Suicide and *Homo Duplex*: an Interpretation of Durkheim's Typology of Suicide*

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The four types of suicide that Durkheim distinguished are implicit in his concept of *homo duplex* and the view of socialization this entailed. The individual requires both repression of his passions and direction toward society; too much or too little of either of these two processes leads to suicide and each of the four types represents one type of such failure in socialization. Internal evidence from *Suicide* is used to show that Durkheim did in fact derive the suicide typology from his view of man. From the standpoint of this interpretation, those by Parsons and Douglas and by commentators who equate the anomie and egoistic suicide types are reviewed and their misunderstandings noted. Finally, the interpretation given is used to shed light on other aspects of Durkheim's thought, especially some that are disputed in the secondary literature.

For many, perhaps most, sociologists, Durkheim's *Suicide* (first published in 1897) is among the greatest works ever done in their field (Merton, 1968:63; Simpson's Preface in the first English edition, 1915:9). In 1966 a reviewer wrote that “clearly our estimate of Durkheim is more reverential than referential. Presently it is less appreciation that patterned evasion” (Wolf, 1966:723). Yet in the following year Douglas (1967) published his *Social Meanings of Suicide* which raised serious questions about Durkheim's approach to the sociological explanation of suicide. Moreover, Douglas questioned conventional interpretations of *Suicide* and offered his own, quite different interpretation. Many of Douglas' points had been made earlier by Giddens (1964, 1965a, 1965b, 1966) who later shifted from an interest in suicide and a focus on *Suicide* to a focus on Durkheim's life-work as a whole. In the course of his interpretation, Giddens (1970, 1971a, 1971b, 1972) has questioned the adequacy of the seminal interpretation of Durkheim's work offered by Parsons (1937), as has Pope (1973). In the past two years the floodgates of critical review of Durkheim opened with book-length treatments by LaCapra (1972), Wallwork (1972), Lukes (1973), and Nisbet (1974). In recent years, then we have had a reinterpretation of *Suicide* as well as more general reinterpretations of Durkheim's work *in toto*. These general reinterpretations have implications, not always made explicit by the writers, for the interpretation of any one of Durkheim's works or periods.

This paper seeks to understand the criteria Durkheim used in developing his typology of four suicide types—egoistic, altruistic, anomie, and fatalistic. The topic was chosen not so much because of an interest in suicide and its sociological explanation (this was Douglas' interest) but as a way toward greater understanding of one of Durkheim's greatest works and, beyond that, toward a better insight into all his work. If the basis of Durkheim's typology of suicide could be made clear, such an understanding would be greatly advanced,

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* This paper was a prize winning entry in the 1974 Howard P. Becker student paper competition sponsored by the Midwest Sociological Society.
because, as Durkheim himself said, "The nature of a phenomenon is much more profoundly got at by knowing its cause than by knowing its characteristics only, even the essential ones" (1951:147). An understanding of the genesis of the typology would enable us to indicate why Durkheim used the two dimensions of "integration" and "regulation." Why just these two dimensions and not others? Why did he try to keep these two distinct? What considerations led him to include the very rare fatalistic suicide to fill out his typology? These are questions that can be answered and, indeed, must be answered before we can fairly evaluate either Durkheim's position or the many criticisms of it, such as, for example, that the egoistic and anomie types are not distinct. Moreover, answers to these questions would contribute to the resolution of other issues now disputed in the secondary literature on Durkheim.

This paper first will outline an interpretation of the suicide typology which, by indicating the basic assumptions Durkheim made in deducing the four types of suicide, will enable us to answer the above questions. Secondly, we will use internal evidence from Suicide itself to argue that Durkheim did in fact develop the typology as we have outlined. Thirdly, we will relate this interpretation to other available interpretations, and finally, we will show how it helps explain other areas of Durkheim's work and helps locate Suicide vis-a-vis his total life's work.

This paper accepts as proven Douglas' claim that Durkheim knew the explanation for the "facts" of suicide before he started his analysis of the data, i.e., it accepts that the types of suicide distinguished by Durkheim did not derive from his analysis of the data. Earlier, Nisbet (1962) had made the same point. Parsons (1937) saw the types of suicide as deriving from differing strengths and/or contents of what Durkheim called the conscience collective, but he could not account for the fatalistic type Durkheim included. Douglas (1967) saw the types as deriving from earlier writers, but this paper will argue that the major influence on Durkheim in his formulation of the different causes and types of suicide was his conception of the nature of man and the need for authority—not scattered comments in the literature on suicide. Douglas, though he searched the literature, doesn't report any reference to fatalistic suicide, yet Durkheim included it to fill out his typology (1951:276, n 25).

