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Article 1

Introduction: The Transatlantic Undead: Zombies in Hispanic and Luso-Brazilian Literatures and Cultures

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Stretched to the point of breaking, the early twenty-first century zombie now seems to signify everything and nothing at all. As Sarah Juliet Lauro reasons in her excellent book *The Transatlantic Zombie* (2015), the zombie is a disturbingly flexible receptacle of meaning; as such, context matters a great deal as we theorize this particular monster. “At various points,” Lauro observes, “the zombie is [. . .] a metaphor, a symbol, an allegory, a figure, and an icon, not to mention, as Ulrich Beck claims, a category” (4).¹ The essays in this special edition prove Lauro’s point as they engage literary and cultural production from Spain, the Caribbean, Mexico, Brazil, and other parts of the Hispanic and Lusophone worlds. Regardless of its exact articulation, this figure constantly serves as a means for criticizing undemocratic elements of society. As the articles in this collection show, the nature of oppression differs depending on where a particular work of literary and cultural production is articulated. Furthermore, the zombie’s role in critiquing said social order also changes depending on numerous factors ranging from the author to the cultural context in which it appears. Nevertheless, when viewed in their entirety, the articles of this volume show that the zombie continues to be a surprisingly versatile figure for social critique.

Relatively little work has been done on the Latin American or Iberian zombie, a surprising fact given the figure’s origins in—and appropriation from—the Haitian Revolution and its folklore. The zombie’s Haitian roots lie at the foundation of any manifestation of the zombie, a fact that often destabilizes and complicates the figure’s presence in contemporary popular culture. Given this troubled history, the zombie figure, in most of its forms, interfaces with notions of race, colonialism, and/or, more recently, neoliberalism. Many of the earliest representations of zombie subjectivity in Latin America (beyond the Caribbean) imagine a world in which a voodoo witch or warlock can control and enslave reanimated corpses. Generally born out of the creature’s articulation in Hollywood, these cases of Latin American zombies acknowledge the figure’s origins in Haiti, but they quickly rearticulate the figure within their own borders. This is especially visible in Mexploitation cinema, where figures like El Santo defeat armies of zombies with explicit ties to Haiti whether they are physically in Mexico or the Caribbean (Dalton 155-57). The domestication of the zombie, then, becomes a problematic imperial act; countries like Mexico may not be at the top of a zombified imperial food chain (that position belongs to the US, the USSR, and their closest allies), but they also occupy a position above that of Haiti. Indeed, the zombie becomes the principal means through which many mid-century Mexican and Latin American films Orientalize their Caribbean neighbor and thus assert their own hegemony. Interestingly, in order to assert themselves as middle-class imperial nations, countries like Mexico must appropriate a Haitian cultural figure, that of the zombie, into their own cinema and rearticulate it in a way that allows them to become the dominating figures. The exact nature of the imperialist discourse in

early Latin American zombie literature and film is necessarily fluid. Rather than posit Haiti as a country in need of colonizing, for example, they generally view it as a weak country that is incapable of defending itself from problems, be they social or zombies. As such, Mexican heroes must swoop in to the rescue, a strategy that produces a shared Latin American camaraderie that is paradoxically based on uneven levels of power that relegate Haiti into the position of junior partner.

The very act of appropriating a Haitian form to the screen entails an uneven power dynamic when it requires a hero from beyond the island to contain it. Even when the ties to Haiti are left unstated, the very invocation of a creature from that country reminds us of the imperial suppositions simmering just beneath the surface. Perhaps one of the most obvious ways that zombie cultural production challenges imperialistic tendencies is through its heavy-handed rejection of racism. This fact rings especially clear in Latin America given the creature's etymological roots in Haiti, a country that has long been coded as black in the regional imaginary. Much of the earliest zombie literature and cultural production directly challenged the institution of slavery even as it tended to reproduce the slaveholding order (McCallister 66-73; Pressley-Sanon 11). The figure continues to interface with constructs of race in the region, and it generally does so in ways that challenge a Eurocentric order. Of course, the zombie also dialogues with constructs of race and ethnicity when imagined from a Spanish context. This should come as no surprise given the Iberian Peninsula's position on the border between Western Europe and Africa, Christianity and Islam. Kiersty Lemon-Rogers's article, for example, discusses how the contemporary author Házael G. González uses the notion of contagion and zombies to discuss Spanish notions of blood purity during the time of the *Reconquista*. As a dehumanized Other, the zombie necessarily opens itself up to critiques along racial and ethnic lines.

