

Wed. Oct. 28, 2009

### QUESTIONS ON DE LA CADENA AND SMITH

1. Describe the ideology that rigidly classifies people as “Indian” or “mestizo.”
2. What are the justifications for the gender inequality present in Chitapampa?
3. What mechanisms maintain this system of gender inequality? Are there any similarities to other systems you know of?
3. During the land reform period in Peru General Velasco saw to it that “Indian” was banned from official discourse and replaced with “peasant.” Defend this decision. Critique it.
4. De la Cadena says that often in Chitapampa nowadays if one asks about the ethnic status of one or another villager, a common response is “he is neither one nor the other; he is ‘in process.’” Could this happen in the U.S.? Discuss.
5. We’ve all seen movies depicting North American Native Americans. We all grew up with stereotypes about Indians. Discuss the gendered aspects of these stereotypes.
6. Describe Smith’s characterization of “a pre-modern symbolics of blood.”
7. What are the advantages of analyzing race/class/gender together in a particular situation, as opposed to separately?
8. In what ways does De la Cadena’s analysis agree with Smith’s? How does it differ?
9. Smith talks about “creoles” (for example, p. 57). What are they? This is a word with many meanings; do you know another?
10. “Only women can bring bastards into the family” (p. 56). Discuss.
11. Indian nationalists were attempting to construct a single and homogeneous state, nation, and culture, using the Western discourse about them (p. 54). Why was this project doomed?
12. “Chatterjee’s argument suggests that in modern nationalist ideologies, whether European or non-European, the female will always come to stand for the spirit of the nation and the site of its reproduction...” (p. 55). Defend this proposition. Critique it.
13. Smith argues that Guatemalan elites cannot create a unified Guatemalan nation. Why?
14. “As in much of Latin America, race is largely defined through culture rather than through descent” (p. 60). How can *race* be something *cultural*?

15. Smith wants scholars to analyze female agency—their capacity to choose among options, and choose in accordance with their own interests. Describe.
16. Smith describes several benefits that accompany playing the role of traditional Maya woman. What are they?
17. Smith compares government policy during the war to the Nazis. Discuss.

MIT OpenCourseWare  
<http://ocw.mit.edu>

21A.226 Ethnic and National Identity  
Fall 2009

For information about citing these materials or our Terms of Use, visit: <http://ocw.mit.edu/terms>.