Though Durkheim, in the course of his life, changed his view of man (Stone and Farberman, 1967), the essential elements of this view remained constant.1

1 The concept of homo duplex, with its associated and almost infinitely ramifying dichotomies, permeates all of Durkheim's work. Among the associated dichotomies are sociology/psychology, social/individual, moral rules/sensual appetites, concepts/sensations, and sacred/profane (see Lukes, 1971; 1973:16-28). His most explicit treatments of the duality are in a 1913 discussion (Durkheim, 1913), his 1898 article on "Individual and Collective Representations" (Durkheim, 1953:1-34) and especially his 1914 article on "The Duality of Human Nature and its Social Conditions" (English translations are available in Wolff, 1960, and Bellah, 1973). But already in his early review articles he was aware of the dualism and criticized Wundt for not noting the dual nature of the attachment of the individual to society (see Giddens, 1971:70-71). See also the explicit references in Division of Labor (1933:100, 105-106), Rules (1958:108ff), Suicide (1951:213, 319), Elementary Forms (1965:297ff), and other works (1953:55; 1956:71-72, 124; 1958:60; 1961:51 and passim) as well as the introductions by Davy and Fouconnet to his posthumous works (1958:ix-xlv and 1956:28-29, respectively). Lukes (1973:22) considers the dichotomy the "keystone of Durkheim's entire system of thought," while LaCapra (1972:8-9) saw "a Cartesianized and socialized neo-Kantianism" as a main stream in Durk-
Durkheim saw man as, in essence, double—*homo duplex*. Part of this man consists of a biological base with insatiable desires. On this base, social man is superimposed and the social in man keeps his drives in check. Social man presupposes a society which he expresses and serves (Durkheim, 1951:213). Man is man only because he is social.

Given this view of man as double, it is apparent that the socialization process (which continues throughout the individual's life) would be all important in determining the relation of the physical to the social for any individual or group of individuals. Given his belief in the priority of society over the individual, and this view of man, Durkheim's types of suicide follow logically from the process of socialization. For the individual to be "socialized" (in some way made and maintained as part of the society):

1. The insatiable, selfish drives associated with the animal part of his nature must be repressed or checked, and
2. He must be directed to some minimal extent toward social ends, i.e., a part of his personality must be made social.

It is these two aspects of the socialization process that Durkheim distinguished by the terms "regulation" and "integration" respectively. Even though what constitutes "integration" is unclear in *Suicide*, this conceptualization gives us the key to understanding the origin of his suicide typology. Conceptually we can subdivide each of these processes of socialization according to the quantity involved and we can link the four types of failure (too much or too little of either process) to Durkheim's four types of suicide. We have done this in Diagram 1 below.

**Diagram 1. Derivation of Durkheim's Suicide Typology**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Socialization of Homo Duplex</th>
<th>Quantity Involved</th>
<th>Type of Associated Suicide</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. Repression of drives</td>
<td>(a) Much</td>
<td>Fatalistic</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(regulation)</td>
<td>(b) Little</td>
<td>Anomic</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Direction towards social</td>
<td>(a) Much</td>
<td>Altruistic</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ends (integration)</td>
<td>(b) Little</td>
<td>Egoistic</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*heim's thought. The *homo duplex* idea derived from Descartes' mind/matter antimony while the other "dualistic antimonies" were neo-Kantian (see also Wallwork, 1972:60-62).

Whether Durkheim regarded commitment to certain values, e.g., collectivism as opposed to individualism, and/or actual social participation as necessary for integration of the individual in society has long been argued. Parsons (1937) held that Durkheim used value-content as a criterion; Pope (1973:402-405) has directly contradicted this, claiming that social participation was the critical factor for Durkheim. Neither could claim that Durkheim's position was unambiguously clear. Douglas (1967:41ff) argues that Durkheim vacillated between ascribing ultimate importance to social behavior or shared meanings, but argues that, as the book progresses, Durkheim moved from an emphasis on external behavior to internal meanings as the fundamental cause of suicide. Wallwork clarifies the situation somewhat:

In *Suicide* and subsequent works Durkheim places increasing emphasis upon the idealist nature of group life. To be sure, Durkheim continues to confuse participation in social structures with loyalty to collectively shared ideas, but he begins, with *Suicide*, to lay increasingly heavy emphasis upon collectively shared ends (in addition to shared norms) or moral action. Thus Durkheim frequently speaks, in *Suicide*, of attachment to one's group in terms of devotion not to others or to the structural properties of the group, but to the moral concepts of the society in question. These concepts are interpreted as ideal ends of action (1972:48).
There is sufficient evidence in Suicide itself for us to infer that Durkheim implicitly utilized this basis to develop the typology. First, the fact that Durkheim chose just the two dimensions of integration and regulation can be seen as impressive evidence. The dual nature of the individual makes these two dimensions particularly salient to him. Because his biologically based desires must be controlled, he is particularly sensitive to information affecting these; because his existence requires integration in society, he is particularly susceptible to information concerning this. It follows also that Durkheim would include fatalistic suicide “for completeness sake” (1951:276, n 25) because, given his homo duplex concept and the view of socialization this implied, this type was logically implied, and its inclusion made the typology inclusive of all possible suicides. In fact, the completeness of the typology when combined with his homo duplex concept can give us an insight into Durkheim’s confidence in his theories. Lukes quotes one of Durkheim’s students as writing that his teacher “when told that the facts contradicted his theories, he used to reply ‘the facts are wrong’” (Lukes 1971:207).

Second, the language he uses in describing each of the types shows that he associates both fatalistic and anomic suicides, but not egoistic or altruistic ones, with the passions (see, for example, his “aetiological and morphological classification of the social types of suicide,” p. 293). This is noteworthy because the passions are associated with the nonsocialized part of man, and these types of suicides result from failure to repress these self-centered passions (anomic) or from too much repression (fatalistic). Fatalism is shown as the suicide of persons with “futures pitilessly blocked and passions violently choked by oppressive discipline” (1951:276, n 25). Anomic suicides result from a failure to control the passions and are therefore angry and violent. Egoistic suicide results from too little direction toward social identity and is characterized by “dreamy melancholy,” “self-complacency,” and “indifference.” As opposed to the anomic suicide which is violently irritated, the egoistic suicide is apathetic. The bond linking him to life is weak because the bond linking him to society is weak (1951:214-215). Altruistic suicides are committed with deliberate energy and a sense of duty, perhaps enthusiasm. In the egoistic suicide, action has no goal; in altruistic suicide the goal is made very explicit. In discussing Lamartine’s Raphael as an ideal type of egoistic suicide, Durkheim notes that “his passions are mere appearances, being sterile” (1951:279) and then continues to describe the egoistic suicide of an Epicurean who is, he notes, “even more passionless than the latter” (1951:282). In the case of the egoist “the life of the passions languishes” (1951:288).

