

ROUTLEDGE CLASSICS

The background of the cover features three miniature figures of men in suits, walking in a line from left to right. They are casting long, soft shadows on the surface below them. The figures are slightly out of focus, with the central one being the sharpest. A semi-transparent dark blue horizontal band is overlaid across the middle of the image, containing the title text.

# Emile Durkheim

Professional Ethics and Civic Morals

ROUTLEDGE

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# Professional Ethics and Civic Morals

**'...one cannot help realizing that had the social sciences paid more attention to Durkheim half a century or so ago, a good many false steps might have been saved and we might be much further along than we are today. Even if his point of view in its entirety may not be acceptable, Durkheim had insights well ahead of his age.'**

*Annual Review of Anthropology*

Émile Durkheim is one of the founding fathers of sociology and *Professional Ethics and Civic Morals* is one of his most neglected yet insightful works. Durkheim's view that the instability of industrial society was connected to the decline of religion and his characterization of the state as the ultimate moral force in society reveal his lifelong engagement with the relationship between the individual and society.

In *Professional Ethics and Civic Morals* Durkheim poses a major question: given the negative social consequences of unfettered markets, which caused what he termed 'anomie', how is the state to reconcile morality with the market? Durkheim argues that the answer is to be found in the evolution of a civil religion, in the form of professional codes and civic values, which would counteract the effects of individualism, just as guilds had regulated medieval economic life.

Arguing that the state has a vital role to play in moral life and that morals are at bottom social facts – a controversial position which drew considerable criticism – Durkheim also argues that the state has a duty to protect the rights of the individual, via a form of cosmopolitan patriotism.

Durkheim also articulates a highly original and critical interpretation of the rules around property and inheritance – a perspective which resonates with debates about inequality and the redistribution of wealth today.

Included in this Routledge Classics edition is a new introduction by Bryan S. Turner, placing Durkheim in contemporary context and outlining the key tenets of *Professional Ethics and Civic Morals*.

**Émile Durkheim** (1858–1917) was one of the founders of sociology and social anthropology. He also believed that education was vitally important in sustaining a moral life and was deeply involved in the campaign for educational reform in France.



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Émile  
**Durkheim**

**Professional Ethics and Civic  
Morals**

Translated by Cornelia Brookfield

With a new introduction by Bryan S. Turner



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# INTRODUCTION TO THE ROUTLEDGE CLASSICS EDITION

## INTRODUCTION: MORAL FACTS

Émile Durkheim (1858–1917) was a dominant and controversial figure in French education and politics in his lifetime and remains a ‘founding father’ of modern sociology. The questions he raised and the puzzles he explored remain with us today. If we have any answers, we have them because Durkheim and other thinkers of his early generation of sociologists paved the way. Many of his publications – *The Division of Labor in Society* (1893), *Suicide* (1897), *The Rules of Sociological Method* (1895), *The Elementary Forms of the Religious Life* (1912) – have retained their place in the arena of ‘classical’ sociology. Finally, Durkheim has also been the topic of two major biographies – Steven Lukes (1972) and Marcel Fournier (2013). However, *Professional Ethics and Civic Morals* has not received the attention it deserves.

The neglect of this important set of lectures is partly due to the convoluted history of its publication. The various chapters in this

volume were originally given as lectures in Bordeaux in 1898–99, and later at the Sorbonne in 1904–5, 1910–11, and 1914–15 and hence the volume is somewhat fragmented. Durkheim’s vocabulary and mode of expression have become foreign to a modern ear as for example when he declares that ‘the State is the very organ of social thought’ (p.55). His central thesis that morals are social facts also challenges many modern assumptions about the relativistic interpretation of facts. A contemporary sociologist might be inclined to put ‘facts’ in quotation marks. Contemporary moral philosophy might also want to treat morality as expressing our approval or disapproval of some behaviour, or registering our feelings and attitudes towards behaviour. Its critics have described this understanding of morality as ‘emotivism’ (MacIntyre, 2007). By contrast, for Durkheim morality is a system of collective, external and objective rules that determine behaviour. He emphatically asserts at the opening of the section on professional ethics: ‘The science of morals and rights should be based on the study of moral and juridical facts. These facts consist of rules of conduct that have received sanction’ (p.1). Durkheim’s optimism about the future development of industrial civilization and the prospect of cosmopolitanism (or ‘world patriotism’ (pp.80–81) under the guiding principles of the Enlightenment has been overshadowed by two world wars and their fatal consequences. Finally, we live in a world where economic liberalism has underpinned policies to cut taxes, privatize government and limit the role of the state. Durkheim’s view of the evolution of the state has not been borne out in Europe and even less so in the United States. Chicago economic theory and neo-liberal policies have eclipsed Keynesianism.

