

CULTIVATING DIFFERENCE:
THE THEORY OF GROUP FORMATION AND GROUP COHESION
ACCORDING TO EMILE DURKHEIM

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O’Rielly’s Queensland, 4 July 1999. [5,933]

“God made the soul out of sameness,
difference and being.” Plato, *Timaeus*.

“Individual minds, forming groups by
mingling and fusing, give birth to a
being, psychological if you will, but
constituting a psychic individuality of a
new sort.” Durkheim, (1895, p 103).

Emile Durkheim (1858 - 1917) is regarded as one of the founders of sociology (Lukes, 1975). His account of social phenomena was based on several key ideas, which were radically different to the consensus (Gane, 1988). He saw society as a being *sui generis*, meaning a being of a type different to other beings, having its own genus; the characteristics of the social being had to be observed and described in its own terms and would not be assisted by comparisons.

The second idea was of *collective representations* that are the shared psychic ideas, sentiments and actions in a communicating group of individuals; they are “the way in which the group conceives itself in its relations with the objects which affect it” (Durkheim, 1966, quoted in Lukes, 1975, p 6). Once they become common property for the members, they are no longer the same as the products of individual consciousses, but exist in their own right. Social life, said Durkheim, “is constituted wholly of collective ‘representations’,” (Durkheim, 1966, p xli).

Together, the collective representations constitute the *collective conscience*. The French word *conscience* condenses English ideas of moral conscience and psychic consciousness. The translations for the word are: conscience, consciousness, conscientiousness, what was in the depths of someone’s heart, and even breast plate (Elwall, 1897). For Durkheim, it has a moral character and is,

“pre-eminently the organ of sentiments and representations; it is not the rational organ that the term ‘consciousness’ would imply. The qualities possessed by a conscience whether collective or individual are not those generally imputed to consciousness in German, English, and American epistemology. ... In fact the term has resemblance to the term ‘unconscious’ in psychoanalysis, rather than to consciousness in logical theory” (Simpson, 1933, p ix).

Durkheim (1964) described collective conscience in the following way:

“The totality of beliefs and sentiments common to average citizens of the same society forms a determinate system which has its own life; one may call it a *collective* or *common conscience*. No doubt it has not a specific organ as a substratum; it is, by definition, diffuse in every reach of society. Nevertheless, it has specific characteristics which make it a distinct reality. It is, in effect, independent of the particular conditions in which individuals are placed; they pass on and it remains. ... it connects successive generations with one another. It is, thus, an entirely different thing from particular consciences, although it can be realized only through them. It is the psychical type of society, a type

which has its properties, its conditions of existence, its mode of development, just as individual types, although in a different way” (pp 79-80).

The life of the collective conscience is communicated to individual action in the same way as ideas are communicated to words, giving language and communication an essential role in its formation. The relationship of individual and collective is described:

“There are in each of us ... two consciences: one which is common to our group in its entirety, which consequently, is not ourselves, but society living and acting within us; the other, on the contrary, represents that in us which is personal and distinct, that which makes us an individual” (pp 129-130).

They have “one and the same organic substratum. They are thus *sui generis*, which, born of resemblances directly links the individual with society” (p 106).

The Division on Labour in Society

Durkheim develops a perspective not reduced to the psychological contents of individual minds in *The Division of Labour in Society* (1893, translation 1966), which describes how societies are held together. Members associated by a sentiment of similarity to each other and difference from those not in the group, acquire an attachment to the whole surpassing the individual and becoming the basis for moral activity.

Regulation and cohesion are necessary for freedom, or “anomie” (the loss of social norms) results. Societies make laws for members, but only its “collective personality” has the continuity, perpetuity and power to bind them “beyond the ephemeral relations which daily incarnate it” (p 5), settle conflicts and assign limits. Hence a set of rules is essential to the formation of a social unit; “common life is attractive as well as coercive” (p 15); the individual “seeks it passionately.” The primary motive for people to come together is “for the pleasure of communing, to make one out of many, which is to say finally, to lead the same moral life together” (p 15).

The formation of a group inherently requires a moral discipline and authority that dominates members. It also provides,

“a source of life *sui generis*. From it comes a warmth which animates its members, making them intensely human, destroying their egotisms” (p 26).

But the group has to resolve the tension between individual self-sufficiency and being part of the whole. The collective conscience demands of the individual: “make yourself usefully fulfil a determinate function” (p 42).

