Durkheim's Effervescence and its Maussian Afterlife in Medical Anthropology

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Abstract
What, if not Durkheim's "collective representations" acquired during exalted states of effervescence, makes possible society, culture and science? Marcel Mauss's attentiveness to multi-species relations provides an answer, as it underlines the importance of synchronising the rhythms of different social relationships for making a livelihood. Among the Eskimo [Inuit], Mauss argues, the seasonal cycle of human sociality is in accord with that of their game; in summer people disperse and pursue in small nuclear bands predominantly economic activities, while they congregate in dense house complexes in winter to engage in ritual. It would appear that Mauss draws heavily on Boas' contrast between the Kwakiutl winter celebrations, which begin in autumn with rites of initiation, and the 'uninitiated' Kwakiutl livelihood in summer.

The above insights have traction for medical anthropologists who are interested in finding an anthropological explanation for the effectiveness of 'traditional' or 'indigenous' healing techniques. The article ends with a discussion of ethnographic materials that discuss rhythmic aspects of sociality brought about through a subtle coordination of body techniques and corresponding (sensory) technologies, and their life enhancing effects.

Key words: effervescence, fermentation, rhythm, synchronicity, body techniques; Durkheim, Mauss, Boas.

One might have thought that Durkheim's fascination with 'psychic life', and with the emotions released during periods of effervescence which he so vividly described, would be of primary interest to medical anthropologists, particularly to those studying so-called states of trance and possession. However, history has proved otherwise. Durkheimian scholars have demonstrated that the amplifying of the drama contained in the ethnographic descriptions of effervescence in the rites and ceremonies of Australian peoples had a specific argumentative function (e.g. de Lannoy 1996: 77). Meanwhile, medical anthropologists have tended to shy away from providing psychological explanations for social processes that are considered therapeutic (e.g. Whyte, van der Geest and Hardon 2003, Lock and Farquhar 2007, Good et al. 2008, Hsu and Potter 2012).

In exploring Durkheim's (1912) *Les forms élémentaires de la vie religieuse* – or *The Forms*, for short – this discussion first examines passages in which effervescence is mentioned as a core characteristic of one of two phases in human social life. An early

identification of these phases can be found in a study by Marcel Mauss (1904-05) on the 'Eskimo' (a term current at the time for the Inuit), in which Mauss famously noted that their social morphology was marked by a seasonal 'rhythm' of group dispersal and concentration which occurred in synchrony with the movements of the animals they hunted.

The present article addresses three main themes. First, an attempt is made to approximate what Durkheim meant by effervescence by presenting the passages in *The Forms* in which the term 'effervescence' is mentioned (in French and in two translations into English). This will bring to the fore sharp alternations between the two phases related to moral concerns connoted by his *homo duplex*. Second, Mauss's essay of 1906 is explored with respect to his understanding of effervescence. As will become evident, Mauss's interest in the techniques and technologies of human beings who are interacting with their surroundings emphasizes a rhythmic temporality and synchronized movement between different species. Finally, ethnographic evidence will be presented to show how the Maussian framing of effervescence can be productively applied to questions in medical anthropology. Incidentally, as will be suggested, Mauss's interest in rhythm and synchronization as an aspect of the 'morphology' of social organization has more in common than is generally assumed with Merleau-Ponty's ([1945] 2012) 'physiognomic' approach to perception.

Durkheim on 'effervescence': tentative approximations

Let us begin with an attempt to understand what Durkheim meant by effervescence by taking relevant passages from *The Forms* word for word:[1]

(A) Mais qu'un corrobbori ait lieu et tout change. … Or, le seul fait de l'agglomération agit comme un excitant exceptionellement puissant (1912: 308).

But when a corrobbori takes place, everything changes. … the very act of concentration acts as an exceptionally powerful stimulant (1915: 215) / Everything changes when a corroboree takes place ... The very act of congregating is an exceptionally powerful stimulant (1995: 217).

(B) Une fois les individus assemblés, il se dégage de leur rapprochement une sorte d'électricité qui les transporte vite à un degré extraordinaire d'exaltation (1912: 308).

When they are once come together, a sort of electricity is formed by their collecting which quickly transports them to an extraordinary degree of exaltation (1915: 215) / Once the individuals are gathered together, a sort of electricity is generated from their closeness and quickly launches them into an extraordinary height of exaltation (1995: 217).

(C) C'est donc dans ces milieux sociaux effervescents et de cette effervescence même que paraît etre née l'idée religieuse (1912: 313).

So, it is in the midst of these effervescent social environments and out of this effervescence itself that the religious idea seems to be born (1915: 218-219) / It is in these effervescent social milieux, and indeed in that very effervescence, that the religious idea seems to have been born (1995: 220).

(D) Et ce qui tend à confirmer que telle est bien l'origine, c'est que, en Australie, l'activité proprement religieuse est presque tout entière concentrée dans des moments où se tiennent ces assemblées (1912: 313).

The theory that this really is the origin is confirmed by the fact that in Australia the really religious activity is almost always entirely confined to the moments when these assemblies are held (1915: 218-219) / That such is indeed the origin tends to be confirmed by the fact that what is properly called religious activity in Australia is almost entirely contained within the periods when these gatherings are held (1995: 220).

Effervescence is here described in natural scientific and, specifically, physicist terms: it arises due to a 'concentration' of people in a gathering,[2] and it is described as a 'stimulant',

as ‘a sort of electricity’ that is ‘released’. It ‘transports’ the people into ‘extraordinary’ states, and out of these states of effervescence ‘the religious idea is born’. The ‘moments [of concentration] when assemblies are held’ are marked ‘almost always entirely’ by ‘really religious activity’. In sum, in the above excerpts, the understanding of ‘effervescent social environments’ links effervescence to specific moments when people assemble in one place.

Furthermore, effervescence can be understood not merely as a concomitant aspect of a gathering but also as causative factor that transforms human conduct and mental states:

(E) Mais en même temps qu’ils la traduisent, ils la renforcent. L’ effervescence devient souvent telle qu’elle entraîne à des actes inouïs. Les passions déchaînées sont d’une telle impétuosité qu’elles ne se laissent contenir par rien (1912: 309).

But while they express it, they also strengthen it. The effervescence often reached such a point that it causes unheard-of actions. The passions released are of such an impetuosity that they can be restrained by nothing (1915: 216) / And by expressing this excitement, they also reinforce it. The effervescence often becomes so intense that it leads to outlandish behavior; the passions released are so torrential that nothing can hold them (1995: 218).

(F) Au regard de l’observation sensible, tout est divers et discontinu. Nulle part, dans la réalité, nous ne voyons des êtres mêler leur nature et se métamorphoser les uns dans les autres. Il faut d’une cause exceptionellement puissante soit intervenue qui ait transfiguré le réel de manière à le faire apparaître sous un aspect qui n’est pas le sien (1912: 337-338).

As far as the observation of the senses is able to go, everything is different and disconnected. Nowhere do we really see beings mixing their natures and metamorphosing themselves into each other. It is therefore necessary that some exceptionally powerful cause should have intervened to transfigure reality in such a way as to make it appear under an aspect that is not really its own (1915: 235-236) / From the standpoint of observation through the senses, everything is disparate and discontinuous.

Nowhere in reality do we observe beings that merge their natures and change into one another. An exceptionally powerful cause would have had to intervene and so transfigure the real as to make it appear in a form not its own (1995: 237-238).

(G) Ce sont donc les nécessités sociales qui ont fait fusionner ensemble des notions qui, au premier abord, paraissaient distinctes, et la vie sociale a facilité cette fusion par la grande effervescence mentale qu'elle détermine (1912: 339).

So it was social necessity which brought about the fusion of notions appearing distinct at first, and social life has facilitated this fusion by the great mental effervescences it determines (1915: 236) / Thus, it is social requirements that have fused together ideas that at first glance seem distinct, and through the great mental effervescence that it brings about, social life has promoted that fusion (1995: 238).

