From solidarity to social inclusion: the political transformations of Durkheimianism.[1]

Introduction

Pierre Rosanvallon holds the chair of modern history and contemporary politics at the Collège de France, Paris. In 2004 he published *Le Modèle politique français*, subtitled 'La société civile contre le jacobinisme de 1789 à nos jours'[civil society against jacobinism from 1789 to the present]. I begin by summarising and scrutinising Rosanvallon's account of French political history since the Revolution. This tends towards a critical account of his thesis, seeing it as representative of a partisan political position of the end of the 20th century. In the process of making this argument, I seek to raise questions for further investigation about the historical relations between social scientific analysis, academic philosophy, and the advancement of social movements as subversive of dominant political discourse.

Rosanvallon's general argument.

Rosanvallon's contention is that there are two possible political histories of France. On the one hand, there is the position consolidated by de Tocqueville which identified a 'jacobin tradition' or jacobinism, meaning a tradition which has constantly asserted the dominance of the central state, emphasizing the importance of a direct relationship between the citizen and the state. On the other hand, Rosanvallon argues, this dominant representation of reality was always challenged by an opposing position which emphasized the significance of 'corps intermédiaires', various forms of associations, parties or local groups which interposed themselves between the extremes which confronted each other on the jacobin model. Not only was the jacobin model challenged by opposition, it also modified itself during the 19th Century as it adapted to social and political change. Rosanvallon's purpose is not to deny the existence of the 'illiberal' jacobin tradition but rather to re-situate it, viewing its adaptations to change.

In defining jacobinism, Rosanvallon early quotes the famous words of Le Chapelier as representative of the view of the Constituents in 1789:

> "Il n'y a plus de corporation dans l'Etat; il n'y a plus que l'intérêt particulier de chaque individu et l'intérêt général. Il n'est permis à personne d'inspirer aux citoyens un intérêt intermédiaire, de les séparer de la chose publique par un esprit de corporation." (statement made by Le Chapelier on June 14, 1791 quoted in Rosanvallon, 2004, 29).
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> [There is no more corporation in the State; there is nothing more than simply the interest of each individual and the general interest. No-one is permitted to encourage in citizens any intermediary interest, to separate them from the public domain by a spirit of corporatism].

The jacobin suppression of 'intermediate bodies', Rosanvallon suggests, led to a redeployment of affective social relations, manifested in the notion of 'fraternité', designed to complement the legalistic rigour of the abstract state/citizen political relationship without at all impingeing on that relationship. Jacobinism entailed the outlawing of political associations, but from ideological points of view which were not identical and became confused. An ideology of 'direct democracy' denied in principle the need for functions of delegation or representation. An ideology of 'immediate democracy' accepted that the people might develop a collective will but refused to institutionalise procedures whereby this might occur. The first part of Rosanvallon's book is devoted to an analysis of the ideological tensions inherent in what, instead of

jacobinism, he prefers to call 'utopian generality'. The second part considers the development of this dominant ideology through the 19th Century. During the Restoration and the July Monarchy (from 1815 to 1848), 'utopian generality' was threatened on three grounds. Its structures were thought to be inadequate to regulate an emergent market economy. Its denial of intermediary bodies generated an individualism which in practice became out of touch with state authority. For the authorities, the encouragement of intermediary bodies became a means to counteract incipient anarchy and social dissolution, whilst, for politically unrepresented citizens, their encouragement became a means to resist state oppression. In the 1830s, the emerging mass of industrial workers began to make association a means for action and resistance, but Rosanvallon contends that these threats to jacobinism were absorbed by what he calls the '*recomposition libérale* du jacobinisme' [the liberal recomposition of jacobinism] (Rosanvallon, 2004, 218) effected by Thiers and Guizot in mid-century. From the 1880s, it was the republicans rather than the liberals who made the biggest impact on the inherited ideology. In the third part of the book, Rosanvallon analyses the legislation of 1884 on syndicates and of 1901 on associations. The first of these formally abolished the position advanced by Le Chapelier in 1791. Rosanvallon claims that there were two main reasons for this explicit renunciation of the jacobin ideology. The first reason was that there was a growing middle class fear of socialism and the consequent sense that the recognition of syndicates might contain this advance. He traces the origins of the 1884 legislation back to the strategy of Napoleon III which was to encourage the capacity of syndicates to look after the social welfare concerns of workers precisely so as to try to ensure that no political alliance should develop between workers and republicans. In turn, after 1871, the republicans proceeded to introduce the 1884 legislation in order to legitimise syndicalism as a social, but not political, movement. The second reason given by Rosanvallon for the rejection of the jacobin model was that the intellectual revolution of the emergence of sociology provided the tools for an objective critique of the political processes established by the French revolutionaries. Rosanvallon implies that sociology was effective because it offered scientific ammunition for discrediting the jacobin ideology. He devotes a sub-section of his book to what he calls 'La sociologie contre le jacobinisme' [sociology against jacobinism]. He offers little detailed discussion of Durkheim. I want to examine this sub-section in some detail before turning to the work of Durkheim of this period in order to consider whether Rosanvallon misses the point in failing to acknowledge that sociology was attempting a positive intervention rather than just a critique. Durkheim was attempting a sociological appropriation of political discourse and, in doing so, was attempting to make sociological analysis, institutionalised in university education, a vehicle for the construction of mechanisms necessary for the introduction of the 'immediate' democratic version of jacobinism.

Rosanvallon's representation of sociology and Durkheim.

Rosanvallon takes a comment made by Durkheim in his inaugural social science lecture at Bordeaux in 1888 to legitimise paying primary attention to Alfred Espinas's *Des sociétés animales*, published in 1877, as constituting 'the first chapter of sociology'. Much influenced by Herbert Spencer, Espinas used his conviction that society is an organism which dynamically coordinates the operation of multiple sub-organisms to reject the legacy of the jacobin commitment to the direct relationship between individual and state. The implications for political philosophy of this sociological orientation were spelt out in an article of 1882 ("Les études sociologiques en France") and in a book which he published in 1898 entitled *La Philosophie sociale du XVIIIe siècle et la Révolution*. Rosanvallon argues that the work of Espinas had important consequences by virtue of his influence on Alfred Fouillée who, in turn, influenced Gambetta and Léon Bourgeois, the latter described as 'le père du solidarisme'. Rosanvallon considers Fouillée to have been of equal importance with Renouvier as co-advocates of absolute republicanism (la 'République absolue'). He cites Fouillée's *La Science*

sociale contemporaine of 1880 and other texts through to his *La Démocratie politique et sociale* of 1910 to show that Fouillée advocated an 'organisme contractuel' to reconcile 'individualité et collectivité, décentralisation et centralisation, liberté des parties et cohésion du tout' (Fouillée, 1896, 180, quoted in Rosanvallon, 2004, 270).

