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La sociologie durkheimienne : tradition et actualité

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## TEAMWORK ACROSS DISCIPLINES: DURKHEIMIAN SOCIOLOGY AND THE STUDY OF NATIONS

### I. INDEPENDENCE THROUGH ANNEXATION

Emile Durkheim's works reflected an unremitting goal to make sociology a science in its own right, yet he achieved his aim through reliance on other disciplines for different theoretical and empirical contributions. Durkheim and his peers acted as architects tasked to build a new science (*La sociologie doit se construire*<sup>1</sup>) by importing ideas and data across disciplines, then critiquing and analyzing the research to develop sociological propositions. As far back as his Latin thesis, Durkheim implied that an interdisciplinary method would not compromise carving out a sovereign sociological territory; sociology would be amongst the ranks of other sciences based on its specific subject matter<sup>2</sup>.

To «make» sociology (*faire cette science*), *L'Année sociologique* (AS) would be the vehicle to collect and critically review the social science literature. The journal covered different rubrics – history, philosophy, moral, religion, geography, economics, statistics, folklore, linguistics, and law – of which the choice and sequence constituted a strategy to promote the development of Durkheim's sociology. AS became an opportunity to comment on the literature as much as to cogently argue the foundations and approach of Durkheimian sociology as it evolved.

Philippe Besnard notes Durkheim and his colleagues came together scientifically by a common pretension that sociology should indeed rule over the neighboring social sciences on which it partially relied<sup>3</sup>. The technique could be considered a form of scientific imperialism whereby territories were annexed for the new discipline and subsequently occupied and exploited<sup>4</sup>. The overall strategy of promoting sociology through the compilation of AS categories and the strategic interest in other sciences that motivated it were methods unique in the history of sociology. This experience created a bond that unified Durkheimiens for decades<sup>5</sup>.

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<sup>1</sup> É. Durkheim, Préface, «L'année sociologique», vol. 1, 1898, in *Journal sociologique*, Paris, PUF, 1969 p. 37, note 1.

<sup>2</sup> É. Durkheim, *Montesquieu. Quid secundatus politicae scientiae instituendae contulerit*, Oxford, Durkheim Press, 1997, p. 15-15<sup>c</sup>.

<sup>3</sup> Ph. Besnard, «Les durkheimiens», *Encyclopaedia Universalis*, corpus 7, Paris, Encyclopaedia Universalis, 1990, p. 758.

<sup>4</sup> Ph. Besnard, «Le centenaire d'une entreprise fondatrice», *L'année sociologique*, 1998, 48, n°1, p. 10.

<sup>5</sup> Ph. Besnard, «Les durkheimiens», *op. cit.*, p. 756.

and, at the time, Durkheim seemed to realize the commitment and solidarity of his associates set them apart<sup>6</sup>.

[...] il est très utile, je crois, que nous mettions en relief ce que nous avons tous de commun, si a cet égard, la publication de l'Année sera un événement intéressant, car pour la première fois, on verra un groupe de sociologues se donner une même tâche et travailler ensemble à un même but, il n'est ni nécessaire ni désirable que tout le monde ait exactement la même formule<sup>7</sup>.

Philippe Besnard rightly points out that Durkheim could not have expected complete doctrinal and theoretical homogeneity. Durkheim built a school of thought with a team of academics whose diversity and heterogeneity shaped their intellectual contributions and working relationships. In hindsight, overall weak group integration characterized Durkheim's endeavor, but it did not prevent its ultimate and lasting success. Because Durkheim wanted to create and advance a new science, he understood his goal would entail a collective enterprise: «[...] la science, parce qu'elle est objective, est chose essentiellement impersonnelle et ne peut progresser que grâce à un travail collectif.»<sup>8</sup>

Philippe Besnard's socio-organizational chart published in *Revue française de sociologie* (RFS) effectively illustrates the collective dynamic of AS that operated according to centralization and the formation of small, inclusive working groups. Durkheim imposed centralization to keep sub-groups linked to a single effort, with some members working and producing more than others to promote Durkheimian sociology and to publish AS<sup>9</sup>. The chart shows how personal relationships clustered around complimentary scientific fields with each member bringing an area of expertise to the common task of founding sociology. Durkheim and his colleagues stayed together because of a common goal of rigorous scientific work but also in part out of loyalty to a man, Durkheim himself, whose substantive contribution, organizational skills, stalwart belief in the usefulness of sociology for Science, and sheer force of character explain why he was the logical leader.