The release of George Romero's *Night of the Living Dead* (1968) and—especially—*Dawn of the Dead* (1978) shifted the zombie's central focus away from slavery and colonialism and instead to cannibalism and rampant consumption. Romero's monster was a new entity that broke away from the zombie of earlier years; however, as Sarah Juliet Lauro and Karen Embry point out, this shift in focus continued to align zombie performativity with people of color: European conquerors have attributed cannibalistic behavior to the nonwhite inhabitants of the Americas ever since the earliest days of the contact period (98, nt. 33; see also Jáuregui 48-63). If any one constant remained, it was that the undead continued to be slaves to an overarching drive (forced labor in Haiti, consumption in the post-Romero case). Romero revolutionized society's understanding of the zombie, and it was inevitable that Latin American representations would soon follow in his footsteps. The colonial component of the zombie, particularly its ties to Haiti, would become much less obvious in this new iteration, but it remains in the background, ready to reemerge at a moment's notice. That said, the post-Romero

zombie's overly literal depiction of runaway consumption and cannibalism makes it an especially overt metaphor for globalization and a neoliberal philosophy that unabashedly assigns value to human lives based on a person's material assets. In the years since Romero filmed his movies, zombies have appeared in numerous types of literary and cultural production in countries all over the world, making familiar critiques and producing a now predictable, campy horror spectacle. Despite its over-the-top carnage, the ontological questions raised by the zombie's mere presence on the screen makes it a useful figure for remembering and criticizing corruption and violence in both the present and the past.

Of course, the post-Romero zombie opens such a rich potential for analysis that many scholars have even applied it retroactively to texts written prior to the film's release. Two essays from our anthology, M. Elizabeth Ginway's "Eating the Past: Proto-Zombies in Brazilian Fiction, 1900-1955" and James Krause's "Undermining Authoritarianism: Retrofitting the Zombie in 'Seminário dos ratos' by Lygia Fagundes Telles," build on a post-Romero zombie hermeneutic to explain the conditions of the texts that they analyze. While their texts may not feature undead cannibals, they do feature animals who devour everything in sight or undead shamans who draw visual parallels to Romero's creations. As both of these analyses show, the zombie metaphor has a strong pull even when applied anachronistically to texts whose authors would not have been familiar with the tropes of the genre. This alludes to the fact that Romero's zombie, as innovative as it was, clearly interfaced with ideas that were floating throughout society long before he packaged them up in *Night of the Living Dead*. As David S. Dalton's "Antropofagia, Calibanism, and the Post-Romero Zombie: Cannibal Resistance in Latin America and the Caribbean" shows, zombie theory often allows us to make fascinating new insights into even the most canonical texts of the region. This fact attests to the zombie's discursive versatility; in an almost chameleon-like fashion, it inserts itself into the most dissimilar fields.

One of the most suggestive areas for zombie subjectivity lies in its invocation of the revenant, a phantasmic creature who, according to Jacques Derrida, creates a specific type of "hauntological" order by existing in the present while drawing our vision to the past (2-4). Lauro notes that "the zombie signifies both of these things at once, inseparably: the positive, resistive return of the revenant and the specter enslaved, doomed to repeat. Therefore, the zombie may be the most apt hauntological figure, representing both our adaptation to existence in a 'condition of aftermath' and the futility of attempting it" (2). Viewed from this vantage point, the zombie becomes a spectral figure, a revenant who can, at times, force us to look into the past as its broken body testifies against historical injustices levied upon it. The zombie thus becomes an all-too-natural figure for engaging with post-dictatorial Spain. Numerous critics have already built on a hauntological framework to discuss cultural memory following the dictatorship.² Similar to the

