

Power, Social Order and Inequality: A Comparative Study of Durkheim and Marx and Their Implications for Political Thought

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Abstract

Based on the theories of Émile Durkheim and Karl Marx, a sociological comparison of these two theories is presented, specifically looking into the theories of power, social order and inequality of both. The study uses a qualitative interpretive analysis of primary and secondary sources to explore how the two thinkers, who were essential to the development of modern concepts of society, developed competing visions of modern society, one based on moral authority and organic solidarity and the other on class domination and structural conflict. The research framework used is that of 'social integration' versus 'system integration' (David Lockwood, 1992) as an analytical lens to shed light on the complementary blind spots in each tradition. The results indicate that the Durkheimian theory fails to explain social disorder, whereas the Marxist theory fails to explain why revolution didn't happen, indicating that a political theory must take into account both aspects. Finally, the paper considers the long-term effects of these different approaches on the current discourses of political thought, including the concept of social change, the role of the state and the nature of justice.

Keywords: Durkheim, Marx, power, social order, inequality, political thought, comparative sociology

1. Introduction

Two fundamentally divergent pictures of modern society, most clearly espoused by Émile Durkheim and Karl Marx, are still alive and well in political thought (Giddens, 1971). They both struggled with the major challenges and issues of the nineteenth-century industrialized capitalist society, including the decline of community, increasing inequality, and the apparent loss of moral consensus, but each had different diagnoses and prescriptions. The key issues from Durkheim's perspective are anomie and the authority of the moral, while for Marx, it is exploitation and class domination (Durkheim, 1951; Marx, 1976). The different “points of origin” produce very different visions of power, social order and inequality with long-lasting implications for views on politics, justice and social change.

In this paper, we aim at a systematic comparative analysis of Durkheim and Marx on three thematic aspects: power, social order and inequality. The analysis follows the lines of Lockwood's (1992) seminal work *Solidarity and Schism: 'The Problem of Disorder' in Durkheimian and Marxist Sociology*, which shows that whilst the two theories are based on completely oppositional conceptions of social structure and social action, they must rely on auxiliary hypotheses; these being to a high degree complementary, and the residual hypotheses of the one theory being those that are analytically central to the other

(Lockwood, 1992). This is most clearly seen if Durkheimian theory is trying to explain social disorder, and Marxist theory social absence of disorder (Lockwood, 1992). The paper is structured in a proper way where, in Section 2, the relevant literature on Durkheim and Marx is reviewed, in preparation for the comparison. Section 3 describes the research methodology, such as the research design, data sources and the research framework. In Section 4, the analysis is made across the three thematic dimensions. The findings are discussed in Section 5 along with the implications for political thought. The last part of Section 6 is devoted to a discussion of the timelessness of both traditions.

2. Literature Review

2.1 Durkheim's Theoretical Framework

In general, Émile Durkheim's sociological work was much concerned with the issue of social order in modern societies. His key question was how social cohesion is achieved despite the drives of individuals for self-interest, or the "Hobbesian problem of order" (Durkheim, 1984). Durkheim responded to this with an explanation for the importance of common norms and values in ensuring social solidarity. He maintained that moral issues could play a key role in the account of social integration (Durkheim, 1984). Durkheim was able to identify two types of solidarity. In pre-industrial societies, the 'mechanical solidarity' was based on common beliefs and values which were mainly held within the collective conscience. When industrial society began to develop a new form appeared: "organic solidarity," which was based on interdependence that results from the division of labour and social differentiation (Durkheim, 1984). However, even organic solidarity needs to be disciplined by moral constraints on egoism, which are derived from association and are the source of social solidarity (Durkheim, 1984).

Durkheim's thoughts about authority are very much at the heart of his political philosophy. Durkheim's ideas on authority are quite distinct from those of Marx and Weber as Giddens (1971) points out. His concern with authority is not to delineate the structures and powers of authority as in the case of Weber nor is it to investigate the forms of power of the dominant class as in case of Marx. Instead, Durkheim has questions regarding the type of authority that society needs and what authority's role is in any society (Giddens, 1971). According to Durkheim, rule of conscience collective (rule concerning the norms, beliefs and values of a given society) is the basis of authority. By authority we refer, as Durkheim put it, to "influence imposed upon us by any moral power that we recognize as superior" (1984, p. 49).

