Ibid. pp.11-12.
4. Ibid., p.9.

argued, in Hegelian fashion, that its eighteenth-century form had expressed only its most negative aspect, and must be "enlarged and completed"[1]: freeing the individual from political fetters was only the pre-condition for subsequent progress. It was vital that political liberties be put to use by working towards economic and social justice. Liberty was a delicate instrument the use of which must be learnt; "all moral education should be directed to this end"[2]. Above all, it would be senseless to renounce objectives already attained so as to pursue the new ones more easily.

The most immediate task, however, was "that of saving our moral patrimony"[3]. Already there were "initiatives awakening within the country, men of good will seeking one another out. Let someone [Jaures?] appear who can combine them and lead them into the struggle: perhaps victory will then not be long in coming"[4]. Durkheim concluded on an optimistic note: the anti-Dreyfusards were strong only by virtue of their opponents' weakness. They had "neither that deep faith nor those generous enthusiams which sweep people irresistibly to great reactions as well as to great revolutions", they were "neither apostles who allow themselves to be overwhelmed by their anger or their enthusiasm, nor are they scientists who bring us the product of their research and their deliberations"[5]. They were "literary men seduced by an interesting

1. Ibid., p.12.
2. Ibid., p.13.
3. Ibid.
4. Ibid.
5. Ibid.

theme"; and it therefore seemed "impossible that these games of dilettantes should succeed in keeping hold of the masses for very long, provided that we know how to act"[1]. His optimism, though not perhaps his reasons for it, soon proved justified.

In the following year, Durkheim published two replies to surveys of opinion which dealt with the other principal issues raised in Brunetière's article: militarism[2] and anti-semitism[3]. Concerning militarism, he held that it "no longer has, or should not have, a moral value", and that its present recrudescence was abnormal, due to temporary circumstances and the exorhibant prestige of the army. Contemporary France needed "qualities of another sort - those of the scientist, the engineer, the doctor, the industriel", and Frenchmen should pursue other goals: "respect for the law, love of liberty, a proper concern for duties and responsibilities, whether they derive from individuals or society, and the desire for a more equitable distributive justice". One major need was to reform the system of public education.

Concerning contemporary anti-semitism in France, Durkheim, unlike Theodore Herzl, who attributed it to the fundamental racialism of the French people[4], saw it as "the consequence and

1. Ibid.
2. 1899b.
3. 1899d.
4. V. L'Affaire Dreyfus (Fédération sioniste de France, s.d.); cf. Kedward, R., The Dreyfus Affair (London, 1965), pp.65-8.

the superficial symptom of a state of social malaise":[1]

> When society undergoes suffering, it feels the need to find someone whom it can hold responsible for its sickness, on whom it can avenge its misfortunes; and those against whom public opinion already discriminates are naturally designated for this role. These are the pariahs who serve as expiatory victims. What confirms me in this interpretation is the way in which the result of Dreyfus's trial was greeted in 1894. There was a surge of joy on the boulevards. People celebrated as a triumph what should have been a cause for public mourning. At last they knew whom to blame for the economic troubles and moral distress in which they lived. The trouble came from the Jews. The charge had been officially proved. By this very fact alone, things already seemed to be getting better and people felt consoled.[2]

There were, of course, secondary causes: certain vaguely religious aspirations that had recently appeared had been able to profit from this movement of opinion, and certain faults of the Jewish race could be invoked to justify it. But these same faults were counterbalanced by undoubted virtues, and, besides, "the Jews are losing their ethnic character with an extreme rapidity. In two generations the process will be complete"[3]. (Compare this view with that of the leading Dreyfusard and Zionist, Bernard Lazare, who wrote that "it is because [the Jews] are a nation that anti-semitism exists ... and what are the effects of this anti-semitism? To make this nationality more tangible for the Jews, to strengthen their realization that they are a people"[4]). Also, Durkheim argued,

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1. 1899d, p.60. Durkheim distinguished here between two sorts of anti-semitism: that of Germany and Russia which was "chronic and traditional", and "our own", constituting "an acute crisis, due to passing circumstances". The former had "an aristocratic character, it consists of disdain and arrogance"; the latter was "inspired by violent, destructive passions which seek to express themselves by any means" (ibid.).
2. Ibid., p.61
3. Ibid.
4. Le Nationalisme Juif, 6 March 1897, quoted in Redward, op. cit., p.51.

the primary causes could not be of a religious order, for religious faith had been no less intense twenty or thirty years before, yet anti-semitism did not then exist as it existed now.

It was, in fact, "one of many indices by which the grave moral disturbance from which we are suffering is revealed"[1]. Thus the real way to check it was to "put an end to this state of disorder; but that is not the work of a day". None the less, there was "something that was immediately possible and urgent that could be done"[2]. If the sickness could not be attacked at its source, at least the special manifestations which aggravated it could be combated, for "one does not let a sick man avenge his sufferings on himself by tearing himself apart with his own hands";

> To achieve this result, it would be necessary, first of all, to repress severely every incitement to hatred by some citizens against others. Doubtless, on their own, repressive measures cannot convert people's minds; all the same, they would remind public opinion what it is forgetting, namely, how odious such a crime is. It would, secondly, be necessary that one should not, while condemning anti-semitism in theory, provide it with genuine satisfactions that encourage it; that the government should take it upon itself to show the masses how they are being misled and not allow itself to be suspected of seeking allies within the party of intolerance[3].

Finally, Durkheim concluded, it would be necessary for "all men of good sense", instead of contenting themselves with "platonic disapproval", to "have the courage to proclaim aloud

1. 1899d, p.62.
2. Ibid.
3. Ibid.

what they think, and to unite together in order to achieve victory in the struggle against public madness"[1].

What form of action did Durkheim himself adopt? He seems to have been a Dreyfusard from a relatively early date. According to his nephew, M. Henri Durkheim[2], he was instrumental in persuading Jaurès to take up the cause of Dreyfus. I have been able to discover no independent confirmation of this, though it is perfectly possible that he added his voice to that of Herr, Lucien Levy-Bruhl and the others who convinced Jaurès that principles of liberty and justice were at stake. Again according to M. Durkheim, his uncle had, as early as 1896, made an outspoken Dreyfusiste speech at the tomb of a recently-deceased colleague at Bordeaux, which caused something of a sensation[3]. (However, his signature does not appear in the "Manifesto of the Intellectuals" published in L'Aurore on 14-16 January 1898). In 1898 he became secretaire général of the Bordeaux section of the Ligue pour la Défense des Droits de l'Homme, founded on the 20th February between the twelfth and thirteenth hearings of the Zola trial by Senator Ludovic Trarieux and a number of his political and academic friends. The Ligue, which has been called "the most effective and durable creation of all this Dreyfusiste agitation"[4] was committed to the view that Dreyfus's conviction, Esterhazy's acquittal and the proceed-

1. Ibid., pp.62-3.
2. Personal communication.
3. Ditto. M. Durkheim was living with his uncle at Bordeaux for some of this period.
4. Miquel, P., L'Affaire Dreyfus (Paris, 1961), p.51.

ings against Zola were all a travesty of republican justice and a victory for the forces of reaction. By May it had over 800 supporters in Paris and the provinces, and by the end of 1898 it claimed over 4,500. It appealed primarily to teachers and intellectuals; and although basically liberal in its theory, it became intensely anti-clerical in practice[1]. It held meetings and in general acted as a pressure-group in the cause of revision, in contrast to the anti-Dreyfusard Ligue de la Patrie Française, founded in December 1898 (and to which Brunetière belonged). Durkheim seems to have been a very active member of the Bordeaux branch and was also elected "président d'honneur" of the Gynesse branch[2]. A report in a local newspaper gives an account of a meeting of the Ligue on the 6th June 1900, in which homage was paid to the activity of the Bordeaux committee. M. Stapfer (Honorary Dean of the Faculty of Letters at Bordeaux) was, we are told,

> no less applauded when he spoke of M. Durkheim, professor at the Faculty of Letters at Bordeaux, whose fiery speeches bring supporters to the Ligue from far and wide.[3]

The Ligue did not confine its activities to the cause of Dreyfus; it was concerned also to extend its republican and anticlerical outlook to discussions of the condition and future of the country as a whole. Indeed, the Bordeaux committee broadened its focus to include international issues. As

1. V. Kedward, op.cit., pp.31-2 and Gauthier, R., Dreyfusards (Paris, 1965), p.133.
2. V. the Bulletin de la Ligue pour la Défense des Droits de l'Homme.
3. Durkheim's dossier, Bordeaux.

Durkheim wrote in a letter to Louis Havet, one of the Ligue's founders and leaders, inviting him to give a lecture at Bordeaux:

> After your lecture the statutory General Assembly of our section will - very briefly - take place. At that Assembly we are planning to put to the vote a motion concerning the war between England and the Boers. In the few words that I shall say in proposing it, I will take care to specify that we are not yielding to any feeling of Anglophobia, but that we are merely claiming the right of every man to protect his country as his family. As the motion is not unrelated to the subject you will be dealing with, I thought it might be useful to let you know about this. As to the reason which has led us to propose it, it is not, of course, that we expect any practical result, but rather that we have been reproached with having aroused Europe on behalf of one man's fate while remaining indifferent to that of a whole people.[1]

Durkheim and Solidarism.

In the previous year, Durkheim had given an address to a different and more influential audience on the theme of "Patriotism and Cosmopolitanism"[2]. This was a subject on which he had fairly constant views, which were very close to those of Jaurès: national loyalties were real and valuable, but they should not be exclusive and they should be extended in an internationalist direction. He was to observe on another occasion,

> Doubtless, we have towards the country in its present form, and of which we in fact form part, obligations that we do not have the right to cast off. But beyond this country, there is another in the process of formation, enveloping our national country: that of Europe, or humanity.[3]

1. Letter dated 4 February 1901. Later that year Durkheim extended a similar invitation to Havet, whose subject then was "The Idea of the Fraternity of Peoples" (letter dated 22nd October 1901).
2. This information comes from a letter to Leon dated 7 February 1900.
3. At a meeting of the Societe Francaise de Philosophie: 1908a (1), p.45. Cf. 1925a, pp.87-90: tr. 1961a, pp.77-9.

Durkheim's speech on this subject was delivered to the Congres International de l'Education Sociale, held in Paris under the auspices of the government as part of the Exposition Universelle of 1900[1]. The aim of this Congress was to discuss the concept of solidarité and to consider ways and means of diffusing it through the educational system. The audience consisted of many leaders of the Radical and Radical Socialist Party, Senators, Deputies, teachers, magistrates, industrialists, and representatives of trade unions and co-operatives. Other speakers included Léon Bourgeois, the aptly-named philosopher-politician of solidarité and ex-Prime Minister; Alexandre Millerand, the Socialist Minister of Commerce; the historian Charles Seignobos; the ecpnomist Charles Gide; the republican educational administrator and theorist Ferdinand Buisson; and Gustave Geffroy, the radical journalist and associate of Clemenceau. The Congress concluded with a resolution stating the meaning and implications of the notion of solidarité - the idea of justice as being the repayment of a "social debt" by the privileged to the underprivileged, assuming mutual interdependence and quasi-contractual obligations between all citizens and implying a programme of public education, social insurance and labour and welfare legislation.[2]

However, despite his attendance at this Congress, and a number of shared ideas with the solidarists[3], Durkheim was

1. For details of the Congress, v. Scott, op.cit., pp.179-81.
2. On Solidarism generally, v. Scott, op. cit., Pt. I, ch.II. On Durkheim and Solidarism, v. ibid., pp.183-4, Alpert, 1941 and Hayward, 1960.
3. Such as the notion of organic solidarity and the emphasis on just contracts.

distinctly cool towards the solidarist movement as such. Solidarism, which virtually became the official social philosophy of the Third Republic in the two decades before the Great War, was a kind of moralistic French equivalent of Benthamite utilitarianism, a reformist doctrine that in no way challenged the existing social structure or the security of property, but had the immediate practical consequences of a stream of welfare legislation.[1] Durkheim had little faith in legislative reformism: he believed (partly as a result of his studies of religion in the mid-90's in the prior and crucial importance of what he called "moral beliefs"; it was only by changing these that the social crisis could be resolved. Thus his sympathies lay with the regenerative aspects of socialism rather than with the practical reformism of the solidarists. As he wrote in criticism of the ideas of the chief philosopher of Solidarism, Alfred Fouillée, the practical proposals of the latter could not fill the "void in our moral conscience":

> How could mere legislative measures have such an effect? They cannot provide us with new ends to desire and become attached to. Besides, is it not the case that the faults of the magistrates and legislators only express, indeed

1. As Scott puts it, the Solidarist doctrine as formulated by Bourgeois "avoided both the pitfalls of laissez-faire liberalism and the commitments of revolutionary socialism; it provided a formula for the amelioration of glaring social abuses while maintaining untouched the existing bases of existing capitalist society in private property and freedom of business enterprise" (op.cit., p.178). V. C.R. Henderson, "Social Solidarity in France", American Journal of Sociology, XI (1905), pp.168-182 for an account of solidarism's practical consequences.

> reinforce, the prevailing lack of direction, and that we must first put an end to the latter if we want to cure the former.[1]

Secular Education.

The central practical issue was therefore, first, to discover and clarify those beliefs which were uniquely appropriate to a modern industrial society, and France in particular, and uniquely capable of assuring its integration; and second, the systematic dissemination of those beliefs throughout the schools of the nation. Durkheim believed that

> the present malaise derives essentially from a dissolution of our moral beliefs. The ends to which our fathers were attached have lost their authority and their appeal, without our seeing clearly, or at least with the necessary unanimity, where to find those that must be pursued in future.[2]

The task of the sociologist was to discover these ends. As to their realisation, the lever of social change was, in the last analysis, the school:

> We have here a unique and irreplaceable opportunity to take hold of the child at a time when the gaps in our social organisation have not yet been able to alter his nature profoundly, or to arouse in him feelings which make him partially unamenable to common life. This is virgin territory in which we can sow seeds that,

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1. 1901a (iii) (45), pp.444-5. On Fouillée, v. Hayward, J.E.S., "'Solidarity' and the Reformist Sociology of Alfred Fouillée", American Journal of Economics and Sociology, 22 (1963), pp.295-222 and 305-312. Hayward emphasises Fouillée's attempt to synthesise the thought of Kant and Comte (an attempt Durkheim also made), social contractualism and social organicism and "the greatest individuality of each member" of society with "the greatest solidarity of all members". But Fouillée, like Bourgeois and unlike Durkheim, disagreed with the socialists over the sanctity of private property.

2. Ibid., p.444.

> once taken root, will grow by themselves. Of course, I do not mean that education alone can remedy the evil - that institutions are not needed which will need legislative action. But that action can only be fruitful if it is rooted in a state of opinion, if it is an answer to needs that are really felt ... today because of the critical situation in which we find ourselves, the services that the school can render are of incomparable importance.[1]

None the less, if education was to have these beneficial consequences, there would have to be a massive programme of educating the educators:

> the schoolmasters must be shown what new ideal they should pursue and encourage their pupils to pursue, for that is the great <u>desideratum</u> of our moral situation.[2]

In his belief in national reintegration through (secular) education, Durkheim was within a tradition reaching back, in particular, to the Kantian Renouvier and the Comtian Jules Ferry, who had written that "the principles of 1789 are the basis of modern French society; the teaching of them must be ensured".[3] But Durkheim went much further than Ferry: his aim was nothing less than the creation of a new republican ideology. One historian of education has written that "the sociology of Durkheim was triumphantly to invade the <u>écoles normales</u>, sweeping out the ideology with which the bourgeois security of Ferry was naively

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1. 1925a, p.270; tr. 1961a, p.236 (S.L.)
2. 1901a (iii) (45), p.445.
3. Cited in Weill, G., <u>Histoire de l'Idée Laique en France au XIXe siècle</u> (Paris, 1925), p.270, q.v. <u>passim</u> for an extremely illuminating discussion of this tradition.

satisfied."[1] Above all, Durkheim's view of existing religious beliefs did not allow him to favour any kind of eclectic compromise between the religious and the secular (such as that attempted by his old teacher Boutroux or his rival Bergson), or any attempt to secularise or modernise the teachings of the Church. Like his equally rationalist colleague and close friend, Octave Hamelin, he held that "in a rational morality God could not intervene as the source of obligation".[2]

At the height of the Dreyfus Affair, which did so much to encourage the diffusion of the esprit laique, Durkheim and Hamelin founded at Bordeaux an association of university teachers and students called "La Jeunesse Laique".[3] Such associations were being founded at this time in many cities and were federated on a national basis in 1902. At Bordeaux meetings were held once a week, mostly in cafés, with about twenty-five members present. Political and ideological

1. Buveau, G., Les Instituteurs (Paris, 1957), p.120. Cf. Bougl and Deat, 1921. We still await an investigation into the influence of Durkheimian sociology on French education (v. Bougle, 1938, pp. 35ff). A key figure in this connection was Paul Lapie, who became a Durkheimian partly as a result of Bougle's influence, contributing to all but one of the volumes of the Annee (v. Appendix F.). As Director of Primary Education in France, Lapie introduced sociology into the syllabus of the Ecoles Normales Primaires and made it a requirement for competitive entry to the higher grades of teaching and administration in primary education. He aimed to combine the long course of Civil Ethics and Political Economy with a number of sociological ideas. This measure was for long bitterly opposed; its consequences await study. On Lapie, v. obituary in A.S., n.s., 2 (1927), pp.7-8.
2. Hamelin's words, cited in Weill, op.cit., p.333. This rationalism was common to all those, including Durkheim, who were grouped around Xavier Leon's Revue de Metaphysique et de Morale. Other members of this group included the philosophers Leon Brunschvieg and Louis Weber, and the historian Elie Halevy.
3. M. Henri Durkheim, personal communication.

rather than strictly religious issues were discussed[1], and the movement as a whole became increasingly more political in character, tending in a socialist and anti-militarist direction[2].

A record survives of an address by Durkheim to one of these meetings on 22 May 1901, on the subject "Religion and Freedom of Thought"[3], in which he made very clear his view of the incompatibility of religion and science and the ability of the latter not only to offer superior explanations of the world but also to discover superior and more suitable moral ends for contemporary society to pursue. In general, religion, like socialism, should be seen as responding blindly to needs which science would uncover, and the educators of the future would seek explicitly to satisfy:

> The speaker proposed to treat the problem scientifically. He declared that while he predicted the triumph of science, he realised that one could not eliminate religion with a stroke of the pen. One had to satisfy the needs to which it had responded for so long. It was no use whatever seeking a compromise whereby these two enemies would live in peace, each in its own sphere: giving Science the world of appearances and Religion the inner depths and the mystery of things. This so-called mysterious world was, in reality, that which was not understood. "What, then, is the essential difference between Religion and Science? It is that religious belief is obligatory, while scientific opinion is free. The scientist has the right and even the duty always to be self-critical and sceptical of his theories; the believer is immured in his dogma". The only possible reconciliation between Science and Religion consisted in discovering within Science itself moral ends. "Science -

1. Ibid.
2. Cf. Weill, op.cit., p.315.
3. 1901b.

> indeed science above all - must discover ends which transcend the individual; it must have an ideal, that is, make a reality of what is outside us: Justice, the welfare of others".[1]

Durkheim believed that the relation of the science of sociology to education was that of theory to practice; and, in this respect, it would become a rational substitute for traditional religion. Teachers should be imbued with the "sociological point of view" and children should be made to think about "the nature of society, the family, the state, the principal legal and moral obligations, the way in which these different social phenomena are formed".[2] With these views, and this mission, it was entirely appropriate that in 1902 he should be appointed as Charge d'un Cours in the Science of Education at the Sorbonne to replace Ferdinand Buisson, who for fifteen years had, as Director of primary education at the Ministry of Public Instruction[3] been the man most responsible for the practical implementation of the

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1. Durkheim's dossier, Bordeaux. The same source indicates that in February 1899 Durkheim addressed the "Patronage Laique de Mansouty", expressing "in an eloquent and brilliant impromptu speech his devotion to the cause of education" and his belief in "the solidarity of the three parts of the education system". In February 1902 he again addressed the Bordeaux Jeunesse Laique on "Individualism".
2. 1899c. Durkheim also proposed that lessons on the history of religions should replace those on the history of philosophy, which are "customary and of little use" (ibid.).
3. Until 1896.

Ferry Laws, the central objective of which was to establish a national system of free, secular education that would secure the moral foundations of the Third Republic.

CHAPTER 3.

PARIS: 1902 - 1917.

(i) Durkheim at the Sorbonne.

When Durkheim arrived in Paris in 1902, he was already a celebrated intellectual figure, yet he was not without enemies. There were those among his future critics - including writers, such as Charles Peguy[1], Daniel Halevy and Romain Rolland (all devotees of Bergson); philosophers, such as Felix Rauh [2]; Catholic priests, such as Dom Besse[3] and Simon Deploige[4]; and opponents of the "New Sorbonne" and of sociology in particular, such as 'Agathon'[5] and Pierre Lasserre[6] - who were to speak and write about him with

1. V. Peguy, 1906 (v. Situations (Paris, 1940), pp.161sqq.). Peguy pictured Durkheim as one of the Inquisitors of Joan of Arc.
2. Rauh spoke (according to Henri Massis) of the logical tendency of Durkheim's methods as "the intellectual form of brutality", quoted in Massis, H., Evocations: Souvenirs (1905-1911) (Paris, 1931), p.146. Cf. Rauh, 1904. Rauh was, however, a personal friend of Durkheim's. On Rauh's death, Durkheim wrote to Leon, "It is difficult for me to speak only as Rauh's colleague. I shall speak also as a friend ..." (letter undated).
3. V. Besse, 1913.
4. V. Deploige, 1911.
5. A joint pseudonym for Henri Massis and Alfred de Tarde, son of Gabriel Tarde, two young men (also strongly influenced by Bergson) who wrote highly polemical pamphlets attacking the new, positivist and anti-classical spirit of the Sorbonne - v., e.g., L'Esprit de la Nouvelle Sorbonne (Paris, 1911). For details of their collaboration, v. Massis, op.cit., passim.
6. V. Lasserre, 1913.

an abusiveness and a vehemence that seem to require explanation. This is to be sought in his aggressive combination of rationalism and positivism. All problems worth considering could be approached scientifically; all else was dilettantism, mysticism, irrationalism. In particular, religion, to the study of which Durkheim's years at Paris were primarily devoted, could be seen as both irrational, insofar as it consisted of beliefs that were imprecise, illogical, untestable and counterfactual, and also scientifically explicable as the symbolic agent of social cohesion. Since, in addition to this militant intellectual standpoint, Durkheim was responsible for the education of successive generations of schoolteachers whom he sought to imbue with the elements of a rationalist secular morality (some said a dogmatic secular religion), it is not surprising that his enemies were passionate and numerous; as one Catholic writer observed "the obligation of teaching the sociology of M.Durkheim in the 200 ecoles normales of France is the gravest national peril our country has known for a long time"[1].

One of the charges that his future opponents were to make has a certain plausibility. This was that his reception into the Sorbonne was not entirely free of extra-academic considera-

1. The phrase was Jean Izoulet's; cited in Goyau, M., Comment Juger la "Sociologie" Contemporaine (Marseilles, 1934), p.184 and in Bouglé, 1938, p.37.

tions. In Daniel Halévy's view, Durkheim was appointed to the Sorbonne by "Herr and his friends" in order to

> furnish them with a doctrine to propound. The word socialist was unsuitable. The more prudent word sociology was chosen. A keen enthusiast, with limited powers of thought but good organising ability, a man called Durkheim, had started using it ten years ago, and Herr and his friends had at first disapproved but now made use of the word, the theories and the man.[1]

Halevy's charge is polemically put, yet its substance seems to be echoed by Bougle - hardly an unsympathetic witness:

> Politics was not unconnected with this change of mind [i.e., on the part of the academic establishment, from a position of hostility towards sociology to one of sympathy]. There was the crisis of the [Dreyfus] Affair. Sociologists and anti-sociologists, one found them all on the same side. Suddenly there were better things to do than pursue internal quarrels, and one saw more clearly, in face of the common adversary, that all served the same ideal. The Annee Sociologique group did not spare its efforts. Old and young, in Paris and in the provinces, all did their duty - that of the 'intellectual' citizen. All were concerned to show, in the aftermath of the Affair itself, that they had perceived the dimensions of the problem that it raised and had envisaged the reconstruction that would be necessary .... By their political attitudes the collaborators on the Annee had given proof of their integrity. In addition, their books were all favourable to democracy .... there is no doubt that moral and political sympathies served the cause of social science: they laid a soft carpet beneath its feet.[2]

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1. Peguy and Les Cahiers de la Quinzaine tr. R. Bethell (London, 1946), p.93. For similar attacks, v. Lasserre, 1913, pp. 178 ff. and Besse, 1913, pp.237 ff.
2. Les Pages Libres, 5 Oct. 1907, cited in Lasserre, 1913, pp.178-9. Cf. Weber, E., The Nationalist Revival in France (Berkeley, California, 1959), p.79: "The Dreyfusard victory led to the rise of Dreyfusards to leading functions in an institution [i.e. the Sorbonne], whose appointments were as politically motivated as those of any ministry"; and Goriely, op. cit., pp.176-7: "... Durkheimian sociology seemed to constitute the major arm of this "parti intellectuel", which, thanks to Dreyfusisme, had conquered certain high university posts ..."

Yet, while Bougle's observations about the relation between Dreyfusisme and the acceptance of sociology may be treated as broadly true, Halevy's specific charge concerning Durkheim's appointment is at best unsubstantiated. The most that can be said with certainty is that his Dreyfusisme was no barrier to his advancement. He himself viewed the appointment with considerable misgivings. When the question arose in 1902 of applying to the Sorbonne to replace Ferdinand Buisson, who held the chair in the "Science of Education" and had just been elected to the Chamber of Deputies, it needed all the insistence and diplomacy of Durkheim's friends to prevail on him to let his candidature go forward. In a letter written at this time to Lucien Levy-Bruhl, he marshalled all the arguments against his own cause. As a specialist in sociology, how could he be a candidate for a chair in education?

> I will give the impression of someone who seeks to use any expedient in order to insinuate himself into Paris. I find the idea of giving such an impression repulsive, especially since it does not correspond at all with my state of mind.[1]

But, above all, he was afraid that he would not have sufficient competence for the task:

> It would be alright so long as I had to deal with moral education, the teaching of morality. There I feel at home. For this I would have enough material to fill my lectures adequately for two or three years. But after that it would be different.[2]

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1. Cited in Saraillh, 1960, p.8.
2. Ibid.

And he ended his letter by observing that he was "a poor politician" and far from an expert in the art of selling himself.

In fact, the Council of the Faculty of Letters in Paris, after seeking the opinions of Boutroux, Victor Brochard and Buisson (the first two of whom were, as we have seen, largely unsympathetic to Durkheim's sociology) decided by a very large majority to appoint him as Buisson's replacement, and when, four years later, he was himself given the title of professor, that majority became unanimity.[1] (It was not until 1913 that his chair was renamed "Science of Education and Sociology".)

We will subsequently consider in detail the specific charges that were to be made against Durkheim's ideas and their supposed practical consequences[2]. But at this point it may be useful to construct some kind of picture of the man himself and the nature of his influence through the recollections of those who knew him, both sympathetic and hostile.

Hubert Bourgin (at the time sympathetic but subsequently hostile) provides a vivid description of Durkheim in his last years at Bordeaux:

> ... having been proposed by [François Simiand], the director of the economic section, I was accepted as a collaborator on the Annee Sociologique by the master whom I respected, indeed already venerated, but whom I had never seen. He received me in his study, which

1. For the material in the last two paragraphs, v. ibid., pp.8-9.
2. V. infra.: ch.3 (viii).

was vast and simple, lacking any adornment or evidence of artistic preoccupations. His long, thin body was enveloped by a large dressing-gown, a cassock of flannel, which concealed his bony and muscular frame, the fragile support for his thought. The face emerged, pale and ascetic, with its high forehead bare, a short beard, a thick moustache, the pronounced nose of a rabbi, but this whole austere and severe face magnificently illuminated by two deep-set eyes that had an intense and gentle power, so that he commanded respect, attention, even submission, while at the same time compelling one to be serious and speak plainly with absolute sincerity, as one saw those imperious eyes before one, and one thus gained confidence. One felt oneself before the judgment and already under the authority of a man who was devoted, entirely devoted, to his task, to his mission, and who, by admitting you to his side, along with his colleagues, delegated to you a part of the responsibilities he had assumed.[1]

He was, on all accounts, a man of considerable presence, with an "air terrible"[2] who "always dominated the situation"[3]. In his daily life he spoke little and was "forbidding and serious"[4]. It was often said of him that he rejected friendship. Davy denies this, stressing another side to his character; he writes of "that mixture of severe authority and anxious affection which seems to me the basis of Durkheim's temperament"[5]. It was in Davy's words,

> in friendship that Durkheim's feelings were most evident; his loyalty, his subtlety, his anxious expressions of concern add warmth to his correspondence with his friends. When they had the slightest trouble, such as worry about their own health or that of their families, Durkheim was

1. Bourgin, 1938, pp.216-7.
2. M. Davy, personal communication.
3. M. Henri Durkheim, ditto. Davy writes that he inspired both "the enthusiasm of fascinated listeners [and] the terror of candidates who had been reduced to extremities": Davy, 1960a, p.14 (cf. Appendix B).
4. M.E. Halphen, ditto.
5. Davy, 1960b, p.8.

> on the watch for news which he demanded frequently. If he thought he detected some hesitation or agitation, some brief change in the look of your handwriting, he took alarm and was ready to comfort you with sympathetic words. Even in the letters of scientific direction and advice, one feels the affection to be present.[1]

It seems that he had an enormous impact on students.

Dominique Parodi wrote that it was

> important above all to emphasise how great Émile Durkheim's influence was just before the War and to point out that a great number of students of philosophy turned to him. What they found was a mind that was firm, imperious and sure of itself, and, above all, a positive programme of work opening up large horizons of future research. They also found a method that appeared rigorous and afforded the certainty that the work to be undertaken would be both original and truly scientific. At the same time attempts to achieve wider syntheses were not ruled out, provided that they rested on a clearly sociological basis.[2]

One of his students later wrote that "those who wished to escape his influence had to flee his lectures"[3]. Bourgin gives the following account:

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1. Davy, 1960a, p.18. The letters to Léon abundantly confirm this picture. To cite just two examples: "Dear friend, I was very glad to receive your good news. The fact that you can work is the best indication that your recovery is complete. But when you are in Heidelberg, please protect your stomach against the combination of German cooking and warm weather" (Letter dated 24 July 1908); "My dear friend, I learned from Le Temps of your bereavement ... I do not know what place your uncle had in your life; and I know from experience how these things vary. But in any case, it is a part of your past that has disappeared and that leaves a painful void. And one cannot avoid a somewhat egoistic heaviness of heart at seeing a clearing of the ranks of those around us." (Letter dated 28 Sept. 1911). As an instance of Durkheim's loyalty to his friends, one might mention the assiduous care he took, together with Rodier, to publish his dead friend Hamelin's manuscripts (v. 1907e and 1911d). When Rodier was at one point reluctant to continue with this work, Durkheim wrote to Leon: "I have already told him that we had in this regard duties which we could not escape ...". (Letter dated 22 Aug.1908).
2. Parodi, 1919, p.150.
3. Maublanc, 1930, p.297.

> ... he appeared, thin and pale, in his grey jacket, with an immense head and sombre eyes, on the platform of the amphitheatre where there waited, crowded on the benches, male and female students. He took up his lecture at the point where he had stopped, picking up the thread with a brief resume. Without the affectation of rhetoric or art, but with a concentrated argument, punctuated with references, he pursued his demonstration - and there always was one - concerning marriage, the family, morality, education. His grave manner never brightened; nonetheless, his speech, always somewhat muffled at the most significant moments, was not without charm; and one felt it turning into a sort of incantation.[1]

Felix Pecaut wrote of his influence on primary school-teachers, as well as on university students, as being not merely great: "he did not just have pupils, but rather disciples. He forged their understandings; he armed them with new categories ..." He fired them with a "veritable moral faith" and gave them the "certainty of duty".[2] Pecaut sought to explain this ascendancy in terms of "ardent intellectual passion, imperious eloquence, a dialectic that was so rapid and so decisive that it compelled conviction and paralysed objections" and, behind this, the existence of "a doctrine and a faith. He was a philosophical innovator and there was in him something of the apostle".[3]. This explanation is advanced by many others. Davy wrote of him as an "orator without equal", whose "faith communicated to his thought and speech an enthusiastic and commanding - one

1. Bourgin, 1938, pp.222-3.
2. Pecaut, 1918, p.1. Bourgin (ibid., p.224) writes of his ascendancy as "unique", adding that "it seemed to us that Durkheim gave us scientific and political aims that were equally sound" and seemed to "protect one against error".
3. Ibid., p.2.

is tempted to say an inspired - character, giving those who heard him the impression that this was the prophet of a new religion"[1]. Xavier Leon, similarly, wrote as follows:

> What explains his influence is not only the dominating power of his philosophical thought, the richness of the fields of research that the novelty of his method opened up to the curiosity and activity of his disciples; it was this face and body of an ascetic, those flashes of light in his face, the metallic tone of that voice that expressed an ardent faith which, in this latter-day prophet, burned to mould and force the convictions of his hearers.[2]

Indeed, the analogy to which these explanations appeal was not unfamiliar to Durkheim himself, who one day said to Bougle, as they were passing Notre Dame, "It is from a chair like that that I should have spoken".[3]

Others, however, were less impressed and far from persuaded. This was especially true of those under the contrasting, but no less overwhelming, influence of Bergson, one of whom writes that it was scarcely exaggerating to compare

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1. Davy, 1919, p.194. Davy adds that they were "astonished at first by so warm a speech from one who seemed so cold", but were then "seduced, conquered, mastered" (ibid.). Leon described the impression Durkheim made at the International Congress of Philosophy at Bologna in 1911, when he delivered his paper on judgments of value and of reality (1911b). Those who were there would "never forget the sight of that assembly suddenly dominated, then spontaneously arising and crowding round his chair, straining towards the speaker as if drawn to him": Leon, 1917, p.749.
2. Leon, 1917, p.749. Cf. Maublanc, 1930, p.299: "A believer in reason, he confessed his faith with the same intransigence and the same passion as his ancestors, the prophets of Israel, had confessed their faith in Jehovah."
3. Bougle, 1930b, p.280.

the impressive gravity of [Durkheim's] face ... to that of a death's head on which a macabre fantasy had adjusted a professor's spectacles and spread a fluffy beard. This master suited his thin and gaunt body, his severe appearance, his cold voice whose mechanical accents revealed a perfect gramophone-record. One immediately saw him as a sort of automaton of super-human creation, destined endlessly to preach a new Reform, and who concealed within some vital organ, perhaps the brain ... a perpetual system of unanswerable arguments. His eloquence, truly comparable to that of a running tap, was inexhaustible and ice-cold; it would not have profaned the inside of a mortuary; indeed it would have substantially assisted the refrigeration of the corpses. And to be acquainted with Durkheim's appearance and his speech was virtually equivalent to grasping his system. For any given question, it contained the answer, classified, set down in its proper place, ranged in an immutable order which evoked not the shelves of a grocer's shop, but niches for epitaphs distributed under the galleries that surround crematoria.

Family, country, institutions ... were preserved by his efforts and confined within his system, but preserved and confined like mummies in a necropolis.[1]

The most offensive features, for Durkheim's critics, of his teaching were its aggressive moralism and its apparent lack of respect for established religious beliefs. As Henri Massis wrote, "he declared to his terrified audience that the teaching of morality was in a state of atrophy, that morality was no longer discussed, that what passed for it was no more than an insipid mixture of old Kantian and Idealist doctrines and that he no longer wished to find such obsolete ideas in examination answers"[2]. As to religion, Massis recalls

1. Maire, G., Bergson, Mon Maitre (Paris, 1935), p.140. This passage is, in part, an expression of the rivalry between Bergson, Tarde's successor at the College de France, and Durkheim, at the Sorbonne. Cf.: "A majestic evolutionism [was expressed] in the militant dogmatism of the French School of Sociology of which the great rival of Bergson, Durkheim, was the pope": Rolland, Peguy (Paris, 1944), 1, p.35.
2. Evocations, p.60.

a student buttonholing him in front of the statue of Auguste Comte, in order to explain to him that we had entered definitively into the "era of the social". The student said:

> Until Durkheim, my friend, the religions were an embarrassment to science and the scientists, I grant you. The fact of the religious mind existed - primordial and irreducible ... It was an open door to all insanities and obscurantisms; and it was this that allowed the Jameses and Bergsons of two continents to scorn rationalism. The irreducible had to be reduced, the primordial subordinated. Then came Durkheim, and this soon happened ... The religious, he said, is quite simply the social. And whoosh, the ground was cleared ... The first element is the existence of the social <u>conscience</u>. The religious is none other than the social personified, hypostasised, substantified, made absolute ... You see, everything resides in the totem. The totem is the symbol of the social soul - and there is no other soul but that ... the individual isn't interesting! What does the individual matter to us sociologists?[1]

Durkheim came to be an extremely influential figure at the Sorbonne, both as a lecturer and as an administrator. Lasserre wrote in 1913 that "among the chapels of science of the university, Durkheimian sociology is rising up like a cathedral whose primacy is recognised by all"[2]; and Bassis was later to observe that "the students of today [1931] can no longer conceive how great Durkheim's dominance was at that time [<u>circa</u> 1910], nor the extent of the power and the authority that sociology exercised over certain people"[3]. Durkheim's education lecture-courses were the only compulsory courses at the Sorbonne, being obligatory for all students seeking teaching degrees in philosophy, history, literature and

1. <u>Ibid</u>., p.78.
2. Lasserre, 1913, p.183.
3. <u>Evocations</u>, p.78.

languages. He lectured at the Ecole Normale Superieure and at the Ecole des Hautes Etudes Sociales. In his administrative capacity, he sat on the Council of the University, as well as on numerous other councils and committees in the University and at the Ministry of Public Instruction.

