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# Emile Durkheim and C. G. Jung: Structuring a Transpersonal Sociology of Religion

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Religion is a prevalent theme in the works of both Emile Durkheim and C. G. Jung, who participated in a common intellectual milieu. A comparison of Durkheim's *collective consciousness* and Jung's *collective unconscious* reveals strikingly similar concepts. The components of these structures, collective representations and archetypes, illustrate interdependent sociological and psychological processes in the theorized creation of religious phenomena. An analysis of the constitutive elements in these processes offers a basis for structuring a transpersonal sociology of religion.

**Keywords:** *collective consciousness, collective unconscious, transpersonal, representationalism, collective representations, archetypes, social facts*

The works of Emile Durkheim and C. G. Jung and commentary upon their writing comprise a significant body of knowledge in sociology and psychology. Since both theorists deal with diverse topics, the intra- and inter-unifying significance of religion throughout their works does not immediately manifest itself. Yet religion is of paramount concern for both Durkheim and Jung (Pickering, 1984; Wehr, 1985/1987).

Religion, writes Durkheim (1893/1984), is an "outstanding form" (p. 227) of the *collective consciousness*.<sup>1</sup> The collective consciousness contains sacred religious beliefs, or collective representations, and binds societies together through publicly acknowledged symbols and rites. The sacred thus represents that which is socially acceptable in religion.

In counterpoint, Jung (1921/1974) writes that religion symbolizes an "inward movement of the libido into the unconscious" (para. 423). To forget the gods means to risk ignoring the archetypal forces of the *collective unconscious* (1928/1966, para. 163). Religion thus implies a "careful consideration' of unknown dangers and agencies" (para. 164). Acknowledgment of both conscious and unconscious elements becomes a means of psychological salvation, a private religious realization (1921/1974, para. 326).

The sociology of Durkheim and the psychology of Jung thus present respectively public and private approaches to religion. These approaches offer comprehensive and complementary systems as both

thinkers seek to explain the social and psychological manifestations of religion, Durkheim through the collective consciousness and collective representations, and Jung through the collective unconscious and the archetypes. Their systems contain striking structural similarities noted by only a few scholars (Guala, 1970; Meštrović, 1985, 1988c; Proff, 1953; Staude, 1976). To date no detailed textual analysis exists with which to substantiate the relationship between Durkheim's and Jung's ideas. This approach holds the potential for opening new theoretical applications in the sociology of religion.

In suggesting the broad outlines of a proposed synthesis, as well as its practical applications, I present here: 1) a literature review of scholars who have analyzed both Durkheim and Jung; 2) a discussion of Durkheim's and Jung's biographies and common intellectual milieu to reveal some significant socio-cultural affinities; 3) a comparative analysis of Durkheim's and Jung's theories, which show a remarkable but little-recognized congruence of religious thought stemming from the philosophy of Schopenhauer; and 4) a basis for structuring a transpersonal sociology of religion. "Transpersonal" refers to a simultaneously objective and subjective awareness and will be defined more fully later.

A major feature of the present analysis is an emphasis on the socio-cultural context in which Durkheim and Jung wrote. Intellectual concerns at the turn of the century focused on *representationalism* and on the concept of the unconscious (Meštrović, 1988c,

p. 94), often ignored in many analyses of Durkheim and Jung. The aim of this essay is to identify affinities in Durkheim's and Jung's approaches based on reading their works in proper historical context.

### The Work to Date

The full implications of the striking similarities between Durkheim and Jung have remained largely unacknowledged in both sociology and psychology because no thorough effort has been made to link their theories. Such an effort becomes the first step in elucidating a transpersonal approach. Meštrović (1988c), whose charge for a "reformation of sociology" (p. 17), dictates a synthesis of both objective and subjective realities, has provided a sound foundation for this effort. Progoff (1953), Guala (1970), and Staude (1976) have also examined the Durkheim-Jung connection.

Progoff (1953) wrote that Jung, indebted to the sociological concepts of Durkheim and Levy-Bruhl, adopted Durkheim's basic concept of the "collective representations" (p. 176). Progoff contributed to an understanding of the social nature of Jung's collective unconscious by recognizing that to Jung "the social is essentially the unconscious" (p. 163).

