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**THE SOCIAL OCCUPATIONS OF MODERNITY:
PHILOSOPHY AND SOCIAL THEORY
IN DURKHEIM, TARDE, BERGSON AND DELEUZE**

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requirements for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy

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For Barbara and Sarah

TABLE OF CONTENTS

	Page
ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS	3
DECLARATION	3
ABSTRACT	4
PROLOGUE - Occupations	5
INTRODUCTION - Social Ontology: Occupations, Modernity and The Contemporary	21
 PART I - THE SOCIAL WHOLE AND THE SOCIAL PART	 38
Ch. 1 - Durkheim's Conception of the Social Necessity of Modernity	39
Ch. 2 - Social Quantity and Difference	67
Ch. 3 - Tarde's Ontology of the Social Particular	84
Ch. 4 - The Sociologisms of Durkheim and Tarde: A Comparative Evaluation	113
 PART II - THE OUTSIDE	 132
Ch. 5 - Bergson's Social Thought as an Alternative to Sociologism	133
Ch. 6 - Deleuzian Social Philosophy: The Horde and Revolutionary Desire	179
 CONCLUDING CHAPTER - Social Need as Occupational: Toward an Ontology of Modern Time and Space	 224
 BIBLIOGRAPHY	 269

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DECLARATION

This thesis is all my own work and contains all original material, and has not been submitted for a degree at any other university.

ABSTRACT

This thesis explores the relationship between occupations and the ontology of the social. I begin by drawing a distinction between the messianic and the modern as concentrated in the affective transformation of vocation into occupation. I then, in the Introduction, sketch an ontic-ontological contrast proper to the modern, between modernity, as the collective problematization of social diversity, and the contemporary, as the plural ground of need which provides a source for these problematizations. I argue that this distinction will enable me to shed new light on the occupational as a distinctly modern event.

In Part I, I begin by providing a reading of Durkheim in which I argue that the occupational is to be understood ontologically, but no longer by means of the theorization of society and social types. This kind of theorization, exemplified in Durkheim's concept of solidarity, contains a fundamental ambiguity between this concept's ontological senses of original diversity and of unity in diversity. Durkheim's thought is thus first intelligible in terms of an implicit evolutionary sense of coherence or 'need of wholeness.' However, the explicit evolutionary framework and its central typological difference between the mechanical and organic is an attempt to resolve the ambiguity that must fail because it addresses primarily a distinction of obligation rather than a distinction of need. Obligation is shown to be a concept of facticity which overcodes and obscures the distinction of need. I then go on to argue that sociality can be better accounted for in terms of a continuity of social becoming which is revealed in a perspective of modernity purged of the modernist tendency to metaphorize this continuity in terms such as 'solidity' (Durkheim) and 'flow' (Tarde). This perspective is the irreducibly plural perspective of the contemporary, which, I conclude Part I by suggesting, lies in a sense of merging with a social outside.

In Part II, I turn to investigate the outside by discussing the social thought of Bergson and Deleuze. Bergson's thought is presented as an alternative to the deductive-sociologistic approaches of Durkheim and Tarde, because it attempts to critically affirm the smooth duration of social continuity. However, I argue that the notion of 'open society' that Bergson presents is still too tied to a model of rare spirituality and hence to the messianic perspective. I then proceed to a social-theoretical analysis of Deleuze's *oeuvre*, in order to show how he uses elements of a thought of continuity from Tarde (microsociology) and from Bergson (multiplicity), but that he is able to transcend the family-model-centeredness of Tarde and the rare-spiritual-model-centeredness of Bergson, by theorizing non-modelled figures of transformative affective multiplicity inscribed within the actual, ie. 'full particularities'.

In my concluding chapter, I show how the intellectual trajectory which takes us from Durkheim to Deleuze can be analysed as a movement from a doctrine or relatively passive notion of social externality towards a more active social image of the outside. In particular, I am concerned to show how this image of the outside can be re-contextualized in terms of a movement of occupation that can be thought of as always combining a sense of the contemporary with a sense of modernity.

PROLOGUE:
OCCUPATIONS

The bourgeoisie has stripped of its halo every occupation hitherto honoured and looked up to with reverent awe. It has converted the physician, the lawyer, the priest, the poet, the man of science, into its paid wage-labourers (Marx and Engels 1982: 11).

One can think of the halo...as a zone in which possibility and reality, potentiality and actuality, become indistinguishable. The being that has reached its end, that has consumed all of its possibilities thus receives as a gift a supplemental possibility. This is...a fusional act, insofar as specific form or nature is not preserved in it, but mixed and dissolved in a new birth without residue. This imperceptible trembling of the finite that makes its limits indeterminate and allows it to blend, to make itself whatever, is the tiny displacement that every thing must accomplish in the messianic world (Agamben 1993: 55).

Why does Marx speak of *halos* in relation to ‘the bourgeoisie’, which is, after all, for him the most natural emblem of modernity? There is something about the nexus of elements which are included in every case, in every stage, of transformation from tradition to modernity that has a structure antithetical to that of halos. As

Agamben points out, the halo is evidence of whatever is *made*, of accomplishments, as it were, in this world; but which are at the same time something *sui generis*, something perfect, something whole, or at least intrinsically worthy, as Marx says, of honour and awe. Modernity brings about a destruction of the halo, but a preservation of the form; a preservation of the occupation, but a destruction of its capacity to constitute original, intrinsically valuable action.

This is all from the point of view, as Agamben puts it, of the messianic world. Marx and Engels were concerned, in the Communist Manifesto (1848) in which this quotation appears, to a large degree with establishing the outlines of a stage theory of history, in which modernity is a progressive accomplishment of the bourgeois and working classes. Perhaps, however, as with Walter Benjamin's conception of history, the spiritual impulse which dominates in the messianic world is not completely alien to the modern world. As Benjamin puts it, "the class struggle, which is always present to a historian influenced by Marx, is a fight for the crude and material things without which no refined and spiritual things could exist" (1973: 246). And, indeed, for Hannah Arendt, in The Human Condition, the rising paradigm of "the society of jobholders" in the post-industrial societies which succeeds the paradigms of work and labour could still be construed primarily as a signification of the loss of the creative locus and the intrinsic worth of action: "to let go...to abandon...individuality, the still individually sensed pain and trouble of living, and acquiesce in a dazed, 'tranquillized,' functional type of behavior" (1998: 322). Marx's heading of 'class struggle' is intended as a way of expressing the raising of the occupational into the context of the problem of consciousness and self-consciousness, into that context by which is revealed the intrinsic capability of the occupational agent to know itself as labour which has the potential to become 'for-

itself' or revolutionary. For Marx, occupation cum labour is the key social transformation within capitalism that contains the means to its overthrow. The problem of labour thus becomes distinguished from and emphasized over the problem of occupation. Perhaps one could define 'vulgar' Marxism by the way it sees this relation as a victory for labour through an at least conceptual overcoming of the occupational. Nonetheless, the 20th-century has forced us to recognize that such could never be more than a hollow victory because the occupational level of socialization has been continuously problematic, unmitigated by class consciousness, and resistant to periodization.

It is as if the occupational has been to capital and labour what in 20th-century and current philosophy ontology has been to epistemology – an ineliminable ground of concern over modernist optimism. We shall never know whether or not Marx really did hesitate over this optimism. There is enough of a question over it, at any rate, to suggest that the social and the philosophical registers are probably neither identical nor in opposition with one another as Marx often suggested. Rather, the evidence suggests that they are curiously parallel. A constant in critical social theory is that occupations – the social needs of work, labour, activities, practices, considered broadly – are held to be at the cutting edge, the creative and the destructive edge, of modernity. The glow of prestige that still often surrounds the occupational, like the chance that philosophers can still seize upon to make a role for themselves as philosophers, indicate for us that Marx was exaggerating when he said that the occupation could ever be completely 'stripped' of its halo, or that philosophy could ever be completely surpassed. Even in Marx's own theorization of capital, what is surely of primary significance is never the final separation, but rather always the interface, in abstract labour, in social practices, of myth and machine. At any rate

modernity, if it at all continues, as we think it does, is patently an initiative which still needs to be enacted occupationally; and occupation is, as we seem to be able to infer, a pursuit which is in search of a halo – or at least some recognition larger than mere pay. If in this sense that which is for-itself is to become, once more, in-itself, it is then no accident that at the same time philosophy is still required to sort out the distinction between ontology and epistemology in order to clear room, as it were, for ontology. Thus, we could say that, in modernity, philosophy is as much a need as occupation, inasmuch as philosophy, or at least some way of distinguishing between existences and essences, is precisely needed in order to account for the enigma of an occupational mode of socialization which has become an end in itself but which can no longer be conceived as a process revolving around distinct valued vocations.

Perhaps one of the most important points causing this confusion is that it is an error to describe to ourselves the relationship between the messianic and the modern as a transition, especially when by transition is understood succession. Far from capturing the essence of modern dynamism and change, surely ‘transition’ and ‘succession’ rather denote a quite rigid imposition of the perspective of one world upon another. What would be denoted here is the perspective of the messianic world imposed upon modernity, a point of view centered in and sustained by concerns over that which is yet to come and hopes for the recovery of that which is lost. On this basis one can only infer a negative, phantasmatic, ‘end-of’ definition of modernity, as when Gianni Vattimo speaks of an accomplished nihilism in terms of the ‘end of modernity’ (1991). The danger here – to follow for a moment this deracinated language of teleology – is the obfuscation of modernity as a variety of means and problems which need to be specified. Of course, on the other hand, against this danger, the theory of history of the Communist Manifesto, qua the organization and

selection of historical materials, cannot be read in any simple way as objective. It is, in large part, a function of the inclusive internal trajectory of Marx's career in social thought, from his philosophical investigations to his social theory of capital.

The orientation of critical social thought points to the opening of at least one major possibility: modernity can be interrogated, in the multiple modes in which it exists, as an unforeseen movement, both in- and for-itself – as 'pure', so to speak. But this possibility must come together with a necessary two-fold qualification, namely, that this interrogation cannot be conceived as the outcome of any 'overarching' or 'underlying' motivations, such as the 'high' motivation to establish an objective social theory as a basis for policy statements, or the 'low' motivation to gain the great pleasure and camaraderie that philosophy can bring (or vice versa). Rather, it has to be conceived as an attempt which needs both philosophy and social theory to work towards a more accurate, flexible, and contemporary definition of social practices.

The greatest temptation at such a juncture of questions concerning modernity has perhaps been the impulse of positivism, or broadly speaking the impulse to posit one modernity that would be 'pure' inasmuch as it would unify experience by constituting a set of criteria which could help us to select and determine that which we can and ought to ask about the social and our practices. In 1958 Arendt summarized the case against contemporary projects of social scientific determination succinctly when she noted that "the conditions of human existence – life itself, natality and mortality, worldliness, plurality, and the earth – can never 'explain' what we are or answer the question of who we are for the simple reason that they never condition us absolutely" (1998: 11). Arendt has been proven correct.

However, today, after the critique of positivism, in a situation in which we have also pushed the critique of knowledge itself to its limit, we have arrived at a general 'post-modern' point of view. Here it has, indeed, begun to seem desirable to turn again towards understanding the organization of our social practices. Thus we might now add the following qualification: such determination is undesirable not so much because it purports to do something to all of life – to totalize, to explain – that it is unable to do. Rather, our perspective today is more that the unduly narrow perspective evoked here, together with the stunted architecture of social systems that results from it, are increasingly revealed to be intimately related to a retrospective, nostalgic orientation – “the presence of the past in a present that supercedes it but still lays claim to it,” in the words of Marc Augé (1995: 75). This is an orientation through which one attempts to alleviate the need to *place* determinable problems in the context, not just of life-as-a-whole, but more specifically in life-as-it-faces-onward: thus leading to the rise of 'non-places', or pockets of comfort and security, in the airport, the shopping mall etc., in *non-symbolized space*, by which the image of the future is conflated with the process of contractual relations (Augé 1995). As Augé puts it, “try to imagine a Durkheimian analysis of a transit lounge at Roissy!” (1995: 94). This complex of '*super-modernity*', is, in Augé's reckoning, today the problem that is at the cutting-edge, no longer just of marginal studies of culture, but of *anthropology* taken in terms of the usual broad definition of the study of humankind (1995).

The problem of occupations, spilling over as it naturally does into the problem of the occupying of space, is a formulation of the problem of defining social practices that is no longer a problem of social fact but rather a problematization *per se* inherent in all problems that press upon us in the urgent terms of the actual –

unexpected problematizations that are each in themselves the very essence of the perspective of modernity in- and for-itself, ie. multiple modernities. Today these personal and impersonal problematizations owing to the brutal continuity of the actual, these jarring distinctions we create between places and non-places for example, these are such that they rise above determination-oriented ways of posing the problem of social life. But this is certainly not because the actual is shaped through them into total institutions that dominate our lives to an oppressive degree, as if the latter were absolute powers, born as such simply through their longevity or persistence of existing. Already in the 1950s Sartre decries a pervasive “spirit of seriousness,” in which “man pursues being blindly by hiding from himself the free project which is this pursuit. He makes himself such that he *is waited for* by all the tasks placed along his way” (1994: 626). It is surely no accident that the contemporary 1950s western vocational model of social life had begun to crack under the pressure not just of the wars but of the post-war transformation of industry, and that it became increasingly felt that this historical development had to be related somehow back to ontology. Just a decade later and ontology is a full-blown western cultural preoccupation, though now, perhaps quite predictably, one related rather increasingly to a ‘lightness of being,’ as Kundera put it, which could then feel just as difficult to adjust to as the heavy hand of institutions (1984).

Our occupations have become more and more intimately and consciously related to our questions concerning ontology. They have proven themselves increasingly co-extensive with our entire social lives, amenable and a familiar sight in non-places as well as the usual places. In this they have become pursuits that are always necessary and occasionally sufficient, but never, as with the image of the total institution, such as that of the old-model ‘full-time job’, always necessary and always

sufficient. Now our contemporary occupations can be among the most serious aspects of social life *at the same time* as being the least serious of such aspects. Make no mistake, in both of these simultaneously heavy and light aspects they are necessary, as well as sufficient in the context of the case. But they can, for us, as Sartre seemed to prophesize, precisely never again be the *only serious* side of social life, the only source, guarantee, or 'base' of a rational sufficiency. Of course, however, we have learnt this not from an existentialism which dawns once and for all after the dark age of the war, but rather from ontological studies which over the whole 20th-century gradually increase in richness, variety, and precision of approach.

Occupations are today specifically and immediately significant, but will never again be generally and vaguely so. This is a result of the irreducible diversity of occupations which now traverse both places and non-places. To be sure, both places and non-places are subordinate to the general and vague category of space as that which is constituted by the activity of occupation. But I would suggest that it would be simplistic to conceive of occupations as the spatial modalities of practices. That which is constituted by something is not necessarily its essential feature. This is the case here: from the perspective of the question of social practices, as distinct from the perspective of an anthropology of supermodernity, but from within its historical point of view, the question of space has to be posed as a question of something other than space, and not, as we might suspect, just as an abstract binary opposition between attributes of placeness or non-placeness. We must be able to do justice to a diversity of media of practices as well as a diversity of practices.

That which must help us to frame the question of space, that which gives the latter meaning, is movement. The relevance of movement to questioning individuals

emerges, more than ever today, vis-a-vis occupational change. The question of the occupational then becomes more and more, as it ought to be, a properly ontological question concerning social practices. There is one key philosophical approach today which sets ontology into the context of social practices. However, this approach sees this process of contextualization as primarily a way of analysing and clarifying the social background of certain recognizable political positions. For example, for Charles Taylor, “ontological questions concern what you recognize as the factors you will invoke to account for social life” (1990: 181). According to Taylor, “any good ontological thesis” is simply a way to “structure the field of possibilities in a more perspicuous way” (1990: 183). For me there is something that is too hasty in this privileging of the terms of ‘possibility’ and ‘recognition’, something which results in a tendency to reduce the question of ontology to a question of debates between, as Taylor puts it, “atomists” and “holists” (1990: 181). I do not believe that one can extend to the ontological the political concept of ‘position’ in order to show how any given political position has a deeper level.

In my view it is the relative indeterminacy of the occupational, not a relative determinacy of political positions, that gives rise to the question of ontology. The occupational and the mode of ever more frequent change it evokes involves a shared social concern which, as such, means that the occupational is precisely not reducible to a set of positions. Similarly, for earlier thinkers the *vocation* involved an element of value which meant for them that the vocation could not be reducible to a mere job. But what is perhaps even more to the point, contra Taylor, is that for these earlier thinkers the value of one’s vocation was precisely a value derived directly from its constituting a source of self-existential illumination in the face of the perceivedly dehumanizing effects of analytical proofs of various types of existence. As Johann

Fichte put it in The Vocation of Man at the very beginning of the 19th-century, “that cause of my being and the determination of my being *outside myself*, the expression of which was further determined by causes *outside it* – that was what repelled me so vehemently” (1987: 20. Author’s original italics.).

For such a romanticist as Fichte, the project of classifying beings involves the over-determination of being, and this involves the constitution of an outside which is essentially understood as the observed, or as the fragmented elements of a gaze which diverts attention from the question of value. That is why Fichte holds that

man is not a product of the sensible world, and the final purpose of his existence cannot be attained in it. His vocation goes beyond time and space and everything sensible. He must know what he is and what he is to make of himself. As his vocation is lofty, so his thought too must be able to rise entirely above all limits of sensibility. He must have an obligation to this; where his being is at home, there necessarily his thought will also be at home (1987: 114).

For the apparently cold and merely comparative concept of position, thus, a Fichtean conception of vocation might substitute the warm and more humanistic concept of home.

But would not this latter proposition involve simply a replacement of a value-neutral term with a value-loaded one? Would not both conceptions, Taylor’s and Fichte’s, in this sense, refer the ontological question of the occupational ultimately to the question of value? It is because occupations are related to our questions concerning ontology that we have traditionally defined occupations more as

vocations than as transitions, successions, or mechanical changes. But we add to definitions of occupations, inasmuch as we compare them and contrast them with vocations, the aura of value, use-value, the ‘highest values’, or even indeed exchange-value, the simulacral condition of ‘communication’. I believe this focus upon value is outdated and misleading, but perhaps more importantly, that it does not do justice to our practices of modernity. It is only from a retrospective point of view that occupations could, with such means, be determined, even if only in terms of the minimal essence of being the ‘origin of modern diversity’. This is illustrated particularly clearly in Fichte’s approach to philosophy. Fichte’s approach is novel to the extent that he explicitly relates the question of ontology to the question of vocational form and movement, but Fichte’s aim is to use this novel ontological problematic as again only another way to capture, re-integrate, own, and dominate the outside, and thus not at all to think the outside: “this form, this peculiar movement, this thinking, in harmony with each other, this persistence of all those essential properties amid a variety of accidental changes, are mine so far as I am a being of my species” (1987: 13). And, in Fichte’s words,

I want to have an inner peculiar power to express myself in an infinitely varied manner, just like those forces of nature, a power that expresses itself just as it expresses itself for no other reason than simply that it expresses itself in that way; but not, as with those forces of nature, that it just happens to occur under those external circumstances (1987: 21).

Such a necessary articulation of being from a gratuitously personal point of view shows that any Fichtean conception of diversity could never transcend egoism,

anthropocentrism, and a kind of nostalgic desire of nature. What is implied is a sequence of separation from one's sensible, familiar surroundings, then a nostalgic articulation of desire-being, and eventually a kind of return to a discovered vocational 'home'. Such a point of view might have been laudable two hundred years ago, but today it would be seen as sedentary, impractical, and untenable.

I think that what is at stake in modernity for us, for our questions concerning ontology, is an element that our own sense of the contemporary impresses upon us, and this element is an occupational event of a rather different nature. This event is not essentially a process of self-grounding amidst a project of classifying nature and determining the categories of being. However, what is intriguingly continuous with older conceptions is that our occupational event still takes place by constituting and involving a sense of an outside. Without being deterministic, our contemporary occupational event is nevertheless not essentially a structure of possibility. Value expectations have decreased more than they have increased. On the other hand, the contemporary occupational event is decreasingly a mode of dialogue with a description of what is essentially a static position. It is also decreasingly a cyclical movement of departure for work and return home. And yet the contemporary occupational event is still that through which one puts one's life, qua affects-motivations, in all the plurality of the latter, directly at stake in the social milieu, and this, at least for me, still makes it a movement of modernity. But it is today a movement outward which constitutes and reconstitutes a variety of flexible practices which are stronger precisely when they do not apply themselves toward a return to the same.

Thus, in my view, ultimately, today, it is for practical reasons relating to the indeterminacy of boundary constitution, and no longer primarily for normative-

identity reasons which could be upset by simulation, that our occupations cannot be *determined vis-a-vis* what *is* as if what *is* is only what appears. Occupations, have, as Marx put it, 'lost their halo', which means we have lost the belief that being and appearance are not always already identical. This means that their contours, just like those of a waiting lounge filled with lap-top users, can no longer be understood as signs or hypothetical determinations of what *would be* intrinsically worthy action, since in any case as such they would be, after all, if 'would be' made any sense here, only enactments of hope and concern for, in Agamben's formulation, whatever. Surely we have passed the point in which that naiveté would go unchallenged that would consist in assuming that in a perfect world occupations would appear as whatever, as a happily trivial infinite variety of practices, or as the mode of random information linkage among agents of a 'cyberdemocracy'. We now just as often tend to link the practical with a sense of problematization in which we feel ourselves 'unplugged,' or wandering outside of our usual links to standard resources. I would contest the cyberneticist notion that we more than ever tend to link the practical with the informative in the illusory interiority of simulated environments. The latter, in fact, can be read as only a last-ditch attempt to over-code or unify in some way the practical, an attempt which was, in this sense, fated to offer more than it could deliver.

On the other hand, to be sure, the concerns of philosophy and occupation have been converging for a long time now. Indubitably, a new kind of ontological investigation will be required to account for this odd new symbiosis between philosophy and occupation which contrasts so sharply with the rigid separation between them assumed by the ancient Greeks. Despite our new modalities of practice, the problem of the social as an ontological problem presses upon us, and is

virtually guaranteed to continue to do so, due to the distinctions we continue to make, as the Greeks did, between our *motivations* and our *occupations*. But these distinctions, for better or worse, are no longer established in external political arenas, or in any situations for that matter in which it might be supposed that ideally philosophers, politicians, soldiers, and workers could mingle and determine their differences. Rather, these distinctions are now intrinsic to our practices and are formulated 'in the course of the job', so to speak. If certain corporate interests have aimed to create a public illusion that there is no longer any possibility for this even in the course of our practices, but at the same time have privately held on to the distinction between the manager and the managed, henceforth the problem has become one of preventing the conflation of our motivations and our occupations *at the same time* as preventing their alienation. This has been the *raison d'être* of the occupational point of view in social theory which continues despite the decline of the industrial inflection this discussion used to have.

If here and now it is true that there can be no pre-established social agenda, nor even a question of a desire for an informal spirit of fellowship, it is also true that managers as well as the managed have come to have misgivings about this situation. But to see only a form of universal alienation here would be to distort the real problem. Alienation is only a problem where a messianic perspective dominates: in, for example, the 'early Marx'. What kind of purchase could such a conception have in an increasingly post-managerial world? There is, of course, the apparent alternative of 'self-management.' But perhaps the solution of 'self-management' is only a novel type of a more traditional process that has an essentially messianic structure: individual purification in anticipation of the ever-to-come manifestation of a judging, God-like power; but with the difference that this time the God-like power

is 'change' considered abstractly as an inevitable force, and the 'judgment' is rather a selection of the strong over the weak.

In the question of the definition of our social practices, for me there is only one real source of continuity and only one real priority that social theory, in our contemporary period, has to continually address: this is the complex problem, quite contrary to that of alienation, of our tendency to confuse the real, pressing, synthetic problem of the conflation of our motivations and our occupations with the theoretical, deferrable, hypothetical problem of the immanence of both in the constitution of an impersonal, social modernity. Our problem today is to a large extent one of the difficulties of perspective itself, when the situation we seem to have arrived at seems to have eliminated any chance of seeing things anew. Every problem requires a distinct perspective that is needed in order to investigate and address that problem. So even to formulate the problem becomes part of the problem.

We have arrived at a unique, unforeseen complex of issues: to address the bad impulsive faith of self-purification, or more generally the conflation of our motivations and our occupations today, we need to avoid being overly frightened of Marx's warning that this conflation is accomplished and that the differential conditions of social agency have collapsed. What we need is to carefully and positively examine the possibility that this new problem brings of a new perspective upon modernity as in- and for-itself the process of the constituting of problems, as problematization; the question of how the sources of these problems, our affective multiplicities, that we traditionally see as limited to individual cognition and hence, ultimately, to mere possibility, might actually have the function of constituting, in the actual process of problematization itself, a new post-vocational sense of occupational

continuity; the question of whether this continuity, as a partly impersonal, partly unconscious, synthesizing process, could be encountered in a sense of exteriority that would be any different from that by which older 'realistic' social facts were identified; and finally the question of whether or not there is any new means here to assert a new paradigm, a new plane of consistency, for social theory based upon the pursuit of understanding the explosion of social diversity.

INTRODUCTION

SOCIAL ONTOLOGY:

OCCUPATIONS, MODERNITY, AND THE CONTEMPORARY

Occupations are intimately related to the question of a new modern attitude to life. The study of them thus cannot begin with any simple way of thinking about social existence. There are, in the history of philosophy and social theory (and not coincidentally in the history of the rivalrous relations between the latter, a point which will become significant below) some important precursors for the unusual outlook required to penetrate the problem of occupations. The case of Emile Durkheim's thought, grounded as it is in his seminal The Division of Labour in Society, is of key importance. Durkheim will always play a role in helping us to think through the relation between occupations, modernity, and social ontology. Hence, Durkheim's thought will play a central role in this thesis.

Above all, it was Durkheim who submerged himself into a life-long study of the reasons for the fact that to identify ready-made images of objectified modernity, images that depend upon manifestation at some point, is not a possible option in the study of modern movements. Such images will by definition always be 'out of date.' 'Manifestation' and 'modernity' are at odds with each other. This is Durkheim's great ontological thesis, the operation that for him links the occupational with the

paradigm of philosophical rationalism. Modernity has a reality that is more real, more felt, more powerful, than any object. Objectifications will always lead us away, not towards, a rapprochement with our real senses of modernity, those senses, those affects, that are inescapable, as well as culpable. But now, for Durkheim, also, an objectification is a way of perceiving a resemblance in an image through a mode of contemplation in which each consciousness blends into others and action has collapsed into itself and become merely mechanical. The division of labour, the system of occupations, becomes then, for him, a surpassing of this mechanical mode and a bearing towards an organic wholeness which would become, precisely, modernity in- and for-itself. What is meant here is that Durkheim sees modernity as an evolving and expanding organic paradigm, not as an omnipotent force. This is evident where Durkheim claims that social formations of modernity and of tradition can, will, and do co-exist.

Here we ought to, for the time being, turn away from investigations of the way our practices presuppose utilizations and confrontations of the messianic perspective: investigations, for example, into identification, inter-subjectivity, and deconstruction. All of these three styles of social investigation – for example in their Freudian/diagnostic, Habermasian/communicative, and Derridean/post-structuralist formulations – all three of these approaches assume that the task of social inquiry is to open the present to an interrogation. They thus unduly privilege the messianic perspective. My aim is not to undermine the messianic perspective. Rather, I aim to investigate what will be at stake once we are to switch, as the pure perspective of modernity invites us to do, to thinking of ‘time as it is occupied’ instead of an ‘historical present which we must open’. There is no question of elimination here. The question will involve the past and the future in addition to the present. But it

will have its own dangers, and its own benefits, and perhaps also its own intellectual harbingers.

Above all, there will be an affinity here with the thought of Bergson and his successors, since it was Bergson's project to formulate a method of intuition that might finally become adequate to 'real time.' Furthermore, in his The Two Sources of Morality and Religion, a text that will figure prominently here, Bergson finally contextualized his project explicitly against, though as informed by, the Durkheimian problematique, with a view to intuiting an irreducible process of 'social openness' that takes place as if it were a volcano constantly erupting underneath Durkheimian categories. Understanding Bergson's social thought will involve re-reading Durkheim. As we shall see, Bergson's attempt to move beyond Durkheim does not, in fact, result in a clear break with Durkheim. I do not mean that I believe Bergson will be shown to be incorrect in his philosophical analysis of the power of creative destruction of social openness, or that this will not necessarily involve a turn away from the model of Durkheimian sociology. Rather, there is a certain *theoretical* insufficiency in Bergson's critique of Durkheim. This insufficiency lies in the fact that the notion of 'opening', no matter how irreducible and effective it is, nevertheless tends to presuppose rather than usefully re-theorize what Durkheim called 'the division of labour in society', ie. our occupations. I have thus come to believe that it is necessary to go back to reproblematicize Durkheim's conception of modernity as essentially a 'division of labour in society'. Philosophy and social theory must advance by seizing the opportunity to theorize rather than merely assume the occupations which, by constituting socially-necessary divisions which fracture and thus problematize the 'full' labour of the historical present, transcend the

subject of knowledge and his or her domain of presence. In this, these disciplines must pick up certain key and salient threads of the Durkheimian project.

To be sure, there is a difficulty inherent in the ‘positivist’ side of Durkheim’s approach. Despite his rationalism, his strategy is to take the social as a phenomenon, as a social fact. At the same time he wants to unveil *modern* social facts. But modernity, as we tend to recognize better today, is above all an unsettling process. Indeed I would hold that modernity is, in fact, not a phenomenon. For example, this is recognized in various critical approaches to the subject. The main insight of ‘critical theory’, for instance, has precisely been to explain why phenomena have to take only a secondary, illustrative part in the social theory of modernity. Critical theory has made it its own *raison d’être* to address the potential problems of objectification and totalization created by the use and abuse, particularly by Heideggerians, of descriptive phenomenology (see, eg., Adorno 1973). The only shortcoming of critical theory is, in my view, its neglect, not of ‘community theory,’ which is post-Heideggerian but still phenomenological, even if negatively so (see, eg., Blanchot 1988; Nancy 1991), but rather its neglect of taking any steps towards *non-phenomenological* social ontology (see, eg., Tarde 1903; Bergson 1977; Deleuze and Guattari 1984; 1988; and, as I will argue here, Durkheim 1984). For the latter perspective has risen as an investigative possibility in direct proportion to the decline in the paradigm of experience. If ‘survival in the outside’ is our new social paradigm – one which needs to be thoroughly confronted and challenged with all our critical and material forces – perhaps we should begin by recognizing that seeing the world only vis-a-vis the presence and absence, the negation, or even the deconstruction of ‘phenomena’ has communicated to the new paradigm, if not its method, its aim: get away from the storehouses, the offices, the branches of interiorizing contemplation,

and get to the things themselves, to the locale, to the basics: the message, which far from being contradicted is much rather clarified by these movements is not so much 'get back' as 'get out'. Vattimo, whose project is a rather intellectualist style of analysis of the *raison d'être* of postmodern thought, sees the latter embedded in the perspective of Nietzsche, whose work, according to him "fundamentally possesses this meaning... [that] the call that comes to us from the world of late modernity is a call for a *taking leave*" (1991: 29). This shift that would be at stake for a non-phenomenological social ontology is put in just as sharp terms by Gilles Deleuze when he asks: "why return to the primitives, when it is a question of our own life?" (1988: 209). What is at stake is a discourse of 'pure' modernity as a fully practical discourse of actors: the event of social relevance as a temporally inclusive, always problematical transformation from tradition to modernity, but always from the point of view of modernity in- and for-itself.

For when this pure, living sense of modernity is our point of view, we no longer conceive ourselves and our modernity as situated in 'the historical present,' a present for which roots and a future can still, if needed, provide alibis. Rather, life intimately involves need and living need is a fully contemporary question. It is, indeed, the question of the contemporary itself. Need will tend to clarify, in each case, the necessary characteristics of modernity. To speak of modernity in- and for-itself is never to speak of a new unity, such as to say that we have 'arrived at a full modernity' – this is precisely never the case. Rather, 'the contemporary' has come to usefully denote the ways in which modernity is able to control or not control the link in the present between feeling and practice which guides our sense of need. This clarity is the richness, the 'fullness' of the contemporary, and its distinction from modernity.

The 'contemporary' has come to include the future in the present rather than to compare the future with the past. That is to say, we have here a supple category which gathers together a future that is immediately felt without need of any intermediary objects of attraction, without need of intervening 'phenomena', or vague signs of that which was once inferior here or that which will be superior there. The contemporary, for us, tends more and more to denote a concatenation of disjointed relations whose minimal condition of coherence is a 'we are the future' denoted in the outward-projected energy by which social encounters become events.¹ The extent to which these events are controlled or not controlled is a useful measure of contemporary modernity. Or in other words, the contemporary, especially our contemporary, or the contemporary inasmuch as it provides a source of a novel sociality for us, denotes the possibility of a critical perspective upon the varieties of modernity. Here social ontology, under the heading of realism, has become veiled and obscure. But perhaps for this very reason social ontology is gathering potential to be revealed as more than ever the pre-eminent problem of modernity vis-a-vis the contemporary.

Again, the essence of that 'networking' – voluntary or coerced – which we are perhaps seeing rise to the status of a universal model for social relations does not lie in a 'work-a-day' anxiety to meet the demands of external pressures. Rather, the key to understanding contemporary modernity must surely be the realization of the

¹ We might consider that, for many of the up-and-coming youth of our western cultures, the 1980s rave culture and the 1990s club and festival cultures have held an increasing centrality of interest for their sophistication of organization which is at the same time a (dis)organization; and we might fruitfully consider how this festival culture is particularly attuned to events, such that, when it becomes political – inasmuch as it might help, for example, to provide the current phenomenon of 'anarchist' protest at world trade meetings with its unforeseen model of social and political interaction – the aspect of the political and the aspect of the event become inextricably intertwined. The relation between (dis)organization and festival events was suggested to me by Arun Saldanha in his presentation of his paper "(Dis)organization and the postcolonial politics of silence in Goa" at the

fact that ‘networking’ represents a decline in the modernist paradigm of ‘experience’ and a rise in the new modernist paradigm of ‘survival in the outside’. Indeed, social events are less and less documented with a view to experience. According to Kroker and Weinstein, “ours is a time of non-history... [where] nothing is ever really experienced, only processed through the ether-net of virtualized flesh, like an invisible acid rain of neutrinos blasting through the earth’s crust” (1994: 136). We rely less on deliberate actions understood through experience and judgement, and more on the creativity-through-necessity, the almost stoical ‘leanness’, that comes from being outside. The important distinction here is that modernism is always an attempt to over-code the ontological challenge of the contemporary, while we can think of modernity as the critical, problematic edge which challenges these over-codings and in the process imbues the contemporary with a particular critical *zeitgeist*.

Is the spirit of our times then based in a new and precarious balance between networking and cultural identity? I do not believe so. Cultural identity became a large-scale problem, a specific type of ‘problem of modernity’, around the middle of the 20th-century. At that time there seemed to be growing a stronger and stronger tendency of the individual to become separated, through various factors of an increasingly mediatized society, from his or her cultural context. This *relative* separation causes a major shared problem of identity and a re-questioning of individuality. The problem of identity, as such, seems to be a fixed, universal problem of modernity, since its proper redress is based in registers of experience, and experience is a neutral, universal fact – or seems to be. There were debates over the factual versus the hermeneutical sides of experience. But these debates were

eclipsed by the more long-term and seemingly irreversible ‘postmodern’ realization that the ‘capacity for experience’ needed to participate productively in society could not be distributed equally throughout the world’s societies by merely supposing it to be the essential grist of human nature.

For it has been the case that a very different kind of problem of modern difference gradually has come to the fore over that of cultural difference and has sometimes been confused with the latter. This simultaneously newer and older problem is that of our *complete* separation from our own cultures vis-a-vis a gradual dissipation of the 19th-century model of civilization as a higher-order family of human beings: the problem of ‘pure difference.’ Here is precisely where the problem of cultural difference cannot account for the attempts to fill this apparent void with various kinds of undesirable and peculiar projects of fascism, totalitarianism, and various other conformisms. The first half of the 20th-century was dominated by this confusion between these two orders of difference, while the second half has struggled with a great sense of frustration at times to extricate itself from it. It seemed a very serious assertion indeed in the 1960s when Herbert Marcuse, in One Dimensional Man, singled out “the threat of an atomic catastrophe” as a new contemporary force of unwanted unification and world domination under the nefarious heading of the pursuit of the mastery of nature, and when he claimed that “advanced industrial society becomes richer, bigger, and better as it perpetuates the danger” (1986: ix). However, Marcuse did not seem to notice the full implications of the fact that the driving force of an unwanted homogenization and conformism in society here precisely begins to become particularized, no longer in a mode of an identity claim, but rather in what he called “the defense structure” (1986: ix).

One could claim with some justification that it is precisely because of a growing and compelling internal distinction between modernity and what has now become clear is only one of its contingent attributes, ie. universality, that modernity is no longer conceivable, in grand style, as a *leviathan*, or a ‘monolith dominating our little identities’. In this context, it is interesting when Carl Schmitt points out that the reception of Hobbes’s symbol of the leviathan has always wavered between firstly taking it as the man-beast peculiarity that it appears as and secondly taking it as a reference to a reasoned political position on the apparently universal question of whether or not to have an authoritarian state. According to Schmitt,

although the enlightened humanitarian [of the 18th-century] could conceive of and admire the state as a work of art, the symbol of the leviathan as applied to the state appeared to his classical taste and sentimental feeling as a bestiality or as a machine turned into a Moloch that lost all the powers of a sensible myth and at first represented an externally driven lifeless ‘mechanism’ and then an animate ‘organism’ of a political contrast, an organism driven from within” (1996: 62).

Perhaps it is precisely because of the bloated and conspicuous nature of modernist institutions such as ‘the defense structure’ that today modernity is much more often taken as a particular, as a beast (which as a force of uncritical modernism it undoubtedly is,) rather than as a transparent, neutral and universal fact of progress.

But the question here is this: if modernity is now revealed to be a project of the particular, is there room only for fear and loathing or is there not also now a new

and more sober opportunity to analyse differences relative to particularities as distinct from differences relative to abstract universalist identifications? While efforts have been made to account for the problem of cultural identity within social theory as a *classic* problem of the theory of the modern, the problem of ‘pure difference’, a *contemporary* problem of the theory of the modern, has, in fact, lacked a social-theoretical context.² Is this simply due to social theory lagging behind changes in the real? I think it is rather because the vast majority of social theories up to now have relied more or less upon a classical ontology of the social in which social forms are determined in the last instance by reference to a ‘reality’ that by definition cannot include the future. Social theorists seem to have an inbuilt bias against the perspective of the contemporary. Social theorists have either pointed to apparently objective structural characteristics of societies and/or what seem to be patterns discerned in the numerical, extensive quantities of these characteristics, or they have pointed to the more or less open interpretation of the hermeneutical situation of the actor in relation to the symbolic phenomena of communication in socio-cultural contexts. Despite the internal struggles between such approaches, they have in common a deliberately narrow focus upon what could be called ‘the historical present.’ Everything earlier than the subject-matters they can theorize is thrown into the general, amorphous category of ‘tradition.’ Everything beyond these social subjects is either too prone to error to study, or ‘postmodernism’. The contemporary itself eludes social theorists.

Our task, since Marx, is understanding social occupations which, quite simply, is to specify the variations of modernity which give rise to images – such as

² There have of course been a number of social-theoretical studies of the *uncritical* responses, such as the response of totalitarianism, to the problem of pure or non-cultural difference (see in particular Arendt 1973), but studies of the more *critical* responses have been left to philosophers who only study

that of the outside – which link feeling and practice. The contemporary, inclusive of the plurality and contingency that Arendt speaks of, is this ground of ontology (1998: 11). My argument, in short form, will be this: if the doctrine of the externality of the social, such as we find in Durkheim, is in substantial terms the agent of the destruction of the plurality of modernities, the image of the outside which we can trace out of it is the always accompanying, but irreducible creative agent: the image *par excellence* of the modernity of work, labour, and all pursuits which we recognize as activities and feel as occupations. My aim is to raise occupations out of their stasis as mere units in an analysis of the division of labour which has become all too managerial and to demonstrate, perhaps more sharply this time, that they are the very processes of the dynamic transformations of contemporary modernity.

In my view, the common elements of these processes can helpfully be introduced and the process usefully reconstructed by means of drawing a certain trajectory of social thought from Durkheim through Gabriel Tarde and Henri Bergson to Gilles Deleuze. For each of these thinkers contributes something contemporary in their own context, but also something essential in the broader picture, to the understanding of this process. This particular trajectory as a whole assemblage is certainly not illustrative of a group of scholars who more or less agree, or even agree to disagree, with one another's premises – as we shall see, this is far from the case! The trajectory and the thesis as a unit is rather illustrative of a principle of the mutual inclusion of the destructive and the creative agents in modern social ontology, of the simultaneity of the over-bearing necessity and the under-determined contingency of cases of modernity. In a sense, I privilege Durkheim, because in my view his novel linkage of occupations and social ontology provides

the contemporary intellectual conditions under which the concept of community simply may or may not be disavowed (see Blanchot 1988 or Nancy 1991).

the most natural and provocative starting point for my analysis. But it is through a critical re-examination of the social theory of Durkheim, *only* in the comparative light of the uncompromising and varied *internal* challenges to the latter provided by Tarde, Bergson, and Deleuze, that we can, in my opinion, best show how these elements can be reconstructed to exhibit the process of modern becoming that occupations display.

Right from the initial inception of Durkheimian thinking, there was already a kind of basic, internal conflict which over time gradually developed: between a highly novel and successful Durkheimian social philosophy and its own quite unsuccessful, unfinished attempt to become a doctrinaire sociology. It is well known that the Durkheimian school's institutional objectives were concretely hampered by what could be called their interest, an interest which explains their disciplinary tactics and which is necessary to help explain the unusual strength of their positions with respect to epistemology, scientific methodology, metaphysics, and moral theory. In chapter one I compose a careful analysis of the ideas behind the interest of Durkheimian classical sociology using one of the key terms of Durkheim himself: as being directed primarily and positively towards an avowal of social 'solidarity'. As we shall see, 'solidarity' in the Durkheimian meaning is tantamount to a metaphysical and external substance. At the same time, however, it is a key term in a metaphorical kind of rhetoric indicative of Durkheim's investment in his strategy of focussing upon consolidated social facts. The words solidarity and consolidated even have the same root meaning relating to the notion of 'solidity', and this strategic symmetry of meaning is fully, intentionally consonant with Durkheim's ontological conception of sociology. They refer alike, one on the side of ontology, one on the side of methodology, to the ultimate basis, as he sees it, of sociality. As we know, in

the event of its communication such a doctrine easily proved unacceptable, as we might say, to all but the converted: the institutionalisation of Durkheimianism in France, though collectively sought, proved to be individually based in its material successes. Taken, as Durkheim took his doctrine, as itself a kind of sufficient reason for a nascent mode of French political socialization in the Third Republic, it proved to be completely chimerical.

But we can and we must distinguish between the important insight and the innovative methods which lead to a doctrine and the doctrine itself. We can – and this has been done and done well – analyse the clash between a more or less complete doctrine and the disciplines which it makes nervous by its very formulation and which it indeed attempts to colonize (economics, human geography, history, and psychology to name only a few). However, I would assert that what is also important but unaccounted for thus is the felt creativity of thought which leads to a new paradigm and how this mode of the conceptualization of the doctrine clashes with philosophy, if we understand the latter as a discipline that has a special interest in the criticism and careful production of creative conceptualizations of a higher-order, systematic nature. Thus I presume that there is a creativity of thinking, a Durkheimian social philosophy, which can be analytically isolated for these purposes of contrast. For on the more sociological side of social epistemology and methodology, a close and problematic relation of nascent sociology with philosophy would have to be a matter of assumption in any account of the continuing echo of Durkheimian premises in the contemporary social sciences. It would be hard, if not impossible, to question this assumption from within these discourses. A safe option might be to think of Durkheimianism being transported, as it were, across vast fields of disciplinary change on the back of the internal and external philosophical

criticisms of the sociology of knowledge and sociological epistemology. But anyone would have to admit that this metaphor, which ultimately conceals an ahistorical perspective, would have severe limitations if there should arise a need to ask such questions as how this Durkheimian social philosophy arises in the context of competition and cooperation with other contemporary intellectual models.

This need to set Durkheim's thought into the context of creative social thought dovetails with the need to understand Durkheim's affirmation of modernity in- and for-itself and the need to criticize his positivistic side. For there arises a problem with Durkheim's affirmation of this pure sense of modernity which becomes one of conflict between a social part predisposed to 'mechanical' inter-relations, the theory of which Gabriel Tarde develops, contra Durkheim, into a theory of creative-imitative practices; and the social whole, which Durkheim makes it his business to defend, contra Tarde, as a vital plane of existence indifferently constraining and influential over all of the practices of the social subject. There is then also a problem of inconsistency in Durkheim stemming from his rhetoric of solidarity/solidity, but also a problem with Tardian rhetoric which reacts against the former. The problem of this Durkheimian versus Tardian disjunction will dominate the concerns of the first part of this thesis.

