

MAIRIE DE PARIS



Projet CAMNAM, Programme EMERGENCES

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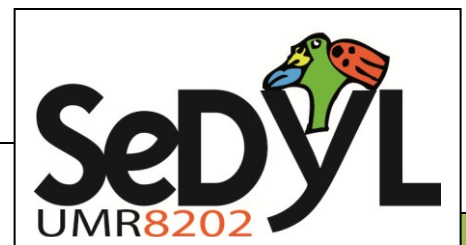
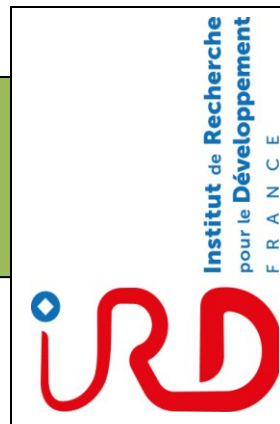


INTERNATIONAL SYMPOSIUM INALCO

*Institut national des langues et civilisations orientales*

- November 29 - December 2, 2017

# Time and Temporality in Southeast Asia



## I. Call for papers

Abstracts submission deadline : July 1, 2017

In Southeast Asia, as elsewhere, modalities of copresence of past, present, and future give rise to a plurality of conceptual and practical forms of social organization. A wide variety of situations is thus available for observation, ranging from representations of the immutability of things - where, beyond the continuous agitation of living beings, everything repeats itself and nothing truly changes - to affirmations of the inescapable, gradual and permanent wearing down of all things - since, of course, while nothing changes, nothing lasts either. Confronted with this dilemma, social actors adapt to it according to diverse strategies, ranging from resignation to a search, with varying degrees of confidence, for mastery over temporality - understood here as the specific perception of the passage of time, a dimension that human individuals universally experience, wherever they live.

Numerous approaches are available for navigating this classic theme, all resulting from a growing interest for it in social science over the past three decades. However, most of them remain to be fully applied in the field of Southeast Asia; one of the objectives of this symposium will be of course to address this issue. For example, we may consider the multiple rhythms that punctuate individuals' lives, the social nature of human existences, measures and calendars in particular, time in the great cosmologies, relations that maintain temporality, narration, and language, or the way memory serves to update the past. To go further, we can draw on Culioli's linguistic reflections questioning the appropriateness of Indo-European grammatical categories to account for the way in which other language families express time, on the idea of structure of the conjuncture as defined by the anthropologist Marshall Sahlins, on the studies concerning the "regimes of historicity", "invented traditions", "textures of time"<sup>1</sup>, and so forth.

Furthermore, the elements that we classify together under the term time may not be compounded in this way everywhere, or be measured against the same scale, or possess a common orientation, from the past to the future or vice versa. Conversely, other

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<sup>1</sup> A. Culioli, « Les modalités d'expression de la temporalités sont-elles révélatrices de spécificités culturelles », [in] *Pour une linguistique de l'énonciation*, Paris, Ophrys, 1999, t. 2, pp. 158-178 ; M. Sahlins, *Des îles dans l'histoire*, Paris, Gallimard/Le Seuil, 1989 et F. Zimmerman, « Sahlins, Obeyesekere et la mort du capitaine Cook », *L'Homme*, t. 38, n°146, 1998, pp. 191-205 ; R. Koselleck, « 'Champ d'expérience' et 'horizon d'attente' : deux catégories historiques », [in] *Le futur passé. Contribution à la sémantique des temps historiques*, Paris, Éd. de l'EHESS, 1990, pp. 307-329 et F. Hartog, *Régimes d'historicité : présentisme et expériences du temps*, Paris, Éd. du Seuil, 2003 ; E. Hobsbawm et T. Ranger (dir.), *L'invention de la tradition. Nouvelle édition augmentée*, Paris, Amsterdam, 2012 ; V. N. Rao, D. Shulman, S. Subrahmanyam, *Textures du temps : écrire l'histoire en Inde*, Paris, Éd. du Seuil, 2004.

societies' notions of time may include elements that contemporary Western cultures do not conceive as such, like a hierarchy based on precedence, or wealth and the prestige that falls to those who capture, give, or - sometimes - destroy it. The approach is therefore necessarily and even epistemologically comparative.