Guala (1970) offered an analysis of Jung's archetypes, Durkheim's collective representations, and Levi-Strauss's models and functions. While concluding that Durkheim and Jung are joined semantically, Guala observed that they remain apart "by the different levels of their reasoning" (p. 131). In ignoring the presence of the unconscious in Durkheim's work (as noted by Meštrović, 1984), Guala failed to perceive that the unconscious is an essential link between Durkheim and Jung.

In attempting to move from "depth psychology to depth sociology," Staude (1976, pp. 314-318) has claimed that to appreciate Jung's concern with the collective nature of both consciousness and the unconscious, one must be aware of his debts to Durkheim, Hubert, and the French sociological school. Staude believed that Jung's definition of the collective unconscious indicates a collective, transpersonal dimension in the individual psyche, a *subjective counterpart* to Durkheim's collective consciousness. The intricacies of the objective and the subjective may be more clearly understood through the word transpersonal, which I will discuss shortly. Finally, Guala made no reference to Progoff, nor did Staude to either Progoff or Guala.

The word transpersonal needs to be explained more fully. Following Wilber's (1984) terminology and

Meštrović's (1987) presentation of Marcel Mauss's "'total' social fact as a phenomenon that includes the sociological, psychological, and physiological dimensions . . . simultaneously" (p. 567), I suggest that a transpersonal perspective implies that religion should be experienced simultaneously in its social and psychological aspects, and that these aspects are not mutually exclusive. This perspective, superseding the limitations imposed by traditional sociological analyses, fulfills Wilber's proclamation (1984) that "a 'transpersonal sociology' is a discipline desperately awaiting birth" (p. 106).

The word transpersonal, in suggesting the validity of both objective and subjective forms of religious realization, moves beyond semantics; it implies simultaneous sociological and psychological, or exoteric and esoteric, awareness. We might even say transpersonal demands an *integrational imperative* in that all aspects of a religious experience must be brought to conscious awareness in order to be understood fully. While transpersonal is linked stylistically with the modern era, in actuality it contains much the same meaning as nineteenth-century *representationalism*.

### Representationalism and Religion

Representationalism suggests that the human mind can apprehend objects only through ideas which represent those objects (Flew, 1984, p. 305; Meštrović, 1988c). Schopenhauer (1818/1969) promoted the use of this concept and probably provided a common intellectual foundation for Durkheim's explicit and Jung's implicit concepts of *homo duplex* (Meštrović, 1985, 1988a, 1988b, 1988c, 1989a, 1989b), as well as for Durkheim's (1897/1951) and Jung's (1921/1974) descriptions of psychological types.<sup>2</sup>

Representationalism allowed Durkheim to eschew the extremes of the long-standing object-subject distinction through his stated reconciliation of classical empiricism and apriorism (Durkheim, 1912/1965, p. 31; Meštrović, 1985, 1989b, p. 263). Durkheim and his followers labeled their sociology *renovated rationalism*, the implications of which are central to Durkheim's explanation of religious phenomena.

Durkheim (1897/1951) writes, "Religion is in a word the system of symbols by means of which society becomes conscious of itself; it is the characteristic way of thinking of collective existence" (p. 312). Later he amplifies, "At bottom, the concept of totality, that of society and that of divinity are very probably only different aspects of the same notion" (1912/1965, p. 490).

Thus a Durkheimian interpretation of symbols would include not only the objective manifestation, a totem for example, but also the subjective realization that a totem reflects a society's consciousness of itself as an entity *sui generis* (pp. 235-237).

With this discussion, then, we can begin to appreciate the idea that the sociological aspect of a transpersonal approach also contains its opposite, a psychological awareness. To ignore the presence of opposites, the objective and subjective or the seen and the unseen, within the single reality—the totem—indicates a one-dimensional religious understanding.

Similarly, Jung's (1934/1980) "transcendent function" (para. 524) implies use of representationalism, again a mediation of the object-subject distinction. The transcendent function, in bridging the gulf between conscious and unconscious functions, uses both rational (the real or objective) and irrational (the imaginary or subjective) categories. It manifests itself in the appearance of symbols, which often possess religious significance. Jung (1938/1969) perceived the union of opposites as a form of psychological salvation, an incarnation of the divine in the human: "The self, as a totality, is . . . indistinguishable from a God-image" (para. 232-233). This concept allows us to employ the psychological aspect, the unconscious or subjective, of a transpersonal approach while also realizing the presence of its opposite, a sociological or conscious awareness.