We have to keep these dates in mind in relation to the progression of Durkheim's work. Rosanvallon claims that it is his account of the perspectives taken by Espinas and Fouillée which enables us to understand Durkheim's contribution. He quotes from Durkheim's 1890 review of Thomas Ferneuil's centennial book – *Les Principes de 1789 et la Science sociale* (1889) – to show that Durkheim was in essential agreement with Ferneuil, arguing that the principles of the Revolution were, in effect, examples of the Comtist category of metaphysical thought and should now be supplanted by political reconstruction founded on positivist research. The existence of any social contract had been disproved by the analysis of social facts. It was necessary now to recognize that associative mechanisms are required to mediate between individuals and the state. Rosanvallon argues that Durkheim was neither étatiste nor libertarian, and he quotes the following passage from Durkheim's *Une révision de l'idée socialiste* of 1899:

> "Ce qui libère l'individu, ce n'est pas la suppression de tout centre régulateur, c'est leur multiplication, pourvu que ces centres multiples soient coordonnées et subordonnés les uns aux autres." (Durkheim, 1899, quoted in Rosanvallon, 2004, 273[1])
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> [What liberates individuals is not the suppression of central regulation, but its multiplication, as long as these multiple centres are co-ordinated and subordinated one to another]

Critique of Rosanvallon's representation.

My point so far, as I move away from Rosanvallon's account of French social political history, is that Rosanvallon wilfully diminishes Durkheim's intention or aspiration. He treats the works of the sociologists at the end of the 19th century as epiphenomena of an essentially political progression, rating the contributions of sociological texts merely as instruments which registered social changes and participated in effecting further changes in the political sphere. Sociological analysis was politically determined. There is no sense, for Rosanvallon, in which the emergent social science could be thought to have challenged the domination of political discourse. He refuses to acknowledge the autonomous scientificity of Durkheim's work. The key issue, however, is one which is paralleled analogously in the recognition of recent commentators on the work of Weber, particularly Richard Swedberg, that, between the first publication of "The Protestant Ethic and the 'Spirit' of Capitalism" in 1905 and the publication of the revised version of the essay published posthumously in 1920 in *Gesammelte Aufsätze zur Religionssoziologie*, Weber shifted from seeking to develop a 'Social Economics' to seeking, instead, to develop an 'Economic sociology'[2]. In other words, analoguously, the force of Durkheim's achievement was not that he simply was identifying, as Rosanvallon would imply, a social dimension of the political but, rather, that he was struggling to establish a sociology of the political whereby the autonomy of politics would be diminished.

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[1]Note that this text does not feature in the Lukes bibliography. Durkheim's text was reproduced in Durkheim, *Textes*, 1975, volume III, which was the edition of Durkheim edited by Viktor Karady in the *Le Sens commun* collection of Editions de Minuit under the general editorship of Pierre Bourdieu.

[2] See Swedberg, R., 1998.

Willie Watts Miller's discussion of the appropriate translation of key phrases of Durkheim's Latin thesis on Montesquieu of 1893 is highly germane. Constrained, perhaps, by the presence of political philosophers on his examining jury, Durkheim chose to talk about *scientia politica* rather than *scientia socialis* but it is clear that the thesis followed Comte's critique of Montesquieu and sought to transform the legacy of his political science into a sociology of politics. As Watts Miller concludes:

> "My own suspicion is that he [Durkheim] had in mind other, greater issues, or, at the least, to create mischief – by challenging the very conception of political science in vogue at the time, and by taking possession of the name in the cause of the approach and methods of sociology". (Durkheim, ed. Watts Miller, 1997, 4).

Also germane is the text of Durkheim's French thesis, also of 1893, *De la division du travail social*; the differences between the preface to the first edition of that text of 1893 and the preface to the second edition of 1902; and, additionally, the relationship between Durkheim's developing thought in this context and in relation to the social function of education.[3] This is not the place to try to unravel the complexity of the relationship of Durkheim's developing thought to the progress of socialism and syndicalism in the period, but I do want to suggest tentatively a broad thesis. In 1937, Harry Alpert wrote an article on "France's First University Course in Sociology" in the American Sociological Review – introducing Durkheim's course given in 1887 in the Faculty of Letters of the University of Bordeaux. Fifty years on, Alpert emphasized the importance of the historical context of that first course of lectures, seeing it as symptomatic of the French attempt to establish order in the decades following defeat in the Franco-Prussian war and the Paris commune in 1871. He wrote:

> "A secular democracy, then, was the ideal towards which the Republicans strove. It was to be achieved and maintained by a free, universal, compulsory and secular state educational system for which the famous Ferry Laws laid the foundation. But Jules Ferry and his fellow Republicans realized that the problems of social and national solidarity and of moral reconstruction could never be solved merely by changing the administrative set-up of the schools. Far more essential was a reorganization of the *content* and *spirit* of education." (Alpert, 1937, 312)

More concretely, Alpert emphasized that Louis Liard, who had been appointed Directeur de l'Enseignement supérieur by Ferry in 1884, had previously taught in Bordeaux and had been responsible for the introduction of the course in social science there. Alpert contends that there was a homology between the social scientific content of the course of lectures and the formal function of those lectures, that the lectures implemented their content or, if you like, that the medium was the message. This view is confirmed by the emphasis of the first edition of *De la division du travail social* of 1893. Durkheim introduced this first edition by indicating that his intention was to advance a positivist science of ethics in opposition to *a priori* moral philosophy. The scientific analysis of the diversity of moral facts would contribute to the construction of social solidarity both by the communication of findings and by the pedagogic transmission of a paradigmatic process of mutual ethical understanding amongst citizens. Hence mass education and functional higher education would help society to cope with the disintegration of organic

[3] W. Watts Miller has kindly given me pre-publication sight of chapter 2 of his forthcoming xxxxxxxx in which he discusses 'The Creation of The Division of Labour'. He reiterates more forcibly the point made in his 1997 introduction to the English translation of Durkheim's Latin thesis. In this instance he argues that Durkheim 'was playing some sort of subversive game with the very idea of 'political science', to deconstruct this and shift the ground towards social science' (p.47).