ghost, the zombie embodies the past while existing in the present; nevertheless, its generally cannibalistic nature gives it an edge—and a degree of urgency—that ghosts lack. What is more, critical zombie films appeared in Spain even during Franco’s tenure. Antonio Córdoba’s “article “Bio-zombies, Exorcism, and the State of Emergency in Jaime Balagueró and Paco Plaza’s *Rec 2*” discusses the zombie from the Spanish context, and he emphasizes how the figure interfaces with (anti)*franquista* discourses. The zombie’s critique of oppression in Spain differs greatly from that which we see in Latin America; rather than decry the colonization of the so-called Third World by the Global North, here it critiques Franco’s domination of his own internal population.

The zombie is almost always born from the aftermath of some sort of disaster or trauma: an enslaved body that is not permitted freedom even in death, a virus that cannot be contained, a cure for cancer gone horribly wrong, or a good old-fashioned apocalypse. As it is articulated across numerous media, the zombie continues to point out the ways in which humans undermine their own societies by appealing to their basest drives and desires. Within the Spanish-speaking world, zombie fiction has become so familiar that, beyond appearing in comics, film, and narrative, it also increasingly appears in the theatre and even poetry (see, for example, Martín Camp’s *Poemas de un zombi*). The prevalence of zombie cultural production contributes to what we and others call zombie fatigue: not only are we tired of the monster; *it* is also tired of *us*.³ This zombie fatigue reflects the dehumanizing effects of late capitalism on “zombified” agents, both human and otherwise. Effects beyond any one person’s control awaken zombies from what should have been eternal slumber or a restful afterlife. The resting dead are forced to endure a stumbling, shuffling reality from which they cannot escape unless they are killed once again—often by the same forces that animated them against their will to begin with. Even when zombies start to move eerily fast—as seen in films like Danny Boyle’s 2003 film *28 Days Later*—they still have a job to do. This particular thread of zombie lore has been pointedly underlined in the recent BBC drama *In the Flesh*, in which the zombie invasion was cured—but only partially. The undead are rounded up by the government, medicated, and rehabilitated to regain their sense of self and consciousness. Their half-rotted bodies cannot be restored, however, so they are said to suffer from PDS—Partially Dead Syndrome. Worse yet, they can remember everything they did while in rabid zombie mode, so many are racked by guilt. As they are required to take daily doses of medication to avoid going “rabid” again, the PDS community is trapped in a different kind of afterlife: neither fully alive nor completely undead. For reasons the program does not explain, the idea of any kind of rest—in complete death or complete life—is out of the question. Sara Potter’s article, “Postcolonial Pandemics and Undead Revolutions: Contagion as Resistance in *Con Z de Zombie* and *Juan de los muertos*” and Emily Maguire’s article, “The Two Faces of the Zombie: Ambivalent

Dominican Undead in *Malas Hierbas* and *El hoyo del diablo*,” both engage notions of sentient zombiism from a Latin American context.

One trait that seems to unite all zombies is a lack of subjectivity and reason (even if they eventually get these back to some degree by becoming sentient). Recent shifts in the presentation of the zombie have transformed it from a poisoned, tractable individual to an uncontrollable, ever-multiplying force. The creature is no longer a controllable *it*, but rather an unruly and anxiety-producing *they*. If we read the zombie as posthuman (as Sarah Lauro and Karen Embry do in “A Zombie Manifesto” in 2008, building on Donna Haraway’s fundamental 1986 “A Cyborg Manifesto”), these figures do not only disregard borders, but they threaten to eliminate them entirely.⁴ Jeremy R. Strong agrees in his 2015 article on posthuman futurity, describing 21st century popular culture zombies as creatures that “represent the final breakdown or destruction of [borders of biopower] and other borders” (213). The anxiety is palpable, but the causes are too complex to explore in a 90-minute zomcom, so the reasons are no longer addressed at all. Ultimately, the cause of zombie subjectivity hardly seems to matter; in many cases, the new order is not that different from life before the outbreak.

