

**MAUSS INTERNATIONAL**  
Anti-Utilitarian Interventions in Social Sciences  
*Digital Journal*

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For four decades now, the MAUSS (*Mouvement anti-utilitariste en sciences sociales*) has been at the heart of the debates in social sciences in France and in French-speaking countries. While this landmass of works has found resonance and relays in Latin countries such as Italy as well as across South America, it has barely percolated across the language and cultural barrier into English – and therefore international – scholarship. For those of us who do, within the MAUSS, publish in English, how often have we been obliged to disappoint interest in this perspective because of the unfortunate unavailability of core MAUSS texts? This is the aim of the *MAUSS International* journal: To bring MAUSS-branded scholarship to a truly international audience and thereby partake more forcefully in the important debates in social sciences today.

Greeted early on by scholars such as Mary Douglas, Albert O. Hirschman, Marshall Sahlins, and Annette Weiner, the MAUSS was founded in 1981 by Alain Caillé and collaborators to resist the growing encroachment of neo-classical economics and other utilitarian approaches in the social sciences. It is interesting how what is often called “French theory” continues to be at the heart of social sciences and philosophy today in English language scholarship. Yet what is intriguing from a French perspective is how this felicitous reception has excluded the critiques and debates that have occurred over the last decades within French scholarship, creating what are sometimes serious problems of interpretation and application of these theories. This continued reliance on heavyweights such as Foucault, Derrida, and Bourdieu is a sign that novel theoretical insights have failed (at least to some extent) to impose themselves within English language scholarship in the last decades. It also gives the impression that French language scholarship has dried up since these heydays and that nothing of similar or significant value has emerged since. This is not true.

The globalization of academia, meanwhile, has brought a diversity of national and regional traditions in contact with each other and has promoted certain issues as common concerns. This process is accelerated by the enmeshing of social realities as a result of these same globalizing trends. As the COVID-19 pandemic has shown, the world today is inextricably woven into a whole, to the extent that a pangolin or a bat in a market in inland China (or some other cause) has the potential to initiate a snowball effect that can reach remote areas of Africa or South America in a matter of weeks. In other words, many of the pressing issues of the day are shared ones, and we are better off if we address them from a plurality of communicating standpoints rather than in isolation.

The *MAUSS International* wants to act as a crucible for such transnational communicative processes and act as a cultural and intellectual broker for anti-utilitarian perspectives on both sides of the linguistic divide in order to better address today’s important issues.

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