solidarity and assist in the constitution of the kind of mechanical solidarity that had become necessary. The foundation of a new intellectual discipline was inextricably linked with the establishment of a new form of socially participative political order, as Durkheim made clear in the closing paragraph of the conclusion to the first edition:

> "Because certain of our duties are no longer founded in the reality of things, a breakdown has resulted which will be repaired only in so far as a new discipline is established and consolidated. In short, our first duty is to make a moral code for ourselves." (Durkheim, 1964, 409)[4]

Durkheim's thinking was linked to the agenda of the fin-de-siècle republicans. However, the Preface to the first edition was replaced in the second edition of 1902 and in the subsequent editions of 1907, 1911, and 1926, by "Quelques Remarques sur les Groupements professionnels" [some notes on occupational groups]. Although the substance of the book remained unchanged, the new Preface succeeded in shifting the emphasis of the text quite dramatically. Whereas the discussion contained within the first edition was thought itself to be instrumental, through the media of publication and educational transmission, in encouraging individuals to embark on a Kantian moral endeavour to construct a collective social ethic, the Preface to the second edition focussed on the social function to be performed by corporations in effecting the transition from organic to mechanical social order. The second edition changed the status of the analysis offered in the book. The text now provided an account of objective social phenomena. It would be the actions of corporations within society which would transform social values rather more than the scientific analysis of those actions. The shift introduced by the new Preface signalled a partial retreat from the optimism of the mid-1890s in two respects. In the first place, it signalled diminished optimism about the social function of the intellectual. In the second place, and relatedly, it signalled diminished confidence that a sociocracy produced by an educational encadrement inspired by dominant social scientific knowledge content would supplant the political structures of the State. It was a shift from an attempted post-Comtist appropriation of Rousseauism by means of positivist social science towards a rather more Saint-Simonian celebration of the social engineering potential of professional organizations. It seemed, in Rosanvallon's terms, to be a shift from an essentially jacobin position towards an anti-jacobin one which acknowledged the function of 'intermediary bodies'. However, the jacobin tendency remained. Syndicalism was to be subordinated to socialism. The function of associations of workers and managers was not to attend to the welfare of their own members, acting in a circumscribed way independently of a political state organisation which liberally tolerated and sponsored their existence, but instead to be the change-agents for a new political order, integrating divided labour, through dialogue, into a new form of managed society. The function of social scientific research and education was to reflect this change agency constructively back to the agents rather than to be more directly engaged in the process.

The shift in Durkheim's position as symptomatic of a contemporary shift in the ideology of university institutions.

My argument is that the shift which I have described in respect of Durkheim's position between 1893 and 1902 corresponded with an institutional shift in French higher education. French

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[4] "… mais c'est que, certains de ces devoirs n'étant plus fondés dans la réalité des choses, il en est résulté un relâchement qui ne pourra prendre fin qu'à mesure qu'une discipline nouvelle s'établira et se consolidera. En un mot, notre premier devoir actuellement est de nous faire une morale. Une telle oeuvre ne saurait s'improviser dans le silence du cabinet; elle ne peut s'élever que d'elle-même, peu à peu, sous la pression des causes internes qui la rendent nécessaire." (Durkheim, 2004 [1930], 406).

universities in this period need the kind of analysis offered of German universities by Fritz Ringer in *The Decline of the German Mandarins. The German Academic Community, 1890 – 1933* (Ringer, 1969) and which he in part provided in his *Fields of knowledge: French academic culture in comparative perspective, xxxx- 1920*. Christophe Charle's work also helps in providing social historical analyses of the intellectuals of the 3rd Republic[5]. In the period before the first world war there was clearly an ideological conflict between institutions which was symbolised by the opposition between Durkheim's Sorbonne and Bergson's Collège de France. I am suggesting that the context of Durkheim's intellectual production was subjected to what has more recently been labelled 'academic drift' in respect of the early ideological defaulting of the new polytechnics in the UK in the 1970s[6]. T.N. Clark's *Prophets and Patrons* of 1973, sub-titled 'The French University and the Emergence of the Social Sciences', analysed this process of academic institutionalization but he paid little attention to its consequences in respect of the relations between social science and political action. He demonstrated that, in 1914, "the Durkheimians were the most completely institutionalized grouping of social scientists in France, and their success in this regard certainly eclipsed all others" (Clark, 1973, 98), but he did not fully explore the relationship between the auto-institutionalization of what he calls 'clusters' of like-minded individuals and the developing identity and ideology of university institutions as such. In the 1890s, these two processes were mutually supportive but, after Durkheim's death, this became less true. Clark proceeded to outline the career trajectories of some of Durkheim's associates or disciples, but he did not try to analyse the impact of their institutional positions on both their post mortem representation of Durkheim's work and on their own adaptation of the Durkheimian legacy in their publications. My feeling is that this analysis still needs to be undertaken. I can only hint at what I think might be the implications of this analysis and, tacitly, I seek to make a plea that further work should be undertaken on the phenomenon of Durkheimianism in terms of the tensions between the academic discourses of sociology and philosophy and of both in relation to political actions and allegiances. It involves detailed scrutiny of the intellectual and institutional trajectories of figures whose works are now almost completely ignored, such as Célestin Bouglé, Paul Fauconnet, and Georges Davy, as well as of the trajectories of less neglected figures such as Marcel Mauss and Maurice Halbwachs.

Some indications of 'academic drift' in the work of the 'Durkheimians'.

As far as the posthumous representation of Durkheim in the 1920s is concerned, I am suggesting that we need to look closely at Fauconnet's introduction to the selection of Durkheim texts which was published in 1922 as *Education et sociologie*; at Bouglé's Preface to the selection of Durkheim texts published in 1924 as *Sociologie et philosophie*; and at Mauss's introduction, published in 1928, to the collection of Durkheim articles given the title: *Le socialisme*. This has to be done with reference to the texts of these authors themselves, such as, for instance, Fauconnet's *La Responsabilité* of 1920; Bouglé's *Leçons du sociologie sur l'évolution des valeurs* of 1922; and Mauss's *Essai sur le don* of 1925. To pursue the line of enquiry which I am suggesting, these analyses have to be undertaken, first of all, by reference to the institutional positions of the authors and, secondly, by reference to the changing status of these institutions in relation to contemporary social and political movements. Fauconnet completed his doctorate in 1920. The following year he was named *maître de conférences* in Pedagogy and Sociology at the Sorbonne. He became *professeur sans chair* in 1926 and then the first professor of Sociology at the Sorbonne in 1932, a post he retained until his death in 1938. (Clark, 1973, 211). Bouglé was more nearly the same generation as Durkheim than most of the other Durkheimians. After posts in the provinces, he entered the Sorbonne in 1907. He substituted in the chairs of

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[5] See, in particular, Charle, C., 1994.
[6] See Pratt, J., 1974.