The division of labour is the means by which society makes this possible, and he concludes it is “the most essential condition of social life” and “the source of civilisation.” It creates a sense of solidarity and coherence among group members; it creates a social and moral order *sui generis*, both distinguishing and linking the members according to functions, which create social categories.

Two types of solidarity:

Durkheim identifies two types of solidarity. The first is created by the sympathy that follows from the similarity of members with each other. Images of similarity unite and carry members into a collective representation. They are either total or dissolve. Representations that are contrary, weaken each other when they encounter each other, but those that are similar reinforce each other. They form a social “agglutination” and are only solidary in the measure to which members confound themselves with each other. This is called *mechanical solidarity* in the sense that members are attached to

each other and the group without intermediary, in the same way that material objects are connected with each other.

The second form of solidarity results from the division of labour. Members are linked by mutual recognition and valuing of differences; their distinctness is preserved. Once this system is developed, it constitutes a social solidarity and the members participate,

“in a work, immense and communal, whose inevitable gradual development links actual cooperators to their predecessors. It is thus the continual repetition of different human endeavours which especially constitutes social solidarity and which becomes the elementary cause of the extension and growing complication of the social organism” (p 62).

It assures cohesion and is called *organic solidarity* since it is similar to the solidarity of the various organs of a living organism.

Organic solidarity is always expressed by the presence of rules or laws that govern members' relations. While mechanical solidarity is based on similarities relying on images, organic solidarity rests on symbols and symbolic relationships that form a system of boundaries. The laws also have regulatory functions and ensure restitution for infringements; Durkheim draws a parallel between the organising role of the nervous system and the system of restitutive laws.

The conflict between individuality and group membership is related to centripetal and centrifugal social forces, which cannot flourish simultaneously. The individual has to be different from others. But mechanical solidarity exerts a pressure so the collective identity supervenes.

“The social molecules which can be coherent in this way can act together only in the measure that they have no actions of their own, as the molecules of inorganic bodies. That is why we propose to call this type of solidarity mechanical. The term does not signify that it is produced by mechanical and artificial means. We call it that only by analogy to the cohesion, which unites the elements of an inanimate body, as opposed to that which makes a unity out of the elements of a living body. What justifies the term is that the link, which thus unites the individual to society is wholly analogous to that which attaches a thing to a person. The individual conscience, considered in this light, is a simple dependent upon the collective type and follows all its movements, as the possessed object follows those of its owner. In societies where this type of solidarity is highly developed, the individual does not appear.... Individuality is something, which the society possesses. Thus, in these social types, personal rights are not yet distinguished from real rights” (p 130).

The unity of mechanical solidarity is strong, but brittle and individual personalities are absorbed into a collective personality. However, in organic solidarity following from division of labour, the personality can attain a personal sphere of action. To make this possible,

“It is necessary, then, that the collective conscience leave open a part of the individual conscience in order that special functions may be established there, functions which it cannot regulate. The more this region is extended, the stronger is the cohesion which results from this solidarity” (p 131).

The individual conscience is strongest when the collective conscience envelopes it; when they are of similar extent, the collective conscience has more or less power, depending on whether it is more or less vital than the individual conscience; the more the states of the collective conscience are determined, the more the individual loses the

opportunity for individuality and is forced into uniform moulds. This is more likely in mechanical solidarity, than organic.

The society with a dominance of mechanical solidarity would be homogeneous, structured as a horde (cf Freud, 1921). Collective states of mechanical solidarity are likely to be progressively less intense and for the individual personality to become more important in the life of the society. The individual conscience grows more than the collective, as shown by the decline in ritual and religion through history. It is inevitable that it should be replaced by organic solidarity as differences between individuals and groups are bound into a larger unit through the division of labour. If this were not to occur, the members would be subject to a collective conscience, expressed by the chief who would become a superhuman figure raised above the mass. His authority would emanate from the collective conscience. This corresponds to the crowd and to a lesser extent to the peer group structure composed of cliques.

In societies where organic solidarity predominates, the units are not repetitions of similar homogeneous entities, but a system of different units each of which has its own role, as organs within a larger whole. Individuals are organised according to the function they fulfilled in the society. This is similar to the law governing biological systems and the society is an organism. With mechanical solidarity, the individual conscience is little different to the collective conscience, but is not artificially suppressed or restrained, because individual personality did not exist at that time in history. Individuality is not “congenital with humanity” (p 195), but comes from the division of labour, which brings about cooperation of specialised functions.