The first part will contain four chapters. These chapters will naturally have as their subject-matter the classical social theories of Durkheim and Tarde. Tarde and Durkheim can be understood as rivals in a common project of the founding of sociology in France. My aim is to work towards a position in which I may formulate a comparative evaluation of their main sociological ideas. My goal is to identify a major error that I think they share in common, namely, the error of aiming to formulate a 'pure sociology'. As we shall see, 'pure sociology' is sociology that

takes for granted that the question of the social is a question of isolating the nature of social substance, in order to determine whether the essence of the social lies in the external constraint which occupations seem to be a vehicle for or whether it emanates from the nexus of motivations involved in the socializing self. My plan in chapter four is to clearly show the exact reasons why any such attempt at a 'pure sociology' must dissolve into mere sociologism. This will allow me to separate the issue of 'pure sociology' from the issue of 'pure modernity', to show how the latter, as an intrinsically ontological question and at the same time an intrinsically social question, is nevertheless not dependent upon pure sociological postulates.

The second part will deal with one way in which, in the trajectory of thought from Durkheim and Tarde to Bergson and Deleuze, there emerges a way of thinking ontologically and socially about modernity which is independent of the axioms of both philosophy and sociology, and which therefore injects new life into and a new rapprochement among the latter. This way of thinking rallies around the image of the outside. The image of the outside is of central significance, in different but related ways, in Bergson's and Deleuze's work.

After my discussion of pure sociology and sociologism, I will be able to move forward into a focussed discussion of Bergson's social thought, to begin part two. I shall investigate how Bergson identifies the weakness of Durkheimian and Tardian sociologisms as the way they oppose each other to form a kind of conundrum of completeness versus incompleteness. The focus will be upon the way Bergson, and Deleuze following Bergson, pose fundamental challenges to the categories invented by Durkheim and Tarde but also upon the way they do this from within the basic social-theoretical problem of how to account for the inescapability of the social in relation to individual thinking, knowing, and judging. Basically, my

aim, roughly from chapter four onwards, is to show that the apparent contradiction between 'opening' and 'closing' can be solved but that it has two major solutions which must be somehow set into cooperation with one another. Bergson's solution is one which intimately involves his whole philosophical work and particularly his critique of the spatial metaphor of time. But my discussion of Tarde and of Bergson will necessarily involve simultaneously beginning to introduce the second solution, which is my own attempt to link the concept of the outside with the concept of occupation.

My overall aim, then, in part two, is to show how the image of the outside is in fact introduced by Durkheim into social theory as its primary point of perspective, and that this image necessarily develops within social theory and peculiarly always at a critical tangent to sociologism. Thus, Bergson and Deleuze can be understood from within a perspective intrinsic to social theory, as long as the qualification is understood that philosophy is an essential part of their approach because it aids them in challenging the tendency towards representational closure in sociology. It is the development of the image of the outside, from a mere passive exteriority towards a more active sense of modern movement, that defines the trajectory that I will trace between the thought of Emile Durkheim and Gilles Deleuze, and Gabriel Tarde and Henri Bergson are read as key intermediaries in this connection.

In the concluding chapter I aim to have finally arrived at a position from which to sketch a positive analysis of the *dynamic process of social occupations as transformative variables of modernity*. I will do this by means of relating the process to the term, or terms, of the problem of the outside, that the latter has been shown to generate in Part II. We shall see that it will be possible to identify at least three levels of the social register of the outside. Each of these levels I will derive from

producing a novel theoretical comparison among the sources Durkheim, Tarde, Bergson, and Deleuze. These three analyses will not stand on their own as isolated aspects of the problem. Rather, they only exist as mutually implicated. Thus, I attempt to draw an outline of the play of their inter-relation. My aim is to have become able to explicitly outline the social metaphysics of the outside and the concepts that we use in our practices of constituting this metaphysics. If successful I will have been able to display the dynamic and transformative process of the social occupations of modernity.

PART I

THE SOCIAL WHOLE AND THE SOCIAL PART

CHAPTER ONE

DURKHEIM'S CONCEPTION OF THE SOCIAL NECESSITY OF MODERNITY

The Division of Labour in Society can be considered the cornerstone of Emile Durkheim's sociological project and a classic of social theory. It contains his first and most long-lasting formulation of the western sociological problematique: the question concerning the relationship between the existence of society and the essence of modernity. What concerns this first chapter is this relationship as set by Durkheim into the context of a theory of occupational differentiation. I am interested in Durkheim's reconceptualization of modern occupations as the basic elements of the social whole. My basic dispute with Durkheim will be that he did not recognize the full, radical implications of the fact that the social whole in itself has a reality that is only virtual in relation to its particular actual cases. The social does not exist as a totality brought about in a compulsion of social need as if it were, by virtue of this, over and above manifested occupations. Rather, I will argue that the social is simply a term for occupations considered from the virtual point of view of their particular and actual necessity, ie. their 'event of need'. Everything will thus first depend upon an investigation into the necessity of social occupations, their provenance or lack thereof in human needs and obligations. In this first chapter we shall therefore be

exploring the extent to which modernity is a social necessity, leaving the creativity and culture of modernity as a critical issue to be dealt with mainly in subsequent chapters.

We may begin by noting that modernity has often been described from the apparently opposite point of view of human contingency. Indeed, Durkheim himself fully accepted that the progress of modernity involves an increasing contingency. Even in the primary text that the reader is referred to in this chapter, in the Division of Labour, Durkheim's aim was to show how the progress of modernity loosens the ties that bind simply-structured communities. In modernity an unlimited creation of strong new social intersections and intensities takes hold. The human world becomes more and more legally, materially, technically, and ethically complex.

However, rather than merely proliferating in an infinite process of complexification, for Durkheim this vast web of differentiations congeals into various complex stratifications. According to Durkheim these stratifications exert a force of constraint which in effect restructures our whole human experience into a modern one. Thus, rather than just taking modern stratifications for granted as objects of sociological description, Durkheim argued that the division of labour is not just the structure but is also the primary, unconscious motivating factor of modernity. Durkheim's way of thinking is therefore potentially quite radical in that it requires an attempt to conceptually encompass both the effect and the cause of modern society. Modernity and society are subsumed, as it were, into a differential, structural, social ontology. Insofar as Durkheim's thinking is ontological, it has to be, paradoxically, focussed upon the human necessity of relations which in their own terms display an increasing contingency. Indeed it is the mark of ontology to attempt to include an

account of both necessity and contingency. However, its primary insight nevertheless always has its source in a certain claim of necessity.

‘Radical,’ for me, would entail the relevance of a social theory to a global plurality of contemporary social realities. Durkheim’s ontology falls short of becoming radical in this way because, as we shall see, it is not sophisticated enough to deal with the illusion of completeness. For Durkheim, to the contrary, the appearance of the contours of various modern social phenomena as vast, grand, and ‘solid,’ as overarching the individual in their superior complex being, is something that we have to simply affirm if sociological comparisons are to resonate with common sense. For there is no common sense that can do anything other than affirm or deny the existence of a superior complex being. The metaphor of solidity is a calculated choice aimed at leading one to affirm the obviousness of such an existence.

With this metaphor of solidity and its intimations of fertility and grandeur Durkheim chose a way to make sociology popular which, we could say, involves making an appeal to the individual’s sense of the sublime. And, indeed, against this approach which involves this decidedly metaphorical dimension are made most of the external criticisms of most sociologies. Criticisms against the ‘meta-narrative’ of an over-arching, potentially complete modern society are perhaps inevitable in a contemporary age of plurality. On the other hand, to repeat this criticism increasingly involves little more than unwittingly testifying to the influence of Durkheim upon many sociologies. How could it be translated into any positive insight into how the contemporary is or is not related to the critical convergence of modernity and society?

A serious internal criticism of Durkheim's involvement with the metaphor of solidity is yet to be made, a criticism which could show how Durkheim's approach diverts attention from the particular involvements of the division of labour in the social lives of individual actors. What I will present below is an argument to this effect. I stress that Durkheim's ontology of society was 'too metaphorical' to the extent that it did not recognize its own stark implication that everything that is liberating but also newly constraining about the development of modernity results from the contributions of actual, particular social occupations. Rather than calling for an alternative postmodern microsociology I am claiming, in large part, that Durkheim neglected to investigate social occupations in their own terms. For it is a little observed fact that we can still be vitally interested in the question of social occupations in our own contemporary situations. Naive observers think that social occupations are subordinate to changes in the world of work and that the question has become moot because it is a question concerning what it is to experience a kind of work-a-day socialization which is on the wane. Against this, my point of view is that the question of social occupations rather concerns what it is to become socially creative, and what is necessary in this, even in a 'postmodern' era.

When we ask what it is to be socially creative we are not just asking, sociologically or quasi-sociologically, about what constitutes our human practices. We are asking further about why our practices occupy us. It is specifically occupations which take us to a strange dimension during which we forget our practices and ourselves and in which we directly encounter and become an active part of that 'vast web of differentiations'. It is in our occupations that we personally have social feelings which can be good or bad. These factors far exceed the significance of empirical evolutions in the world of work. Often counterposed to

work-based social criticism is identity-based social and cultural theory. These two approaches vie against each other to explain the effect of difference in modern society. But due to the peculiar way occupations unfold it is they, precisely as distinguished on the one hand from our jobs and on the other from our identities, that explain the coherence of these differentiations, and therefore explain what we can still say about the coherence and impact of modern societies. Everything thus depends upon whether we can grasp the real significance of occupations for our social existence. Strangely, our occupations seem to become more like social creations and open up more social feelings the more they help us to transcend our human experience and states of affairs – including our metaphors.

Modernity and the Metaphor of Solidarity-Solidity

Modernity, for Durkheim, cannot be defined as a more or less complete phenomenon which comes to act upon and transform social existence at a certain stage in history. Modernity is rather more like an initially latent theme of all forms of social existence which at various significant points in the development of those societies becomes more explicit. Those societies collectively cross a line at which an unavoidable necessity becomes impressed upon the individual consciousness of negotiating the overall nature of social existence in other than the static terms of tradition. In Durkheim's view, modernity is that perspective upon social existence which highlights the basic blueprint of society's various, case-specific instances of collective existential transformation. This is the meaning of Durkheim's famous social distinction between the mechanical and the organic. It is a matter of de-periodizing or de-historicizing the transition between tradition and modernity. From the 'mechanical' or the bare material of the gathering of the similar and the primal action of communication, we arrive at the 'organic' or a dense and complex entity

that is less and less capable of being conceived or manipulated from any individual viewpoints. Modernity is thus conceived as a kind of social transcendence of the human condition: “because society surpasses us, it obliges us to surpass ourselves.”³ The vehicle for this, this entity which comes to be tantalizingly outside us, modern society, seems to increasingly solidly cohere as a single organism which absorbs real particular human practices as its vital organs. At the core of Durkheim’s lifelong thinking, as at the core of his original thesis, is a concern to account for this increasing modern externality of the social so as to make possible a better understanding of the social anomie apparently caused by it.

What I intend to show in this chapter is that there is a certain confusion in Durkheim’s conception of this externality caused by a certain use of spatial or physical metaphor in his theorization of the division of labour, and that this confusion might still be remedied by showing how his thought can be productively re-organized according to a non-metaphorical conception of social occupations. Durkheim himself certainly did not believe that his central distinction between mechanical solidarity and organic solidarity was a simple one or that in regard to it it would be possible to avoid confusion easily. On the contrary, to be sure, the project of sociological study itself will contain an inherent complexity, just in order to be adequate to its lifelong object of describing this distinction. For Durkheim, the convergence of modernity and society is the key to this complexity. For him, this connection creates every phenomenon that any discipline aimed at understanding the social has ever taken an interest in. In addition, it has always been difficult to find concepts to convey the significance of these social phenomena, and this difficulty is one of Durkheim’s major preoccupations.

³ On Morality and Religion, 163.

It is clear that Durkheim's choice of focus and terminology lies in the theory of the emerging 'organism', which in the Division of Labour already guides every facet of Durkheim's way of thinking the social. The notion of 'organism' captures Durkheim's way of simplifying our understanding of complexity non-reductively. Given this focus and this terminology, it is perhaps easy to suppose that Durkheim understood this social and modern confluence essentially in terms of an analogy with the emergence of a biological organism. My view is that this supposition, if emphasized too much, could cause a certain distortion in the interpretation of Durkheim's thought. Durkheim understood the birth of an organism as an event which makes a difference primarily on the level of nature.⁴ Nature, for him, is a reality that includes the social and the biological. Therefore, the analogy is clearly not metaphorical, because it includes a sense of category-identity which goes beyond description. Perhaps the expression is not even analogical. Analogies are generally direct comparisons made for heuristic purposes and thus have no need of relying upon explicit third terms such as 'nature.' Indeed, in Durkheim's case, 'nature' links the terms compared by indicating a common operative plane which cannot be known in an unmediated way but only in the terms of an unfolding of that which comes to exist. It is not just as if Durkheim perceived a model of evolution unfolding in nature in biological conceptions and then simply transposed this intellectual model into sociology. Rather, I think it would be more accurate to call the notion of 'organism' in Durkheim evidence of ontology rather than analogy. One can, with best precision, interpret Durkheim's way of thinking as a way of thinking ontologically which, as a consequence of its being a thinking of ontology, happens to effect an intimate connection in his thinking of the existence of the biological and the existence of the

⁴ According to Durkheim sociology regards "social facts as explicable naturally." In order to distinguish this idea from positivism, however, Durkheim would warn us that "we should...hesitate to

social. Moreover, this perspective explains why Durkheim never makes his points by relying upon a direct comparison of features of the biological and the sociological and instead prefers to make general comparisons between their methodologies, as well as between their methodologies and those of other sciences which have a stake in the field such as psychology. Durkheim's methodological concerns take their cue from original observations of what he called 'social fact' as well as from previous intellectual models.

However, I nevertheless believe that there is a metaphor at work in Durkheim's thinking of the convergence of modernity and society, and that it is a metaphor which creates an unsurmountable obstacle to any refinement of his social thought in general. For Durkheim, modernity and society converge in the form of a metaphorical code. This metaphorical code is a 'solidarity' which regardless of degree of compositional complexity is nevertheless always characterized by the basic feature of having more or less 'solidity.' In Durkheim's own words, solidarity is "the way in which men are solidly linked to one another" (1984: 126). The metaphor that creates a stumbling block for the continued influence of Durkheim's thought and which confuses his ontological insight is therefore not biological but rather physical.

Inclusive of the mechanical and the organic, the physical and spatial metaphor of solidarity-solidity is the heading under which Durkheim's whole understanding of social ontology is organized. We must ask then if it would be possible to criticize this heading and still preserve the original contours of Durkheim's core sociological problematique. This is doubtful. We are unlikely to be able to avoid taking up a fundamental critique of his seminal sociological thinking. One strategy of such an avoidance would be to simply criticise Durkheim

for using a metaphor as opposed to more precise technical means of expression. But one's criticism would only have a significant effect if it could explain why the metaphor is used. We ought to ask what kind of difficulties it glosses over and this should give us our clues as to the usage of expression and also as to whether and how the situation ought to be remedied.

I would contend that the imprecision inherent in the concept of solidarity-solidarity lies not so much purely in the descriptive aspect of the fact that it is a metaphor. As a metaphor it is a groundless direct comparison between the social and the physical. But the problem is not so much the making of a leap to description on the basis of something groundless. It is not a groundlessness per se that ought to concern us. Metaphors used descriptively can lead to all kinds of equivocations. Metaphors also cannot be avoided easily and probably have to play all sorts of roles in social thought. But the problem in this case is rather that the equivocation here is also a kind of assertion which enables the formulation of Durkheim's most important and most passionately defended conceptions in the Division of Labour. "To create between two or more people a feeling of solidarity" is Durkheim's fundamental conception of the division of labour's "true function" (1984: 17). Since any society is pre-defined for Durkheim as constituted by some form of solidarity, and for him the division of labour is argued from factual reality to be a particularly modern phenomenon, the division of labour is thus positioned within an argument which will have to either confirm or disprove its role as the 'true' or underlying reality of the modern social world. There is a *claim of theoretical argumentation* to be dealt with here with respect to the true correspondence of a theory with social reality. What is at issue is not simply another example which supports a linguistic theory that asserts

the witting or unwitting usage of metaphor in language. The stakes are more immediate than that.

If it cannot, almost by definition, be the subject-matter of an objective theory, metaphorical usage can nevertheless be theorized and such theories can help to illuminate certain aspects of the strategies of theoretical argumentation. In this case even a loose, superficial metaphorical analysis reveals what we might call a certain ‘vision of the sublime’ inherent in Durkheim’s conception of the social. But in this age in which we have seen ‘postmodernism’ rise and fall we are probably all too familiar with the limitations of such analysis. I am convinced that such analysis, restricted as it ultimately has to be in its conclusions to the framework of linguistic theory, cannot fully explain the theoretical passions about certain social feelings that shape such grandiose truth claims in classical social theory. To shape an effective criticism we ought to meet the challenge of such claims directly by showing how our skepticism about such truth claims is justified on the same grounds as that upon which they are asserted, which is to say in this case on ontological and not just linguistic grounds.⁵ This would not be so pressing if it were not for the fact that in the present day it continues to be common – and perhaps even necessary – to think ontologically about modern society. Furthermore, when we do so, in our contemporary period, we tend to think of society existing very negatively and confusedly as both a liberating and oppressive phenomenon of ‘constant change’. On the one hand, this contradictory opinion of society is a sure sign that the central issue of society remains the issue of modernity. On the other hand, what needs to be

⁵ My distinction between the ontological and the linguistic here is intended as one of emphasis, not exclusion. I am well aware that a certain tradition, namely that which links thinkers such as Heidegger and Derrida, has seen in linguistics an uncritical assumption of a link between *logos* and *ontos*, an uncritical ontology or an ontology unnecessarily restricted to the ontic or the factual. I agree with them on this point, but I differ with them as to how our ontological investigations ought to proceed after this criticism.

made more clear is what kind of contemporary societies are linked with this present type of modernity.

I think it is becoming clear that the latter phase of 'postmodern' discourse with its 'linguistic turn' has really been only a step toward coming to a better understanding of what we increasingly surmise to be 'constant change.' Thus, it is possible now to see that modernity remains as much more of an ontological issue for us than a linguistic issue. It is therefore very possible that modernity has been primarily a social ontological issue all along. For surely our pressing need to gain precision in our individual and collective assumptions about 'change', which we always understand as social change, continues to overshadow any phase we may have gone through in the recent past in which we have debated whether society is or is not more than a narrative of modern progress. Modernity has always been more about an urgency of clarifying and explaining ontologies than about simply asserting or denying them. The same pluralism is the typically modern view also on methodologies. Having gained extensive insights from a long postmodern critique of linguistic usage we should at least be able to recognize that we have absolutely nothing to gain by either defending 'postmodernism' or replacing 'postmodernism' with some other 'ism.' Deconstruction and linguistic theory by themselves cannot help us to avoid the trap of replacing a linguistic truism about 'metaphorical usage' with an ontological truism about 'constant change'. Further investigative innovation is now required. We are being challenged to investigate what we mean by constant change and why the latter tends to summarize our current way of thinking about modern society. A sound way to do this in my view is to bring our current questions to bear upon the classical formulations of the existence of society such as Durkheim's. I am convinced that the latter contain important clues as to why we

think of that which persists and has reality in society as change and why this seems so contradictory and difficult for us to conceptualize given that we tend to rely upon classical terms.

In this way, it ought to be a key concern of social theory today to expose in social theoretical terms the conceptions which independently underlie Durkheim's sublime vision of the externality of the social. This is what I intend to pursue. For the equivocation implied by the metaphor of solidarity-solidity is not simply between these terms, 'solidarity' and 'solidity'. It is not simply the 'sublime' connection between society and some sense of physical constancy and grandeur that must concern us. To remain on that level of analysis is to miss an important contemporary point of concern. I am precisely *not* here asserting, contra Durkheim, that the externality of the social is, as one might say, 'something that we cannot believe in.' Such assertions, both pro and con, lead nowhere. Rather, as I intend to show, Durkheim presents an equivocation which lies between two background concepts which underpin the metaphor of solidarity-solidity: the concept of need and the concept of obligation. The 'solidity' which Durkheim thinks of as 'solidarity' is meant to describe a certain necessity. It is the understanding of necessity in Durkheim that causes the confusion which leads to the metaphorical solution. In order to make any more significant advances in our studies of Durkheim we shall have to return to the issue of necessity over which, in his thought, philosophy and sociology diverge.

Durkheim's understanding of necessity has two sides, that of need and that of obligation. Obligation, for Durkheim, is the key explanation of 'solidarity': as Durkheim will put it in the Rules of Sociological Method, "in reality, as far as one can go back in history, the fact of association is the most obligatory of all, because it

is the origin of all other obligations” (1982: 130). Furthermore, in Durkheim’s view, “all that is obligatory has its origins outside the individual” (1982: 130). Therefore, for Durkheim, this exteriority of obligation signifies obligation’s suitability as a commonly recognized notion available for the formulation of the social-theoretical concept of solidarity. For Durkheim does not hesitate to draw the rather dramatic conclusion, based upon the premise of exteriority, that “as all societies are born of other societies, with no break in continuity, we may be assured that in the whole course of social evolution there has not been a single time when individuals have really had to consult together to decide whether they would enter into collective life together, and into one sort of collective life rather than another” (1982: 130). The existence of social solidarity is thus a matter of deduction supplemented by observation rather than inference based upon historical study. But I will argue that in Durkheim’s way of thinking solidarity is *deduced* not from obligation itself but rather from a premise of need; the role of obligation is only to help to explain this special social need or, in what amounts to the same thing, to offer a proof that a social need exists by appeal to the facticity, articulation, or ontic aspect, of the existence of obligation. Thus, it is in this way that the main theme of the Division of Labour (1984), the theme of how the primary need of sociality can be differently articulated in various types of societies and especially in modern society, foreshadows and complements Durkheim’s arguments in the later Rules of Sociological Method (1982) defending social ontology by appeal to ‘constraint’ and ‘obligation’. The Division of Labour is thus of primary importance for me, since it posits and propounds the basic doctrine of sociology that the Rules only develops in methodological precision and flexibility: that the possibility of a plurality and typology of solidarities follows from one essential feature of obligation: that it is

based in types of human need; the division of labour is in design a result of one such type of need.

Already in the first few lines of the Division of Labour, for Durkheim ‘need’ refers to a necessity of any relations becoming a durable source of human life by being persistent and structured in various ways (1984: 11). In Durkheim’s thought, need is conceptually composed by blending the notions of structure and source. For example, at an early point in the text in which he explains his basic conception of society Durkheim adduces the example of conjugal solidarity (1984: 18). Marriage is a prime example of solidarity. In addition, the persistence of marriage goes to show that solidarity is not necessarily a fusion of similarities but is also likely to prevail under conditions of connection between subjects who otherwise differ profoundly.⁶ The example in its context is calculated to highlight the special methodological advantage of conceiving sociology’s object as solidarity since it seems to show how solidarity is a highly inclusive and yet very specifically social phenomenon. This is at least the explicit meaning of the example. However, I would suggest that it has another, more implicit meaning, and that is that the existence of marriage, insofar as it stems from a kind of human need, proves that solidarity, or structure and constancy in human life, in certain forms, *can be a need*.

This sense of need is taken to make the persistence of types of solidarity readily

⁶ In the Durkheimian view this difference is very much one of a power imbalance, and marriage is considered to be a kind of imperfect corrective to this imbalance. The difference in question is thus thought of especially as a hierarchical gender difference discriminatory against women, though it could also be, for Durkheim, a racial/cultural difference biased against strangers. It is interesting to note that Durkheim holds that marriage falls into a class of rituals that can act as a kind of imperfect corrective or defense mechanism against a threat of violence inherent in cases of the proximity of unequal subjects. As Mike Gane points out, there is here implied a little known theory that Durkheim holds that at a certain point in human anthropology, due to a fear of blood and a desire to overcome this fear by instating the abstract and misogynist principle of blood relations, women became “subjects *minoris resistentiae*.” Strangers are also held to be treated, traditionally, in a similar fashion. Gane persuasively argues that Durkheim never fully problematized his perception of women and that a tendency to misogyny led Durkheim to be particularly uncritical on the question of gender (see Gane 1992: 109; 85-132). In my opinion, this does indeed seem likely to be the case, and if so,

understandable. Durkheim is here depending upon us understanding that the *feeling of wholeness* that marriage ostensibly provides for its participants is such a need. We are supposed to intuitively understand that a feeling of wholeness is for married people a needed source of constancy and structure in life.⁷ However, in his illustration Durkheim downplays the significance of the conditions under which marriage comes into being in the first place and the role of attraction in this genesis.⁸ Surely the latter is an essential part of the definition of marriage, a part the existence or lack of existence of which in marriage will always stand to problematize any complacent understanding of this institution as an effect of natural needs.

At first glance, this neglect of attraction in social formation may not seem like much of a difficulty for Durkheim. And there is a certain insightful novelty in implying that society, particularly as shaped by the division of labour which is traditionally explained in terms of the creation of wealth or the predispositions of talent, is rather based in human need. What “confers value upon” the division of labour, what provides a “reason for its existence,” is for Durkheim “the fact that it meets certain needs” (1984: 15). But here what is at stake for Durkheim is not wealth, or the “goods of civilization” (1984: 15). What is at stake is not specifically defined needs which as such *result* from the division of labour. Rather, there is only one kind of need which can, in the Durkheimian perspective, be construed as the

we would have to say that it would weaken Durkheim’s theory of solidarity even further. However, it is not my aim here to argue this point.

⁷ Durkheim’s study *Suicide* also supports this view in a negative way inasmuch as one can find therein a reaffirmation of what Durkheim calls “the prophylactic virtue” of married family life.

Conspicuously, Durkheim makes a point of arguing that a contemporary increase in the suicide rate according to certain statistics must be regarded as “independent of marital status,” and this even despite a lengthy discussion in which Durkheim points to “changes...in the constitution of the family which no longer allow it to have the same preservative influence as formerly” (1966: 377). One wonders why, if the family really can be simply and statistically shown to have no impact upon the suicide statistics, why then it should warrant an extended discussion as to its changing status as a source of social cohesion.

⁸ As Gane points out, for Durkheim, “the two sexes, reflecting the forces of the division of labour, are ‘impelled towards’ each other but come to *desire* each other only under determinate circumstances, ‘only after having entered into relations’ with one another” (1992: 99).

source of the division of labour, and that is the need of sociality. In other words, all particular needs are supposed to arise from this concretely universal, social-existential need.

For Durkheim, when solidarity arises as a need, need defines the wholeness of a society, and need then provides a means to outline the boundaries of the society in its totality so that it can be compared and contrasted with other types of society. But for Durkheim this depends upon our accepting that need sometimes has a special way of pressing itself upon us as fact and that from this factual pressure *alone* arises in every case the demands of *obligation*. For a big part of Durkheim's argument here is to adduce obligation as a fact in support of his understanding of society as a special, non-psychological, non-biological entity – in short as a unique entity and therefore as an entity with a necessary existence. Just as he needs to prove the existence of a social need or need of sociality, he needs to find a source of obligation. This double strategy indeed has resulted in a certain novel and even insightful symmetry in Durkheim's theoretical result. What distinguishes Durkheim's sociological approach is that 'obligation' is not a logical a priori duty simply based upon an initially-positing anthropological premise of need, but is rather understood as an experienced manifestation of need's real but not always clearly visible archeology. Sociology diverges from philosophy at precisely this point in his thinking. He comes to locate the theory of obligation in a source which is quite outside its provenance in moral philosophy and intellectual history.

However, if, as I have argued above, need cannot be construed as the *sole* source of social structure, if other aspects such as attraction play an essential role, then need's connection with obligation is not as symmetrical as Durkheim would like us to suppose. Such a line of criticism shows, at the very least, that for Durkheim to

refer throughout his career to obligation as indicative of the existence and structural integrity of whole societies and of the disciplinary importance of sociology is an appeal that is undoubtedly shaped by a reliance upon a tautology evident in the theoretical interdependence of his concepts of need and obligation. Need, qua the source as well as the structure of the whole of society, is a constant force proved by the fact of obligation, since obligation, for Durkheim, is the main evidence that such societies actually exist and have more or less stability depending upon the force of need. At the same time, obligation is proven to be effective as a necessary constraint by the reason that in order to hold such societies together in a coherent form, the things that go to make them up could not be otherwise. But this coherence is nothing but the constancy of the force of need expressed in experiential terms, in terms of what supposedly ‘everyone knows.’ As Durkheim put it, rather dogmatically, “he who speaks of obligation speaks at the same time of constraint” (1984: 13). Durkheim is here assuming rather than explaining his most basic subject-matter, social solidarity.

The notion of solidarity, as the term which provides a focus for thematizing the ‘solidity’ of this constraining necessity, can therefore be said to constitute nothing more than a metaphorical affirmation of a tautology. Supplementary to this I initially argued that the metaphorical figure of solidarity-solidity is calculated to invoke a sense of grandeur in the continuity of the social. What we must seek out, therefore, is why such social feelings are linked with a conception that accounts for the issue of necessity by means of a doctrine of the externality of the social, and how such social feelings may be accounted for in a more immanent and less dogmatic way.

Externality versus Objectification

What remains at issue is the status of the notion of ‘the externality of the social’ as a concept presumably referring to an entity independent of individual experiences and states of affairs. It might seem to many that the most pressing question is whether or not this externality is an effect of some sort of alienating objectification that can be eliminated or alleviated in some way. However, I will argue that Durkheim correctly discovered that the externality of the social is real, and does refer to an independent or *sui generis* social being, and that the latter is not related in any essential way to what is known in social theory as ‘objectification.’ We will see, as a result, how Durkheim differentiates sociology from pursuits such as political economy and management studies in general.

To begin with, it should be made clear that Durkheim’s sociological approach was never to take an ‘objective reality’ for granted and then measure the extent and strength of whatever determines it. This would require supposing that Durkheim simply posited society’s independent existence. In fact, he was never a positivist in this sense. Rather than argue for the existence of some objective society, Durkheim crafted an argument from solidarity for the existence of the social per se.

Let me recapitulate briefly some relevant points from what we have already seen in regard to the argument from solidarity. The main thrust of this argument is that it resolves the factual observation of obligation with a deductive reasoning based upon an assumption of need. The resolution is accomplished by means of the physical metaphor of ‘solidity’, a metaphor which describes the repeated juxtaposition of individual facts and the reasons for their obligatory, needful association in quasi-spatial or ‘structural’ terms. This implies that society as the whole of this repetition has a kind of independence as a moulding or shaping force in

human development. It is characterizable as the latter to the extent that it somehow auto-selects from the material universe the elements that go into making up those various tangible organic designs for human living that are necessary and unavoidable in the long-term perspective of human existence. This is really a spatial, even architectural metaphor describing a certain durability.

However, in reverse order the implied ontological argument becomes more obvious: the durability of the social proves the independent coherence of the various instances of its design which proves its superiority over its own transient and contingent materials which proves its necessity which proves its existence. Moreover, the physical metaphor involved here creates the illusion that social facts are transparently knowable once the spatial structure of the features that one wants to know are retraced. In addition, for the Durkheim of the Division of Labour, one cannot do this retracing without detecting and following the movement or birth of a society from the mechanical to the organic. Thus, the knowable essence of a society is, from the beginning for him, identical with the progress of its modernity. One cannot fully know a society defined as solidarity unless one witnesses its modern growing pains from one type of solidarity to another. What we can know about society, if we define it as solidarity, consists in the movement of modernity. For Durkheim everything applied to the social, both ontology and epistemology, goes back to the definition of organic solidarity.

Now because he involved organic solidarity so inextricably in his central definition of modern society, Durkheim's social ontology and social epistemology are misleading and as we have seen rely upon hidden tautologies and groundless metaphors. I could admit that it may not be possible to avoid tautology when dealing with the externality of the social. However, it would be interesting if instead of using

an overly-specific metaphor of more or less solid connectivity we could say that the externality of the social is what humans simply refer to as 'the outside'. One of the aims of Part II and my concluding chapter is to socially account for 'the outside.' For 'the outside' must be distinct from other geographical references such as 'the environment' precisely to the extent that it is a social distinction. We refer to an 'outside' precisely when we think, not just of human geography, but more specifically of our human struggles both for social freedom and social inclusion involved in that geography. Indeed, these social struggles would therefore be the explanation for 'constant change' and what we collectively call 'modernity.'

Durkheim understood 'constant change' as a social necessity stemming from the necessity of the division of labour. Occupations, in this sense, are, in his way of thinking, the basic agents of modern change.

Up to the present we have had only a vague intimation of what is at stake in the notion of 'the externality of the social.' However, we have now at least come to a point at which we may see more precisely why occupations are in the Durkheimian way of thinking emphatically not a contributory factor in objectifying processes. It might be easy to misunderstand Durkheim on this point and to accuse him of absurdity for his claim that the social could exist independently of the very individuals that go to make it up. However, absurdity only enters when one assumes that existence includes manifestation at some point. It is true, as we have seen, that Durkheim believes 'obligation' comes to us in a factual way in key social experiences and states of affairs. But 'obligation' is understood by Durkheim *only* as a kind of facticity of these manifested, experienced social realities; it is an important, general fact but it does not define the form or content of the social positively by virtue of its status as a general fact. For Durkheim obligation inheres in the social

not as a passive generality but rather as a kind of neutral facticity. The distinction, put this way, appears to be a fine one, but it is in fact a highly important one for understanding Durkheim's social theory, for if attended to correctly it can show us just exactly why we must attack Durkheim's theory of obligation on grounds of ambiguous tautology rather than on grounds of vagueness. The 'constraint' of the social, and the ambiguous facticity of this, is important for Durkheim but as an allegedly neutral facticity it is not for him sufficient to define the social and thus he can claim to have attempted to transcend the ambiguity. To this end, we have seen how he believes that that which is required for this transcendence is to connect obligation with need in order to fully account for social reality. Durkheim wants to provide a social ontology for sociology. That is why, perhaps rather counter-intuitively, social need is not a manifested, experienced fact for Durkheim but is rather a premise, an assertion of a need of sociality, in a key portion of his social ontological analysis. To be sure, this portion of his analysis is, following on from this premise, deductive, and the form of deduction can indeed make Durkheim's social theory seem very hard to assail.

The subject-matter of his attention, social reality, for Durkheim, lies somewhere between the premise and the fact. Later in his career, Durkheim turned away from his 'spatial arguments' of the Division of Labour (I will cover these arguments in detail in chapter two) and turned more towards an 'emblematology', a theory of symbolism in the formation of societies (Gane 1992: 61-84). But even there what was suggested by Durkheim was not that the *manifestation* of emblems is equivalent to the manifestation of societies. As Durkheim put it,

if the moral force sustaining the believer does not come from the idol he adores or the emblem he venerates, *still it is from outside* of him as he is

well aware. The objectivity of its symbol *only translates* its externalness
(Durkheim, quoted in Gane, 1992: 80. Italics mine.)

Thus, the later Durkheim cannot be said to have modified his basic premise that the externality of the social is fundamentally irreducible to the manifestations associated with it. The latter cannot therefore be understood as more than, for him, *ontically* necessary obstacles or codings which societies can, nonetheless, in cases of creative practice, critically and massively surpass in *ontological* terms. What is interesting to me is how in Durkheim's early thought this creativity lay in the division of labour, in the way the division of labour provokes a need of wholeness, a social need. For in this Durkheimian way of thinking, the social occupation is in this real sense social reality in itself, before the fact and before the premise. In an important sense, the Division of Labour had to be written before the concept of emblematism could be formulated. It is the externality of the social, as grounded there in occupational social need, which grounds *all* of Durkheimian sociology.

Durkheim's claim as to the independent existence of the social apart from individuals is therefore not as absurd as it seems at first glance. For Durkheim never argued that occupations, which initially and continuously thereafter for him go to make up the reality of the social, are manifested in themselves, independently of individuals. He rather argued that occupations are the focal point, the creative and essential locus of an inexorable need of a specifically social existence. Thus, Durkheim's social theory certainly does not entail the supposition that 'occupations' can somehow be *manifested* apart from such items as, for example, 'individuals who are occupied', or an 'occupational event.'

We have now seen that the independence of the existence of the social properly speaking does not, in any stage of Durkheim's thought, include

manifestation at some point. Durkheim is never a positivist, at least not in any essential way. Durkheim's social thinking has a factual side, an empirical side which conceptually encompasses socially-related manifestation, and to this he identifies only 'obligation' as of key relevance. Even then obligation is not simply de facto obligation but is a 'needed' or 'structural' obligation. It is thought of as only a framework for a social reality which is irreducible to the framework. This ontological way of thinking does, therefore, require supposing that this sort of social existence is *superior* to, or 'over and above' a merely individual existence. Beings will be categorized and preferred in accordance with their relative proximity to the main need of sociality. But this superiority is not an empirical superiority. It has to be a non-empirical superiority for Durkheim. Thus, what is superior and what is inferior cannot be pre-defined. Durkheim holds that individual existence, that which is objective and apparently isolated in social modernity, is in truth dependent upon social existence. But this social existence is a zone of indeterminacy from the point of view of the individual. It is a wholly other, larger reality that is not dependent upon contextualized individual existence. The superiority of the social is an ontological superiority only.

But from what we know about Durkheim's social theory, this sense of ontological superiority cannot be taken to dilute the force of his belief that occupations are for him the elements not just of a zone of indeterminacy but more specifically of a social whole which exists independently of individuals. What this means is that he can only describe this sense of the superiority of the social metaphorically. We are supposed to take the concept of 'solidarity' as a kind of master-emblem of this superiority of social existence over individual existence. Of course, as I have shown, there is an inherent weakness in Durkheim's concept of

solidarity. Indeed, there are problems with his whole theorization of the social. However, these problems do not include the problem of objectification, if the latter is understood to include the notion of manifestation at some point. Objectified phenomena are manifested and appear as empirically isolated in relation to other objects. Occupations, for Durkheim, are precisely never isolated phenomena. Indeed, it is perhaps a more acute problem for Durkheim that due to his ontological approach to the social via the theory of occupations he will have difficulty in specifying particular empirical occupations. But certainly they are not ‘pieces of an objective reality’ or even of an ideology which makes a claim on such a reality.

How then, could a Durkheimian deal with the more empirical issue of the fact that occupations continue to run the risk of being ‘objectified’ as work and labour? Indeed, we can here broaden our perspective to include contemporary social reality. ‘Objectification’, or something like it, is the *modus operandi* of the identifications relied upon in management and self-management. The working and labouring subject has no freedom to change the management and self-management system. Attempts have for a long time been made to isolate subjectivity at some extreme revolutionary point in which non-work and non-labour might be at least notionally incorporated into the process of work and labour and a more socially responsible social whole established. At the same time we have seen from practice that this is idealistic and impossible, and not just due to endemic class conflict, but due more generally to the fact that the working and labouring subject’s class identity is weakened, or at least mediated, by the necessity of occupational differentiation, as well as by gender difference and race difference. This point has even become a textbook truism in the sociology of work: “gender, ethnic and occupational divisions, mediated by the interpretative processes of individual and social

interaction, ensure that heterogeneity not homogeneity is the historically constructed norm at the level of social groups and individuals” (Grint 1991: 152).

Despite its drawbacks, Durkheim’s way of thinking is nevertheless useful for dispelling the grip of this ‘objectification’ conundrum. He showed already in the 19th-century that the reality of these divisions alone is evidence enough of the impossibility of any revolutionary objectification of non-work and non-labour, ie. a social revolution, from the limited perspective of work and labour. Today, it seems that Durkheim was correct to the extent that social opinion appears to have come to accept the fact that strength-in-recognition on the shop-floor cannot and should not be assumed to carry with it the same at home. In the end, it is likely that the sphere of the domestic and the sphere of work and labour can only be harmonized as such from the objectifying perspective of management and self-management with the support of governments which value management efficiency above all else. And then such a politics of compromise would always be a matter of attaining a degree of harmony that would probably become more unsatisfactory to more citizens the more its compromises would be able to take effect. A controversy-free politics would, in fact, be likely to have the inadvertent effect of provoking general instability; as long as it continues it will certainly be a source of pessimism for various agents of human liberation.

Surely it has gradually become clearer since the days of classical social theory that ‘objectification’ is a less compelling issue in society than the ‘division of labour.’ This is all the more clear when we consider the class subjectivity which was supposed to accompany different modes of such objectification. The enduring, essential social change is occupational change which goes on despite class subjectivity. That is not to suppose that class subjectivity and objectification do not

really occur or have no importance. Rather, what is important is that a certain sense of occupational existence continues amidst the decline of these classically work-centred ways of thinking about social practices.⁹ There is a lack of conceptual tools today which might help us to specify the modernity, the social impact upon individuals, of this working as well as non-working occupational existence that continues amidst ongoing occupational change.

Conclusion

This is what I take Durkheim's main insight to be: occupations delimit an externality of the social which is not an effect of objectification, since objectification includes manifestation at some point and occupations are not a part of manifestation or vice versa. Occupations are rather a social need and social need always exceeds or 'grounds' social manifestation. According to Durkheim, even though the human world is increasingly modern, dynamic, and intricately socialized, social occupations are still able to generate for individuals a sense of coherence related to social need. Durkheim argued that this coherence was a function of what he called 'solidarity.' I have argued that this is a mere tautology and that 'solidarity' explains nothing in this regard and actually diverts attention from that which is at stake in socialization. It is a physical metaphor used to thematize that which Durkheim himself admits cannot be physically manifested. With this critique of Durkheim, then, we have opened up the possibility of a broader viewpoint from which we can see, more clearly than Durkheim did, just exactly why the criterion of modernity cannot be derivable from the objectives of management and organization, nor indeed from any political-economic conceptions. This is the case not because the latter work against 'solidarity' but rather because the latter are defined within a perspective in which

⁹ On this decline, for a neo-liberal point of view see Rifkin 1995; for a more critical, post-marxist point of view see Gorz 1967 and 1982; for a radical-anarchist point of view see Vaneigen 1983.

social practices are summed up and criticized according to the extent to which they are manifested in themselves as objective occupations. The criterion of modern practices considered socially is not manifestation but rather occupation.

This chapter, then, has also served to point our way forward. What has been suggested by the non-manifestability of occupations is that they must involve alternatively some other sense of reality. It was correctly proposed by Durkheim, in my view, that for social ontological reasons we must use some sort of indirect method of analysing social practices. But then, as I see it, he confused this issue by introducing his metaphor of solidarity into the apparent gap between social concepts and social reality. All he was warranted in asserting was that the division of labour is related in some way to the modern externality of the social. Thus, it is now left to us to investigate how strong and motivating this 'outside' really is that is created during the occupying moments of modern social practices. If the outside is that intrinsic part of social occupations which means that they are precisely *not* manifested, then indeed it must be worthy of investigation. The outside, that vital and yet ominous sense of social externality created by the modern division of labour must be something that is somehow sensed but not directly observed.

What we have to deal with socially, therefore, and what I have formulated, is an ontological criterion. That is because we must assign existence to the occupation and the outside on the basis of their immediate human and individual constitution, even though we must say that strictly speaking the occupation involves a transcendence of subjective human experience and objective states of affairs. In contrast, management and most political economy works with mediated generalities that are indifferent to their human origins and therefore assumes that the outside is

merely the relative difference between objectives. Much of mainstream sociology, following Durkheim, counterposes to this an idea that the power of the social is irreducible to these business objectives because it involves a power of solidarity, a power of the group and its inherent morality. But the theory of this social wholeness is, as it indeed should be, based upon our ontologically-sensitive attention to the division of labour and specifically our occupations as the agencies of social change and therefore as serious internal challenges to social integrity. And even from the most simple of such social-ontological observations it should be clear that in actuality social occupations involve individual struggles for wholeness which are always 'not yet' achieved. The persistent notion of an outside gives us an intuition of this fundamental incompleteness. That the struggle implied by the notion of the outside must be manifested creatively is our intuition of the constitutive feature of modernity. We have thus reached the limits of the social necessity of modernity, but we have nevertheless confirmed that there must always be a certain intensity of this social necessity which must always be linked with social needs and thus connected with social occupations.

CHAPTER TWO

SOCIAL QUANTITY AND DIFFERENCE

The managerial outlook on the world has been suspected by many of having a strong will to quantify and control every aspect of society. However, in my view, what is more specifically characteristic of management and organization and most of political economy is a concern to do with the manifestation of social phenomena. By using the term 'manifestation' I am calling attention to something other than an empirical bias. Quantification is a generic approach in the social sciences that is disputed even in management studies, whereas a focus upon manifestation much more specifically betrays a concern to seek out signs and opportunities of the optimization of social reality.

The ways of sociology and practical philosophy are certainly unifiable only to the extent that ontology is taken to be the paramount question with respect to the social. Ontology attempts to avoid what it sees as concerns that are peripheral to existence. This includes manifestation, which in the usual understanding is mixed with the contingency of appearances. Ontological approaches to the social are common in sociology and practical philosophy. These disciplines attempt to deal primarily with necessity. However, from a perspective such as this which sees

manifestation as a false problem, it is nevertheless possible to see quantification as an important part of social ontology.

