

A rational reconstruction of Durkheim's thesis concerning the division of labour in society

Henk Jarring *

1. Introduction and problem

Current works on the history of sociology tend to be written outside of a specific historiographical research programme. Often the historiographical account appears to simply aim at 'didactic value' or 'telling everything there is to be told'. Yet such motives or goals, forced into the role of historiographical directives, are scarcely of any practical constructive value when it comes to writing the history of sociology.

Current historiography derives from that conception of a 'history of ideas' which strives to be an imaginative work of recapitulation forever incomplete, retracing intellectual debts and polemical skirmishes, recapturing contemporaneous social influences, uncovering the mark of a particular *Weltanschauung*, and above all, treating concepts as the 'essence' of scientific work. In short, a history of ideas as the narration of the successive emergence of crucial concepts in the light of present concerns.

Durkheim's work has in this fashion come to be characterised by the concept of anomie.

An example of this type of approach is the lucid (in style as well as argumentation) article by Steven Lukes entitled 'Alienation and Anomie'.¹ Lukes contrasts the opposing views on the nature of man that underlie the respective conceptual formulations of Marx and Durkheim.² The article illustrates the basic dilemma of that traditional type of historiography: given the presence of a sufficient measure of consistency in the argumentation, what other criteria can be applied to *evaluate Lukes' evaluation*? What is, in other words, the framework of the interpretation itself.

Lukes tries to show that the rivalry between the explanatory concep-

* Studeerde sociologie in Utrecht en is thans verbonden aan 'Nijenrode'.

tualizations of alienation and anomie is grounded in the divergent views of Marx and Durkheim on human nature. But it seems equally possible to argue that such rivalry exists as a result of the extent to which Marx and Durkheim concur in their views on human nature, i.e. the extent to which they both assume 'natural man', to be a *tabula rasa*, with 'social man' as the creation of a history to which 'natural history' (both internal and external, psychological as well as environmental factors) records only certain parameters. It all depends on (among other things) what is held to be the nature of scientific work and development. That is, to write the history of science involves making a programmatic outline of a model of scientific endeavour.

The point then, is *to work from a specific historiographic programme*. Needless to say, it is desirable that such a programme should be explicitly acknowledged.

With respect to scientific practice, Lakatos has grounded historiography by pointing out that historiography and methodology are related: a specific methodology leads to a corresponding type of historiography, and a specific type of historiography implies a corresponding methodology.

Differences in interpretations are thus located as possibly belonging to different historiographical programmes, which in turn can be clearly related to methodological positions. An interpretation is, in other words, firmly situated as emanating from some specific historiographic 'problem-recognizing and problem-solving machinery'.³

Lakatos' ideas have so far found little application within sociology. In this paper his proposal for a specific type of historiography (the rational reconstruction of research programmes) will be applied in an examination of Durkheim's first work, 'De la division du travail social'. Two of the reasons for choosing this work are: a. the book is of a sufficiently high theoretical level, and b. while Durkheim's theory has often been all too easily disposed of by being situated in the context of his social-political concerns, the theory put forward has not received the attention that has been lavished on e.g. his work on suicide.⁴

In the following section, the programme for the remainder of this paper will be sketched. Since the aim here is to apply some of Lakatos' ideas, the relevant arguments will not be reiterated. Instead, Lakatos' proposals will merely be illustrated briefly. Thus, this paper is an exercise in the historiography of sociology. It aims to give a rational reconstruction of the theory put forward by Durkheim in his book 'De la division du travail social'.

2. Lakatos : rational reconstruction and the history of sociology

2.1. *Historiography of science*

The relation between the historiography of science and scientific practice is specified by Lakatos as follows:

'... all methodologies function as historiographical theories ...'⁵

Put in terms of Lakatos' own proposed methodology of research programmes, we can say that all methodologies function as 'hard-cores of (*normative*) *historiographical research programmes*'.⁶

Lakatos' methodological proposals embrace the following historiographic hard-core assumptions:

- a. scientific achievements are research programmes (and not isolated concepts, hypotheses, theories etc.), consisting of hard-cores and conjunct theories, and positive and negative heuristics;⁷
- b. research programmes can be evaluated in terms of progressive and degenerative problemshifts (and not necessarily by reference to social context, utility etc);
- c. a scientific revolution is marked by the superseding of one dominant research programme (RP) by another (and not necessarily by changes in the value-orientations of the relevant community of scientists, nor radical changes in the scientists' instrumentarium, etc).

It is important to note that the single most crucial consequence of Lakatos' problemshift lies in the increase in the *measure of autonomy* from empirical research it allows for in theoretical endeavours.⁸ A few remarks may serve to illustrate this.

Lakatos' focus on RP's contrasts with Popper's attention to the case of isolated theories. Lakatos relativises Popper's demand for falsification and is thereby able to embrace a wider range of phenomena. Take for instance the case where work on a project is continued long after refutational material has been uncovered: such activity Popper cannot explain in his own terms, it is a case of unscientific perseverance. Should it happen that after much work, the scientists engaged on the project succeed in turning the refutational evidence into corroborative material, then Popper must have recourse to explanations in the realm of 'external history', such as 'intuition', 'sheer luck', etc. Lakatos, however, can well reconstruct this sequence of scientific activity in terms of continuous theoretical progress and only intermittent empirical corroboration, made possible by the distinction between the positive and negative heuristic of an RP.⁹

The measure of autonomy granted to scientific work can also be seen with reference to Kuhn's notion of puzzle-solving. By assuming that the positive heuristic of an RP is the directive impetus behind the research-work, Lakatos, like Kuhn, envisages an unlimited supply of anomalies, and hence of opportunities for puzzle-solving activity. However, Lakatos goes further, (and thereby granting scientific practice a greater degree of autonomy), by specifying that an RP in its positive heuristic has a policy for deciding which puzzles are more worthwhile than others and in which way.

Lastly, in the programme of rational reconstruction, the criterion of progressive and degenerative problemshift is of central importance. However, to say that the aim of a rational reconstruction is the discovery and expression of empirical and theoretical progress may be misleading. This may give the impression that this type of historiography leads to a linear sketch of cumulative growth of knowledge, relegating all actual deviations to a didactic role if any.¹⁰ One could object to such a sketch as being *unnecessarily* limited. The point is not that such a sketch of continuous and cumulative scientific progress is a distortion of the actual erratic march of events; all rational reconstructions (and the products of other types of historiography) are distortions, the aim not being to produce faithful reproductions. Instead, the point is that degenerative phases in scientific work do occur; and since it is desirable to maximize the explanatory range of a programme, the historiography of rational reconstruction should strive to account for such degenerative phases, if that is at all programmatically possible, which indeed it is.

One remark on the relation between external and internal history. From a historiographical point of view, the latter is primary, since it programmatically has the status of denoting what are the important problems of external history.¹¹ This point should be born in mind in the appraisal of a rational reconstruction, or any other historiographical account.

2.2. Rational reconstruction

Durkheim's theory concerning the division of labour in society constitutes a problemshift¹² compared to contemporaneous perspectives. It is in the light of the latter that Durkheim's theory will be reconstructed here.

There are four contemporaneous accounts of the division of labour to which Durkheim address himself. The next section will deal with these programmes in relation to Durkheim's theory. In each case it will be necessary to attribute a hard-core, a set of irrefutable assumptions that are the basis of the particular programme. Within the scope of this paper we will concentrate on appraising Durkheim's critique primarily in terms of the attributed hard-cores.

Moreover, the lack of subsequent developments of Durkheim's theory, particularly in the direction of conducting empirical tests, makes it difficult to carry out comparisons on the basis of the respective heuristics. Nevertheless, the latter will occasionally be touched upon.