After World War I, Philippe Besnard reminds us that sociology no longer needed material borrowed from other disciplines because it had obtained scientific legitimacy through its published research and work in specialized fields<sup>10</sup>. The collective mode and nature of the discipline were, however, significantly weakened and it was uncertain sociology could continue to develop on its own without an intellectual and editorial leader. Johan Heilbron writes «La fin d'une entreprise

<sup>6</sup> Letter from É. Durkheim to C. Bouglé, 13 June 1900, *Revue française de sociologie*, 17, 2, 1976, p. 174. «De tous les services que nous pouvons rendre le plus sérieux est de montrer qu'il y a en sociologie des travailleurs qui sont plus préoccupés de se rapprocher pour coopérer, que de se distinguer pour s'originaliser»: letter from É. Durkheim to C. Bouglé, 13 July 1901, *ibid.*, p. 178.

<sup>7</sup> «...l'établissement de la sociologie ne peut être que le fruit d'un travail collectif ou chacun des membres d'une équipe se spécialise dans une branche du savoir et fait valoir le point de vue sociologique dans les disciplines ou domaines d'étude déjà institués»: letter from É. Durkheim to C. Bouglé, March 1897, in É. Durkheim, *Textes*, t. II, Paris, Minuit, 1975, p. 393-394.

<sup>8</sup> É. Durkheim, Préface, *L'année sociologique*, *op. cit.*, p. 36.

<sup>9</sup> Ph. Besnard, «La formation de l'équipe de l'Année sociologique», *Revue française de sociologie*, vol. XX, 1, January-March, 1979, p. 22.

<sup>10</sup> Ph. Besnard, «Le centenaire d'une entreprise fondatrice», *op. cit.*, p. 24.

collective» and notes that *AS* off-springs, the Institut français de sociologie and the Centre de documentation sociale (1920-1940), united specialists from different social sciences but these successive generations did not necessarily stress a discourse claiming the goal of scientific independence for sociology. With the *Annales sociologiques* (1934-1942), the different specializations led to five separate publications in contrast to the centralized compendium of *AS*'s first series.

## II. DURKHEIMIAN SOCIOLOGY APPLIED TO POLITICAL SCIENCE

After reading Philippe Besnard's 1979 article in *RFS*, I thought the formation of Durkheimian sociology and the chart that illustrated the operating mode of *AS* could apply to political science. My doctoral dissertation would attempt to demonstrate how the Durkheimian school of sociology – its approach and method – could contribute to a better understanding of the national question<sup>11</sup>. I sensed Durkheim's perspective provided the necessary theoretical architecture which integrated specific contributions from a variety of disciplines.

Theoretically disinterested in politics, Durkheim's sociology is not incompatible with political science for it prescribes action in the name of moral necessity. The sociological vocation attracted Durkheim and his colleagues to political problems for moral reasons. The promotion of moral science and social science went side by side in Durkheimian sociology as these scientists sought to maintain social cohesion and thwart countervailing tendencies of anomie, individualism, and extreme nationalism. They were convinced their vocation would make a valuable contribution to social life, in particular, life in France during the Third Republic. Sociology was also political by the role it assumed in defining and critiquing the national moral that mirrored the country's social organization. To that end, Durkheim and his contemporaries disclosed their intent and willingness to engage in contemporary political life. Through articulating a moral for national society and developing a sociology of action, Durkheim's effort aimed to provide a solid scientific explanation of social and political phenomena. He understood that for science to be useful, it must be applied to address social issues such as the role of religion, patriotism, individualism, and the functioning and type of political regimes. The Dreyfus Affair and World War I are illustrative of the direct involvement by Durkheim and his colleagues, albeit mixed, in political theory, notably socialist and radical party debates, human rights, local or state politics, and the communication of France's national ideals and morality.

