Meridional. Revista Chilena de Estudios Latinoamericanos is pleased to invite you to participate in the dossier “Deconstructions of the biopolitical monster in Latin America (20th and 21st centuries)”, which corresponds to our 19th number will be published in October 2022.

Considering the notion of “monster” as an epistemological explanatory entity of some core aspects of biopolitics, this dossier will seek to gather contributions to the comprehension of the different manifestations that this concept assumed throughout the 20th and 21st centuries in Latin America.

The monster is a spectrum that nobody could identify a priori, but which everybody must fear its potential irruption. Arias Mora, recently, as Espósito and Negri before, have proved its inextricable bond with biopolitics, for which it appears as its condition of possibility. Fundamentally, because the discursive existence of the monster unites the necessity of submitting to particular expertise that indicates where the latent danger is, to then assure us of being sheltered through more and more sophisticated devices, as Foucault remarked in Society Must Be Defended. Thus, the specific knowledge commissioned of highlighting the threats entailed a will to power that extended in the West, in general, and in Latin America, in particular, the decision to organize and control the threatening diversity, reducing life to its biological component.

In a way, these scapegoats motivated the imaginary constructions of the “Jew conspirator” who scammed secretly, the infiltrated “communist”, the “subversive” that destroyed our Western and Christian civilization, the “invert” which clouded moral and good manners, the “prostitute” who corrupted unsuspecting men, and the “natural born criminal” whose phenotypic features anticipated the crimes he will commit. All of them met, in turn, with paradoxical extremes in Latin America: “indigenous peoples” (who were always there) and the unwanted immigrants (who never were but pretended to). The monster nested in every one of those images that were recreated each time it was necessary to increase the normalization of a society that handed over liberties in exchange for security.

Given the fear caused by that monstrous otherness, biopower could naturally display its strategies of differential reproduction to benefit the sameness over the otherness. Issues as the closing of borders, procreational hindrances for the “misfits”, and the stimuli to the fecundity of those who were presupposed to be the “successful” ones were part of an issue that resulted in the problem of population.

If confronting the monster entailed a tranquilizing means of protection, such a purpose merited transcending all limits, as was experimented on repeated occasions in Latin
America when the “state of exception” facilitated the advance of biopower, in a broad
gallery of cases that could be framed into the conceptual framework thematized by
Agamben.

Thus, the “state of exception” was a recurrent condition expressed beyond the visible forms
of violence that were exerted by the military dictatorships in the region, justifying each
“exception” with the monstrous entity that, from biopolitics, had to be countered by
immunization of all the population.

Consequently, deconstructing the monster means acknowledging the underlying projects
in the biopolitical strategies deployed from a propitiatory factor. Hence, the effort is to
advance from what the (visual and/or literary) images conceal from the otherness as a
normalizing program of societies, understanding the monster as a fundamental hint in that
path.

What has been indicated so far pretends to operate as a trigger of ideas around the
monstrous otherness and its approach from cultural studies on biopolitics, biopower,
traditional and new eugenics, along with their normative –prescriptive, proscriptive– and
artistic expressions that tended to identify it, exhibit it, and represent it to, later, punish it.

For the papers’ submittal, we propose the following thematic lines:

- The monstrosity of barbarity: indigenous people in front of the civilized gaze
- The monster under control: the exhibition of the otherness in fairs and museums
- The monster in art: images of the threatened society
- Monstrosity and its boundaries: traditional eugenics
- Avoiding monstrosity: the new eugenics and the guarantees of “normalized”
procreation
- Migration policies to face the invasions of the monstrous
- The monster and us: cultural forms of contemporary supremacism

Meridional is incorporated in the following indexes and databases: ERIH-Plus, Latindex
Catálogo, DOAJ, Dialnet, Gale-Cengage, Prisma.

The manuscripts’ deadline is on March 15th 2022.

Contact: revistameridional@gmail.com.

Dossier’s coordinators:
Mission Statement

Meridional. Revista Chilena de Estudios Latinoamericanos is a publication of the Centro de Estudios Culturales Latinoamericanos of the Universidad de Chile. The goal of the journal is to promote an interdisciplinary and multidisciplinary dialogue about Latin American culture with a humanities focus. The journal publishes original manuscripts in Spanish, English, French and Portuguese. Manuscripts must be submitted following the MLA guidelines for Scholarly publication. The journal is published both in print and digital formats.

Aims and Scope

Meridional. Revista Chilena de Estudios Latinoamericanos is a scientific publication that appears twice a year, in April and October. The Journal welcomes articles on relevant topics for the study of Latin American Culture from a multidisciplinary and interdisciplinary perspective resulting from research and studies from both academic and intellectual fields of inquiry. The journal is intended for an academic audience including researchers, thinkers, university professors, and general public interested in the development of ideas, and the production of knowledge about Latin American culture as well as the fostering of a critical and intellectual dialogue on these topics.

Meridional includes three sections: Articles, Reviews and Notes.

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In order to guarantee the integrity and quality of the articles that we publish, as well as the transparency of the evaluation procedure, Meridional. Revista Chilena de Estudios Latinoamericanos takes as its reference the Code of Conduct for Journal Editors of the Committee on Publication Ethics (COPE). The journal’s Editorial Board ensures that all those involved in the editorial process (that is, editors, reviewers, and authors) comply with these ethical norms. Meridional has a review system for its articles, which are evaluated by peers external to the journal under a double-blind system, based on criteria exclusively related to the article’s
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