Why, then, read Durkheim? First, he very clearly saw the negative social consequences of unregulated markets. His study of moral regulation is premised on the argument that the growth of industrial capitalism and free markets has created major social instability that he called ‘anomie’. Thus ‘there exists today a whole range of collective activity outside the sphere of morals and which is almost entirely removed from the moderating effect of obligations’ (p.11). He was critical of socialist and classical economic theories alike which hold that ‘economic life is equipped to organize itself and to function in an orderly way and in

harmony, without any moral authority intervening' (p.11). He concluded by saying that 'this amoral character of economic life amounts to a public danger' (p.13). Durkheim's critical views on an emerging capitalist society have been echoed by many critics of contemporary deregulated economies. For example, John Galbraith's notion of 'private wealth, public squalor' was pursued in many publications that were critical of the neo-liberal view that expenditure on education, health and welfare are intolerable deficits (Galbraith, 1973).

In my conclusion, therefore, I spell out two areas of modern life where Durkheim remains highly relevant. In ethical criticism of modern economics, one common element is the idea that inequality cannot be easily justified by reference to economic arguments in favour of low taxation, small states and global competition. Durkheim's notion of anomie is relevant to understanding the political crises of modern society, where democracy itself is under threat by the behaviour (or misbehaviour) of powerful elites (Shipman, Edmunds and Turner, 2018).

Secondly, Durkheim thought that the instability of industrial society was connected to the decline of religion. This theme which modern sociology might simply describe as 'secularization' preoccupied Durkheim in *The Elementary Forms of Religious Life* (2008), but one also finds this argument running throughout this volume. But Durkheim was not strictly speaking a secularization theorist but rather he belongs to a school of political theory that argues society cannot function adequately without a 'civil religion' (Beiner, 2011). Durkheim was critical of the hold exercised by the Catholic Church over French society, but he saw the need for a civil religion to offset the force of individualism and the destructive consequences of unbridled economic competition. This idea has had many exponents but two political theorists have special relevance for our understanding of Durkheim namely J-J.Rousseau (1712–1778) and Charles-Louis de Secondat Baron de Montesquieu (1689–1755).

## THE ESSENTIAL ARGUMENT

There is no single argument to *Professional Ethics and Civic Morals*. In a collection of lectures, Durkheim explored many issues and themes – the

role of professional associations in civil society, the functions of the state, the nature of contracts, the rights of property, the study of morals from the perspective of an empirical sociology and so forth. 'Professional Ethics' refers to the moral and juridical norms to govern the relation of the individual to him or herself, to the family and the professions. 'Civic morals' refers to the rules that determine the relation of the individual to 'political society' (a plurality of diverse social groups including families and occupational groups), but within that political society the state is the 'dominant feature'.