Regardless of certain weaknesses, the interdisciplinary method and internal logic of Durkheimian sociology transposed well into political science and led to a relatively comprehensive treatment of the nation and of the nationalism problematic. Philippe Besnard's relational and organizational chart helped unite multiple aspects of the nation in which civic moral was a leading element. I took the chart's layout that gives an effective picture of the relationships and domains of nascent Durkheimian sociology and made it a purely thematic and theoretical overview of

<sup>11</sup> J. Mergy, *Nations et nationalismes : Durkheim et les durkheimiens. De la question de l'Alsace-Lorraine à la Société des nations*, Université de Paris IX, 2001, 2 vol.

my subject's assorted aspects. The interdisciplinary perspective of the chart, and the independence yet integration of its constituent dimensions, adequately accounted for the complexity of national life – its nature, diverse manifestations, and the relationship among its features.

In addition to examining the nation and nationalism through the different fields covered in *AS*, I looked closely at other works of Durkheim and his colleagues, including correspondence. I realized the nation and nationalism were social phenomena integral to political organization and social life in Durkheim's historical context, but they were not given separate and focused treatment. The Durkheimians studied the national question through the lens of varied interests, such as race and ethnicity, civic and moral education, national ideals and symbols, social bonds and cohesion, and other factors related to geography, archeology, ethnography, folklore, linguistics, and demography. Consequently, my work required going behind the more well known and explicit theses of the authors to unravel an underpinning logic that often revealed practical and complex theoretical obstacles relevant to the national question.

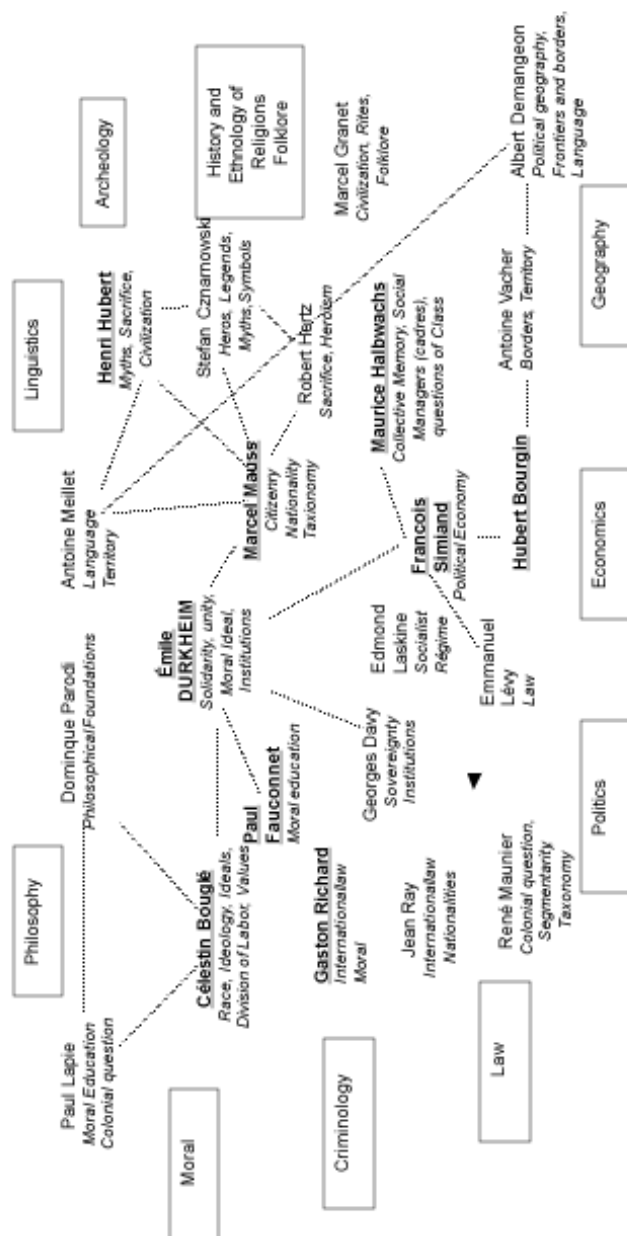
Besides enlarging the disciplinary perspective and types of texts covered in the chart, I removed some fields to accommodate the specific nature of my subject (see Fig. 1). I also concentrated more on the political dimensions in the works of the Durkheimian school, such as the role of the state, citizenry, and questions of authority. Finally, I went to lesser known Durkheimians who had made some specific and germane contribution to the national question. This is the case of Antoine Vacher, Georges Davy, Jean Ray, and René Maunier who were not considered part of the core circle of Durkheimians in the first series of *AS* but were influenced by Durkheimian sociology and used it in political science, notably in the study of nations and nationalism.

