

# Ethnohistory and Disability

## Disability and Culture: The Case of a Group of People with Disabilities, Indigenous in Chile

**Gregorio Perez Serrano**

professor of the department of occupational therapy, Faculty of Medicine University of Chile and  
president of NGO Bioscorpore  
*gregorio.perez.serrano@gmail.com*

*\*Corresponding Author: Gregorio Perez Serrano, professor of the department of occupational therapy, Faculty of Medicine University of Chile.*

### Abstract

*This article is a pioneer in disability studies in Latin America, since it shows the ethnohistorical relevance of disability. If emperors have seen disability as "less than", in Latin America disability is synonymous with "lack of capacity" by capacity, we understand being able to do something, then it is an even greater challenge for the States in Latin America, to have the capacity to understand a person with a disability and effectively enforce the articles of the "Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities". This little article refers to occupational health and the eighth article of the convention "Awareness". This ethnohistorical anthropological reflection will give clues to comply with this article, by positioning not only the disability in a synchronic moment but in a diachronic process*

**Keyword:** *Hetnohistory, disability, different productions mode*

### INTRODUCTION

The problem of disability has recently become a challenge for the Latin American region, with the ratification of the international treaty "Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities," by the General Assembly of the United Nations in 2006.

This population has been historically excluded from public work, the World Health Organization and the World Bank recognized a series of disabling obstacles, while establishing recommendations on the issue for member countries.

The detected by both institutions refers to: insufficient policies and norms, negative attitudes, insufficient provision of services and problems with them, insufficient financing, lack of accessibility, lack of consultation and participation, as well as lack of data and information.

To face the above, a series of possible solutions were established, among them: to enable access to all conventional systems and services, to invest in specific programs and services for people with disabilities, to

adopt a national disability strategy and action plan, ensure the participation of persons with disabilities, improve human resource capacity, provide sufficient funding and improve accessibility, promote public awareness and understanding of disability, improve the collection of disability data, reinforce and support research on disability. (BM, WHO 2011).

The Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities of the United Nations was designed to address these shortcomings of the most disadvantaged group in the world: disability, thus complying with the recommendations of the organizations already named (UN, 2007).

Disability is a cause of inequality, and inequality is also a cause of disability, since people in this group suffer from discrimination, marginalization and illiteracy, poor nutrition, lack of access to water, unhealthy and dangerous working conditions. (UN, 2007).

According to the World Health Organization, 10% of the world population has some type of disability, according to the World Bank it is 20% of the population. In short, there are approximately 650 million people with

disabilities in the world. (UN, 2007). That is why the United Nations Convention on the matter arises, as a political and legal body that tries to protect this group of people. (UN, 2007).

In the body and first chapter of "The Convention on the Rights of Disability," it states: "The purpose of this convention is to promote, protect and ensure the full and equal enjoyment of all human rights and fundamental freedoms. for all persons with disabilities and promote respect for their inherent dignity. People with disabilities include those who have physical, mental, intellectual or sensory long-term deficiencies that, when interacting with various barriers, may prevent their full and effective participation in society, on equal terms with others." (UN, 2007 p.128).

In order to establish a link between the actions of the States with respect to disability and the purpose of the United Nations Convention, this thesis will focus on Article 32 of said Convention, regarding its dimension of international cooperation. It states: "The States Parties recognize the importance of international cooperation and its promotion, in support of national efforts to realize the purpose and objectives of this Convention, and shall take appropriate and effective measures in this regard, between the States and where appropriate, in partnership with relevant international and regional organizations and civil society, particularly organizations of persons with disabilities".

In this way, cooperation according to Article 32 of the Convention, accounts for other aspects, such as cultural. The relationship of this dimension with disability is recorded in the "United Nations Development Program" (UNDP), and the "United Nations Organization for Education, Science, and Culture" (UNESCO), these two Agencies pursue the cultural development of a country and for that they must refer to this dimension.