The wisecrack that life was not so different before the zombie apocalypse has ominous implications. If that is the case, then we were already living in the apocalypse, in a constant Agambian state of exception; we ourselves were already zombies. The ultimate border breakdown, then, occurs between the living human and the living dead. Given the clear focus on consumption in zombie cultural production, the undead led what can only be described as a “bare” existence because they lack the most basic amenities (intellect, shelter, food) of a fully “human” existence. Far from fearing death alone, the characters of zombie literature and film fear the prospect of becoming like the creatures they abhor. Nevertheless, the spectator of this fiction takes a voyeuristic thrill from the genre’s excessive violence. While human characters constantly die in creative and gory ways, the genre’s calling card remains that of a monstrous, decomposing human being whose head explodes after a survivor shoots it with an impractically powerful firearm. The true protagonist of the zombie movie is not the surviving hero, but the brainless masses of expendable human bodies.

In many cases, the undead corpses become a foil for living people who exhibit similar characteristics in their own lives. N. Katherine Hayles’s famous declaration, “You are the cyborg, and the cyborg is you” (*How We Became Posthuman* xii), applies here as well, but to a different posthuman figure than the one she had in mind: You are the zombie, and the zombie is you. Zombies continually devour people yet are never satisfied; survivors become hardened and often resort to animalistic existences. At a deeper level, the readers themselves continuously consume zombie literature without ever becoming fully satisfied. This is in part because the zombie speaks to so many social realities that their readers

face; beyond critiquing the globalized neoliberal order, zombies also function nicely within many political contexts, particularly those plagued with corruption. Indeed, zombie-related cultural production is most successful when it critiques social ineptitude. The very term “zombie apocalypse” necessarily entails the loss of civil society, and almost every zombie cultural product discusses, in one way or another, how the zombie plague destroyed the world. The trigger for zombie consciousness (whether it be nuclear, mystical, or a virus) does not destroy the world in and of itself; instead, the destruction of human bodies creates such chaos that society itself can no longer remain intact. In most cases, governments collapse under the weight of their own ineptitude; unable to mobilize before a new threat, they simply fall apart. Sometimes, the physical corruption of the zombie plague draws attention to political corruption among the leaders of a specific nation. In either case, the broken bodies of undead corpses provide an eerily powerful metaphor for the broken governments that they sire—or, alternatively, for those that sire them.

The zombified existence of the living is not an entirely hopeless condition, however: like the cyborg, the zombie is a double-edged figure that embodies both resistance and oppression. The multiple levels of signification inherent to the zombie are of great interest to us in our focus on the Spanish and Portuguese-speaking world and the ways in which zombies interact with notions of a colonialism that is itself zombified: supposedly long over yet doggedly present. It cannot be *post* as it never really ended (to echo the critics of the term “postcolonialism”), nor can it be *neo* as it is far from new. The notion of the zombie as a convenient Other who exposes the faults of corrupt governments, economic systems, and politics becomes much more poignant when we realize that all people are, in one way or another, zombies. This suggests that individual artists, activists, and even fictional characters can call attention to the social problems surrounding them as they play out the reigning logic of neoliberal society to its extreme. This produces a sort of zombie aesthetic that shows the obvious problems to the systems of oppression—be they race-based, socioeconomic, gender-based, etc.—in which they operate. As the zombie appears in different forms of literary and cultural production, it toys with distinct strategies for critiquing—and improving—the world around it. Clearly, the zombie is a powerful yet malleable metaphor that can interface with many of the most difficult questions facing the Spanish-speaking world. In the pages that follow, we include abstracts for the articles that appear in *The Transatlantic Undead: Zombies in Hispanic and Luso-Brazilian Literatures and Cultures*, a special edition in *Alambique: Revista académica de ciencia ficción y fantasía/Jornal acadêmico de ficção y fantasia*.

