

ČTVRTEČNÍ SOCIOLOGICKÉ SEMINÁŘE

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zasedací místnost 207, Jilská 1, Praha 1

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The sociality of mind: Problems, appropriations, and prospects of Durkheim's sociology of knowledge

More than one hundred years ago, Émile Durkheim and Marcel Mauss argued that the way we order and classify the world around us is shaped by the structures of our social groups. A few years later, in *The Elementary Forms of Religious Life*, Durkheim even claimed that the very categories of mind (such as space, time, or causality) are shaped by social life. Since then, these radical socio-epistemological claims have not only provoked numerous and strong objections but have also facilitated the development of crucial innovations in sociological theory.

Against this background, the paper will discuss the problems and promises of the Durkheimian sociology of knowledge in four steps. First, Durkheim's basic claims regarding the sociality of mind will be outlined. Second, by drawing on the works of such diverse thinkers as Claude Lévi-Strauss, Pierre Bourdieu, Luc Boltanski, Robert Bellah, and Hans Joas two quite different lines of reception of Durkheim's arguments will be distinguished. Third, current research in primatology and cognitive ethology will be discussed to get a better understanding of the evolutionary roots of the sociality of mind. Finally, an attempt is made to combine these approaches in order to tap the full potential of the Durkheimian sociology of knowledge.

Frithjof Nungesser is assistant professor (Universitätsassistent) in the Department of Sociology at the University of Graz/Austria. In April 2017, he received his doctorate from the University of Graz and the Max Weber Center for Advanced Cultural and Social Studies. His research interests include pragmatist social theory, the Durkheimian tradition in sociology, the sociology of violence, and the interdisciplinary dialogue between sociology and the life sciences.

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