The term “information” is used deliberately here to show the similarity of Durkheim’s conceptualizations with general systems theory. In Suicide, the individual is seen as a system open to certain information from his social environment. His dual nature makes the two types of information isolated particularly salient. The individual is seen as passively sensing the passing currents (of information) rather than as actively “mapping” his environment, a view which suggests that the passing of information from society to any one individual (socialization) has many features of what general systems theorists call energy input. “Thus we would follow the various currents which generate suicide from their social origins to their individual manifestations” (Durkheim, 1951:277). For a review and critique of a similar view of socialization in Durkheim’s work on moral education see Wallwork (1972. chapter 5, esp. 121-123 and 147).
Mawson (1970:301-302) noted the relationship of anomie with the passions and egoism with the intellect, and continued:
But if a weakening external control over the passions is the distinguishing feature of anomie, deregulation of the intellect as a result of isolation from group activity is the differentia specifica of the second pathological state to be considered: egoism. Durkheim thus postulates a distinction between man’s intellect and his passions.
Since his concept of homo duplex with its intellect/passions dichotomy, is present in Durkheim’s thought from the beginning and is central to his thought, it makes much more sense to suggest that this distinction led him to postulate the distinction between anomic and egoistic suicides rather than vice versa.
The third piece of internal evidence for our interpretation of the derivation of the typology comes from Book 2, Chapter 1 of Suicide. This very short chapter (1951:145-151) has created great difficulty for interpreters. Durkheim first suggests the advisability of a morphological classification of suicides as a first step to sociological analysis, but then claims that adequate data for such a classification are lacking (1951:145-146). He continues:
But our aim may be achieved by another method. Let us reverse the order of study. Only in so far as the effective causes differ can there be different types of suicide . . . . Consequently, we shall be able to determine the social types of suicides by classifying them not directly by their preliminary described characteristics, but by the causes which produce them. Without asking why they differ from one another, we will first seek the social conditions responsible for them; then group these conditions in a number of separate classes by their resemblances and differences, and we shall be sure that a specific type of suicide will correspond to each of these classes. In a word, instead of being morphological, our classification will from the start be aetiological (1951:146-147).
Since it is apparent that one must “know” the causes of suicides before one can classify them according to these causes, this statement is correctly seen as a question-begging argument (e.g., by Lukes 1973:201-202). But labeling it “question-begging,” or even the more academic “petitio principii,” doesn’t help us understand how Durkheim did, in fact, “know” the causes. As we have seen, however, given his view of man and the nature of the socialization process it implied, the four types of suicide Durkheim did isolate had to be the only possible causes from his sociological perspective.
There are two apparent reasons why Durkheim would not have spelled out explicitly this derivation of his typology. First, his interest in establishing sociology as a separate science would have led him to emphasize “social facts” external to and constraining individuals and thus to downplay the relationship between any one individual (even the abstract homo duplex we have described) and the total society. Second, since he wrote for an audience that probably shared or was familiar with the homo duplex conception of human nature, he might not have felt compelled to spell this out in detail. Douglas (1967:14) shows that Durkheim probably assumed his readers to be familiar with earlier works on suicide, and since these were but a small part of the voluminous works of social commentary, philosophy, etc., with which Durkheim was familiar and which were permeated with the idea of man as double, we may confidently

4 See Petrement (1946) and Zurcher (1969) for histories of the mind/body distinction in Western thought. In Durkheim’s case the links of the homo duplex conception to Descartes,
infer that Durkheim would have expected his readers to be familiar with *homo duplex*.

**Other Interpretations**

Without doubt, Parsons' (1937) interpretation of the suicide typology has been the most influential. His interpretation of *Suicide* forms a small part of his explication of Durkheim's major works. A feature of this explication is that it ignores the whole socio-historical and cultural context in which Durkheim wrote. Elements of and changes in Durkheim's thought are explained by reference to other elements or features of this thought, which is thus treated as an intellectual system without links to a particular time, a particular social setting, or a particular thinker. Parsons (1937:336) interprets Durkheim's types of egoistic, anomic, and altruistic suicide as resulting from sets of combinations of the strength and content of the *conscience collective*. Altruistic suicide occurs where the *conscience collective* is strong and its content emphasizes collectivism (1937:330-334). Egoistic suicides are characteristic of Protestants who are "under pressure to be independent" and "forced to be free" (1937:332). Anomic suicide occurs in situations where the socially given moral norms no longer apply (1937:336) and it is typical of sudden economic change. In boom times, for example, the relevant norms about standards of living lose their restraining force as expectations and aspirations change. Lazarsfeld and Barton (1951:176-177) have conveniently presented Parsons' interpretation of the types of suicide. Their diagram is reproduced as Diagram 2.