Here effervescence is seen as a causative agent giving rise to 'unheard-of actions' and unrestrained 'passions', 'impetuosity,' and 'exaltation'. Durkheim speaks of 'mental effervescence' and links it to physiological processes in the brain: where the impression of the senses in profane everyday life gives rise to the human cognitive faculty of thinking with distinctive concepts and notions, the 'great mental effervescence' facilitates a 'fusion' of them. Herewith, we are transported into the midst of the emergent disciplines of psychophysics, psychology, and neurology at the turn of the nineteenth and twentieth centuries, when empiricism as a positive science had its heyday, which, on the other side of the Atlantic, would lead to the stronghold of behaviourism in the psychological and social sciences before World War II.

The basic assumptions of nerve impulses and even brain activity as a matter of stimulus-response, towards which Durkheim may have gestured when he spoke of 'notions appearing distinct at first', have since been much elaborated in evolutionary psychology, and they linger on in anthropology to this day. The assumption that the psychic process of a

'fusion' between disparate, totally disorganized 'notions' was necessary in order for people subsequently to make sense of them has become a fundamental axiom that continues to inform the cognitive sciences, specifically cognitive and psychological anthropology. It is grounded in Durkheim's theorizing that effervescence results in 'collective representations' or, verbatim here, 'collective thought':

(H) Pour faire la loi aux impressions des sens et leur substituer une manière nouvelle de se représenter le reel, il fallait qu'une pensée d'un genre nouveau se constituât: c'est la pensée collective … (1912: 340).

In order to make a law for the impressions of the senses and to substitute a new way of representing reality to them, thought of a new sort had to be founded: this is collective thought ... (1915: 237-238) / To make men take control of sense impressions and replace them with a new way of imagining the real, a new kind of thought had to be created: collective thought... (1995: 239).

Accordingly, religion is a social affair, grounded in collective thought, and science and philosophy are derived from religion.

(I) Pour créer tout un monde d'idéaux à travers lequel le monde des réalités senties apparût transfigure, il fallait une surexcitation des forces intellectuelles qui n'est possible que dans et par la société (1912: 340).

To create a world of ideals through which the world of experienced realities would appear transfigured, a super-excitation of the intellectual forces was necessary, which is possible only in and through society (1915: 237-238) / Creating a whole world of ideals, through which the world of sensed realities seemed transfigured, would require a hyperexcitation of intellectual forces that is possible only in and through society (1995: 239).

Durkheim, who had long employed *effervescence* and *surexcitation* as equivalent terms, speaks here of a 'super-excitation' of the intellectual forces. Cognitive or intellectual forces are galvanized through effervescence into collective thought, which, in its turn, makes possible the emergence and flowering of the specifically human endeavours of science and philosophy:

(J) La religion leur a frayé la voie. Mais si elle a pu jouer ce rôle, c'est parce qu'elle est chose sociale. (1912: 340)

Religion opened the way for them. But if it has been able to play its part, it is only because it is a social affair (1915: 237) / Religion made a way for them. It is because religion is a social thing that it could play this role (1995: 239).

In effect, then, Durkheim was telling the French intelligentsia and his fellow scientists that their [rational] intellectual activities owed everything to [irrational] religion, and this would be so because religion was an intrinsically 'social' affair. In his view, as already indicated (*cf.* passage D), 'really religious activity' emerged when the concentration of the group gave rise to moments of effervescence. Interestingly, he initially refers to effervescence as primarily an attribute of a physical 'gathering' of individuals, i.e. the social environment (*cf.* A, B, and C). Only secondarily does it become constitutive of 'great mental' forces (as in passages F, G, and H).

In this context, Durkheim can be seen as bringing into play two paradoxes. One is simply that of the grounding of rational thought in irrational effervescence. The other is that, whereas the history of science and philosophy at the time was almost exclusively cast as the work of great men of great genius – an 'egotism' that seems to have established itself as intrinsic to Occidental scientific activity since the ancient Greeks (Lloyd 1987: 56-70) – Durkheim instead stressed that scientists and philosophers owed all their individual

intellectual achievements to a deeply 'social affair', namely the social affair that is religion, with its primal roots in 'collective thought', brought into being through effervescence.

These two paradoxes reflect a remarkable modesty of mind, as well as a commitment to a better understanding of the importance of morality for social life. They are grounded in Durkheim's notion of effervescence and, while he clearly intends to adopt insights from the natural sciences into his writing, he appears to be even more concerned with questions of morality. Yet before turning to his moral concerns, let us investigate further the scientific assumptions at the basis of his notion of effervescence.

What are the scientific assumptions that ground Durkheim's notion of effervescence?

Evidently, Durkheim saw effervescence as arising from a concentration of people – the corroboree, the assembly, the gathering. At the turn of the twentieth century, the excitation of the crowd and the psychology of the masses had become a concern of many social theorists in Europe (see, for example, the discussion of writers such as Tarde and Le Bon, as well as of Durkheim himself, in Torres 2014). There had been no major wars since France's defeat by Germany in 1870. Not only were social tensions growing, but organized social movements were also maturing. This happened in processes that social theorists then likened to fermentation.

Fermentation, which nowadays natural scientists associate with decay, was perceived differently at the time. The 'effervescent' was seen as bubbling uncontrollably, its upward movement indicating a vitality that is contagious. It was, of course, known that processes of fermentation could take place beneath a smooth surface before erupting and causing violent turmoil, and Durkheim lived long enough to see the fermenting social discontent erupt in the Great War of 1914-18, and in the Russian Revolutions of February and October 1917.[3]

Alongside the understanding of fermentation as a process marked by a creative ambiguity through its potential to climax in both violent outbreaks and vital risings, highly positive attitudes are found among many peoples towards fermented and fermenting foodstuffs and drinks; they cherish their upwardly bubbling life forces that have locality-specific smells and tastes. This spontaneously occurring, upbeat vitality is often reinforced by human intervention, such as stirring the gaseous bubbling with whipping utensils that create foam; thus, they are used not only in the highly scripted tea ceremony of modern Japan, but also among agro-pastoralists like the Mursi who inhabit Northeast Africa's savannahs in 'the cradle of humankind'.

The foam of a beer, which the Gisu smear all over the face and chest of young men on the celebratory day of their initiation (Heald 1989), or the sea's foam (*aphros*), from which the Greek goddess of life-making love, Aphrodite, was born, or, perhaps, even the foam of a cappuccino enjoyed all too briefly in a busy day, appear to be instantiations of such upbeat life forces. Social anthropologists often discuss fermented foods such as wines and beers, breads and cheeses, and the like, in the light of regional identity politics, memory, and nostalgia. But since these foodstuffs are produced by different organisms attuned to the complexities of overlapping life-cycles, they deserve to be valued – in view of the ethnographic moments of effervescence mentioned above – not merely for their role in place-making but also for the temporalities that they entail. The taste of fermented food is exquisite, but only momentarily, as it can easily 'go off'. So, fermented foodstuffs inevitably impose a precarious temporality on social life. In other words, they not only emplace those people in a locality who have acquired a taste for them but they also provide the people with a temporal structure that contrasts periods of feasting and fasting or, in Durkheim's terms, a phase of effervescence alternating with one that was 'uniform, languishing and dull', dominated by 'economic activity' and the need 'to procure indispensable food' (Durkheim 1912: 307-308

[1995: 215 / 1995: 217]), Admittedly, the interplay of such temporalities was not of primary concern to Durkheim's discussion of effervescence but, as suggested below, it was crucial for Mauss.