“Social life comes from a double source, the likeness of consciences and the division of labour. The individual is socialised in the first case, because, not having any real individuality, he becomes with those he resembles, part of the same collective type; in the second case, because while having a physiognomy and a personal activity which distinguishes him from others, he depends upon them in the same measure that he is distinguished from them, and consequently upon the same society which results from their union” (p 226).

The division of labour requires rules determining the relations of divided functions including moral rules:

“Men cannot live together without acknowledging, and, consequently, making mutual sacrifices, without tying themselves to one another with strong, durable bonds. ... Every society is a moral society” (p 228).

Cooperation has intrinsic morality, and develops as the individual personality becomes stronger and allows for personal initiative, but members work for the whole and regard themselves as part of the organism. In return, society has duties toward its members as co-operators.

The division of labour follows from increasing concentration and density in the social interaction and communication of the members. Intra-societal relationships are multiplied leading to variation and specialisation, conflict has to be resolved, and the institution of rules and division of labour allow multiple interests to coexist.

For this to happen, the society has to have been constituted with some degree of solidarity and mutual recognition of the need to preserve it. As division of labour progresses, groups must remain in communication and adapt to each other. Social structure is transformed into a more highly organised and durable state of solidarity, but has to begin with mechanical solidarity and the formation of a collective conscience based on apparent similarities of members, and mechanical solidarity is developed by the pressure to resolve social needs and to bring harmony into the sentiments. The division of labour is a derived phenomenon,

“it results from internal movements, which are developed in the midst of the mass, when the latter is constituted. ... Once it appears, it tightens the society. But this integration supposes another which it replaces. For social units to be able to be differentiated, they must first be attracted or grouped by virtue of the resemblances they present. ... It is necessary first that these latter be mingled in the midst of the same individual collective conscience for the process of differentiation to begin. ... It is then that more complex organisms are formed by the repetition of more simple similar organisms which are differentiated only if once associated. In short, association and cooperation are two distinct facts” (p 278).

He rejects the utilitarian notion that cooperating individuals form societies, which would be creation *ex nihilo*.

“Collective life is not born from individual life, but it is, on the contrary, the second which is born from the first. ... This is the only way we can explain the personal individuality of social units formed without the disintegration of society. It is elaborated in and adapted to existing society. ... It is not the absolute personality of the monad, which is sufficient unto itself, and could do without the rest of the world, but that of an organ or part of an organ having its determined function, but which can not, without risking dissolution, separate itself from the rest of the organism. Under these conditions, cooperation becomes not only possible but necessary” (p 279-280).

The advance of the division of labour occurs by units exerting pressure on each other and the weakening the collective conscience formed under conditions of mechanical solidarity. The collective conscience however, continues to moderate the process by the pressure it exerts on the individual consciences. The more general the collective conscience is, the more abstract it is, and individual consciences are more concrete. But abstraction leaves more opportunity for the individual variations, and as society is extended and concentrated, it envelops the individual less. As it develops, culture becomes more general and abstract, less fixed in the body and more social.

As society becomes more established as an organism, the culture, cannot fail to develop and become structured by division of labour. No individuals have control over it and it becomes a reality *sui generis*,

“which exists by itself and by virtue of specific and necessary causes, and which, consequently, confound themselves with man’s own nature, and to which he is held to adapt himself in order to live, just as to his physical environment” (p 342-343).

To begin with, the only psychic life is collective and identical for all, but with increased complexity and development of societies, a new sort of psychic life appears, in which individual diversities multiply and separate from the social images. They become objects for collective representations and social phenomena. This includes self-consciousness and acquiring social significance; the psychic life of the individual and society become freer, more complex and more extensive, constituting personalities.

“Social facts are not the simple development of psychic facts, but the second are in large part only the prolongation of the first in the interior of consciousness. ... If we do not accept this we will mistake the cause for the effect. ... The major part of our states of consciences would not have been produced among isolated beings and would have been produced quite otherwise among beings grouped in some other manner. They come not from the psychical nature of man in general, but from the manner in which men

once associated mutually affect one another, according as they are more or less numerous, more or less close. Products of group life, it is the nature of the group which alone can explain them. ... Society does not find the bases on which it rests fully laid out in consciences; it puts them there itself” (p 349 - 350).

