

Milpa system: as and epistemology

Abstract

Milpa system is being claimed and studied, especially by agronomists and biologists as a production system. In this paper, it is analyzed as a culture that implies certain social relations, a kind of relation with nature, but especially a productive logic, different from capitalism. It is proposed that reproductive logic (Hinkelammert and Mora 2009) or *extended social reproduction logic* (Coraggio 2009) can set up a Way of good living. Based on field work with Mesoamerican peasants I try to analyze how they see different things (ontology), and make different relations between things (epistemology), and how these categories, as frames, affect all their relations. Milpa system supposes how people *see, judge and act* and do things, that is inscribed in mind and heart, is imposed as a *frame* (Turner, 1974), as a formula, that overlaps in other areas of everyday life. The argument focuses on differences in perception when reality is seen in terms of complementarity and interdependence, rather than competition, and the notion of collective rather than individual subjects. Finally, it addresses how generalized reciprocity operates in peasant communities in Mexico.

Key Words: milpa system, Good living, other epistemology and ontology, complementarity, reciprocity