It was the heat of effervescent human warmth and the feelings and sentiments of the gathering that Durkheim imbued with great transformative powers. In contrast to psychologists who spoke of 'crowds' and their 'madness', Durkheim portrays the effervescent assembly as generative of moral force. This idea that features prominently in *The Forms* is already found in his earlier work. The key argument in *Suicide* (1897) had been that individuals left to their own devices were prone to self-destruction (*cf.* Thomassen 2012);[4] yet here we see how Durkheim understands 'creative ferment' and 'effervescent social environments' as able to transform an individual into a group-member with shared 'collective representations'. Indeed, 'religious force' was a sentiment the group inspired in its members (Durkheim 1912: 327 [1915: 229 / 1995: 230]).

Interestingly, Durkheim's thinking in the domain of morality paralleled then-contemporary thinking in the natural sciences on sense perception. The natural sciences of the time assumed that individual 'sensations' on their own were meaningless and not to be trusted: they were disparate and disconnected, and hence could not be made sense of. In Durkheim's view, religion, morality, and the intellect were necessary for human beings to give disparate sense impressions coherence and to make connections between them. The specific forms by which human beings would make these connections were generated in effervescent social environments and superimposed upon the primary sensations.

(K) Le monde du religieux n'est pas un aspect particulier de la nature empirique; *il y est superposé* (1912: 328).

The world of religious things is not one particular aspect of empirical nature; *it is superimposed upon it* (1915: 229) / The world of the religious is not a special aspect of empirical nature: *It is superimposed upon nature* (1995: 230).

(L) Or ces relations et ces liens internes, la sensation, qui ne voit rien que du dehors, ne saurait nous les faire découvrir; l'esprit seul peut en créer la notion... Le grand service que les religions ont rendu à la pensée est d'avoir construit une première représentation de ce que pouvaient être ces rapports de parenté entre les choses (1912: 339-340).

But sensations, which see nothing except from the outside, could never make them disclose these relations and internal bonds; the intellect alone can create the notion of them. ... The great service that religions have rendered to thought is that they have constructed a first representation of what these relations of kinship between things may be (1915: 237) / Sense perception, which sees only from the outside, could not possibly cause us to discover such relationships and internal ties; only the intellect can create the notion of them. … The great service that religions have rendered to thought is to have constructed a first representation of what the relations of kinship between things might be (1995: 239).

(M) L'essentiel était de ne pas laisser l'esprit asservi aux apparences sensibles, mais, au contraire, de lui apprendre à les dominer et à rapprocher ce que les sens séparent; car du moment où l'homme eut le sentiment qui l'existe des connexions internes entre les choses, la science et la philosphie devenaient possibles. La religion leur a frayé la voie (1912: 340).

The essential thing was not to leave the mind enslaved to visual appearances, but to teach it to dominate them and to connect what the senses separated; for from the moment when men have an idea that there are internal connections between things, science and philosophy become possible. Religion opened up the way for them (1915: 237) / What was essential was not to let the mind be dominated by what appears to the senses, but instead to teach the mind to dominate it and to join together what the

> senses put asunder. As soon as man became aware that internal connections exist between things, science and philosophy became possible. Religion made a way for them (1995: 239).

For Durkheim, the sense impressions were not only unconnected with one another but also unintelligible on their own. They needed to be linked up, and only the mind could make these meaningful connections. The mind's collective representations, in turn, were generated by intense moments of effervescence when human beings came together in congregations. Thus, to make sense of sense impressions in daily life, human beings relied on the religious force – and with it, the collective representations – that Durkheim saw as superimposed on 'empirical nature'.

Insofar as he distrusted individual sense impressions, Durkheim was no doubt a rationalist. Yet he differed from classic rationalists, such as Descartes, in that he gave a primacy to intense emotions of the group that resulted in the production of collective thought. Where, for Descartes, the ontological foundation for the *ego* was provided by the *cogito*, Durkheim based it on an *effervescimus* in the group. In his view, it was only possible to link sense impressions and make them intelligible if people shared collective representations.

Durkheim's moral concerns: 'man is double'

As Durkheimian scholars have long established, and as the few passages cited above should have helped to convey, a central message of *The Forms* is that the foundations of philosophy and science – namely, collective representations, as well as the ability to make connections between random sense impressions – were created in periods of exalted group concentration. Durkheim furthermore noted that these moments of exaltation alternated with periods of 'profane occupations':

(N) La vie des sociétés australiennes passe alternativement par deux phases différentes (1912: 307).

The life of the Australian societies passes alternately through two distinct phases (1915: 214) / Life in Australian societies alternates between two different phases (1995: 216).

In *The Forms* the ensuing account of a corroboree underlines how people can get into states of exaltation, how they get carried away, and how intense forces take hold of them as they are being 'transformed', 'transported', and 'metamorphosed' by them. This period of collective effervescence Durkheim contrasted with daily life that 'wearily drags along'. He spoke of a sharp alternation between the phase of effervescence in the 'ceremonies of the clan and tribe' and the phase of monotonous 'lay and profane occupations' of ordinary life (Durkheim 1912: 313 [1915: 218-219 / 1995: 220-221]. This sharpness of contrast between the two phases would become increasingly blurred, he remarked, as society evolved and developed.[5] Of the two, it was the effervescent phase that needed to be explained, as it was out of the ordinary. The contrast with ordinary life had to be sharp, Durkheim suggested, in order to prompt a rupture with the profane as experienced in the effervescent phase.

(O) On peut même se demander si la violence de ce contraste n'était pas nécessaire pour faire jaillir sensation du sacré sous sa forme première (1912: 314).

It might even be asked whether the violence of this contrast was not necessary to disengage the feeling of sacredness in its first form (1915: 219). / Indeed, we may well ask whether this starkness of contrast may have been necessary to release the experience of the sacred in its first form (1995: 221).

In other words, the human ability to participate in both phases resulted in a state that was morally charged, namely that 'man is double'.

(P) En se ramassant presque tout entière dans des moments déterminés du temps, la vie collective pouvait atteindre, en effet, son maximum intensité et d'efficacité et, par suite, donner à l'homme un sentiment plus vif de la double existence qu'il mène et de la double nature à laquelle il participe (1912: 314).

By concentrating itself almost entirely in certain determined moments, the collective life has been able to attain its greatest intensity and efficacy, and consequently to give men a more active sentiment of the double existence they lead and of the double nature in which they participate (1915: 219). / By compressing itself almost entirely into circumscribed periods, collective life could attain its maximum intensity and power, thereby giving man a more vivid sense of the twofold existence he leads and the twofold nature in which he participates (1995: 221).

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Durkheim invokes a dichotomy, not entirely unrelated to the Cartesian one (Fields 2013: 29), but also very different from it. The effervescence that arises during the celebrations and that generates a moral community with shared collective representations is an embodied experience of highly emotional human beings. Religious force and the sacred, for instance, are constructed through the body; they are not a disembodied eternal principle. Durkheim's

ultimate concern appears to be with how the double existence (a sort of duplicity?) that arises from living through two very different phases affects the morals and morality of humankind.

As with every thinker, there are tensions, inconsistencies, and disconnects in Durkheim's work. Even so, he seems to be firmly grounded, overall, in a Cartesian framework: he speaks of body versus mind, techniques versus morals, economic versus religious life.... Nevertheless, when he says 'man is double', he does not appear to be alluding to a Cartesian mind / body dualism arising from a preoccupation with cognition and existence. Rather, he appears, above all, interested in morality as a very basic problem of human existence (cf. Shilling and Mellor 1998). His concerns seem to derive from the observation that human beings have developed, together with a sense of successful shared communication during moments of effervescence, a moral sense of social obligation towards each other. However, since they alternate between the two phases of collective effervescence and daily ordinariness, this is not consistently the case. In my understanding, Durkheim therefore speaks of *homo duplex*.