This article refers to the ideational or cultural way in which people with disabilities are treated, from a hybrid culture (Canclini, 2007). This article is based on the thesis of GP to obtain the title of anthropologist, and aims to contribute to information on disability in Chile. An investigation will be carried out from the ethnohistorical and anthropological point of view.

## **PROBLEMATIC**

In the article 32 literal (a), it is allowed to glimpse that the phenomenon of the disability is a cultural problem, this is the paradigmatic change. In capitalist society, these individuals lose their identity as subjects, because what prevails is to be able to sustain a paid job. As seen, in different cultures over time and different production modes. There was a process of changing systems of ideas. Understanding that structures are what change the systems of ideas, and not the other way around.

For Wolf, the capitalist mode of production converts interpersonal relationships, into relationships where discriminatory treatment prevails, separating or excluding the disabled person from the collective group, losing identity, and transforming it into a social stigma, we ask ourselves: if there will be other forms to face the problem of "disability" in a capitalist mode of production like the current one.

Questioning what is the vision of disability in the different production modes, and specifically in Latin America?

## **HYPOTHESIS**

We have formulated the following hypothesis: Disability in the indigenous world receives a different cultural value, the value it receives in Western culture. Well, it is taken from another logic, which obeys another system of totally different ideas and realities.

To prove, if there is a cultural variable acting within a group of indigenous people. Parameters were built based on ethnomethodology, which consists of separating the world from a disabled subject.

This world in theoretical terms is composed of several elements, which would be: resilience / desmoralizations, instrumental / communicative rationality, solidarity / charity, normality / abnormality, identity / experience, disability / disability, stereotype / discrimination. These elements have an alterity, which has a negative part and a positive part, and which through a social process can be appropriated or may be appropriate (Perez Serrano 2017).

The current Latin American society appropriates people with disabilities, appropriating the negative part of the elements. Building a stereotype of a person

## **Ethnohistory and Disability, Disability and Culture: The Case of A Group of People With Disabilities, Indigenous in Chile**

---

with disabilities, which the subject sometimes accepts for himself, cementing a deteriorated identity, or rather putting his identity in negative and giving way to society and its economic, political and social model creates a false image of them, calling them “disabled”, “disabled”, “sick”, “poor”.

Corporally non-conventional people can, through a sense of resilience (ability to overcome adversity) appropriate the positive elements of the world of disability and break away from the “disabled” stereotype.

### **THE ETHNOHISTORICITY OF THE SUBJECT**

The problem of disability has been present in all cultures and in all societies as something inherent in the human condition. In all of them we look at the “disability “ or the disabled people, with some non-conventional corporeal characteristic, in multiple ways.

People with disabilities do not form a cohesive group, but rather a diaspora. Given that historical data are extremely important for this article, a set of historical backgrounds has been gathered that will be analyzed, considering the view that disability is seen in different epochs, and ethnic groups, placing it within the modes of production. The “cultural variable” will be considered as an analytical tool, therefore, it is necessary to know the historical tradition of a people.

An ethnohistoric recount will be made, of the mestizo chroniclers Garcilaso de la Vega and Guaman Poma de Ayala, who make a critique of the Spanish occupation of the Inca Empire, in his books “Royal Comments and First New Chronicle and Good Government”, dedicating a few paragraphs to people with disabilities, arguing a work function within the Inca empire.

Then the text of Michel Foucault “History of madness” and also the text “The life of the infamous men” will be exposed certain ideas forces. To analyze the Spanish-European case we will deal with Victor Hugo, “Our Lady of Paris”.

Finally, we will analyze data from Carlos Méndez Notari, Chilean historian who collected information from veterans of the war in the Pacific, whom I call “disabled”, and we will take the thesis of Leonora Parrau that provides background to complement the history of the disabled in Chile. From Eric Wolf in “Europe and people without history” the chapter

“modes of production” will be used to contextualise the background of society, and its treatment of persons with disabilities, and the way of seeing these people when changing the modes of production and its transformation, and the change in the system of ideas.

