

ABSTRACTS

Brandes, Stanley. *Day of the Dead, Halloween and the search for a Mexican national identity.*

Day of the Dead in Mexico is a version of the Catholic celebration of All Saint's Day. This essay analyses the way in which this festivity has been examined—in Mexico as well as abroad—as a unique Mesoamerican legacy and therefore as a symbol of the nation itself. Tourism and international relations have been responsible of this phenomenon. The recent dissemination of Halloween in Mexico has sparked off a symbolic competition in which Halloween has been associated with U.S.A. and the Day of the Dead with Mexico. The presence of Halloween symbols in Mexico has been interpreted as a symptom of a North American Imperialist act of aggression.

Mayer, Leticia. *The ritual analysis applied to the history of Mexico.*

Victor Turner is one of the cultural anthropologists who has more influence on studies related to symbols and rituals. However, the historians who have taken up anthropology for their investigations, have paid little attention to his works. This article proposes the possibility of using some of Turner's arguments as well as the chance of applying them to the historical material. The foundations of this study lay on the two single yearbooks (1845 and 1848) published by El Colegio Nacional de Minería de Mexico, which is a prestigious academic institution of the 19th century. In Turner's terms, a "Social Drama" took place in 1847 with the outbreak of the war with the U.S.A. The capture of Mexico City by North American troops modified the every day life of the citizens. The "Social Drama" changed the message of the ritual. In 1846 the drama was periodical and regulatory, and in 1848 it had restoring characteristics.

Olavarría, Ma. Eugenia. *The Yaqui calendar context.*

The aim of this work is the interpretation of the Yaqui ritual cycle and the identification of the cultural system that is derived from it, starting from the ethnographic reconstruction, date by date, of their annual liturgical cycle. This work also presents an accurate description of significant dates of the religious calendar, then it

considers the theoretical basis on which such reconstruction is supported and lastly, it determines, based on analysis, the implicit principles that rule the considered classifying scheme.

Díaz Cruz, Rodrigo. *The plot of silence and the ritual experience.*

This work inquires into the *ritual experience* itself, a topic that has been relatively scorned by anthropology. Indeed, not any ritual experiences, but the one that will be called *extreme*. This research starts with the works of Victor Turner about the *Chihamba*—the most significant ritual of the Ndembu—and from this fact there are two main purposes to be followed. Firstly, finding information regarding these sort of extreme experiences aroused from ritual celebrations by means of a reflection on full silence and on what cannot be expressed, the ritual language, the experience of others and the *performance*. Secondly, arguing with the anti-reductionist assumption that has been protected by certain phenomenology of the religion in order to understand religious experiences, mainly the so-called mystical ones.

Araiza, Elizabeth. *The ritual theatrical representation. A metaritual practice?*

This article enhances some aspects of the relation between drama and ritual, throughout the creation of theatrical representations by and for indigenous peoples. The ritual behaviour becomes evident in many different ways within the indigenous playacting; it can be seen in the reception conditions that generally require certain ways of ritualisation of the beginning and end of a play. In this case, rituals precede the development of dramatisations. However, rituals are often inserted within the dramatic structure, they become a constituent element of the play; besides, there are plays whose dramatic structure relies on a ritual basis or even on a ceremony. In this way, rituals do not represent an element of dramatic action (a scene, a picture, a sequence), but the main subject of the play. The purpose of this work is to focus on these sort of plays, since they do not represent ritual as such, but a performance of itself. Therefore, the hypothesis is that the ritual theatrical representation has a metaritual role.

Garma Navarro, Carlos. *Socialization of the gift of tongues and healing in Mexican Pentecostalism.*

Regarding the religious manifestation of believers, Mexican Pentecostalism stands out because of the practice of speaking in various tongues, as well as of the healing due to faith. Although they are considered as a gift of the Holy Spirit, such practices represent socialisation with the other believers. The analysis of Pentecostal groups in the urban environment of Mexico City, as well as in Totonaca rural communities show that these sort of practices and beliefs are very similar amongst themselves. The Pentecostal believer needs to learn the “correct” way of speaking in tongues and to heal the sick people in order to distinguish himself from the followers of other religions that contend with the Pentecostalism when offering ritual possession and other forms of healing human suffering. In Mexico, Popular Spiritualism, Christian Charismatic Movement as well as indigenous healers, directly compete with Pentecostalism. This religious mobility makes this situation more intricate. Finally, this article deals with the important role played by political speech as well as by testimony.

Sidorova, Ksenia. *The usage of verbal communication within ritual and ceremonial contexts.*

Compared to the ritual action, the ritual language seems to have received little attention of the anthropologists who are specialists in rituals and ceremonies. Based on the premises that actions and words are integral parts of the ritual and the ceremony, the article seeks to demonstrate the importance of the anthropological study of the ritual language and verbal communication within the ritual and ceremonial contexts. For this purpose, various papers focused on the presence, specificity, usage and functions of verbal communication (spirit, speech, ceremonial dialogues, ritual songs, ritual silence) in rituals and ceremonies are examined. The analysis of these examples leads to the conclusion regarding the relevance of the anthropological study of the ritual language and verbal communication in the mentioned contexts.

Other themes

Rosas Mantecón, Ana. *The movies' boom, decline and revival in Mexico City (1930-2000).*

This article deals with the transformations regarding the exhibition of movies and their relation with the usage and shape of the urban area of Mexico City during the 20th century. By exploring the nature of

segregation patterns that have given shape to the present expansion of movie theatres, a hypothesis is formulated which states that the regaining of audience is restricted and that it is also determined by such segregation patterns. It is true that at the end of the century, audiences do not expressly choose a specific approach and that they can be considered multimedia. Within the conception of audio-visual circuits (movie theatres, video as well as open and restricted T.V.), movies turn out to be more accessible to high and middle class population as an experience of public sociability. Lower sectors prefer television and video as means of entertainment.

Pérez Cortés, Sergio. *The attitude towards reading in ancient times.*

Reading is—in spite of appearances—a complex matter. Lonesomeness, introspection and solitary reflection represent the present reading behaviour and they have absolutely nothing to do with a culture in which dramatic expression used to work together with the meaning of the text. The purpose of this article is to meticulously reassemble, as far as possible, this intellectual experience which has nothing to do with us anymore.

Schaffhauser, Philippe. *Around Meseta Purépecha: pragmatism and identity in Mexico.*

Rightly or wrongly, appeal to the notion of identity in many different types of theoretical discourse—political, scientific, religious, regional or artistic—has become common practice today. In the field of sociology, the concept of identity still has no theoretical status, nor does it correspond to any empirical reality. It is still in the project stage. This dissertation seeks first to criticize the structuralist conceptions of identity prevailing today in the social sciences, then to construct sociology of identity by testing a method of sociosemiotic analysis, based of the peircian theory of sign, of a number of identity-founding features—migration, craft industry, and social movement—observed in an indian region of Mexico: Meseta Purépecha.

Varela, Roberto. *The Anthropology Department of the Metropolitan Autonomous University at Iztapalapa. Covered paths and paths to be covered.*

The purpose of this article is to sketch out a brief history of the Anthropology Department of the Metropolitan Autonomous University at Iztapalapa. The periods analyzed (1974-1979; 1980-1989; 1990-1998) arbitrary clipped and already concluded. A personal view on the problems that it faces is proposed as well as the possible processes to offer solutions.