Importantly, Durkheim made a distinction between power and authority. A world of difference exists between one forced to conform, as there is no alternative, and one who decides to conform because he or she identifies with the community (power vs. authority) (Durkheim, 1984). According to Durkheim, authority is a moral force which is not based on compulsion or economic control, but on the moral power of the collective conscience which unites the individuals (Durkheim, 1984). Durkheim contended that it was wrong to conceive freedom in opposition to authority as was done by some earlier thinkers. Freedom exists for the individual only in society and moral power is a prerequisite for freedom (Durkheim, 1984).

2.2 Marx's Theoretical Framework

The theory of Karl Marx is completely contrasting with Durkheim's theory. Marx considered power to be linked with the economic relations of production. Unlike other bundles of power, political power is the organized form of the dominance of one class over other classes (Marx, 1976). In capitalist society, the state is dominated not just by the means of production, but governance institutions as well, which are known as the political and ideological institutions of the state (Marx & Engels, 1967).

Marx's notion of class is not just one based on income or occupational status, but one that has historical connotations of the contradictory situations that men have been in during different social formations, master versus slave, lord versus serf, capitalist versus worker (Marx, 1976). Along with the changing of the productive forces and relations of production, there also comes into being a new class-structure. The primary frame of reference for Marx is class relation and the distribution of political power occurs around this axis (Marx, 1976). Marx, therefore, claimed that political power is related to economic power (Marx & Engels 1967).

This critical study of justice is an integral part of the analysis of inequality, performed by Marx. Marx's analysis of inequality cannot be separated from his critique of justice. Ironically, while Marx studied and condemned the injustice of capitalism and exploitation, he did not give a thought to 'justice' (Marx, 1970). According to Marxist theory, justice is not regarded as desirable: "Ideology" and "utopia" take the place of "justice. Why? If the economic base (class structure) dictates the cultural superstructure (ideology) and the dominant values are the values of the ruling class, then anything that calls for more justice is nothing but ideology which is used to conceal the bourgeois domination (Marx, 1970). The concept of justice is an empty slogan, it is not involved in real change which is the only thing that is really needed - "a socialist society" (Marx & Engels, 1967).

Also, Marx's concept of division of labour is in a different sense than Durkheim's. In Marx' view, the division of labor was a case of an unfree man, a case of a mentally and physically deformed individual because of his binding to a specific function of the division of labor (Marx, 1976).

2.3 The Lockwood Synthesis

The most in-depth comparison of Durkheimian and Marxist sociology is found in David Lockwood (1992) *Solidarity and Schism*. Both theories share a central theme, in Lockwood (1992) words, they are based on very different conceptions of the social structure and of social action. Both will need to rely on some auxiliary theories, which are deeply complementary. This is especially true when the Durkheimian theory tries to explain social disorder and Marxist theory social disorder's absence (Lockwood, 1992).

Lockwood (1992) mentions that there are two types of integration: social integration (integration of actors within norms and values) and system integration (integration of part of a social system through functional interdependence). Durkheim's theory is about integration into society, and Marx's theory is about integration into the capitalist system; in the case of Marx, integration into the capitalist mode of production, which is characterized by the contradictions in it (Lockwood, 1992).

2.4 Research Gap

Though there have been many treatises on Durkheim and Marx separately, and some works which make comparisons on selected aspects, a comprehensive comparative analysis between the theories of Durkheim's and Marx's theory on various aspects of political thought, specifically on the aspect of power, social order and inequality is lacking. The present paper aims to fill this gap by setting up a structured comparison that is based on the framework developed by Lockwood (1992) but taken further in connection with the implications it has for the present day political theory.

3. Research Methodology

3.1 Research Design

This research is qualitative research and takes the form of a comparative approach with the main method of inquiry in this research is textual analysis. The comparative approach is especially suitable for

comparative analysis of the theories of Durkheim and Marx as it helps to identify systematic points of convergence and differences in their theories on several levels.

Both Marx and Durkheim have started by analysis of the most simple aspect of phenomenon for recognition of the noteworthy phenomenon – Marx in respect to capitalist society and Durkheim particularly on religion – to explain the complex situation on that base. It is a shared methodological procedure of conceptual abstraction which serves the base of meaningfully comparing.

3.2 Data Sources

The Data Sources will Comprise of both data from Primary and Secondary sources with the studdly implying qulitataive analysis of the Literature. The Data sources are as follows:

Primary Sources:

Durkheim, É. (1893/1984). *The Division of Labour in Society*. Macmillan.

Durkheim, É. (1895/1982). *The Rules of Sociological Method*. Macmillan.