Questions that can then arise with respect the opponent programmes are:

- a. does Durkheim render one or more of the hard-core assumptions superfluous;
- b. does Durkheim confront the explanatory account with refutational material, which he himself can accommodate;
- c. does Durkheim cite phenomena which the programmes, unlike his own theory, are unable to embrace within their explanatory scope.

Where there is an affirmative answer to any of these questions, one can begin to speak of a progressive problemshift in a theoretical sense.

By paying attention to Durkheim's treatment of his opponents in this way, there will inevitably arise a fragmentary picture of Durkheim's own theory. This is hoped to be rectified in section 4. Durkheim's programme will there be set out:

- a. which are the hard-core assumptions;
- b. which are the conjunct theories employed;
- c. which are the hypotheses put forward by Durkheim, and to what extent does he himself indicate possible corroborative material;
- d. which, if any, possible indications of refutational or anomolous findings that Durkheim himself anticipates, and how does he then propose to deal with them.

Rational reconstruction is a matter of hindsight. But it should be emphasized that the retrospective appraisal is carried out on the basis of the programme's internal development and competing programmatic developments. Substantial critique (as distinct from rational appraisal) can only come from a rival programme, however heuristic mere speculation may prove to be. As I indicate further on, a marxist programme could in this way level critique at Durkheim's theory. One could of course consider whether Durkheim's programme may not contain points of inconsistency. However, a rational reconstruction will tend to implicitly remove rather than uncover such inconsistencies¹³, all the more so as the programme is by no means fully articulated. What then does remain is the indication of anomalies as pointed out above. But this may do little to subtract from the overall impression that what follows is, on the whole, an 'uncritical' appraisal of Durkheim's thesis. I hope that this apparent lack of critique will be seen to be implied by the historiographical approach used here.

On the first page of his book, Durkheim indicates the phenomenon which he seeks to account for as follows:

'Au jourd'hui, (la division du travail) s'est généralisé à un tel point qu'il frappe les yeux de tous.

3. Durkheim and opponents

3.1. Introduction

Durkheim levels his arguments against the contractualists (CN), the classical economists (CE) and the utilitarians (UT).¹⁴ He furthermore devotes particular attention to the work of Spencer, which will here be referred to as the evolutionist programme (EV).

In the versions of their foremost exponents, the opponent programmes could be considered to be marginal to sociology proper. Perhaps it may even be said that Durkheim's attack on these programmes is in some way inappropriate: that e.g. his argument against Locke¹⁵ does not establish but merely illustrate his own thesis and without damaging Locke's theory. More generally the charge against Durkheim could be that in his striving towards a 'true social science' he mistreats certain theories in some way. This objection is here in any case beside the point. With respect to his immediate problem (to explain the emergence and predict the consequences of DL) and his solution (the rise in social condensation and the consequent change in social solidarity and social structure), Durkheim seeks to demonstrate the deficiencies entailed by the accounts of his opponent programmes. It is then irrelevant whether, for example, Locke's notion of 'tacit consent' continues to play an important role in political philosophy: what matters is simply that Durkheim tries to show his own theory to be theoretically progressive compared to Locke's thesis in terms of explaining the phenomenon of the division of labour.

A second feature of the opponent programmes is that already at the theoretical level alone, Durkheim's theory constitutes a progressive problem-shift. That is to say, as I will try to show below, Durkheim's theory predicts novel facts. His explanatory framework can account for phenomena which were out of reach of the opponent programmes. Yet Durkheim's programme at the same time retains the explanatory breadth of his opponents. One could say that Durkheim's programme surpasses rather than rejects the others: to speak of rivalry here seems inappropriate because the programmes in question do not offer radically different accounts of the same phenomena, but instead, can be sequentially arranged in terms of basic programmatic extensions.

By way of contrast, if one considers Durkheim's theory in relation to

Marx's work, then the term 'rival programmes' does appear appropriate. For example, central to Marx's work is the proposition that as the western industrial states develop, so will the economic dichotomy between the owners of the means of production and those who have only their labour to sell, increasingly manifest itself: further industrial growth, which entails increasing division of labour (DL), will, normally speaking, be accompanied by increasing socio-political strife. Durkheim in this respect argues the reverse: as DL proceeds, so does the measure of social solidarity (SS) based on that source increase, and socio-political strife should, normally speaking, diminish.¹⁶ The state of rivalry between these two programmes is indicated by the respective attempts to confront the other's corroborative material. Thus, where increasing DL is accompanied by increasing economic struggles along class lines, Durkheim works out auxiliary hypotheses in order to accommodate this 'abnormal' state of affairs. Where, on the other hand, solidarity grows under similar conditions, Marxists attempt to accommodate this 'apparent' harmonious development of capitalism by suggesting hypotheses specifying conditions under the proletariat fail to develop awareness of their increasingly exploited situation.

I do not wish to suggest that the terms 'rival programmes' and 'opponent-programmes' express different types of relations between research programmes. The terms are merely descriptively useful here, expressing a difference in degree of irreconcilability: given that two programmes share a problemfield-then the less one programme can accommodate the other as a marginal instance, the more the two are rival programmes.

I want to round off this sketch of the relations between Durkheim's theory, his opponent programmes and a rival programme such the Marxist one, by indicating the order in which the four opponent programmes will be dealt with below.

The CN-programme is the most limited of the four. In its hard-core it addresses itself primarily to the question of the genesis of social life: the free, rational individual¹⁷ ('natural man') becomes constrained (i.e. social) by forging a social contract. The programme thus seeks to account for the political framework of society; political DL is ultimately grounded in the terms of the original social contract. Man's striving towards survival is the impetus behind the forging of this contract. The CE-programme extends this hard-core and uses the notion of the rational individual in the form of 'homo economicus' to explain social behaviour which pertains to material exchanges. Thus, the narrow focus on political DL is removed in order to embrace economic DL. Survival is no longer taken to be the single and dominant goal of man's rational activities; for the classical economists, man seeks not only to survive,

but to maximize the material conditions of his survival, his existence. The UT-programme in turn removes the restriction of the material conditions of welfare: the market-place becomes the prototypical situation of social intercourse. Thus man seeks more than mere survival and comfort: man, the utilitarian asserted, strives towards 'happiness'. The UT-programme addressed itself to all social DL, not merely to political and economic DL. The EV-programme adds an evolutionistic perspective. Individualism is no longer a constant parameter, but men in fact become more individualistic as social life increasingly develops into a market-place writ large. Concomitantly, the goals (survival, comfort, happiness) vary in importance. A typology of societies can then be constructed, and these different societies have different forms of solidarity, different ways of being held together.

In the course of specifying the respective hard-cores of these four programmes, the relations here outlined should emerge more clearly.

3.2. CN-programme

The CN-programme contains the following hard-core statements¹⁸:

- a. all men seek to survive and have a general disposition towards rational thought, which to some degree enters into all self-oriented human behaviour;
- b. for all societies, there exists a point in time at which a number of individuals, in accordance with their rational pursuit of survival and living in a state of nature, behaved themselves in such a way that they forged some contract giving rise to and specifying some sort of political relations amongst them;
- c. for all societies, contemporary political DL is based on some original social contract, the terms of which are honoured by the individuals alive today in accordance with their rational pursuit of survival.

These statements, being hard-core assumptions, are taken for granted.

The social contract theorists have at times been heavily criticised for their picturesque assumption of a historic occasion upon which men gathered together at some clearing in the woods and, after due deliberation, forged a social contract which marks the birth of society, of all social intercourse.

Yet such criticism of course misses its mark. If the hard-core assumptions of the CN-programme seem open to ridicule, if they appear to be at odds with certain more or less accepted historical accounts, then the most that can be said against the programme at the very outset, is that, in the course of its subsequent development, it must sooner or later confront certain historical data (not theory) concerning the genesis of various societies. Besides, to point out in

advance the limitations of a programme is not show it to be necessarily fruitless.

