DURKHEIM: THE GOAL OF EDUCATION IN A DEMOCRATIC STATE IS AUTONOMY

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The world is in crisis: Ecologically, financially, and politically. For Émile Durkheim (1858-1917), however, the diagnosis of a societal situation as pathological should not make us just wait for the solution simply to happen by the grace of God, the general equilibrium or the logic of history behind our backs, be it ideal or material. Durkheim is a modern democratic republican, who believes social reality to be the outcome of human activity, and a diagnosis of the pathologies of capitalism must therefore include ideas for a cure. Human beings can cure social diseases, since society is a political reality, which can be different, as already Aristotle made clear.1

According to Durkheim the current social disease is partly moral, both in relation to society and to the individual, and part of the cure is therefore education, or to be more specific, Moral Education,2 L’éducation morale,3 which in 1925 became the posthumous title of a collection of Durkheim’s lectures. In these lectures his aim was precisely to discuss the educational principles and practices, which were necessary to cope with the challenges of a modernity, which gets its main ideological momentum from enlightenment, i.e. science and rationality, and these are as relevant today as when they were written more than one hundred years ago.4

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For Durkheim morality is thus not primarily an individual phenomenon, actually quite the contrary. Morality must first be understood at the societal level, and that brings discussions of morality and education in close contact with politics and the challenges from the dynamics of capitalist economy. These political challenges and the proposed answers are dealt with in another collection of lectures, posthumously edited and published in 1950 as *Leçons de sociologie,* which in English has become *Professional Ethics and Civic Morals.* Here we find his arguments for a republican democracy and the ideals of a modern state, and this article will sketch the logic that connects Durkheim’s proposals for moral education with his political philosophy.

1. **To Moralize Economy and Cure Society We Need a State**

To Durkheim the most advanced societies in the beginning of the 20th century are modern societies, and they are in crisis, a crisis that is to be conceived of in terms of both economy and morality. His point is that since early enlightenment in the 18th century economy has developed from a secondary social function to the primary function in society. This becomes a problem to modern society, since contrary to a lot of other social roles and professions, occupation within economy, i.e. trade, industry, entrepreneurship, etc., does not encourage the development of strong moral virtues, values and ideals. To Durkheim the amorality of economic life therefore becomes a public danger to society. Liberating economy means that a still larger part of human life is lived without or beyond morality, and the result will eventually be a demoralization of society. To Durkheim the answer is to moralize the economy, and that means to regulate it. This is the only way to make sure that economic activities are organized collectively and rationally, conducted according to rules determining rights as well as duties, detailed and concisely, and not just improvised according to individual whims.

To moralize economy thus means to accept a regulation of economy by something, we would normally call a state. As a good Aristotelian, Durkheim thinks that human beings always live in groups. These groups can be more or less organized, but they are all particular and real in the strongest sense, since they are constituted by people, who have things in

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7 *Leçons*: 50.
8 *Ibid.*: 51.
9 *Ibid.*: 52.
common, things which are part of their common consciousness, that is, common representations or common ideas.\textsuperscript{10} In a global perspective humanity as such is therefore neither a group nor a society. For Durkheim the highest possible human organisation must be thought of as within a particular society, and in a descriptive perspective the most highly organized human group is the modern state.\textsuperscript{11} The state is characterized by being a political society, which means a society composed of various secondary groups such as those mentioned and families, professions, local communities, castes, etc.\textsuperscript{12} Such a political society can also be composed of other political societies, and one can therefore have a continuity or better, a hierarchy of political societies, which means that what is considered a state can actually be subordinate to higher political society,\textsuperscript{13} as for instance is the case today in the USA and the EU.

In one sense the state is thus itself a political society. Durkheim, however, also thinks of the state as a special function within a society, namely the organ for societal thinking, deliberation and decision. Durkheim’s idea is that the state in this sense should be separated from society in order to think and decide for society. The state should develop the representations common to society and change the diffuse common consciousness into a clear self-consciousness of the society in question, making thereby society aware of its causes and goals. To accomplish this Hegelian task the state constitutes organs for deliberation, namely councils, commissions, parliaments, where it can develop the representations most valuable for society. The state then is an organ for social deliberation, which is precisely not just speculative, but practical in its ambitions, namely to govern the collective behaviour of society.

