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Liberation through destruction

From fantastic creatures to marginalized social groups

Liberación a través de la destrucción

De criaturas fantásticas a grupos sociales marginados

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Summary / Resumen

In the literature of Spain, Latin America, and the Caribbean, countless acts of redefinition emerge through destruction, a powerful symbol of breaking free from oppressive forces and embracing independence. Within these narratives, characters undergo a process of redefinition, enabling them to assert themselves and advocate for their own rights, ultimately generating a sense of empowerment. But this transformation isn't confined to human beings alone, it also extends to magical creatures, demonstrating that all entities, human or otherwise, have the power to reshape their destinies through the redefinition of their identities. 'Liberation through destruction: From fantastic creatures to marginalized social groups' portrays literary worlds in which a rich tapestry unfolds, where witches, sorcerers, demons, and other fantastical beings coexist within contemporary, modern, and even colonial settings. These characters breathe life into these narratives, giving voice to those marginalized, alienated, or rejected by society. However, the presence of these diverse and extraordinary characters challenges the established hierarchies.

When women are seen as witches or portrayed as autonomous figures, fear often follows. The dissident woman becomes a target simply for refusing to conform. Her defiance against masculine subjugation, and her pursuit of feminine liberation and economic autonomy, forces her into a liminal space between what is accepted and what is repudiated, between what is considered "normal" and what is "terrifying."

This "woman," who breaks the rules and challenges societal norms, who evokes the heroines who took action, like Antigone and La Llorona, heroines who act decisively to navigate the blurred line between what is "fair" and what is "unfair," between what is "right" and what is "wrong." In doing so, they enter a space where they are both feared and revered, they embody a liminality that gives them the ability to rewrite the stories they occupy and enter a realm where they are both feared and revered.

En la literatura española, latinoamericana y caribeña, son frecuentes los actos de redefinición que, a través de la destrucción, se presentan como un poderoso símbolo de liberación de las fuerzas opresivas y de la adopción de la independencia. Dentro de estas narrativas, los personajes a menudo atraviesan un proceso de redefinición que les permite afirmarse y abogar por sus propios derechos, acompañado de un proceso de empoderamiento. Sin embargo, esta transformación no se limita solo a los seres humanos, sino que también se extiende a criaturas mágicas, demostrando que todas las entidades, sean humanas o no, tienen el poder de redefinir su identidad y, por tanto, transformar su destino.

'Liberación a través de la destrucción: De criaturas fantásticas a grupos sociales marginados', despliega un rico tapiz de mundos literarios donde

brujas, hechiceros, demonios y otros seres fantásticos coexisten en escenarios contemporáneos, modernos y coloniales. A través de estos personajes, se consigue dar voz a aquellos que han sido marginados, alienados o rechazados por la sociedad. Sin embargo, la presencia de estos personajes no pasa de largo, sino que desafía el status quo.

La aparición en estas obras de mujeres que son (o son vistas) como brujas o figuras autónomas suele causar miedo a su paso. La mujer disidente no pasa de largo, sino que se convierte en objetivo simplemente por no conformarse con lo que le viene impuesto. Su búsqueda de la liberación femenina y la autonomía económica la obliga a ocupar un espacio ambiguo entre lo aceptado y lo repudiado, entre lo que se considera "normal" y lo que se considera "terrorífico".

Esta "mujer" que rompe las reglas y desafía las normas sociales, evoca a heroínas como Antigona y La Llorona; heroínas que actúan de manera autónoma, fijando sus propias normas y situándose en una línea difusa entre lo "justo" y lo "injusto", entre lo "correcto" y lo "incorrecto". Al hacerlo, entran en un espacio donde son tanto temidas como veneradas, un espacio donde tienen la capacidad de reescribir sus propias historias.

About the editors / Sobre los editores

Kate Kagan is a Professor of Spanish in the Department of Interdisciplinary Studies at Russell Sage College, NY. She completed her PhD in 2002. Her dissertation examines the formation of the Spanish language in Puerto Rico, Cuba, and Dominican Republic. Her research interests include linguistics, second language acquisition, and teaching and technology.

Gabriela Schiappacasse earned her Ph.D at the University of Pittsburgh, holds a master's degree in the University of Connecticut (UConn), and a bachelor's in Literature and theatre in Universidad Científica del Sur in Lima. She has published fifteen fiction novels, two articles, and is an active member of NeMLA Congress and research Institute of Cesar Vallejo in Peru. She is interested in fiction and fantastic creatures as an X ray of contemporary societies as well as the mental "illness" and the labels that contemporary societies use to classify individuals and allow exclusion.

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