

In His Own Words

Emile Durkheim

On Social Facts:

"The determining cause of a social fact should be sought among the social facts preceding it and not among the states of individual consciousness" (Durkheim 1895/1964, 110).

[My] "principal objective [is] . . .to extend scientific rationalism to human behavior" (Durkheim 1951, xxxix).

"A social fact is identifiable through the power of external coercion which it exerts or is capable of exerting upon individuals" (Durkheim 1895/1964 , 56).

"To be autonomous means, for the human being, to understand the necessities he has to bow to and accept them with full knowledge of the facts. Nothing that we do can make the laws of things other than they are, but we free ourselves of them in thinking them, that is, in making them ours by thought" (Durkheim 1961, 91).

"Social facts are not the simple development of psychic facts, but the second are in large part only the prolongation of the first in the interior of consciences. This proposition is very important, for the contrary point of view exposes the sociologist, at every moment, to mistaking the cause for the effect, and conversely. For example, if, as often happens, we see in the organization of the family the logically necessary expression of human sentiments inherent in every conscience, we are reversing the true order of facts. On the contrary, it is the social organization of the relations of kinship which has determined the respective sentiments of parents and children. They would have been completely different if the social structure had been different, and the proof of this is, in effect, that paternal love is unknown in a great many societies. One could easily cite many other examples of the same error. Of course, it is a self-evident truth that there is nothing in social life which is not in individual consciences. Everything that is found in the latter, however, comes from society. The major part of our states of conscience would not have been produced among isolated beings and would have been produced quite otherwise among beings grouped in some other manner. They come, then, not from the psychological nature of man in general, but from the manner in which men once associated mutually affect one another, according as they are more or less numerous, more or less close. Products of group life, it is the nature of the group which alone can explain them" (Durkheim 1893/1933, 286-287).

"Society does not find the bases on which it rests fully laid out in consciences; it puts them there itself " (Durkheim 1893/1997, 287).

"This is a sufficient reply, we believe, to those who think they prove that everything in social life is individual because society is made up only of individuals. Of course, society has no other

substratum, but because individuals form society, new phenomena which are formed by association are produced and react upon individual consciences and in large part form them. That is why, although society may be nothing without individuals, each of them is much more a product of society than he is its maker" (Durkheim 1893/1997, 287).

On the Dualism of Human Nature

"There are in each of us...two consciences: one which is common to our group in its entirety...the other, on the contrary, represents that in us which is personal and distinct, that which makes us an individual" (Durkheim 1893/1933, 129).

[Thus], "there are, here, two contrary forces, one centripetal, the other centrifugal" (Durkheim 1893/1933, 130).

"The painful character of the dualism of human nature is explained by this hypothesis. There is no doubt that if society were only the natural and spontaneous development of the individual, these two parts of ourselves would harmonize....In fact, however, society has its own nature....Therefore, society cannot be formed or maintained without our being required to make perpetual and costly sacrifices. Because society surpasses us, it obliges us to surpass ourselves, and to surpass itself, a being must, to some degree, depart from its nature—a departure that does not take place without causing more or less painful tensions....We must, in a word, 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 civilization" (Elementary Forms 1914/1973, 163).

"It is not without reason, therefore, that man feels himself to be double: he actually is double....In brief, this duality corresponds to the double existence that we lead concurrently; the one purely individual and rooted in our organisms, the other social and nothing but an extension of society....The conflicts of which we have given examples are between the sensations and the sensory appetites, on the one hand, and the intellectual and moral life, on the other; and it is evident that passions and egoistic tendencies derive from our individual constitutions, while our rational activity—whether theoretical or practical—is dependent on social causes" (Elementary Forms 1914/1973, 162).

"There are in each of us, as we have said, two consciences: one which is common to our group in its entirety which, consequently, is not our self, but society living and acting within us; the other, on the contrary, represents that in us which is personal and distinct, that which makes us an individual" (1893/1997, 129-130).

"But if nothing external can restrain this capacity, it can only be a source of torment to itself. Unlimited desires are insatiable by definition and insatiability is rightly considered a sign of morbidity. Being unlimited, they cannot be quenched. Inextinguishable thirst is constantly renewed torture. It has been claimed, indeed, that human activity naturally aspires beyond

assignable limits and sets itself unattainable goals. But how can such an undetermined state be any more reconciled with the conditions of mental life than with the demands of physical life?" (Durkheim 1897/1951, 208).