Philippe Besnard's socio-organizational chart gave my research the theoretical and disciplinary overview needed to assemble the constitutive elements of the nation, from the material and moral substrate (*i.e.*, morphological elements), to the elaboration of political and moral values, including rites, practices, myths, legends, heroes, and symbols. With modification and expansion, Durkheim's approach served well my subject's complexity under a single conceptual framework that could integrate direct observation and value judgments, as well as statistical, normative, and inductive methods to construct the nation according to the basic propositions of Durkheimian sociology. As my research progressed, it became clear the concept of the nation was often implicit but nonetheless crucial to integrate socially and politically individuals and groups in modern societies. Although my dissertation expands fully on this claim, I would like to limit here my remarks to defining the nation as a category in Durkheimian sociology.

### III. THE NATION AS A SOCIOLOGICAL CATEGORY

From Durkheim's perspective, the nation is a variety of the species called political society. Political society relates to the idea of a *social* species within the Durkheimian nomenclature. Durkheim upholds a guiding hierarchical principal that political organization is by definition a form of social organization. In light of sociology's causative nature and politics as consequential, a political fact results

Figure 1  
ASPECTS OF THE NATION AND NATIONALISM AS SEEN THROUGH THE SPECIALIZATIONS OF CONTRIBUTING AUTHORS TO ANMÉE SOCIOLOGIQUE



I modified and enlarged the chart conceived by Ph. Bénaïd in "La formation de l'équipe de l'Année sociologique", *RFS*, vol. XX, n° 1, Jan-Mars, 1979, p. 22. The unitalicized names are among those in the founding group of *AS*'s first series. Cf. Annex A. of J. Mierly (2001).

from a social fact just as political evolution follows social evolution<sup>12</sup>. Neither the state nor the political economy can develop without the presence of an established society.

In the Durkheimian nomenclature, going down another layer from social species, political society has national society (or the nation) as one of its manifested forms (see Fig. 2). Durkheim would go a layer further below and specify sub-national groups that descend from national society, including professional groups, but that topic exceeds the outline of this article. Durkheim specifies that although political societies vary in degree by their different regimes, such diversity does not constitute a change in social species. For example, France belongs to one social species whether we look at its government during the *Ancien régime*, the Empire, the July Monarchy or the Second Empire. Durkheim claimed to have relatively little scientific interest in the study of varieties and individual regimes. A focus on case studies complicated the possibility of generalization; therefore, Durkheim concentrated more on large social categories and broad, general social states of human organization.

The nation falls within the social species of political society based on the degree of its social composition and organization. For each species, its different cases of societies vary in the level of integration, and independence of these segments or constituent groups. What mattered was the nature of the entire society or the «*constitution congénitale*»<sup>13</sup> – defined as the special form of its substrate (comprising a set of stable phenomena), and the nature, number, and mode of association of its constituent elements. As described in *De la division du travail social*, the cumulative characteristics of each social species engender a specific form of solidarity. In particular, political society is an organized and integrated type of society that is polycellular and polysegmented<sup>14</sup>. Therefore, it has marked organic solidarity as opposed to a segmented type of society associated with mechanical solidarity. Strong organic solidarity signifies the nation incorporates clans and hordes unified in tribes, and it would later develop professional groups and other sub-national affinities and roles. The volume, contact, and nature of interaction of these groups, from simple to complex, explain its overriding solidarity type. Although possessing qualities of mechanical solidarity, political societies are generally based on an organized social structure with developed markets and cities. Relations in nations with strong organic solidarity are codified by law and contract. Social and political authorities are not absolute and take into consideration individuals, human dignity, and rights, as much as social justice and equality.