Durkheim, É. (1897/1951). *Suicide: A Study in Sociology*. Free Press.

Marx, K. (1867/1976). *Capital: A Critique of Political Economy* (Vol. 1). Penguin.

Marx, K., & Engels, F. (1848/1967). *The Communist Manifesto*. Penguin.

Marx, K. (1859/1970). *A Contribution to the Critique of Political Economy*. International Publishers.

Secondary Sources:

Lockwood, D. (1992). *Solidarity and Schism: 'The Problem of Disorder' in Durkheimian and Marxist Sociology*. Oxford University Press.

Giddens, A. (1971). *Capitalism and Modern Social Theory: An Analysis of the Writings of Marx, Durkheim and Max Weber*. Cambridge University Press.

Lukes, S. (1973). *Emile Durkheim: His Life and Work*. Penguin.

3.3 Methodology and Analytical Framework

The structure of the analytical framework used in this comparative study is based on three thematic aspects, all of which relate to major ideas in political thought: power, social order, and inequality. The first of these dimensions looks at the way each theorist understands power, including where it comes from and how it is connected to authority and domination. The second dimension considers how each theorist accounts for social cohesion, the role of norms as opposed to that of coercion, and the origins of both social stability and social change. The third dimension looks into how each theorist conceives of social inequality, examining its roots, its consequences, and its connection with justice.

Within each of these three thematic areas, the analysis is carried out in four systematic stages: explication, in which the theorist's view of the concept in question is made clear by a careful examination of the primary writings and secondary sources (Giddens, 1971); comparison, in which the points of agreement and disagreement between the two theorists are identified, using Lockwood's (1992) observation that the residual categories of each theory are analytically central to the other; evaluation, in which the strengths and weaknesses of each position are assessed by looking at the auxiliary hypotheses that each theory needs in order to explain anomalous cases (Lockwood, 1992); and synthesis, in which the implications for political thought are drawn by considering how each framework contributes to different views on the nature of social change, the role of the state, the meaning of justice, and the relationship between the individual and society.

This synthetic phase does not aim at reconciling the two traditions but rather shows how each one supplies what the other fails to provide, thus leading towards a more complete political theory that addresses both structural inequality and moral fragmentation as closely interconnected aspects of modern social life.

3.4 Limitations

There are some limitations in this study which are explained as follows:

First, it concentrates on Durkheim and Marx while not taking into account others such as Weber, who may offer some other comparative perspectives.

Second, it's based on analyzing existing texts, not conducting of any particular archival research or empirical investigation.

Third, it is always a matter of interpretation which is relative and dependent on the theoretical perspective of the researcher.

Fourth, the study doesn't cover the entire literature about either theorist, but rather some of the more significant texts and secondary literature.

4. Analysis

4.1 Power: Moral Authority versus Class Domination

4.1.1 Marx: Power as Class Domination

For Marx, it is impossible to separate out of power from economic relations of production. Political power does not stand by itself, but it is an organised form of class domination (Marx 1976). In capitalist society the bourgeoisie exercises control over capitalists means of production but also over the political and ideological apparatuses of the State (Marx & Engels, 1967). Capitalist societies are marked by material and political power distribution inequalities, where differences in material and political resources are where conflict arises between social classes, said Marx (1976).

Marx's use of the term class is not simply one that is defined by income or by a person's place in the job market; instead, class is a term that is used to describe a position occupied by men within the various social formations through history: master and slave, lord and serf, capitalist and working class (Marx, 1976). Marx (1976) argued that the predominant way of structuring political power depends on class relations. In this assumption political power is closely tied to economic power, indeed it is very much an expression of it (Marx & Engels, 1967). The state is not a neutral entity, it represents the interest of a single class, the dominant class (Marx & Engels, 1967).

This knowledge of power has radical implications because power is at its core an economic power; any significant changes must impact the economic base itself. Modifications to the existing system simply help to maintain bourgeois rule (Marx 1976). In Marx's political philosophy, class struggle replaces all other forces as the motor of change in history and ultimately the victory of the proletariat in the revolution overthrowing the state will lead to the "withering away" of the state.

4.1.2 Durkheim: Power as Moral Authority

It makes no sense at all that Durkheim's notion of power would be so different. Unlike Marx (Giddens, 1971) he is not interested in the nature of power of the dominant class. Durkheim, however, is more interested in the type of authority needed in a modern society and the role of authority in any society (Giddens, 1971). The concept of authority for Durkheim is not that of the dominant class exercising power, nor is it a legitimate control, but rather, it is the rule of the conscience collective—rule concerning the norms, beliefs and values of a given society (Durkheim, 1984).