On Anomie:

"It is this anomic state that is the cause, as we shall show, of the incessantly recurrent conflicts, and the multifarious disorders of which the economic world exhibits so sad a spectacle" ([1893] 1933: 5).

"The more one has, the more one wants, since satisfactions received only stimulate instead of filling needs" (1951, p. 248).

"When there is no other aim but to outstrip constantly the point arrived at, how painful to be thrown back!...Since imagination is hungry for novelty, and ungoverned, it gropes at random...At least the horizon of the lower classes is limited by those above them, and for this same reason their desires are more modest. Those who have only empty space above them are almost inevitably lost in it, if no force restrains them" ([1897] 1951, p. 257).

"Unlimited desires are insatiable by definition and insatiability is rightly considered a sign of morbidity. Being unlimited, they constantly and infinitely surpass the means at their command; they cannot be quenched. Inextinguishable thirst is constantly renewed torture" ([1897] 1951, p. 247).

"...appetites, not being controlled by a public opinion become disoriented...with increased prosperity desires increase" ([1897] 1951, p. 253).

"We must not be dazzled by the brilliant development of sciences, the arts and industry of which we are the witnesses; this development is altogether certainly taking place in the midst of a morbid effervescence, the grievous repercussions of which each one of us feels" ([1897] 1951, p. 368).

"Civilization is concentrated in the great cities, suicide likewise" ([1893] 1933, p. 247).

"The malaise from which we are suffering is not rooted in any particular class; it is general over the whole of society. It attacks employers as well as workers, although it manifests itself in different forms in both: as a disturbing, painful agitation for the capitalist, as discontent and irritation for the proletariat. Thus, the problem reaches infinitely beyond the material interests of the two classes concerned...[one should] address, not those feelings of anger that the less-favored class harbors against the other, but feelings of pity for society, which is suffering in all classes and in all its organs" (Durkheim [1897] 1986: 143).

"To the extent that the individual is left to his own devices and freed from all social constraint, he is unfettered too by all moral constraint" (Professional Ethics and Civic Morals, Durkheim [1950] p. 7).

“Even from the strictly utilitarian standpoint, what is the purpose of heaping up riches if they do not serve to abate the desires of the greatest number, but, on the contrary, only rouse their impatience for gain? ([1950] 1983: : 161).

On Religion:

A religion is a unified system of beliefs and practices relative to sacred things, that is to say, things set apart and forbidden--beliefs and practices which unite in one single community called a Church, all those who adhere to them" (1954, p. 47).

"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. He feels within him more force, wither to endure the trials of existence, or to conquer them" (1954, p. 416).

"At the roots of all our judgments there are a certain number of essential ideas which dominate all our intellectual life; they are what the philosophers since Aristotle have called the categories of the understanding: ideas of time, space, class, numbers, cause, substance, personality, etc. They correspond to the most universal properties of things. They are like the solid frame which encloses all thought; . . . They are like the framework of intelligence. Now when primitive religious beliefs are systematically analyzed, the principal categories are naturally found. They are born in religion and of religion; they are a product of religious thought" (1954, p. 9).

"Thus there is something eternal in religion which is destined to survive all the particular symbols in which religious thought has successively enveloped itself. There 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; hence come ceremonies which do not differ from regular religious ceremonies, either in their object, the results which they produce, or the processes employed to attain these results. What essential difference is there between an assembly of Christians celebrating the principal dates in 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?" (1954, p. 427).

[Religion is] "an eminently collective thing" (1954, p.47).

"We must discover the rational substitutes for these religious notions that for a long time have served as the vehicle for the most essential moral ideas" (1961, p. 9).

"Society is not at all the illogical or a-logical, inherent and fantastic being which has too often been considered. Quite on the contrary, the collective consciousness is the highest form of psychic life, since it is the consciousness of consciousness. Being placed outside of and above individual and local contingencies, it sees things only in their permanent and essential aspects, which it crystallizes into communicable ideas. At the same time that it sees from above, it sees farther; at every moment of time it embraces all known reality; that is why it alone can furnish

the minds with the moulds which are applicable to the totality of things and which make it possible to think of them" (1954, p.444).

“The notion of the infinite, then, appears only at those times when moral discipline has lost its ascendancy over man’s will. It is the sign of attrition that emerges during periods when the moral system, prevailing for several centuries, is shaken, failing to respond to new conditions of human life, and without any new system yet contrived to replace that which has disappeared” (*Moral Education*: [1925] 1961, p. 43).

