ABSTRACTS

The "Cosmic Axis" as principle of civilization in Paul Mus' writings, between cultural morphology, aesthetics and sociology

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An examination of Paul Mus's work on the Barabudur monument shows that he postulates the existence of a civilizational "principle" or "archetype" inspiring the works of Asian cultures, which he identifies with the concept of "cosmic axis". Beyond the Buddhology of Alfred Foucher and the sociology of Marcel Mauss, in his approach to "civilizations" and cosmologies, the work bears witness to influences from cultural morphology (Spengler), "neo-Babylonism" and Lévy-Bruhl. At the confluence of these inspirations, Mus then develops an *aesthetic of the aniconic*, integrating Cadière and Chavannes, and prefiguring Vernant. I conclude by highlighting some of Mircea Eliade's little-known borrowings from Mus.

***The "living grave"* and Buddhist "participation": a phenomenology of divine representation?**

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How did the ethnology of the interwar period fit into Mussian hermeneutics of religion, and reciprocally, how did this hermeneutics work to (re)orient ethnological understanding of Asian religion? Mus's encounter with both ethnographic practice and ethnological theory took a decisive turn in the mid-1930s, at the conjunction of his own intellectual maturation and the growing enthusiasm for the writings of Lucien Lévy-Bruhl, particularly among the French advocates of phenomenology, a reading which, it seems, was also Mus's own (I). This is shown by the *verbatim* of « La Tombe vivante », a lecture given in 1936 at the invitation of Paul Rivet, which turns the doxical use of the Lévy-Bruhlian concept of participation upside down by applying it not only to the mentalities of so-called "primitive" peoples, but by extending it to "Indian wisdoms". It puts into perspective Mussian reasoning on the representation of the divine (particularly with regard to Buddhism), revealing the singular place occupied by ethnography, dedicated to a phenomenological understanding of the religious (II).

Lucien Lévy-Bruhl, Paul Mus and the ethnology of Asia

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The author defends the thesis that Lévy-Bruhl had a substantial influence on Paul Mus, both philosophically and politically, and that the Dreyfus Affair was the founding event: the affair prompted Lévy-Bruhl to play a "sentinel" role in his cousin's defense. Lévy-Bruhl recognized that the anti-Dreyfusards had an irrational argument based on a mentality founded on affective principles, hence his research on "primitive mentalities" and participation, in which he studied the affective links between two disjointed beings, the sacrificer and the victim. In the theoretical debate on the links between humans and non-humans that followed Mus's intervention on Lévy-Bruhl's positions (the participation of the god in the stone), Mus sided with Lévy-Bruhl against Mauss. From the perspective of this "affective category of the supernatural", there is in fact no systematicity to participation in an all-encompassing sacred order – which is the point of view of the sacrificer that Mauss defends – because this depends, says Mus, on the degree of initiation of the individual and his or her perceptive capacity, distinguished in the context of ritual. To say, as Durkheim and Mauss do, that participation in sacrifice leads to entry into a sacred world whose complexity must be explored in order to understand how it is reorganized in modernity, is still to take the point of view of the sacrificer, i.e., of the State as judge of Dreyfus. To say, as Lévy-Bruhl and Mus do, that participation brings us into a world of bi-presence is to take the point of view of the sacrificed, who is both himself and more than himself, since he identifies with the spirit of an ancestor he cannot see. Holding this scientific position, Mus would also play a "sentinel" role in public debate, as exemplified by his post-war anti-colonialist struggle.

The localizations of Asian place. From the resilience of chthonic divinities to the resistance of local communities. Anthropology of place in the work of Paul Mus.

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The question of "place" and "local" is a common thread that runs through all of Mus's work. Place is posed as an anthropological foundation, while the relationship to the local constitutes the key to interpreting the different modes of implementation of Indianization and Sinicization in the Indochinese space but also to explaining the failure of French colonization. The article proposes, through a reading of the historical stratifications that Mus operates over the

long term, to show the coherence of this questioning which intersects with a political positioning located on the side of the "locals".

