

ABSTRACTS

Esteban Krotz. *Alterity and the anthropological question.*

The situation of cultural contact is the place of origin of the “anthropological question”. The meeting between paleolithic groups, travel and imperial expansion are three exemplary forms of this situation. The “anthropological question”, whose central category is “alterity”, is a way of studying this type of situation. Thus, anthropology reveals itself as a specific way of conceiving socio-cultural phenomena which is different from other social disciplines.

José Jorge de Carvalho. *Anthropology and the post-modern philosophical nihilism.*

This essay intends to make a critical assessment of the nihilistic posture (which currently characterizes a large part of the western intellectual universe) and its consequences on the relationship between philosophy and anthropology. It focuses on Gianni Vattimo’s work, The end of modernity, which, according to the author, will attain an important position in the postmodern philosophical panorama. In a second part it offers a discussion which reaches other anthropologists and philosophers, mainly seeking to assess if, in the so called postmodern era, this relationship between both disciplines can be presented in a more fruitful form.

Rodrigo Díaz Cruz. *Purifying the words of the tribe. Symbolic anthropology and austere reason.*

The object of this essay is to controvert an old topic of symbolic anthropology: that which places symbolic actions as opposed to rational ones. It is argued that this topic assumes a simplifying conception of reason, in other words, all exercise of reason is reduced to austere reason, a type of reason which, by the way, has its own historic framework from where it emerged: that of an illustrated culture of a rigoristic type. An undesirable consequence of this contrast has been the characterization of symbolic actions as non rational, limiting the possibility of opening new and fruitful routes of research for symbolic anthropology. This essay first explores some materials which are constitutive of austere reason and of an illustrated culture of a rigoristic type; further on it makes some comments in regards to the counter-illustrated reaction and the

aesthetic of romanticism; and it proposes some conjectures in regards to the influence of symbolism, particularly the type exemplified by Mallarmé- in the configuration of the above mentioned topic. Finally, it defends the emphatic notion of reason and an illustrated culture of an argumentative type.

Vargas Melgarejo. *Luz María. On the concept of perception.*

This paper studies the concept of perception from an anthropological point of view. It is showed like a bio-cultural process of organization and elaboration of evidences through the which the social groups explain their environment; this process is mediated by collective references adjusted by sociocultural and ideological norms, this perspective is opposed to some psychologic and philosophic concepts in which perception is seen like a lineal and no historical process. This paper shows, furthermore, how the perception is in constant interaction with other view of reality levels, for instance the moral and esthetic ones, to the structuring of social order.

Sergio Pérez Cortés. *Violence and government of itself.*

As violence has become a problem and for many it is a synonym of “lack of morals”, the author wonders if it is not necessary to distinguish between the different types of violence, its causes, authors, and, even if the systematic condemnation of the transgressors is too easy an answer. It offers his ideas on the existing link between violence and its government, considering that violence is a complex phenomena and that this is only a partial explanation. It does not intend to present a phenomenology of violence; it leaves pure and simple criminality apart, and centers both on the link between violent action and conduct norms which are impressed on and demanded from the citizen, as well as in the understanding and surveillance this citizen exerts on himself to contain the violence.

Xóchitl Ramírez Sánchez. *Towards an ethics of diversity.*

The object of this essay is to explore some of the relationships of pluralism, a concept which alludes to a

far more profound idea than what is understood in the daily and superficial use of the term. First of all it analyzes the relationship which refers us to epistemological aspects; and then, the consequences derived from a pluralist vision applied to political projects and its repercussions in the field of ethics or morals.

The author also introduces ideas regarding the profound meaning of the notion of pluralism and its relation to the debate on the construction of new projects of social interaction, which recognize, from the beginning, the existence of the conflict.

Ana Paula de Teresa. *Processes of socio-economic differentiation in the agrarian community.*

Regardless of the profound deterioration the Mexican agricultural land has been suffering over the past 25 years, the agricultural workers' sector still holds an important place in the productive, social and political fields. This essay presents some hypothesis on the conditions that have made the reproduction of the agricultural worker's sector possible throughout time. After studying four communities in the Central Valleys of Oaxaca it shows that, as agropecuarian activity stops being the economic basis of land workers' subsistence, mechanisms are developed which lead to the retention and/or selective expulsion of the rural population.

This phenomena, apart from decreasing the pressure on the resources, generates a socio-economic differentiation process which is expressed both at a demographic level as well as productive and occupational ones.

José González and Regina Leal. *Commercial demand and handling of resources in an indigenous agricultural community.*

Market relations established with the socio-economic environment where they are immersed, are a very important element in the dynamics of indigenous agricultural communities. In the case of the community of Santa Catarina del Monte, the commercial insertion takes place with the markets of the cities of Texcoco and Mexico. This insertion, seen from a temporary perspective, causes a series of adjustments in the handling of natural resources. These can be observed in the change of strategies so as to be able to adapt to the demand of products in the market. This essay presents a diachronic revision of the different forms and changes in the handling of natural resources as a response to the commercial demand in the markets of Sonora, La Merced, Jamaica and the Central de Abastos, for these are the main commercial centers of the region.

Jorge Aceves. *Live sources take the word.*

Aceves writes about the problems faced by the historian who is confronted with the difficulty of reaching and getting to know sources that can inform us on the daily life and events of "common people", which not only help us reconstruct the past, but also to explain it. He does not propose to do away with the traditional work of the historian, but to offer options which in a systematic and rigorous way reinforce his documentary work; thus, he studies the so called "oral history" and offers a review of the efforts done in this field over the past few years in Mexico.