Durkheim's critique of the CN-programme is of import precisely because he does not simply point out that the contractual theorists assume man to be a rational individual, but because he offers an alternative programme which can account for rationality and individuality as attributes of man. Thus, since for Durkheim both individualism and rationalism are historical variables, his explanation even with respect to political DL need not move within the restrictive bounds of having to postulate a faithfulness to some original contract or scheme or political relations. Furthermore, Durkheim's alternative is one in which the contractually based differentiations of human activity in a state of mutual beneficial dependency form only a marginal instance of a much broader range of collective differentiated activities. And this is crucial, for the CN-programme after all failed repeatedly in its task of establishing some viable indications of a network of contractual commitments in all its ramifications, extending from some original social contract marking the birth of social life to the various and divergent contemporary activities and relations.

An example of a modification in the CN-programme which aimed at avoiding certain of these difficulties, is Locke's introduction of the notion of 'tacit consent'. However, as Durkheim points out, this proposed modification only raises further problems as to how to distinguish between contractual and non-volitional relations. Durkheim concludes that:

'Mais alors il faut appeler contractuelle toute démarche de l'homme qui n'est pas déterminée par la contrainte.'¹⁹

Which is precisely what the positive heuristic of the CN-programme advocates and which the modification was intended somehow to improve in the face of the persistent failure to establish such contractual relations with any significant measure of fruitfulness.

The relation between Durkheim's theory and the CN-programme can thus be summed as follows:

- a. Durkheim relegates a part of the CN's programmatic assumptions into the explanandum (the assumption of the rational individual);
- b. Durkheim side-steps the single most important empirical problem of the contractualists (the inability to uncover manifestations of the contractual framework upon which society is held to rest).

3.3. *CE-programme*

The CN-programme, with its focus on the genesis of society, fundamentally restricts the free pursuit of individual interests within a framework of social

life that is wrought with contractual commitments (socio-political obligations) that are the *sine qua non* of social activity.

The CE-programme does not limit behaviour in this way. Its hard-core statements are:

- a. all men seek to maximize the material conditions of their existence, and have a general disposition towards rational thought, which to some degree enters into all selforiented human behaviour²⁰;
- b. for all societies, the DL results from the activities undertaken by individuals in the pursuit of maximum material comfort.

The CE-programme's account of DL is that greater specialization leads to greater productivity, which in turn increases the state of material well-being: hence, the progressive development of DL derives from man's striving towards a greater measure of material comfort.

The progressiveness of the problemshift from the CN- to the CE-programme should be noted. The emphasis on a foundational social contract is dropped: it thus becomes more feasible to put the contractual fabric of human behaviour to the test. The shift from political to economic behaviour further facilitates empirical work; rational behaviour in the economic sphere is easier to indicate since contractual arrangements there are relatively short-term. The CE-programme thus removes the restrictive concern with the genesis of society and exposes its theoretical endeavours to empirical findings to a far greater degree.

Durkheim criticises the CE-programme in two ways. First he seeks to counter the assumption concerning 'homo economicus'. Second he tries to show the CE-programme to be limited in its explanatory power compared to his own theory. The first of the criticisms is inherently fruitless, while the second aptly introduces elements of his own theory.

With respect to 'homo economicus', Durkheim expounds a physio-psychological thesis: 'happiness' is not only rationally but also constitutionally limited (while productivity is in principle limitless) so that the impulse towards greater productivity and hence increasing DL is also limited.²¹ The unending progressive development of DL can thus not be explained. Durkheim concludes:

'Si donc la division du travail n'avait réellement progressé que pour accroître notre bonheur, il y a longtemps qu'elle serait arrivée à sa limite extrême, ainsi que la civilisation qui en résulte, et que l'une et l'autre se seraient arrêtées. Car, pour mettre l'homme en état de mener cette existence modeste qui est la plus favorable au plaisir, il n'était pas nécessaire d'accumuler indéfiniment des excitants de toute sorte. Un développement modéré eût suffi pour assurer aux individus toute la somme de jouissance dont ils sont capables'.²²

Durkheim also considers the interpretation of happiness as referring to a state of stimulation which must be continually renewed, i.e. as the evasion of boredom.²³ His critique along these lines leads him to draw the notion of 'homo economicus' to a sarcastic but logically possible conclusion when he suggests a point of diminishing returns:

'Il est impossible que l'humanité se soit imposé tant de peine uniquement pour pouvoir varier un peu ses plaisirs et leur garder leur fraîcheur première'.²⁴

It is instructive to compare Durkheim's treatment of the hard-core assumptions of the CN-programme and that of 'homo economicus'. The former Durkheim successfully surpasses, not by showing the assumptions to be false, but by offering an alternative theory which makes them redundant, which can explain what the other programme needed to assume. In the case of 'homo economicus' Durkheim goes to great lengths to try and discredit the assumptions, to falsify them. Such criticism is ineffectual.

Durkheim argues more cogently when he considers the limitations of the CE-programme in the light of this own theory. His attempted rebuttal of 'homo economicus' already contains elements of this kind of critique. Durkheim proposes that the appreciation of goods and services is socially variable. Civilization, as he puts it, thus has two complementary facets which roughly correspond since they can be ascribed to the same causes: on the one hand, there are changes in productivity (greater amount and diversity of goods and services available), while on the other hand, there are changes in the attitudes of men towards these newly available goods and services.²⁵ Both the CE's and Durkheim thus account for the increase in productivity. But while the CE-programme assumes at the very outset that man will see the benefit or usefulness of an ever increasing diversity of products (that man, so to speak, will always need and want more), Durkheim's theory removes such an assumption and seeks to account for the appreciation of goods and services concomitant upon their production. As Durkheim sums up:

'Si nous spécialisons, ce n'est pas pour produire plus, mais c'est pour pouvoir vivre dans les conditions nouvelles d'existence qui nous sont faites'.²⁶

Again, I want to stress that it is by rendering the hard-core assumption superfluous, and not in trying to directly discredit it, that Durkheim books progress.

The second major elaboration of the CE-programme by Durkheim concerns the relation between the progress of DL and its social setting. The CE-programme envisages that relations of exchange take place naturally (since and when they are of mutual benefit) and is thus somewhat at a loss as regards the obvious social setting of this natural process. As a consequence, the CE-pro-

gramme reserves a curious role of preventative abstention for the State: with respect to economic relations, the State is simply there to 'allow' the natural flow of exchanges to take place. By virtue of its hard-core focus on economic DL and its inability to provide an integral role for the political DL of the contractualists, the CE-programme is unable to consider the conditions for such relations of exchange. Durkheim, on the other hand, places economic DL within a framework of political DL. More generally:

'... la division du travail ne peut s'effectuer qu'entre les membres d'une société déjà constituée'.²⁷

Consider Durkheim's indication of the State's role. This central organ is no longer an anomalous *deus ex machina*, but an integral part of the progress of DL. As such, when the development of DL does not seem to lead to a relatively harmonious state of affairs, the State needs neither to impose (Comte's solution) nor to abstain (CE-programme). Instead, the solution is to be found in proper management, something in which the State can of course play its part, though not exclusively so since it is affected by the same causes that have resulted in the lack of harmonious development. (Thus Durkheim comes to advocate the revival of the old occupational corporations in his famous second preface to the book). Durkheim finally characterises the limitations of the CE-programme by saying that it can best explain those '*rappports de mutualisme*' which are to be found in international traderelations, given the absence of a coordinating central State there.²⁸

The relation between Durkheim's theory and the CE-programme can thus be indicated as follows:

- a. Durkheim again relegates a part of the programme's assumptions (i.e. on the appreciation of novel products) into the explanandum;
- b. Durkheim is better able to accommodate certain phenomena because his theory, though it conceives of DL being brought about quite mechanically, regards the development of DL as a social rather than a 'natural' process as indicated above.

