

Edited and with
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Durkheim: essays on morals and education



Routledge & Kegan Paul

London, Boston and Henley

*First published in 1979
by Routledge & Kegan Paul Ltd
39 Store Street, London WC1E 7DD,
Broadway House, Newtown Road,
Henley-on-Thames, Oxon RG9 1EN and
9 Park Street, Boston, Mass. 02108, USA*

*Set in Compugraphic English Times
and printed in Great Britain by
Ebenezer Baylis & Son Limited
The Trinity Press, Worcester, and London*

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*British Library Cataloguing in Publication Data
Durkheim, Émile*

Durkheim

1. Ethics 2. Moral education

I. Pickering, W S F

170'.8 HM216 79-41002

ISBN 0 7100 0321 8

**Durkheim: essays on
morals and education**

By the same author
Durkheim on religion

Acknowledgments

What would seem to be straightforward work entailed in a volume such as this calls for the help of those with specialized knowledge. As a consequence we are grateful for the aid that has been given in reading parts of the manuscript or in offering advice of various kinds. In particular, our appreciation extends to Philippe Besnard, Mohamed Cherkaoui, Norman Dennis, Andrew Fairbairn, Victor Karady, Steven Lukes, Mary Midgley, and Michael Stant. A word of appreciation also goes to Tony Evans for contributing to the bibliography in the section on education.

Not least we should like to thank our ever enthusiastic typist, Annemarie Rule, who offered us not only great technical skill, but also encouragement to press on with the work when sometimes it approached the laborious.

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Finally, we mention with gratitude an initial research grant given by the University of Newcastle upon Tyne, which allowed us to launch the project.

W.S.F.P.
H.L.S.

The translations

On the whole, a literal approach has been adopted in the task of translating Durkheim. For the reader's sake, it was considered preferable to sacrifice embellishments of style to fidelity to the original. Changes have nevertheless proved necessary, for the most part in punctuation and in coping with occasional very long sentences such as occur, for instance, in the transcripts of the discussions.

As is the custom amongst translators of Durkheim, certain words for which there is no precise and unambiguous English equivalent have been left in the original. Among such cases one might instance *conscience* (which may mean consciousness, conscience, morality), *représentation* (idea, sentiment, volition), *moeurs* (custom, habit, social norm). In this category one might also include those words whose translation varies somewhat according to the context, but for which it was felt the reader should know the original French, despite the English word being used, such as *éducation*, *culture*, *enseignement*, and *morale*.

Where Durkheim quotes extensively from Rousseau's *Émile ou de l'Éducation*, it was judged best to use Foxley's Everyman translation, whilst indicating any discrepancies in page references or renderings which became apparent.

It is in fact Durkheim's lecture notes which presented the greatest challenge, since the French, as one might expect from notes, is skeletal and telegraphic. No attempt has been made, however, to reflate the original text and thus provide it with meanings which Durkheim may never have intended.

Where emendations of footnotes were essential, or where the text was ambiguous, as in a number of places in the piece on Rousseau, this fact has been indicated by means of notes bearing the initials of the translator or the editor.

H.L.S.

Notation and bibliographies

In references in the Introductions and in certain notes to the translations, the shorthand sign for the name of a book or article is the date which follows the author's name. The title of the item, its publisher, date, and so on, can be found under the author's name in the Bibliography (which lists the works of Durkheim and those of other authors on Durkheim himself) or in the short reference sections at the end of each Introduction. The numbers which follow the date refer to the pages of the item. The prefix t. before the date indicates that the item is a translation of that date. The prefix r. before a date means that a previous item is reproduced in a book or article of the date which follows the prefix.

The actual combination of dates and letters of works by Durkheim is that of Steven Lukes (1972) and subsequently brought up to date by W. S. F. Pickering (see *Études durkheimiennes, Bulletin d'information*, June 1978, no. 2, pp. 9-14).