In the Division of Labour Durkheim saw quantification as a key component in his argument from solidarity for the existence of society. As I have argued above, the argument from solidarity relies solely upon a tautology between the background concepts of need and obligation and thus stands or falls depending upon whether we accept this tautology. But Durkheim, of course, did not see it that way. He believed he could support his equation and the structural description of human need that is based upon it by means of a causal argument. It thus remains for me to show how this causal approach does not support Durkheim's theory. I will not argue that his causal argument is logically invalid or that causal arguments can never be made to support social theory but rather that Durkheim's argument is contextually unsound. This is because, for reasons that I believe even Durkheim himself would ultimately have to accept, a quantitative argument can only account for the degrees of spatial dimension and not the basic types of structure of human need. Moreover, there are two distinct notions of difference implied in the latter two categories, and we shall see that the lack of a rigorous distinction between these two orders of difference is at the root of Durkheim's error. Thus, my argument will conclude that Durkheim neglected to see how the issue of spatial dimension is bound up intrinsically with social occupations. This neglect was caused by his focussing his attention instead upon an investigation into an erroneous supposition that spatial arrangement and rearrangement might be an objective cause or condition of the existence of society.

Social Quantity

Durkheim's main causal argument for the existence of society finds the cause of solidarity in the phenomenon of population density. Population density is indeed

an objective phenomenon that is physically measurable using a statistical method. It is obviously related to the social in some way. What Durkheim sees as its impact is that, according to him, increases in population density inevitably lead to a struggle for existence which determines changes between types of solidarity. For Durkheim, population density is thus a quantitative phenomenon which can be said to determine qualitative social change in general. Durkheim thus has to understand 'population density' in a very broad way. And I believe it is a way which includes and confuses the issues of quantity change and quality change.

The main focus of what I see as Durkheim's confusion over social quantity has nothing to do with merely counting the individual members of a population and whether or not this is possible and the extent of its accuracy and whether or not it reflects factual reality. Rather, it has to do with a question of theoretical principle concerning whether or not measurable spatial change has the capability to determine a change in nature between what Durkheim called mechanical and the organic types of solidarity. Durkheim believed that what he called mechanical social relations are in essence spatial relations between 'segments' of the population. In Durkheim's way of seeing the social world, a population is a mosaic of formal 'segments'. A segment of the population is a section of the individual members of the population. It is defined externally as a potential organ of society or by its potential for integration, and internally as a collective conscience contingent upon the degree of resemblance of its members. According to Durkheim, therefore, segments have no necessary, intrinsic reality and have to dissolve if it happens that these individual resemblances come to be shared to a significant degree with those of other segments. Instead of appearing as a collapse of the social need for the role that these segments might fulfill, the dissolution of the segments is rather characterized as a dissolution

of participatory boundaries which creates the conditions for a struggle between contending social participants over a natural need for society which endures.

The essence of social struggle is thus for Durkheim a struggle for substitution which looks like a kind of natural selection. As Durkheim claims, “specialization cannot fail to be the outcome” (1984: 212). The struggle appears to be between segments of the population and it may be necessary to speak in terms of segmental struggle but because segments have porous boundaries the struggle is actually among the members of those segments who find themselves involved in an identity-challenging reorganization of the roles in society that need to be fulfilled. Indeed, we might see evidence of such a phenomenon today in the difference between the apparently objective managerial conception of job redundancy and the ways in which the reality of these firings have an impact beyond the objective factors to include core identity and value issues in society. In his day Durkheim could still feel justified in making use of a certain common rhetorical optimism: “the segmentary organ that triumphs, if we may speak in those terms, cannot be sufficient to undertake the larger task that now falls to it in the future save by a greater division of labour” (1984: 212). Nonetheless, the hard truth that Durkheim discovered that is probably still true today is that a segment in itself and its basis in resemblance or in ‘what one is used to’ is only a relative human need whereas society as a focus for organizing different distributions and identities is, very likely in some sense, an absolute human need. The process begins in an inflexible segmentary organization that has little overall coherence and limited diversity and moves toward a modern organization which not only has greater overall coherence and diversity but comes to exist as a dynamic, though metaphysical reality in itself which the members of any population can still recognize as stemming from their social needs but to which they

nevertheless become bound as if by an absolute obligation. They feel this as their practices become vertically more and more involving of concentration while at the same time horizontally more and more interrelated with those of others, and thus become more and more social occupations. "A break in the equilibrium of the social mass gives rise to conflicts that can only be resolved by a more developed form of the division of labour: this is the driving force for progress" (1984: 212).

In my view, there is a great amount of accuracy in Durkheim's theory of modernity. However, Durkheim's reasoning is weak to a significant extent because his causal argument, as a statistics-based argument, fundamentally appeals to a varying degree of the quantity of the individual members that go to make up the social fact of population density and is therefore inconsistent with his argument with respect to the basis of the division of labour in need. In the overall argument, the division of labour is explained by the necessary existence of types of structure of human need. The main thrust of the argument is that modern structures of difference tend to become a human priority over traditional structures of resemblance without completely eliminating the latter. Human development is therefore a tendency toward a modern progress defined by differentiating externalizations which are historically 'solidified' into forms of social existence which are more and more flexible, coherent, independent of the individual, and organic. In the causal argument, an attempt is made therefore to link the division of labour more directly to the dissolution of primitive organization. The main argument depends on this link. The way Durkheim outlines his theory of this change is therefore consistent as a strategy of argumentation.

However, if we consider this move as a theoretical strategy, I think there is in Durkheim a fatal inconsistency stemming from a confusion over the relation of space

and quantity. It is the issue of this relation in particular that the metaphor employed in the overall argument completely glosses over. In the causal argument Durkheim assumes as a premise that an increase in the number and physical concentration of individual persons is a direct cause of the duplication of roles among various societal segments. But why do not increases in population density simply result in the spatial modification of the same segmentary organizations? Durkheim implies to the contrary that primitive organizations require their own unique, static spaces, and there seems to be no justification on his part of this assumption. Indeed, in this unexamined premise seems to lie the inspiration of his notion of solidity.

The problem is that before we can accept any argument to do with a struggle for substitution we must accept that social role duplication (the duplication of traditional ways of fulfilling social needs,) and indeed a relatively unlimited multiplication, occurs spontaneously along with increases in population density. Here we have to accept that populations spontaneously group together into unique segments. We also have to accept that these segments are somehow originally partitioned – differentiated spatially. Durkheim therefore indubitably posits the existence of static spaces as the original sites of traditional organizations. For Durkheim, the traditional is traditional because of its lesser proximity to a juncture in which one might sense that sociality itself is in fact a problem, and to the feeling of sociality as a feeling of need which first gives rise to this juncture. Durkheim's conception of the static nature of traditional sites is linked with his assumption that these sites are containers of a finite number of human members. Any new members of a full segment must spill over, as it were, across the partitions of the segments. He has to explain the dissolution of bordering segments and what he is attempting to suggest is that a spatially-motivated exclusion across partitions – not a need but

much rather an over-abundance – causes this dissolution. – For according to Durkheim the more this excretion occurs the more redundancy or inter-segmental membership duplication occurs: this has the net result of making bordering segments more and more alike and their borders unnecessary. But why does Durkheim suppose that *intra*-segmental spatial solutions are not found that can address spatial problems? The whole problem that I am addressing in my critique of Durkheim is this unjustifiable supposition that social spaces are static containers. We would have no account of why these containers were originally differentiated, of how they acquired their contents and why.

Two criticisms can therefore be asserted. On the one hand, from an empirical point of view, Durkheim seems to unjustifiably suppose that segmentary societies have no indigenous mechanisms for controlling and directing population growth. Here Durkheim would respond that he is not claiming that social resemblances can be explained spatially but rather that spatial techniques must be explained socially. But there are probably many spatial techniques which would factor into the constitution of a segmentary society which he does not explore, and therefore until we investigate the extent of these we cannot accept that the sole significance of spatial social change is to cause role duplication and a resulting progress of social modernity. Some spatial techniques such as many solutions to population density that we see in Asia would likely even problematize our whole conception of modernity, particularly if our conception had no cultural dimensions and rested upon premature conclusions about the social significance of space.¹⁰

On the other hand, one can assert a theoretical criticism. This is the criticism that Durkheim confused space and quantity, and in my view it is the more serious

¹⁰ One example that comes to mind is that of compartment-hotels in Japan which represent an internal or organizational spatial response to a spatial problem.

part of the problem. If we think of social change as a breaking up of traditional static social spaces – as differentiation – we nonetheless need to account for why, in the first place, numbers of similar actors do gravitate together and reproduce their segment of the population in close proximity. Durkheim simply posited the existence of the ‘horde’ and based his theory upon this unexamined premise (1984: 126). The theory of social segments does not constitute the necessary explanation for the positing of the horde. It simply takes as its point of departure an apparent ‘solidity’ of their formation at an arbitrary point. Durkheim therefore attempts to introduce a quantitative argument to supplement this theme of his main structural and qualitative argument, but what he actually introduces is only nominally a quantitative argument. It is not fully a quantitative argument if it attributes no significance to the individuation of elements and the operations between them that result in the sets of elements in question. Durkheim is actually only interested in the dissolution of ready-made sets, *he is only interested in differences between discrete agents, ie. those with more or less complete boundaries*. Durkheim therefore does not seem to have much faith in quantity at all. In the end, there is little to distinguish his position from the naive position that quantity in general provides some kind of ‘solidity’.

The Perception of Difference

I would tend to link these two possible criticisms. A primary problem as I see it is that we are left with no explanation on the part of Durkheim for the role of mutual attraction and gravity in the original creations of societies. Durkheim would have us believe that this is “a moot point” (1984: 25). For Durkheim it is simply axiomatic that “social life, wherever it becomes lasting, inevitably tends to assume a definite form and become organised” (1984: 25). Why does Durkheim posit such a premise? I cannot accept the simplistic explanation that he was simply enamoured

with the form of power he experienced in founding a new school of thought. Putting the question this way is again to ignore the reasons for this new kind of power, motivated as it was by the kind of grandiose social convictions that were commonly displayed by nearly all of the classical social theorists.

As we have seen, Durkheim's main theme from the outset of his work has to do with a fundamental connection he draws between modernity and society. In the Division of Labour he proposed that modernity can and should be conceived as progressive, as a matter of positive social need, rather than as something merely negative or merely new and unsettling to various traditions. Nonetheless, for Durkheim, modernity is highly complex. What is interesting is that for Durkheim modernity arises precisely when lines are blurred and borders are crossed between segmented kinds of differences, on the level of feelings of inferiority and superiority, exclusion, inclusion, and between corresponding spatio-temporal situations. This perception of difference seems to be at the heart of the issue of classical Durkheimian social theory.

Durkheim set these feelings and situations into the context of a theory of modern social movement which he derived from studying the division of social labour. According to Durkheim, individuals who perceive differences among themselves are motivated to become innovators of cooperative movements and to oblige each other to sustain these movements as projects of socialization. From this arises increasingly formal, regular, and persistent patterns or social structures. New, ever-increasingly stratified societies are the overall result. For once a certain social regularity is experienced, Durkheim implies, there is a repetition inherent in it which begins again to create borders between groups of individuals. In Durkheim's way of

thinking, modernity, with all the social repetition that emerges from it, paradoxically is inextricably interwoven with a perception of difference.

Furthermore, Durkheim goes so far as to claim that social repetition causes segmental differences. As the latter emerge they become added, cumulatively, to old ones which have never completely disappeared. This 'bare' repetition of the same differences undermines the bonds of obligation to the extent that there arises a need of wholeness which acted upon results in new obligations that come to stand beside old obligations. With this Durkheim was satisfied that he had arrived at a description of the development of modern social complexity. To find a solution to this complexity, the whole question of evolutionary timing and of 'anomie', seems to have been the most pressing question for him. But from our perspective today we have easily seen that there is something strongly doubtful about this problematique. What is primarily doubtful is not so much the call for 'solidity' in itself, nor metaphoricity in general – those things are strange but still familiar as political or quasi-political rhetoric. What is really doubtful, and perhaps much more disturbing, is the conception of modern necessity which lies behind them which is guided by the figure of a 'need of wholeness'.

The 'need of wholeness' is for Durkheim that which explains both how people are pushed apart and towards social innovation and how people are pulled together and away from further social innovation. It is supposed somehow to account for these two types of difference, and therefore in essence, supposes that these differences are the same. The early Durkheim, the Durkheim of the Division of Labour and the Rules, wants to *prove* that there is one seamless social ontology, unified by the need of wholeness, which connects the negative and the positive in modern social life. But we have seen how utterly insufficient and misleading was

Durkheim's attempt at a causal argument from population density in support of this proof. What is much more coherent and compelling in the early Durkheim is the insight that one can still gain from a perspective on society which is fundamentally ontological.

For despite an ever-advancing march of modernity, contingency, and individuality which is obvious to all, Durkheim's perspective privileges necessity, where the need of wholeness is socially speaking at least arguably still a veritable universal need. Only a veritable universal need can supply the sense of necessity which proves the independent existence of the social. In Durkheim's view, only proof of the independent existence of the social can justify a sociology. For Durkheim, then, individualities are only transitory moments in a greater process of social necessity. According to Durkheim, in modernity we see an increase in contingency and individuality but therefore also a corresponding increase in the need of wholeness and therefore a proliferation of intrinsically complicated social circles. In his way of thinking, social ontology can help to explain and thus perhaps mitigate the 'anomic' dangers of this complexification.

Durkheim could therefore still be said to have fashioned in his early writing career a compelling attempt to ground the effects of modernity in the development of social life and sociology. But there is nevertheless an unsettling feeling that shortens our praise of Durkheim, one which comes from our common contemporary perception that the 'need of wholeness' seems, in this way of thinking, to be all too ready to engineer 'solutions' to the perception of difference. Nonetheless I think that there is a real problem that needs to be actively addressed, and that is that the need of wholeness, the motivation of social totalization, is taken, too often by its harshest critics as well as its sentimental adherents – and classically by Durkheim, which

makes his work so instructive – as ‘the one’ explanation which somehow accounts for *both* large ruptural social differences *and* small differences made by social repetition. The lack of any unity, of even any potential ‘normal’ unity, between these latter two social aspects is a point which so many subsequent theorists will, not surprisingly, begin to insist upon.

However, almost as if he already sensed this shortcoming, after The Rules Durkheim’s writing began to take on the burden of explaining how the need of wholeness is implicated in social psychology, specifically in the formation of models that are collectively followed by members of societies, and in the emblematicism that I already mentioned above (p. 51). In this later period Durkheim came to rely upon a theory of collective effervescence for his account of social innovation. As Stephen Lukes puts it, “from the first publication of The Rules onwards, the focus of Durkheim’s attention shifted...to what we might call the cultural or ideational dimension of social reality, and what Durkheim himself called ‘collective representations’” (Durkheim 1982: 6).

The theory of collective effervescence, as found in Durkheim’s last major monograph, The Elementary Forms of the Religious Life, constitutes Durkheim’s theory of the genesis of collective representations (1961). Collective representations, for Durkheim, are mental states and ideas that cannot be held individually and can only be held in common in a society. The theory of collective effervescence attempts to account for how these collective mental states and ideas arise. However, we need not go far into the theory in order to show clearly that it still only accounts for the repetition of forms of collective life which have already come into being. In Durkheim’s own words, it explains only how a novel ideal, a social model, can be “*added*” to the reality of a collective life which is already given (1973: 195. Italics

mine.). Thus, we may immediately see that if we are seeking an explanation and not merely a further description of Durkheim's positing of the need of wholeness, then we have run into an unsurmountable obstacle in Durkheim's thinking. In my view, it would not be too strong to say that the theory of collective effervescence can only mystify rather than clarify the provenance of the need of wholeness from which, according to Durkheim, necessary modern societies emerge.

Because it is strictly an empirical notion, the notion of 'effervescence' takes us further away from, rather than closer to, an understanding of how the need of wholeness is involved in our various ongoing social occupations. Durkheim held the satisfaction of the need of wholeness as a background idea which defines the end of social innovation, but he also therefore implicitly took wholeness to be an activity that one can pursue since social innovation means nothing without including a sense of pursuit, even where as in the majority of cases such pursuit is not goal-directed. In this implicit aspect of Durkheim's thinking lies an important insight which reveals the properly occupational meaning of social existence. But it is, ironically, an insight which the preeminent theorist of the Division of Labour did not and could not develop, since there is no way of connecting the pursuit of an occupation *experientially* with obligation in the way that one can think of the connection between the need of wholeness and obligation experientially. Thinking about our experiences requires reflection upon events which have already happened. 'Effervescence' seems to have been selected as a concept by Durkheim later in his career precisely because it is, in principle, an historically observable collective experience.¹¹ But our occupations, which are much more pervasively and immediately our social subject-matter, are clearly not historically observable

collective experiences, or are so in only a very partial way. Rather, occupations are composed in such a way that, incorporating so many different kinds of feelings and perceptions over the course of a day, we could never believe that they could be wholly explained by reference to obligations which come from the past. But then nor could they be explained by some collective sensation from the immediate past which we might describe as effervescence, since the latter would still be no more than a mere generalization based upon experience, no matter how 'close' to the present it is.

If we had to rely only upon experience, upon reflection 'at the end of the day' for example, our occupations would appear rather simply as blank spaces of memory amidst an incoherent mix of activities without any clear internal boundaries. Any generalizations about them would immediately appear as over-generalizations. Hence the famous 'silence' of the worker who has just returned home. In the same way, this ignorance inherent in experience creates just as much a problem for the concept of the 'need of wholeness'. This concept includes, as a hidden premise, or as a kind of blind spot, that social individuals perceive differences amongst themselves. We can only presume that Durkheim supposed this perception of difference to be simply primary, obvious, and unproblematic. But if we take it to be an empirical concept, which means it is supposed to be based in experience, the perception of difference is surely meaningless. For in an important sense, experience *is* difference, or a kind of difference, whereas difference itself is not exhausted by experience, and therefore there is nothing about experience per se which can provide us with a critical purchase upon difference. Experience simply in every case takes the perception of difference for granted. Hence, if the 'need of wholeness' cannot be left as an intuitive proposition but rather has to be set into the context of a richer

¹¹ By this I mean that it is *conceivable* that we have all had some intimation of such a phenomena occurring, ie. we can shape an hypothetical description of it in our minds and compare this description

theory of social occupations, the perception of difference must also find its source in the same occupational context, and does not *necessarily* have to be related to some other context, such as the context of symbolism and of the sign.

Therefore, from the point of view of developing the theory of social occupations, we need to confirm only two aspects of the later Durkheim. Firstly, Durkheim seemed to recognize in his later period the need for an account of social innovation in that he began to formulate a theory of social model formation. However, secondly, from the fundamental premises of the theory that he formulated, the theory of collective effervescence, we can confirm that the need of wholeness continues in his research to be taken for granted, and perhaps even more and more to be taken as a given. Therefore, despite his move towards making an account of the 'cultural or ideational dimension' of social reality, Durkheim actually formulated an account of the genesis of the social in his later work which added nothing profound to his earlier thought, and in fact only supplemented his earlier assumptions with a theory to do with one of the *effects* of social genesis in the field of social psychology. He did not, in the end, vindicate his whole project and defence of sociology but only complicated it.¹²

So where does this need of wholeness come from? From where emerges this initial impulse to socialize? Durkheim will only suggest that it comes from the example of societies which have already established a solid network of obligations, which is to say, from the example of societies which are in fact already constituted. But surely a principle of social genesis cannot be derivable from already constituted

against our experiences.

¹² I would just clarify my position here: whether or not this complication proves, in its own way, productive or unproductive is not my concern. Here I am only concerned with Durkheim's theory of occupational difference. My claim is only that there are difficulties in the early theory which are not addressed by the moves made in the later theory and that this is unfortunate. I do not mean by this

societies considered only from the point of view of factual, experienced reality. As I showed in the last chapter, this answer is tautological and unacceptable. Durkheim developed some important concepts and an orientation to the subject-matter of the social which is significant in challenging us to account for its necessity, showing us that need and obligation are linked in the genesis of the social, but he nevertheless brings us no further toward understanding this social genesis in itself and therefore why the social should be interesting and influential upon us. That which is interesting and influential upon us is likely to involve us in some form of social innovation. But because Durkheim connected need with obligation tautologically, and then upon that basis formulated a theory of social psychology, he barred himself from incorporating any positive account of social innovation.

Conclusion

Essentially, Durkheim relied upon us somehow to intuitively understand how social innovation, in addition to obligation, must rely upon a need of wholeness. This intuitive understanding is supposed to include, as if automatically, a perception of difference. In addition, we have seen a fundamental confusion in Durkheim over the issue of social quantity. Now these two major confusions, the first over the need of wholeness and the second over the issue of social quantity, can be shown to be related to one another. We are ready to summarize these two, apparently isolated confusions as rather constituting, in effect, only one confusion. This one confusion is over the basic issue of difference. Durkheim's causal argument in the Division of Labour rests on an assumption that social difference is ultimately a kind of spatial difference between social groups with more or less complete boundaries, a difference of repetition. But the theory of organic solidarity, in a quite different vein,

that the later theory in itself has a lesser value. I only mean that it has no more than a marginal relevance to this thesis.

presupposes a perception of difference arising from the source of the structure of organic solidarity in a need which is, in large part, a symptom of a social incompleteness, and this links this kind of difference with the affective origins of social rupture. Two kinds of difference, of completeness and incompleteness, of closedness and openness, exist, as it were, side by side in Durkheim's social thought, with hardly any mention at all of the apparent contradiction.

Henri Bergson, late in his career, made a sudden diversion from philosophy into social theory, and it was precisely to take up this challenge left behind by Durkheimian social thought. If we consider Bergson's relevance here, we have an added reason for attempting to take advantage of Gabriel Tarde's contemporary critique of Durkheim, because although it is a neglected and useful critique in its own right, our main motivation has to do with the fact that Bergson's critique of Durkheim could not have been fashioned without it. I will thus turn to an investigation of the social thought of Tarde immediately in the next chapter.

CHAPTER THREE

TARDE'S ONTOLOGY OF THE SOCIAL PARTICULAR

It is now time to move positively beyond Durkheim in order to search for relevant explanations for the relation between social creativity and social occupations. A good place to start will be an investigation of Durkheim's contemporary theoretical opposition in the form of the writings of Gabriel Tarde. In Tarde we shall see how the primary mode of actualization of the individual struggle for wholeness involves a certain understanding of social genesis as model formation. From Tarde's point of view it will become clear how arbitrary it was for Durkheim to subordinate the role of model formation to the end of overall social solidarity. And indeed, I will agree with Tarde that model formation should not have a lesser theoretical status than the term of solidarity, particularly if the latter concept contains an essential confusion, as I have shown above. This is a key part of the reason why we must now begin to account for social genesis in the plural without appealing to any generic model such as that of 'solidarity'. This is why we must now turn to look at the work of Durkheim's antagonist, Gabriel Tarde, the thinker of social quantity and the social significance of model formation *par excellence*.¹³ In chapter one I

¹³ In many ways, Tarde's *oeuvre* is also worth studying in its own right. Tarde's writing has been neglected for some time now, and many of his books and essays have gone out of print. However, very recently there has been revival of interest in his work. A particularly strong current here is the project of Éric Alliez, a fine philosopher and Deleuze scholar, who has been at the centre of a concern

focussed upon the formulation of the 'need of wholeness' only because it was necessary to fashion a preliminary account of the ontological status of the social whole. Now that we have found that this status of the social whole is intimately bound up with its particular modes, ie. social occupations, and that at the same time the 'social whole' is actually always and essentially fractured into 'that which is closed' versus 'that which is open,' it has become obviously necessary to focus upon the perception of difference implied by the need of wholeness in order to work up a critical account of the ontological status of social occupations as particulars.

Precisely because 'the whole' is always fractured, there can be no other kind of theory of the particularity of social occupations than a differentialist theory. I believe Durkheim should have developed the implications of this, and admitted that 'the externality of the social' is not a seamless entity, instead of compounding his problem by taking the route of correlating social ontology with the representations and operations of social psychology. The existence of the latter relationship, by definition, can only account for an alleged social interiority and cannot account for the perception of difference, the fractured outside, that the social occupation takes as its primary function to generate, and which social ontology absolutely assumes. In this chapter we shall see how Tarde perceived that in Durkheimian sociological theory there is no satisfactory account of this presumed social motivation towards wholeness, and that therefore the problem with respect to social wholeness *as a given* is a false problem.

On the other hand, in Tarde's view, social parts are not to be considered mere 'atomic' fragments which have an innate tendency to assemble. Social parts still, for

to re-publish Tarde's writings in France. As a result, most of Tarde's work, including several obscure writings, after a long hiatus are now being re-published with special introductions pointing to his contemporary relevance. For detailed references see my review article "The renaissance of philosophie tardienne" (Toews 1999: 164-173).

him, must relate in some way to a kind of production of a sort of social whole, to a process which is necessary but which is never quite fully achieved: the production of a 'civilization', for example. Thus, for Tarde, that which is particular about social forms has to be the product of an aspiration or attraction, ie. a desire constituting the particular social elements which are constructed precisely as this 'provisional social whole' is constructed. Tarde will thus show how any 'pure sociology' must place social innovation at the centre of its account of social existence. The concept of need may be part of this account, but it cannot explain the formation of models which are actually followed. Accomplished societies do not automatically provide a model of wholeness, a 'solidarity', for individuals to aspire to. The need of wholeness could never be simply explained by its result. What is needed in order to understand the social scientifically, according to Tarde, is a deepening of our understanding of the existence of societies in terms of their logic of imitative currents, in terms of *model formation*, rather than in terms of any models already formed. The end-point, the consolidation of social facts into a quasi-objective 'reality', is no longer of interest. What Tarde calls for is an ontology of the particular and the dynamic in social formation.

It will be recalled from chapter one that Durkheim relied upon a flawed causal argument in support of his metaphor of solidity-solidarity as the theme which defines the overall coherence of social forms. We saw that it was flawed because it ultimately merely rephrased the metaphor in terms of a quasi-spatial, quasi-quantitative theory of 'segments.' As we saw, Durkheim's theory of segments begs the question of the geo-historical origins of so-called 'primitive' or 'mechanical' social boundary formations. At the same time, for Durkheim, the formation of complex modern organic social systems is a dynamic process that, via the division of

labour, distinguishes modern societies in structure and in nature from mechanical ones and thus reveals the perspective of sociality as a necessary, whole, but non-manifested reality. However, for Durkheim, even though the necessity and metaphysical nature of the social, its *principle of reality*, is increasingly revealed as modernity progresses, the formations of modernity still find their *principle of actuality*, as Durkheim's misguided attempt at a causal argument shows, in the supposition that they are, at least initially, juxtaposed in space.

It is difficult to see how, in the Durkheimian view, mechanical and organic societies co-exist, as Durkheim claims (1984: 121). To isolate Durkheim's perspective upon social space is to expose a strange, ultimately metaphorical feature of Durkheimian thinking. Let me suggest that we could think of the co-existence of the two opposing types of societies in question, the one traditional and the other modern, as the co-existence of *strata*. I am not particularly referring to the concept of statistical stratification of subsequent empirical sociology, but rather to a feature of Durkheim's basic ontological view of the structural, or archeological layering of social forms. What is remarkable is that in the Durkheimian view modernity is an ahistorical moment, a solidification in which new strata are formed and distinguished from more established strata. At the same time, Durkheim, after a certain ontological fashion, distinguishes with respect to the real the metaphysical from the actual. Thus, with Durkheim we have a view of the metaphysical as grand form or as monumental, and the actual as spatially-detailed form or as stratified. Because his principle or metaphor of actuality is spatial and physical, Durkheim's monument can only be understood as 'solid' or what we might call *monolithic*.

To be sure, Durkheim's work is remarkable for the original and influential way he distinguishes the metaphysical and the actual with a view to making such a

distinction enabling for the progress of sociology. However, if Durkheim thus moved sociology toward a more sophisticated study of social structures, this distinction, in my view, still puts too much faith in the givenness of 'mechanical' societies as spatially and empirically isolated composites, and too much credence in the idea of the modernity of 'organic' societies as a need arising when through proximity and duplication their isolation is felt as difference and a lack of wholeness. Durkheim's formulation of modernization is still too much imbued with a notion of the organic transcendence as a deterritorialization which is *successive*. There is not enough of an attempt to critically relate this deterritorialization to the premise that mechanical societies derive their structural coherence from resemblances rather than from, as in the organic case, needs arising from difference. For Durkheim does not sufficiently follow up a line of reasoning that this implicit relation points to, namely, that there is a close relation between resemblance and 'primitive' social formation. He ignores his own implication that resemblance is essentially involved in the production of social space. He ignores the suggestiveness of this that so-called mechanical societies must be able to produce their own deterritorialization or metaphysical reality and could not be merely 'primitive', undeveloped, barely materialistic, or simply that which is co-extensive with manifested social actuality. Instead of positing a conscience collective as the sum of the perceptions of resemblance in a mechanical society, a formulation which tells us nothing further about where these resemblances come from or how they operate, one could say with some justification that he ought to have taken the ontology of so-called mechanical societies more seriously.

In his seminal, but perhaps neglected book The Laws of Imitation, Gabriel Tarde takes up, in particular, perhaps what is the most obvious theme of the

insufficiency of Durkheimian sociology. He takes up Durkheim's neglect to investigate the origins and operations of the social resemblances that the theory of the conscience collective and the later theory of the symbolic can only presuppose.¹⁴ Durkheim had argued that mechanical societies, those in which social psychology originates, have this status because they are bound by the resemblances between their inside members. Tarde's attack does not initially dispute this but rather asks why it is that resemblances – including, crucially for a critical stance against Durkheim, duplication resemblances – may come about *also between* these so-called segments. Tarde raises the question of apparently fortuitous resemblances between whole, widely-dispersed communities. In chapter one we saw that Durkheim had simply assumed that duplication resemblances occur and that the latter are primarily significant for certain *members* of the segments (p. 63). Tarde asks on what basis a fortuitous resemblance between 'small segments within larger segments' is assumed and then quickly ignored in favour of the supposedly essential resemblances that bind together the whole group. Tarde thus adduces the social theoretical role of descriptive homology and exposes how it is diminished in favour of what he argues is a no-less dogmatic reliance upon functional analogy (1903: 40).

More generally, however, Tarde is suggesting that to take such a line of criticism is to criticise the very premise of the group as a starting point for sociological analysis. One could say then with considerable justification that Tarde's aim is to strike right at the heart of the mainstream sociological project. What Tarde's problem is meant to indicate is that resemblance is a phenomenon with a

¹⁴ Noted for his colourful rhetoric and occasional linguistic ambiguity (see Tarde's own self-criticism in 1903: xiii), Tarde once averred that "there are few truths as useful as Mr. Durkheim's errors" (Tarde quoted in Gane 1988: 76). To be sure, in The Laws of Imitation (1903) Tarde does not state explicitly that he is taking up a criticism of Durkheim's theories, but this can nevertheless be inferred without too much difficulty. Interestingly, debates between Durkheim and Tarde were frequently of a

much wider provenance in the social world than merely in so-called traditional or mechanical societies, and that therefore any segmental theory could not possibly satisfactorily account for social resemblances as a whole. If Durkheim has not fully accounted for social resemblances, therefore, Durkheim has no right to move to a definition of society as based in primitive cultures which then become modernized through functional differentiation. There would be a whole range of phenomena of social resemblances ready for anyone to point to with the power to upset this narrative of the emergence of a monolithic modernity.

For Gabriel Tarde, “resemblances between communities which are separated by more or less insurmountable obstacles,” ie. Durkheimian segments, can and should be explained, “through the common possession of some entirely forgotten primitive model” (1903: 46). Tarde thus elaborates in The Laws of Imitation, in direct counter-position to Durkheimian sociology, a theory of social formation through model formation. Modernity will no longer be viewed as a monumental, general, floating symbol of the moment of change within societies but rather as an open-ended series of small but specific and irreversible changes that bring about the evolution and multiplication of societies. Tarde will not fall back upon an hypothesis of pan-genesis in which a general, optimistic force of creation is immanent in all particularities but will rather show how the *resistance* of the social particular becomes a model and as such defines the social, from a micrological perspective, as one force of continuity among others. He thus argues that the original social group is born in this model formation, and in the way this resistance of the social particular acquires consistency, for Tarde, particularly via the model of the family (1903: 287).

person-to-person nature at sociological conferences in the early 20th-century. For an illuminating transcription of one such debate see Tarde 1969: 136-140.

My aim in this chapter is to learn from Tarde's alternative theory of model formation, to seek out its strong and weak points, and to adapt his insights to my differentialist, occupational theory of the social. If social theory is to avoid falling back into a metaphorical Durkheimian realism it will be essential to specify how occupations consist precisely in being that agency which has the capacity to incorporate the perspectives of the social whole as well as the social part. If 'modern society' consists in a need of wholeness which is generated by its own, immanent process of differentiation, it is clearly difference that lies at the root of a pure sociology, and the social part would consist in the perception of social difference. The theory of the relation between the social part and the social whole would be a theory that would have to deal primarily with the issue of social variation. Any theory of the relation between the social part and the social whole would have to at least begin as a differentialist one. And yet social needs, the ontological perspective, must be incorporated. In the last chapter I discussed how the social whole exists on the basis of the perspective of that which is necessary in particular social relations. Some headway towards this goal was achieved, but it has now become clear that any further progress will depend upon our investigation into the extent to which social difference must play a foundational, rather than a secondary role in social ontology. It is thus the burden of the present chapter to show to what extent we could say that particular social relations, rather than constituting solutions to mere contingent needs of particulars, are themselves a constitutive element in the genesis of the social precisely because they are needed to explain the original becoming of the whole.

The Perspective of Science

Tarde's critique of Durkheim strikes right at the core of Durkheim's definition of the social fact. We have seen how Durkheim's definition of the social

fact can be illuminated by reference to his conception of need and of obligation and his archeological metaphor which for him links the two. Durkheim's image of sociology is shaped by his perception of a monolithic modernity in which philosophical speculation can and must be overcome by an archeological, sociological attunement to the ground of need. This is not conceived as an external or merely empirical or scientific critique of speculative thinking but rather, if we take seriously his Division of Labour in Society, as the absolute presupposition, the metaphorical meta-occupation of all the particular occupations of society. Tarde will begin by questioning the scientific basis of what he sees as Durkheim's sociological pretensions. However, Tarde will not end up by espousing any sort of skeptical position. Rather, he will take very seriously and positively Durkheim's idea of a pure sociology, and he will even retain, to a certain extent, the analogy between sociology and archeology.

One must be careful in reading Tarde not to confuse his initial problem of the nature of social resemblances with his idea of a pure sociology. Tarde's attack on the Durkheimian social fact points out that Durkheim assumes social resemblances. But with this Tarde is not taking a critical view of an illegitimate assumption, or of resemblances per se. He is rather pointing out, in a theoretical mode, that the social fact of social resemblances must be put into the more general context of the theory of scientific method. He is pointing out that, according to an activist conception of science which Tarde himself would endorse, resemblance is a necessary construction of the scientific method. In this view, resemblance is internal to modernity rather than prehistorical in relation to it, and there is no major distinction possible between social resemblances and scientific resemblances. The idea of a monolithic modernity

contrasted with a chaotic set of traditions will have to begin to crumble, as he sees it, under a sophisticated theory of science.

Tarde's conception of the scientific method is, admittedly, a curious and innovative one. His view of science is particularly influenced by his interpretation of Leibniz's principle of continuity and Leibniz's perspective of composition. One of Tarde's early essays is entitled "Monadologie et Sociologie" (1999). Eric Alliez has recently argued that all of Tarde's work can and should be read through the prism of this essay (Alliez 1999). I think Alliez is clearly correct in this, since as we shall see, Tarde's main work, The Laws of Imitation, is shot through with implicit references to the Leibnizian point of view. At the same time, as Gilles Deleuze has pointed out, the outcome of Tarde's *rapprochement* with rationalist philosophical speculative thinking is highly original (Deleuze 1994: 313-14). In Deleuze's view, Tarde was able to outline a more or less complete micrological social metaphysics.

I will treat Deleuze's view of Tarde extensively below. For the purposes of the present chapter, it should suffice to begin by presenting the elements of Tarde's appropriation of Leibniz. I will then discuss the Tardian social-philosophical concepts that emerge in the process of this appropriation. My basic argument with respect to Tardian social thought will be that although Tarde presents a brilliant and useful argument with respect to the conditions of a pure sociology, this will ultimately have, for him, more to do with a project of re-linking the image of social thought with the ontology of the spontaneous modern social person, with the theory of the *avant-garde*, as it were, than it has to do with providing a method for objectively understanding the particular currents of contemporary social modernity. There is a certain impersonality about Tarde's system, but this impersonality resides only in Tarde's implicit stand against subjectivist intellectual property, which results,

as we shall see, from a distinction he draws between the historical particular and the social particular. There is no evidence at all that Tarde should be seen as attempting to efface the ideas of the creative, spontaneous, social person, and in fact a number of core aspects of his thought point in the opposite direction.

Repetition

I mentioned above that Tarde's point of attack upon Durkheim's conception of the ultimate social fact is Tarde's problem of resemblance. In fact, Tarde's problem of resemblance is a rephrasing of Leibniz's problem of continuity, or what the empiricists called the problem of uniformity. This problem is the battleground for all debates over the notion of coherence. Empiricists such as Hume investigate the phenomena of coherence for a uniformity which should be the condition of truth and knowledge but conclude that we can only be profoundly skeptical about whether or not we can ever truly and objectively know what uniformity in itself, this condition, is. Leibniz, on the other hand, holds precisely the opposite opinion that we can, in fact, know exactly what constitutes coherence and uniformity. The condition for this knowledge, according to Leibniz, is to seek for the conditions of uniformity in the constitution of continuity. He relies here on a kind of implicit contrast between the ideas of coherence and continuity. In this view, whereas the notion of coherence seems to imply a deep, mysterious uniformity of a general surface of continuity, if investigated carefully continuity can be seen as in itself actually only the surface of a deeper uniformity of particulars. The investigation of continuity, then, ought to provide a means to penetrate deeper behind the premise of coherence.

The human point of view is admittedly split, according to Leibniz, along the lines of the distinction between deduction and induction. But it is not an exclusive,

shattering split, since for Leibniz the particular point of view, or the point of view of the particular, has to include the deductive point of view in a latent, unconscious form. The deductive point of view can never be fully known since it includes all the the past, present and future, but it nevertheless can and has to be constructed in particular cases as they unfold. Sensitivity to a continuity of particulars, for example, to the trace of the past and the future in the present, is thus all the sensitivity there can be toward particulars. For empiricists such as Locke this would constitute a fallacious and uncritical acceptance of the scholastic doctrine of innate ideas. But it is one thing to reject a doctrine of innate ideas and quite another to recognize how the doctrine of innate ideas arises always in the context of the problem of continuity. The development of the latter approach, in the Tardian view, is a pre-condition for the development of a modern, sociological outlook on the world. The problem of continuity is precisely a problem of modernity as distinguished from a doctrine of tradition. But it perhaps would be fair to say that it is a problem which, at least initially, leads to a rationalistic optimism rather than a skepticism.

Tarde's appropriation of Leibniz's problem of continuity is present in the challenge he poses to Durkheim's sociology in the form of the problem of fortuitous social resemblances. As we have seen, Durkheim had assumed that some sort of duplication of functions occurs among so-called segmental societies defined as societies which cohere via the resemblance of their members, and Tarde points out that there is nothing to distinguish a 'duplication of a function', in this context, from any kind of 'resemblance', and that therefore Durkheim has explained nothing about why and how segmental societies, and therefore any societies, should be the focus of a key ontological attribution. Instead, according to Tarde, before we can speak of

resemblance and duplication we must examine the notion of repetition. In Tarde's view, "every advance in knowledge tends to strengthen the conviction that *all resemblance is due to repetition*" (1903: 14). The notion of repetition grounds our understanding of resemblance and duplication. What is real in resemblance and duplication is the repetition that they bring about.

Repetition is always the repetition of particulars. In Tarde's words, "the relation of universal to particular...is precisely that of repetition to variation" (1903: 7). And furthermore, "repetition exists...for the sake of variation," and not vice versa (1903: 7). Herein lies the main source of agreement between Tarde and Leibniz. For Leibniz, precisely because coherence is based in continuity, and continuity is only attributable to particulars, it cannot be attributed to any uniform, general categories. Similarly, for Tarde, because resemblance is based in repetition, and repetition is only attributable to particulars, a structural principle of resemblance cannot be attributed to what he takes to be a general 'mechanical' type of society over other 'organic' types.

Now, actually, we have seen that in Durkheim generality has a specific limited place and is *not for him sufficient* to define a social category. Generality, in short, is not fixity. What Tarde does is propose an interesting theory for why this should be so, one which differs from Durkheim's evolutionism. According to Tarde, "as soon as a new science has staked out its field of characteristic resemblances and repetitions, it must compare them and note the bond of solidarity which unites their concomitant variations. But, as a matter of fact, the mind does not fully understand nor clearly recognise the relation of cause and effect, except in as much as the effect resembles or repeats the cause, as for example, when a sound wave produces another sound wave, or a cell, another cell" (1903: 6). Now while Durkheim does not

attribute an absolute fixity to the social types, he nevertheless does explicitly attribute to them, as we have seen, a relative solidity (p. 39). In Tarde's view, instead of firm, 'solid' types of societies we ought to think of reproductions of societies which exhibit similar compositions. In the words of Tarde, "at all times and places the apparent continuity of history may be decomposed into distinct and separable events, events both small and great, which consist of *questions followed by solutions*" (1903: 156). The problem of continuity brings to light, for Tarde, a *compositional perspective*, a perspective upon 'things' as certain repeated gatherings of elements, as particular events whose unity is no greater than that of complex, problematic compositions.

In this compositional perspective, 'similarities' are seen, not simply as constructions, or as purely subjectively necessary as opposed to absolutely or objectively necessary, but rather as intrinsic and constitutive as opposed to extrinsic and merely passively perceptual. It is important to note that, like Leibniz, Tarde feels no need to draw from this any skeptical conclusion that we cannot therefore know with certainty whether or not societies exist at all or that 'societies' are only the degree of any given aggregation of individuals. Rather, the full, overall necessity of the existence of the particular via repetition and/or continuity is upheld by both Tarde and Leibniz. As Tarde puts it, "repetitions and resemblances...are the *necessary themes* of the differences and variations which exist in all phenomena" (1903: 6). And it follows from this, in Tarde's view, that nor are "the crude incoherence of historic facts...proof at all against the fundamental regularity of social life or the possibility of a social science" (1903: 12).

For Tarde, repetition, not coherence, is the primary concept of a pure sociology, and the problem of repetition is derived from the problem of the

resemblance of particulars. Clearly the concept of repetition can be seen here to have evolved toward a sociological perspective and far away from any purely philosophical doctrine of innate ideas. In his later work, one could say, Durkheim accounted for innate ideas as symbols perceived by the individual but necessarily based in the common consciousness of social resemblances rather than in individual psychology. But even such 'emblems', as Durkheim saw them, in the Tardian view are now to be explained *in an even more pure sociological fashion* by examining the features of the process of social repetition that underlie the 'social facts' that are repeated. For Tarde it is repetition that clearly underlies the Durkheimian theory of social resemblances. For the perspective of repetition, as a science of particulars, in this view brings the social fact back into the context of history.

But by the same token Tarde is not completely dismissing the Durkheimian approach. For Tarde, history does not mean a history of the historians. Rather, what Tarde proposes to do is to take Durkheim's archeological metaphor and de-metaphorize it. That is to say, he claims to find in the sociological perspective a methodology that has actually been unwittingly and independently clarified by archeologists who have "unconsciously adopted" a similar scientific outlook (1903: 89). Archeology has clarified sociology's scientific *modus operandi* because it reveals that "social science must deal exclusively with a multitude of homogeneous facts," which, as such, are too mundane, too much a part of the very fabric of social continuity, to not be "carefully concealed by the historians" (1903: 13). Thus, it is clear that Tarde means to distinguish the particularity he is interested in, a social particularity, from an historical particularity, but at the same time save concrete social particularity from its fate in the hands of what he takes to be Durkheim's inattention to the composition of apparently 'solid' continuity.

According to Tarde, historical particularities are exceptional and unique, “violent events which are in themselves dissimilar,” and from their viewpoint history is a mere aggregation of such events (1903: 91). But “below the surface, in some way, of the violent and so-called culminating events that are spoken of as conquests, invasions, or revolutions, the archaeologists show us the daily and indefinite drift and piling up of the sediments of true history, the stratifications of successive and contagion-spread discoveries” (1903: 91). Thus, Tarde’s transformation of Durkheim’s archeological analogy is based in his conviction that particulars are not necessarily unique, historical particulars. Instead, Tarde affirms the particulars of uniformity, reproduction, and duplication; he questions why they should be ignored. He affirms the particulars of repetition. But it should also be clear that, on the other hand, if it were not for Durkheim’s importation of an ontological perspective into sociology this social ‘solidity’, this mode of the continuous reproduction of social facts would perhaps have never come to light. In the end, however, the Tardian position complements and gives substance to the position that ‘solidity’ is only an ontic attribution, a metaphor, deployed in support of a social typology which once again threatens to obscure the real composition of social facts.

Against Intellectual Property

Now, as I have already anticipated above, for Tarde, social repetition is formulated as a theory of imitation. Tarde must therefore affirm, however, that imitation implies the event of “an original act of imagination” (1903: 43). The latter, including everything social that is supposed to come of it, is deduced from Tarde’s positing of a necessary human “desire”, or as Tarde sometimes also puts it from “organic wants” (1903: 44). According to Tarde, “every organic want is *experienced* in the characteristic form which has been sanctioned by surrounding example” (1903:

44). Imitation is thus how we experience the social, although it is not its only defining feature. For “every social resemblance” is only a kind of precedent which is set by “that initial act of imitation” of an original act of imagination or innovation (1903: 44). The tendency to imitate is a “form of a desire which I myself hold to be innate and deep-seated and from which I deduce...all the laws of social reason, namely, desire for a maximum of strong and stable belief” (1903: 50).