His critics complained of his power and what they saw as his misuse of it. Lasserre noted that he "soon became a great political and administrative power in the university"[1], while Agathon bitterly observed that the Rector Liard had

> given [Durkheim] his entire confidence and had him appointed, first to the Council of the University of Paris, then to the Comite Consultatif, which allows M. Durkheim to survey all appointments within the field of higher education.[2]

Durkheim represented "a victory of the new spirit":

> Endowed with university pomp, he is the regent of the Sorbonne, the all-powerful master, and it is known that the professors in the philosophy section, reduced to the role of humble functionaries, carry out his every order, dominated by his authority ... M. Durkheim has firmly established his intellectual despotism. He has made of his teaching an instrument of domination.[3]

He was often accused of managing appointments. According to Rolland, chairs in sociology were "created in all the universities in order to propagate the Durkheimism of the State"[4] and Dom Besse claimed that the advancement of careers "came to depend on absorbing and propagating the definitions of the master"[5]. Massis remarked in his memoirs that

1. Lasserre, 1913, p.180.
2. L'Esprit de la Nouvelle Sorbonne, p.98.
3. Ibid.
4. Peguy, I, p.138.
5. Besse, 1913, p.237.

> to be a sociologist at that time was to have one's career made. A sociologist never had to wait. Immediately he was given a doctorate, immediately he was provided for: if there was no chair available, one was created, as for Mauss, as for Hubert. And the ambitious young men ... became imbued with the new dogma ... a whole eager clergy was formed by the words of the master who received his deacons, every Sunday, in his austere cell in the rue St. Jacques, at the corner of the boulevard Arago![1]

The use of ecclesiastical imagery was as frequent among his opponents as among his admirers, though the particular images chosen differed significantly in the two cases. To friends he was a prophet and an apostle, but to enemies he was a secular pope. Lasserre wrote of the "scholarly papacy which the State and its agents, rectors, inspectors and deans ... have established in Durkheim".[2] Rolland likewise wrote of "the tyrannical encroachment of socialism ... with its socio-logical Sacred College, issuing by decree its Syllabus of secular and obligatory reason, and its catechism of the State"[3], and Péguy asked,

> Will this World without God that we are building inevitably become in its turn, by a regression that we did not anticipate, a new governmental catechism, taught by the gendarmes, with the benevolent collaboration of the police?[4]

According to Rolland, Péguy held that the danger was enhanced by what he saw as Durkheim's inverted mysticism "insinuated in his myth of the conscience collective". It was, in effect, "a revival of the authoritarian dogma of the Church, through

1. Evocations, p.77.
2. Lasserre, 1913, p.214.
3. Péguy, I, p.138.
4. Péguy, 1906, cited in ibid., pp.138-9.

the official freedom of thought, the opposite of true freedom of thought".[1]

As to the interests served by Durkheim's ascendancy, these were commonly held by his enemies to be political. To Massis, his doctrine was "an ideology of the State, a metaphysic of the social"[2], while to Rolland he was the "anti-Bergson ... who tyrannised over the ideology of the Sorbonne and - reaching beyond this - the ideology of the Combist and Jaurèsiste State"[3]. According to Besse, Durkheim was

> the agent, in our official education system, of the oligarchy which imposes its wishes on French democracy. This influence is not confined to the Sorbonne and the direction of higher and secondary education; it extends as far as the Confédération Générale du Travail.[4]

Indeed, it became common to attack Durkheim as the agent of the anti-clerical governments of the 1900's: as Daniel Halévy put it, "Durkheim's lecture-course was the sign of the insolent capture by a doctrinaire group of the teaching of the State"[5]. Lasserre cited as the final proof of this charge a debate in the Chamber of Deputies in February 1910 on education, when, after a speech by Maurice Barrès which described sociology as the latest example of the secular moralities propagated over the previous thirty years, a deputy, later to become Minister of Public Instruction, "glorified the new dogma" and "recited passages from the Division of Labour at the tribune".[6]

1. Péguy, I, p.139.
2. Evocations, p.77.
3. Péguy, I, pp.137-8.
4. Besse, 1913, p.231.
5. Cited in Rolland, Péguy, I, p.138.
6. Lasserre, 1913, p.184.

The chief charge of all these critics of Durkheim was that he and his followers were seeking a unique and pernicious domination over the minds of the young. Lasserre regarded Durkheim's education course as a carefully devised plot to make "the new generation of the university" listen to Durkheim "in order to make sociology, as presented by Durkheim, their religion"[1]. The charge and its implications were stated most clearly by Rolland:

> The French sociological school, inspired by [Durkehim's] imperious doctrine, with a fanatical docility, was no longer content with thinking and philosophising for themselves; it sought, by the application of positive methods to social and moral facts, studied from the outside and treated "like things", to "act upon them", methodically to transform institutions and ways of behaving. A chair of pedagogy had been created at the Sorbonne, and the teaching, obligatory for candidates for teaching degrees, had been entrusted to Durkheim who, unequivocally had declared that he was concerned, not to accumulate the lessons of the past, but rather to develop and mould the man of tomorrow.[2]

There was exaggeration and caricature in these views, but they did have a certain validity. Durkheim did come to have considerable authority and influence within the University and the French education system as a whole; and his purpose was indeed to "develop and mould the man of tomorrow". M. Georges Friedmann has written:

> Towards the end of the Combes ministry, and even more in the years which followed, Durkheimian sociology established itself, alongside secular morality, in the official ideology of the Third Republic, through the various grades of teaching, and in particular through the Ecoles Normales. It possessed considerable power and influence.[3]

1. Ibid., p.182.
2. Péguy, I, p.138.
3. La Crise du Progrès (Paris, 1936) pp.33-4.

Such influence was only strengthened by the impersonality and highmindedness of Durkheim's aims. The suggestion that he was influenced by politicians, or merely political motives is, however, implausible.

He certainly numbered influential politicians among his friends. Apart from Jaures, with whom he kept on very good terms[1] (Jaures was guest of honour at the dinner to celebrate the tenth anniversary of the Année)[2], he moved within circles frequented by both the academic and political worlds. For example, he often used to attend large parties given by Gustave Lanson, Henri Berr and, above all, his good friend, Xavier Léon, which were attended both by the professors of the Sorbonne and by politicians such as Millerand, Poincaré and Painlevé.[3] These parties, according to Bourgin, were

> of a scientific and academic nature, at times more spiritual, at others more temporal, and political too, for politics was represented by those great academics-turned-politicians, and by others who desired to be so, and by yet others who kept on the margin ... In the crowded salon, boudoirs and buffet are found Henri Poincaré, deformed, distracted, and awkward and strikingly odd in manner, Painleve bird-like with his nose in the air, Emil Borel like a butterfly, Jean Perrin joking and laughing, Gustave Lanson and Levy-Bruhl deep in a conversation apart, and generation after generation of professors, mostly philosophers, of beginners and even aspirants, summoned or admitted to the contemplation and conversation of their masters. In this crowd, which already contributed to spreading the reputation of sociology, Durkheim, erect and thin with brilliant and bright eyes, moved, stopped, conversed, said a few words and, without affectation, pursued his mission.[4]

1. M. Henri Durkheim, personal communication.
2. Bourgin, 1938, p.192.
3. Ibid., p.223.
4. Ibid., pp.223-4.

Davy writes that Durkheim was made use of by "several ministers"[1]. Yet, as we have shown, he was temperamentally averse to political activity and always retained a somewhat haughty contempt for the general run of politicians and for the political parties. He himself, apart from his active support of the Dreyfusard cause and his subsequent whole-hearted participation in the war effort, always avoided all direct political involvements. Many of his colleagues at the Sorbonne, such as Lucien Lévy-Bruhl[2] and Gabriel Séailles, were much more politically committed than he.

It was his commitment to a cause that transcended both party politics and personal self-advancement that was a major source of his influence over others. As Bourgin wrote,

> He had in him, alongside the philosopher, moralist and priest, something of the politician and the negotiator ... He was capable of adroitly moving the pawns on a political chess board, albeit one confined to the dimensions of the Sorbonne, and to pursue strategies, as in a game. His adversaries, his enemies, not taking sufficient account of his personal disinterestedness, considered him, and sometimes treated him, as ambitious and as an intriguer. What an error of judgment! His ends were noble and went beyond personal rewards, and I believe that all the steps he took, when they related to getting people jobs - advancing some, and thwarting and excluding others - had the single objective of the interest of science and the community.3

This lack of personal ambition is borne out by his refusal in 1908, at the early age of fifty, to let his name be put forward

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1. Davy, 1919, p.190.
2. V. Cazeneuve, J., Lucien Lévy-Bruhl (Paris, 1963), pp.5 sqq.
3. Bourgin, 1938, p.221.

for admission to the Institut, though strongly pressed to do so by the Rector Liard, Theodule Ribot, and Lucien Levy-Bruhl. Considering the candidature of a philosopher much older than himself to be more worthy, he responded to the flattering insistence of which he was the object by writing, "the idea that I might appear to bar the way to this man who has come to the end of his career and almost of his life was intolerable to me."[1]

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1. Davy, 1960a, p.18. Though not admitted to the Institut, he received the Légion d'Honneur in 1907 (Durkheim's dossier, Bordeaux).

(ii) The History of Education in France

The compulsory education course that was the occasion for so much rancour had been established by Liard as the theoretical part of the training of teachers in secondary education. Durkheim was persuaded by Liard, much against his will,[1] to give this course, intended for all students at the University of Paris seeking agregations in sciences and in letters; he delivered it annually at the Ecole Normale Supérieure from 1904 to 1913[2]. Durkheim interpreted his task as giving the future teacher "a full consciousness of his function"[3]. For this, he believed, historical understanding was indispensable, for "only history can penetrate under the surface of our present educational system; only history can analyse it; only history can show us of what elements it is formed, on what conditions each of them depends, how they are inter-related; only history,

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1. Davy, personal communication.
2. V. Appendix A. The inaugural lecture of the 1905-6 course was published as 1906c: repr. in 1922a: tr.1956a. The whole course was published posthumously in two volumes with an introduction by Halbwachs (1938a). It has been almost completely ignored by writers on Durkheim and on the history and sociology of education, though it is unquestionably a major work that deserves to be republished and translated. For very brief discussions, v. Fauconnet, 1922; Halbwachs, 1938a; Bellah, 1959; and Floud, 1965. Halbwachs justly calls it "a vast and bold fresco covering ten centuries of history ... a sort of continuous discourse on the progress of the human mind in France" (loc.cit., not paginated) and Fauconnet describes it as "one of [Durkheim's] finest courses ... an incomparable model of what the application of sociological method to education can give". (loc.cit., pp.27,28: tr.1956a, pp.51,52).
3. 1922a, p.135: tr. 1956a, p.135 (S.L.).

in a word, can bring us to the long chain of causes and effects of which it is the result".[1] He therefore chose to lecture on the "Formation and Development of Secondary Education in France" from its origins in the Primitive Church to the confused situation of his own time.

That confusion was fundamental and prolonged. Durkheim observed that "secondary education has for more than half a century been undergoing a grave crisis that is not yet, and is indeed far from being, resolved. Everyone feels it cannot remain what it is, but no-one can yet see clearly what it is required to become".[2] French secondary education was essentially education for the elite and it was centralised to an extreme degree. Its content thus formed the focus for perpetual social and political conflict. What kind of elite was desirable? Where should the balance be struck between the requirements of an industrialising society and a common cultural tradition? And what was the nature of that tradition: classical or modern, religious or secular? Throughout the nineteenth

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1. Ibid., pp.157-8; tr. pp.152-3. Halbwachs notes (loc.cit.) that Durkheim's knowledge of "modern historical methods" could be traced back to Fustel de Coulanges; that he went back to the original sources, reading Alcuin, for instance, in the original; and that most of the lectures included bibliographies (not repr. in 1938a) testifying to "vast reading". Yet, according to Fauconnet, he was unsatisfied at several points with his research and documentation, to which he had devoted "hardly more than one or two years of work" (loc.cit., p.28; tr. 1956a, p.52).
2. 1938a, 1, p.10.

century there had been a succession of officially prescribed and often politically induced changes in syallabus, oscillating between a total monopoly of classical, literary studies and varying degrees of incorporation of the sciences, and between an exclusive emphasis on general culture and a sporadic recognition of the need for specialisation.

Durkheim's aim was to help to bring an end to this "intellectual disarray"[1], to contribute to the elaboration of a new "pedagogical faith" to succeed the "old faith in the persistent virtue of classics"[2]. Studying the history of education, relating educational change to wider cultural, social and economic changes, would enable one to "anticipate the future and understand the present"[3]. As Mauss commented, Durkheim

> always used the same method: both historical and sociological to begin with, and then inductive and normative. This enabled him to make intelligible the practice followed up to our own time, on the one hand, and to guide the young teachers, on the other, towards a better appreciation of that practice, towards a better application of their powers and, eventually, towards the consideration of carefully presented reforms.[4]

Durkheim's method was "historical and sociological" in that it went beyond the analysis of successive educational institutions and practices, and the exposition of educational

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1. Ibid., 1, p.12.
2. Ibid.
3. Ibid., 1, p.13.
4. Mauss, 1925a, p.19.

doctrines; he continually sought to explain why particular ideas and ideals, practices and institutions arose, survived during certain periods, disappeared, and, in some cases, re-appeared. His explanatory scheme was neither monocausal nor one-sided; the explanations advanced were always complex and stressed different explanatory factors at different points. Sometimes the main factors were cultural, or representational; at others geographical, or political, or economic. Here we can refer only summarily to the rich diversity of historical detail and explanatory argument which this work contains.

Durkheim began by relating the concentration and co-ordination of teaching in a single place and the notion of the school as a "morally unified environment closely enveloping the child and acting upon his entire nature"[1] to the religious idealism of early Christianity, seeking to act upon "the depths of the soul"[2]; but he also pointed to a "sort of contradiction" in the teaching of the early Church between "the religious element, the Christian doctrine" and "Ancient Civilisation, and all the borrowings the Church had to make from it, that is, the profane element".[3] On the other hand, he attributed the growth of the school system under Charlemagne to a primarily political development: the "energetic movement of concentration" which occurred at this time, bringing together "the intellectual forces of the country at a small number of points",

1. 1938a, 1, p.39.
2. Ibid., 1, p.38.
3. Ibid., 1, pp.32, 33.

so that they "could mutually reinforce one another by virtue of their association"[1]. He then discussed the teaching of grammar during the Carolingian period, as "the origin and basis of all the other arts"[2], arguing that it was a kind of preliminary form of the study of logic and that the "age of grammar" led naturally to the Scholastic age of logic and dialectic. This whole development was, in effect, the "very slow and very gradual development of one and the same idea"[3], involving the focussing of education on thought, in its most formal and abstract aspect, and it was "attached by deep roots to the intellectual structure of European countries, that is Christian countries"[4].

The explanation Durkheim offered of the origins of the universities in the eleventh and early twelfth centuries appealed to a number of factors: a "general stimulation of the intellectual activity throughout Europe"[5], the "extreme mobility of men of all classes and professions"[6], a "double concentration of this [heightened] activity: first at a number of dispersed points, then at a single but stable point"[7] and finally (and of subsidiary importance), the personal influence of Abelard. In discussing the early development of the University of Paris, Durkheim traced the growth of its internal organisation, with

1. Ibid., 1, pp.49,50.
2. Ibid., 1, p.70.
3. Ibid., 2, p.7.
4. Ibid., 1, p.81.
5. Ibid., 1, p.90.
6. Ibid., 1, p.86.
7. Ibid., 1, p.90.

the grouping of masters in a corporation (following the medieval corporative pattern), their struggles with the Chancellor of Notre Dame and their alliance with the Pope; but he also stressed the cultural preconditions - "a conception sui generis of education and teaching characteristic of Christian societies, a conception which existed prior to the function of a teaching corporation, but which found in the latter the means of realising itself in the most active manner that it could conceive".[1] After examining the development of tutorial organisation in Faculties and Nations (the Faculty of Arts corresponding to secondary education) and the rise of the colleges, he sought to account for the system of "internat" in the latter, and a general bureaucratisation of the university which set in in the fifteenth century, in terms of a wider process of "morbid" and "excessive" centralisation and "moral and political unificqtion"[2] beginning in France at this period, having deep cultural roots and wide-ranging consequences.

The next three lectures consisted of a penetrating inquiry into the framework and content of teaching, including a striking discussion of the role of dialectic as a means of coping with the world of experience within a pre-scientific cultural tradition innocent of the experimental method.[3] In this context, Durkheim argued, a respect for books and texts and for

1.Ibid., 1, p.120.
2.Ibid., 1, p.158.
3.V.ibid., 1,pp.192sqq.

the words of wise men was entirely natural, and not, as the men of the Renaissance argued, a mark of intellectual servility.

In examining the educational changes wrought by the Renaissance, Durkheim offered an account of the latter that was in the first place economic, invoking "a whole set of changes in the economic order"[1]. The growth of order and security, with a better organised administration, the development of markets and of consumers' demand, the multiplication of towns and the growth of population, the discovery of America and the route to the Indies - all this galvanised economic activity and led to a growth of consumption and a change in manners, especially in Italy and thence to France. Durkheim argued that this growing wealth was accompanied by a declining social distance between social classes, and an increasing emulation of aristocratic styles of life, with a consequent change in the conception of education, for "the teaching destined to produce a good bachelor of arts, skilled in all the secrets of the syllogism and the disputatio, could not serve to form an elegant and eloquent gentleman, able to hold his place in a salon, expert at all the arts of society".[2] In the second place, Durkheim pointed to the consolidation of "the great European nationalities"[3], breaking up the old unity of Christendom, with the resulting diversification in the interpretation of fundamental dogmas, entailing the right to diverge from

1. Ibid., 1,p.216.
2. Ibid., 1, p.218.
3. Ibid.

received beliefs, a limited right of schism and of freedom of thought, and, in general, a growing "movement of individualisation and differentiation ... within the homogeneous mass of Europe"[1] (a process for which Scholasticism had paved the way and which was also bound to affect religiously determined conceptions of education).

In the education of the Renaissance Durkheim discerned two great currents of opinion: the "encyclopaedic" or scholarly current represented by Rabelais, stressing the cognitive faculties and the unlimited acquisition of knowledge; and the humanist current, represented by Erasmus, emphasising the arts of expression and the cultivation of taste. Durkheim explored the differences and similarities between the ideas of these two thinkers and between the cultural tendencies they expressed, relating them both to the formation of a polite society, to a general relaxation of moral sentiment and of the traditional Christian appeal to duty, to an increasing stress upon personal emulation and honour, and to a growth in dilettantism and essentially aristocratic values. Montaigne's "pedagogical nihilism"[2] only expressed the logical conclusions of his predecessors' ideas. In general, the sixteenth century was "an epoch of educational and moral crisis":

> Under the influence of changes within the economic and social order, a new education had become necessary. But the thinkers of the time only conceived of it in the

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1. Ibid., 1, p.219.
2. Ibid., 2, p.65.

> form of an aristocratic and, directly or indirectly, aesthetic education ... Although a scientific education, such as Rabelais envisaged, was certainly superior to the purely literary education recommended by Erasmus, it also had the grave defect of remaining unrelated to the demands of serious life, and of only occupying minds in a noble game.[1]

It fell to the Jesuits to put these prevailing ideas into practice; and Durkheim's account of their acquisition of a sort of hegemony in French education, of their essentially ambiguous role, combining humanism and faith, employing paganism for the glorification and propagation of Christian morality, and of their immense influence on the growth of French classical culture constitutes a real tour de force. Essentially, Durkheim argued that the Jesuits were able, by deferring to the tastes and ideas of the time, to direct their development and, in consequence, both to mutilate and impoverish the educational ideal of the Renaissance and to bring about a "retrograde movement which put back our educational organisation by several centuries".[2] On the other hand, their discipline based on the two principles of close personal supervision and extreme rivalry and emulation between students, had its roots in the "moral constitution of society"[3], in particular the development of the individual personality:

> At the time of the Renaissance, the individual begins to become conscious of himself; he is no longer, at least in enlightened regions, a simple aliquot fraction of a whole, he is already a whole in a sense, a person with

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1. Ibid., 2, p.67.
2. Ibid., 2, p.78.
3. Ibid., 2, p.115.

> his own physiognomy, who has and who experiences at the very least the need to develop his own ways of thinking and feeling ... as <u>consciences</u> become individualised, so education itself must become individualised....[1]

Durkheim's discussion of the cultural consequences of the education inaugurated at the time of the Renaissance, and propagated primarily by the Jesuits, laid stress upon "some of the most distinctive features of our national spirit"[2], implanted during the classical era. He instanced the marked and exclusive taste of seventeenth-century literature for general and impersonal types, abstracted from all social context in space and time, and traced it to the system of education which explicitly taught men to conceive of human nature as "a sort of eternal reality, immutable, invariable, independent of time and space ..."[3] This conception of human nature was, he argued, not merely a distinctive trait of French literature; it affected "our whole intellectual and moral temperament"[4], leading to a sort of "constitutional cosmopolitanism", to an over-abstract and <u>simpliste</u> rationalism and, in particular, to the abstract individualism of the eighteenth century.

The remaining historical lectures covered the development of scientific teaching, relating it to Protestantism in Germany and to a growing civic consciousness in eighteenth-century France; the abortive educational reforms of the French

1. <u>Ibid</u>.
2. <u>Ibid</u>., 2, p.126.
3. <u>Ibid</u>., 2, p.128.
4. <u>Ibid</u>., 2, p.129.

Revolution; and, finally, the extraordinary see-saw of educational reforms in the nineteenth century, which he attributed to a wider social and intellectual crisis, as well as to more immediate political interests, with the traditionalists (religious, social and political) defending the inheritance of humanism against the claims of science.

It is evident from this extremely selective summary that Durkheim's method was "historical and sociological". If there is an explanatory bias, it is perhaps in the direction of the cultural; the factors he tended to find especially fruitful in the explanation of educational developments were collective aspirations, values, beliefs and ideals. Conversely, he had an ingrained distrust of an appeal to purely personal factors. Thus, when writing about the origin of the university, he observed that, far from it being "possible, as some historians have done, to attribute it to the personal influence of several men of genius, we have seen that it was the product of general causes..."[1] Similarly, as we have seen, he regarded particular educational doctrines as "nothing other than the expression of currents of opinion which agitate ... the social environment in which they arose", registering "prevailing aspirations" with particular force and clarity.[2]

Durkheim's method was, in Mauss's words, also "inductive and normative". He aimed both to generalise from the explana-

1. Ibid., 1, p.113.
2. Ibid., 2, pp.9-10.

tions he had arrived at and to derive practical conclusions from them. It is worth looking, first at his generalisations, and, finally, at his normative conclusions.

He made a systematic attempt to identify broad historical continuities, interpreting them as evidence of cultural traits or as answering fundamental social needs. Thus one can trace a number of recurring themes: the continuity of "formalism" ("To the grammatical formalism of the Carolingian epoch and to the dialectical formalism of the scholastic age there succeeded a new kind of formalism: literary formalism"[1]); the continual re-appearance of encyclopaedic ambitions, under different forms (among the grammarians and then the scholastics, in Rabelais, and, above all, in the eighteenth century); the gradual, but for long retarded, growth of secularism and reason within education to an ultimate position of dominance[2]; the extremely prolonged educational monopoly of studies relating to man[3], only lately matched by an equal concern for the rest

1. Ibid., 2, p.38.
2. The nominalist-realist controversy was "a first and powerful effort to confront faith with reason"; the scholastics allowed "the enemy within the gates". They "introduced reason into dogma, while refusing to deny dogma", trying to hold an equal balance. It was not until the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries that the harvest sown by these ideas was reaped (ibid., 1, p.95).
3. Durkheim attributed this in part to a central feature of Christianity (as opposed to the religions of Antiquity): "For Christianity ... it is the mind, the conscience of man which is sacred and incomparable; for the soul ... is a direct emanation of divinity. The world is defined as matter, and matter is profane, vile, degrading, the source of evil and sin. Between mind and matter there is the whole distance separating the spiritual from the temporal ... with Christianity the world loses the confused unity it had primitively, and divides into two parts, into two halves of

contd. over.

of nature ; the continuity of educational organisation, reaching back to the Middle Ages ("universities, faculties, colleges, grades, examinations, all come from that period"[1]); indeed, the very existence of secondary education itself, whose objective Durkheim defined as "awakening the reflective faculties, exercising and strengthening them in a general way and without employing them in any occupational pursuit"[2], the differences between different periods consisting only in which form of reflection appeared to be most important at any given time.

He was also concerned to generalise about historical discontinuities, to postulate a hypothetical "norm" of historical development from which the actual historical process might at times diverge. In general, a kind of natural selection operated and it was "the most apt" ideas which survived, but it was possible, in "the course of the struggles and conflicts which have arisen between contrary ideas", for valuable ideas to founder[3]. It could happen that "elements

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unequal value; there is, on the one hand, the world of thought, of the conscience, of morality, of religion; and, on the other, the world of matter, unthinking, amoral and areligious. Now, religious, moral, intellectual activity, these are what is truly human and characteristic of man. Since ... education has above all the aim of developing in the child the germs of humanity to be found there, the idea could not even arise that nature and the sciences of nature might serve this end" (ibid., 2, p.140).

1. Ibid., 2, p.133.
2. Ibid., 2, p.183.
3. Ibid., 1, p.18. "Here, as elsewhere, the struggle for survival produces only rough and approximate results" (ibid.).

of the past disappear which could and should have become normal elements of the present and the future".[1] Thus,

> The Renaissance followed upon Scholasticism; the men of the Renaissance began by thinking it obvious that there was nothing worth preserving in the Scholastic system. It is for us to ask whether the result of this revolutionary attitude was not that the educational ideal we have inherited contains lacunae. Thus the historical study of education, while enabling us to gain a better understanding of the present, [offers] us the chance to revise the past itself and to bring to light the errors of which it is important that we become aware, since we have inherited them.[2]

From his generalisations about educational ideas and practices in the past, or the consequences of their absence, and from his assessment of the present and future needs of industrial societies, Durkheim concluded by drawing a number of prescriptive conclusions, in answer to the question: "what should [secondary education] become henceforth?"[3] It was these conclusions - pro-scientific and anti-literary, uncompromisingly secular and anti-classicist - that so upset Durkheim's traditionalist critics.[4]

The formalism of earlier periods had been one way of achieving the objective of secondary education, as he defined it, but it had always sought to form the mind by applying it to purely abstract and conceptual matter - "to the abstract forms of pure understanding ... to the subjects of literature, to the general aspirations of the human mind and heart".[5] He proposed instead that contemporary education should direct

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1. Ibid., 1, p.22.
2. Ibid., 1, pp.22-3.
3. Ibid., 2, p.181.
4. V. supra, ch. 3(i).
5. Ibid., 2, p.187.

reflection to "solid, firm, resistant objects, to objects from which we have much to learn, of which the mind needs to take account and on the understanding of which it needs to be formed ..."[1] There were two catogories of such objects: "human" and "natural".

How should the former be studied at the level of secondary education? In answering this, Durkheim argued that humanism "no longer responds to the real demands of today, and ... must in consequence be transformed"[2]. In place of its twin basic principles that human nature is unchanging and that ancient literature, above all Latin, is "the best possible school of humanity"[3], it was clear that "another conception of man is necessary today, along with other methods to teach it"[4]. The humanists' human nature was an arbitrary construction of the mind, a product of the fusion of the Christian ideal with those of Rome and Greece, part of a particular historical context. What was currently needed was to convey to the pupil "not only what is constant, but also what is irreducibly diverse in humanity"[5]. He needed to become aware of different moralities and mentalities, and to appreciate, for example, the very complex mental processes of primitive peoples; he should acquire a conception of man "not as a

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1. Ibid., 2, pp.187-8.
2. Ibid., 2, p.190.
3. Ibid., 2, p.192.
4. Ibid., 2, p.193.
5. Ibid., 2, p.198.

system of definite and countable elements, but as an infinitely flexible and proteiform force, capable of assuming the most diverse aspects under the pressure of endlessly varied circumstances"[1]. Such a new conception would influence attitudes, making men less hostile to change on the grounds of the supposed inflexibility of human nature, showing them that, at any given point in history, we contain "a multitude of unrealised possibilities"[2], while giving them a healthy appreciation of social complexity. Given the currently rudimentary state of the psychological and social sciences, Durkheim proposed history in depth as the most effective discipline to achieve these ends[3], using literature as a means of understanding civilisations and revealing the variability of human nature and its extreme complexity (thus adapting the work of the humanists to contemporary ends).

As to the teaching of the natural sciences, Durkheim advocated it as essential for the formation of a complete mind. Not only was man part of nature, so that it was essential to grasp his place within it, but science was itself a human product, at least equal in importance to literature: its development and procedures, its methods of thinking and reasoning were of incomparable educational value. Teaching

1. Ibid., 2, p.199.
2. Ibid.
3. He proposed the history of "various peoples, chosen carefully among those which differ from [peoples] of whom we have immediate experience", in particular Greek and Italian history and that of those primitive societies whose cultures could be related to those of Ancient Greece and Rome (ibid.).

pupils to think scientifically was an "invaluable instrument of logical culture"[1], the way to fill the educational lacuna that had been left by the demise of Scholasticism. In any case, Durkheim argued that ultimately the gap between the study of the physical and human worlds would disappear; scientific culture was becoming an indispensable part of human culture. Finally, he advanced the case for studying language and logic as a means of training the mind. In general, he characterised his educational ideal as encyclopaedic in the sense, not of aiming to produce the "complete scholar", but rather the "complete reason". True to his most basic intellectual principle, he sought to form "men who are concerned to have clear ideas",

> rationalists of a new type, who know that things, whether human or physical, are of an irreducible complexity and who know how to confront that complexity directly and without faltering. [2]

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1. Ibid., 2, p.216.
2. Ibid., 2, p.225. He elsewhere applied this principle to higher education, complaining that the syllabus for the agrégation was such that it did not allow candidates to "acquire definite knowledge [or] to develop ideas, on a number of problems, that are equally definite (though provisional)"; what achieved success was "neither knowledge, nor firmness and solidity of thought ... but a talent that is entirely formal and of doubtful value" (1909b, p.160).

(iii) Durkheimian Sociology: its Context and relation to other Disciplines

By the turn of the century the idea of sociology had acquired a new popularity throughout Europe and the United States. As Durkheim wrote in 1900,

> our science came into being only yesterday. It must not be forgotten, especially in view of the favourable reception that sociology is given now, that, properly speaking, Europe did not have as many as ten sociologists fifteen years ago.[1]

A major precipitating factor in this development was the enormous influence of Herbert Spencer. The Study of Sociology won widespread recognition between 1870 and 1890 and The Principles of Sociology was likewise extensively studied, particularly in German and American universities.[2] In France Spencer's influence was especially notable: he was widely seen as the true scientific descendant of Comte, free from the later quasi-religious excesses of Comte himself and his contending disciples. As William Graham Sumner said, he "rescued social science from the dominion of cranks"[3]. Durkheim wrote that in the history of sociology Spencer was " Comte's immediate successor" who, in the course of applying the evolutionary hypothesis to the social world, "found himself compelled,

1. 1900c; tr. 1960c, p.354.
2. Charles Horton Cooley wrote that in the United States The Study of Sociology "probably did more to arouse interest in the subject than any other publication before or since"; "Reflections upon the Sociology of Herbert Spencer", A.J.S., 26 (1920), p.129.
3. Cited in Carneiro, R.L., "Spencer", International Encyclopedia of the Social Sciences (New York, 1968) 15, p.123.

on a number of points, to correspondingly complete or rectify the generalisation of the Comtist sociology".[1]

Following upon Spencer, there arose, in Durkheim's words, "a whole legion of workers, a few in every country, but most especially in France, who applied themselves to [sociological] studies. Sociology has now emerged from the heroic age"[2]. And indeed, there was a remarkable growth of studies of a sociological character in the 1890's and 1900's[3]. This growth was evident in the establishment of chairs and lectureships and of new institutions, as well as in the publication of books and new sociological journals. In France the lectures and writings of Tarde, of the neo-Comtean, Eugene De Roberty and, above all, of Durkheim himself and his colleagues were of particular significance. The mid-90's also saw the founding by Rene Worms of the Institut International de Sociologie, the Société Sociologique de Paris, the Revue Internationale de Sociologie, and the prolific Bibliothèque International de Sociologie. Worms, who was a brilliant organiser, saw his and sociology's primary task as co-ordinating and synthesising the various social sciences, and the truths and insights to be found in the one-sided theories of others. (Like Tarde, he opposed Durkheim's 'social realism', and he was strongly, though increas-

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1. 1905d, pp.202-3.
2. 1909e (3rd. ed., 1914), p.317.
3. Cf. Branford, V.V., "On the Origin and Use of the Word 'Sociology'," Sociological Papers, I (1905) esp. pp.8-9.

ingly less, attached to social organicism[1]). Worms formed the focus for an alternative sociological tradition to the Durkheimian. He gathered around him a large number of scholars, professional and amateur, both in France and abroad, among them Tarde, and others such as the Russian emigres Maxim Kovalevsky, Jacques Novicow and de Roberty[2] - and eventually (from 190 or so) the apostate Durkheimian Gaston Richard, who inherited Worms's position on his death in 1926. The Revue Internationale has justly been called the "chief organ of expression of the anti-Durkheimian sociologists in France"[3], though these latter differed widely among themselves. Equally productive, but less influential in the academic world, were the Catholic and upper-class Le Playists, who produced a number of remarkable monographs concerning family types and industrial organisation, as well as community studies and work in "social geography". They were divided between a highly ideological, conservative and largely anti-industrial group centred on the journal La Reforme Sociale and a much more empirically productive group around La science sociale.[4]

1. On Worms, v. Essertier, 1930, pp.232ff.; Benoit-Smullyan, 1938, pp.861-2; Simon, 1963, pp.14 -9; and Clark, T.N., "Worms", International Encyclopedia of the Social Sciences (New York, 1968). For Worms's attitude to Durkheim, v. Worms, 190 , 191 and 1921. Cf. Clark, T.N., "Marginality, Eclecticism and Innovation: Rene Worms and the Revue Internationale de Sociologie from 1893 to 1914", RLS, ser.II, 3(196), pp.3-18.
2. Cf. Sorokin, 192 .
3. Benoit-Smullyan, 1938, p.861.
4. V. Davy, 1926, Chulliat, 1936, Essertier, 1930, pp.284sqq. and Pitts, J.R., "Le Play", International Encyclopedia of the Social Sciences (New York, 1968).

In addition to these various groups, there were many other individual scholars who saw themselves, and were seen, as pursuing sociological studies, such as the versatile Espinas, in Paris since 1894, the demographic sociologist Adolphe Coste, the anti-individualist Catholic Jean Izoulet at the College de France, and Charles Letourneau at the Ecole d'Anthropologie. Various institutions fostered a wide range of sociological work, among them the Institut International de Sociologie, the Ecole des Hautes Etudes Sociales, the College Libre des Sciences Sociales, the Ecole d'Anthropologie, and the Ecole Socialiste. Finally, though many specialists in particular disciplines remained hostile or indifferent, others became increasingly well-disposed to sociology, many of them to the Durkheimian variety. Chief among these were the historians grouped around Henri Berr's Revue de Synthèse Historique, founded in 1900, which sought to bring together all the various kinds of history and the human sciences, especially sociology. Indeed, there developed close links between the schools of Durkheim and Berr, and wide areas of agreement, both in substantive interests and methodological views[1]. There were the human geographers, especially Paul Vidal de la Blache, who became more and more sociological, and some of them eventually

1. V. Faublee, 1964, where it is argued that the divergences between the two groups were evident but unimportant. (For Durkheim's attitude to Berr, v. 1913a(ii)(4)).

Durkheimian, despite some violent territorial disputes[1]. The legal theorists Léon Duguit and Maurice Haurion and the economist Charles Gide were very impressed by the value of sociological perspectives. The statisticians, from Adolphe Quetelet to Tarde and Jacques Bertillon (who was on the editorial board of the Revue Internationale de Sociologie) were increasingly preoccupied with sociological problems and explanations, though mostly critical of the Durkheimians. The psychologist-philosopher Théodule Ribot's work became increasingly sociological in character; he became impressed by the thought that psychology had confined itself to studying the white, adult, civilised man and by the corresponding need to study different social "milieux". As Durkheim noted with pleasure, Ribot's La Logique des Sentiments demonstrated that "psychology, once it had arrived at a certain stage in its development, becomes inseparable from sociology"[2]. Moreover, from 1894 onwards, Ribot's Revue Philosophique included a section entitled "Sociologie" and carried frequent sociological articles and reviews, many of them by Durkheim and his associates. As to the philosophers, though there were many who found sociology in general, and Durkheimian sociology in particular, intellectually and morally repugnant, there were others who were its varyingly enthusiastic supporters, especially among the growing

1. V. Essertier, 1930, pp.369sqq; for the disputes, v., e.g., Simiand, F., review in A.S., XI (1910), esp. p.727 and Febvre, L., Le Terre et L'Evolution Humaine (Paris, 1922), p.76; also v. 1913a(ii)(37). One member of this school, Albert Demangeon, was an editor of volume 12 of the Annee.
2. 1906a(8), p.158.

number sympathetic to rationalism and the claims of science. Among these were Xavier Léon, who opened up the pages of his Revue de Métaphysique et de Morale to the Durkheimians, Lucien Lévy-Bruhl, whose whole subsequent intellectual career consisted in a tireless pursuit of the philosophical implications of (mainly Durkheimian) sociological ideas and ethnographic evidence, and, as we have seen, some of the most promising young agreges; equally, there were other philosophers, such as Gustave Belot, who, while favourable to sociology in general, were hostile to Durkheimism in particular.[1]

By 1900, Durkheim noted, in France

> the word ["sociology"] is on everyone's lips, and it is even used abusively; the thing has become popular. People's eyes are fixed on the new science and they expect much from it. There has thus emerged at the end of the century an intellectual movement altogether analogous to that which we have noticed at its beginning [including Saint-Simonism, Fourierism, Comtism and, in general, the birth of sociology] which, moreover, results from the same causes.[2]

These causes came down to a condition of acute social disorder, bringing with it a fuhdamental questioning of the bases of social order. Durkheim dated the new intellectual awakening from that year of disaster, 1870:

> The shock of those events was the stimulus which re-animated men's minds. The country found itself confronting the same question as at the beginning of the century. The system of organisation that constituted the imperial system, which was in any case nothing but a façade, had just collapsed; it was a matter of rebuilding another, or rather of building one that could survive otherwise than by means of administrative gimmicks, that is to say, a system with

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1. V. supra., ch.2(xii) and infra. ch.3(viii).
2. 1900b, p.651.

> a real basis in the nature of things. For this purpose it was necessary to know what that nature of things was. In consequence, the urgency of establishing a science of societies did not delay in making itself felt.[1]

Sociology made comparable progress elsewhere in the 1890's and 1900's. In Italy, the Rivista Italiana de Sociologia was founded in 189/ and there was a considerable growth of sociological teaching in the universities and of publications. In Belgium there was the foundation of the Universite Nouvelle by Guillaume de Greef on a specifically sociological basis and of the Institut de Sociologie Solvay. In Germany there were the sociology courses of Georg Simmel in Berlin, of Ferdinand Tönnies in Kiel and of Paul Barth in Leipzig, the founding in 1904 of the journal Archiv für Sozialwissenschaft und Sozialpolitik and the existence of long-standing sociological approaches and sympathies on the part of specialists in a wide variety of fields. In the United States there was a widespread development of sociological courses in universities, colleges and theological seminaries and the publication in Chicago of the American Journal of Sociology (of which Durkheim was an advisory editor until the War) from 1895 onwards. Even in Britain a Sociological Society was founded in 1903, at the third meeting of which, on June 20th 1904, Durkheim's views were very extensively discussed[2]; and in 1903 sociological teaching was begun at the University of London by Patrick Geddes, Edward Westermarck, A.C. Haddon and L.T. Hobhouse[3].

1. Ibid., p.647.
2. V. 1905d (for details v. bibliography).
3. Branford, art. cit., p.9 fn.

In general, however, these developments tended to follow their separate national courses. There were of course certain specific cross-national influences, such as that of some of the Germans and of Gabriel Tarde in the United States, of the Le Playists in England and Scotland, and of Social Darwinism generally, but national sociological traditions tended to crystallise and become increasingly isolated from one another. This was especially true of France and Germany and is symbolised in the total lack of interest in each other's work shown by Durkheim and Weber[1]. Durkheim had, as we have seen, been strongly influenced in his youth by German historians and social scientists, but by 1902 he was writing:

> I have the very distinct impression that, for some time now, Germany has not been able to renew its formulae. Its scholarly production continues to be abundant, more abundant than ours. But I do not see any evidence of a new impetus in the field of the social sciences. Studies of sociology, which are currently almost too fashionable amongst us, have scarcely any representatives. This fact seems to me all the more remarkable since, when I first began my present studies some eighteen to twenty years ago, it was from Germany that I sought enlightenment[2].