These lectures on the state, civil society and the individual involved Durkheim in an explanation of the idea of social facts that he was to explore more fully in *The Rules of Sociological Method* (1895) and *Sociology and Philosophy* (Durkheim, 1974). Durkheim's understanding of social facts as the topic of sociological research, perhaps especially in the empirical research behind *Suicide*, has been deeply contentious (Gane, 1988). Durkheim argues in *The Rules* that social facts are external to and exercise constraint over the individual, typically involving a sanction. Thus, when I fulfil my obligations, for example as a citizen, I perform duties which are defined by law and custom. Moral regulation was in this sense an appropriate topic for the study of professional ethics and civic morals. Hence the opening sentences of his study proclaim 'The science of morals and rights should be based on the study of moral and juridical facts. These facts consist of rules of conduct that have received sanction' (p.1). This claim was an aspect of Durkheim's concern to distinguish sociology as a separate discipline from either psychology, biology or philosophy. Thus in a critical consideration of the pragmatism of William James in *Sociology and Philosophy* (Durkheim, 1974:25), he presents the argument again that religious beliefs, morality and the precepts of law are 'all the most characteristic manifestations of collective life. All are expressly obligatory'.

One major theme of these lectures concerns the functions of the state as a moral agency in modern societies. This theme involved Durkheim in a complex analysis of the individual and modern individualism. Although liberalism has focused on the freedom and

autonomy of individuals, Durkheim insists that ‘our moral individuality, far from being antagonistic to the State, has on the contrary been a product of it’ (p.74) and the role of the state ‘is to persevere in calling the individual to a moral way of life’ (p.75).

Throughout *Professional Ethics and Civic Morals* we find Durkheim expressing concern that collective life is being slowly undermined by social and economic change. As France evolved in the late nineteenth century into an industrial society, the market was not regulated by the state, and at the same time, with the decline of the guild system, a gap emerged between civil society and the state. This gap could only be closed by the development of professional associations and a corresponding ethical system. Durkheim observed that there was little or no regulation of the economic functions of society. The absence of regulation in the business professions was of ‘the greatest moment: that is, that in this whole sphere of social life, no professional ethics exist’ (p.10). Sociology was to play a role in developing both professions and ethics.

In order to understand Durkheim’s sociology, we need to understand both the context in which his sociology developed and the intellectual influences on his work. Here I follow Edward Tiryakian (2009:104) in arguing that any comprehensive understanding of ‘a sociological classic’ demands that we grasp ‘the intellectual debates of the day’ and the ‘broader societal and cultural context in which it was fashioned’. Durkheim’s sociology was a product of the political crises of French society in the nineteenth century and the intellectual debates that emerged from those crises.

## THE CONTEXT

Durkheim’s sociology was directed towards discovering and understanding the conditions that can create and sustain social solidarity (or social cohesion to use a modern notion) in societies undergoing rapid social change or revolutionary political upheavals. Although the whole of Europe was exposed to radical changes from the eighteenth to the twentieth century, France went through a period

of exceptional political instability. We can only appreciate Durkheim's focus on social solidarity and civil society against a background of political instability and military conflict. Between 1789 and the First World War France experienced a number of revolutionary events that divided the country between the Church and political conservatism on the one hand and the bourgeoisie and emerging liberalism on the other. The final destruction of the ancient regime and the descent of the French Revolution into terror produced a strong conservative reaction in Europe. Edmund Burke's *Reflections on the Revolution in France* (1790), published in November 1790, was and remains one of the most influential criticisms of the abstract notion of 'The Rights of Man'. Its influence is felt today and not least in Hannah Arendt's analysis of totalitarianism (Arendt, 1976). For Burke the traditional rights of English men under the common law provided more security than the abstract ideas of the Revolution, and hence Burke hoped for a peaceful transition of power comparable to the English revolution of 1688. The Revolution and its aftermath established a deep fissure between secular anticlerical republicanism and political and social conservatism that defined French politics for the next two centuries. Durkheim's own life ended in the tragedy of the First World War when his son Andre Durkheim was killed in December 1915.

These political crises erupted in a context where French society struggled to define itself in terms of the principles that are now regarded as essential to modernity: liberty, equality, secularity and democracy. The period between the Second Restoration of 1814 and the Revolution of 1848 was one in which there were many attempts to secure a stable government under a constitutional monarchy. The 1848 Revolutions raised once more the aspiration to create a liberal bourgeois alternative to the reactionary regimes, which had controlled political life in Europe after the fall of Napoleon. However, the 1848 Revolutions were unsuccessful attempts to create stable governments under a liberal constitution. As failed bourgeois revolutions, they were the context in which conservative social forces were able to restore their traditional political role against the rise of an

urban bourgeoisie that was the product of nineteenth century industrialization. Karl Marx in *The 18<sup>th</sup> Brumaire of Louis Bonaparte* ([1963] 1852) called the political coup a 'farce' in order to compare it to Napoleon Bonaparte's seizure of power in 1799. He famously said that history repeats itself first as a tragedy and then as a farce.