**Diagram 2. Parsons' Interpretation of Durkheim's Suicide Types**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Existence of Norms</th>
<th>Content of Norms</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Norms Exist</td>
<td>Individualism</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Collectivism</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Egoistic Suicide</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Norms Do Not Exist</td>
<td>Altruistic Suicide</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Anomic Suicide</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Kant (LaCapra, 1972), and Rousseau (Lukes, 1973:125-128, 435) have been documented. Gardner (1974:Chapter 1) has provided a history of this stream in French social thought, while Cassirer (1963) and Mead (1936:Chapters 1 and 2) have explored the relationships between Rousseau and Kant. More than this cataloging, however, we need an investigation of how Durkheim built his system of thought. Which current ideas did he accept and why? How did he try to fit them together? What were the relationships between his "philosophical assumptions, theoretical insights and empirical insights"? (See Wallwork, 1972:5ff on Durkheim as a "master of dialectics.") From this viewpoint several aspects of the use of the *homo duplex* idea are worth investigating: (i) Durkheim's use of the term as descriptive of an ontological dualism, in contrast, e.g., to Rousseau's "state of nature" which was an heuristic device; (ii) its function in a theory of social change. The Germans' "spirit" and Durkheim's *conscience collective* were similar in that they influenced and shaped individuals. For the Germans, the concept of man as dual was embedded in a philosophy of history; history was the progressive spiritualization of "nature." The dynamic for this came from the inner resources of individuals. In contrast Durkheim located the source of change in society. Change originated not with any one individual but through individuals acting together; (iii) its use in the problem of relating individual and society. In direct contrast to Durkheim's conception we may note Diderot's two-sentence "short history of almost all our misery": "Once there was a natural man: an artificial man was implanted into him. Thereupon a civil war broke out between the two and it lasted unto death" (quoted in Dilthey, 1957-60:1, 382). Others, e.g., Fourier, believed that the expression of the passions was the basis of society.
One weakness of this formulation is the difficulty of placing fatalistic suicide in the typology. Though empirically rare, this type is important in seeking to understand Durkheim typology, for he conceptualized it as opposite to anomic suicide and included it for "completeness sake" (1951:276, n 25). Parsons, aware of the difficulty, excluded it (1937:327, n 2) from his analysis because Durkheim himself had not developed the idea at any length. Parsons also suggested that fatalistic suicide might be associated with altruism (1937:336, n 1), but there is little evidence in Durkheim to support this view.

Dohrenwend (1959:466-473) tried to go beyond Parsons and to "establish, conceptually, the systematic dimensions of the four types (of suicide) . . . as states of the most important norms in social aggregates" (1959:467). Accepting Parsons’ use of strength and content of norms (which Dohrenwend uses as equivalent to conscience collective) to distinguish egoistic, altruistic, and anomic suicides from each other, he introduced a third variable, the source of the regulatory power of the norms, to distinguish fatalistic suicide from the other types. Fatalistic suicide occurs where this regulatory power of norms is "anchored in an authority external to the social aggregate as a whole and to each individual in it—vested, for example in the 'captor'" (1959:471). Thus: The four types can be differentiated, each from every other, in terms of oppositions on at least one of the three major dimensions: the existence of norms, their content, and their effective source of regulatory power (1959:471-472).

We have schematically presented this interpretation in Diagram 3.

**Diagram 3. Schematic Presentation of Dohrenwend’s Interpretation of the Basis of Durkheim’s Suicide Typology**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Whether Appropriate Norms Exist</th>
<th>Source of Norms’ Regulatory Effectiveness</th>
<th>Content of Norms</th>
<th>Type of Associated Suicide</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Internal to the social aggregate and/or to each individual in it</td>
<td>Individualism</td>
<td>Egoistic</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>None</td>
<td>Collectivism</td>
<td>Altruistic</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No</td>
<td>None</td>
<td>Not discussed by Dohrenwend</td>
<td>Fatalistic</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>None</td>
<td>None</td>
<td>Anomic</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

This interpretation, however, owes more to an attempt to deal with Parsons’ difficulty in interpreting fatalistic suicide than it does to Durkheim’s formulation. Moreover, by citing Durkheim’s example of suicide by slaves, he is being selective. How, for example, can he deal with the other examples of fatalistic suicide cited by Durkheim, that of "very young husbands, (and) of the woman who is childless" (1951:276, n 25).

The greatest difficulty with Parsons’ formulation and modifications of it stems from their attempts to categorize neatly Durkheim’s types of suicide into a simple four-fold table. Attempting to do this, Poggi (1972) criticized Durkheim claiming that:
There is no way of constructing such a table with Durkheim’s pretended independent variables as its two coordinates and his four types of suicide as its cells; that is, no “property space” comprising the four types will result from actually treating his two variables as independent and crossing them (p. 201).

Instead of criticizing Durkheim for not achieving what he didn’t attempt to do, Poggi should have questioned Parsons’ interpretation of the genesis of the suicide typology.

In contrast to Parsons’ interpretation (and those based on it) which deals with Suicide divorced from its socio-cultural context, we may note Douglas (1967) who locates Suicide firmly in the France of the 1890s. Suicide was, he claims, an attempted, though in his opinion not completely successful, synthesis of “the better principles, methods of analysis, and empirical findings of the moral statisticians” in nineteenth-century France (1967: Chapter 1), a synthesis Durkheim sought as a means “to demonstrate the need for an independent scientific discipline concerned with human society” (1967: 15). Douglas’ critique of Suicide is important not only for its new interpretation, but also for its explicit criticism of earlier interpretations (which mainly followed Parsons). Because these failed to see the historical background to Suicide, Douglas claimed, they were unable to interpret it correctly.