Germany, he thought, was becoming intellectually parochial and stagnant, displaying "a certain lack of curiosity, a sort of falling back on its own resources, an intellectual surfeit hostile to new developments"[3]. (Durkheim himself had scarcely any influence in Germany, though a German translation of Les Règles appeared in 1907).

France, on the other hand, Durkheim thought of as on the intellectual frontiers in the social sciences and above all

1. Cf. Tiryakian, 1966. Tiryakian is mistaken to say that Durkheim nowhere refers to Weber: v. 1913a(ii)(3), p.26.
2. 1902d.
3. Ibid.

in sociology. He attributed this to the decline of traditionalism, and to the native rationalism of "the country of Descartes" - to that "cult of distinct ideas, which is at the very root of the French spirit, as it is the basis of all science"[1]. He even went so far as to call sociology "an essentially French science"[2]. From the late '90's onwards Durkheim exhibited to the full an assertive and self-confident cultural patriotism that was, however, in no way parochial (as the reviews in the Annee abundantly confirm). Indeed its encyclopaedic range was matched only by its claims to universal scientific validity.

Yet in Durkheim's case the assertiveness was more an expression of his intellectual imperialism on behalf of sociology than of satisfaction in its being French. This imperialism was radical, even subversive in character. The aim of sociology was to transform existing specialisms, which it was "bound to imbue ... with a new spirit"[3]. The very word 'sociology'

> sums up and implies a whole new order of ideas: namely that social facts are indissolubly linked together, and, above all, must be treated as natural phenomena governed by invariable laws. To say that the various social sciences should be particular branches of sociology is therefore to state that they should be positive sciences themselves; that they should be developed in the same spirit as the other sciences of nature, and inspired by the methods which these employ, while keeping their own individualities ... Integrating them into sociology is

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1. 1900b, p.651.
2. Ibid., p.609.
3. 1899a(i) p.i: tr.1960c, p.348.

> not simply imposing a new generic name on them; it is claiming that they must be orientated in a new direction. This conception of natural law, which it is Comte's glory to have extended to the social kingdom in general, must be applied to detailed facts, and found a home among these special researches from which it was originally absent, and into which it cannot be introduced without accomplishing an entire revolution in them.[1]

This, he wrote, was "the task of the sociologist of today and the true way of continuing the work of Comte and Spencer". It "maintains their fundamental principle, but gives it its true value by applying it no longer to a restricted category of social phenomena, more or less arbitrarily chosen, but to the whole area of social life".[2]

The entire work of the Durkheimians can be seen as an attempt to effect this revolution in "the various social sciences". The extent to which that attempt succeeded has yet to be definitively assessed[3]. What is clear is that, quite apart from direct influences on particular scholars[4], the Durkheimian influence ramified (and continues to ramify)

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1. 1903c: tr. 1905d, p.268.
2. Ibid., pp.268-9.
3. V., however, Essertier, 1930; Bougle, 1935; Benoit-Smullyan, 1937, 1938 and 1948; Gunnison, 1948; Hinkle, 1960; Honigsheim, 1960a; Gugler, 1961 and Wilson, 1963.
4. Among many examples in France are the psychologist Charles Blondel and the historians Marc Bloch and Lucien Febvre who, according to Charles Morazé, "recognised in Durkheim his master" ("The Application of the Social Sciences to History", Journal of Contemporary History, 3,2 (1968), p.208). Among examples outside France are the English classical scholars Jane Harrison and Francis Cornford, and the anthropologist A.R. Radcliffe-Brown (v. infra., ch.3(viii)).

across an enormous range, from ethnology[1] to social psychology[2] and from the sociology of deviance[3] to sinology[4]. The immediate gains, as they appeared to Durkheim and his colleagues, were clear. The first was the dissolution of arbitrary barriers between subjects. Who, asked Durkheim, could until quite recently have supposed "that there are relationships between economic and religious phenomena [he did not answer: Max Weber], between demographic adaptations and moral ideas, between geographic forms and collective manifestations, and so on?"[5]. His own studies of the relationship between social structure and forms of religious practice and belief and, most importantly, systems of classification are a striking example of the kind of inquiry that the Durkheimians opened up. Their general principle was that when describing or explaining "religious, juridical, moral and economic facts,"

> one must relate them to a particular social milieu, to a definite type of society; and it is in the constitutive characteristics of this type that one must search for the determining causes of the phenomenon under consideration[6].

The second gain was a rigorous insistence on a rationally defensible method that was comparative in its use of evidence and sought to arrive at general laws that ranged over social types. Durkheim was devastating in criticism of what he saw

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1. Here the influence mainly operated through Mauss: v. Appendix E.
2. Halbwachs was important here: cf. Stoetzel, J., La Psychologie Sociale (Paris, 1963).
3. In which the concept of anomie has played a central role: v. Lukes, 1967 for discussion and references.
4. Via Marcel Granet.
5. 1900c: tr. 1960c, p.371.
6. 1899a(ii), p.ii: tr. 1960c, p.348.

as inadequate method, as can be seen in very many of the reviews in the Annee and in his ruthless criticisms of doctoral candidates[1]. M. Davy tells the story of Durkheim examining a candidate, whom he had terrorised by his peremptory manner, and saying:

> Monsieur, you could either have a method, which is not mine but which I understand; or else you could use my method, and then I would be satisfied; or else, thirdly, you could, as is the case, use no method at all, so that I do not understand you at all.[2]

He was particularly critical of historians, whom he saw as over-inclined to describe rather than seeking to explain; he thought of the historical method as an "indispensable auxiliary to sociology"[3]. History played, or should play, "in the order of social realities, a role analogous to that of the microscope in the order of physical realities"[4]. History provided the principal mode of access to data for the sociologist in his search for general relations and laws verifiable in different societies. Durkheim had no time for any conception of history as humanistic and non-scientific, and least of all as an alternative mode of synthesising the social sciences.

He offered abundant argumentative refutations of general sociological approaches and methods that differed from his

1. V. Appendix B.
2. Personal communication.
3. 1928a, p.348; tr. 1956b, p.239. For the disputes between the Durkheimians and the historians, v. the Bulletin de la Societe Francaise de Philosophie for 30 May 1906, 30 May 1907 and 28 May 1908. Cf. also Durkheim, 1902a(iii)(1) and 1903a(iii)(1)-(3).
4. 1909e (3rd ed., 1914), p.328. He was, however, "convinced that [sociology and history] are destined to become ever more intimate and that a day will come when the historical approach and the sociological approach will no longer differ by any more than nuances". (ibid., pp.330-1)

own - such as those of Marx[1], J.S. Mill[2], Espinas[3], Tarde[4], Simmel[5], Franklin H. Giddings[6], Albion Small[7], Ludwig Gumplowicz[8], Alfred Vierkandt[9], Gaston Richard[10] and very many others - in fact those of all his major contemporaries (with the exception of Max Weber[11]). He was above all contemptuous of sociological theorising that operated in a philosophical void and did not connect with the detail of the facts and generate empirical hypotheses. A characteristic passage is the following, in criticism of one Jankelevitch:

> Here is yet another book of philosophical generalities about the nature of society, and of generalities through which it is difficult to sense a very intimate and familiar practical acquaintance with social reality. Nowhere does the author give the impression that he has entered into direct contact with the facts of which he speaks, for the general ideas he develops do not appear to be illustrated by a single concrete example nor applied to a single determinate and precise sociological problem. However great the dialectical and literary talent of authors may be, one cannot protest enough against the scandal of a method which offends as much as this book does against all our scientific practices and which is still, none the less, often employed. We no longer today allow that one can speculate on the nature of life without being first introduced to the techniques

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1. 1897e.
2. 1903c, pp.473-6.
3. 1902a(iii)(3).
4. V. supra, ch.2 (xii).
5. 1900c, 1901e, 1902a(iii)(6), 1903c, pp.479sqq. and 1904a(29) and (30).
6. 1903c, pp.476-9.
7. 1902a(iii)(4).
8. 1902a(iii)(7).
9. 1903a(iii)(4).
10. 1913a(ii)(1).
11. V. Tiryakian, 1966 and supra. He saw (the early) Pareto as seeking "to justify the old abstract and ideological method of political economy and wanting to make it the general method of all the social sciences": 1900a(3). For a brief comparative discussion of Durkheim, Simmel and Pareto, v. Lukes, 1966.

> of biology. By what privilege is the philosopher to be permitted to speculate about society, without entering into commerce with the detail of social facts?[1]

Yet, despite his imperialistic positivism, Durkheim retained a fundamental respect for philosophy. In 1911 Georges Davy published a small book of extracts from Durkheim's writings[2], with a long introduction which laid emphasis on the philosophical side of Durkheim's thought. Durkheim wrote Davy a letter in which he commented on its "rigour to which an old systematiser like me is particularly sympathetic", adding the following observation:

> Certain of our friends will criticise you for having presented me in the more philosophical aspect. But there is no doubt that my thought tends in that direction. Having started out from philosophy, I am tending to return to it, or rather I have naturally been led back to it by the nature of the questions which I found on my way.[3]

It will be recalled that, when at the Ecole Normale, Durkheim had been known by the nickname 'the Metaphysician'[4], and throughout his life, while engaged in the most detailed empirical work, he never lost sight of its philosophical assumptions and ultimate implications. Moreover, he retained a keen interest in current philosophical debates. In 1908, for example, he wrote to Léon:

> I have just read Boutroux's book.[5] It would be really interesting if on Tuesday you could raise at the Societe de Philosophie the question of the relations

1. 1907a(1), p.171.
2. Davy, 1911.
3. Davy, 1960b, p.10.
4. Ibid., p.9.
5. This must have been Science et Religion dans la Philosophie Contemporaine (Paris, 1908).

> between philosophy and religion. There is a question which hovers over all the recent discussions which I have attended and which this book raises once again, namely, whether there are two types of reason, the one relating to science, the other to philosophy and religion[1].

Durkheim was a regular attender and contributor at the meetings of the Societe Francaise de Philosophie and in 1906 presented a paper on "The Determination of Moral Facts"[2]. Again, in 1911 he gave his paper on "Judgments of value and judgments of reality"[3] to the fourth International Congress of Philosophy at Bologna, which caused a considerable stir[4]. In 1913-14 he gave a philosophical course on Pragmatism and Sociology[5]. He planned a major work on La Morale, but he never got further than the introduction, written during the last weeks of his life[6]. In addition, at Paris he voluntarily undertook the teaching of general philosophy to candidates for the agregation[7], lecturing on such subjects as infinity, matter, teleology and so on[8]. As Davy has observed, there was always a philosophical exigency in his temperament[9].

Indeed, not only did his sociological work presuppose well-defined epistemological and ethical positions; it had, as we shall see, the long-term aim of providing an empirically-based account of the nature of morality and of perception and

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1. Letter dated 8 May 1908. For a report of the meeting, v.1909a(i).
2. 1906b.
3. 1911b.
4. Léon, 1917, p.249.
5. 1955a; v. infra, ch.3(vii).
6. 1920a; v. infra., ch.3(iv).
7. Davy, 1960b, p.9.
8. Davy, 1919, p.194.
9. Davy, 1958.

knowledge[1]. He never achieved a fully worked-out sociology of morality, which was his greatest ambition, but his work on the sociology of knowledge is to be found in the essay on primitive classification[2] and in the Elementary Forms of the Religious Life[3] and was carried further by a number of his disciples[4]. A letter to Leon written in 1908 shows very clearly where his preoccupations lay. He could, he wrote, offer Léon the introduction to the book he then proposed to call "Les formes élémentaires de la pensée et de la pratique religieuse", for publication in his Revue. This would be

> a short exposition in which I will indicate the object of the work, from the double point of view of the nature and the genesis of religious thought, and more generally of the genesis and nature of thought. I intend to indicate, in effect, in passing, in the course of the book, some of the social elements which have helped to constitute certain of our categories. (Time, causality, the notion of force, the notion of personality.) This question, which has preoccupied me for a long time, and which I do not dare for the time being to approach directly, can, I think, be tackled from this perspective of religious thought[5].

The introduction as published in the Revue de Métaphysique et de Morale[6] included, interestingly, a whole section which did not appear in the Elementary Forms. This dealt, in part, with the relations between sociology and philosophy. He had felt it necessary, he wrote, to remove sociology from "a philosophical tutelage that could only prevent it from constitu-

1. V. infra., chs.3(iv), (v) and (vi).
2. 1903a(i).
3. 1912a.
4. By, e.g., Hubert, Halbwachs and Granet.
5. Letter dated 24 July 1908.
6. 1909d.

ting itself as a positive science"[1]; and, as a result, he had been suspected of being hostile to philosophy, or at least sympathetic to a narrow empiricism (i.e.: bad philosophy). In fact, his view was that sociology could help to renew perennial metaphysical problems. By focussing on the conscience collective, it fixed on man's representation of the world, a "true microcosm"[2], for "it is in the totality formed by [a civilisation's] religion, its science, its language, its morality, that one finds realised the integral system of human representations at a given time"[3]. Moreover, the study of the categories, the fundamental and universal forms of thought, provided access to the "synthetic expression of the human mind"[4]; there was "no more suitable object for philosophical thought"[5]. By studying these empirically, how they were formed and what elements entered into them,

> [sociology] is destined, we believe, to furnish to philosophy, the bases which are indispensable to it and which it currently lacks. One can even say that sociological reflexion needs to extend itself naturally and spontaneously in the form of philosophical reflexion...[6]

(One may suppose that he excluded this passage from the book because it gave too many hostages to the philosophers: it was still important to avoid their tutelage.)

Ultimately Durkheim thought of sociology as "destined to open a new way to the science of man"[7]. By finding empirical

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1. Ibid., p.755.
2. Ibid., p.756.
3. Ibid., pp.756-7.
4. Ibid., p.757.
5. Ibid.
6. Ibid., p.758.
7. 1912a, p.637: tr.1915d, p.447.

answers to questions that had hitherto seemed purely philosophical because non-empirical, he hoped that the social sciences would "restore to philosophy, with interest, what they had borrowed from it"[1].

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1. 1903c: tr.1905d, p.240.

(iv) The Sociology of Morality.

Durkheim's thought about morality operated at a number of different levels. In effect, he proposed a complex system of interdefined concepts with which he sought, first, to describe and explain empirical data - the genesis and functioning of particular moral codes in particular social contexts; second, to make evaluative judgments about such data - about whether and how they should be reformed; and third, to provide solutions to fundamental ethical questions - such as the nature of evaluation and moral judgment, the autonomy of morals, and the "dualism of human nature". In our consideration of these ideas, and the development they underwent, it will be useful to begin by examining the conceptual scheme, and its progressive development, and then to look at its application to Durkheim's explanatory, evaluative and philosophical purposes.

The chief difficulty in pursuing such an inquiry is that Durkheim never synthesised his work on morality. We have already discussed his early interest in the "positive science of morality" which he discovered among the Germans[1]. We have seen how he gradually deepened his view of morality as a social phenomenon, moving from an exclusive concentration on moral rules and their obligatory character ("all moral phenomena consist in rules of sanctioned conduct"[2], differing

1. V. supra, ch.1 (iv).
2. 1893b, p.24; tr. 1933b, p.425 (S.L.). This definition occurs in that part of the introduction to the Division of Labour which was omitted from the second edition (1902b) and subsequent editions.

from laws in that sanctions were diffuse rather than organised[1]) to the more complex ideas set out in the course on moral education, analysing morality as combining the imperative and the desirable, the "spirit of discipline" and "attachment to social groups", with the progressive introduction of autonomy through rational understanding[2]. We have also discussed Durkheim's early empirical work in the sociology of morality, forming part of his study of law and social practices (physique du droit et des moeurs)[3].

However, during his years in Paris, Durkheim never ceased to think about morality and his ideas about it evolved during successive Sorbonne lecture-courses[4]. His book on morality was "the work Durkheim wanted to write" and he "awaited an opportunity ... to recast his whole theory"[5]. Unfortunately, the opportunity never came; he got no further with his Morale than the beginning of its theoretical introduction[6]. All

1. Cf.: "the external sign of morality ... consists in a diffuse repressive sanction, that is, blame on the part of public opinion ..." (1901c, p.52: tr. 1938b, p.41).
2. V. supra., ch. 2(ii).
3. V. supra., ch. 2(ix)
4. V. Mauss, 1925a, p.12. These lectures were delivered in 1902-5, 1908-12 and 1914-16: v. Appendix A.
5. Ibid.
6. 1920a. Mauss gives (in Mauss, 1920,p.80) the following summary of the projected contents of the first, introductory book of Durkheim's La Morale (based on notes Durkheim had gathered together, deriving mainly from his 1914-15 lectures):- Object of course - traditional conception of morality (1920a); critique of traditional ethics; critique of the conception that morality is entirely subjective; critique of Tarde's theory; the problem and the Kantian solution; critique of Kantian ethics; value judgment and ideal (sociological idealism); the individual moral conscience and objective morality (morality and moral conscience); objective and subjective point of view (sentiment of justice, idea of justice); the relation between public morality and individual morality (autonomy and the Kantian solution); collective type and average type; unity of the two elements (ideal and duty);

contd. over

that he published were two short papers on morality, both delivered to philosophical audiences[1]. It is partly for this reason that a number of critics have complained that in this area Durkheim's work was more philosophical than sociological[2]. In trying to give a more rounded account, it will be necessary to draw on various different sources in Durkheim's work, as well as on the notes taken by MM. Davy and Cuvillier at the Sorbonne lectures[3]. Hopefully, this account will suggest where Durkheim's thought was tending and what it might have yielded.

The Conceptual Framework

In his paper "Determination of the Moral Fact"[4], delivered to the Societe de Philosophie in 1906, Durkheim offered the clearest formulation of his conceptual scheme, which he saw as

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how can we attach ourselves to society? Mauss reports that Durkheim was also proposing to use material from:- Introductory lecture to the course on domestic morality; and lectures on divorce, the three zones of kinship, property - the Kantian theory, and the consensual contract and sanctions.

1. 1906b and 1911b; repr. in 1924a; tr. 1953b.
2. E.g. Ginsberg, 1951 (1956), p.52 and Gurvitch, 1937 (1950). Gurvitch argues that "instead of working on the sociology of morality, or on the science des moeurs, Durkheim wished to derive from sociology a moral philosophy based on the metaphysical and dogmatic equation between Supreme Good, Conscience Collective and Spirit, from which he was never able to detach himself". (ibid. p.553). Cf. Gurvitch, G., Morale Theorique et Science des Moeurs (Paris, 1937), pp. 96-103.
3. V. Appendix D. Cf. Richard, 1911; Bougle, 1922; Bayet, 1925; Bougle, 1935, last ch.; Gurvitch, 1937; Parsons, 1937, ch.x; Ginsberg, 1951; Indan, 1960; and Aron, 1962 (1967), pt.II, ch.6; also infra, ch.3(viii) and the references therein.
4. 1906b; repr. 1924a; tr. 1953b.

the theoretical framework for his sociology of morality. This formulation re-stated and extended that offered in the moral education course. In accordance with his third rule of sociological method[1], he began with an "initial, provisional definition" in order subsequently to discover "the intrinsic differences between ... moral rules and other rules by beginning with their apparent and exterior differences"[2]. The observable difference between moral and technical rules lay in the obligatory character of the former. This was shown by the existence of "sanctions", whether negative (punishment and blame) or positive (honour and praise), which were consequences "synthetically" related to an action, that is, in virtue of a pre-existing rule; as opposed to consequences that were "analytically", or causally, related to the action[3]. To his Kantian, anti-utilitarian account of the obligatory aspect of morality, Durkheim added what he saw as the anti-Kantian proposition that "moral ends must be desired and desirable"[4].

He went beyond the discussion in Moral Education by elaborating on the relations between these two characteristics. His distinction between them was an analytical one: "moral reality always presents simultaneously these two aspects which

1. "The subject matter of every sociological study should comprise a group of phenomena defined in advance by certain common external characteristics, and all phenomena so defined should be included within this group" (1901c, p.45: tr.1938b, p.35).
2. 1924a (1951 ed.), pp.58, 60: tr.1953b, pp.41, 42 (S.L.).
3. Durkheim recognised (elsewhere) that there were borderline cases between technical, or practical, rules and moral rules: "... the moral order is not isolated. It is tied to experience. One can move without interruption from ordinary practical rules to moral rules" (Appendix D (2)).
4. Ibid., p.63: tr. p.45 (S.L.).

cannot, in fact, be isolated"[1]. Thus "[n]o act has ever been performed as a result of duty alone; it has always been necessary for it to appear in some respect as good"[2]. On the other hand, "[s]omething of the nature of duty is found in the desirability of morality"[3]. They were combined in different proportions within different actions, different personalities and different civilisations[4]. Neither could be derived from or reduced to the other; this would be artificially to simplify moral reality[5] Finally, Durkheim compared morality, thus defined, with sacredness, which he saw as similarly dual ("The sacred being is in a sense the forbidden being, that one dares not violate; but it is also good, loved and sought after"[6]), concluding that morality and religion were closely related; for centuries they had been "intimately linked and even completely fused"[7] and there were always elements of morality in religion and of religion in morality[8].

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1. Ibid., p.64; tr. p.45.
2. Ibid., pp.64-5; tr. p.45.
3. Ibid., p.51; tr. p.36.
4. Durkheim argued that the morality of Ancient Greece and Rome was primarily eudemonistic; cf. 1938a, 2, p.47.
5. He saw the utilitarians as reducing duty to good, and Kant as reducing good to duty; v. Appendix D(2).
6. 1924a (1951 ed.), p.51; tr. 1953b, p.36 (S.L.).
7. Ibid., p.69; tr. p.48.
8. As he remarked in his lectures, in morality "the feature of sacredness is less clearcut. Dogmas and myths do not exist here ... The emphasis is upon acts. The difference is nonetheless entirely one of degree"; Appendix D(2). Cf. 1912a pp. 295-9; tr. 1915d, pp.206-9.

Thus far Durkheim had proposed a set of inter-related definitions to be used in analysing moral rules and behaviour and in situating such rules and behaviour in relation to other spheres of social life. He next asked an ambiguous question to which he gave a deeply ambiguous answer. How was one to "explain" these characteristics of moral reality? This question could be construed as asking for an empirical study of a wide variety of moral codes, their causes and functioning, leading to "some idea of the general causes upon which depend those essential characteristics that they have in common"[1]. Alternatively, it could be seen as asking for a "purely dialectical argument"[2] to support the system of concepts already presented.

In pursuing the latter, Durkheim showed himself to be a poor philosopher. His aim was to determine the necessary conditions for calling an act "moral", and his method was to "question the common moral <u>conscience</u>"[3]. Beginning from the postulate that "we have no duties except in relation to <u>consciences</u> ... to moral persons, or thinking beings"[4] and that an act can only have two sorts of end, myself and beings other than myself, he argued as follows:-

> (i) The qualification "moral" has never been given to an act which has individual interests, or the perfection of the individual from a purely egoistic point of view, as its object; (ii) if I as an individual do not constitute an end having <u>in itself</u> a moral character, this is necessarily also true of other individuals, who

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1. 1924a (1951 ed.), p.70: tr. 1953b, p.49. He explained that he followed this method in his teaching, but was unable to do so here.
2. <u>Ibid</u>., p.55: tr.p.39.
3. <u>Ibid</u>., p.71: tr. p.50.
4. <u>Ibid</u>.: tr. p.49 (S.L.).

> are the same as myself, differing only in degree; (iii) from which we conclude that, if a morality exists, it can only have as an objective the group formed by a plurality of associated individuals - that is to say, society, but on condition that society be considered as a personality qualitatively different from the individual personalities who compose it. [1]

In reaching this conclusion, Durkheim assumed that the "object" of moral activity must have "moral value". Morality, he argued, "according to common opinion, begins where disinterestedness and devotion begin", but "disinterestedness only makes sense when that to which we subordinate ourselves has a higher moral value than we have as individuals. In the world of experience I know of only one being that possesses a richer and more complex reality than our own, and that is the collectivity"[2], as opposed to any, some or all of its separate elements. Thus, when "acts directed towards others or myself" had moral value, "they are oriented towards a higher end ... the morality which is recognised in them must derive from a higher source"[3], namely, society as a sui generis moral being.

Durkheim compared the structure of this argument with Kant's argument (as he read it) for the existence of God:

> Kant postulates God, since without this hypothesis morality is unintelligible. We postulate a society specifically distinct from individuals, since otherwise morality has no object and duty no roots. Let us add that this postulate is easily verified by experience[4].

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1. Ibid., pp.52-3: tr.p.37 (S.L.). This argument derives from Wundt's Ethik. Cf. supra, ch.1 (iv) and 1887c, p.130, where Durkheim first adopted it.
2. Ibid., p.74: tr. p.52 (S.L.).
3. Ibid., p.73: tr. p.51 (S.L.).
4. Ibid., p.74: tr. pp.51-2.

As Durkheim saw it, "[o]ne must choose between God and society"[1]. There were coherent reasons militating in favour of each solution, but he was "quite indifferent to this choice, since I see in divinity only society transfigured and conceived symbolically"[2].

Durkheim thought it possible to use the conclusion of this argument to "explain" (a) the characteristics of desirability and obligatoriness into which he had analysed morality, as well as (b) their unity, and (c) the close relation between morality and sacredness. Thus, "society is good and desirable for the individual who cannot exist without it or deny it without denying himself, and ... because society surpasses the individual, he cannot desire it without to a certain extent violating his nature as an individual"[3]. Likewise, society "has all that is necessary for the transference to certain rules of that very imperative character which is distinctive of moral obligation".[4] As to the unity of the two aspects, society "commands us because it is exterior and superior to us ... [but it is also] internalised within us and *is* us, we love and desire it, albeit with a *sui generis* desire since, whatever we do, society can never be ours in more than a part and dominates us infinitely"[5]. Finally, "the sacred character

1. *Ibid.*, pp.74-5; tr. p.52 (S.L.).
2. *Ibid.*, p.75; tr. p.52 (S.L.).
3. *Ibid.*, p.53; tr.p.37. Thus society "is at once the source and the guardian of civilisation, the channel by which it reaches us ... a reality from which everything that matters to us flows ..." (*ibid.*, p.78; tr.p.54).
4. *Ibid.*, p.80; tr. p.56 (S.L.).
5. *Ibid.*, p.82; tr. p.57 (S.L.).

which marks and has always marked moral things"[1] was to be similarly explained; sacred things were things given an incommensurable value by collective opinion and to which *sui generis* collective sentiments were attached, sentiments which "speak to us from a higher level and [which] by reason of their origin ... have a force and an ascendancy peculiarly their own"[2] (witness the socially determined "sacredness with which the human being is now invested"[3]).

Rather than pursuing a detailed analysis of each false step in this dialectical argument[4], it will be more profitable to separate out the various strands which are concealed within it. Durkheim's purpose was to "explain" morality by relating it to society. The trouble is that he failed clearly to see that there were a number of different relations involved here. Morris Ginsberg has justly observed that "in general 'la societe' has an intoxicating effect on his mind"[5], hindering further analysis; though one might plausibly argue that this was a fertile confusion, leading Durkheim to insights he might not otherwise have attained.

He believed he had discovered in society "the end and the source of morality"[6]. This statement, and the whole course of his argument, here and elsewhere, imply at least six distinct

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1. Ibid.
2. Ibid., p.84; tr. p.58.
3. Ibid.
4. It relies, as will be suggested, on a confusion between "end" "objective" or "object"; "interest"; "motive"; "ideal"; "precondition"; and "cause".
5. Ginsberg, 1951 (1956), p.51.
6. 1924a (1951 ed.), p.84; tr. 1953b, p.59 (S.L.).

ways of relating the "social" and the "moral". Durkheim can be seen as advancing

(i) a definition of "moral" according to which an action is moral if and only if it is aimed at a social, rather than individual, end or object - more specifically, at securing the common good, rather than the good of a particular individual or individuals;[1]

(ii) a definition of "moral" according to which an action is moral if and only if it is aimed at satisfying a social, or public interest, rather than the interests of a particular individual or individuals[2];

(iii) a definition of "moral" according to which an action is moral if and only if it is motivated by social, or altruistic, sentiments, rather than egoistic ones[3];

(iv) a definition of "moral" according to which an action is moral if and only if it is socially prescribed, in the sense of being in accordance with a society's ideals and values[4];

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1. When actions have a moral value, "they are oriented towards a higher end than the individual himself or other individuals" (ibid., p.73 ; tr. p.51); "Man ... acts morally only when he takes a collectivity as the goal of his conduct" (1925a, p.294; tr.1961a, p.256 (S.L.)).
2. "To act morally is to act with a view to a collective interest" (ibid., p.68; tr. p.59 (S.L.)).
3. "Sensibility ... inclines us towards ends that are individual, egoistic, irrational, immoral" (ibid., p.128; tr.p.112 (S.L.)); "The basis of the moral life is the sentiment that man does not belong to himself alone ..." (1938a, 2 p.54).
4. Thus, when "the ideal of society is a particular form of the human ideal, when the model of the citizen is in large part identical with the generic model of man, it is to men as such that we find ourselves attached. This is what accounts for the moral character attributed to sentiments of sympathy between individuals, and to the actions which they inspire" (1924a (1951 ed.), p.76; tr. 1953b, p.53 (S.L.)).

(v) the claim that society, or rather a social context, is a precondition for the existence of morality. This claim could be either

(a) philosophical, or conceptual - i.e.: "we could not make sense of morality unless ..."[1]; or

(b) empirical - i.e.: "certain initial conditions must exist if ..."[2];

(vi) the empirical hypothesis that adherence to particular moral codes[3], involving deference to moral authority[4] and the attribution of moral value[5], is socially determined; and, as a corollary, the methodological precept that it can be sociologically explained[6].

1. "Morality begins with life in the group, since it is only there that disinterestedness and devotion become meaningful" (ibid., p.74: tr. p.54); "Let all social life disappear, and moral life will disappear with it, since it would no longer have any objective... Morality, in all its forms, is never met with except in society" (1902b, pp.394-5: tr.1933b, p.399).
2. "Society is the field of an intense intellectual and moral life with a wide range of influence. From the actions and reactions between its individuals arises an entirely new mental life which lifts our minds into a world of which we could have not the faintest idea had we lived in isolation" (1924a (1951 ed.), p.85: tr. 1953b, p.59).
3. "Up to the present I have not found in my researches a single moral rule that is not the product of particular social factors ... all moral systems practised by peoples are a function of the social organisation of these peoples, are bound to their social structures and vary with them ... Individual morality ... does not escape this law, for it is social to the highest degree. What it makes us try to realise is the ideal man as the society conceives him, and each society conceives the ideal in its own image" (ibid., pp.56-7: tr.p.81).
4. "society ... by manifesting itself in certain precepts particularly important to it, confers upon them an obligatory character" (ibid., 53: tr. p.38).
5. "... the human being is becoming the primary focus for the social conscience of European peoples and has acquired an incomparable value. It is society that has consecrated him" (ibid., p.84: tr. p.58 - S.L.).
6. "The diversity of individual moral consciences shows how impossible it is to make use of them to arrive at an understanding of morality itself. Research into the conditions that determine these individual variations would no doubt be an interesting psychological study, but would not help us to reach our particular goal" (ibid., p.57: tr. p.40); "...it is in their social form that [moral facts] must above all attract scientific research ..." (1920a, p.97).

It was the sixth of these connexions between morality and society that was potentially the most fruitful, and it was here that Durkheim's ideas gradually evolved. Up to this period (the mid 1900's), though morality was always the "centre and end of his work"[1], he tended to see it primarily as a system of constraining rules, as a kind of informal analogue to law - "a system of rules of action that predetermine conduct ... so many moulds, with given structures, which serve to shape our behaviour"[2]. Even in 1907 he was writing that the sociology of morality must begin by studying "rules of conduct, the judgments which imperatively enunciate the way in which the members of a given social group must behave in the different circumstances of life"[3], and must subsequently seek the causes on which they depend. But the focus of his attention was gradually shifting from the obligatory to the "desirability" aspect of morality, and from the rules people follow to the moral beliefs expressed by the rules. Largely as a result of his preoccupation with religion, he became more and more interested in the sphere of beliefs and ideals, and in the sociological explanation of the attribution of moral value.

Already in 1906 he characterised society as "above all a composition of ideas, beliefs and sentiments of all sorts which realise themselves through individuals. Foremost of these

1. Davy, 1920, p.71; v. supra., ch.1 (iv).
2. 1925a, pp.27, 30; tr. 1961a, pp.24, 26 (S.L.); v. supra, ch. 2(ii). Cf., esp., the Division of Labour.
3. 1907a (10), p.386. Cf.: "Morality appears everywhere to the observer as a code of duties ... the idea of duty expresses its fundamental characteristic ..." (1906a (11), p.325).

ideas is the moral ideal which is its principal raison d'être"[1]. Pursuing the analogy between the moral and the sacred, he postulated the existence of incommensurable secular values, a "separate world of sui generis representations", endowing certain things and ways of acting with a "sacred quality which effects a solution of continuity between morality and economic and industrial techniques, etc..."[2]. The ideal, he liked to say, was part of the real world and could be studied as such[3]. In "Value Judgments and Judgments of Reality"[4] he described values as "sui generis realities"[5] corresponding to "ideals" which were "essentially dynamic, for behind them are ... collective forces - that is, natural but at the same time moral forces ... The ideal itself is a force of this type and therefore subject to scientific investigation"[6].

He took two further steps along this road in his last work, the unfinished introduction to La Morale. In the first place, he began to draw out the connexions between the sociology of morality and the sociology of knowledge, arguing that "the manner in which man situates himself in the world, the way in which he conceives his relations with other beings and with his fellows varies according to the conditions of time and place. Now, the moral ideal is always strictly dependent upon the conception that men have of themselves and of their place

1. 1924a (1951 ed.), p.85: tr. 1953b, p.59.
2. Ibid., p.104: tr. p.71.
3. V. Appendix D(2).
4. 1911b.
5. Ibid.: repr. in 1924a (1951 ed.), p.119: tr. 1953b, p.81.
6. Ibid., p.136: tr. p.93.

in the universe"[1]. Secondly, he made a new distinction, "morale" and "moeurs", which amounted to that between ideals and values, on the one hand, and rule-governed behaviour, on the other - between operative ideals and social practices. His last theoretical statement on the sociology of morality was the announcement of a firm, anti-behaviourist predilection for the study of the former:

> Doubtless the morality (morale) of the time is to be found in social practices (moeurs), but in a degraded form, reduced to the level of human mediocrity. What they express is the way in which the average man applies moral rules, and he never applies them without compromising and making reservations. The motives on which he acts are mixed: some are noble and pure, but others are vulgar and base. Contrary to this, the science whose scope we are outlining, seeks to attain moral precepts in their purity and their impersonality. It has as its subject-matter morality itself, ideal morality, over and above human behaviour, not the deformations it undergoes in being incarnated in current practices which can express it only imperfectly. How it is to confront this subject-matter is something we will have to consider. However, it should be appropriately named, and we therefore propose to call it the "science of morality" or "science of moral facts", meaning by this that it treats of moral phenomena, of moral reality, as it appears to observation, whether in the present or in the past, just as physics or physiology treat their data ...[2]

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1. 1920a, p.89.
2. Ibid., p.96. According to Mauss, in Durkheim's last lecture-courses on the subject in 1915 and 1916, "[t]he principal ideas of the Morale Générale, those concerning the relations between the average, the normal and the ideal had been ... clarified in lectures to which he ... attached much importance" (Mauss, 1925a, p.9).

Explanation.

Durkheim never abandoned this intransigently positivist (or, as he preferred to say, rationalist) position. Morality was a subject for science, a "system of realised facts"[1], indeed (as he increasingly came to describe it) "a system of forces, not physical forces, certainly, but mental, moral forces, forces which draw all their power of action from representations, from states of mind (états de conscience)"[2] He always saw morality as irreducibly dual[3], and as set apart from the rest of life; what gradually changed was the focus of his interest, moving from the study of social practices, and the operation of rules, or norms, to that of the ideals and values, or the beliefs, underlying them.

One can only guess at the use to which Durkheim would have put his conceptual scheme in his projected science of morality[4]. It is most likely that, while continuing his work on such areas as the family, property and contract, he would have given much attention to the sociological explanation of both the genesis and the functioning of moral ideals. He would probably have attempted the former along two separate lines: first, by seeking the long-term origins and historical develop-

1. 1902b, p.xli; tr.1933b, p.35.
2. 1910b, p.60. Cf. Appendix D(1): "The ideal is a system of forces, which can be studied and made the object of a science".
3. Cf. the rule of method recommended in his 1908-9 lectures: "One must explain the two aspects of each moral rule" (Appendix D(2)).
4. For the plan drawn up in 1908-9, v. Appendix D(2).

ment of a set of beliefs (as in his tracing of the respect for the human person and the sacrilegious character of homicide to the notion of the soul and the derivation of this latter from totemic beliefs gradually becoming individualised[1]); and second, by looking for those "moments of effervescence", those "periods of creation and renewal" when "men are brought into more intimate relations with one another, when meetings and assemblies are more frequent, relationships more solid and the exchange of ideas more active"[2]. As examples of such creative moments, Durkheim cited "the great crisis of Christendom, the movement of collective enthusiasm which, in the twelfth and thirteenth centuries, bringing together in Paris the scholars of Europe, gave birth to Scholasticism ... the Reformation and Renaissance, the Revolutionary period and the great Socialist upheavals of the nineteenth century"[3]. The explanation he offered here was in terms of what one might call collective psychology. At such moments there is an intense and exclusive mental exaltation, eliminating all egoistic and commonplace concerns, when men believe that "the time is close when the ideal will be realised and the Kingdom of God established on earth"[4]. Then the crisis passes and social life returns to its ordinary level; "all that has been

1. V. Appendix D(1). Cf. the discussions of homicide, property and contract in 1950a: tr. 1957a (v. supra, ch. 2(ix)).
2. 1924a (1951 ed.), p.134: tr. 1953b, p.91 (S.L.).
3. Ibid., p.134: tr. pp.91-2 (S.L.).
4. Ibid.: tr. p.92.

said, done, thought and felt during the period of fertile upheaval survives only as a memory ... an idea, a set of ideas"[1], that is, as ideals, distinct from ordinary experience. These, to survive, must be periodically revived by means of "festivities and public ceremonies, whether religious or secular, by oratory and preaching of all kinds, in the Church or in the schools, by dramatic representations, artistic displays - in a word, everything that brings men together and makes them communicate in the same intellectual and moral life"[2]. But such revivals are only partial and have only a temporary effect.

As to the study of the functioning or operation of moral ideals, there are a number of clues which suggest what kind of investigation Durkheim might have undertaken. In the first place, he continued to see value in the study of statistical rates as indices, albeit crude and approximate, of the <u>conscience collective</u>[3]. Secondly, he spoke of the importance of consulting "popular beliefs" and observing people's reactions when such beliefs were contravened in practice[4]. There were

> a considerable number of moral ideas and maxims that are easily accessible: those that are written down, condensed in legal formulas. In law the greater part of domestic morality, contractual morality, the

1. <u>Ibid</u>., pp.134-5: tr. p.92 (S.L.).
2. <u>Ibid</u>., p.135: tr. p.92 (S.L.).
3. V. <u>ibid</u>., pp.130-1: tr. p.89: "[The sentiment of respect for human dignity] is at the root of the moral ideal of contemporary societies. Now, as it is more or less intense, the number of criminal assaults against the person is low or high. Likewise, the number of adulteries, divorces and separations expresses the relative force with which the conjugal ideal makes itself felt." Cf. Appendix D(2).
4. V. Appendix D(1).