Finally, some remarks on the respective approaches of Durkheim and the classical economists to the diversification of criminal activities in contemporary industrial society.

At first sight Durkheim's refusal to simply acknowledge such diversification as an instance of DL may appear puzzling. Durkheim introduces an *ad hoc* auxiliary hypothesis to distinguish '*différenciation pure et simple*' from division of labour.²⁹ As an illustration of the former, he cites the biological and pathological example of a cancerous growth. Having thus denied the phenomenon of criminal diversification the status of specialization proper,

Durkheim can conclude that he need consider the matter no further.³⁰ To the CE-programme, this phenomenon of DL in the criminal sphere presents no particular problems, it is an instance of increasing DL as much as any other.

Durkheim, however, faces a problem here in terms of his observational theory of SS. The type and relative importance of a particular SS can be measured by examining the types of law and their respective importance. Part of this observational theory is the auxiliary hypothesis which states that, in so far as a type of SS is not expressed by written law (but, e.g., laid down in customs), the same can be said for other types of SS, so that written law is, on the whole, a true indication of the respective importance of the different types of SS.³¹ The diversification of activities in the criminal sphere would constitute a realm of DL (and hence of SS) which can hardly be said to be recognized in legal statutes. Yet Durkheim's solution of simply then dismissing such criminal diversification is completely ad hoc.

It would appear that a modification of the observational theory of SS would have been more appropriate.³² The point here is that Durkheim's inability to account for criminal diversification can not be regarded as indicating a deficiency in his programme relative to the CE-programme, since that inability is not at all programmatically unavoidable.

3.4. *UT-programme*

With respect to explaining the development of the DL, the UT-programme is an elaboration of the CE-programme. The focus on rational, self-interested economic behaviour and the subsequent contractual basis of relations is broadened to embrace human behaviour under the motive force of a general striving for happiness. The hard-core assumptions of the UT-programme can read as follows:

- a. all men pursue happiness and have a general disposition towards rational thought, which to some degree enters into all self-oriented human behaviour;
- b. for all societies, the DL results from the activities undertaken by individuals in the pursuit of happiness.

Obviously one would have to add a theory of happiness which would also indicate how one is to set about measuring it, for in itself it is little specification to add that happiness is 'civilization', 'relief from boredom' or 'the greatest good for the greatest number of people'.

Durkheim's comments on the UT-programme are directed at the conjunct theory of happiness.³³ If one considers happiness to be matter of civilization,

of being a state of material comfort, then Durkheim points out the correlation between material comfort and suicide. The more advanced DL is within society, the higher the societal suicide-rate. Again, within a particular society the higher social classes, which owe their origin to the development of DL show a higher suicide-rate than the lower social classes. It may be interesting to note that Durkheim himself remarks that the statistics on this leave much to be desired, and that it is perhaps safer to conclude that at least the available statistics deny that happiness increases with progressive DL. Yet despite any inconclusiveness of contemporaneous statistics, Durkheim confronts the UT programme with a theoretical anomaly which can in principle be empirically settled.

I want to stress that the hard-core assumptions are not themselves questioned by Durkheim. Though the very notion of a non-social impetus in the social realm is an anathema to Durkheim's thesis, he seems to correctly perceive that the UT-programme stands or falls depending on the possibility of a conjunct theory of happiness. As Durkheim argues, the UT-programme fails to provide a satisfactory conjunct theory which elaborates the notion of 'happiness' beyond mere survival and/or material comfort.

Durkheim looks at J. S. Mill's thesis that happiness consists of men being socially classified according to their natural abilities or characteristics. Hence Mill suggests that DL is progressively required to classify men in this manner.³⁴ Durkheim levels two main arguments at this theory of DL. First and foremost, the more a society is marked by DL, the greater the role of education appears to be in bringing about the economically requisite varied capacities (Mill's thesis would seem to suggest the reverse). Second, Mill, unlike Durkheim, virtually rules out a priori the possible social variability of the role of hereditary influences: Durkheim, however, can account for the decreasing role of hereditary transmission as DL progresses and the increasing importance of education. (In the discussion on forced DL, Durkheim accords man's natural abilities a limited role).

Summing up, Durkheim attacks the UT-programme for its problems concerning a conjunct theory of happiness. It goes furthermore without saying that much of his critique of the CE-programme applies equally to the UT-programme.

3.5. *EV-programme*

Durkheim devotes particular attention to Spencer's work. The latter differs markedly from other contractual theorists because of his evolutionary per-

spective. Like Durkheim, Spencer sees an increase in individualism as a concomitant of progressive DL, though the two theorists differ somewhat in their conceptions of individualism.³⁵

The hard-core assumptions of the EV-programme are as follows:

- a. all men pursue the goals of survival, material comfort and other instances of happiness to some degree: they all have a general disposition towards rational thought, which to some degree enters into all self-oriented human behaviour;
- b. for all societies, the DL results from the activities undertaken by individuals in the pursuit of survival, material comfort and other instances of happiness.

The degree to which the goals of survival, material comfort other forms of happiness enters into self-oriented human behaviour, is, according the EV-programme, historically variable. The conjunct theory is that early societies are 'militaristic': survival is there the dominant aim, given a harsh state of nature (i.e. a state of existence unabated by a developed fabric of contractual relations, etc.), while at a later stage in the development of societies, the goal of material comfort comes to the fore. Spencer's approach solves the problem of simultaneously accounting for political and DL: potentially any number of typologies of societies with different states of DL expressing differences in solidarity, could be generated, depending on the particular conjunct theory used.

Durkheim's argument against the CN-programme points the way to his criticism of Spencer.

The latter may, like Durkheim, be able to account for the increase in individualism, but he does so by virtue of assuming man to be an individual at the very outset. Hence Spencer has to consider individualism to have previously been repressed (militaristic societies) through some agency, the State.³⁶ Now, Durkheim then points out that the increase in individualism is accompanied by a growth, and not a diminution, of State activity.³⁷

Centralization and the expanse of administrative law for example are self-evident. Durkheim on the other hand is able to explain this correlation very well: the same causes that lead to progressive DL lead to an expansion of the role of the State. Spencer's theory is moreover severely limited. It is not able to hypothesize upon conditions of contractual solidarity, since solidarity is contractual relations. When solidarity then fails to eventuate, Spencer would have to produce some ad hoc hypothesis to account for this. Durkheim also notes that Spencer is unable to simultaneously explain the increase of restitutive law with respect to *non*-contractual relations, such as in the case of certain aspects of domestic law.³⁸ Finally, the spontaneous solidarity that is held to accompany contractual relations does not accord with the fact that in western society

it is not the consenting parties, but the law which decides the validity of a contract.³⁹

Spencer's theory, incorporating the notions of egoism and bellicose environment, owes probably as much to Hobbes as to the contractual theories already dealt with here. Yet the point remains that the four opponent-programmes overlap to quite an extent, and thus Durkheim's arguments often apply to several of the opponent-programmes simultaneously.

One final remark. I want to emphasize again that one should recognize the limits of Durkheim's critique: his programmatic account of DL constitutes a theoretically progressive problemshift to which he at times indicates possible sources of corroborative material. This does not imply that further work on, for example, the CE-programme was or is doomed to failure or indefensibility. Lakatos' assumption that science is a battleground of relatively autonomous RP's is starkly illustrated by his contention that

'... it is very difficult to defeat a research programme supported by talented, imaginative scientists'.⁴⁰

Durkheim's critique then does not constitute some final verdict on the sum-total of past and future achievements and possibilities of his opponent-programmes. One can, for example, point to Schumpeter's thesis on the functioning of democracy as a fruitful contemporary extension and modification of the CE-programme.