Espinas and Durkheim until 1919 when he became Professor there of History of Social Economy. (Clark, 1973, 178). In 1935 he became Director of the Ecole Normale Supérieure, a post he held until his death in 1940. Mauss remained marginal to the university. As Clark puts it: he 'was not a *normalien*, not a docteur, not the author of a single weighty volume, he was at the EPHE until a chair (in sociology!) was created for him at the Collège de France in 1931' (Clark, 1973, 211). Simultaneously, he constituted a 'sub-cluster' outside the formal educational system at the Institut d'ethnologie.

As early as 1911, Georges Davy was involved in presenting or mediating Durkheim's work, publishing *Durkheim, choix de textes avec étude du système sociologique*, and he maintained this 'gatekeeper' role with his *Sociologues d'hier et d'aujourd'hui* of 1931 and his introduction to a Durkheim publication of 1950 entitled *Leçons de sociologie: physique des moeurs et du droit*. His own intellectual position in the 1920s is most represented by his *La foi jurée. Etude sociologique du problème du contrat, la formation du lien contractuel* (1922) and his *Sociologie politique* (1924). According to Clark, however, Davy most exemplified the affinity of many of the Durkheimians for administration: "Dean at Dijon in 1922, during the interwar years he served as Inspector General of Public Instruction and Rector of the academy of Rennes; soon after entering the Sorbonne as professor in 1944, he became Dean of the Paris Faculty of Letters. From the interwar years until the 1950s, he was chairman of the agrégation committee in philosophy …" (Clark, 1973, 220).

Maurice Halbwachs seems to have been least involved in disseminating Durkheim's texts posthumously, although, in 1938, he did introduce the publication of the two-volume edition of Durkheim's *L'Evolution pédagogique en France*. He completed his doctorate in 1913, published in that year as *La Classe ouvrière et les niveaux de la vie*, taught for a while at the University of Caen and then was appointed to a chair of Pedagogy and Sociology at the University of Strasbourg in 1919 when it reopened as a reorganised institution after the post-war return of Alsace to French rule. It was there that he maintained a dialogue with the new *Annales* movement of social historians and developed his thinking in response to Durkheim in *Les Origines du sentiment religieux d'après Durkheim* (1924) and *Les Causes du suicide* (1930) and his own distinctive work on memory and social morphology before he was appointed to a chair at the Sorbonne in 1935.

The socio-political context of the 'drift' of the Durkheimians: the example of Bouglé.

What I have outlined should be the basis for a major research project to analyse in detail the social and institutional conditions which shaped the post mortem interpretation and dissemination of Durkheim's work. All I can do here to advance my argument is make a few comments specifically about the mid-1920s. The key political event of the period in which several editions of the work of Durkheim were published was the election in May, 1924 of the Cartel des gauches, bringing to power a trio of normaliens – Herriot, Painlevé and Blum. The government was short-lived, Herriot resigning in April, 1925, and the Cartel collapsed with the return to power of Poincaré on July 27, 1926, but it had attempted to introduce radical reforms in direct opposition to the bloc National which it had supplanted. As Roderick Kedward has summarised the programme which Herriot set out in the autumn of 1924:

> "Wartime pacifists accused of relations with the enemy … were to be amnestied; striking railway workers, sacked *en masse* in 1920, were to be reinstated; civil servants were given the right to unionize; Jaurès was elevated to the highest national status in the Panthéon; concessions to religious sensibilities in Alsace and Lorraine were to be

withdrawn and the French embassy in the Vatican to be dismantled." (Kedward, 2005, 134)

In short, the Cartel was anti-clerical and pro-syndicalist. Although Albert Thibaudet's account of the government of the Cartel, published in 1927, established the notion that it was a 'République des Professeurs', emphasizing that the three ministers were all about 50 years old and had been formed attitudinally by the Dreyfus affair, in respect of educational policy the Cartel did not preserve the legacy of the reforming pioneers of the 3rd Republic, such as Jules Ferry. These reformers had introduced compulsory primary education and *écoles primaires supérieurs* with the ideological intention of founding social solidarity educationally, but they had not attempted to disband what Edmond Goblot, writing in 1925, called *La barrière et le niveau*, the separate place in the system for lycées which alone provided access to higher education. Immediately after the First World War, the movement called the *Compagnons de la nouvelle université* advocated the establishment of an *école unique* – that is to say an undivided or comprehensive schooling system. They also argued that the aim of making universities encyclopedic should be abandoned. This coincided with the view, expressed by Léon Bérard, minister of education of the Bloc National government in 1922, that the faculties should avoid too much theoretical teaching 'expensive for the state and the need for which is not always evident' (quoted in Zeldin, 1980, 325). The Durkheimians had to juggle their attachment to their Master's early vision of totalising, conceptual encadrement with the new socialist vision of inclusive social equality based on the provision of opportunity for all to acquire socially useful skills. This juggling had to take place in a context in which Alain (Emile Chartier) was vigorously recommending philosophically a reflective, idealist detachment from instrumental knowledge and in which, in 1927, the one-time Radical, Julien Benda, published *La Trahison des clercs*, castigating the mundane social and political engagement of intellectuals.