> morality of obligations, all the ideas relating to the great fundamental duties are expressed and reflected ... When we have broken this new ground we will pass on to another ... Proverbs, popular maxims and non-codified customs are no less sources of information. Literary works, the conceptions of philosophers and moralists ... direct our attention to aspirations that are only in the process of becoming conscious, enabling us to go more deeply into the analysis of the common conscience, to reach those depths where these obscure and still half-conscious currents are elaborated.[1]

Such data would enable one to "cut broad avenues that may bring in some light to this virgin forest of moral and, more generally, social facts"[2].

Thirdly, Durkheim began to develop a theory of symbolism, which has a markedly modern ring. Collective ideals, he argued, "can only become manifest and conscious by being concretely realised in objects that can be seen by all, understood by all and represented to all minds: figurative designs, emblems of all kinds, written or spoken formulas, animate or inanimate objects"[3]. The actual objects serving as such symbols came to do so as the result of "all sorts of contingent circumstances" but, once selected, they acquired a unique prestige: thus "a rag of cloth becomes invested with sanctity and a tiny piece of paper can become a very precious thing"[4]. In his lectures Durkheim offered a preliminary list of such symbols: things (emblems), places (e.g. in

1. 1924a (1951 ed.); p.114; tr. 1953b, p.77 (S.L.).
2. Ibid.
3. Ibid., pp.137-8; tr. p.94 (S.L.).
4. Ibid., p.138; tr. p.94 (S.L.).

pilgrimages), days and dates (e.g. anniversaries and religious and national holidays), words (e.g. political formulas - such formulas being "impersonal, rhythmic and imperative"), and men (not only great men, but also, e.g., priests and magistrates - the "functionaries of society"). He remarked on the considerable role of emblems in "religious moral life", observing that the fact that the flag was virtually the only emblem in modern secular life was an indication that the latter was undergoing a period of transition and crisis. Likewise, the absence of public festivities (fêtes) showed that "we have not established a new ideal"[1].

The most modern and suggestive aspect of these ideas is to be found in Durkheim's speculation on the general significance of such symbolism:

> In this way collective thought transforms everything it touches. It fuses natural orders and combines contraries; it reverses what one might regard as the natural hierarchy of being, it eliminates differences and differentiates between what is similar. In a word, it substitutes for the world revealed to us by the senses, a quite different world which is nothing other than the projection of the ideals it constructs.[2]

Evaluation

Durkheim never abandoned his explicit concern to derive value judgments from the scientific study of morality, though he was equally concerned to avoid the contamination of the

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1. Appendix D(1) and (2)
2. 1924a (1951 ed.), p.138; tr. 1953b, pp.94-5 (S.L.). Cf. the more recent writings of Claude Lévi-Strauss, esp. Lévi-Strauss, 1962a and b.

latter by such judgments; indeed, he saw its pursuit as rigorously separated from "art", but a rational art could then be derived from science. Like Lucien Lévy-Bruhl, he believed in the "necessity of clearly separating, in all speculation relative to morals, science and the practical applications that can be made of it"[1] in order that "we should be in a position, not merely to gain a scientific understanding, but to make an objective evaluation of moral practices, we must have considered them in an entirely free spirit"[2]. On the other hand his "constant preoccupation" was that sociology "might have practical results"[3]. As he wrote in reply to a critic,

> We wonder ... how anyone could think that we refuse to evaluate the morality of our contemporaries, when the first work of any importance that we published had precisely as its declared object the making of an evaluation of this kind.[4]

In the sphere of morality as elsewhere, "the science of reality puts us in a position to modify what exists and to control it".

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1. 1906a (11), p.325. Cf. Levy-Bruhl, 1903; and 1904a (5).
2. 1907a (3,4,5), p.355. Cf. "The role of sociology ... must properly consist in emancipating us from all parties, not so much by opposing a doctrine to other doctrines, but by enabling the mind to acquire, in relation to these [practical] questions, a special attitude that science alone can provide through its direct contact with realities" (1901c, p.175; tr. 1938b, p.143 (S.L.)).
3. 1901c, p.174; tr. p.143.
4. 1907a (3,4,5), p.355. Durkheim here goes on to observe that "in the Division of Labour, we evaluate the old ideal of humanist morality, the moral ideal of the cultivated man, we show how it can be regarded today as increasingly anachronistic, how a new ideal is forming and developing as the result of the increasing specialisation of social functions" (ibid., fn.).

Thus, the "science of moral opinion provides us with the means to evaluate moral opinion and, where necessary, to rectify it".[1]

What kind of evaluations did Durkheim believe could be derived from the sociology of morality? He was clear that the latter afforded no basis for judging between societies, no general criterion, no "formula for the universal moral ideal"[2] the "anarchist will prefer pure diversity; the authoritarian absolute unity. Rousseau preferred small societies where a strong moral homogeneity prevented individual dissent; how could one show him to be wrong?"[3] On the other hand, only the sociology of morality "can help us in solving these practical problems"[4]. How? Durkheim's answer is very revealing:

> Each moral institution must be studied separately, in its genesis and in its functioning, in its relations with the environment; and it is in accordance with its past that we can conjecture its future.[5]

In other words, Durkheim believed that, in the last analysis, evaluation was strictly determined by explanation; that, in any given situation, only one set of moral judgments was rationally possible in face of a fully scientific understanding of the present and foreseeable future: "it is never possible to desire a morality other than that required by the social

1. 1924a (1951 ed.), p.86: tr. 1953b, p.60.
2. 1906a (10), p.324.
3. Ibid.
4. Ibid.
5. Ibid.

conditions of a given time. To wish for a morality other than that implied in the nature of society is to deny the latter and, consequently, oneself"[1]. He recognised an ultimate value premise here, which he did not think needed to be discussed: that "we are right in wishing to live"[2]. This was to imply that only one set of moral judgments was consistent with social, and consequently individual, survival. Thus Durkheim could write of the "state of society" as providing "an objective standard to which our evaluations must always be brought back"[3]. The sociologist could do no more than "enlighten [society] about the value, the true significance of the needs it experiences"[4].

Perhaps it was because of the all-purpose relationship that he sought to establish between society and morality that Durkheim could suppose that this position followed inexorably from a sociological view of morality. To support it, he argued that the "reason" employed in making such evaluations was not individual and personal, but relied on "knowledge, as methodically elaborated as possible of ... social reality.

1. 1924a (1951 ed.), p.54: tr.1953b, p.38 (S.L.).
2. Ibid.
3. Ibid., p.38: tr. p.61 (S.L.).
4. 1907a (3,4,5), p.368. Cf.: "... the role of reflexion has always more or less consisted in helping contemporaries to become aware of themselves, their needs and their sentiments. The science of morality, as I understand it, is only a more methodical application of reflexion put to the service of the same end" (1924a (1951 ed.), p.93: tr. p.64 (S.L.)).

Morality depends on society, not on the individual"[1]. Instead of merely arguing that rational evaluation must be based on adequate knowledge[2] and that in any given situation certain possibilities of change can in the light of such knowledge be precluded[3], he concluded that scientific knowledge would show there to be only one possible path of development and that, consequently, no other could rationally be preferred[4].

Yet this arch-historicist and deterministic position does not adequately characterise Durkheim's thought, and even less his practice: he found a number of ways of avoiding its implications. In the first place, he argued that the nascent science of morality was not yet "in a condition to act as the sovereign guide of conduct"; in the meantime, one must make "reasoned evaluations" on as informed and scientific a basis as possible[5]. Secondly, he freely interpreted his position in such a way as to allow for the possibility of critical value judgments of a reformist, even radical character. He explicitly acknowledged two main possibilities. First, it could happen that, "under the influence of passing circumstances,

1. 1924a (1951 ed.), p.88: tr. p.81 (S.L.).
2. "in order to ratiocinate about morality, one must first know what it is, and ... to know what it is, one must observe it" (1907a (3,4,5), p.368).
3. "There can be no question of assigning ends to a society that are quite alien to it, of which it has no idea, and for which it feels no need" (ibid.).
4. "how can one choose between the diverse tendencies active [in a society], and decide which are well-founded (fondées) and which are not, except by taking as a guide-line the nature of that society?" (ibid.).
5. 1924a (1951 ed.), p.89: tr. 1953b, p.62.

certain principles that are even essential to the existing morality, should be for a time rejected into the unconscious and be, thenceforth, as though they did not exist"[1]. The sociologist could then, by contrasting their previous permanence with their present absence, cast "rational doubts" on the legitimacy of their denial; and he could further seek to show their relation to the "essential and ever-present conditions of our social organisation and our collective mentality"[2]. Secondly, new tendencies emerged out of the existing moral order and the "science des moeurs" enabled the sociologist to opt for those which were "in relation with changes that have occurred within the conditions of collective existence and required by those changes"[3]. It could therefore happen that "we judge it our duty to combat moral ideas that we know to be out of date and nothing more than survivals, and that the most effective way of doing this may appear to be the denial of these ideas, not only theoretically, but also in action"[4].

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1. Ibid., p.54; tr.p.38 (S.L.).
2. Ibid., pp.86, 87; tr. p.60 (S.L.). As an example, Durkheim cites society's losing sight of "the sacred rights of the individual" (ibid.). He appealed to this argument during the Dreyfus Affair (v. 1898c and supra., ch.2 (xiii)).
3. Ibid., p.87; tr. p.61 (S.L.).
4. Ibid., p.88; tr. p.61 (S.L.). This, in Durkheim's view was the historical role of Christ and Socrates: v. 1901c, p.88; tr. 1936b, p.71; 1924a (1951 ed.), pp.93-4; tr. pp.64-5; 1925a, pp.60-1, 103; tr. 1961a, pp.53, 90.

Of course, the crucial difficulty here was that of determining which tendencies and ideas were "essential" to a given social and cultural system and, again, which were "required" by changing conditions. The assumption that there were, in principle, unique and scientifically ascertainable answers to these questions never seems to have caused Durkheim any intellectual discomfort; and it never occurred to him to doubt that such answers were all that was ultimately needed for the solution of "practical" moral questions[1].

He therefore never felt the need to ask the question: how can we justify adhering (or not adhering) to the single morality allegedly determined and required by society? (other than to suggest that the answer lay in the desire to live).

A similar difficulty arises in the thought of Levy-Bruhl, who argued, in parallel fashion, that morality could become a "rational art", "comparable to mechanics and medicine", which would "use the knowledge of sociological and psychological laws for the amelioration of existing practices and institutions"[2]. There is a crucial passage in Levy-Bruhl's book, where he asks himself the question: "Ameliorate, you say? But what sense can this term have in a doctrine such as yours?"[3] His answer is simple:

> the sociologist can ascertain in current social reality such and such an "imperfection", without thereby having recourse to any principle independent of experience.

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1. But v. 1938a, 1, pp.197-8 for the hint of a doubt whether science will ever be able to banish controversy over legal, moral and political questions.
2. Lévy-Bruhl, 1903 (1953 ed.), p.256.
3. Ibid., p.272.

> It is enough for him to show that a given belief, for instance, or a given institution are out of date, obsolete and true impedimenta to social life. M. Durkheim has made this point perfectly clear[1].

It eventually turns out that "amelioration" for Levy-Bruhl involves the elimination of "useless, barbaric and injurious practices, and the inhuman sentiments associated with them"[2]. A humane, liberal ethic was assumed to be built into "current social reality".

Durkheim enthusiastically endorsed Levy-Bruhl's book and its arguments[3], and for a long time he offered an account very similar to Levy-Bruhl's of the application of the science of morality. In the Introduction a la Morale, however, the ground shifts slightly. The applied sciences, he argued,

> take [their] ends as given, assume that men attach value to them, and are solely concerned with the most suitable and effective techniques of attaining them. It is different with morality. Morality consists, above all, in proposing ends; it prescribes to man the goals he should pursue, and, in this respect, is distinct from the applied sciences properly so called.[4]

But he never drew from this the implication that the choice of ends itself requires rational justification.

In 1900 Durkheim reviewed an article about the relation between the science and practice of morality, which he criticised

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1. Ibid., p.273.
2. Ibid., p.291.
3. 1904a (5).
4. 1920a, p.65. He can be seen to be moving towards this position in the Sorbonne lectures (Appendix D(2)), where he argues that morality is more analogous to "therapeutics, hygiene and medicine", because these are related to "theoretical sciences that have the object of determining what is health: normal and pathological physiology".

in terms that can be applied precisely to his own ideas on this subject. The solution offered by the author to "the great difficulty of the problem" was, he wrote, "rather too summary";

> How should one establish the standard according to which these [reforms of the functioning of morality] will be carried out? Can one take the prevailing morality to fulfil this role? Yes, in general; but it is never all that it should be. It therefore must itself be reformed at certain points. But the author does not make clear how these points are to be identified and according to what standard the reforms are to be made. He is content to invoke the principle of adaptation to social needs. But which are normal needs and which are not, and when are the former at normal intensity?[1]

This was indeed the great difficulty of the problem. By assuming that the needs of society could ultimately be specified by scientific inquiry alone, and that adaptation to them required no further justification (other than the "desire to live"), Durkheim failed to confront it - and, therefore, to see the crucial role of evaluation within the structure of his own thought.

Application to Philosophy

Durkheim's attempt to use his account of morality to solve some fundamental questions of moral philosophy relied on the ambiguous relationship he posited between the "moral" and the "social".

In "Value Judgments and Judgments of Reality", he aimed "to show by a specific example how sociology can help to resolve

1. 1900a (7).

a problem of philosophy"[1]. The problem was no less than to offer an explanation of evaluation, to "understand how value judgments are possible"[2] (and by this he chiefly meant moral judgments). After dismissing various forms of utilitarianism (for failing to account for the content of actual, especially moral, judgments) and philosophical idealism and "the theological hypothesis" (for postulating trans-empirical ideals which themselves required explanation, and for failing to account for the diversity of moralities), Durkheim argued that it was "not enough to postulate a certain number of ideals; they must themselves be accounted for, by showing where they come from, how they relate to experience while transcending it, and the nature of their objectivity"[3]. By suggesting "society" as the solution, he was, without realising it, appealing to all the relations between society and morality distinguished above. Thus, value (and, in particular, moral) judgments are "transcendent" and "objective" with respect to an individual insofar as they are defined as "social" in ways (i) - (iv) (especially (v)). They are made "possible" by society insofar as a social context can be shown to be a pre-condition for morality ((iv)). Finally, they "come from" society and relate to "social" experience insofar as their content and adherence to them can be shown to be socially determined ((vi)).

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1. 1911b; repr. 1924a (1951 ed.), p.117; tr. 1953b, p.80.
2. Ibid.
3. Ibid.

Such arguments are of interest, but they do not amount to the solution of the philosophical problem of the nature of evaluation and the justification of moral judgments. Definitions (i) - (iv) are simply stipulative definitions of "moral", in themselves neither valid nor invalid. The argument relying on relation (v) (in both its forms) is plausible and interesting, but, at the most, it proves only what it claims to prove. As to the hypothesis of (vi), this is a fruitful basis for empirical inquiry, but not the solution to a philosophical problem.

As to the autonomy of morals, Durkheim added to the Kantian notion of obligation the idea of essentially social moral goals, according to definitions (i) - (iv). In relating the latter to the notion of "sacredness", he thereby (perhaps deliberately) failed clearly to distinguish morality from religion, but he hoped that he had distinguished it from other areas of judgment and activity (e.g., from "economic and industrial techniques, etc."[1]). Unfortunately, the arbitrariness and indiscriminateness of the definitions (and his failure to distinguish between them) renders his attempt to account for the autonomy of morals a good deal less than plausible. In any case, this could hardly be achieved by definitions alone. On the other hand, his analysis of the relations between moral rules, ideals and values and the

1. Ibid., p.104; tr. p.70.

hypothesis of their social determination ((vi)) remain useful, as a basis for empirical inquiry, as does his hypothesis that morality is sui generis, forming "a distinct sphere of social life"[1]. It would be of great interest to discover whether "this word 'moral', which is found in various forms in all languages, connotes phenomena that are distinct from all other human phenomena in virtue of definite and homogeneous characteristics".[2]

In seeking to account for the "dualism of human nature", Durkheim discussed a basic theme of philosophy and religion[3]. For many philosophers, man was essentially double, split as Pascal said between "angel and beast", betwen mind and body, reason and sensation; and in religious thought, the opposition of soul and body represented a particular case of that between the sacred and the profane. For Durkheim, this traditional theme expressed a real "constitutional duality"[4] within the individual "at the very heart of [his] inner life"[5], a "double existence ... the one purely individual and rooted in our organisms, the other social and nothing but an extension of society"[6]. In identifying the former with "sensations and

1. Ibid., p.105: tr. p.72 (S.L.).
2. 1920a, p.93. It is astonishing how little attention has been given to such questions in twentieth-century sociology and social anthropology.
3. V. 1914a: tr. 1960c, pp.325-340. Cf. 1913b.
4. Ibid., p.328.
5. Ibid.
6. Ibid., p.337. "The old formula homo duplex is therefore verified by the facts" (Ibid., p.328).

the sensory appetites" and the latter with "the intellectual and moral life"[1], he was in part relying on definitions (i) - (iv) (especially (iii)) of "moral", arguing that conceptual thought and moral activity "by definition (sic.) ... pursue impersonal ends".[2] Thus, "[m]orality begins with disinterest, with attachment to something other than ourselves", as opposed to the "sensory appetites" which were "necessarily egoistic"[3]. So far, this is simply to restate four different (and problematic) definitions of morality. However, Durkheim's account of the duality of human nature can also be read as the assertion in a bold form of the empirical hypothesis (vi) concerning the (unique) social determination of moral beliefs and behaviour (as well as of concepts and categories).

Durkheim deepened and extended that hypothesis, towards the end of his life, in a way that is sharply reminiscent of the thought of the later Freud[4]. He argued that the "painful character of the dualism of human nature is explained by this hypothesis"[5], that there is in man a permanent tension between the demands of social life and those of his individual, organic nature, a tension which will increase with the advance of civilisation: society's

> requirements are quite different from those of our nature as individuals ... Therefore, society cannot be formed or maintained without our being required to make perpetual and costly sacrifices ... We must ... do

1. Ibid., p.338.
2. Ibid., p.327.
3. Ibid.
4. Cf., esp., Civilisation and its Discontents (London and New York, 1930). There is no evidence that Durkheim knew of Freud's work.
5. 1960c, p.338.

violence to certain of our strongest inclinations. Therefore, since the role of the social being in our single selves will grow ever more important as history moves ahead, it is wholly improbable that there will ever be an era in which man is required to resist himself to a lesser degree, an era in which he can live a life that is easier and less full of tension. To the contrary, all evidence compels us to expect our effort in the struggle between the two beings within us to increase with the growth of civilisation[1].

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1. Ibid., pp.338-9.

(v) The Sociology of Knowledge

Durkheim's conception of human nature as dual involved, as we have seen, two parallel oppositions: between sensory appetites and moral rules, and between sensations and concepts. The Kantian nature of this conception is unmistakable and corresponded to the predominant philosophical ideas of the time, which he had absorbed, first through the major formative influence of Renouvier[1], and later from the more specifically epistemological thinking of Hamelin[2]. However, in epistemology as in ethics, he found the Kantian and Neo-Kantian solutions unsatisfactory because question-begging. If humean empiricism could not account for the function of classification and "what philosophers since Aristotle have called the categories of the understanding: ideas of time, space, class, number, cause, substance, personality, etc."[3],

1. V. supra., ch.1(ii). As Bougle observed, "Kantianism, through the intermediary of Renouvier, was as if reawakened in France after 1870", and a kind of idealist rationalism, combining the influences of Kant and Descartes, prevailed, in various forms, between 1880 and 1920 (Bougle, 1938, pp.53, 54).
2. V. esp. Essai sur les Elements Principaux de la Representation (Paris, 1907).
3. 1912a, pp.12-13; tr. 1915d, p.9. Following Hamelin (op.cit.) Durkheim did not accept the Kantian distinction between the forms of intuition (Anschauungen) and the categories; he called all these ideas "categories", arguing that they played the same role in intellectual life. In particular, he accepted Hamelin's argument (op.cit., pp.75ff) that space was not, as Kant thought, indeterminate and homogeneous but was "divided and differentiated" (1912a, p.16; tr.p.11).

Kantian apriorism, while recognising the mind's power to organise the data of immediate experience, could not explain it, for "it is no explanation to say that it is inherent in the nature of the human intellect"[1]. Classical empiricism sought to dissolve reason into individual experience; apriorism placed it outside nature and science. The solution lay in restating the old epistemological questions in sociological terms. The "genesis, and consequently the functioning, of logical operations"[2] could then be related to social conditions and the categories could be considered as "essentially collective representations", which "depend upon the way in which [the group] is founded and organised, upon its morphology, upon its religious, moral and economic institutions, etc."[3]. A "sociological theory of knowledge" could, Durkheim believed, unite the opposing advantages of the two rival philosophical theories: it "leaves the reason its specific power, but it accounts for it and does so without leaving the world of observable phenomena".[4]

In fact, Durkheim's sociology of knowledge[5] advanced six

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1. Ibid., p.20: tr. p.14. Moreover, postulating a transcendent divine reason (as Hamelin did: v. op.cit., 2nd ed., 1925, p.348) was not only unscientific; it failed to account for the "incessant variability" of the categories in different places and times (ibid., p.21: tr. p.15).
2. 1903a(i), p.72: tr. 1963b, p.88.
3. 1912a, p.22: tr. 1915d, pp.15-16.
4. Ibid., p.27: tr. p.19.
5. This is to be found in 1903a(i): tr. 1963b, and 1912a, pp.12-28, 203-22, 290-2, 336-42, 386-90, 459-64, 508-28, 616-35: tr. 1915d, pp.9-20, 141-56, 203-4, 234-9, 269-72, 321-5, 355-69, 431-45. Cf. also 1910a(ii)(1) and (iii)(2), and 1913a(ii)(6) and (7). For discussions, v. Gehlke, 1915, Schaub, 1920, Brunschvicg, 1922, Sorokin, 1928, Benoit-Smullyan, 1937 and 1948, Parsons, 1937, Worsley, 1956 and Needham, 1963. Cf. also infra., ch. 3(viii).

different claims which he did not constantly and clearly distinguish one from another. Insofar as he did distinguish them, he nonetheless assumed, mistakenly, that they were logically related, and that arguments and evidence in favour of one therefore lent support to others.

The first was the claim that "concepts are collective representations"[1]. In part, this can be seen as equivalent to the simple but fertile idea, rediscovered half a century later by Wittgenstein, that concepts operate within forms of social life, according to rules. At the very least, this idea suggests that concepts are to be observed in use and as part of a wider system, but, at the philosophical level, it can easily be interpreted as leading to conventionalism and extreme relativism[2]. Durkheim met this problem by arguing that, although concepts, including the categories ("the pre-eminent concepts, which have a preponderating part in our knowledge"[3]), are imposed by social pressure on individuals, so that their authority is "the very authority of society"[4]; although "each civilisation has its organised system of concepts which

1. 1912a, p.621; tr. 1915d, p.435. V. esp. ibid., pp.616-27; tr. pp.431-9. Cf 1955a, pp 203-5
2. Cf. the use made of Wittgenstein by P. Winch in The Idea of a Social Science (London, 1958) and "Understanding a Primitive Society", American Philosophical Quarterly, 1 (1964), pp.307-24. For a critique of Winch's arguments, v. the author's "Some Problems about Rationality", EJS, 8 (1967), pp.247-64.
3. 1912a, p.628; tr. 1915d, p.440.
4. Ibid., p.24; tr. p.17. It is "a special sort of moral necessity which is to the intellectual life what moral obligation is to the will" (ibid., p.25; tr.p.18).

~~which~~ characterises it"[1]; and although even the "methods of scientific thought" should be seen as "veritable social institutions"[2] - nonetheless, the validity of the categories and of science remained intact. Two somewhat different arguments for this conclusion can be found in his work. The first is a rather metaphysical appeal to the unity of nature:

> The social realm is a natural realm, which differs from the others only by its greater complexity. Now it is impossible that nature should differ radically from itself, in the one case and the other, in regard to its most essential features. The fundamental relations that exist between things - just that which it is the function of the categories to express - cannot be essentially dissimilar in the different realms ... If a sort of artificiality enters into them from the mere fact that they are constructed concepts, it is an artificiality which follows nature very closely and which is constantly approaching it ever more closely[3].

The second argument is an attempt to reconcile the social determination of thought with non-context-dependent criteria of rationality and truth:

> If logical thought tends to rid itself more and more of the subjective and personal elements which still encumber it at its origin, it is ... because social life of a new sort is developing. It is this inter-

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1. Ibid., p.622; tr. p.435.
2. 1903a(i), p.2; tr. 1963b, p.3. These were "the work of tradition and are imposed on the worker with an authority comparable to that with which the rules of law and morality are invested. They are veritable institutions concerning thought, just as legal and political institutions are obligatory methods of action". (1910a(iii)(2), p.44).
3. 1912a, pp.25-6; tr. 1915d, pp.19-19 (S.L.). As illustrations, Durkheim cites, with respect to time, the "rhythm of social life" and "another in the life of the individual, and more generally in that of the universe"; likewise, there are natural classes and species, as well as human groups (ibid. fn.). Cf. 1910a(iii)(2), p.45, where he describes society as "the highest form of nature", adding that "it is nature as a whole which becomes conscious of itself to the highest degree in and through society".

> national life which has already resulted in universalising religious beliefs. As it extends, the collective horizon enlarges; the society ceases to appear as the only whole, to become part of a much vaster one, with indeterminate frontiers capable of advancing indefinitely. Consequently things can no longer be contained in the social moulds according to which they were primitively classified; they demand to be organised according to principles which are their own and, therefore, logical organisation becomes differentiated from social organisation and becomes autonomous[1].

On the other hand, Durkheim came to oppose Levy-Bruhl's extreme antithesis of the pre-logical and mystical character of primitive and religious mentality to the rational procedures of modern thought[2]; they were but "two moments of a single evolution"[3]. Not only, Durkheim argued, were the categories "elaborated in the very womb of religion"[4], but

> while the primitive is inclined to confusions, he is equally led to make sharp oppositions and often applies the principle of contradiction in an extreme fashion. Conversely, the law of participation is not peculiar to him: our ideas, today as formerly, participate in one another. This is the very condition of all logical thought. The difference lies above all in the way in which those participations are established[5].

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1. Ibid., pp.634-5: tr. p.445 (S.L.). Cf. "The concept which was first held as true because it was collective tends to be no longer collective except on condition of being held as true; we demand its credentials of it before according it our confidence" (ibid., p.624): tr. p.437). But Worsley is right to say of the Elementary Forms that "the distinction between objectivity in the sense of social authority or consensus, and objectivity as correspondence with nature counts for little in the total argument" (Worsley, 1956, p.50).
2. v. Lévy-Bruhl, 1910 and also 1922, 1927, 1931, 1935 and 1938 (but cf. Lévy-Bruhl, 1949 where Levy-Bruhl retracts, moving closer to Durkheim's view). In Primitive Classification, Durkheim appears nearer to Lévy-Bruhl's conception of the "pre-logical" and the initial confusion of the primitive mind (v. 1903a(i), pp.2-5: tr. 1963b, pp.4-7).
3. 1913a(ii)(6,7), p.35.
4. Ibid.
5. Ibid., p.37. Lévy-Bruhl's "law of participation" is as follows: "In the collective representations of primitive mentality, objects, beings, phenomena can, in a way that is

contd. over.

Thus, the "explanations of contemporary science are surer of being objective because they are more methodical and rely on more rigorously controlled observations, but they do not differ in nature from those which satisfy primitive thought"[1]. He was to tackle this basic issue of the relation between the sociology of knowledge and the justification of canons of validity and truth in one of his last lecture-courses, on Pragmatism and Sociology, which will be considered below[2].

Durkheim's first claim, then, was simply the heuristic idea that concepts, including the categories, are collective representations, that (as opposed to sensations and images) they are "common and communicable", that they are the means by which "minds communicate"[3]. He drew from this idea the invalid inference that there was a causal relation between the social order and the conceptual order[4]. This constitutes his second claim. It is, however, ambiguous, since Durkheim gave different meanings to "society". Insofar as this is defined in cultural terms as the conscience collective, con-

incomprehensible to us, be at once both themselves and something other than themselves. In a manner that is no less incomprehensible, they emit and receive forces, virtues, qualities, mystical influences which are felt outside them, while remaining within them" (Levy-Bruhl, 1910, p.77). Cf. 1912a, 336-42: tr. 1915d, pp.234-9.

1. 1912a, pp.340-1: tr. p.233.
2. In ch. 3(vii).
3. 1913a(ii)(6,7), p.36.
4. "Now a representation cannot be common to all the men of a single group unless it has been elaborated in common by them, unless it is the creation (l'oeuvre) of the community" (ibid.).

sisting of ideas or representations held in common[1], it adds little to the first claim. But insofar as it refers to structural, or morphological, and institutional factors, it offers the basis for a number of bold and ambitious empirical hypotheses. Thus the central argument of Primitive Classification is that men "classified things because they were divided by clans"[2]; it was "because men were organised that they have been able to organise things, for in classifying these latter, they limited themselves to giving them places in the groups they formed themselves"[3]. The categories, Durkheim argued, were "the product of social factors"[4]. There were "societies in Australia and North America where space is conceived in the form of an immense circle, because the camp has a circular form ... There are as many regions distinguished as there are clans in the tribe, and it is the place occupied by the clans inside the encampment which has determined the orientation of these regions"[5]. Likewise the divisions "in relation to which all things are temporally located, are taken from social life"[6] and the category of causality "depends upon social causes"[7], arising out of "collective force objectified and projected into things", together with the practice of imitative rites[8]. Moreover, "if the totality of things is

1. V. esp. 1911b; repr. 1924a; tr.1953b.
2. 1903a(i), p.67; tr. 1963b, p.82 (my emphasis).
3. 1912a, p.206; tr. 1915d, p.145.
4. Ibid.
5. Ibid., p.16; tr. 1915d, pp.11-12 (my emphases).
6. Ibid., pp.14-15; tr. p.10.
7. Ibid., p.519; tr. p.363.
8. Ibid. et seq.

conceived as a single system, this is because society itself is seen in the same way. It is a whole, or rather it is the unique whole to which everything is related"[1]. In general, "logical life has its first source in society"[2].

Durkheim saw this second claim - that specific classifications and conceptual orderings were caused by specific forms of society - as equivalent to a third: that these classifications and orderings were "modelled" on, or (more precisely) structurally similar to, specific forms of society. Thus, in Primitive Classification it is claimed that among the Australian tribes "the classification of things reproduces [the] classification of men"[3], and that their classificatory systems, and those of the Zuñi and the Sioux,

> merely express under different aspects the very societies within which they were elaborated; one was modelled on the jural and religious organisation of the tribe, the other on its morphological organisation .... In one case, the framework was furnished by the clan itself, in the other by the material mark made on the ground by the clan.[4]

Durkheim took Primitive Classification to show that "these classifications were modelled on the closest and most fundamental form of social organisation"[5]. He believed he had shown there and in the Elementary Forms that the categories

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1. 1903a(i), p.68: tr. 1963b, p.83 (first emphasis mine).
2. 1913a(ii)(6,7), p.36.
3. 1903a(i), p.8: tr. 1963b, p.11.
4. Ibid., p.55: tr. p.66. The next sentence reads "But both forms are of social origin".
5. Ibid., p.67: tr. p.82.

themselves were "made in the image of social phenomena"[1]:

> Cosmic space was primitively constructed on the model of social space, that is, on the territory occupied by society and as society conceives it; time expresses the rhythm of collective life; the notion of class was at first no more than another aspect of the notion of a human group; collective force and its power over men's minds served as prototypes for the notion of force and causality, etc.[2]

The very "unity of these first logical systems merely reproduces the unity of the society"[3]. The classifications and categories observed in primitive societies took "from society the models upon which they have been constructed"[4].

Distinct from this claim is a fourth: that the categories are <u>functional</u> to society. Durkheim argued that if

> men did not agree upon these essential ideas at every moment, if they did not have the same conception of time, space, cause, number, etc., all contact between their minds would be impossible, and with that, all life together.[5]

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1. 1913a(ii)(6,7), p.36. Cf.: "... the social organisation has been a model for the spatial organization ..."; "the divisions into days, weeks, months, years, etc., correspond to the periodical recurrence of rites, feasts and public ceremonies"; "[these systematic classifications] have taken the forms of society as their framework"; "the idea of power... does not come without those of ascendancy, mastership and domination, and their corollaries, dependence and subordination; now the relations expressed by all these ideas are eminently social" (1912a, pp.17, 15, 206, 522; tr. 1915d, pp.12, 10, 145, 366).
2. 1913a(ii)(6,7), p.36.
3. 1912a, p.206; tr. p.145.
4. <u>Ibid</u>., p.628; tr. p.440.
5. <u>Ibid</u>., pp.23-4; tr. p.17.

A minimum of logical conformity was as indispensable as a minimum of moral conformity and society used "all its authority" to ensure it; "logical discipline" was a "special aspect of social discipline"[1]. (This explained "the exceptional authority which is inherent in the reason and which makes us accept its suggestions with confidence")[2]. Thus, for example, the calendar not only expresses the rhythm of collective activities; "its function is to assure their regularity"[3]. Likewise, the category of causality was "made to fulfil the exigencies of life in common"[4]. In general, society was

> possible only when the individuals and things which compose it are divided into certain groups, that is to say, classified, and when these groups are classified in relation to each other ... To avoid all collisions, it is necessary that ... space in general be divided, differentiated, arranged and that these divisions and arrangements be known to everybody. On the other hand, every summons to a celebration, a hunt or a military expedition implies fixed and established dates, and consequently that a common time is agreed upon, which everybody conceives in the same fashion. Finally, the co-operation of many persons with the same end in view is possible only when they are in agreement as to the relation which exists between this end and the means of attaining it, that is to say, when the same causal relation is admitted by all the co-operators in the enterprise.[5]

The fifth claim which Durkheim can be seen to have advanced is that belief-systems, and in particular primitive

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1. Ibid., p.24; tr. p.17.
2. Ibid.
3. Ibid., p.15; tr. p.11.
4. Ibid., p.526; tr. p.368.
5. Ibid., pp.443-4; tr. pp.632-3.

religions, can in part be seen as cosmologies; indeed, he asserted that there "is no religion that is not a cosmology at the same time that it is a speculation upon divine things".[1] Systems of primitive classification aimed "to make intelligible the relations which exist between things ... to connect ideas, to unify knowledge" and could be said to constitute "a first philosophy of nature"[2]. Thus, totemism could be shown to "offer us a conception of the universe"[3] and it was through primitive religion "that a first explanation of the world has been made possible"[4]; indeed, the "great service that the religions have rendered to thought is that they have constructed a first representation of what [the] intelligible relationships between things might be"[5]. Accordingly, the Mount Gambier tribe divided the entire world into ten classes, each with its special totem, which, when brought together, "make up a complete and systematic representation of the world; and this representation is religious, for religious notions furnish its basis ... like the Greek religion, it puts the divine everywhere"[6]. Again "the wakan plays the same role in the world, as the Sioux conceives it, as the one played by the forces with which science explains the diverse phenomena of nature"[7]; and when

> the Iroquois says that the life of all nature is the product of the conflicts aroused between the unequally intense orenda of the different beings, he only expresses, in his own language, this modern idea

1. Ibid., p.9; tr. p.12.
2. 1903a(i), p.66; tr. 1963b, p.81.
3. 1912a, p.203; tr. 1915d, p.141. Cf. ibid., book II, ch.III, passim.
4. Ibid., p.339; tr. p.237 (S.L.).
5. Ibid., p.340; tr. p.237 (S.L.).
6. Ibid., pp.219-20; tr. p.154.
7. Ibid., p.290; tr.p.203.

> that the world is a system of forces limiting and containing each other and making an equilibrium.[1]

As to the beliefs underlying imitative rites and magical techniques, they constituted "a concrete statement of the law of causality", for a "full conception of the causal relation is implied in the power thus attributed to the like to produce the like"[2].

Finally, a sixth claim can be distinguished, which is evolutionary in character: that "the fundamental notions of science are of a religious origin"[3]. Primitive Classification was about "the genesis of the classificatory function in general" and sought to "throw some light on the origins of the logical procedure which is the basis of scientific classifications"[4]. Durkheim claimed to have shown in Elementary Forms that

> the most essential notions of the human mind, notions of time, of space, of genus and species, of force and causality, of personality, those, in a word, which the philosophers have labelled categories and which dominate the whole of logical thought, have been elaborated in the very womb of religion. It is from religion that science has taken them.[5]

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1. Ibid., p.291: tr. pp.203-4.
2. Ibid., p.518: tr. p.363.
3. Ibid., p.615: tr. p.431. Science, he maintained, "puts to work the notions which dominate all thought and in which the whole of civilisation is, so to speak, condensed: these are the categories" (1910a(iii)(2), p.44).
4. 1903a(i), pp.66-7: tr.1953b, p.82. He argued that "the history of scientific classification is, in the last analysis, the history of the stages by which [the] element of social affectivity has progressively weakened, leaving more and more room for the reflective thought of individuals" (ibid., p.72: tr. p.88).
5. 1913a(ii)(6,7), pp.35-6.

He sought to catch these ideas "at their very birth"[1] and to show how "[r]eligion opened up the way for [science and philosophy]"[2] - thereby taking up in a new form the old Comtean theme of mankind's evolution from theology through metaphysics to science. Thus for example, "the idea of force is of religious origin. It is from religion that it has been borrowed, first by philosophy, then by the sciences"[3]; and the "idea of the personality" derived from "the spiritual principle serving as the soul of the group" which gradually became individualised[4]. Conceptual thought was, in general, "rich in all the experience and all the science which the collectivity has accumulated in the course of centuries"[5].

The empirical basis of Durkheim's sociology of knowledge must be distinguished, as far as possible, from its theoretical significance. The former is certainly open to a number of serious objections[6]. In the first place, some crucial evidence appears to have been faulty; serious doubt has been cast on the accuracy of Cushing's account of the Zuñi clans and, in consequence, on the postulated correspondence between their classificatory system and their social organisation, as well as on the hypothesis that they were or ever

1. 1912a, p.28; tr. 1915d, p.20.
2. Ibid., p.340; tr. p.237.
3. Ibid., p.292; tr. p.204.
4. Ibid., pp.386-7; tr. p.270.
5. 1913a(ii)(6,7), p.36.
6. For fuller discussions of these, v. Needham, 1963, Cazeneuve, 1958 and Worsley, 1956.

had been totemic in the Durkheimian, or any other, sense.[1] Secondly, Primitive Classification failed in many cases to establish the postulated correspondence between form of classification and form of society[2]. Thirdly, Durkheim and Mauss failed rigorously to test the evidence by concomitant variation and constantly tried to explain away counter-instances and deviant cases (as conjectural late developments or in various other ways). Fourthly, they wrongly assumed that, at any given stage, each society has only one system of classification and set of categories, and they did not distinguish (except very cursorily) between totemic and other kinds of classification. Fifthly, they constantly postulated, indeed took as established, evolutionary sequences for which there was and is no evidence, in order to harmonise with their preconceptions about the evolution of totemism from moieties to clans to sub-clans, and from classification by clans to that by regions, as well as from totemism itself to "later" belief-systems. Finally, they never considered the diverse ways in which totems become attached to groups, nor the diversity of those groups (i.e.: other than clans), nor other available sociological explanations of classification (e.g. on the basis of use and interest, and as a result of men's interaction with their natural environment[3]).