It is important here to underline that the state thus conceived is neither the monopoly of power, nor the apparatus which serve to hold the population in order. The state is thus not the executive power,\textsuperscript{14} and neither is it the judicial power. According to Durkheim both the legal system and the army are to be considered secondary groups in relation to the state thus conceived.\textsuperscript{15} Since Durkheim is a scholar of Montesquieu,\textsuperscript{16} he

\begin{thebibliography}{10}
\bibitem{Léducation} L’éducation: 113-15.
\bibitem{Leçons} Leçons: 79-81.
\bibitem{Ibid} \textit{Ibid}.: 84.
\bibitem{Ibid} \textit{Ibid}.: 87.
\bibitem{Ibid} \textit{Ibid}.: 85.
\end{thebibliography}
must be supposed to be familiar with the separation of powers recommended by the latter. Claiming that the state is neither a judicial nor an executive power thus amounts to saying that the state ought to be the legislative power. The state thinks, decides and communicates its decisions by issuing orders to the executive powers, which then take action.17 The state is a society in itself and as such it is an organ for authority, or better: an agent for sovereign authority.18 As an authority, however, the state is not necessarily authoritarian. On the contrary it can be both valuable and desirable for its citizens.

2. THE BIGGER THE STATE THE GREATER THE FREEDOM

This is the basic structure of the state that is supposed to moralize the economy and cure the modern society of its current illness. The societal necessity of a state thus conceived can of course vary. Durkheim notes the difference between states at peace and states at war, where the extent of control and authority is much bigger in the latter than in the former. In this case the functions of the state multiply, they become more important, and Durkheim notes that just as the human brain can be developed so can the social. What is interesting is that this growth is not just temporary and limited to times of war; actually such a development has been constant up through human history.19 For a classical liberalist big government – i.e. the state – is the biggest threat to human freedom, and Durkheim notes that if this was descriptively correct, then human freedom should have diminished up through history. Instead he wants to argue that actually the opposite is the case; namely, the bigger the state the greater the freedom.

Historically Durkheim recognizes the obvious fact that the division of labour has been developed both quantitatively and qualitatively, meaning that more and more people in modern societies are highly specialized in their particular skills. Since civilisation means that our needs have been developed in numbers and refined each by themselves, this means that more and more individual specialists are indispensable to the smooth functioning of a modern civilisation such as ours. To Durkheim it is therefore understandable that the individual is more highly valued in a modern society than in less developed societies. Already at the time of Durkheim one could recognize a modern “cult of the individual,” an es-

17 Leçons: 86-87.
18 Ibid.: 84.
19 Ibid.: 88-90.
team of the individual as the highest “moral reality,” protected by awe and “respect.” Modern morality thus holds individual human beings highly in regard. Durkheim, however, wants to stress this does not mean a threat to the cohesion of society, quite the contrary. Since modern individuals in general share the respect for the individual as a common value, it can be considered the basis of a specific kind of solidarity, which Durkheim calls ‘organic’ and considers normal for the modern society.

For Durkheim this is the reason to value modernity and the actual historical development of society. He wants to argue for the possibility of individual freedom without unacceptable liberalistic and legalistic assumptions. Individuality must be a collective moral project, which is part of the moralization and regulation of capitalist economy. Durkheim thinks practically, aiming to entrench the moral respect for the individual, and this can be thought of in two ways, individually and collectively. Individually the entrenchment is brought about by formation, education, and upbringing in general; collectively by the creation of such values as common and institutionalising them, that is, entrenching them with legitimacy in the customs and behaviour accepted by society, maintaining the thing-like character of the moral respect without its religious overtones. Durkheim wants both as part of the same socialization process.