### **MODE OF PRODUCTION BASED ON KINSHIP: PEOPLE WITH DISABILITIES, IN DIFFERENT CULTURES IN THE HISTORY OF MANKIND**

Throughout ancient history, Western and non-Western, there were treatments for people with some type of disability, in the thesis of Leonora Parrau “The hearing sensory impaired. Testimony of discrimination in the regular education system in Santiago “points out:

“In Greece of the 4th century BC the eminent philosopher Aristotle tried to interpret some deviations. There are records of studies of physical and mental differences made by Diogenes, Hippocrates and Galen, who studied epilepsy, dementia, among other forms. In the epoch of flourishing of the first civilizations, the Spartans of the old Greece, threw from the Monte Taigeto to the people with disability, because they did not want that “in their beautiful and flourishing civilization” different people existed “. (Parra Leonora en Perez Serrano 2008)

For the inhabitants of the Nordic countries, the disabled were true gods. For the ancient Hebrews, physical defects were a mark of sin. The Chagga of East Africa used the disabled to scare the devil away. The Jukun of Sudan, considered that the disability, was the work of the evil spirits and the disabled were abandoned to die. The Semang of Malaysia, considered people with disabilities as wise men. The Lotuko of Uganda, destined to the affairs of magic to the invalids and the neuropaths. The Masai indigenous people murdered children with disabilities. For the Selk’nam and Yámana peoples of Tierra del Fuego, the sickly individuals were predisposed to meditation and asceticism.

The stories give a vision of how different cultures dialogue with people with disabilities, they do it from a parental mode of production; The symbolic importance in these relationships was of great relevance and they could define what role and status they gave to the person. Whoever had a corporal mark, or acted differently from the rest of the group, was someone different. And those differences had a cultural meaning.

## Ethnohistory and Disability, Disability and Culture: The Case of A Group of People With Disabilities, Indigenous in Chile

In cultures such as the Selknam, they were incorporated into social life, as they were considered as wise and wise men, occupying a place of importance. On the contrary, in the case of the Chagga, they were used to chase away the spirits. In other cultures, such as the Spartans, they simply excluded them at birth with some bodily malformation, or were thrown into Mount Taigedo. For the Masai, the disabled had to be killed.

The different conceptions and treatments, given to the disabled, were due to the symbolic behavior of these magical-religious societies. These tribal societies, being mediated by symbolic definitions between relatives and related, included within their system of ideas to these people, the kinship carries with it, symbolic constructions (marriage, affinity) that places people in reciprocal social relations.

People with disabilities in this type of society, due to their corporeal characteristics, must fulfill some supernatural function or disappear. Since the body was indispensable for the mode of production, in the case of men, and in women it was reproduction. In these societies, therefore, disability was a spiritual-religious and aesthetic sign.

### TAX PRODUCTION MODE: CASE OF PEOPLE WITH DISABILITIES CALLS IN ANDINO AMERICA

Garcilazo de la Vega "the disabled for the major jobs were engaged in some profitable exercise for them to catch zero and straw, and to delocate themselves, and to bring the lice to their decursions or squad ends. The office of the blind was to clean the cotton or granillos they have inside them, and to sow corn from the corn on which it was believed ... "(De la Vega, 1976, pp. 298).

Guaman Poma de Ayala "In this street of the quarto of the sick and crippled, lame and maimed and crippled, upa, mute; cugo nausea; uncoc, sick .., uinay uncoc, "crippled, paquisca machin, maimed, hanca, coxo: In these yndios and yndias had a good horden of seruido de Dios. And multiplied from jente to swell 'the land of people for the great He rose from the magestad of the Inga and princes, counts, marquises of this kingdom, they married the blind man with blind blindness, the lame with another lame, the mute with another mute, the dwarf with another dwarf, corcovado with corcovado. The naris cleft with another of cleft naris, and these had their seedlings, houses, eredades and

help of his servant ancino to need hospital, or alms, with this horden: the holy and polite deste rreyno, Like no rreyno of, Christendom. Neither ynfielos has not had it nor can he have it for more Cristiano very good []. "(Guaman Poma, 1980, pp 240).