“Whenever moral rules lack the necessary authority to exert, to a desirable degree, a regulatory influence on their behavior, we see society gripped by a dejection and pessimism reflected in the curve of suicides (*Moral Education*: [1925] 1961, p. 68).

“The totality of moral regulations really forms about each person an imaginary wall, at the foot of which a multitude of human passions simply die without being able to go further. For the same reason—that they are contained—it becomes possible to satisfy them. But if at any point this barrier weakens, human forces—until now restrained—pour tumultuously through the open breach; once loosed, they find no limits where they can or must stop. Unfortunately, they can only devote themselves to the pursuit of an end that always eludes them” (*Moral Education*, p. 42).

“During periods when society is disorganized and, as a result of its decadence has less power to exact the commitment of individual wills, and when, consequently, egoism has freer reign—these are calamitous times. The cult of the self and the notion of the infinite go together” (*Moral Education*, p. 72).

“A group is not only a moral authority which dominates the life of its members; it is also a source of life sui generis. From it comes a warmth which animates its members, making them intensely human, destroying their egotisms” ([1893] 1933: 26).

“The old gods are growing old or are already dead, and others are not yet born” ([1912] 1965: 475).

“Religion is in a word the system of symbols by means of which society becomes conscious of itself; it is the characteristic way of thinking of collective existence” ([1897] 1951: 312).

“It is not possible for a social function to exist without moral discipline. Otherwise, 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”(Professional Ethics and Civic Morals, Durkheim [1950] p. 11).

“The unleashing of economic interests has been accompanied by a debasing of public morality. We find that the manufacturer is aware of no influence set above him to check his egoism. He is subject to no moral discipline (Professional Ethics and Civic Morals, Durkheim [1950] p. 12) .

The great things of the past which filled our fathers with enthusiasm do not excite the same ardor in us...In a word, the old gods are growing old or already dead, and others are not yet born...But this state of incertitude and confused agitation cannot last for ever. A day will come when our societies will know again those hours of creative effervescence, in the course of which new formulae are found which serve for a while as a guide to humanity; and when these hours shall have been passed through once, men will spontaneously feel the need of reliving them from time to time in thought, that is to say, of keeping alive their memory by means of celebrations which regularly reproduce their fruits. We have already seen how the French Revolution established a whole cycle of holidays to keep the principles with which it was inspired in a state of perpetual youth...There are no gospels which are immortal, but neither is there any reason for believing that humanity is incapable of inventing new ones. As to the question of what symbols this new faith will express itself with, whether they will resemble the past or not, and whether they will be more adequate for the reality which they seek to translate, that is something that surpasses the human faculty of foresight and which does not appertain to the principal question (1954, pp. 475-476)

On Social Structure:

"But if there is one fact that history has irrefutably demonstrated it is that the morality of each people is directly related to the social structure of the people practicing it. The connection is so intimate that, given the general character of the morality observed in a given society and barring abnormal and pathological cases, one can infer the nature of that society, the elements of its structure and the way it is organized. Tell me the marriage patterns, the morals dominating family life, and I will tell you the principal characteristics of its organization" (1961, p. 87).

[Society] "is a complex of ideas and sentiments, of ways of seeing and of feeling, a certain intellectual and moral framework distinctive of the entire group" ([1925] 1961, p. 277)
(translated and cited by Mestrovic, 1988/1993, p. 41).

"As there is nothing within an individual which constrains these appetites, they must surely be contained by some force exterior to him, or else they would become insatiable—that is morbid... This is what seems to have escaped Saint-Simon. To him it appears that the way to realize social peace is to free economic appetites of all restraint on the one hand, and on the other to satisfy them by fulfilling them. But such an undertaking is contradictory" ([1928] 1978, p. 213) (translated and cited by Mestrovic, 1988/1993, p. 69).

"The more that deliberation and reflection and a critical spirit play a considerable part in the course of public affairs, the more democratic the nations. It is the less democratic when lack of consciousness, uncharted customs, the obscure sentiments and prejudices that evade investigation, predominate"(Professional Ethics, [1950] 1983, p. p. 89).

"The totality of beliefs and sentiments common to average citizens of the same society forms a determinate system which has its own life; one may call it the collective or common conscience" ([1893] 1933: 79).

On Crime:

"Where crime exists, collective sentiments are sufficiently flexible to take on a new form, and crime sometimes helps to determine the form they will take. How many times, indeed, it is only an anticipation of future morality--a step toward what will be" (1950, p. 71).

