DURKHEIM'S CONTRIBUTION TO THE RECONSTRUCTION OF POLITICAL THEORY

IN few matters is there a greater degree of unanimity of opinion among students of politics and sociology than exists with respect to the fundamental cause of modern political stupidity, corruption and inefficiency. It is not often questioned that the chief reason for the existence of this deplorable state of affairs is the general indifference shown by the public, particularly by its more intelligent members, toward political questions and practical administration. Most of the present plans for a thorough-going reconstruction of modern political life have as their dominant purpose the increase of popular interest in political life, in the better sense of that term. The two most promising programs which have been put forth are the proposal to increase the scope and importance of local government,[1] and the more radical plan for substituting direct representation of economic and professional interests in political parties and parliamentary institutions for representation on the basis of territory and population which was introduced by Rousseau.[2] One of the most suggestive contributions to this latter mode of solution has come from the pen of Émile Durkheim, in whose recent and premature death sociology has suffered the most severe loss which it has ever sustained.

General Sociological Theories

Émile Durkheim (1858–1917), the most erudite and critical of French sociologists, was born in 1858. After the completion of his education in 1882 he became a teacher of philosophy in several French "lycées." In 1887 he joined the faculty of the University of Bordeaux, where he gave the first course in sociology offered in a French university. After 1902 he

[1] By Graham Wallas and Le Play, from quite different points of view.

[2] A view supported with great vigor by Gumplowicz and Ratzenhofer in Austria, by Gierke in Germany, by Duguit and Benoist in France, by Maitland and Figgis in England and by Bentley and Small in America.

was a member of the faculty of the University of Paris, giving instruction in sociology and the science of education. Unlike most French sociologists he followed an exclusively academic career. His rise to one of the highest professorial positions in his country, in spite of racial prejudice and the opposition of the vested educational interests, is a high testimonial to his rare intellectual powers. Like Professor Hobhouse in England, he was one of the few sociologists who brought to bear upon the study of society a large amount of information in philosophy, ethnology and the special social sciences. Owing to the diametrical opposition of the most fundamental propositions of their sociological systems, there always existed an interesting but unfortunate intellectual feud between Durkheim and Tarde. The quarrel was regrettable, for the system of each writer was weakest in the very department in which his adversary excelled, and both would have gained by collaboration.[1]

[1] Quite in accord with his doctrine that a general synthesis of sociological principles is either impossible or would at the present stage of our information be premature, Durkheim published no systematic treatise on sociology. His first work and his most important contribution to the subject matter of sociology was his *De la division du travail social*, first published in 1893. In this he develops his conception of the two opposing types of social solidarity and traces the causes and methods of the transition from the one to the other. His second work in the sociological field was entitled *Les règles de la méthode sociologique*, first published in 1895. This expands his idea of "exteriority" and "constraint" as the criteria of social phenomena and more especially formulates the laws to which a sociological system of investigation should conform. His third work, *Le suicide*, first published in 1897, studies this abnormality primarily as a social phenomenon amenable to cure by social agencies. His last and longest work, *Les forms élémentaires de la vie religieuse*, published in 1912, is the most pretentious strictly sociological study of religion which has yet appeared, and whatever its defects in methodology or interpretation, the most severe critics admire its display of erudition and mental power. This is the only one of Durkheim's works of which an English translation has appeared. In connection with it should be read A. A. Goldenweiser's masterly critique in the *Journal of Philosophy, Psychology and Scientific Methods*, March, 1917. In addition, Durkheim has since its foundation been the editor-in-chief of *L'Année Sociologique* (1898–), the most authoritative of all reviews devoted to sociological literature. A complete bibliography of Durkheim's books and articles is given in C. E. Gehlke, Emile Durkheim's Contributions to Sociological Theory, pp. 185–8. An appreciation of Durkheim's significance as a sociologist is to be found in the article by V. V. Branford, "Durkheim, A Brief Memoir," in the *Sociological Review*, 1918, and a more thorough discussion in the article by Maurice Halbwach's, "La doctrine de Émile Durkheim," in the *Revue philosophique*, 1918. Much of great value can be found in Harold Höffding's review of *La vie religieuse*, in *La revue de métaphysique et de morale*, 1914, pp. 828–848.

