

SYMPOSIUM

The Elementary Forms of Religious Life

A Centenary Celebration

Flinders Victoria Square Campus 20 -21 September 2012



The School of Social and Policy Studies is pleased to host a two day symposium celebrating Emile Durkheim's *The Elementary Forms of Religious Life*. First published 100 years ago, this book pioneered the sociological and anthropological study of the 'sacred'. It has since spread well beyond the investigation of ritual and symbolism to broader questions in politics, philosophy and theology. This is because one of its main conclusions, that the realm of the sacred is not only a fundamental feature of the human condition, but central to the very creation and reproduction of society, has application well beyond the study of religion. The arguments of *The Elementary Forms* could therefore be said to be pertinent to unresolved debates about nationalism and other forms of 'collective consciousness'; ritual and mythology in art and popular culture; social imaginaries and the varieties of 'collective representations'. Furthermore, while some modern societies have sought to renounce the sacred, the questions that Durkheim posed regarding the human need for transcendence, and the social energies contained in acts of 'collective effervescence', seem to have an ongoing poignancy.

Abstracts:

We invite contributions from any discipline but papers should engage with *The Elementary Forms*, and/or its ongoing relevance for debates regarding religion, spirituality, politics, art, music, popular culture, and other meaning-centred social forms. Selected papers will be published as part of a journal special issue on Durkheim's *Elementary Forms*.

Please send abstracts on proposed papers to the symposium conveners:

Dr Suzi Adams, email: suzi.adams@flinders.edu.au phone: 08 8201 3092 or

Dr Eduardo de la Fuente, email: eduardo.delafuente@flinders.edu.au phone: 08 8201 7891 . Abstracts should be of 250-300 words and offer a concise outline of the proposed paper.

Final deadline for abstracts is 31 July 2012.