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Nota di contenuto	Introduction -- I. L'ENJEU DES SOURCES: LA PSYCHOLOGIE. -- II. UN PHENOMENE DE COMMUNICATION. -- III. UNE FONCTION DU LANGAGE. -- IV. LE PROBLEME DE LA PERTINENCE ET DU CONTEXTE. -- V. LA VALIDITE DE L'INTERPRETATION. -- Conclusion.
Sommario/riassunto	Whereas psychology has particularly studied motivation as a processus, sociology, despite Weber's and Mills's contributions, has often neglected to conceive the status of motives. This article tries to show that a sociological study of motives should contribute to a better understanding of some religious phenomena which are related to our technological societies. The author describes the motive as an act of social communication and as a function of language, which permits a reconsideration of the problem of relevance and validity in interpretation. Consequently, the sociological study of motives appears to be a way to understand the dynamics of social groups and to establish that sociology is a theory of knowledge.