1. V. Cazeneuve, 1958 and Kroeber, A.L., Zuñi Kin and Clan (New York, 1917).
2. V. Needham, 1963.
3. V. Worsley, 1956 for a discussion of such alternative interpretations.

In addition to these criticisms of Durkheim's evidence and his interpretation of it, a more general point must be made with respect to the vaunting ambition of his sociology of knowledge, before considering its theoretical significance. It is one thing to investigate the relationships between forms of thought and forms of society; it is another to seek to account for the fundamental conditions to which all thought is subject. Kant wrote that there "can be no doubt that all our knowledge begins with experience ... but it does not follow that it all arises out of experience"[1]. Durkheim argued otherwise; he believed that sociology made it "no longer necessary to place [man's distinctive attributes] beyond experience"[2]. In arguing thus, he went too far, since the operations of the mind and the laws of logic are not determined by, or given in, experience, even in social experience. No account of relations between features of a society and the ideas and beliefs of its members could ever explain the faculty, or ability, of the latter to think spatially and temporally, to classify material objects and to individuate persons, to think causally and, in general, to reason; nor could it ever show that the necessity, or indispensability, of doing all these things was simply an aspect of social authority. For, in the first place, the very relations

1. Critique of Pure Reason, tr. by N. Kemp Smith (New York, 1950), p.41.
2. 1912a, p.638; tr. 1915d, p.447 (S.L.).

established must always presuppose the prior existence of these very abilities; the aboriginal must have the concept of class in order even to recognise the classifications of his society, let alone extend them to the universe, and the putative Zuñi must likewise have the concept of space, and so on. In the second place, the very necessity of these conditions of thought makes the hypothesis of their empirical determination unstatable, since the hypothesis to be empirical must be falsifiable. We cannot conceive of the possibility of a situation in which individuals do <u>not</u> in general think by means of space, time, class, person, cause and according to the rules of logic, since this is what thinking <u>is</u>.[1]

Durkheim's failure to see this, and his consequent belief that sociology could solve the Kantian problem, by giving an empirical answer to a philosophical question, stemmed from his seeing the categories as concepts and concepts as collective representations. As Gehlke wrote, he saw the categories as "a content of mind rather than as a capacity of mind"[2]; he did not distinguish between the

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1. This is not to say that there are not specific, and specialised types of thinking which do without some of these categories (e.g. mathematical thinking) or which violate some of the laws of logic (e.g. mythical or mystical thinking), but these are only possible within the context of ordinary thinking.
2. Gehlke, 1915, p.53. Cf. Dennes, 1924, p.39, Sorokin, 1928, p.477, Benoit-Smullyan, 1937, ch.III, pt.iii and 1948 (1966) pp.240-1 and Needham, 1963, pp.xxvi-xxix. Durkheim does, in fact (inconsistently) grant that the individual, before he is socialised, is capable of distinguishing right from left, past from present, and that "this resembles that, this accompanies that" - i.e., that he already possesses the essential categories (v.1903a(i), p.5; tr. 1963b, p.7 and 1912a, p.206; tr. 1915d, p.145). He also speaks of "technological classifications .., closely linked to practical concerns", but does not relate them to those he considers or realise that they refute his sociological explanation of the categories (v. 1903a(i), p.66 fn.; tr.1963b, pp.81-2 fn.)

faculty of thinking spatially, temporally, causally, etc. and criteria for dividing space and time and identifying causes, or between the faculty of classification and specific classificatory criteria. It is as an attempt to throw light on these latter that the theoretical significance of his sociology of knowledge is best considered.

His first (heuristic) claim, whatever its philosophical importance, is a crucial first step in the sociology of knowledge, since it is only by seeing concepts as rule-governed elements within cultural systems that sociological questions can even be asked. The second (causal) claim is, however, extremely problematic. No convincing evidence is offered in Primitive Classifications or the Elementary Forms to show that particular morphological or organisational features of particular societies cause particular classificatory or conceptual systems; indeed, the evident lack of a correspondence in many of the cases cited is especially damaging to this claim. Moreover, Durkheim's only attempt to specify this postulated causal mechanism ("the forces ... which induced men to divide things as they did between the classes"[1]) is in terms of sentiments and affective values; yet the "sentiments which are the basis of domestic, social and other kinds of organisation" and "emotional value" are not sufficient to establish a causal

1. 1903a(i), p.69; tr. 1963b, pp.84-5.

connexion[1]. The fourth (functionalist) claim is, if interpreted generally, likewise open to objection: shared concepts are part of the very definition of society. On the other hand, the role played in particular societies by particular sets of concepts and classifications is a central area of sociological and anthropological inquiry[2]. Durkheim's sixth (evolutionist) claim is also of little use if interpreted generally, as a hypothesis about the intellectual evolution of mankind. On the other hand, the hypothesis that primitive and traditional religions contain the germs of scientific thinking is, in many ways, both challenging and plausible[3].

This leads one directly to Durkheim's fifth claim, that belief-systems, including primitive religions, should be treated as cosmologies. This claim has proved immensely fruitful, both within the Durkheimian tradition and outside it[4]; and Durkheim's own analyses in this connexion have continued

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1. Ibid., pp.69, 70; tr. pp.85, 86. As Needham has commented, "there is neither truth nor use in such an assertion as that space is differentially conceived 'because each region has its own affective value'" (Needham, 1963, p.xxiv).
2. Cf. much of the work of the Durkheimians, especially that of Mauss, Hubert and Hertz. V. esp. Hubert's "La Representation de Temps dans la Religion" in Mauss and Hubert, 1909.
3. Cf. Horton, R., "African Traditional Thought and Western Science", Africa, XXXVII (1967), pp.50-71 and 155-187; Goody, 1961; and Lukes, "Some Problems about Rationality", loc. cit.
4. Cf., e.g., Prof. E.E. Evans-Pritchard's Nuer Religion (Oxford, 1956), esp. pp.314-5 on the need to study "primitive philosophies".

to serve as a model for work in this area[1]. Perhaps their most theoretically significant aspect derives from the implications of his third (structuralist) claim: that there are structural correspondences between symbolic classification and social organisation[2], and quite generally between different orders of social facts.

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1. Marcel Granet wrote that the pages on China in Primitive Classification "mark a date in the history of sinological studies" (La Pensee Chinoise, Paris, 1934, p.29, fn.); though v. Needham, 1963, p.xxii.
2. As Needham has written, "in systems of prescriptive alliance [which are typical of Australia] there is such a concordance between the symbolic forms and social organisation that these two orders of facts may be regarded as aspects of one conceptual order, one mode of classification. This concordance need not be a formal correspondence, such as Durkheim and Mauss supposed, but may subsist in a structural sense, institutions of different forms being seen as based on the same mode of relation." (Needham, 1963, p.xxxvii).

(vi) The Sociology of Religion - II

Durkheim's sociology of religion was, as we have seen, by his own testimony indebted both to "Robertson Smith and his school" and to "the ethnographers of England and America"[1]. His debt to the former was multiple. To Smith himself it was both general and specific. He accepted Smith's sociological view of religion ("Religion ... is a relation of all the members of a community to the power that has the good of the community at heart"; there was "[s]olidarity of the gods and their worshippers as part of one organic society"[2]); his conception of its regulative and stimulative functions; his contrast between religion as within the communion of the church and magic as outside it and residual; even his association of religion and political structure[3]. More specifically, as we have seen, he accepted Smith's interpretation of clan totemism as the earliest known form of religion, involving the divinisation of the clan, and he also accepted (in part) his analysis of sacrifice as originally a sacramental meal creating social

1. V. supra, ch. 2(vii), pp.155-6.
2. Lectures on the Religion of the Semites (Edinburgh, 1889; 3rd ed. London, 1927), pp.55, 32. Cf.: "Religion did not exist for the saving of souls but for the preservation and welfare of society" (ibid.).
3. This was, of course, the central theme of Fustel de Coulanges' La Cite Antique, which, as well as being an early influence on Durkheim, may well have influenced Smith through his teacher J.F. McLennan. For Durkheim's application of the idea that religious ideas and organisation developed pari passu with social and political organisation, v. 1912a, pp.280-1, 608-9; tr. 1915d, pp. 196-7, 246-7.

bonds of the same nature as kinship ("commensality can be thought of (1) as confirming or even (2) as constituting kinship in a very real sense"[1]).

Of Robertson Smith and Frazer Durkheim wrote that they had "contributed, more than anyone, to giving the sense of the extreme complexity of religious facts, the deep-lying causes on which they depend, and the partly unconscious evolution from which they result"[2]. On the other hand, he sternly opposed Frazer's later theory of totemism as "a particular case of the belief in miraculous births", describing it as "the fruit of a sort of voltairianism whose presence is astonishing in the development of our science and in M. Frazer himself"[3]. He adopted the same critical attitude to the explanations of the "English school of religious anthropology" as a whole, the virtues and defects of which he characterised as follows, taking Crawley's The Mystic Rose as exhibiting them in an extreme form:

> One certainly finds interesting insights there ... But, to a rare degree, the method lacks a critical and discriminating character. In order to prove an assertion, the author does not hesitate to gather

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1. Smith, op. cit., p.274. Durkheim, however, maintained that the Australian evidence disproved Smith's thesis that "the idea of oblation was foreign to the sacrificial institution and later upset its natural arrangement. The thesis of Smith must be revised on this point. Of course, the sacrifice is partly a communion; but it is also, and no less essentially, a gift and an act of renouncement." (1912a, p.490; tr. 1915d, p.343). Cf. Mauss and Hubert, 1899.
2. 1913a(ii)(11), p.95.
3. Ibid.

> together, without distinguishing between them, facts borrowed from the most heterogeneous societies. All the continents are scoured without order or discimination ... The impression emerging from this whirling confusion of facts is itself confused and indeterminate. At the same time, the extreme facility with which all evidence serving to confirm the theses advanced is accepted without prior examination detracts from the authority of the conclusions. Finally, the theories offered to account for the facts are of a simplism that is truly intrepid.[1]

The "anthropological school", of which Frazer was typical, "does not seek to locate religions in the social environments of which they are a part, and to differentiate them according to the different environments to which they are thus connected"[2]; rather,

> all those who pass as being not too far removed from the origins, and who are confusedly lumped together under the rather imprecise rubric of savages, are put on the same plane and consulted indifferently. Since from this point of view, facts have an interest only in proportion to their generality, they consider themselves obliged to collect as large a number as possible of them; the circle of comparison could not become too large.[3]

Durkheim, on the contrary, thought that the "essential thing is to assemble, not a large number of facts, but facts that are at once typical and well-studied. Rather than extending indefinitely the field of comparison (which compels one to rest content with poorly established data), one must limit

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1. 1903a(iii) (32), p.352.
2. He saw Frazer's Totemism and Exogamy, however, as marking a methodological advance, since it sought to link domestic and religious institutions to their geographical and social conditions. (v. 1912a, p.132: tr. 1915d, p.93; and 1913a(ii)(11)).
3. 1912a, pp.132-3: tr. 1915d, pp.93-4. Cf., e.g., a similar criticism of Hartland: 1913a(ii)(28), p.414.

it with discrimination and method"[1]. Here lay the overwhelming importance he and his colleagues attached to the English and American ethnographers - above all to Spencer and Gillen[2], Howitt, Matthews (and the German missionary Strehlow) in Australia; and also to Dall, Krause, Boas, Swanton, Hill Tout, Dorsey, Mindleff, Mrs. Stevenson and Cushing in America. The Australian material especially seemed to furnish the evidential basis for a systematic theory of religion relying on the comparative method applied to "so limited a number of societies that each of them can be studied with sufficient precision" and concentrating on "one clearly determined type"[3]. The Australian tribal societies, he wrote, all belonged to one common type. Also,

> Australian totemism is the variety for which our documents are the most complete[4]. Finally, that which we propose to study in this work is the most primitive and simple religion which it is possible to find. It is therefore natural that to discover it we address ourselves to societies as slightly evolved as possible, for it is evidently there that we have the greatest chance of finding it and studying it well.[5]

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1. 1901a(iii) (17), p.341.
2. In a review in the Annee, Mauss described Spencer and Gillen's The Native Tribes of Central Australia as "one of the most important books of ethnography and descriptive sociology of which we know"; the "picture they give us of social and religious organisation is one of the most complete with which anthropology has provided us" (A.S., 3 (1900), pp.205, 205-6).
3. 1912a, p.134; tr. 1915d, pp.95, 94.
4. Cf. the retrospective assessment of Evans-Pritchard: "Durkheim's choice of that region for his experiment was unfortunate, for the literature on its aboriginals was, by modern standards, poor and confused, and it still is" (Evans-Pritchard, 1965, p.58).
5. 1912a, p.135; tr. 1915d, pp.95-6.

The American evidence he used in a supplementary way, "to illuminate and lend precision to the Australian facts"[1]; for, though the American Indians' civilisation was "more advanced", the "essential lines of the social structure remain the same as those in Australia; it is always the organisation on a basis of clans". Here were not two different social types but "two varieties of a single type, which are still very close to each other" representing "two successive moments of a single evolution". Moreover, "certain aspects of their common social organisation" were more easily studied among the American Indians; totemism was "much more visible there"; their organisation had "a greater stability and more clearly defined contours"; and it was useful to trace the evolution of totemism, thereby revealing the historical place of the Australian variety. But it was the latter that constituted "the real and immediate object of our researches"[2].

It must be said that Durkheim's view of totemism looked more to the past than to the future. In common with Smith, the early Frazer and Jevons, as well as Wundt and Freud, he accepted the view, going back to McLennan, that totemism was the most primitive form of religion and was its evolutionary origin, or at least its earliest known form. His imprisonment in this view can be gauged by looking at his reaction to Goldenweiser's (forward-looking) critique of contemporary ideas

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1. 1913a (ii) (12), p.96.
2. 1912a, pp.136-8; tr. pp.96-7 (S.L.).

on the subject[1], which adduced evidence from different societies to show that none of the supposedly essential traits of totemism (exogamy, totemic taboos, the use of totemic emblems, religious attitudes and practices concerning the totem, belief in descent from the totem) were invariable features of totemic societies. Durkheim wrote that Goldenweiser had no difficulty in showing that none of these traits was truly universal; his method could lead to no other result, for he

> brings together forms of totemism that are quite heterogeneous, situated at moments of evolution far distant from one another; some pertain to primitives, others to societies where totemism is no longer any more than a shadow of itself. It is quite natural that no determinate institution can be found in an identical form in all instances; but that is not to say that none among them is closely linked to what is truly essential in totemism.[2]

Durkheim never doubted that totemism was a real social institution with distinctive characteristics, indeed the "most elementary religion we can possibly know"[3], which was, indeed, essentially constitutive of Australian social organisation ("the simplest which we know"[4]); thus, "[t]otemism is ... at the basis of the familial organisation, and, in consequence therefore, of the social organisation, since in Australia the

1. Goldenweiser, A.A., "Totemism, an Analytical Study", Journal of American Folk-lore, 23 (1910), pp.179-293. Cf. infra, Ch.3(viii). For the subsequent development of the study of totemism, v. Levi-Strauss, 1962a.
2. 1913a(ii) (13), p.101. This appeal to evolution to save a hypothesis was a way Durkheim often used to get out of tight corners, or rather to avoid seeing they were tight.
3. 1912a, p.239; tr. 1915d, p.166.
4. Ibid.; tr.p.167.

latter is merely another aspect of the former"[1]. Totemism was both the most primitive religion and constitutive of the most primitive social organisation.

Elementary Forms was based on a methodological assumption that was both backward-looking and forward-looking: the assumption that "all the essential elements of religious thought and life ought to be found, at least in germ, in the most primitive religions"[2]. This assumption represents both his residual evolutionism and his heuristic wisdom as a social anthropologist. This duality (and his failure to perceive it) is evident in the opening paragraph of the book, where he defines "primitive religion" as (1) that found in the simplest society[3] and (2) that which can be explained without reference to a previous religion; and it is also revealed in his claim to be "taking up again, but under new conditions, the old problem of the origin of religion", meaning by "origin" not "an absolute beginning, but the most simple social condition that is actually known or that beyond which we cannot go at present", so as to determine "the ever-present causes upon which the most essential forms of religious thought and practice depend"[4]. Obviously, it is the

1. 1913a(ii) (9), p.54.
2. 1912a, p.450; tr. p.315.
3. As many critics observed, he made the mistake of assuming that the simplest form of religion was to be found in the simplest form of society.
4. 1912a, pp.10-11; tr.p.8. For notably evolutionary passages in Elementary Forms, v.1912a, pp.4-5, 10-12, 123-4, 135-6, 238-9, 254-5, 272-3, 290, 422-3, 465; tr. pp.3-4, 8, 87-8, 95-6, 167-8, 178, 191, 203, 295, 326. On the other hand, Durkheim had absolutely no interest in the evolutionary speculation characteristic of the period; he dubbed it "subjective and arbitrary" (ibid., p.11; tr. p.8). Cf. his criticism of Lang in a review in the Annee: "his dominating preoccupation is to reconstitute the way in which men lived before they reached

contd. over

heuristic principle that is the more relevant to an understanding of Elementary Forms, which is better seen as a classic in social anthropology than as a remote exercise in religious history using the data of ethnography (though Durkheim saw it as both).

The heuristic principle was itself influenced by an analogy taken from the natural sciences. Durkheim argued that, while "an extended verification may add to the authority of a theory ... it is equally true that when a law has been proved by one well-done experiment, this proof is valid universally"[1] (as examples he instanced the physicist simplifying phenomena in his experiments[2], and - gesturing again towards evolutionism - the biologist "finding out the secret of life of even the most protoplasmic creature ..."[3]). This could be regarded as simply a "piece of special pleading which [is] little more than the ignoring of instances which contradict the so-called law"[4], but equally it can be seen as a prudent concentration on the relatively simple in order to discover "the most characteristic elements of the religious life"[5]. He clearly went too far in maintaining that at "the foundation of all systems of [religious] beliefs and of all cults there ought necessarily to be a certain

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the most rudimentary social state that we can currently know by observation. This, on the contrary, is a question we avoid as much as possible, since we judge it now insoluble and somewhat vain" (1907a(16), p.401).

1. 1912a, p.593; tr. p.415 (S.L.).
2. V. ibid., p.11; tr. p.8.
3. Ibid., pp.593-4; tr. p.415.
4. Evans-Pritchard, 1965, p.58.
5. 1912a, p.593; tr. p.415.

number of representations or conceptions and of ritual attitudes which, in spite of the diversity of forms which they have taken, have the same objective significance and fulfil the same functions everywhere"[1], but there was much plausibility in his claim that "[p]rimitive civilisations offer privileged cases, ... because they are simple cases"[2], that the constituent elements of primitive religion were especially visible and "[s]ince the facts there are simpler, the relations between them are more apparent"[3]. Durkheim hoped by a close study of totemism to develop hypotheses about "what religion is, of what elements it is made up, from what causes it results, and what functions it fulfils"[4], and Elementary Forms can be regarded as a somewhat dated, and in part factually inaccurate[5]

1. Ibid., p.6: tr. p.5.
2. Ibid., p.8: tr. p.6.
3. Ibid., p.9: tr. p.7.
4. Ibid., p.65: tr. p.47.
5. In particular, he made false distinctions between "the totemic clan" and the local group or clan, and depended too heavily on the central Australian material (Stanner, 1967, p.225). Again, his rigid distinction between sacred and profane is not borne out by the ethnographic evidence; the horde and the tribe are the corporate groups in Australia, not the clan; and there is little evidence that the Australian gods are syntheses of totems (v. Van Gennep, 1920 and Evans-Pritchard, 1965). But cf. the Australian ethnologist A.P. Elkin's comment that "ever since it has been my good fortune to get to understand native life in Australia, I have been amazed at the remarkable manner in which Durkheim was able to penetrate that life through the medium of Spencer and Gillen, Strehlow and a few others. Durkheim's position cannot be completely held, but his work is an inspiration". (Review of W.L. Warner, A Black Civilisation, Oceania, 1 (1937-8), p.119, cited in Levi-Strauss, 1945, p.521-2.).

study of aboriginal religion which constitutes a major contribution to the sociology of religion[1], in virtue both of its approach and of the generalisable hypotheses it advances.

That approach was based on the distinctive principle that "primitive religions ... relate to reality and express it"[2]. Instead of attributing them to "some sort of a deep-rooted error", the sociologist must "know how to go underneath the symbol to the reality which it represents and which gives it its true meaning"[3]. This rather vague formula, together with Durkheim's doctrine that "there are no religions which are false. All are true in their own fashion"[4], enabled him to reject both the notion that religions are "made up of a tissue of illusions"[5] and the explanations and justifications of their beliefs and practices offered by the faithful[6]; instead

1. For helpful discussions relating to it, v. Webb, 1916, Goldenweiser, 1917 and 1929, Van Gennep, 1920, Richard, 1923, Lowie, 1924 and 1937, Malinowski, 1925, Parsons, 1937 and 1960, Radcliffe-Brown, 1952, Goody, 1961, König, 1962, Levi-Strauss, 1962a, Evans-Pritchard, 1965 and Stanner, 1967; also v. the summary discussion of Durkheim's critics in Seger, 1957, and infra, ch. 3(viii). Apart from Elementary Forms, Durkheim lectured once in Paris on "Religion: Origins" in 1906-7 (v. Appendix A; also v. 1907f). His most relevant reviews were 1898a(iv) (i), 1900a(8) and (9), 1903a(iii) (33), 1904a (8) (9) and 1903d (cf. 1904d), 1906a (19), 1907a (16), 1910a (iii) (3) and 1913a (ii) (1i), (12), (13) and (31). Also v. the reviews in the "Religious Sociology" section of the Annee by Mauss and Hubert, passim.
2. 1912a, p.3; tr. 1915d, p.2 (S.L.).
3. Ibid.
4. Ibid.; tr. p.3.
5. Ibid., p.98; tr. p.69. Cf.: "Our entire study rests upon this postulate that the unanimous sentiment of the believers of all times cannot be purely illusory" (ibid., p.596; tr. p.417).
6. Cf. Durkheim's argument against William James that "from the fact that a 'religious experience', if we choose to call it this, does exist .... it does not follow that the reality which is its foundation conforms objectively to the idea which believers have of it" (ibid., p.597; tr. p.417).

he aimed to discover whence those "realities" expressed by religion "come and what has been able to make men represent them under this singular form which is peculiar to religious thought"[1]. His answer was, of course, "society". The aboriginal's error was

> merely in regard to the letter of the symbol by which this being is represented to the mind and the external appearance which the imagination has given it and not in regard to the fact of its existence. Behind these figures and metaphors, be they gross or refined, there is a concrete and living reality. Thus religion acquires a meaning and a reasonableness that the most intransigent rationalist cannot misunderstand. Its primary object is not to give men a representation of the physical world; for if that were its essential task, we could not understand how it has been able to survive, for, on this interpretation, it is scarcely more than a tissue of errors. Above all, it is a system of ideas by means of which the individuals represent to themselves the society of which they are members, and the obscure but intimate relations which they have with it. Such is its primary role; and though metaphorical and symbolic, this representation is not unfaithful.[2]

Similarly, the practices of the cult were not merely to be seen as ineffective gestures; while "their apparent function is to strengthen the bonds attaching the believer to his god, they at the same time really strengthen the bonds attaching the individual to the society of which he is a member, since the god is only a figurative expression of the society"[3]. In developing this approach, Durkheim did not rest content with the essentially non-explanatory notions of symbol and metaphor, nor with the elementary truth that religious worship is in part a communion. He derived from it a number of fertile hypotheses,

1. 1912a, p.98; tr. p.70. He always, of course, denied the frequently-made accusation that he himself made religion into a very special sort of illusion.
2. Ibid., pp.322-3; tr. p.225 (S.L.).
3. Ibid., p.323; tr. p.226.

most of which, in being generalised, have proved and continue to prove of central importance to the sociology (and, more particularly, the anthropology) of religion. These hypotheses can be seen as falling into four recognisable clusters. The first two concern society's relation to religion; the third, religion as an autonomous, independently operative reality; and the fourth, religion's consequences for society and the individual.

The first, most dated and least fruitful, set of hypotheses relates to the causal influence of certain social situations, those of "collective effervescence", in generating and recreating religious beliefs and sentiments. In advancing them, Durkheim was doubtless affected by the crop of studies in crowd psychology that had appeared at the end of the nineteenth century[1], by Scipio Sighele[2], Gustave Le Bon[3] and, indeed, Gabriel Tarde[4] among others, but there is no evidence that he was specifically influenced by any of them[5]; and, unlike them, he did not see crowd behaviour as pathological, undesirable and an argument against democracy. On the contrary, he argued that

1. V. Bramson, L., The Political Context of Sociology (New Jersey, 1961), pp.52-7.
2. V. Psychologie des Sectes (Paris, 1895) and La Foule Criminelle (Paris, 1901).
3. V. Psychologie des Foules (Paris, 1895).
4. V. L'Opinion et la Foule (Paris, 1901).
5. There is no basis for Mary Douglas's suggestion that Durkheim "seems to have freely drawn upon" Le Bon's theory of crowd psychology (Purity and Danger (London, 1966), p.20): Durkheim would have been the last person to regard Le Bon as a serious social scientist. The only suggestion of a possible influence relating to crowd psychology occurs in a footnote reference in Elementary Forms to Stoll's Suggestion und Hypnotismus in der Voelkerpsychologie (1912a, p.300 fn: tr. 1915d, p.210 fn). An early influence here may have been Espinas (v. 1902b, p.67: tr. 1933b, p.99).

it was "out of this effervescence itself that the religious idea seems to be born"[1], that "after a collective effervescence men believe themselves transported into an entirely different world from the one they have before their eyes"[2], that sacred beings, the creations of collective thought, "attain their greatest intensity at the moment when the men are assembled together and are in immediate relations with one another, when they all partake of the same idea and the same sentiment"[3]. Moreover, the "only way of renewing the collective representations which relate to sacred beings is to retemper them in the very source of the religious life, that is to say, in the assembled groups"[4]. The nearest he came to accounting for the mechanism supposedly involved here was to postulate a change in the "conditions of psychic activity", an enhancement, even creation, of energies, passions and sensations, and a resulting attribution to things with which men are in most direct contact of exceptional powers and virtues; men create an ideal world with "a sort of higher dignity" than the real, profane world[5]. Durkheim tried to use this type of explanation to account for the exuberance of religious imagery and activity[6], for the sentiments associated with mourning rites and the idea of the soul's survival[7], indeed for the sentiments aroused by all the

1. 1912a, p.313; tr. 1915d, pp.218-9.
2. Ibid., pp.323-4; tr. p.226.
3. Ibid., p.493; tr. p.345.
4. Ibid., p.494; tr. p.346.
5. Ibid., p.603; tr. p.422.
6. V. ibid., p.345; tr. p.381.
7. V. ibid., pp. 570-5; tr. pp.399-403.

various kinds of rites, as well as the mythological interpretations developed to account for them.[1]

Durkheim's second set of hypotheses concerns religion as a special kind of representation of social realities. There were two principal emphases here. On the one hand, he identified religion as a cognitive enterprise, a way of comprehending society and social relationships; on the other hand, he pointed to its expressive aspect, symbolising and dramatising social relationships.

He applied the former conception of religion both to totemic religion in general and to specific beliefs. In general, as we have seen, he saw religion as "a system of ideas with which the individuals represent to themselves the society of which they are members, and the obscure but intimate relations which they have with it"[2]; "the sacred principle", he maintained, "is nothing more or less than society hypostasised and transfigured"[3], and he argued that religion "reflects all [society's] aspects, even the most vulgar and the most repulsive. All is to be found there ..."[4] He claimed that "the totemic principle or god" was "nothing else than the clan itself, personified and represented by the imagination under the visible form of the animal or vegetable which serves as totem"[5]; and that "a society has all that is necessary to arouse the sensation

1. Like Smith, Durkheim thought that the object of myths was "to interpret existing rites" (ibid., p.183: tr. p.130).
2. Ibid., p.323: tr. p.225.
3. Ibid., p.495: tr. p.347 (s.L.).
4. Ibid., p.601: tr. p.421.
5. Ibid., pp.294-5: tr. p.206.

of the divine in minds, merely by the power that it has over them; for to its members it is what a god is to his worshippers", instilling "the sensation of a perpetual dependence", pursuing its own ends but demanding men's aid, making them into its "servitors" and submitting them to "every sort of inconvenience, privation and sacrifice, without which social life would be impossible", exercising "moral authority" and inspiring "a veritable respect"[1], but at the same time exercising a "stimulating influence" acting as a "perpetual sustenance for our moral nature", revealing "the other aspect of society which, while being imperative, appears at the same time to be good and benevolent"[2].

More specifically, Durkheim tried in this way to account for the antithesis of body and soul ("we are made up of two distinct parts, which are opposed to one another as the profane to the sacred, and we may say that in a certain sense there is divinity in us ... those representations whose flow constitutes our interior life are of two different species which are irreducible one into another. Some concern themselves with the external and material world; others with an ideal world to which we attribute a moral supremacy over the first"[3]). Similarly, he argued that the idea of the immortal soul was "useful in rendering intelligible the continuity of the collective life"[4], and that the individual totem and the protecting ancestor were to be interpreted as external projections of the

1. Ibid., pp.295-6; tr. pp.206-7 (S.L.).
2. Ibid., pp. 302, 303; tr. pp.211, 212 (S.L.).
3. Ibid., pp. 376, 377; tr. pp.262, 263 (S.L.).
4. Ibid., p. 385; tr. p.269.

individual soul, representing "an outside power, superior to us, which gives us our law and judges us, but which also aids us and sustains us"[1]. Again, the great god (arising out of tribal, especially initiation, ceremonies) was "the synthesis of all the totems and consequently the personification of the tribal unity"[2], and, in general, religious forces were "nothing else than objectified sentiments"[3], so that when "a society is going through circumstances which sadden, perplex or irritate it",

> men ... imagine that outside them there are evil beingswhose hostility, whether constitutional or temporary, can be appeased only by human suffering. These beings are nothing other than collective states objectified; they are society itself seen under one of its aspects. But we also know that the benevolent powers are constituted in the same way; they too result from the collective life and express it; they, too, represent the society, but seen from a very different attitude, to wit, at the moment when it confidently affirms itself and ardently presses on towards the realisation of the ends which it pursues.[4]

Insofar as Durkheim conceived religion in this way - as a mode of comprehending social realities - he regarded it as a sort of mythological sociology. He explained its rationale as follows:

> Since social pressure operates in mental ways, it could not fail to give men the idea that outside themselves there exist one or several powers, both moral and, at the same time, efficacious, upon which they depend. They must think of these powers, at least in part, as outside themselves, for these address them

1. Ibid., p.401; tr. p.280.
2. Ibid., p.421; tr. p.294.
3. Ibid., p.599; tr. p.419.
4. Ibid., p.590; tr. p.412.

> in a tone of command and sometimes even order them to do violence to their most natural inclinations. It is undoubtedly true that if they were able to see that these influences which they feel emanate from society, then the mythological system of interpretations would never be born. But social influence follows ways that are too circuitous and obscure, and employs psychical mechanisms that are too complex to allow the ordinary observer to see whence it comes. As long as scientific analysis has not come to explain it to them, men know well that they are acted upon, but they do not know by whom. So they must invent by themselves the idea of these powers with which they feel themselves in connection, and from that, we are able to catch a glimpse of the way by which they were led to represent them under forms that are really foreign to their nature and to transfigure them by thought.[1]

We have suggested that Durkheim also saw religion as a way of <u>expressing</u> social realities. Thus, "the totem is the flag of the clan"[2], constituting its "rallying sign", by which its members "mutually show one another that they are all members of the same moral community and they become conscious of the kinship uniting them"[3]. In a striking passage, Durkheim discussed the "recreative and aesthetic element" of religion, comparing the rites to "dramatic representations" and observing that the profusion of religious symbolism and hyper-activity at certain times was to be explained in terms of an "intense and tumultuous" mental energy of which a "surplus generally remains available which seeks to employ itself in ... works of art" and in "exuberant movements ... not easily subjected to carefully defined ends"; this recreative aspect

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1. <u>Ibid.</u>, p. 298-9; tr. p.209 (S.L.).
2. <u>Ibid.</u>, p. 315; tr. p.220.
3. <u>Ibid.</u>, p. 511; tr. p.358.

of religion contributed to "the feeling of comfort which the worshipper draws from the rite performed; for recreation is one of the forms of moral remaking which is the principal object of the positive rite"[1]. More generally, the whole of Book III of Elementary Forms can be seen as exploring the expressive nature of ritual. He himself later wrote that, for each of the types of rite there considered, he had examined "what are the collective states of mind expressed, maintained or restored" and thereby shown "how the details of ritual life are linked to what is most essential in social life"[2].

Durkheim's third set of hypotheses, which concern religion as an independently operative element in social life, presented religion as a system of communication of ideas and sentiments, and as a means of specifying and regulating social relationships. Thus, in the first place, symbolism was "necessary if society is to become conscious of itself" and "no less indispensable for assuring the continuation of this consciousness"[3]; indeed, "social life, in all its aspects and in every period of its history, is made possible only by a vast symbolism"[4]. The role of emblems was to perpetuate and recreate the "social sentiments"[5] aroused by the rites; moreover, the rites themselves enabled social communication to "become a real communion, that

1. Ibid., pp.542-7; tr. pp.379-82. Jane Harrison made much of this aspect of Durkheim's sociology of religion.
2. 1913a (ii) (12), p.98.
3. 1912a, p.331; tr. p.231.
4. Ibid.
5. Ibid., p.330; tr. p.231.

is to say, a fusion of all particular sentiments into one common sentiment"[1], and they not only expressed but served "to support the beliefs upon which they are founded"[2]. Hence, the cult in general was both "a system of signs by which the faith is outwardly translated" and "a collection of the means by which this is created and recreated periodically"[3]. In the second place, Durkheim, as we have seen, saw totemism as essentially constitutive of aboriginal social organisation; the totem identified the clan, whose members were bound by specific ties of kinship, so that "the collective totem is part of the civil status of each individual"[4]. Indeed, a

> clan is essentially a group of individuals who bear the same name and rally round the same sign. Take away the name and the sign which materialises it, and the clan is no longer representable. Since the group is possible only on this condition, both the institution of the emblem and the part it takes in the life of the group are thus explained.[5]

Finally, the fourth set of hypotheses advanced in Elementary Forms concerns religion's consequences; these hypotheses can be expressed macroscopically, in terms of its effects on society and social relationships, and microscopically, in terms of its effects on individuals. As Durkheim wrote in his own review of Elementary Forms, "religion thus

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1. Ibid., p.329; tr. p.230.
2. Ibid., p.511; tr. p.358. Cf.: "We must refrain from regarding these symbols as simple artifices, as sorts of labels attached to representations already created ... they are an integral part of them (ibid., p.331; tr. p.231 - S.L.).
3. Ibid., p.596; tr. p.417.
4. Ibid., pp.229-30; tr. p.161.
5. Ibid., p.334; tr. p.233 (S.L.).

understood appears as consisting above all of acts which have the object of perpetually making and remaking the soul (âme) of the collectivity and of individuals"[1].

Durkheim's central thesis concerning the practices of the cult was that their real function was to "strengthen the bonds attaching the individual to the society of which he is a member"[2]. Indeed, he generalised this thesis to the claim that "there is something eternal in religion which is destined to survive all the particular symbols in which religious thought has successively enveloped itself", so that

> [t]here can be no society which does not feel the need of upholding and reaffirming at regular intervals the collective sentiments and the collective ideas which make its unity and its personality. Now this moral remaking cannot be achieved except by the means of reunions, assemblies and meetings where the individuals, being closely united to one another, reaffirm in common their common sentiments ...[3]

It was in this way that he sought to resolve an ambiguity inherent in all his earlier writings: was religion in decline[4], or was it a permanent feature of all societies? His solution was to see religion in functional terms; what mattered with respect to ceremonies was "their object, the results which they produce, or the procedures employed to attain these results"[5]. What essential difference was there between "an assembly of

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1. 1913a (ii) (12), p.98.
2. 1912a, p.323: tr. p.226.
3. Ibid., pp.609-10: tr. p.427.
4. Cf. 1928a, p.329: tr. pp.225: "... as one advances in history, ... one observes consistently that religion withdraws more and more from public life". Cf. 1902b, p.143: tr. 1933b, p.169.
5. 1912a, p.610: tr. p.427 (s.l.). Cf. 1898c, p.10: "A religion is, in a sense, indispensable ..."

Christians celebrating the principal datee of the life of Christ, or of Jews remembering the exodus from Egypt or the promulgation of the Decalogue, and a reunion of citizens commemorating the promulgation of a new moral or legal system or some great event in the national life?"[1]

The analysis of the consequences of religion in Elementary Forms can be seen as operating both at the social and at the individual levels. At the social level, Durkheim examined, for example, the social functions of religious asceticism ("... society itself is possible only at this price"[2]), he elaborated on Smith's view of sacrifice as an "alimentary communion"[3], bringing about a "collective renovation"[4], and he characterised commemorative rites as serving to "revivify the most essential elements of the collective consciousness", so that "the group periodically renews the sentiment which it has of itself and of its unity"[5]. Similarly, he analysed mourning rites as strengthening social bonds and as consisting in a "commmion of minds" which "raises the social vitality"[6], and he regarded piacular rites in general as having a "stimulating power over the affective state of the group and individuals"; thus, for example, when, in punishing the neglect of a ritual act "the anger which it causes is affirmed ostensibly and

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1. Ibid.
2. Ibid., p.452; tr. p.316.
3. Ibid., p.481; tr. p.337.
4. Ibid., p.498; tr. p.349.
5. Ibid., p.536; tr. p.375.
6. Ibid., p.574; tr. p.401.

energetically", and is "acutely felt by all", the "moral unity of the group is not endangered"[1].

At the individual level, Durkheim wrote that the "Arunta who has been properly rubbed with his churinga feels himself stronger; he is stronger"[2], and argued that, in general, the

> believer who has communicated with his god is not merely a man who sees new truths of which the unbeliever is ignorant; he is a man who is stronger (un homme qui peut davantage). He feels within him more force, either to endure the trials of existence, or to conquer them. It is as though he were raised above the miseries of the world, because he is raised above his condition as a mere man; he believes that he is saved from evil, under whatever form he may conceive this evil. The first article in every creed is salvation by faith.[3]

In generalising thus, he appealed to the evidence of the general experience of believers: "whoever has really practised a religion knows very well that it is the cult which gives rise to these impressions of joy, of interior peace, of serenity, of enthusiasm which are, for the believer, an experimental proof of his beliefs"[4]. Among the Australian aboriginals, he argued, the "negative cult" was "found to exercise a positive influence of the highest importance over the moral and religious nature of the individual", so that, for example, in the initiation rites certain pains were inflicted on the neophyte "to modify his condition and to make him acquire the qualities characteristic of a man"[5]; and the belief was "not without foundation" that

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1. Ibid., pp.583-4: tr. p.408.
2. Ibid., p. 326: tr. p.228 (S.L.).
3. Ibid., p. 595: tr. p.416.
4. Ibid., p.596: tr. p.417.
5. Ibid., pp.441, 447: tr. pp.309, 313 (S.L.).

