

## 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 retranlations. 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

'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.

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