The chronicles, in addition to describing the treatment given to people with disabilities, evidence an inclusive logic that used the Inca Empire, to preserve all people with special training. The Inca State, had a tax production mode of oriental despotic court. According to Wittfogel; "The elite that holds the power, first will have to control some strategic element, for this mode of production as: hydraulic works and the army.

"In this case, local governors are not required to collect taxes, because the center will be able to interact directly with the primary producers, making possible the work of all the subjects, thus giving way to a need for inclusion". (Wolf, 2000).

In "the street of the room of the sick", it can be deduced that Felipe Guaman Poma compares the two ideologies, implying that in his reign no beneficence was needed to include them, since the different ethnic groups took charge of them. That is, there was inclusion and solidarity. The disabled were useful to society, they played a role, whatever it was. They had a place in the dynamics of the productive system, therefore, they were given a functional particularity. In the chronicles, it is mentioned that the blind had the function of removing the granillo or cotton. That is, they did not see the dysfunctionality of disabled people, on the contrary, they took advantage of other skills they developed, in this case, touch.

Another example, we see it in the French case "Our Lady of Paris" to Pedro Gringoire the attention of the beauty of the gypsy in the Plaza de Gréve, and at that moment the procession of the pope of the insane who came to the Square. It was a crowd of scoundrels, thieves, vagrants, among the high dignitaries of the mad brotherhood was Quasimodo the hunchback, who proudly showed his disgusting and sad face. After a lifetime of humiliations, disjuncts, and contempt of the people, he felt some satisfaction due to the clamor of the crowd of people, because he was part of the crazy, crippled, thieves, beggars, lazy, and that was his people. "Quasimodo besides hunchback, was deformed, somewhat deaf and incomplete. The characteristics of him, infused in the other real fears,

## **Ethnohistory and Disability, Disability and Culture: The Case of A Group of People With Disabilities, Indigenous in Chile**

being hunchback was robust; the patituerto, agile; and the deaf, bad. Therefore, there were three qualities that he possessed that moderated mockery somewhat. "(Parrau, 2003).

The same author mentions that during the fourteenth century, the disabled were confined to permanent confinement, and were shown on weekends as a spectacle, a kind of deformed circus. The society attended as a family to see them and they enjoyed seeing their faults. The disabled were considered "monsters or phenomena" that suffered a punishment for their bad acts occurred in the past, so their physical, sensory, mental defects were a punishment sent by God. It is a historical constant, that the disabled will be considered abnormal beings. With this foundation they were confined, and confined to institutions of correction. These institutions of correction see the way to make use of their inmates. And they are used to awaken Christian charity, in exchange for monetary aid, salvation and eternal life are promised to those who give a contribution to its maintenance. Therefore the category changes, from phenomena become miserable, Under this new role its function is no longer to entertain like the previous one, on the contrary it was a more dignified role apparently, the disabled were carriers of God's goal, to free people who had been born normal from sin, through charity. Foucault shows us that in the Europe of the Middle Ages the disabled could be visible to society, only in times of carnavals that resembled a circus show. Therefore there was a rejection and an aversion, which caused them to be marginalized from society, that is, to exclude them. However, within the existing cultures in Latin America, at the same time the disabled were included and respected in society.

The answer could be found in the variant of the tax production mode, in Europe it was feudal, the local gentlemen were the strong ones and not the center. The local collectors, the merchants, controlled coercion and strategic means of production. These prevented the flow of taxes to the center and had full control over the land and the workers, formed alliances that needed those who were more fit for work, this excluded the disabled, since they could not be part of productive work, they were marginalized from the production system and social life.

## **CAPITALIST PRODUCTION MODE: THE CASE OF PEOPLE WITH DISABILITIES IN THE HISTORY OF CHILE**

From a tax system to a capitalist system:

Many authors argue that medieval merchants were the direct predecessors of the capitalist system, because monetary wealth allowed to buy work, losing the link between the person and the object created by it.