The unity of organised societies is given by the spontaneous consensus of the parts. Collective sentiments (such as occur in the crowd) become more and more impotent in holding together the centrifugal tendencies and are replaced by the *sui generis* solidarity provided by division of labour, instead of social likeness. Durkheim concludes:

“The only power which can serve to moderate individual egotism is the power of the group; the only power which can serve to moderate the egotism of groups is that of some other group which embraces them” (p 405).

Clinical Application:

Durkheim’s theory provides a framework for a group whose purpose is the entry into a social life for those who have been unable to do so. The initial stage of a group is based on the common factor of being acquainted with, and trusting the therapist enough to join. This is a similarity between all members without which, the group is unlikely to commence.

However, this only provides for *mechanical solidarity*, encouraging the formation of horde dynamics, manifesting as power struggles and incorporating the members into a loyalty based on similarity. In Psychoanalytic terms, this is a relationship of identification. It is a constant centripetal force drawing members together and if allowed to continue, leads to typical sect dynamics. The purpose of this form is to unify the members around the leader or the ideal incarnated by the leader in the form of privileged knowledge.

Following Durkheim, the nature of this identification is specific and limited. He describes it as based on similarities that rely on images, or sensory representations. This locates it in the order of the Imaginary (in Lacanian terms), or in Freudian terms as based on fantasy. The similarity must be evident to the members, and ensures privacy and individuality is restricted. They have to reveal the signature of the characteristic to the other members in order to qualify as belonging. This ultimately is expressed in bodily imagery, fashion or perceptual characteristic, and this shows it to be a resurrection of the *Mirror Identification*, which according to Lacan, is the process by which the child locates the image of his or her own body as like the parent’s, signifying that he or she is a member of a family, a race, a species. This is the same identification that Freud enigmatically alludes to in the beginning of chapter VII in *Group Psychology* as “the earliest expression of an emotional tie with another person” (S.E., vol. XVIII, p 105). We can extend this and say it is a tie to society and its structures by virtue of recognising oneself as a human being, and of a particular sort. This is in question in psychosis and borderline conditions.

Such a group formed through mechanical solidarity is a primitive or unstable social organism, and as Durkheim describes, the development of differentiation is inevitable, provided one condition is met: the members communicate. Once this happens, the presence of language constitutes collective representations and differences emerge. This is why the first task of those wanting to preserve a social organism in mechanical solidarity is to restrict free communication. Whoever does this thereby gains in power, since they are the only one with access to the full repertoire of collective representations.

The emergence of difference breaks the primary identification and leads to organic solidarity, since similarity has to be replaced with the formation of a whole, into which differences are incorporated so they add to it. The division of labour means that members constitute a unity together, instead of each expressing it in themselves. The meaning is in the whole, the social unit. In psychoanalytic terms, this breaks the imaginary identification, allows recognition of difference and ultimately the possibility of other forms of attachment.

The idea of the division of labour is that people differentiate their activity and in the course of it, provide for each others' needs in a reciprocal way so that all are needed, all constitute the whole organism. It is based on the ability to tolerate not just difference, but to accept *incompleteness* as a condition of human social life. In psychoanalysis we know this incompleteness as *Castration*. Not only does it break the imaginary identification, but also the narcissistic structure which is the consequence of recognising oneself. Incompleteness implies there is something outside the self, which can compete it; and can be the contribution of one's fellow members, or an ideal, not yet expressed by any one. This introduces the group to the abstract realm.

Durkheim says that organic solidarity rests on symbols and symbolic relationships, which enable boundaries and varied systems of relationships to form. The only way this can occur is through the function of language, not just as a means of communication, but as a dimension in which social phenomena are represented and mapped, so they develop abstract relationships. The functioning of language creates verbal or word representations that Freud says are the elements leading to identifications of a more complex and structured sort. These can be called *Oedipal Identifications* since they allow for identification on the basis that the other has or expresses something the subject lacks, and this not only has a value in desire, but also a symbolic value. However, this only occurs as long as the incompleteness is tolerated and the commonality is accepted as symbolic rather than real.

Thus, the division of labour can be taken as a metaphor for the differentiation that represents each individual as a difference and allows for the possibility of symbolic relationships. In social life, the *Oedipal Identification* is not just with a parent, but with all those who give access to modes of being which allow the subject to take their place in a community of others. The elements forming the basis for such identifications have to be constituted by language, which means for a sensory basis that is named and integrated into symbolic relations with a system of meanings or "culture". Difference becomes the basis for the subject acquiring something in a symbolic form. But having done so, he or she is then *the same* as the other, but only in symbolic terms, in a cultural system of meaning.