We are thus coming closer to a position from which we might understand what might be meant by imitation for Tarde. Imitation is for Tarde neither simple mimicry nor even a varyingly-structured mimetic tendency in society. Imitation is for Tarde neither an effect or a cause of the social. If a cause is to be found it is to be sought in a long, forgotten chain of innovations originating in pre-history, the vast, irreversible, continuous series of innumerable and imperceptible social changes which compose “the subject” of imitation (1903: 43). ‘Imitation,’ in Tarde’s usage of the term, is not an imitation of a discrete, perceived, coherent innovation with a clear beginning and end. Rather, imitation is understood by Tarde as the pre-mimetic, or the ‘original’, operation of the compositional perspective within social formation. Imitation is a ‘current’, to use Tarde’s expression: “all these streams and currents of belief and desire which flow side by side or contrary to one another in society, quantities whose subtractions and additions are regulated by social logic...all are derived from imitation” (1903: 150). An imitation involves a particular social movement in itself, a quantity, without necessarily implying the involvement of a particular manifested quality that can be described as the subject or object of that movement in historical retrospect. Imitation is indeed for Tarde the subject of pure social change.

For Tarde, from a certain perspective, imitation is primarily a kind of continuous current of social change which is also a composition. That is to say that as imitation flows in its repetition or copying of a model all social change becomes a *following*, it is a gathering or coming together of certain 'like-minded' imitators, which accumulated together create a seamless flow of imperceptible changes. That which seemed to Durkheim to be a clear and distinct social fact is according to Tarde composed of a complex flow of desire. Social facts are created by humans, but rather than implying that the social is created and led by geniuses, which implies a model of leadership, what Tarde means is that creativity is rather defined by many followings of many impersonal currents of innovation. A creative individual becomes a social model only insofar as he or she is *immediately* constituted as a subject of imitation. Herein lies one of the peculiarities of Tarde's thought: it is the creativity, the desire, and not the imitation, that actually by degrees constitutes the resulting social uniformity together with the strong beliefs that hold the latter together.

Thus, Tarde proposes that we conceive of the social as a system of impersonal movements. However, that does not mean that persons are not involved. In fact, persons are highly involved in Tarde's system. Persons, especially creative persons, make up, in a spontaneous and *ad hoc* way, a kind of primal anarchy of social growth and change, according to Tarde. However, while each personal initiative is therefore radically discontinuous, the 'primal' anarchy this implies could therefore never be manifested as any sort of perceivable, coherent phenomenon. It is a virtual anarchy, not an empirical anarchy. As a virtual, flowing reality, the social cannot be perceived directly as a set of personal initiatives but only traced in their imitations. Herein lies a key limit to what we should understand as the

'impersonality' of Tarde's understanding of the social. For just as easily we could call it a radically personalist theory. This is because for Tarde a personal initiative is not traced by observing the historical, experiencing individual and the manifested actions thereof, either alone or in a group, but rather by observing the transmission of the social in that which is partly consciously and partly unconsciously created and repeated. A very high level of personal creativity would be required to kick-start any given one of these trajectories. Nor can we conclude that what are referred to as imitations-repetitions might be better described as habits, either, because habits are patterns of experienced behavior. Repetition is not accessible to experience, or to any normal empiricism. Repetition indicates the ontology, not the experience, of the particular.

Considered from the virtual point of view of the whole of the social, from its ontology, imitation is the necessary theme, the principle of social continuity, of many original innovations. For Tarde, in the imitative current is illustrated the substance of social continuity, the 'outside looking in' of its composition. On the other hand, it is equally true that for Tarde, imitation is primarily a composition which is only secondarily a current; very often, one candidate for imitation, one independent and coherent invention, will conflict and interfere with another, indicating relations of spiritual inter-dependency. As Tarde puts it, in the first instance, "we are led to copy from others everything which seems to us a new means for attaining our old ends, or satisfying our old wants, or a new expression for our old ideas" (1903: 207). In the second instance, however, "we do this *at the same time* that we begin to adopt innovations which awaken new ideas and new ends in us" (1903: 207). Herein, in this latter perspective, is affirmed the 'inside looking out' of composition, the perspective of the equally essential discontinuity, resistance, or power to change

direction, of the social particular. Furthermore, in this latter instance of social conflict, according to Tarde, substitution is the result, and in this lies the possibility of what I referred to earlier as 'duplication resemblances.' But for Tarde there is no necessity to see these duplications as function or role boundary crossings, and therefore as the means to dissolving and re-forming groups, as Durkheim does. Resemblances, for Tarde, can just as easily be fortuitous and only parallel to one another. This leads to the perhaps surprising but at least, for Tarde, consistent conclusion that the group is not a useful starting premise for sociology.

According to Tarde, imitation is a personal current or force which is inside an impersonal composition. The social is the flow of many personal movements of desire, of many model formations, which then become contracted into stable beliefs which make the social appear to cohere in certain formations. But these formations, once formed, do not then interact to create another, higher typology of social facts. Rather, desire and belief are poles of a common social spectrum. Their content is not as important as the fact that they indicate pure or virtual social quantities, which is to say degrees of social change, which are analytically isolated at the points in which societies switch directions this way and that, according to movements of imitation which are either accumulative or substitutive. According to Tarde, there is no ontological coherence of the social apart from the consistency of these flows. And yet, for him it is absolutely the case that these flows depend upon personal preference and personal creativity. Perhaps the central characteristic of the social that Durkheim had referred to as a basic feature of the definition of a social fact and the *starting point of sociology* was social regularity, or continuity. Tarde does not disagree with this. He only disagrees with the premise of the static, pre-defined group of resemblances. In this context it would be a red herring, and an error, to aver that

Durkheim did not attribute fixity to these primitive social types. For one must specify what kind of fixity is at issue. What is at issue here is stasis, 'solidity', or *relative* fixity, not absolute, general fixity.

On the other hand, what Tarde proposes as a *positive* alternative to social types will likely not satisfy many of his readers. In Tarde's view, the social "regularity to which I refer is not in the least apparent in social things until they are resolved into their several elements, which it is found to lie in the simplest of them, in combinations of distinct inventions, in flashes of genius which have been accumulated and changed into commonplace lights" (1903: 3). Thus, a major aspect of Tarde's theory, as placed in contrast to that of Durkheim, is that it entails a certain optimism with respect to the power of thinking and of ideation as forces of social change. At times Tarde is capable of putting this point very bluntly: "let us explain these changes through the more or less fortuitous appearance, as to time and place, of certain great ideas, or rather, of a considerable number of both major and minor ideas, of ideas which are generally anonymous and usually of obscure birth; which are simple or abstruse; which are seldom illustrious, but which are always novel. Because of this latter attribute, I shall take the liberty of baptising them collectively *inventions*" (1903: 2). It should be noted that these Tardian inventions, these novel ideas, these personal moments of creativity with direct social ramifications, have to be prior to and irreducible to the actions of individuals. Thus, perhaps contrary to common sense, for Tarde imitation is not meant as a type of action. Rather, imitations, the media of inventions, are the social as such. Tarde is similar to Durkheim in that he believes the making of adequate formulations of the ontology or ground of social existence is both a priority for sociology and the main criterion of any useful sociological concepts.

In Durkheim's case the ground is the need of solidarity, and in Tarde's case the ground is the social desire inherent in the point of view of imitation. Tardian imitations are direct, immediate, single, and personal perspectives – ontological windows, as it were – which in overview directly constitute the totality of social resemblances. They are conceived for the purpose of explaining the illusion of the completeness of individual resemblances. Here, one could say with some justification, Tardian concepts can serve a salutary critical function. However, the same concepts also imply an alternative ontology that would then be grounded in this necessity of an incomplete and continuous social existence. As Tarde reminds us, “this is idealism...if you choose to call it so; but it is the idealism which consists in explaining history through the ideas of its actors, not through those of the historian” (1903: 3). According to Tarde, the philosophy of history supposes that “there is a fundamental continuity in historic metamorphoses” (1903: 2). However, in Tarde's view, “the true causes” of social change “can be reduced to a chain of ideas which are, to be sure, very numerous, but which are in themselves distinct and discontinuous, although they are connected by the much more numerous acts of imitation which are modelled upon them” (1903: 2). The study of imitation is an archeology which digs underneath the facts of history to reveal the radically singular particulars which compose historical continuity.

Thus, it would be too facile to say, as a quick formula, that for Tarde what is basic in the experience of society and constitutive of all imitation is the perception of a personal moment of ‘having an idea’. Such a statement is not untrue. However, the relationship in a statement such as this between ‘having’ and ‘thinking’ rather has to be understood as a part of the wider relationship between social resemblances and personal creativity, and the latter should itself be recognized as a part of the even

wider relationship between repetition and difference. For Tarde, the existence of sociological difference, the difference of the social particular, is primary and is explained by the highly personal creativity inherent when models are formed by a kind of anarchic or spontaneous *invention through following*.

I would say that the link implied here between having and thinking constitutes, in effect, a theory profoundly against the notion of historical intellectual property, and profoundly for an archeological theory of interiority in which the social particular is concentrated and determined in the having and thinking of a particular *social* person. In other words, while the personality is for Tarde the agency of social creation and existence, this is true not for an individual psychological personality but is rather true only insofar as the personality is a sociological personality.¹⁵ This is similar to saying that the sociological personality, the super-ego, as it were, is independent of psychological individuality, or the ego. But in contrast to this Freudian understanding, Tarde's notion of the sociological personality is one of absolutely rather than relatively spontaneous communion with social movement in itself in 'thinking' as the pure perception of 'having'. Tarde's notion is perhaps more like 'capital', taken as the whole of the social pursuit and as a sufficient reason for social change. Thus, from his perspective, Tarde can ask "how and why did human genius come to run its course at all, unless by virtue of certain initial causes which, in arousing it from its original torpor, also stirred up, one by one, the deep potential wants of the human soul? And were not these causes certain primordial and capital inventions and discoveries which began to spread through imitation and which inspired their imitators with a taste for invention and discovery" (1903: 42)?

¹⁵ See Tarde's note on his own turn from individual psychology toward social psychology in 1903: 145.

In my view, Tarde's understanding of the social does not go far enough towards accounting for the influence of need upon these pursuits and these changes. It reverts too much away from the concept of concrete social need towards the deduction of a pure necessity on the part of the provenance of social change as stemming from an abstract sociological personality. If Tarde's aim is to break down the dogmatic Durkheimian social fact, "and other verbal palliatives of...ignorance of the real groundwork of things," (1903: 1) what he is then challenged with is having to find some way to account for personal creativity which is, at the same time, irreducible to historical intellectual property, or as Tarde puts it, "let us...ward off the vapid individualism which consists in explaining social changes as the caprices of great men" (1903: 2). Of course, one agrees with this. But what Tarde also appeals to is the possibility of a social ontology, alternative to that of Durkheim, that would be based in the spontaneous pursuit of desire and the formation of social models. This is where I think need is not fully problematized in Tarde.

This model formation, which he speaks of as imitation, would constitute the primary social bond for Tarde. This social bond is therefore based in the continuity of radical, desiring particulars. But would not this ontology of the social particular become for Tarde a doctrine itself, perhaps even as an ideology of 'spontaneity', no longer to be taken merely as a critical problem stemming from the apparent necessity of social resemblances? What Tarde indubitably discovers is that there exists a pure perception of social change which is just as unconscious as conscious inasmuch as it stretches out to accompany and to help constitute the entire, unlimited possible range of social differences. Any social ontology, based upon repetition, assumes social difference. But if therefore the positing of Durkheim's conscience collective is rightly shown to be an illegitimate way to make conceivable the unity of social

groups and make possible common sense comparisons between segments of social resemblances, precisely because those resemblances imply a repetition which cannot be taken for granted, on the other hand Tarde's pure process of production and reproduction, of inextricably and immediately linked invention and imitation, if taken as a positive fact, is surely just as mysterious. In Tarde's own words, "there is nothing more mysterious, one may say, than such reproductions. I admit this: but when we have once accepted this mystery, there is nothing clearer than the resulting series. Whereas, every time that *production* does not mean *reproduction of self*, we are entirely in the dark" (1903: 6). Thus, though both Tarde and Durkheim are for a sociological problematization and rejection of our naive affirmations of individuality, both thinkers unfortunately come to a dogmatic conclusion, the one affirming a transcendent externality of the social and the other affirming instead an immanent, impersonal transmission of personal creativity.

Conclusion

Tarde is perhaps unique among social theorists because he formulates a theory of personal creativity, indeed a theory of radical human contingency, one which explodes the myth of a monolithic modernity. At the same time, remarkably, Tarde's social theory is nevertheless ontologically grounded in the necessary. Tarde's point of departure for his own positive social theory is the necessary existence he deduces from Durkheimian premises of social resemblance of a perception of difference which has to be primary in the social. He brilliantly touches on exactly that issue which is most pressing in contemporary society, that which troubles us about Durkheimian 'solidarity', and that which we seem to continually misunderstand about our ongoing modernity. One might now put the question like this: why can we not affirm that society positively exists, or has certain particular

effects beyond the individual human condition, without subordinating the socially useful concepts that we can derive from such cases of the existence of the social to criteria limited by the needs of a myth of a transcendent collectivity? Why do we appear to need to formulate the existence of a social substance? Perhaps Tarde's most profound insight is that imitation is identical with model formation, i.e., with the creation of those socially useful concepts, and therefore that, at least from this point of view, imitation constitutes the essential fact of the social. However, paradoxically, we have seen that in order to defend this point of view Tarde must raise imitation to the status of a metaphysical formula. Social metaphysics arises one more time.

In the next chapter I aim to make clear why Tarde must introduce his own social substance, one located in the field of ideation, over against that of Durkheim's quasi-physical social substance. We have already seen a hint of the reason: for Tarde ideas are actual, even, to a certain extent, empirical. For to support such a theory Tarde must make a compromise: ideas can be said to be actual only insofar as they are related to an imitation, a following, or a tracing of an invention, and this essentially social essence of ideas can be only metaphysical. If ideas flow as real, discontinuous, effective particulars in the social world, the social is nonetheless the metaphysical concept of their existence and the status of this 'flow', or continuity among the discontinuous, is thus also metaphysical.

Nevertheless, despite this major concession to social metaphysics, Tarde has won one major point, in my view: he has opened an opportunity to theorize the ontology of the social particular. According to Tarde, whereas social science must study the particular facts of social repetitions, there can also be a positive social philosophy which affirms the ideas of the social particular in themselves. Indeed, he

believed that “social science might be as advanced as the other sciences, and... social philosophy is actually much more so than any other philosophy” (1903: 13). Thus, the net effect of Tarde’s social theory is therefore the creation of a new image of philosophical thought, one which is identified as a pure sociology. This has a profound meaning for the future of sociology and philosophy. It inscribes an essential cooperation between them precisely at the point in which Durkheim believed they must diverge. This freeing-up of social thought from the constraints of social science while nevertheless in close cooperation with those constraints surely must be one of the most innovative and indeed salutary aspects of Tarde’s critique of Durkheimian sociology.

His return to metaphysics notwithstanding, my response to this Tardian position, however, is to ask about specifics. Why it would not be much more logical to say that all that we can speak of in terms of a pure perception of social change is a pure or deductive perception of the process of division, of a problem-based differentiation, which is experienced in occupations. Why is there *something* that must occupy the moment of change? Why is there some *person* which must *be* occupied? Does not modernity reveal that the social consists rather in the notion, sense, and image of being outside, which is to say, in a plurality of pure social occupations? Surely neither transcendence nor immanence have a monopoly on the duration and space of the social. Even though Durkheim tends toward taking the side of social transcendence, it is precisely the Durkheimian focus upon occupations, even the occupations implied by inventions and imitations, that Tarde can have no response to. For, as I have argued, although Durkheim as we have seen above raised this point but then neglected it, occupations are surely exactly those processes during which the consistency of the social as such is revealed to the person involved, not in

manifested appearances, nor on the contrary in an unextended self which multiplies and organizes appearances, but rather in a drama of externalization, of 'going outside'. From this perspective, Tarde seems again to want to locate the consistency of the flux of the social in an experience, in an interior logic of 'having'. Rather, is not the ground of the social the occupation which makes us forget our having through our attraction to difference in itself and our attendant movement outside? Does not the occupation include and even embrace our future which has never been experienced?

Perhaps Tarde's sociology of modernity, though it redresses an imbalance by exhibiting the neglected perspective of immanence, is nevertheless not ontological *enough*. Perhaps a fully ontological investigation into modern society would have to incorporate a more full account of desire constraints which are not inherent even in the operations of unconscious creativity. Indeed, I think that Tarde's criticism of Durkheim's premise of the basis of the social fact in need is not sufficient grounds for a rejection of Durkheimian thought because it does not go far enough sufficiently to deal critically, for example, with the doctrine of social constraint. As we have seen, the cost of Tarde's critical distinction between historical and sociological investigation is that he must posit that social constraint is a construction only of the scientist's perception of repetition and resemblance. On the other hand, to be sure, Durkheim confused social numbers, and the attendant pressures and constraints placed upon social members, with spatial constraint, even though he cleverly avoided the inherent problems with this by attributing the process of boundary construction to a metaphorical notion of solidarity. But one error cannot correct another.

Thus, in order to look into this further, in the next chapter I propose to compare Tarde's and Durkheim's approaches to the question of sociology. With this

comparison we may begin to more positively specify the limitations of 'pure sociology' or sociologism. We shall then, in the following chapter, be in a position to begin to appreciate why and how Henri Bergson came to recognize late in his career that there is an element of truth but also an element of error in the positions of both Tarde and Durkheim. He grappled with the consistency of social movement between its apparent poles of attraction and constraint, and explicitly attempted to avoid sociologism, the positing of either a self or a social externality.

CHAPTER FOUR

THE SOCIOLOGISMS OF DURKHEIM AND TARDE:

A COMPARATIVE EVALUATION

However directly inaccessible our object of understanding, the social, becomes by taking on its essentially occupational character, we can nevertheless benefit from a theoretical as well as a practical rationale for studying it. My aim is now to use the main ideas of Durkheim and Tarde to summon up an explicit theoretical context for the theory of social occupations. Essentially, in this chapter, my focus for this derivation is upon only one broadly-defined error of Durkheim and Tarde which I believe can be found to dominate in both of their works. Each offers considerable individual insights into the nature of the social. Nevertheless, they each fall into a similar error which results in a significant distortion of the processual realization of modern social life. The source of this error is no less than a guiding idea which is common to both of their writings, namely, the idea of a 'pure sociology'. Durkheim and Tarde were rivals in a common attempt to achieve a 'pure sociology.' Pure sociology is, precisely, organized primarily with a view to the ontology of the social. Thus, it must be the specific task of this chapter to support the theory of occupations, which I conceive as a social ontological theory, by

showing that not all ontological approaches to the study of the social must be conceived as 'pure sociology'.

Pure Sociology and its Two Perspectives

There are two perspectives which vie against each other to become the dominant focus of pure sociology. The first kind of approach is exemplified by Durkheim's discussion of his methodology in the Division of Labour. It has perhaps been tempting at times to see this early part of Durkheim's work as a source of sterile, abstract functionalism in sociology. But Durkheim attempted to rebut such a view in advance in the opening pages of his first major book. As he put it, "the word *function* is used in two somewhat different ways. Sometimes it designates a system of living movements, divorced from their effects. At other times it expresses the corresponding relationship existing between these movements and certain needs of the organism" (1984: 11). He then goes on to make perfectly clear that he favours the latter understanding (1984: 11). Therefore, given that for Durkheim it is not possible to employ an ordinary empiricism, in the extent to which "'results' or 'effects' cannot satisfy us either, because no idea of correspondence is evoked", thus, rather simply "what is important for us is to know whether this correspondence exists, and in what it consists" (1984: 11). Thus, what Durkheim is calling for is not an abstract functionalism, or a theory of social systems, but rather a grounded social ontology.

But nor does that which is 'purely sociological' in Durkheim come from sheer disciplinarity or scientificity, from the fact that he attempted in the Rules to specify the criteria of social facts and the domain of sociology (see 1982). It is easy to conceive such specifications as being also an integral part of a merely empirical approach. Rather, Durkheim partakes in 'pure sociology' precisely and exclusively

in the extent to which he attempts to construct an identity, not just a mere correspondence but an *existing, sui generis, purely tautological* correspondence, between social cause and social effect. We have seen in chapter one that that which is implied here is an argument for an exclusive relation of necessity between the source of the social in a social need which breaks down quasi-spatial barriers, and the structure of this event as a unique and modern kind of quasi-temporal durational constraint over individuals.

The first kind of ‘pure sociology’ is that tendency in sociology which seeks to ground itself in need. The second kind of ‘pure sociological’ tendency is exemplified by Tarde. Here one seeks to align oneself with desire as the ‘desire to invent’, or the decomposition of the grounding in need for the sake of new compositions. Perhaps somewhat surprisingly, this perspective does not involve a rejection of the idea that there are forces or constraints which tend to make ‘individuals’ inessential in comparison with the larger social whole. Desire is not an attribute of the individual for Tarde since what is peculiar about desire is that it “completes and is part of the logical need for unification” (1903: 150). Rather than assuming individual desire what Tarde does is put at stake the agency of desire as located in a personal self with a problem which surpasses the personality because the problem is a social problem of how to invent. As I have shown in chapter three, in Tarde there is a strong sense of the larger impersonality of the social existing constructively alongside the personal. The criticism of ‘impure’ sociology implicit in this second perspective consists not in the rejection of the notion of a force of impersonality but rather in the rejection of the notion that such a force could lend the social whole any sort of quasi-spatial, quasi-temporal externality. Instead, what is seen is an ideational but nevertheless quantitative continuum between personal desire

and impersonal force in the form of belief. As Tarde puts it, “desire and belief: they are the substance and the force, they are the two psychological quantities which are found at the bottom of all the sensational qualities with which they combine; and when invention and then imitation takes possession of them in order to organise and use them, they also are the real social quantities” (1903: 145-6). As Tarde sees it, “the simplicity of such principles equals their generality, and I grant that it is much easier to lay them down and even to prove them, than to follow them through the labyrinth of their particular applications. [But] their formulation is nevertheless necessary” (1903: x). In this sense, and in his own terms, Tarde has “tried, then, to outline a pure sociology” (1903: x).

Durkheim agrees that what is interesting is “what social phenomena are when stripped of all extraneous elements” (1982: 55). However, in Durkheim’s view, there is no purity in locating the substance of the social in desiring-imitations since the latter are operative so far away from their source in need, and are conversely so far gone into the labyrinth that Tarde speaks of, so as to make impossible a consolidated, structural definition of their part in social existence. In Tarde’s perspective, on the other hand, there is simply no justification to implicate such a sense of sociological strategy in social ontology. ‘Pure sociology’ for Tarde, insofar as it is linked with any sort of method, can only be described as a necessary attunement or alignment with the flux of the particular desires which, inasmuch as they become forceful pursuits of the new models they innovatively follow, immediately constitute the sense of the wholeness of societies in the form of provisional beliefs. Thus, for Tarde, beliefs, which provide the social with ‘wholeness’ in particular cases of desiring-imitations, are actually always immediately connected with the

multiplicitous social particulars of desire. They could not be just 'ideals' or general ideas held in abstraction.

What is 'purely sociological' in both Durkheim and Tarde does not come from abstraction or generalization. Nor does it come from a reflection upon the transcendental nature of certain sociological categories. The term 'pure', here, should not be understood in a Kantian or quasi-Kantian sense. What is at stake is 'strategical' rather than 'critical.' Durkheim and Tarde each have a strong sense of strategy which guides their work. Strategy is disciplinary in the case of Durkheim and inter-disciplinary in the case of Tarde. But this only goes to show that, in fact, the issue of disciplinarity is not of key significance. What is important is that each thinker's strategy develops in a dialogue with that which he posits as a key social substance. Each thinker is thus bound to link his strategy with the very nature of the social substance he argues for. This link, then, between strategy and social substance, will be our provisional definition of 'pure sociology'.

Pure Sociology, Metaphor, Sociologism

I think there is enough evidence to say that the groundings and alignments of Durkheim and Tarde can be organized into two basic sociological perspectives which grant ontological significance and analytical emphasis to certain features of the social. The first perspective targets the features of constraint, obligation, endurance and concentrates its ontological deduction of the necessary existence of the social upon the central feature of social externality. The second perspective targets attraction, play, spontaneity and emphasizes the ontological necessity and centrality of the self. The first perspective, exemplified by Durkheim, is primarily deductive inasmuch as it generates a strong, circular conception of the features it privileges, while tending to interpret the other perspective weakly as based upon insignificant

epiphenomena. The second perspective, exemplified by Tarde, is primarily critical and intuitive, combining an effective criticism of the tautology involved in the first position with a radical intuition of the relation between the positive features neglected in the first position and social becoming, while tending to dismiss the features emphasized in the first position as objectifying or derivative.

How can we formulate a serious evaluation of the pursuit of a 'pure sociology', an evaluation that can take into serious account the features of both kinds of approach? Above all, a serious account must evaluate the pursuits of Durkheim and Tarde in ontological terms. Thus, we must ask whether the goal to establish the nature of the ultimate social substance is an appropriate way to pursue the ontology of the social. Certainly, a social ontology needs to be inclusive. But does it need to be universal as well? I think that the search for substances leads away from inclusivity and toward an ideal universality which will always fail to be absolute. Thus, in my view, it should be clear that the criteria of ontology cannot be positive, or linked with certain features over others. In my view herein lies the common error of Durkheim and Tarde. We ought to ask whether any kind of 'pure sociology' can outline an effective relation between social space-time and social existence without becoming too dogmatic on either of the sides of stasis or dynamics.

Now we are in a position perhaps to make a significant theoretical criticism of Durkheim and Tarde. If we ask what is common in these mutually-opposed attempts, we find an interesting conjunction of facts. Durkheim and Tarde both become dogmatic at certain points in their social ontologies. These points are those in which they link the substance of the social with an agency which they suppose, rightly or wrongly, to be a certain locus of creative originality: the self in the case of Tarde and the horde or simple group in the case of Durkheim. At this point each

thinker does two things. First, they immediately inject temporality into the locus by supposing it to be creative. Secondly, but with less promising effect, they additionally assume that the locus they have isolated has certain spatial properties, including, for example, spatial difference. Durkheim perhaps sank deeper into this error than Tarde did because Durkheim thought that such spatial properties could play a causal role in social genesis. But this obvious error only helps to illuminate a more subtle, common error, namely, that each thinker assumes that spatial characteristics, whether causal or not, are always unproblematically linked with temporal change. They speak of spatial characteristics of the social in temporal terms such as ‘change’, ‘continuity’, ‘current’, ‘persistence’.

At first glance this might not seem like a big problem. Why do we need to worry about specifying what spatial features the social has, if indeed it has any? Why cannot we be content with this loose, ‘strategical’ way of thinking about ‘social space’? Perhaps we can, but then we would at least have to admit that we have no reason to assume that such terms could be used to describe any aspect of real space. Moreover, it does not help to answer that what is being referred to in ontologically oriented social thought such as this is social rather than physical space. What could ‘social space’ be, given that the term ‘social’ is already immediately impregnated with a fundamental temporality? How can space be described in terms of time? Would we not, with ‘social space’, have simply formulated another contradictory term of analysis?

At the crucial junctures of their attempts at ‘pure sociology’, as a result of the ‘pure sociological’ requirement to posit a creative locus, both Durkheim and Tarde each provide a classical example – and furthermore these are examples that are otherwise supposed to be opposed to one another – of what can only be described as

a temporal metaphor of space. The one relies upon the metaphor of 'solidity' and the other upon the metaphor of 'fluidity'. In this, 'pure sociology' necessarily becomes a mere sociologism.

Two Criticisms of Sociologism

The essence of sociologism, as I would now define it, lies in this reliance upon a variety of temporal metaphors of space as proof that the social exists and is manifested in a corresponding variety of modes of social life which subsume the existence of the comparatively short-lived individual. From this definition, I will show that there are three ways one can criticise sociologism, but as I will argue, only the last two are real, effective criticisms that we can learn from.

The first and most common way of criticising sociologism is the external criticism which comes from the point of view of the individual and accuses sociologism of formulating banal truisms and, as a result, of lacking 'common sense'. It is probably enough, from this position, to rely upon a doctrine, such as that of 'human nature,' or that of 'the sacred', in order to account for the regularities of social practices. However, despite the numerous and obvious difficulties in maintaining the truth of such a doctrine, not the least of which would be an at least equivalent reliance upon explanatory metaphors, for present purposes we need only recognize one relevant defect in it. This is that such a position is intrinsically unable to specify its object of criticism, such as whether the object of criticism is the idea of sociological awareness in general or whether it is a certain practice of the latter.

It is extremely important for our purposes that we attempt to understand the elusive motives and carefully defined practices of the classical project of sociological awareness. As I argued in chapter one, such an understanding is highly relevant, if not essential, to our own immediate social awareness, since we still share with it a

sense of modernity. Sociologism is a certain becoming dogmatic of these classical types of sociological awareness. Even today it supplies the public with echoes of a discourse against which a sufficient attack is merely that which can be seen to be dealing only with another kind of discourse as discourse. Such attacks can easily conceal their own naive realism and vagueness by appearing to directly address the terms, or the 'deconstruction' of the terms, before them. This is why sociologism is undesirable: it distracts attention from the social needs and desires that most sociology attempts to attend to and instead attracts obscurantist types of criticism. Over against these ill-informed types of criticism, but informed by their attempts and their deficiencies, I think we must attempt to formulate effective internal criticisms of sociologism.

Firstly: a problem of hollowing, or false transcendence. Sociologism begins from being against the idea of space as an exclusive property of the private individual, but on the grounds of ontology rather than political economy. It wants to address the problem radically at its root in the fundamental nature of social existence. But it also sees social existence fundamentally imbued with creativity and thus with time. In its eagerness to appropriate time for non-private activities, it fails to address the relation between time and space in social existence. Instead it comes to rely upon various temporal metaphors of space. It does this to communicate its criticism of the appropriation of space and to communicate its alternative idea of a social reality that encompasses and temporally supercedes that of the life and death of the individual. What is involved here is primarily an ontological approach to the necessity of social spaces which wants to see the latter as somehow floating over and subsuming private or proper space, in time. It therefore attributes a mystery to both real space and time

itself which is matched only by the apparent profundity of the questions raised by the notion of a *sui generis* social space.

In Durkheim, for example, we have seen how an 'insight' into the necessity of society as a *sui generis* fact is linked with a theory of spatial social segments. Sociologism comes from the theoretical pursuit of a 'pure sociology' which aims at providing an outline of the essential features of social existence, and thus the questions raised as to the provenance of social space in social existence are addressed theoretically. But also in Durkheim we have seen how a certain distinction is initially implied and then comes to be developed between his theory of 'organic need' and his theory of structural segments. The first is implied to be metaphysical and the second to be actual. They are to be contrasted on the level of theory: the first is implied to be non-spatial and the second to be spatial. Together they are supposed to account comprehensively for one reality of modernization. But what is spatial cannot provide, on its own, an explanation for what is non-spatial, and what is non-spatial cannot provide, on its own, a reciprocal explanation for what is spatial. Such a tautology will obscure the social meaning of the actual as obligation and thus as intimately involved in social necessity. At the same time it will introduce an assumption that the actual, now a sphere of quasi-spatial relations, somehow, somewhere, constitutes a *sui generis* movement of social creativity.

To come to rely upon a temporal metaphor of space is to implicitly separate one's ontological insight into the necessity of social spaces from one's theory of those spaces and to come to rely upon an increasingly hollow formulation of the latter. As we have seen above, Durkheim's attempt to unify his theory by developing a causal argument is weak and ineffective. This aspect of his theorization, its aspect of being a theoretical choice, is insignificant in comparison to the fact that, in order

to develop a concrete, grounded social ontology, Durkheim must actually bifurcate his theory, with the result of creating parallel theories, one purportedly to do with the non-spatial and one purportedly to do with the spatial. There is, in fact, no way to unify such theories as parts of a coherent ontological problematic except by means of using an overarching metaphor which is an emblem of that which is mysteriously creative in both. This is a hollow, false transcendence. They are, in fact, only theories of certain quasi-spatial effects of social creativity. The power of the metaphor of 'solidarity' is only its appeal to a sense of the mystery of social creativity, and it is only a quasi-spatial metaphor. It is, to be precise, a temporal metaphor of space.

Furthermore, Durkheim's opposition from within the project of 'pure sociology' makes almost exactly the same mistake. The only difference between Tarde and Durkheim on this point is that Tarde did not attempt to draw out an explicit causal argument for imitative currents. But he did not need to make such an attempt at a causal argument in order to end up with exactly the same kind of ontological bifurcation of social theory which requires the same kind of metaphorical solution. Tarde's concept of invention is a kind of creativity of the self which has a mysterious effect of inspiration upon others. It does not create *ex nihilo* but is rather a kind of 'model formation through following,' a kind of model of fashion. By creatively selecting some cultural influence to 'follow', or to appropriate for one's own development, one creates a model for others to follow as well and in this imitation a social current comes into being. One can thus have an influence on agents who live many generations apart from one's own time.

However, Tarde's notion of invention, or what I have described as 'model formation through following,' is nevertheless systematically separated from his

theory of imitative currents. Moreover, this confusing bifurcation is a necessary consequence of his approach. For even if imitative currents are not intended to refer to solid space, they are still intended to refer to quantifiable social flows. The sociological idea of quantity, without solidity, is flow. The idea of flow, or to use Tarde's term 'current', makes sense only in reference to an idea of space, even if only to pure changes in space. Over on the other side of the equation, the notion of invention has to remain 'a flash of genius', an element of mysterious creativity. Since the agents of invention-imitation have no spatial solidity and therefore no spatial contact or proximity whatsoever, only the idea of a flow or current, which when linked with creativity is a temporal idea, can remain to link invention and imitation if they are to retain a sense of quantifiability.

In Tarde's thinking there is no contact or proximity that is presumed to take place between agents. The problem of boundaries is eliminated so that the problem of the social part within social processes can take pre-eminence over the allegedly false problem of the social whole. Durkheim's idea was of a kind of 'worldly space' of solidarity which made him see enduring boundaries as intrinsic to the social question. Just exactly because he rejects this sense of boundaries, but at the same time wants to keep quantity central to the social question, what Tarde generates is an alternative temporal metaphor of a kind of 'outer space' in which the question of boundaries is left completely behind but in which the idea of space nevertheless remains important. Tarde's idea is that of an unlimited reservoir of flows or currents which bond, distinguish, and re-bond imitative agents together in a constantly fluctuating social eternity. This kind of notion of a flux is still just as hollow and falsely transcendent as that of Durkheim, however, because the more we affirm the

'reality' of the description, the more we must suppose that what it means to be socially situated comes from some fundamentally mysterious creativity.

Secondly: a problem of flattening, or false immanence. The reliance upon a temporal metaphor of space creates the unfortunate effect that social time can only be conceived flatly in terms of general moments which separate traditions from effects of modernity. Durkheim's distinction between 'mechanical solidarity' and 'organic solidarity' is formulated in his first major work and remains as the primary insight which guides his entire subsequent work (1984). The first category refers to traditional sociality, the second refers to modern sociality. As we have seen, the transition between the traditional and the modern is de-historicized in Durkheim's thought. The main link to history he retains is a vague sense that the division of labour which he believes spurs on the transition between tradition and modernity has accelerated in relatively recent times. At the same time, Durkheim's explanation of the division of labour, and indeed of modernity in general, is evolutionary, not revolutionary. It deals with the gradual duplication and substitution of functions based in social need and a resulting complexification based on the necessary evolutionary co-existence of old and new social forms. It deals mainly with the exteriorization of society caused by this complexification. But nowhere is there explained the time of this exteriorization process, which is the modern creative social process *par excellence*.

On the one hand, it appears that Durkheim has conceived time as immanent in sociality inasmuch as he discovers a *sui generis* creativity of the social in its becoming complex and modern via the division of labour. And for Durkheim thus, generally,

the guidelines in relation to which [time] is divided and organized are fixed by the movements of concentration or dispersion of society (1973: 218).

On the other hand, there is another sense in which it seems for him that time is simply a flat backdrop against which actors play out a struggle over their social needs and their accompanying problems of roles and boundaries. In Durkheim's words,

the rhythm of collective life dominates and embraces the varied rhythms of all the elementary lives from which it results; consequently the time which it expresses dominates and embraces all particular durations. It is time in general. For a long time the history of the world has been only another aspect of the history of society (1973: 218).

If Durkheim does not attribute generality to social types he nevertheless does attribute generality to time. It seems there is simply one time which expands as modernity expands and accommodates all needs and all boundary changes.

As we have seen, Tarde attacks Durkheim's conception of a monolithic modernity. However, Tarde only attacks the linking of modernity with the sense of a monolith as a phenomenon that appears to be external to individual actors. Modernity is still highly active in Tarde's conception of society. For Tarde, however, modernity is not really considered with respect to the 'whole of the process'. Tarde's modernity could only be said to be an aggregation of innovative ideas sustained, concentrated, and fluctuating in the imitative space between

individuals, in what Durkheim called 'negative solidarity' (1984: 75-77). Modernity for Tarde is not an objective phenomenon with an organic nature of its own. The moments of modernity, for Tarde, are conceived as immanent in a social substance of ideas which in themselves are the radical particulars of social continuity which lend form to history and to the infinite varieties of imitation. Thus, in Tarde's thinking, we might see a time of innovation and ideas and particularity, and a time of imitation and following and continuity. For Tarde however there are not two times here but only one time which is simply identical. In his view, history does not have its own, overarching time.

For Tarde, all time is social and archeological. Rather than describe an increasing alienation between traditional forms and modern forms as Durkheim does, Tarde simply collapses them into one spontaneous social cosmos. In Durkheim, everything social must *become* modern. In this process, though institutions are increasingly divided and differentiated, time is gradually expanded, homogenized, and accessible to modernizers as a kind of quasi-spatial reservoir of freedom for diversity. Not unlike Durkheim, in Tarde's conception, modernization is a "growing resemblance of individuals between whom all the customary barriers of reciprocal imitation have been broken down, and who imitate one another more and more freely...and yet more and more necessarily", and this "makes them feel with a growing and, eventually, irresistible power the injustice of privilege" (Tarde 1903: xxiv). However, in Tarde, everything social is *already* modern in principle; the acceleration of progress is an acceleration of imitations which have always been taking place in human society. As Tarde puts it, "far from smothering their true originality", the progressive resemblance of individuals "fosters and favours it"

(1903: xxiv). The traditional is merely improved by modernization, not revolutionized, in Tarde's way of thinking.

This need not obscure the fact that Tarde is very pro-modern according to his own standards. Indeed, Tarde claims that "what is contrary to personal pre-eminence is the imitation of a single man whom people copy in everything. But when, instead of patterning one's self after one person or after a few, we borrow from a hundred, or ten thousand persons...the very nature and choice of these elementary copies, as well as their combination, expresses and accentuates our original personality" (Tarde 1903: xxiv). Modernity, for Tarde, is accompanied by an increasing desire for living in a novel way, a desire for difference and a maximum of spontaneous personal innovation. Social change, for Tarde, is immanent in a social substance composed of radical social particulars. But these radical particulars are already posited from the outset. Consequently, Tarde's conception is that of a 'false immanence' inasmuch as time has to be posited as a pre-established continuity which accompanies the social 'current'. Time does not change significantly when any new particular social innovation occurs. Time is the flat, grey, impersonal continuity of otherwise discontinuous archeologically-discovered social facts. Time plays a role only as an *over-arching or super model* for the 'current', the concept which is actually only a spatial metaphor with which Tarde attempts, aiming at his 'pure sociology', to thematize social diversity.

Conclusion

Sociologism can be defined as one dimensional social ontology justified primarily by recourse to a temporal metaphor of space. We can now conclude that the usage of such a metaphor is the element which must be held in common in the various, even opposed 'strategies' of 'pure sociology'. This is the means of 'pure

sociology's attempt to link substance and strategy. The end, however, is that 'pure sociology' cannot be maintained as a project without becoming sociologism. The main problem with sociologism is that it confuses social time and social space. The interwoven heterogeneity, the virtual confluence, of social time and social space in our actual occupations is ignored, glossed over in sociologism. The types of sociologism we have analysed imply a common model of time that is so general as to be indifferent to social change. In addition, they imply different notions of space which nevertheless each in different ways falsify our ontological insight into our need for social existence. They do this by positing a substance of the social and a locus of social genesis and an intrinsic connection between substance and locus. This connection can only be strategical and thus it can only be metaphorical. But in no way have we only needed to criticize it qua metaphorical in order to mount an effective criticism. Rather, we need only point out that the theoretical evidence shows, as it does from our exposition, that there can be no privileged locus of social change, either in the 'self' or in the 'group.' And if we furthermore concur that we cannot leave this question as a mere matter of theoretical preference, we must then admit that there also can be no social substance. If there can be no social substance, there can still be metaphor, but the metaphor has been shown to be arbitrary and of little consequence. Thus, it is not necessary to criticize the use of metaphors per se, but it is necessary to ask if they might be used, as they have been by Durkheim and Tarde, to gloss over a major theoretical problem.

As I have already suggested in many places above, I think the contemporary social theory of human practices still requires us to formulate a basically ontological social problematic. 'Pure sociology' starts from a similar notion but ends in a sociologism which, in its own terms, forecloses the possibility of re-opening the

question. It attempts to finally answer what cannot be finally answered. For there is something inevitable about the need to formulate a social ontological problematic. This is not simply because human practices are social, a persuasive and realistic tautology, but a tautology nonetheless. But nor is it because practices are inherently self-creative, based on an intuition or an idealistic reflection upon the flux of our existence. Rather, for me social ontology is required because the social, our practices, tend to become occupations, and in this, its vital state, the social is inaccessible to direct observation. In our occupations we somehow, somewhere, move 'outside' of either the 'state' or the 'process' we have been in. Social ontology is thus of a central, eternally recurring importance. To answer the social question on the basis of any particular set of space and time bound observations would be like trying to do literary criticism by watching someone become embroiled in reading a novel. The occupational side of all practices is that which, in constituting a social diversion, there is engendered a socially significant feeling and a personally relevant, but complex, and thoroughly social concept of the externality of the social. In my view, we would have no other way of fully accounting for this 'outside' than by analysing social practices ontologically.

But not all ontological approaches to the social need to be formulated as a 'pure sociology'. From the shortcomings of Durkheim and Tarde we can learn an important lesson, namely, that it is a mistake to suppose that the source of social genesis, if it could be isolated, would then be of key significance for our social practices. What I propose is that having learned from the excesses of sociology we are left in a position in which we may affirm that that which is significant for social ontology, and indeed, that which is important generally in social matters, is simply full occupation. This is what 'full occupation' means today: that the drawbacks of

'pure sociology', evaluated comparatively, have confirmed that what is needed for social occupation is neither to organize phenomena in our understanding around the mantle of social stability, that what is desirable in social occupations is not, on the other hand, to leap courageously into the stream of our intuition of social change. 'Full' social genesis is rather an occupying movement which temporarily dissolves the fracture between 'that which is closed' and 'that which is open' by means of generating a temporary, socially-useful image of the 'externality of the social'. The perspectives of group and of self are of significance only for an interior reflection upon a past experience of this movement, and past experience is only one aspect of what is intrinsically a complex, disjointed movement. Therefore, what we need in order to surpass sociologism effectively, to reopen the question of social ontology effectively, is an immanent, futurally-inclusive, phenomenology of social occupations, which is to say, one guided by an analysis of the space-time of occupational trajectory. Time and space should not be analysed dualistically as separate aspects of one creative locus, but rather as parallel aspects of a variety of social quantities which are qualified as social and lend the social their peculiar colour inasmuch as they are socially involved, somehow, somewhere. What is of interest in sociology now is only this 'somehow, somewhere'.

PART II

THE OUTSIDE

CHAPTER FIVE

BERGSON'S SOCIAL THOUGHT AS AN ALTERNATIVE TO SOCIOLOGISM

It might be said that philosophy in turn of the century and early 20th-century France for our purposes is best understood as a kind of neutral reservoir of intellectual talent from which a new science – sociology – wanted to recruit much-needed intellectual capital. Because of the tendency to inflate their vision of social science with Durkheim's social philosophy, the Durkheimians did not pose a direct challenge to mainstream philosophy in France, but simply drew upon it as a resource. It has been shown that the majority of the Durkheimians were recruited precisely from the mainstream pool of neo-Kantian rationalist philosophers (Besnard 1983). However, thinkers such as Celestin Bougle, Paul Lapie, and Dominique Parodi, who were at the core of participation in the *Annee Sociologique* as well as of the defence of the tenets of the Durkheimian doctrine, had no problem, ideological or institutional, in *remaining* philosophically based. Durkheim himself, trained as a philosopher like the others, continued to describe himself as a 'rationalist' even at a very key explanatory moment in the preface of his Rules of Sociological Method (1982: 33). Besnard's studies show that Durkheim actively recruited scholars from within philosophy, far more than from any other disciplines (1983: 11-39). But at the same time, Durkheimian sociology sat well, probably too well for its own institutional

good, as Karady has established, with established philosophy (1983: 71-89). The discipline of French philosophy never appeared 'purist' or threatened to the point of desiring to wholly exclude the development of the sociological movement from its domain.