While these events shaped the world into which Durkheim was born in 1858, it was the defeat of France in the Franco-Prussian War of 1870 that had the most profound consequences for Durkheim and the development of sociology in French universities. Alsace-Lorraine, the birth place of Durkheim and a major centre of the Jewish community, was annexed. Epinal, the birth place of Durkheim, was occupied by 15,000 troops thereby becoming a fortified city. Military failure contributed to the emerging tensions in French society between social classes, and between Catholic conservatism, nationalism, socialism and secularism.

The military defeat was followed by the Paris Commune of 1871, which more than any other event demonstrated the deep divide in France between the substantial rural Catholic and conservative population and the more republican and radical working class of the large cities, especially Paris, Lyon and Marseille. The Commune was a radical socialist and revolutionary government that controlled Paris from late March to late May 1871. The radicals were deeply suspicious of the Catholic Church and on 2 April 1871 a decree confiscated state funds allocated to the Church, seized the property of many congregations, and banned religious education in Catholic schools. Two hundred priests, nuns and monks were arrested. The capital was defended by the National Guard and the Commune refused to accept the authority of the French government. The revolution was eventually put down by the regular French army in what came to be known as the 'Bloody Week' of May 1871. Although the Commune was short lived, it had a lasting effect on socialist thought and movements including the analyses of Karl Marx (1989) [1871] who wrote enthusiastically in 1871 about the Commune in *The Civil War in France*.

Although the occupation came to an end in 1873, it had a lasting effect. Durkheim came to the conclusion that the only effective

response to military defeat and national humiliation was to improve the French educational system. These military disasters illustrated the weakness of France in relation to the technological and scientific superiority of Germany. We can see much of his early interest in education as a response to the Franco-Prussian War and the Commune. In fact, the need for educational reform had been a national concern for many years. French universities were thought to be inferior to the German higher education system. Durkheim was given leave of absence to spend the academic year of 1885–86 to evaluate the scientific work being undertaken in German universities. Durkheim travelled to Leipzig to meet Wilhelm Wundt (1832–1920) who had created a famous psychology institute to further the cause of experimental psychology. Wundt sought to promote the empirical study of ethics, religion and law. Durkheim also travelled to Berlin and Marburg where he became acquainted with developments in the field of economics and political economy which explored the inter-connections between ethics and economics.

Durkheim returned to France with a determination to develop the empirical study of ethics and law, and this became an important feature of Durkheim's general sociology. In particular, Durkheim was influenced by the 'historical school' of jurisprudence in Germany which saw the law as the expression of the collective life of a society. This exposure to an emerging sociology of law in Germany can be regarded as the starting point of Durkheim's life interest in the empirical and objective study of moral (including religious) life in terms of the discipline and regulation of collective life (Poggi, 2000: 99–120). These interests in the connections between mores, ethics and law can be seen as the foundation of what became the lectures on ethics in Bordeaux and at the Sorbonne which were called *Physique des mœurs et du droit* and which we have here in translation as *Professional Ethics and Civic Morals*.

We can see therefore that the Franco-Prussian War and the Paris Commune shaped Durkheim's appreciation of German social sciences, but they also defined Durkheim's attitudes towards contemporary politics. In particular, what we know as 'The Dreyfus Affair' (1894–1906) was important in Durkheim's private and public life. In 1894 Captain

Alfred Dreyfus, a Jew of Alsatian origin, was falsely accused of providing secret military documents to the Imperial German military. He was sentenced to life imprisonment on Devil's Island. After a long legal and political struggle, he was finally acquitted in 1906 by the Supreme Court. Reinstated in the army, he served in the First World War, eventually dying in 1935.