Sociology, according to the view held by Durkheim, is more a system or a methodology of investigation of social phenomena, permeating all the social sciences, than any definite and independent body of knowledge. It is distinguished primarily by its synthetic and scientific method, and it is the fundamental task of the sociologist to infuse into the special social sciences this method of procedure. This would prevent the social sciences from being detached, isolated or *à priori* bodies of knowledge and would weld them all into a coherent system and allow them to contribute to their mutual improvement. Though there may be in the future a place for "general sociology," in the sense in which this word is used by Professor Giddings and others, its data must be provided in advance by the special social sciences, and their development has not as yet been sufficient to make them competent to fulfil this function.[1]

The fundamental basis of Durkheim's interpretation of social phenomena is to be found in his criterion for the determination of such facts or phenomena. The distinctive characteristic of a social fact is two-fold. It is an influence which comes from the social environment which is exterior to, but includes the individual, and it has the power of constraining the individual in spite of his own will.[2] The explanation of this power of constraint by society over the individual is to be found in Durkheim's views on social psychology.[3] According to him,

[1] C. E. Gehlke, Émile Durkheim's Contributions to Sociological Theory, chap. v. This work is the standard exposition of Durkheim's system. It is an excellent and scholarly study not only of Durkheim's sociological thinking but of his whole system of thought. For a concrete expression of Durkheim's conception of the scope of a proper system of sociological knowledge one should consult the schematic arrangement of topics in the *Année Sociologique*, a sample of which is given in Gehlke, *op. cit.*, pp. 122-4.

[2] Social facts "consistent en des manières d'agir, de penser et de sentir, extérieures à l'individu, et qui sont douées d'un pouvoir de coercition en vertu duquel ils s'imposent à lui." Durkheim, *Les Règles de la méthode sociologique*, 3rd ed., Paris, 1904, p. 8. Or, looked at from another point of view, "une fait social se reconnait au pouvoir de coercition externe qu'il exerce ou est susceptible d'exercer sur les individus." *Ibid.*, p. 15.

[3] Gehlke analyzes Durkheim's psychology, *op. cit.*, pp. 93 *et seq.* Durkheim's best presentation of his own views is to be found in an article entitled "Représentations individuelles et représentations collectives," in *La revue de métaphysique et de morale*, vol. vi, 1898.

the social mind is exterior to, superior to, and independent of the individual mind, strictly considered. While the social mind, of course, could not exist without the minds of the component individuals, it is, like a chemical compound, a new product resulting from the interaction of the minds of the associated individuals within the group. Even the main categories of thought—time, space, kind, force and causation are of a social origin. If these premises are accepted,[1] one can readily admit with Durkheim that the social mind will exert an all-powerful constraining influence over the mind of the individual. In fact, Durkheim regards the latter chiefly as a mere receptacle for receiving and coloring impressions from the social mind. Gehlke summarizes this vital point in Durkheim's theory as follows:

> The individual mind furnishes the sensation elements, the impulses to activity, the emotional tendencies, and some representations; the social mind furnishes the great mass of the representations, of the ways of feeling and the ways of acting. These social representations must exist within the individual mind, but their origin is outside of the individual mind, to which they come with force, impressive because of the varied superiority of the source whence they spring, over the source of the individual representations. In its most extreme form this view makes of the mind or soul of the individual merely the incarnation of the social mind in the individual.[2]

Against Tarde, Durkheim argues that all innovations come through the action of the social mind and not from individual inventions spread by imitation.[3] Innovations are frequent in proportion as the number of persons in the social group (*i. e.*, its volume) is great, and as the population is psychically concentrated (*i. e.*, has a high degree of density).[4] Durkheim's theory of the social process thus comes very near to being a mechanistic interpretation in which the element of conscious

[1] The psychological basis for these assumptions, which cannot be dwelt upon in this place, are well presented by Gehlke, *op. cit.*, pp. 20–54; see also *Les formes élémentaires de la vie religieuse* (English translation by J. W. Swain, pp. 9 *et seq.*).

[2] Gehlke, *op. cit.*, p. 54.

[3] *Ibid.*, pp. 58–68.

