Collectivism and the Intellectuals

Svend Ranulf, Émile Durkheim, Fascism, and Resistance

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Ideals of collective solidarity and community are often affirmed by authoritarians as well as by democrats. That double fact has seemed paradoxical to many thinkers, some of whom conclude, or suspect, that the pursuit of collective initiatives and solidarities is reactionary in principle. The fact that Nazi Germany sought to revive the Volksgemeinschaft (folk community) has fueled this suspicion. One consequence has been that thinkers whose views are regarded as collectivist have often been charged with setting the stage for fascism. Accusing fingers are often pointed at philosophers (Hegel, Schopenhauer) and sociologists (Weber, Durkheim). Lately, a subterranean current of accusations against Émile Durkheim in particular has gained renewed attention. Charges by Svend Ranulf and Marcel Déat in the prewar era have been resuscitated. But closely examined, the views of Ranulf, Déat, and their latter-day successors reveal deep confusion about democracy, solidarity, community, fascism, and resistance to fascism.

Solidarity and community are prized in most democratic circles. But the dangers of communitarian excess have been widely recognized in the years since the Dreyfus Affair gave Europe a foretaste of the reactionary horrors to come on the eve of the 20th century. Individualism was now invidiously contrasted to ethnic unity, and democracy was suddenly an object of fierce derision. Émile Durkheim, the pioneer of French

sociology and a passionate defender of the persecuted Dreyfus, was among the first to explore and challenge this anti-democratism.¹

In *Le suicide*, which appeared in 1897 at the height of the Dreyfus Affair, Durkheim argued that society was now suspended between dangerous moral extremes—excessive egoism, on the one hand, and excessive "altruism," on the other. The latter, which he defined as the morbidly extreme dominance of the group over the individual, entailed the loss of self, the sacrifice of individuality. Until the modern era, such over-integration had been normal. But now it had become a reactionary choice, reflecting a wish to tighten society's loosening ties. This wish was found, most markedly, in the military—the very institution which, in the Dreyfus Affair, had made itself the prime locus of French chauvinism.²

In other publications of the period, Durkheim criticized antisemitism (which he said was fueled by the wish for expiatory sacrifices) and came to the defense of individualism and moral autonomy against Brunetière and others.³ He believed that society needed solidarity to flourish; but solidarity itself could be unhealthy. As he explained in the final chapter of *Suicide*, and in the foreword to the second edition of *De la division du travail social*, society needed new, balanced forms of solidarity. His hope was that "professional life," in the workplace and in the wider sphere of vocational interests, would enable society to steer a course between the Scylla of unbridled egoism and the Charybdis of over-integration. Just as the workplace had spurred working-class syndicalism, so might it provide a platform for new forms of communal life which would draw their strength from shared personal interests, rather than stifling individuality.⁴

In the early years of the twentieth-century, as his influence grew at the Sorbonne and elsewhere, Durkheim also became increasingly controversial. On the reactionary and monarchist right, he was an ever more prominent symbol of liberal decadence. Antisemitic writers, in particular, singled him out as a menace to virtue—a kind of Dreyfus of the academy. Durkheim, unbowed, turned in his tremendous final work, *Les formes élémentaires de la vie religieuse* (1912), to the theme of "collective effervescence." This is the energy of group assembly, which "dynamogenically" lifts the group's members to peaks of vision and morale they could not otherwise attain. 5 So intense is the experience of

assembly that, in the heat of the moment, people transcend their usual sense of limited personal agency. They either scale heights of collective inspiration (\acute{a} la August 4, 1789) or sink to debased collective depths (as in the vindictive *Boulangiste* chauvinism of 1889, which Durkheim felt presaged the Dreyfus Affair).

In 1915, Durkheim published an incisive critique of the mentality which German nationalists had displayed *en route* to the Great War. This mentality, he contended, combined the worst of both worlds—soaring national egoism and the surrender of individual will to an autocratic state. Critics have sometimes accused Durkheim of indulging in patriotic propaganda thinly disguised as scholarship, but in reality his analysis is clinically accurate—and quite mild, in light of what the world was later to learn about German chauvinism in the course and aftermath of the Second World War.⁷

Many elements of a potential sociology of fascism appear in these texts. Durkheim was keenly aware of the temptations of radical collectivism, and, in the concepts of effervescence and altruism he offered indispensable starting points for critique. Anyone who reads Robert Brasillach's joyous apology for the Nuremberg rallies will see Durkheim's concepts brought to life.⁸ So too will anyone who reads Aurel Kolnai's underappreciated masterpiece on Nazi ideology.⁹ Unlike the crowd psychologists—Le Bon, Sighele, Bernheim, Freud—Durkheim sought the roots of politics and prejudice not in the peregrinations of "Great Men" but in society itself. This gave his sociology a foundation without which insight into authentically mass phenomena would have been debarred.

Gabriel Tarde, who offered a variant of crowd psychology as an alternative to Durkheimian sociology, attempted to explain mass phenomena by the principle of imitation. Society, he believed, is divided between inventors and imitators, so if we seek to explain a social movement we should not look past the character of the leader. Know the shepherd, and you will know the sheep. In 1898, Tarde applied this principle to emerging mass antisemitism. The modern crowd, he argued, is moved not simply by the power of demagogic speech but above all by *printed* speech. The master publicist is the demiurge of the anonymous mass.

Of course, Tarde says, one could argue, with "a specious appearance of reason," that the ultimate impetus for public action comes from

the public itself, and that the publicist who seeks influence must appeal to the public's pre-existing wishes. "But who can deny," he demands, "that every public has its *inspirateur*, and occasionally its creator? What Sainte-Beuve said of genius, that 'the genius is a king who creates his people,' is especially true of the great journalist. How often we see publicists create their own public!" With respect to the mass anti-Jewish feeling that flowered in France in the aftermath of the Paris bourse crash of 1882, Tarde underlined the role played by the pandering journalist Edouard Drumont. Of course, he agreed, "for Edouard Drumont to give life to antisemitism," he had to take the public's "state of mind" into account. But "until his resounding voice was raised," there was literally no mass antisemitism. It was Drumont alone who made anti-Jewish bias conscious, strong and "contagious." "He who expressed it created it as a collective force" 11

This, the mass psychology of antisemitism, remains influential in many forms. Mass sentiment is blamed either on charismatic leaders, who "mesmerize" their followers, or on compelling situations, \acute{a} la the Stanford Prison experiment. Durkheim, in striking contrast, focuses on multiple sources of causation—norms, culture, population—of which leadership is only one, and seldom, if ever, decisive in the long run. He thus points the causal arrow in the other direction, saying that the publicist's success or failure depends on the pre-existing character of the public. "In Melanesia and Polynesia," he wrote in *Les formes élémentaires*, "it is said that an influential man has *mana*, and that we can impute his influence to this mana. It is apparent, however, that his unique status comes from the significance that opinion gives him." 13

Know the followers, and you will know the leader. ¹⁴ A similar conclusion was reached by the German socialist and sociologist Theodor Geiger in 1926: "The typical leader of a crowd is not a 'demagogue,' he does not consciously and coldly lead the crowd in a certain direction, but is rather himself affected the most by the ecstasy of the crowd experience, is himself the most unconscious person." ¹⁵

Curiously, Émile Durkheim himself has been charged recently with an appreciable degree of inadvertent responsibility for the success of fascism. The implication, it seems, is that Durkheim, like Drumont, has been a publicist for reaction, even if this was not his intent. Is there in fact any merit to this charge? Is Émile Durkheim one of the sources

of what Wilhelm Reich called "the mass psychology of fascism"? 16 Was Durkheim an "inspirateur," a "creator," of hate?

TWINS SEPARATED AT BIRTH?

It has been common to trace the ideological ancestry of communism and fascism to eminent *inspirateurs* ever since the revolution of 1917 brought Lenin to power and the counter-revolutions of 1922 and 1933 did the same for Mussolini and Hitler. Hegel, Marx, Nietzsche, and Sorel are among the most often-cited figures. In the postwar era, when academic sociology solidified and Weber and Durkheim joined Marx in the pantheon of major social theorists, they too have increasingly become magnets for liberal suspicion.

Marx, of course, has been the subject of entire libraries of denunciation. One of the most extreme charges against him is the claim that, by calling for the abolition of capitalism—and hence, of the capitalist class—Marx was a conscious proponent of genocide, however much he may have said that he hoped for change by peaceful means.¹⁷ Other familiar charges include accusations of totalitarian and antisemitic intent.

Similar accusations have been made against Weber. At first, under the galvanizing influence of Wolfgang Mommsen, Weber's critics focused mainly on his theory of charismatic authority, which they said prefigured Hitlerian claims to domination. But more recently, thanks especially to Gary Abraham, Weber has also been charged with a subtle form of anti-Jewish bias.

For many years, Durkheim escaped this kind of infamy. Occasional slivers of doubt and accusation had appeared in print as early as the 1930s, but they were little noticed.²⁰ Lately, however, these accusations have been given fresh attention and emphasis by two authors in particular: Michele Battini, who has argued that Marcel Déat's transition from socialism to fascism in the years culminating in the Nazi occupation of France was due largely to Durkheimian influence; and Marcel Stoetzler, who has revived charges against Durkheim that were first advanced in 1939 by the Danish philosopher Svend Ranulf.²¹ The essence of Ranulf's charges were recapitulated by Stephen Turner in 1992 in a passage cited by Stoetzler: "There are many very direct connections between fascist

ideas and early sociology. . . . The romantic notion of reweaving a social order destroyed by impersonality, shared by Tönnies, Durkheim [and] others . . . contributed, however indirectly, to the climate of opinion in which fascism took hold."²² He also cites Ranulf directly. Durkheim's sociology, Ranulf wrote, "served to prepare the soil for fascism by their propagation of the view that the society in which they were living was headed for disaster because of its individualism and liberalism and that a new social solidarity was badly needed."²³ Though this was not what he consciously sought to promote, Durkheim's contribution to fascist thought is, in effect, his guilty secret, the inner truth of his sociology.²⁴

His goal, Stoetzler writes, is "to complicate and develop Ranulf's thesis," especially with respect to Durkheim and antisemitism.²⁵ This leads him to offer several corollary claims, which I will consider later, along with Battini's argument about Déat. But first I will explore Ranulf's thesis directly. Until now, that thesis has received only glancing discussion. Stoetzler finds this distressing, lamenting that, to date, "Ranulf 's intervention . . . has not enjoyed any lasting influence."²⁶ The question, then, is whether this intervention in fact merits such influence.

RANULF THE ANTI-DURKHEIM

Durkheim has often been misread. One misreading in particular, that he denied the importance of individuality, became so persistent that he was forced to disavow it repeatedly, for decades—to no avail. Resisting this meme, he said, was like "slashing at water with a knife." And that meme is one of the basic premises for Ranulf's charge of fascism.