When producers separate from the means of production, from the final product, a process of alignment begins, which instrumentalizes the relationship, and the work force depends on others to acquire the means of production.

This new relationship, forms a conflict between the owners of the means of production, and the owners of the workforce, whose only link is the workforce. The work produces a surplus, which is achieved in two ways: By raising the level of surplus produced, above the amount that must be paid by the labor force. This is achieved by increasing the performance of the workers during a given period of work.

The other way is to keep wages low or reduce them to the lowest possible point biologically or socially. This could explain why the disabled are discriminated against, since the owners of the means of production seeking to increase capital, and increasing the performance of their workers, produce the instrumentalization of the social relationship, which leaves out those who do not have the capabilities to perform physically to the maximum.

## **THE CONSTRUCTION OF DISABILITY IN CHILE: A PATERNALISTIC MENTALITY**

During the discovery and conquest of Pedro de Valdivia, he installed a semi-feudal relationship through the system of encomiendas and land grants, and built a Chilean society based on feudal Christian values, which excluded the disabled from everyday social life and integrated them into the state system, this was maintained for three hundred years. According to Sonia Montesinos, the Creole identity was created under the Marian mantle and, the mental structure was created from the institution of the fief, and the ideological charge was creating stereotypes, as Indian or crippled. This, I believe the culture of pity towards those who were different or abnormal.



## Ethnohistory and Disability, Disability and Culture: The Case of A Group of People With Disabilities, Indigenous in Chile

From the beginning, Chilean society did not integrate the disabled. He made it visible from the point of view of discrimination, and from here he denied it, denying all his abilities as well. For example, almsgiving as charity, is the way people have to help the handicapped, the old feudal Christian tradition allowed to visibilize the disabled from charity, giving way to a construction of paternalistic Christian values. In Chile, paternalism would be maintained for more than three hundred years, which responds to the logical pattern-tenant, dialectic similar to sir-servant, during the twentieth century if this paternalism was maintained with the hacienda system.

The disabled were generally people of humble origin, who were part of the population of the poor, and because of their bodily conformation, that is, different morphology they did not have access to education or work, thus generating their double exclusion from society.

“Thirty-four years after the creation of the Republic of Chile and two years before the creation of the National Congress, President Manuel Montt created the first School for the disabled, especially for the deaf. At the same time, this was the first School of its kind in Latin America and was created with the aim of giving them the possibility of having a teaching, although rudimentary. This precinct was first called No. 862 (which was the same number of the decree of creation), then Secondary School for Anormales, who attended together blind, mentally impaired and deaf. Later it was separated into two areas, with the second area being the School for the Blind and the Deaf. Again, in 1951 it was divided into two Schools, the School of the Blind and the School of the Deaf and Dumb. (Parrau, 2003).

As a result of the war in the Pacific, many former soldiers could not return to the labor force, because they were invalidated, or relative cripples. The state granted them a small pension for basic sustenance.

“In summary, the problems faced by the veterans when returning to Chile were mostly economic, because some did not have access to labor sources, so that they only had to ask the authorities for permanent economic recognition for the services provided in the war of the Pacific and those that had it, as it is the case of the invalids, the widows and the minor orphans that would have left the deceased veterans, demanded an

urgent increase of their pensions, since comparatively with an active military man was ostensibly more low”. (Mendes, 2004).

Having a certain order established by a symbolic belief system, a very powerful ideology for the Chilean western world, further highlights the differences in this vertical and paternalistic system. But, in some tribal societies, thought was dual and complementary, day-night, good-bad, sick-healthy; Christian thought, on the other hand, has three components, the father the son and the holy spirit; these three figures are structured, one after the other; they have a vertical order creating the duality between lord - servant. As it says: Mary Douglas “Dirt, as we know it, consists substantially of disorder. There is no absolute filth: it exists only in the eye of the beholder. (...) The dirt offends the order “. (Douglas 2007).