[4] *Ibid.*, pp. 71 *et seq.*

direction is eliminated.[1] Again, Durkheim's theory of the reality and independence of the social mind makes him psychologically, if not philosophically, a social realist.[2]

If the group mind in this manner constrains the individual mind, it naturally follows that social control is effected mainly by the solidarity or cohesion which is thus maintained. Now this social solidarity or cohesion is of two main types: mechanical or repressive and organic or functional. The mechanical or repressive type of social solidarity, which is the more crude and primitive of the two, grows out of the constraining force of the social mind—the collective consciousness. This type is particularly characteristic of primitive society with its rigid customs, taboos and traditional practices.[3] Its strength varies with the volume, intensity and definiteness of the states of the collective consciousness, as compared with the individual consciousness.[4] Social evolution is characterized by a decrease in this repressive and mechanical type of social cohesion or solidarity and by a corresponding increase in the development of individual consciousness and personality. To maintain an adequate degree of social pressure and control, however, it is necessary that some other more advanced type of solidarity should evolve to replace this declining mechanical solidarity. This is to be found in the principle of organic or functional solidarity which is based upon growing social specialization and the division of labor. This process tends to develop in proportion as the earlier type of solidarity gives way and makes room for the development of the succeeding form. The groupings in society undergo a corresponding transformation, changing from a kinship basis to a territorial and finally to the highest of all types—the functional or professional grouping.[5]

If, however, this later and more advanced type of organic

[1] Gehlke, *op. cit.*, p. 75.

[2] *Ibid.*, pp. 85 *et seq.*; Bristol, *Social Adaptation*, pp. 138–145.

[3] Gehlke, *op. cit.*, pp. 156 *et seq.*; Durkheim, *De la division du travail social* (ed. of 1893), pp. 73–117; *La vie religieuse*, passim.

[4] Gehlke, *op cit.*, pp. 160–161.

[5] Gehlke, *op. cit.*, pp. 162 *et seq.*; Durkheim, *De la division du travail social*, pp. 118–141, 158–217.

or functional solidarity is prevented by external or artificial interference from developing in proportion to the decline of the repressive solidarity, social cohesion and social control will be weakened and abnormal conditions will arise in society. Now it is owing to this very condition of a hampered and restricted growth of organic solidarity in society that there are at present so many pathological types of social organization and so many symptoms of social disintegration and anarchy as well as of individual degeneration. The individual, accustomed since the appearance of the race, to the external and authoritative control of society, finds it hard to adjust himself to the extremely complicated relations of modern social life, and the functional solidarity of society either has not developed enough as yet to furnish the necessary guidance for the individual, or else it has assumed such repugnant, forced and unnatural forms that the individual rebels against it. We have, thus, in modern society the growing prevalence of suicide, crime, the antagonism of capital and labor, social anarchy and general social maladjustment.[1] This being the case, the abnormal conditions of modern society can be remedied only by strengthening the functional type of social solidarity, based upon the division of labor, and by making it possible for it to assume more adequate and equitable forms. This much-needed policy of social reconstruction can best be accomplished by increasing the importance of the modern occupational group. This group is the one which, next to the family, possesses the greatest amount of interest and importance for the individual. Since the family is too narrow and unstable a group upon which to base a firm and comprehensive system of social and political control, it is to an improvement of the occupational group that the practical reformer should direct his efforts, if he would eliminate the more threatening of the abnormal conditions in modern society. The occupational group is not only well adapted to enforce an adequate type of social control, but its control is likely to be more agreeable to the individual than the authority now in-

[1] Gehlke, *op. cit.*, pp. 167 *et seq.*; Durkheim, *op. cit.*, pp. 395–445, and *Le suicide*, passim.

adequately exercised by the state, in that the individual can always be much more conscious of his interests in this group.[1] This last point leads directly to Durkheim's political theories which are based upon the proposal to strengthen the occupational group at the expense of the economic functions of the state, and to make it the basis of representation in the law-making body.[2]

Specific Political Theories[3]

At the outset Durkheim states the problem which constitutes the most pressing necessity for political reform. It is to be found in the need for providing some remedy for the present anarchical conditions which exist in economic affairs, particularly in the industrial relations between employer and employee. While there is at least a rudimentary professional morality among lawyers, magistrates, soldiers, professors, clergymen and physicians, there is practically no semblance of fixed cus-

[1] Gehlke, *op. cit.*, pp. 171 *et seq.*; Durkheim, *Le suicide*, pp. 434 *et seq.*, *De la division du travail social*, 2nd ed., 1902, preface.

