

Seminar III

Direction: Pedro G. Romero, Santiago Eraso

Venue: Rector's Lecture Room of the Universidad Internacional de Andalucía (UNIA), Seville

Speakers: Francisco J. Ayala, Alberto Cordero, Gerhard Vollmer

Date: 4th-7th October 2002

PRESENTATION

When the Universidad Internacional de Andalucía (Andalusian International University) decided to start a new programme of activities under the title of "art and thinking", a wide range of activities were proposed which dealt with the contradictions between art and contemporary culture from various different perspectives. Within this wide scope for debate and discussion, a specific area for reflection was developed in an attempt to analyse in depth the crisis of humanism and consequently the possibility of re-inventing a new ethic which is more in tune with the realities of our time.

The emergence and subsequent socialisation of a universal space dominated by techno-science and an audiovisual culture is gradually distorting the principles upon which up to now our laws and customs have been based. Within this broad framework, since a hundred years have passed since Sutton's development of Mendel's work, it seems that the time has really come to discuss the concept of the living world.

The dehumanisation of the world is a new series of talks to be presented in Seville coinciding with the 5th International Ontology Congress which will be held in Donostia-San Sebastian under the title of "Genetic homology and human singularity: the state of affairs". In both the congress and the working sessions in Seville the concept of the living will be considered once again in a contemporary context. It is known that the identification of the "letter"; sequence of the human genome, far from answering questions related to the essence of what is human, has actually complicated the issue. Hence the term "searched science" is perfectly apt to describe the situation following the latest findings. In the reflection hopefully generated by this series of talks, the objective will be to establish the current thinking on the subject.

PROGRAMME

Friday, 4 October

- 12:00 h. Francisco J. Ayala:

From genetics to culture: the singularity of the human species.

- 19:00 h. Alberto Cordero:

Bestiaries, Biology and the Realism/Anti-realism debate.

Presentation by Julio Gallego, profesor titular de Filosofía de la Universidad de Huelva.

Monday, 7 October

- 19:00 h. Gerhard Vollmer:

New problems for an old brain - epistemology and ethics in the light of evolution

Presentation by José M^a Delgado, Catedrático de Fisiología de la Universidad Pablo de Olavide.

FREE ENTRY

SPEAKERS

Francisco J. Ayala

Professor of Biologic Sciences at the University of California, Irvine. He has received honorary degrees from several international universities: Athens (Greece), Bologna (Italia), and in Spain, the Universidad Complutense of Madrid, the Universidad Central of Barcelona, and the Universities of León, Vigo and Valencia. President George W. Bush awarded him the United States National Science Medal. He has been President of the American Association for the Advancement of Science (1993-1996). From 1994 to 2001 he was a member of President Clinton's Committee of Advisors on Science and Technology. In 2000 he was given the Gold Medal of the Accademia Nazionale dei Lincei (Rome) and received the William Procter Prize for Scientific Achievement from Sigma Xi, the U.S. Scientific Research Society. He is the author of many books, many of which are translated into Spanish.

Alberto Cordero

Professor of Philosophy and History in the City University of New York. He is an Honorary Doctor of the Universidad Ricardo Palma in Lima, Peru. In 1993 he received the National Science Foundation Research Award. He is a member of the Academie Internationale de Philosophie des Sciences, Brussels and The British Society for the Philosophy of Science. He has written many books in English about the Philosophy of Science.

Gerhard Vollmer

He is professor at Technical University Braunschweig. He studied mathematics, physics and chemistry at the universities of München, Berlin, and Freiburg. Both his "Diplom" 1968 and his Ph. D. 1971 he got from work with Siegfried Flügge in Freiburg. His first thesis was on inverse problems in scattering theory. From 1971 to 1974 he was "Assistent Professor" for theoretical physics at the university of Freiburg. Simultaneously he studied philosophy, concentrating on logic, epistemology, philosophy of science, general linguistics and philosophy of language. He finished his academic studies in philosophy with a second thesis on evolutionary epistemology. His teaching topics are logic, epistemology, philosophy of natural science, foundations of physics and of biology, artificial intelligence.