Does Ranulf's charge deserve lasting influence? The short answer is no. Of the seven pages he devotes to Durkheim in his 1939 article, he spends just six sentences arguing that his sociology has fascist tendencies. Those sentences are not competent, and they have not yet been carefully dissected by Durkheimian scholars.²⁸ But they deserve our attention because they exert a kind of spectral, reputational influence. The smoke of Ranulf's allegations implies the presence of fire in Durkheim's thought. That implication, in my opinion, is demonstrably untenable.²⁹

To begin at the beginning. Svend Ranulf (1894–1953), who had studied briefly with Durkheim's nephew Marcel Mauss, dedicated his early career to the study of ancient Greek law. He argued, in his dissertation and in The Jealousy of the Gods, that moral indignation is the mainspring of reactionary modern politics as well as archaic punitive law. 30 He equated this indignation with ressentiment, as defined by the Catholic social philosopher Max Scheler,³¹ and he regarded it as the denominator common to every movement of the angst-riddled "petty bourgeoisie" (which he defined so elastically that it included Stalin's bureaucracy in the 1930s).³² He pursued this thesis, and a quixotic wish to purge sociology of everything save positivism, with dogged tenacity. He was thus disturbed by Durkheim's thesis, in De la division du travail social, that punitive, outrage-fueled law is being displaced by dispassionate "restitution" and rehabilitation. He found this liberal optimism dissonant, and hence, when he pivoted from Tönnies to Durkheim in his essay on fascism, he devoted most of his attention to the nettlesome question of restitutive law. Even this he treated briefly.³³ But it would be hard to be more cursory than his ensuing six sentences, in which he casually accuses Durkheim of having an elective affinity for fascism.³⁴

The following six sentences comprise the whole of Svend Ranulf's "intervention" with respect to Durkheim and fascism: 1) "In a Preface to the second edition of De la division du travail sociale Durkheim describes a revivification of the professional corporations, as a necessary prerequisite for the creation of the new social solidarity of which he is in quest"; 2) "This is what he thinks his scientific investigations have helped him to foresee and what it is, therefore, his practical duty to further as a remedy against the state of anarchy from which contemporary society is suffering." These two sentences complete Ranulf's remarks on what I call Durkheim's "guild sociology"—that is, his argument that new forms of solidarity are possible in professional groups and workplaces.35 The next four sentences concern Les formes élémentaires de la vie religieuse: 3) "But instead of writing the book which it had been his intention to devote to this subject, [he] describes in his last great work, Les formes élémentaires de la vie religieuse, an ideal of social life which is located in the past and would seem to have no very hopeful prospect of a resurrection in the future"; 4) "He finds this ideal realized in the native Australian communities which are as yet unaffected by the

disastrous individualism and egotism of modern civilization"; 5) "The Australian religious festivals, the relationship of which to modern mass phenomena is indicated, are described as the indispensable means to prevent the societies in question from falling to pieces" and, 6) "It is stated that modern civilization suffers from the absence of some equivalent institution, and a hope is expressed that this defect will be remedied in the future, but Durkheim does not now undertake to predict anything about the form of the institutions which may be expected to effect that salvation." ³⁷

Besides these sentences, Ranulf cites passages from two private letters he had received from Marcel Mauss. On November 6, 1936, Mauss had written that the fact that "great modern societies . . . could be subject to suggestion as Australians are by their dances, and made to turn around like children in a ring, is not something we had really foreseen." Thirty months later, on May 8, 1939, he wrote "this is all a real tragedy for us, an unwelcome verification of the things we had been suggesting and the proof that we should perhaps have expected verification in the bad case rather than a verification in the good." Some critics have echoed Ranulf's conclusion that these letters show that Mauss "acquiesced" to the charge of prefiguring fascism. But there is no evidence to suggest that Mauss suspected that his former student would levy this charge against him.

As it happens, as we know from *Deutschland über alles*, Durkheim was acutely aware of the "morbid enormity" and cancerous potential of German hyper-nationalism, which he saw as a uniquely grave danger.³⁹ Durkheim was relentlessly opposed to the Tardean premise, echoed uncritically by Mauss, that leaders rule by "suggestion."⁴⁰ And even if we were to agree that Durkheim did not fully foresee fascism, or that he valued positive forms of effervescent assembly, that would not mean that his sociology was proto-fascist or that he encouraged "bad cases" of effervescent assembly (which he had long called "morbid effervescence").⁴¹

Ranulf rests his case against Durkheim on a single paragraph. On the strength of that paragraph, he poses a remarkably casual question, which, as we saw above, Stoetzler quotes with apparent approval: "Is not the rise of fascism an event which, in due logic, Durkheim ought to have welcomed as that salvation from individualism for which he had been trying rather gropingly to prepare the way?" Without pause (or, it seems, reflection), he answers blandly: "In due logic, undoubtedly."⁴² What that "due logic" may be remains unspoken.

In all, Ranulf has offered just four claims: 1) Durkheim favors revived forms of professional solidarity as a remedy for social anarchy; 2) His "ideal of social life" entails the kind of freedom from egoism that once typified Australian cultures; 3) Effervescent collective rituals are indispensable to solidarity; so that, 4) we need similar rituals now. And to defend these propositions he offers just a few ambiguous lines of Maussian chagrin about the "tragedy" of Nazi suggestion and a few cryptic references to two of Durkheim's texts. Since Durkheim did not in fact idealize Australian ritualism, which he regarded as ecstatic, orgiastic, and fetishistic, and since he favored the kind of professional and fraternal assembly that would bind people together as mutually responsible colleagues and citizens, Ranulf's case for Durkheim's "undoubted" affinity for fascism rests exclusively on the claim that he favored professional solidarity over anarchy.⁴³ That, plainly, is a very weak reed for a major and counter-intuitive claim.

Effervescence "sublime or savage"

Later in this article, I will examine in more detail the argument that Durkheim puts forward in favor of professional guilds. But first, it is *ápropos* to review the key page cited by Ranulf from *Les formes élémentaires*. This shows that Mauss as well as Ranulf had failed to read Durkheim carefully or to recall exactly what he said. "In the midst of an assembly animated by a common passion," Durkheim writes:

we become susceptible of acts and sentiments of which we are incapable when reduced to our own forces; and when the assembly is dissolved and when, finding ourselves alone again, we fall back to our ordinary level, we are then able to measure the height to which we have been raised above ourselves. History abounds in examples of this sort. It suffices to think of the night of August 4th, [1789], when an assembly was suddenly led to an act of sacrifice and abnegation which each of its members had refused the day before and which surprised them all the day after. This is

why all political, economic and confessional parties take care to hold periodic reunions so that their members can revivify their communal faith by manifesting it in common. To reinforce those sentiments which, if left to themselves, would soon wilt, it suffices to reunite those who share them and to link them more closely and actively.⁴⁴

Up to this point Durkheim's analysis might appear to contain a hint of enthusiasm. Collective assembly raises us to heights of self-sacrifice. Borne aloft on currents of collective energy, we find ourselves elevated to a plane of common passion. But in his ensuing lines, Durkheim shows keen awareness of the demagogic possibilities opened up by *passion commune*:

We see here what explains the unique attitude of the man who speaks to a crowd [and] successfully enters into communion with it. His language has a grandiloquence that would ordinarily appear ridiculous; his gestures are domineering; his very thought is impatient of all rules, and easily falls into all sorts of excesses. This is because he feels within him an abnormal plethora of forces that overflow and expand beyond him; sometimes he even has the feeling that he is dominated by a moral force that surpasses him and of which he is only the interpreter. It is by this trait that we recognize what is often called the demon of oratorical inspiration.⁴⁵

Durkheim knows that this demon can be anything but benign. At moments of "great collective shock" people assemble more than ever," producing the kind of:

general effervescence . . . typical of revolutionary or creative epochs . . . one sees more and differently than in normal times. These changes are not only of shades and degrees; men become different. The passions that agitate them are so intense that they can be satisfied only by violent, excessive acts, acts of superhuman heroism or bloody barbarism. This is what explains, e.g., the Crusades and many of the scenes, whether sublime or savage, of the French Revolution. Under the influence of the general exaltation, we see the most mediocre and inoffensive bourgeois become either a hero or a hangman.⁴⁶

Clearly, Durkheim knew the dangers of mass demagoguery and assembly. He had witnessed Boulangism and the Dreyfus Affair. He

would soon witness the morbid excesses of German chauvinism. If he had lived to see *Kristallnacht* in 1938—he would have been 80—would he have been speechless as well as aghast? That seems less than likely. He knew that cities and factories provide unique venues for assembly, and that demographic concentration is far more conducive to rebellion and riot than dispersion. He absolutely did believe that some forms of assembly and effervescent collectivity are positive. But he knew the difference between morbid and healthy effervescence, between voluntary professional guilds and authoritarian leagues. Ranulf, like his co-thinkers and successors, found this difference hard to grasp.

ROADS TO REACTION

The premises underlying Ranulf's reliance on an unexplained "due logic" appear not in his sketchy claims or evidence but, rather, in his defense of market individualism. When he notes, with casual condescension, that "aspects of fascism . . . would probably have seemed unacceptable to Durkheim," he suggests hopefully that discomfort with these "aspects" among Durkheim's successors might "induce a reconsideration of the whole view of nineteenth-century individualism as a thing to be deprecated." His tacit neoliberalism comes to the fore when, in his effort to blame fascism on the wish to replace egoistic market society (Gesellschaft) with face-to-face community (Gemeinschaft), Ranulf concludes with uncharacteristic vehemence: "indulgence in . . . deprecations of the Gesellschaft is equivalent to a piece of fascist propaganda unsupported by genuine science."

Ranulf, in a phrase, is a free-market liberal. He opposed, and deprecated, all currents of thought, socialist or sociological, which challenged market society. That became clear in the late 1930s when he histrionically criticized his chief rival for the first university appointment in Danish sociology, the exiled German Social Democrat Theodor Geiger, who, like Tönnies, was a sociologist of *Gemeinschaft*. ⁴⁹ The same attitude was implicit in 1939 when Ranulf protested that Durkheim had not "proven" his claim that "the economic anarchy and inequality of capitalism are responsible for the lack of solidarity now prevailing." ⁵⁰ His neoliberal standpoint became even plainer when, in 1948,

he published an anthology in which, alongside a revision of his 1939 essay,⁵¹ he wrote in defense of Friedrich Hayek and against the alleged excesses of the Danish resistance to Nazi occupation.⁵²

Friedrich Hayek established himself as the ultimate neoliberal in 1944 with the publication of *The Road to Serfdom*.⁵³ Ranulf, four years later, pointed out that "Hayek's theory that socialism leads inevitably to Nazism" meant that democratic socialism can only be an oxymoron. Hayek's position was therefore welcomed by the business community (in the United States) but opposed by leftist critics like Herman Finer.⁵⁴ Finer stressed that actual Italian socialists had always hated Mussolini.⁵⁵ But Ranulf says that Finer "entirely" misses Hayek's point. Echoing his prewar criticism of Durkheim and Tönnies, Ranulf explained to Hayek's critics that the road to serfdom is paved with good intentions: "didn't it ever happen before that generous and humanitarian people pursued a policy which led to results unexpected by themselves?"⁵⁶

Socialists, like sociologists, may place themselves on the side of the angels. But their resistance to *laissez faire* capitalism places them on the wrong side of the law of unintended consequences. Fascism, not democratic socialism, is the only actual alternative to market *Gesellschaft*. So social reformers who seek to revive lost forms of solidarity or invent new ones are dangerous. They encourage vain populist hopes that can only lead the masses astray. Modern forms of serfdom, whether fascist or "socialist," are the inevitable destiny of untethered populism.

This was a view that Ranulf had long entertained. Writing about Nazism and atrocity propaganda in 1936 in a Danish journal, Ranulf had criticized Geiger for saying that politicians must court and honor public opinion if they hope to win power. On the contrary, Ranulf argued, Nazi racism and totalitarianism can be credited to Hitler personally. Sounding very much like Tarde on Drumont, he concluded that the well-spring of punitive indignation may have predisposed the masses to take the Nazis seriously, but that Hitler and Goebbels were responsible for their embrace of specifically anti-democratic and antisemitic views. "It seems necessary to assume that the attitude of the Mass on such questions depends not on its immanent nature, but on the propaganda to which it is exposed." 57

A similar fear of propaganda and populism led Hayek to advocate a rule-bound, delimited democracy. Ranulf was incensed to learn that Finer found this obnoxious: "Although Hayek's whole book is meant as a weapon for the defence of democracy against the threat of Fascism, he does not avoid being accused by Finer of anti-democratic and Fascist tendencies. . . . Finer does not see that what Hayek is trying to do is prevent democracy from committing suicide." Democracy would be weakened, not empowered, if society were always to defer to the public's passing whims.⁵⁸

The irony here is palpable. Best known for his charges against Durkheim, Ranulf is appalled when Finer makes similar charges against Hayek. By this point, with the war behind him, Ranulf had become less casual about charges of fascism. But he remained uncertain, and uneasy, about populism and *Gemeinschaft*. Mass outrage and utopian hope continued to worry him, and he was reluctant to back down from his earlier conclusions, but he was also less confident about those conclusions. As a result, he vacillated. In his essay on the Danish resistance, he raised the stakes by advancing an argument that he knew would infuriate a great many people. But in the next breath, he wavered, and came close to reversing his position on politics and sociology altogether. How this happened is instructive.

RESISTANCE TO RESISTANCE

Nothing testifies more to the shakiness of Ranulf's grasp of fascism and anti-fascism than his quirky, tone-deaf criticism of the Danish resistance to Nazi occupation and the Nazi Holocaust. The resistance has been widely acclaimed for its uniquely resolute and effective resistance to the murder of Danish Jews. ⁵⁹ But incredibly, for Ranulf, the resistance was analogous to Nazism itself. This rather astonishing interpretation reflects the persistence of Ranulf's hostility to "moral indignation" in all its forms. He simply could not tell the difference between moral outrage driven *by* authoritarian hate and moral indignation *against* authoritarian hate.