Durkheim declares himself to be a rationalist in the sense that no part of reality is inaccessible to human reason. This should be understood in the Aristotelian way, as comprising both the theoretical and the practical relation to reality. Durkheim is not quite clear on this point however. He thus argues that reality can be understood rationally without being changed substantially. The ambition of Durkheim is, first, to study the respect for the individual rationally, and then, second, on this basis to secularize it as reasonable, and this must be done without losing its moral imperative force. So Durkheim actually does want to change something, namely rationalizing morality and thereby moral thought and action. This may sound rather optimistic, but Durkheim would argue that part of the

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20 Ibid.: 92.
21 ‘Normal’ is here to be understood as ‘ideal.’ Durkheim was well aware that social solidarity in reality was threatened by class conflict, and he regarded social justice as an “indispensable” “condition” for the realization of organic solidarity (Durkheim, Émile (1893) De la division du travail social. Paris: Félix Alcan: 420-34). [In English: The Division of Labour in Society. New York: Macmillan, 1933.] For a standard account of organic solidarity, see Lukes, Steven (1985) Emile Durkheim. His Life and Work. Stanford Univ. Press: 146-66.
22 L’éducation: 34.
23 Ibid.: 161-62.
job is actually done by the historical development of modern societies, politics and science, which favours the individual as the bearer of reason.

This leads to the other part of the answer, namely the faith in the potentialities of both human beings and societies, cherishing them both as something valuable, which can nevertheless be otherwise. The individual can raise itself to something beyond itself, precisely because the individual is never just an individual, but, as it is often put in dialectics, always already social and historical. As Durkheim puts it, the best in us comes from society, but this is not a static thing; just as human beings can improve so can societies, and they both do so by improving on the other.

What is interesting is that Durkheim is convinced that the growth of the state adds to this improvement, saying that the stronger the state, the better the conditions for the individual and its personal freedom. Durkheim would therefore recommend continuing the development of the state even more, precisely to add to the freedom of the individual, and that is interesting considering the political discussions and the societal development in the wake of post-modernity, which all have pointed in the opposite direction.

Durkheim admits that apparently this is a paradox, but the solution is ready at hand: namely, recognizing that the individual is not given as a human individual by nature. We have rights, values, prices, because they are given to us by society, not because of the natural constitution of things. Durkheim explicitly criticises Kant for thinking human rights as natural, given once and for all, making the human being something not to be violated. Humans are only humans because of society, and when the individual is not given by nature, the sovereign cannot be restricted to being a simple arbiter. If the individual is a product of society, and the state is the brain of society, the state is also responsible for the creation of the individual. It is therefore quite right that society is experienced as valuable and that the individual experience becoming social as being elevated by society.

Durkheim, however, is very conscious of the fact that human groups tend to absorb their members. To Durkheim it is first of all a matter of social density. The more extensive the group is, the lesser are the possibilities of such an absorption by elevation. Put in another way, the

24 Ibid.: 106.
25 Leçons: 93.
26 Ibid.: 102.
27 Ibid.: 101.
28 Ibid.: 96.
possibilities of social control and thus the tyranny of the collective diminish simply because of the lesser social density. Modern societies, however, are very dense societies, so this does not offer a general solution, and the general point is that one cannot rely on human groups to regulate this balance by themselves. We need a state to regulate society in order to secure freedom within society. The modern individual is a creation of the modern state, and it is only this creature that can realize freedom.

It is important to notice that this was not Durkheim’s position in the first version of De la division du travail social, The Social Division of Labour from 1893. Here society does not need a political state in order to moralize economy, and this early position can be seen as an even more advanced liberal vision than Adam Smith’s, since Durkheim did not even have to rely on God’s invisible hand. A few years later, though, he recognized that he had been too optimistic, and in the second edition of the book from 1902 he added a new introduction, where he argues for the development of intermediary groups to secure the unity of society. This, however, does not mean that Durkheim turns from a liberal into a communitarian. In his political lectures these secondary groups are recognized as potentially and often really suppressive, and to secure the freedom of the individual it is therefore necessary to institute a counterbalance. This counterbalance is the state.