[2] It will be evident to students of modern social theories that Durkheim's position is an interesting combination of a sort of capitalistic syndicalism and something like the gild socialism of the German Catholic social reformers, Ketteler and Hitze, and of recent English theorists like Cole, Orage and S. G. Hobson with the "solidarism" of Gide and Bourgeois and the theory of the representation of interest groups of Gumplowicz, Ratzenhofer, Duguit and Bentley. *Cf.* C. D. Plater, Catholic Social Work in Germany; G. H. D. Cole, Self-Government in Industry; Gide and Rist, History of Economic Doctrines, pp. 587–614; A. F. Bentley, The Process of Government.

[3] Durkheim's brief but trenchant political doctrines are to be found in the latter part of his work, *Le suicide*, and in the preface to the second edition (1902) of his *De la division du travail social*. While they are specifically concerned with providing a remedy for the increase of suicide and with improving the organic or functional solidarity of society, they are highly pertinent as suggestions for general political reform and represent one of the most advanced and satisfactory positions taken on this subject by a sociologist. Owing to the fact that the second edition of *De la division du travail social* is often unavailable, the footnote references are to the reprint of the preface of this edition together with that of the latter portion of *Le suicide*, which is published in the volume on Durkheim by G. Davy in the series *Les grands philosophes, francais et étrangers*, Paris, Louis-Michaud, 1911. These two selections are entitled "Conséquences practiques de la sociologie." The passage from *Le suicide* appears on pages 193–199 and the preface of *De la division du travail social* on pages 199–220. For a brief analysis of Durkheim's political theories, see Gehlke, *op. cit.*, pp. 171–176.

toms or a moral code to guide the vast mass of industrial activities and relations of the present time. The rights and relations of employer and employee and of both with the public, when not regulated in an arbitrary manner by the state, are settled, without any attempt at uniformity of procedure or any regard for equity of principle, according to the relative strength in each instance of the parties involved and the methods best adapted to any particular case. The party that is vanquished by force is filled with resentment and awaits the opportunity for revenge. Modern industrial life is thus, in reality, what Hobbes imagined the state of nature to be, namely, a condition of economic warfare.[1]

The reason why this state of non-moral or immoral and unregulated relations and activities in the economic world is so serious at present is that modern society has come to be primarily industrial in its foundations. The Industrial Revolution has wrought a great transformation in the relative significance and complexity of the spheres of human activity, and the industrial realm has now become preponderant in its influence and importance. The scientific sphere is its only serious competitor, and the most influential aspects of even modern science are those which are related to industry and known as "applied science." The most important domain of modern life is, therefore, "en dehors de toute action morale." The situation is rendered even more deplorable because the absence of a proper legal and moral regulation of economic affairs has inevitably reacted upon society as a whole, lowering public morality in general and inducing symptoms of social anarchy.[2] Under existing conditions of social control there is, then, the alternative of leaving the most important aspect of the life of the average man without moral or legal regulations or of proceeding to regulate it by the action of the state. But the state can secure competent legislation only on general principles and its massive and slow-moving machinery is very ill adapted to dealing with the highly specialized industrial activities and re-

[1] Durkheim, *loc. cit.*, pp. 200–201.

[2] *Ibid.*, pp. 201–2, 217–18.

lations of the present day.[1] As a result of this lack of adaptability of the state to fulfil this regulative function in industry, there is a constant oscillation between an excess of inexpert regulation and a condition of partial anarchy.[2]

The only way to solve this difficulty in a rational and permanent manner is to constitute a regulating body separate from the state, though subject to its general supervision, which shall possess legal authority and shall have enough plasticity and adaptability to variation and complexity to be able to deal successfully with the specialized problems of modern industrial life.[3] Such a regulative organ must not only possess the quality of plasticity and adaptability to complex and diverse conditions, but it must also be able to enlist the loyalty and respect of both employer and employee and be equipped with the specialized knowledge essential to an adequate regulation of economic activities.[4]

The modern occupational group is the only organization that fulfils, or has the potentiality of fulfilling, these conditions.[5] These secondary groups, interpolated between the individual and the state, are, on the one hand, general enough to allow their policy to be regulated intelligently by the state, and, on the other hand, possess the detailed knowledge and the flexibility which enables them to comprehend the diverse needs of specialized industrial interests and to minister to these needs in an expert manner.[6] Again, the occupational group is well de-

[1] "L'État est trop loin de ces manifestations complexes pour trouver la forme spéciale qui convient à chacune d'elles. C'est une lourde machine qui n'est faite que pour des besognes générales et simples. Son action, toujours uniforme, ne peut pas se plier et s'ajuster a l'infinie diversitê des circonstances particulières." *Ibid.*, pp. 194–5.