One final essential characteristic of *Oedipal Identification* is that it is the other as a social being in his or her own right, as a member of the same system constituted by the *Mirror Identification* that is the source of the identification. The boy identifies with the father, and although he may imitate him, ultimately he becomes a man *in his own way* taking the role and identity of a man. The same occurs for the girl. This frees the subject from having to be *the same* as the source of the identification, and allows individuality and a measure of freedom. Durkheim shows this is lacking in social groups bound by *mechanical solidarity*, and only comes about when difference is enshrined in a symbolic system of culture.

Another possible attachment exists through the constitution of difference. Relationships can be formed to preserve difference. This happens where the difference is a function of desire, such as in sexuality, but it could be in any other

form where the subject wants something from the other that flows out of difference. In this case, the difference needs to be maintained; whereas identification attempts to annul the difference by augmenting the ego. Relations that rest on the difference itself, lead to *Object Relations* or *Libidinal Bonds*. In other words, difference becomes the source of the subject acquiring something out of the active exchange with the other, which does not change him or her. For identification, exchange is not integral, since it exists as a symbolic relationship. But active intercourse is the means whereby the libido flows. In Durkheim's terms, differentiation leads to communication, which generates what he calls the *life* and *pleasure* of communal life.

The exchange around preserved differences have the possibility of giving the participants something they do not otherwise have; it constitutes the relationship Durkheim calls the relations of the organs of a living body. But this implies some purpose of the social being and this seems to be a function that is in danger of being lost in a psychological environment, since this can only be construed in terms of the relationship of the group to other groups or to a larger social life.

One further possibility of attachment arises. There may be differences, which emphasise to the subject that he or she lacks something that is recognised in another. In this case, the other as a social being is not the object of the attraction; it is the quality the other possesses. The subject may be drawn into a bond, which does not acknowledge his or her own lack, but seeks to complete itself *in the same terms as the object*. This leads to identification, not with the other in a symbolic relationship, but in terms of the specific characteristic that signifies the completion of the lack. The subject then takes on that characteristic from the other in the same form as the other.

Expressions of this are imitation and contagion. In psychoanalytic terms, this is *Hysterical Identification*. It is based on acquiring the characteristic of the other in order to obscure a lack and create an imaginary structure in which the subject has what the other has, and becomes the same. It reduces individuality, restricts freedom and condemns them to being the other. The difference is obscured for an imaginary union.

For the group, *Hysterical Identification* involves a relationship in which the subject is absorbed back into a relation of similarity and the only way of satisfaction is to be like the other. This reduces the differentiation that allows for relationships that enable individuation to occur, and instead lead in a regressive way, to mechanical solidarity based on sameness. This destabilises the group, making it restrictive for the others while giving the subject an imaginary satisfaction. As Freud shows, *Hysterical Identification* is the mechanism by which the subject collects symptoms from the other, representing the hoped-for quality and hence for the formation of a Horde. It leads to the destructive dynamics that make of a group a place where individuality is restricted.

These four modes of attachment comprise different possibilities in the dialectic of same / different, in relation to belonging / rejection. At its most primitive, groups function on the basis of the same being accepted, and the different being rejected. But this is not adequate, since an object relation requires the different have to be accepted and the same rejected, as in the sexual relationship.

This is a set of binary relations. The other is the same as the subject or not, and is accepted or not, making a matrix of possibilities, as shown in Figure 1.

There are four possible relations in this set and they enable the group process to be mapped. At one moment, a member may indicate a sameness that binds them to another member, at another moment, it is the difference that attracts them. Then again, it the sameness or difference may become the basis for rejecting the others.

These relations fluctuate from moment to moment in the group process. But what activates them is largely unconscious, therefore verbalising them alters the way they operate. It interferes with the imaginary relation and encourage the formation of symbolic relations.

	ACCEPT (BELONG)	REJECT (ALIEN)
SAME		
DIFFERENT		

Figure 1. Matrix of group relations.