For Durkheim it is thus the balance of power between the state and the secondary groups that is to secure the freedom of the individual. It is, however, important to emphasize that it is not just the balance of power that secures individual freedom; the state is valuable in itself to the freedom of the individual. Since secondary groups like families, clans and religious communities are formed by society before the state, Durkheim can regard the state as liberating the individual by bestowing the individual with rights and value simply as an individual, namely as a person. It is in this sense that the state constitutes and creates the individual. Durkheim can therefore declare that the essential function of the state is to liberate the individual. Still, the state is also a particular social group itself, and to avoid that it becomes despotic and absorbing as such, it is necessary that secondary groups counterbalance the state, and it is out of these complex webs of conflicting balances within the state that the freedom of the individual is born. From Montesquieu, Durkheim thus inher-

29 Ibid.: 97.
30 See Lukes, Emile Durkheim: 539. See also Leçons: 134-35.
31 Leçons: 97-98.
its the idea of using power against power to secure the freedom of the citizens.

An individual with natural, political, legal or civil rights is an individual recognized and thus protected as such by a state. Such an individual is the product of a state, and actually the state is liberating for the individual since the state recognizes the rights of individuals, whereas secondary groups are less permissive. As mentioned, one of the reasons for this is the lesser size of secondary groups. Another reason, however, is more interesting. The basic idea is that the state is the thinking centre of society, an organ for clarity and reason. As such it can legitimately intervene in secondary groups, since clarity is valuable and the collective consciousness of secondary groups by definition is more diffuse. The reason is simply that secondary groups are not preoccupied with ruling a heterogeneous political society, but can rely on the traditional morality of a homogeneous group to simply rule itself.

3. A STRONG DEMOCRATIC STATE IS THE BEST DEFENCE AGAINST CAPITALIST ECONOMY

The state is thus both the conscious creator and the reasonable protector of the individual. What can be said of government and democracy on those conditions? Durkheim criticizes Aristotle and Montesquieu for occupying themselves too much with the number of persons involved in government. Both the representatives in the parliament and the government are always in the minority, and the main point is not their numbers, but to mark the difference between those in government and those governed. As we have seen, the state is a social group, which must take it upon itself to think for society. Social and political thought is common in society at large, consisting of hopes, beliefs and feelings, which mostly are diffuse, but which can be made clear by the state, that is, in the hands of a government.

Society and state are closely related and should be so. They represent two different kinds of collective psychic life, the first diffuse, unconscious, spontaneous, and automatic, whereas the latter is highly organized, centralized, reflective and takes place in deliberations and discussions, both by individuals themselves and in collective session. The aim of this Hegelian scheme is to develop the collective consciousness to become conscious of itself and thus ready to make decisions motivated by reason. The state helps society to be more disciplined, and the analogy is in this case for Durkheim the individual. The distinction between two

32 Ibid.: 110-11.
kinds of psychic life is the same as for individuals; just as our behaviour can be more or less conscious, more or less governed, so can the behaviour of society.  

As mentioned, the state can be more or less involved in the life of society, meaning that government can extend its deliberations to greater or lesser areas. It can, however, also be expansive in another dimension, namely by the number of those involved in the deliberations, just as noticed by Aristotle and Montesquieu. Durkheim’s point, however, is different. When the government extends its deliberations to the social groups affected by its decisions, it gets more information and can thus make better informed judgements. Governmental questions can be posed to society in various ways, and one way is simply to consult the population by making referendums from time to time. The communication, however, can also be made both more intense and continual, and that makes both the state and the government lose their sacred character. This, however, must not be taken as an ideal of dissolving the state into society. The state should still be clearly distinguished from society, since it is important that there is an organ dedicated to ruling society, which can reach an exceptional clarity in these matters. The ideal of democracy must not be made equivalent with society ruling itself, since society has many functions and cannot be trusted to develop a clear consciousness about itself.

Durkheim’s point about democracy is not just that more people are involved in the government of society, whereby it is closer to the ideals of collective popular sovereignty of the people. It is just as important that democracy means that governmental deliberations become more extensive in society, and that in itself makes government better. As mentioned, modern government expands the state into still more areas, and taken together these developments expand the domain of clear and conscious decisions in society. Such political enlightenment eventually makes development and progress possible in all areas of social life, since one can only improve what is conceived in a clear way. The more civilized a society thus becomes, the more democratic it becomes, and the better it can be governed in all corners of the social life.

