Abstract

What happens when things occur during fieldwork that the fieldworker does not consider real? Why, when these events are retold by the actors, are they excluded by anthropologists from their "ontological corral" and relegated to the plane of "belief" or "cultural representation" of some other thing, nature, or context? Anomalous experiences that can be lived not only as real but also as meaningful and essential are excluded from ethnographic texts and analyses through rhetorical subterfuge, or even incorporated as interpretations and discourses of an always different and ontologically acceptable referent. Staring from a fieldwork situation in the Argentinean region of Cuyo, in this article the problematic of the representation and ethnographic analysis of extraordinary events and objects that produce a disjuncture in the sense of reality of the researcher are explored. Furthermore, the relevance of anthropology for taking on such phenomena in the extent to which they are incorporated into the lives of the subjects studied and, eventually, into the fieldwork experience itself is analyzed.

Keywords

Earthlights, Anthropology of the extraordinary, Ontology, Relativism.