As far as Ranulf could tell (and indeed, as he insisted), defensive violence was simply aggressive violence in disguise. This outlook is made vividly clear in his essay, "Nazism as a Resistance Movement," which follows his essay on Hayek. Ranulf knows that he is braving popular

opinion: "People who have risked death and torture in the struggle against the SS and the Gestapo, when their country was occupied by the Germans, will feel outraged at any suggestion of a psychological affinity between ourselves and the Nazis." And yet, he obstinately insists, that hypothesis should be "considered objectively and tested carefully . . ."60

What considerations and tests are we offered? Ranulf begins with the accounts offered by German Nazis in the 1930s, as reported in Theodore Abel's book, Why Hitler Came Into Power, to explain why they had joined the party and why they remained loyal to it.⁶¹ He concludes from these reports that Nazism was itself a resistance movement. It, too, was an indignant reaction to humiliation in war. Stung by the indignity of seeing French and Polish troops in the streets after Germany lost the war, Abel's Nazi informants reported aggrieved and aggressive feelings that Ranulf argues were "not fundamentally dissimilar to the feelings" of Danes who resisted Nazi occupation.⁶² In support of this startling thesis, Ranulf cites these chilling words from an "idealistic" Nazi: "What fellowship was there among the men who left their wives, families, and parents, preferring the sacred sign of the swastika to their means of livelihood! They mocked Hell, death and the Devil in their faith in a just cause. What joy and honor to fight side by side with such comrades!" ⁶³

He asks, with transcendental innocence: "Can the heroes of the resistance movements against the German occupation of other countries in Europe fail to recognize their own state of mind in this description of the Nazi mentality?" He seems to think that this is a truth so plain that it can be established by a rhetorical question; that those men and women who "risked death and torture in the struggle against the SS and the Gestapo" were overjoyed to have the opportunity to leave their families, to mock Hell, death and the Devil in a Düreresque holy war against the swastika. 65

With barely a hint of sociological analysis, Ranulf rests his case on what he regards as self-evident similarities of form and feeling. Alluding to the ultra-right German death squads which, in the aftermath of World War I, committed a series of notorious murders, he writes: "The parallel between the *Black Reichswehr* and the Danish (and other countries') resistance movements can hardly be denied." His evidence for this remarkable claim? "A parallel to these *Fehme* murders, as they were called, was the execution of informers by the Danish resistance . . ."67

The perversity of this claim is made clear by the historiography of the Danish resistance. On the one hand, much of the resistance focused on a truly remarkable effort to shield Danish Jews from mass murder—which was, according to historians, almost uniquely successful.⁶⁸ Sabotage, not interpersonal violence, was the most common form of resistance, and the movement showed considerable sensitivity to issues of ethics, as reflected in this statement by the Danish Freedom Council in 1944:

The Nazi-minded persons who have met death in recent times, or have been wounded, have not been attacked because of their convictions, but solely because they have undertaken, for high pay, to track down fellow countrymen who are active in the struggle for freedom, and to give them up to the Gestapo. These informers have not been put out of action as a punishment, but because they have caused the imprisonment of a great many people, and the execution of several, and solely to prevent them from endangering even more by their continuing activities.⁶⁹

That the Black Reichswehr killed people in peacetime, in sour revenge for an entirely fictitious "stab in the back" during the war; that their preferred victims were Jews and socialists; and that the "informers" they killed were traitors only to fascism—all that, it seems, is immaterial to Ranulf.⁷⁰ As he sees it, their "feelings" were outraged and they lashed out, just like the resistance fighters who opposed them. He concedes that "there was no anti-Semitism in the Danish movement" and that, despite Communist participation, there was "no animosity towards the bourgeoisie as such but only against those who had grown rich because of their relations with the Germans." But he hurries past these differences to ask, again rhetorically, whether a hypothetical government headed by the resistance would truly "have been very different from those headed by Hitler or Mussolini? Would there not have been concentration camps, arbitrary arrests, and maltreatment of prisoners?"⁷²

Ranulf seems to think that, "in all due logic," simply asking this question suffices to answer it. He does bolster his case with other observations: that, resistance fighters were occasionally guilty of excesses, for example, and that authoritarians in their midst, taking advantage of the fog of war, did commit atrocities.⁷³ But his ulterior premise, entirely apart from the evidence, is still a function of what he sees as "due

logic": that resistance is vicious, not generous; that people fight back for the sheer pleasure of venting their outrage, not to defend the weak.

In this twilight all cats are gray

Twelve years earlier, Ranulf had shown a similar inability to tell the difference between angry wartime rhetoric and antisemitic Nazi extremism, arguing that anti-German epithets in the First World War had found a peacetime equivalent in Nazi propaganda. An English newspaper had called Kaiser Wilhelm "Europe's mad dog," Rudyard Kipling had contrasted Germans to humans, and French authors called Germany a menace to civilization. Ranulf was able to point to occasional expressions of actual demonology, but, in his typical way, he did not carefully distinguish between vehemence in the heat of battle and genocidal hatred in official doctrinal form.⁷⁴ He quoted Mein Kampf to the effect that Marxists are hyena-like traitors; that Social Democrats are thieves, "ripe for the gallows"; that Jews, striving for "world domination" (jediske Verdensherredømme), are responsible, with the "Negroid" French, for all "pornography, prostitution, and white slavery." And yet he maintains, with what seems like a parody of academic detachment, that all such departures from "objectivity" belong to the same class.⁷⁶

It should also be borne in mind that, when Germany occupied Denmark, Ranulf was by no means clearly opposed to collusion. His resistance to resistance was not entirely theoretical. "The tone in which the Nazis spoke of the statesmen of the Weimar Republic," he contended, "is similar to the tone in which the Danish resistance movement spoke of the politicians who wanted to save the country from terror by collaborating with the Germans." How such collusion would have saved Denmark's Jews from terror he does not pause to consider. But he does consider the plight of those who colluded. "No one could be more unlike Hitler than Christmas Møller," he went on, referring to the prewar leader of Danish conservatism, who had opposed the Nazis from exile in London: "After the war Christmas Møller did not hesitate to squander away his popularity for the sake of maintaining views which were the very opposite of those to which Hitler would have adhered under similar circumstances: Christmas Møller defied public opinion

in order to protect Danish officials and other citizens who were being accused of treason because they had loyally followed the instructions of their government in their dealings with the Germans . . ."⁷⁸

Even by Ranulf's standards, this is a peculiar statement. His implication, however inadvertent, is that Hitler, like the Danish public, would have wanted to punish officials who were loyally following orders. Even without the 20–20 clarity of post-Eichmann Trial hindsight, this excuse has an unsettling quality. Equally oddly, Ranulf concludes by insisting that his interest in outrage and resistance is "purely theoretical" and that, in the spirit of value-neutrality, he declines to pass "moral judgments on anything or anybody." And finally, "to forestall misunderstanding," he stresses that, despite their mixed motives, the anti-Nazi resistance movements "deserve the admiration and thankfulness of every one who does not want to live under the tyranny of Hitler."

This final caveat might sound disingenuous, as if the equivocating Danish sociologist wanted to have his cake and eat it too. But Ranulf's mixed feelings appear genuine. This is the clear impression given by his revised essay on sociology and *Gemeinschaft*. Here, less than a decade after accusing Durkheim of accidental fascism, he reconsiders—and, in part, changes his mind.

THE TWO SOULS OF COMMUNITY

By now it should be clear that Ranulf is an unreliable guide to fascism on any level. His judgments on the moral psychology of fascism and its intellectual heritage are not to be trusted. But his emerging equivocations raise questions of lasting interest and relevance. Under a new, Popper-influenced title, "Fascism and the Open Society," he offers a sharply revised version of his 1939 essay, in which all mention of Comte vanishes while a new section appears on the Social Democratic legal scholar and Weimar-era justice minister Gustav Radbruch. This new section amplifies Ranulf's critique of Social Democracy and those, like Herman Finer, who are too eager to abandon market society. But Ranulf is suddenly less absolute in his criticism of sociology. This new hesitancy is especially clear in his ambivalent treatment of two newly discussed texts, one by Rudolf Heberle (*From Democracy to Nazism*, 1945),

and another by Aurel Kolnai (*The War Against the West*, 1938).⁸¹ Both of these authors explain the diametrically opposed ways in which people pursue *Gemeinschaft*—in some instances, in an authoritarian spirit, but in other instances with democratic *esprit de corps*. Ranulf is reluctant to hear this, but he is no longer sure that arguments like this are wrong.

Heberle showed that, in Schleswig-Holstein, the wish for Gemeinschaft sprang first from circles "far removed from Nazism"— "pietistic circles and sects" which were anti-war and anti-imperialist. "The very notions of bigness and power were rather despised," Heberle noted. "In listening to [their] professions of a new faith in the people, one is reminded of Tönnies and Charles Horton Cooley rather than of Hitler and Goebbels."82 But there was also a parallel and contrasting "neo-romantic" ideal which "in certain circles," Heberle writes, "bordered dangerously on anti-Semitism" and was "closely interwoven with . . . the longing for charismatic leadership—the daydream of a new iron chancellor, a political savior . . . "83 Ranulf found this second tendency easier to envision than the first, but he nevertheless showed interest in Heberle's argument that two opposing ideals of Gemeinschaft were in question: the "genuine" vision of the early communitarian movements, which embraced universal humanity as well as face-to-face community, and the warlike, "behavioristic" Nazi ideal of "pseudo-community" in which uniformity, attained "by compulsion and training," resulted in "large-scale organization," "absolute obedience," and the "oppression of all dissenting or antagonistic movements."84

Ranulfalso quotes Kolnai, who showed that Herman Schmalenbach, in 1922, expressly contrasted his far-right vision of *Gemeinschaft* from sociological notions á la Tönnies and from ordinary, everyday ideas of community. Schmalenbach's *Bund* was a *third* form of *Gemeinschaft*, "deviating essentially" from the other two. Rather than affirming humane, grassroots community in everyday life, he offered a vision of roving rebel youth who abandon their families in a quest for communal conquest, brigandage, and adventure, led by warrior heroes. 85

Despite his newfound interest in views like those of Heberle and Kolnai, Ranulf attempts to remain critical of Durkheim. This attempt takes the form of a diluted argument to the effect that people who are influenced by Durkheim "as to the desirability of a moral consensus" could still ignore his moral objection to "the impropriety of trying to

bring such a consensus about by means of coercion"—so that, despite his wish to promote a truly consensual community, he would remain an unwitting pro-fascist. 86 But Ranulf now pivots radically and begins to question his own case against *Gemeinschaft*. Is it actually true, he now asks, that opponents of fascism should always, with Popper, defend *Gesellschaft* against *Gemeinschaft*? This kind of neoliberal intransigence, he realizes, could backfire, since people with communitarian yearnings would have no anti-fascist alternative. This leads him to a startling conclusion: "So the Social Democrats may, after all, have been well advised in . . . adopting the views of Tönnies."87

Consider carefully what Ranulf is saying here. In a single sentence, he has completely upended his earlier stance. Tönnies and the socialists were not proto-fascists but communitarians who offered what may have been the needed *antidote* to fascism. Far from inspiring the wish for a National Socialist *Volksgemeinschaft*, they offered a potential alternative.⁸⁸ Ranulf remains a pessimist. On the heels of the war, he harbors few hopes for truly popular democratic *Gemeinschaft*, and his fear of populism has not abated: "the question is whether a Christian or a Social Democratic *Gemeinschaft* would really be able to compete with a new brand of Fascism without having recourse to those traits of Fascist dictatorship which are commonly considered most objectionable, such as torture and concentration camps."⁸⁹ He sees no obvious ways to inspire a sense of humane *Gemeinschaft* that would match the experience of "fanatical fighting against a common enemy."⁹⁰ But are there better alternatives? Ranulf has none to suggest.

We have thus come full circle. Ranulf began by stigmatizing communitarian criticism of market society, which he called irresponsible, and an invitation to fascism. Now, he thinks it may be our best hope of keeping fascism at bay. That suggests that Tönnies and Durkheim were scholarly forerunners of *anti-fascism*.