In his second chapter, Douglas shows that many of Durkheim’s ideas were already available. He shows that the idea of a social suicide rate explicable only in extra-individual terms was widespread, but he fails to prove that moral statisticians generally accepted these causes as necessarily social. Douglas has shown that Durkheim’s use of statistical comparisons was continuing in a long tradition stretching at least from Quetelet. Finally, though Douglas does show that Durkheim did get an idea of the difference between anomic and egoistic suicides from romanticist literature, he fails to show how he developed the insight thus obtained. It is much more plausible, however, to suggest that Durkheim used Lamartine’s Raphael (egoistic), Chateaubriand’s René, and Goethe’s Werther (both anomic) to provide examples of the suicide types he had already distinguished rather than as a basis for distinguishing these types (Durkheim, 1951: 278, 286). Durkheim himself said that his descriptions of them “conclusively illustrates the relations and difference between egoistic and anomic suicide, which our sociological analysis had already led us to glimpse” (1951: 287, emphasis added).

Douglas argues that Durkheim “did not even have to develop the specific ideas of ‘egoism’ and ‘anomic’ as the fundamental causes of suicide in European societies” (1967: 18), because from the 1850s onward these conditions were frequently described. Douglas claims that the term “egoism” was used to refer to “the lack of moral (social) repression of individual passions,” a condition that was “often distinguished” from “the soaring of individual passions resulting from the rage for monetary gain” (1967: 18) which Durkheim called “anomie.” Nevertheless, even if the background for both notions was “a broad and all-pervasive tradition of discussion concerning the causes of imminent social disintegration” and the remedies needed (as Lukes, 1973: 198, notes), we must go on with Lukes to recognize that Durkheim’s approach was “distinctive.” In so far as Durkheim’s work was foreshadowed by that of others, as Douglas claims,
it seems clear, even from the evidence that Douglas presents, that the similarities he notes were due to the implicit use by the earlier writers of a concept of man as double, a conception that Durkheim made explicit and systematic, and then used to derive the four possible types of suicide that it logically implied. Both the moral statisticians and "commonsensical thought of the age" believed that "man must recognize or accept a moral authority" (Douglas, 1967:17). Douglas, on the same page, quotes Esquirol: "Man has need of an authority which directs his passions and governs his actions," and he adds that this idea was repeatedly expressed in works on suicide (1967:17). This is Durkheim's society/individual dichotomy, including the dual nature of the link between them (direction of passions, governing of actions). The associated and isomorphic dichotomy of thought/emotion was explicit in Brière de Boismont's work, as Douglas notes (1967:20, n 3).

Without going into Douglas' elaboration of his interpretation we can summarize it as follows (based on Douglas, 1967:41ff, esp. 49-52): different "pools" of shared meanings (especially of anomie, egoism and altruism) cause different social behavior which causes different forces (individual and collective) within the individual. The pools of shared meanings, social facts, emerge from individual minds only "when they have been transformed by association" (Durkheim, 1951:310, quoted in Douglas, 1967:49).

Wallwork's (1972:esp. 47-53) interpretation of Suicide acknowledges the influence of Douglas (page 48, n 5) whom he largely follows. He introduces a Parsonian note, however, when he identifies Durkheim's conceptualization of egoistic and altruistic forms of suicide in terms of "attachment to collectively shared moral concepts" and their contrast with anomic and fatalistic suicide "which are defined in terms of normative control" (1972:48-49, emphasis in original). Egoistic and altruistic suicides result from attachment to different values (either of individualism or collectivism, respectively); anomic and fatalistic suicides result from the extremes of social control.

Besides the interpretations deriving, directly or indirectly, from Parsons and Douglas, there is a third type. Stretching at least from Halbwachs (1930) to Marks (1974) there are those who have argued that anomie and egoism are indistinguishable empirically and/or conceptually, or that one is subsumed in the other. (See for examples Johnson, 1965, and the references in that paper; Gibbs and Martin, 1958; Sainsbury, 1955:22). A major advantage of our interpretation is that, by throwing some light on the relationship in Durkheim's mind between the two, it provides a standpoint from which to evaluate these arguments. Although Durkheim admitted that egoism and anomie are "usually found together" (1951:288), our interpretation enables us to show why he found it important to distinguish them analytically. One manifestation of Durkheim's homo duplex concept was his dichotomies, which he considered isomorphic, of social versus individual, moral rules versus sensual appetites, and concepts versus sensations (Lukes, 1971:196-201). When Durkheim wrote on the differences between egoistic and anomic suicides he cast his argument in terms of "reflective intelligence" and "emotion":

Suicides of both types suffer from what has been called the disease of the infinite. But the disease does not assume the same form in both cases. In one, reflective intelligence
is affected and immoderately overnourished; in the other, emotion is over-excited and freed from all restraint. In one, thought, by dint of falling back upon itself, has no object left; in the other, passion, no longer recognizing bounds, has no goal left. The former is lost in the infinity of dreams; the second in the infinity of desires (1951:287).

Here "reflective intelligence," "thought" and "dreams" are related to the social side (which must be directed) of the homo duplex, while "emotion," "passion," and "desires" are related to the biological side (which must be restrained) (see LaCapra, 1972:165-166). Without a clear understanding of this dual-aspect of the relation, in Durkheim's thought, between individual and society (regulation and integration) this passage seems a mere play on words, as, doubtless, it has appeared to many.