Thus, Jung's transcendent function mediates conscious and unconscious religious factors within the psyche, and similarly, Durkheim's renovated rationalism mediates conscious and unconscious religious factors within society. Considered simultaneously, Durkheim's and Jung's approaches reveal the necessity of a transpersonal approach to religion: Without it, to paraphrase the Gospel according to Matthew, we will see without seeing, hear without hearing.

An examination of Durkheim's and Jung's focus upon religion through the relevant literature makes clearer their roles in developing a transpersonal sociology of religion. I am by no means able to summarize here the full extent of their treatment of religion, but I will attempt to suggest avenues for future investigations. The important point is that both Durkheim and Jung share *fin de siècle* philosophical assumptions derived, directly or indirectly, from Schopenhauer. Because their understandings of human nature and representationalism have not been apprehended in the socio-cultural context

in which they wrote, the full extent of their intellectual affinities has been underappreciated. To understand the role of religion in their works, we must exercise, as Mills (1959) demands, our "sociological imagination [which] enables us to grasp history and biography and the relations between the two within society" (p. 6).

### **The Religious and Intellectual Milieux**

Despite being the sons of clergy, both Durkheim, born in France in 1857, and Jung, born in Switzerland in 1875, appeared bored and repelled by formal religion (Pickering, 1984; Wehr, 1985/1987). Durkheim came to emphasize religion's moral benefits for society, while Jung turned inward to explore numinous events, or those having some mystical or holy significance. Durkheim (1912/1965) wrote:

This division of the world into two domains, the one containing all that is sacred, the other all that is profane, is the distinctive trait of religious thought; the beliefs, myths, dogmas and legends are either representations or systems of representations which express the nature of sacred things. (p. 52)

Thus Durkheim stresses the importance of the concept of representation: Representations signify the underlying reality at the same time that they are a "reality" (subjectively) in their own right. For Durkheim, this reality is the nature *sui generis* of a religious collective consciousness.

Jung (1938/1969) wrote:

To many people it may seem strange that a doctor with a scientific training should interest himself in the Trinity at all. But anyone who has experienced how closely and meaningfully these representations collectives are bound up with the weal and woe of the human soul will readily understand that the central symbol of Christianity must have, above all else, a psychological meaning. (para. 171)

Acknowledgment of both conscious and unconscious elements within each person thus becomes a means of psychological salvation, a private religious realization (Jung, 1921/1974, para. 326). The above passages are not isolated quotations about religion but illustrate continuous themes that interested Durkheim and Jung.

With regard to Durkheim, Pickering (1984) has written, "The alleged mysticism which was said to have engulfed his concept of society and his approach to collective representations had associated with them

mysterious qualities which were not far removed from the divine” (p. 8). Meštrović (1988c) believes that Durkheim was always concerned with religion. Wehr (1985/1987) has written that, including *Psychological Types*, almost all of Jung’s works in the second half of his life featured religion: “Jung’s object, in fact, was nothing less than to build a spiritual bridge between traditional dogma and immediate experience” (p. 299).

Durkheim thus focused his attention upon religion as manifested in social experience, while Jung emphasized religion as revealed by the inner world of the psyche. Meštrović (1984) has countered the mid-twentieth-century implication that Durkheim had no use for psychology, observing that Durkheim (1924/1974) stated unequivocally, “Collective psychology is sociology” (p. 34). At the Ecole Normale Supérieure in Paris, Durkheim found among his classmates, characterized as the best and brightest of a generation (Lukes, 1972, pp. 44-45), the psychologist Pierre Janet. This association with Janet was one of many such contacts, and it led to interesting connections with Freud’s work.

Bellah (1973) has called attention to “significant parallels with Freud, since Durkheim was trying to understand the unconscious sources of social existence as Freud was the unconscious sources of personal existence” (p. liv). Staude (1976) has discussed the “progressive development in the theory of the unconscious from Freud, through Jung, to Levi-Strauss” (p. 334). Meštrović (1982, 1988a, p. 171, 1988b, p. 70, 1988c, p. 49) has carefully detailed Freud’s many references to Durkheim and his followers. Even more significantly, Meštrović (1984) has substantiated the infrequently recognized role of the unconscious in Durkheim’s concepts. Jones (1986) has also pointed out that between 1897 and 1898, Durkheim evinced “increased interest in the psychology of the unconscious” (p. 617). Thus Durkheim’s use of the unconscious appears to be a relatively recent “discovery,” while Freud’s use of the unconscious has been commonplace information since he first published.