Just one example of the juggling is Célestin Bouglé's Preface of 1924 to assembled texts of Durkheim of 1898, 1906, and 1911. The first of these was "Représentations individuelles et représentations collectives", first published in the *Revue de Métaphysique de de Morale*; the second was a text entitled "Détermination du fait moral" which records both some theses presented by Durkheim to the Société française de Philosophie and the subsequent discussion; and the third was a text given at an international Philosophy Congress and published, again, in the *Revue de Métaphysique et de Morale* entitled "Jugements de valeur et jugements de réalité". At no point, of course, was *Sociologie et philosophie* a title which Durkheim would have countenanced even though the pieces were presented in philosophical contexts. In his presentation of the 2002 edition of *Sociologie et philosophie*, Bruno Karsenti rightly points out that Durkheim had argued in the conclusion of *Les règles de la méthode sociologique* of 1895 that the constitution of scientific sociology made it 'independent of all philosophy' (Durkheim, 1986, 139, quoted in Durkheim, ed. Bouglé, 2002 [1924], ed. Karsenti, vii). This was not an acceptance of the co-existence of sociology with philosophy, but a claim that sociology had superceded philosophy. Whereas Durkheim's behaviour in relation to established philosophical discourse may correctly be understood to have been strategic, and whereas Simiand, Mauss and Halbwachs proceeded to situate their work as social science, Bouglé's intentions were more ambiguous. Bouglé sought to rescue Durkheimian thought from interpretations which, mainly based on *Les règles de la méthode sociologique*, identified 'sociologisme' with materialism and narrow scientism, hoping in this way to 'sauvegarder les droits de l'esprit' (Durkheim, ed. Bouglé, 2002 [1924], lxviii). Karsenti associates these interpretations with texts of Fouillé and Parodi published in Durkheim's lifetime and also particularly with Brunschvicg's *Les progrès de la conscience européenne* which was published in 1927.

My argument therefore is that in seeking to emphasize the non-materiality of Durkheim's thought and to reconcile it with elements of Kantian transcendentalism, Bouglé not only sought

to legitimate sociology philosophically but also placed Durkheimianism in alliance with the kind of thinking of Alain and Benda which opposed the engagement of philosophy with social and political affairs.

From Bouglé to Bourdieu via Aron.

It is no accident that Bouglé was a kind of mentor in the 1930s to the still young Raymond Aron, nor an accident that Aron's doctoral thesis was supervised by Brunschvicg. Bouglé commissioned Aron to write *La sociologie allemande contemporaine* which was published in 1933 after Aron had spent a period of three years lecturing and studying in Germany. In that text Aron distinguished between the 'encyclopaedic sociology' represented by the Comte/Durkheim tradition (which he later dubbed the 'sociologistic' tendency) and the 'analytic sociology' which characterised much of the developing German tradition. He wrote:

> "La sociologie de Comte et de Spencer avait pour objet l'ensemble du passé humain et le tout de la société. Elle était couronnement et synthèse des sciences sociales. Historique et systématique à la fois, elle déterminait lois et valeurs, elle rattachait l'ordre humain à la nature. C'est sous cette forme que la sociologie, venue de France et d'Angleterre, fut d'abord connue et, en général, rejetée en Allemagne." (Aron, 1981, 1)
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> [The sociology of Comte and Spencer had as its object the whole of human history and the totality of society. It was the crown and synthesis of the social sciences. Simultaneously historical and systematic, it determined laws and values, it made human being a part of nature. It was under this guise that sociology, imported from France and England, first became known and rejected in Germany]

Aron had immediately signalled three of his lasting *bêtes noires*: his rejection, first of all, of the sociological attempt to usurp the function of philosophical history in seeking to take the whole of human history as its object; his rejection, secondly, of the sociological attempt to impose systematic unity on the diversity of social processes; and, thirdly, his rejection of what lay behind these two forms of conceptual appropriation: what he took to be the false inclination to deny any distinction between human and natural behaviour, that is to say the false endeavour to place human history within a bio-genetic evolutionary process rather than to acknowledge human transcendence of nature. Aron spent the war years in London and became a commentator of political events, consolidating his philosophical orientation to suppose that reality is essentially political rather than social. It was only in 1955 that he sought selection for an academic career and was elected to the chair of sociology at the Sorbonne. In the following decade, he repeatedly announced his hostility to the Durkheimian intellectual tradition and to the practical corollary of that tradition which he took to be the assertion of the primacy of social action. For Aron, sociological knowledge might assist political decision-making, but it could not usurp constitutional and legislative processes or determine what should be the ends of human society. He spelt out his opposition to Durkheim's thought in his first course of lectures at the Sorbonne, published as *Dix-huit leçons sur la société industrielle* in 1962, and again in the first volume of *Les Etapes de la pensée sociologique*, published in 1967. He spelt out his opposition to what he took to be the practical consequences of Durkheimianism in his commentary on the 'events' of May, 1968 and the book about those events which he published before the end of that year as *La révolution introuvable.* Aron had no sympathy for idealist detachment from social and political affairs, but his commitment was to a Weberian balance between science and politics which had no time for the possibility that social science might immanently coincide with social action and stimulate social movements which might undermine

political domination, or, more accurately, might insist on the redundancy of an independent sphere of political action.

Retrospectively, it is ironic that at the beginning of the 1960s Aron appointed Pierre Bourdieu to be the secretary of his newly established research group. Bourdieu's orientation was sociologistic, wanting, as he much later famously said, to insist that 'tout est social' (Bourdieu, 1992). Bourdieu used his position as General Editor of a series of texts published as Le Sens commun by Editions de Minuit to attempt to retrieve the Durkheimian project of the 1890s whilst up-dating the epistemological basis of that project. Notably he sponsored Viktor Karady's editions of the works of Mauss (1968) which was directly in opposition to Lévi-Strauss's representation of Mauss in his 1950 introduction to *Sociologie et anthropologie*; Karady's collection of articles of Halbwachs published in 1972 as *Classes sociales et morphologie*; and Karady's selection of Durkheim texts, published in 1975. As Karady commented in his introduction to his selection of Durkheim texts, his intention was to retrieve the work of someone who was 'insufficiently known as a researcher' (Durkheim, ed. Karady, 1975, 8). The intention, in other words, was to rescue Durkheim from the distortions effected by his 1920s editors.

Bourdieu's retention of Durkheim's attempted subordination of political to social science: Bourdieu & Boltanski's 1976 critique of the post-World War II origins of the post-1968 anti-Durkheimian reaction in France.