Questions of authorship: Durkheim, Mauss, and Franz Boas

It is generally acknowledged that scholarly interest and research in the career of the concept of 'effervescence' in Durkheim's thought was revived by W. S. F. Pickering (1984), who maintained that 'Durkheim always associated the French Revolution with collective effervescence' (ibid.: 382). Pickering also found, in *Suicide* (Durkheim 1897), the seeds of an early understanding of effervescence as referred to in *The Forms*, which went against the common negative connotations of crowd psychology.[6]

By contrast, N.J. Allen's (1998) reading of *The Forms* associated the notion of effervescence with turn-taking and recurrent rhythms of human livelihood, rather than with the revolutions that made human history. Allen (ibid.: 158) recounted observations by

primatologists of so-called 'chimp carnivals', where 'apes from different areas meet…, and the meeting results in "social excitement"', concluding: 'So the contrast between periods of social dispersal and concentration seems to have extremely deep roots.' In Allen's view, the idea of a phase in effervescent congregation that was in rhythmic alternation with another one of social dispersal Durkheim owed to Marcel Mauss and his 'Essai sur les variations saisonnières des sociétés eskimos' published in 1906 in the issue of the *L'Année sociologique* of 1904-1905.[7] As Allen notes, there is a reference to 'effervescence' in that essay:

> L'hiver est une saison ou la société, fortement concentrée est dans un état chronique d'effervescence et de suractivité. (Mauss 1904-05: 125)
>
> Winter is a season when Eskimo society is highly concentrated and in a state of continual excitement and hyperactivity. (1979: 76)

Yet, here it is worth noting that the word 'effervescence' itself is mentioned only once in Mauss's essay, and then only in its conclusion. It is evident from Durkheim's correspondence with his nephew Marcel Mauss that the latter still had to finalize the essay in March 1906, not least because he had decided to rewrite Henri Beuchat's contribution (Durkheim 1998: 372-6). Conversely, Mauss recalled in a privately circulated memoir of 1930, 'I had to rework from start to finish our *Seasonal Variations of the Eskimo*' (Mauss 1998: 31). What is less clear is the respective roles of Durkheim and Mauss in the essay's production. As the same memoir by Mauss notes, 'I collaborated in everything he did, just as he collaborated with me; often he even rewrote entire pages of my work … He always checked what I wrote' (ibid.: 31). Accordingly, a possibility to consider is whether Durkheim revised key parts, particularly in the conclusion to the essay, and above all whether he inserted the reference to 'effervescence' – a distinctively Durkheimian rather than Maussian term, mentioned just once in the latter's original French text.[8]

The style of the prose in the conclusion (Mauss 1904-05: 129-132 / 76-80) is quite different from, and in my reading not as compelling as, that of the essay preceding it.[9] For one thing, the text does not read as though it was written by a single pen and appears in places as if it has been stitched together.[10] Furthermore, regarding the content, the ethnographic materials mentioned in the conclusion branch out, away from the Eskimo, to the Kwakiutl and the French. Might this have been due to an editorial intervention? In *The Forms* Durkheim interspersed his text with references to French life with great ease, and hence it is not unconceivable that he aimed to make his nephew's argument more plausible to his French readership, by pointing out their own seasonal oscillations between living in the city in winter and in the countryside in summer. Franz Boas, of course, should be credited with already having published on seasonal variations in the social organization of the Kwakiutl, as early as 1897. Indeed, the Kwakiutl clearly belonged to Durkheim's ethnographic repertoire insofar as they are mentioned in prominent places, as though they were at the forefront of his mind.[11] Incidentally, Boas was born in the same year as Durkheim, in 1858, and to what extent this coincidence was of relevance in the history of social and cultural anthropology may well be worth further research.

Interestingly, an outline of the seasonal variations and a parallel alternating social organization, as formulated by Mauss in 1906, is already given in Durkheim's review of Boas in the third issue of *L'année sociologique* (1898: 336), published in 1900:

> Leur organisation sociale est double: l'une est fait pour la vie profane, laique, l'autre pour la vie proprement religieuse. On les distingue aussi d'après les maisons où elles fonctionnent. La premiere ne s'observe que pendant l'été, l'autre, exclusivement, pendant l'hiver; car c'est en hiver que se célèbre les grandes cérémonies religieuses.

This may, in parts at least, explain Durkheim's 'scanty acknowledgement' in *The Forms* of Mauss's *Seasonal Variations* (*cf.* Allen 1998: 157). Since Durkheim's review was published in 1900, the nephew seems to have elaborated on his uncle's ideas in 1906, while both in fact owed important aspects of their writing to the fieldworker George Hunt and the ethnographer Franz Boas.[12] As a brief search in the digitized version of the riches of his recordings reveals, Boas (1897) himself had already spoken of an '*alternating* of seasons' (italics added), when he noted that the Kwakiutl themselves had a concept and terminology for the alternation between season-specific forms of social organization. Specifically, they said that in summer *bax'us* ['profane'] was on top and the 'winter ceremonies' ['called *ts'e'tsa'aeqa*, the secrets'] were below, and that it was 'vice versa in winter' (ibid.: 418):

> Therefore, from the moment when the spirits are supposed to be present, all the summer names are dropped, and the members of the nobility take their winter names. It is clear that with the change of name the whole social structure, which is based on names, must break down. … Thus, at the beginning of the winter ceremonial the social system is completely changed (ibid.: 418).

As names were altered in accordance with the seasons, so were the summer and winter songs and dances.[13] Boas (ibid.: 500 ff.) described in detail the ritual procedures that simultaneously caused, enacted, and celebrated the advent of the winter ceremonies.[14] The 'sacred' and the 'profane' were not part of his vocabulary (with one exception, p. 500), and yet the seasonally recurrent social alternations he describes fit the Durkheimian framework intriguingly well. Indeed, in one sole passage on p. 416, Boas notes that the period of the uninitiated, called *bax'us*, 'might be translated "profane"', where otherwise he barely uses the word, and when he does so, not in this Durkheimian sense. So, Boas a) speaks of seasonal

alternations of social organization, b) implies a rhythmic re-occurrence of alternating states of livelihood 'above' and 'below', and c) studies at length the winter celebrations marked by effervescence. However brief this excursion into Boasian ethnography is, it demonstrates that there was a transatlantic traffic in ideas that appears to have been overlooked to this very day.

Effervescence in Spencer and Gillen

The above inquiry into Durkheim's idea of 'effervescence' leads one to query his use of the available ethnography. His most detailed descriptions of effervescence in *The Forms* (1912: 310-312 [1915: 216-218 / 1995: 218-220]) are both taken from Spencer and Gillen's *The Northern Tribes of Central Australia* of 1904, and specifically from their account of two sets of rites among the Warramunga people, one centred around the snake, Wollunqua, the other called the *nathagura* or 'fire ceremony'. However, in contrast to the available ethnographies on the Kwakiutl and Eskimo that highlighted the coinciding alternations of season and sociality, no solid basis for this idea can be found in the main available ethnographies of Australia.[15] Nevertheless, Durkheim used them as evidence to argue for two contrasting phases of livelihood, one effervescent and sacred, the other dull and profane.

De Lannoy (1996: 73-74), in his meticulous study of Durkheim's compelling style, has already noted that Durkheim described the effervescent rites in his own words, but in a language very close to Spencer and Gillen's. Morphy (1998: 23) gestured in the same direction when he noted that Spencer and Gillen (1904) had noted: 'The excitement was gradually growing more and more intense' (on p. 389, in fact), where *The Forms* had 'Commencing at nightfall … ; the general effervescence was constantly increasing' (Durkheim 1915: 218 [1912: 311-312 / 1995: 219-220]). Why would Durkheim want his language to be so close to theirs? Durkheim's interest in the intra-psychic, 'experiential dimension' has already been noted. If Durkheim's understanding of the effervescent phase as

being in alternation with another, more languid one drew largely on Boas and Mauss, why, then, would he make use of Spencer and Gillen's ethnography and rhetoric? Here it is important to know that not only Durkheim but above all his senior, James Frazer, was visibly affected by Spencer and Gillen's two monographs, which in Anglo-Saxon circles were hyped up more generally (Morphy 1998: 15). So, did Durkheim choose to write in the language of the exotically familiar to persuade his armchair audiences in the European metropoles?[16] The phenomenological descriptions of the Warramunga rituals are certainly more gripping, emotionally, than the dry and repetitive prose of the different rites and procedures that make up the winter ceremonies among the Kwakiutl.