Kiersty Lemon Rogers’s article, “Zombies and Immune Discourses in Hazael González’s “Luna de sangre sobre Lepanto,” argues that the zombies in Hazael González’s “Luna de sangre sobre Lepanto” function as embodied

manifestations of physical, spiritual, and cultural contagion. The ideas of Roberto Esposito, Priscilla Wald, Mabel Moraña, Sarah J. Lauro and Karen Embry, put into conversation with González's tale, help illuminate how the author uses monstrosity to demarcate the Other and define it as those who exist outside of the human, the normative, and more generally outside of the Western social order. The historical and contemporary context of "Luna de sangre" is one of nationalism, bigotry, walls, and anti-Islamic and anti-Semitic sentiment. González says that "el marco histórico lo escogió Cervantes mismo, no yo." Within the narrative, the distinction between race and religion blurs, as the characters treat Turkish Muslims, Spanish Jews and "unconverted" Africans alike with similar disdain. González's work necessarily draws upon the baroque quality of Cervantes's original Quixote narrative, and his parody also reflects the similarly complex twenty-first century relationships and tensions between varying groups of "us" and "them," where those categories of community and belonging shift depending on the position of the speaker.

Antonio Córdoba contributes the article "Bio-zombies, Exorcism, and the State of Emergency in Jaime Balagueró and Paco Plaza's *Rec 2*." A sequel that complements the events in the first film in the series and adds some key developments, *Rec 2* introduces a theological dimension that is mostly absent in *Rec*. As a priest accompanies the SWAT team that goes into the apartment building in which the story takes place, we see how in this zombie film the immunitary logic of the modern state (as per Esposito) coexists with the theological logic of exorcism. The purpose of this chapter is to explore the full implications of the fact that the bio-zombie apocalypse in *Rec 2* is a state of emergency that combines viral infection and supernatural possession, a hybrid of the natural and the otherworldly against which both secular and sacred powers fail. While in *Rec* the emphasis is placed on the need to survive, and the anxiety of the survivors that have no real understanding of what is happening, in *Rec 2* the directors focus on how church and state are powerless, a failure that equalizes them and invites us to consider to what extent secularization is nothing but the repression of the sacred. Furthermore, we can see an invitation to consider new, utopian possibilities in the general collapse of patriarchal authority figures (the priest and the militarized police officers) that in Spain evoke a genocidal National-Catholic past. By studying the ways in which *Rec 2* mixes the original magic dimensions of zombies, creatures under the control of a seemingly supernatural agency, and the contemporary secularized tropes of bio-zombie narratives, he shows that the filmmakers turn the audience's attention to the theological underpinnings of the contemporary Spanish state, and use the conventions of the zombie apocalypse to reenact and work through Spanish historical trauma and open the field to the terrifying and tantalizing picture of a post-apocalyptic society.

Emily Maguire's article, "The Two Faces of the Zombie: Ambivalent Dominican Undead in *Malas Hierbas* and *El hoyo del diablo*," discusses how

