

CÁTEDRA MÉXICO 2018

A Critical Exploration of the Anthropology of Contemporary Mesoamerica: A View from the Ontological Turn

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In this course, we will explore the cultural specificity or ethnocentricity of our supposedly universally applicable concepts and theories and how their unreflective use distorts our understanding of the people we work with and write about. As an alternative, I will propose a symmetrical dialogue between the knowledge practices of contemporary Mesoamerican peoples and those of socio-cultural anthropology. Undoubtedly, this critical reflection on some of the discipline's basic categories (e.g. culture, society, kinship, gender) is challenging since it forces us to confront the limitations of ways of being and thinking we usually assume to be objective and beyond inquiry. However, the challenge is worth the effort. It offers conceptual liberty to better understand the multicultural world in which we live and to begin to imagine novel solutions to the social problems currently plaguing Mexico and the world. I will draw on the critical thinking of anthropologists such as Roy Wagner, Marilyn Strathern and Eduardo Viveiros de Castro, and on my own research as well as that of others who have applied this kind of critique in their research on contemporary Mesoamerica.

The course will be partly in English, partly in Spanish

1. Monday, November 19th, 14.00-16.00, Sala/Aula Kolumnowa, Krakowskie Przedmieście 26/28

Beyond Multiculturalism: Interactive Alterity in Contemporary Mexico

2. Tuesday, November 20th, 15.00-16.30: Budynek Neofilologii / Edificio de Neofilología, Dobra 55, s. 1.024

Orígenes en el Pacífico: Los límites de las dicotomías naturaleza/cultura e individuo/sociedad

Schneider, David M. (1984) *A Critique of the Study of Kinship*. Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press.

Strathern, Marilyn (1988) *The Gender of the Gift: Problems with Women and Problems with Society in Melanesia*. Berkeley: University of California Press.

Wagner, Roy (1981) [1975] *The Invention of Culture*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press.

3. Wednesday, November 21st, 9.45-11.15, Budynek Neofilologii / Edificio de Neofilología, Dobra 55, s. 1.024

The Challenge of the Post-colonial critique: Steps toward avoiding Orientalism without neglecting difference

- Povinelli, Elizabeth A. (2002) *The Cunning of Recognition: Indigenous Alterities and the Making of Australian Multiculturalism*. Durham: Duke University Press.
- Trouillot, Michel-Rolph (1991) "Anthropology and the Savage Slot: The Poetics and Politics of Otherness". In Fox, R. G. (ed.) *Recapturing Anthropology: Working in the Present*. Santa Fe, NM: School of American Research Press, pp. 17-44.

3. Thursday, November 22nd, 8.00-9.30, Budynek Neofilologii / Edificio de Neofilología, Dobra 55, s. 1.024

La Amazonia: Multi-naturalismo y el cuerpo inestable

- Vilaca, Aparecida (2005) "Chronically Unstable Bodies: Reflections on Amazonian Corporalities". *Journal of the Royal Anthropological Institute*, 11: 445-464.
- (2016) *Praying and Preying: Christianity in Indigenous Amazonia*. Berkeley: University of California Press.
- Viveiros de Castro, Eduardo (2004a) "Perspectivismo y multinaturalismo en la América Indígena" en Surallés, A. y P. Hierro (eds.), *Tierra adentro*, IWGIA, Copenhagen, pp. 37-83.
- (2004b) "Exchanging Perspectives: The Transformation of Objects into Subjects in Amerindian Ontologies". *Common Knowledge*, 10(3): 463-484.

4. Thursday, November 22nd, 11.30-13.00, Budynek Neofilologii / Edificio de Neofilología, Dobra 55, s. 1.024

Mesoamerica: Beyond the reproduction of community and the indigenous/mestizo dichotomy. Can we deal simultaneously with connectivity and difference?

- Good, Catharine (2004) "Trabajando juntos: los vivos, los muertos, la tierra y el maíz". En: Broda, J. y Catharine Good Eshelman (eds.) *Historia y vida ceremonial en las comunidades mesoamericanas: los ritos agrícolas*. 153-176. México: INAH/UNAM, pp. 153-176.
- (2005) "'Trabajando juntos como uno': conceptos nahuas del grupo doméstico y la persona". En Robichaux, David (ed.) *Familia y parentesco en Mesoamérica: unas miradas antropológicas*. México: Universidad Iberoamericana, pp. 275-294.
- Magazine, Roger (2012) *The Village is Like a Wheel": Rethinking Cargos, Family and Ethnicity in Highland Mexico*. Tucson: University of Arizona Press.
- (2015) *"El pueblo es como una rueda": Hacia un replanteamiento de los cargos, la familia y la etnicidad en el altiplano de México*. México, D.F.: Universidad Iberoamericana.
- Pitarch, Pedro (2013) *La cara oculta del pliegue*. México, D.F.: Artes de México.