The Dreyfus Affair is important in helping us to decide whether Durkheim's sociology was deeply conservative insofar as the central theme of his sociology is the need for social solidarity and the importance of collective life over individual needs and experience. The notion that Durkheim's sociology was a conservative response to rapid social change and political instability is associated in particular with the work of Robert Nisbet (1965;1967). According to Nisbet, sociology was a response to the Industrial and French Revolutions. The 'unit ideas' of sociology are the problem of authority, the sacred, community, the threat of individualism, social status, and organic wholeness of society. These ideas are also the basic core of conservative thought. The issue of Durkheim's conservative thought was examined at some length in my 'Preface to the Second Edition' of *Professional Ethics and Civic Morals* (1992) where, by referring to the work of Alvin Gouldner (1962) and Anthony Giddens (1986), I examined Durkheim's relationship to the development of socialism in France. To take one element of his study of property rights, Durkheim's criticism of inheritance laws as profoundly unjust in distributing wealth regardless of merit in the lottery of birth further suggests that Durkheim's sociology was far from conservative. The idea that his sociology was conservative no longer commands support and hence there is little merit in persisting with this interpretation of his political views. Recent interpretations of Durkheim have drawn attention to the fact that 'he clearly did not believe that normative integration could occur without justice and equality' (Stedman Jones, 2002: 123), as he made clear in the *Division of Labor in Society* (1984). Despite Durkheim's search for the grounds of social cohesion through shared values, he was categorical in his view that 'all external inequality compromises organic solidarity' (Durkheim, 1984: 373).

The complexity and subtlety of Durkheim's political views are illustrated by the Dreyfus Affair, which more than any other event after the Commune, exposed the deep divisions in French society between Catholicism and secular republicans. However, it was the profound antisemitism that deeply affected Jews in France and throughout Europe, including of course Durkheim himself. The antisemitic demonstrations were instrumental in the rise of Zionism by persuading Jews of the necessity to create their own state. In response to the general social disorder, Durkheim proposed the creation of the League for the Respect of Legality and the Defence of the Nation's Honour. The crisis demonstrated the fragility of the social order and the extreme difficulties of creating social cohesion in a fractured and fragmented society.

## THE INTELLECTUAL INFLUENCES

Durkheim was influenced by the legacy of socialism in France and he gave lectures on socialist theory at Bordeaux in 1895–96. The lectures were in response to student interest in the national political crisis and the evolution of socialist groups and ideas (Tiryakian, 2009: 33). More than half of these lectures were focused on the work of Claude H. Saint Simon (1760–1825) who is often regarded as the founder of French socialism and sociology. His interpretation of the need for a new religion to underpin an emerging industrial society was clearly influential in Durkheim's own thinking about civil religions. Durkheim rejected the idea that socialism was a science of society but recognized nevertheless that it gave rise to scientific activity. Socialism was an ideology that could be understood and explained by sociology. These lectures were published as *Le Socialisme* in France in 1928 and in English in 1962. They provided the basis for Alvin Gouldner's defence of Durkheim as a serious political theorist in his 'Introduction' to the Bordeaux lectures. In my 1992 Preface to the Second Edition I also referred to Gouldner's interpretation of the influence of Saint Simon on Durkheim to demonstrate that he was not a conservative figure. However, in this new Introduction to the

Routledge Classics edition I give more emphasis to Durkheim's interest in the law, claiming that in fact Montesquieu and Jean-Jacques Rousseau were central, not only to Durkheim's approach to law and to his substantive sociology of French society, but also to his methodology.

