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*L'istituzione come espressione e sistema differenziale: Marcel Mauss da Durkheim a Lévi-Strauss*

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Every structure, therefore also every institution, is inhabited by an “empty box”, a mobile space that can never be filled, which sets the elements in motion. This idea – which finds one of its many formulations, perhaps the most famous, in Deleuze’s *Structuralism* – is the outcome of a long and fruitful path, from Durkheim, through Mauss, to the anthropology of Lévi-Strauss. To understand its genesis and follow its evolutionary path, it is necessary to focus attention on Marcel Mauss’s work and on his way of thinking about institutions.