Both Freud, Jung’s mentor, and Janet studied under Jean Paul Charcot, a prominent neurologist at the Salpêtrière Hospital in Paris, and both were influenced by his work on the psychology of neurotic states.<sup>3</sup> Meštrović has cited Janet as an important conduit of Schopenhauerian philosophy into French psychology. Indeed, Meštrović (1982, 1988a, 1988b, 1988c, 1989a, 1989b) places Freud and Durkheim in the stream of Schopenhauer’s philosophy. Jung too acknowledged a

debt to Schopenhauer as evidenced by his numerous citations to the philosopher (Forryan & Glover, 1979, pp. 598-599; Staude 1976, p. 318).

Another link between Durkheim and Jung is found in the work of Levy-Bruhl, the anthropologist. Lukes (1972, p. 294) has noted that Durkheim corresponded with Levy-Bruhl. Meštrović (1988c) writes that Levy-Bruhl, “an intimate friend of both Durkheim and Jung (according to Levy-Bruhl’s granddaughter), may have cross-fertilized several schools in Europe at the time” (p. 99). Jung (1934/1980, para. 5) acknowledged that his concept of archetypes and Levy-Bruhl’s *representations collectives* were one and the same.

All of these personal and intellectual connections suggest that commonalities of thought abounded around the fin de siècle and reveal Durkheim’s and Jung’s theoretical interdependence in describing religious phenomena. Religion, therefore, appears highly significant for both Durkheim and Jung in their private and public lives, in the individual and collective representations that influenced their work. This acknowledgment completes another step in the process of understanding the development of a transpersonal sociology of religion.<sup>4</sup> Yet we must consider another related factor, that of translation, in dealing with interpretations of Durkheim’s ideas.

#### The Translation Factor

Durkheim wrote in French, Jung in German. Controversy over translation has not yet surfaced with Jung as it has with Durkheim. Scholars discussing Durkheim’s conscience collective must address the translation factor: The single French word *conscience* translates into English either as “conscience” or as “consciousness.” Lalande (1928), who moved in the same circles as Durkheim, compiled a dictionary of the then-current usage of philosophical terms. He (pp. 127-128) offered first a psychological meaning for conscience and found it akin to the German words *Bewusstsein* and *Selbstbewusstsein*, and to the English word consciousness. Second, he listed a moral meaning, akin to the German word *Gewissen* and to the English word “conscience.”

Thus some scholars (e.g., Meštrović, 1985) have chosen the original French phrase. Others (e.g., Halls, as cited in Durkheim, 1895/1982) have used the English word consciousness, and still others (e.g., Lukes 1972), conscience. Some (e.g., Traugott, 1978) have even alternated between the two English words, depending upon their interpretation of the particular section.



Bohannon wrote that no one used ambiguity with greater effect than did Durkheim (Wolff, 1960, p. 78). Lukes (1972) cited five different ways in which Durkheim used the word “society” (p. 21). Is it possible that Durkheim’s thought holds a flexibility and a beauty through this very ambiguity? Perhaps sociology, having produced, as Mills (1959) observed, the extremes of grand theory and abstracted empiricism, has now matured enough to find the balance between these polarities of the sociological continuum.

I suggest that a Jungian reading of Durkheim, and a Durkheimian reading of Jung, promotes this balance and provides yet another way to apply a transpersonal perspective through intellectual flexibility; in essence, we can overlay one approach while reading another. To facilitate this process further, I will now explore Durkheim’s collective consciousness and Jung’s collective unconscious.

### **The Collective Consciousness and the Collective Unconscious**

Jung is well known for his work on the unconscious, but few scholars have acknowledged the presence of the unconscious within Durkheim’s work, as noted earlier. Although Durkheim (1924/1974) referred to sociology as *collective psychology*, the psychological implications have been largely ignored by sociologists. Likewise, the sociological implications of Jung’s work have been neglected by psychologists. Collins (1988a) has used Staude’s explication of Jung’s theory to explain life transitions, but in general social scientists remain unaware of Jung’s relevance in understanding Durkheim’s explanation of religion, as manifested by the collective consciousness.

Let us turn first to the definitions used by the authors themselves. Durkheim (1893/1984) characterized the collective consciousness thus:

The totality of beliefs and sentiments common to the average members of a society forms a determinate system with a life of its own. By definition, it is diffused over society as a whole. . . . It does not change with every generation but, on the contrary, links successive generations to one another. . . . It is the psychological type of society. (pp. 38-39)

For Jung (1934/1980), the collective unconscious is a “psychic system of a collective, universal, and impersonal nature which is identical in all individuals. This collective unconscious does not develop individually

but is inherited. It consists of pre-existent forms, the archetypes” (para. 90).