To achieve these objectives, several points of entry emerge. The first, immediately comparative, is to view what we call time as a means of accessing the social structures of diverse Southeast Asian communities. Temporality then appears to unify everything we usually segment into politics, religion, economics, and so forth. For example, is the abdication of a king a temporal phenomenon (that of a Buddhist world renouncer), a hierarchical phenomenon of precedence (a temporary abdication for the benefit of the original occupiers of the land), or does it partake of a status relation (an older king abdicates for a younger one, as may happen in Madagascar?) Similarly, should a king's funeral organized by his son or nephew be seen as the expression of a death/rebirth of the royal institution or does it symbolize an exchange of goods (merit, wealth, and dependents) between the members of the same house? Does contracting a debt compensate for weak credit institutions or does it extend a relationship by changing its status? Should the production of currency be viewed as a tool to encourage the circulation of goods or, in that it allows for instantaneous exchanges, as a means of liberation from bonds of dependency?

A second point of entry, directly cognitive, consists in identifying markers of temporality as they occur in Southeast Asia. Linguists can then study syntactic markers and/or constructions that relate to the concepts of "habit", "tradition", "heritage", "memory", "myth", "tale", "history", "temporality", or "appearance", which they will be able to study from the angle of syntax, semantics, and etymology, as well as discourse analysis. Historians may be interested in the origin of time, the succession of cosmic eras, the various calendrical cycles (cycles of royalty, institutions, ancestors, cultures, etc.), the sequences of ruptures and foundations in politics, or the withdrawal of time which millenarianism is based on. Finally, when time is defined as "the irreversible synchronization of events or actions belonging to two or more separate domains"<sup>2</sup>, anthropologists can comparatively explore such synchronization in various societies.

With both strategies, we can expect to uncover a relationship between multiple forms of synchronization opposing or complementing each other<sup>3</sup>. The articulation of these then constitute the distinctiveness of a society, laid out in a worldview ordered by a hierarchy of values. The investigation will, moreover, be open to the "disenchantment of time"<sup>4</sup> in contemporary globalized societies, which constitutes the confrontation

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<sup>2</sup> A. Itéanu, « Orokaiva : le temps des hommes », [in] P. Piettre (dir.), *Le temps et ses représentations*, Paris L'Harmattan, 2001, pp. 211-220.

<sup>3</sup> A. Itéanu, *loc. cit.* ; J. Baschet, *La civilisation de l'Occident féodal*, Paris, Champ Flammarion, 2006, p. 444.

<sup>4</sup> B. Pradel, « les caractéristiques traditionnelles du rythme social », *Rhuthmos*, 11 février 2012.

## Inalco Symposium - *Time and Temporality in Southeast Asia*

between the acceleration of time in contemporary globalized societies<sup>5</sup>, and more local ways of experiencing temporality. This workshop will therefore develop Southeast Asian representations of time using new or established theoretical orientations, in particular those from linguistics, history, and anthropology, in order to mutually enrich theoretical and empirical knowledge. The conference will feature three invited speakers who are specialists in one of these disciplines, but in other cultural areas than Southeast Asia, to support the comparative approach.

### II. Practical information

Submissions in the form of a one-page abstract should be accompanied by a title, the author's first and last name, institutional affiliation, e-mail address, and a short CV, should be sent by 1<sup>st</sup> July 2017 to the following email address: [camnam2017@free.fr](mailto:camnam2017@free.fr). On the basis of the Scientific Committee's evaluation, the Organizing Committee reserves the right to accept or reject proposals, within a month from this deadline.

The languages of communication are French and English; each speaker will be scheduled for 30 minutes (25 minutes presentation followed by 5 minutes for questions). A selection of papers will be published.

#### Important dates

- **1<sup>st</sup> July 2017** : deadline for proposal abstracts
- **30 July 2017** : notification of acceptance
- **15 octobre 2017** : submission deadline for selected proposals

### III. Invited speakers and Organizing committee

#### Invited speakers

- **Maurice BLOCH (Anthropologist)**  
Professor Emeritus of anthropology, specialist on Madagascar - London School of Economics and Political Science
- **Daniel LEBAUD (Linguist)**

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<sup>5</sup> R. Hartmut, *Accélération. Une critique sociale du temps*, Paris, La Découverte, coll. « Théorie critique », 2010.

## Inalco Symposium - *Time and Temporality in Southeast Asia*

Professor Emeritus of linguistics, specialist in French - Université de Franche-Comté/ELLIADD (Publishing, Literature, Languages, Computer Science, Arts, Didactics, Discourse, EA 4661)

- **François MACÉ (Historian)**

Professor Emeritus of history, specialist on Japan - Institut National des Langues et Civilisations Orientales (INALCO, National Institute of Oriental Languages and Civilizations)

### Organizing Committee

- Nasir ABDOUL-CARIME (AEFEK)
- Sovath BONG (URBA)
- Éric BOURDONNEAU (EFEO/CASE)
- Grégory MIKAELIAN (CNRS/CASE)
- Joseph THACH (INALCO/SeDyL)

### IV. Website

For more details, visit the symposium website: <http://camnam2017.free.fr>