Under this logic, a person with disabilities would become the dirt for a man who was made in the image and likeness of God. The disabled leaves these pre-established canons, and would be the third part of a man. Healthy, crippled or disabled and sick as Foucault asserts “Even if the cripple does not conform to nature, in a way is provided by law” in this case, act a kind of customary law, extrapolating from the legal burden that this term has Paternalism would have a vertical cut. The peasants, the indigenous and the disabled, are those who are the lowest on the economic, social and political scale.

This paternalism helped by an existing racist mentality since the construction of history began; that is based on an idea of a totally aristocratic nation, of a universalist character, with a marked relationship between past and present. This nationality, which is the expression of the nation, operates in different areas that are disseminated by a written language. As a homogenizing form that diffuses as it is the formal learning of the school and the university, divulged and compiled in books and encyclopedias. Also for symbolic expressions such as dances or certain rituals: in the Chilean case the commemoration of the national holidays, on September eighteenth, all these cultural devices armed in built traditions create a national identity. This scientific learning helped greatly to create racism and its source was historiography.

Now a historical recapitulation of historiographical knowledge will be rescued and analyzed: four waves

## Ethnohistory and Disability, Disability and Culture: The Case of A Group of People With Disabilities, Indigenous in Chile

---

marked the path of an exclusionary historiography of both the indigenous and the disabled.

The first is composed of personalities that were generally actors of the emancipation and was formed by chroniclers, memorialists and self-taught historians, creators of a historiographical descriptive of political and military events, certainly not exceeding value, but more concerned about the biography and the action of the heroes of the war or the organizers of the republic that by the processes and problems of the new societies.

With this first moment of gestation of Latin American historiography, a symbolic engineering begins that forms the basis of a national historical memory. All chroniclers and self-taught historians will examine history with the veil of Western ethnocentrism, based on the ideas of the Enlightenment with a strong racist and classist component, excluding the indigenous and also the disabled person from this formation.

The second wave, appears linked to the academies of history, national or local, or to the centers and institutes of histories, generally without official character that were founded in almost all the Latin American countries, did not lack this group of scientific formation neither of concern for the theoretical and methodological problems. Positivists in their vast majority, in the explanation of historical events used geographic phenomena and racial factors. They exalted or underestimated the Hispanic cultural heritage and in general had little perception of the importance of the indigenous component of American cultures.

These intellectuals, had a unitary, integrationist and statesman look. At that time there is a need to build a nation state and an official historiography. In Chile the History of Chile emerges as a valid attempt, with a positive and rational component, to grant the state a civilizing discourse, from which a hegemonic apparatus of an elite that holds and generates power can be sustained. This was created in the academies, which were the vehicles from which the aristocratic elite allowed the exclusion of the person with disability and the indigenous, as the liberal aristocrats considered them barbarians and uncivilized, or simply did not consider them as is the case of disability.

Then came a third wave. The third group arises at the end of the 19th century and in the first decades of the 20th century, its place of origin is in the universities,

in its chairs, departments and history institutes. His most conspicuous representatives come from fields such as law, medicine and engineering, or disciplines such as economics, anthropology and sociology. With them Latin American historiography overcomes the almost exclusive concern for political and military problems, for history or for the biography of heroes and statesmen, to enter the fields of economics, culture, institutions and forms of social organization.

In Chilean historiography this spectrum also opens up. There was a process of historical engineering built on the basis of military history and its events, a basis for continuing to mold the history of this country according to the interests of the creole or elite aristocratic class that controlled economic and political power. This has to do with the expansion of borders. At the end of the 19th century, the process called pacification of the Araucanía in the south and the Pacific War in the north developed. Chile expanded its borders, and it became essential to control and colonize these new frontiers to integrate them into the idea of a nation that had elite groups, even from a cultural hegemony. This is the case of Tomas Guevara who was a student of the Mapuche people and was concerned with the cultural and organizational aspects, with a positivist and evolutionist bias of the time.

In this period, the assimilative discourse that the nation states imposed on the indigenous people is consolidated. The disabled were beings that were not even considered in the historiography of the nation, that is, they were invisible.