We know from Bourdieu's posthumously published *Esquisse pour une auto-analyse* (Bourdieu, 2004) that he had a sense of filial commitment to his father's attachment to the political vision of Jean Jaurès. During the 1970s Bourdieu began a series of studies which sought to demonstrate the dangers associated with attributing autonomous validity to the political sphere. "L'opinion publique n'existe pas" of 1971 (Bourdieu, 1971) can be interpreted as an attack on the ways in which opinion polls appropriate sociological analysis to manufacture political evidence which eliminates genuine responsiveness to the diversity of social attitudes. The target here was the political exploitation of the kind of political science produced in the Sciences-Po in Paris. I want to focus briefly on an article which Bourdieu wrote with Luc Boltanski in 1976 entitled "La production de l'idéologie dominante" in which, as the title suggests, they tried to show sociologically that the dominant political discourse in contemporary France was the product of a dominant social elite. It is significant that this article was written at about the same time as Bourdieu was analysing the way in which Heidegger had exploited everyday language to construct a 'pure' philosophical discourse which endorsed fascist political domination in his "L'ontologie politique de Martin Heidegger" (Bourdieu, 1975). The linguistic approach is common to both articles and in both cases the authors argue that an insidiously partisan way of seeing the world linguistically becomes normalised through the operation of institutions which socially reproduce themselves. In this case, the target was, as Bourdieu and Boltanski put it, certain groups, notably Catholic intellectuals, who,"since before the War, undertook to reconcile the irreconcilables of our time – the economy, religion, and science - by avoiding the equally abhorred alternatives of communism and radical-socialism." (Bourdieu & Boltanski, 1976, 8). Bourdieu and Boltanski proceeded to narrow further their specification of these ideological culprits. The search of these groups, they continued, "for a third way [cette recherche d'une troisième voie] which often led to the threshold of fascism … anticipated down to the last detail the collective effort of the commissions of the Plan" (Bourdieu & Boltanski, 1976, 8). The ideological reconversion of the post-war period operationalised the debates of the pre-war period and those which took place during the war at Uriage which, they concluded, "assured the continuity between the left of the Révolution nationale and the right of the Resistance" (Bourdieu & Boltanski, 1976, 8).

Bourdieu detected the insidious influence of the members of L'Ecole des Cadres à Uriage which had been established as a component of the Youth policy of the Pétain government and, after 1942, had become clandestinely associated with the resistance of the Vercors, and, finally, at the end of the war, had published a manifesto entitled *Vers un intellectuel du XXe siècle*. Participants of the Ecole were now in inflential positions – Joffre Dumazedier and Pierre-Henri Chombart de Lauwe in Parisian academia and Hubert Beuve-Méry as editor of Le Monde – but Bourdieu identified the influence of the movement with Emmanuel Mounier and the journal *Esprit*. As part of their article, Bourdieu and Boltanski attempted to produce an 'encyclopaedia of received ideas', seeking to demonstrate the way in which an ideology was constructed by the mutual citation of a limited number of authors, all engaged in a process of corporate legitimation through the publication of texts and participation in self-congratulatory conferences and meetings. The encyclopaedia was based on a reading of 35 books amongst which texts of Valéry Giscard d'Estaing and Michel Poniatowski feature prominently, but I want only to single out the attention given to the work of Jacques Delors. Bourdieu and Boltanski were attempting to delineate what we would now call the 'mantras' of an emergent dominant ideology.

Critique of Jacques Delors as exemplary of 'Second Left' thinking.

Delors was born in 1925. He went to his local lycée and started employment at the Banque de France at the age of 19. He became a 'personalist', indebted to the thought of Mounier, in the 1950s and remained committed to personalism throughout his career. In 1957 the Banque de France released Delors to work on Tuesdays for the Confédération Française de Travailleurs Chrétiens (CFTC) and this brought him to the attention of Pierre Massé who was director at the Commisariat du Plan. Massé asked Delors to set up a social affairs department at the Commissariat and Delors began full-time work there in 1962. Meanwhile, during the Mollet government, Delors and Michel Rocard became the leading lights of the 'Second Left' movement which, during the Algerian War of Independence, rejected the Stalinism of the Communists and also the colonialist politics of the Radical Party. The Club Jean Moulin was one of the most influential clubs of the Second Left and Delors frequented the club. Delors supported Mitterrand's unsuccessful candidacy for the presidency in 1965 but in 1969 he became advisor on social affairs to Pompidou's Prime Minister – Jacques Chaban-Delmas. Delors remained in that post until Pompidou sacked Chaban-Delmas in 1972. He delayed two years before joining the Socialist Party in 1974. After Mitterrand's narrow defeat in the presidential election of 1974, Delors became fully committed to Mitterrand's team and became his leader on 'international economics' in 1976.

I give you these potted details of Delors's career to indicate that, at the date of Bourdieu and Boltanski's article in 1976, Delors's stance was typical of those which were the objects of the article's attempted exposé. Delors was a Catholic and, more specifically, a personalist. He had served in a Gaullist ministry but had become associated with Mitterrand's political fortunes, exhibiting an 'end of ideology' willingness to associate with whoever held power. In the light of this I want to revert to some of the quotations given by Bourdieu and Boltanski to illustrate some of the characteristics of the ideology which was insidiously becoming dominant. They provide some quotations under the heading of 'changement' in order to suggest that the new ideology implies support for the antithesis of revolution, the encouragement of unprincipled pragmatism. An extract is taken from Delors's book of 1975 entitled *Changer*. Delors is cited as saying that "I attach a great deal of importance to change strategies and not simply to the definition of goals" (Bourdieu & Boltanski, 1976, 14). Bourdieu and Boltanski imply by association that this is the essence of the philosophy of the commissariat au Plan when they quote from a publication of the Club Moulin to the effect that "Planning replaces regulation" ["Le plan remplace la

règle") (Bourdieu & Boltanski, 1976, 28). Again, Bourdieu and Boltanski suggest that the new ideology is essentially managerial and anti-egalitarian. They quote from Bloch-Laine's *Pour une réforme de l'entreprise* of 1963 his comment that "In every business, as in the whole of human society, there are the governed and the governors" (Bourdieu & Boltanski, 1976, 14) and, for the purposes of my argument here, I emphasize that this suggested orientation is reinforced by a quotation from Pierre Massé which features under the heading of 'Exclus'. An extract is given from Massé's *Le Plan ou l'anti-hasard* of 1965 in which he is presented as perceiving social exclusion in terms of threat: "There is a risk that we shall see the emergence of what Mendras calls a counter-society, made up of those who don't want or can't conform [suivre la cadence]" (Bourdieu & Boltanski, 1976, 19) and this is cross-referred to entries under the headings of 'hippies' and 'May 1968' to illustrate this further. Under the heading of 'Elites', defined as the antithesis of the 'masses', Michel Poniatowski is quoted as saying in his book of 1972, *Cartes sur table*, that "It is obvious that the world evolves thanks to elites… Every evolution is achieved by a small number of especially gifted people" (Bourdieu & Boltanski, 1976, 17) and this cross-refers to entries on 'leaders' which is a deliberate recall of the emphasis of the ethos of Uriage. One final indicative entry is under the heading of "Pauvreté" where the following extract from a 1961 text published by the Club Jean Moulin entitled *L'Etat et le citoyen* is quoted, saying "Poor people should have nothing to fear from a society where they have their place, from a society which understands them, which includes them", and this passage is cross-referred to the entries under 'Exclus'.