Durkheim was well aware of his debt to Montesquieu and Rousseau. His Latin thesis of 1892 was on Montesquieu, whose work was described as a contribution to 'political science' – the phrase that was used originally to describe 'sociology'. Of Montesquieu, Durkheim admitted that 'his successors in instituting *sociology* did little more than give a name to the field of study he inaugurated' (Durkheim, 1965: 57). The two essays that describe that intellectual debt were published in English translation as *Montesquieu and Rousseau: Forerunners of Sociology* (1960). I suggest the influence of Montesquieu and Rousseau on Durkheim has been under-estimated. While Anthony Giddens (1972:29; 1978:9) refers to Montesquieu in understanding the formation of Durkheim's thought, recent analyses of Durkheim, for example by W.S.F. Pickering (2002) and Edward Tiryakian (2009) fail to consider their influence on his sociology. In fact we can detect the influence of both Montesquieu and Rousseau in the key issues in Durkheim's sociology, which included the critique of individualism in modern societies, to uncover the social sources of moral authority and to demonstrate the practical utility of sociological research in understanding the social nature of suicide (Durkheim, 1951), the reform of education (Durkheim, 1973), and the importance of professional associations in stabilizing a capitalist economy (Durkheim, 1962). I propose that these key issues and concerns flowed directly from his reading of Montesquieu and Rousseau. In this regard I follow Lynn Hunt (1988:25) in noting that Durkheim, never indifferent to the political principles of 1789, 'singled out Rousseau and Montesquieu as the forerunners of sociology, but they were also the two chief inspirations for the revolutionaries of the 1790s. Rousseau and Montesquieu initiated the discovery of society's laws of operation; the revolutionaries put these discoveries into practice'.

The influence of Montesquieu, was in part, one of epistemology if not methodology. Montesquieu understood history in his

*Considerations on the Causes of the Greatness of the Romans and their Decline* not in terms of heroes, individual events and fortune but by reference to external causes which determine what appear to be accidents. While political leaders might create institutions, it is institutions that subsequently control humans. He also rejected the idea of Divine Providence, favoured religious tolerance and supported the separation of church and state. *The Spirit of the Laws* (Montesquieu, 1989) which he published in 1748 is generally regarded as the early foundation of a comparative science of political forms, namely monarchies which are based on a principle of honour, republics which require a principle of virtue, and finally despotisms which rely on fear. However, it is in the study of religion that we can see a clear connection between Montesquieu's and Durkheim's sociology of religion. Montesquieu was less interested in the truth or falsity of the religious doctrines of different religions but with their utility in civil society. He opens his discussion of religion in Book 24 with the following statement:

I shall examine the various religions of the world only in relation to the good to be drawn from them in the civil state, whether I speak of the one whose roots are in heaven or of those whose roots are in the earth.

(1989: 459)

In *The Elementary Forms of the Religious Life* (1912), Durkheim argued that sociology did not address questions about the truth or falsity of religious beliefs. He dismissed such theological questions by flatly asserting there are no religions that are false. Sociology only considers the utility of religion or its social functions, which are to underpin collective sentiments and collective representations.

Montesquieu was critical of religion because he believed, for example, in Book 24 of *The Spirit of the Laws* that religion supports despotic governments in making people fatalistic and passive. However, he also alludes here to a theme in western political thought which recognised that no society can exist without a civil religion as a necessary condition for shared values, discipline and morality. A wise ruler should use neither love nor fear of religion to guide the

conduct of the state, but depend on the utility of religion to control a population. The implication of this tradition is that Christianity was not by itself a possible basis for a civil religion. There was a general agreement from Thomas Hobbes onwards that Christianity was in many respects an anti-political religion and that the teaching of Jesus was also in many respects incompatible with many basic social institutions including marriage and the family. In the New Testament one of Jesus's disciples asks for permission to bury his father and Jesus replied 'Follow me: and let the dead bury the dead' (Matthew 8:19-22). Thus 'family obligations lose all moral force in the face of the trumping power of the Christian mission' (Beiner, 2011:44). However, a functioning society requires the moral force that can only be supplied by religion and a civil religion is most suited to this task.

The principal architect of this argument is Rousseau in Chapter 8, Book 4 of *The Social Contract* of 1762. Although Rousseau is often seen as a secular philosopher, he was deeply convinced of the importance of a civil religion which would involve belief in a deity and an afterlife as important elements in instilling discipline and moral order on a society. He favoured a civil religion because it would be more tolerant of diversity than Christianity. Indeed 'no state has ever been founded without religion as its base' (Rousseau, 1913:180). A civil religion supporting obedience and loyalty to the state, and the love of the law is important in promoting 'sentiments of sociability' (Rousseau, 1913:152) that are necessary in the character of the good citizen.