SOCIOLOGY MALIGNED

When Lucien Lévy-Bruhl died in 1939, Action Française published a barbed obituary in which it was said that, influenced "by another Jew, Durkheim," and like other Jews of his day ("he was the cousin of the

traitor Dreyfus"), Lévy-Bruhl had helped to make the "pseudo-science" of sociology into a spearhead of the liberal crusade to secularize and republicanize teaching.⁹¹

It would be hard, given this caustic slur, to envision Durkheim and Lévy-Bruhl as *de facto* allies of Action Française or its historical leader, Charles Maurras. And yet that was precisely what Marion Mitchell envisioned in 1931 in her article, "Émile Durkheim and the Philosophy of Nationalism." Positing the equivalence of Durkheim's social realism with the ultra-nationalism of Action Française (and, to leave no stone unturned, with Bolshevism, fascism, and "100% Americanism"), she credited Durkheim with a very odd nationalism. It might seem "paradoxical," she admitted, to accuse him of jingoistic nationalism, since his patriotism was in fact "pacific and humanitarian." He opposed national expansion and advocated decentralization: "in his own mind, the human ideal loomed larger than the strictly national." On what ground, then, did she assert his chauvinism? On slender grounds indeed. She alleged, most strikingly, that Durkheim had demonstrated his chauvinism by accusing *Germany* of chauvinism.

A more realistic insight into Durkheim and Action Française came from Pierre Lasserre, who in 1913, when he published an attack on Durkheim and "La Barbarie en Sorbonne," was a leading Action Française publicist. Lasserre, who in 1909 had called Durkheim a "morose Jewish jester" and Lévy-Bruhl a "dangerous Jew-moralist," was not misled about Durkheim's true outlook. At first glance, he wrote, a naïve reader could think that Durkheim shared the "same sentiments that inspired . . . a Drumont, a Barrès, a Maurras . . . " After all, he called for improved social cohesion and did not accept the premise that individual rights are absolute. "How strange!" Lasserre exclaimed. If this were really true, "This Jew would have denied the instinct of his race . . . by [seeking] not social dissolution but restoration . . . not anarchy, but archy!" 99

But alas: "M. Durkheim's sociology is a *trompe-l'oeil*," an illusionist's trick. There was a rumor that he wanted individuals to be subordinated to society; but in reality, that goal—the goal of Action Française—was antithetical to Durkheim, who wanted community within, and bound by, liberal democracy. He sought voluntary unity, the professional solidarity of co-workers who find their shared identity not

in tradition or ethnicity but in the modern division of labor. So wishful thinkers who think that Durkheim could align himself with "the abhorred causes of Roman Catholicism, French patriotism, and Latin culture" are in for a rude awakening. What he offers under the guise of a doctrine of "corporations" (Lasserre here cites the same text that Ranulf would later cite) was a phony collectivism, "under the supervision of the pedantocracy of the Sorbonne. M. Durkheim dissolved, with his grave dialectic, the idea of nation. He demanded the abolition of inheritance. He advocated the development of professional guilds, but on the basis of a pure democracy incompatible with the vigor and seriousness of this institution."

By upholding the chimera of a community attained *by means of anarchy*, Durkheim actually served only one community—that of cosmopolitan "Jewish nationalism," which would flourish, Lasserre warned, even as France decayed.¹⁰³ This, not patriotism, was what inspired Durkheim's "insolent carnival of false science."¹⁰⁴

A Benedictine monk, Dom Besse, who was also an Action Française stalwart, took Lasserre's argument further. Rather than resting content with the implication that Durkheim worked towards Jewish rule, Besse said this directly. "Agathon," the pseudonym for one of Gabriel Tarde's sons and a collaborator, had taken a step on this path in 1911, accusing Durkheim of "fanatisme autoritaire" and "despotisme intellectuelle." But this was a charge of mandarin elitism, not, á la Besse, a full-throated blast of paranoia.

Besse begins with a roll call of infamy—"Durkheim, Lévy-Bruhl, Bouglé" and others ("all Jews") who form the nucleus of an intellectual and financial elite. Like Agathon and Lasserre, Besse engages Durkheim and French sociology with a far greater show of scholarship than Svend Ranulf or Marion Mitchell. But he also makes no effort to conceal his antisemitic conspiracism. This makes him one of the very first critics to accuse Durkheim of an effectively protofascist taste for hegemony. And while naïfs like Ranulf and Mitchell were inclined to doubt that Durkheim's *autoritaire* impulses were conscious, Besse is not so generous.

To be sure, Besse himself is not a liberal democrat. But as a Maurassian monarchist, he is profoundly offended by Durkheim's wish to replace traditional hierarchy with what he imagines would be an anti-traditional hierarchy. He thus opens Chapter 14, "M. Durkheim at the Sorbonne," on a dark, conspiratorial note: "He presides over . . . social science, which reigns in the Ministry of Public Instruction. He is a man apart. He is the agent, in our official teaching, of the oligarchy which dictates its wishes to French democracy. Its action is not confined to the Sorbonne or to the direction of higher and secondary education. It extends to the General Confederation of Labor."¹⁰⁹

This is the despotism at the heart of democracy.¹¹⁰ Durkheim, the "Moses of sociology," the "high priest of humanity," wields a magnetic influence, placing "reason in lethargy" and treating people like puppets. His objective is to place a reconstructed humanity above God and under the sway of cosmopolitan Jews and Protestant liberals. This is a hideous fate, but in "democracy" it is also inevitable. Hence Besse fears the worst. "Dreyfus will be rehabilitated." Every supernatural influence will be extirpated. The sages of the Sorbonne will complete their moral invasion of France and educate the next generation of "educators of democracy."¹¹¹

In other words, democracy is a ruse, a cover for demagogues; and sociology in the form of Durkheim's social realism is its accomplice. "Democracy and social realism are . . . two myths which support each other mutually." And farther behind the curtain, we find Jewish supremacism and socialism: "M. Durkheim is a Jew, we must not forget that. His race dominates him." Durkheim conquered sociology to disfigure it. In this he serves his fellow Jewish socialists: "They began before Karl Marx and they will continue after him. By . . . their financial power [they seek] a social, political and industrial basis for their neo-messianism." 114

This vision is anti-Durkheimian not only politically but sociologically. Besse's premise is pure crowd psychology, á la Tarde, but rather than naming Drumont as the *inspirateur* of the misguided crowd he singles out Durkheim, the anti-Drumont. This is not a coincidence, since Action Française publicists often made it a point of honor to defend Tarde. The profound and brilliant Tarde was right, Lasserre wrote, to ignore Durkheim's "ridiculous" objections and give Great Men the credit they deserve for their "eminent part in the formation of manners and public opinion. But ironically, these "great men" were now conceived as Jewish deceivers, who must be exposed and resisted.

That was what Dom Besse and Pierre Lasserre attempted, and in that attempt they were fully in line with Action Française policy, which pivoted around resistance to manipulation by Jewish usurpers.

The Action Française slogan in this period, Maurras reminisced in 1931, could have taken this very simple form: "Shut up, you insolent Jew! Here comes the King!" Eight years later, his newspaper celebrated the fact that Lévy-Bruhl had fallen silent, at last.

SOCIOLOGY DISFIGURED?

Ivan Strenski is one of Svend Ranulf's sharpest critics. About his main anti-Durkheimian claims, Strenski writes sternly: "This is unadulterated rubbish. Most critics have treated Ranulf far too gently. Perhaps, after nearly 70 years, it is time to take off the gloves?" He follows this rebuke with several pertinent objections, one of which is that "Ranulf never cites a single instance of any fascist who ever claims to have been so influenced by Durkheim." But, as it happens, Marcel Déat is precisely such a fascist. And Déat differs from his Action Française precursors in his wish to claim Durkheim's mantle *for* fascism.

Where Besse et al. had recoiled from sociology's democratic reformism, Déat claims Durkheim for the very antithesis of democracy and reform. On the occasion of Lévy-Bruhl's death in 1939, he took a stance very different from that of the bellicose Action Française: "The ideas of Durkheim and Lévy-Bruhl have been perfectly confirmed by totalitarianism," Déat declared. "The sociologists, if there are any still around, should never forget it." 119

Déat was well aware, of course, that many sociologists, including Mauss, were still very much on the scene. But he was bent on claiming Durkheim's legacy for himself and fascism. ¹²⁰ An influential socialist politician in the 1920s and a one-time protégé of Durkheim's colleague Célestin Bouglé, Déat had begun his odyssey to the neo-Nazi right in his book *Perspectives socialistes* (1930), in which he upheld a technocratic *planisme* against social democracy. ¹²¹ Déat's wish to claim sociology as the ground for his break with socialism, and with Bouglé, was already evident, leading the youthful Claude Levi-Strauss, writing in *L'Étudiant socialiste* (1931), to condemn Durkheim as well as Déat for

supposedly transcendentalizing society. 122 Mauss was given an inscribed copy of Déat's book, 123 and he probaby knew that, by 1942, Déat was rallying "totalitarian" support for the collaborationist Vichy regime against alleged Jewish betrayal. 124 But he was still "disconcerted," Battini reports, when, that same year, Déat wrote: "We are on the threshold of community life. Heroism is not only courage on the battlefield but also devotion to the common interest, the feeling that the individual is not complete unless he is integrated in a group and that he is nothing unless he is willing to devote himself to society and to sacrifice himself for it." 125

This sentiment more closely resembles the "idealistic" Nazi wish to mock death and the devil that Ranulf found in Abel's book than it does Durkheim's sociology of collegiality. But Battini, who evidently does not see the difference, cites Déat's memoirs as further evidence of his fidelity to Durkheim. Here the nimble fascist links Durkheim's "idea of national solidarity" to his own desire for the "complete reintegration of the individual in a society where he breathes—in a certain sense—the same air as in a family community. And—let's admit it—with something of that intense warmth which the sociologists discovered in the primitive clan."

Déat thus plays the Ranulfian card. Readers who know little about Durkheim's views of clan culture can be forgiven for assuming that confident assertions like this one might have merit. But Battini also thinks that Maurras "was surprisingly in tune" with Durkheim vis-à-vis collegial associations and the renewal of solidarity. 127 Maurras himself knew better. In the booklet Battini cites, L'idée de décentralisation (1898), Maurras argues that a truly autoritaire state, one capable of ostracizing Dreyfus and his liberal allies once and for all, must reserve central authority for the French state and military and grant cultural autonomy to the provinces. 128 Maurras dedicated his book "to the officers of the general staff of the FRENCH ARMY, defamed by the enemies of the state," and he echoed Ernest Judet, the editor of the Petit Journal, 129 who had recently said that "centralization, established to increase the State's forces, had [actually] enervated those national forces."130 Judet had "observed that, in the Dreyfus Affair, the State, so formidable against all private initiatives, had found itself unable to defend its military and judicial prerogatives."131 To win back popular fealty, the state must stop micro-managing the provinces and draw strength from the loyalties and energies that would flourish regionally as a result. This

regionalism would draw together the variegated threads in the tapestry of French culture and would thus strengthen rather than weaken the French state and military.