Furthermore, Durkheim's interpretation bordered on overdrawing the dichotomy between the two alternating phases, as can be gleaned from another passage in Spencer and Gillen (1904: 33), where they mentioned that 'ordinary life common to all men and women' contrasted with 'matters of a sacred or secret nature' that were exclusive to men. The context in which they wrote of this alternation is one of noting that, from the moment of a boy's initiation, 'his life is sharply marked out in two parts', and they then went on to discuss how a man's social role changed with age. Meanwhile, Durkheim (mis-)used this very passage as evidence of two sharply distinctive phases between the sacred and profane.

One is left wondering, once again, why Durkheim re-interpreted this passage such as to highlight the alternation between the two phases? As already noted, Durkheim's effervescence entailed 'a new kind of psychic life' that was 'qualitatively different from the everyday life of the individual'. Durkheimian scholarship concurs that the Australian peoples did not give him the idea of effervescence and points instead in the direction of Mauss's essay, *Seasonal Variations* ,and his seminars at the École Pratique des Hautes Études in 1903-05.However, although they clearly influenced each otherthey worked in close

collaboration, it would appear that uncle and nephew were engaged in quite different intellectual projects.

As established above, *The Forms* emphasize a recurrent alternation between two phases. This is what Mauss did in his essay on the *Seasonal Variations,* and before him Boas (1897) when reporting on Kwakiutl social organization. Unlike Mauss, Durkheim focused in particular on the phase of exaltation in congregation, just as Boas had done in his ethnographic report, which devoted several hundred pages to the winter ceremonies. Yet, where Boas' ethnography on the winter ceremonial immerses the reader in a world of different spirits and dance and song-specific group divisions and re-arrangements during the winter, Durkheim seems to have pondered – if from a more detached vantage point at the end of his life – the existential aspects of the human condition insofar as they required participation in two entirely different life worlds. The sharp contrast between the two alternating phases seems to have been tied to his moral concern with *homo duplex*. Mauss, by contrast, was on another trajectory, as he searched for the 'patterns' and 'regular rhythms' that were intrinsic to the making of the morphology of any social group, and foregrounded peoples' *movement* from social density in winter to social dispersal in summer.

The present discussion will now shift from Durkheim's effervescence to the Maussian social morphology of seasonal group expansion and contraction. It bears in mind Allen's (1998: 157) recommendation to compare the uncle's and nephew's writings, although, instead of focusing on similarities, it highlights some striking differences in orientation between them.

Marcel Mauss on seasonal patterns of concentration and dispersal

Mauss was not interested in philosophizing, as his uncle seemed to be in *The Forms* when reflecting on *homo duplex.* Rather, where Durkheim has a dichotomizing gaze and a rather

static understanding of sharply alternating phases, Mauss seems to be drawn to regularities in any movement that the study of a social group's morphology, as with the Eskimo, might uncover. He spoke of a '*rhythm* of dispersal and concentration for the morphological organization' and of the Eskimo people's religion having 'the same *rhythm* as their social organization' (Mauss 1904-05: 95, 96 / 1979: 56, 57, italics added).

As elsewhere in his writings, in this essay Mauss insists on studying the 'concrete' – a noted characteristic of his thinking (see, for example, Louis Dumont [quoted in Fox 1979: 1] and Wendy James 1998). Although he refers to Eskimo 'societies' not only in the title but also throughout the text of his essay, he does not just assume the idea of 'society' as a clear and concrete unit of analysis. On the contrary, he notes that 'Eskimo society is, by its very nature, somewhat vague and fluid' (Mauss 1904-05: 50 / 1979: 25). Neither 'a distinct language' nor a 'common name shared by all its members' allows for easy recognition of a social political entity. 'It [the tribe] is certainly not the solid and stable unit upon which Eskimo groups are based. The tribe, to be more precise, does not constitute a territorial unit. Its main characteristic is the constancy of relations it permits between assembled groups' (ibid.: 53 / 26). Instead, Mauss takes the concrete house-complex or the 'settlement' as a unit of analysis. He spells out why: it has a definite name, and its name is a proper name; it has clearly recognized [territorial] boundaries; and it forms a linguistic as well as a moral and religious unity (ibid.: 54-55 / 27-28). Having identified the settlement as a unit of analysis, Mauss can then go on to show how the Eskimo alternate seasonally in social density. It is in the house-complexes of the settlements that they congregate during the winter, leaving them and dispersing during the summer to live in tents and small family bands.

Mauss speaks of the morphological organization of Eskimo society in terms of a pattern and a rhythm of concentration and dispersal. His description centres on ecology and material culture; he is clearly in conversation with archaeologists and palaeontologists[17] and

he discusses in great detail techniques and technology, for example, of hunting. In the conclusion, however, a very explicit disclaimer against technological determinism is expressed; 'the winter house cannot be accounted for exclusively in technological terms'. Instead, it is 'dependent on the entire culture' (ibid.: 125 / 77). 'The seasons are not the direct determining cause of the phenomena they occasion; they act, rather, upon the social density that they regulate' (ibid.: 128 / 79). Through his multiple perspective-taking on concrete things and events, and on inter-species relatedness, Mauss is able to create a sense of how the synchronous working together of different life-cycles creates a whole that is morphologically, which is to say socially, meaningful.

What, then, is the driving force for this patterned movement? Mauss's answer is clear: '[T]he population congregates and scatters like the game [they hunt]. The movement that animates Eskimo society is synchronized with that of the surrounding life' (ibid.: 95 / 56).[18] Mauss establishes that the Eskimo are primarily 'fishers', seal hunters in particular. In winter they dwell on the seashore and wait by ice holes on the frozen sea for seals gasping for air, while in summer they set up camp on sweet-water river banks, where large game tends to ford the river: 'It is by means of this technology, a social phenomenon, that Eskimo social life becomes a veritable phenomenon of symbiosis that forces the group to live like the animals they hunt' (ibid.: 93-94 / 55). Mauss later comments on his 'methodological rule', that 'social life in all its forms – moral, religious, and legal – is dependent on its material substratum, and that it varies with this substratum, namely with the mass, density, form and composition of human groups' (ibid.: 129 / 80). This does not, however, make his writing merely to an attempt to bring 'a holistic, ecological approach to the analysis of a society' (Fox 1979: 6). Rather, his ethnography remains relevant today on the basis of his sensitivity to patterned movements as intrinsic to the generation of social morphology.[19]

Generating Synchronicity

To recapitulate: Durkheim saw in effervescence a 'new kind of psychic life' and driving 'stimulant' for creating 'collective representations' that provided the basis of moral conduct among group members. In *The Forms* he furthermore emphasized that effervescence occurred in a clearly delimited time period, marked by religious collectivity, which alternated with a phase of self-interested economic activity in small dispersed bands.