The relations between egoism and anomie are not simple.\(^6\) Besides their failure to understand the genesis of the distinction as we have described it above, commentators have been hampered by an apparent inconsistency in Durkheim's own thought on the matter and by his actual inconsistency in the use of terms. His concept of man required him to base the passions in the biological organism, but his treatment of anomic suicide, especially during sudden economic change, suggests to some that these passions were ultimately derived from society (see Nisbet, 1965:58). This inconsistency is an apparent one only; the solution is that although the passions are based in the organism, their satisfaction is felt (measured) by individuals by reference to social standards (1951:246-254). When these standards are not socially shared, they lose their restraining force and, consequently, individuals' passions are stimulated. Fast economic changes increase suicide "because they are crises, that is, disturbances of the collective order . . . the scale is upset; but a new scale cannot be immediately improvised" (1951:246, 253) (for a different interpretation, see Giddens 1971b:215). The terminological inconsistency has misled Douglas especially (1967:344-345) who failed to notice that, in his 1914 article on "The Dualism of Human Nature and Its Social Conditions," Durkheim used the term "egoism" to refer to the body/sensation side of the homo duplex (cf., Durkheim in Wolff 1960:388), in contrast to its use in Suicide where its referent is the social side. Thus "egoism" in Suicide connotes a condition resulting from the penetration of the individual by society while in the 1914 article it connotes a condition in which there is no such penetration (Giddens, 1971b:221, has noted the shift in terminology). His use of the 1914 article to explain individual/society relations in Suicide, without noting the change in terminology, is one reason why Douglas' explication (1967: Appendix I) is what he claimed Suicide to be: "Very confusing, even to the point of including contradictory theoretical arguments" (1967:13).

For Durkheim, "homo duplex" was a term descriptive of an ontological reality. The two parts of man were necessarily in conflict. (See the references in footnote 1.) Both regulation and integration were needed, and these could conceivably vary independently of each other, at least for some time. Thus

\(^6\) Even such a Durkheim scholar as Steven Lukes has changed his mind. In his 1967 article, "Alienation and Anomie," he agreed with Johnson's (1965) reduction of anomie and egoism to one (1967:159, n 14), but in his book on Durkheim he writes that Johnson argued "unsuccessfully" for this reduction (1973:213, n 4).
anomie and egoism are conceptually distinct. As causes of suicide they cause different people to kill themselves and in different ways, e.g., with different amounts of passion. Durkheim used religion, family situation (marital status and number of children), and the stability of political society as indices of the integration (direction) dimension (1951:152-216). Note that these index states of society. Regulation (repression) on the other hand is indexed by changes in states of society, e.g., economic booms or busts, the “crisis of widowhood,” and the number of divorces and separations (1951:241-276). The difference between these dimensions on the social level is that between being single and having just been suddenly widowed, or between being wealthy and having suddenly and unexpectedly become wealthy on the individual level.

Whether anomie and egoism are empirically distinct as social states, and whether their contributions to the total suicide rate are separable (analytically—there is never a pure type of suicide), are empirical questions. One approach to an answer would be a research project comparing suicide rates between two populations similar on one dimension but different on the other. Let us imagine an ideal research design (using Durkheim’s indices of integration and regulation). The integration dimension is the extent to which individuals are allowed to act and think for themselves and on their own apart from society. (Protestants and single people, for example, were less integrated than Catholics and married people; integration increased for all during political crises such as wars.) We could compare two populations with low integration (for illustrative purposes assume it comprises only single Protestants during a period of political stability) before and after one of them suffered a sudden large scale economic collapse, measured, for example, by the unemployment rate or the drop in real income. Alternatively we could study highly integrated groups, e.g., married Catholics during a war, and later compare the suicide rate among the recently widowed (i.e., the number who killed themselves shortly after being widowed) with the rate among the non-widowed. Assuming that all other relevant factors were held constant or randomized, we could argue that any increase in suicide due to the economic collapse in the first example or the crises of widowhood in the second would be due to a reduction in regulation without any change on the integration dimension. Difficulties in operationalizing “integration” and “regulation” are not proof that they are inseparable.

The interpretation of Suicide given above has many advantages over previous interpretations. By highlighting how the suicide typology was constructed it allows us a deeper understanding of its connections with, and implications for greater understanding of other aspects of Durkheim’s thought. Previous interpretations were unable to specify why these four particular types of suicide were important to Durkheim and seemed to assume that he pulled them out of the air. Dohrenwend could only suggest that:

. . . certain states of this “moral constitution” or “moral structure” approximate “pure types” which, in the extreme, constitute social conditions predisposing individuals to suicide. Durkheim singled out four such types: egoism, altruism, anomie and fatalism (1959:467-468).

An example of a society with low integration but high regulation would be one having what Durkheim called “the cult of the individual,” i.e., a society with institutionalized egoism.
Douglas labeled Durkheim's theory of suicide as a realist theory:

. . . i.e., an explanation of events in nature by the application of ideas that are not abstractions from other events, but, rather, ideas merely assumed, intuited, or derived from we know not where (1967:33).