Democracy does not mean that the state is weak. Quite the contrary. It is true that democracy means the extension of consultations and communication to more people, more often and with more affairs left to ra-

33 Ibid.: 113-14.
34 Ibid.: 115.
tional agreement; but at the same time democracy also means the extension of state authority into areas of social life, which were left to private decisions before. This is what provokes modern libertarians. Apart from those areas already mentioned, Durkheim in this connection adds health and education, and precisely these areas are often put in dispute by libertarians. The typical arguments are that the education of the individual is the responsibility of the family, not the state, and that health is the responsibility of the individual, not the state. To Durkheim this is simply nonsense, since there is no individual before the state. The state must therefore be developed even more, and democracy must also be understood as what history is actually progressing towards. Societies become more complex the more modern they become and thus more difficult to govern. In such societies the government would be in need of more and more information to make the right decisions, and Durkheim therefore considers democracy the only right way to govern future societies. Only the clarity about societal matters, which can be achieved in democracies, will enable a society to be flexible and adjust rapidly to changing circumstances.

4. TO SUCH A STATE ONE NEEDS CITIZENS EDUCATED TO BE AUTONOMOUS

For Durkheim the regulation by the state of society should thus be a regulation by society itself. This, however, does not mean letting everybody do as they please and then hoping for the best. In order to fulfill its role the state must be the most rational part of society, and this does not come by itself. A democratic society governed by a rational state is something that has to be formed intentionally and rationally, and according to Durkheim this is best done by developing the moral education of the inhabitants. To a democratic society education should be taken care of by the state in order to liberate the individual human being from secondary groups such as the family and the religious communities. The teacher must therefore meet the pupil already at an early age and treat the pupil accordingly. To Durkheim the right education must be a gradual actualization of the moral character, which at every step takes into account the emotional and cognitive potentialities of the child.

36 Ibid.: 122.
37 Ibid.: 120.
38 Ibid.: 124.
For Durkheim it is important to stress that the ideal is a rational education.\textsuperscript{39} To be rational, however, does not mean that there is always a final answer on moral matters. We have to prepare children that morality changes in a society such as ours, and that they also have to contribute to that development.\textsuperscript{40} To be rational means that we should not let religious prejudice or emotional haste determine our final verdicts. As potentially rational beings we should strive to make ourselves master of ourselves through moral education, which can be reconstructed into three elements, discipline, attachment to groups and autonomy. The school must form the child for the social life by stimulating these elements to become general dispositions.\textsuperscript{41} They are all necessary for maturing human beings to become reasonable, but they should be encouraged at the right stages of development and in the right proportions.

Discipline is the basic condition, which should lead education in the early years, and since discipline today has some unpleasant connotations, it is important to understand it in the right sense from the start. First of all, Durkheim argues very strongly for an “absolute prohibition of corporal punishment,” since it violates the modern idea of the human being as worthy of “religious respect.”\textsuperscript{42} According to Durkheim primitive people do not use violence in education, and modern educationalists like Tolstoy argue against the necessity of violence in education. According to Durkheim the problem, however, is the social structure of the school: “Because this society naturally has a monarchic form, it easily degenerates into despotism.”\textsuperscript{43} It is the closure of schools and classes that makes violent abuses possible. To avoid violence schools should therefore be made more open to the public, and classes should not be left alone too much with only one teacher. Durkheim recognizes the need for punishment, but it should be applied with great care. It is important to signal that there is a law, and that it ought to be obeyed, but already back then it was well known from criminology that punishment cannot be used to prevent transgressions of the law,\textsuperscript{44} and Durkheim adds that punishment works best as a threat.\textsuperscript{45}