Yet, where Durkheim underlined a sharp contrast between the two phases, one exalted, the other dull, as an explanation for the conundrum of man's psychological doubleness (or even duplicity), Mauss was interested in the movement of a social group's seasonal dispersal and concentration for different reasons: he noted that the rhythm of expansion and contraction arose from a synchronization between species, and that this form of multi-species inter-relatedness was a social phenomenon grounded in technology. This techniques-oriented approach, which is interested in the interface of different life-cycles and in the forms of relatedness both within the human species and across species, has inspired recent sensory and medical anthropological research. In particular, medical anthropologists who are interested in 'traditional medicines' and their contested effectiveness, will find themselves attracted to Mauss's minute observations of how interspecies synchronization can be instigated and reinforced through human practice and technology.[20]

Mauss's ethnographic method was holistic (*sensu* Parkin and Ulijaszek 2007) in that it treated the technological and the material as an intrinsically social phenomenon and viewed human social life as an aspect of intersecting ecologies. In the terminology of the *Phenomenology of perception* (Merleau-Ponty 2012), Mauss's approach to social morphology comes close to a 'physiognomic' (ibid.: 19-25) account of life worlds. Mauss's focus on hands-on techniques and technologies at the interface of the body and its spatial surroundings, together with his sensitivity to changes in social morphology, calls to mind

Merleau-Ponty's insistence on taking the body, and its movement through space, as a starting point for the 'physiognomic' perception of the world. The body is then comprehended as 'the mediator to a world' (Merleau-Ponty 2012: 146). This requires, on the one hand, the body's movement through space in order to elicit a perception,[21] and on the other, a bodily awareness that the perceived is always partial, depending on the positionality and perspective of the perceiver (ibid.: 57, 62). It is the physiognomic comprehension of 'concrete' techniques, as argued here, that has been productively applied to medical anthropological questions (e.g., of how a sick person is transformed into a healthy one).

With the above in mind, it has been possible to identify a variety of techniques that 'generate synchronicity' in medico-religious settings. In recent research,[22] concerned with caring and treatment techniques in respect of a *homo ritualis* (Hsu 2011), rather than a *homo duplex*, an effort was made to re-interpret so-called 'superstitious' practices as sophisticated techniques that 'generate synchronicity', that is, moments of synchronization that have vitality-enhancing effects. Furthermore, the visual anthropological method of filming tactile micro-techniques in Chinese foot massage permitted the recording of a multitude of micro-moments of attuned movements between customer and practitioner. The massage techniques had a surprisingly elating and thereby enlivening effect (Hsu and Esposito forthcoming), which, beyond relaxation, also gave them a preventive medical role. Yet another project[23] centred on sacrificial techniques in Southwest China that local Bön shamans resorted to under the current revivalist Buddhist regime, which asked them to use herbal substitutes in place of the blood from animal slaughter (Schiesser 2013). Here too it was possible to identify certain ritual constellations that generated synchronicity between the participants present, that is, in this case, humans and spirits.

In a similar vein, the suggestion has been made to interpret a recurrent practice among acupuncturists in the People's Republic of China as a technique of 'generating

synchronicity' that is therapeutic. Specifically, they were taught how to insert needles so that they generated in their patients a specific sensory perception that was painful insofar as it evoked a sense of sourness (*suan* 酸), a tingling (*ma* 麻) or an expansion (*zhang* 張), for instance, of warmth beneath the skin (Hsu 2005). To be sure, these intentionally inflicted, temporally structured episodes of pain were brief, and they should not induce pain in the sense of *tong* 痛. Patients and practitioners alike spoke of *de qi* 得氣 (contracting the *qi*), and deemed this moment of *de qi* crucial for any acupuncture treatment to be effective. Rather than interpreting the moment of *de qi* as a matter of counter-irritation, as did Melzack and Wall (1996: 236-40), it appeared to form part of a ritual dynamic. Accordingly, the moment of *de qi* would generate a sense of synchronicity in the patient and practitioner insofar as both would be absorbed by the very same event – say, the insertion of the needle – and this would be positively valued. Seen in cross-cultural perspective, the acupuncture techniques to achieve *de qi* belonged to a variety of techniques that practitioners make use of to intensify the experience of pain deliberately in the opening phase of a healing ritual. Where I focused mainly on hands-on techniques (needling, nettle massaging, crying and shrieking, cacophonous music), more recently Barros Cajdler (forthcoming) has noted that *machi* shamans among the Mapuche in southern Chile make use of narrative techniques that trigger in their mostly female patients a wish to cry over their hardships in life. This narrative technique was generally used during the opening phase of the healing procedures in which the *machi* shamans engaged. In all these situations, pain was an intersubjective rather than a subjective experience, and it was also a potentially positive experience (on this latter point, see also Throop 2011).

At this point, one might want to respond to Elaine Scarry (1985) by citing evidence contrary to her understanding of pain, which was based on the chronic pain accounts of people who had been tortured and who felt it had deconstructed them and their culture.

Instead one could suggest that the human capacity for feeling pain is a powerful medium for sociogenesis among humans. Accordingly, intentionally inflicting socially approved and temporally structured pain becomes a form of making sociality and intensifying social bonding. The above ritual, massage, acupuncture and narrative techniques were all used to generate a sense of synchronicity in the group, and this in turn was experienced as revitalising and empowering in an unmediated and immediate fashion. However, a sense of synchronicity need not arise only from sharing acute experiences of pain – it can be generated through the touch of a blessing, an anointment, the spraying of water, or the daubing of coloured clay, mixed with water, on to those participating in a ritual, as among the Mursi (Fayers-Kerr 2013: 203).

Victor Turner (1967) foregrounded the liminal phase as eminently important. He adopted from van Gennep the view that a ritual had three phases and from Durkheim the fascination with effervescence (Thomassen 2009). Techniques of 'generating synchronicity', by contrast, are usually applied during the opening phase of a ritual, much like percussion (Needham 1966). This is likely to awaken the patient to the impending transformations that medical and/or ritual treatment aims to effect. Csordas (1983) spoke of three intra-psychic stages in a healing ritual: predisposition, empowerment, and transformation. Techniques 'generating synchronicity' would accordingly be applied to create the predisposition in the patient to want to get well. Rather than locating ritual efficacy in symbols and metaphors, brain activity, and psychic life, as did Turner, 'hands-on' techniques are foregrounded here that effect instances of 'synchronicity' between the participants who are present.

If effervescence becomes an aspect of efforts at synchronization, techniques that generate synchronicity need not always lead to exalted religious experience but might also be effected through the fertile interplay of interspecies interdependencies. For instance, the production and consumption of fermented foods with tastes and flavours specific to the earth,

water, and organismic life-cycles of a locality involve fine-tuned synchronization, as in Yaka fertility rites (Devisch 1993). Indeed, processes of fermentation need not always end in a loud explosion but can be complex and prolonged (Rahman 2014).

In the silence of the night, in meditative practice, a person may experience their synchronically attuned body becoming one with their environment and dissolving into it (e.g. Leder 1990: postscript). There are sophisticated breathing techniques through which this can be effected (e.g. Hsu and Lim 2016). Indeed, participant experience and participant learning of such 'meditative' practices suggests that ritually induced bodily felt synchronic interdependences are intersubjectively experienced as gratifying, thereby becoming likely to trigger bodily processes of 'self-healing' (Wheater 2017).

Rhythmic synchronizations

The movement and rhythm that is contained within Mauss's writing differs, as argued here, from the sharp alternation that Durkheim saw between the two phases of effervescence and ordinary life. As already noted, Durkheim's term 'alternations' parallels the idiom 'alternating of seasons' contained in Boas' (1897) ethnography of the Kwakiutl. Likewise, his preoccupation with effervescence parallels Boas's ethnographic focus on the winter ceremonial, and Victor Turner followed suit. Yet, as also argued here, Mauss's sensitivities to rhythm and movement, techniques, and the 'concrete' highlighted how different ways of effecting moments of synchronization, within and beyond the human species, were key to the constitution of the social. This has proved particularly helpful for medical anthropologists inspired by Merleau-Ponty's *Phenomenology of Perception* (1945 / 2012), Csordas' (1994) cultural phenomenology of *The Sacred Self*, and Ingold's (2000) *Perception of the Environment.* They help the ethnographer recognize that bodily processes happen in accord

with seasonal rhythms, notably those within the body ecologic (e.g. Hsu 2007), but also otherwise (You 1994a, 1994b).[24]

Basic physiological functions, however complex their synchronized interplay is in detail, involve a rhythmic movement, such as breathing: as the air is inhaled and exhaled, the lung expands and contracts. The experience of [lung] expansion and contraction is accordingly basic to one's physiognomic perception of being alive. This adds an additional dimension to the movements of social expansiveness and concentration that Mauss described, basic not only to the Eskimo and Kwakiutl societies, but also to the civilized French, and human kind more generally.