4. Durkheim's programmatic account of the division of labour in society

Before outlining the hard-core and conjunct statements on the programme, it is necessary to clarify a source of confusion in Durkheim's presentation which might otherwise obscure the main features of his programme.

4.1. Methodology and conjunct empirical specifications

Already in 'La division du travail social' Durkheim puts forward certain principles of method which he is later to elaborate in 'Les règles de la méthode sociologique'.

Durkheim's concern is to subject the formation of concepts to certain rules in order to arrive at concepts that are 'adequate to the facts'. He opposes what might be termed 'naïve conceptualization', i.e. the practice of formulating one's concepts with a disregard for the characteristics of the phenomenon in question, and then arguing from the resulting ideational viewpoint with a

equal disregard for the facts. Durkheim proposes what might be termed a method of 'realistic conceptualization', i.e. one forms a concept of for instance law, by examining the existing body of legal statutes. The resulting conceptual distinctions will thus to some degree reflect the actual characteristics of law.

Basic to Durkheim's endeavour is a demand for empirical reference. But, even though in this respect his realistic conceptualization is an improvement over the naïve method, the solution is itself highly problematic and misplaced. Empirical reference of a theory is located in the formulation of hypotheses and their testing, not in the formulation of concepts themselves. The way to avoid speculative idealism is not by forming notions adequate to the facts, but by generating testable hypotheses. Durkheim confuses methodological rules with the role of conjunct empirical specifications: he proposes methodological rules on conceptualization to prevent an objectionable disregard for empirical facts, while the answer is to be found in the application of conjunct empirical specifications. No matter how one conceptualizes law for example, as long as testable hypotheses are generated the conceptualization is exposed to empirical confrontations, and therefore tested for its fruitfulness with respect to the theoretical framework of which it forms a part.

A consequence of this confusion is that one has to reconstruct Durkheim's arguments quite radically. Instead of stating his basic assumptions and conjunct statements, Durkheim argues in something like a reverse order. The most obvious example in the work being considered here is his treatment of the notion of social solidarity. Durkheim starts out by examining law, discovers two types of sanctions and deduces two corresponding types of SS. The lengthy and complex arguments include considerations on the nature of crime and punishment in support of the concluding conceptualization of SS. In the course of thus developing his outline of mechanical and organic solidarity, Durkheim constantly wavers between turning to the facts on the one hand in order to form adequate notions, and on the other hand, in order to show his notions to be adequate. It is a peculiar tacking procedure.

In following the reconstruction of Durkheim's theory below, it is important to bear in mind that DL is not a basic, hard-core term: DL is the phenomenon which he seeks to account for and he does so in terms of a theory of social solidarity.

*4.2. The *theorie of solidarity**

The hard-core of Durkheim's theory can be expressed in the following assumptions:

- a. all social life is characterized by a general quality called social solidarity and to each type of social solidarity there corresponds a type of social structure;
- b. all differences in states of SS (of relatively autonomous sections of social life) are the results of differences in the resp. social densities and volumes.

Durkheim himself explicitly indicates that the assumption of the quality of solidarity is a fundamental one. Solidarity

'... est un fait social que l'on ne peut bien connaître que par l'intermédiaire de ses effets sociaux'.⁴¹

He adds, that stripped of all its particular forms, there remains an abstraction 'La tendance générale à la sociabilité', and 'la sociabilité en soi ne se rencontre nulle part'.⁴² There are two places in which Durkheim does remark on the genesis of social life and potentially moves beyond the above hard-core statements by bringing in non-social parameters. However, in both cases he does not develop his comments to any great length. In the one case he merely asserts that:

'... ce qui rapproche les hommes, ce sont des causes mécaniques et des forces impulsives comme l'affinité du sang, l'attachement à un même sol, le culte des ancêtres, la communauté des habitudes, etc'.⁴³

In the other case, Durkheim speaks of

'... la grande différence qui sépare l'homme de l'animal, à savoir le plus grand développement sa vie psychique, se ramène à celle-ci: sa plus grande sociabilité'.⁴⁴

In all, Durkheim is remarkably faithful to the, what might be termed strict sociological, assumptions of his programme. In his later works he can be seen to dilute in practice his own insistence on a truly social science. In 'Les formes élémentaires de la vie religieuse' for example, he puts forward a sociopsychological hypothesis of the occurrence of 'un délire bien fondé' to account for the associative act of man that marks the birth of social life.⁴⁵

The road from the above hard-core assumptions to an explanatory scheme runs first of all via a conjunct statement specifying the term 'states of solidarity':

- c. there are only two possible types of SS, and a particular state of SS constituted by the degree to which either type is predominant.⁴⁶

It must be emphasized that the notion of the existence of two and only two types of social solidarity is introduced by means of such a conjunct assumption.

ion, and *not* via any inductive path. The way in which Durkheim arrives at two and only two types of SS was discussed in section 4.1 above. Durkheim examines law, discovers two types of legal rules (penal law and 'restitutive' (law) and concludes that there must be only two corresponding types of SS. Even so, this argument is of course faulty: Durkheim could have gone on to conclude that the absence of other types of legal rules indicates, with respect to the societies he is examining, an *absence* of other types of SS. To conclude, as he does, that the *non-existence* of other types of SS has therefore been shown, is incorrect. However, reconstructing the elements of his programme removes such problems by indicating that as a conjunct statement, the assumption of only two types of SS can be made quite legitimately. At the same time, the point at which a modification involving a change in the number of types of SS possible would affect the old programme, is pointed out.

From assumptions a. and c. it follows that:

there are only two types of social structure, and the structure of a particular society is constituted according to the degree to which either type is predominant.

Thus, parallel to the specification of two and only two types of solidarity as constituents of the overall state of SS, we have the specification of two and only two types of structural configurations as constituents of the overall social structure.

It may need to be stressed that Durkheim's assumptions express the *degree* to which either type of SS is predominant within a given society:

'Ces deux sociétés n'en font d'ailleurs qu'une. Ce sont deux faces d'une seule et même réalité, mais qui ne demandent pas moins à être distinguées'.⁴⁷

Thus for example, Durkheim later argues that mechanical solidarity in a highly differentiated society has diminished but not completely vanished.⁴⁸

4.3. *States of social solidarity*

The further conjunct theory of solidarity is straightforward, though it may appear complex due both to the manner in which it is presented (see section 4.1. above) and Durkheim's deviations from it. The theory holds that a society's body of written law is a reflection of that society's state of solidarity. As long as one bears in mind what is specified in the conjunct statement c. (state of solidarity = degree to which either type predominates), it should be clear what can be measured by examining the body of legal statutes; i.e. the degree to which either type of solidarity is present relative to the other. In short, the

conjunct theory suggests a measure of the proportional presence of the two types of SS.

The theory does not propose a measure of the total SS, nor of the intensity of either type in one society compared to its intensity in another society. Historical data, therefore, do not measure for example an increase in organic solidarity, but a possible increase in the proportional presence of organic solidarity relative to the presence of mechanical solidarity. Not the intensity, but the proportional presence of either type is a basic term in the programme. For example, as the DL progresses, so does the proportional presence of organic solidarity: this is what the conjunct theory specifies and indicates means of measurement for.