zombies appear in cultural production from the Spanish Caribbean. Although figure of the zombie can be traced to Haitian folklore, the undead have rarely been featured in cultural production from Haiti's neighbor, the Dominican Republic. In recent years, this has begun to change, particularly as a new generation of writers and directors have begun to engage with the fraught relationship between the two countries and their people. Two recent—and radically divergent—Dominican texts demonstrate both how apt and how flexible a metaphor the zombie is for exploring the island's contemporary issues and highlighting its historical traumas. Puerto Rican writer Pedro Cabiya's *Malas hierbas* (2010) tacks back and forth between Haiti and the Dominican Republic to present two intertwined tales of contemporary zombies. In modern-day Santo Domingo, a zombie scientist searches for a cure to zombie-ism as he flirts with his three attractive (human) lab technicians. Meanwhile, in the wealthy suburbs of the Dominican capital, upper-class Haitian emigrés traffic in zombies, providing the Dominican elite with an ideal workforce of compliant undead. The scientist's gradual "humanization" through his love for one of his colleagues stands in stark contrast to the flashbacks that explain the enslavement of the exploited Haitian zombie workers. Through these juxtaposed stories, Cabiya shows how modern day affective sensibility is both bolstered by and connected to more basic forms of capitalist exploitation. Francis "El Indio" Disla's 2012 horror film *El hoyo del diablo* employs many of the stock elements of the genre, yet its references to Dominican history and religion gesture to more profound, if ambivalent possible meanings. A group of college friends on vacation during *Semana Santa* are stranded in a remote location when their car is run off the road. Taking shelter in an abandoned house, they soon discover that the house is haunted by its previous owner, who practiced black magic. In an ironic twist on the idea of an unconscious zombie, the house's owner, a colonel under Dominican dictator Trujillo, sacrificed Haitian cane workers in order to make himself immortal; the zombie, in this case, becomes the exploiter rather than the exploited. While the film connects the colonel's violent acts to the 1937 massacre of Haitian workers under Trujillo, the black magic aspect of these deaths both trivialize and fail to fully examine the historical events. As a result, the undead monster that truly haunts the film is not the fictional colonel but rather Trujillo and the unexamined effects of his dictatorship.

Sara Potter's article, "Postcolonial Pandemics and Undead Revolutions: Contagion as Resistance in *Con Z de Zombie* and *Juan de los muertos*" finds common threads in twenty-first century Mexican and Cuban apocalyptic tales. Mexican playwright Pedro Valencia's 2013 *Con Z de Zombie* and Cuban director Alejandro Brugués's 2011 Cuban-Spanish zomcom *Juan de los muertos* spring from similar roots: both place the blame for each country's zombie apocalypse at the feet of the United States. In Brugués's film, the accusation is clear but never proven: news reports interspersed through the film state that the participants in the

zombie uprising are dissidents paid by the U.S. government, though there is no physical U.S. presence in the film, only the symbolic presence of the country's flag. The origins of Valencia's plague in Mexico are less clear still: the zombie-narrator Randy does not know how it began, though he takes some satisfaction in the knowledge that the plague headed north, since the undocumented immigrants crossing over were impossible to contain: "lo que hubiera dado por ver a un zombie latino partiéndole su madre a la border patrol, ¡por fin de habrían metido su ley antiinmigrante por el culo!" (I.2, unpaginated) She examines the ways in which both film and play employ contagion as a double-edged sword that can be oppressive as well as an instrument of resistance, underlying the political and economic structures that dictate how human life is valued (and not) in both post-revolutionary countries.

David S. Dalton contributes the article "*Antropofagia, Calibanism, and the Post-Romero Zombie: Cannibal Resistance in Latin America and the Caribbean.*" His study uses zombie theory to flesh out common themes between Oswald de Andrade's *The Cannibalist Manifesto* and Roberto Fernández Retamar's *Calibán*. While both of these canonical Latin Americanist thinkers theorized literary and cultural cannibalism as a resistant act that could challenge the hegemony of Western cosmologies and aesthetics, very little scholarship has thought to reconcile—or even juxtapose—these men's thought. The article asserts a shared camaraderie between Latin American people of color and the zombies of the region's cultural production by emphasizing both entities' association (fair or not) with cannibalism in the Western imaginary. When viewed through this framework, even the zombie apocalypse comes to signify an optimistic revolt of the oppressed against corrupt, imperial entities. The article references numerous cases of Latin American literary and cultural production both to highlight the discursive ties between the Latin Americanist zombie and people of African and indigenous descent and to signal strategies that these works propose for challenging Western (white) supremacy in the region.

