That being the case however, since Christian theism is committed to a Trinitarian account of God, on Swinburne's terms it would be less probable than a non-Trinitarian view. To avoid that consequence Swinburne tries to show that God's being triune follows necessarily from God's being good. This gives rise to two problems: why accept Swinburne's inference and even if one does, what about its consequences? As to the consequences: if reason entails that God necessarily is triune, yet scripture only supports the claim that God is triune, then one ends up making reason a source of knowledge of God which is superior to scripture: reason can show that God is necessarily triune, scripture cannot. But even readers sympathetic to Swinburne's project are likely to have reservations about that. As to the inference: why must a perfectly good being have an equal in order to be perfectly loving? Admittedly that might be true of human beings, but no one suggests they are perfectly good. More needs to be done to make that case for a perfect being. Specifically one wonders about Swinburne's confidence that God will act in a recognisably similar way to a human being. Even if one accepts the argumentation however, God the Son and Holy Spirit turn out to be metaphysically necessary i.e. 'inevitably caused to exist by an ontologically necessary being' (p. 31). But given that creation for Swinburne is a matter of God knowingly causing something to exist or allowing something else to cause something to exist (p. 12) then the distinction between Son, Spirit on the one hand, and creation on the other, does not seem to be very robust.

Leaving aside issues that arise from the need to keep Christian theism a simple hypothesis, Swinburne is at his best tackling the posterior evidence for Christian theism. The account of Christ's life and death is useful; likewise the way in which Swinburne takes seriously the scriptural and other evidence and marshals it in favour of the resurrection is refreshing. Criticisms notwithstanding, the book is clear, well written and interesting throughout, indeed Christianity is fortunate to have so gifted an advocate as Swinburne. That said however, where many are likely to part company with Swinburne is in his commitment that reason alone is able to access fully the divine mystery.

DOMINIC RYAN OP

SUFFERING AND EVIL: THE DURKHEIMIAN LEGACY: ESSAYS IN COMMEMORATION OF THE 90th ANNIVERSARY OF DURKHEIM'S DEATH, edited by W.S.F. Pickering and Massimo Rosati, *Berghahn* Oxford, 2008, pp. viii + 195, £30.00 hbk

For most theologians, Durkheim is a figure who looms peripherally. Those who dabble in religious studies will be aware of his landmark work, *The Elementary Forms of the Religious Life*. Few might realise his enormous and growing significance within sociology. In France, his star is very much in ascent. Thus, when it came to naming side streets adjacent to the *Bibliotheque nationale de France* in 1996, Durkheim won over Sartre. But this increase of interest in Durkheim is by no means confined to France.

The British Centre for Durkheimian Studies, based at Oxford, has done much to enhance his reputation with an annual review, numerous conferences, and a flood of scholarly excavations. This is an unusually creative collection of essays to come from the Centre, one of particular significance for theologians. Edited by Bill Pickering, who age does not wither and who has produced a flood of invaluable critical appraisals of Durkheim on religion, and by Massimo Rosati, an Italian specialising in the history of sociology, the work comes with significant credentials. As to be expected, it is impeccably edited. The first section of essays deals with suffering and evil in Durkheim and the second with the Durkheimian

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legacy. Why is the collection so interesting, given that Durkheim wrote little directly on these topics?

The collection seeks to open out a neglected topic, both in Durkheim and in sociology itself: suffering. The essays involve a re-reading of Durkheim through the lens of suffering to produce a brilliant re-reading of his works, one that exposes his strengths and weaknesses, but above all in ways that propel sociology in the direction of theodicy. This term, the property of Weber, has now been well applied to Durkheim's sociology of religion, and presents a card to play for those sociologists seeking to deepen links with theology. Ingeniously, in the prolegomena Pickering exposes Durkheim's own vulnerability by speculating if he died in 1917 from a stroke, or cancer, or a broken heart at the loss of his son André in battle in 1916. Such biographical speculation would be commonplace in regard to central figures in other disciplines, but oddly, up to recently, have been rare in sociology. This biographical reticence seemed to affirm the virility the discipline sought for itself, of providing scientific appraisals that came from lives cast above the human and, so disembodied, seemed above its weaknesses. Setting their thoughts in the milieu of their lives, far from diminishing their insights, enhances their credibility, a point illustrated in Radkau's recently published massive tome on Max Weber.

All the essays in the collection are thoughtful, scholarly and creative, but particularly noticeable is the quality of the Italian contributions from Rosati and Paoletti. The collection turns Durkheim around into concerns of late modernity with happiness, fulfilment and its denial, evil and suffering, and what is structured in the collective that gives rise to manifestations of melancholy. Some original re-interpretations appear. Thus, *The Division of Labour* is denoted as concerned with the pursuit of happiness. It can be thwarted by pathological breaches of the normal, that which gives society stability and solidarity. It is in the failures of meshing between society and the individual that aberrations can be found that give rise to Durkheim's twin concepts of egoism and *anomie*. These generate a property of melancholy which Jankélévitch treats as 'the modern face of ancient *acedia*' (p. 39). She exploits well Durkheim's metaphor of *tissu* (holes in fabric of society) that require repairs, often obtained through rituals (pp. 41–44).