"Crime brings together upright consciences and concentrates them" (1960, 103).

"Just as ancient people needed, above all, a common faith to live by, so we need justice" (Division of Labor, [1893] 1933, p. 288).

"Justice becomes ever more important. Indeed the progress of justice is measured by the degree of respect accorded to the rights of the individual, because to be just is to grant to everyone what he has the right to demand" 9[1897] 1986, p. 49).

"The average number of suicides, of crimes of all sorts, can effectively serve to mark the intensity of immorality in a given society" ([1925] 1961: 50).

"An act is criminal when it offends strong and defined states of the collective consciousness. In other words, we must not say that an action shocks the common consciousness because it is criminal, but rather that it is criminal because it shocks the common consciousness. We do not reprove it because it is a crime, but it is a crime because we reprove it" (Durkheim, [1893] 1933: 80-81).

On Mechanical and Organic Solidarity:

In *The Division of Labor*, Durkheim (1893/1997) identifies two types of solidarity which are based on different sources. Mechanical solidarity is "solidarity which comes from similarities" or likeness, Durkheim writes, and "is at its maximum when the collective conscience completely envelops our total consciousness, coinciding with it at every point" (84). This occurs in early "primitive" societies in which there is little division of labor. Such societies are relatively homogenous, Durkheim claims, in which all engage in similar tasks and daily activities, all have similar experiences. In such societies, the few distinct institutions express similar values and norms that tend to reinforce one another. "The solidarity that derives from similarities is at its maximum when the collective consciousness completely envelops our total consciousness, coinciding with it at every point" (84).

"Social life comes from a double source, the likeness of consciences and the division of labor. The individual is socialized in the first case, because, not having any real individuality, he becomes, with those whom he resembles, part of the same collective type; in the second case, because, while having a physiognomy and a personal activity which distinguishes him from others, he depends upon them in the same measure that he is distinguished from them, and consequently upon the society which results from their union" (1960, p. 226).

"The other (mechanical solidarity) is strong only if the individual is not. Made up of rules which are practiced by all indistinctly, it receives from this universal, uniform practice an authority which bestows something superhuman upon it, and which puts it beyond the pale of discussion. The co-operative society, on the contrary, develops in the measure that individual personality

becomes stronger. As regulated as a function may be, there is a large place always left for personal initiative" (1960, pp. 228-229).

On the Division of Labor:

"Civilization is itself the necessary consequence of the changes which are produced in the volume and in the density of societies. If science, art, and economic activity develop, it is in accordance with a necessity which is imposed upon men. It is because there is, for them, no other way of living in the new conditions in which they have been placed. From the time that the number of individuals among whom social relations are established begins to increase, they can maintain themselves only by greater specialization, harder work, and intensification of their faculties. From this general stimulation, there inevitably results a much higher degree of culture. From this point of view, civilization appears, not as an end which moves people by its attractions for them, not as a good foreseen and desired in advance, of which they seek to assure themselves the largest possible part, but as the effect of a cause, as the necessary resultant of a given state. It is not the pole towards which historic development is moving and to which men seek to get nearer in order to be happier or better, for neither happiness nor morality necessarily increases with the intensity of life. They move because they must move, and what determines the speed of this march is the more or less strong pressure which they exercise upon one another, according to their number" (Durkheim 1893/1997, 336-7).

"Even where society relies most completely upon the division of labor, it does not become a jumble of juxtaposed atoms, between which it can establish only external, transient contacts. Rather the members are united by ties which extend deeper and far beyond the short moments during which the exchange is made. Each of the functions they exercise is, in a fixed way, dependent upon others, and with them forms a solitary system. Accordingly, from the nature of chosen task permanent duties arise. Because we fill some certain domestic or social function, we are involved in a complex of obligations from which we have no right to free ourselves. There is, above all, an organ upon which we are tending to depend more and more; this is the State. The points at which we are in contact with it multiply as do the occasions when it is entrusted with the duty of reminding us of the sentiment of common solidarity" (1960, p. 227).

"Because the individual is not sufficient unto himself, it is for society that he works. Thus is formed a very strong sentiment of the state of dependence in which he finds himself. He becomes accustomed to estimating it at its just value, that is to say, in regarding himself as part of a whole, the organ of an organism. Such sentiments naturally inspire not only mundane sacrifices which assure the regular development of daily social life, but even, on occasion, acts of complete self-renunciation and wholesale abnegation" (1960, p. 228).