The collective consciousness appears to represent society, but as Durkheim points out, it is only a *representation*, or a perception, of the totality of society. Its unconscious aspects remain hidden, while its conscious, social aspects appear more obvious in such social facts as laws, statistics, and religious beliefs. As Meštrović (1984) has explained, Durkheim repeatedly emphasized, especially through reference to Janet, the role of unconscious mental factors.

Janet’s influence appears obvious in Jung’s formulation of the collective unconscious (e.g., Jung, 1934/1980, para. 490). Although the collective unconscious is hidden from consciousness, it represents the totality of the psyche. The collective unconscious manifests itself in dreams, symbols, and behavior that contain identifiable archetypes or primordial images. These images contributed to the ancient mythologies, which in time became part of many religious systems. To understand more precisely how the collective consciousness and the collective unconscious function, we must turn to their respective components, the collective representations and the archetypes.

### **Collective Representation and Archetypes**

By turning to the concepts of collective representations and archetypes, we retrace the steps followed by both Durkheim and Jung, who first described the overall structures, the collective consciousness and the collective unconscious, and then the respective components within the structures. Like the collective consciousness and the collective unconscious, Durkheim’s collective representations and Jung’s archetypes possess both sociological and psychological aspects as well as the common element of the unconscious.

Durkheim’s (1895/1964) first methodological rule suggests that we “treat social facts as things” (p. 14). In other words, as Pickering (1984, p. 153, p. 224) has noted, the sacred as social fact is a thing-in-itself, but it always appears as a representation symbolizing an underlying reality. Durkheim (1895/1964) wrote, “We must, therefore, consider social phenomena in themselves as distinct from the consciously formed representations of them in the mind” (p. 28). He noted that Janet proved “that many acts, while bearing all the signs of being conscious, are not in fact so” (Durkheim, 1924/1974, p. 20). Acts are thus both conscious and unconscious. Meštrović (1984) has noted, “Durkheim regarded

social facts as a type of collective representation whose reality eludes the consciousness of agents, witnesses, and society itself” (p. 268). What indeed are collective representations, how are they related to archetypes, and why is a knowledge of both essential to a transpersonal sociology of religion?

In exploring the concepts of collective representations and archetypes, we may first assume that the unconscious plays a key role. Ambiguity remains an ever-present factor, since we can never fully know another’s motives or even our own. We may observe the manifestations of the unconscious, as Durkheim (1895/1964) pointed out, through social facts, or as Jung (1921/1974, para. 814-829) pointed out, through the process of symbol-formation. Second, we can examine the words that Durkheim and Jung used to describe collective representations and archetypes. Consider, for example, Durkheim’s (1924/1974) statement that representations are “partially autonomous realities with . . . the power to attract and repel each other” (p. 31). Collective representations are thus characterized by a synthetic process. This process, embodying the psycho-sociological aspect of the transpersonal, creates *sui generis* social forces from the association of private sentiments (p. 26).

As Durkheim (1912/1965, p. 25, p. 94) later noted, mythologies provide a source of religious beliefs, or representations, which leave “an indelible trace” and which illustrate the most fundamental and collective aspects of a society. He identified these collective representations as:

the result of an immense cooperation, which stretches out not only into space but into time as well: to make them a multitude of minds have associated, united and combined their ideas and sentiments; for them, long generations have accumulated their experience and their knowledge. (p. 29)

This accumulated knowledge resulting in religious collective representations is also implicit in Jung’s description of archetypes. Compare Durkheim’s statement with Jung’s (1961/1965) description:

Archetypal statements are based upon instinctive preconditions. . . . They have always been part of the world scene—representations collectives, as Levy Bruhl rightly called them. . . . Practical consideration of these processes is the essence of religion, insofar

as religion can be approached from a psychological point of view. (para. 353)

Jung (1912/1956) further stated, “It is a psychological fact that the archetype can seize hold of the ego and compel it to act as the archetype wills” (para. 101). Commonality with Durkheim seems obvious, as both describe a similar phenomenon. Jung (1928/1966) echoed Durkheim’s description of the synthetic process of forming collective representations when he stated that the symbols of the collective unconscious, to be understood on an individual level, must be “subjected to a synthetic mode of treatment” (para. 122).