For societies in which organic solidarity dominates, the population is stratified and subordinated with multiple roles for its members. The population size of political societies such as the nation is not as important as its differentiation. The population incorporates the family, class, professional group, and leisure associa-

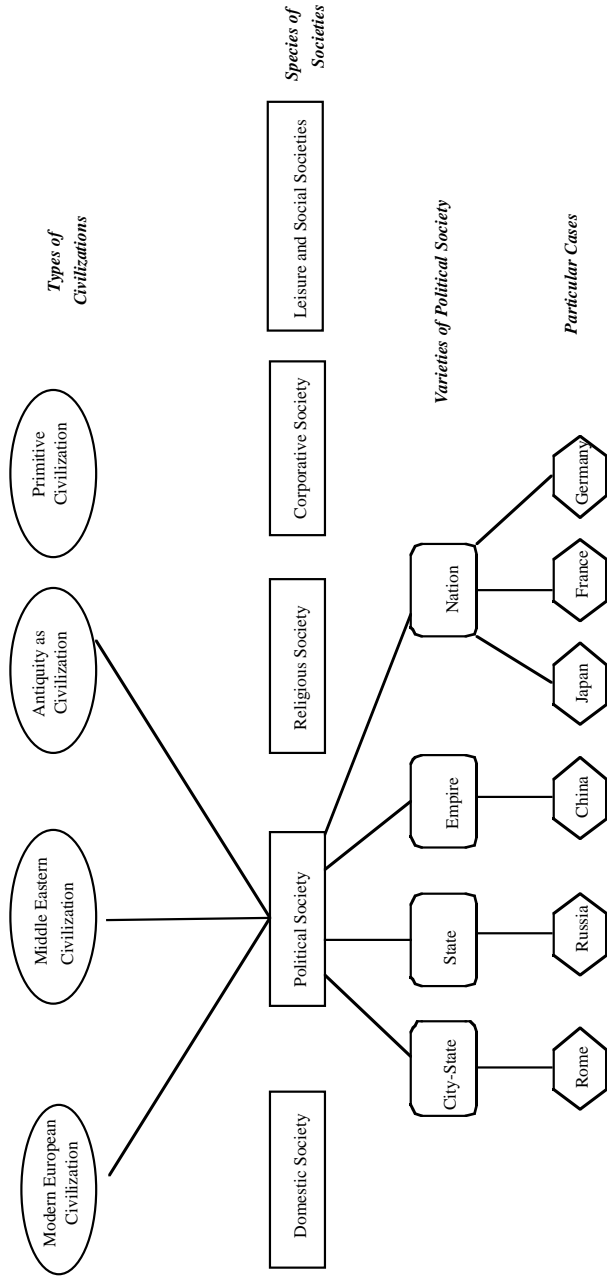
<sup>12</sup> É. Durkheim and Paul Fauconnet, « Sociologie et sciences sociales », *Revue philosophique*, t. LV, 1903, in *Textes*, I, *op. cit.*, pp. 142, 152.

<sup>13</sup> É. Durkheim, « Deux lois de l'évolution pénale », *L'année sociologique*, vol. IV, 1901 in *Journal*, *op. cit.*, p. 249 and note.

<sup>14</sup> É. Durkheim, « Morale civique. Définition de l'État », *Leçons de sociologie*, Paris, PUF, Quadrige edition, 1995, p. 83.

Figure 2

POLITICAL SOCIETY IN THE NOMENCLATURE DURKHEIMIAN OF SOCIAL FORMS





tion, none of which are political societies in themselves having a political authority or exercising a modern sense of sovereignty. The distinguishing mark of political society is a unity and separate identity relative to the partial societies it encompasses<sup>15</sup>. Political society is a social unity or «*maximum d'individualisation dans la vie sociale*»<sup>16</sup> that is not subordinated to another group. As with other examples of political societies, the nation is sovereign.

To consider the nation's population as a distinct race was an issue raised indirectly by Durkheim in his study on suicide. During the period, the question of racial origins provoked numerous debates among social scientists<sup>17</sup>. From a Durkheimian perspective, national society would never be a hereditary race type, nor an Empire imposed by force, but a unity that is both social and moral in nature, encapsulating one or several nationalities as products of history and culture with traditions and common aspirations. Works by Celestin Bouglé, Dominique Parodi, and Jean Ray would explore more deeply the arguments by various authors of the era who viewed the nation as an anthropological entity. The Durkheimians own material, however, focused more on the nation apart from natural sciences and within sociological, philosophical, and legal realms.