But another aspect can be defined. Whether the characteristic is the *same* or *different* as the subject is an objective fact. However, the same characteristic can also be seen as subjective when it is felt in terms of whether the subject *has* or *has not* the characteristic. Then we can say that the dimension of accept / reject can be seen in terms of the social significance of a characteristic, which is whether it promotes *belonging* or *rejection*; or on the other hand, it can be seen in personal terms as whether the characteristic is *present* or *absent*. Using this, we can fill in the matrix for the types of attachment that have been discussed. This is shown in Figure 2.

		<i>Personal</i>		
		PRESENT	ABSENT	
<i>Objective</i>	SAMENESS	Mirror Identification	Oedipal Identification	HAVE <i>Subjective</i>
	DIFFERENCE	Libidinal Bond	Hysterical Identification	HAVE NOT
		BELONG	REJECT	
		<i>Social</i>		

Figure 2. The matrix of attachment.

When we come to the question of technique, this matrix provides a reference framework for the therapist to orient to what should be commented on and named. All these relations can be described and revealed. When they are named the imaginary elements are given a symbolic value.

Organic solidarity validates differences as the basis for belonging (to form identifications) or exchange (to form libidinal bonds) and the circulation of signifiers in a culture incorporating all members. The sense of being part of an organism provides an experience of belonging that validates members' differences within a group context. The status of the subject's experience is changed as it takes its place there.

The process that occurs in the social being can be illustrated, using some detail of adolescent sexuality. Mick is a 15-year-old boy who has been referred for aggressive and uncontrolled behaviour at home and particularly towards his father since he had a heart attack. In outpatient and inpatient work, individual and family therapy many aspects of his problems were understood, but the underlying basis of the difficulty did not become clear until he joined a group. Over several sessions, it became clear indirectly, that he suffered from a fear that his insatiable desire for masturbation indicated he was homosexual. Because of this he had to hide all his contacts with peers behind a veil of hostility.

He was isolated in this problem and could not allow himself to communicate or get close to peers in any way and this prevented him from finding out what masturbation meant to others. He tended to opt out of the group activities, make comments from the sidelines and be disruptive. We could say from Durkheim's point of view that there were no accessible *collective representations* available to him about his sexuality. But he was also threatened by similarity with others and had to break out of it to ensure that he did not fall into identification with them, leading to a horde. At the same time he also jeered at them for their differences from him. He could find no basis to connect.

In a session when the term "wanking" was used, I asked the group what the word meant. Mick said of me, "well if he doesn't know we won't tell him. If he found out he would not be able to stop himself doing it." Another boy said that if my mother knew I was a wanker she would kill me; others made comments in the same vein including the idea that if I did not know what it was, I was missing out on something very good and I was to be pitied. Then Mick said that it meant a person was a homosexual. In spite of my efforts to get the group to talk more about it, they moved onto other things. Then about 15 minutes later, while they were waiting for the cards to be shuffled and dealt for a new hand, another boy sitting next to Mick leaned over to him conspiratorially, held up his right hand and said, "do you think it is in the wrist or the fingers?" Mick laughed with a mixture of embarrassment, "I dunno" he said, then he thought for a moment and then said, "I think it's in the fingers." The other boy nodded with the air of a connoisseur and said, "Yes, I think the fingers have it."

Here we see collective representations forming among the members of the group so that the facts of their sexuality cease to be a unique personal characteristic, and become signified as a group characteristic, shared with the others, but in their own way and it becomes part of a culture, or *collective conscience*. The fact that it is not discussed in a logical, discursive way does not prevent the formation of collective representations and in turn a broader collective conscience, which allows the subject to insert his own experience into a group culture, which gives it a group meaning, relieving the individual of the full responsibility of making meaning of it. The fear of homosexuality is not explicitly dealt with, but the fact that the others share a similar set of ideas, is of enormous relief.

In this way, Mick not only becomes a group member, but he also can begin to identify Oedipally with the others around the fact that they all masturbate in their own way, rather than having to resist the fear that if he finds out about them he will fall into an hysterical or mirror identification and lose his identity. At the same time, he finds himself to be a member in the sense of making a unique contribution to the group and together they encompass the range of reactions to masturbation.

Although this is only a fragment it may indicate how the totality of the group culture emerges and constitutes through the formation of collective representations, a

system of values and ideas that can function as a collective conscience. This can provide for Mick the elements of a collective mind (a term Durkheim also uses) that reduces the uniqueness and burden of his experience by placing it into a community, or we could say constituting it as an organ of a being. This is the solution to his fear. From same and difference he is delivered by the emergence of being.

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