The items in the two sections are presented in the order of the date of their publication, though this does not necessarily mean that they were written at the time of the date specified. Where there is a large discrepancy between the date of composition and publication, an explanatory footnote will be found or reference made to the fact in the Introductions.

The bibliographies of the books and articles by other writers on Durkheim's approach to morals and education is a selection and is in no way exhaustive.

Many of the articles and other items by Durkheim are reproduced in V. Karady (ed.), *Émile Durkheim. Textes*, 3 vols, Les Éditions de Minuit, Paris, 1976.

W.S.F.P.

Abbreviations

<i>AJS</i>	<i>American Journal of Sociology</i>
<i>AS</i>	<i>L'Année sociologique</i>
<i>ASR</i>	<i>American Sociological Review</i>
<i>BJS</i>	<i>British Journal of Sociology</i>
<i>BSFP</i>	<i>Bulletin de la Société Française de Philosophie</i>
<i>MF</i>	<i>Mercure de France</i>
<i>PR</i>	<i>Philosophical Review</i>
<i>RB</i>	<i>Revue bleue</i>
<i>RFS</i>	<i>Revue française de sociologie</i>
<i>RHPR</i>	<i>Revue d'histoire et de philosophie religieuses</i>
<i>RIS</i>	<i>Revue internationale de sociologie</i>
<i>RMM</i>	<i>Revue de métaphysique et de morale</i>
<i>RP</i>	<i>Revue philosophique</i>
<i>R de P</i>	<i>Revue de philosophie</i>
<i>SR</i>	<i>Sociological Review</i>

Preface

This book consists of translations of essays and other items by Émile Durkheim (1858–1917) which have not been translated into English before.* As a revival of interest in this great French sociologist is taking place, the work of translation continues, encouraged by such developments.

The translations which are presented here relate to the two connected subjects of morality and education, which were crucial to the thought of Durkheim in general and more particularly to his social theory. It has not been thought necessary to reproduce English translations which have already been made, be they chapters taken from Durkheim's books, articles, or reviews. The work of translation is arduous, and, because there is still much to be done, it was thought undesirable to attempt any retranslations. What has been translated up to now on morality and education can be gleaned from the Bibliography.

As in a previous volume (W. S. F. Pickering (ed.) 1975 *Durkheim on Religion*, Routledge & Kegan Paul, London and Boston) we have presented items in their entirety and have avoided reproducing in translated form fragments of books or articles published for some *ad hoc* purpose. It is to be hoped, therefore, that this volume will contribute to the growing corpus of translations of Durkheim, in which each book, article or review by him stands in its own right. However, unlike the previous volume, there are cases in which a certain amount of editorial excursion has had to be made and this relates to items which consist of reports of academic discussions in which Durkheim took part. Such debates were associated with the Société Française de Philosophie, which met regularly in Paris

* Just at the time of going to press it was learnt that one item, 'Introduction à la morale' (1920a), will probably appear in translation before the publication of this book (see M. Traugott (ed.), *Émile Durkheim on Institutional Analysis*, University of Chicago Press, Chicago and London, 1978). Also, another piece, 'La Grandeur morale de la France: l'école de demain' (1916c), has very recently been discovered in translation in a somewhat obscure American book published in 1919 (see Buisson and Farrington, 1919, in the Bibliography).

