



Fichero bibliográfico En torno a los orígenes del hombre americano

Essay by Bernardo Berdichevsky. Second edition.
Editorial Universitaria. 203 pages. 1984.

The topic that the book poses has an extraordinary relevance. Every day, archeologists and ethnologists add new precedents to the investigations that, without ceasing, have been carried out in these last years. Considering this fact, it was well done by the Editorial Universitaria to request the author, currently a professor at the University of Canada, a revision of his work, with the purpose of reediting it.

It is what happened. The professor Berdichevsky, not only accepted with pleasure the request, but also increased the support bibliographic, which allowed him to add explanatory notes, corrective and complementary to each chapter, as he did in his prologue.

In this way, the bibliographic references increased considerably. Around a thousand books, articles, interviews, reports, etc., support the fundamental thesis of the author. Specifically, he estimates that here there has been a process of historical-social nature, much more difficult to prove, despite its complexity.

On this base, the professor Berdichevsky develops his work, integrated in four vertebral chapters: "The problematics and the sources", "Development of the investigation on the American population", "Archaeology and the first routes of penetration" and "Origin and evolution of the first American cultures". Besides this, prologue, notes, bibliography and conclusions.

What is notable is to advert the enormous progress that has ex-

perimented this investigation in the course of these last decades, especially with the particular confluence of archaeology, without forgetting, for sure, the support of the natural sciences and of the data provided by the anthropological, ethnological and ethnolinguistic sources.

It is important to note that the discovery and conquest of America, with all the value that it may have as a historical event, has meant a great problem for the investigator of these areas, from the moment in which the European presence compromised the uses and customs of the indigenous man, at the same time that it truncated its cultural development. This same, however, had a positive consequence for the knowledge of the American man in the so-called "protohistoric period", which is that in which the indigenous peoples and the European conquerors managed to put themselves in contact. From here result the first written testimonies, noted by chroniclers of the Old World. In addition, some of them correspond to oral references, delivered by the indigenous peoples and, in some cases, written by the most cultivated of them.

In sum, the book is a good synthesis of what has been learned about "the origins of the American man". Not only does it support this study, but also the author, Bernardo Berdichevsky, is a well-known archaeologist and ethnologist Chilean, known in various continents for his version on the topic and for the quality of his conferences offered in America and Europe. It was well done by the Editorial Universitaria to edit his work.

Carlos René Ibáñez. Chillán.

El Dr. Ibanez, 17. VIII. 1984 p. 2

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