"Why does the individual, while becoming more autonomous, depend more upon society? How can he be at once more individual and more solidary? (Durkheim [1893] 1933, p. 37).

The division of labor develops, therefore, as there are more individuals sufficiently in contact to be able to act and react upon one another. If we agree to call this relation and the active commerce resulting from it dynamic or moral density, we can say that the progress of the

division of labor is in direct ratio to the moral or dynamic density of society" (Durkheim [1893] 1933, p. 257).

"Whereas lower societies are spread over immense areas according to population, with more advanced people population always tends to concentrate" (Durkheim [1893] 1933, p. 257).

"Even an immense aggregate of clans is below the smallest organized society, since the latter has run through stages of evolution within which the other has remained. In the same way, if the number of social units has influence on the division of labor, it is not through itself and necessarily, but it is because the number of social relations generally increases with that of individuals. But, for this result to be attained is not enough that society take in a great many people, but they must be, in addition, intimately enough in contact to act and react on one another" (Durkheim [1893] 1933, pp. 261-262).

"We can then formulate the following proposition: The division of labor varies in direct ratio with the volume and density of societies, and, if it progresses in a continuous manner in the course of social development, it is because societies become regularly denser and generally more voluminous" (Durkheim [1893] 1933, p. 262).

"We say, not that the growth and condensation of societies permit, but they necessitate a greater division of labor. It is not an instrument by which the latter is realized; it is its determining cause" (Durkheim [1893] 1933, p. 262).

"But why do they [men] specialize? What makes them lean towards distinguishing themselves from others? Spencer ably explains in what manner evolution will be produced, if it does take place, but he does not tell us the source producing it. As a matter of fact, the question is not even raised for him" (Durkheim [1893] 1933, p. 265).

"If work becomes divided more as societies become more voluminous and denser, it is not because external circumstances are more varied, but because struggle for existence is more acute" (Durkheim [1893] 1933, p. 266).

"That settled, it is easy to understand that all condensation of the social mass, especially if it is accompanied by an increase in population, necessarily determines advances in the division of labor" (Durkheim [1893] 1933, p. 268).

"The division of labor is, then, a result of the struggle for existence, but it is a mellowed denouement. Thanks to it, opponents are not obliged to fight to a finish, but can exist one beside the other. Also, in proportion to its development, it furnishes the means of maintenance and survival to a greater number of individuals who, in more homogenous societies, would be condemned to extinction" (Durkheim [1893] 1933, p. 270).

"An industry can exist only if it answers some need. A function can become specialized only if this specialization corresponds to some need of society. But all new specialization results in increasing and improving production. If this advantage is not the division of labor's reason for existing, it is its necessary consequence. Therefore, advance can be established in permanent

form only if individuals really feel the need of more abundant products, or products of better quality. As long as transportation was not organized, each one traveled by the means at his disposal, and was adapted to this environment. For it to become a specialty, however, men had to cease being satisfied with what had, till then, satisfied them and become more exacting. But whence could these new demands come? (Durkheim [1893] 1933, p. 272).

"They are an effect of the same cause which determines the progress of the division of labor. We have just seen that such progress is due to the greater acuteness of the struggle. But a more violent struggle does not proceed without great depletion of forces, and, consequently, without great fatigue. But for life to be maintained, reparation must be proportionate to the expenditure. That is why the dispensations, until then sufficient to restore organic equilibrium, are insufficient from then on. There must be a more abundant and choicer sustenance (Durkheim [1893] 1933, p. 272).

"All these changes are, then, mechanically produced by necessary causes. If our intelligence and sensibility develop and become keener, it is because we exercise them more, and if we exercise them more, it is because we are forced to by the greater violence of the struggle we have to live through. That is how, without having desired it, humanity is found apt to receive a more intense and more varied culture" (Durkheim [1893] 1933, p. 273).

"The division of labor appears to us otherwise than it does to the economists. For them, it essentially consists in greater production. For us, this greater productivity is only a necessary consequence, a repercussion of the phenomenon. If we specialize, it is not to produce more, but it is to enable us to live in new conditions of existence that have been made for us (Durkheim [1893] 1933, p. 275).

"Collective life is not born from individual life, but it is, on the contrary, the second which is born from the first" (Durkheim [1893] 1933, p. 279).

