



Ethnicity and Racism

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ABSTRACT Perhaps the oldest ethic problems related with human biology and society, are those related with racism and ethnicity. A lot of suffering has been caused by racial prejudice, and by ethnic intolerance. The better understanding of the Human genome, gives both new arguments to reject racial prejudices, but also new challenges. The need to develop a new ethical, legal and political frame for individuals and populations to relate with institutions, court tribunals, sanity, illness insurance, ethnic identification etc., is an urgent responsibility of anthropologists and geneticist. The road from genotype to phenotype is review in the light of the recent knowledge of genetics and plasticity; it is also remembered that the initial approach to the genotype, begun all the way round, that is, it was inferred from morphological, physiological and behavioural traits. The influence of this initial approach, in the context of the typological thinking, is still very clear in different authors. Even the biological meaning of “race” is currently open to debate. Because all societies are multiethnic in different degrees is important to know the mutual perception, and the relations of dominance or equity among them. Through the examples of indigenous groups, and migration minorities, is stressed the necessity of an open discussion both on the ethics of race and ethnicity, and on the new legal possibilities open by the knowledge of the genome. As anthropologist we have the ethical responsibility of actively participating in this debate, and even to lead it, in a time where racism, and xenophobia are increasing in worrying way, as the claming of ethnicity is.

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