[2] *Ibid.*, p. 195.

[3] "Le seule manière de résoudre cette antinomie est de constituter en dehors de l'État, quoique soumis à son action, un faisceau de forces collectives dont l'influence régulatrice puisse s'exercer avec plus de variété." *Ibid.*

[4] *Ibid.*, pp. 202–3, 216–17.

[5] *Ibid.*, pp. 195, 203. Durkheim uses the term "groupe professionnel," but the special meaning usually attached to the term "professional" makes "occupational group" the better rendering of his meaning.

[6] *Ibid.*, pp. 194–5, 202–3, 216–17.

signed to attract the respect and loyalty of employers and employees. It is active at all times, and its influence extends over wide areas and comprehends the majority of the interests of all parties.[1] Finally, the occupational group would be able to deal satisfactorily with the delicate matters of mutual aid and insurance among its members, which are in need of development, but which it would be unwise to entrust to the control of the state, already overburdened and demonstrated to be relatively incompetent in such matters. It could adjust the highly specialized problems connected with the technical administration of the affairs of each profession and the conflicts which arise between different professions or between the members of the same profession. Both industry and science are becoming daily more highly specialized and subdivided, and, as they require a regulating organ which is equally specialized, the state is becoming constantly more incompetent in the premises.[2]

Some writers and statesmen oppose the further development of the occupational group on the ground that it will be merely a revival of the exclusiveness and corruption of the Roman sodalities or the medieval gilds. To allay this fear, Durkheim gives a brief sketch of the history of corporations to show their past services and the necessary changes which their organization would have to undergo to adapt it to modern conditions. In Rome the occupational groups were under distinct disadvantages. They had no legal standing and shared in the general prejudice of the Romans toward any type of industry save agriculture.[3] In the medieval period conditions were different, for corporate occupational groups were then not only possessed of almost monopolistic control of all industry but also, as a rule, controlled the government of the towns. They were the real cornerstone of medieval society. Their one defect was that, being a product of a narrowly local and exclusive economy, they were unable to adjust themselves to the national economy which followed the Commercial Revolution, and, as a result, they became a barrier to industrial and social progress.[4] The

[1] Gehlke, *op. cit.*, pp. 194–5.
[2] *Ibid.*, pp. 195–6.
[3] *Ibid.*, pp. 205–7.
[4] *Ibid.*, pp. 207–11.

national state, which succeeded the occupational corporation as the chief regulator of industry, was fairly successful in the transitional period when industry was still crude and partially undeveloped. Since the beginnings of the Industrial Revolution, however, the state has become progressively more unfitted to deal with the problems of industry with their growing specialization and complexity. It was the great service of the classical economists and their followers to point out this incompetence. Nevertheless, the failure of the older type of industrial corporation and of the modern state to regulate industrial activities does not imply that these basic aspects of modern life must remain in an unregulated or anarchical condition or must submit to the clumsy and inefficient regulation of the state, and Durkheim presents in an outline form his plan for putting industry under the immediate control of specialized quasi-political occupational groups.

At the outset, Durkheim explains that he has no intention of dogmatizing about the administrative details of his scheme, but simply desires to formulate his general propositions and leave the details to be worked out by experience.[1] Unfortunately, at present, the occupational groups are little more developed than industrial morality and regulation. The only crude approximation to such a group is to be seen in the syndicates of French employers and workmen, which may be regarded as the first rough beginnings of occupational organization—the germ of the future system. But as these syndicates are merely private organizations, unrecognized by law and vested with no legal powers, they have no authority to regulate industrial relations. Not only are there a large number of isolated syndicates in each industrial category, without power of giving unity to the action of the whole, but even the syndicates of employers and employees have no fixed mutual relations based upon equitable contracts. The struggles between them are settled by force, so that their relations are like those of autonomous states of

[1] "L'oeuvre du sociologue n'est pas celle de l'homme d'état. Nous n'avons donc pas à exposer en détail ce que devrait être cette réforme. Il nous suffira d'en indiquer les principes généraux tels qu'ils paraissent ressortir des faits qui précedènt." *Ibid.*, p. 212.