Now, Durkheim frequently deviates from the above conjunct theory. The most recurring instance of this is his presentation of historical data to show that mechanical solidarity has regressed, or that organic solidarity has increased. This is, strictly speaking, incorrect. Sometimes the distinction may be negligible, at other times not. Certainly it allows Durkheim to make sweeping cross-cultural comparisons that are not always appropriate. Durkheim's misuse of the conjunct theory could be considered to be another aspect of his manner of developing his theory.⁴⁹ Even so, can one reconstruct his deviation as a legitimate possible extension of his conjunct theory of SS? After all, if the societal body of law reflects the relative presence of types of SS, can it not also be used to measure the intensity of those types?

The point here is not really whether such an extension is possible but what is involved in taking this course of action. What can be called the extended conjunct theory is confronted with a specific problem which it must solve, the problem of crosscultural comparisons. In terms of the extended conjunct theory, it should be possible to compare the intensity of mechanical solidarity for example in two different societies, yet the theory fails to indicate how this could be done. For all that Durkheim marshalls historical data to demonstrate the regression of mechanical solidarity and the increase in organic solidarity his data (where they are not simply crude and insufficient) are culturally biased⁵⁰, so that it indeed appears plausible to assume that a proportional increase in organic solidarity not only implies a proportional decrease in mechanical solidarity, but a factual decrease in the intensity of the latter as well. But this plausibility is theoretically fortuitous, being the result of biased data. Furthermore it must be recognized that the extended theory can scarcely be contained by the programme as it stands. The hard-core assumptions would have to be altered so as to make the constituent types of solidarity the basic terms of the programme. Only then is a conjunct theory which purports to measure the absolute strength of a type of solidarity called for. At present

adopting the extended theory would among other things lead to an observational range in excess of what is programmatically appropriate, and thus cannot be justified in the light of the increased difficulties involved.⁵¹

Durkheim's conjunct theory of SS is by implication nationalistic. Since a body of law pertains to a particular nation, the hard-core term 'relatively autonomous section of social life' will tend to be interpreted along national lines. A society will then be identified as being a particular nation. This has restricting consequences for the measurement of social volume and density. It is these two latter notions that must be looked at next.

4.4. Social volume and social density

In considering the conjunct theory of social volume (SV) and social density (SD), I want to deal with notion of SV first, because it presents certain problems. The point at stake is the role of population-size.

Social volume refers to the size of any given social substance, of any 'relatively autonomous section of social life.' How is this size to be measured? In discussions such as those on international trade, Durkheim seems content to measure SV along national lines. As we saw in the previous section, this would fit in well with the conjunct theory of SS. Even so, the question remains as to what precisely SV refers to: population or geographical size, or both, or something else again?

Durkheim states that social volume:

'... n'est, si l'on veut, qu'un facteur additionnel; mais quand il se joint au premier, il en amplifie les effets par une action qui lui est propre et, par conséquent, demande à en être distingué'.⁵²

However, one can only wonder in what sense then SV is a secondary factor. Durkheim seems to suggest that an increase in the number of individuals only leads to an increase in the number of social relations if the individuals concerned do indeed interact, i.e. if the SD increases. Yet how is one to distinguish between an increase in SD and an intensification of social life? Furthermore, aside from retaining an analogy with physics, there seems to be no reason for insisting on volume and density as two separate factors, whether the former can be largely equated with population-size or not. Durkheim himself, in his chapter on the causes of DL, repeatedly fails to maintain the distinction. One might be tempted to conclude that the notion of SV is vacuous, that any society may as well be said to be characterised by a particular measure of SD alone. Geographical and population size could then be regarded as factors on

which the SD depends. Other such factors Durkheim sums up under the heading of material density.

In all, it is probably best to take Durkheim's remarks on both SV and SD as heuristic indications rather than concrete specifications. In any case, the lack of a properly developed conjunct theory of social condensation does not alter the fact that Durkheim has formulated his basic statement in such a way as to maximize its informative content:

'Nous disons, non que la croissance et la condensation des sociétés *permettent*, mais qu'elles *nécessitent* une division plus grande du travail'.⁵³

In the course of developing a set of indicators, embracing factors of material density, population-size and geographical aspects, along with others perhaps it may prove fruitful to distinguish two separate causal components as Durkheim does, or only one or more than two. Whatever specification is used, it must be clear and explicit, as well as consistently applied. Moreover, the type of mistake that Durkheim commits in his treatment of the relation between SD and material density must be avoided. He considers material density to a component of SD as well as a measure of the latter.⁵⁴ This is theoretically inappropriate, however precisely SD and material density may prove to increase concomitantly in the development of western society.

It has often been pointed out that Durkheim's achievement lies in recognizing a social rather than a merely economic function of the division of labour. This particular focus of Durkheim's can now be formulated as follows: he accords DL a crucial role in the elaboration of his programmatic account of social solidarity. The notion of DL must now be looked at.

4.5. *Division of labour*

Durkheim distinguishes two forms of differentiation: simple and coordinated differentiation (see section 3.4 above). The latter is known as specialization. He further distinguishes two forms of specialization: the separation of qualitatively similar activities (first degree specialization) and the development of qualitatively dissimilar activities (second degree specialization). DL is second degree specialization. When we speak of DL, we have above all in mind the phenomenon whereby qualitatively work is performed by different (groups of) people, in such a way that the notion of progressive DL implies the development of novel activities. Should DL merely involve the separation and monopolization of activities previously performed by large segments of the society, then clearly DL would be very restricted in the extent to which it could continue to develop.

The positive heuristic of Durkheim's programme contains directives in accordance with the following conjunct statement:

'La division du travail varie en raison directe du volume et de la densité des sociétés, et si elle progresse d'une manière continue au cours de développement social, c'est que les sociétés deviennent régulièrement plus denses et très généralement plus volumineuses.'⁵⁵

More specifically, DL is pointed out as the source of one type of SS, which thus increasingly marks social life as the latter grows ever denser. An auxiliary statement concerns the development of the other type of SS, mechanical solidarity: it becomes decreasingly viable as social life becomes denser. The development of organic solidarity (OS) and the demise of mechanical solidarity (MS) are thus linked to one and the same cause, 'la condensation progressive des sociétés'.⁵⁶ Thus we have a clear and concise '*théorie mécaniste du progrès*', which indicates the evolutionary development of social life. As social life continues to be marked by an increase in condensation, a saturation point is reached at which MS ceases to be viable and instead, OS sets in and becomes increasingly predominant.

The programme's positive heuristic now contains directives such as the following:

a. differences in the extent to which DL has taken place are in the first place to be accounted for in terms of differences in the respective social densities. Thus hypotheses such as the following can be formulated: if the SD of a segment of social life A is greater than that of segment B, then the extent to which DL has taken place in segment A will exceed that in segment B.

Examples of such hypotheses formulated by Durkheim himself concern:

- the progressive DL in western societies as SD there increases;
 - the historical priority of the occurrence of DL in urban centres (since cities are clusters with relatively high social density);
 - at any given point in time, DL will be more intensive in urban than in rural areas (where such areas are relatively autonomous).
- b. so-called functional prerequisites of DL are in the first place to be accounted for in terms of the causes of DL, rather than the characteristics of DL itself.

Take for example the following items that are at times considered to be functional prerequisites of DL: individualism, rationality, social mobility and the spread of education. For each of these, it can be hypothesized that if the SD of a segment of social life reaches a certain point and continues to increase, then the attribute in question will occur and become increasingly extensive within that segment. From this and the above hypothesis, it can be hypothesized that,

for example, individualism develops in urban centres at an earlier date than in rural centres.

The important point is to bear in mind that the programme obviates the need to call on functional requirements of DL: such aspects of DL are to be explained in terms of the causes of DL quite separately. To regard Durkheim as a functionalist is to distort his mechanistic theory of progress, and to dismiss his repeated assertion that the concomitance of phenomena is to be explained in terms of a common cause, and not in terms of the functional requirements of the one vis-a-vis the other.