All the time, the emphasis in Durkheim and his followers is to accentuate the significance of the collective, hence the emphasis on evil as social in location, but also as something affecting the individual, a specific concern of Jankélévitch's contribution. The nuances of Durkheim's approach to evil are given a subtle reading in the essay from Paoletti. Social evil derives from a failure to mark limits (hence giving rise to *anomie* and egoisim) (p. 59). It also emerges from what he terms 'an excess of reality' (p. 72). Emptiness, frustration and sadness shape Durkheim's notion of social evil. Denial, sacrifice and asceticism are marked out as the vitalising contributions of suffering, issues pursued in the contribution from Cladis. He evaluates suffering in relation to the dilemmas of Durkheim's *homo duplex*, struggles with which offer prospects of moral transformation. It is the location of the source of this transformation, but also in regard to social ties, that mark a division between Durkheim's sociology and theology; for the former it lies in the social resources alone and for the latter in God alone. Both differ over the origin of flourishing.

Suffering and its neutralisation by means of ascetic and negative rites emerges in *The Elementary Forms* and this is well explored on Rosati's first essay (of two) in the collection. A creative linking of evil to the sacred and the profane is marked here. These rituals respond to suffering and seek to heal the damage done to social vitality. The strong argument for linking suffering to society in terms of redress is well explored in Allcock's reflections on the Hague Tribunal where genocide and collective guilt are brought into focus. Parkin's chapter on Hertz, a follower of Durkheim who, in anticipation of Bauman explored the 'dark side

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of humanity', will occasion interest with its exploration of sin and confession sequestered to sociological concerns. Expiation is given a social rather than a Divine universe of understanding. Rosati's second essay on 'evil and collective responsibility' uses moral taint to provide the interconnection.

In his conclusion, Pickering seeks to rehabilitate the notion of theodicy for sociology but in ways that draw attention to the limits of Durkheim's concerns with evil and suffering. The difficulty emerging from this study, as also in Mauss on prayer, is that what is of the interior and of the subjective is sacrificed in Durkheim to attenuate the significance of the objective, what is of social fact, and of the collective. The perplexities within the sacred and its relationship to the profane are given an original interpretation in this collection. In the end, Pickering is right to conclude that Durkheim does not start with evil and suffering in his sociology, but rather treats them as outcomes of social forms of society (p. 168). Because evil is never personified, nor indeed adequately classified in his sociology, Durkheim seems doomed to treat it as a form of damage to society but in ways that block off exploration of the sensibilities of the individual, most noticeably in regard to fear. This dread renders evil malign, both for the individual and for society. Where evil eludes sociological understandings is where theological reflection on its origins begins.

KIERAN FLANAGAN

LIBERTY OF CONSCIENCE by Martha C. Nussbaum, *Basic Books*, New York, 2008, pp. viii+406, US$28.95 hbk

Martha Nussbaum presented her credentials as a philosopher and a classical scholar in 1978 with a book on Aristotle's *De Motu Animalium*. Since then she has been a prolific author, at first chiefly in the field of ethics, but more recently, since she joined the Chicago Law School, addressing philosophical issues connected with law. In *Hiding from Humanity* (2004) she criticised the advent into American penal practice of subjecting offenders to public shaming, and the weight given by legislators and judges to feelings of disgust as a ground for prohibiting behaviour that arouses them and as an excuse for violent reactions they allegedly inspire. In *Liberty of Conscience* she examines judicial decisions on appeals concerning religious freedom and religious establishment. Although the cases she discusses all belong to the United States, her book is highly relevant to current debates in Britain about disestablishment, about state funding for religious schools and adoption agencies, and about conscience in health care. She refers particular issues back to general principles with great clarity and philosophical rigour. And her book has something more that has almost disappeared from academia if not from the law courts: she writes with eloquence. You feel not only that she believes what she says, but that she cares about convincing you of it too.

Nussbaum bases her reasoning on two related but distinct principles. First, everyone should be free to practice any religion or none. On the basis of this she argues for giving religious people exemptions from certain general laws, for instance about military service, dress, drugs and absence from work on sacred days. She also relates it (p. 286) to depriving pupils at religious schools of benefits like free transport which the state ought to provide equally to all, and even (pp. 338–9) to depriving religious institutions of charitable status if they make sexual discriminations their religion requires, though she thinks that could not happen in America. To the question why religion should have this special treatment, her answer in brief is that it is required by respect for conscience (pp. 167–9). No doubt she would agree that before the sixteenth century not

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