and published the proceedings in its *Bulletin*; and with another group, the Union pour la Vérité, whose debates were published in the *Libres entretiens*. The contributions which Durkheim made on these occasions were important, not only for what he said but also for the criticisms that were levelled at him and against which he had to defend himself. By reason of the incisive and sometimes brilliant exchanges that took place between him and other members of the groups, his own position is often clarified and the issues sharpened. The discussions as reported were frequently lengthy and this raises a practical problem. One attempt has been made before to use Durkheim's contributions to a debate, which was in *Sociology and Philosophy* (1924a/t.1953b), but here Durkheim's speeches were extracted from their context. Such a procedure loses what atmosphere is created by the complete French text. However, to translate the whole of the debate would be of doubtful merit. The practical solution is to make a selection of the relevant parts of the discussion in which are located Durkheim's specific contributions. This procedure has been recently adopted by Victor Karady (see Notation and bibliographies). In order to try to recreate something of the situation in which Durkheim was speaking, we have in certain cases translated the speeches which preceded his and sometimes those which followed. Where the intermediate speeches were long, a summary is sometimes offered. If the contribution of a discussant was closely argued, it was felt best to translate the speech in full. On the subjects of morals and education, it so happened that the number of discussions and debates in which Durkheim took part was fairly numerous. A selection has been made of what might be said to be the most important discussions (see 1908a(2); 1909a(2); 1910b; 1911a; 1912b).

Morality and education were closely linked in Durkheim's mind: with justification it could be said that they were to him as theory and practice. We have nevertheless attempted to make a fairly clear-cut distinction between them. Certain items do, however, relate to both subjects and it has not been easy to place them in one section rather than the other. The problem of drawing a line of demarcation is particularly difficult in his famous lectures on *Moral Education* (1925a/t.1961a), which deal with basic problems about morality and yet are at the same time concerned with the problems of teaching not only morality but other aspects of education as well. Problems of locating items in this volume become

apparent in the Introductions where there are many cross references. Furthermore, as might be expected, certain books and articles appear in the bibliographies of both sections.

In the selection of items on the subject of morality, attention is drawn in particular to 'Introduction à la morale' (1920a), which is of considerable interest for an understanding of Durkheim's theoretical and systematic approach to the subject, and which was one of the last things he wrote shortly before he died. However, Durkheim was very much concerned with practical morality in such areas as the family, divorce, suicide, sexual behaviour and so on, and items relating to some of these subjects have been included in both the section on morals and education. The only major article on morals that now remains untranslated, apart from reviews, is Durkheim's account of 'scientific' morality which he wrote in his early days as a result of a visit to Germany, a year before he started teaching in the University of Bordeaux in 1887. It is 'La Science positive de la morale en Allemagne' (1887c). The article is long – over sixty pages – and refers in detail to a number of now rather obscure German philosophers and psychologists. Although it is of much importance to the scholar, keen to trace the origins of Durkheim's concept of morality, it represents the work of the youthful and emerging sociologist, and to have included it in its entirety in this volume would have created a certain amount of imbalance.

In the case of education, and bearing in mind the specific nature of the French situation, it was decided that the selection of items should be of as wide a general interest as possible. For this reason items whose subject was university education, which calls for treatment in its own right, were excluded. None the less, in the bibliography on education, references to items on French university life have been given. With the translations made in this volume, nearly all the pieces Durkheim wrote on non-university education are now available in English. Within the selection, the reader's attention is drawn to the major item – again one edited or compiled at the end of his life – namely his notes on Rousseau's *Émile* (1919a). But there does remain perhaps one possible gap in the work of translation on the subject of education and it is the notes taken by students attending Durkheim's lectures on education and morality. They are Lenoir's 'De l'Enseignement de la morale à l'école primaire' (1968a(1–12); Davy's 'La Morale' (1968c); and Cuvillier's

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'La Morale' (1968d). As indicated, some of the items relate as much to morality as to education. Whilst the notes are well worth studying, their accuracy and veracity have been questioned (*RFS*, XVII, 1976:196). In the light of the limitations set by this volume, it was thought undesirable to translate the notes.

At the end of each item translated, certain notes will be found which have been added by the editor or translator and are enclosed in square brackets. These notes arise from an attempt to clarify points in the text which seemed to require elucidation. They also cover brief descriptions of French philosophers and sociologists whose names appear in the text. Notes appearing in parentheses are those which are printed in the French text. In the texts themselves, not in the notes, parentheses are used where the French text employs them and are also reserved for French words of the original, where it is thought readers would appreciate knowing the actual words used by Durkheim and others.

W.S.F.P.

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Part I **Morals**