different degrees of strength. What is needed, as the first step in advance, is to unify the syndicates of workmen and the syndicates of employers in each industrial category, give each the legal authority to regulate its own activities under proper state supervision, and provide for a proper adjustment of the relations between the syndicates of labor and capital. The most important fact in regard to the modern syndicate and its future utility is not its present crude and undeveloped condition, but rather that it alone of all types of modern social organization gives evidence of possessing potentialities which can be developed into a proper organ for regulating and controlling the diverse activities and relations of modern industrial life.[1]

The history of the industrial corporations of the past has demonstrated conclusively that the framework of the occupational grouping must be in harmonious accord with the general lines of the organization of economic life. The lack of adjustment between the two was the cause of the disappearance of the gilds. To meet the present conditions the occupational group should be nation-wide and vested with legal powers. At the present time, it could not exist as a legal institution beyond the boundaries of each state, but the various national organizations could enter into extra-legal relations and agreements. This national organization of each occupation would not prevent subordinate organizations of the occupational groups in each locality and would, thus, permit the existence of both efficient regulation and diversified interests and development.[2] As to the relation of the various national occupational organizations to the state, the general principle would be that the government should formulate the basic rules for industrial regulation and delegate to the occupational group the function of diversifying and applying them to the particular needs of the individual industry. This function of proper diversification and specialization of industrial regulation, which the state cannot perform, is the vital rôle of the occupational group.[3] This

[1] Gehlke, *op. cit.*, pp. 194, 199, 203-5. [2] *Ibid.*, pp. 212-13.

[3] "Les deux organes (*i. e.* state and occupational group) en rapport doivent rester distincts et autonomes; chacun d'eux a ses fonctions dont il peut seul s'acquitter. Si c'est aux assemblées gouvernementales qu'il appartient de poser les principes gén-

arrangement thus provides for the best employment of the activity of the state and the subordinate corporation. The former can impart the necessary uniformity and stability to the system, while the latter can supply the equally essential need of plasticity, specialized knowledge and sympathetic interest in its task.

In each industry there should be occupational groups of both workmen and employers. These organizations should be independent and should determine their policy independently within each organization. Both should elect representatives to the industrial tribunal which is to apply the general regulations imposed by the state to the special needs of the industry in question. The proportion of representatives which should be allotted to workmen and employers in this tribunal would have to be determined by the opinion of the public (presumably to be expressed through the action of the government) as to the relative importance of each.[1] These occupational groups would not only perform indispensable administrative and juridical functions but would tend to produce the highly essential moral and social environment which is so much needed in modern industry. They would doubtless provide for the development of the fraternal activities, the mutual aid, the education, the aesthetic life and recreation of their members. Even the present-day syndicates show tendencies in this direction.[2]

There is every reason to believe that the occupational group should also succeed the territorial district as the fundamental political unit—the elementary division of the state. Such an arrangement would have everything in its favor. It would permit of a much more efficient expression and a franker recognition of the different interests with which the government is concerned than the awkward and antiquated system of territorial and personal representation. It seems to be a vital law of social evolution that progress is characterized by a continual

éreaux de la législation industrielle, elles sont incapables de les diversifier suivant les differentes sortes d'industrie. C'est cette diversification qui constitue la tâche propre de la corporation." *Ibid.*, p. 213.

[1] *Ibid.*, p. 213, note.

[2] *Ibid.*, pp. 214–15.

substitution of the functional organization of a society for the territorial or segmentary type of organization.[1] It is certain that the extra-domestic interests of the average modern man are centered primarily in the activities of his occupational group and that his territorial or local loyalty or interest is constantly on the decrease. The idea of territorial representation is a heritage from the agricultural or municipal society of the past, when interest in one's locality meant the same thing as interest in his occupation. Of course, the territorial basis of social grouping would not lose all its significance, but it would not retain its present unjustifiable preponderance. Each national occupational group would have subordinate local organizations, and these local subdivisions of the national organizations would have important mutual interests and relations. Finally, the mere fact of territorial contiguity would retain a certain sentimental importance.[2]

Though it would be extravagant to hope that the carrying into execution of this program of occupational organization of existing society would be a universal panacea for the remedying of all social maladjustments, it is scarcely an exaggeration to say that it is the most important and the most immediate step which needs to be taken to solve our present problems. Nothing else can be substituted. Even if wealth were to be equally divided among the members of society, there would still have to be some regulating organ to adjust industrial relations.[3] Many people prefer to allow the present anarchical condition to continue on the ground that the proper regulation of industry can be accomplished only by a sacrifice of individual liberty. This position is based upon the thoroughly antiquated and discredited notion that there is an antithesis between liberty and authority, for, in reality, there can be no liberty without authoritative control.[4]

[1] In Professor Giddings' terminology, a growth of the social constitution at the expense of the social composition.