"Civilization is itself the necessary consequence of the changes which are produced in the volume and in the density of societies. If science, art, and economic activity develop, it is in accordance with a necessity which is imposed upon men. It is because there is, for them, no other way of living in the new conditions in which they have been placed. From the time that the number of individuals among whom social relations are established begins to increase, they can maintain themselves only by greater specialization, harder work, and intensification of their faculties. From this general stimulation, there inevitably results a much higher degree of culture. From this point of view, civilization appears, not as an end which moves people by its attractions for them, not as a good foreseen and desired in advance, of which they seek to assure themselves the largest possible part, but as the effect of a cause, as the necessary resultant of a given state. It is not the pole towards which historic development is moving and to which men seek to get nearer in order to be happier or better, for neither happiness nor morality necessarily increases with the intensity of life. They move because they must move, and what determines the speed of this march is the more or less strong pressure which they exercise upon one another, according to their number" (Durkheim [1893] 1933, pp. 336-337).

“Not only is individualism distinct from anarchy; but it is henceforth the only system of beliefs which can ensure the moral unity of the country” ([1898 1975, p. 66).

On Social Evolution:

“In the first place, we cannot arrive at an understanding of the most recent religions except by following the manner in which they have been progressively composed in history. In fact, historical analysis is the only means of explanation which is possible to apply to them. It alone enables us to resolve an institution into its constituent elements, for it shows them to us as they are born in time, one after another. On the other hand, by placing every one of them in the condition where it was born, it puts into our hands the only means we have of determining the causes which gave rise to it. Every time that we undertake to explain something human, taken at a given moment in history—be it religious belief, moral precept, a legal principle, an aesthetic style or an economic system—it is necessary to commence by going back to its most primitive and simple form, to try to account for the characteristics by which it was marked at that time, and then to show how it developed and became complicated little by little, and how it became that which it is at the moment in question. One readily understands the importance which the determination of the point of departure has for this series of progressive explanations, for all the others are attached to it (Durkheim 1912/1954, 15-16).

“Yet if there is one truth that history has incontrovertibly settled, it is that religion extends over an ever diminishing area of social life. Originally, it extended to everything; everything social was religious—the two words were synonymous. Then gradually political, economic, and scientific functions broke free from the religious function, becoming separate entities and taking on more and more a markedly temporal character. God, if we may express it in such a way, from being at first present in every human relationship, has progressively withdrawn. He leaves the world to men and their quarrels. At least, if He continues to rule it, it is from on high and afar off, and the effect that He exercises, becoming more general and indeterminate, leaves freer rein for human forces. The individual thus feels, and he is in reality, much less acted upon; he becomes more a source of spontaneous activity. In short, not only is the sphere of religion not increasing at the same time as that of the temporal world, nor in the same proportion, but it is continually diminishing. This regression did not begin at any precise moment in history, but one can follow the phases of its development from the very origins of social evolution. It is therefore bound up with the basic conditions for the development of societies and thus demonstrates that there is a constantly decreasing number of beliefs and collective sentiments that are both sufficiently collective and strong enough to assume a religious character. This means that the average intensity of the common consciousness is itself weakening (1893/1997, 119-120).

“Thus it is a law of history that mechanical solidarity, which at first is isolated, or more so, should progressively lose ground, and organic solidarity gradually become preponderant. But when the way in which men are solidly linked to one another is modified, it is inevitable that the structure of society should change. The shape of a body needs be transformed, when the molecular affinities within are no longer the same”(1893/1997, 126).

“It [Civilization] is not the pole towards which historic development is moving and to which men seek to get nearer in order to be happier or better, for neither happiness nor morality necessarily

increases with the intensity of life. They move because they must move, and what determines the speed of this march is the more or less strong pressure which they exercise upon one another, according to their numbers” (Durkheim 1893/1997, 336-337).

On Functionalism:

"When . . . the explanation of a social phenomenon is undertaken, we must seek separately the efficient cause which produces it and the function it fulfills. We use the word "function," in preference to "end" or "purpose," precisely because social phenomena do not generally exist for the useful results they produce. We must determine whether there is a correspondence between the fact under consideration and the general needs of the social organism, and in what this correspondence consists, without occupying ourselves with whether it has been intentional or not" (1895/1964, 95).

"The determination of function is . . . necessary for the complete explanation of the phenomena. . . . To explain a social fact it is not enough to show the cause on which it depends; we must also, at least in most cases, show its function in the establishment of social order" (1895/1964, 97).

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