

ABSTRACTS

Eduardo Menéndez. *Biologization and racism in daily life.*

Since the decade of the fifties, there has been a constant spread of theories, representations and biologicists practices in regards to diverse aspects of subjectivity, society and culture, which partly appear related to racists activities and proposals. Although some investigations were generated in some fields regarding the signification of the biologization and racism in daily life, what actually prevails is the lack of anthropological research concerning these issues, even within streams concerned with the study of "difference" and particularly with ethnicity. This lack of investigations contrasts with the incessant increase of ethnic conflicts and ethnic/racist "sliding" as well as with the increasing interest regarding problems that include the biological ones, expressly the ones concerning the body and the health/illness/attention process. In regards to both problems, anthropologists analyzed in particular dualist conceptions (cultural/biological; body/mind), that find in biomedicine one of their main expressions from developing a unified conception of body and suffering. This article is based on the premise that all racism is always a socio-cultural issue, even though it may be expressed through religious, ethnic or biological criterion. Therefore, it is important to recognize that the increasing biologization of daily life demonstrates that a great deal of representations and practices coming from biomedicine, become a standardized component of cultural knowledge of different social groups and such biologization may propitiate the development of daily racism.

María del Rosario Mendoza Aguilar. *A causal model of suffering. Case study in Psicocibernética Esenios.*

The object of study of the present investigation is the medical system propagated by Psicocibernética Esenios cult movement. Their main religious practice is the cure (its members denominate it "therapy"). It arises in 1976 in Mexico City, although most of their members are distributed in urban areas of the North of Mexico. This medical system is considered as a cultural system, which is closely related to the representations and religious practices of the movement. From phenomenological perspective two questions arise: the denomination and classification of the movement, and the construc-

tion of a causal model of suffering. The need to deepen within the epistemology of complementary cure systems is considered and its relationship with ethics. Furthermore, this investigation deals with a consideration on certain aspects that could improve the medical practice, such as the practitioner-patient relationship and the active role of the patient in the recovery of their health.

L.E. Ulises Contreras C. *Social conflict as generator of suffering: litigation for land and Ilvajunel (evil cast by envy) in Yolohuitz, Chiapas.*

The present work seeks to explain, through two cases of land dispute, the existing relationship between social conflict and the concepts as well as experiences involved in the health of the indigenous Tzotziles in a community of San Juan Chamula, Chiapas. In the Totzil town of Yolohuitz, land is scarce and struggles for its control generate social strain among its members expressed through litigations. Within this context, those who have little or no land at all may envy people who possess greater quantities of land. This problem is so strong that this group of persons may contract a witchdoctor (*ac'chamel*) to provoke malaise in the health of the first group. The evil cast by the witchdoctor is called *ilvajunel* (evil cast by envy) in Tzotzil.

Ethnographic fieldwork group-workshop from *IDES. From field notes to theoretical work. Discovery and redefinition of nagual according to the Chiapanecos records of Esther Hermitte.*

This article is a contribution to current reflections on fieldwork and the ethnographic text. It analyses the doctoral thesis of Argentine anthropologist Esther Hermitte and three sets of field notes taken during her two-year fieldwork in Chiapas, México (1960-1961). Through this literature there has been a reconstruction of the process through which Hermitte redefines the notion of *nagual* in the anthropology of the Mayan area. Such a reconstruction takes place through several signs that lay out the main features of the ethnographic enterprise in the field, as it was practiced by Hermitte. Her ability to learn and to discover the unexpected, and her dialogue with theory standing from another cultural world, is crystal clear in her appraisal of an Indian society.

Other themes

Willem Assies. *Officialization of non-official issues: a re-encounter of two worlds?*

The constitutional recognition of the juridical capacity of indigenous people performed by various Latin American countries gives rise to new problems and dilemmas and promotes changes in indigenous law itself. This article seeks to contribute to the development of a theoretical-methodological framework in order to study such processes by combining the concept of a pluralized legal field, that is, a field made up of semi-autonomous sub-fields, with conceptualization of law as a variable combination of rhetoric, bureaucracy and violence. The second part of the essay seeks to link the concept of semi-autonomous fields to the notion of a plurality of public spheres to argue that the recognition of a space for internal debate among indigenous people is a crucial condition for genuine intercultural dialogue.

Miguel Alberto Bartolomé. *The right to the autonomy of Macehualob Mayans.*

This essay proposes a brief reflection in regards to the past and present of the self-denominated Mayan group of the Macehualob. This group was constituted by the rebel descendants of the so-called *Guerra de Castas* (1847-1901). Nowadays, such group behaves as an organizational ethnic group which is different from the peninsular ethno-linguistic Mayan group, since they split in mid-last century, becoming a messianic society that reinvented their own past and got hold of a new future. Their one-hundred-year struggle, the self-generated feature of the native church they developed as well as their indisputable territorial rights, allow to state the legitimacy of their autonomic configuration that actually prevails, even though the State does not grant them the right to legally materialize their claims of self-determination. The present usurpation performed by the tourist project of Rivera Maya, once again shows the lack of acknowledgment of the collective rights concerning the native peoples, whose past is even expropriated as a new way of marketing for tourist consumption.