"suffering creates exceptional strength"[1]. Similarly, as a result of the sacrificial rites, men "are more confident because they feel themselves stronger; and they really are stronger, because forces which were languishing are now reawakened in the consciousness"[2]. As to the "imitative rites", which Frazer misleadingly thought of as sympathetic magic, their "moral efficacy" was real and itself "leads to the belief in [the rite's] physical efficacy, which is imaginary"; their "true justification ... does not lie in the apparent ends which they pursue, but rather in the invisible influence which they exercise over the mind and in the way in which they affect our level of consciousness"[3] Again, the commemorative rites "give [men] a feeling of strength and confidence: a man is surer of his faith when he sees to how distant a past it goes back and what great things it has inspired"[4]; while the recreative element of ritual activity "contributes to that feeling of comfort which the worshipper draws from the rite performed"[5] In general, Durkheim concluded, the object of the religious life, in all its forms, was

> to raise man above himself and to make him lead a life superior to that which he would lead if he followed only his spontaneous desires; beliefs express this life in representations; rites organise it and regulate its functioning.[6]

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1. Ibid., p.451; tr. p.315.
2. Ibid., p.494; tr. p.346.
3. Ibid., pp. 513, 514; tr. pp.359, 360 (S.L.).
4. Ibid., pp. 536-7; tr. p. 375.
5. Ibid., p.547; tr. p.382 (S.L.).
6. Ibid., p.592; tr. p.414.

Independently of the explanatory power of these hypotheses, there still remained a residual but philosophically fundamental problem contained in Durkheim's methodological assumption that all religions were "true in their own fashion", a problem of central significance for his sociology of knowledge. It was to the consideration of this problem that he turned in the year following the publication of Elementary Forms.

(vii) Pragmatism and Sociology

In 1913-1914 Durkheim offered a new course of lectures, on Pragmatism and Sociology. This course, of which we now fortunately have a published version derived from students' notes[1], appeared to Mauss as "the crowning achievement of Durkheim's philosophical work"[2]. Mauss recalled that

> [t]he goal he set himself was to make known to his students that form of philosophical thought called 'Pragmatism' which was at that time still a novelty. He had especially intended this course for his son André Durkheim, who was now his pupil. He wished to fill a gap in the education of these young men. He seized the opportunity, not only to acquaint them with this philosophy, but also to specify the relations, the agreements and the disagreements which he held to exist between this system and the philosophical truths which appeared to him already to have emerged from a nascent sociology. He situated himself and his philosophy in relation to H. Bergson, to William James, to J. Dewey, and the other American pragmatists. Not only did he summarize their doctrine forcefully and faithfully; he also sifted from it what, from his own point of view, appeared to be worth preserving. He took especial account of J. Dewey, for whom he had a very strong admiration. This course was of great value and made a great impression on a very large public, and especially (which is all Durkheim wanted) on a number of young and good minds.[3]

It was also, as Cuvillier has observed, "a complement and, so to speak, a continuation of the theory of knowledge outlined in The Elementary Forms of the Religious Life"[4], for it tackled the issues, raised by Pragmatism and crucial for the sociology of knowledge, of the criterion, or criteria, of truth and its alleged relativity.

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1. 1955a. Surprisingly, the only published discussion of this is Cuvillier, 1955 and 1958. It certainly deserves to be much more widely known, both for what it reveals about Durkheim's thought and for its pungent critique of ideas that are still, in various forms, current.
2. Mauss, 1925a, p.10.
3. Ibid.
4. Cuvillier, 1955, p.11. V. supra, ch. 5(v).

That relativity was proclaimed in its most extreme form by James, whose writings were beginning to find a ready public in France. The ground had been prepared by increasing attacks on neo-kantianism and positivism from various quarters but most effectively from the pen of Bergson. James's The Meaning of Truth had just appeared in French translation, two years after a translation of his Pragmatism, with a preface by Bergson[1]. Through these and other writings, Jamesian Pragmatism was attracting interest, seeming to offer a philosophical, even para-scientific, rationale for the anti-intellectualist currents of the time[2]. As Durkheim observed, it offered "almost the sole theory of truth currently existing"[3] and it shared with sociology "a sense of life and action"[4], but its conclusions were part of a general "assault upon Reason, a real armed struggle"[5]. Not surprisingly, Durkheim took up the struggle, seeing in "this form of irrationalism which Pragmatism represents"[6] a threat that was both cultural ("A total negation of Rationalism ... would subvert our entire national culture"[7])

1. A Pluralistic Universe was translated in 1910.
2. It was especially evident in the "modernist" neo-religious movement, of which Edouard Le Roy was a leading figure (v. 1955a, p.41 and infra., ch. 3(viii)). Bergson himself seems to have been relatively uninfluenced by Pragmatism.
3. 1955a, p.27; tr. 1960c, p.386 (s.L.).
4. Ibid. (s.L.).
5. Ibid. (s.L.). As Cuvillier notes, Durkheim was here probably referring to James's statement: "Against rationalism as a pretension and a method pragmatism is fully armed and militant" (Pragmatism, London, 1907, p.54, cited in ibid.).
6. Ibid., p.28; tr. p.386 (s.L.).
7. Ibid. (s.L.).

and philosophical. The whole philosophical tradition, with the exception of the Sophists, had been rationalist in the relevant sense that in all its forms, whether rationalist or empiricist, it recognised "the obligatory and necessary character of certain truths"[1]; Pragmatism broke with this tradition by affirming that "the mind remains free in the face of what is true"[2]. It thereby showed "the necessity for renovating traditional rationalism"[3], so as to "satisfy the demands of modern thought, and to take account of certain new points of view that have been introduced by contemporary science"[4]. The problem Durkheim set himself was "to find a formula that will preserve the essence of rationalism, while answering the justified criticisms made of it by Pragmatism"[5].

Durkheim concentrated on the ideas of James, together with the elaboration of them by the Oxford philosopher F.C.S.Schiller, their refinement and modification by Dewey, and a number of arguments gratefully borrowed by James from Bergson. These ideas and arguments posed the crucial question not yet directly confronted by Durkheim's sociology of knowledge: is truth itself variable, a function of human interests and

1. Ibid.: tr. p.387.
2. Ibid. Durkheim rightly distinguished this position from that of Nietzsche, for whom there was a "higher" truth, and from that of Peirce, whose ideas were distorted by James; as Durkheim justly observed, Peirce "does not repudiate rationalism", offering no theory of truth, indeed admitting its inescapability (ibid., pp.29-30: tr. pp.387-92). Cf. Perry's dictum that "the philosophical movement known as Pragmatism is largely the result of James's misunderstanding of Peirce" (cited in Gallie, W.B., Peirce and Pragmatism (London, 1952), q.v. ch. 1 and passim.).
3. 1955a, p.27: tr. p.366 (S.L.).
4. Ibid., p.29: tr. p.387 (S.L.).
5. Ibid. (S.L.). Cf. 1912a, p.26 fn.: tr. 1915d, p.19 fn. (S.L.) where Durkheim writes of the "rationalism which is immanent in a sociological theory of knowledge".

purposes? The virtue of Pragmatism, he thought, was to have raised the question, but its answer was unacceptable. From the Pragmatist point of view, "though the truth is certainly good, useful, 'satisfying', it is nonetheless without any characteristic of logical necessity. It is we who make it and we make it thus to satisfy our needs. We are therefore entirely <u>free</u> in the process of its construction"[1]. Yet, as he repeatedly argued, "Pragmatism offers no proof of the thesis it advances, the thesis that truth is amorphous"[2]. He maintained, on the contrary, that truth "is enriched, but it does not, properly speaking, change"[3]. The Pragmatist thesis "has a certain basis", resting on "certain facts which the Pragmatists sense only vaguely, but which must be given their true significance"[4] - by being explained sociologically. The "sociological point of view", he claimed, "has the advantage of making it possible to apply analysis even to so august a thing as truth", while retaining the "higher value" possessed by "truth, together with reason and morality"[5]. As he had written in <u>Elementary Forms</u>, to "attribute social origins to logical thought is not to debase it or diminish its value or reduce it to nothing

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1. 1955a, p.125.
2. <u>Ibid</u>., p.146: tr. 1960c, p.432.
3. <u>Ibid</u>., p.144: tr. p.431 (s.L.).
4. <u>Ibid</u>., p.146: tr. p.432 (s.L.).
5. <u>Ibid</u>., p.144: tr. p.430 (s.L.).

more than a system of artificial combinations"[1].

Broadly speaking, Durkheim, while rejecting virtually all the Pragmatists' specific arguments[2], found some value, first in their negative critique of "rationalism" and, second, in their positive objectives.

The Pragmatists, in criticising the "Dogmatic Conception of Truth", according to which "the truth is given, either in the world of sense-experience (as in Empiricism) or in an intelligible world - in an absolute thought or Reason (as in Rationalism)"[3], were really taking on virtually the whole of Western philosophy under the general heading of "rationalism". The Pragmatist objections to this basic conception of truth as "objective, transcendent, impersonal" were, as Durkheim carefully set them out, manifold but largely unconvincing: the Pragmatists held that truth on this view was useless and redundant, unknowable, extra-human, unchanging, incommensurate with human diversity, conducive to intolerance and based on a static conception of reality. Even more unacceptable to Durkheim was the critique of conceptual thought itself, borrowed by James from Bergson[4], according to which "the principle of

1. 1912a, p.634: tr. 1915d, p.444 (S.L.).
2. Apart from the Pragmatists' arguments against the correspondence theory of truth, Durkheim found equally unacceptable their identification of knowledge and existence, the instrumentalist conception of knowledge, their criterion of truth and James's empty appeal to "satisfaction", their confusion of logical and existential questions, James's psychological and individualist explanation of religion, which showed "much indulgence for mystical intuitions" (ibid., p.133) and the contradiction in Pragmatism between epiphenomenalism and idealism. In general, Pragmatism lacked "the fundamental characteristics one has the right to expect from a philosophical doctrine" (ibid., p.140: tr. p.427 - S.L.).
3. Ibid., p.46: tr. p.400 (S.L.).
4. In chapter VI of A Pluralistic Universe.

identity and the law of non-contradiction do not apply to reality"[1]; Durkheim rejected this hostile "attitude to classical Rationalism" shared by both thinkers, their "tendency to subordinate clear thought to the confused aspect of things" and their "form of argument, which puts conceptual thought in the dock"[2]. On the other hand, it was true that "classical Rationalism" conceived of truth as "a simple, quasi-divine thing which would derive all its value from itself", which was "placed above human life" and whose "role is to let itself be contemplated"; and it likewise put "reason outside scientific analysis"[3].

Accordingly, in terms of Pragmatism's positive objectives, there was value in James's ambition to "soften the truth", insofar as this meant removing from truth "this absolute and almost sacrosanct character" and making it "part of reality and life"[4]. It could then be seen as having

> antecedents and consequences. It poses problems: one is entitled to ask where it derives from, what function it serves, and so on. It becomes an object of science. Here lies the interest of the Pragmatist enterprise: one can discern in it an effort to <u>understand</u> truth and reason themselves, to restore to them their human interest, to make of them human things that derive from temporal causes and engender temporal consequences. To "soften" truth is to make it into something that can be analysed and explained. [5]

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1. 1955a, pp.79-80: tr. p.425.
2. <u>Ibid</u>., pp.80-1: tr. p.425 (S.L.).
3. <u>Ibid</u>., p.141: tr. p.428 (S.L.).
4. <u>Ibid</u>., pp.141-2: tr. p.429 (S.L.).
5. <u>Ibid</u>., p.142: tr. p.429 (S.L.).

Unfortunately, it was also to "free it ... from the discipline of logical thought"[1]. Thus, despite Pragmatism's commendable aim of seeking to "link thought to existence and to life[2]", despite its "very keen sense of the diversity of minds and of the variability of thought in time"[3] and despite its realisation that "thought, tied to action, in a sense creates reality itself"[4], nonetheless its arguments led it to impugn logic itself and to fail to account for the universally-held conception that "the truth ... imposes itself on us independently of the facts of sensibility and individual impulse"[5].

Durkheim argued that the facts which Pragmatism vaguely sensed but failed to explain were that there was no "unique system of categories and intellectual frameworks", that the "frameworks which had their raison d'etre in former civilisations do not have it today, though this in no way detracts from the value they had for their time"[6]. All that Pragmatism offered by way of explanation of this was an "ideal notion", an arbitrary definition without objective value, according to which the true is the useful[7]; yet, to establish this, Durkheim argued, one would need an independent criterion of truth. He proposed instead an inquiry into the characteristics of "recognised truths", examining "what makes them accepted", just

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1. Ibid., pp.140-1: tr. p.428.
2. Ibid., p.53: tr. p.407 (S.L.).
3. Ibid., p.67: tr. p.416 (S.L.); cf. ibid., p.59: tr. p.411.
4. Ibid., p.65: tr. p.415.
5. Ibid., p.143: tr. p.430 (S.L.).
6. Ibid., p.149: tr. p.434-5 (S.L.).
7. Ibid., p.150: tr. p.435.

as with morality one should begin with the study of moral facts[1]. Pragmatism, which was a kind of "logical utilitarianism", could explain neither the obligation to accept truths, nor their "factual necessitating power" (indeed, the "truth is often bitter"[2]) nor their impersonality; nor could it account for the speculative function of truth, the intellectual need to understand, the non-utilitarian desire for knowledge, evident not only in history, science and philosophy, but also in primitive mythology; indeed, it failed to see that "seeking truth for truth's sake is neither an isolated case, nor a pathological fact, nor a deviation of thought"[3] and that "the exigencies of knowledge are fundamentally different from those of practice"[4]. An inquiry such as Durkheim proposed would, he claimed, show that "a representation is considered to be true when it is believed to represent reality"[5], whether this belief was justified or not. This pointed to the need to know "the causes which have determined that men should believe that a representation conforms to reality"[6], and here "the representations that have been recognised as true in the course of history have an equal interest for us"[7]. It was necessary to examine pre-scientific and non-scientific truths, as well as scientific truths. In distinguishing between different sorts of truths,

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1. Ibid. Cf. 1906b: repr. 1924a: tr. 1953b.
2. Ibid., pp.154,155.
3. Ibid., p.164.
4. Ibid., p.167.
5. Ibid., p.172.
6. Ibid.
7. Ibid.

Durkheim was therefore led to distinguish between different sorts of correspondence between representation and reality.

At this point, Durkheim's argument took a characteristic turn. Complex questions were best approached through evidence from simpler societies. Beginning with mythological truths, he asked:

> Now, what led men to consider these mythological propositions or beliefs as true? Was it because they had confronted them with a given reality, with spirits, for example, or with divinities of whom they had a real experience? Not at all: the world of mythical beings is not a real world, and yet men have believed in it. Mythological ideas have not been regarded as true because founded on an objective reality. It is, on the contrary, our ideas, our beliefs which confer on the objects of thought their reality.[1]

From this he generalised to arguing that these ideas were collective representations, endowed "in virtue of their very origin, with a prestige thanks to which they have the power to impose themselves", a superior "psychological energy", in which the "very force of truth resides"[2]. Thus one rediscovered, transposed to another level, the double Pragmatist thesis that "1) the model and the copy are identical; 2) we are the co-authors of reality"[3]; the difference was that sociology explained "that impression of resistance and that sentiment of something transcending the individual which we experience in the presence of the truth and which are the very condition of objectivity"[4]. Thus, "it is thought which creates reality, and

1. Ibid., pp.172-3.
2. Ibid., p.173.
3. Ibid.
4. Ibid., p.174.

the pre-eminent role of collective representations is to 'make' that superior reality which is society itself"[1].

What, then, was the distinction between the "two types of truths which are opposed to one another in the history of human thought", namely, "mythological truths and scientific truths"?[2]

The former were accepted without verification or demonstration because of collective pressure; moreover, they were "the conditions of existence of the societies who have believed in them", in which "common life ... supposes common ideas and intellectual unanimity"[3]. Yet this did not imply a kind of sociological pragmatism, according to which peoples, rather than individuals, would be "free to create the truth according to their fantasy"[4]; "ideas, representations, in effect, cannot become collective if they respond to nothing in reality"[5].

In general,

> Every collective representation must, on the practical level, be of service to individuals, that is, it must engender actions which are adjusted to things, to the realities to which they correspond. Now, in order to engender these actions, the representation must itself be adapted to those realities.[6]

Mythological representations expressed society, and what "religion translates, in its representations, its beliefs and

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1. Ibid.
2. Ibid., p.175.
3. Ibid.
4. Ibid., p.176. Cf. Parodi, 1919 (3rd ed.), p.458 for such a criticism of Durkheim.
5. Ibid.
6. Ibid., pp.176-7.

its myths, are social realities and the way they act on individuals"[1]. Things served as symbols for the self-expression of society and, in consequence, "mythical representations are false in relation to things, but they are true in relation to the subjects who think them"[2]. Hence, truth was, in a sense, variable, but the Pragmatists were wrong to say that truths were constantly being created and old truths abolished:

> All the cosmologies immanent in mythological systems are different from one another and yet those different cosmologies can legitimately be regarded as equally true, because they have fulfilled the same functions in relation to the peoples who have believed in them, because they have had the same social role.[3]

Scientific truths, on the other hand, "express the world as it is"[4], and yet, Durkheim argued, "scientific representations too are collective representations", for "scientific truth contributes to reinforcing the social conscience, just like mythological thought, but by other means"[5]. There were two types of communication between individual minds: "by becoming fused one with another, so as to become a single collective mind" and "by communicating with respect to a single object which is the same for all, each still retaining his personality, like Leibniz's monads each of which expresses the universe as a whole while preserving its individuality". The first procedure was that of mythological thought, the second that of scientific thought. The very object of science was "to represent things as though viewed by a purely objective understanding"[6].

1. Ibid., p.177.
2. Ibid.
3. Ibid., p.178.
4. Ibid.
5. Ibid.
6. Ibid., p.179.

Durkheim next turned to an examination of the place of science and the "survival of mythological representations" in contemporary society, and thereby offered a further clue to his conception of ideology and its relation to science[1]. Comte had been wrong to expect that science would put an end to mythology, that "one would live on scientific, positive truths, that one could consider established, and that for the rest one would live in intellectual doubt"[2]. Though true of the physical world, this was untrue of the human and social world, where science was still rudimentary and direct experiment impossible; here "notions which express social phenomena in a truly objective fashion are still very rare"[3]. Sociology itself could only offer fragmentary hypotheses which had so far had little influence on the popular mind. Yet it was necessary to act and to live, and society could not wait for its problems to be solved scientifically. Consequently,

> in the absence of objective knowledge, it can only know itself from within and must seek to translate the sentiment it has of itself and be guided by it. In other words, it must be led by a representation of the same nature as those which constitute mythological truths.[4]

These expressed "a unanimous conception", which gave them "a force, an authority which imposes them on individuals and removes them from control or doubt"[5]. Hence the existence of formulas "that we do not see as religious, but which still have

1. Ibid., pp.183 sqq. Cf. supra. ch. 2(viii).
2. Ibid., p.183.
3. Ibid.
4. Ibid., p.184.
5. Ibid.

the character of dogmas and are not discussed" - notions such as "democracy", "progress" and "the class struggle"[1]. Durkheim concluded that

> [t]here is, there will always be, in social life, a place for a form of truth which will be expressed perhaps in a very secular form, but which will still have a mythological and religious basis. For a long time yet, there will exist in all societies two tendencies: a tendency towards objective and scientific truth, and a tendency towards truth perceived from within, towards mythological truth. This is ... one of the greatest obstacles to the progress of sociology.[2]

Finally, he sought to establish a link between mythological truth and conformism, on the one hand, and between scientific truth and "intellectual individualism", on the other. The latter was "an indispensable factor in the establishment of scientific truth and the diversity of intellectual temperaments can come to serve an impersonal truth".[3] Not only was scientific truth compatible with "the diversity of minds"; it also went with social diversity ("as the complexity of social groups ceaselessly grows, it is impossible that society should have a single conception of itself ...") and a growth in tolerance (which "must henceforth rest on the idea of the complexity and the richness of reality, and consequently, on the diversity, at once necessary and effective, of opinions").[4]

It is clear that in all this Durkheim was really maintaining two different theses which he failed to separate from one another because he did not distinguish between the truth of a

1. Ibid.
2. Ibid.
3. Ibid., p.186.
4. Ibid., pp.186-7.

belief and the acceptance of a belief as true. The first was the important philosophical thesis that there is a non-context- or non-culture-dependent sense of truth (as correspondence to reality), such that, for example, primitive magical beliefs could be called "false"[1], mythological ideas could be characterised as "false in relation to things"[2], scientific truths could be said to "express the world as it is"[3] and the Pragmatist claim that the truth is essentially variable could be denied. It was this thesis that Durkheim was advancing when, as against Bergson, he argued that the "concept ... expresses a reality: if it is distinct, this is because it expresses distinctions that are something quite other than a simple product of the mind" and that "distinction is a need of conceptual thought; but it is already in things as it is in the mind. Likewise, continuity, communication is in the mind just as it is in things"[4]. Durkheim's second thesis, which he confused with the first, was a sociological one concerning beliefs (i.e., propositions accepted as true) in different contexts and societies. This thesis had a number of component elements: first, that such beliefs (including scientific ones) have a social origin; second, that their authority comes from society ("truth is a norm for thought as the moral ideal is a norm for conduct"[5]); third, that they have social functions ("reinforcing

1. V. ibid., p.110.
2. Ibid., p.177.
3. Ibid., p.178.
4. Ibid., pp.194, 195.
5. Ibid., p.197.

the social conscience"; indeed, the expression of reality "constitutes societies, though one might equally say that it derives from them")[1]; and fourth, that they are "in no way arbitrary; they are modelled on realities, and in particular on the realities of social life"[2]. In this way, Durkheim's critique of Pragmatism can be seen as implying both a philosophical vindication of "the essence of rationalism", and with it the practice of sociology, and a programme for the sociology of knowledge.

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1. Ibid., p.196.
2. Ibid., p.197.

(viii) Contemporary Critics.

Durkheim's ideas never ceased to be the centre of intense controversy. It was not merely that they were new, often extreme, and pungently and dogmatically expressed. They challenged academic and religious orthodoxies, disputing the methodologies of the former and discounting the supernatural justifications of the latter. Five areas in particular were especially productive of lively and worthwhile argument (in which Durkheim himself took an active part): his methodological principles, his critique of liberal economics, and his sociological treatment of morality, knowledge and religion.

Social Realism

In the first place, Durkheim continued to be widely attacked for his so-called 'social realism'. Critics continued to characterise this (despite his repeated clarifications and disclaimers[1]) as dogmatic, scholastic, even mystical, as unverifiable and unscientific or alternatively as a denial of the freedom and uniqueness of the individual, and sometimes as immoral, entailing advocacy of the subordination of the individual to the group. Typical among these critics were, as we have seen, Tarde, Worms and (latterly) Richard; and also Alfred Fouillee, Andler, Belot, Bernès, Deploige, Leuba and Parodi[2].

1. V., e.g., 1894a, pp.14-15fn; tr.1951a, p.51 fn; 1898d; 1901c, p.ix; tr.1938b, p.xli; and many other places.
2. For references, v. bibliography. Deploige's treatment is the most thorough.

One of the most interesting expressions of this kind of criticism is to be found in the writings of the Nietzschean Georges Palante[1]. For Palante the antinomy between the individual and society was incapable of resolution; indeed one must take sides and 'fight for the individual' and free him from social constraint. Tarde, thought Palante, had been right in arguing that "the individual is not a simple product of biological and social factors. He has at least the power to register in his own way previous and present social influences, to react against them and become a new centre of activity, the point of departure for a new social orientation"[2]. Palante took Durkheim to be advocating a false methodology (" ... it is to [individual psychology] that one must always return. It remains - whether one wishes it or not - the key which opens all doors"[3]) together with a restrictive authoritarianism ("It seems to be Durkheim's plan for sociology to take over the function previously assumed by religion, namely, to restrain the individual in the interests of society"[4]). Palante's alternative was to adopt Tarde's methodology and to advocate a form of 'aristocratic' individualism, encouraging the historical growth of individuality, and in particular the development of supermen who would enhance social and cultural progress.

1. V. esp. Précis de Sociologie (2nd ed., Paris, 1903), Combat pour l'Individu (Paris, 1904), La Sensabilite Individualiste (Paris, 1905) and Les Antinomies entre l'Individu et la Société (Paris, 1913).
2. Precis, p.60.
3. Ibid., p.3.
4. Antinomies, p.280. For Durkheim's response to Palante, v. 1901a (iii)(2), 1902a (iii)(11) and 1902c.

In general, however, the criticisms of Durkheim's social realism did no more than repeat the observations of Tarde. Durkheim offered a final defence against these charges in the omitted section of the introduction to the Elementary Forms[1]. He was not, he protested, indifferent to human beings, as his critics claimed. In studying religious phenomena, his hope was

> that this study will throw some light on the religious nature of man, and it is to explain the conscience morale that is the ultimate aim of the science des moeurs. In general, we hold that sociology has not completely achieved its task so long as it has not penetrated into the mind (le for interieur) of the individual in order to relate the institutions it seeks to explain to their psychological conditions. In truth - and this is doubtless what has given rise to the misunderstanding in question - man is for us less a point of departure than a point of arrival. We do not begin by postulating a certain conception of human nature so as to deduce from it a sociology; it is rather from sociology that we seek an increasing understanding of humanity[2].

The general mental characteristics studied by psychology were universal and thus could not explain any particular social configuration. It was society that

> informs our minds and wills in such a way as to put them in harmony with the institutions which express them. It is from here, in consequence, that sociology must begin[3].

Economics and Sociology

The economists, still largely hostile to the intrusive claims of sociology, were equally critical of Durkheim's methodological views. At a meeting of the Societe d'Economie

1. 1909d. V. supra.
2. Ibid., p.755.
3. Ibid.

Politique in 1908[1] Durkheim advanced his views concerning the nature of economic phenomena and the relation of economics to the other social sciences. It was clear, he argued, that the scientific study of morality, of law, of religion and of art were concerned with ideas. Was political economy different: did it deal with phenomena "independent of opinion"?[2] He maintained that economic facts could also be considered as matters of opinion, though this did not mean that they did not operate according to laws.[3] The value of things depended not only on their objective properties but also on the opinion held concerning them. For example, religious opinion could affect the exchange value of certain goods, as could changes in taste. Again, wage-rates were a function of a basic minimum standard of living, but this standard itself varied from period to period as a function of opinion. And certain forms of production (e.g. co-operation) expanded not because of their objective productivity but because of certain moral virtues ascribed to them by opinion. Thus economics lost its preponderance and took its place beside the other social sciences and in close relation to them. The only primacy correctly attributable to economic factors resulted from those which "profoundly affect the way in which a population is distributed, its density, the form of human

1. 1908c (1).
2. Ibid., p.65.
3. Cf. 1924a, pp.82-3: tr. 1953b, p.57. V. also Meyer, 1960, pp.75-6. For a systematic exploration of this point of view, v. the writings of Francois Simiand, passim., esp. Simiand, 1912.

groups, and thereby often exercise a profound influence on the various states of opinion"[1]. In reply, the economist Leroy-Beaulieu accused Durkheim of exaggerating the influence of opinion on the economy. Although it was doubtless a powerful factor in modifying certain economic forms, it would never transform the great immutable economic laws. A psychological factor did intervene in determining economic value but it was eternally subject to the eternal law of supply and demand[2].

The Sociology of Morality

Another favourite object of attack was Durkheim's theory of morality, especially on the part of philosophers. Among the more notable published critiques were those of Richard[3], who argued (among other things) that Durkheim made an illegitimate slide from the social fact of solidarity to a principle of moral obligation, from social pressures to moral rules, and in particular from the fact of organic solidarity to the demands of justice; that of Rauh[4], who argued that Durkheim misdescribed the nature of moral judgments, making them purely cognitive, and that he concentrated on the external, immobile shell of social life, missing its active and living reality; and that of Cantécor[5], who objected that Durkheim missed the transcendent and subjective side of morality.

1. Ibid., p.67.
2. Ibid., p.72.
3. Richard, 1905 and 1911.
4. Rauh, 1904.
5. Cantécor, 1904.

There were also three extended philosophical critiques of Durkheim's attempt to develop a sociology of morality by Landry, Fouillee and Belot[1], which Durkheim in turn submitted to a lengthy examination in a review in the Annee[2]. Landry argued that Durkheim was really a utilitarian in that he maintained that the generality of institutions would be inexplicable if they were not the most advantageous. To this Durkheim replied that he maintained no more than that institutions, especially moral institutions, fulfil useful functions; utilitarian explanations were one-sided and archaic, and at variance with the evidence of history and comparative ethnography. Far from his being a utilitarian himself, he laid chief stress on the 'contrary principle' of obligation in the Kantian sense[3].

Fouillee argued (1) that Durkheim wished to eliminate the making of value judgments from specualation about morality and reduce this to mere 'descriptions'[4]; (2) that there was no need for "long studies of history, of comparative jurisprudence, of comparative religion" to discover "why we must not kill, steal, rape, etc.," or what were the sources of "brotherly affection, respect for children and their modesty, the keeping of promises"[5]. These were self-evident truths, perceived by intuition; and (3) that for Durkheim there was nothing either

1. Landry, 1906; Fouillee, 1905; and Belot, 1905-6.
2. 1907a (3), (4) and (5).
3. Ibid., p.354.
4. Op. cit., p.234.
5. Ibid., p.247.

moral or immoral that was not social in origin. Durkheim replied (1) that he maintained only that the danger of bias and prejudice in social science was particularly great; so far from his method making evaluation dispensable or impossible, it was a preliminary to it ("explanation opens the way to justification ..."[1]) and scientific reflexion could change morality by the very act of explaining it; (2) that in contrast to Fouillée's 'simpliste' attitude, he was conscious of the extreme complexity of the ideas and sentiments that made up morality and the need to explain it in its rich and particular detail; and (3) that he did not hold the a priori and unscientific view that everything was social: he merely adopted "the hypothesis, largely borne out by history, that morality at any given point in time depends closely - this being normal and legitimate - on the state of society", believing further that the "individual and interior side is neither the whole nor the essential element of morality, and that is because moral facts are given to us in history as essentially social facts, varying as societies do"[2].

Belot's critique amounted to the denial that a science des moeurs had any practical relevance (though it might be of academic interest). He offered two reasons: (1) that a purely historical inquiry into origins could not tell us what to do; the only sociological knowledge of any practical use was of the present social system, but even this was insufficient to provide

1. 1907a (3)-(5), p.350.
2. Ibid., pp.300-1.

moral reasons for action; and (2) that, consciousness being an active element in society, it always reacted upon and thereby modified its preconditions; thus a study of the latter could not tell us which ends deserved to be preferred. Durkheim answered that it was a truism that we only had a practical interest in the present; the point was that "in order to analyse those extraordinarily complicated wholes which are social phenomena, we cannot do without historical analysis"[1]. In order to know how to act, one needed to know the actual and possible effects of given causes in the social world (did Belot deny the operation of the principle of causality in the social realm?); moreover the sociological study of morality could even provide us with ends to pursue. The sociologist must identify "the tendencies to movement, the germs of change, aspirations to a different form of society, ideals striving to be realised"[2]; the "present prefigures the future ... the future is already written for those who know how to read ..."[3]. There was no point giving society ends which did not correspond to its needs; the sociologist could identify these and indicate the various tendencies operating in the present, showing which were well-founded and which not.

There was also a lively discussion of Durkheim's views on morality at the Societe de Philosophie in 1906, when he read his paper on "The Determination of the Moral Fact"[4]. The most

1. Ibid., p.365.
2. Ibid., p.368.
3. Ibid. discussion
4. 1906b; partially reproduced in 1924a; tr.1953b.

significant objections follow, with Durkheim's replies in brackets.

Parodi maintained that by concentrating on the conscience collective, Durkheim reduced the study of morality to the study of public opinion (but opinion was a major clue to the nature of society and its needs, and indeed part of it). Barlu argued that Durkheim allowed no scope for the individual's reason; what about the rebellion of the individual against traditional morality? In any case the individual's mind was richer than the most perfect and complex society (the point about reason was not that it was individual but rather that it was impersonal and scientific, and, like moral ideals, collective in source; rebellion could be justified only in terms of emerging forms of society; and with respect to the individual conscience, "[h]ow much richer and more complex is the moral life of society, with all its complementary or conflicting aspirations of all kinds . . . .";[1] moreover, individual constructions were socially determined, refracting common ideals). Jacob objected to the analogy of the moral and the sacred and the association of morality with religion; this view was inconsistent with the application of reason to morality (but morality was historically associated with religion; there was an analogy between our horror at crime and the believer's reaction to sacrilege; both religion and morality involved "a world, separate and apart, of sui generis representations"[2]; and the point was to account for both in secular,

1. Ibid. (1951 ed.) p.98; tr. 1953b, pp.67-8 (S.L.).
2. Ibid., p.104; tr. p.71 (S.L.).

rational terms). Brunschvicg argued that the progress of civilisation consisted in its allowing more and more scope to the individual to regain his rights against the material structure of society (but those rights were the product of society; the progressive emancipation of man consists in the transformation not the weakening of social bonds). Malapert said that Durkheim saw society as a moral legislator and as ideally perfect (but society played the part of legislator because it was granted moral authority by its members' beliefs; Durkheim did not think of it as ideally perfect, just as a "rich and complex moral reality"[1]). Louis Weber objected that philosophers not sociologists were the proper students of morality (but they were more concerned to develop their own systems, to argue as revolutionaries or iconoclasts; Durkheim was more concerned to discover morality as it was and had been, not as conceived by some philosopher). Finally, Gaul made a plea for the individual's inner moral life; for instance, he knew scholars and artists who considered some of their duties to be extra-social (so did most people, but the claim was that this picture of morality was mistaken; and as to the inner life, "There is no individual conscience that exactly expresses the common moral conscience ... each of us is immoral in some respects."[2]).

Durkheim attended two further sessions of the Societe when morality was discussed, in 1908[3] and 1914[4], at which his

1. Ibid., p.108: tr. p.74.
2. Ibid., p.115: tr.p.78 (s.L.).
3. 1908a (2).
4. 1914b.

views were subjected to further criticisms. At the first, Belot developed the argument that "one could never in fact arrive at moral ends or develop new rules if societies could be the object of a complete and definitive science"[1]; seeing social facts as 'dead things'[2] was incompatible with the very essence of morality - "this need for improvement, this dissatisfaction with the given"[3], in particular the fact that "individual consciences rebel against collective imperatives, conceive new imperatives, develop new practical hypotheses"[4]. Durkheim agreed that reflexion was increasingly becoming an element in morality, but he denied that it was a necessary element, as was its social character: "[t]he immense majority of men passively carry out moral imperatives, and even the most cultivated among them reflect on them only rarely. Certainly, reflexion elevates and perfects morality, but it is not, in effect, its necessary condition"[5].

At the second meeting, the Bergsonian Wilbois argued that duty could not be founded "on rational principles or empirical data but was rather a primary reality which it is at once useless and impossible to prove"[6]; it could not be explained by "relating it to what purports to be society considered as a thing"[7]. Indeed he denied "not only the

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1. 1908a (2), p.195.
2. Ibid.
3. Ibid., p.194.
4. Ibid., p.195
5. Ibid., p.197.
6. 1914b, p.27.
7. Ibid. Of Bergson's own views abour Durkheim's account of morality we know little directly. However, in his Souvenirs sur Henri Bergson (Paris, 1942), I. Benrubi wrote that

contd. over

possibility of this attempt but even its intelligibility"[1]. Secondly, Wilbois characterised Durkheim's method as 'static', arguing that it missed out the internal 'élan' of historical development. Durkheim replied that, on the first point, Wilbois simply asserted but had not proved that duty was inexplicable and that it could not be related to any synthesis of natural forces; and, on the second, that Wilbois' charge was without foundation: "I do not understand how such a mistake could be made, nor do I see which text of mine could give rise to it"[2]. He added:

> I here believe and I have very often said that the novelties that are produced in the course of social evolution are not a legacy of the past. The past does not create; it can only transmit what has been created. Its creations can only be the work of associated and co-operative living persons, arising from contemporaries. Every new impulse in life can only emanate from beings who are alive and acting. It is even thanks to them, and to them alone, that the past continues to live. I have therefore devoted part of my effort to the study of these creative syntheses.[3]

The Sociology of Religion and Knowledge

It was, however, Durkheim's sociology of religion and of knowledge that came in for the most severe and sustained criticism from a number of quarters[4]. We have already con-

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"Bergson thinks that [Durkheim's] conception of morality is accurate with respect to the "closed morality", but not with respect to the "open morality". This opinion has only confirmed the impression I have had while reading *The Two Sources [of Morality and Religion]* that Bergson, indistinguishing closed from open morality, wished also to react against Durkheim and sociologism in general" (pp.126-7).

1. *Ibid.*
2. *Ibid.*, p.35.
3. *Ibid.*
4. Cf. Seger, 1957. We will consider these two areas together, since Durkheim's critics rightly saw them as intimately linked.

sidered some of its more personal and polemical forms[1]. Let us now look at the more intellectual criticisms that were characteristically advanced.

At a meeting of the Societe de Philosophie in 1913 Durkheim read a paper on "The Religious Problem and the Duality of Human Nature"[2], in which he presented what he took to be the main philosophical implications of his recently published Elementary Forms. The "religious problem" was one of explanation: whence came those "forces sui generis, which elevate the individual above himself, which transport him into another world from that in which his profane existence is passed, affording him a life that is very different, more exalted and intense"[3]. Given that the source or sources of religious life were to be sought within nature, the sole moral forces superior to the individual that were to be found in the observable world were "those which result from the grouping of individual forces, from their synthesis in and through society, that is, collective forces"[4]. He claimed to have shown with respect to one particular religion "that collective forces can account for the characteristic effects which have at all times been attributed to religious forces"[5].

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1. V. supra., ch. 3(i).
2. 1913b.
3. Ibid., p.63.
4. Ibid., p.64.
5. Ibid.

This conception of religion could also account for a perennial feature of religious and philosophical systems: a belief in the duality of human nature. Hence the division, indeed antithesis, between immediate sensation and conceptual thought, between egoistic appetites and religious and moral activity - expressed in religious thought as that between body and soul, and between profane and sacred. Philosophers had no genuine solution: empiricists, materialists and utilitarians, on the one hand, and absolute idealists, on the other, simply denied these antinomies without accounting for them; ontological dualists simply reaffirmed them without explaining them. "A sociological explanation of religion", however, "enables one to discern a new approach"[1]; it then becomes apparent that "the duality of man is to be seen as the antithesis between the individual and the social"[2]. For,

> simply because he is social, man is therefore double, and between the two beings that reside within him there is a solution of continuity, the very same which exists between the social and the individual, between the parts and the whole sui generis that results from the synthesis of those parts. From this perspective the duality of human nature becomes intelligible, without it being necessary to reduce it to no more than an appearance; for there really are two sources of life that are different and virtually antagonistic in which we participate simultaneously.[3]

To this position the psychologist Delacroix made a number of objections, prefacing his remarks with a fulsome tribute:

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1. Ibid., p.65.
2. Ibid., p.74.
3. Ibid., p.65.

