

From death's practices to the survival: notes for a biopolitical understanding of the military dictatorship in Chile

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Abstract

From a biopolitical viewpoint, this article seeks to understand recent Chilean history resorting to a critique of the theoretical discourses that made the arrival of democracy possible. We argue that biopolitics, through its different authors, provide interesting analytical tools to understand this history. Particularly, here, we argue that during the Chilean military dictatorship a type of governmentality was engendered that was based in a practice of *survival*, related to three axes: the production of death; the economization of politics understood as a practice that is constitutive of neoliberalism; and the elaboration of a transitional political rationality that laid the foundations for a democratic neoliberal development. The effects of this new governmentality are reinforced by the legal exceptionality of the period, strengthened in its turn by the Constitution of 1980.

Keywords: Biopolitics, dictatorship, democracy, exception, survival.

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