Maurras drew inspiration for this proposal to strengthen autocracy by federalist means from the novel *Les Déracinés* (1897) by his friend and comrade Maurice Barrès. It was Barrès who popularized the idea that *energie nationale* can spring from the revival of the unique heritages of "earth and death" (*la terres et les morts*) found in the regions. Maurras saw immediately that unsuspecting readers might number Barrès "among the anarchists." But that, he said with understated irony, would be "inexact." Barrès was an authoritarian who believed not in the individual, but in the stream of national tradition that carries individuals along. Very few empirical people are ever truly "personalities" in the Barrèsiste sense. Only "at long intervals," Maurras explained, and among exceptional figures is personality found in "the human soul." That is why it is necessary, against the teachings of anarchism, for the anonymous masses to submit to the state. 134

Unlike Durkheim, Maurras argued that hope for the future lies not in resurrected guilds (which were uniformly called "corporations" in French texts), but in the state. "In the . . . disorganized nation," he writes, "the State alone has a privilege analogous to the corporations of the past."135 But that privilege is rusting, and must be revived. Currently, he writes, "all the civil servants, even the judges and the priests," have been stripped of the nimbus of authority. Only "a single group of officials must be excepted from the rule, for it has been systematically enfranchised and forms in the State a solid and powerful State . . . " This group he portrays as a kind of deep state, ruling from behind the scenes because the true state has been hollowed out: "It is the cadre of educators." Sounding much like his future disciples Besse and Lasserre, Maurras adds darkly: "The tightly-knit members of this body draw their influence from the disunity of the French. [The educational community exerts] influence without counterweight, since there is no other legal corporation. In a country where everyone is "uprooted" [déracinén] they grow roots and branches. I find it significant that, with the exception of two or three free spirits, these gentlemen have received Les Déracinés as enemies, and have not even conceded the interest of the thesis or the beauty of the work."136

How beautiful is the work? One detail will suffice for present purposes. Sturel, the protagonist, is one of seven free-floating young men from the eastern province of Lorraine who find themselves perturbed by their loss of rooted identity while studying with a Kantian academic in Paris. Sturel becomes romantically involved with a stereotypically exotic Armenian woman, Astiné Aravian, who in a deeply disturbing scene is brutally attacked by two assailants, who bludgeon her and ultimately decapitate her. When Sturel discovers that the killers are also from Lorraine, and that they are unknown to the police, he is faced with the Barrèsiste version of a moral dilemma. Should he report them to the authorities? He decides, in a gesture of regional solidarity, to allow Astiné's hideous murder to go unavenged. Bonds of earth and death matter more than ideals of legal justice.¹³⁷

Maurras knew that this vision, which the untutored might confuse with anti-authoritarianism, was anathema to democrats, however community-minded. Liberal educators were the last people he would count upon to befriend Barrès or betray Dreyfus. Intellectuals like Durkheim and Lévy-Bruhl might steer a course between pure individualism and collectivism, but they were enemies of reaction. Battini, in his effort to identify Durkheim with Maurras and Déat, thus falls into the very trap against which Pierre Lasserre had warned. As Lasserre and others knew in their bones, Durkheim was not one of them, but was, in fact, an enemy. Saying otherwise may have served Déat's purposes, but Action Française knew better.

WORDS HAVE CONSEQUENCES

Marcel Déat was an outlier. As Desan and Heilbron have shown, he was atypical of the 22 younger Durkheimians they studied, most of whom remained on the left in the fascist era. Several fought in the anti-fascist resistance and at least two (Valentin Feldman and Anatole Lewitzky) died for the anti-fascist cause. 139

Desan and Heilbron are also puzzled by Stoetzler's return to Ranulf. Is it really plausible, they ask, to infer that "by even addressing the same questions as nineteenth-century antisemitic discourse (e.g., the rise of egotistical utilitarianism and the moral dislocations of modern society)" that "classical sociology, including the Durkheimian tradition, unwittingly disarmed itself in the face of antisemitism and fascism?" ¹⁴⁰

This brings us back to Stoetzler, who hoped to "complicate" Ranulf's thesis. This ambition led him in two directions. On the one hand, he shows considerable sensitivity to Durkheim's humanistic tendencies, offering a generous assessment of his liberal activism and motives; and yet, at the same time, he significantly deepens and extends Ranulf's thesis by attempting to link Durkheim to antisemitism as well as fascism.¹⁴¹ He does this mainly by a symptomatic reading of Durkheim's language, with respect, most notably, to Herbert Spencer.

Durkheim "developed a discourse that aimed at defending liberal society and modernization," Stoetzler says, "while at the same time attacking a caricature of [Spencer's] 'egotistical utilitarianism'. . . . [Durkheim opposed] but also mimicked the discourse of the antisemites, even when . . . explicitly opposing antisemitism." ¹⁴² This is a grave accusation, which Stoetzler does little to document or even clarify. By what criterion would a frontal assault on antisemitism qualify as "mimickry" of radical antisemitism, and by what criteria would such mimickry count as evidence of antisemitism? Rather than addressing these questions squarely, Stoetzler offers a sampler of what he sees as telltale phrasing. In one place, for example, he writes that Durkheim "calls utilitarian individualism 'a ferment of moral dissolution' (a choice of words that is rather close to a conservative, typically antisemitic critique of modern society)"143 Elsewhere he says that Durkheim's comments on archaic Jewish traditionalism resemble the views of "the radical antisemites" on "Jews as symbols of the old regime." 144 And still elsewhere he argues mainly by analogy: "antisemites . . . engage in a not entirely dissimilar project: trashing a straw man called Spencer or some equivalent and proposing a scheme of collective morality or quasi-religion."145

None of this is enlightening, or credible. We have seen what antisemites say about Jews. Saying that a stray phrase is "rather close" to antisemitic language or that Durkheim's project of social criticism and reform is "not entirely dissimilar" from criticisms and reforms pursued by antisemites does not get us very far. 146 Nor does it help to accuse him, without credible psychological evidence, of acting from the same impulses that drove an arch-antisemite like Edouard Drumont. Stoetzler, who opens with an epigram from Drumont, 147 asserts with

little obvious evidence or logic that "Durkheim seems to have been driven to caricature and demonize Spencer . . . by the same impulse that drove the antisemites." ¹⁴⁸

Seems; the same; demonize?¹⁴⁹ Those are frail claims, and I see no reason to accept them.¹⁵⁰ Stoetzler's attempt to defend his elaboration of Ranulf's thesis on epistemic grounds, meanwhile, is no stronger. "Some readers will object that Durkheim's corporations are not the corporations proposed by the fascists—that Durkheim *intended* a different meaning . . ." Calling this objection "banal" and "*über*-historicizing," Stoetzler offers a reply in advance: "Part of what [the classical sociologists] *actually* said is also what others, at the time and later, *thought* they said." ¹⁵¹

I think not. By that logic, Durkheim would share the blame for every careless reading, for every incompetent translation, for every honest or dishonest reading inspired by jealousy, careerism or political hostility, now and in the future. Everything said about him by Agathon, Besse, Déat, Lasserre, Mitchell, and Ranulf could be laid at this doorstep, no matter how radically or capriciously any of these writers may stray from the letter or spirit of his text. Even worse is the license this hermeneutic principle would give to prejudices and stereotypes: "[u]nconventional thinking often suffers the indignity of being mistaken for conventional thinking. This is especially true when sociological realism and other forms of anti-reductionism are at stake, since, in many spheres, anti-reductionism is so far from conventional that, when unsuspecting observers encounter it, they often confuse it with reductionism." ¹⁵²

In strictly literary terms Durkheim is hard to misread. Unlike Marx, who never taught, or Weber, who taught for only a few years, Durkheim was a gifted life-long pedagogue who wrote with didactic precision. But his ideas are hard to assimilate because they are very far from conventional. Studying *Les formes élémentaires* or *Le suicide* for the first time can be a wrenching experience, because these books challenge the reader at every step. Each chapter, relentlessly, pulls the reader farther from the gravity of conventional thought. Durkheim may be right or wrong, but he is seldom if ever shallow or trite.¹⁵³

Svend Ranulf and Michele Battini and almost every other writer who has been reviewed in this article has had something to say about Durkheim's views on so-called "corporations." This theme is, in fact, only a thread in the larger tapestry of Durkheim's thought, which encompasses a very wide range of concerns. But it is also central to his agenda, and deserves our attention.

GUILD SOCIOLOGY AND THE FUTURE OF SOLIDARITY

In 1893, when Durkheim's study of the social division of labor first appeared, the start of *l'affaire Dreyfus* was just months away. Much of what Durkheim had to say in that book was directly relevant to the turbulence that shook France in the ensuing years, but it was in *Le suicide*, in 1897, that he delved most deeply into the ulterior causes of the "morbid effervescence" which, despite the "brilliancy" of modern social advances, cast a long shadow over modernity. The past had been worse, and could not be revived. Industrial and technical advance would continue. But would that advance be progressive?

That question was central to the neglected final chapter of *Le suicide*, entitled "Practical Consequences." It was in this chapter that Durkheim first mapped the possibility of renewing social cohesion on a new foundation, "the "corporation"—that is, the group made up "of all workers of the same sort, in association, all who cooperate in the same function, that is, the occupational group or corporation." ¹⁵⁵ In fin de siècle France, the word "corporation" referred not to modern businesses but to medieval guilds, small enterprises that united masters and journeymen in shared face-to-face pursuits. Modern capitalism, as depicted by Durkheim, was bereft of any institutions that could provide a similar ground for healthy social integration. The modern administrative state is too remote from daily life and should not, in any event, be entrusted with excessive power over civil society. Religions hold critical thinking in abeyance, which, given the irreversibility of modern trends, is no longer a long-term option. Families are scattering to the winds, and even the ideal of "the nation" can only inspire and unite people in exceptional moments.

The beauty of the *guilde nouvelle* is that it would unite people without dividing them at the same time. Unity on the basis of nationality is also division on the basis of nationality. But new professional guilds would unite people on the basis of shared activities and values, within

the framework of the larger division of labor; and that division of labor would unite them globally, organically, complexly, as specialized units within the larger universe of entwined collectives. The bonds between co-workers and collectives would have to be voluntary, since "solidarity" ordered by the state would be morbid—it would force a *simulation* of cooperation without evoking a *spirit* of cooperation.

The malaise that Durkheim hoped to overcome had two primary aspects: egoism and anomie. Neither of these terms were used by Durkheim in the usual contemporary sense. Both, for example, were defined subjectively and objectively. "Egoism" is not simply the selfishness or self-absorption that readers have often assumed was an object of moral censure for Durkheim. It is, on the contrary, an objective condition of isolation, of social detachment, that makes people feel lost and lonely, not simply, or necessarily, narcissistic. So too, anomie is an objective condition of normlessness, of separation from group values and guidance. Like egoism, anomie is seldom embraced; it is, rather, experienced, as a kind of fate. And the experience of anomie is at least as disorienting and disturbing as it is liberating.

Durkheim was equally opposed to excessive regulation and integration (egoism and altruism) and their opposites, anomie and fatalism. He hoped to see balance and cooperation in the relations between nations, classes and individuals. His concern, in the 1915 pamphlet *Deutschland über alles*, was to better understand the anomie of nations, which had reached extreme heights in wartime Germany. Why was Germany so avid to achieve radical autarky? Why did German statecraft, influenced by Treitschkean statism, pursue unbridled supremacy *über alles?* Why was the German military so willing and eager to flout all recognized international norms in pursuit of goals of morbid enormity?

Hyper-nationalism, viewed from this perspective, is precisely the kind of unbridled national self-assertion that Durkheim sought to understand and undo. He hoped to promote amity between nations in place of anomie. A similar motive was at work in the preface to the second edition of *De la division sociale de travail* (1902), which is, for most readers, the *locus classicus* of his corporation doctrine.¹⁵⁷ Here his hope is to cure the "sickness" in the relations between classes, which he attributes to the "legal and moral anomie" that prevails between "employers and office workers, industrial workers and factory bosses,

industrialists in competition with one another [and] industrialists and the public." In these knotted relations, he says, we see few signs of the kind of moral consensus that would be needed to ensure mutually supportive relations. Instead, we hear only vague truisms about "employee loyalty and employer moderation," unfair competition and consumer exploitation. What Marx had characterized as the "anarchy in production" is now given a moral dimension. It is to this state of anomie that [we must attribute] the continually recurring conflicts and disorders of every kind of which the economic world affords so sorry a spectacle, and which, morally unconstrained, tend to grow beyond all bounds . . In 160 Durkheim is insistent that effective lasting barriers to conflict can only be moral. Men's passions are only stayed by a moral presence they respect. If all authority of this kind is lacking, it is the law of the strongest that rules, and a state of warfare, either latent or acute, is necessarily endemic.

That, unfortunately, is precisely the situation in contemporary class relations. Since "unions of employers and . . . employees . . . lack a common organization to unite them without causing them to lose their individuality . . . it is . . . the law of the strongest that decides any disputes, and a state of out-and-out warfare prevails." ¹⁶² In this state of warfare abuses are common. These abuses can be avoided only if society takes action to ensure that the strong do not exploit the weak or "fetter" their liberty.