Durkheim in many respects followed both Montesquieu and Rousseau, especially in understanding that a successful society had its foundation in shared values, morals and discipline and as such could only find a source in a civil religion. Here we can consider an important component of *Professional Ethics and Civic Morals* where Durkheim claims 'The fundamental duty of the State is laid down in this very fact: it is to persevere in calling the individual to a moral way of life' (p.75). He asserts that it 'is above all, supremely the organ of moral discipline' (p.77). But what more precisely characterizes the connection between the individual and the State? It is of course patriotism which 'is precisely the ideas and feelings as a whole which bind the individual to a certain

State' (p.79). However, Durkheim was aware of a growing challenge to patriotism, namely between the national ideal and a moral vision associated with 'the human ideal and mankind in general – in a word, between patriotism and world patriotism' (p.78).

In a remarkable passage, Durkheim begins to imagine the effects of globalization on national societies and the possibility of universal human rights. The tension between patriotism and cosmopolitanism could begin to be solved when we can imagine 'humanity in its entirety organized as a society' (p.74). A peaceful international order could exist if 'the state had no other purpose than making men of its citizens, in the widest sense of the term, then civic duties would be only a particular form of the general obligations of humanity' (p.80).

This tension between patriotism and cosmopolitanism became especially difficult in Durkheim's own life following the outbreak of the First World War. Durkheim was highly critical of the aggressive version of nationalism that he saw emerging in Germany. He developed his critical ideas about nationalism and war in *Germany Above All: The German Mental Attitude and the War* (1915a) and *Who Wanted the War? The Origin of the War According to Diplomatic Documents* (1915b). Of course, the tensions between patriotism, nationalism and world-patriotism or cosmopolitanism raise very practical questions about how those tensions and contradictions could be resolved. Durkheim's view was consistent and clear. It is the educational system that can and must provide moral education and guidance for children and through those educational experiences they can develop a deep respect for humanity that is not incompatible with patriotism. Durkheim's contributions to the sociology of education were considerable. He published three books on the sociology of education which were published posthumously: *Education and Sociology* (1956), *Moral Education* (1961) and *The Evolution of Educational Thought* (1977). He was made a professor of education in 1906 and the highly centralized French educational system meant that Durkheim could have a national role to play in educational reform. One aim of the educational policy of the Third Republic was to replace Catholic education, with its strict ecclesiastical morality, with a secular education. While Durkheim was himself a rationalist and secular Jew, he was critical of the secular reform of

education because it failed to take the moral basis of education seriously. Durkheim promoted the ideals of a moral education through a process of socialization that would introduce the child into respect for humanitarian values. *Professional Ethics and Civic Morals* can also be seen as an aspect of Durkheim's sociology of education insofar as it treats the teaching profession as a key element of civil society.

## CONCLUSION: DURKHEIM AND THE TWENTY-FIRST CENTURY

The sociology of the twentieth century was almost uniformly committed to the idea that modernization was inevitably accompanied by secularization in terms of the declining influence of religious institutions, the authority of the Church and recruitment to the ministry or priesthood. In British sociology this perspective was closely associated with Bryan Wilson's *Religion in Secular Society* (1966). This view was revised, with greater attention being given to the influence of Islam and Buddhism in the West, the vitality of religion in Africa and Latin America, and the presence of popular religion in urban society. Perhaps more important is the recognition of how religion has shaped major political developments worldwide such as the Iranian revolution, Solidarity in Poland, the moral majority in the United States, and liberation theology in Latin America. These developments were described by José Casanova as 'public religions' (1994). In a similar fashion, Robert Bellah had revived the idea of civil religions in sociology in his famous *Daedalus* article on 'Civil Religion in America' (1967) where he also argued against a simple secularization thesis in showing that American history from the Civil War to Vietnam had been modelled on themes of tragedy, suffering and sacrifice with ultimate redemption. In this new Introduction, I have stressed the importance of civil religion and the state in Durkheim's work as a whole. Here I may fittingly quote the view of Edward Tiryakian (2009:104) that Durkheim's *The Elementary Forms of the Religious Life* is 'a continuation of the conscious attempts in the French Revolution to formulate and enact a civil religion'. The quest for the moral authority of a civil religion remains part of the contemporary political agenda.