[2] *Ibid.*, pp. 214–17, note. In this way Durkheim would bring his program into harmony with those favoring the development of local government.

[3] *Ibid.*, pp. 218–20.

[4] "Rien n'est plus faux que cet antagonisme qu'on a trop souvent volu établir

Lest Durkheim be erroneously accused of advocating syndicalism, in its present connotation, it might be well to point out the main differences between his program and that advocated by syndicalists. Durkheim condemns the class struggle and revolutionary ideas of the syndicalists. He retains the state as the chief political organ of society, but he limits its power in regard to industrial conditions to that of general supervision. Furthermore, he would retain the wage-system, properly safeguarded. Again, he recognizes the necessary function of the capitalist and the entrepreneur and gives to each a proper place in his new organization of industry. In short, Durkheim has little in common with the revolutionary aims and crude methods of syndicalism, but he shares with it the belief in the fundamental utility of the functional organization of society.[1]

Further, while there are important resemblances, Durkheim's plan differs radically from gild socialism in many respects. While gild socialism is now chiefly associated with the exposition of the doctrine by G. H. D. Cole and a number of associates, it is really a much older development. Much of its program was anticipated by Phillippe Joseph Buchez in the middle of the last century and was accepted by the English Christian Socialists and by John Ruskin. Its theory and practical principles were worked out much more systematically in the next generation by the German and Austrian Catholic reformers, Bishop von Ketteler, Franz Hitze and Karl Lueger. Later it was accepted in France by Albert de Mun and the *action libérale*. From continental Europe it was taken to England by Hilaire Belloc and Cecil Chesterton. Working under the influence of these latter writers and the developments of French syndicalism, a number of English writers, especially G. H. D. Cole, A. R. Orage and S. G. Hobson, have given the notion its

entre l'autorité de la règle et la liberté de l'individu. Tout au contraire, la liberté (nous entendons la liberté juste, celle que la société a le devoir de faire respecter) est elle-meme le produit d'une réglementation. Je ne puis être libre que dans la mesure ou autrui est empêché de mettre à profit la supériorité physique, économique ou autre dont il dispose pour asservir ma liberté, et seule la règle sociale peut mettre obstacle à ces abus de pouvoir" *Ibid.*, p. 201.

[1] Gehlke, *op. cit.*, pp. 176–8.

very recent publicity in the English-speaking world. Briefly, the gild socialists propose to hand over the control of the interests of citizens as consumers to the present political organization, though perhaps modified in detail, while autonomy for industrial production will be assured through turning over its direction to "gilds" or organizations of workingmen. Above both state and gilds will be a representative council chosen by and from the groups of consumers and producers. In its thorough-going form it would carry with it an abolition of the capitalistic wage system. Durkheim's proposal would provide for a greater amount of autonomy and self-government for productive industry and for a form of industrial organization similar to the gilds, but here the resemblance ceases. He would retain the capitalistic wage system, and, contrary to the principles of gild socialism, would allow the employers to be represented in the industrial corporations. His whole program savors of *solidarism* more than of a thorough-going proletarian program of reconstruction. His aim is to bring about a restoration of social and economic *morale* through a strengthening of the functional organization of society, rather than to produce a sweeping reorganization of the whole productive and distributive system. Nor is his state merely or mainly the representative of the citizens as consumers; it retains its general and comprehensive control over all social interests, but with its legislation in industrial matters limited to a laying down of general policies. On the whole, his general program is an interesting capitalistic flirtation with the least dangerous and revolutionary phases of syndicalism and gild socialism.[1]

As Durkheim's political theories are in themselves but a brief statement of principles which he hoped to expand later, there is no need for a summary at this point, but it might be useful to indicate the general significance of his plan and its relation

