

Xavier Papaïs in “La production du milieu”

To have or not to have Mana, you must act upon the milieu. Hence the beauty of the very simple theorem ... we construct the framework of the ritual, it is the arrangement of the ritual milieu which creates the magic force. That's it. You don't need to rack your brains to try and find out what can be the ultimate essence of magic force, or the power of magic since it simply results from acting on the practice milieu. The strength or the power of magic appears in the construction of the milieu.

Xavier Papaïs in “Grand écart”

Mauss's main idea is that the milieu, the institution working on the milieu, aesthetics working on the milieu, or ... as Georgio said a while ago, working on life forms can generate new power. Power cannot be reduced to instituted or instituting power, it is wild but it has an instituting capacity, the capacity to regenerate personal or social life. This is where, to me, Mauss's sober definition of magic as equating the strength (or power) of the milieu has far-reaching implications. Why? Because it helps us get a glimpse of another possible conception of power, in other words of the potential, of the possibilities, and, consequently of will, freedom, and desire. Going beyond folklore, what is at stake in magic is precisely the underlying aspects of human power, particularly the faceless, the shapeless, what cannot be codified in terms of law, religion, technique, even concept.

Xavier Papaïs in “La révolte des puritains d'Ecosse”

(He looks for a book)

It should be somewhere here, it won't be long ... and by the way, but this is something we will talk about later, in the fourteenth century, things happened as they do now, with the same consequences ... so ... but that would be too long.

There it is ! I'll read a passage about the decisive event which was at the start of (The Great Rebellion) the English Revolution after which was the point of no return: it is a “Covenant” “réunion” in French or, for a better translation a “symbolon”. It takes place in 1638, during the Scots' rebellion. This is a formal Covenant ... ecstatic ... This is what Hume says:

The assembly met at Glasgow; and besides a great concourse of the people, all the nobility and gentry of any family or interest were present, either as members, assessors, or spectators; and it was apparent, that the resolutions taken by the covenanters could here meet with no manner of opposition. A firm determination had been entered into of utterly abolishing episcopacy [or as we said a theocracy]; and as a preparative to it, there was laid before the

presbytery of Edinburgh, and solemnly read in all churches of the kingdom, an accusation against the bishops, as guilty, all of them, of heresy, simony, bribery, perjury, cheating, incest, adultery, fornication, common swearing, drunkenness, gaming, breach of the Sabbath, and every other crime that had occurred to the accusers . The bishops sent a protest, declining the authority of the assembly [the constituting power]; the commissioner too protested against that court, as illegally constituted and elected; and, in his majesty's name, dissolved it. This measure was foreseen, and little regarded; the court continued to sit, and to finish their business. All the acts of assembly since the accession of James to the crown of England were, on pretty reasonable grounds, declared null and invalid: the acts of parliament which affected ecclesiastical affairs, were supposed, on that very account, to have no manner of authority; and thus episcopacy, the high commission, [i.e. the Inquisition] the articles of Perth, the canons, and the liturgy were abolished and declared unlawful: and the whole fabric, which James and Charles, in a long course of years, had been rearing with so much care and policy, fell at once to the ground: the covenant likewise was ordered to be signed by every one, under pain of excommunication. [1639]

We must not omit another auxiliary of the covenanters, and no inconsiderable one; a prophetess who was much followed by all ranks: her name was Michelson, a woman full of whimsies, partly hysterical, partly religious; and inflamed with a zealous concern for the ecclesiastical discipline of the Presbyterians. She spoke at certain times only, and had often interruptions of days and weeks; but when she began to renew her ecstasies, warning of the happy event was conveyed over the whole country; thousands crowded about her house, and every word which she uttered was received with veneration, as the most sacred oracles . . . The covenant was her perpetual theme [She had become the symbol of the covenant]: the true, genuine covenant, she said, was ratified in heaven; the king's covenant was an invention of Satan. When she spoke of Christ, she usually gave him the name of the covenanting Jesus. Rollo, a popular preacher and zealous covenanter, was her great favourite; and paid her, on his part, no less veneration. Being desired by the spectators to pray with her and speak to her, he answered, "that he durst not; and that it would be ill manners in him to speak, while his master Christ was speaking in her."