\textsuperscript{39} *L’éducation*: 35.
\textsuperscript{40} Ibid.: 45.
\textsuperscript{41} Ibid.: 53.
\textsuperscript{42} Ibid.: 233-34.
\textsuperscript{43} Ibid.: 249.
\textsuperscript{44} Ibid.: 210-11.
\textsuperscript{45} Ibid.: 251.
When Durkheim talks about discipline and authority the idea is to prepare the child for living in a democratic society, which offers a lot of freedom, but also demands a lot of inhibition. The aim of the education in school is that the children should learn to respect a non-personal law. In the family there is emotion and lenience, mildness and a lot of exceptions. In contrast to this the school represents “the first initiation to the austerity of duty. This is where the serious life begins.”\(^{46}\) Discipline is valuable as a disposition since morality is the area of duties,\(^{47}\) and duties require an ability to repeat actions under the same conditions,\(^{48}\) almost like a habit. The duty refers to a rule, which refers to something beyond the single individual, and this something we acknowledge as an authority. Authority is to Durkheim a “moral power”\(^{49}\) or “a quality of a human being raised beyond the merely human.”\(^{50}\) We act in a certain way, because we accept the prescription of the authority, which appears as a moral rule or law.

Durkheim is well aware that this is controversial, and that one might very well consider discipline just a necessary evil. As he puts it, if life is good, how can it be desirable to constrain it?\(^{51}\) There is no doubt that discipline is necessary to moderate desire and limit the appetites, and that moral education gives us the power to resist ourselves, to master ourselves.\(^{52}\) Durkheim’s point is, however, that this is not against our nature, but a condition for the development of our nature.\(^{53}\) Discipline is the condition for the development of our nature as reasonable beings, individually and collectively, as free citizens in a democratic society.\(^{54}\) Human nature needs discipline. Freedom is not simply to do what one pleases at every moment, letting oneself be guided by impressions and whims. Freedom is to raise oneself above, what is merely corporal, emotional and animalistic. Without discipline autonomy, individual as well as collective, would be impossible.

The second element, attachment to groups, also calls for some remarks. Durkheim’s idea is that we must encourage children to love something beyond themselves. They already love their parents, but we want to

\(^{46}\) Ibid.: 197.
\(^{47}\) Ibid.: 56.
\(^{48}\) Ibid.: 60.
\(^{49}\) Ibid.: 62.
\(^{50}\) Ibid.: 130.
\(^{51}\) Ibid.: 60.
\(^{52}\) Ibid.: 79-80.
\(^{53}\) Ibid.: 87.
\(^{54}\) Ibid.: 85.
get beyond that. As Durkheim puts it, the domain of morality starts where the social starts. 55 Children should learn to love the specific groups to which they are actually attached, i.e. apart from the family also the school class, the school itself, the town or city and eventually the modern nation state. Durkheim’s point is that society transgresses the individual both materially and morally. 56 Human beings are therefore only completed by being attached to more groups than one, and morality only when there is solidarity with all those groups. 57

As mentioned above the state is something particular and real; but as the rational centre of society the state is also the highest possible human organization. Durkheim does not want to exclude the possibility that a global state one day would be able to comprise the whole of humanity, and one could say that the ideal state would be the global state, which automatically would make all citizens world citizens. Durkheim, however, emphasizes that the condition of both human morality and of a political order is a real society defined by its common representations about language, religion, custom, etc., and humanity is still not a society in this sense. And actually he is not sure whether this is actually an ideal to be realized. 58 In other words: maybe the ideal global state will then be a totality excluding the differences between groups and thus totalitarian, which means that it would not be desirable after all.

In relation to the ideal attachments there is thus a conflict – both conceptual and real – between patriotism and cosmopolitanism, which Durkheim, however, deals with in a very elegant dialectical way. The idea is to say that any actual state ought to realize the ideals of humanity; if this is made the case, then the conflict between particularistic patriotism and universalistic cosmopolitanism disappears. This, however, presupposes a distinction between two forms of patriotism. One form is turned against the outside, expansive and thus potentially always in conflict with its neighbours. The other is turned towards the inside, improving qualitatively what is already the patrimony and peacefully focused on the progress of national science, art and industry, thereby improving the lot of the population living there. 59 And it is of course the latter kind of patriotism that can be reconciled with cosmopolitanism.

55 Ibid.: 96.
56 Ibid.: 128.
57 Ibid.: 112.
58 Ibid.: 120.
A state must by nature aim to maintain itself, and as such it must be patriotic. But patriotism can be turned inward to develop the patrimony within existing borders. That means that more areas of societal life will be the made the subject of public deliberation, and that clarity and reason will be demanded of the collective representations of the secondary groups in question. Traditional legitimacy is not enough anymore. The domain of the state will thus be extended into areas normally considered part of civil society, that is, religion, family, health, education, the labour market, and private economy in general.