[1] On these points consult F. S. Nitti, Catholic Socialism; C. D. Plater, Catholic Socialism in Germany; a forthcoming work by P. T. Moon dealing with the *action libérale;* H. Belloc, The Servile State; and G. H. D. Cole, Self-Government in Industry, and Labour in the Commonwealth. A closer resemblance to Durkheim's program than either syndicalism or gild socialism is the British "Industrial Council Plan" submitted by the Whitley Committee in 1917–18.

to the theories of other sociologists and political scientists. In the first place, little but praise can be bestowed upon his arrangement for dividing the control of industrial relations between the state and occupational groups. It is, perhaps, the only way by which the evils of bureaucracy can be avoided and, at the same time, specialized and expert control of industry secured. Again, his method would avoid a centralized and all-powerful state and yet secure for labor a large degree of authority in regulating its own conditions. It is also difficult to comprehend how valid arguments can be brought against his other and secondary suggestion to make occupational organizations the basis of political representation. The chief arguments against it are based merely upon sentiment and a love of the traditional modes of procedure. The only argument of any weight which can be brought against the proposal is that the representation of so many interests would confuse and delay legislation. The obvious answer to this is that the same interests already exist and are represented in hidden, illegal and extra-legal ways. Durkheim's system would bring the representation of interests frankly into the open instead of compelling it to continue a surreptitious but effective existence in the lobby.[1] All in all, the conception of political representation based upon *interests* seems to be one of the most desirable and promising of proposed political innovations, and one which is receiving the support of an ever-increasing number of thoughtful writers. This conception, however, is by no means new either in theory or in practice. In the ancient world Plato, Aristotle and Polybius understood and advocated the representation of interest groups. A type of representation somewhat analogous but by no means identical characterized the medieval system of estates and the municipal organizations and received a theoretical formulation in the doctrines of the Conciliar Movement. In theory, Althusius advocated a somewhat similar arrangement at the very beginning of the seventeenth century, and Mirabeau revived the notion two centuries later. Recently it has received the support of the French political

[1] *Cf.* Bentley, The Process of Government.

scientists, Duguit, Benoist and La Grasserie; of the Belgian sociologists DeGreef and Prins; of the Germanic publicist Schaeffle; and of Maitland and Figgis in England. In America, Professor Overstreet, Mr. Laski and Mr. Bentley have supported this conception.[1] Again, the related idea of the state as an organization of various interests, which has a close relation to Durkheim's theories, was the keynote of Gumplowicz's political theory and of Ratzenhofer's monumental *Wesen und Zweck der Politik*, interpreted to America by Professor Small and elaborated by Mr. Bentley. Further, as Durkheim would give his occupational groups a corporate organization, his scheme bears a close similarity to the theory of Gierke, Maitland and Figgis which would make the state a union of lesser corporate groups.[2] Finally, Durkheim's notion of the supremacy of the functional organization of society over the segmentary or territorial organization is in essential harmony with Professor Giddings' contention that civilization is characterized by a constantly increasing subordination of the social composition to the social constitution.[3]

As to the contrasts between Durkheim, Le Bon and Tarde in regard to political theory, Durkheim differs from Le Bon in that the latter can see no good in the syndicalist movement or in the reglementation of industry. Probably he would agree with Durkheim, however, in desiring to limit the intrusion of the state into the details of economic regulation. Tarde argues against the idea that modern industrial life is characterized by an increasing amount of specialization or division of labor.[4] In view of the facts, while one must admit the ingenuity of Tarde's argument, it is difficult not to accuse him of engaging in mere sophistry for the purpose of being at odds with Durkheim. In short, while no one could justly attribute to Durkheim any par-

[1] *Cf.* Dunning, A History of Political Theories from Luther to Montesquieu, pp. 61–67; Garner, An Introduction to Political Science, pp. 469–474.

[2] *Cf.* Barker, Political Thought in England from Spencer to the Present Day, pp. 173–183. Of course, this idea had its germ in the doctrine of Althusius, of whom Gierke was the leading interpreter.

[3] *Cf.* Principles of Sociology, p. 299.

[4] *Cf.* G. Tarde, *Les transformations du pouvoir*, pp. 221–5.

ticular originality in his political theories, they constitute a constructive synthesis of several of the most promising progressive elements in the reconstruction of political theory and practice and undoubtedly represent in one particular phase one of the most advanced and most satisfactory of sociological positions in regard to political and economic problems.

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