Thus, I think the issue of fluctuations in the boundaries of the philosophical discipline vis-a-vis fluctuations in the boundaries of the new discipline of sociology, of which the issue of recruitment is a large part, really explains little by itself about the emergence of the project of sociological awareness. For example, if we want to understand the Durkheimian movement we will want to ask if there are any philosophical grounds which explain why the Durkheimians did indeed want to distance themselves from established philosophy. At this point, such a question ceases to be a question of cross-boundary movement. In my view, too many thinkers have simply taken Durkheim at his word, have succumbed to his repetitious formulations, that his motivation to create a sociological paradigm was purely sociological.

Alternatively, it is sometimes tempting to offer a quasi-psychological explanation for today's relative decline of sociology which consists in supposing that sociology was motivated, classically, by untenable delusions of grandeur. But why have such delusions, such as that of Durkheim, been so compelling for so many generations of social thinkers, inside and outside of sociology, while the discipline of sociology has tended to suffer? Moreover, surely the answer to the latter question, if it could be answered, would have to do with specialization more than with cross-disciplinarity. The latter indubitably rests upon the success of the former.

Intellectual workers in academia have traditionally felt compelled on the one hand to form small groups of specializations and on the other hand to oppose each other for

the sake of lending to their special pursuits a critical or cutting edge. If delusions of grandeur do arise, they would arise in this context of success in enlarging the group while preserving its special principles. Such delusions would therefore rest upon a tacit assumption that effective difference is measured by productivity stemming from opposition and competition. More to the point, one ought to recognize that one would need just such an assumption simply to identify any such delusions. Thus, the assumption that difference is subordinate to productivity could not be purely psychological, or at least could not be individually psychological since it is, for sure, a kind of absolute presupposition in western societies even today.

The net effect of our productivity paradigm indeed has been that the social sciences, sociology, and indeed every member of society at large who accepts the basic assumptions of the former, have necessarily tended to forget the basic paradox of modernity which ties them all together. It is this paradox that we must understand in order to begin to understand Bergson's resistance to sociologism. The paradox consists in the fact that many irresolvable issues, such as key social questions tend to be, are nevertheless impossible for anyone to set aside, as one might attempt to do for the sake of concentrating, in a vulgar modernist mode, strictly upon verifiable/falsifiable work – or in broader social terms, upon productivity. Of course, many social thinkers have long seen this paradox as purely inherent in the various hermeneutics and/or critical hermeneutics (eg. Gadamer 1994; Habermas 1984; 1987; Giddens 1990; Touraine 1995) and deconstructive modes (eg. Derrida 1978; Lyotard 1988; Nancy 1991) with which we approach social questions. Historical materialists (eg. Hill 1991; Hobsbawm 1995) and cultural materialists (Foucault 1991a; Bourdieu 1977) have interpreted it in terms of class struggle or of the circuits of power and capital. The two former approaches stress the ethical problems of

inter-subjectivity, but then tend to either posit an abstract-functionalist notion of an ideal situation of communicative action, revive the abstract theorization of structure and agency in holistic-reflexive terms, or affirm an abstract-eschatological notion of a new justice and a new community to come. In contrast, the two latter approaches have rested upon objectivist illusions, the first upon the illusion of unmediated (or insignificantly mediated) class group agency and the simplistic model of power as domination, and the second upon the determination of the cultural product vis-a-vis a cultural 'field' which is all-pervasive and virtually devoid of agency.

However, it has been shown recently that there can be a non-objectivist alternative to hermeneutics and deconstruction which is nevertheless progressive and not intrinsically a postmodern or cultural-theoretical approach: one can classify and historicize the different modalities of the paradox to create the useful effect of broadening, decentering, and specifying our understandings of modernity (Wagner 1994). Faithful to the paradox as such, this perspective has, in part, had the effect of confirming that there must be something more immediate and vital in the paradox than merely an historical lesson as to why we need to approach sociality with a variety of interpretations. It has, at the very least, become apparent that without a *theorization* of modernity even an interpretive-historical approach cannot fully grasp Kant's observation that the paradox created by these types of troublesome social questions comes not from their *longevity* but rather from their *inescapability* (Wagner 2001). It is because of *inescapability* that human reason simply fails to render our powers of knowledge such as explanation, interpretation, and critical reflexivity into uncontroversial, automatic faculties. In the same stroke, *inescapability* motivates us to attain stable, systematic answers to our social questions, but then tends to push this *attainability* decisively out of reach. For the

more these difficult kinds of questions are formulated with a view to eliminating, containing, or glossing over their inescapability in order to switch the focus to narrow, solvable questions, the more one strays from the ground of need, and then the more all of our questions tend to lose their internal animus as well as their contextual relevance. We shall see that Bergson's thought is aimed precisely at countering this tendency, and that his strategy, in his final years, comes to be aimed implicitly as a critique of the formulation of 'anomie' by means of illuminating a particular shortcoming in the Durkheimian interpretation of the paradox.

Durkheim's interpretation of the Kantian paradox is certainly a sophisticated one that affirms the paradox. Durkheim holds that the inescapability in question involves a constitutive externality of social relations which derives from a social need that is so powerful that we necessarily describe it to ourselves as something sacred and beyond our direct knowledge. However, he is nevertheless optimistic that certain of the vicious effects of this, particularly those which create obstacles to the rational organization of our societies, can be mitigated through innovation in social theory and practice. Rather than eliminate the paradox we can alleviate it. In comparative reflection upon the social structures of morality and religion we can elaborate a genealogy of human reason which, though falling short of providing solutions that would be capable of rendering the sacred obsolete, can nevertheless help to develop a therapeutic understanding of the problems that a scientific modernity generates of skepticism and general anomie.

The key difficulty with Durkheim's perspective upon social theory which marks it off from the more recent ones mentioned above does not lie in a distinction between grand, all-encompassing theory versus modest, situated theory. The difficulty rather consists, as I suggested in chapter four above, in Durkheim's implied

link between strategy and substance, in that for Durkheim modernity is not a constellation of paradoxical problem intensities but is rather a monolithic perspective generated by a single substantial problem, the division of labour in society, which he theorizes as an overarching problematic of 'institutions' by virtue of its essence as an inescapable externalization process. Durkheim's insight was to conceive a kind of collective problematization (the division of labour) as an inescapable, ontologically-significant process of externalization. ✓

Durkheim's error was to suppose that it follows from this that only one problem is involved in this process. In fact, as we have seen above, the division of labour in society as Durkheim expresses it is so general as to be, in fact, not a social problem at all: what he theorizes is rather simply the very process of modern socialization itself! Given this difficulty, we can suppose that it must have appeared to Durkheim that the only way to salvage any critical edge was to posit one side of the 'problem' as normality and the other side as pathology. But the latter division only causes mystification and confusion. Herein lies yet another important modality of Durkheim's tautological distortion: to have taken a process which he describes in operational terms as an explanation for the same process in problematical terms.

In this context, Gabriel Tarde begins to emphasize the phenomenon of imitative repetition over social externality and the flow of desire over the stability of systems. It is as if the position of Tarde is as far away from that of Durkheim as one can hold while still believing that sociology ought to be rooted in some kind of pure sociological deduction. However, even Tarde held that the intrinsic aim of social desire is to attain, if not a complete explanation of society, nevertheless a maximum of stable belief (1903: 147). Tarde's and Durkheim's projects were very much opposed to each other, but they nevertheless both began from within philosophy and

subsequently came to feel a need for an organic interdisciplinarity organized around what might be called broadly the perspective of social thought. They both believed this broad perspective could enable them to advance toward the goal of inventing sociological paradigms which they thought might be able to develop a better understanding of, if not to completely answer, those ultimate questions pointed to but neglected in contemporary philosophical neo-Kantian rationalism.

In this way, in the context of early 20th-century philosophy in France, research surrounding the Kantian paradox is transformed, from the starting point of a rationalist affirmation of inescapability, and by means of sociological deductions therefrom, into a program of research into sociality. Bergson's point of attack will become precisely this reliance upon deductive ontological arguments. From Bergson's point of view, a deductive approach allowed Durkheim and Tarde to simply posit the social problems of the creative agent rather than explain them by penetrating to the problem of the practical process of creativity itself with its sub-problems of memory and of action. It is this 'pure sociological' legacy of rationalism, with its espousal of purely metaphorical understandings of time and space, that allows for 'problems of the social' to become de-emphasized in favour of 'social problems', ie. for problems to become detached from their specific social ontological implications, and to instead become entrenched in ontologically desensitized language.

It is precisely in this context that Bergson arises as yet another kind of figure who would make philosophy turn away from the dismal project of analysing and clarifying those apparently ultimate questions which are set aside by the sciences, and to rather participate in the project of discerning the effects of modernity in society, in art and in science. After Kant, not only did the social sciences suffer from

too much emphasis upon the pursuit of positive knowledge, but philosophy around the world, in Bergson's view, began to gradually espouse a more limited and ultimately self-defeating approach: one of merely refining theories of representation. In order to resist this stagnation of philosophy, Bergson's basic agenda becomes one of asserting "the brain as an instrument of action, and not of representation" (1988: 74). But Bergson's approach is, in my view, as I will argue we can see from his last book, The Two Sources of Morality and Religion (1977), more than a mere pragmatism. It is also, and perhaps more profoundly, a significantly distinct and constitutively rival attempt to both Durkheim's affirmation of social externality and Tarde's affirmation of personal creativity.

This is not to say, of course, that Bergson's thought is necessarily equally sympathetic and/or critical towards these two thinkers. In fact, Bergson's thought is particularly oriented as a critique of Durkheimianism and he is more sympathetic to Tardian thought. There are important reasons of theoretical-intellectual rivalry for this particular bias against Durkheim. Firstly, it is Bergson's wish not to compromise but rather to intensify an attitude of philosophical holism (Moore 1996: 42-3). This holistic bias makes Bergson more intensely a rival of Durkheim. For Bergson this is bound up with the distinction between social theory and social philosophy, and with his sense that the latter approach is the best suited to the position of holism. This explains why Bergson would like to effect a reform of philosophy rather than a break with it.

In addition, however, Bergson holds, despite even his own emphasis upon action, a premise that is in fact close to Durkheim: that there is an important level of analysis which must be irreducible to that of action and confronted philosophically. In Bergson's view, despite the importance of focussing upon the problematique of

action versus representation, “there would still remain” a complimentary though irreducible aspect of action “which is of a more metaphysical order – viz.: that in pure perception we are actually placed outside ourselves; we touch the reality of the object in an immediate intuition.” (1988: 75) The more philosophy is to become effectively practical and action-oriented, in Bergson’s view, the farther it proceeds away from the constraints of memory together with the attitude of deference towards longevity or the mere persistence of institutions, towards “that other extreme plane where no action is any longer affixed to...images”, ie. towards the problematic of the constitution of external reality itself (Bergson 1988: 243). Durkheim’s attempt to alleviate the difficulty of self-knowledge attainability through the indirect study of social structures involves the making of inescapability into a *doctrine* of social externality. But if this is the case for Durkheim, Bergson’s approach rather tends to tilt the opposite way: towards *problematizing* inescapability and the metaphor of structure in relation to the perspectives of action and memory.

Bergson’s conception of action vis-a-vis external reality has to do with his desire to position a holism of life, a kind of vitalism, over against the dogmatic holism of sociology. What are the means of this new problematization, if memory is its past and action its future? We shall see below that Bergson makes significant use of Tarde’s critique of Durkheim. However, Bergson will not be satisfied merely to seek an alternative to the notion of structure as Tarde does with his theory of imitation. Bergson’s interest is in mobilizing Tarde’s idea of social formation as common attraction to a model to help illuminate an aspect of action that is characterizable as a kind of ‘dynamic religion’ (1977: 209-66). Because the actions that go to make up our social practices are always already dynamic, there emerges neither the need for transcendental deductions which can help us to map abstract

limits for our desires by means of theories of representation, nor an indifferently passive external reality which does the same thing in a defacto way. In Bergson's view, there must nevertheless be some mode of motivation which is generic, and thus inescapable, in every case of action, which is not for example a contingent rational stimulus or an arbitrary purpose of intention. Bergson's solution is to say that with every action there emerges a necessary passive element, not in which 'we place' ourselves but in which, as he says, '*we are placed*', ie. an '*outside*' (1988: 75). But in contrast to, for example, Augé's non-places (see 1995), Bergson's notion of the outside would be understood to provide, not an extended continuum constituted for the sake of an ultimately-finite quantity of contractual relations, but rather an *unextended*, virtual point of ontological coherence for the multiplicity of social practices and experiences.

Here is implied a 'coherence' that no architecture could provide. In contrast to the environmental or dwelling-related necessity of architecture, Bergson's image of the outside is of a more advanced or intimate necessity that is quite differently related to the sense of the inescapable. By means of such an image one does without, on the one hand, appealing to a foundation or transcendental illusion of reality 'beyond these illusory walls in the real world', or on the other hand, lapsing into an idealism which affirms only the concept of 'another world out there that is more real than this one'. The latter amount to the same thing in contrast to the outside in question which is not one of these forms of provision for a sedentary, negative unity, but rather could only be understood as a new principle of ontological coherence amidst the *active diversity* of modern practices that have begun to see the practical uselessness of both realistic and idealistic borders. No longer would ontology require invoking either a causal priority or a more general concept. Pure perception

and the outside would be produced only in parallel processes able to provide each other mutual support without mutual conflation.

For most of his career, much depended for Bergson upon establishing his theory of pure perception. We will naturally want to examine it carefully for clues to the provenance of the outside. However, our first step must be to recognize that we cannot find such clues in an examination of the theory of pure perception which is undertaken solely to discern philosophical consistency and soundness, as it appears in its own explicit terms in Matter and Memory. For this could only reproduce rather than begin to explain the apparent mystery of the metaphysics that Bergson claims, at that point in his writing career, that the outside evokes. Moreover, one would be arbitrarily and unproductively refusing to follow Bergson's own path towards an interdisciplinary attempt to account for this metaphysics in his later writings.

Particularly in his Two Sources of Morality and Religion (which was unintentionally and unfortunately his last book), Bergson widened his ambit beyond the constraints of philosophical analysis in order to take on board a perspective of social thought in the light of sociology's contemporary claims to have opened the way to explaining the social origins of metaphysical beliefs and practices. In this way, the outside ought to be recognized as an image of the social offered by Bergson aimed at critically transforming, in the same stroke, both Kant's formulation of 'inescapability' and Durkheim's formula of 'constraining externality.'

Bergson's Philosophy and Postmodernism

Today we find ourselves in a position in which our modern beliefs and practices, far from being supported, have rather been deeply challenged, it is said, by interdisciplinarity and by postmodernism more generally. Thus, I think it will be inevitable now for enthusiastic comparisons to be raised between Bergson's thought

and postmodernism, and it may be the case that this will become even more tempting once we exhibit Bergson's critique of the sociological account of society. For it should be appreciated that, not unlike postmodernists, Bergson wanted to distance his own approach from attempts to link the question of what exists with what we can know, a classical framing of philosophy, exemplified by Kantianism, which separates the world from thought in accordance with an image of more or less punctual separation and return. This is for Bergson an image linked with the idea of spatial measurement. Bergson was concerned above all else with durations, and thus to criticize the intrusion of the spatial metaphor. Thus, while one may very well find postmodern thought interesting and helpful in many ways, I think it will be useful to discuss from the outset several key points of disanalogy between Bergson's thought and postmodernism, and thus to clarify Bergson's position.

The key point of disanalogy here is that while Bergson's explicit aim is to criticize spatial metaphors of time in order to perceive the workings of 'real time', his resulting theory of duration is not intended, as was the Tardian notion of 'flow', as merely an alternative metaphor. Bergson really believes that his theory of duration penetrates through to the immediacy of time. It is easy to see how to many this focus could seem quite presumptuous, simplistic, and even impossible at first glance, just as postmodernism is often scorned for similar alleged shortcomings. Bergson's turn to duration entails that he holds the position that 'epistemology', the pursuit of a sound theory of knowledge that characterizes, implicitly or explicitly the first task of traditional Kantian modern philosophy, consists only in the erroneous assumption that we can encompass and stabilize – referentialize – our vital processes by means of philosophical concepts. Since postmodernism has also been concerned with what has sometimes been termed 'the disappearance of the referent,' Bergson's

concerns seem as if they overlap with those of this latter development. Perhaps Bergson's thought carries with it many of the worries that today we all have about postmodernism.

However, Bergson arrives at this position with very different means: what is involved in Bergson's thought cannot involve a passive skepticism. 'Postmodernists' are often chastized for communicating in their ideas a kind of political and economic defeatism stemming from a belief that all experience has become fragmented, singularized, and impossible to politically and economically reorganize. However, in duration, for Bergson, thought combines with external reality on the condition of remaining distinct from and irreducible to objects of reference themselves but without on the other hand becoming merely a variable subjective perspective which perceives objects and modifies theories in relation to them. Quite to the contrary of 'postmodernist thinking', for Bergson there is real immediate evidence of veritably unbroken conscious thought in duration, solely for which that which is fragmented, ie. simulacra, exists.

To begin with, the subjectivity which is to be criticised by 'postmodernists' a good forty to fifty years after Bergson becomes unjustifiable, in this new point of view, only at a fairly recent point in intellectual history in which the optimism of the 'social turn' in philosophy more or less comes to an end. In contrast, Bergson was rather writing precisely at the beginning of this turn. Such claims regarding subjectivity had, in this early context, often been seen as justifiable on strategic grounds. These earlier attempts were strategic steps aimed at alleviating the Kantian paradox by means of theorizational comparisons among societies taken as representatives of the past and the present, in order to relativize the field of morality. But, counter to many of the more vulgar receptions of postmodern thought, the most

what all these features of fluids amount to, in simple language, is that liquids, unlike solids, cannot easily hold their shape. Fluids, so to speak, neither fix space nor bind time....Fluids do not keep to any shape for long and are constantly ready (and prone) to change it; and so for them it is the flow of time that counts, more than the space they happen to occupy; that space, after all, they fill but 'for a moment.' [Thus] when describing solids, one may ignore time altogether; in describing fluids, to leave time out of account would be a grievous mistake. Descriptions of fluids are all snapshots, and they need a date at the bottom of the picture (Bauman 2000: 2).

In my view, the great disservice of this kind of theorizing is summed up by Bauman himself when he goes on to propound what he sees as the relevance of this to social criticism:

We associate 'lightness' or 'weightlessness' with mobility and inconstancy: we know from practice that the lighter we travel the easier and faster we move. These are reasons to consider 'fluidity' or 'liquidity' as fitting metaphors when we wish to grasp the nature of the present, in many ways *novel*, phase in the history of modernity (Bauman 2000: 2).

Essentially, for this all-too-common type of postmodern theory, flow is a metaphor that people apply more and more as a way of understanding the social processes

taking place around them. But could it really be as Bauman suggests that the only role of criticism to simply ‘reflect upon’ these naive descriptions of contemporary modernity? Does not this popular form of postmodernism simply represent a mode of the simple multiplication of such descriptions? From a Bergsonian point of view such a perspective precisely misses the point of memory, or that which governs the relation between the past and the present, as a tool of action. What we have to counterpose to the metaphor of flow with its implication of the reduction of reality to successive snapshots is the reality of unbroken duration which in no way can be understood on the model of succession. For Bergson, “the unrolling of our duration resembles in some of its aspects the unity of an advancing movement and in others the multiplicity of expanding states; and, clearly, no metaphor can express one of these two aspects without sacrificing the other” (1999: 27). In contrast to the metaphor of flow, then, duration is, according to Bergson, not intended as an alternative metaphor but is rather a concept of the full sense of time, in which memory governs the relation between the past and the present for the sake of the future.

The future is, in Bergson’s famous image in Matter and Memory, the conical point of the materializations of the brain, body, and action (1991: 152). However, if therein duration is dissociated from entropy it does not mean that the materializations in question are merely ‘flowing’ on and on interminably. Bergson’s theory entails the view that there can be no such pure process of escape. There is for him in the image of the outside very clearly a dimension of inescapability which cannot be theorized as a mere materialization. Escape would entail closure. Materializations are prevented from attaining closure not despite the fact that they depend upon an image of being outside in relation to both the past and the present but precisely

because of this. The future, in Bergson, is not the simple manifestation or success of actions, as if it were simply a chaotic ‘arrivals level’ of discrete, fragmented episodes of life. Rather, the vital and useful existence of the future evinced in Bergson’s perspective involves neither a simple materialism nor idealism but rather a mediating image of the exterior, the purely external, or the outside. This image is, as it were, a by-product created by our activities which encourages them and provides, not a utopian rationale or even a local self-justification, but rather simply a kind of basic ontological coherence among what are, after all, a plurality of actions and durations.

One could indeed say that there would be nothing to stop us from conceiving such an image as a prerequisite for political and economic reorganization. If it is true that Bergson has little to say about the organization of political economy, it could nonetheless be argued that he is essentially and consistently optimistic about the possibility of positively retheorizing its popular conditions. Bergson’s main point, however, is that we would have no account of such popular durations if we did not go beyond the dialectics of subject and object. It is not so much the Kantian paradox that Bergson rejects as the false solution of dialectics. But nor could that which takes place in duration, for Bergson, despite its immediate relation with thinking, ever again resolve itself in a pre-dialectical image of an interior, thinking ego.

Admittedly, here is, again, another surface similarity between Bergson’s thought and postmodernism. However, in contrast to a mere ‘decentering’ of subjectivity which involves a movement of deferral, duration is a point of critique against dialectics which much rather emphasizes a facing toward the future. We are “ever driven into the future by the weight of our past” (1988: 243). What is involved here is an intuition of the whole of time from a concrete perspective, which, just because it is concrete and active, materializes the future. But it does not follow from this, and nor

does common sense allow us to believe, that the future is that point of our processes which is simply materialized. The future is not conceived as an end-point within a process of entropy, but rather for Bergson as an internal motivation, or a kind of ‘building self-encouragement’, or ‘effort’ of action.

The outside would therefore be an externality not as general or container-like as space, because it would not have merely the function of supporting the succession of phenomena. The idea of succession implies that externality is concentrated in objects, and therefore succession cannot describe duration. In Matter and Memory Bergson will claim, against the common belief in the unity of the human psyche as a sequence of private sensations which are developed in space, that “they forget that an impersonal basis remains in which perception coincides with the object perceived and which is, in fact, externality itself” (1991: 66). An image of the outside will function for Bergson to support the expansion of cases of thought into a larger, though constitutively incomplete, inter-becoming of thought and reality. Concepts blocked within intuited succession can therefore never capture this externality but only *utilize* it as a plane upon which they may be constructed (1960: 108-111).

For Bergson philosophy is always articulated in practical, ‘immediate’ relation to this element of passivity, as it were, within concrete philosophical activity, this inexhaustible, unlimited sense of a beyond that exists not in thought or in thought’s focus of attention. Philosophy partakes of an element of thought which Kant first noted but too hastily conceived as a kind of universal default structure for thought (1996). Kant thought that this structure or ‘condition’ of thought could nevertheless be determined through the philosophical rigour of the transcendental critiques of reason, morality, and judgment, as long as we could agree to first make a decision to adhere only to the ultimately circumstantial evidence of thinking

indicated in our apparent power to referentialize and to know, ie. to adhere to concepts and conceptualization. To be sure, in contrast to Kant, the absolute intuition that Bergson appeals to seems to be self-defeating or incoherent since what Bergson would seem to be attempting to grasp philosophically would nevertheless be admitted to be beyond the grasp of philosophy's determinations. In Bergson's own words, in regard to the kind of philosophical method he would advocate, "it is only truly itself when it goes beyond the concept" (1999: 30). Some well-respected critics are often ready to laud Bergson for implicitly recognizing the fundamental modern problematic of inescapability and even seem to agree with Bergson in his apparently negative stance against Kant. As Adorno put it, "the aporetic concepts of philosophy are marks of what is objectively, not just cogitatively, unresolved" (1973: 153). However, such critics are often at the same time quick to point to an apparent lack of appreciation in Bergson of the significance of the mediating social world for this problematic, for which reason, according to them, we must avoid the Bergsonian "cult of irrational immediacy" (Adorno 1973: 8). But, as we shall see, it would be simply wrong to suppose that there is a lack of optimism on Bergson's part that an explicit problematic of social thought can and ought be undertaken in the interest of fully modernizing our way of doing both philosophy and social theory. In Chapter 1 we saw that Durkheim had argued that there is a key sense of externality which is, as a sense of the social, irreducible to objectification and, in an ontological-analytical sense, unmediated. Durkheim had thus already relocated the problem of the convergence of modernity and society away from the problems of objectification and negation and into the context of a problem of externality which implies a whole new problematic of difference. Once we understand Bergson's starting point as this problematic of externality rather than the older problem of objectification his work

begins to appear less as a philosophical idealism and more as a productive contribution to social thought and to the development of the problematic of difference.

The Image of the Outside and Sociology

I think Bergson's whole philosophy only begins to make sense once the implication is understood that for him ultimate reality is a multiplicity of the durations of thought and action within a multiplicity of material ends which share a common means of imaging an outside. The outside that he speaks of in the passages above is largely implicit in his work. Nonetheless, it is a special, central image because it has the special function of communicating his ontology. This ontology is neither abstract nor a pre-historical origin. For Bergson, ultimate reality does not stem from the past since the past is only a tool of action. Thus, ultimate reality is for Bergson somehow always already becoming accomplished, and is therefore something that requires metaphysics in addition to an analysis of action in order to become intelligible. Bergson has often been accused of mysticism. But this only confirms that what Bergson articulates is not completely *unimaginable*, and perhaps its relation to imagination and the image is the clue that we can use to develop a better understanding of his thought. I think if we concentrate upon the image of the outside in his thought we might be able to find novel ways of illuminating his thought comparatively.

There is an image in 'the outside' that is proper to this question of Bergsonian philosophy while being also proper to other modes of thought which are concerned with the paradox of modernity. As we have seen in chapter one, the classical sociology of Durkheim also has an interest – and indeed an ontological interest – in what we could also call the outside. To be sure, here the outside would be perceived

as a necessary externality, in relation to the living and thinking human individual, of a constitutive sociality which is inescapably implied in every concept and material. This is Durkheim's point of departure for what has been called his 'conversion' from philosophy to sociology. It is the perception of the externality of the social which provides the key element which will lead Durkheim away from philosophy towards his basic strategy to focus his analysis strictly upon consolidated facts of social phenomena.

Bergson's Social Thought and Durkheimian Metaphysics

There are several possible points of comparison between Bergson and Durkheim, the first of which is disciplinary, or more precisely, methodological. I believe I have already pointed to sufficient evidence to assume the existence of a subject of philosophical reception to both of their works to whom disciplinary boundaries are relatively unimportant. Below I have formulated a discussion of their methodologies which I then want to show is intelligible mainly as a function of the differences between their respective images of the outside. But first I want to discuss how their methodological dispute arises out of a difference over social metaphysics. As we have noted, Bergson's method is, or is at least intended to be, direct and absolute (1999: 22). As I have already noted, for Bergson no point of reference is required in order to enter into a perception of the movement of objects (1999: 21). Our habit of analysing an event by breaking it down into spatialized components is never adequate to the indivisible apprehension of the event. Intuition is this apprehension. What Bergson is concerned to convey, particularly in his writings up to and including Creative Evolution is above all a method of intuition.

According to Bergson, intuition is hardly distinguishable from what he calls metaphysics, precisely until the former is able to become methodological (1999: 45).

Metaphysics is that form of outlook on the self and world which always claims to dispense with symbols and enter into a communion with the thing itself (1999:24). Here is the main similarity between intuition and metaphysics. To be sure, for Bergson metaphysics can be, and has been, a rigorous science. But metaphysics, or traditional metaphysics, has been too concerned with furnishing the mind with static images of the design of movement. For instance, it has been too concerned with duration taken as a generality, on the basis of which it then contrasts a relatively fixed unity with a relatively static multiplicity (1999: 46). Metaphysics has merely asserted the infinity it aims to communicate by appealing to the multiplicity of possible representations and a need for order among simulacra. Instead, as it were, intuition operates to enter into things themselves, not as an infinity of attempts, but as the finitude of particular successes. This, in turn, implies the existence of a duration of the unique successes which constitute the entirety of movement as at the same time a variety of qualities and a unity of direction. In short, Bergson's notion of intuition is that which succeeds in particular cases in which thought becomes fully adequate to corresponding particular events.

If the problem of epistemology is by-passed in this manoeuvre, for Bergson it is because he is interested primarily in ontology, and for him nothing *exists* properly speaking apart from the reality of these two-sided particulars. Bergson's analysis of dualism here is not, as in traditional modern philosophy, that of a 'mind' versus a 'body', or representation versus reality, but is rather that of a triangulation of the body as a site of vibrations creative of two levels of representation, that of concepts on the subjective level and that of images on the objective level. To be sure, it seems on the surface that Bergson is particularly interested in the level of concepts to the neglect of the level of images, when he claims that we too easily "forget that, if

metaphysics is possible, it can only be a laborious, and even painful, effort to remount the natural slope of the work of thought, in order to place oneself directly, by a kind of intellectual expansion, within the thing studied: in short a passage from reality to concepts and no longer from concepts to reality” (1999: 45). However, what he is really pointing to is not so much a privilege of concepts over reality but rather the more basic fact that “duration is continually in the making” and the intuition of it is “not a single act, but an indefinite series of acts” (1999: 27; 46).

Bergson’s primary aim is to attain a perspective in which the success of intuition is not simply presumed to be automatic and require no effort. The ‘effort’ of these acts, though for Bergson it is played through the body, does not for him stem from the body originally. Nor does it become deposited in a self-sufficient realm of concept-forms. It is likely not Bergson’s intention to locate in the body a site of creative originality, or in concepts an original creative product. For if that were the case we could correlate bodies and concepts with acts that have already been accomplished. But for Bergson bodies are not discrete entities that are separate from their products, and concepts are not forms that are greater and more original than their components. Conceptions such as these tend to orient the body and concepts exclusively within a past that faces only the certainty of the present and present knowledge. Rather, I think what Bergson is interested in is an intuition that faces the past and the future from the vantage point of the present and which thus illuminates the character of knowledge as a contingent composite. Instead of manipulating the interpretation of acts that have *already* been accomplished, in Bergson’s view, metaphysics ought to “*proceed* by intuition” (1999: 46).

The distinction between traditional metaphysics and intuition as a method essentially involves the inclusion of a future orientation in the latter. For this reason,

Bergson is a thinker of the possibility of a modern metaphysics, or more precisely, a metaphysics of modernity in- and for-itself. If it is necessary to follow and account for inescapable reality, as metaphysics has traditionally attempted to do, there nevertheless arises the perspective of attainability, the modern necessity for practical, free problem-setting in conjunction with this following. In Bergson's view we may not attain to certainties of knowledge. We may only "attain to fluid concepts, capable of following reality in all its sinuosities and of adopting the very movement of the inward life of things. Only thus will a progressive philosophy be built up, freed from the disputes which arise between the various schools, and able to solve its problems naturally, because it will be released from the artificial expression in terms of which such problems are posited." (Bergson 1999: 51-2) Thus, *the modern 'effort' in question, for Bergson, is indicative for him that creativity is the creativity of the body, as an agent of sense, and as conceptually engaged not with negating sense but rather with inescapable, or really and immediately sensed problems.*

Bergson is certainly not concerned with an individual free agent who attains solutions. The effort in question is a collective actualization of the ontological distinction between metaphysics and the method of bodily intuition, and is, as a matter of *sense*, irreducible to either.

We can see that, in the Two Sources, once directed towards the question of society, intuition will have to involve discerning the social as directly a series of intelligent collective movements. It is already implied as a background assumption for Bergson that society, just like any entity, can no longer be fit into a pre-established framework or set of conditions for thought. A Bergsonian position will have to advocate attaining to the movement of the social itself rather than to an abstractly or metaphorically external social state. It is true that Bergson had held in

his Introduction to Metaphysics that “all reality...is tendency, if we agree to mean by tendency an incipient change of direction” (1999: 50). But social thought appears to be structured like a progressively expanding common intelligence. In Bergson’s view, “a tendency, natural or acquired, is one thing, another thing the necessarily rational method which a reasonable being will use to restore to it its force and to combat what is opposing it” (1977: 22). Such intelligence, Bergson says in the Two Sources, is constantly intervening in the real, but presumes to be aimed at a systematic overcoming of that which confronts the human condition (1977: 269). Bergson will indeed have to show that a special methodology of critical thinking such as philosophy purports to be will have to depend upon this collective human intelligence for its material and for its motivation. Philosophy will thus have to ultimately depend upon “the very general tendencies which determine the trend of a society, and whose development necessarily extends over a more or less considerable number of generations” (1977: 296).

To provide a framework for a timely analysis of the direction of such tendencies – such as a nefarious, technology-driven “concern for comfort and luxury” – is, in a sense, the *raison d’etre* of Bergson’s final book, The Two Sources of Morality and Religion (1977: 298). Like most social thought, there is a kind of political problematique embedded in Bergson’s effort. To be sure, I think there is not a great deal to be illuminated by reference to Bergson’s particular diagnoses in that book or through a reconstruction of his political views, since these are bound to the context of contemporary society and politics. Rather, what concerns us here is the general linkage the Two Sources announces between Bergson’s method of intuition and his conception of social agency and the general view of the social and

political that is contained therein. It is mainly for these latter reasons that Bergson's whole work can and should be read through the prism of the Two Sources.

However, from the outset, the Two Sources has also to be read in relation to a recognition that comes to us more easily today than it did in the 1930s of a serious difficulty with the type of approach to the question of the social that Bergson chose for the purpose of communicating his ideas. We cannot simply proceed to read and interpret the Two Sources only in relation to Bergson's earlier work without discussing this problem from the outset. I would summarize the difficulty by stating the following fact: that we have already, indeed, a way of thinking and a recognized term for the idea of a progressive common intelligence, the term 'civilization.' In addition, there are drastic problems with this notion. Not the least of these difficulties is that we have left the 19th-century. At that time, to be sure a very formative time for many of our categories of social thought, the question concerning 'civilization' and its future dominated our social and political horizons. But now we have left even the 20th-century in which the concept of 'civilization' was demolished, not just by wars but by deeply moving critiques of its racist, sexist, classist, and other unwarranted assumptions.

The concept of civilization was productively ambiguous in the 19th-century, but fatally ambiguous in the 20th, because it was based on a procedure of assimilating certain advantageous parts of every social movement to the aims of restricted civil society and repressing the undesirable parts. This meant that the quality of social movements which were first recognized in the 19th-century could then still be judged initially by a few problem-setters. But by the next century technical and legal problems were growing exponentially with modernization, and so were growing the number of those setting and expected to define what these

problems actually are, and so, we might say, were attendant ‘judgements of quality’ increasing in occurrence and diffusion throughout societies. Actually, we have seen that this continued far beyond the critical point in mass society where this nexus of social movements hardly seemed definable in terms of ‘judgements of quality’ anymore, since the latter seems and probably is impossibly sedentary and unfeasably individualistic, especially when contrasted with the new productivist jargon of an ‘exploitation of an opportunity’, or a ‘creation of a demand’ and so on. Thus, we may still need to speak of philosophies depending on the quality of relevant social movements, but the idea that judgements are that which link theory and practice is for all practical purposes foreclosed to us.

This foreclosure of individualistic judgement, along with the ‘postmodern’ questioning of the Kantian paradigm that was based upon it, both complicates and speeds up the need for a reappraisal of Bergson’s social thought. The futures of social thought and of philosophy have become linked together closer than they ever have been, but the linkage itself has become more obscured in darkness than ever. However, on the positive side, this could be understood, indeed to Bergson’s credit, as the very point of departure of Bergson’s social thought and that which makes the latter still worthwhile reading. It is as if the Bergson of the Two Sources realized, in the context of an increasingly unstable and mass society in the 1920s and 30s, that this relation is paramount and to have made it the culminating question of a life’s work.¹⁶ His work is radically exceptional for its lack of having recourse in the last practical instance to a theory of civil subjectivity and an image of judgement. He argued that this path has become closed to us because it has become impossibly general and “intellectualist” (1977: 66). Bergson assumed an increasing modern

¹⁶ See in particular Bergson’s comments on the problem of world peace in his “Final Remarks” (1911: 266-318).

social complexity to be a reality, but wanted to find a new, 'non-intellectualist' source of intuitive simplicity to mitigate but nevertheless methodically guide its effects. At the very least, we ought to recognize, that though Bergson chose to write within a mode of discourse on 'civilization' which would soon be outmoded, nevertheless his work contains an important insight, in its very point of departure, into what kind of method would be needed within the context of this imminent decline. And this also confirms an important point for our internal reading of his work: with the Two Sources Bergson attempted to be consistent and faithful to his method of intuition to the end, and therefore the significance of this book has nothing to do with any departure from his own basic method of thinking.

Thus, on the one hand, there is no doubt that the method of intuition – Bergson's holistic and socially-tending approach to philosophy – has to be understood in advance if one is to understand Bergson's more explicit social thought. But on the other hand, as we shall see, in Bergson's explicit social thought we might find new, legitimate, and constructive bases for a critical understanding of his method of intuition. The latter approach has not been taken within philosophy because it means taking his social thought seriously and comparing it with contemporary and rival kinds of sociology. But we, on the other hand, have the freedom, and indeed, the need, to perform such an analysis below.

Methodology and Ontology

The difficulty lies in finding the point of comparison. Of course it would be absurd to treat Bergson's thought as just any sociology, as say, a peculiar 'sociobiology'. Rather, we could say that Bergson's social thought contains and emphasizes the essential features of a whole class of sociologies that we might call 'microsociologies.' Thus, in my view, his social thought could be roughly but

effectively understood by comparing its basic features with a class of sociologies that it opposes, which we might call ‘macrosociologies.’ I am not saying that we have to commit ourselves to this dichotomous terminology. Rather, the distinction between micrological and macrological is only a methodological ramification of a more core dispute over the nature of social ontology. In practice, we will be aiming to compare the ontological assumptions of the method of intuition with those of the method of comparison, since the latter is the method of ‘macrosociology.’ The Two Sources draws heavily, both in theoretical content and in quasi-anthropological style, upon Durkheim’s sociological method, as a source both to learn from and to attack polemically – particularly with respect to the central issue of Durkheim’s social ontology.

The method of comparison, as laid down by Durkheim in his Rules of Sociological Method, has to assume a relative externality of the social, because it has to take juxtaposed social phenomena and tease out explanations for their association or lack of association, hence social phenomena are inferred to be necessarily and intrinsically external to individuals, and this seems to explain the long-term persistence of social facts beyond the lives of particular individuals (1982: 130). Thus the method of comparison is not ontologically indifferent but rather carries with it distinct ontological implications. These implications, at least at first glance, include, for Durkheim, the requirement of ruling out the notion of social reality being in every case given immediately to the mind.

The tactical method of intuition has to be opposed to this strategic social ontology. Durkheim had stopped short of dismissing the fact that life as a whole is nevertheless the necessary ‘substratum’ of the social fact (1983: 95; 1982: 39). Nevertheless, in Bergson’s view, there is an ignorance on the part of Durkheim of the

true ontological role of life in socialization (Bergson 1977: 100-101). By the same token, however, for Bergson this is an essential qualification of any theory of mind, since for Bergson, neither 'mind' nor the 'social' can for him be a special locus of ontology. Bergson believes that his method of intuition, in contrast to the method of comparison, is able to *wait*, in its own duration, for a node of association as a whole event, to look at the point in this event where phenomena are supposed to be associated, and to specify a necessary zone of indiscernability between them. In other words, a positive social referent or relation of social atoms need not be isolable in order for Bergson's concepts to do their work, and this is the key to how he will attempt to avoid both psychologism and the sociological critique of psychologism. This micrological view adduces contra Durkheim a power to dissolve and reshape the configurations of phenomena to accord with the practical and sensible constraints of an involved observer, and these practical perceptions can and are occasionally disseminated in special events which involve certain particularly inventive observers who lead changes in the way whole societies perceive the world.

Thus, one could say that one advantage that Bergson's method of intuition might have over Durkheim's strategy of the affirmation of solidarity is that Bergson's method is able to re-insert, as it were, the 'speaking-position' of the theorist. Furthermore, Bergson does not just adduce a perspective of composition and then on that basis isolate a subject of more or less free-association, as does Tarde. Bergson's method further implicates a *power* of composition. This is because Bergson's analysis essentially involves a distinction between the multiplicitous actuality of an association and the virtual reality of *how* its constant indeterminacy will be guided to shape a whole, continuous, particularizing, event. For Bergson there is a pragmatic question to be addressed, as it were, around every

metaphysical corner. These pragmatic questions are anti-deterministic not because they are loaded against the perspective of metaphysics but rather because they appeal to the relative openness of any system as a whole which is guaranteed never to be beyond intervention by such a system's continuous, inevitable, and simultaneous overall alteration and particularization. The impulse of determinism is not unaccounted for thus; Bergson does not fail to remind us that the actualization of the composition in the same events is always perceived, somewhat paradoxically, as its constraining closure. But what Bergson is most concerned to draw attention to is that the virtual and the actual are always co-existing, not as juxtaposed entities, but as modalities of power.¹⁷

In Bergson's way of thinking, the ontological distinction between the virtual and the actual explains the always double-sided (ie. closed and open) ontology of the social which is only assumed by the comparative method and shows how this ontology involves a problematic that is broader than both methods. For if 'closed society' is the basic unit of comparison, 'open society' indicates the constantly succeeding changes to such societies which are inexplicable solely on the premise of closed society. It is the inclusive interplay between the closed and the open that accounts for the emergence of real particular social forms. The externality of the social, which is to say, that which makes a social form closed or bounded, is only an effect of this dynamic complexity. In Bergson's view, Durkheim's attribution of a *thing*-like quality to social facts (Durkheim 1982: 35-36; 60) is in error, not because it is an objectifying attribution or 'reification,' but rather because such a strategy tends to reduce externality to the *static side of an impersonal dichotomy* between dynamic complexity and static complexity, whereas for Bergson externality takes the

¹⁷ For clarifying the central distinction between the virtual and the actual in Bergson's writing we are indebted to Gilles Deleuze's Bergsonism (1988: 65).

important sense of non-general complex reality that Durkheim pointed to only from the *metaphysical interplay that we can transformatively intuit* between virtual openness and actual closedness. Durkheim's strategy is, for Bergson, tantamount to deliberately ignoring how social facts come into existence, to ignore Becoming for the sake of identifying Being.

Bergson's Conception of Social Agency

Bergson leaves us in the Two Sources with a new ontological distinction between closedness and openness which provides a philosophical solution to Durkheim's social ontological dilemma. Each society must recognize its closed and open sides as co-existing in order to account for the complete and vital existence of that society. Thus, indeed, there is a notion of fundamental struggle located at the core of every society's overall existence the explanation of which is precisely made impossible if one is to simply posit from the outset, as Durkheim does, a normal/pathological distinction. Rather, the struggle intimated is much more continuous, sensually synthetic, and thus much less a mere convenient framework for social analysis. The struggle consists in this: the overall reality of the society as a whole is virtual, 'given immediately to the mind' or intuited directly, by the participants who understand and freely sympathize with the problems that society has been formed to deal with, but at the same time this reality is *necessarily perceived as external* to everyone's actual activities, creating the reality and the perception of resistant bodies constraining and constricting them to what must be done, creating divisions of labour. Thus, sometimes we think that society is alive and vital and equally correctly sometimes we think it is dead and gone, and more often than not today these sentiments tend to be schizophrenically simultaneous and creative of a 'postmodern' vertigo. Bergson shows us the way to the heart of the problem:

society has never conformed exactly to either of these attributes but consists exactly in the *continuity and changing logic of sense* effected by their interplay.

To be sure, for Bergson, the model formation which guides and conditions cooperation, sympathy, and gregariousness is not the only mode of social actualization. In addition, natural instinct has an equally potent social role to play, connecting human reality to the whole universe. In Bergson's view, the overall virtual reality of particular societies in formation, perceived in actuality as external, has its sources in these two modes. Bergson's idea of model formation was inspired by Tarde. As we have seen, Tarde had thought that there is no social reality outside of the currents of invention, opposition, and imitation between persons; he had no account of institutions which persist beyond these micrological developments. Tarde had therefore raised model formation to the status of an ultimate social fact contra Durkheim's Rules of Sociological Method, which had emphasised the externality of the social. Actually, Bergson eschews both of these positions as 'sociologisms'. Bergson's idea of model formation is not merely a 'reality' but a power which struggles with natural instinct by setting problems or challenges which can only be solved by overcoming habit through the organization of new social movements, thus micrologically adding to complexity but also creating the macrological effect of externality.