Research on the pulses and pulsation also underlines how existential the expansion and contraction of the vessels, heart, and lungs becomes as people are made to experience it in synchrony with that of the cosmos as whole. Roseman (1991), without making use of Merleau-Ponty's phenomenological vocabulary, described how the Temiar in the Malaysian rain forest occasionally, as need and/or desire arises, perform [trance] dance ceremonies that involve musical instruments and other techniques to make synchronous participation in the universe's pulsating expansions and contractions possible. Specifically, she noted, how in the shimmering light of the hut, underneath freshly-picked foliage from the forest that enhances this shimmering (a shimmering discussed also by Novellino 2009), people dance to the rhythm of stamping bamboo tubes, which, with their high and low pitch, resonate with the two-toned beating of hearts, which in turn resonate with the pulsations of the cosmos at large. She also describes how the calls of the cicada and the chirps of the golden-throated barbet induce a longing in humans, a longing that the women she spoke to experienced as a distension of their heart-mind into the faraway places of their beloved and/or deceased relatives. Ethnomusicologists have described such music using the idiom of 'iconicity of sound', where the sound is 'iconic' of the meanings imbued in it, but Roseman (1991: 168-

173) stresses the polychromy and multimodality of such sound-signs, which can also have effects on a physiological and neurological level, as they generate and/or resonate with multi-modal, yet 'synchronous' pulsations in the cosmos.

Although elsewhere the theme of trance and trance dances is often explained in terms of Durkheim's effervescence and internal psychic forces, Marina Roseman focuses on the 'concrete', such as the specific techniques of music-making with stamping bamboo tubes, to demonstrate how bodily expansions and contractions rhythmically resonate with cosmic ones. Like Mauss's comprehension of social dispersal and densification as an intrinsic aspect of seasonal rhythms, Roseman's ethnography conveys how Temiar ritual dance healing resonates with, reinforces, and even generates cosmic rhythms.

To be sure, Durkheim does speak of rhythm (perhaps in *The Forms* more so than in his earlier publications), but rhythmic movement is not, for Durkheim, intrinsic to the human interactions that effect and are effected by multi-species synchronizations and that are so central to Mauss's discussion of the two phases between dispersed small-group activity and concentrated large-group feasting. Rather, for Durkheim rhythm appears to be a secondary phenomenon. In the following passage regarding effervescent excitement, for instance, there is an underlying assumption that the gestures and cries are wild at first, only eventually becoming rhythmic:

(O) [C]es gestes et ces cris tendent d'eux-mêmes à se rhythmer et à se régulariser; de là, les chants et les danses. Mais, en prenant une forme plus régulière, ils ne perdent rien de leur violence naturelle; la tumulte reglé reste du tumulte (1912: 309).

[T]hese gestures and cries naturally tend to become rhythmic and regular; hence come songs and dances. But in taking a more regular form, they lose nothing of their natural violence; a regulated tumult remains a tumult (1915: 216) / [T]hese gestures and cries tend to fall into rhythm and regularity,

> and from there into songs and dances. But in taking on a more regular form, they lose none of their natural fury. A regulated commotion is still a commotion (1995: 218).

Here, uncoordinated gestures and cries have to be regulated, and only once they are regular and rhythmic can song and dance ensue. This understanding of rhythm as a secondary phenomenon is reminiscent of Durkheim's understanding that 'sensations' and 'sense impressions' hit the person in a disordered and random fashion. Only secondarily, after their 'fusion' in the congregation, can disparate sense impressions start to make sense.

By contrast, the *Phenomenology of Perception* insists that the body itself, with its internal rhythms that resonate with external ones, is a generative principle of 'perception'. So, where Durkheim considers sense impressions from the outside world to randomly hit the individual body, Merleau-Ponty emphasizes that the body is the starting point from which we explore the world. The body projects itself into the world and thereby elicits sense perceptions. Perception is hence always ego-centred and marked by our intentionality; we perceive a thing in terms of its 'affordances' for our ego. This understanding of perception again contradicts Durkheim's, insofar as Merleau-Ponty posits that perception is a process which cannot disengage itself from making internal connections between the perceived and the ego. Sense perception is relational in its very existence; it is not the result of the 'connections' that the mind and the 'collective representations' make between unconnected sense impressions.

Merleau-Ponty's physiognomic gaze, not unlike Mauss's morphological approach, relates to rhythm not merely as a matter of an alternation or a regular beat. Rather, it attends to the synchronized coordination of a multitude of different rhythms by different organisms or of body parts that are mutually interdependent. Accordingly a fieldworker interested in the complexities of social morphology has to learn to live in suspense, a suspension that is, of course, never ending. As Merleau-Ponty (2012) repeatedly said, ultimately there always

remains some indeterminacy in the situations studied. Explanations can never be final, ultimate, let alone axiomatic. This need not mean, however, that the world is intrinsically chaotic and unintelligible to human kind; quite the contrary. Why is this so? Because the human organism participates in complex rhythmic movements that constitute the core of living beings. Mauss has to be acknowledged here for making this insight, fundamental to the disciplines of ecology and biology, relevant to social (and medical) anthropology as well.

Conclusion

In this article, we first familiarized ourselves with Durkheim's writing on effervescence in *The Forms*. As an aspect of fermentation processes, effervescence was for him a term that connoted upbeat vitality. Human kind was subject to living a life that alternated sharply between phases of religious excitement in the collective and ordinary self-interested activity otherwise. This gave rise to his conception of *homo duplex*, particularly in respect to morality and moral conduct.

Mauss's ethnography of the Eskimo placed the effervescent feasting in winter time and dispersed economic activities in the summer; he described the seasonal movements of group dispersal and concentration, thereby emphasizing a phenomenological theme: rhythm. He barely mentioned effervescence, and the movements he accounted for were mostly comprehended in terms of techniques that effected types of synchronization. Thus, uncle and nephew were clearly engaged in two different intellectual projects, yet both seem to have drawn on the riches of the ethnographic materials gathered by Franz Boas, perhaps more so than is generally acknowledged.

Finally, I highlighted that the Maussian take on effervescence can be productively applied to the medical anthropological study of micro-techniques as used in medical contexts, in order to improve our understanding of a treatment's effectiveness. It is in this context that I

noted striking parallels between Mauss and Merleau-Ponty regarding rhythm, movement, and the primacy of the body for both sense perception and social participation in the world.

Rhythm is primordial for Mauss and intrinsic to the seasonal movements he described: in my reading, it is not as prominent in Durkheim's writing. Admittedly, in *The Forms* turn-taking is contained in Durkheim's concept of an 'alternation' of two phases, which the ageing Durkheim may have accorded more attention than in his earlier texts. However, rhythm, an organizing principle for ecologists and biologists, is central to the sociology of the *Seasonal Variations*, without it being deployed in a deterministic way. Rather, as argued here, there are striking affinities in Mauss's writing with the early Merleau-Ponty. When speaking of the body and motricity, for instance, Merleau-Ponty (2012: part 1, chapter 3) repeatedly refers to the rhythmicity of the body's movements and their coordination, even though he does not mention the word 'rhythm' itself but rather speaks of 'music' or 'melodic movement'.

Medical anthropologists attentive to peoples' practices will find it easy to admit their intellectual debt to Mauss's interest in technology and techniques, and in particular to his 'body techniques' (Mauss [1935] 1979) and his insistence on studying the 'concrete' aspects of social morphology. As my reading of the *Seasonal Variations* also suggests, Mauss's morphological approach furthermore comes surprisingly close to Merleau-Ponty's physiognomic perception of the world elicited by the body-as-a-mediator that moves through space. Methodologically, both Mauss and Merleau-Ponty insist on paying special attention to the body-in-movement. Despite his otherwise more Cartesian understanding of the body, Mauss treats the hunting and dwelling techniques of the Eskimo, and later the 'body techniques', as an aspect of sociality that is irreducible; 'embodied', so to speak.[25] Finally, *Seasonal Variations* also contains the seeds for a study of sensory attentiveness as generated and harnessed through intersubjectively moderated skills and body techniques. Sensory

perception would accordingly not be the result of a 'fusion' of discrete and disorganized sensations, as the empirical scientists of the time assumed, including Durkheim.