It will be recalled that a type of SS was assumed to imply a particular type of societal structure. Hence, the demise of MS implies the demise of a corresponding structure. It is that particular structure, segmental organization, that Durkheim thus characterizes as lacking attributes such as individualism etc. Unlike Spencer therefore, he does not have to presuppose individualism, nor a former repressive agency in order to account for its subsequent development. Individualism emerges quite 'mechanically' from the demise of segmental organization.

This brings us to a further directive of the positive heuristic:

- c. the demise of MS and the development of OS are to be accounted for in the first place in terms of the structural consequences of the increases in the SD.

At this point Durkheim introduces a conjunct theory of the struggle for survival to explain the structural consequences of an increase in the SD. The effacement of segmental boundaries brings formerly separated spheres of activities in direct competition with one another (formerly separated competitors now sharing a common market), and a struggle for survival ensues, with specialization as one possible result (along with migration, suicide etc).⁵⁷ A large number of lines of research are possible here. Hypotheses could be tested in terms of the available statistics on nineteenth and twentieth century migration. It would seem, for example that a high degree of emigration (such as is the case for Ireland) should correspond to a relatively low measure of DL development. More generally, the hypothesis can be proposed that the more secondary factors prohibit the recourse to migration, suicide etc., the more the struggle for survival in accordance with the increase in SD will lead to progressive DL.

Each of the above directives, and others that can be worked out, demonstrate in detail the consequences of the problem-shift implicit in the hard-core assumptions. It will be clear that the added conjunct theories result in a specific evolutionary scheme of the development of social life. This scheme will be briefly remarked on next.

4.6. Historical societal development

One of the basic terms in the programme is SD, or what might be termed 'the progressive condensation of peoples'. So far, no specification of actual continuous increase in societal condensation has been mentioned. But Durkheim does do so. To the programme's 'if SD were to increase continually, then . . .' he adds an auxiliary theory which holds that such increase does indeed take place, thereby generating a specific outline of continuous societal development.

Durkheim adduces three causes for the inevitable increase in SD in various societies. In the first place, there is the increase due to the excess child-birth over mortality-rate (this is structurally accommodated for by the formation of hordes into clans, clans into territorial groupings, etc.). Second, within a society clustering may occur, giving rise to pockets of social intercourse in which a relatively high SD prevails. Durkheim cites the formation of cities as an example (cities in turn of course result from the enfeebling of segmental boundaries due to a rise in SD as a result of population increases among other things). Finally, aside from increases due to birth-rate and clustering, developments leading to an increased state of material density will increase the SD of a given society.⁵⁸ The resulting outline of the evolution of societal development due to the continuous increase in SD thus runs from hordes to clans, territorial groupings, cities, nations, and even to a global city. Again, a vast area of research is programmatically opened up. Durkheim himself, concerned to demonstrate the veracity of his theory, indicates possible hypotheses in such comments as;

'Tant que l'organisation sociale est essentiellement segmentaire, la ville n'existe pas'.⁵⁹

A central concept, and a very problematic one, in Durkheim's account of the historical development of societies, is the notion of collective conscience (CC):

'L'ensemble des croyances et des sentiments communs à la moyenne des membres d'une même société forme un système déterminé qui a sa vie propre; on peut l'appeler *la conscience collective* ou *commune*'.⁶⁰

In this reconstruction of Durkheim's programme, the notion of CC can be situated as follows. A basic problem for the programme is that the hypothesis concerning the absence of any significant DL until the point of precipitation, must be further developed. For it appears that some primitive societies (i.e., societies marked by a low degree of SD) seem nevertheless to exhibit a state of DL which may be quite precise and elaborate. How can this be accounted for?

Durkheim does so by arguing that such roles as that of the chieftain or

medicine-man, are not signs of DL at all, but instead are embodiments of the representative and affective elements of the CC respectively.

However, the apparent anomaly can be accounted for without having recourse to the notion of CC. First, such apparent DL as exists below the saturation-point is the result and expression of both environmental contingencies and hereditary differences. It is therefore not DL proper, it has no social roots (is not determined by the state of SD) and will thus not develop beyond its contingent a-social basis. Second, such rudimentary differentiations of activities, being socially fortuitous, are contained by the social structure of the society. They are, structurally speaking, of little significance. Hence, below the saturation-point, the SD of a society gives rise to a largely undifferentiated social structure. Or put in terms of environment and heredity:

- in societies below the saturation-point, differentiations of activities will occur under environmental pressures and along hereditary lines;
- in societies above the saturation-point, differentiations of activities will increasingly take place irrespective of environmental and hereditary factors.

Now, it is not at all clear what advantages the inclusion of the notion of CC leads to. The structural argument alone suffices and can generate hypotheses concerning the increased role of education, the extension of social mobility, the diffusion of class lines, the increased rationality of occupational milieux, the rise of individualism, etc., without necessarily evoking the notion of CC. Neither does this notion help to meet the need for a specification as to when the saturation-point occurs.⁶¹

4.7. The problem of 'abnormal' forms of DL

Durkheim neither advances many hypotheses (as distinct from programmatic heuristic indications) nor does he carry out empirical tests to any significant degree. Nevertheless, his arguments range far and wide, touching on the most disparate matters, while he also presents extensive empirical data. Unfortunately, most of that data is meant to demonstrate the plausibility of concepts (their adequacy to the facts), thus being entailed by the method of realistic conceptualization. However, the material is undoubtedly valuable both in order to comprehend the thrust of the programme and as a heuristic guide for any research carried out along these lines.

In sections three and four I have indicated the primary explanatory concerns of the programme, and will now finally turn to Durkheim's treatment of the 'abnormal' forms of DL.

The term 'abnormal' is an unfortunate one. It is in part a consequence of

the method of realistic conceptualization. Instead of referring to abnormal forms of DL, it would be more appropriate to speak of programmatically anomalous developments of DL.

Durkheim discusses three such developments.⁶² Each of these constitutes a potential refutation of the programme's main thesis, since each concerns the failure of DL to result in SS.

The first step towards the development of DL is the effacement of the old structure as the SD reaches a certain intensity. Consequently, potential competitors are then brought in contact with one another and in the ensuing struggle for survival, specialization occurs. If, however, the effacement of segmental boundaries and the contiguity between competitors is insufficient, the process of specialization will not take place properly, but instead, will reflect the idiosyncracies of the existent conditions. The result will be an anomic form of DL, i.e. a DL characterised by a lack of regulation and coordination due to its uneven development.

Though Durkheim mentions the two factors separately, it would appear that the lack of sufficient contiguity is but an aspect of the lack of sufficient effacement of segmental boundaries. Thus, the occurrence of anomic DL is to be accounted for in terms of specifying to conditions of the effacement of segmental boundaries.

It may happen that the struggle for survival is over before it has even started: i.e., some of the competitors, due to inherited wealth, political power etc., are able to force others out of certain spheres even though the latter may well be particularly suited to carrying out those activities. Though a DL will ensue, it will be a forced DL, reflecting not the play of diverse capacities and initiatives, but existent differentiations in wealth and power. Like anomic DL, forced DL may be characterised by industrial and general social strife. Class struggles are often due to forced DL.⁶³ Thus the occurrence of forced DL is to be accounted for in terms of specifying the conditions of the struggle for survival.

Finally, Durkheim considers the case where a distorted development of DL takes place due to improductivity. He concludes:

'Nous sommes ainsi conduits à reconnaître une nouvelle raison qui fait de la division du travail une source de cohésion sociale. Elle ne rend pas seulement les individus solidaires, comme nous l'avons dit jusqu'ici, parce qu'elle limite l'activité de chacun, mais encore parce qu'elle l'augmente. Elle accroît l'unité de organisme, par cela seul qu'elle en accroît la vie; du moins, à l'état normal, elle ne produit pas un de ces effets sans l'autre'.⁶⁴

This argument is, of course, completely ad hoc. Unlike the above two anomalous cases, for each of which Durkheim indicates where programmatic modifi-

cations are to be made, this last discussion of improductivity does not seem to have any heuristic value.

