

## Notes on Contributors

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**Micheline Galley**, Research Director at the Centre national de la recherche scientifique, is a field researcher. She has worked essentially in the Maghreb and in Malta on oral literature (Arabic dialects), biography, rural rituals, and popular culture. Her most recent work is entitled *Maria Calleja’s Gozo* (Utah University Press and UNESCO, 1994). From 1972 to 1987 she was General Secretary at the International Association for the Study of Mediterranean Civilizations. She was responsible for organizing and editing the proceedings of interdisciplinary conferences on the relations between Mediterranean cultures (Algiers, 1973 and Tunis, 1985).

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humain chez Eschyle et Sophocle," published in the *Revue des études grecques* (1994); "Poésie et religion chez Hésiode," in *Discours religieux dans l'Antiquité* (1995); and "L'insoutenable légèreté de la victoire. Nike chez Homère et Hésiod" (1997).

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**Nicole Revel**, a linguist and anthropologist, received her Ph.D. from the Université René-Descartes, Paris-V in 1985 and a Masters Degree in political science in 1964. She is Research Director at the CNRS and teaches linguistic anthropology at FRA, EHESS, and at the research center for oral history at the INALCO. Since 1991-92, she has conducted a research seminar on *Les Littératures de la voix: les épopées*. She is the author of numerous books and articles on the language, oral histories, and ethnosciences of the Philippine Palawan. Among her publications: *Le Riz en Asie du Sud-Est. Atlas du vocabulaire de la plante* (1988); *Chants alternés, Asie du Sud-Est* (1991) and *Pour une anthropologie des voix* (1993).

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**Jacqueline Sublet**, Ph.D, is responsible for research at CNRS and an expert on Arabic proper names and the transmission of knowledge in medieval Islam. Her publications include: "La peste prise aux rets de la jurisprudence" published in *Studia islamica* (1971); "Les frontières selon Ibn Battouta" in *La signification du bas Moyen Âge dans l'histoire et la culture du monde musulman* (1978); *Un fonctionnaire chrétien dans l'administration mamelouke: Ibn al-Suquâi*, ed. and trans. by Tâli Kitâb Wafayât al-Ayân (1974); *Le voile du nom. Essai sur le nom propre arabe* (1991). The Arabic edition *Hisn al-ism. Qirâât fî l-asmâ al-arabiyya*, trans. S. M. Barakat, will be published in 1998 at the Institut français d'études arabes de Damas; and *Les trois vies du sultan Babars* (1992).

**Solange Thierry** has been a member of the Ecole française d'Extrême-Orient and curator at the Museum of Phnom Penh. Upon her return to France she became Vice Director of the Musée de l'Homme and Lecturer at the Musée national d'histoire naturelle (ethnological laboratory), responsible for the Asian department. Currently she is Director of the honors program at the Ecole pratique des hautes études (section V, religious studies). She has also continuously taught additional courses at the Institut national des langues et civilisations orientales.

**Maria Villela-Petit**, born in Rio de Janeiro, completed her studies in philosophy in Paris with Paul Ricœur. Responsible for research at the CNRS she is affiliated with the Centre de recherches phénoménologiques et herméneutiques, a research unit associated with the ENS in Paris. She has published numerous essays on Merleau-Ponty, Husserl, Heidegger, Henry Maldiney, Paul Ricœur, and Simone Weil. Among her contributions to the field of Greek studies: "La question de l'image artistique dans le Sophiste" in *Études sur le Sophiste de Platon* (1991); "Heidegger, Pla-

ton et l'art grec" in *Contre Platon, 2, le platonisme renversé* (1995), "Les peintres de la poétique" in *La part de l'œil 8* (1992), "L'enjeu des voix dans le Philoctète" in *Pour une anthropologie des voix*" (1993). Also, forthcoming in Brazil is a collection of conference proceedings on personal and cultural identity, organized in Recife by the Fondation Gilberto Freyre.

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*Editorial Note:* The Central Asian epics represent those idealized values of virility – defense and perpetuation – which are of equal value to the individual, the society or the ethnic group. It is as such that these epics have become, even more so than religious values, instrumental in the development of a national identity among these peoples. In the 1950s, Geser, the bouriate equivalent<sup>1</sup> of Djangar, was considered the greatest enemy of the Soviet Regime in that region, although he was but a mythological character. At that time, experts of these epics were imprisoned! Since the fall of the communist regime, all Central Asian people have celebrated their epic heroes: in search of possible role models, they historicize them. In 1940, trying to win over the Kalmuks during the war, Stalin decided to celebrate the 500th anniversary of the orate leader (i. e. western Mongolian – the Kalmuks being the western Mongolian tribe who came down the Volga) Esen Khan of the Ming army in 1440. It thus appeared quite natural when the Kalmuk capital celebrated the 550th anniversary in 1990. Even the celebration of the kirgian Manas and the bouriate Geser took place in 1995, totaling 1,000 years in one occasion! These epics have such

force as ideological vehicles that political as well as religious powers have tried to salvage them. Buddhism filtered into the Tibetan Geser as well as the Mongolian Geser, Islam into Manas, a little bit of everything into Djangar ...Geser's enemies in recent times count Hitler among them.

## Notes

1. See Roberte N. Hamayon, "Chamanisme, bouddhisme, héroïsme épique: quel support d'identité pour les Bouriates post-soviétiques?" in *Etudes mongoles et sibériennes*, 27 (1996): 327–356.