

**Population Change
and
Social Change**

Plan of Action

6/9/04

Topic: Demography and
the Division of Labor

(1) Review Quiz

(2) Durkheim

Émile Durkheim (1858–1917)



Durkheim's Questions:

What is it that bonds people to each other as social actors?

How can we study these attachments and thereby construct a meaningful understanding of society?

Understanding Durkheim

Basic Concepts

Social Facts (aka "Emergent Properties")

"...a category of facts with very distinctive characteristics: it consists of acting, thinking, and feeling, external to the individual, and endowed with a power of coercion, by reason of which they control him."

"...it is to them exclusively that the term 'social' ought to be applied."

Understanding Durkheim

Basic Concepts

Forms of Social Cohesion (Solidarity)

- Mechanical
- Organic

Understanding Durkheim

Basic Concepts

Characteristics of Mechanical Solidarity:

- Cohesion based on similarity
- Common rituals and routines
- Normative and repressive social controls
- Collective Consciousness
- Rudimentary Division of Labor (e.g. by gender)

Characteristics of Organic Solidarity:

- Cohesion based on mutual interdependence
- Specialization creates need for interdependence
- Co-operative legal social controls
- Individual Consciousness
- Complex Division of Labor

Understanding Durkheim

From Mechanical to Organic Solidarity

As industrialization progresses, changing social needs produce new social functions.

Individual consciousness supercedes collective consciousness, and mechanical forms of solidarity fade as the need for a more organic social system increases.

Co-operative legal structures replace repressive legal structures, creating a more generalized and broad-based system of social control.

Understanding Durkheim

"Thus, it is an historical law that mechanical solidarity which first stands alone, or nearly so, progressively loses ground, and that organic solidarity becomes, little by little, preponderant. But when the way in which men are solidary becomes modified, the structure of societies cannot but change. ... Consequently, if the preceding proposition is correct, there ought to be two social types which correspond to these two types of solidarity."

From: *The Division of Labor in Society*, p. 174

Understanding Durkheim

Social Structures

Segmental Societies (Mechanical Solidarity)

- Formed by the repetition of like aggregates, or **clans** (familial/political entities)
- Grouped by relations of lineage
- Natural milieu is the natal unit
- Characterized by collective punishment, responsibility, mutual inheritance

Organized Societies (Organic Solidarity)

- Formed by coordination with other differentiated units, all subordinate to a central authority
- Grouped by particular nature of social activity
- Natural milieu is the occupational unit
- Characterized by specialized production, separate political forms

Population Change and Social Change

- (1) What demographic variables does Durkheim discuss? How does he connect these to the shift from segmental to organized society?
- (2) What function does demographic change play in the shift from segmental to organized society?
- (3) What factors other than population are important in producing the division of labor?

Population Change and Social Change

- "The division of labor varies in direct ratio with the volume and density of societies, and, if it progresses in a continuous manner in the course of social development, it is because societies become regularly denser and generally more voluminous."

(Division of Labor in Society, p. 262)