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Abstracts

Claude Lévi-Strauss
Unesco at 60

This paper reports the text of the intervention pronounced by Claude Lévi-Strauss for the 60th anniversary of Unesco in 2006. Lévi-Strauss recalls the intersections between his activity in the field of anthropology and ethnology and Unesco since its foundation, and the role Unesco can play nowadays in the preservation of cultural diversity and biodiversity.

Henri Atlan
Knowledge, Glory and 'On Human Dignity'

The idea of dignity seems indissociable from that of humanity, whether in its universal dimension of 'human dignity', or in the individual 'dignity of the person'. This paper provides an outlook on the ethics governing the sciences and technology, in particular the biological sciences and biotechnology, and recalls the notion of 'glory', both human and divine, as it infuses a great part of the Middle Ages and the Renaissance cultures, just before the scientific revolution in Europe.

Joseph Yacoub
The Dignity of the Individual and of Peoples: The Contribution of Mesopotamia and of Syriac Heritage

This paper provides a rich reconstruction of the notion of dignity and rights of people and individuals in its Assyrian origins in ancient Mesopotamia. It analysis several particular positions. Among them, Bardaisan, Yacoub Aphraates (Aphrahat), Michael the Syriac, as well as, much later, the missionary policy of the Eastern Church in Asia and the influential of the Nestorian church in Asia.

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Michael Moussa Karayanni
Multiculture Me No More! On Multicultural Qualifications and the Palestinian-Arab Minority of Israel

Multiculturalism has become a central theme in many academic disciplines from philosophy to education, social work and psychology, ultimately reaching political science and law. What seems to be unique in current studies on multiculturalism is not merely the observance and display of societies that happen to be diverse in terms of the religious, cultural, national and ethnic affiliation of their members. Rather, it is the central argument that such divergence is legitimate and should be accommodated. Accepting other groups in society and the legitimacy of accommodating them has become a virtue of tolerance.

This paper argues that we must first look into multicultural theory itself to discover what can be called 'multicultural qualifications'. These are in essence pre-conditions without the presence of which group accommodations, even if granted based on group membership, should not be considered as multicultural in nature. With multicultural theory as a backdrop, this article intends to identify such multicultural qualifications. The Palestinian-Arab minority in Israel is studied in its constellation as both a national minority group and as a religiously diverse group as an object for testing the application of the identified multicultural qualifications.

Tanella Boni
The Dignity of the Human Person: On the Integrity of the Body and the Struggle for Recognition

The author states that the very idea of human dignity lies in human relationships in the form of mutual recognition of one another. She emphasizes the 'daily' commitment to dignity as an essential feature of intersubjectivity and insists on the bodily dimension as the fundamental mode of relationships to the other. Thus human dignity is first of all the dignity of the body.

Ru Xin
The Human Being in Chinese Civilization

The author provides an introductory view of the notion of dignity and yen (benevolence) in Confucius' and Mencius' doctrines. It compares them with classical Western positions (viz. Plato's), through an analysis of the Analects and Mencius' works. It shows that because of a strong emphasis on the importance and dignity of the human person, Chinese humanism has been developing under a specific social and cultural background which is entirely different from that of Western countries.

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Rafael Argullol
What is Left of the Angel?

The author raises the problem of the presence of terror in contemporary life. He analyzes the continuous dynamic between fear, terror and hopes of peace in contemporary societies. Dignity appears as a blueprint of the ubiquitous presence of terror and fear.

Michel Maffesoli
From Universal to Particular

The author provides a rich plethora of examples of a *heterology*, a knowledge of the multiple, which alone is able to recognize the richness of life. Philosophical, sociological and literary analysis of different authors, mainly from the 20th century, are provided.

Paul Ricœur
The Istituto Italiano per gli Studi Filosofici: A Liberal Transversal Institution

One of Paul Ricœur's last conferences, on the occasion of the 30th anniversary of the Italian Institute of Philosophical Studies, was pronounced at Unesco in November 2002. He presents the intellectual model represented by the Institute as being both liberal and transversal, and considers these two features as summarizing the task of philosophy.

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