An important thing to remember is that Durkheim is careful to distinguish between power and authority. Durkheim (1984) points to the contrast between “power” and “authority,” referring to the latter as where an individual takes pleasure in conforming to the norms of a community because he or she has identified with them. For Durkheim, authority is a moral power, “the influence which is imposed upon us by any

moral power which we recognize as superior” (p. 49). It does not stem from "force" or economic way of life, but from the consciousness of the group which is shared by all the members. (Durkheim, 1984).

The moral vision of authority has political consequences. According to Durkheim (1984) it is in society that the individual is free and the lack of moral authority cannot allow it to be free. The State, in turn, if it is not an instrument of class rule, is a special organ: it must pursue certain representations that are valid for everyone - Durkheim (1984). The contemporary democratic state is an "elaborate form" of collective moral consciousness, and has the obligation to help the citizens become attuned to the sentiment of collective solidarity (Durkheim, 1984)

4.1.3 Comparison and Evaluation

The idea of power is a concept that is opposed by Marx and Durkheim in a manner that could not be any more contrasting. Marx has a different assessment of power as being fundamentally coercive based upon class domination (Marx, 1976); Durkheim has a different one as being fundamentally moral and based upon collective conscience (Durkheim, 1984). Durkheim focuses on the power as it is manifested in moral and symbolic ways while Marx's emphasis is on the economic determinant of power. Marx's conception of the state is one of class rule while Durkheim's is that of a “organ of elaboration of collective representations” (Durkheim, 1984).

Both views cast light on sides of power that the other casts into darkness. Marx's analysis of the structural inequalities and coercive aspect of power is more apt to reveal inequalities and coercion that are not just naturalized but also legitimate. Marx can identify only the instrumental and coercive aspects of authority, which Durkheim identified as the normative and integrative aspects. In this respect "residual categories" of each theory turn out to be analytically central to the other as Lockwood (1992) claims.

4.2 Social Order: Solidarity versus Conflict

4.2.1 Durkheim: Order through Moral Consensus.

Durkheim's main focus in sociology is the Hobbesian one of getting societies together in spite of people's self-interest (Durkheim, 1984). In his response, he turns to the function of common norms and values in the process of social cohesion. Durkheim challenged utilitarian conceptions of social thought that attempted to analyze social cohesion and solidarity in terms of a contract and individual benefit, arguing that questions of morality must be incorporated into an understanding of social cohesion and solidarity (Durkheim, 1984).

Durkheim recognized two types of solidarity. Pre-industrial societies had mechanical solidarity characterized by common beliefs and values mostly in the collective conscience. The coming of industrial society brought a new type, one that is based on interdependence resulting from differentiation and division of labor: organic solidarity (Durkheim, 1984). However, even organic solidarity needs some moral constraints on egoism that come from association and are the source of social cohesion (Durkheim, 1984). For one thing, Durkheim didn't deny that there is conflict, or that force is used in conflict. His framework, however, sees conflict as abnormal and pathological – a dysfunction of integration (Durkheim, 1984). This is particularly true when Durkheimian theory aims to explain social disorder, as Lockwood (1992) claims. Order for Durkheim is the normal situation, disorder is a problem to be explained. (Durkheim 1984).

The political implication is obvious: social order is based on moral consensus or the capacity of the intermediate groups (such as professional associations) to convey the moral norms and to have the individuals enter the collective (Durkheim, 1984).

4.2.2 Marx: Order through Coercion and Conflict

Marx has only a nearly upside down version. The socialistic explanations of order are materialist not cultural (Marx, 1976). Economic and political pressure is the means of increasing cohesion, not shared values. Different collectivities (social classes) have competing claims of access to material and/or political resources, which create conflict between them (Marx, 1976).

From this perspective conflict means that there is no consensus of morality, and social order is always at stake (Marx, 1976). Order is the result of the power relationship between conflicting groups, in which the stronger groups dominate the weaker, and cohesion is achieved by the use of economic power, political and legal coercion and bureaucratic routine (Marx 1976). Durkheim's view of moral integration remains in contrast with Marx's view of domination (Marx & Engels, 1967).