Nevertheless, Bergson is significantly influenced by Tarde's critique of Durkheim. This critique consists of an attack upon the way Durkheim posits as the basic unit of sociological analysis, with little or no explanation, a primary 'horde' which is a spontaneous grouping of individuals who resemble one another and through their 'mechanical solidarity' share a collective consciousness. For Tarde and Bergson this means taking too much for granted the subject-matter of sociology. In

contrast to Durkheim, they conceive the primary subject-matter of sociology rather as models through which people are attracted to one another creating a social subject. For Bergson, in particular, the key to social thought, far from taking such models for granted, is rather to discern the means of the dynamic formation of these models. The 'models' that are formed are not simply imitated – not functions of pure resemblances – but rather function as that which is appealing and generative in social movements. They are so because the creativity of problem-setting is inspiring and attractive and a following is created as a result, and this leads to particular social formations. Bergson attributes to the social model a *relative universality* which does not have a content as it does in Tarde's specific sociological postulation of the family model but perhaps, just for this reason, becomes for Bergson even more emphasized as a general criteria of the social.

If this relative universality inherent in Bergson's conception of the social model does not have a determined content qua model, it nevertheless lends itself to certain key, privileged examples of *initiation*. It is charismatic religious leaders that come to supply Bergson with, as he sees it, prime examples of agents of the formation of these primary social models. Herein Bergson privileges a certain type – and a rather unconvincing one at that – of social agency. He appeals to mystics as evidence of the capability of overall social change to be occasionally concentrated in the influence of certain singular and well-placed visionaries. I think it would be fair to argue, however, that the status of Bergson's claim here need not be granted any less sociological status than, say, Max Weber's analysis of charisma: it can be taken as only one type of agency that is isolated for sociologically specific and not exhaustive purposes. It contains a certain sociological insight on this level. Nor do I believe it involves a special, covert ontological attribution. For Bergson what is

deduced is rather the definite historical existence of a type of model formation that has 'inspirational' and 'opening' consequences for society as a whole: the kind of major change he believes in has a kind of rare, almost eschatological structure. But his appeal to spiritual leadership is not exactly a normative prescription, for tellingly, Bergson creates no rigid definitions which could become conceptual obstacles to the further expansion and updating of this notion of model formation according to the reality of the leadership, or lack thereof, of contemporary social movements.

What is important for Bergson is the way model formation, along with other factors, is able to have a transformative role in socialization and, most importantly, in actualizing a distinction between closedness and openness which would otherwise be only abstract. Bergson then contrasts this model formation with natural instinct which he takes to explain the force of the closure of societies under the habits and repetitions which, causing a social pressure which is nevertheless also a losing of sight of the practical aims of society, make a reliance on the force of moral obligation increasingly necessary for the survival of particular social formations. In Bergson's view, model formation exacts "another kind of obligation", which "supervenes, above and beyond the social pressure" (1977: 33). According to Bergson, this makes model formation a prime aspect of human, as distinct from social, anthropology (1977: 35).

What is the morality of culture, as distinct from the morality of society? According to Bergson, men have attempted to account for a power of transcendence via "a priori reasoning", through which they have deduced the existence of God and the communion of Reason, using the language of religion and the language of philosophy (1977: 33). On the other hand, sometimes there have been offered psychological explanations for the morality of culture as "love for one's family, love

for one's country, love of mankind" (1977: 38). But all of these approaches are incorrect since they are all too intellectualist. For Bergson "it is through an excess of intellectualism that feeling is made to hinge on an object and that all emotion is held to be the reaction of our sensory faculties to an intellectual representation" (1977: 40). Cultural morality, or the 'morality of aspiration,' as he sometimes calls it, cannot be explained just in taking it, representationally, after the fact, but must also, and primarily, be accounted for through an analysis of what motivates those who initiate the creation of it, ie. the exceptional mystics who founded the great religions and philosophies (1977: 34). Bergson observes that "the saints have their imitators"; but he asks "why do [these] great moral leaders draw the masses after them? They ask nothing, and yet they receive. They have no need to exhort; *their mere existence suffices*....Such is precisely the nature of this other morality" (1977: 34. Italics mine.). The formation of the model, then, is not simply the institutional conferral of sainthood upon an exemplary person but is rather the constitution of a special, unforeseen kind of *social existence* which has its center of gravity in the saint. What marks the saint is this kind of aura around the saint which signifies that his or her appeal consists exactly and only in the influence that his or her existence has for others. According to Bergson, then, only such exemplary souls are able to mediate and expand the social claim, give it vibrancy and life, and "transfigure it". (1977: 33)

This alternative morality is not just one of a special kind of existence per se but rather is clearly for Bergson incarnated in "exceptional men" (1997: 34). Examples Bergson provides are "the saints of Christianity...the sages of Greece, the prophets of Israel, and Arahants of Buddhism, and others besides" (1977: 34). This kind of morality, in other words, "must be incarnate in a privileged person who becomes an example" (1977: 34). Here the essential contrast is to the "impersonal formulae" of

demands arising from social pressure, and/or a priori conceptions of philosophy and theology (1977: 34). In Bergson's words, "the generality of the [impersonal, social morality] consists in the universal acceptance of a law, that of the [personal, cultural morality] in a common imitation of a model" (1977: 34).

Thus, for Bergson, "whereas natural obligation is a pressure or a propulsive force, complete and perfect morality has the effect of an appeal" (1977: 34). Here Bergson attempts to explain:

As a matter of fact this personality takes shape as soon as we adopt a *model*; the longing to resemble, which ideally generates the form, is an incipient resemblance; the word which we shall make our own is the word whose echo we have heard within ourselves (1977: 35. Italics mine.).

Admittedly, there is here involved an obscure notion of imitation that is hardly fully developed by Bergson. Nevertheless, we can clearly see here what appears to be the key relevance of personality for this kind of morality that Bergson has set in his sights. And yet it is the morality, or the wholeness or completeness that accompanies the realization of this non-natural obligation of imitation and which is the *sine qua non* of this morality, this wholeness, which remains central to Bergson's analysis, no matter how crucial the personal is in model-formation.

[For] the person matters little. Let us merely make the point that, whereas the first morality was the more *potent* the more distinctly it broke up into impersonal obligation, on the contrary the latter morality,

at first dispersed among general precepts to which our intelligence gave its allegiance, but which did *not* go so far as to get our will in *motion*, becomes more and more cogent in proportion as the multiplicity and generality of its maxims *merge more completely* into man's unity and individuality (1977: 35).

Thus, it is not a cult of persons or saints that Bergson is appealing to. Rather, he appeals to the possibility of cultural anthropology as located in a complete morality in action, indeed, a morality that would become complete only inasmuch as it becomes identical with the actions of individual men. But this completeness would not support sheer, egoistic individuality. Rather, a "principle of action" is one of Bergson's primary concerns, one which "here takes the place of the natural obligation" (1977: 35).

This raises the question of the social, or non-social, status of this morality of exemplarity. Bergson complicates matters by suggesting that it could be said that this morality is properly "human instead of being merely social" (1977: 35). It remains social, implicated in the social claim of closed society, but now it has an added anthropological dimension upon which the stress of Bergson's analysis seems to lead. However, Bergson is more clear when he distances himself from any doctrine of human nature, humanism or "love of humanity," or indeed any "altruism" (1977: 36). Indeed, any *objectification* of this morality would be "too vast, the effect too diffuse" (1977: 36).

Therefore, the subject of this morality of exemplarity is neither the *object* of a human or social claim, ie. a mere substratum of instinctive, natural activity, or an affective expansion of a subjective, principled self-willing, which would be merely

an intellectual conceit, according to Bergson. The problem that Bergson counterposes over against the Durkheimian question concerning social facts is rather simply this: "how comes it that the men who have set the example have found other men to follow them? And what is the power that is in this case the counterpart of social pressure?" (1977: 39). In response to his own question, Bergson comes to this conclusion: "we have no choice. Beyond instinct and habit there is no direct action on the will except *feeling*" (1977: 39. Italics mine.). The *raison d'être* of the new morality of open society, then, is the emergence of "unsuspected tones of feeling", which "draw us after them into this music that we may express it in action" (1977: 40). Therefore, creative emotion, hereafter, is the focus of Bergson's analysis of the social bond. Creative emotion has a purchase only insofar as it has an affect on what Bergson calls "the activity of life" (1977: 54).

Now this contradicts Durkheim in several interesting ways. Primarily, there is Bergson's rejection of the primacy of the problematic of social ontology as taken to pertain specially to a discipline of sociology. According to Bergson, what is always important is the "generative effort of life" (1977: 54), which will always guarantee that "we have the right to proceed like a biologist" (1977: 54), who will maintain "that the tendencies which are, as it were, organic in social life have remained what they were in the beginning" (1977: 56). To be sure, "it is for closed, simple societies that the moral structure, original and fundamental in man is made" (1977: 56). Social solidarity is a biological fact for Bergson, a fact of nature. Now it is too little appreciated that this is true for Durkheim as well. Bergson, however, does implicitly recognize this. The problem with Durkheim for Bergson is that Durkheim allegedly does not notice the key event of what Bergson calls the "passing from social solidarity to the brotherhood of man" (1977: 58). And according to

Bergson “between the first morality and the second, lies the whole distance between repose and movement” (1977: 58). In other words, there is an interval which is enacted as intuition cuts across the distinct essences of the impersonal and the personal, making it in effect adequate to human life itself. On a narrower plane it is hard not to see in this Bergson’s particular way of conceiving a necessary, but antagonistic relation between sociology and philosophy. For Bergson refuses to follow Durkheim into an affirmation of the radical symmetry of social fact and sociology.

For Bergson, every society is constantly compelled to struggle between these mutually implicated ‘two sources’ – society and culture – with their two apparently but not really mutually opposed explanations, of social actualization. Bergson’s conception of social agency is thus harmonized with his method of intuition, his conception of duration and his image of the outside which for him, taken together, end any need for a static social ontology.

Continuity in Bergson’s Thought

Bergson thus made an intuitive connection between the writings of Durkheim and Tarde, integrating their work, implying that neither was exactly right about the ontology of the social. Social ontology consists rather in the movement between their insights. This goes to show just exactly how there is a fundamental continuity between Bergson’s philosophical thought and his social thought. In the broader context of Bergson’s thought as a whole, we simply have to compare this odd sociological synthesis with his earlier writings – and particularly apropos here would be his manifesto for philosophy in an Introduction to Metaphysics – in order to see how closely linked the main ideas are. The problem of the appearance of external reality versus immediate intuition in this earlier book is given philosophically-

informed sociologically-thick description in a much later, final writing. On the level of solutions, there is a direct continuity between the duality in the book on metaphysics of following reality versus free problem-setting and the duality in the Two Sources of natural instinct versus model formation. These are exactly the same class of inclusive disjunction, motivated by the same interest in ontology and creativity. Thus, the Two Sources is in no way an anomaly with respect to the core of Bergson's thought, and is in fact a development of it.

But what is this essence of this new development? I believe that the significance of Bergson's social thought lies primarily in his attempt to provide a new, more positive and modern image for philosophy as a *de-centered thinking of continuity*, but also in the challenge it provides in the way of a *critique of Durkheimian sociology* on the level of the image of thought as a non-objective, non-subjective externality. In the nexus that links natural instinct and model formation Bergson is writing about a new, non-judgmental way of conceiving the linkage between theory and practice, one which is based in an image of thought which is shared between, though utilized in different ways by, philosophy and sociology. In this view, philosophy can no longer remain a purely intellectual pursuit. Or rather, its intellectual appeal derives from an image of opening up what has become closed, which is itself properly a social distinction, indeed a social struggle.

On the other hand, according to Bergson's point of view sociology has to re-question its commitment to social gregariousness and the premise of the group. The Durkheimian doctrine of the externality of the social perceives the social facts which are explained by these premises as existing outside ourselves and takes this perception as uncontroversial proof of an irreducible sociality. Bergson does not

disagree that the image of the outside exists and has prime relevance to the question of social ontology, but he believes that it cannot be made into a doctrine. Rather, the social image of the outside bears a relation, via a problematic continuity, to external constraint that must be explained rather than assumed. Durkheim simply interprets an apparent constraint of the social as obligation; the sociological doctrine is then based upon a common sense appeal to the existence of obligation, which supposedly no one can deny, and the character of social space is then correlated with this alleged inevitability of obligation (1982: 130). Bergson points to the obvious inconsistency here: obligations are simply not capable of stabilizing social phenomena in a spatially condensed, relatively external formation, so such correlations between obligations and existing social formations are arbitrary. For Bergson, "obligation is in no sense a unique fact, incommensurate with others, looming above them like a mysterious apparition" (1977: 20). In Bergson's view, as we have seen, obligations can be the modulations of the force of a model which struggles, with only limited success, to keep the focus of the social subject from being attracted to other, rival models. Social continuity has to be accounted for as something dynamic. It has to be internally explained, not assumed, as one does both when one simply refers to its characteristic of externality, and when one refers to a process of symbolism that is supposed to be based upon these social forms. It is for this reason, also, that in Bergson's view, morality and religion do not, as Durkheim proposed in The Elementary Forms of the Religious Life, provide the object of a stable sociology that can observe in its object the foundation of higher-order concepts. Concepts, for Bergson, are not products of morality and religion. Rather, morality and religion are witnesses to the necessity of the formation of models, to the necessity of initiation, and to the *continual* opening and closing of minds to the mystery of creation.

The Durkheimian position of sociological reduction was quite popular among the contemporary – especially the young – philosophical elite in France. This view held that the social domain, with its various legal and technical extensions, ought to be understood as the proper depository of the problems that philosophy has traditionally taken as its right to investigate. We should understand Bergson, as a purveyor of an ambitious new mode of thinking, as being pressed to provide a means of countering the tendency here towards Durkheimian sociological imperialism, while nevertheless recognizing one of its key creative insights. Thus, we can derive from the Two Sources a question that has two irreducible sides: what is this irreducible form of social externality that even the limit-case of pure thought, embedded as it is in the discipline of philosophy, needs and absolutely presupposes; but conversely, what is this philosophical attempt to transcend the investments and constraints of the social context? Bergson's work points to the hypothesis of there being only a single and same synthesis involved in both of these pursuits, the synthesis of an image of particular cases of modern intelligence converging and coming into their own in an Outside-which-is-opened, without being a function of extension or interiority, but rather being a function of continuity, and so is co-extensive with the duration of its critical movements.

Understanding such a question raised by Bergson's Two Sources requires understanding Bergsonian philosophy as a key creative rival of Durkheimian sociology. There is nothing here to prevent us from recognizing how incommensurable these two rival approaches will become once they become established paradigms for social thought. It should be noted, as even Bergson did, to his credit, that there is nothing in his own analysis to prevent science from setting up frames of reference within which it can provide opportunities for the indirect

observation of the effects of duration. It is just that for Bergson – and here he differs from Tarde – the reference points of science ought not to be confused with the process itself or with the philosophical concepts that aim to combine directly – intuitively – with this process. Another objection might be raised that a Bergsonian point of view must then entail believing that philosophy thus has to become rearticulated within the field of the mystical agent of social creation. Bergson is a philosopher, and there seems to be little for philosophy to gain by Bergson's 'spiritualistic' move in the Two Sources. Indeed, it would have to be admitted that there is necessarily a question left open as to whether Bergson's social thought requires a reorganization of his philosophical theory of duration, a reorganization that he would thus have not had time to address in its full ramifications for philosophy, since the Two Sources was published not long before Bergson's death. But just from the latter book alone it would be hard to argue that Bergson's move toward social thought in his later years has nothing to do with a motivation to encourage the project of pragmatism to embrace a modern mysticism. Bergson's thought does have to do with a concern to recognize how a spiritual tendency in modern life could be harmonized with the principle of a sustainable modernity, or plurality of modernities, in openness. But 'mysticism' is perhaps a misleading term when applied to his thought because it seems to suggest that Bergson was interested in religion for its own sake and as an end in itself. Bergson does not seek to establish, for example, a modern religion centered around a principle of openness. Rather, it is much more characteristic of Bergson to ask, as he did, "is the distinction between the closed and the open, which is necessary to resolve or remove theoretical problems, able to help us practically? It would be of little utility if the closed society

has always been so constituted as to shut itself up again after each momentary opening" (1977: 271).

In my view, what ought to be recognized as intervening here is *continuity added to externality*, Bergson's social thought added to Durkheim's premise, the coming into being of an outside which though contingent upon human action, could nevertheless serve as the necessary ontological image of those same modern practices considered as sociality per se. I think something like this is indeed implicit in Bergson's thinking. However, Bergson himself chose to account for the openness constitutive of the outside by reference to a significantly modified Tardian conception of the attraction of social models. I say 'significantly modified' because, for Tarde, desire is an automatic, unconscious, micrological occurrence in which the self is constituted negatively as a kind of remainder amidst a flux of attractions. Bergson rather chooses to maintain a link between ontology and a kind of rare creative originality constitutive of relative cultural universalities, a 'grand originality', which could only stem from social models which come to call for a total reconfiguration of our social practices, models such as we find in the pantheon of saints.

Certainly in his earlier work, Bergson holds that durations are the provenance not so much of an imaginative function as an intuitive method, a method that he hopes might be inspiring of a modern and mature philosophical activism. The intuition of duration is interpreted by him as a *project*. This self-interpretation is actively promoted by Bergson up to and including Creative Evolution (1983). Bergson then does not produce any major work until he publishes the Two Sources. Despite the gap in time, I would argue that his analysis of sociality, religion, and morality is nevertheless implicitly linked with, not broken wildly away from, the

earlier analysis of the passive synthesis of externality effected in duration. If the Two Sources is to be read as a natural extension of Bergson's philosophy as I believe it must, then I think that what we can learn from Bergson is a useful way to reformulate the paradox of modernity. This distinction would lie between the acts of imagination and myth-making required to re-open, re-constitute, and refresh the social bond by refreshing our sense of common 'attainability', and the image that everyone nevertheless takes as an 'inescapable' starting point for their social projects and which is therefore the proper subject of a sociology: an outside which supplies the possibility of there coming into being many durations of being.

CHAPTER SIX

DELEUZIAN SOCIAL PHILOSOPHY: THE HORDE AND REVOLUTIONARY DESIRE

Sexuality and love do not live in the bedroom of Oedipus, they dream instead of wide-open spaces, and cause strange flows to circulate that do not let themselves be stocked within an established order (Deleuze and Guattari 1984: 116).

When we read Bergson's social thought in the Two Sources today, to a considerable extent it seems 'dated', in the sense that it constitutes a response to a set of pre-war circumstances. It must be read, to a significant extent, as a timely diagnosis of the danger of continuing, given contemporary modern conditions, to believe in a unified, substantive social being. Bergson returns in this, his final work, to the Kantian paradox. His emphasis is upon the formulation of this paradox as an interplay between closedness and openness. Perhaps this work even seems to still be tinged with a perspective not completely divorced from that of the messianic world, particularly in the sympathy it seems to have towards the open. As we have seen, Bergson finds the two sources of closedness and openness – social constraint and personal desire – brought into sustained interplay by the social and personal

challenges presented by spiritual models, which are, after all, far more models of openness than they are of closedness.

There is, however, a more recent reading of Bergson which re-opens some of the social and political issues raised in that book. This reading has been led by Gilles Deleuze and Deleuze's attempt to develop, using Bergsonian concepts, a more intrinsically modern account of social plurality. As we shall see, whereas Bergson attempts to think the outside as sustained exemplary openness, Deleuze attempts to think the outside as the production of an impersonal field of social modernity. We shall see that what is important for Deleuze is a mode of virtual co-existence located in particular modernization initiatives which purportedly makes these particulars 'full', or devoid of any need to import sense from the limited or concrete universality of a model. Deleuze does not work with any concept of a 'need for initiation.' Writing well after the war and the reconstruction of Europe, with these 'full particulars' in mind, Deleuze begins again to demand that critical thinkers ought to assume vis-a-vis sociality more, not less, substance than Bergson was willing to attribute. Arguably, with Deleuze we will have come as close as perhaps is possible to a perspective of modernity in- and for-itself.

Desire and Culture

Understanding Deleuze's social philosophy requires a knowledge of how Deleuze negotiates between two essential movements to do with thinking the social. Firstly, there is the project of classical social theory, with its consensus against purely psychological explanations of sociality and its internal debate over whether or not social existence should be associated with an apparent externality of the social world or rather with processes of life and of cultural creativity. Secondly, and perhaps of greater importance, there is the explicitly anti-social-theoretical stance of

Deleuze's greatest influence, Bergson, with his suggestion that the social exists for the thinking individual in accordance with intuition somewhere between interiority and exteriority. Deleuze's social thought takes its point of departure somewhere between Bergson and classical social theory, and it is one of the primary aims of this chapter to clarify his position.

One highly relevant source for the social thought of Deleuze is the work of Gabriel Tarde. Tarde had a significant influence upon Deleuze and was himself a thinker situated very much between classical social theory and Bergsonian philosophy. With Durkheim, Tarde thought that becoming social lies in tension, often in conflict, with individuation. However, instead of seeing this tension as decisive, beginning among the conditions of a 'horde' and thus *before* any individuation, for Tarde becoming social is problematic and begins *as* individuation. In Tarde's view, becoming social involves the constitution of a rule of fashion which sits in tension, intimate conflict, or in opposition with the rule of custom. "The rule of fashion is distinguished in every order of things by the blossoming of certain great and free individualities" (1903: 342). Though it is deduced from social, not individual premises, Tardian thinking indeed tends to emphasize the significance of particular agents of social change.

However, for Tarde, as for Deleuze, such individualities are not what is really at stake in speaking of 'the social'. They are only products of the social; they do not by themselves illuminate many of the most important elements that go into the production of the social. For Tarde, indeed, the production of the social is a process of the making of difficult sacrifices on the part of persons on their way to becoming individuals. Individuals are only able to make their gains by sacrificing their familial roles and identities in order to innovatively follow greater and more distant models:

In the beginning the family...was the only social group, and...every subsequent change resulted in lessening its importance...by constituting new and more ample groups which were formed artificially, at the expense of the social side of families, and which reduced them to mere physiological expressions; but that, finally, such dismembered families tended to aggregate into a kind of enlarged family that was both natural and social like the original family except that the physiological characteristics, which were transmitted through heredity, existed mainly to facilitate the transmission through imitation of the elements of civilisation, and not *vice versa*" (1903: 287).

Thus, for Tarde, becoming social in no way involves the coming about of an anarchy of isolated, 'fashionable', individuals who 'celebrate' their own self-centered achievements. It rather implicates individuation in the progression and expansion of a cultural model of the family straight down to its natural primitive origins. Indeed, for Tarde, it implicates the individual in a "vacillating struggle between custom and fashion which lasts until the ultimate triumph of the former" (1903: 343). Becoming social thus begins as individuation, but it then moves on to ultimately become a larger cultural force.

There is a certain paradox in Tarde's thinking of social becoming. Here we have seen that Tarde assumes that the family is the original starting point of sociality. On the other hand, the point of view of Tarde is that of desire, specifically desire for modernity, desire as attraction to a distant model and as thereby significant for new and progressive or 'artificial' social formations made of single individuals.

However, whatever social progress comes about, the family, for Tarde, is always reinstated, if not physically, certainly as a model for customary interactions, as a model for 'tradition', in short. In the Tardian understanding, modernity is a struggle against the model of the family inherent in traditional social practices. He was, however, categorical that modernity could never effect a complete break with the family model. This has important implications for Tarde's notion of desire. Due to this familial imperative, for Tarde, desire will never be completely anarchic. Quite to the contrary, desire will for him always be modulated as an 'attraction' which organizes potential familial elements.

Now when we turn to Deleuze, it does not seem likely that we would find him agreeing with this restriction of the analysis of desire to an analysis of the sociality of attraction. Nowhere, in fact, in Deleuze's work is there to be found any interest in such a topic. Tardian social thought involves a very non-Deleuzian concept of social repression which we might call a 'social containment of desire'. However, here we come across a strange fact, because it was precisely a similar notion of social repression that Bergson took from Tarde for use in the writing of the Two Sources. The question thus arises as to whether Deleuze will be able to agree with Bergson on this point. We shall see that this will become a very important problem both for the question of Deleuze's philosophical originality and at the same time for his conception of the social and for its relevance to our own question of social ontology.

Any insight into this question of the nature of desire must take classical social theory into account. For Bergson's explanation of sociality, which depends significantly upon that of Tarde, is only intelligible inasmuch as it constitutes an attempt to rival the Durkheimian model of the social as necessitated by 'external' constraint-obligation. Bergson's social thought thus comes to be dependent upon the

Tardian concept of desire. Henceforth, his thought becomes interwoven with classical social thought. The possibility of this convergence depends entirely on Tarde, in the way Tarde emphasizes the socially progressive feature of imitation-attraction and because this allows Tarde to research social repression from the point of view of incorporation rather than externalization. It makes possible an attempt at a non-Durkheimian, immanent account of social repression.

There are two means by which Deleuze is influenced by Tarde: through direct reading as we can see from references to Tarde in Deleuze's work,¹⁸ and through Bergson's appropriation of Tarde. This two-fold nature of this influence complicates Deleuze's relation to Tarde. But the relation is well worth examining since particularly the latter means of appropriation, through Bergson, means that Tarde will be more than just a passing inspiration for Deleuze. For Bergson is an indispensable, main source for Deleuzian philosophy. It is quite simple to formulate a provisional, working definition of Deleuze's relation to Bergson with particular respect to social thought. The most important element shared in common in Deleuzian and Bergsonian social philosophy is the idea that becoming social means becoming conscious beyond one's ego of one's situation in something like an 'open society', to use Bergson's phrase. Part of what is at stake is a sense of reality felt immediately and emotionally. Part of what is at stake is an intuition of the limits of philosophy in attaining to this social sense. In Deleuze's words, "if man accedes to the open creative totality, it is...by acting, by creating rather than by contemplating. In philosophy itself, there is still too much alleged contemplation: Everything happens as if intelligence were *already* imbued with emotion" (1988a: 112. Italics mine.). Deleuze sees 'becoming social', with Bergson, as the need to disperse the

¹⁸ Of particular importance is a long footnote in Difference and Repetition (1994: 313-4).

ego in an 'open totality' which then enables access to free emotional currents which motivate creativity, particularly for the fashioning of higher-order concepts.

Bergson emphasized openness and process throughout his work. But particularly in the Two Sources, for Bergson, every philosophical motivation becomes attainable only by means of various socially-originating affects as that through which such attributes as 'openness' and 'process' may exist. Bergson's social thought is in this sense a kind of social justification or 'rendering timely' of Bergson's philosophical thought. However, in the Two Sources, indeed his last important work of thought, he still saw this conjunction of tendencies sustained by objects of desire which initiate a variety of social subjectivities. Thus, despite his emphasis upon openness and process, Bergson's conception of the social is still heavily involved with a notion of the socially creative force of mystical, charismatic, spiritual leaders. It is thus still involved with the reduction of desire to attraction. Thus, the difference from Deleuze here may indeed be more significant than has previously been recognized.

Tarde had emphasized the need for a kind of 'self-fashioning' which would involve creativity and a social individuality. This had a certain influence on Bergson who used it as a way into researching what was for him a new field: the sociological field. Being a student of Bergsonian thought, the task for Deleuze is, then, to either accept this Tardian conception of socialization as a premise or create one's own version of it. We shall see that Deleuze takes the latter path and that what is created is a much more radical version. It takes its point of departure from the end-point of Bergson's writing, that which dwells upon the theme of the social, but it ends up going far beyond Bergson's response to this question.

I would put all of this in even stronger terms: if Deleuze could be said to make a break with Bergson or differ with him significantly, it could only be here, in a highly implicit break with a very little known or discussed aspect of Bergsonian-Tardian social thought: the conception of desire as attraction, not least inasmuch as this might be taken as an implied criticism and an alternative explanation for Durkheim's social example of 'marriage'. Herein, in my view, lies the great significance of AntiOedipus (1984), written together with the radical psychologist Félix Guattari, the most socially-oriented of Deleuze's books. If Deleuze was the philosophical apprentice of Bergson, bound to the premises and the aims of his master until a certain new alliance and diversion begins to open onto a new and original area of research for Deleuze, then AntiOedipus was – and I think it is – Deleuze's first wholly original work.

The one thing that begins to make Deleuze differ significantly from Bergson is that which takes him onto the sociological ground that Bergson believed had been obviated or surpassed by the writing of his Two Sources. On the one hand, this might seem like an obscure point. Even with a working knowledge of all of Deleuze's texts it might still be possible to miss the significance of Deleuze's relation to classical sociology. And this is for good reason, since little explicit reference to classical sociology can be found in Deleuze's texts. Indeed, even some of his main themes seem to have little to do with the question of the social. Let us take Deleuze's Difference and Repetition (1994) as a case in point. The main theme seems to have much more to do with the philosophical tradition itself than with sociological problems. Difference and Repetition will mainly be read – as I believe it should – as a highly original essay on the problem of thinking without

presuppositions, of the unthought within thought, or the problem, as Deleuze puts it, of “where to begin in philosophy” (1994: 129).¹⁹

Philosophy and Difference

Difference and Repetition is one of Deleuze’s most philosophically-oriented monograph’s. But then, to a sociologically-informed reader, even here one can find subtle references which show how sociological premises are implicit from the very beginning of properly ‘Deleuzian philosophy’. To be sure, there is a problem of scholarship: up to and including Difference and Repetition, the references in question are short, vague, and very small in number. The only reference of lasting significance is a long footnote to Tarde in which Deleuze claims Tarde’s work is a ‘microsociology’ based on a similar line of thought to Deleuze’s own (1994: 313-4). But this too might seem marginal and of little significance. There is also a problem of methodology: Deleuze’s explicit method is to perform thought experiments, or creative appropriations of concepts, using the thought of many thinkers. So why should a few references to Tarde be considered more important than his other, diverse references?

Late in his career, Deleuze noted that philosophy has traditionally been constructed such that it thrives upon an agonistic relationship with various disciplinary rivals, beginning with the Platonic struggle with ‘sophistry’ (Deleuze and Guattari 1994: 1-12). It is the lot of philosophy to be a kind of Socratic ‘underdog’, always carefully, intentionally, and deliberately facing various and repeated challenges to the integrity of thought. It is precisely here, though, that we find Deleuze noting a curious fact, that in modern times, “especially sociology, wanted to replace [philosophy]” (Deleuze and Guattari 1994: 10). Is this a revealing

¹⁹ See in particular the chapter on “The Image of Thought” (1994: 129-167).

statement? On one level, it appears to be only a passing comment in an introduction to a monograph which is on other matters. But what would really justify us in supposing it is only a passing comment? The claim, surely, is quite large and significant: that sociology is the key modern rival of philosophy. Indeed, this would have to be the case for Deleuze's point of view if we consider that the greater the challenge to philosophy – and the claim is here that the challenge is great – then the greater should be, in Deleuze's way of thinking, the concentrated effort at a strategical response.

Indeed, then, it would not be too far to propose from this that, if Deleuze held this view more or less throughout his career, he would have had to have had as a kind of background assumption during the writing of Difference and Repetition the idea that modern philosophy is somehow bound up with an effort to wrest from standard sociological conclusions the 'broader philosophical truth' from the contemporary project of sociological awareness. Now, to be sure, as Deleuze made explicit in What is Philosophy? (Deleuze and Guattari 1994), any question of 'truth' is for him rather more of a question of restoring the rights of a philosophy to maintain or alter the composition of higher-order concepts in accordance with the immediate needs of creative, useful thinking. As he became fond of claiming, "so long as there is a time and a place for creating concepts, the operation that undertakes this will always be called philosophy" (Deleuze and Guattari 1994: 9). But the implication is clear: there should indeed be a basis for us to treat Deleuze's textual references to sociological works with special care.

I believe we ought to seek in Deleuze's references to Tarde signs of Deleuze's main strategy of thinking rather than just interesting embellishments or tactics. And from this point of view, many interesting possibilities for reading

Deleuze do emerge. In particular, one can isolate two main aspects to Deleuze's long footnote to Tarde in Difference and Repetition. Firstly, there is a rather stunning implied suggestion on the part of Deleuze that the whole outline of Difference and Repetition was inspired by what he found in Tarde's work, particularly in a couple of Tarde's essays, "Monadologie et Sociologie" (1895/1999) and "La Variation Universelle" (1895).

According to Deleuze, these essays present "the free figure of difference" (1994: 314). If the Laws of Imitation had focussed upon 'universal repetition' as the ground of scientific inquiry that enables the pursuit of sociology and binds it into a working relationship with philosophy, in his short essays Tarde had been better able to highlight more effectively the ultimate end of repetition as difference. In Deleuze's words, it is specifically Tardian philosophy, "one of the last great philosophies of nature, in the tradition of Leibniz," in which we can find the discovery that "repetition...is not the process by which difference is augmented or diminished, but the process by which it 'goes on differing' and 'takes itself as its end'" (1994: 313). Similarly, in Difference and Repetition Deleuze states explicitly that his own interest lies primarily in a "difference that would not extend, or 'would not have to extend' as far as opposition and contradiction; [and] a concept of repetition in which physical, mechanical, or bare repetitions...would find their *raison d'être* in the more profound structures of a hidden repetition in which a 'differential' is disguised and displaced" (1994: xx). What matters to Deleuze is this idea that he discovers in Tarde: that "the perpetual divergence and decentring of difference [corresponds] closely to a displacement and a disguising within repetition" (1994: xx).

To be sure, Deleuze's writing of Difference and Repetition intimately involves an original, sustained attempt to situate the theme of difference vis-a-vis the practice of philosophy. Its novelty is the way Deleuze takes the Leibnizian insight into repetition as particularity and radicalizes it by placing it into the theoretical context of a radically anti-Cartesian, post-Spinozist materialism in which an ontology of pure difference would purportedly become possible (Marks 1998: 75-7; Hardt 1993: 79). Perhaps even more important for the future transmission of this book's importance is the way Bergson's concept of intuition, as an affirmative notion of difference as process but also as act, provides a kind of two-layered understanding in Deleuze's interpretation of Spinoza as, in a certain fundamental sense, expressionist (1992), but in another, irreducible sense, pragmatic (1988c). However, what is primarily relevant here is that the *thesis* of the book, Deleuze's self-professed first attempt at an original philosophy, comes from Deleuze's reading of Tarde, a self-professed master of 'pure sociology'.

Sociology and Difference

The second main aspect of Deleuze's long footnote to Tarde follows from the first. This second point takes Deleuze away from philosophy and toward more straightforwardly sociological matters. Here Deleuze explicitly makes a claim as to the essence of Tarde's approach to sociology. This time the contrast with Durkheimian sociology is explicit. Durkheim had intentionally focussed upon that sociological subject-matter which is so far from being controlled by individuals that arguably it constitutes an independent, 'external' fact. But Durkheim concentrates not so much upon what happens between individuals, ie. upon an interactional theory of institutions, as upon what constrains 'all' individuals, ie. upon an ontological theory of institutions. For this reason Durkheim is often seen as having invented a

‘macrosociology’ which is then contrasted with an interactional ‘microsociology’ which is built upon skepticism against Durkheimian social ontology. The Durkheimian point of view is that ‘microsociology’ runs the risk of lapsing back into individual ontology unless it ultimately locates the source of the symbols involved in interactions in the necessary phenomena of long-term social duration rather than in the contingent circumstances of social contact. In contrast to these two points of view, Deleuze, in his footnote, implicitly affirms that Tardian ‘pure sociology’ constitutes a third sociological possibility which rejects skepticism against social ontology but is nevertheless critical of the latter for “assuming what must be explained” (1994: 314).

Thus, Durkheimian ontology is tacitly accepted by Deleuze as a point of departure for thinking the social. What is distinctly Tardian about Deleuze’s emphasis is that a notion of the personal self’s necessary involvement with social ontology is brought back into the sociological picture. Quite commendably in my view, Deleuze recognizes an important distinction which is not always well recognized even among social theorists. Deleuze recognizes that ‘microsociology’ need not be a study of relations and encounters between exemplary individuals: “for the alternative – impersonal givens or the Ideas of great men – [Tarde] substitutes the little ideas of little men, the little inventions and interferences between imitative currents” (1994: 314). Now here is a crucial point in which we can see how important a knowledge of social theory which includes a knowledge of the thought of Tarde is for the interpretation of Deleuze’s thought. For it might seem tempting for some to interpret this statement as a description of an alternative, perhaps a ‘radical’ kind of interactionist sociology. The rhetoric of ‘little ideas of little men’ seems to resonate with the project of interactionist microsociology with its concern to get back

to the problems of everyday life. But there is, in fact, absolutely no basis for such an interpretation. For Deleuze, Tarde is “not necessarily concerned with what happens between individuals” (1994: 314). Generally interactionists study that which takes place ‘between individuals’ as it appears in communication or more generally in the language of the symbolic. According to Deleuze, where Tarde’s main interest lies is not with communication or with the symbolic but rather with “what happens within a single individual, for example, hesitation understood as ‘infinitesimal social opposition’, or invention as ‘infinitesimal social adaptation’” (1994: 314).

Furthermore, Deleuze is right, because, as we have seen in chapter three, the major premise of Tardian sociology, formulated as “the tendency of imitation to free itself from reproduction” means that imitation can be at a great historical distance and that it is therefore not contingent upon intimate, or ultimately physical, social contact (Tarde 1903: 250).

Tarde reserves a place for the personal self as the key agency of social change, but Tarde attempts to do so from *within* Durkheim’s ontological affirmation of long term social configurations, by means of reconceiving the archeological method in sociology as a method of isolating the imitative ‘currents’ that purportedly link already established social configurations to a common model. One great virtue of this is that instead of simply presuming that ‘mechanical solidarity’, or traditional configurations, are repeatedly overtaken by ‘organic solidarity’, or modern configurations, Tarde points out that it is first important to come to grips with what constitutes ‘mechanical solidarity’. ‘Mechanical solidarity’, as the theory goes, is based upon resemblances. In addition to ‘mechanical solidarity’, Durkheim had supposed that ‘custom’ could also have certain effects upon the character of primitive social groups but that it was somehow a less significant phenomenon

(1984: 66). Tarde will begin from the premise that the resemblances of 'mechanical solidarity' are all essentially resemblances of custom (1903: 253-4).

Custom, for Tarde, is not understood in the ordinary sense of simply any practice that is transmitted through tradition. In Tarde's view, custom is organized precisely through familial territorialization. According to Tarde the sociological problematic lies in the fact that customary familial territorializations somehow come to be challenged by exciting, inspiring 'innovative imitations' which bring about a new, more modern, flexible, and inclusive model of family as 'civilization.' Purportedly, only this way of conceiving sociology may begin to problematize 'what Durkheim could only assume', ie. that sociological research must take its point of departure from the phenomenon that similar people gather to form groups in an apparently spontaneous manner. According to Tarde,

independently of any contact with alien civilisation, a given people within a given territory must inevitably continue to grow in numbers, and must no less inevitably progress in consequence towards urban life. Now, this progress causes the nervous excitability which develops aptitude for imitation. [By contrast] primitive rural communities can only imitate their fathers, and so they acquire the habit of ever turning towards the past, because the only period of their life in which they are open to the impressions of a model is their infancy, the age that is characterised by nervous susceptibility, and because, as children, they are under parental rule (1903: 247-8).

Clearly, Tarde can only be said to 'reproblematize', not 'break with' Durkheim's premise. For Tarde agrees with Durkheim that social resemblance and social quantity are interlinked and that changes in them are directly related to the transformation to modernity.

We saw also in chapter four above that the difference between Durkheim and Tarde is more subtle than perhaps these two thinkers themselves supposed. The difference between them will become a great challenge for Deleuze. In what consists, from a Deleuzian perspective, the most significant difference between these two classical social thinkers? According to Tarde, modern organization, based as it is upon the development of urban life, in its earliest form arises through the territorial establishment of the family. Social quantity plays a direct role in this. But according to Tarde social quantity is related to this transformation only through a 'nervous excitability'. What he is referring to is a purely affect-based collective phenomenon. Thus, according to Tarde, resemblance and social quantity are not, as the Durkheim of the Division of Labour thought, a cause of modernity simply by virtue of bringing about role duplication. As we have seen above, the idea of role duplication is formulated as such in order to resonate with the idea that the source of participation and therefore the source of society is a 'need of wholeness'. Whatever spatial configurations come about are thus correlated, as we have seen arbitrarily, with whatever role duplications occur. Durkheim's implication was thus that society is thus somehow extended in space by means of a non-extended source of constraint. In Tarde's view this makes Durkheim's sociology unworkable. In Tarde's view, rather what is at stake is a much more general phenomenon of imitation which operates completely on a non-extended plane, with what Tarde called 'ideas', on a kind of socio-psychic current of contagion.

Two points here are relevant to the social thought of Deleuze. Firstly, as we have seen above, despite his salutary critical point of view, nevertheless with the theory of contagious 'currents' Tarde fails to provide a non-metaphorical account of social continuity. Secondly, the 'current' of contagion, though it is from a Deleuzian perspective tantalizingly close to providing a new model of philosophy that would be grounded in social desire, is unfortunately always referred back for a sense of coherence to the model of the family. For this reason the 'figure of difference' that Tarde elaborates by means of the metaphor of 'currents' is not as radical, not as 'free', not as Bergsonian, as someone interested in radical process such as Deleuze would wish for. So for these two reasons, in his first collaborative work with Félix Guattari, AntiOedipus, Deleuze will begin to implicitly but clearly diminish the optimistic attitude towards Tarde that he had in Difference and Repetition. Deleuze will turn against the reliance of 'pure sociology' upon metaphor, but he will become perhaps even more revulsed by the idea of the recurrence of the model of the family in the realm of culture. And as we shall see, perhaps surprisingly, this will bring him toward a reappraisal of the notion of the horde.

Revolutionary Desire

At first glance such a direction may seem impossible for a thinker such as Deleuze. Surely Deleuze is one who shares an intellectual affinity with those, such as Freud, who conceive becoming social as an individual working to control the forces that constitute his or her ego and thus to better manage any obstacles to personal growth. Is not Deleuze one who wants us all, in this way, to better get in touch with the 'real possibilities' contained within our desires? Is his not a project of 'diagnosis'? From a Deleuzian point of view one could not be less satisfied with such a project. For Deleuze the dispersal of the ego is at the same time the

constitution of a fully impersonal social field, not a merely 'super' ego. As Deleuze and Guattari put it, "a schizophrenic out for a walk is a better model than a neurotic lying on the analyst's couch. A breath of fresh air, a relationship with the outside world" (1984: 2). The dispersal of the ego is a process which testifies to an actual contribution to 'the outside world'. It is, in a word, a *synthetic*, not simply a negative, heuristic, or investigative operation. As Deleuze and Guattari put it, "what is a 'real' desire, since repression is also desired? How can we tell them apart? We demand the right to a very deliberate analysis. For even in their contrary uses, let us make no mistake about it, *the same syntheses are at issue*", ie. those in psychic repression and those in social repression (1984: 116).

Deleuze is thus led to the very Tardian and anti-psychologistic tendency in which it is believed that "social repression should not be understood by using as a starting point a familial repression coextensive with civilization – far from it; it is civilization that must be understood in terms of a social repression inherent to a given form of social production" (Deleuze and Guattari 1984: 118). However, for Tarde, it did not seem inconsistent to formulate that form of social production paradoxically as invention-imitation and then to still organize this disjunction by reference to a family model. Deleuze and Guattari want to completely destroy the connection between families and the notion of a 'model', and on an even deeper level, as they made clear in A Thousand Plateaus (1988), their follow-up to AntiOedipus, to challenge 'the model' *wherever* it tends to take root (1988: 3-25). Deleuze had realized as early as Difference and Repetition that the risk here is that if this kind of 'model-unity' is rejected one will always be left with dualism unless one can locate a certain univocity in process itself. As Deleuze put it in Difference and Repetition, "univocity, for its part, has two completely opposing aspects according to

which being is said 'in all manners' in a single same sense, but is said thereby of that which differs, is said of a *difference which is itself always mobile and displaced within being*' (1994: 304. Italics mine.). This univocity is the 'virtual ontology' which at the same time grounds and ungrounds being (Boundas 1996). For with Bergson and, I would say, contra Adorno, Deleuze believes that the metaphysics of process must combine with reality directly, not through some system of symbolic mediation. Such mediation implies the reduction of process to a mere 'realization of possibilities'. As Deleuze put it in Difference and Repetition,

the only danger in all of this is that the virtual could be confused with the possible. The possible is opposed to the real; the process undergone by the possible is therefore a 'realisation'. By contrast, the virtual is not opposed to the real; *it possesses a full reality by itself*. The process it undergoes is that of actualisation. It would be wrong to see only a verbal dispute here: it is a question of existence itself (1994: 211. Italics mine.).

In this way, according to Deleuze, the virtual must not be understood as a plenitude of the whole or as a simple sociological inversion of the economic concept of 'scarcity', precisely because the virtual is a continuous and open process. Thus, the only option left is to understand the virtual as a 'full particular'. And if 'existence itself' is already full, as Deleuze together with Guattari goes on to elaborate in AntiOedipus, it does not need a model of problem-solving modelled on diagnosis or a search for something that it lacks.

The textual evidence, however, shows that Deleuze is interested in Tarde as an inspiration for the main philosophical theme of Deleuze's Difference and

Repetition, and also as a source for the theory of revolutionary desire in AntiOedipus. The consequence of this must be, and is, that despite Deleuze's extensive creative appropriation of Bergson's philosophy, there is a significant difference between Bergson's understanding of sociality and that which Deleuze will come to hold. Let me propose in what I think consists this difference between Deleuze and the common tendency of Bergsonian and Tardian social thought: Deleuze is influenced by their emphasis upon process, especially that of Bergson, and he commends the way Tarde highlights the relationship between desire and the social, but for Deleuze this is all too negative and not practical enough. For Deleuze to define sociality it is not enough to simply define the conditions in which the ego may be dispersed, as Tarde and Bergson thought. A greater practicality, even than that of Bergson, is desired.