I have deliberately selected words related to poverty, inclusion and exclusion to give a particular emphasis to the way in which Bourdieu and Boltanski sought to identify a terminological nexus underlying the stances of a group of politicians largely associated with the Second Left. After Mitterrand's defeat in 1978, Delors supported Mitterrand in his resistance to Rocard's leadership challenge. Chévènement was rewarded for his comparable support by being given the opportunity to rewrite the party programme. The Socialist Party adopted this programme, called the "Projet Socialiste", in 1980. Although Delors voted against this programme and spent a brief period in 1979 as an MEP, he was brought back to be Minister of Finance when eventually Mitterrand was elected President in 1981. Delors was, therefore, a member of the French socialist government which, in December, 1981, failed to condemn the suppression of the Solidarity movement in Poland by General Jaruzelski. In his biography of Michel Foucault, Didier Eribon devotes a chapter to the reaction to this event in Paris which was the only moment ever of collaboration between Foucault and Bourdieu. They were both signatories to a statement which was published in *Libération* on December 15th, 1981, which condemned the weakness of the government, likening its inaction to that of the socialist governments of 1936 and 1956 in relation to Spain and Hungary. At the same time, as Eribon puts it; "Foucault also agreed with Bourdieu that they should contact the trade union CFDT (Confédération des Travailleurs Démocratiques). They hoped to develop ties between a workers' union and the intellectuals similar to those that had existed in Poland between Solidarity and the cultural and university milieus" (Eribon, 1992, 298). A week later, Bourdieu explained his position in an interview with Eribon entitled "Retrouver la tradition libertaire de la gauche". Asked why he had encouraged a liaison between intellectuals and trades unions, Bourdieu replied:

> "Solidarity is a great non-military workers' movement which has been crushed by military force; and also a movement raised against State socialism. The power to think about society, to change society, cannot be delegated, certainly not to a State which gives itself the right to offer welfare to its citizens without them, not to say in spite of them." (Bourdieu, 1981, in Bourdieu, ed. Poupeau & Discepolo, 2002, 167)

It might be said that this marks a decisive break in Bourdieu's thinking, away from attempts to transform society on the basis of his sociological analyses of educational practices towards active engagement with the syndicalist movement, understood broadly as a social movement. In other words, this represented a break which was comparable to the break I have tried to describe in Durkheim's thinking between the first and second editions of *De la division du travail social*.

After three years as Minister of Finance, Delors made it known that he would like the post of President of the European Commission and he was duly elected, commencing in January, 1985. Subsequently Mrs. Thatcher recalled:

> "At that time all I knew was that M.Delors was extremely intelligent and had, as French finance minister, been credited with reining back the initial left-wing socialist policies of President Mitterrand's government and with putting French finances on a sounder footing" (Thatcher, 1993, quoted in Grant, 1994).

Delors's first goal was to achieve an European single market by 1992, but as early as 1988 Delors began to worry that, as his biographer Charles Grant puts it, that 'the 1992 programme was turning the Community into a mere cornucopia for capitalists" (Grant, 1994, 83). As a result, Delors promised a series of Labour laws, to be inspired by a Social Charter, designed to achieve social integration. Grant quotes from a television interview which Delors gave in October, 1987, to demonstrate how far Delors's social thought was still inspired by Christian personalism. Delors said:

> "The individual must be able to fulfil himself, to be a real citizen, to be an active man in his work, but he also has obligations towards society" (Grant, 1994, 87).

The Social Charter was published in May, 1989 and approved by all the 12 member states except the UK in December, 1989, at the Strasbourg Council[7]. In the period between 1986 and 1994, the participation of the UK government in these initiatives was, to say the least, lukewarm. The government was in denial about the existence of poverty in the UK, 'social exclusion' was thought to be an alien piece of eurospeak, and the involvement of the Commission in social issues was thought to be part of a French-dominated attempt to mould Europe into a socialist, republican superstate[8]. The assumption was that the concept of 'social exclusion' was predicated on the concept of 'solidarity' and was, therefore, intrinsically Durkheimian. I have tried to suggest, on the contrary, that the social agenda initiated by Delors was one which was in accord with the Second Left thinking of the 1960s and which, in Bourdieu's thinking, manifested a spurious, governmentally managed social inclusion which was antagonistic to socialism[9].

An enormous amount has happened since Tony Blair gave his speech entitled "Bringing Britain Together" in December, 1997 at Stockwell Park School, South London, at which he launched the Social Exclusion Unit as 'one of the most important new initiatives of this administration', designed to achieve 'national renewal' meaning 'Britain re-built as one nation, in which each citizen is valued and has a stake; in which no-one is excluded from opportunity and the chance to develop their potential; …'. In the terms which I have been discussing, I suspect, as did

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[7] I recommend Ross, g., 1995 for a full discussion of these issues.
[8] I know this second-hand from observing my wife's work. Between 1986 and 1989, she was a member of the evaluation team working on the second European Union Poverty Programme. Between 1989 and 1994 she was the UK member of the European Commission's Observatory on National Policies to Combat Social Exclusion, which she co-ordinated from 1993, writing supplement 4/93 of *Social Europe* (Robbins, D.F., 1994)
[9] For further discussion of the pre-1968 origins of the post-1968 reaction, see Audier, S, 2008.

Bourdieu in the late 1990s, that the inspiration for the discourse of social inclusion was personalist more than socialist and that the Third Way celebrated by Tony Blair and Anthony Giddens had characteristics not unlike those exposed by Bourdieu and Boltanski in respect of the legacy of the post-war thought of the earlier adherents of Uriage[10].

Full circle, and some concluding remarks.

