

**‘REVOLUTIONARY VIOLENCE AND THE END OF HISTORY:
THE DIVIDED SELF IN FRANCOPHONE THOUGHT, 1762-1914’**

CAROLINA ARMENTEROS

About the Author

Carolina Armenteros is a Fellow of Wolfson College, Cambridge, a Rosalind Franklin Fellow at the University of Groningen, The Netherlands, and a *chercheur associé* at the École des hautes études en sciences sociales, Paris. Her research interests lie in European intellectual history ca. 1750-1914, with a special emphasis on the French nineteenth century. One of her two major current research projects focuses on the rise of historicism in France during the period 1797-1848. It has so far resulted in two articles on Maistrian historicism and the origins of moral statistics, published in *History of Political Thought* and the *Journal of the History of Ideas*, respectively. Her other major project investigates Francophone social thought from Rousseau to Durkheim, a study that has also led her to investigate the intersections between Rousseau’s moral, educational and gender philosophies.

Paper Introduction

This paper synthesises themes drawn from these various projects. Challenging conventional interpretations, it presents French sociology in a new light as a discipline deeply indebted to Rousseau. It argues likewise that sociology’s founders and precursors—notably Maistre, Comte and Durkheim—invested the new science with the mission of ending history—in a manner quite unrelated to Hegel’s description of the end of history, much more familiar to English-speaking readers. In France, the desire to end history was inseparable from that of finishing the social violence that the French Revolution seemed to have consummated. Delving into Rousseauvian ideas on the origins of violence, early Francophone sociologists hence set out to modify what they viewed as the first cause of all human ills—the divided self. Their efforts in this regard prove that, contrary to scholarly consensus, early sociology was profoundly preoccupied with the problem of the human individual.

Bibliographical Note

English-language:

Bradley, Owen. ‘Maistre’s Theory of Sacrifice’, *Joseph de Maistre’s Life, Thought and Influence*, ed. Richard Lebrun (Montreal, 2001).

Lebrun, Richard A. *Joseph de Maistre: an intellectual militant* (Montreal: McGill Queen’s University Press, 1988).

- Lukes, Steven.** *Émile Durkheim: his life and work: a historical and critical study.* Harmondsworth: Penguin, 1973.
- Melzer, Arthur.** *The natural goodness of man: on the system of Rousseau's philosophy.* Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1990.
- O'Hagan, Timothy.** *Rousseau.* London and New York: Routledge, 1999.
- Pickering, Mary.** *Auguste Comte: an intellectual biography.* Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1993.
- Wernick, Andrew.** *Auguste Comte and the Religion of Humanity: the post-theistic program of French social theory.* Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2001.

French-language:

- Brunschvicg, Léon.** *Le progrès de la conscience dans la philosophie occidentale,* 2 vols. Paris: Félix Alcan, 1927.
- Bénichou, Paul.** *Le temps des prophètes: doctrines de l'âge romantique.* Paris: Gallimard, 1977.
- Isambert, François André.** *Buchez ou l'âge théologique de la sociologie.* Paris: Cujas, 1967.
- Prades, José A.** "Religion civile et religion de l'humanité: retour sur l'anthropocentrisme durkheimien," *Social compass*, XL, 3 (1993).