In addition to a complex and differentiated population, political societies with organic solidarity of which the nation is a variety, have their own territory. Yet, a fixed territory remains a secondary factor: nomadic societies have a political nature without possessing a delineated territory. Historically, frontiers change and identification with boundaries is relatively recent and related to the modern epoch of nations. Another modern aspect of political societies is the creation of a federation to encompass several independent and sovereign political societies. To be sure, the evolution of political societies is complex and wide ranging, and from a socio-historical perspective it implies as many discontinuities as regularities. Other Durkheimians, Antoine Vacher, Albert Demangeon, and Antoine Meillet, delved deep into a sociological explanation of the nation with respect to the role of boundaries and a stable territory<sup>18</sup>.

More broadly, contemporary readers are aware that during the formative decade of Durkheimian sociology, the terms «race», «society», «nation», and «nationality» were used with inconsistency in the social science literature. The philosophical, anthropological, and political factors of the nation were confusing and obliged the reader to discern the real meaning according to the specific context in which the term appeared. In 1894, before his participation in *AS*, Paul Lapie recognized the problem and provided a clue as to why the nation was not treated expressly in *AS*.

<sup>15</sup> É. Durkheim, *Ibid*, p. 84, 116.

<sup>16</sup> É. Durkheim, «Morale civique et patrie», notes by Armand Cuvillier during a course taught 1908-1909 at the Sorbonne on *La morale*, in *Textes*, t. III, *op. cit.*, p. 221.

<sup>17</sup> É. Durkheim, *Le suicide. Étude de sociologie*, Livre I. chap. II Le suicide et les états psychologiques normaux. La race. L'hérédité, Paris, PUF, 1897, Eighth edition, Quodrigé, 1995.

<sup>18</sup> A. Meillet, «Les Langues et les nationalités», *Scientia*, XVIII, LIX an., 1915, p. 192-201. A. Demangeon, *Problèmes de géographie humaine*, introduction E. de Martonne: «Albert Demangeon 1872-1940», Paris, Colin, publication posthumous, 1942.

Nations, races, sociétés, ces termes sont trop compliqués pour être définis au début d'une science: les sociologues, quand ils prétendent les définir, ne font qu'expliquer les opinions vulgaires; leur définitions ne sont pas scientifiques: il faudrait connaître les lois des faits simples pour expliquer ces êtres composés<sup>19</sup>.

The shifting use of the term nation meant social science scholars in Nineteenth century France, England, and the United States, including the Durkheimians, referred to the North American Indian populations (Hopi, Iroquois, Osages, Cherokees, and Hurons) as 'nations'. In different texts, Mauss classified other types of society as nations: the Greek city-state was a 'small nation', the Jews before the Babylone exile were a 'Hebrew nation', and he wrote of mythical Gaelic or Breton nations, and rudimentary Celtic and Germanic nations.

The question of origins was another example of the changing historical genesis of the nation as a sociological category. Henri Hubert argued that French linguistic and cultural foundations are rooted in its Celtic origins. The Celts played an historical role as the intermediary between the ancient Greek world and the modern French nation<sup>20</sup>. Yet, the Celts were unlike the French in political terms. France was founded as a «*union des hommes dans un État ou une nation*»<sup>21</sup>, whereas the Celts of ancient Gaul did not have a proper state structure. Both Hubert and Mauss believed the existence of a state – a central power – is a necessary condition for the designation of nation:

Bref, la civilisation des Celtes est au fond de la nôtre, comme la nation que commençaient à former les Celtes de Gaule est au fond de notre nation. C'est un lieu commun que de nous jeter à la tête nos affinités gauloises. [...] Mais, pour ce qui est de leurs organisations sociales, toutes les parties supérieures en ont croulé. L'État chez nous n'est pas celtique; il est germanique ou romain<sup>22</sup>.

For Hubert, the myth of origins serves to reinforce social cohesion by the moral value it brings to the French nation's democratic and republican traditions. He also demonstrated myths respond to a social need to rejuvenate and discuss origins, to celebrate and ritualize them so citizens engage in political action and find real meaning in social life.