As Marxist theory has its own converse problem, that is, how to explain the lack of disorder, so Lockwood (1992) points out that this is why the theory runs into trouble. Why is capitalism still in existence if it is always exploitative and is always in trouble? The answer is ideology which Marx and Engels would define as the ideology of the ruling class becomes the ruling class ideology: "the ideas of the ruling class are the ruling ideas, the ideas of the wage-slaves are the wage-slave ideas" (Marx & Engels, 1967). However, this consent is always fragile and ongoing tension and change suggest a lack of enduring stability (Marx, 1976).

The political ramifications are revolutionary! Order must be maintained by force and therefore, by coercion, it cannot be morally legitimate. Political action, however, should not be trying to change the outcome but instead to overthrow the outcome and have the Proletariat class dominate and win the fight of democracy (Marx & Engels, 1967).

4.2.3 Comparison and Evaluation

The definitions of social order provided by Durkheim and Marx are completely opposed. Marx and Durkheim respectively are concerned with coercion and conflict and with moral consensus and integration (Durkheim, 1984; Marx, 1976). According to Durkheim the normal state is order and the pathological is disorder, while for Marx it is the normal state is conflict and order is maintained precariously by domination (Lockwood, 1992). There are positive and negative aspects with each account. While Marxism is likely to focus on the material aspects of social life, Durkheim's framework was oriented toward the normative features. Nevertheless, Durkheim has a difficulty in trying to understand why sometimes societies witness breakdown and revolution and why the moral consensus is at times lost (Lockwood, 1992). Marx's model is able to highlight the structural elements of social order and the forceful aspect that is often ignored by Durkheim's functionalism. But Marx cannot account for the fact that revolutions don't happen more often, why the oppressed are satisfied with their condition (Lockwood, 1992).

The point is that Lockwood (1992) makes is that for each theory there have to be auxiliary hypotheses which are analytically central to the theory of the other. In order to explain disorder, Durkheimian theory needs a theory of anomie and social disintegration, and Marxist theory a theory of ideology and hegemony to account for order (Durkheim, 1951; Marx & Engels, 1967). Any complex theory of social order must also be based on these both traditions.

4.3 Inequality

4.3.1 Marx: Inequality as the Essence of Capitalism

For Marx inequality is not merely a by-product of capitalism but an essential feature of it (Marx, 1976). The division of society into classes is the basic structure of all society which has hitherto existed (Marx &

Engels, 1967). In a capitalist system the worker undergoes alienation—that is, a separation of the person from his or her nature as a free producer and creator—because labour becomes a commodity and the worker is thereby reduced to just an input in the process of production (Marx, 1976). Marx's analysis of inequality goes hand in hand with his criticism of justice. In a paradoxical situation, even though he examined and condemned the injustice of capitalism and the system of exploitation, he neglected the idea of justice (Marx, 1970). What is the reason for this? Since the economic base determines the cultural superstructure and the dominant values simply reflect those of the powerful, any demand for greater justice is merely ideological and serves to mask bourgeois rule (Marx, 1970). Justice is therefore an ideological cliché which diverts attention from the real aim: revolutionary change leading to the establishment of a socialist society (Marx & Engels, 1967). For Marx, inequality cannot be improved within the capitalist system; it can only be eliminated as a result of a revolutionary transformation of the mode of production (Marx, 1976).

4.3.2 Durkheim: Inequality as a Problem of Integration

Durkheim's perspective on inequality is more subtle and (in part) more hopeful. He examined the division of labor, and demonstrated that social inequalities result in solidarity only in certain circumstances (Durkheim 1984). Inequality is pathological only when it prevents social integration, when division of labor is not voluntary but imposed, when it does not lead to morality which in turn becomes the basis for organic solidarity (Durkheim, 1984).

Not all inequality is necessarily immoral as Durkheim did not believe this as he did not believe in inequality being unjust. Social justice, therefore, is not the simple product of bourgeois illusions, but an ethical drive towards the better and the improvement of social circumstances (Durkheim, 1984). To a large extent, according to Lukes (1973), Durkheim's picture of a rightful society in a dynamic market economy, a stable welfare-state and 'cult of individualism' is in line with current trends in western societies. It is certainly not to end the market but to reform it in such a way that it conforms with contemporary individualistic beliefs and fosters true solidarity (Durkheim, 1984).

A second major pathological form was presented to us by Durkheim, with that of the forced division of labor (Durkheim, 1984). For Marx, the division of labour was a situation in which the individual was unfree; a situation in which the individual was mentally and physically distorted just because he was tied down to a certain function (Marx, 1976). The division of labor, as Durkheim conceived it was different from Marx's. The division of labour by itself was not seen as a negative thing by Durkheim; it only became a problem if it was compelled upon or didn't result in organic solidarity (Durkheim, 1984).