We agree that Durkheim’s theory was realist in this sense. Where this paper disagrees with Douglas is in its claim that Durkheim derived his types of suicide not primarily from earlier literature on suicide, from creative literature (see Douglas, 1967:65), or from “we know not where,” but from his conception of *Homo Duplex*, and socialization. Poggi (1972:202), following Parsons in disregarding fatalism, in his discussion of Durkheim’s claims (1951:321ff) that the “norms” of egoism, altruism, and anomie exist to different degrees in every society, goes on to write that:

Since he arrives at these norms inductively, arguing from his previous classification of the “suicidogenic currents” (egoism, altruism, anomie), it would be rash to assume that in his view the types exhaust the class of universal norms; after all, the study of phenomena other than suicide might have led him to construct a different set of such norms (1972:202).

This argument no longer holds when we realize that Durkheim’s suicide typology derived from his *homo duplex* concept.

Our interpretation can be used to shed light on some general aspects of Durkheim’s thought and also to help resolve some issues disputed in the secondary literature. First, it provides us with a convenient “handle” to come to terms with the problem of distinguishing, analytically, the cultural, social, and personality systems and their interrelationships in Durkheim’s thought. Following Wallwork (see above) we can identify the directive component of the socialization with the cultural system and the repressive component with the social system (the values one is directed toward, on the one hand; the system of social control, on the other). Further, it enables us to see more clearly some parallels between Durkheim’s and Freud’s ideas and their convergence. As Parsons noted:

Durkheim, working in sociology, discovered essentially the same basic phenomenon of internalization and interpretation as did Freud in his study of the personality . . . (and as did) Charles Horton Cooley and George Herbert Mead (1960:143-144; see also Nisbet 1974: Chapter 3).

For him, as for Freud, the possibility of society (civilization) demanded the repression of the innate biologically based passions. For both there was as inherent conflict between the individual and society (see Coser, 1960:226-227; and Lukes, 1973:433-434). In Parsons’ view, this convergence on the idea of internalization is “one of the great landmarks in the development of modern social science” (1960:144). In *Suicide*, Durkheim devoted a full chapter (1951, Book 3, Chapter 6) to “The Individual Forms of the Different Types of Suicide,”

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7 These two aspects should be seen as distinct elements of the *conscience collective* which is maintained through interaction. The use of the term “culture” and “society” does not imply that the one refers to shared ideas or ideals and the other to interaction (see footnote 2); neither should “culture” be seen as hierarchically controlling society, as in Parsonsian theory, or *vice versa*. 

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which should suffice to refute the charge that he was uninterested in psychological issues. Pope showed that Durkheim “employed the concept of internalization from the beginning” (1973:414); Parsons had held that he “discovered” internalization only after or during the writing of Suicide. Though he doesn’t outline the process in detail, this chapter deals with the phenomena of internalization and the interpenetration of social, cultural, and personality systems, showing, for example, that anomic suicide, in the individual case, is characterized by irritation and disgust (see his “Actiological and Morphological Classification of the Social Types of Suicide,” 1951:293). More specifically our interpretation of Suicide and our formulation of the derivation of its suicide typology in socialization terms allows us to approach one problem in the sociology of suicide that Giddens considered “crucial” (1965a:524), that of the differential distribution in society of personalities prone to suicide. Personality is developed through the socialization process and, therefore, so also are suicide-prone personalities. Any sociological explanation of suicide rates must also account for the distribution of suicide-prone personalities. Durkheim’s theory, while seeming to do this, in fact does so only to a limited extent. His data deal almost exclusively with nineteenth-century Europe where undoubtedly only a narrow range of the possible types of socialization were represented. More serious, however, is his assumption that he knows what socialization implies in different groups; for example, he assumes he knows how socialization differs as between Catholics and Protestants, between the married and the unmarried, or between men and women (see Douglas, 1967:59).

Second, our interpretation can be related to the disagreement over whether Durkheim was a nominalist or a realist (see Nye and Ashworth, 1971). Following Alpert (1938:151ff), Wallwork (1972:16-26) has shown that Durkheim actually rejected both of these in favor of a mediating position that Wallwork call “relational social realism.” By this is meant:

... a conception of society which views a social system as a network of actual relations. These relations and the phenomena engendered by them are facts, albeit often non-material facts, which exist. These facts exist neither apart from individuals nor in any single individual taken in isolation, for they only exist in and among associated individuals (Wallwork, 1972:18; see also Pope, 1973 and Stark, 1962:237).

There are many passages in Suicide (e.g., 1951:210, 300, 307-308, 310, 319, 320) which illustrate this, but one in particular is worth quoting since it provides evidence also for the homo duplex conception and the nature of socialization we have described. Noting that the stability of suicide rates implies social forces external to the individual Durkheim notes that:

By definition, indeed, the (social states of consciousness) can reach none of us except from without, since they do not flow from our personal dispositions. Since they consist of elements foreign to us they express something other than ourselves. To be sure in so far as we are solidarity with the group and share its life, we are exposed to its influence; but so far as we have a distinct personality of our own we rebel against and try to restrain them. Since everyone leads this sort of double existence simultaneously, each of us has a double impulse. We are drawn in a social direction and tend to follow the inclinations of our own natures. So the rest of society weighs upon us as a restraint to our centrifugal tendencies, and we for our part share in this weight

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upon others for the purpose of neutralizing theirs. We ourselves undergo the pressure we help exert upon others (1951:318-319).

The above interpretation of the suicide typology is perfectly compatible and consistent with Durkheim's relational social realism as described by Wallwork (even allowing for the ambiguity noted in footnote 2 above).

