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Sur le désarroi des après-guerres. Les philosophes ont douté de leur parole, l'ethnographie y a trouvé la sienne

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This article aims to return to a pivotal moment in the encounter between philosophy and anthropology in France. In the space of a few decades, straddling two world wars, evidence (Cartesian), experience (Kantian) and lived experience (according to Scheler, Husserl or Bergson), the supports and arguments of a multi-secular history of philosophy, lost their frames of reference and their certainties. The *cogito* wandered, looking for places where it could be mastered, the '*cogito baladeur*', as Sartre called it, and not only for its insolence. One doubted or criticized, but nothing could remedy this collapse of assumptions. It was a humiliation, then in 1945 an inescapable confrontation with what of this Second World War could never have been assumed, not even intuited, and felt like the black hole of the intelligible. What had happened in Europe challenged a philosophical intelligence folded in on itself, problematic and without a future. The encounter with ethnography was indirect and revitalizing. The paper argues that Mauss' project, and his claim to a '*droit des images*' which, drawing on an Etruscan-Roman usage, supported his teaching and his last conference (London, 1938), uncovered the black spot of Enlightenment and gave to philosophy a second chance after the exhaustion of its Alexandrian legacy.