In the fourth wave, this discourse had changes on several subjects; finally, in the decades prior to the Second World War, with this group appears what we could call the first generation of historians, the new generation of historians abandons the field of great historical panoramas and is oriented towards monographic studies, cases and the problems of social, economic and political history.

Although there was a new historiographical course it would be said that there was also from the social sciences. That course was not so much the macro story, but more ethnographic studies or a micro story that took the social scientists of that time.

It began to visualize the problems of ethnic groups, especially in this country, with the studies of Munizaga,

## Ethnohistory and Disability, Disability and Culture: The Case of A Group of People With Disabilities, Indigenous in Chile

---

Faron Titiev, Cooper between the Mapuche and Van Kessel, Martinez and company among the Aymara, without forgetting the positivist influence with which they were marked. Also by this time there were expeditions to Rapa Nui. In summary this problem was taken from a holistic point of view, but there was a disregard for the problem of disability, it was again invisible, for three reasons: the Jewish Christian Catholic mantle, the positivist influence that entered since the creation of the nation state, and why the disability would not have been a topic of interest for anyone at that time. (It is assumed that the inability of the disabled to fulfill a useful function, as before fulfilled in the Inca Empire, they were not considered in the historical discourse).

In the 60's a new type of language was used, which allowed to give a partial vision of the world of disability, that is, it showed a totally performateed vision of this minority, through audio visual language. This has been occupied since 1978 for more than 29 years, it has offered a totally coarse vision of disability. As Foucault said, the cripples were there to give pity, because by means of this language, they put on makeup and formed a stereotyped image of a mutilated disabled person and with cybernetic devices attached to the body.

Therefore, a review will be made of what the audiovisual language has meant for this minority, and how it is responsible for further strengthening the paternalistic structure of the disabled. In recent years, this image has been used to construct a certain stereotype to obtain charity, this is the case of the Telethon in Chile. In today's western society, where the economy prevails, and whose primary institution is the market, and the way of integration is the exchange that is transacted in this market, which act jointly in this technological society, generating mass media, such as advertising and television.

The advertising campaigns and the rationing by which the television stations compete are some of the resources generated by this society, in which the disabled person seems to play a role that does not correspond to him, a role of victim. The visual language generates a kind of annulment of the disabled person by society, through an icon built by the media, mainly television and audiovisual media controlled by companies, which use this language to show reality

of the disabled, appealing to the morbid, this raises the rating, which is one of the ways to measure the economic convenience of the participating companies. If we consider these two elements: "victimization" and "morbid", the objective would be to distort the term of solidarity and convert it into charity, where the society constructs a speech of perversity, that annuls the disabled person turning it into an object of market.

This would have an explanation through the analysis of discourse, which Michel Foucault makes, which focuses on two discourses pertaining to the medical and judicial spheres.

"In general terms, we can say the following: contemporary expertise replaced the reciprocal exclusion of medical discourse and legal discourse by a game that we could call a double qualification, of double medical and judicial qualification. This practice, this technique of double qualification, organizes what could be called the domain of perversity, the very curious notion that begins to appear in the second half of the nineteenth century and will dominate the whole field of double determination and authorizes the appearance, in the discourse of experts who are nevertheless cults, of a whole series of terms or elements that are manifestly antiquated, ridiculous or puerile "(Foucault, 2007).

From this discourse of perversity, a concept of nullity of certain people can be detached from their condition as human beings, transforming them into typified objects, into a cause-effect relationship, for example, these subjects are sick, they have to be improved, these other subjects are dangerous You have to lock them up.

The perverse imaginary constructs an acceptable discourse, both for the legal sphere and for the medical field, which in a technocratic society with functionalist traits are fundamental for a harmonious coexistence. However, this leaves the subject aside, converting it into his stereotype, thereby canceling the person. This discourse is formed giving room to perversity, thus giving way to a social discourse, in which perversity is accepted as a form of coexistence.

Then we will talk about the ubuesco: bourgeois stupidity as a society that is asleep against this issue.