Specifically, the synthetic mode of treatment requires the opposing states of the psyche to “face one another in the fullest conscious opposition . . . while the ego is forced to acknowledge its absolute participation in both” (Jung, 1921/1974, para. 824). Such work activates the “transcendent function” (para. 825), which brings about a middle ground where the opposites can be united. Since the psyche contains the constant dynamic of tension between opposites, their “union” signifies conscious awareness, inasmuch as possible, of unconscious material. This description clearly illustrates the social-psychological aspects of a transpersonal perspective.

Jung’s description of psychological facts resembles Durkheim’s social facts or collective representations (see Meštrović, 1988c, p. 95, for an elaboration of the unconscious within social facts). Durkheim (1924/1974), in discussing the basis for collective representations, wrote that psychic phenomena “make themselves apparent by their characteristic signs of . . . hesitation [and] tentativeness” (p. 20). His words bear an uncanny resemblance to those of Jung (1938/1969), who stated that unconscious factors, or archetypes, can cause reactions to be “delayed, altered, suppressed, or replaced by autonomous intruders” (para. 21). Both collective representations and archetypes contain unconscious factors so that they can never be known in entirety to humans. Both exert a compulsion upon humans and affect behavior in bizarre ways.

Further explanation lies in Jung’s (1928/1966) suggestion that the self prefigures the “God within us,” since the self represents a psychological concept expressing an unknowable essence which can “thwart our will . . . obsess our consciousness . . . and . . . influence our moods and action” (para. 400). Jung

echoes Durkheim's emphasis on the divine as social necessity by admonishing us not to leave out the divine when considering autonomous contents, since the divine is a psychological necessity. By affixing the attribute "divine" to the workings of autonomous contents, we are admitting their relatively superior force (para. 403).

In tracing the historical usage of the concept of archetypes, Jung (1934/1980, para. 5, para. 89) described archetypes as "universal images that have existed since the remotest times" similar to Platonic forms. He cited Levy-Bruhl's representations collectives, as well as Hubert's and Mauss's *categories of the imagination*. In addition, he listed Usener's *unconscious thinking*, Bastian's *elementary ideas*, Kant's *doctrine of categories*, St. Augustine's *ideae principales*, and Philo Judaeus's and Irenaeus's *Imago Dei* (God-image). The *Corpus Hermeticum's* God is *archetypal light*. Jung also observed that the familiar characters in fairy tales, such as the witch or the trickster, represent archetypes. Thus Durkheim's collective representations and Jung's archetypes appear to possess a similar conceptual foundation. Although Durkheim's use of collective representations has generally been dropped in favor of "social facts," we must remember that the category of collective representations subsumes social facts, including their psychological, subjective dimension (Meštrović, 1985).

Collective representations manifest themselves especially in religions and in mythologies containing "vast systems of representations" which "far from being engraven through all eternity upon the mental constitution of men . . . depend, at least in part, upon factors that are historical and consequently social" (Durkheim, 1912/1965, p. 25). Durkheim's collective representations appear to have their origins in distant time, but because of their synthetic nature and ability to form and reform, specific collective representations exert a time-limited effect upon humans. Yet this effect may exhibit great power, a power in part due to unconscious factors.

Again, let us remember that collective representations, while unfamiliar to modern day sociologists, was a commonplace term in fin de siècle society (Janik & Toulmin, 1973; Meštrović, 1985). Jung (1934/1980) explained that collective representations, described by Levy-Bruhl in primitive tribal lore, have been modified from unconscious to "conscious formulae . . . generally in the form of esoteric teaching. This last is a typical means of expression for the transmission

of collective contents originally derived from the unconscious" (para. 5). As with Durkheim, ambiguity appears in this statement as we attempt to determine the similarities between Jung's archetypes and Durkheim's collective representations.

Through the preceding comparative analysis, I conclude that Durkheim and Jung are indeed describing the same process, and that through acknowledgement of the similarity, we can complete yet another step in analyzing religion from a transpersonal perspective.

#### **Toward a Transpersonal Sociology of Religion**

For Durkheim, religion revealed the organization of society through the collective consciousness and the collective representations, which together provide social organization and enable society to become aware of itself. Analogously, religion for Jung revealed the organization of the self through the collective unconscious and the archetypes, which together provide self-organization and enable the self to become aware of its psychological totality. With this brief review, I am ready to suggest directions for a transpersonal sociology of religion.