I can see two main aspects of this greater intensity of practical disposition in Deleuzian thought. The first is historically contextual. Deleuze's formative milieu in the radical 1960s is one in which forces of the constitution of the ego against its dispersal, formulated as 'conformism', seem to be stronger than ever. In the 'Preface' of Difference and Repetition, one of Deleuze's first attempts at an original philosophy, he begins by observing that "modern life is such that [we are] confronted with the most mechanical, the most stereotypical repetitions, inside and outside ourselves" (1994: xviii). The form of difference that is significant amidst this modernity is thus not a difference between pre-established, traditional identities, but rather a difference between repetitions (1994: xviii). In sociological terms: what Deleuze is recognizing is that what is at stake is not a grand difference among distinctive individuals with differing philosophies, but a difference made impersonally and often without even being recognized among already socialized

single individuals, ie. a small difference, variation, or 'escape' made between institutional repetitions. Indeed, this post-war age is an age in which 'institutional analysis' is high on the social agenda. Here, institutionally, seems to lie a good part of the challenge calling for the response of greater practicality that Deleuze desires.

On the other hand, Michel Foucault, in his introduction to AntiOedipus, hints at a second and related, but perhaps deeper or more 'philosophical' reason for Deleuzian pragmatism. Most projects of institutional analysis, especially in this period, assume that social changes are impersonal and quasi-objective, beyond the influence of personal creativity. Although he is inspired by institutional analysis, it is the peculiarity of Deleuze that he seems, uniquely, to be writing 'ethics' (Deleuze and Guattari 1984: xi-xiv). It is perhaps mainly for 'ethical' reasons that Deleuze cannot be satisfied with institutional analysis. The figure of Spinoza is omnipresent in Deleuze's writing and testifies to this Deleuzian desire for a practical and materialist ethics. Institutional analysis primarily involves a revolutionary resistance to the forces of conformism; but most of this kind of resistance is still too potentially humanist in the sense that it is still too much involved with political economy as self-criticism from the point of view of the ego. For these very reasons Foucault himself was heavily involved in attempting to create a form of institutional analysis that is explicitly anti-humanist. But for Deleuze one must go further than 'the negative'. Deleuze is explicitly concerned in Difference and Repetition to research "a concept of difference without negation" (1994: xx).

In fact, Deleuze's strong interpretation of Foucault's *oeuvre* is highly revealing of Deleuze's perception of his own project. In his book on Foucault, Deleuze of course points out the primary distinction in Foucault's early work between visual knowledge and articulable, linguistic knowledge, and the problem

that arises: “how could statements explain scenes, or scenes illustrate statements?” (1988: 121). According to Deleuze, it is “Foucault’s major achievement” to have effected a “conversion of phenomenology into epistemology” (1988: 109). But Deleuze goes further and argues that the new, discursive-materialist formulation of the epistemological problematic is, in Foucault’s work, particularly in its later trajectory, governed by the image of a radical exteriority composed of scenes and statements folding into themselves to create a radical interiority which “condenses the past...in ways that are not at all continuous but instead confront [the past] with a future” (1988: 119). As a result, Deleuze thinks there is a certain commonality between his and Foucault’s projects, starting as they do in philosophy, but ending in quite different forms of analysis. In Deleuze’s words, “as Melville says, we look for a central chamber, afraid that there will be no one there and that man’s soul will reveal nothing but an immense and terrifying void (who would think of looking for life among the archives?). But at the same time we try to climb above the strata *in order to reach an outside, an atmospheric element, a ‘non-stratified substance’* that would be capable of explaining how the two forms of knowledge can embrace and intertwine” (1988: 121. Italics mine.). According to Deleuze, “to be realized in this way means becoming both integrated and different” (1988: 122).

Because of his engagement with contemporary problems of institutions and of knowledge, Deleuzian thought opens again to the problem of social ontology amidst conditions of modern diversity. This turn, however, is closely qualified for Deleuze by the Spinozist injunction to critically confront the philosophical haste which wants to expeditiously overcome dualism. It seems that Deleuze is torn between this Spinozist doctrine of ‘caution’ (Deleuze 1988c) and Bergson’s more optimistic doctrine of ‘intuition’ (Deleuze 1988a). On the one hand, the need of overcoming

dualism without creating a 'third term' might be taken to explain certain Deleuzian formulas. Let us take the assertion that "social production is purely and simply desiring-production itself under determinate conditions" (Deleuze and Guattari 1984: 29). The 'determinate conditions' might be understood as taking the place of a 'third term' through a direct analysis of their composition which is true simply if it 'works' or 'usefully coheres.' However, there would be a fundamental difference between this interpretation and Deleuze's more typically Spinozist assertions which affirm the ontological strategy of 'univocity-through-parallelism'. A case in point is Deleuze's famous, rather haunting claim that "there is only desire and the social, and nothing else" (Deleuze and Guattari 1984: 29).

I am not sure that this tension between the Bergsonian and the Spinozist sides of Deleuze is properly explained by the caprices of what one might call 'philosophical taste'. I think the difference rather resides in the distinction between that which is modern and that which is contemporary in the modern. AntiOedipus, from which these quotations are taken, is in part a document of the time in which one can observe a certain frustration with the diagnostic model and a timely call for a more positive image of revolutionary movement. But this tendency co-exists with another, very different tendency, for this book also wants to link 60s and 70s revolutionary movement again with 'the social', and this is a very 'untimely' or 'more purely modernist' aspect of the book. AntiOedipus is set against the pessimism of the post-May '68 left-wing avant-garde. But it is not just a response to a certain set of experiences and states of affairs. AntiOedipus is also an experiment with a certain view on social ontology that had been developing in Deleuze's thought before '68 and essentially since his engagement with Bergson and Tarde through Bergson.

In AntiOedipus, Deleuze, together with his co-author, Guattari, does not want merely to overturn the supposition that the relation between the family psychology of desire and the constitution of the social can be simply that of a model to a copy. These authors do not simply want to show that the latter are ‘complicit’. If that were true then most of the alternative concepts that we find in the book could simply be explained as deliberately timely products of a contemporary ‘spirit of experimentation’, or perhaps rather as an accidentally timely product of ‘eccentric minds’. But particularly the concept of the ‘machinic’ could not be conceived in this way. There is nothing timely about the ‘machinic’ in the age of the advent of the digital revolution. The time in which AntiOedipus is written, the late-60s and early 70s, is precisely the time in which the machine and a machine-centered mode of industrial production is being overtaken by the cybernetic model of ‘post-industrial’ production. And yet the concept of the ‘machinic’, though it goes back thousands of years, is nevertheless deployed as a figure of modernity and as a central figure of the book.

The figure of the ‘machinic’ appears in Deleuze’s writing whenever there is a question of the unconscious operation of desire. In addition, the ‘machinic’ involves a method of assemblage, of connection and structure, which is a fully modern, even ‘modernist’, productivity-oriented paradigm of object relations. However, in Deleuzian thinking, the play of assemblage central to modernity constitutes a new, processual social unity. What is harmonized in this modern unity is desire on the one hand and production involving an open-ended number of production factors on the other, not desire and some special object of attraction. Nor does Deleuze need to appeal to an explanatory concept such as ‘technology’ to account for assemblage. Such notions for Deleuze always carry with them connotations of anthropocentrism

(Deleuze and Guattari 1984: 4). They again only revert to assuming what must be explained, such as the doctrine that humans are ‘rational animals.’ The ‘machinic’ is, therefore, on one level, introduced in AntiOedipus as an alternative to the humanistic model of psychic interiority. But the providing of an ‘alternative’ is not its whole purpose. For Deleuze theory is never just a question of ‘getting it right’, of adapting one’s premises to correspond more accurately with reality. Rather, only if we understand the social ontological background of Deleuze’s entry onto this sociological stage can we fully understand his deployment of a concept such as the ‘machinic’.

For this there is a very specific reason of hidden intellectual genealogy. Let us begin with the proposition that the idea of the ‘machinic’ is related to the classical sociological struggles against psychology’s tendency to grant an ontological privilege to the individual. From this perspective, what would be at stake in the concept of the ‘machinic’, given Deleuze’s ‘rivalrous’ relationship with sociology? What is at stake is that it allows Deleuze and Guattari to formula their intuition of a desire without attraction. This will allow Deleuze to make a complete break with the appeals to charisma and to mysticism of Bergson’s Two Sources. This in turn will allow Deleuze to steer ontology back towards an ‘affective materialism’. At the same time, through the concept of the ‘machinic’ Deleuze will have found the material he needs to formulate a more ‘revolutionary’ concept of desire than that of Tarde. The practical and ethical contemporary circumstances demand such a concept in order to break out of the recuperations of the time by rediscovering the ‘untimely’ element of modernity. Of course, we have to keep the term ‘revolutionary’ in scare quotes, as Deleuze does, because of this untimely way that machinic desire produces the social. And this clears up a minor mystery that has gathered around Deleuze’s vehement

opposition to the notion that the ‘machinic’ and other such concepts are mere ‘alternative metaphors’. For truly, in severing desire from attraction Deleuze will have no further need to indulge in inspirational temporal metaphors of contemporary ‘social space’. The time and space of desire will have become much more anarchic than ever before.

The Horde

The central significance of Deleuze’s social thought is that while he finds a way in theorizing the unconscious to eliminate the need for social theory to supply social descriptions of ‘the actual’ – understood here as knowledge based in the relation between past social ‘reality’ and prescriptions for actions toward the future ‘state’ of the social, or ‘knowledge seeking judgement,’ in short – in the same stroke he begins to create a theory that might become adequate to the ‘immanence’ or the ‘pure operation’ of the social considered ontologically which had first appeared to Durkheim as an inexplicably persistent ‘externality’, a fact upon which Durkheim had founded sociology. With his focus upon the intensity of pre-conscious affects arising vis-a-vis the figural, Deleuze’s social thought presents a novel solution to the impasse in Durkheim’s social thought between ‘the actual’ and ‘the metaphysical’. Deleuzian philosophy is shot through with implications for sociology, and this has gone completely unrecognized, though perhaps for good reason. At the time of Deleuze’s main writings perceptions of reification dominate the concerns of radical social thinkers. The reception of any thinker who could explicitly claim that the first and most basic rule of sociology is “to consider social facts as things”, as Durkheim did, is understandably at a very low ebb (1982: 60).

Tarde’s critique of Durkheimian ‘reification’ had been formulated from the point of view of attraction. Tarde wondered what attracted together the primitive

groups that Durkheim had been taking simply as given facts. Durkheim's response to such a question was to posit a spontaneous genesis of a horde, which was for him a more or less accidental group made up of similar individuals. This was a weak moment in Durkheim's thinking. Where Durkheim's theory was provocative and where it made a lasting contribution to social thought was with his theory of modernization according to which, given these primal groups, individuals nevertheless lose their affiliations to them by losing their similarities and becoming unconsciously affected by their remaining differences, not through internal strife, but primarily through inter-group competition and the consequent 'division of labour' or specialization. Durkheim thus attempts to explain social facts by reference only to other social facts, and he believes that success in this implies success in establishing the autonomy of sociology. From this point of view, he had no option but to respond obtusely to Tarde's criticisms, and to prefer to simply assert the premise of 'the horde.' The premise of 'the horde' is formulated as such precisely because it relies not at all upon individual psychology.

But Deleuzian thought exposes Durkheim's error as one of ambiguity. Durkheim's 'horde' – the formless 'germ' from which the mechanical solidarity of the clan emerges – is nevertheless an extended, spatially-homogenous horde, a 'solid' one based upon relatively stable numbers (1984: 126-131). As Durkheim puts it, "otherwise [these segments] would become so lost in one another as to vanish" (1984: 128). Taken together in its spatial and social senses, then, this could only mean a horde that is autochthonous or *immediately territorial*. To be sure, in chapters one and two above we did not need a Deleuzian conceptual framework in order to see that Durkheim's thought is weakened not so much because of his dogmatic methodological pronouncements but rather because of his hasty premises

regarding originary social boundaries. Durkheim's thought is weak because he felt it was necessary to stick to the metaphor of solidarity despite its tendency to distort his social ontological analysis, especially with respect to so-called 'early' societies. But Deleuze's thought is indispensable when one wants in a more detailed way to account for why the formless, unbounded germ of society, a *rhizome*, need *not* be supposed to have, as Durkheim supposed it to have, at the same time no unity and a "supplementary dimension" or a "comprehensive secret unity" in which it exists as a radicle or potential root, ie. as a potential clan (Deleuze and Guattari 1988: 6). By *positing* the horde with its ambiguous attribute of non-unity/secret-unity, from Deleuzian thought we can infer that Durkheim attempted to by-pass the *question* of the unity of the primal clan and of mechanical assemblage. Indeed, Durkheim's tactic here gives the impression that Durkheim is devaluing the social criterion of unity in favour of a more scientific approach to the explanation of the origins of society. But Durkheim then has to supplement this obscure explanation straight away by granting to the clan a kind of proto-typical spiritual reality or collective conscience. In other words, there is a strange intellectual symbiosis here which somehow includes in the same thought a denial and an affirmation of unity.

In A Thousand Plateaus Deleuze and Guattari claim that "the abortionists of unity are indeed angel makers, *doctores angelici*, because they affirm a properly angelic and superior unity" (1988: 6). But perhaps this insight is mainly available to those who have indeed searched for such a unity. For, to be sure, with Tarde and Foucault, and against Durkheim, Deleuze himself, between Difference and Repetition and A Thousand Plateaus can be understood as searching for non-subjective units of social analysis that are nevertheless characterized by non-extension. Against both Tarde and Durkheim, Deleuze wanted to reject the strategy

of using a metaphor to convey to whatever non-extended social agency that will be found a merely symbolic status. With Spinoza, Deleuze is an affective realist and a materialist. However, purely Spinozist thinking is unable to account for the development of a paradigm of productivity and the consequent coming into necessity of a conceptual convergence between society and modernity. As usual, it is Bergson that comes to the aid of Deleuze. Deleuze and Guattari would explain this in A Thousand Plateaus.

In Bergson there is a distinction between numerical or extended multiplicities and qualitative or durational multiplicities. We are doing approximately the same thing when we distinguish between arborescent multiplicities and rhizomatic multiplicities. Between macro- and micromultiplicities. On the one hand, multiplicities that are extensive, divisible, and molar; unifiable, totalizable, organizable; conscious or preconscious – and on the other hand, libidinal, unconscious, molecular, intensive multiplicities (1988: 33).

It is on the basis of this distinction between types of multiplicities that Deleuze and Guattari propose their breakthrough figures of the machinic and the rhizome.

But is Deleuze and Guattari's 'rhizome', for example, simply a new 'horde', a new secret disavowed unity, a new model-in-waiting-for-formation? Unfortunately, I do not have the space to fully address this question here, but we can note that this is precisely and explicitly what Deleuze is concerned to avoid by deploying Bergson's distinction between types of multiplicities. The 'rhizome', like the 'machinic' in AntiOedipus, is not intended as a model. A model is precisely an idea which *may or*

may not then be given design and extension; its contingency is extrinsic rather than intrinsic. According to Deleuze, unity and universality are only contingents, but the latter are, however, *necessarily* extracted from what is at hand. This does not decrease their contingency, but it conditions it. Or, better yet, as Deleuze and Guattari put it in A Thousand Plateaus, uniqueness is that which is *subtracted* from whatever multiplicities are to be constituted in events (1988: 6). So, for example, the clan is not, as Durkheim seems to suggest, an accidental, additional, or supplemental given which somehow, somewhere arose from a prior horde. Rather, the clan's contingency – one could now propose – should only be thought of as a uniqueness which each clan itself constitutes, not only potentially or to the extent that it is capable of functionally differentiating in a future which is far away, but rather actually and necessarily through need in a future which is always at hand. For one could say that the 'clan' or group exists only for the sake of a needed collective enunciation, ie. to allow for multiple modes of voice to address together a future which is critical and given form by shared problems which the clan is compelled to face with directness and immediacy.

Thus, the solution to Durkheim's problem, though Deleuze does not refer to this problem as such, is nevertheless tangible for Deleuze via Bergson.. It lies in the theory of what we could call – I would provide a definition here to remain within the ambit of social theory in order to illustrate a point – a *non-extended horde, whose unity is no more than to be actively critical of certain over-generalized and apparently external boundaries by affirming instead not a new or more hidden interiority such as a reflected and opinionated self but rather a particular, practical, problem-centered, outside continuity*. What we are speaking of here is not an entity,

then, but rather the theory of an act of exteriorizing creative disorganization implied and fostered in every actual event of collectivization.

There are more than fanciful reasons for such a reading of Deleuze.

Durkheim posited a 'horde' which, given his aims and his evolutionary framework, he could be satisfied with defining as an amorphous 'primitive' group. Given the rigorous requirements of Bergson's new distinction between types of multiplicities and his conception of creative or open evolution, it is logical for Deleuze to turn himself to investigate 'the horde'. But this time what will be investigated will not be a horde in the sense of a primitive group. It will rather be a horde in the sense of a 'crowd' or 'mass', a horde that can be fully relevant in modernity. What is now of interest is a horde in immediate relation to an unbridled modern process of production, a horde as a pre-territorial 'body', one in the process of forming, one which is not yet organized. In short, such "a body without organs is not an empty body stripped of organs, but a body upon which that which serves as organs...is distributed according to crowd phenomena...in the form of molecular multiplicities" (Deleuze and Guattari 1988: 30).

So 'the horde' will have to be for Deleuze a 'body of the crowd' or a 'full body', and be situated in direct relation to production. In this way, the 'horde' is also a zone of sociality, or a 'socius'. For one needs to account for that which appears to miraculously create organized production, since that is how organized production appears to new subjects, ie. as an accidental given. According to Deleuze, however, this solution of 'the given', along with its potential for a favourable reception among subjects of 'good common sense' and/or a symmetrically critical reception among unreconstructed revolutionary radicals, ought to be rejected in favour of a conception of unconscious rhizomatic process. Deleuze is often particularly uncompromising in

his stance against what he takes to be vulgar radicalism and what he sees as its central method, namely, negation. In Deleuze's words, "if the unconscious knows nothing of negation, it is because there is nothing negative in the unconscious, only indefinite moves toward and away from zero, which does not at all express lack but rather the positivity of the full body as support and prop" (Deleuze and Guattari 1988: 31). Negation is often valued among radicals for the way it is able, if applied to reifications, to expose the illusion that social reality is made up of atoms that can be known with *certainty*, ie. that have no mediating and thus potentially controversial relationships between them. For Deleuze and Guattari, the 'horde' can neither be analysed in isolation nor postulated in Durkheimian fashion. It can only be examined by carefully penetrating the 'founding mythology', the 'true perception of a false movement' which we call the primitive social group. But also, one of the interesting aspects of this theory of the social body is that it brings the social question back into the context of the question of sense and away from the context of the question of certainty.

A 'non-extended horde', though it is not named as such, is the focus of Deleuze and Guattari's analysis of the question of social substance inasmuch as the latter is *analytically prior* to that which may become perceived as given, certain, divine, and autochthonous. The 'non-extended horde,' if it is not 'the One' socius, is not 'the Many' or a sheer mass of people either, because 'the Many' is a multiplicity that is ultimately determined by reference to 'the One' and its function of dividing. Rather, "it is only the category of multiplicity, used as a substantive and going beyond both the One and the many, beyond the predicative relation of the One and the many, that can account for desiring-production: desiring-production is pure multiplicity, that is to say, an affirmation that is irreducible to any sort of unity"

(Deleuze and Guattari 1984: 42). The 'horde', then, in Deleuze's thinking, can be defined as a non-extended, indeterminate, but substantive 'social multiplicity'. It is the substance of desiring-production.

AntiOedipus and Postmodernism

Is there any 'deeper reason' for this 'return to the horde'? I think the reason is primarily that Deleuze, together with Guattari, cannot be satisfied with Bergson's conclusion as to the final importance of 'open society.' This is because Deleuze would like to think further the conditions of ethical practice, which for him as for Guattari involves boundary issues and therefore also thinking again in terms which problematize boundaries, ie. in social-ontological terms. Deleuze and Guattari want in no way to assume boundaries, particularly territorial, group boundaries based on a family model. But, tellingly, they will also have nothing to do with or say about alternative models of 'mutual self-care'. Mark Seem, in his introduction to AntiOedipus, suggests that such a anarchic system of care, based on 'personal energy under personal control', could be an implicit model for collectivity in Deleuzian thinking (Deleuze and Guattari 1984: xxii). Let us suppose this means that this care is defined as a process that takes place between single persons or agents who are defined by the needs and desires of their extended bodies. Such an interpretation of Deleuze would involve an unfortunate error. Even if one could remain on this superficial 'politically interpretive' level, one would probably have great difficulty in accounting for the distinction I mentioned above (p. 171) between the Deleuzian-Tardian social philosophy of the single social agent and the microsociologies with respect to the same agents which focus upon 'the mutual' or 'the between', such as interactionist sociology.

But secondly, and more seriously, one would miss the more subtle distinction between the social philosophies of Deleuze and Tarde. The Tardian conception of the social is of a quasi-tragic struggle against the family for the purpose of establishing non-hierarchically-based cultural customs. The Deleuzian conception seems to refer to the same struggle, and Deleuze seems to add only the emphasis that this is always a struggle against the ‘family *within* the self.’ But this is simply not true: the social referent is not exactly the same for the two thinkers. If Tarde challenged and critically rejected the idea that social progress could be conceived and organized solely by reference to needs of solidarity without taking into account the significance of new group models created by new attractions, Deleuze, following Bergson, rather challenges both sides of this equation. Bergson challenged the idea that social configurations must have boundaries which are ultimately extended and closed, and that social relations are static subject-object relations vis-a-vis these boundaries. Bergson challenges representation in sociology. Deleuze goes further than Bergson. Deleuze challenges not so much the representational idea that boundaries involve ‘closure’ and ‘exclusion’ as the defeatist idea that it is not possible to conceive of social groups ontologically and outside of a critique of social representations.

This attitude of Deleuze’s makes it difficult to situate his thought in relation to what was perhaps the most influential intellectual movement of his own time, and of which he was often thought to be a leader, namely, ‘postmodernism’. Since ‘postmodernism’ is a confusing term that has been used in many different contexts to refer to vastly different events and/or phenomena, let us narrow the field down and take only that ‘postmodernism’ which might be said to inhabit the core of the movement – if it is a movement – that form of thinking which has evolved from

Heideggerian thought where the term might be said to have its greatest sense of polemical relation to the western philosophical and cultural tradition *tout court*. Heideggerian deconstruction begins with an attempt to correlate 'use' and the 'being there' of the using subject in a way which problematizes human Being as a purported universal. The problem of totalitarianism in the mid-20th-century then causes an abandonment of this attempt to make a descriptive phenomenology work to illuminate the conditions of a 'fundamental' ontology. Indeed, it is not the project of 'fundamental ontology' so much as the way the latter is linked with a method of descriptive phenomenology that becomes strategically suspect in the post-war period. This is evident in the fact that deconstruction ends by eschewing description altogether and proposing that continually 're-thinking community' will lead to an avowal of the complexity of a 'justice' that will in turn constrain intelligent social individuals to a tolerant disposition.

The problem is that Deleuze's approach often seems to share more of an affinity with the method of the early rather than the later Heidegger. This is true in a very specific sense: that Deleuze and the early Heidegger tend to focus most of their critical attention upon 'the great Kantian error' which consists in assuming that the appearance of phenomena is useful only as a means of the verification or falsification of knowledge. Knowledge is made up of claims which imply a judgement that certain realities and certain accompanying modes of criticism can be defined for 'everyone'. Now, in my view, with the early Heidegger, Deleuze's interest lies not so much in 'representation' per se as in how the question of knowledge can be transformed into the more productive question of how notions with respect to phenomena of 'use' may vary. Moreover, Deleuze arguably takes this line of thinking to a more logical conclusion than that of mere 'deconstruction'.

For even though the end of deconstruction might seem ethically justifiable such a path remains highly dubious. It is dubious because it presupposes intelligence, socialization, and variation in the technical means of society. I often get the impression that such categories are, as a result, more compartmentalized now than the state they were in before Heidegger published Being and Time. This is what interests me in the Deleuzian position: the distinction between Deleuze and post-Heideggerian thinking lies precisely in that Deleuze accepts that sociality requires that we discuss not only community but also how social relations must vary concomittantly with variations in technical means, and how the concept has a central role only as a pragmatic crystallization of this relation.

To be sure, comparisons between Deleuze and Heidegger are only comparisons. Even in the beginning Heidegger's project was still one of 'fundamental' ontology – it was still primarily oriented to investigating the 'grounding' of ways of being. Due to Bergson's influence, Deleuze, together with Guattari, is always primarily interested in 'the intuition of the actual'. Indeed, Deleuze well observed his own contemporary circumstances in which he along with everyone else witnessed the complete and final discrediting of sociologism and a need for 'alternative models.' In contrast to most 20th-century thinkers, including Heidegger, Deleuze rejected intellectual elitism. Deleuze refused to dismiss the academic conversations around him as 'ideology' or 'idle talk', or as screens that are 'unfortunately necessary' to control the intensity of the feelings which connect us with other members of society. Deleuze simply did not believe that such filters or media should necessarily be included in the definition of a modern society. Deleuze did not become a '60s thinker.'

Nonetheless, Deleuze believed in the development of socially-informed philosophy. But for Deleuze the key to the advancement in such philosophy is not to first formulate the conditions in which ‘mutual self-care’ might be possible in the midst of a horde that one posits as a ‘mass society’ which swings wildly between anarchy and total control. Rather, following the Tardian dictum not to take social ontology for granted, but also in view of the error that Tarde made by hastily espousing the theory of the family model, what is therefore important for Deleuze is to formulate and explore the horde itself, or pre-familial *and* pre-individual social reality. In their social thought Deleuze and Guattari are interested in ‘the actual’ particularly as a construct of anarchic and yet strangely consistent ‘hordic thinking’. Since such collectivity-based thinking is the key to the creation of all socially-useful higher-order concepts, Deleuzian philosophy has to be said to be essentially a social philosophy, and furthermore one which takes its point of departure from an implicit critique of Durkheimian sociology.

Thus, with Deleuze, sociology well and truly meets its rival, philosophy, and it is a meeting point at which one can no longer be sure just exactly in what their previous ‘affiliation’ has consisted. Is Deleuze’s line of thinking ‘post-modern’ or ‘pre-modern’? Deleuzian thought intimately involves a social ontology characterizable as that of a ‘non-extended horde’ which affectively conditions first our socially- and then our individually-useful concepts, a way of thinking and being that animates the tribe as much as it swarms in the flows of capital. As Deleuze and Guattari would put it, “it cannot be said that the previous formations did not foresee this Thing that only came from without by rising from within, and that at all costs had to be prevented from rising” (Deleuze and Guattari 1984: 153). By thus critically transforming sociology’s most basic premise, the premise of the primitive

group, and combining this with an analysis of 'the actual' in terms of revolutionary 'desiring-production', Deleuzian thought exposes both the absurdity but *no less* the uncanny, delirious intuition of Durkheimian social ontology.

The Actual and the Virtual

Bergson formulated metaphysics as the desire to intuit reality directly, as "the science that claims to dispense with symbols" (1999: 24). Since this 'reality' is thus the substantial movement of time itself, and since the movement of time involves the future as well as the past and the present, intuition bears more precisely upon what we ought to call 'the actual', since the future may be included in the actual even though the future is not included in anything we can call reality. Rather than oppose the future and reality, Bergson includes the future in the actual. For the future is the movement of time from the point of view only of that which is in the process of actualizing, and not of that which simply might actualize, since such 'possibilities' are by definition not included in the movement of time. But this raises another question, namely, what is the relationship between coherence or co-existence, and the actual? How can anything co-exist, how can these apparently regular patterns of social life, for example, exist, if the future is a part of the actual, since the future is of undetermined shape and extension, since the future is, in fact, the non-extended itself from the point of view of time? The answer that Deleuze finds in Bergson is, on one level, quite simply deduced: co-existence is not the form of the determined or a 'relatively solid' snapshot of the frozen but rather comes to each co-existing form from without. It is a zone of indeterminacy. But at the same time it arises from within the movement of the actual, since the rich or 'full' indeterminacy of the other's existence dawns upon each only inasmuch as each is involved in actual movement. Bergson thus leaves the scene having usefully provided an outline of a

decentred sociology, one without a group and without a self, one which focusses, productively, for Deleuze, upon the nature of an ‘open society of creators’ (1988a: 111).

What Bergson allows for, but does not follow up, is a thinking of variation in social formation. Deleuze takes the key step of linking social formations with the variations of desiring-production. ‘The actual’, in *AntiOedipus*, becomes ‘the machinic.’ After Bergson ‘the actual’ can finally be organized ontologically in terms of a virtuality which is no longer merely ‘the whole’ but rather includes the future within the actual. Implicit in Deleuzian thinking is a ‘non-extended horde’ which is the virtual principle of social co-existence which ‘organizes’ the actual. The ‘non-extended horde’ is a ‘full body’ but one precisely ‘without organs’. That is to say that it exists prior to the organization efforts of individuals. This intuition of Durkheim was correct: “there is not one of all the single centers of consciousness who make up the great body of the nation, to whom the collective current is not almost wholly exterior, since each contains only a spark of it” (1966: 316). The problem is that Durkheim, following the model of other sciences, too-hastily attributed extension to this ‘body’, such as this ‘national’ extension. The theory of the non-extended horde allows one to perceive, *without compromising and in fact through enhancing the point of view of the actual*, how organization, along with the ‘external social patterns’ of organization-over-time, and therefore the appearance of ‘social externality,’ is actually immanent in the horde. Every organization arises from within the horde in response to the problems of a desire which has not yet any body which is distinct enough to ‘attract’ it or guide it ‘from beyond its own horizons’, since at this stage it has no ‘horizons’. What is at stake are the problems of a desire which are at the same time the problems of inventing coping machines.

Thus, by means of the Bergsonian analysis of time, the actual is able to progress beyond the problem of totality. But what becomes of central importance is the way the theory of the actual and the virtual is able to exhibit, in real time, our curiously modern and machinic mode of co-existence. This is the mode of co-existence that Durkheim first called attention to in the Division of Labour in Society, in which Durkheim showed that modern social reality lies precisely and positively in division, structure, and connection. To be sure, a significant part of the aim of Deleuze and Guattari in AntiOedipus is to show how the figure of the ‘machinic’ involves a critique of the Freudian concept of the death drive, the psychological conception according to which “desire can be made to desire its own repression” (1984: 105). Freudian theory is a useful starting point for Deleuze and Guattari in AntiOedipus. But their framework of analysis is simultaneously anti-psychologicistic and anti-sociologicistic, which enables, for them, conversely, the discovery that “social production and desiring-production are one and the same” (Deleuze and Guattari 1984: 116).

It might be objected that Deleuze formulates such a radical social theory that it is far too divorced from reality to be of any use to working philosophers and sociologists. Here the recently popular interpretation of Deleuze of Alain Badiou is pertinent, and rather ironic. Badiou’s revisionist reading of Deleuze is that Deleuze is actually much more conservative than most observers think, since, according to him, “Deleuze’s fundamental problem is most certainly not to liberate the multiple but to submit thinking to a renewed concept of the One” (2000: 10). To be sure, as we have seen, there is a strong element of Spinozism in Deleuzian thinking, and the concept of the One in Deleuze comes precisely from Spinoza. Thus, all “those who naively celebrate a Deleuze for whom everything is event, surprise, and creation

[forget] that the multiplicity of ‘what-occurs’ is but a misleading surface, because for veritable thought, [in Deleuze’s words,] ‘Being is the unique event in which all events communicate with one another’” (2000: 10). According to Badiou, “it is therefore necessary to maintain that Deleuze’s philosophy is particularly systematic in that all the impulses are taken in by it according to a line of power that is invariable precisely because it fully assumes its status of singularity. This is why, in my view, it can also be described...as an abstract philosophy” (2000: 16). Thus, from Badiou’s point of view, for example, one would read Deleuze and Guattari’s What is Philosophy? as a clarification of a philosophy which was all along a philosophy and never more than that. I think some such assertion would indeed be entailed in Badiou’s argument.

I agree with one of the key implications of Badiou’s reading, namely that it would be erroneous to suppose there is an ‘early socially-concerned Deleuze’ and a ‘late purely philosophical Deleuze’ which can be significantly contrasted with one another. However, whereas Badiou would claim that this is because Deleuze was single-minded in his pursuit of an “ethics of thought” (2000: 16), I would rather explain the variations in Deleuze’s writing as strategical variations stemming from the tension in Deleuze’s work between philosophy and sociology. I think Badiou makes a series of errors related to his apparent ignorance of the sociological side of Deleuze’s work. Of most concern is that, because Badiou misses Deleuze’s implicit engagement with social theory, he supposes that Deleuze’s interest in non-extended flux is merely indicative of a philosophical taste for ‘the abstract’, or as Badiou defines the latter, for the “quasi-organic consistency of conceptual connections” (2000: 16). This, perhaps together with his observation of Deleuze’s apparently ascetic lifestyle, then leads Badiou to suppose that Deleuze is simply a kind of stoic.

For 'stoics' are concerned precisely with a philosophy of death, and Badiou thinks an attraction to such a philosophy is exactly what explains the appearance in Deleuze's thinking of the 'category of the outside' which is necessarily correlated with a non-extended impersonal exteriority. "For death is," in Badiou's reckoning "above all else, that which is *simultaneously* most intimately related to the individual it affects and in a relationship of absolute impersonality or exteriority to this individual. In this sense, it *is* thought, for thinking consists precisely in ascetically attaining that point where the individual is transfixed by the impersonal exteriority that is equally his or her authentic being" (2000: 12).

What a strange irony that Badiou should raise his voice in the period of denouement of the Deleuzian *oeuvre* only to make a pronouncement upon Deleuzian philosophy from exactly that which was the point of view against philosophy of turn-of-the-century sociology! What Badiou here calls 'thinking' is in fact nothing more and nothing other than the Durkheimian model of 'thinking the social.' Moreover, it seems to be forgotten that it was Durkheim who produced the basic text in this regard: a lengthy monograph on Suicide (1966) which had the express purpose of supporting the theory of the ontological externality of the social by arguing that the latter's limit-case and final proof resides in the phenomenon of extreme self-abnegation. Can Deleuze and Guattari really have held, all along, the point of view of death? Certainly not. Quite to the contrary, Deleuze and Guattari stated in AntiOedipus that "the subject-group always invents mortal formations that exorcize the effusion in it of a death instinct" (1984: xxii). And even more simply several years later, in A Thousand Plateaus: "we are not evoking any kind of death drive" (1988: 229).

But perhaps such quotations are not enough to persuade a tenacious reader such as Badiou. Perhaps only a more full clarification of Deleuze's relation to Durkheim would enable a real refutation of Badiou's interpretation of Deleuze. In fact, I believe this must be so. For we need to know precisely why Deleuze would be against such an interpretation of his own thought. For this one must begin, as we have, by examining Deleuze's connection with Bergsonian post-sociology. And the answer, as we have seen, must reside in the contrast between two basic elements. Firstly, we have seen Durkheim's marriage-influenced model of social ontology in which the externality of the social is proved by reference to obligation, denoting a 'reality principle' by which is explained the rest of social organization including 'love' or desire-as-attraction. Is this that far from Badiou's position? Secondly, we have seen the way Deleuze and Guattari, by following out and problematizing the Tardian critique of resemblance, turn Durkheimian sociology on its head by analysing first the necessary collective production of 'the actual', as can be conceived, they argue, only within a dynamic horde, in relation to which attractive bodies, love, and capital appear only as contingent, symptomatic, or derivative productions. All I can do here is point out the significant difference between what Deleuze and Guattari have expressly produced by way of social theory. But indeed on that basis alone it is impossible for me to agree with Badiou, who, due to his neglect of their immanent critique of sociology, seems to suppose that their work constitutes no more than a prolonged philosophical *contemplation* of the main problematic of Durkheim's sociology.

Conclusion

What is Philosophy may appear to turn away from the earlier, more socially relevant work. In it, Deleuze seems to summarily dismiss sociology by declaring it

philosophy's modern rival par excellence. But careful attention to the implications of such a claim and to how the subsequent trajectory of Deleuze's thought corresponds to these implications, testifies at the very least to the impossibility of such a dismissal. As even Badiou correctly points out, a concern with the 'outside' remains implied, even in this later work. However, that does not change or diminish the fact that in the earlier work the constitution of an outside, as analysed in Deleuze's book on Foucault, is linked more explicitly with revolutionary, anti-psychologistic ways of becoming social, such as we see with the figure of the machinic in AntiOedipus. Figures such as the machinic are in Deleuze's work social particulars which ramify throughout societies in diagonal lines which leave no remainder which could then become the object of a projection of essence or origin. The machinic is precisely not an essence or origin of modernity but is just simply one of modernity's plural, impersonal modes of assemblage. Perhaps what makes this difficult to see is that the connection between this kind of pluralistic philosophy and the premises of classical sociology, by the time of the writing of AntiOedipus, have been largely forgotten. Even in the works of the late sixties and early seventies the connection between the outside and the classical sociological problematic of the externality of the social is ignored by virtually everyone.

But let us point the blame more specifically at what seems to be a certain inattention in the social theoretical and philosophical communities to the influence of Bergson upon Deleuze. Bergson's inconclusive struggle with Durkheimian sociology can be clearly seen to carry over into Deleuze's work. In contrast to Bergson's contemplation of a need for an 'open society', Deleuze was able to *theorize* the notion of open society. As Deleuze said of Foucault, with whom he felt a strong affinity, the key is to "speak less of the Open than of the Outside" (1988:

113). Herein is announced the key, implicit distinction between the post-messianic perspective of Bergson and the fully modern perspective aimed at by Deleuze and Foucault. Deleuze himself had begun to theorize the outside already in Difference and Repetition and then together with Guattari, by reappraising Tardian social philosophy and purging it of the tendency to metaphorize the open space of creative imitation, and by examining instead the specific unconscious operations by which ‘openness’ is the collective production of the actual, or the production of an impersonal field of forces. In contrast to Tarde’s mere suggestiveness, Deleuzian thought effectively replaces what Durkheim could only pose as a doctrine of the ‘externality of the social’. What arises in its place is an analysis, inspired by but going beyond the intuition of Bergson, of how specific movements of intelligence, socialization, and productive technical forces operate together along what are only apparently opposed trajectories of desire and the social. Together, they produce a synthesis: an *outside* which is seized immediately as it appears, seized as a virtual but no less urgent reality, as an ordinary rather than an exemplary source of sustenance, by and through each actor as an moderating and stimulating intuition of co-existence with others within the actual.

CONCLUDING CHAPTER

SOCIAL NEED AS OCCUPATIONAL: TOWARD A CONTEMPORARY ONTOLOGY OF MODERN SOCIAL TIME AND SPACE

The trajectory Durkheim-Tarde-Bergson-Deleuze takes us through three major positions on the provenance of social ontology, one following upon the other: from the deductive approach (pure sociology), to the discovery of limited universals (social models), to the project of conceiving fully-ramifying particulars (figures).

There is one transformation that links them all together: the movement from a doctrine or relatively passive notion of social externality towards a more active social image of the outside. In this final chapter I shall attempt to work toward an analysis of some of the main principles, based upon the elements of this movement, of a contemporary ontology of modern social time and space.

This takes me back to my starting point: the notion of occupation in Durkheim. For like him, I see in the movement of modernity a glimpse of the key to the movement of social ontogenesis. However, the movement of modernity that I perceive is not at all the same as what he presents with his theory of the ‘increasing preponderance’ of the organic over the mechanical type of solidarity. It will be necessary now to show how different my conception of modernity is – and as I see it

how different it *must* be after reading Tarde, Bergson, and Deleuze – from that of Durkheim. For the outcome of this reading might be mistaken for a theory, for example, of a new modern archetype that would simply be an improved alternative to that of Durkheim's conception of organic solidarity. The transformation from the notion of a perceived externality to a more positively responsible image of the outside might indeed be tempting to present as an archetype embedded in our collective unconscious perhaps as a result of a political revolution or some other major kind of event, for it might seem difficult to account otherwise for a non-empirical repetition, and how to account for this non-empiricality is precisely what is at issue here.

However, archetypes, though in themselves non-empirical, are nevertheless supposed to be manifested in some combination of behavioral, cultural, and conceptual development. What I think is essential about modernity is rather the birth of a kind of movement which is related to the constitution of the outside. This movement would move in virtually the opposite direction of any movement that one could conceive as stemming from an archetype. As the outside, the lynchpin of modern sociality, is constituted, the agency of its constitution would become, as it were, less manifested, not more so. Durkheim rightly separated the question of empirical social reality from the question of social ontology. But he believed, as I do not, that there is an ultimate harmony, non-empirical but nevertheless indicated in law and social constraint, between the factual and the ontological levels of the question of the social. This is what he tried to express with his metaphor of 'solidarity', and this is what I have devoted most of the first part of this thesis to attacking.

There are a number of points over which I very much agree with Durkheim. Durkheim argued that our occupations, as can be seen in an analysis of the division of labour in society, are creatures of an ongoing crisis and creation of social modernity. They do not only resonate with our present sense of our employment situations. Rather, they re-enact the creative/destructive process, the difference, apart from selves, apart from society, that modernity creates as an ontological and critical window upon both. As a result, it is not *merely* our social practices but rather the *occupational* dimension of our social practices that is the ontological source of the theory and genealogy of, as well as the responsibility for, the problems constitutive of social modernity.

However, I disagree that one can fruitfully apply a notion of institutional persistence to this concept of modern social occupations. Rather, we can and ought now to employ instead a concept of the actual. By the actual I mean the spatio-temporal sensory modality of social existence which is parallel, co-extensive, and co-terminous with the ontological point of view of the occupation. One could say that, having undertaken the trajectory of social thought that this thesis has taken, the occupation, as the actual, has become a kind of sociological correlate of the Deleuzian conception of the virtual, rather than of the Durkheimian conception of the whole. The actual, as an actualization of the virtual, includes the trajectory of the occupation through the past, present, and also the future.

Below I will illuminate what have been described traditionally as mainly horizontal relations between a past, present and future which *succeed* each other, as, instead, structured in each moment of modernity as *vertical* passages from our critical *notion* of the outside, through our *sense* of presence in a real outside, into a 'full' or mature, responsible *image* of the outside, toward the *form* of occupation

which is no longer formal in the sense of vocational but is rather the occupation as a boundary-formation which is, again, constitutive of the notion of the outside. This is the circuit of the social as a medium of sense, of the condition of cognition in the ontological layering which incorporates the conceptualization and the real encounter with the external.

Deleuze's notion of 'full' particularity provides the inspiration for this spatio-temporal fullness of the occupation which reaches, as it were, its vertical peak in the image of the outside. It is an agency which is always already 'full' of time and space, rather than lacking on, or dominated from, one side or the other. Though it is a 'full' particularity, 'the occupation' is not a substance and never could be, precisely because occupations *are processes, not loci*, of creative destruction. Perhaps often our 'feelings of being occupied' are vibrant and alive, and they seem to be accompanied by regular as well as new social opportunities. But that is only because occupations 'get us out there', as it were. They link us with an outside that is 'larger' than ourselves. Occupations make us forget ourselves and feel ontological continuity immediately, with no creative locus, and even without an intermediary 'community.' Precisely because of their function of creative *dislocation* they allow us to feel continuity, to relate our feelings, be they good or bad, to the social as a whole.

For me, as we shall see, society exists only in this occupational sense. Society is wholeness, but wholeness as contingency, as incomplete; occupation is the *need* or internal necessity of this social wholeness in accordance with its incompleteness. But what I am referring to here is not an internal teleology which seeks to complete itself with a certain finality. For at the same time as it is an act upon a need, occupation is also always already fullness. The latter thus cannot mean that it is somehow intrinsically complete or abstractly whole. But nor does this

fullness mean that it is 'not lacking,' as if it were a task indifferently waiting for an agency which will come to manifest itself for it. Rather, occupation here is in principle modern as distinct from messianic which means that it has a kind of full adequacy to itself in its being a process of the creation of need which is at the same time no more than a thinking of the particular problems of that need.

This thinking out of prioritized problems is co-extensive with and dependent upon practice but is not determined, as if it were a part of the manifestation, the 'tricks of the trade', of certain practices. Practice takes place in the present. If practice in the present, like drama, involves a partly conscious, partly unconscious convergence of appearance and reality, a play of 'necessary illusions', then if we were to social-theoretically isolate practice itself we would only be isolating an assumption that appearance and reality are separable prior to and/or at the end of practice. Alternatively, we could posit that practices are never-ending, but then our whole conception of them would collapse since to speak of an eternal identity of appearance and reality, though it would not be 'incorrect', would nevertheless be pure paradox, nonsensical and incomprehensible. That which makes the assumption of the duality of appearance and reality a necessary part of practices is not this duality itself as if it were a 'real duality', which is absurd, but nor is this agency definable in terms of an identity that could somehow be conceived apart from the problem of duality, which is equally absurd. In the face of these alternatives, in practice what we create is an occupational perspective which enables us to account for what makes necessary illusion, the whole problem of simulation for example, a necessary part of practices without being sufficient to define us. The occupational perspective is the perception in practices simply of a dynamic sequence of differences, for example first the difference of the initial role; then the difference of

the impression that these different practices together make something new which is sensed not as a new something but rather simply as the thrilling feeling of participation; then the difference of the emerging forms of work, labour, or action against which, in productivity terms, the initial role is evaluated. These differences take place in practices but are not manifested as a part of practices. They are that aspect of practices which – not successively but rather simultaneously or vertically within an event of practice – opens, occupies, and moves on. It is occupational sequences such as these that are primary in social practices. Neither the concept of a practice nor the observation of that which appears as that practice can grasp these events because they cannot revive the forward-facing sense of need which animates them. I first want to discuss the issue of social need in greater detail. I will then turn to use the insights that arise to indicate some of what I think will be main features of a contemporary ontology of modern occupations.