New animism » in Southeast Asia and Paul Mus's legacy

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This paper deals with a new wave of studies on spirit cults in Southeast Asian Buddhist societies, in regard to Paul Mus contribution to the identification of a common religious background in the region which he characterized as "land religion" or "cadastral religion" in order to convey the idea of an "impersonal god mainly defined through its localization". This research renewal observed since the 2000s is all the more striking that it occurs after half a century of relative neglect on this aspect of religiosities and that it belongs to the ontological turn in anthropology for which those religiosities are part of « new animism ». The focus on spirit cults rather casts light on a form of spiritual powers manifestation common in the region, the spirit possession, whose diverse forms bridge Mus' « land religions », deeply rooted in localities, and prosperity cults which one can see burgeoning today in the region metropoles.

Paul Mus's Monsoon Asia: Old Problems and New Directions

Andrea Acri, Associate professor habilitated to supervise research (École Pratique des Hautes Études, University PSL ; GREI/EA2120)

This article offers historiographical and theoretical reflections on old and new research trajectories by tracing the intellectual genealogy of the idea of Monsoon Asia and its application to the field of the humanities and Asian studies. Suggesting a revival and revisiting of the idea of Monsoon Asia elaborated in French intellectual circles at the beginning of the twentieth century, and in particular by Paul Mus, it reconceptualises the geopolitical configurations of Asia as framed by the current paradigm of regional studies by broadening the geohistorical framework through which the complex mosaic of cultural phenomena linked by a common history dating back to the distant past is to be studied, as well as by decompartmentalising academic disciplines.

Paul Mus,"The politico-religious sects and Annamite traditionalism", unpublished text edited and commented by…

Pascal Bourdeaux, Associate Professor, habilitated to supervise research (HDR), EPHE-PSL

The Paul Mus archives located in Lyon (Institut Asie Orientale) preserve scattered documents and varied studies likely to enrich our knowledge of the

history and cultures of Southeast Asia. They are also a key to understanding the abundant and often complex work of this thinker of Asia. The annotated edition of this unpublished text aims to do both: to underline, as Mus does, the acuity of the questions of Sacrality, religious and profane, which emerged in a colonial context and especially in the aftermath of the Second World War; to place this text – a teaching course – in a triptych which probably aimed to explain the anthropological underpinnings of the mutation of contemporary Vietnam, by analyzing all the political and religious forces which each in their own way, but with varying degrees of legitimacy, demanded national independence.

***Sociology of a War's Afternath: Another Look at Paul Mus'* Planète Viêt-Nam**

Christophe ROBERT, Anthropologist.

Planète Viêt-Nam by Paul Mus is subtitled "a small visual sociology." This posthumous work was published in 1988 based on a nearly-completed manuscript from 1957. It consists in part of a series of reflections on sets of images where Mus reviews some basic elements of Vietnamese society during the colonial period. This is not an autobiography, an ethnographic monograph nor a historical study. One could say that it is an assessment by Mus, in this presentation of an unknown world that he unveils by means of visual analysis. In order better to make sense of Vietnamese anticolonial struggles, he takes up again and continues the analysis first undertaken in his previous book, *Sociologie d'une guerre*. I revisit my readings of these works at the beginning of my doctoral studies in sociocultural anthropology at Cornell University, and focus on a series of images, from road scenes to household interiors, and on to the political principles which underlay Mus's interpretation of a world that remained largely unknown to most French people at the time.

A correspondence between Paul Mus and Paul Rivet (1932-1937)

Edited by Grégory MIKAELIAN, Research Fellow at the Centre Asie du Sud-Est (UMR 8170, CNRS/EHESS/INALCO), Secretary of the Société des amis de Paul Mus.

The letters sent by Paul Mus to Paul Rivet between 1932 and 1957 shed new light on the Orientalist's relationship with ethnography, political commitment, and war. They show Mus as a disciple of Rivet, who drew inspiration from discussions with his master to invent a method he later named "paleo-ethnographic". On the question of politics, Mus, a determined pacifist, shows that he was aware of the major political events of the second half of the years 1930s, but that he chose to confine himself to the academic world. This makes

his commitment to war all the more striking, in which we see an Alinian mimesis for this mature man of impressive physical stature who, like Alain during the First World War, went to war to defend his country despite his pacifist convictions.