> His doctrine, too narrow perhaps, still contains a part of the truth. He has shown, brilliantly, how in the study of religion, as of all spiritual phenomena, it is necessary to consider the role of society; this necessity henceforth imposes itself on all. I would add that his book seems to me masterly, and I am not generous with such praises[1].

Delacroix offered four main objections. First, that religious beliefs purported to be true: "religion is an interpretation of the world and a philosophy, quite as much as it is an active force"[2]. It could not be dismissed as "the inadequate apprehension of the sentiment of power that participation in his society gives to a believer"[3]. Second, the social was not <u>ipso facto</u> religious; there were many collective phenomena, such as feasts and assemblies, that were in no way religious. Also social effervescence and collective over-excitement were necessary but not sufficient conditions of religion. They only released what originated within individuals. Third, the duality of man was between his intelligence and his will and was psychologically, not socially, given. Finally, Durkheim's dualism was itself metaphysical: the relation between society and the individual was unintelligible.

To these points Durkheim replied, first, that he not only agreed but had often indicated that religion was in part "a certain representation of the world which the believer believes to be true"[4]. He had "sought to show that

1. <u>Ibid</u>., p.75.
2. <u>Ibid</u>., p.77.
3. <u>Ibid</u>.
4. <u>Ibid</u>., p.82.

religion contained within it the essential germs of reason, that it was in consequence rich in intellectual elements"[1]. Second, he had never said that everything social is necessarily religious. Some social relations were characterised by religion; others, such as those of exchange, were not. Delacroix offered no support for his hypothesis that "the individual carried within himself ready-made the religious idea"[2]. Third, Delacroix's account of the duality of man was incoherent and he had no explanation for it. Finally, his own explanation was not metaphysical: "[s]ociety is an observable phenomenon just like the individual"[3], and clearly required certain given individual predispositions. Next, Parlu (after remarking on "the force and beauty in the new and great work"[4] of Durkheim) asserted that there were two ideas in Durkheim's thesis which he confused: (1) that "religion, moral and even logical concepts are of social origin"[5] and (2) that they were "primitively and essentially concepts of social phenomena, formed on the model of social phenomena"[6]. Parlu accepted the first but not the second. Durkheim's only proof for it was that "the social group has, in the eyes of the individual, a unique force, authority and majesty"[7]. This was insufficient to support an idea that "went against the whole philosophical tradition"[8]. Moreover

1. Ibid., p.83.
2. Ibid., p.84.
3. Ibid., p.86.
4. Ibid., p.87.
5. Ibid.
6. Ibid., p.88.
7. Ibid., p.89.
8. Ibid., p.93.

Durkheim's two ideas were contradictory: on the one hand, religious concepts were formed by collective, not individual thought; but on the other, they consisted of the impression of influence and authority that society caused individuals to experience.

Durkheim first denied any confusion, saying that he had made exactly this distinction in his book. Second, he rejected Barlu's purported summary of his 'proof' as far too simple and was not too bothered about his views being incompatible with a philosophical tradition. As to the contradiction, he denied it: religion was a collective force penetrating individual minds. It was a moral force, a system of ideas and sentiments elaborated by the collectivity and symbolising it. It exercised a stimulating and imperative influence on individuals but was not formed by them.

Le Roy then sought to emphasise the personal and moral side of religion in contrast to what he saw as Durkheim's 'physical' point of view. Durkheim replied that the idea of moral influence pervaded his whole book and he could not understand the objection. Le Roy then made another: that Durkheim thought he could define and "discover the essence of religion by analysing one of its most rudimentary, inferior and primitive forms"[1]. Religion evolved from period to period. Durkheim denied this charge. To define religion one must take account of both primitive and advanced religions. His

1. Ibid., p.94.

reason for studying a very primitive religion was that "religious phenomena there appear in a very simple form which facilitates their study". He did assume there were "permanent and fundamental elements of religion"[1] - that was his working assumption. Finally, Le Roy objected that Durkheim's theory of religion entailed that certain religious beliefs were illusory; but was not the believer's illusion the very essence of religion? In reply Durkheim said that his explanation gave a meaning and a raison d'être to religion. Religious rites served to "discipline and fortify men's minds" and helped "periodically to make and remake our moral life"[2]. M. Le Roy had not explained what he thought the true religious life consisted in.

> [At this point Durkheim rounded on his critics and observed:
>
> Once more I must remark that in this debate, instead of grappling in detail with the facts and arguments by which I have tried to demonstrate my thesis, I am too often confronted with impressions, personal feelings, mental habits, in other words prejudices, and even acts of faith which do not easily lend themselves to discussion.][3]

Finally, the philosopher Lachelier engaged Durkheim in a prolonged and heated debate over whether religion was essentially individual or social. For Lachelier, religion (following Kant) consisted "for a mind capable of it, in an individual and solitary effort to free itself and to cast off all that is external to it and all that is incompatible with its own freedom"[4]. The religious spirit operated far from,

1. Ibid.
2. Ibid., p.95.
3. Ibid.
4. Ibid., p.96.

and often in opposition to, the social group. Durkheim was concerned with "barbarian" religions and the "adoration of gods in the streets"[1].

Durkheim denied that religion was essentially a matter of individual and solitary effort, though one of its essential functions was indeed to lead the individual to "free himself from his profane nature, to rise above and transcend himself"[2]. He knew of no gods - by which he meant those that had been a part of history - that had been born in solitude. Lachelier was concerned with what a few refined and unusual persons had done and believed; but he was concerned with the religion "that has allowed the bulk of humanity to make existence supportable"[3]. Besides, it was likely that even Lachelier's religion could be explained sociologically; even his believer "derived from society the very forces which allowed him to become free of the world and of society"[4]. It was "not for religion to dogmatise about itself"[5]; only "the science of religions, thanks to the methods of analysis and comparison at its disposal, is in a position gradually to explain religious phenomena"[6].

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1. Ibid., pp.96, 99.
2. Ibid., p.96.
3. Ibid., p.100.
4. Ibid.
5. Ibid.
6. Ibid. Sociology had "taught us, or at least given us the sense, that, beyond the world of the individual, a new world was disclosed, in which hitherto unsuspected forces operated which could explain many phenomena that had long been thought of as inexplicable. This discovery of a new realm, added to the other realms of nature, is destined to turn the science of man in new directions, to open up unknown horizons ..." (ibid., p.98).

Durkheim's theory of religion met with a number of other criticisms that are worth mentioning. Belot published an article[1] in which he made a number of objections. Durkheim, he argued, had confused the causes of religion, the value of the services it renders and the truth of what it affirms. His definition assumed a complete heterogeneity between the sacred and the profane which had not been demonstrated. He assumed there was a single, irreducible essence of religion manifest in all its forms, which was doubtful. Finally, there was a logical incompatibility between his religious sociology and religion itself; a secular, scientific investigation into the realm of the sacred challenged the very essence of religion.

Among the reviewers of the Elementary Forms, Matisse (in the Revue des Idees) objected to Durkheim's account of man as homo duplex - "that old aberration which, in deifying humanity, isolated it from the rest of creation"[2]. In general, religious critics objected to Durkheim's naturalism, arguing that it was impossible to preserve in relation to society, seen as a product of the laws of nature, sentiments that had been directed towards God, for the transcendental character of the deity thereby became illusory[3]. Goblet d'Alviella, in a largely favourable review[4], protested against what he saw as Durkheim's too easy dismissal of animism and naturism; he also

1. Belot, 1913.
2. Cited by Lalande, A., Philosophical Review, 13 (1913), p.365.
3. Ibid.
4. Goblet d'Alviella, 1913.

maintained that the notion of force was not, as Durkheim thought, social in origin and he argued that, while admitting the role of social pressure in forming religious sentiments, consideration must also be given to the "part of individual reasoning in the origin and development of religion"[1]. Höffding[2], on the other hand, saw the Elementary Forms as in effect allowing more scope for non-sociological explanations than Durkheim's earlier writings. It was important to see that individuals (conditioned, it was true, by society) had "at every given point, a certain autonomy in relation to society"[3] - hence every new development in the forms and traditions of society, sacred as well as profane, and hence the rise of new ideas and customs. It was necessary to look at psychological processes in individuals, especially to explain the development of individual deviations and initiatives. Indeed, the role of the individual and the development of individual variations increased as religions advanced. In fact, Durkheim made use of psychological explanations (e.g. his account of 'contagiousness' in totemic cosmology). Finally, he disagreed with Durkheim's account of the social origin of causation, stressing instead the role of the history of science in this connexion. Religious influences were here only of historical interest.

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1. Ibid., p.210.
2. Höffding, 1914.
3. Ibid., pp.840-1.

In the United States there were two critical reviews in the American Journal of Sociology. The first, by Webster[1], argued that Durkheim exaggerated the importance of totemism as a social institution and also of the idea of mana, which was really a relatively advanced philosophical idea; in general, Durkheim's was an elaborate system that mistakenly attempted to explain "the totality of primitive religion by reference to a single factor"[2]. In the second, Ulysses G. Weatherby[3] made four criticisms; first, that Durkheim tended to read back into the savage mind "something of the abstruse mental processes of the critical scholar "[4]; second, that he sought generalisations to cover "the most heterogeneous and often contradictory facts"[5]; third, that he misapplied the sacred-profane distinction; and fourth, that his account of the origin of totemic groupings was unsatisfactory.

Elsewhere, Wallis[6] argued; (1) that primitive societies did not necessarily have primitive religions; (2) that 'native life' was not as uniform and undifferentiated as Durkheim supposed; (3) that Durkheim made use of an unacceptable 'principle of evolution'; (4) that his purportedly 'purely analytic and inductive method' amounted to beginning with a definition of religion and then collecting examples, so that one only got out of the analysis what had been put into it -

1. Webster, 1913.
2. Ibid., p.846.
3. Weatherby, 1917.
4. Ibid., p.561.
5. Ibid., p.562.
6. Wallis, 1914.

and this led him to underestimate the differentiated character of totemism (revealed by Lang, Van Gennep and Goldenweiser); (5) that his account of the origin of totemism was logically inadequate; and (6) that while he had shown the importance of the division between the sacred and the profane, the co-operation of individuals, the church, ritualistic phases and the plurality of the sacred, these were not differentia of religion. Religion was not essentially social and the sociological point of view was only one among many. One needed to look at individual influences, especially to explain messianic religions. In general there was a need to "explain what keeps [religion] going and to what element of our natures it appeals"[1]; and, contra Durkheim, it was necessary to introduce the concept of the supernatural or the supernormal into a definition of religion.

One of the most interesting and valuable discussions of Durkheim's sociology of religion took place at a meeting of the Union de Libres Penseurs et de Libres Croyants pour la Culture Morale, a group of undogmatic non-believers and believers, held early in 1914. This was devoted to a discussion of the Elementary Forms, before which Durkheim delivered an introductory (and impromptu) speech[2]. The report of this meeting is particularly valuable, partly because of the criticisms raised, but also because it clearly shows how

1. Ibid., p.264.
2. 1919b. He had to leave early and did not stay for the discussion.

Durkheim viewed the method appropriate to the sociology of religion, how he saw its implications for religion itself, and what his ideas were concerning the future of religion. For once, he allowed himself to indulge in prophetic speculation, at a time of renascent irrationalism and nationalism, about the nature and place of religion in the societies of the future.

In his speech, Durkheim specified how he wished his book to be studied and discussed. Addressing himself first to the non-believers in the audience, he argued that religion was not simply to be seen as a system of ideas, but as primarily a "system of forces"[1]. The man who lived religiously was not just someone who saw the world in a certain way, knowing what others did not know: he was a man who felt within him an extraordinary power, a "force which dominates him, but which, at the same time, sustains him and raises him above himself"[2], giving him greater strength to face life's difficulties and enabling him to bend nature to his will. Such a sentiment was too universal and too constant to be an illusion; an illusion could not last for centuries. Whence, then, came this force? It could not result from men's attempts to interpret natural phenomena, even the great cosmic powers; physical forces did not penetrate the inner life. It was moral forces that were in question; and for the non-believer, seeking to render religion rationally intelligible, the only

1. Ibid., p.98.
2. Ibid., p.99.

possible source of such moral force was to be found in the coming together of people. His explanation of the collective origin of religion was, he observed, not just speculative; it arose out of facts and historical observation, it had inspired and given a useful guide to research, and it had served to interpret various phenomena in different religions. Thus it had stood the test of experience and thereby shown its vitality.

Finally, and most significantly, Durkheim urged the non-believer to "confront religion in the state of mind of the believer"[1]. On this condition alone, he went on, could one hope to understand it;

> Let him experience it as the believer experiences it, for it only really exists in virtue of what it is for the latter. Thus whoever does not bring to the study of religion a sort of religious sentiment has no right to speak about it! He would be like a blind man talking about colours. Now, for the believer, the essence of religion is not a plausible or seductive hypothesis about man or his destiny. He sticks to his faith because it forms part of his being, because he cannot renounce it, so he thinks, without losing something of himself, without being cast down, without a diminution of his vitality, a lowering of his moral temperature.
>
> In a word, the characteristic of religion is the dynamogenic influence it exercises on men's minds. To explain religion is thus, above all, to explain this influence.[2]

Turning next to the believers present, Durkheim asked for their sympathy, and a certain freedom of thought and cartesian doubt. Let them at least forget provisionally the

1. Ibid., p.101. This is the nearest Durkheim ever came to the principle of verstehen.
2. Ibid.

formulae in which they believed, if only to return to them later. The task was to uncover the reality which religious formulae expressed, all more or less inexactly. In this way they would not be tempted to commit the unjust error of those believers who had characterised his manner of interpreting religion as thoroughly irreligious. Indeed, a rational interpretation of religion could not be thoroughly irreligious, since an irreligious interpretation of religion would be one which denied the very fact it sought to explain (this remark met with applause). Nothing was more contrary to the scientific method. His own account of the source of religious life should surely be acceptable to believers. They might certainly believe there to be another, higher religious life, with a quite different origin, but perhaps they could agree that there were religious forces within us and outside us that we could call into existence, indeed could not avoid arousing, by the very fact of thinking, feeling and acting in common.

Recently an orator had gestured prophetically at the heavens, saying that they were emptying and urging his hearers to turn their gaze towards the earth and look after their economic interests. This had been called impious, but for Durkheim it was simply false:

> No, there is no reason to fear that the heavens will ever become quite empty; for it is we ourselves who fill them. And so long as there are human societies, they will provide from within themselves great ideals for men to serve.[1]

1. Ibid., p.103.

Durkheim then turned to the nature of religion in the future, once it had become more conscious of its social origins. Extreme caution was, of course, necessary in such conjecture, and one could not predict in what form such a religion would be expressed. But one could guess at the social forces that would engender it. The reason why contemporary religious life was at a low ebb, and why religious revivals were never more than superficial and temporary, was that "our power of generating ideals has weakened"[1]. But this was because "our societies" were undergoing a phase of profound disturbance, after an earlier period of equilibrium. The old ideals and the divinities which incarnated them were in the process of dying, because they no longer responded adequately to the new aspirations which were becoming evident; and the new ideals that would be necessary to guide men's lives were not yet born. "We therefore find ourselves", Durkheim said, "in an intermediary period, a period of moral indifference which explains the various manifestations that we see every day, in anxiety and sorrow."[2]

Yet there was cause for reassurance, for, in the depths of society,

> an intense life is growing and seeking outlets, which it will eventually find. We aspire to a justice higher than that expressed by any existing formulae. These obscure aspirations that now excite us will, however, some day come to be more clearly formulated, translated into clearcut formulae around which men will rally and

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1. Ibid., p.104.
2. Ibid.

> which will form a focus of crystallisation for new beliefs. As to the letter of those beliefs, there is no point in trying to discern this. Will they remain general and abstract, or will they be linked to certain persons who will incarnate them and represent them? That will depend on historical contingencies that one cannot foresee.
>
> All that matters is that we should realise that, beneath the moral indifference that pervades the surface of our collective life, there are sources of commitment that our societies contain within themselves. One can even go further and say with some precision in which region of society these emerging forces are particularly in evidence: among the working class (les classes populaires).[1]

Durkheim concluded his speech by observing that it was inescapable that humanity must rely on its own resources; historically this idea had become ever more pervasive and it was unlikely to recede. It was troubling to a person used to relying on extra-human forces, but, once he realised that humanity could provide him with the support he needed, surely it was highly comforting, since the required resources were close to hand?

In the discussion, Gustave Belot repeated his criticisms mentioned above, observing that it was difficult for him to dispel the very intense conviction created in the audience by the clarity and warmth of Durkheim's language. He emphasised the multiplicity of the forms, causes and functions of religion, but his chief argument was against Durkheim's claim that his sociology of religion did not destroy religion itself, that his explanation of religion was compatible with believing

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1. Ibid.

in it. Durkheim, Belot insisted, was (despite his claim to the contrary) maintaining that all religions were false, insofar as they did not accept his own theory. Who, asked Belot, would continue to pray, if he knew he was praying to no-one, but merely addressing a collectivity that was not listening? Where, he continued,

> is the man who would continue to take part in communion if he believed that it was no more than a mere symbol and that there was nothing real underlying it?[1]

Religion, according to Durkheim, was the first form of the conscience collective and as such a basis for social cohesion. But today there were other institutions providing such a basis, as Durkheim had himself shown in the Division of Labour. Moreover, the conscience collective no longer required religious symbols - and, in any case, religion divided societies more than it unified them. Durkheim was thus destroying religion by postulating as its essential function one that was adequately fulfilled by other institutions and poorly by religion itself. Finally, the notion of a science of the sacred was a self-contradiction. It was, in short, impossible that the scientific theory of religion could leave religion intact.

The next speaker was the Protestant pastor and professor Marc Boegner, later to become head of the French Protestant church and president of the World Council of Churches. Boegner began by paying tribute to the way in which Durkheim had expressed the nature of the religious life; one seemed, he

1. Ibid., p.131.

remarked, "to hear a believer testifying to what he believes to be essential to his faith, to that which he holds most dear"[1]. Boegner raised four questions in relation to Durkheim's theory, which, together with Durkheim's written replies, are worth reproducing in full.

> (1) Boegner: Is it legitimate to seek the essential elements of the religious life in its most rudimentary forms? In order to determine these elements, should one not take the greatest account of the most perfect and realised forms of that religious life?
>
> Durkheim: I have explained in my Formes Élémentaires de la Vie Religieuse, pages 3-12, the reasons why the study of a very simple religion seemed to me particularly instructive. It is because a science in its infancy must pose problems in their simplest form, and only later make them gradually more complicated. When we have understood very elementary religions, we will be able to move on to others. Moreover, the former have the advantage that, by reason of their simplicity, the essential elements are more apparent within them, and easier to discern.
>
> On the other hand, it is very clear that the study of the most advanced forms of religious life also has very great advantages. I might even add that a certain knowledge of these more advanced forms is a help in understanding the simpler forms. But research must in the first instance concentrate on the latter.
>
> (2) Boegner: Can the primitives of present-day Australia be regarded as genuine primitives? Surely primitive forms of religious life, when this has emerged, must have a certain spontaneity, and, in virtue of this, certain essential characteristics that are no longer to be found in the religious life of contemporary Australians, which has necessarily become ossified, at least to a certain extent, by remaining unchanged during many centuries?
>
> Durkheim: There are no longer any "genuine primitives"; I said this on the first page of my book. There is no doubt that the Australians have a long history behind them, as have all known peoples. I chose them simply because I found among them a religion that surpassed in simplicity all others of which I knew and which it seemed

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1. Ibid., pp.134-5.

to me could be explained without it being necessary to refer to an antecedent religion. If another religion is found that is still more simple, then let us study it, but for the time being it is useless to speak about this.

In the same way, it seems to me pointless to talk about changes that may have occurred within Australian religions in the course of history, given that we are ignorant of these. There are, however, some that we know about and others that we can reasonably guess at. The cults of the great gods seem to me to be relatively late, the piratry cults to have lost ground, etc.

(3) Boegner: Is it possible to recognise in the conscience collective of a given time all the elements which go to make up the religious conscience of the great innovators of that time, of a Jeremiah or a Jesus, for example, who went against the tendencies of the collective religious conscience of their epoch?

Durkheim: The problem of great religious personalities and their role is certainly important. The study that I undertook did not consider it. I do not have to advance an hypothesis concerning such a complex problem, which has never been studied methodically.

(4) Boegner: Would the sociologist not find it interesting to study the social phenomena which determine the influence of a religion regarded as superior, such as Christianity, on the conscience collective of a tribe or pagan people (whether they believe in fetishism or animism), such influence operating through the individual minds that it penetrates? Examples might be Basutoland and Uganda.

Durkheim: The study here referred to would be among the most interesting. There is here a whole field of human experience, the importance of which is indisputable.[1]

Anthropological Critics

Among anthropologists, there were reviews of the Elementary Forms by Sidney Hartland[2], Alexander Goldenweiser[3] and Bronislaw Malinowski[4]. Hartland thought it a 'brilliant

1. Ibid., pp.142-3. I have rearranged these questions and answers which appear in the text in two separate lists.
2. Hartland, 1913.
3. Goldenweiser, 1915 (cf. 1913a (11)(13)).
4. Malinowski, 1913.

volume' which "opens up a new chapter in the discussion of the origin of religion"[1] but thought Durkheim's case against animism and his view that primitive religions were not anthropomorphic to be unsustained. He also argued against Durkheim's view that if primitive religions were essentially illusory they could not be amenable to scientific study; indeed he argued that Durkheim's own theory entailed that the soul and spiritual existence were unreal. And, like many other critics, he held that Durkheim and his school "attach too little weight to [the influence of external nature and the experiences of the individual] upon what is assumed, rightly or wrongly, to be the constitution of the human mind"[2].

Goldenweiser's critique was comprehensive and largely unfavourable. Durkheim's view that primitive man did not distinguish between the natural and the supernatural showed that "he fundamentally misunderstands savage mentality"[3] and his search for a reality underlying religion was misconceived. Moreover, his definition of religion was a conceptual hybrid, assimilating ritual with belief, and a body of believers with a moral community. He questioned Durkheim's assumption that a clan organisation was ipso facto primitive and argued that, in any case, primitiveness of clan organisation was not necessarily correlated with primitiveness of religion. Moreover the choice of Australia was unfortunate since the data were notoriously unsoundly based. He also had a number of concrete

1. Ibid., p.92.
2. Ibid., p.96.
3. Ibid., p.720.

points against Durkheim's theory of totemism; (1) a clan name did not necessarily betoken solidarity and solidarity did not necessarily lead to a name; (2) Australian art was of extra-totemic origin; (3) cosmogony and totemism were only indirectly related; (4) totemic complexes were really "aggregates of various cultural features of heterogeneous psychological and historical derivation"[1]; and (5) the argument for the historical priority of clan totemism was unconvincing - in particular, what Durkheim called 'individual totemism' was not a development out of clan totemism, and there were forms of religion earlier and more universal than clan totemism.

Turning then to what he called Durkheim's theory of social control, he objected to Durkheim's account of mana, wakan and orenda and their positions in conceptual evolution, and also to the derivation of the sacred from an inner sense of social pressure - there must be pre-existing religious conceptions. But Durkheim's main error in this connexion was his "misconception of the relation of the individual to the social"[2]. His conception of the social was at once too wide and too narrow. It was too wide in that it allowed individual factors to become altogether obscured ("The lives of the saints are one great argument against Durkheim's theory"[3]) and left isolated religious experience quite out of account.

1. Ibid., p.724.
2. Ibid., p.727.
3. Ibid., p.728.

It was too narrow insofar as "the only aspect of the relation of the individual to the social drawn upon in Durkheim's theory is the crowd-psychological situation"[1]. For Durkheim, society was a sublimated crowd. There was no consideration of the "cultural type of the group, of the tribal or national or class patterns developed by history or fixed by tradition"[2]. Goldenweiser next turned to Durkheim's theory of ritual. This was the most satisfying part of his analysis but still open to two objections; first, that the intensity of religious belief was not correlated with complex ceremonialism ("The gods live not by ritual alone"[3]); and second, that Durkheim was guilty of behaviourism in attempting to account for the survival of the soul by means of ritualistic mentality.

Finally, with respect to the 'theory of thought', Goldenweiser described it as "obviously artificial and one-sided"[4]. In the first place, the categories existed where a "complex and definite social system" did not; there were other sources for them in experience and in the psychological constitution of man (even grammar could be seen as a conceptual shorthand for experience). In the second place, Durkheim's exclusive emphasis on the religious and ultimately on the social was "unjustified in virtue of the rich variety of profane experience which is amenable to like conceptualisation".[5] Goldenweiser concluded that the central thesis of the

1. Ibid.
2. Ibid.
3. Ibid., p.731.
4. Ibid., p.733.
5. Ibid.

book that the fundamental reality underlying religion is social "must be regarded as unproved".[1]

Malinowski made a number of the same points, though he regarded Durkheim's book as "a contribution to science of the greatest importance" by "one of the acutest and most brilliant living sociologists"[2]. While objecting to Durkheim's attempt to base a theory "concerning one of the most fundamental aspects of religion" on the "analysis of a single tribe, as described in practically a single ethnographical work"[3], declaring himself unconvinced that the distinction between the sacred and the profane was universal, and while registering his uneasiness about the assumption of totemism being the elementary form of religion, Malinowski found "very interesting" Durkheim's conception of religion, which stressed "the social nature of the religious" and was based on his theory of totemism, in which the "god of the clan ... can be no other than the clan itself, but hypostasised and represented to men's imaginations under the perceptible form of vegetable and animal species which serve as totems"[4].

But then Malinowski turned to the question of Durkheim's "objective" method of "treating social facts as things and avoiding individual psychological interpretations"[5]. Durkheim wrote of society as "an active being endowed with will, aims and desires"[6]. This was either to be interpreted as "an

1. Ibid., p.735.
2. Malinowski, 1913, p.531.
3. Ibid.
4. Ibid., p.527 (tr. S.L. from Durkheim, 1912a, p.295).
5. Ibid., p.530.
6. Ibid., p.528.

entirely metaphysical conception", conveying "no scientific meaning", or else it referred to individual experience of a certain sort, in which case it would be "perfectly empirical"[1]. But the latter interpretation did not yield an "objective", non-psychological set of explanations. In his actual theory Durkheim "uses throughout individual psychological explanations"[2]. Thus the source of religious ideas was to be found in "big social gatherings" and their effects on individual minds. The sacred and divine were in fact "psychological categories governing ideas originated in religiously inspired crowds"[3].

Durkheim's views thus presented "fundamental inconsistencies". Society was "the source of religion, the origin of the divine" - but in what sense? As a collective subject which "thinks and creates the religious ideas"[4]? But that was metaphysical. In the sense that society was itself the "god", as the totemic principle was the clan conceived under the aspect of a totem? But that reminded one of "Hegel's Absolute, 'thinking itself' under one aspect or another". Or else as merely "the atmosphere in which <u>individuals</u> create religious ideas"[5]. This last was the only scientifically admissible interpretation. Religious ideas were then only collective in the sense of being general, i.e. common to all members of the crowd. Their nature was to be understood, Malinowski insisted, "by individual analysis, by psychological intro-

1. <u>Ibid</u>.
2. <u>Ibid</u>., p.530.
3. <u>Ibid</u>.
4. <u>Ibid</u>., p.529.
5. <u>Ibid</u>.

spection, and not by treating those phenomena as 'things'".[1] Finally, he observed that tracing back the origins of all religious phenomena to crowd manifestations seemed "to narrow down extremely both the forms of social influence upon religion, and the sources from which man can draw his religious inspiration". "Mental effervescence" in large gatherings could "hardly be accepted as the only source of religion"[2].

Last among the anthropologists, we may mention A.R. Radcliffe-Brown's criticisms of Durkheim. In August 1912 Radcliffe-Brown wrote a letter to Mauss[3], in the course of which he said that he was "somewhat disappointed by Professor Durkheim's latest work". His chief criticisms of Durkheim were

> that he has misunderstood the real nature of the Australian social organisation, particularly the classificatory system (of which the phratries and classes are simply a part), and the clans (which are also, as I see it, a part of the classificatory system). He has also exaggerated the importance of the clan-emblem. The waninga and carved bull-roarer exist in many parts of Australia and are sacred, without being in any way associated with the totems. Such association seems to be confined to the tribes of the centre. I have collected a good deal of material for a study of symbolism in Australian tribes and I think it can be shown that in most cases this symbolism (waninga, ornamentation etc.) is independent of totemism.

but, he then went on:

> I may say that I am in complete agreement with the view of sociology put forward in the Année Sociologique, and I was the first person to expound those views in England .... In England Durkheim's views are either

1. Ibid., p.530.
2. Ibid., pp.530-1.
3. Letter dated August 6, 1912. This letter was kindly made available to me by Professor Raymond Aron.

> ignored or misunderstood. It is to be hoped that the new book will do something to alter this, but I am sorry, for that very reason, that it should contain much that I cannot help but regard as misinterpretation of the real facts.

Radcliffe-Brown was also in correspondence with Durkheim. A letter survives in which Durkheim replied to him[1], thanking him for sending a letter together with a reprint of Radcliffe-Brown's article "Three Tribes of Western Australia"[2] in which his criticisms of Durkheim's view of Australian social organisation were elaborated with reference to Durkheim's "Sur l'organisation matrimoniale des sociétés australiennes"[3]. Durkheim, in his reply, wrote that he was "extremely glad to learn from you that we are in agreement concerning the general principles of the science. Nothing could have given me greater confidence in the method that I am trying to apply"[4].

Concerning Radcliffe-Brown's article, Durkheim wrote:

> Without mentioning numerous points of detail which I have noted, what you say about matrimonial rules in Australia is certainly such as to make me reflect and hesitate. In order to know whether I should completely abandon the explanation which I have previously put forward concerning the organisation in eight classes, it would be necessary for me to carry out a new study of the facts, which I cannot

1. Reprinted in Wolff, 1960, pp.317-8; dated November 9, 1913.
2. Journal of the Royal Anthropological Institute, XLIII (1913), pp.143-194.
3. 1905a (i).
4. 1960c, p.318. There is another letter from Durkheim to Radcliffe-Brown, dated Jan.12 1914, which gives similar expression to a sense of intellectual alliance. Durkheim wrote: "I have read your lecture programme at Birmingham with much interest. It constitutes one more proof of the understanding (entente) which exists between us about the general conception of our science" (the letter, together with the lecture-programme, is among Radcliffe-Brown's papers at the Oxford University Institute of Social Anthropology).

> contemplate doing at the moment; for all my time is taken by my teaching which has just started again. But I recognise very clearly that the objection is a very strong one and I am very grateful to you for having pointed it out to me. The subject has to be investigated anew.[1]

It never was. Within two years France was at war and Durkheim's academic life effectively at an end. As we have seen, his methodological ideas and his work in the sociology of morality, knowledge and religion had undergone considerable development - partly under the stimulus of the wide-ranging criticisms we have considered above. In all these spheres, his thought was arrested and his achievement incomplete.

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1. 1960c, p.318. For a discussion of Radcliffe-Brown's criticisms, v. Peristiany, 1960.

(ix) Practical Concerns

Up to the outbreak of war, Durkheim continued to keep himself apart from direct political involvements, though not from active, occasionally vehement, controversy over current social and political issues. Always he took a clear and ruthlessly reasoned position that followed, more or less directly, from what he took to be sociologically-established premises. For Durkheim a sociological perspective always had distinctive practical social and political implications.

Marriage and Sex

For example, he brought to his discussion of the much-debated question of divorce law reform arguments based on the evolution of marriage and the family, and on their present nature and functions, as well as on the evidence of comparative statistics of suicide[1]. His general position was that, while fully accepting the principle of divorce under certain closely-defined conditions, he was opposed to divorce by mutual consent, on the grounds that it would probably have "a very dangerous influence on marriage and its normal functioning"[2]. He claimed to have shown in Suicide that quite generally the number of suicides varied with the number of divorces, and further that where the divorce rate was high, the bulk of the extra suicides were committed by married persons. Durkheim advanced the

1. V. 1906a (35), 1906d and 1909f. Cf. supra, ch.2(iv) and (v).
2. 1906d, p.549. Divorce had been established in France by a law of 1884, which had been applied with increasing leniency. In the early 1900's various publicists and politicians started campaigning for divorce by mutual consent (v. 1906a(35)).

hypothesis that "the practice of divorce strongly affects the moral environment resulting from the state of marriage"[1], which directly affected spouses and whose influence survived among the widowed, and was directly related to a tendency to suicide. This, he held, applied especially to men; since in existing societies "the marriage state only weakly affects the woman's moral constitution"[2], and since she gained little from marriage, she was less harmed by the prevalence of divorce.

Durkheim's case was, therefore, that marriage exercised, above all on men, "a moral influence from which individuals themselves gain; it provides them with a stronger attachment to life", while "they part with it the more easily when they find it easier to break conjugal bonds"[3]. What was the nature of this influence? Marriage

> by the rule to which it submits the passions, provides man with a moral disposition which strengthens his power of resistance. By giving his desires an object that is certain, definite and, in principle, invariable, it prevents them from becoming aggravated in the pursuit of ends that are always new and always changing, that become boring once they are attained, leaving nothing behind but weariness and disenchantment. It prevents the search after pleasures that are unattainable or disappointing; and it makes it much easier to attain that peace of mind, that internal equilibrium, which are the essential conditions of moral health and of happiness. But it only produces these effects because it involves a system of rules that are respected, by means of which men are firmly bound[4].

Allowing these bonds to be broken at will would render them fragile and ineffective;

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1. 1906d, p.550.
2. Ibid., p.551.
3. Ibid., p.552.
4. Ibid.

> A system of rules from which one can flee as soon as one has a fancy to do so ceases to be such. A curb from which one can free oneself so easily is no longer a curb that might moderate desires, and, in moderating them, appease them.[1]

The result would be that a measure designed to alleviate the sufferings of married persons would end by "demoralising them and diminishing their attachment to life"[2].

Furthermore, Durkheim went on to argue, marriage did not merely have repercussions on the husband and the wife; there were "higher and graver interests at stake"[3], above all where there were children, and it was "not enough merely to consider the mutual feelings of the parents and their material and moral well-being"[4]. In any case, their own view of their relations was "a very poor criterion for judging the true state of those relations"[5]. Except where they were literally impossible, it was better to preserve the family. How many families were there in which "husband and wife do not have for one another all the sympathy that could be desired, but where both still have a sufficient sense of their obligations usefully to fulfil their roles, while this attachment to a common task, by bringing them together in a mutual state of tolerance, renders their lives more supportable and easier"?[6]

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1. Ibid.
2. Ibid.
3. Ibid., p.553.
4. Ibid.
5. 1906a(35), p.442. They were not in a position to decide whether their marriage was "no longer able to fulfil its function" (ibid).
6. 1906d, p.553.

But to preserve this attachment, it must be seen as a strict duty, sanctioned by the law, the interpreter of the public conscience. Where would they derive "the moral force needed to support courageously an existence whose joys must needs be somewhat austere, if public authority solemnly proclaims that they have the right to become free of it whenever they please?"[1] Thus divorce by mutual consent could only "sap the springs of domestic life, break up a large number of families, and all this still without a corresponding increase in happiness or diminution of suffering for most married persons"[2].

The argument went even further. If marriage was at the basis of the family, the functions of the family went far beyond the rearing of children. In primitive societies family life had encompassed almost all forms of social activity - economic, religious, even legal. Although these various functions had since become differentiated and organised outside the family, it "has kept something of its primitive role":

> If it is no longer directly in control of these various manifestations of collective life, there is still none with which it has no connexion. It is affected by the economic, religious, political, legal life of its members. All that affects them affects it. It has the task of affording them help in the efforts they make in these various directions, of stimulating them and guiding them, of restraining them and comforting them. It has the task of exercising over the whole of our life a moral influence which is of the utmost importance. That is its true function[3].

Given this, together with the fact that the contemporary family was based upon the married couple, it was very important that it

1. Ibid.
2. Ibid.
3. 1909f, pp.280-1.

"should not depend solely on the will of particular persons, on the caprice of their wishes". It was essential that "there should be a rule which dominates people's desires"[1].

The same alliance of sociological acumen with strict Victorian morality is to be seen in Durkheim's views on sex. At a discussion of sex education at the Société de Philosophie[2], he claimed that his historical and ethnographic researches had revealed to him the "obscure, mysterious, forbidding character of the sexual act"[3], as well as the extreme generality of this way of regarding it. It was necessary to look at the sentiments, ideas and institutions which "gave sexual relations their specifically human form"[4]; and it was due to "our moral and social ideas of today"[5] that the sexual act appeared to us as mysterious. By this he meant that it could not

> be assimilated to the actions of ordinary life, that it is exceptional, that, in some of its aspects, it is troubling and disconcerting, awakening in us contradictory sentiments. That is to say, it shocks us, offends us, repels us, while at the same time it attracts us.[6]

Now, Durkheim asked, could this contradictory, mysterious and exceptional character of the sexual act be preserved if it were spoken of quite openly, without any sort of precaution? What moral results would ensue "if one encouraged young people

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1. Ibid., p.281.
2. 1911a. The paper was given by Dr. Bolériis of the Académie de Médecine, who advocated a "rational education" in sexual matters by means of science.
3. Ibid., p.36.
4. Ibid.
5. Ibid.
6. Ibid., p.34.

to see in sexual relations nothing but the expression of a biological function, comparable to digestion and circulation."[1] As in so much else, the religions had offered a symbolic and rationally indefensible expression of an important truth: "the confessional symbol may imperfectly express the moral reality to which it corresponds; but that is not to say that it is devoid of all reality".[2]

Church and State

Durkheim also brought his sociological perspective to bear on the issue of the separation of Church and State,[3] a measure finally enacted by Briand in December 1905, whereby the State recognised absolute liberty of conscience and no longer recognised, or contributed to the funds of, any religion. Durkheim was a good anticlerical, but with a difference. At a meeting of Paul Desjardins' Union pour la Vérité he caused a stir by observing that the Church was "from a sociological point of view, a monstrosity"[4]. (The report of the proceedings indicates that "this condensed formula of M. Durkheim's had a striking effect on the persons present at the discussion"[5]). Desjardins, concerned to reconcile Catholics and freethinkers, tried to soothe ruffled feelings by reformulating this as meaning that the Church

1. Ibid., p.35.
2. Ibid., p.34.
3. 1905e.
4. Ibid., p.369. On the Union, v. infra.
5. Ibid.

had something of the miraculous about it. To this Durkheim responded,

> That's the same thing ... It is abnormal that an association so vast, so far-reaching, that is itself a grouping of such complex moral groups - in which, as a result, so many causes of differentiation should operate - should be subject to such absolute intellectual and moral uniformity. The effect of the law [of Separation] will be to let loose within this organism the sources of differentiation that have been muzzled for centuries. It is possible, in fact, that local groups will be less impeded than they have been in the past from developing their natural diversity.[1]

There was, he went on, a contradiction between the Church viewed as eternally hierarchical, and indeed military and monarchical, in structure, on the one hand, and the separation of Church and State, giving rise to internal dispersive and decentralising tendencies, on the other. The reign of opinion, even if qualified, was the essence of any democratic constitution, and "if Separation awakened the opinion of the faithful, then there would certainly be some changes in the Church"[2]. In fact, in the short term at least, it had precisely the opposite effect: the Church's embattled unity only increased during this period of politically authorised persecution.