M. Elizabeth Ginway further builds on the ties between zombies and *antropofagia* with "Eating the Past: Proto-Zombies in Brazilian Fiction 1900-1955." Taking Oswald de Andrade's 1928 "Manifesto antropófago" [Cannibalist Manifesto] as a point of departure, this article analyzes how zombies in Brazilian literature from 1900 to 1955 represent a kind of cultural cannibalism, consuming bodies as a way of resisting hegemonic power, oblivion and marginalization. Zombies variously represent rural inhabitants, modern consumers, prostitutes and hustlers who often become invisible, faceless, and voiceless, symbolizing the historical silencing of subalterns or "cannibals." Several Brazilian short stories and legends from the first half of the twentieth century serve to illustrate the cultural cannibalism of the proto-zombie: Lima Barreto's "A Nova Califórnia" (1910), Monteiro Lobato's "Café, café" (1900), Murilo Rubião's "O pirotécnico Zacarias" (1943), Carlos Drummond de Andrade's "Flor, moça, telefone" (1951), Gilberto

Freyre's "Boca-de-ouro" (1955) and its re-interpretation in comic-book form by Roberta Cirne. Written by canonical authors, these stories have traditionally been considered to be parables condemning greed, horror or madness, yet upon closer examination, they also involve the living dead and the contagion characteristic of zombies. She argues that Brazil's proto-zombies represent these groups' resistance to collective oblivion as they fall victim to the transition from a rural, agricultural-based economy to an urban consumer society.

James Krause contributes the article "Undermining Authoritarianism: Retrofitting the Zombie in 'Seminário dos ratos' by Lygia Fagundes Telles." Here he argues that, although the figure of the zombie has proved to be quite popular in recent years in Brazil—thanks in large part to the wave of imported graphic novels, television shows, and movies—Brazilian literature does not possess a strong tradition of autochthonous zombie narratives. Nevertheless, a number of texts lend themselves to a zombie reading, including "Seminário dos Ratos" (1977), by Lygia Fagundes Telles. In this modern allegory of a world plagued by rats, Fagundes Telles surreptitiously decries the political corruption, censorship of the press, foreign intervention, class warfare, and abuses of power of the Brazilian military dictatorship (1964-1985). Reading "Seminário dos ratos" through a zombie hermeneutic highlights the underlying themes of uninhibited consumption, unbridled proliferation, and the threat of unmitigated annihilation as forces that undermine authoritarianism.

As this list of contributions shows, this anthology engages the question of the zombie across a wide array of contexts. This approach permits us to look at broad trends in the figure's articulation in different parts of the Iberoamerican world. What is more, the individual case studies also allow for close readings of important texts from the countries of this region. In some cases, these articles signal new ways to approach some of the most canonical figures of Hispanic studies; in other cases, zombie theory allows us to rescue texts that have been largely forgotten. In both cases, *The Transatlantic Undead: Zombies in Hispanic and Luso-Brazilian Literatures and Cultures* provides a much-needed look at the zombie and its transformation across the Hispanic and Luso-Brazilian world. As such, it both provides interesting analyses and important gestures toward future research in the field.

Notes

¹ Lauro refers here to German sociologist Ulrich Beck's notion of "zombie categories" that was outlined in Beck and Beck-Gernsheim's 2001 *Individualization* in reference to a category that is impotent, irrelevant, or otherwise "dead" but is still used or perpetuated (see particularly 202-14).

² See Jo Labanyi, "History and Hauntology; or, What Does One Do with the Ghosts of the Past?"

Reflections on Spanish Film and Fiction of the Post-Franco Period” and Steven Marsh, “Editor’s Introduction. *Untimely Materialities: Spanish Film and Spectrality*.”

³ See, for example, George Denison (“Zombie Fatigue”) and Daniel W. Drezner (100).

⁴ Neither do they have reason to respect or care about those borders or what lies on either side of them. Persephone Braham’s 2015 chapter on Caribbean zombies offers a succinct reminder of that fact in choosing an epigraph from Gertrudis Gómez de Avallaneda’s 1841 novel *Sab*: “Los esclavos no tienen patria” (153). Given the zombies’ cultural and historic origins, it can reasonably be argued that they, too, have multiple reasons to lack—or simply reject outright—the idea of a homeland or *patria*.

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