Two Principles of Modern Existence: Need and Obligation

For Durkheim social necessity is a combination of need and obligation. Instead of accepting Durkheim's tautological *equation* we can restyle social necessity as an ontological *distinction* operative throughout the Division of Labour. Let us then examine how we might effect such a reconceptualization of his project.

Durkheim's argument as a whole in the Division of Labour, based as it is upon the concepts of need and of obligation, is explicitly channelled through his conception of society as an 'organism'. An "organism" is for Durkheim the relation between "living movements" as seen from the perspective of the whole or the unity of those movements (1984: 11). There must be some place for a conception of the 'social whole' in any theory of social necessity. The point of view of the 'social whole' is significant primarily because, for Durkheim, this is the only perspective

from which we have any chance of telling whether or not a particular movement is absolutely needed and therefore felt as obligatory. If a need is felt, it is indicative, for Durkheim, of the possible attainment of this holistic perspective. As in the example of marriage, the division of labour, for Durkheim, is a response to a 'need of wholeness' which results in the pursuit of an overall evaluative perspective.

The first step toward understanding the ontological distinction operative here is to see that Durkheim is implying in his reasoning that the human need of wholeness has no provenance in a *particular* function or vital movement. On the other hand it is true that, with his novel strategy of argumentation which appeals to 'structures of need', the primary social motivation, the 'need of wholeness,' is productively divorced from the idea of social relations considered as *generalities*, such as we consider the relation of exchange. The need of wholeness is for Durkheim real not because it is conceptually general but rather because it is continuous and external, and is thus contended to be primary among that which conditions concepts. As Leibniz pointed out, generalizations presuppose an external continuity, and both Durkheim's and Tarde's social philosophies begin, in different ways, with a premise of this type. Durkheim is the first to formulate the premise of continuity strongly in social theoretical terms. What becomes fundamental for him, and that which constitutes his most original but also most controversial premise, is that the 'structure' arising from the need of wholeness, that is, the way each individual finds the other, is, in substance, "outside each other" (Durkheim 1984: 22). There is a constitutive moment in social theory here where an image of the outside is first used to convey a social existence. And here I should reiterate of course, as I argued in chapter one, that even though Durkheim attempted to base a deduction of social fact upon this image, there is, in fact, nothing in itself deductive

about it and Durkheim's expression of it, though deductive in form, is merely metaphorical.

Though he falls into the trap of a metaphorical realism Durkheim nonetheless successfully avoids basing sociology upon a mere 'right to generalize'. For by the same token, the linguistic trap that Durkheim falls into is not unavoidable. Rather, his shortcoming lies in his neglect of searching for a way to attribute existence to particular occupations. According to Durkheim's view, existence is only attributable to the social insofar as it transcends the practice and the self of the individual in an absolute manner. This is not a determinism. For after this transcendence the individual is in fact left to re-assume, if not an autonomy of action, nevertheless a privilege of agential particularity. As Durkheim put it, ultimately, "society can exist only if it penetrates the consciousness of individuals and fashions it in 'its image and resemblance'" (1973: 149). There is a great amount of contingency in this process; it evokes a determinism of tendency rather than a determinism of the particular. There is, precisely, much indetermination in the point of view of the individual according to Durkheimian thinking. What is of primary importance is that for Durkheim the existence of the social individual feeds from the source of the intuition of the whole.

Durkheim does not explicitly state that occupations cannot exist as particulars, but he leaves little room for the supposition that they can. For him they are only considered as differentials of a structure. One could say that an occupation, like a gender difference, is for Durkheim the whole as a sense of lack seen from within the part, inasmuch as this individual particular is confronted by the real as that which is durably beyond his or her conceptual generalization. But this sense of lack is for Durkheim not simply a matter of messianic waiting, mourning, or desire, because it is just as much indicative for the individual of worldly enablement as

constraint. In other words, in Durkheim's view, the social promises to the individual not a redemption or return or the overcoming of a privation but rather an overarching grandeur of its own possibilities of freeing them to be more of what they already are becoming, not through a sense of destiny but through a sense that special roles, though changing and dynamic, still must, through a kind of metaphysical taxonomical evolution, each bring about a significant difference vis-a-vis the social whole. This is that sense which is for Durkheim linked with the durable externality of each social fact in relation to the other as confirmed and indicated by the history of rules, regulations, and law.

But this is precisely where one will begin to have a problem with Durkheim's way of thinking, because for him what the modernity of the modern occupation reveals is that a society is a special kind of reality the necessity of which cannot consist merely in its actuality. Rather, "we must determine the degree to which the solidarity [the division of labour] produces contributes *generally* to the integration of society. Only then shall we learn to what extent it is *necessary*, whether it is an *essential factor in social cohesion*" (Durkheim 1984: 24. Italics mine.). The study of the division of labour and the intrinsic plurality of occupations stands or falls on whether or not it confirms that which from the beginning Durkheim has posited, that "social solidarity is a wholly moral phenomenon which by itself is not amenable to exact observation and especially not to measurement" (1984: 24). Indeed, the study of modern organic solidarity confirms that "solidarity is something too indefinite to be easily understood. It remains an intangible virtuality too elusive to observe. To take on a form that we can grasp, social outcomes must provide an external interpretation of it" (Durkheim 1984: 27). And yet solidarity is not merely possible, or a mere possibility, despite the fact that it cannot be materially manifested. For

“where social solidarity exists, in spite of its non-material nature, it does not remain in a state of pure potentiality, but shows its presence through perceptible effects” (1984: 24). Thus, the necessity of society for Durkheim cannot be merely particular, merely general, or even merely possible. Its reality does not consist in such attributes. Nor is it a necessity of constraint, of actual boundaries such as laws, since these are for him only indicators of something else. Rather, the necessity of society is for Durkheim simply the necessity of coherence amidst diversity, the necessity of ‘the whole’. The social occupation itself is only a contingent division of this One whole entity.

I would oppose this proposition. I would say rather that with respect to ontology society as a sense of the necessity of coherence and wholeness is a mere contingency, since those attributes refer to the representational problem of the dualism of appearance and reality with its reduction of time to the dialogue between the past and the present. This problem, I would submit, is subordinate to the more fundamental sense in which occupations are the creation and addressing of needs and in which they are in this the very necessity of an ongoing sociality. In a sense, then, one could with some justification claim that Durkheim did not attribute *enough* durability to society, in the sense that he did not attribute to society a durability that could extend to the temporal modality of need as oriented toward a future that is intimately included in unfolding time. The insight of Durkheim that social quantity does not depend upon empirical manifestation is probably correct, but we have seen that he is frustrated, and falls into obvious errors, when he then wants to link social quantity with progress.

With Durkheim we are limited to peering at the future through the opaque lenses of a comparative method. With such a method we restrict ourselves to the

elements of the past and the present. If that means supposing that beyond such a restriction such an ideal as 'science' may not flourish,²⁰ it also must mean that the peculiar temporality of need is fated to remain obscure, addressed, if at all, in only an inadequate, circular fashion. Durkheim feels it is sufficient to make statements such as that "men draw closer to one another because of the strong effects of social solidarity" as that social solidarity "is strong because men *have* come closer together" (1984: 25). There is, ultimately, only a linguistic figure at work here which employs the metaphor of strength and solidity to stand for the coherence of a society which is more than an aggregate of individuals. Durkheim's whole social philosophy boils down to this thin thread of coherence which claims to be the basis of every society but which cannot even be proven to be necessary in relation to any existing society. To be sure, because his realism is precisely only metaphorical, the occupation as a social occupation begins to become detached by Durkheim, albeit in a confusing way, from the false problem of manifestation. With the advent of his social philosophy we can start to envisage the occupation in a new, more essential, and more invigourating light: in terms of the image of the outside, which is non-empirical. But the characteristic feature of Durkheimian methodology is always the way he attempts to account for the metaphysics of society through actualities which are suspended in a kind of comparative limbo between the past and the present.

Within the tenets of Durkheimian sociological method, societies must be posited only as metaphysical principles of totality that – somehow, somewhere – immediately bound and organize 'the horde.' In Durkheimian sociology there can be only a metaphorical horde subordinate to a metaphysics of the whole, never a real horde or virtual coexistence of the random elements of the actual. This is brought

²⁰ Durkheim often presented himself as a champion of the scientific point of view. See for example Durkheim 1996: 121-128.

out most clearly precisely at those points in which ‘organic solidarity’ is traced in restitutive rather than penal sanctions. For these are the points in which Durkheim’s way of thinking shifts abruptly from what seems to be the neutral, empirical framework provided by law to the concerns of social theory. At these points, according to Durkheim, the type of society that corresponds with the restitutive type of law cannot be compared with that which corresponds with the penal type of law by treating them as juxtaposed in space. There is a certain non-empiricality about society that is being addressed here. However, from this all-important point of view, repeated so often in Durkheim, societies have suddenly and unaccountably become more than merely non-empirical. They have ‘positively’ become metaphysical entities, compared only by the degree of their effects that are accessible to individual consciousness and the nature of the human need they correspond to. In Durkheim’s words, “restitutory law springs from the farthest zones of consciousness and extends well beyond them. The more it becomes itself, the more it takes its distance” (1984: 16).

What is at work here is a kind of traditional deductive way of thinking ontologically. Society exists because, as we seem to see in its limit case in ‘organic solidarity’, nothing ‘farther’ or more inclusive can be conceived than it on the part of individuals, not merely because it displays effects which seem to be patterned as some sort of design. Society is defined by a principle of coherence, not just by a principle of design. “The first condition for an entity to become coherent is for the parts that form it not to clash discordantly. But such an external harmony does not bring about cohesion. On the contrary, it presumes it” (Durkheim 1984: 75). The requirement of coherence in effect entails that we conceive societies not just as actual but as ‘the real’, as immediately metaphysical organizations of the actual. The mere

design or system of a modern society is only an aspect of “negative solidarity”, which is “only the emanation of another solidarity that is positive in nature: it is the repercussion of social feelings in the sphere of ‘real’ rights which come from a different source” (1984: 77). Here what is properly metaphysical and real can only be ‘solidarity’, as Durkheim claims. But he does not seem to notice that the latter term, to the contrary, symbolizes a physicality and a characteristic of manifestability that Durkheim has already clearly shown cannot be attributed to the social.

Moreover, for Durkheim the *articulation* of solidarity in modernity is one of cooperation, in family life, in business, in commerce, in court, and in administration – in the special tasks or *projects* that are undertaken in these spheres by various groups. This goes to show that social actuality ought to have become just as future-oriented in Durkheim’s thought as it became past- and present-oriented. Projects require cooperation among an exclusive clique of actors who understand the special problem or challenge that the project aims to take up. They therefore “overflow beyond” the common consciousness (1984: 82). The formal outside constituted as negative solidarity would have to be said, in fact, to be filled to overflowing with projects. The outside, as ‘negatively’ conceived by Durkheim, by which I mean as mediated through the concepts of externality and of solidarity, is at the same time an infinite multiplicity of cooperative projects, a ‘multiplicity of ends’, so to speak.²¹ What could be intuitively understood as a zone of indeterminacy is rather, for some mysterious reason, understood as solid. What is this alleged boundary of solidarity which is a unity but not a unity?

²¹ A concept of the ‘multiplicity of ends’, or *polytélisme*, was invented by an avowed Durkheimian, Célestin Bouglé, and promoted by him in an article in 1914 (Vogt 1983: 243). It seems to me that such a concept could be very useful in understanding Durkheim’s more ‘futural’ side and perhaps even in clarifying his position vis-a-vis teleology. In addition, while it has not seemed necessary to explore this connection here where more formal ontological considerations are of primary concern, I

It is indubitable that the occupation, for Durkheim, as the perspective of the division of labour in *society*, always has the character of a social venture which comes together with social feelings, feelings of participation in a project. As Durkheim put it in his preface to the second edition of the Division of Labour,

it is otiose to waste time in working out in too precise detail what [our laws] should be. In the present state of scientific knowledge we cannot foresee what it should be, except in ever approximate and uncertain terms. How much more important it is to set to work immediately on constituting the moral forces which alone can give that law substance and shape! (1984: lvii).

Furthermore, one can see that for Durkheim occupational agency holds the potential for social innovations and personal initiatives of varying degrees of originality (1984: 81-5). According to Durkheim, “the more extensive this free area is, the stronger the cohesion that arises from this solidarity” (1984: 85). But if it seems that Durkheim is on the verge of re-thinking social variation in an exciting way, we must remember that for Durkheim, there is no *post hoc ergo propter hoc* reasoning intended in the latter proposition. For Durkheim it is always primarily his concern to hold that “the individuality of the whole” is what is mostly at stake in his thought since few in the past, according to him, have understood the latter and how it “grows at the same time as that of the parts” (1984: 85). In the Durkheimian view it is actually the mode of social cohesion that *precedes* or at least ontologically grounds the free acts, and not vice versa as in moral and political philosophies which promote an image of states of

think it would be well worth doing so to compare the Durkheimian ontology of social modernity with concepts of society in political philosophy.

affairs as ‘*consequences*’ which arise out of actions. It is the *occupational corporation, not the occupation as a process*, which holds for Durkheim the key to the capacity we need in order to attain a social stability (1984: xxxi-lvii).

In Durkheim’s way of thinking the social, this premise of the precession of the social, far from leading him to posit any kind of parallelism as might seem logical, rather runs the risk of being taken by careless readers as a positing of an empirical precession of the social. The latter would indeed be absurd and would constitute grounds for dismissing Durkheim’s project if Durkheim could be shown to hold such a belief. But Durkheim does not, in fact, hold such a belief. Rather, Durkheim holds the much more complicated and rather difficult to grasp supposition that the relationship between need, as the source of coherence, and obligation, as the general formula of the articulation of this source and as such the structuring condition of social manifestations, is an implicit ontological-level equation. Or to put it another way, the two main background concepts here are ‘source’ and ‘structure’, and in Durkheim’s view there is a perfect symmetry between the two as if they were two equal aspects, two modes of expression, as it were, of what is really only one social existence.

Of course, Durkheim’s social philosophy runs counter to common sense. For one might ask perhaps with some justification why the distinction between need and obligation cannot be construed simply as a kind of ‘stress’ or ‘tension’. Surely most of us tacitly believe that what one needs to do and what one is obliged to do are very often opposed to one another and that this leads to practical conflicts. However, what is interesting, and what our common sense understanding cannot grasp rationally but can only affirm, ignore or deny, is that it sometimes occurs that need and obligation are opposed to one another and yet at the same time supportive of one

another, when individuals can no longer practically distinguish between need motivating obligation and obligation satisfying need. This is when, in the Durkheimian view, individuals must simply affirm ‘solidarity,’ as takes place, he claims, for example, in a vow of marriage. These ‘events of coherence’, as we might call them, for Durkheim are ontologically primary in relation to the more individualistic negotiations with contradiction. Durkheim’s argument implies that such a blurring of the distinction between need and obligation in ‘factual reality’ is evidence of the genesis of properly social forms of existence.

The problem is that such a formulation contains a fundamental ambiguity. How could this possibly engender – as in chapter two we have seen Durkheim imply – a social boundary? In moments of crisis, we all tend to see need as an intangible, virtual reality and obligation as an all-too-tangible, actual reality and on the basis of this division we convince ourselves of a great, impassable – indeed sublime – gulf between them. The necessity of getting along with others seems always twofold in accordance with a social-ontological acceptance of a distinction between virtual need and actual obligation. But the divide is not exclusive and boundary-constitutive. And contrary to what Durkheim asserted, we do not need merely the *observation* of factual reality to give us essential information in this regard, as we might gather it after the fact. We can cope with modern change by assigning the virtual reality of need to the present and the actual reality of obligation to the past *and* to the future.

But even this tells us little of what we need to know about the distinction because to the extent that it is focussed in this way upon the attainment of presence, need is still, erroneously, understood as a need of wholeness. If the need of wholeness is actual, there must be some sort of event of coherence. Would not the event of coherence, as Tarde argued, rather constitute a continuity that can and must

be composed and decomposed vis-a-vis particular repetitions which, if we supposed them to be unified a priori, would simply not exist, and which must therefore lead us to the premise that the real is a function of the particular, not the whole? On the other hand, such a conception contra Durkheim of the primacy of particularity could not allow us to escape the problem of the reduction of social existence to the problem of the real. The problem of the real, in its temporal aspect, is always only the problem of the relation between the past and the present.

We could satisfy ourselves by simply stating a truism such as that obligation is only secondary to the shaping of social time as an unfolding of the immediate present, and need contrasts with obligation because need is more relevant to the present in the sense of the immediacy of the particular. It seems to us that many social philosophies tend to link need with the real in such a way. If the latter tend to disagree with the precession of the social as a principle of totality, they nevertheless agree with the precession of need and the way this distinguishes a sociology of the social particular from, say, an economic theory of individual behavior based upon an inverted or naively externalist conception of need construed as 'scarcity'. But such a particularist social philosophy could not really be saying more than that obligation has a kind of 'mental' priority in social matters, that it is only a priority in conscious reflection, not for that adventure which motivates us and of which the best is still to come. Here I would suggest that there is still too little upon which to make a practical distinction between a particularist social philosophy and a rugged economic individualism. I am not saying that the two are the same or that they refer to the same problems, events, and phenomena. I am rather saying that nothing positive is in fact said about need itself in either conception and in fact we tend to revert with them to an orientation towards the future which is no more than a kind of blind

waiting which we have seen dominates in the messianic perspective. Perhaps it is no accident that at the same time the theories of the particular, such as we can find in Tarde and Bergson, each exhibit a peculiar urge to celebrate the power of the model.

Let us, then, turn the tables on Durkheim, but without unduly privileging the realist perspective of the particular. We begin by recognizing obligation and its imperative to wait for the good which will satisfy needs as the true negative figure. Obligation is a figure of monolithic modernity, a gentle monster that will do the best it can for us 'until the system improves', but one which at the same time asserts its privilege to define itself as a leviathan, an 'increasing preponderance', or movement-force which tends to eclipse everything. Obligation operates precisely as a means to *eclipse* need, to divide everything into the attainable and the unattainable, and to strive for that which seems necessary and possible over against that which seems unnecessary and impossible. Need, on the other hand, is a figure of multiple modernities. Need is a temporal concept without a before and after and thus without succession, and thus without teleology, without a source *or* an aim in wholeness (in contrast here to obligation). There is no spatial outcome of need. There is only a sequence of syntheses characterizable as occupations which delimit the ever-changing practical contours of need. Occupation is thus defined as that aspect of social activity which constitutes and shapes need into a reality. Only in retrospect does this seem like a choice between one's following of an internal desire versus everyone's conformity to external pressure.²²

²² There is also in Durkheim strong evidence to suggest that the distinction I draw in this paragraph between need and obligation is closely related to the history of gender relations (see Gane 1992: 85-132). I would suggest that one might fruitfully think, for example, of obligation as a principle of patriarchy and need as a principle of feminism; and one might even correlate these principles each with a contrasting image of the outside, such as an image of outside-as-social-inclusion, ie. a 'working outside' among men contrasted with patriarchy and an image of outside-as-social-exclusion or a 'domestic outside' among women contrasted with feminism, such that each image of the outside refers to an outside of one of the principles in question. Of course, such a correlation might constitute the

We have thus reached an understanding that is required in order for us to turn now to examining fresh ways of socially perceiving, socially understanding, and socially existing, namely, *that there are no needs that precede occupations*. Everything social begins with occupation, as occupation. Since occupation constitutes need, and obligation requires the sublimation of need, obligation, far from being a means towards facing up to a work-load which calls to be completed, as it is often presented in vocational terms, can rather be understood as a means to marginalize the occupation, to contain and minimize the extension of the occupational and the creation of new needs, new problems, and new accomplishments into all areas of life.

Social Need as Occupational: Three Analyses

We are now in a position to re-evaluate and re-construct the elements of that intellectual trajectory which takes us from Durkheim to Deleuze. My first premise is that everything social exists on the basis of a logic of being that unfolds in and through occupations. This logic of being is not a logic of a thing that moves but is a logic of movement itself, or a *sense* of movement. As Bergson teaches us, a thing that moves is most naturally or common-sensically defined in relation to success and succession. But occupation is precisely distinct from categories such as work, labour and action, because it is *not* defined in relation to success and succession. For this reason, we have traditionally had an intuition that occupation ought to be defined in vocational terms, ie. from the messianic perspective, in relation to 'intrinsic value', as an 'accomplishment of a tiny but worthy displacement', or as an 'end in itself.' The vocational conception both presupposes and emphasizes a subject of value, a kind of halo over the vocation, exhibiting something about the vocational subject that

beginning of such an analysis, but it would have to be submitted to extensive critical and historical reflection which I do not have space for here.

is more important than the vocation itself. But in *modernity*, what we are compelled to consider about our practices is not so much this completion, recognition, and hallowing of the education of the subject but rather more pressingly its problems of inadequacy and redundancy within ‘progress’, within movement, ie., its contextualized needs. If work, labour, and action are now, in modernity, applied to movement, occupation ceases to believe in itself as a vocation and becomes precisely no more or less than that portion of work, labour, and action which *is* adequate to movement at any given time and beyond which lies the slipping of movement into mere chaos. Occupation sheds its pretence of experience and becomes a perspective intrinsic to movement considered in- and for-itself.

My aim is to see how this occupation can be investigated, still as distinct from categories such as work, labour, and action – as that which is non-empirical is distinct from that which is empirical – but now from a perspective proper to modernity. Modernity is, as the truism goes, pure movement, pure change. But what distinguishes it from mere chaos? I believe an occupational perspective upon modernity in- and for-itself can provide us with a means to a new rigour in understanding modernity. For occupation contains both the change and the generic logic, both the movement and the sense, of modernity, in plural occupational events. By ‘occupational events’ I mean the occupation considered ontologically apart from a subject or object of occupation. By ‘ontologically’ I mean not as a unity of subject and object which is greater than those terms but rather a way of designating a distinction between movements and the senses of those movements. Movements, taken as simple movements, cannot be fully grasped without a notion of ‘trajectory’, or a framework of succession, as when I speak of a trajectory from Durkheim to Deleuze, who are finite manifestations, as it were, of a certain intellectual movement.

Trajectory, as such, has to be defined concretely, retrospectively, and historically. But the senses of movements are appreciations of the element of the broadening, and over-running of borders, that all movements share.

This feeling of occupation, this social-occupational affect, is indeed common to the politico-militant and work-practical spheres of human activities, and is, I would submit, the key connection between the latter which is irreducible to either. Now it will perhaps be thought that it is no accident that the intellectual trajectory I have presented culminates in the very peculiar context of the 1960s, where this connection becomes a matter of intense, popular, and global debate. This is certainly true. However, at the same time, in this context, the contemporary thinker whose works I have discussed here, Gilles Deleuze, was a thinker very much ahead of this decade and of stereotypically '60s thought'. It might be charged, then, however, that I have presented ideas that are not very well 'in sync' with the intellectual trajectory I have described.

I would, in fact, discourage too much faithfulness to Deleuze. But I would also implore us, at the same time, to not be cowed by those, such as Alain Badiou, who would attempt to impose their own memory of the 60s as a criteria against which Deleuze's effort is measured and found to be lacking in political and organizational will-power. Let us re-consider the example of May '68 in Paris in the light of our discussions above. In my view, May '68 in Paris was neither a purely rhizomatic multiplication of desire acts, nor an organizational effort by revolutionaries which aborted in the face of too much external pressure. Let us consider the evidence. There was, among the demonstrators, neither collective enunciation or affirmation pure and simple, nor an agenda either explicit or hidden. Nevertheless, during this period in Paris, what was peculiar was that revolutionaries

and workers somehow combined their efforts to create an unintended and unforeseen kind of demonstration. This demonstration was neither rhizomatic nor organizational but was, in fact, occupational, and very intuitively so. Student militants and factory labourers were able to join forces only very intermittently and temporarily: but these moments were precisely when their very distinct types of occupations could be set aside for the sake of a general militant occupation of politically strategical spaces – *occupations were deterritorialized and reinscribed within an occupational movement* (see Viénet 1992). Occupation here sheds its vocational aspect and takes on a very different, non-linguistic, in fact hardly communicable but nevertheless virtually literal, meaning of occupying time and space. But precisely it does not become so literal that this could be understood apart from the sense of *overcoming* the earlier, now seemingly more mystifying vocational sense of the term. Thus, we could say that it is the focal point in the occupational movement that raises what had up until 1968 been only random, isolated demonstrations into a *sense of an event which as such supplies an image and a memory even today*.

This example, this particular event, is precisely not isolated. It has still, arguably, a vital continuity. Indeed, the *overall* radical movements of the '60s, taken together, provide a good example of a sequence of events which could only become potent when they could become a shared sense of a movement outside, when they could become occupations as literal tactics. In such kinds of events, social functions, or the social as concrete machines, are increasingly *less* manifested, and *more* abstract, not more constraining and thus less abstract. A social ontology of social structures or systems is, in such events, proven to be inadequate and prone to distortion. And this 'making strange' of systems was, in fact, a common *raison d'être* of these movements. Even if the events of the '60s considered as acts of

systemic revolution were not *successful* – or perhaps precisely because of this lack of an aim of creating a new regime – the demonstrators were able to overcome borders and to a certain extent, for a certain time, intensify sociality. They created a new paradigm of social-critical demonstration. They affirmed that the social is essentially occupational but demonstrated that this sense of the occupational, which contains its own logic of broadening and overcoming of borders, has its own pure sense of sociality. This, become generalized, I would submit is the social paradigm that we, especially in western cultures still live with today, for better or for worse. It is not surprising, then, that our contemporary modern sense of sociality has precisely been difficult to describe, explain, or quantify in terms such as work, labour, or action.

If the paradigm of the 60s is not caricatured as a mere sentiment of freedom or of revolution and is understood rather as a paradigm of intimately relating problems and practices through occupational action, then perhaps it is still a vital paradigm for us. If so, we must now make an inclusive distinction between movement and our occupational sensation of movement. This distinction I hope will enable us to specify different modalities of this occupational sense.

Notion-sense

Where is the starting point of modern sociality, if not in ‘revolution’? The first modality of the social sense of occupation is *notion-sense*. Notion-sense shapes its point of view on the model of empirical observations of human practices around us, but its mode of operation is that of an analytical perception of social design and coherence, ie. it is the beginning of an ontological outlook. For example, this is what is at stake in the Durkheimian and Tardian clash over ‘solidity versus fluidity’. The solidity that Durkheim attributed to social formations through his metaphor of ‘solidarity’ already presumes in advance that the socially-derived concepts such as

that of totality will display a certain cognitive or analytical stability. The fluidity that Tarde attributed to social formations through his metaphor of 'imitative currents' presumes in advance that 'ideas', understood in terms of micrological social multiplicity, in terms of social innovations such as new social fashions in flux amidst each other, are that which are able to undermine perceived, stable resemblances without undermining the continuity of sociality per se (which he sees in the family as model of civilization).

At first glance, we seem to have here only opposed accounts of the social origin of critical distance, of cognitive multiplicity. However, what is at stake in these accounts is rather our sense of inclusion and exclusion, of inferiority and superiority, of completeness and incompleteness, and so on. These senses sense a force, internal or external, a current or a solidity, that is somehow preventing a productive resolution but which is at the same time the *full* material for this productive resolution. Like 'revolution' the occupation is, indeed, on one level, always an addressing of this resolution. However, notion-sense, inclusive of the concept of revolution and other such concepts, is not the only aspect of the sense of the occupational but rather is only occupational to the extent that it constitutes the *beginning* of a perception of an outside.

For the outside in notion-sense is only a beginning because it still perceives fullness as otherness. The occupational notion-sense here, in this perception of otherness, in the perception of a 'directive' for example, is that critical moment by which there arises an option between a) an analysis of movement in terms of *determination*, ie. in terms of a blocked subject and a blocking object, or b) in terms of what Bergson called 'pure perception' ie., in terms of the beginning of the formation of images. Sense is not here related automatically to an object but is rather

a kind of interval, or critical hesitation, which mulls over the kinds of critical oppositions mentioned above. As Bergson puts it, “the diverse perceptions of the same object, given by my different senses, will not, then, when put together, reconstruct the *complete* image of the object; they will remain separated from each other by intervals which measure, so to speak, the gaps in my needs” (1988: 49).

The analysis of pure perception can be articulated in terms of the notion-sense of occupations by which there is *first initiated* a formulation of need. It is on the level of notion-sense, of cognitive-critical-sense, that a new need first emerges, when one is initiated, for example, into an office or a task which one feels necessarily requires support.

Need is not just another abstract concept. Rather, our occupations are that by which we create the possibility of imagining an outside and need is *generated* as our way of articulating this possibility which, precisely, we *immediately* sense is shared by others. This capacity is thus not simply a neutral or stable cognitive function – a capacity for ‘taking or giving orders’, for example. Rather, it is meant to guide us in our negotiation and overcoming of the oppositions we perceive. Its essence is that it is the beginning of a capacity for modern sociality, for ‘smooth functioning,’ as it were. Wholeness, for example, has a need that is irreducible to wholeness itself, a need which aims at but does not come from wholeness, a need which does not exactly come from incompleteness either, which would be a straight contradiction. The need of wholeness rather comes from occupation itself; it is the occupation, not wholeness, that therefore ought to be the primary focus of social ontological analysis.

Occupations are, in the initial phase of notion-sense, that by which we challenge ourselves vis-a-vis the changes going on around us with our ‘notion of the outside’. For in the course of being occupied it is necessary to maintain a notion of

the outside since the notion supplies the possibility of choosing to move outside which is the condition of changing or modifying occupations. The notion of the outside which is not yet really the outside is the condition of possibility of occupation as flexibility, as variation, as what Durkheim called 'the division of labour in society'. But too often the perspective of 'management studies' influences us to simply leave the question here. This is unfortunate, because the 'notion' of the outside is not *sufficient* material to compose a concept of the necessity of the outside as a feeling of social occupation. For it is also true that the ideology of 'constant change' attempts to oblige us to restrict ourselves to a notion of the outside and to ignore our immediate sense and image of it. It is an ideology with an interest in leaving us with a perpetual feeling of dissatisfaction which it would have us take as a social norm.

Social occupations therefore intimately involve a social struggle. For the mere notion of the outside, by itself, is always derived from a situatedness in an already-constituted spatio-temporal relation. For example, the 'mechanical' in Durkheim is a notion-sense of the outside. It involves a certain acceptance of a distinction between what is inferior and what is superior which is always in the last instance, as the theory goes, determinable spatially in terms of what Durkheim called 'segments'. These 'segments' – one could think of them, for example, as tasks – are isolated, bounded sections of sociality. Thus, according to Durkheim the mechanical becomes related primarily not to the outside but rather to an *inside*, a conscience collective, which seems to be its primary feature. This inside, or isolated notion-sense of the outside, thus seems to be involved primarily in the objectification and dissolution of the real sense of the outside. Movement here is perceived abstractly as successive, as destructive, as 'against the comfort of colleagues,' as one might put it.

But what I am attempting to say, in occupational terms, is that movement is destructive only from a certain, *initial* point of view. This point of view is what I call the notion which is involved in the initiation of the sense of movement, or notion-sense.

For the notion is certainly not something to be devalued and marginalized in the theory of social occupations. We ought not to stress only its conservative possibility, its possibility of choosing the path of subject-object analysis. We can also stress its role as a potential source of contradiction and opposition. Durkheim seemed to sense this as we can see in his claims that 'mechanical solidarity' somehow must always co-exist with 'organic solidarity' even at the height of modernity. At times Durkheim seemed to stress the nefarious, conservative possibility of 'mechanical solidarity' as an exclusionary force. At the same time he was forced, within the terms of his own conception, to admit that he needs to suppose that the mechanical is a necessary origin of what seems to be a collective consciousness. The metaphor of solidarity-solidity led him into this contradiction. First he confused the mechanical with a process of externalization and solidification. Then this idea of exclusion had to depend for Durkheim upon positing an entity which could exert a motivating influence upon mechanical relations and cause this process, which he called the conscience collective. Due to this positing of the existence of a conscience collective, this construction of an abstract interiority, Durkheim's implied criticisms of mechanical relations had to therefore be silenced by Durkheim himself. He deprived himself of a basis of criticism, leaving the diagnosis of social ills to the vagaries of polemical emphasis on the one hand and the rigid normal/pathological distinction on the other.

There should be no need to posit some mystical conscience collective once we rethink the issue of social externality in the terms of an outside. A notion of the outside is involved in a gaze upon an objectifiable social form and a perception of distance from this object. This is what tends to happen in Durkheim's 'mechanical' relations, but Durkheim could provide no explanation for objectification other than his description of a primal, 'mechanical' tendency. But how could one have a notion of this externality if one has never come within a sense of the outside or, to put it in another way which amounts to the same thing, if one has never *been* outside? What is missing in Durkheim's account is the immediate sense of the outside itself, and as a result we cannot take the 'mechanical', or the 'organic' for that matter, to be more than hypothetical concepts linked by the metaphor of solidarity-solidity. What is always presupposed by the notion of the outside, and by its potential inside, is a sense of the outside.

In contrast with mere notion, absolute notion, or notion arbitrarily abstracted from sense, a *notion-sense* of the outside already *is* the outside, is already a modality of the outside. For it is on the level of sense that it begins to become clear, notionally, not that things are either certain or uncertain, as if we had some traditional cosmological relationship with 'things' which precedes the initiation of a modern sensibility. Rather, in modernity it begins to become clear that the outside is composed of movement, because it begins in modernity to become apparent that we can draw useful oppositions between finite and infinite, static and dynamic elements in nature. *The notion of the outside is always included in this emerging sense of movement, -- this emerging sense of self-empowerment, for example at work -- especially in the emerging phase of it, and would therefore be ill-conceived, for example, as a negation of sense.* We seem to have arrived at a choice of whether to

see the notion as a servant of determination or of movement. But since determination implies movement much more than movement implies determination, what is primary is movement. Therefore, notion, however critical, is always a modality *included* among the senses of movement, and it is thus nothing less and nothing more than an initial contribution to the image of the outside, even if it stands in both notional and image worlds in the sense that it holds the potential to imagine an inside as well.

Despite the fact that notion-sense does not necessarily lead outside, which is to say to a richer sense of the outside, the notion of the outside also does not necessarily lead to objectification and interiorization. Rather, like that which confronts the viewer of art in a gallery, the *notion* of the outside involves the facing of a choice between a hesitating, gazing objectification which de-occupies both the viewer and the object, and a movement to the outside of the work where the various occupations that constitute the work, such as those of the artist, the gallery, and the viewer, become real, immediate and sensible. On the notional level we can only perceive the variety of practices that criss-cross before us as possibilities. At this very moment we also begin to sense an outside and to sense that we have our own occupations. We may then resolve those vectors into stable objects-objectives, but the price of that choice is in any case to lose our sense of occupation. Since our sense of occupation is our sense of social reality, the stakes are high.

Image-sense

In one way the outside is a simple, immediate, sensual constitution. Perceptually, it is multiplicity. However, it is not just a sense of empty space in which isolated movements occur, because it is directly contingent upon practice and movement that, through the initiation provided by the observational-critical attitude

of notion-sense, crosses social boundaries. That is why the sense of the outside is always connected with a nascent image of the outside. Indeed, there is much to say on the distinct topic of the *image-sense* of occupation. For an *image* of the outside does have a certain content inasmuch as it accompanies the sense of the outside as an indeterminate feeling of occupation. *The affect of occupying is the feeling of the outside.* The image thus links the immediate sense of the outside with the practice-movements that generate that sense. If the notion-sense critically raises the event of the occupation into the sense of becoming a moving outside, it is the image-sense of the outside that makes possible the discernment of the event of crossed boundaries involved in an immediate sense of the outside. The immediate sense of the outside would not be a specifically social sense, and would probably not exist at all in any sustained way, and the notion-sense would be for nothing, if there was not generated this image. The image of the outside is always a positive effect of the occupational event and has positive consequences for further events of the same kind. In contrast, it is only the notion-sense of the outside that faces a choice of whether or not to become 'deeply' involved with the outside, of whether or not to move 'further' outside, because it has not yet sensed the image of the outside. In other words, notion-sense challenges the claim to reality of a vanishing, but nevertheless still real, sense of the outside.

As an undergoing and an overcoming of this painful initiation, social ontology, to a large extent, is *image-sense*. Image-sense is that which makes us describe the social to ourselves as an ideal structure of action that is irreducible to actual experiences and states of affairs. It is a kind of exhilaration. In contrast to the representation of 'public spheres', the image-sense does not just indicate a special domain or realm but rather stems from the occupational affect of a social individual

which feels it *is* outside. Now, of course, this image-sense carries implications of both inclusion and exclusion. Durkheim attempted to account for this apparently internally contradictory nature of the division of labour by formulating a holistic category of 'solidarity' with which he would attempt to both explain and transcend the contingent divisions of inclusion and exclusion. This perhaps works to a certain extent if one considers only the structure and the perception of difference inherent in what he called organic solidarity. But he then needed to specify a type of solidarity by which organic solidarity could be measured in a comparative fashion, namely, the mechanical type of solidarity. Tarde initiated that critique of Durkheim which exposes precisely the impossibility of there being a total lack of image in certain types of societies which are supposedly constituted as a melange of concatenated resemblances amidst the members of a community. For Tarde there could not be just this mechanical assemblage by itself but rather there had to be for him first a familial desire amidst the assemblage, a kind of 'welcoming' as it were, and then an impersonal model of civilization arising out of this and finally the possibility of a civilizational archeology.

We have seen that Bergson's critique of sociology is linked with the way Bergson brings this Tardian model back into the scope and influence of a *personal sensation*. This Bergsonian personal sensation is, according to him, capable, in rare moments, of extending outwards to become a spiritual event of a new sense which makes us see how things involving of ourselves and others can be done completely differently. The image-sense of an occupation is thus not simply a 'welcoming to' or an 'opportunity within' an already established routine. Image-sense rather constitutes the being of the model itself as it were. As such it points to openings within what have otherwise tended to become closed systems. For Bergson the

personal and the social exist together in this way in a continuum of differentiating modes of sense. Bergson teaches us that *image is always within sense and as such does not transcend sense representationally or constitute initially a negation of sense*. What Deleuze then does is clarify for us how *the continuum of sense does not have to be conceived as unified on the level of a model*, and that, in fact, the 'continuum' is only a presupposition that sense must sense in an infinite multiplicity of directions, ways, and media on an ongoing basis.

Form-sense

This is why social ontology, as the study of the plurality of modernities, is also *form-sense*. Durkheim inaugurated this perspective with his seminal distinction between the mechanical and organic types of solidarity. What is at issue in these types of solidarity is not just a social formation, for instance a particular institution, but rather the form of these formations. The types of solidarity are not models; they are not configurations of the social that are manifested for others to observe and affirm, ignore, or deny. Nor are they general concepts of various kinds of political arrangement of human affairs. Rather they are the sense, the felt affect, of a specific kind of needful relation to wholeness, non-empirical or non-manifested, but nevertheless a real, felt need which occurs as a kind of structuring of configurations. They are the form or immediate shape and dispensation of need. They are general types of the sense of social need conceptualized and described as types of solidarity.

While they are prototypical cases of form-sense they are at the same time, for Durkheim, *structural types*, since they determine the mode of the perception of difference for the configurations under these forms. What is important here and now is to point out that this is not the only way in which form-sense may operate. Deleuze has shown us a way in which form-sense becomes linked with the

continuous multiplicity of practices: through the medium of *figures*. For example, the whole *raison d'être* of Deleuze's *A Thousand Plateaus* is to experiment with figures. He presents, for instance, the figure of the nomad (Deleuze and Guattari 1988: 351-424). The nomad, on the one hand, involves a logic of sense on many levels, both of humour and of seriousness. On the other hand, the nomad is a figure which presents an intimation of a temporary autonomy of form. There is a figure of the rat which swarms and the figure of the swarm itself through which we intuit not a model of the social or observe an actual social formation but through which we sense a kind of social need and the effusion of a kind of 'hordic' social desire (Deleuze and Guattari 1988: 233).

I often think of the *pirate* as a figure central to early modernity. For the pirate presents us with the form-sense of an outsider who seeks an expansion of wealth and displays an advanced technological innovativeness, but he or she cultivates his or her initiative not for the sake of capital accumulation but rather for the sake of *sustaining a life lived outside*. The pirate as a symbol is a symbol of good or of evil; as a symbol he or she is evaluated according to a preconceived framework of values. The pirate as form-sense, however, is much more immediately effective, since it has more to do with fright than with calculated disapproval. The fear a pirate brings with him or her is not a fear of a man or woman but rather is the discomforting sense of the form of pure modernity, the fear of the co-existence of the creative and the destructive in one life. Form-sense is not simply form, nor formation, nor any other kind of product. Rather, it is a mode of our *occupational* sense of the social, one of the modes through which we can understand how the social exists. It is not just to point out the curious fact that piracy *can be* an occupation, that ironically it can be much like any other occupation; it is rather to point out that piracy *is* occupation, in

all its senses, that all the fears and expectations, needs and promises of early modern being are convergent, concentrated, exploded, and dispersed through the intensity and the contiguity of these senses: the militant-(de)territorial, work-active, and outside-exploratory senses of occupation.

The notion of the outside in Deleuzian philosophy could not have emerged if it were not for Bergson's notion of 'open society', and the latter could not have been developed if it were not for the challenge posed by Durkheim's doctrine of the externality of the social. There is a kind of overarching reason for this intellectual genealogy. For the outside is the key to an immanent account of what has appeared in the past to be the twin, inseparable criteria of modernity: the autonomy of intelligent desires on the one hand, and the overall societal discipline required for their coordination and technical achievement on the other. A socially-immanent account of modernity is now necessary for two reasons. First, it is necessary in order to avoid elevating modern intelligence to a transcendental plane at the 'end of history' upon which there can only flourish a struggle between 'intellectual property' and the 'conscientious good will' of a global elite. Secondly, it is necessary to avoid at the same time reducing the issue of production to a struggle between the determinations of an oppressive, quasi-objective political economy, and mere 'anticapitalist' destruction. The notion of the outside fills a *practical and popular* function that all classical social concepts have filled. Certainly it could not have been formulated in its present state if philosophy had not taken a 'second social turn' in the thought of Deleuze.

Durkheim's approach to the problem of defining the externality of the social was, as we have seen, conceived as inextricably linked with its context: the theory of

a 'monolithic' modernity shaped by the contours of the 'division of labour.' What we now need instead of a theory of a division of labour which shapes the grand edifice of a single modernity is rather to theorize occupational difference as a basis for multiple modernities.

One of the obstacles confronting the theorization of a plurality of modernities has been a certain inherited way of seeing the relation between time and space. In more universalistic theories of modernity this relation has been formulated in mainly two ways: sometimes as a confrontation between a pre-established mental continuity blocked and fragmented by technocratically-ordered spatial patterns of social production; but sometimes time is rather attributed to social institutions as testified by their longevity and their history as over against a space of vital mental freedom from institutional control. The difficulty with both points of view lies in the way they imply that it is necessary to *compare* time and space. Such comparisons always imply a kind of dialectical conflict between two things: actualities situated in the present and actualities coming from the past. While the paradoxical element of the conflicts of modernity may be real – the fact that there is always an element of inescapability co-existing with an element of unattainability – the answers formulated in terms of time and space have never been more than heuristically-useful and have always been ultimately illusory.

This problem of social time and space should, to begin with, be set into the context of the problem of the relation between the social part and the social whole. For what occurs in the peculiar relation of social part to social whole in modernity is the reorganization of the actualities of work and labour under the virtual heading of social occupations which involve a notion-sense, image-sense, and form-sense of being outside. This existence outside is intimately related to the problem of social

time and space. The modern social occupation is not just a role-specialization which supplants traditional organizations of work and labour for the sake of economic efficiency but is rather 'special' to the extent that it includes within work and labour an outside, its own 'effort,' its own 'fullness,' a spatio-temporality which is intrinsic rather than extrinsic to these activities. Since it is intrinsic it is an ontological problem, rather than, say, a problem of instrumental rationality. The outside becomes more than a notion associated with the essentially static locations of sets of 'inferiors' and 'superiors'. It becomes something real and necessary to modern people engaged in the ever increasing multiplication and inter-connection of social tasks. Modern social actors sense an outside to the extent that they sense the necessity of this 'progress' in particular instances and deal with those instances by creating and depending upon an image of an outside. In this sense, as a social fact, occupation is 'much larger' than work. It is, in fact, a phenomenon that includes but also exceeds the actual tasks and sets of rules, procedures, and conventions of work and labour. It is not defined by those actualities but rather by the notion-sense, image-sense, and form-sense of the outside that it generates, a negotiation at the intersection of many social vectors in the process of emerging, combining, and disappearing.

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