A related issue is the sovereignty of the modern state and its relationship to the economy. *Professional Ethics and Civic Morals* presupposes and celebrates the role of a powerful state in guiding the nation and disciplining citizens. The state and professional groups were important bastions against the excesses of egoistic individualism. In *Suicide* (1951: 389) Durkheim claimed that individuals ‘are made aware of society and of their dependence upon it only through the State’. However, the relationships between state, society and individual had been disrupted by the growth of a market society where the ‘amoral character of economic life amounts to a public danger’ (Durkheim, 1962:12).

Durkheim was confident that the state would continue to expand and influence society. In reviewing the growth of individual rights, Durkheim concluded that ‘these considerations explain more clearly the continuous advance of the State and its justification, to some extent: they allow us to assume that far from being some kind of passing anomaly, this advance is bound to go on indefinitely in the future’ (p.74). Contrary to Durkheim’s expectations, in many respects the role of the state has contracted following the Reagan–Thatcher era with the reduction of personal and corporate taxation, the privatization of many public utilities and an emphasis on personal not collective responsibility for health and welfare. However, in support of Durkheim, the economy is deregulated and professional ethics are underdeveloped. Injustice, inequality and greed continue to compromise the ‘organic solidarity’ of Durkheim’s vision of society.

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# PROFESSIONAL ETHICS

The science of morals and rights should be based on the study of moral and juridical facts. These facts consist of rules of conduct that have received sanction. The problems to be solved in this field of study are:

1. How these rules were established in the course of time: that is, what were the causes that gave rise to them and the useful ends they serve.
2. The way in which they operate in society; that is, how they are applied by individuals.

Another matter, obviously, is to consider how we arrived at our current ideas of property and how theft has come to be a crime in certain conditions determined by the law; we must, too, define the conditions that account for the protective rule of the rights of property being here more and there less observed, that is, how it happens that some societies have more, and some, fewer thieves.

These two questions are distinct, but even so, they could not be treated separately, for they are closely linked. There are the causes which have led to the establishment of rule, or law and order, and there are the causes responsible for the ascendancy of rule over the minds of men, sometimes over few, sometimes many. These causes are not identical but are yet of a kind to act as a check on each other and also to throw light one on the other. The problem of the origin and the problem of the operation of the function must therefore form the subject matter of research. This is why the equipment of the method used in studying the science of morals and rights is of two kinds. On the one hand we have comparative history and ethnography, which enable us to get at the origin of the rule, and show us its component elements first dissociated and then accumulating by degrees. In the second place there are comparative statistics, which allow us to compute the degree of relative authority with which this rule is clothed in individual consciousnesses and to discover the causes which make this authority variable. It is true we are not at present able to treat every moral problem from both points of view, for very often statistical data are lacking. This is perhaps the moment to remark that a science with its own technique ought to tackle both these questions.

In thus defining the subject of our inquiry, we have at the same time settled its sub-divisions. The moral and juridical facts—let us say, briefly, just moral facts—consist of rules of conduct that have sanction. Sanction is thus the feature common to all facts of this kind. No other kind of fact within the human order shows this peculiarity. For sanction, as we have defined it, is not simply any consequence following automatically on the act of a human being, as when we say, misusing the term, that intemperance brings illness as its sanction or laziness of the candidate, failure in examinations. Sanction is certainly a consequence of the act, but a consequence which results not from the act taken in isolation but from the conforming or not conforming to a rule of conduct already laid down. Theft is punished and this penalty is a sanction. But that is not because theft consists of this or that operation in the material