Third, our interpretation allows for easy explanation of two of Durkheim's other ideas: the increasing suicide rate in the nineteenth century (which he accepted as true) and, second, the differences in the rates for different groups, for example, Catholics versus Protestants. Durkheim believed that suicide increased during the nineteenth century because of the weakening of the repressive or control capabilities of society associated with the change from mechanical to organic solidarity of the society. Similarly, he believed that anomie had become chronic in the business world with a consequent increase in anomic suicides. He seems to regard this increase as being mainly responsible for the increase in suicide through the century. Our division of the failure of the second component of the socialization process (direction toward social ends) into too "much" or too "little" integration of the individual in society is, I think, the distinction Durkheim had in mind when he distinguished, for example, between Catholic and Protestant groups. Protestants were allowed to think for themselves and act by themselves more than Catholics were—similarly with the unmarried as opposed to the married.8

Introducing his chapter on anomic suicide, Durkheim wrote that, "Society is not only something attracting the sentiments and activities of individuals with unequal force. It is also a power controlling them" (1951:241). Neyer (1960:43) had linked these two types of individual/society relations to the immanence and transcendence of society vis-à-vis the individual and went on, in a footnote (pp. 66-67) to outline an interpretation of Durkheim's typology of suicide which is quite similar to the one proposed in this paper. Nevertheless, unlike Douglas, he did not recognize the connection of the double relation between the individual and society, on the one hand, and the concept of homo duplex on the other. Likewise, Poggi (1971:257) failed to link the double relation, which he did note, to the homo duplex idea, and though both Lukes (1973) and LaCapra (1972) recognized the central importance in Durkheim's work of the homo duplex concept and its associated dichotomies, neither used it to explain the derivation of the suicide typology. In another suggestive footnote Neyer claimed that "this dual aspect of the relation between the individual and society recurs in all of Durkheim's thought, and is worthy of more attention than has been devoted to it" (1960:65-66). He cites, as examples, the distinction between awareness of duty and aspiration toward the good in Durkheim's discussion of moral philosophy, the constraint/spontaneity distinction in The Rules of Sociological Method, the "spirit of discipline" versus "devotion to social groups" in Moral Education, and, in Durkheim's writings on religion, the dis-

8 This illustrates the connection between Suicide and Durkheim's emphasis on the historical nature of man and society (cf., Durkheim in Wolff, 1960:429, or Giddens, 1972:252; also Bellah, 1959). Neither Durkheim's suicide typology nor our interpretation of it imply an ahistorical orientation on his part. Both integration and regulation in any society may change, conceivably, independently of each other, through history.
tinction between “awe” and “love of God” (desire for communion). Again, by identifying this dual relation of individual and society as basic to the typology of suicide, our interpretation provides evidence of a strand of Durkheim’s thought stretching from his early reviews (Giddens, 1970:190; 1971a:71) to the Elementary Forms of the Religious Life (1912).

Running like a red thread through Durkheim’s work and interpretations of it is the idea of homo duplex (see footnote 1). Some (Giddens, Neyer, Poggi) have noticed the dual relation between individual and society in different works or periods. Nevertheless, this dual link is not separate from, but is an aspect of, the same red thread. We have argued that the homo duplex idea and the dual link of individual to society, as used by Durkheim, implied each other. This is so because, for Durkheim, man was composed of two real and antagonistic parts. By seeing together these red threads we were able to understand one of the best known and least understood parts of Durkheim’s work—his suicide typology.

We have noted above that our interpretation supports Pope’s (1973) view that Durkheim had arrived at the idea of internalization much earlier than Parsons (1937) had claimed (Parsons, 1960:144, had already changed his views). Moreover, this paper supports Giddens’ position that Durkheim was already aware of many notions, especially of an idealist kind, that Parsons held, only appeared later (Giddens, 1971a:71; 1970:189-191; see also Douglas, 1967: 45, n 60). These notions included the recognition of the dual nature of the tie between the individual and society. Though these notions are “stated in a rudimentary way,” they show that Durkheim arrived at an idealist position much earlier than Parsons held. As Giddens (1970:189) said, what is not questioned is Parsons’ identification of the conflict between positivism and idealism in Durkheim’s work, but rather Parsons’ chronology of the stages in the development of Durkheim’s ideas, and therefore the utility of this chronology in understanding Durkheim’s work as a whole.

If a full understanding of Durkheim’s theory and its evolution requires a division of his life work into chronological stages, they will differ from those of Parsons (see Pope, 1973). The publication of “Individual and Collective Representations” in 1898 (Benoit-Smullyan, 1948:510; Taylor, 1956:152; Wallwork, 1972:53) or the Dreyfus affair around the same time (LaCapra, 1972:11) is often taken as a turning point. As Giddens has shown, however, many elements in his thought that were later developed were already present. Durkheim himself saw the first course he taught on religion, in 1895, as marking:

... a line of demarcation in the development, of my thought; so much so that all my previous researches had to be taken up again with renewed efforts in order to be placed in harmony with these new views (quoted in Giddens, 1970:190, n 81).

Suicide, his major work between this date and the date commonly taken as a major turning point in his career, is therefore of critical importance in any attempt to delimit stages in the development of his thought. We hope this paper has contributed toward this attempt.

9 The positivism/idealism conflict may actually be seen as another manifestation of the pervading Cartesian mind/matter antinomy which underlay the homo duplex conception (see LaCapra, 1972:10).
A final but very important advantage of our interpretation is that it permits us to undertake a critical evaluation of Durkheim's position, an evaluation which was not attempted in this paper but which is misguided, if not impossible, until one fully understands this position.

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