Durkheim was a regular attender at the Union pour la Verite, founded in the early 1900's as a successor to the old Union pour l'Action Morale[3]. It was an association of academics, liberal Churchmen and politicians that was for-

1. Ibid., p.370.
2. Ibid., p.497.
3. V. Besse, 1913 Ch.XII and Lalande, "Philosophy in France", Philosophical Review, 15, pp.261ff (1906).

bidden by its constitution from adhering "to any church, philosophical school or political party, and in short to any grouping organised around a fixed doctrine"[1]. Its self-proclaimed objects were "(a) to maintain among its members, by a discipline of judgment and manners, the perpetual liberty of thought which the investigation of truth and the struggle for the right demand; and (b) to uphold in public life, by its example and propaganda, the active love of truth and right, and to promote the adoption of critical methods in general practice"[2]. Its main activities were the Libres Entretiens, held regularly in Paris, internal correspondence and ad hoc public and private meetings.

Syndicalism

It was at the Libres Entretiens that Durkheim gave the fullest expression we have of his views on the two very different contemporary movements of administrative and revolutionary syndicalism, and on the militantly antipatriotic ideas associated with the latter. In the course of doing so, he elaborated further his distinctive understanding of socialism and its practical implications for the future organisation of industrial societies. Since he never systematically set out these ideas in published form, it is worth attempting to reconstruct them in some detail. As always, he argued ex cathedra as a sociologist.

1. Lalande, art. cit., p.261.
2. Ibid. Among the members attending the Libres Entretiens were Andler, Belot, Bouglé, Brunschvicg, Buisson, Paul Bureau, Darlu, Desjardins, Durkheim, Fontaine, Lalande, Lévy-Bruhl, Pecaut, Rauh, Vidal de la Blache. Politicians such as Millerand, Steeg and Benoist attended, as did a number of Abbés.

Administrative syndicalism was historically quite distinct from revolutionary and working-class syndicalism. It had begun as "a revolt of state employees against the favouritism that was rampant in all public administrative services"[1], in particular against violations of the regulations concerning appointments and promotions. After the Law of Congregations of 1901, which established freedom of association for all secular purposes, professional associations began to form, alongside the militant unions of the Confédération Générale du Travail. These were the middle-class Syndicats de Fonctionnaires, whose primary aim was initially the defence of legal status against political inroads - "associations of legal defence against political chicanery"[2]. The ideas of administrative syndicalism developed in the direction of demanding the autonomy and decentralisation of the whole Civil Service and a similar organisation of the whole economy, with the gradual limitation of the role of the state to financial control and the securing of efficiency. The movement was a broad response to what was seen as the breakdown of political authority and the parliamentary system, and to the ever-present threat, so powerful in those years, of anti-republican authoritarianism. It propagated ideas of economic federalism and functional groups of "syndicats" based on free contracts

1. Jubineau, L'Idée de Fédéralisme Economique dans le Socialisme Francais, cited in Soltau, op. cit., p.466. I am indebted to Soltau's discussion of this movement (ibid., pp.465-72).
2. The phrase is Hauriou's: cited in Soltau, ibid.

between themselves and the State. It was basically advocating a sort of loosely organised capitalism: it declared itself opposed to "monopoly or State Socialism"[1] and held that "economic questions are now in the forefront and the task is how to organise a freedom duly subordinated to economic relations and economic conditions"[2]. Since the State could not do this, it was necessary that private interests should organise themselves.

Durkheim was against the general tenor of administrative syndicalism[3]. His view was that the unplanned growth of "syndicats" throughout the society would gravely disorganise its most essential functions. Society would come to consist of professional federations, each with its own life, and within which each professional group would be sovereign on internal matters. The state would become absorbed into the professional groups themselves[4]. But such a development was "contrary to the general direction of our historical evolution"[5]. The idea, he argued, had arisen in the nineteenth century that there was no essential distinction between private and public jobs, that men were all fonctionnaires of society. The "syndicats" were seen by the administrative syndicalists as a means of introducing this idea, though only partially, into economic life, where there was little sense of the social character of economic functions. The chaotic

1. M. Leroy: cited in ibid., p.468.
2. J. Paul-Bancour: cited in ibid., p.472.
3. 1908d.
4. V. Appendix D(2).
5. Ibid., p.253.

nature of economic relations resulted from the free play of the antagonistic interests of individuals, and the *syndicats* seemed to offer a hope of order. The hope was that the social interests served by each occupation would increasingly predominate over particular interests. The trouble was that "the *syndicat* is, in the end, only a poor and imperfect image of real administrative organisation".[1]

One looked forward to a time when

> in industry strikes would be rare, or even would be compulsorily referred to arbitration tribunals, when wage-earners would have more stability and would be less dependent on bargaining, on arbitrary decisions and on circumstances.[2]

The remedy of *syndicats* was worse than the evil it sought to cure, since it only reinforced the system of bargaining and free enterprise. The true solution was to "elevate those functions called private to the dignity of public functions"[3]. Contemporary professional associations or *syndicats* were "private, particular groups; in a single occupation one could have an unlimited number", and this absence of organisational unity and of hierarchy rendered them unfit for the task that they should fulfil. Instead Durkheim envisaged "vast administrative corporations, strongly organised and unified"[4]. In general, there was, he thought,

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1. *Ibid.*, p.254.
2. *Ibid.*
3. *Ibid.*, p.261.
4. *Ibid.*

> a whole aspect of administrative life which is essential, namely, authority and hierarchy. There must be centres of command. One must not imagine that the authority that has been indispensable to all known societies, can suddenly turn out to be useless.[1]

Durkheim never worked out a detailed blueprint for the future organisation of large-scale industry; as he wrote, "the sociologist's task is not that of the statesman"[2]. But his guiding ideas on this subject can be reconstructed from his contribution to the Entretien, together with his lectures on Professional Ethics and his preface to the second edition of the Division of Labour[3].

He envisaged the various industries throughout the country grouped into separate categories based on similarity of type and natural affinity. Each group would be presided over by an administrative council, a sort of miniature parliament, nominated by elections. This would have the power, the extent of which would have to be determined, to regulate matters that concerned the industry in question - labour relations, labour conditions, wages and salaries, relations of competing organisations with one another, questions of appointment and promotion, and so on. They would consist (given "the present state of industry") of representatives of employers and workers (as was currently the case

1. Ibid., p.265. Durkheim added, with some truth, that his ideas were, in fact, consonant with those of Guesde (ibid., p.280).
2. 1902b, p.xxvii; tr. 1933b, p.23.
3. 1908d; 1950a, pp.46-51; tr. 1957a, pp.37-41; and 1902b, pp.xxvii - xxxvi; tr. 1933b, pp.23-31.

with arbitration tribunals),"in proportions corresponding to the respective importance attributed by opinion to these two factors of production"[1]. Without being certain, Durkheim wondered whether these representatives would not have to be elected by distinct electoral bodies at the base of the corporative organisation, at least insofar as their respective interests were in conflict[2]. In addition to this central administrative council, there would be a place for the growth of subsidiary and regional bodies under its jurisdiction. The

> general rules to be laid down by it might be made specific and adapted to apply to various parts of the area by industrial boards. These would be more regional in character ..... In this way economic life would be organised, regulated and defined, without losing any of its diversity.[3]

The point was to develop

> a structure that was comprehensive and national, uniform and at the same time complex, in which the local groupings of the past would still survive, but simply as agencies to ensure communication and diversity.[4]

The corporations would be statutory bodies and individual membership would be obligatory. They would be attached to, but distinct from, the State.

1. 1902b, pp.xxviii-xxix fn.: tr. 1933b, p.25 fn.
2. V. 1950a, pp.49-50: tr. 1957a, p.39. He became more certain about this by 1902, v. 1902b, p.xxix fn.: tr.1933b, p.25 fn.: "... if it is necessary that both meet in the directing councils of the corporation, it is no less important that at the base of the corporative organisation they form distinct and independent groups, for their interests are too often rival and antagonistic."
3. 1950a, p.47: tr. 1957a, p.37.
4. Ibid., p.47: tr.p.38.

What would their functions be? First, they would enact industrial legislation, as a specific application of the law in general enacted by the State; thus they would deal with such matters as "the general principles of the labour contract, of salary and wage remuneration, of industrial health, of all that concerns the labour of women and children, etc.".[1] Second, they would be a suitable sourde for "the provision of superannuation and provident funds"[2] - more suitable than the state ("over-burdened as it is with various services, as well as being too far removed from the individual"[3]). Third, they would regulate labour disputes, a function requiring specialised and variable procedures. Lastly, they would have a more general function: that of acting as "a source of life sui generis"[4]. They would encourage that solidarity and "intellectual and moral homogeneity"[5] which comes from the practice of the same occupation. This would be evident in the provision of social security, and of technical and adult education, as well as in sport and recreation. These were the more obvious functions, but, Durkheim added, once they were formed, others would develop of their own accord and "no-one can foresee at what point this evolution would stop".[6] There might, for example, be

1. Ibid., p.50; tr. p.40.
2. Ibid.
3. Ibid.
4. 1902b, p.xxx; tr.1933b, p.26.
5. Ibid.
6. 1950a, p.51; tr. 1957a, p.40.

a recasting of the laws of property, with a transference of property rights from the family to the occupational group (for they would be both institutionally stable and closer to economic life). It was unlikely that the day would ever come when means of production would be wholly divorced from the means of consumption, when all property rights and rights of inheritance would be abolished, and when the position of the employer would no longer exist - and it was impossible to predict what parts these would play in any future social structure.

Durkheim widened his speculations about the corporations to the point of envisaging a transformation of the political system based on functional representation; and in this he joins a whole tradition of French political thought that stretches from Saint-Simon through Louis Blanc to present-day theorists of planification and others, on both right and left.[1] The corporation, he believed, was destined to become "the basis or one of the essential bases of our political organisation", and would be "the elementary division of the State, the fundamental political unit"[2]. With the development of industrial society, there was a progressive weakening of the old social structure: territorial divisions, though they would not disappear entirely, were diminishing in importance,

1. Cf. Hayward, 1960 and Private Interests and Public Policy (London, 1966), ch.II (q.v. for further references). The latest example is Pierre Mendès-France: v. La République Moderne (Paris, 1962), ch.5.
2. 1902b, p.xxxi; tr. 1933b, p.27 (S.L.).

and the bonds attaching us to them were "becoming daily more fragile and more slack"[1]. Increasingly they affected men only insofar as they affected their occupational interests. Political representation should ultimately be reorganised along functional lines and society, "instead of remaining what it is today, an aggregate of juxtaposed territorial districts, would become a vast system of national corporations"[2].

Needless to say, Durkheim was much further removed from revolutionary than he was from administrative syndicalism. Nothing could have been less congenial to him than the anti-reformist, anti-intellectual and anti-bourgeois standpoint of the former, or the heroic myth-making of its theoreticians, though he mildly echoed its hostility to parliamentarism and party politics.

The theorists of revolutionary syndicalism, and in particular Georges Sorel, Edouard Berth and Hubert Lagardelle, had come to embrace and idealise the thinking and practice of the militant union activists within the C.G.T. Sorel and Berth, who had little influence among the unionists, moved in an irrationalist and pro-royalist and nationalist direction, but Lagardelle remained closer to the union movement and the socialist party, editing the Mouvement Socialiste from 1899 to 1914, which was an important international forum for the discussion of syndicalist ideas. These were much influenced by

1. Ibid., p.xxxii; tr. p.27.
2. Ibid., p.xxxi; tr. p.27. It should be evident that Durkheim's corporatism was very different from that of Maurras and the Action Française, which eventually issued in the Vichy Charte du Travail.

the uncompromising anti-nationalist Gustave Hervé. Syndicalists in general agreed with Hervé (at least, until 1914) when he said that "for the poor, nations are not loving mothers; they are harsh stepmothers ... Our nation can only be our class"[1]. Socialists should, they believed, oppose all wars, whether offensive or defensive, by means of a revolutionary strike against the whole capitalist system.

Durkheim confronted these ideas at a Libre Entretien in 1905[2], which was devoted to the question of whether there was an incompatibility between working-class consciousness and patriotism. Was antipatriotism necessary to the class struggle? Lagardelle argued that it was, and, in reply Durkheim observed that this position was derived from a more general set of assumptions; that a reconstruction of society was only possible by means of the destruction of existing nations, that present society consisted of two blocs and that one had to destroy the other. Thus it was necessary to examine the question of whether socialism and destructive revolution entailed one another.

Durkheim advanced three principal arguments against Lagardelle. In the first place, Lagardelle had argued that the necessary destruction of existing societies was a consequence of the growth of large-scale industry. But why should one assume that this growth was not part of the normal development of modern societies? Why should our societies necessarily

1. Quoted in Goldberg, op.cit., p.318.
2. 1905e.

be unable to achieve a relative harmony with the economic system? Why "should it be impossible that legal and moral institutions should progress, parallel to this economic progress, in such a way as to achieve this harmony?"[1] In the second place, the whole theory of revolutionary syndicalism was based on the idea that the worker was exclusively a producer. This was to reduce him to an abstraction, altogether analogous to the old homo oeconomicus of the classical economists; in fact, the worker participated in a whole "intellectual and moral life" that was as necessary to him as the air he breathed.

In the third place, how could it be possible that tomorrow man should wish the destruction of society and the advent of barbarism? Man was man because he had a social life; how could he want to destroy society? It had been said, Durkheim continued

> that if war broke out today between France and Germany, that would be the end of everything. The destructive revolution that is advocated would be a destructive movement worse than that.[2]

To destroy society was to destroy a civilisation. Doubtless such catastrophes had often occurred in the past, but

> man's intelligence should precisely have as its overriding aim the taming and muzzling of these blind forces, instead of letting them wreak destruction. I am quite aware then when people speak of destroying existing societies, they intend to reconstruct them. But these are the fantasies of children. One cannot in this way rebuild collective life; once our social organisation is destroyed, centuries of history will

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1. Ibid., p.422.
2. Ibid.

> be required to rebuild another. In the intervening period, there will be a new Middle-Ages, a transitional period in which the old departed civilisation will not be replaced by any other, or at least will only be replaced by a civilisation that is incipient, uncertain and seeking to find itself. It will not be the sun of a new society that will rise, all resplendent with light over the ruins of the old; instead, men will enter a new period of darkness. Instead of hastening the advent of that period, it is necessary to employ all our intelligence so as to forestall it, or, if that is impossible, to shorten it and render it less sombre. And to do that we must avoid acts of destruction that suspend the course of social life and civilisation.[1]

Certainly, Durkheim went on, he did not deny the individual's right to wish to live in a better society, but the anti-patriots were making war on <u>all</u> societies, since these were all capitalist. They thus accepted joyfully the prospect of the transitional epoch of which he had spoken - and that was a true enormity.

Lagardelle replied that intellectuals were irrelevant; the workers did not have to justify themselves before an intellectual like M.Durkheim. An intellectual could not understand their reasons. It was, he said,

> up to M. Durkheim, who is a sociologist, to understand [workers' socialism], not to oppose it ... The workers feel themselves to be outside the <u>patrie</u>. That conviction may scandalise us, but it is a fact ...[2]

All maladies, observed Durkheim, were facts (at this there was laughter), but M. Lagardelle had not justified the anti-patriotic sentiment. Lagardelle answered that he could only describe it. Durkheim then observed that one must not lose one's reason and approve of a violent movement simply because

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1. <u>Ibid</u>., p.423.
2. <u>Ibid</u>., p.424.

it was violent. One had to reflect, and not abandon oneself blindly to one's emotions. Lagardelle replied that these ideas were the products of a spontaneous movement of the masses. Durkheim in turn replied - so what? Lagardelle then spoke of the capitalist regime at a certain point engendering within itself forces that were incompatible with capitalism itself and which would lead to revolution. Durkheim replied that

> It would be necessary to show how the development of capitalism has suddenly produced this antagonism, that would necessarily bring with it the destruction of existing society.[1]

Slightly later in the discussion, Durkheim once more asked Lagardelle why moral, legal and political institutions could not evolve alongside economic life, so as to adapt to it and regulate it. Lagardelle replied that we were confronted by two regimes that were economically distinct: capitalist production contained forces that tended to destroy the capitalist regime and transform society. To this Durkheim responded by remarking that there had certainly been a greater relative change between the crafts of the Middle Ages and the manufacturing industry of the eighteenth century than between the eighteenth century and the large-scale industry of the present time. In any case, what Lagardelle forgot was the factor of consciousness: it was under the influence of the French Revolution that the new aspirations had been formed. The beginning of socialism was in the French Revolution. Lagardelle was the prisoner of the formulae of Marxist materialism.

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1. Ibid., p.427.

Lagardelle replied that the progressive evolution of capitalism was towards revolution. The worker was confined to the sphere of production, without property and subject to the arbitrary exploitation of capitalists. Everything depended on the worker's role as producer.

This discussion was leading nowhere, and Durkheim reverted to the question of the worker's supposed antipatriotism by observing that there was more in common between the worker and the bourgeois than Lagardelle thought; they lived in the same social environment, they

> inhale the same moral atmosphere, they are, though they deny it, members of a single society, and, as a result, cannot but be impregnated with the same ideas.[1]

In the light of this, the notion of imminent and indispensable destruction was unintelligible. As for socialism, he concluded:

> It is a question, in the end, of knowing whether socialism is miraculous, as it imagines, whether it is contrary to the nature of our societies, or whether it accords with their natural evolution, so that it does not have to destroy them in order to establish itself. It is to this latter view that history seems to me to point.[2]

These, then, were Durkheim's views about the issues of his time. He was in many ways both a moralistic conservative and a radical social reformer, who would qualify, on most definitions, as a socialist of sorts. His conservatism was sociologically based but rested ultimately on a view of human nature as being in need of limits and moral discipline. His

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1. Ibid., p.433.
2. Ibid., p.436.

socialism likewise rested on a fear of anarchy both within society and within the life of the individual. Social order and the mental equilibrium of the individual, based on maximum freedom of thought and distribute justice in social relations - these were his ultimate guiding preoccupations.

He was also, like so many of his generation prior to 1914, an optimist. His high-minded rationalism led him to believe, like Jaurès, in an internationalist future, thought from the mid-1900's (say, from the fall of Delcassé in 1905) this looked increasingly unlikely. He believed, as Jaurès did, that, "while awaiting the realisation of international peace by socialist unity, socialists of all countries must each protect their own against possible acts of aggression"[1]. He also believed that they would do so, and eventually he was largely proved right. Yet he was never a nationalist though he was a patriot; as he said, in 1907, it was

> to speak in nationalist terms to place French culture above all others, even though it be revolutionary ... It would be a cause for despair if one were condemned to think of patriotism only in terms of putting France above all.[2]

As we have seen, he came to fear the outbreak of war with Germany as being "the end of everything". But when it came, he gave himself wholly to the national war effort.

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1. (1898) Quoted in Soltau, op. cit., p.440.
2. 1908a(1), pp.6-7. Contrast this with the misleading statements concerning Durkheim's 'nationalism' in Mitchell, 1931 and Peterson, 1963.

(x) The War

"On the day when the flood of arms inundated us", recalled André Lalande, "we felt for the most part as if a gigantic sea-wave had crossed the valley of the Seine and was about to dash upon the suburbs of Paris"[1]. German forces under Von Kluck swept through Belgium into northern France, but the French counter-attacked in early September, the Germans were contained and Paris was saved by the battle of the Marne. Durkheim wrote to Léon:

> I don't have to tell you what satisfaction these latest events have caused me. But we are not at the end of our difficulties and our sacrifices; yet for the first time one has the sense that the monstre de feu has been hit ...[2]

It seemed impossible, he wrote,

> that Germany, even helped by Austria, should prevail over the entire world and the nature of things.[3]

The time was perhaps near when French territory would be freed; above all it was necessary to "undermine their morbid arrogance - and their arrogance is their strength"[4]. The recent events, he felt,

> should revive your idealistic faith, which the brutality of the German attack may have disturbed. Never has the ideal to which we are all attached shown its strength more clearly. Therein has resided the value to us of our most effective allies, the English and Belgians; and it is because Germany, or rather Prussia, has combatted this ideal with a brutality leaving no room

1. "Philosophy in France", Philosophical Review, 25 (1916) p.525.
2. Letter dated 15 Sept. 1914.
3. Ibid.
4. Ibid.

> for any doubt, that the Prussian regime is tottering. The regimes of Prussia and Austria are unnatural aggregates, established and maintained by force, and they have not been able gradually to replace force and compulsory subjection by voluntary support. An empire so constructed cannot last. The geography of Europe will be remade on a rational and moral basis. Russia herself is caught up in the movement - she is liberating Poland![1]

This optimism and idealism sustained him for the next two years[2]. Although his health was already seriously impaired by overwork[3], he threw himself into the task of national defence, alongside his teaching which continued until 1916. As for the teaching, he had little enthusiasm for it. Most of the students were called up; indeed, of the 342 students at the Ecole Normale Superieure, 293 were eventually sent to the firing line and 104 were killed outright[4]. Of those that remained, Durkheim wrote that neither teachers nor students could show much interest in university life[5]. With national survival in jeopardy, with national morale to sustain and foreign support to win, especially in the neutral countries, and with his own son and son-in-law and five nephews in the army, Durkheim's attention lay else-

1. Ibid.
2. A year later he was, for example, to write: "If, then, at certain times of weariness, it should happen that we allow ourselves to sink into doubt and discouragement, let us think of the Serbs and the Belgians! These small states, devastated and ruined, remain a force to be reckoned with. They symbolise a whole aspect of the ideal for which we are fighting." (1916a, p.120).
3. Davy, 1960b, p.11. He was twice forced to take a holiday (ibid.).
4. Lalande, art.cit., p.525. Many of the most promising Durkheimians died during the war: v. the obituaries in the Annee, n.s. 1 and 2 (1925 and 1927).
5. Letter to Léon dated 30 Oct. 1914.

where. Yet he still managed to write an article on sociology for the International Exhibition at San Francisco[1] and to edit and write part of a book explaining French universities to Americans[2].

Durkheim's chief activities were writing and organising. He organised a committee for the publication of studies and documents on the war[3], which were, as he told Leon, to be sent "to neutral countries and would neutralise, as far as possible, Germany's bold and lying propaganda"[4]. The Committee published two pamphlets by Durkheim himself: Qui a voulu la Guerre?[5] and L'Allemagne au-dessus de Tout[6]. The first, written with a noted germaniste, Ernest Denis, is a brief and incisive study of the events leading up to war based on the available diplomatic documents. It is a careful and cool document, evaluating the respective responsibilities of

1. 1915a.
2. 1918a. He took this work very seriously, as is shown by two long letters to Louis Havet in which Durkheim, as editor, sought to correct what he saw as misleading statements in Havet's account of the Ecole des Hautes Etudes.
3. The committee consisted of E. Lavisse (President), Durkheim (Secretary), C. Andler, J. Bedier, H. Bergson, E. Boutroux, E. Denis, J. Hadamard, G. Lanson, C. Seignobos and A. Weiss. It was formed by agreement with Raymond Poincare and Marcel Sembat, For a discussion of the role of French academics in this propaganda work, v. Mitchell, A, "German History in France after 1870", Journal of Contemporary History, 2, 3, (1967) pp.95-99.
4. Letter dated 30 Oct. 1914.
5. 1915b: tr. 1915e. He appealed to the schoolteachers to help secure its widest possible circulation (Davy, 1960a, p.19).
6. 1915c: tr. 1915f.

France, England, Russia, Austria and Germany for the outbreak of war. In introducing it, the authors wrote that

> In approaching the subject of this study, we must not forget that we are ourselves judge and a party in the debate, since our own country is concerned. We must therefore forewarn ourselves and above all our readers against a possible national parti-pris, however respectable that may be. For this reason, we shall confine ourselves to providing in the first place an objective and complete account of the events, without any mixture of evaluation. Only subsequently will we allow ourselves to draw any conclusions; but, at that stage, it will be easy for the reader to test, by the account which precedes them, the results that we will arrive at.[1]

The conclusions were that Austria provoked the war by issuing an unacceptable ultimatum to Serbia but drew back as a wider war became more and more menacing; and that it was Germany who had initially encouraged Austria and subsequently pressed her to persevere. It was Germany who systematically directed the crisis towards war, refusing efforts to delay and offers of mediation, and ultimately declaring war on Russia and France. Germany was "la grande coupable".[2] Allowing for its conditions of publication as a French war pamphlet, and given the restricted availability of diplomatic evidence, this pamphlet stands up remarkably well to the historical record. Indeed, some present-day historians are increasingly arguing precisely this case[3]: that in 1914 the

1. 1915a, p.5. Some of his evidence was obtained directly from those who had taken part in these events (letter to Léon dated 12 Feb. 1915).
2. Ibid., p.61.
3. V. esp. Fischer, F., Griff nach der Weltmacht (Düsseldorf 1961; 3rd ed. 1964): tr. as Germany's Aims in the First World War (London: 1967) and the illuminating discussion by Joll, J., "The 1914 Debate Continues", Past and Present, 34 (July 1966), pp.100-113.

German government was prepared to risk war in pursuit of the general aim of establishing Germany as a Great Power, and that it systematically encouraged Austria to provoke war with Serbia even when it saw that it could not be localised.

Durkheim's second pamphlet, L'Allemagne au-dessus de Tout, was written as a study of "German mentality", centering on the pangermanist ideas associated with Heinrich von Treitschke. This was altogether less coolly written. He began by drawing a contrast between Treitschke's ideas (in which there was "not one word of humanity"[1]) and humanitarian morality:

> For morality to us, that is to say, to all civilised nations, to all those who have been formed in the school of Christianity, has for its primary object the realisation of humanity, its liberation from the servitudes that belittle it, its growth in loving-kindness and fraternity.[2]

In a democratic society, he wrote, "the people and the state are simply two aspects of a single reality. The state is a people awakened to a consciousness of itself, of its needs and aspirations - a more complete and definite consciousness"[3]. In Germany there was "between these two essential elements of all national life a radical distinction and even a sort of contradiction"[4]. Treitschke assumed there to be a contradiction between the state and the individual, but in reality there was no such necessary antinomy. Individuals did not just care for their private interests; the state presupposed society, expressing, defining and regulating men's 'social sentiments'.

1. 1915c, p.23.
2. Ibid.
3. Ibid., p.27.
4. Ibid.

The state depended on moral forces which themselves depended on treaties it had signed, as well as on the goodwill of its subjects and of foreign nationalities. Morality, seen not merely as a set of ideas but as forces which move and dominate men, was superior to the state, limiting its authority and its sovereignty. With these principles Durkheim contrasted the German "public mentality", arguing that "the war has been caused by the German staff with a barbarity unparalleled in history"[1].

Turning to the analysis of this mentality, Durkheim wrote that there was evidently

> an intelligently organised system of ideas in the German mind which accounts for the actions of which one would like to believe Germany incapable. We are ... able to see where and how [these practical consequences] coincide with a certain form of German mentality.[2]

This was a "system of ideas ... made for war"[3]: its basis was Germany's 'will to power'. Treitschke's doctrine, embodying a "concrete and living sentiment"[4], was based on an idea of the state that rested on a certain disposition of the will. What were the sources of this myth of Germany as "the highest terrestrial incarnation of divine power"? Durkheim found them to lie in a spiritual state, a "morbid hypertrophy of the will, a kind of will-mania".[5] The "normal, healthy will, however vigorous, accepts the necessary relations of dependence inherent

1. Ibid., p.38.
2. Ibid., p.41.
3. Ibid., p.42.
4. Ibid., p.44.
5. Ibid.

in the nature of things"[1], but the German will to power and world-domination was unbounded. But Durkheim, characteristically, saw this as transitory because unnatural:

> There is no state so great that it can govern eternally against the wishes of its subjects and force them by purely external coercion, to submit to its will. There is no state so great that it is not merged within the vaster system of other states, that does not, in other words, form part of the great human community, and that owes nothing to this. There is a universal conscience and a universal opinion, and it is no more possible to escape the empire of these than to escape that of physical laws, for they are forces which, when they are violated, react against those who offend them. A state cannot survive that has humanity arrayed against it[2].

These were observations forged in the heat of war; but Durkheim was not, for the most part, affected by war hysteria nor, at all, by the aggressive integral nationalism evident in the Catholic and conservative sectors of French opinion. Although in September 1914 he was writing that "in order to destroy Prussian militarism ... it will be necessary seriously to invade Germany"[3], he was soon worrying about the dangers of a German military defeat:

> I do not think one has the right to [seek to prevent Germany from existing as a people], and I wonder if it is possible. It is contrary to the principle which we intend to apply. If the Poles must belong to Poland, the Alsatians to themselves or to France, the Germans must belong to Germany. All that matters is that Germany must be prevented from being Prussian, from being an essentially military empire. Unfortunately, I fear that we are not tending in this direction.[4]

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1. Ibid.
2. Ibid.
3. Letter to Léon dated 23 Sept. 1914.
4. Ibid., dated 2 Oct. 1914.

In France, he wrote, the clerical party was seeking to turn the circumstances of the war to its own advantage:

> By an abominable paradox, it is said that this war spells the death of the pacific ideal, whereas it constitutes its triumph, above all if we win[1].

He was greatly concerned to contribute to what he called the "moral sustenance of the country"[2], which, as the war dragged on, became increasingly important. As he wrote to Davy in late 1915, it was vital to "remain calm, to rejoice in success, when it comes, but without abandoning oneself to such emotions, because of the extended efforts still needed, nor to the contrary emotions in case of difficulties"[3]. These sentiments colour the patriotic pamphlets entitled Lettres a tous les Francais,[4] which he organised, writing a number of them himself. In the first he developed the theme to be found in them all: the need for "patience, effort, confidence"[5]. It was, he wrote, only their inflexible will that would give Frenchmen victory in a struggle that could not quickly be brought to an end. In war the people's "moral state" played "a role of the utmost importance"[6]. In order that the nation should remain patient, calm and unshakeable in its decision, it was necessary

> that we all sustain ourselves, that we all involve one another mutually, that we strengthen each other ceaselessly by speech and example in this patience and this firmness. ... We must struggle against ourselves

1. Ibid.
2. Davy, 1960b, p.11.
3. Davy, 1960a, p.19.
4. 1916a.
5. V. Davy, 1919, p.192.
6. 1916a, p.12.

> against our nerves, against causes of all sorts that threaten our internal equilibrium and that of the country; and we must struggle too against similar weaknesses in others ... We do not belong to one another as in times of peace. We are accountable for the feelings we experience and, more still, for the language that we use. For if, in the flow of conversation, we let slip one word of discouragement, we diminish the courage of those around us...[1]

He wrote to Léon in early 1915 that

> events have shown that there is still a rich vitality in the country; this is worth infinitely more than those who represent and lead it. When a strong sentiment unites it, it shows itself capable of energy. What we must make sure of is that, when peace is re-established, this moral enthusiasm must be preserved. That will not be easy ...[2]

Durkheim's own energy and enthusiasm were prodigious. He was an assiduous member of the following committees (among others):- the Conseil de l'Universite, the Comité des Travaux Historiques et Scientifiques, the Comité Consultatif de l'Enseignement Supérieure, the Comité aux Etrangers au Ministere de l'Intérieur, the Comité Français d'Information et d'Action aupres des Juifs des Pays Neutres, the Fraternité Franco-Americaine, the Pupiles de l'Ecole Publique, the Comité des Publication des Etudes et Documents sur la Guerre, the Comite de Publication des Lettres à tous les Francais, the Ligue Republicaine d'Alsace-Lorraine, the Société des Amis de Jaurès, and Pour la Rapprochement Universitaire[3]. In November 1914 he wrote to Léon that he did not have a moment to himself - "I am working like a young man"[4]; in February 1915 he wrote that he had been leading a life that was "more than active",

1. Ibid., pp.12-13.
2. Letter dated 30 March 1915.
3. Davy, 1919, p.193.
4. Letter dated 24 Nov. 1914.

adding that "I can do no more than I am doing at present. I have twice had to stop in these last weeks"[1]. In March he wrote that the translation into seven languages of the war pamphlets, posing endless problems for him to solve, was filling his whole life: "I do not think", he wrote, "that I have worked so hard for twenty years"[2].

Amidst all this activity, he was to receive a blow from which he would never recover. His son André, to whom he was greatly devoted, had just gained his agregation when war broke out and had been training to be a linguist under Antoine Meillet. He was one of the most brilliant of the youngest members of Année group. Durkheim's letters are full of constant and anxious concern for him. Late in 1915 he was sent to the Bulgarian front and suddenly the family lost communication with him. On the 10th January 1916 Durkheim wrote to Davy, telling him that he had just learnt that André had been declared missing in the retreat from Serbia. He continued:

> I do not have to tell you of the anguish in which I am living. It is an obsession that fills every moment and is even worse than I supposed. Still, I have been preparing for this blow for a long time. My wife and I realised it above all when he left for Salonica.[3]

On the 14th, he wrote: "Now I can see the expected moment approaching, I am afraid"[4]; and the next day, to Léon, referring to his continual scrutiny of the Bulgarian despatches: "I am beginning to discern the insignificant signs over which I stop

1. Letter to Léon dated 12 Feb. 1915.
2. Letter to Léon dated 10 March, 1915.
3. Cited in Davy, 1960a, p.19. Cf. Davy, 1960b, p.12.
4. Ibid.

for a moment only to struggle against the opposite sensations that dominate me"[1]. Then, a month later, to Davy, still with no definite news, he wrote that he was haunted by "the image of this exhausted child, alone at the side of a road in the midst of night and fog ... that seizes me by the throat"[2]. Ten days later, he wrote to Léon, asking him to come and visit:

> We will converse as before. But what I wish to avoid is conversations that may lead me back to that on which my thoughts find it all too easy to concentrate. The best rule, in such a case, is to set about one's task again as quickly as possible. It is the only way to prevent obsessions ...

but then he added:

> Nothing is so bad as endlessly analysing one's grief. I have allowed myself to do this too much ... And that is why I ask my friends not to come and see me at this time, because of the circumstances in which I find myself. I am sure that on reflection you will agree with me.[3]

Finally, in April, there was no longer any doubt; André's death and its circumstances were confirmed[4]. Durkheim wrote to Davy: "It is at least a satisfaction to me to have discovered that I found comfort in the ideas that I teach", and

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1. Letter dated 15 Jan. 1916.
2. Cited in Davy, 1960a, p.19.
3. Letter dated 28 Feb. 1916.
4. In his son's obituary, Durkheim was to write: "André Durkheim was not only united to me by blood-ties. For a long time I was his sole teacher and I always remained closely associated with his studies. Very early he showed a marked interest in the researches to which I have devoted myself and the moment was near when he was about to become a companion in my work. The intellectual intimacy between us was thus as complete as possible". (1917a, p.201).

added: "Do not worry about us. We will recover, at least in so far as it is possible to recover, at any rate I hope so"[1].

He went to Biarritz to recuperate, writing to Leon:

> [The seaside] is of no interest to us. Personally, what I need is silence and meditation. I have profited from the over-active life I led in Paris. It proved to me that I was still able to interest myself in things although I no longer had a personal interest in them. Above all, it prevented the suffering from overwhelming me completely, driving it back and localising it. From there it cannot be driven out. But it is perhaps possible to render it less acute. To this task I am applying myself. To achieve this, it is important that I should be left to myself for a while. I feel a great need for that.
>
> It is truly incredible that the therapeutic of moral grief should still be as Epicurus described it. I am not aware that anything new has since been said on this subject. It is inconceivable that this should be the great human malady and that almost nothing should have been done to treat it. Of course I know that the religions are there, and that their practices are rich in experience that is unconscious and full of accumulated wisdom. But their wisdom is crude and empirical; nothing resembling ritual practices has been of use to me or seems effective to me. Everything remains to be done and yet although for several months I did not know ....[2] to what happens to me, one does not find the remedy for such ills in so short a time. I am none the less trying as methodically as I can. We will see what the results will be.
>
> Apart from this, my recuperation is not pure contemplation. I have work to do. We are going to publish the Lettres in three volumes. There were two that were so bad that I had to rewrite them. This is how I am occupied at the moment. It is almost finished. I am also concerned about the Jewish question in Russia, which I am studying for the first time. Add to that a correspondence that is several months behind. That is enough to fill my days and even my evenings. Ten o'clock has struck and my wife is calling me to order. I obey.[3]

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1. Cited in Davy, 1960a, p.19.
2. The writing here becomes indecipherable.
3. Letter dated 20 April, 1916.

Meanwhile, the uglier passions of war mounted within the country; and as a native of Alsace-Lorraine, and a Jew with a German name, Durkheim was the victim of at least two scurrilous attacks. The first was an item in the Libre Parole of 19th January 1916, referring to Durkheim as "a Boche with a false nose, representing the Kriegsministerium whose agents are swarming throughout France"[1]. The second attack came a few months later from a senator, speaking at the tribune of the Senate, who demanded that the Commission charged with reviewing residence permits issued to foreigners should examine the situation of "this Frenchman of foreign descent, a Professor at our Sorbonne, and without doubt reprosenting, or so it has been claimed, the German Kriegsministerium".[2] However, Paul Painleve, then at the Ministry of Public Instruction, protested indignantly at this accusation, in the following words:

> M. Durkheim, Head of the School of French Sociology, has published a pamphlet about responsibilities for the war which has made the greatest impression in the neutral countries (Très bien! and applause). His son was killed gloriously on the field of honour at Salonica (loud applause). This is the man that it is sought to dishonour at the tribune. I shall say no more. I regret that to the wound caused by a German hand to M. Durkheim's heart there has today been added an even graver injury coming from a French hand (Très bien! and loud and unanimous applause).[3]

The senator was then forced to withdraw his accusation by the unanimous disapproval of the Senate.

1. Cited in letter to Léon dated 26 Jan. 1916.
2. Cited in Sarrailh, 1960, p.9 from the Journal Officiel.
3. From Durkheim's dossier, University of Bordeaux.

Despite his imperfect health, Durkheim continued his manifold activities during 1916. Davy recalls that he had withdrawn into "an almost ferocious silence"[1], forbidding his friends to mention the source of his grief: "do not", he said to Davy, "speak to me again about my son until I tell you that it has become possible"[2]. Léon recalled that he imposed on others a "frightening silence, as glacial as death itself"[3]. He gave himself all the more unstintingly to all the various committees and organisations concerned with the war. "What we lack", he wrote to Davy, "is a strong hand, an energetic will, that will stir up and gather together the forces [in the country] and direct them untiringly towards a fixed objective"[4].

He had become thin and feverish, his eyes were hollow and his walk less assured[5]. He was trying to take up his lectures on ethics again, but could not work continuously. He confided to Davy that he feared that he would never be able to complete his book on this subject[6]. Then, as he was leaving one of his innumerable committee meetings late in 1916, after making a passionate speech, he had a stroke[7]. He was obliged to rest for several months and seemed to recover some of his former strength. America's entry into the war

1. Davy, 1960b, p.12.
2. Davy, 1960a, p.19.
3. Leon, 1917, p.750.
4. Davy, 1960a, p.20.
5. Davy, 1919, p.181.
6. Davy, 1960b, p.12.
7. Leon, 1917, p.750.

was a great relief to him: he wrote to Davy that "more than ever it seems that things are going well for us"[1]. He took up some work again, though he could not contemplate the prospect of an hour's lecturing[2].

In the early summer he spent some weeks at Fontainbleau in the peace and fresh air. While there, he said, in the course of a conversation, to Davy: "I have the sensation of speaking to you about men and things with the detachment of someone who has already left the world"[3]. He died on the 15th November of that year at the age of fifty-nine, having lost, in the course of the war, many of his closest collaborators and finest students.

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1. Davy, 1960a, p.20.
2. V. ibid.
3. Ibid.