Since the individual is becoming still more valuable in modern societies, the modern state must have the goal to govern the collective machine, as Durkheim formulates it, so that it will be felt less burdensome for the individual, securing peaceful exchange and the harmony of the individual good wills. But since modern society is also becoming still more complex in the same process, the state must spend more and more energy governing its own interiors. As a result the state becomes less and less occupied with the exterior and therefore also more peaceful in relation to its neighbours. It does not mean that wars simply disappear, only that they will tend to mean less for the modern states, relatively speaking.60

This makes it also more likely that one can actually experience the conflation of the two opposing ideal attachments, namely the particularistic patriotism and the universal cosmopolitanism. The modern state actually recognizes the individual in a way that approaches recognizing the individual as a human being, simpliciter. The modern state has as its goal that its citizens become educated as human beings, i.e. that their civilian duties become particular forms of universal human duties. There is still patriotism and it is still love for a particular nation, but it is now connected with the pride that the state is the best organized, most just, and most moral society among the nations known. Durkheim does not only think that such a patriotism can easily be accepted as legitimate, but also that it should be encouraged for the sake of the individual, its rights and its liberties.61

For Durkheim the two first elements of moral education both refer to society, although in different ways. The discipline is required by the order of society, whereas the ideal of being attached to groups calls attention to society as something valuable beyond the individual. Society is at

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60 *Leçons*: 105.
the same time something which we must have duties towards and something which is desirable.\textsuperscript{62} Durkheim emphasizes that we never act morally only out of either duty or love for the good. A duty is a desirable constraint, and we could never raise ourselves above ourselves without the discipline forced upon us by society.\textsuperscript{63} In terms of moral education these elements, however, should be thought of as sequential, meaning that discipline comes first and encouraging attachment to still wider groups comes second. This brings us to the last element, autonomy.

Autonomy is the goal of moral education in the democratic state.\textsuperscript{64} The rationality of education is not only a goal, but actually demonstrated in the process, namely by explaining to the children along the way, how morality actually functions. For Durkheim formulating the moral reality in rational terms does not endanger morality,\textsuperscript{65} quite the opposite. Moral education makes morality in modern societies intelligent.\textsuperscript{66} It is reason and science, which is the basis of autonomy. When we understand the nature of morality, we are masters of the moral law, and then moral authority ceases to be heteronomous.\textsuperscript{67} We can understand morality as good and natural, even though it constrains. We are part of society and therefore we accept morality as both desirable and necessary in an enlightened manner, and that is the end of humiliation and slavery.\textsuperscript{68} Durkheim stresses that thought is liberating for will, and the conclusion is that it is the consciousness of the nature of human morality that make us autonomous.\textsuperscript{69}

5. END

In this small sketch I have attempted to argue that a dialectical democratic republicanism like Durkheim’s is still a suitable political answer to the challenges of modernity and global capitalism. With Durkheim we can argue morally and politically for a strong state without giving up on the ideals of rationality, individual freedom and democracy. Only a strong

\textsuperscript{62} L’\textit{éducation}: 132.
\textsuperscript{63} \textit{Ibid.}: 141.
\textsuperscript{64} Unfortunately Durkheim never completed his construction of the logic of this third element, and the sketches he left are now lost. Still we have some indications, on which we can base a reconstruction, and a very good account can be found in W. Watts Miller, “Teaching autonomy,” in Walford & Pickering, \textit{Durkheim and Modern Education}: 72-91.
\textsuperscript{65} L’\textit{éducation}: 147-48.
\textsuperscript{66} \textit{Ibid.}: 164.
\textsuperscript{67} \textit{Ibid.}: 161.
\textsuperscript{68} \textit{Ibid.}: 162.
\textsuperscript{69} \textit{Ibid.}: 164.
state can develop humanity through education, science and social interventions, just as it alone has the power to counter the human desires united behind free market capitalist economy. With Durkheim we can thus fight capitalism without giving up on the ideals and achievements of modernity.