Action of this kind to overcome anomie must be taken within civil society, since "the state . . . cannot discharge this function." Often in the past "dependence on the state swiftly degenerated into . . . intolerable servitude." And activity in any specialized field can be effectively regulated only by those who know its operations and needs intimately. "The only group that meets these conditions" consists of "all those working in the same industry, assembled together . . . in a single body. This is what is termed a corporation, or professional group. The sole groups that have a certain permanence are . . . today called unions, either of employers or workers. . . . This represents the beginning . . . though still in a rudimentary . . . form." 164

It would be naïve to think that "the ancient corporation as it existed in the Middle Ages" can be revived artificially. What is needed rather is a guild that serves the material interests of its members, as unions do

now, without forgetting its higher purpose. Such a guild would be capable of "nurturing among workers a more invigorated feeling of their common solidarity, and preventing the law of the strongest from being applied too brutally in industrial . . . relationships."¹⁶⁶

What Durkheim is envisioning here is plainly a form of Social Democracy. Like Bernstein and other mild socialists among his contemporaries, he advocates a kind of self-management via class collaboration. He wants to see associations built on a trans-local scale, to unite everyone who can collaborate on the basis of shared professional interests. But he wants these associations to operate by elections and local autonomy at every level. This requires "elected assemblies [which] include representatives of employees and employers," not only at the highest national and governing levels but also at the lower levels, to ensure that everyone is shielded from the worst effects of hierarchy and competition.¹⁶⁷

Ultimately, what Durkheim wants above all is an antidote to egoism and anomie. Hence the new guilds must therefore strike a balance between excessive integration and legislation and their absence. Translated into human terms, that means that members should be incorporated into and subject to the guild's self-regulation just enough to feel the collective "warmth that . . . gives fresh life to each individual . . . causing selfishness to melt away." This, in turn, entails a further role for the guilds, to serve as community centers: "we now already see trade unions acting at the same time as friendly societies, and others are setting up communal centers where courses are organized, and concerts and dramatic performances held." 169

Finally, Durkheim wants the guilds to serve as the groundwork for a political system which, to my ears, sounds Jeffersonian, rising on the foundation of a matrix of decentralized local assemblies. "A society made up of an extremely large mass of unorganized individuals," he writes, "which an overgrown state attempts to limit and restrain, [is] a veritable sociological monstrosity." Infinitely better would be a system in which the guild "will be called upon to become the foundation, or one of the essential foundations, of our political organization. May we not legitimately think that the corporation should [become] the basic political unit? Society, instead of [being a collection] of juxtaposed landmasses—would become a vast system of national corporations

[with] electoral colleges . . . constituted by professions and not by territorial constituencies."¹⁷¹

This is not the whole of what Durkheim proposes, since he knows that many important social reforms can only be accomplished at the international and national level. His social democratic goals, in particular, require legislative action at the level of the state. The professional guild is not "a kind of cure-all which can serve any purpose. The crisis from which we are suffering does not stem from one single, unique cause. For it to be dispelled, it is not enough to establish some kind of regulatory system . . . the system should also be fair." At this point, he cites a passage that occurs later in the book: "If one class in society is obliged, in order to live, to secure the acceptance by others of its services . . . the latter group can lord it over the former. In other words, there can be no rich and poor by birth without their being unjust contracts." ¹⁷³

Durkheim believes that equal opportunity should be guaranteed; that inheritance should not determine anyone's fate. The abolition of inheritance would thus be an immense leap forward: "Let us suppose that the overriding consideration of ideal justice has been finally realized, that [children] begin their lives in a state of perfect economic equality, that is, that wealth has completely ceased to be hereditary." But achieving even this, one of the cherished ideals of socialism, would not be enough. Inequality would diminish but anomie and egoism would persist; solidarity would not have been reconstituted: "[t]he problems with which we are now grappling would not thereby have been resolved. . . . Merely because wealth will not be handed down according to the same principles as at the present time, the state of anarchy will not have disappeared." 175

This is why Durkheim considers it necessary to think beyond the state. Anomie and egoism will flourish in the interstices of society, in everyday life, if we do not construct new means of solidarity. That is why he believes that, "although the problem of the corporation is not the only one that imposes itself upon public attention, there is certainly none more pressing . . ."¹⁷⁶

It would be easy to fault Durkheim's guild sociology on many grounds. How could private ownership of the major modern corporations persist without inheritance? Why would these behemoths not join the ranks of "corporations" in the reconstituted sense of guild democracy? Why would society *want* to preserve private ownership of the engines or production which society depends upon for its very survival? Why would society restrain, but not eliminate, brutality and enmity between classes?

Many other questions can be raised. But this is a serious and imaginative attempt to envision a path from anomie and egoism to new forms of cooperation. The events of the storm-tossed twentieth century have dimmed hopes for this kind of transition. But Durkheim's work was a beacon in the darkening skies. His ideas continue to matter because they continue to shed light on the prospects before us. Let us hope that the century to come will offer better chances for free association, professional and civic, and for effective resistance to fascism.

Notes

- 1. On the Dreyfus Affair in general, see Stephen Wilson, *Ideology and Experience: Antisemitism in France at the Time of the Dreyfus Affair* (Rutherford, NJ: Fairleigh Dickinson University Press, 1982). Wilson examines the sociology and ideology of the affair with exemplary subtlety. On Durkheim's personal role in the Dreyfus Affair, see Chapter 17 in Steven Lukes, *Emile Durkheim: His Life and Work* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1985).
- 2. Émile Durkheim, *Le suicide: étude de sociologie* (Paris: Félix Alcan, 1897). See also the translation by John Spaulding and George Simpson, *Suicide, A Study in Sociology*, ed., George Simpson (Glencoe, IL: The Free Press, 1951).
- 3. Émile Durkheim, "Notes sur l'antisémitisme" in *Enquête sur l'antisémitisme*, ed., Henri Dagan (Paris: Stock, 1899); Émile Durkheim, "L'individualisme et les intellectuels," 1898, in Durkheim, *La Science sociale et l'action*, ed., Jean-Claude Filloux (Paris: Presses Universitaires de France, 1970); Émile Durkheim, "Individualism and the Intellectuals," in Émile Durkheim, *On Morality and Society*, ed., Robert N. Bellah (Chicago: University of Chicago, 1973).
- 4. Émile Durkheim, De la division du travail social: étude sur l'organisation des sociétés supérieures (Paris: Félix Alcan, 1893). The second edition appeared in 1902.
- 5. On Durkheim and dynamogenesis, see W. W. Miller, "Dynamogénique and élementaire," *Durkheimian Studies* 11, no. 1 (2005): 18–32.

- 6. Émile Durkheim, Les formes élémentaires de la vie religieuse: le système totémique en Australie (Paris: Félix Alcan, 1912). On Durkheim and Boulangisme, see Joseph R. Llobera, "Durkheim and the national question," in Émile Durkheim: Critical Assessments of Leading Sociologists, vol. 3, ed., W. S. F. Pickering (London: Routledge, 2001).
- 7. Émile Durkheim, "Deutschland über alles": die deutsche Gesinnung und der Krieg (Paris: Armand Colin, 1915).
- 8. On Brasillach and Nuremberg, see Alice Yaeger Kaplan, *Reproductions of Banality* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1986).
 - 9. Aurel Kolnai, The War Against the West (London: Victor Gollancz, 1938).
- 10. Gabriel Tarde, "Le public et la foule," Part 1, La revue de Paris 5 no. 4 (July 15, 1898), 297. Saint-Beuve's aperçu appeared in "Chateaubriand" in which, anticipating Tarde, he writes that admirateurs imitate inspirateurs (and idealize their faults as well as their virtues). Charles Augustin Saint-Beuve, Selected Essays from Saint-Beuve, ed., John R. Effinger (Boston & London: Ginn, 1895), 23.
 - 11. Tarde, 297.
- 12. On the Stanford Prison Experiment, see Erich Fromm, The *Anatomy of Human Destructiveness* (New York: Holt, Rinehart and Winston, 1973).
 - 13. Émile Durkheim, Les formes élémentaires de la vie religieuse, 305.
- 14. Durkheim did not deny that leaders matter. When he was asked in 1914 by the Protestant theologian Marc Boegner what weight he gave to prophets and apostles, he replied that they exert influence, but that, since he had not studied this subject directly, he would refrain from speculation. See W. S. F. Pickering, "The Response of Catholic and Protestant Thinkers to the Work of Émile Durkheim, with special reference to *Les formes élémentaires*," *Durkheimian Studies* 14 (2008): 78.
- 15. Theodor Geiger, *Die Masse und ihre Aktion: ein Beitrag zur Soziologie der Revolutionen*, ed., Horst Baier (Stuttgart: Enke, 1987), 149. Cited by Christian Borch, "Crowds and Pathos: Theodor Geiger on Revolutionary Action," in *Acta Sociologica* 49, no. 1 (March 2006), 9.
- 16. Wilhelm Reich, *Massenpsychologie des Faschismus* (København: Verlag für Sexualpolitik, 1933). The English translation of the third edition is marred by changes that reflect Reich's later mystical views.
- 17. What Marx actually sought was the abolition of a social system, not a social class, and he advocated only defensive violence, if, as in the American Civil War, socialist reforms were greeted by a 'slaveholders' revolt.' On this and Marx's politics in general, see the utterly reliable Hal Draper, *Karl Marx's Theory of Revolution*, vols. 1–5 (New York: Monthly Review Press, 1977–2005).

- 18. Wolfgang J. Mommsen, *Max Weber and German Politics*, 1890–1920 (University of Chicago, 1990). For a critique of Mommsen's thesis, echoed by many others, that Weber's views on charisma prefigured Nazi ideals, see David Norman Smith, "Charisma Disenchanted," *Current Perspectives in Social Theory* 31 (2013): 3–74.
- 19. Abraham's charges against Weber are widely cited, but they are not strong. See David Norman Smith, "Gary Abraham, Max Weber, and The Jewish Question," *Journal of Church and State* 36, no. 4 (1994): 858–59.
- 20. On an attempt to link Durkheim to the genocide of Armenians during World War I, see David Norman Smith, "Ziya Gokalp and Émile Durkheim," Études durkheimiennes / Durkheimian Studies 1, no. 1 (1995): 45–51.
- 21. See Svend Ranulf, "Scholarly Forerunners of Fascism," *Ethics* 50, no. 1 (October, 1939): 16–34. Michele Battini, *Socialism of Fools: Capitalism and Modern Anti-Semitism* (New York: Columbia University Press, 2016); and, Marcel Stoetzler, "Introduction: The Theory of Society Talks Back to Its Travesty," and "Sociology's Case for a Well-Tempered Modernity," in Marcel Stoetzler, ed., *Antisemitism and the Constitution of Sociology* (Lincoln: University of Nebraska, 2014), 1–44 and 66–89. When I cite Stoetzler's two essays, I will distinguish them only by page numbers.
- 22. Stoetzler, 4, citing S. P. Turner, "Sociology and Fascism in the Interwar Period," in Stephen P. Turner and Dirk Käsler, eds., Sociology Responds to Fascism (New York: Routledge, 1992), 6, 7, 9. See also David Norman Smith, "Review of Sociology Responds to Fascism," Sociological Inquiry 64, no. 4 (1994): 456–67. In the next sentence, Turner writes: "It would be convenient to excuse these thinkers on the ground that intellectuals ought not to be held accountable for the consequences of their ideas or their use by others. But in each of these cases, and in the case of sociologists generally, this defense fails. Ranulf suggested that their efforts were the moral equivalent of Nazi propaganda. This is perhaps harsh. But the differences in intent were matters of degree . . . " (6).
 - 23. Stoetzler, 5.
- 24. Stoetzler argues that Durkheim's alleged affinity for fascism and antisemitism is shared by classical sociology per se, but, since he gives relatively detailed attention only to Durkheim, I will focus here exclusively on his critique of Durkheim.
- 25. Stoetzler, 8, 7. "Ranulf argues that Durkheim . . . believed he lived in an age of moral dissolution and that sociology was called upon to remedy this evil. He asks, 'Is not the rise of fascism an event which, in due logic, Durkheim ought to have welcomed as that salvation from individualism for which he had been trying rather gropingly to prepare the way? In due logic, undoubtedly'."