The question of origins and semantics aside, if we consider the complete works of the Durkheimian school from 1889-1950, its authors conclude that the national variety is a distinctively *modern* case of political society. Given its long historical evolution, these political societies became national unities, large «*individualities*», or «*national personalities*»<sup>23</sup> whose formation began at the end of the barbarian invasion. Durkheim admits, as does Jacques Novicow<sup>24</sup>, that the

<sup>19</sup> P. Lapie, «L'année sociologique 1894», *Revue de métaphysique et de morale*, t. III, 1895, p. 312.

<sup>20</sup> H. Hubert, *Les Celtes et l'expansion celtique jusqu'à l'époque de la Tène*, preface M. Mauss, Avant-propos Henri Berr, Paris, La Renaissance du Livre, t. 21, 1932, p. 10-17.

<sup>21</sup> H. Hubert, *Les Celtes depuis l'époque de la Tène et la civilisation celtique*, preface M. Mauss, Avant-propos H. Berr, Paris, La Renaissance du Livre *Celtes*, 21<sup>bis</sup>, 1932, 1950, edition reviewed and corrected, p. 269.

<sup>22</sup> H. Hubert, *Les Celtes et l'expansion celtique jusqu'à l'époque de la Tène*, Paris, La Renaissance du Livre, t. 21, 1932, p. 20.

<sup>23</sup> É. Durkheim., «*Morale civique et patrie*» (1909), *op. cit.*, p. 223.

<sup>24</sup> J. Novicow, *Conscience et volonté sociales*, Paris, Giard & Brière, 1897, p. 311 *sqq.*

idea of a national sentiment dates back to the Middle Ages but its development is observed most clearly since the French Revolution. If France under the *Ancien régime* is considered a political society, the Revolution was the catalyst for achieving national unification in territorial and political terms. Thereafter, the French people became citizens of a nation, and were united by a civic moral. National society would henceforth refer to the global historical society comprised of numerous subgroups and member roles in a political unit (a state), expanded geographically, integrated socially, and industrialized economically. In this respect, the nation is *ipso facto* modern and European, and in the French example, composed of a nationality and a state.

The nation in Durkheim's period was often assumed by scholars to indicate modern West European countries. This is not too surprising given the political and social organization of Nineteenth century West European societies. This may explain a number of important debates of the period, as well as the contemporary theory that critical distance was often missing in the writings of Durkheim and his colleagues. Other schools of sociological thought in Durkheim's time understood political society as an object of science, and saw it indissoluble from the formation and development of nation states. The identification of a social system with the national state certainly gives the impression that society and nation overlap in meaning in several ways. Admittedly, the Durkheimian conception reflects to a certain degree the structures and ideologies of its historical context and can even present a universalistic aspect in the approach to the nation. Although not systematic in application, my dissertation research led to the conclusion, however, that Emile Durkheim and his peers distinguish society from state, nation, patria, race and people.

Durkheim's originality came from a two-fold approach to the study of nations as a sociological category. First, he viewed national society as a social *reality*. It was a variety of political society belonging to the empirical domain because it was quantifiable as a society taken from the exterior, or a historical totality and social cultural human group. As one variety, the nation demonstrates common traits of other examples in this category – France, England and Germany – each of which is the product of a civilization in a cultural sense (Celtic, Anglo-Saxon and Germanic civilizations).

Second, Durkheim understood the nation as an *idea*, viewed conceptually. It remained in the social realm but under the scope of philosophical, moral, and affective inquiry. It was national society as an ideal and an elaborated collective moral value comprising numerous representations from which social practices resulted. Durkheim attempted to treat national consciousness as a scientific fact and study the rational foundations in relation to other social facts by scientific principles and a positivist method. Durkheim conceived the nation as a moral entity derived from morphological phenomena specific to a social milieu. A moral unity exists via social and political bonds created through the building and operation of institutions. In particular, a common civic moral was a decisive constitutive institution of the nation as a modern and national form of political society.

In sum, the uniqueness of Durkheimian sociology was to study the nation through this double prism: as a defined social group according to the degree of social organization – the national society and its form of solidarity –, and conceptually through its level of moral elevation and substance of the national ideal.

Durkheim recognized the two necessary perspectives of social facts and did not exclude either in his explanation but rather intertwined them in an attempt to provide a comprehensive, integrated, and systematic understanding of the nation. The linkage of aspects from different disciplines led to intellectual teamwork to achieve a broad and detailed analytical treatment of the nation. Durkheimian sociology appeared less interested in the content of the nation as an idea or what was particular to specific cases of nations and instead attempted to explain national society as a sociological category.