For medical anthropology, then, it is important to remind ourselves that, due to the history of the discipline he founded, Durkheim's writing on effervescence has become engrained in anthropological thinking. Yet it is primarily Mauss's insistence on holistically studying 'concrete' techniques and technologies that brings people together in rhythmically reoccurring moments of synchronicity. This understanding of sociality as irreducibly contained in body techniques has the potential to further enhance our understanding of shamanic procedures, trance dance, and other healing technologies. As the editor of *L'Année sociologique*, Durkheim himself (presumably) noted, in the conclusion to Mauss's famous essay, this applies not only to 'primitive society' but also to contemporary life.

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[1] The quotations provide first Durkheim’s 1912 text and then Swain’s 1915 translation, as both reflect very well the empiricist stance of the early twentieth century, to which author and translator both adhered. However, the Fields translation of 1995 is also given throughout for comparison.

[2] Notably Chau (2013), who discusses effervescence in the context of what he terms ‘amassing’.

[3] Durkheim welcomed the first, but was too ill, already on his deathbed, to comment on the second.

[4] Specifically, Durkheim (1897: 352) said: ‘A l’origine, la société est tout, l’individu n’est rien.’

[5] As society becomes more ‘civilized’, its citizens are in less need of ‘self-deception’. Is this being implied here?

[6] Following on from the above footnote 4, Durkheim (1897: 352) said: ‘… Par suite, les sentiments sociaux les plus intenses sont ceux qui attachment l’individu à la collectivité; elle est à elle-même sa propre fin.’ Pickering (1984: 382) reads this to mean effervescence is a positive event. Meanwhile, Watts Miller (2012: 75-78) found negative connotations of the term in Durkheim’s early writings.

[7] Durkheim apparently mentions ‘oscillations in social life’ in 1899 in a review of peasant life in medieval Germany and in one of 1900 on Boas’s Kwakiutl ethnography (*cf.* Watts Miller 2012: 84-85, 91, 100).

[8] Apart from ‘effervescence’, the Durkheimian term ‘profane’ also occurs just once in the text, again in the conclusion.

[9] This is said in awareness that this impression would be difficult to prove at this stage.

[10] For example, it is a bit clumsy to introduce the final paragraph with ‘Whatever the value of these remarks, however, there is another general conclusion to this work …’ (Mauss 1904-05: 129 /1979: 80).

[11] The Kwakiutl are mentioned upfront in both Durkheim (1912: 271, fn 1 [1915: 190, fn 1 / 1995: 192, fn 1]) and in the conclusion of Mauss (1904-05: 126, fn 1 / 1979:77, fn 1, and also in fnn 6, 7).

[12] In Chapters VI and VII, Durkheim (1912: 325, fn 1 / 1915: 227, fn 1 / 1995: 228, fn 40) refers several times to Hubert and Mauss’s joint publication of 1904: *Esquisse d'une théorie générale de la magie*, but only once to this essay (and then to an irrelevancy mentioned in the conclusion; see Mauss 1904-05: 124 / 1979: 76).

[13] In winter, people protected by the spirit who has initiated them form a group. ‘The period of the winter ceremonial is called ts'e'ts'aeqa, the secrets, which term designates also the ceremonial itself. It is also called ts'e'qa (singular of ts'e'ts'aeqa); aik-'e'gala (making the heart good); and g-a'xaxaak" (brought down from above)’ (Boas 1897: 418). Bax’us designates all those who have not been initiated by a spirit, and it also refers to the time when they live in clans, in summer.

[14] In Boas’s (1897: 500ff.) ethnography of the Kwakiutl, the beginnings of the winter ceremonial are closely entwined with initiation rites. It is this Boasian ethnographic observation, rather than any philosophical principle, that may explain, at least in part, why Durkheim considered initiation the ‘purpose of tribal gatherings’, which, as has variously been noted, he did without explaining why (*cf.* Allen 1998: 159).

[15] Allen (1998: 161) furthermore deplores the fact that Durkheim had not taken sufficient note of the perceptive critique offered by his nephew (see Mauss [1909] 1968, vol. I: 423 fn 160; 449 fn 281).

[16] In the second part of his essay, Morphy notes that Durkheim's use of Spencer and Gillen (1904) resulted in even more fundamental differences between them. With regard to the question of totemism, he noted that their inductive approach aimed to account for the world as conceived of by the Australian peoples themselves. Their ethnography thereby uncovered the 'locality-based nature of Australian totemism and the network of ancestral tracks that became the Dreaming' (ibid.: 25).

[17] The Eskimo house complexes are in structure surprisingly similar to the circumpolar Neolithic ones excavated in Scara Bray, Orkney, by V. Gordon Childe in the 1930s. For photos and an impressionistic introduction, see http://www.orkneyjar.com/history/skarabrae/, accessed 12.7.2018

[18] The difference is that in winter there is supposedly 'continual excitement and hyperactivity' among the human beings, while some of their game hibernates. Why did humans not hibernate but instead become excited and hyperactive?

[19] Mauss ends with a note on method that also remains relevant to the present day: 'Therefore, the present study has, at least, this methodological advantage: it has shown how the analysis of one clearly defined case can establish a general law better than the accumulation of facts or endless deduction' (ibid.: 130 / 80).

[20] Mauss, like Arnold van Gennep, uses the framework of an 'anthropology of life' which attends to its rhythm (see the following section), yet here he clearly goes beyond van Gennep (1960:194, quoted in Thomassen 2012:244): 'It is indeed a cosmic conception that relates the stages of human existence to those of plant and animal life and, by a sort of pre-scientific divination, joins them to the great rhythms of the universe'. Rather than invoking 'a sort of

pre-scientific divination', Mauss highlights how subtle human intervention can effect such synchrony technologically.

[21] For Merleau-Ponty (1945 / 2012) our perception is physiognomic, i.e. the perceived is always an entirety in itself, like a Gestalt/figure standing out from the ground: 'It [the perceived circle] stands out for me, it makes itself recognized and distinguished from every other figure by its circular physiognomy, and not by "properties" that thetic consciousness will later discover in it' (ibid.: 287).

[22] 'Generating Synchronicity: Vitality and Relatedness in Southwest China', PI: E. Hsu and C. Ramble. ESRC standard grants scheme, RES 000-23-1408.

[23] 'Icons and Innovation in Southwest China's Religious Texts', PI: E. Hsu. Large Grants (Religion and Society) Scheme. AHRC/ESRC no: AH/HO16147/1, 2009-2013 #DC00005835.

[24] You (1994a) discusses many texts that mention rhythm, and among them Durkheim's, but his reading of texts is differs from mine; it also differs from Thomassen's (2012).

[25] I am grateful to Yuxin Peng (personal communication, October 2018) for drawing my attention to Nick Crossley (2005: 9) on Mauss's 'body techniques': 'The movements of the body, for Mauss, are not, as they were for behaviourists and other writers of his time, mere movements. They are practical and embodied forms of knowledge. … His [Mauss's] concept of "body techniques" gives us a way of thinking sociologically about the bodily activities, a way that prioritizes the social dimension while simultaneously building links to biology and psychology. … it equally grows out of and facilitates solid, empirical analysis …'. See also Crossley (2007:87): '"Body techniques" … effectively translates 'embodiment' into a researchable format.' I came independently to the conclusions Crossley formulates here so concisely by reading and reflecting on *Seasonal variations* (first draft submitted in May 2018).