- 26. Stoetzler, 7.
- 27. David Norman Smith, "Slashing at Water with a Knife? Durkheim's Struggle to Anchor Sociology in First Principles," *Contemporary Sociology* 43, no. 2 (2014): 165–171.
- 28. See the small book that Ranulf wrote in the late 1930s which was published in 1946: *Methods of Sociology* (Kobenhaven: Ejnar Munksgard, 1946). Here, besides Durkheim and Simiand, Ranulf also discusses Karl Mannheim, Georg Simmel, Weber, and Tönnies—all of whom, Egil Fivelsdal writes, are "given rather unfair treatment." *Acta Sociologica* 1, no. 4 (1956), 268.
- 29. For a good brief criticism of Ranulf and another of Durkheim's critics, Marion Mitchell, see Llobera.
- 30. Svend Ranulf, Der eleatische Satz vom Widerspruch (København: Gyldendal, 1924). See also Ranulf, The Jealousy of the Gods and Criminal Law at Athens: A Contribution to the Sociology of Moral Indignation, vols. 1 & 2, trans. Annie I. Fausbøll (London: Williams & Norgate, 1933–34). Mauss reviewed Ranulf's dissertation in L'Année sociologique, Nouvelle série, 1ère Année (1923–24), where he says (259) that Ranulf argues his case with "ingenuity and tenacity." Paul Shorey praised Ranulf's acumen and industry but faulted him for arguing that the works of Plato, Aristotle, and the ancient Greeks in general "are replete with fallacies beyond all modern analogy." Paul Shorey, "Book Review," Classical Philology 21, no. 1 (1926), 95–6.
- 31. Max Scheler, Über ressentiment und moralisches werturteil (Leipzig: Engelmann, 1912); Max Scheler, Ressentiment, trans. William W. Holdheim (Glencoe, IL: Free Press, 1961). Scheler, as it happens, had equated Durkheim's "sociologism" with Bonald's authoritarian Catholicism long before Ranulf made his even more radical claim. A similar charge was made by Robert A. Nisbet in his essay "De Bonald and the Concept of the Social Group," Journal of the History of Ideas 5, no. 3 (June 1944), 322.
- 32. Svend Ranulf, *Moral Indignation and Middle Class Psychology* (København: Levin & Munksgaard, 1938). Maria Ossowska notes that Ranulf seems to have assumed without argument that the petty bourgeoisie is uniquely susceptible to *ressentiment*. See Maria Ossowska, *Bourgeois Morality*, trans. G. L. Campbell (New York: Routledge, 1986).
- 33. Of the seven pages Ranulf devotes to Durkheim in his 1939 paper, most (26–30) were dedicated to the discussion of 13 pages in *De la division to travail sociale*, in which Durkheim discusses the theme of restitutive law.
- 34. Ranulf's 1939 essay appears near the start of vol. 1 of *Émile Durkheim:* Critical Assessments, ed., Peter Hamilton (London: Routledge, 1990), 23–34.
 - 35. I elaborate Durkheim's argument on this point at the end of this article.

- 36. Ranulf cites *Les formes élémentaires*, 299f., 323, 406ff., and 547. Suffice to say that these pages do not support his allegations. They focus mainly on details of Arunta ritual, revolving around circumcision, initiation, "bull roarers," ecstatic dances, etc..
- 37. He cites *Les formes élémentaires*, 610f. In these concluding pages, Durkheim restates his thesis about the power of collective assembly, giving as examples, for Christians, celebrations of events in the life of Christ; for Jews, the flight from Egypt; major events in national life; the institution of new moral codes; and events concentrating sentiment against economic inequality. The citations from Mauss appear in Ranulf, *Forerunners of Fascism*, 31.
- 38. Michèle Richman, the excellent historian of the Collège de Sociologie, is the writer who thinks she hears Mauss "acquiesce" to Ranulf's allegation: "Myth, Power and the Sacred," *Economy and Society* 32, no. 1 (February 2003), 42. See also Simonetta Falasca-Zamponi, "A Left Sacred or a Sacred Left? The *Collège de Sociologie*, Fascism, and Political Culture in Interwar France," *South Central Review* 23, no. 1 (Spring 2006), 43. The citations from Mauss appear in Ranulf, *Forerunners of Fascism*, 31–32.
- 39. Mauss may have forgotten about this essay, which had appeared 21 years earlier.
- 40. Mauss was not always a reliable guide to this uncle's thought. On this point, the gulf between them is wide.
 - 41. For further details see the closing section of this article.
 - 42. Ranulf, Forerunners of Fascism, 31.
- 43. Many characterizations of this kind appear in *Les formes élémentaires*. For an English language example, see 216 in the excellent translation by Joseph Ward Swain that appeared in the first edition of *The Elementary Forms of the Religious Life* (London: Allen & Unwin, 1915). My citations from *Formes*, below, often hew closely to Swain's translation, but with modifications to capture nuances in the original French. Unless otherwise stated, page citations refer to the original, which I call *Les formes*.
- 44. *Les formes*, 299–300. Durkheim quotes Rivarol, who had called August 4th "the St. Bartholomew of the estates." This was an allusion to the massacre of Huguenots by Catholic royalists in Paris on St. Bartholomew's Eve, 1572.
- 45. Les formes, 300. He adds: "Now this exceptional surplus of force is something very real: it comes to him from the very group that he addresses. The sentiments that he provokes by his words return to him, but enlarged, amplified, and to this degree they reinforce his own sentiment. The passionate energies he arouses re-echo within him and quicken his vital tone. It is no longer a simple individual who speaks; it is a group incarnate and personified" (300–301).

- 46. Les formes, 301.
- 47. Ranulf, *Forerunners of Fascism*, 31–32. Durkheim, of course, appreciated individualism as much as he "deprecated" it, as he made clear in his essay "Individualism and the Intellectuals." But Ranulf leaves that essay unmentioned.
 - 48. Ranulf, Forerunners of Fascism, 34.
- 49. Geiger won the appointment, as Ranulf reported unhappily to Mauss. Later, in *Socialvidenskabelig metodelære* (København: Munksgaard, 1946), Ranulf criticized Geiger at great length, contending, as Kristoffer Kopp writes, "that his approach— however unintentionally—supported Nazism. This was a rather harsh criticism of [an anti-Nazi] refugee one year after the [war]." See Kristoffer Kopp, *A Historical Account of Danish Sociology* (London: Palgrave Macmillan, 2015), 22. Geiger replied in a book of his own: *Ranulf ctr. Geiger: et Angreb og et offensivt Forsvar* (København: Nyt Nordisk Forlag Arnold Busck, 1946).
- 50. Ranulf, Forerunners of Fascism, 30. He cites Le division de travail sociale, 375.
- 51. Though he says that he reproduces his 1939 essay with only minor changes, Ranulf in fact deletes his discussion of Comte and adds highly significant new material.
- 52. Svend Ranulf, On the Survival Chances of Democracy (København: Universitetsforlaget i Aarhus, 1948).
- 53. Friedrich A. von Hayek, *The Road to Serfdom* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1944).
 - 54. Herman Finer, Road to Reaction (Boston: Little Brown, 1945).
 - 55. Herman Finer, Mussolini's Italy (New York: Henry Holt, 1935).
 - 56. Ranulf, Survival Chances, 10.
- 57. Svend Ranulf, "Propaganda," *Theoria* 2, no. 3 (1936), 239. Criticizing Geiger's *Die Masse und ihre Aktion* (1926), Ranulf opposes Geiger's Durkheimlike views with Arthur Christensen's crowd psychology of suggestion via propaganda. See Christensen, *Politics and Crowd-Morality* (London: Williams and Norgate, 1915).
 - 58. Ranulf, Survival Chances, 13-14. He cites Finer, Road to Reaction, 29.
- 59. See A Conspiracy of Decency: The Rescue of the Danish Jews During World War II, ed., Emmy Werner (Oxford: Westview, 2002); and, The Rescue of the Danish Jews: Moral Courage Under Stress, ed., Leo Goldberger (New York: New York University Press, 1987).
 - 60. Ranulf, Survival Chances, 60.
- 61. Theodore Abel, Why Hitler Came into Power (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1988).

- 62. Ranulf, Survival Chances, 25.
- 63. Ibid., 33. He cites Abel, Why Hitler, 145ff.
- 64. Ibid., 33.
- 65. Husbands as well as wives, one would think.
- 66. Ranulf, Survival Chances, 29.
- 67. Ibid.
- 68. See Bo Lidegaard, Countrymen: The Untold Story of How Denmark's Jews Escaped the Nazis, of the Courage of their Fellow Danes and of the Extraordinary Role of the SS (New York: Knopf, 2013).
- 69. Jørgen Hæstrup, Europe Ablaze: An Analysis of the History of European Resistance Movements 1939–45 (Odense: Odense University Press, 1978), 453.
- 70. For an incisive portrait of the Fehme murderers, see Henry Victor Dicks, *Licensed Mass Murder* (New York: Basic Books, 1973).
 - 71. Ranulf, Survival Chances, 34.
- 72. Ranulf adds sternly that excuses for these excesses resemble the excuses of the Nazi leader Alfred Rosenberg for German excesses. See *Survival Chances*, 36.
- 73. It is true, as Tore Bjørgo has noted, that a rightwing faction of the resistance in Jutland later agitated against immigrants. But the large majority of the resistance was liberal or leftwing in outlook. See Tore Bjørgo "Extreme Nationalism and Violent Discourses in Scandinavia," *Terrorism and Political Violence* 7, no. 1 (1995), 193.
- 74. Ranulf, "Propaganda," 239. He cited evangelists, as Ray Abrams had shown, who had preached that the "Germans were devils who drank the blood of their enemies." See Ray Abrams, *Preachers Present Arms* (New York: Round Table Press, 1933), 99ff.
 - 75. Ranulf, "Propaganda," 242.
- 76. Ibid., 239. In *Hitlers Kampf gegen die Objektivität* (København: Ejnar Munksgaard, 1946), Ranulf carefully parses questions about the differences in objectivity between lies told by Hitler and lies told by Churchill, with a focus, in particular, on the degree to which they advocate reprisals (108ff).
 - 77. Ranulf, Survival Chances, 30.
 - 78. Ibid., 31.
 - 79. Ibid., 38.
- 80. With respect to Radbruch, at least, Ranulf had a good case. Radbruch bewailed the fact that the socialist worker's movement had been imbued with individualism, and that even Marx had portrayed "the ideal social order" as one in which workers are assured "such a free development of their personality as has, under capitalism, been the privilege of the upper classes." This Radbruch

regards as a misjudgment! But he is pleased to report that times change—his book appeared in 1922 while he was Justice Minister—and that *Gemeinschaft* is the new ideal. Now "a personality can only be recognized as valuable if it develops inside a *Gemeinschaft*." Gustav Radbruch, *Kulturlehre des Sozialismus* (Berlin: J. H. W. Dietz, 1922), 49.

- 81. Rudolf Heberle, *From Democracy to Nazism* (Baton Rouge: Louisiana State University Press, 1945); and, Aurel Kolnai, *The War Against the West*, 1938.
 - 82. Ranulf, Survival Chances, 51f. He cites Heberle, From Democracy, 122.
 - 83. Ibid., 52. He cites Heberle, 88.
 - 84. Ibid., 53.
 - 85. Ibid., 53. He cites Kolnai, War, 80ff.
- 86. Ibid., 55, Ranulf now adds Vilhelm Grønbach to his list of unwitting pro-fascists. On 114 he cites Dominique Parodi, *La philosophie contemporaine en France* (Paris: Félix Alcan, 1920, 159), who mentions Durkheim in the same breath with Barrès and Maurras (159), but later (381) refers to an unspecified "discrepancy" between Durkheimian and Maurrasian theory. On Parodi's actual views, see note 91.
 - 87. Ibid., 58.
- 88. The same logic would presumably apply to Durkheim, since France, unlike Germany, never had very many *Gemeinschaftliche* fascists.
 - 89. Ranulf, Survival Chances, 58
- 90. Ibid., 58. He adds: "The persecution of Jews or other minorities may also serve the purpose of uniting the persecutors emotionally."
- 91. Dominique Merllié, "Lévy Bruhl et Durkheim. Notes biographiques en marge d'une correspondance," *Revue Philosophique de la France et de l'Étranger* 179, no. 4 (1989): 494, n. 3.
- 92. M. Marion Mitchell, "Émile Durkheim and the Philosophy of Nationalism," *Political Science Quarterly* 46, no. 1 (March 1931): 87–106. Mitchell was a graduate student when this paper appeared, nine years before she received her Ph.D in 1940.
 - 93. Ibid.
- 94. Ibid., 88, 91–93, 98–100, 104–106. Mitchell also noted that Durkheim defended the right of nations to self-determination, which she apparently regarded as incriminating. Among other indications of his "obvious" nationalism she listed his "anti-individualism" and his alleged idealization of collective rites that "raise the vitality of the nation." She may have forgotten how he felt about Boulangism and the Drevfus Affair.
- 95. Mitchell infers that because Durkheim accused Germany of an "extravagant pride," a "bellicose disposition," and "systematic savagery"—all of

which sprang, he said, from the chauvinist wish to see *Deutschland über alles*—he himself was guilty of French chauvinism. Parodi (381), whose opinion on this subject was cited by Ranulf (see note 84) said "Durkheim and his disciples" placed themselves in service to what they saw as "an irresistible tendency to individualism, to equality, to respect for the human person, to democracy," while Action Française and Maurras "condemn without appeal" every idea leading to social reorganization.