4.3.3 Comparison and Evaluation

This is connected to an inherent political perspective difference; while Marx aims to eliminate inequality and the class system by means of revolution (Marx & Engels, 1967), Durkheim aims to regulate inequality with the help of rules and ethics, to make it possible to have integration instead of anomie when operating within the division of labour (Durkheim, 1984).

The strengths of Durkheim's work is its recognition that certain types of inequality can be consistent with social solidarity and that there may never be equality, or that equality may not be desirable. The strength of Marx's perspective is that he is aware that structural inequalities will not be solved by merely managing the technical problems of these structures but only by changing them (Marx, 1976). Each point of view contains some questions that the other can't answer.

5. Discussion: Implications for Political Thought

Several question arises including: What implications it has for political thought? What does it mean for political thinking? The contrasting frame of Durkheim and Marx lead to opposing political theories, which are still relevant in today's debates.

5.1 Political Change Over Time

No one has ever offered anyone even a single word of comfort: Marx's theory requires an overthrow. Power is a product of economic relations and a step-by-step reform will only reinforce the system (Marx, 1976; Marx & Engels, 1967). In contrast, by promoting reform of the present institutions, Durkheim pleads for a reorganisation of professional groups, an enhancement of moral education and the expansion of the legal control (Durkheim, 1984). The difference between social revolution and social reform was the hallmark of the two traditions.

5.2 The Role of the State

The state for Marx is a means of class domination which eventually as time passes, will have to be "smashed". (Marx & Engels, 1967) In Durkheim's view, the state constitutes the "social brain", the organ that allows the society to elaborate representations of the collective, which constitute the rule for the society to be unified. The state guarantees the freedom of the individual, and at the same time, its independence and moral authority (Durkheim, 1984).

5.3 What is the meaning of justice?

For Marx, justice is ideological (Marx, 1970) while for Durkheim it is an "ethics of justice" which gives its moral underpinning to modern society (Durkheim, 1984). This difference is in keeping with the epistemological differences outlined above: Marx's historical materialism believes that ideas are a reflection of material conditions, whereas Durkheim's sociological realism regards moral facts as social facts per se (Marx, 1970; Durkheim, 1982).

5.4 The Relationship between Individual and Society

Marx views the individual as alienated in a capitalist society and as capable of being freed in a classless one (Marx, 1976); Durkheim on the other hand holds that the individual is necessarily determined by society and that freedom can only be achieved through moral authority (Durkheim, 1984). This has important consequences for political theory since Marx's approach stands for emancipation from social constraints while Durkheim's is based on integration via social constraints.

5.5 Synthesis

Both visions are incomplete in themselves, as Lockwood (1992) comments. The Durkheimian theory has difficulties in explaining social disorder, and the Marxist theory in explaining the lack of revolution (Lockwood, 1992). Each has what the other doesn't have. With regard to political thought, what this means is that to write a theory that addresses politics thoroughly, it must represent an attempt to work with both aspects of contemporary society: the structural inequalities Marx powerfully diagnosed, and the moral fragmentation Durkheim singled out. Rather than comparing and contrasting them, it is important to appreciate the interconnections between the three and the ways political engagement could be used to engage with all three at once.

6. Conclusion

It is interesting to compare Durkheim with Marx, because they will both appear to present two conflicting visions of the nature of modern political life. In a world of class domination, economic exploitation and ideological mystification, freedom must be won by revolution which overturns the existing order (Marx,

1976; Marx & Engels, 1967). There is no soothing concept in Durkheim's view as social solidarity or moral authority that can be restored to replace anomie, which is the moral crisis he observes in a free society. The concept of social solidarity or of moral authority can only be restored to replace anomie, which is a moral crisis that is faced in a free society, according to Durkheim (1951, 1984).

None of these vision are completely satisfactory when used individually. Despite its apparent differences, the two theories share basic concepts of social structure and social action that are fundamentally opposed: regardless of that, both have to depend on some auxiliary hypotheses that are highly complementary. Social disorder is difficult for Durkheim to explain, whilst lack of revolution is difficult for Marxist (Lockwood, 1992). Both provide one another what they are missing.

For political thought, this implies that any good theory must be able to deal with both aspects of modern society: for Marx the structural inequality, and for Durkheim the moral disintegration. Rather than comparing and contrasting them, it is important to appreciate the interconnections between the three and the ways political engagement could be used to engage with all three at once.

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