Transpersonal, as defined earlier, addresses the ambiguities in both Durkheim's and Jung's concepts of religious phenomena. In so doing, it incorporates traditional sociological analysis within a framework that recognizes the validity of unconscious factors. We still have difficulty today escaping from an overly rationalistic mind-set stemming from the Enlightenment. Meštrović (1984), for example, has written that the positivistic tradition has neglected Durkheim's use of the unconscious. Yet as Meštrović (1988c, p. 77) has clearly demonstrated, the unconscious cannot be divorced from scientific endeavors.

Perhaps transpersonal aptly fits a description of religious phenomena in a post-Enlightenment era, as we begin to incorporate subjective ways of knowing into the objective, positivistic tradition. In other words, transpersonal suggests a methodology by which unconscious factors may be studied simultaneously as psychological and social facts. Ideally, transpersonal could signify a new type of "enlightened" consciousness by suggesting a synthesis of what are usually considered antithetical elements—Durkheim's sociology and Jung's psychology—through awareness of the psychological aspects of the collective consciousness and of the sociological aspects of the collective unconscious.

A possible origin of the seemingly antithetical relationship between social and psychological facts lies



within two Latin roots of the word “religion.” Rather than being an abstruse exercise, these etymologies highlight the underlying unity behind the surface differences in Durkheim’s sociological and Jung’s psychological approaches to religion and, in so doing, help to structure a transpersonal perspective.

The early Christian Fathers’ emphasis upon the binding nature of religion (Jung, 1938/1969, para. 982) appears to reflect Durkheim’s concern with the socially binding nature of religious rites and, as Meštrović (1988c) has outlined, the obligatory morality that Durkheim’s vision of religion implies. This meaning is exemplified in *religare*, the preferred primitive root of religion, which carries the connotation of “obligation” (Lewis & Short, 1879/1975, p. 1556) or “binding” (Cosier 1977, p. 138). This meaning appears to capture the essence of many contemporary sociological approaches to religion which provide an objective description of religious participation.

In contrast, let us examine the word religion from Jung’s perspective. Jung emphasized reverence and fear of archetypal religious forces operating on an intuitive level beyond the five senses. This meaning is embodied in *religio*, a “reverence for God (the gods), the fear of God, connected with a careful pondering of divine things” (Berger, 1969, p. 27; Lewis & Short, 1879/1975). Jung (1938/1969) added that *religio* means “a careful observation and taking account of . . . the numinous” (para. 982). A transpersonal approach thus offers the possibility of a reconciliation between what many people believe to be mutually exclusive forms of religion, shown in part by Luckmann’s (1967) *invisible* or *private* religion (akin to *religio*), which seeks to dissociate itself from public church organization (akin to *religare*). We might even identify the transpersonal process as a divine dialectic which synthesizes these forms of religion.

As we continue to transcend the strictly sociological level of analysis, a Durkheimian-Jungian consideration of symbols further develops the transpersonal perspective. In recalling the previously mentioned example of Durkheim’s *totem*, let us substitute the cross for the totem. The cross appears as a visible symbol of the collective consciousness to a community of worshippers. The visible symbol is an objective manifestation, but it also represents within each worshipper a subjective realization of the group’s consciousness of itself. This realization is emancipatory

in that both the objective and subjective natures of the cross are understood simultaneously and that such understanding demonstrates that the objective and subjective are not mutually exclusive.<sup>5</sup>

Jung (1921/1974) described the opposition of the psychological functions of sensation/intuition and thinking/feeling as comprising the core of the psyche, a symbolic cross. He (1946/1969, para. 523) saw the psyche as literally at “cross purposes” with itself by virtue of the struggle of these “warring” functions. The four functions exist in consciousness as well as in the unconscious, depending on the preferential hierarchy in each individual psyche. The two lesser-preferred functions become part of one’s shadow, the shadow being an archetype of the collective unconscious (Jung, 1934/1980, para. 44). Jung (1946/1969) concluded, “The cross as a form of suffering expresses psychic reality” (para. 523). The anguish of coming to terms with opposing functions ultimately reconciles them by bringing them to conscious awareness. Literally, the ego is crucified and then resurrected to psychological wholeness (Jung, 1955/1984, para. 1664).