96. Pierre Lasserre, La Doctrine officielle de l'Université. Critique due haut enseignement de l'état (Paris: Mercure de France, 1913).

97. Pierre Lasserre, "Moralistes juifs" and "Á l'Académie" in *Action Française*, 11/30 and 12/14, 1909, cited by Wilbur Merrill Frohock, *Pierre Lasserre: The Evolution of His Critical Doctrines* (Ann Arbor: Edwards Brothers, 1937), 29.

98. Lasserre, La Doctrine officielle, 187.

99. Ibid.

100. Ibid., 188.

101. Ibid., 193.

102. Ibid., 244.

103. Ibid., 243ff.

104. Ibid., 214.

105. R. P. Dom Besse, *Les religions laïques* (Paris: Nouvelle Librairie Nationale, 1913).

106. Agathon, *L'Esprit de la Nouvelle Sorbonne* (Paris: Mercure de France, 1911), 105, 100. The co-authors, Henri Massis and Tarde's son Alfred, accused Durkheim of "hatred for individuals" and a "horror" of cultural traditionalism. But they wrote in the spirit of the deceased Tarde, not Maurras.

107. Besse, Les religions, 206, 226-27.

108. Ibid., 209–245. This contains Besse's main commentary on Durkheim.

109. Ibid., 233. On this point Besse (221, 223) echoes Lasserre—the Sorbonne is a citadel of subversion under the malign influence of Durkheim et al. Later (240f) he echoes Agathon as well.

110. Ibid., 225-6.

111. Ibid., 215–17, 220, 224, 225, 230, 236.

112. Ibid., 244.

113. Ibid.

114. Ibid., 245.

115. The sages of the Sorbonne, in this demonology, are not unlike the Elders of Zion, whose vogue was still quite new at this point. On this, see David Norman Smith "The Social Construction of Enemies: Jews and the

- Representation of Evil," *Sociological Theory* 14, no. 3 (1996): 203–40; and, David Norman Smith, "Judeophobia, Myth, and Critique," in *The Seductiveness of Jewish Myth*, ed., S. Daniel Breslauer (Albany: SUNY Press, 1997), 123–154.
 - 116. Lasserre, La Doctrine officielle, 217, n. 1.
- 117. Maurras, cited by Stephen Wilson, 388. Wilson explains that Action Française, which was "the longest-lived of the anti-Dreyfusard leagues . . . kept organized antisemitism alive in France after the eclipse of most other movements around 1906" (388–89).
- 118. Ivan Strenski, "Change Only for the Benefit of Society as a Whole," *International Social Science Journal* 58, no. 1 (2006), 113.
- 119. Journal de guerre (11/39), cited by Jean-Paul Cointet, "Marcel Déat et le parti unique. Été 1940," Revue d'histoire de la deuxième guerre mondiale (July 1973), 17.
- 120. In his *Mémoires politiques* (Paris: Denoël, 1989), Déat took credit for having been "[n]ourished with the philosophical thought of masters such as Durkheim, Brunschwig and Marcel Mauss . . ." (618, cited by Michele Battini). "It was precisely because of his intellectual consistency with Durkheim's sociological thought," Battini reports, that Déat originally "enjoyed high regard in university and intellectual circles." Michele Battini, *The Socialism of the Imbecile* (2014), 122, accessed July 26, 2017, http://gesta.scuoladottorato.it/joomla/images/ALLEGATI/attivita-2013–2014/La_folla_lettura_Battini1.pdf.
 - 121. Marcel Déat, Perspectives socialistes (Paris: Valois, 1930).
- 122. Mathieu Hikaru Desan and Johan Heilbron, "Young Durkheimians and the Temptations of Fascism: The Case of Marcel Déat," *History of the Human Sciences* 28, no. 3 (2015), 6.
- 123. Déat, cited by Battini, *Antisemitism*, 98, from Marcel Fournier, *Marcel Mauss* (Paris: Fayard, 1994), 662.
- 124. Marcel Déat *Le parti unique* (Paris: Aux Armes de France, 1943), 35. By this point, Mauss probably knew full well, as Battini puts it (108–09), that Déat had unreservedly embraced the "so-called Drumont paradigm."
- 125. Marcel Déat, *Jeunesse et Révolution* (Paris: Jeunesses Nationales Populaires, 1942), 16–17.
 - 126. Cited by Battini, Antisemitism, 98.
- 127. Battini, *Antisemitism*, 83, echoing Jean-Philippe Parrot. Battini also claims in passing (79) that Durkheim's ideas were "perfectly in line" with the corporatist views of the Catholic Monarchist Marquis de La Tour du Pin, who was close to Maurras.
- 128. Charles Maurras, *L'idée de décentralisation* (Paris: Revue encylopédique, 1898).

- 129. Judet was well known as a violent critic of Dreyfus and the novelist Émile Zola, the author of *Paccuse*.
 - 130. Maurras, 1898, paraphrasing Judet, L'idée de decentralization, 43-44.
 - 131. Ibid.
 - 132. Ibid., 30.
 - 133. Ibid.
 - 134. Ibid.
 - 135. Ibid., 31.
 - 136. Ibid., 31-32.
- 137. See, for commentary, Robert Soucy, Fascism in France: The Case of Maurice Barrès (Berkeley: University of California, 1972); and, Edouard Ousselin, Invention of Europe in French Literature and Film (London: Palgrave Macmillan, 2016).
- 138. Others who have ignored Lasserre's warning include Stanley Grossman, who called Déat's totalitarian organicism an extension of an alleged Durkheimian corporatism. See "L'évolution de Marcel Déat," *Revue d'histoire de la deuxième guerre mondiale* 25 (1975), 26; cited by Desan & Heilbron, "Young Durkheimians," 6. And Philippe Burrin, *La dérive fasciste* (Paris: Editions du Seuil, 1986). Stoetzler, meanwhile, agrees with Mitchell (106) that Durkheim "foreshadowed what . . . Maurras has been pleased to call 'integral nationalism.' It is not a far step, from a conception of the nation as the supreme reality, and humanity as the highest ideal, to one in which the nation fulfills the requirements of both" (Stoetzler, 34, n. 34).
 - 139. Desan and Heilbron, "Young Durkheimians," 21.
 - 140 Ibid 4
- 141. Stoetzler, 7. "It is notable that Ranulf's discussion . . . does not mention antisemitism; as antisemitism has over the past decades been recognized as central at least to the German Nazi variety of fascism, the exploration of antisemitism seems a good vantage point to reopen the discussion."
- 142. Stoetzler, 17. Stoetzler stresses that, unlike Ranulf, he regards Durkheim as ambivalent about individualism, not simply critical (7). That would appear to make Durkheim, in part at least, a forerunner of many strands of postwar liberalism.
 - 143. Ibid., 69
- 144. Ibid., 55. Stoetzler adds that, according to Durkheim, "everyone thought and lived alike" among the Jews and that "individual divergences were made almost impossible . . . Judaism, like all early religions, consists basically of a body of practices minutely governing all the details of life and leaving little room to individual judgment" (Ibid., 38, citing *Suicide*, 160). But it is also pertinent

to note that Durkheim explained modern Jewish unity largely as a response to antisemitism: "the reproach to which the Jews have for so long been exposed by Christianity has created unusual feelings of solidarity among them. Their need of resisting a general hostility . . . has forced them to strict union among themselves"; "everywhere in a very small minority" and "facing the hostility of the surrounding populations," Jews "are obliged to exert severe control over themselves" to defy and deflect persecution. Such "rigorous discipline" is thus not a failure to adapt to modernity but a response to ostracism and defamation. And Durkheim adds that this discipline reveals pride and strength of character, not cultural backwardness: "When one feels himself an object of inescapable hostility, one abandons the idea of conciliating it, and is the more resolute in his most unpopular observances." Durkheim, *Suicide*, 159–60; 156–57.

- 145. Ibid, 77. Besides *Suicide*, Stoetzler cites "Individualism and the Intellectuals" (1898) and "La science positive de la morale en Allemagne," *Revue Philosophique* 24, 1887: 33–284.
- 146. Durkheim's views were also "not entirely dissimilar" from Jaurèsian socialism, Renouvier's neocriticism, Jane Ellen Harrison's "Cambridge Ritualism," and so on. But that, of course, does not implicate these schools of thought in antisemitism or mean that Durkheim should share the blame for any errors they may have committed.
- 147. Drumont wrote, in 1886: "Without rancor or hatred, in the spirit of sociology and psychology, I seek to examine the debased condition into which France has fallen. . . . My mission as a sociologist is to show people as they are." (cited by Stoetzler, 1). This shows, Stoetzler says (8), that "antisemites were fully aware and also part of the emerging new way of talking and thinking about the new society."
 - 148. Stoetzler, 69.
- 149. Stoetzler devotes less than two pages to the claim that Durkheim demonizes Spencer with an "impulse" akin to that of antisemites. Most of what he says in these pages consists of severe *obiter dicta* about Durkheim's coherence. Nothing is proven about antisemitism or demonology. Instead, Stoetzler calls one of Durkheim's points "a *non sequitur*," another "dubious," another "rather unsociological," and Durkheim's point of view, in general, "rather Spencerian, teleological [and] deterministic." He adds that Durkheim "paraded" the "liberal (and socialist) belief in the irreversibility and linearity of progress" (70).
- 150. Stoetzler, 77. He adds a comment here that echoes Ranulf on another level as well: "Why does any of this matter? Part of the thrust of my argument is that Spencer and the economists need to be defended against the wrong kind of critique."

- 151. Ibid., 32–33, n. 17. For now, I will set aside Stoetzler's other epistemic premises, which take this form: "society . . . expresses itself in the utterances of the speakers and gives them meaning and resonance beyond their *specific* contexts as long as the *general* context . . . remains the same"; and therefore, writers can "reflect on what it is in society that 'thinks' and 'speaks' *through* him or her" and assume "at least some" responsibility for acting as society's "mouthpiece." Interestingly, these two claims resemble a viewpoint which is often wrongly credited to Durkheim.
- 152. These are the opening lines of Smith, "Slashing at Water with a Knife?," 165.
- 153. Durkheim's most egregious departures from sociological thinking appear in his painfully stereotyped comments on gender in *Suicide*.
 - 154. Suicide, 368.
 - 155. Ibid., 378.
- 156. Deutschland über alles. For further comments on this text and related subjects, see David Norman Smith, "Genocide," in the Encyclopedia of Sociology, eds., Edgar F. Borgatta and Rhonda Montgomery (New York: Macmillan, 2000), 1066–73; and, David Norman Smith, "The Rhetoric and Reality of 'Mass Destruction': How Genocide Became an International Social Problem," in The Handbook of Social Problems: A Comparative International Perspective, ed., George Ritzer (Beverly Hills: Sage, 2004), 368–88.
- 157. Émile Durkheim, "Preface to the Second Edition: Some Remarks on Professional Groups," in *The Division of Labor in Society*, trans. W. D. Halls (New York: The Free Press, 1984).
 - 158. Ibid., xxxii.
- 159. Ibid., xxxii. "Such anarchy," he adds, "runs counter to the very purpose of society, which is to eliminate or at least to moderate warfare among men..."
 - 160. Ibid., xxxii.
 - 161. Ibid., xxxii-iii.
 - 162. Ibid., xxxv.
 - 163. Ibid., xxxviii.
 - 164. Ibid., xxxv-vi.
 - 165. Ibid., xxxvii.
 - 166. Ibid., xxxix.
 - 167. Ibid., xxxiv.
 - 168. Ibid., lii.
 - 169. Ibid., liii.
 - 170. Ibid., liv.

- 171. Ibid., liv.
- 172. Ibid., liv.
- 173. Ibid., 319. (This is from the main text of Halls's translation of *The Division of Labor in Society*, not, in this one instance, from the preface to the second edition.)
 - 174. Ibid., lv.
 - 175. Ibid., lvi.
 - 176. Ibid., lvi.

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