5. Concluding remarks

Durkheim explains the phenomenon of the division of labour in terms of a mechanistic theory of progress, a programmatic account of social solidarity.

Durkheim himself does not fully develop the programme in his later works, though certain isolated elements are taken up within differing theoretical contexts. It is perhaps somewhat surprising that a theory which is both clear-cut and amenable to empirical research, has attracted so little further work. It is not impossible that the combination of a distorting focus on such concepts as the notion of a collective conscience and the unsustainable imputation of functionalism has relegated the importance of Durkheim's first major work to a didactic role.

One of the aims of the historiographical method of rational reconstruction is to serve as an independent aid to contemporary research. I hope in this paper to have contributed to a revival of interest in the possibilities for empirical research along the lines of Durkheim's theory of social solidarity.

Notes

1. Lukes, 1967.
2. Ibid., p. 145: 'For (Durkheim), man is a bundle of desires, which need to be regulated, tamed, repressed, manipulated and given direction for the sake of social order, whereas, for (Marx), man is still an angel, rational and good, who requires a rational and good society in which to develop his essential nature . . . '.
3. The phrase was coined by Peter Urbach (Urbach, 1974), p. 111.
4. An analysis of statements on social solidarity, such as Zetterberg's illustration of the advantages of axiomatic theory, is not (and neither is intended to be) an evaluation of *De la division du travail social*.
5. Lakatos, 1972, p. 109.
6. Ibid., p. 92 (emphasis in original).
7. For these and other terms, see Lakatos, 1972. An exception is the term 'conjunct theory', derived from Urbach (1974, p. 103) in his discussion of two particular research programmes: 'Logically the hard-cores of both programmes are all-some statements and they consequently have no potential falsifiers. Falsifiable versions can only be generated by conjoining them with some auxiliary, 'protective belt', hypotheses'. (For the term 'protective belt', see again Lakatos, 1972).
8. See particularly Lakatos, 1970, pp. 134 ff.
9. Ibid., especially p. 137.

10. This position would appear to be as extreme as that which Lakatos calls historiographical positivism, in which history is identical with external history (Lakatos, 1972, p. 132).
11. See particularly Lakatos, 1972, pp. 92, 105 and 118.
12. See section 2.1 above.
13. See Lakatos, 1970, p. 130 (footnote 4).
14. For the CN-programme, see e.g. the works of Rousseau and Locke. The works of the classical economists, above all Adam Smith, Durkheim appears to be acquainted with through such texts as that of V. Gide (see Durkheim 1895, p. 25). For the UT-programme see e.g. the works of J. S. Mill and Bentham.
15. See Durkheim, 1893, p. 179.
16. See section 4.7. of the present paper.
17. The term 'individual' indicates a disposition towards the pursuit of personal interests. With Durkheim, 'individualism' is regarded as a historically variable phenomenon; thus the emergence and increase in individualism under the progressive development of DL indicates the development of personal interests and the increasingly widespread pursuit of such interests.
18. It is difficult to be precise in articulating hard-cores, for such assumptions are after all rarely specified by those who base their work on them. Useful examples were the reconstructions of Watkins (1958, pp. 346-354) and Urbach (1974, p. 102).
19. Durkheim, 1893, p. 179.
20. The notion of 'homo economicus': man is a rational individual who strives to maximize his state of material well-being.
21. Durkheim, op.cit., pp. 213 ff.
22. Ibid., p. 215.
23. Ibid., pp. 232 ff.
24. Ibid., p. 236.
25. Durkheim, op.cit., pp. 255-9.
26. Ibid., p. 259. (Durkheim proposes a theory of the social relativity of material comfort: a given state of civilization can thus be measured in terms of the concomitant social density and social volume).
27. Ibid., p. 259.
28. Ibid., p. 266.
29. Ibid., p. 343-4.
30. Ibid., p. 344.
31. Ibid., p. 78.
32. Such a modification could retain and be inspired by Durkheim's distinction between penal and restitutive sanctions; e.g. where the sanctions applied within the criminal world are increasingly restitutive in nature, this would indicate an increasing diversification of activities within that world. (In sections 4.1. and 4.3. of this paper the observational theory is further commented on).
33. Ibid., pp. 211 ff.
34. Ibid., pp. 211 ff.
35. The history of ideas traditionally talks of intellectual debts: Durkheim's debt to Spencer is no less than his more widely acknowledged debt to Comte.
36. C.f. Durkheim, op. cit., p. 171: 'En fait, si dans les sociétés inférieures une si petite place est faite à la personnalité individuelle, ce n'est pas que celle-ci ait été comprimée ou refoulée artificiellement, c'est tout simplement qu'à ce moment de l'histoire elle n'existait pas'. (emphasis in original).
37. Ibid., pp. 199-205.
38. Ibid., p. 184.

39. Ibid., p. 189 and 193.
40. Lakatos, 1970, p. 158 (see also Lakatos, 1972, p. 100).
41. Durkheim, op.cit., p. 31.
42. Ibid., p. 31.
43. Ibid., p. 262.
44. Ibid., p. 338.
45. Durkheim, 1912, p. 324.
46. The negative and contractual forms of solidarity are not relevant here; they are not basic types of SS. See Durkheim, 1893, p. 88 and pp. 177 ff.
47. Durkheim, 1893, p. 99.
48. Ibid., p. 209.
49. From the traditional viewpoint of conceptual criticism, it could be argued that Durkheim's approach entails a reification of the notion of types of SS. With this I would agree but add that reification may on occasion be programmatically legitimate.
50. Specifically; Durkheim selects his material largely from the history of western society, which as such inevitably allows for sequential conclusions.
51. This discussion, though it may give some of the considerations involved in reconstructing the possible developments of a programme, should not give rise to the idea that such possibilities can also be evaluated: actual choices can only be assessed retrospectively.
52. Durkheim, 1893, p. 244.
53. Ibid., p. 244 (emphasis in original).
54. Ibid., p. 241.
55. Ibid., p. 244.
56. Ibid., p. 238.
57. Ibid., pp. 248 ff.
58. Ibid., pp 237 ff.
59. Ibid., p. 240.
60. Ibid., p. 46 (emphasis in original).
61. Lindenberg (1975) focuses attention to the psychological theories employed by Durkheim in the course of developing his programme. Lindenberg's analysis includes a neat and lucid reconstruction of the theoretical (psychological) framework in which the notions of mechanical solidarity and collective conscience become at once quite comprehensible. However, while the psychological theories clearly constituted a decisive guide to Durkheim in developing his 'sociological' account of the development of DL, the substantial role played by such theories in the subsequent programme remains very vague. In his conclusion, Lindenberg (p. 149) too acknowledges such a disjunction (one, moreover, as Lindenberg argues, that has usually led to a neglect, or even denial, of the psychological theories used by Durkheim): 'If the above analysis is only moderately correct, it would imply that (Durkheim's) psychological theories and structural assumptions have to be scrutinized separately and, if necessary, improved or abandoned separately'.
62. Ibid., pp. 343 ff. Note p. 344: 'Nous ramènerons à trois types les formes exceptionnelles du phénomène que nous étudions. Ce n'est pas qu'il ne puisse y en avoir d'autres; mais celles dont nous allons parler sont les plus générales et les plus graves'.
63. Ibid., p. 367.
64. Ibid., pp. 389-390.

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