My argument comes full circle by returning to the work of Pierre Rosanvallon. When, in November 1995, Alain Juppé announced a proposed reform of the social security system, it is no surprise to find that Rosanvallon was one of the signatories to a petition produced in favour of the reform, whilst Pierre Bourdieu was to become the dominant figure-head of the movement which expressed itself in opposition in 'a call to intellectuals in support of the strikers' of December 4th, 1995. 'La pétition réforme' expressed some reservations about aspects of Juppé's proposals, but it contended that

> "… en proposant de modifier la gestion des systèmes de santé par le vote du budget de la sécurité sociale par le Parlement, il peut ouvrir la voie à un véritable débat sur les options de la politique sanitaire et sociale et sur les rôles respectifs du parlement et des partenaires sociaux." (Duval et al., 1998, 18)

The democratically elected parliament would have the opportunity to debate the relative functions of politicians and social partners in managing health and social care policies. By contrast. 'la pétition Grève' stated that

> "Le mouvement actuel n'est une crise que pour la politique gouvernementale. Pour la masse des citoyens, il ouvre la possibilité d'un départ vers plus de démocratie, plus d'égalité, plus de solidarité et vers une application effective du Préambule de la Constitution de 1946 repris par celle de 1958" (Duval et al., 1998, 19)

The strike in opposition to Juppé's proposals would provide an occasion for the re-emphasis of the social constitution of the political and for a rejection of the continued imposition of de Gaulle's suppression of the socialist constitutional reforms introduced after the Second World War.

Rosanvallon marginalises the ideological contribution of Durkheim and the Durkheimians precisely because recognition of the historical significance of Durkheim in generating a 'social politics' would necessarily seem to contradict the anti-sociological methodology of a book published with the intention of polemically recommending a resurgence of a post-revolutionary, political definition of democracy. Rosanvallon is, after all, Director of the Centre de recherches politiques Raymond Aron and his opposition to Durkheim by omission is Aronian.

I have tried to trace aspects of what, in my sub-title, I have called the political transformations of Durkheimianism. I think it would have been more accurate to have called what I have described

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[10] At the time of giving the lecture on which this paper is based (October, 2008), the UK we still had a Cabinet Office Social Exclusion Taskforce implementing the Social Exclusion Action Plan of September, 2006. In Europe, a decision of the European Paliament and of the Council of December, 2001, established a community Action Programme to Combat Social Exclusion for a period of five years. As I have indicated in the endnote to this article, it is beyond the scope of this revision to follow the relevant policy developments through to the present.

as, rather, an account of the political deformations of Durkheim's thought, partly effected by some Durkheimians. Although I have sympathy for Bourdieu's general position, this was not intended to be a partisan paper and I hope I have raised questions which we can pursue, notably about the nature of Durkheim's thought itself and his changes of position, the contribution of his followers in shaping his legacy across the period since his death, the relation in 'Durkheimian' thinking between syndicalism and socialism, and, finally, the relative status in 'Durkheimian' thinking between the spheres of social and political action and the boundaries of explanation between social and political science.

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[1]This is a revised version of a paper given at the conference: "In search of solidarity; 150 years after the birth of Emile Durkheim" held in Oxford, October 10-12, 2008. The revision does not take the opportunity to consider the implications of the argument in relation to political developments in the UK since the end of the Blair/Brown era (1997-2010), although clearly it is necessary to reflect on the nature of the social inclusiveness proposed for the 'big society' as advanced by the current Coalition government. Between preparing the lecture and revising it for this publication, I have pursued related arguments in several published articles, chapters and reviews, viz.: "The Foundations of Social Theoretical Discourse." Review of Simon Susen: *The Foundations of the Social. Between Critical Theory and Reflexive Sociology*, *Journal of Classical Sociology*, 2010,10, 1, 1-8; review of F. Keck: *Lévy-Bruhl. Entre philosophie et anthropologie*, *Durkheim Studies*, 2010,16, 150-2; "Pierre Bourdieu and the practice of philosophy", chapter 7 (pp. 153-175) of volume 6 (Poststructuralism and Critical Theory: The Return of Master Thinkers, ed. Alan Schrift) of a 8-volume *History of Continental Philosophy*, (General Editor: Alan Schrift) Durham, Acumen Press, 2010; "John Stuart Mill and Auguste Comte: a trans-cultural comparative epistemology of the social sciences", *Journal of Classical Sociology*, 2011, 11 (1), 1-24; "The *Centre de sociologie européenne*, Paris: social theory and politics.Aron, Bourdieu and Passeron and the events of May, 1968." in *The Legacy of Pierre Bourdieu*, edited by Bryan Turner and Simon Susen, Anthem Press, 2011; and "Sociological analysis and socio-political change. Reflections on aspects of the work of Bourdieu, Passeron and Lyotard". in *Sociological Routes and Political Roots*, ed. M. Benson & R. Munro, *Sociological Review monographs*, 2011. I consider these issues in relation to the second half of the 20th Century in respect of the work of Aron, Althusser,Foucault, Lyotard and Bourdieu in my *French Post War Social Theory: International Knowledge Transfer*, which is in production for publication by Sage at the end of 2011. This book concentrates on the transfer of 'social theory' texts between France and England and it is my intention that a complementary book will examine the implications of the socio-political differences between the fields of production and consumption of these texts.

This article, and the works outlined above, are all, in different ways and more or less explicitly, concerned with the relationships between institutionalised or academicised 'philosophy' and 'social theory' and the relations of both to the sociological or social anthropological explanation of social practices. Interest in the trans-national transfer of concepts deployed in these discourses is an extension of the interest in the natures and relative statuses of the discourses themselves in as much as the assumption is that 'national' differences reflect pre-existing mundane, indigenous, socio-political realities which are imposed upon by objectified discourses which are the products of intellectuals who seek to generalise their particular perceptions so as to produce universal explanatory languages which transcend local circumstances. The aspiration to achieve universally valid explanation can be seen to be a form of conceptual imperialism which is in conflict with an inclination to secure mutual understanding across

cultures based on inter-subjectively shared articulations of 'différence'. To date, I have mainly pursued this line of thinking by reference to the encounter between English and French modes of thoughtand English and French socio-political conditions. My intention is to follow this enquiry logically to consider the cross-cultural encounter intrinsic to the development of Western social and cultural anthropology between 'occidental' and 'oriental' thinking and practices, and, as a case-study, to explore the development of English and French indology in relation to Indian self-perceptions of their situation. This will involve scrutiny from this perspective of the work of Bouglé and Dumont and others. This article is in part a plea for greater consideration of the transformation of the work of Durkheim effected by the Durkheimians, and I would be delighted to receive expressions of interest (to d.m.robbins@uel.ac.uk) in this endeavour, with particular reference, historically and in the present, to the western conceptualisation of Indian society.