#### IV. CONCLUSION

We have seen membership in national society is characterized by organic solidarity, to a lesser degree elements of mechanical solidarity, and a complex network of inclusive identity roles of which each taken alone do not guarantee an individual's stable and well-rounded development, nor the meaning of social life. For France, civic moral was a form of association that accommodated different sub-national lifestyles and aspects of human interaction to provide group cohesion and the substance of an ideal with which members identify. Durkheim, Gaston Richard, Emmanuel Levy, and Bouglé explored how citizens belong to the society, the rights they have toward the nation and to the state, the role of law, and the political socialization process. Moreover, they probed the question of how do states become part of Europe. Finally, the Durkheimian school of sociology raised the question of how can European nations integrate into the greater international community of political societies and states.

The work of Durkheimian sociology increases our understanding of the nation as a sociological category and, in the French case, of the role of civic, moral, and republican values. The French nation at the time of the Third Republic is conceived as public space and a laic moral organization where no single population presides. Its organization allows for justice to reign through a series of rights while also imposing on groups and individuals certain duties. Participating in national life is a moderating force against anomie and a positive force to achieve and maintain social order. National life means living together as a 'nation of citizens'<sup>25</sup> and constituted the very *modus operendi* to realize the ideal of humanity, justice, and equality. In modern France, social environmental conditions as much as ideals, human will, political goals, and moral organization interacted to produce a specific form of solidarity. National life also implied the development and functioning of structures to organize mass social activity. Examples of these values that Durkheim referred to as institutions are the school, the state, and the army. Durkheim's focus on institutions as defined both in terms of social activity and identity, led him to call the nation a community of organization (*communauté d'organisation*)<sup>26</sup>.

<sup>25</sup> M. Mauss, «Les idées socialistes. Le principe de la nationalisation» [1920?], in M. Mauss, *Écrits politiques*, Paris, Fayard, 1997, p. 258.

<sup>26</sup> É. Durkheim, «Morale civique et patrie» (1909), *op. cit.*, p. 221-222.

As with every society, the national form is produced from conjugated and antagonistic actions of several organic factors relative to social construction<sup>27</sup>. According to the Durkheimian approach, as a society, the nation has a *sui generis* existence which reflects its unique substrate and form of association by individuals based on their multiple affiliations in the social, political, and professional realms, notably their role in the division of labor as a source of unity that preserves the functional independence of its members. National society demonstrates a strong sense of differentiation and relative conflict in relations with its members. Similar to Marcel Mauss' development of the *internation*, the nation as a political society was unified and highly integrated in the economic, technical, political, and moral realms in which individuality is preserved. This unity and individuality, integration and differentiation, coexisted and kept relations intimate, numerous, and extended.

The systemic thought of Durkheim and his objective to develop a social science was an evolving and dynamic process as reflected in and promoted by the categories of *AS*. Instead of having to create a new science called sociology, today's international scholars study different aspects of the works of Durkheim and his colleagues in such fields as anthropology, political science, philosophy, religion, and ethnography. In *RFS*, Philippe Besnard refers to the Groupe d'études durkheimiennes (G. E. D.) as a global network of specialists on the history of French sociology initiated in 1975 by the Fondation de la Maison des Sciences de l'Homme. As the first editor of *Etudes durkheimiennes*, Philippe Besnard was instrumental in institutionalizing a renewed interest in the Durkheim school of sociology. As with the authors of *AS* who defined the tenets of Durkheimian sociology, the contemporary team of scholars is united by a common subject of study. Varied in interests and disciplines, today's Durkheimian group of academics have carried out research on the Durkheimian school, organized debates and conferences, and published their material for over 25 years. And as with the authors they analyze, these scholars may one day too have a 100<sup>th</sup> year anniversary to commemorate their common and collaborative intellectual activity.

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(This article is solely the view and research of the author and does not reflect the opinion or position of the U. S. Government.)

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<sup>27</sup> É. Durkheim, review of Franz Boas, *The Mind of the Primitive Man*, 1911, in *L'année sociologique*, vol. XII, 1913 in *Journal, op. cit.*, p. 677.