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Habilitation's Project: "The Return of the Monsters. Figurations of the monstrous in contemporary Hispanic literature".

"We live in a time of monsters" - this statement of the cultural theoretic Jeffrey Cohen and his proposal to read cultures through the exegesis of their monsters constitute the initial basis of this research project. Hereby the monster is understood as symbol or symptom of social uncertainties or collective desires. This project pretends to examine the presence of the monstrous in Hispanic belles lettres from 1990 onwards. As central to the project count interrogations about the kind of shape the traditional forms of the monstrous are adopting in contemporary literature and what they tell about the deep reaching changes of the past twenty years in the four proposed study areas. It shall be shown to what extension the present social debates on Identity and Alterity, on the problematic of the individual and collective subject, on the naturalness, respectively the artificiality of the human body as well as the virtual world as opposite to the natural world gain expression by means of figurations of the dreadful. At the same time the monsters are analyzed as matrixes of the past and returning, and as incarnation of oppressed fears and forbidden desires.