As with a Durkheimian interpretation of the cross, the objective (the conscious psychological functions) struggles with the subjective (the unconscious psychological functions) in order that reconciliation take place. This reconciliation resembles that achieved by Durkheim’s renovated rationalism and Jung’s analytic psychology with each theorist’s emphasis on empirical as well as intuitive data. Thus a transpersonal approach unifies both the sociological objective and subjective and the psychological objective and subjective.

This approach will be the direction of my future research as I attempt to extend, through a focus on religion, Durkheim’s (1950/1957) search for a science of moral facts. Toward this goal I shall investigate a possible common philosophical heritage for both sociology and modern Christian mysticism through several theoretical treatments of perception (e.g., Jung’s distinction between intuition and sensation).

The preceding examples suggest the possibility of fruitful research not only in the sociology of religion but also in the larger body of sociological theory when the latter may involve religious considerations. I shall briefly mention two ideas. First, in the sociology of religion a transpersonal perspective could extend the focus of the comparative method by adding the more micro component of collective representations and

archetypes to the usual macro approach. The macro approach, rather than employing only the traditional structural analysis, would include the collective consciousness and the collective unconscious.

Use of a transpersonal comparative methodology might reveal as yet unrecognized connections between Western religions, traditionally more outwardly or sociologically focused, and Eastern religions, traditionally more inwardly or psychologically focused. This analysis, through inclusion of unconscious factors, would transcend the frequently one-dimensional or positivistic approach of the functionalist, conflict, and interactionist perspectives.

Second, the continuing discussion over macro-micro issues provides an arena for theoretical applications of a Durkheimian-Jungian approach. Although Collins (1988b) has repeated the standard, anti-psychological interpretations of Durkheim, he nevertheless works with a conciliatory spirit to resolve differences between macro- and micro-sociological views. The incorporation of a Durkheimian-Jungian framework in the macro-micro debate could reveal artificially constructed boundaries designed, albeit unconsciously, to buttress a researcher's theoretical position. These boundaries could be exposed by Durkheim's collective consciousness, a macro entity containing a micro entity, the collective representations, and by Jung's collective unconscious, a macro entity containing a micro entity, the archetypes. In addition, a Durkheimian-Jungian approach could strengthen Collins's (1988b) *meso* theories (e.g., network analysis and organizational theory applied to religious factors), which articulate his proposed rapprochement between macro and micro issues.

In summary, Durkheim's collective consciousness and collective representations reveal the social manifestations of religion with psychological implications. Jung's archetypes and collective unconscious reveal the psychological manifestations of religion with social implications. Thus the structuring of a transpersonal sociology of religion suggests a synthesis of Durkheim's and Jung's own individual syntheses. It provides a whole greater than the sum of its parts and the beginnings of a new approach to which others may contribute their ideas.

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### Notes

1. Durkheimian scholars differ on the translation of the French phrase conscience collective. I have chosen collective consciousness to indicate both moral and perceptual meanings.
2. In *Suicide* (1897/1951) and in other works, Durkheim describes psychological counterparts to his social categories. His nephew and collaborator, Marcel Mauss, argued that Durkheimian sociology presupposes a psychology, particularly the psychologies of Wilhelm Wundt in Germany and Theodule Ribot in France. In turn, both Wundt and Ribot were heavily influenced by Schopenhauer (Meštrović, 1988c, p. 48). Staude (1976, p. 316) refers to Jung's "teacher" Schopenhauer.
3. Janet developed the concept of the abaissement du niveau mental, a lowering of the mental level. The concept found its way into 12 of Jung's books (Forryan & Glover, 1979, p. 3). This was no coincidence, since Janet was Jung's supervisor when Jung interned at the Salpêtrière in 1904-05.
4. The aforementioned theoretical interdependence is related to and promotes an understanding of the applicability of critical theory, particularly Habermas's (1968/1971) concept of emancipatory interest, as briefly discussed later in this paper.
5. This approach also enhances some versions of postmodern social philosophy, in particular, Habermas's work in critical theory. Critical theory has its roots in the so-called Frankfurt School and draws largely upon Marx and Freud (Held, 1980). A member of the "second generation" of critical theorists, Habermas (1968/1971) built upon their foundations. He developed a cognitive emancipatory interest to show that "the self-formative process . . . depends on the contingent conditions of both subjective and objective nature" (p. 210). Analysis of self-realization uses subjective socialization experiences as well as objective "material exchange" communications. Through emphasis on emancipation, a deepening of the traditional sociological approach of "looking behind the scenes," critical theory thus moves closer to a transpersonal perspective.

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