"Now, that ubuesque character is not simply linked to the person of those who pronounce it, or even



## Ethnohistory and Disability, Disability and Culture: The Case of A Group of People With Disabilities, Indigenous in Chile

---

to a non-elaborated character of the expertise or knowledge linked to it. On the contrary, it is linked in a very positive way to the role of exchanger that exerts criminal expertise, is directly linked to the functions of this, to return once again to a Ubu, if it is admitted - as I tried to show them last time- that the exercise of power through the explicit disqualification of those who exercise it, if the political grotesque is the annulment of the possessor of power, the ritual itself that manifests that power and that possessor, will understand that the psychiatrist can not, in effect, to be something other than the very character of Ubú". (Foucault, 2007).

Under this discourse of perversity, a process of annulment is directly linked to power. The annulment generates a process of power, given by the interaction that is established between two social subjects, one possessor of power and another lacking it. Although here a dual relationship is generated. It necessarily has to establish a Ubu, (bourgeois stupidity) that is, the naive people with a paternalistic mentality that would be the first social subject.

In order for this process of annulment to be valid for the disabled, a dialogue must be generated with a second social subject, such as an elite that controls a power expressed through a language of perversity delivered in the form of a message. In addition, there must be a means to express this discourse containing a perverse language, these are the media and the charities controlled by an elite that is the bearer of power.

These act through a coded message, with a certain meaning to be used for a specific purpose, which is to obtain a product that generates capital. This process of cancellation occurs in a more symbolic discursive plane that is used by the media controlled by the elite, which displays and internalizes a message in the mind of this social subject ubuesco giving way to the stereotype of a mutilated subject, with cybernetic apparatuses that gives the sensation of being completely robotized, generating believable stereotypes for the public that sees it through television. The nullity or cancellation character has already been defined. The conceptual tool that the mass media use, are the symbols, through a process of signification, categorize and stereotype certain type of subjects, in this case disabled people.

From the process of annulment, and how symbols are used, George H. Mead, refers to the meaning:

"We say that the animal does not think. It is not placed in a position for which it is responsible; He does not put himself in the other person's place and says he will act vertically: he will act in that way and I will act in that other. If the individual can act in this way, and the attitude he provokes can become a stimulus for him, then we have the behavior with significance". (Mead, 2009).

This refers to a conscious, rational behavior, in the sense that meanings are constructed, and that with conformist thinking it is easier to deliver a message whatever it is, just this phrase points to a Ubuesco subject. But what would be his thought, in the words of the author:

"Thought ...involves, not only communication in the sense that birds and animals communicate, but also a provocation, in the individual himself, of the reaction he is representing in the other." (Mead, 2009).

Now, we will see the tool of communication the symbols, these are a materiality, and the subjects under a mental process configure certain common codes for all. The symbols covered with power, are transferred to the materiality, and are accepted by general consensus. This materiality is identified as such, and becomes an identifiable material object. In this case, some codes are created, highlighting the strange, the strange, the abnormal, to refer to deformations, mutilations and cybernetic apparatuses, causing a feeling of pity.

"We can say that a whole series of different symbols with a meaning is acceptable; but they are always gestures, that is, they are always, parts of the act of the individual that reveal what the latter will do to the other person, so that when the person uses the key, he provokes in himself the attitude of the other" (Mead, 2009).

This materiality, converted into an object that already has meaning, is translated into gestures, which tell the receiver how to behave in front of a certain gesture. This conjunction between meaning materiality (image), translates into a meaning, which incorporated into this process of gestures becomes a symbol, and if that happens through an interpretant, the result is a social action. To paraphrase Ricoeur,

## Ethnohistory and Disability, Disability and Culture: The Case of A Group of People With Disabilities, Indigenous in Chile

the symbol has multiple meanings, but ubiquitous people always give it a literal meaning, that is, they are incapable of abstracting an image and criticizing it. Moreover, these images, these symbols are properly armed so that there is no speculation. So this armed stereotype is what makes subjects mechanically give money, it's charity, almsgiving, the easiest way to help society practice.

"The nature of signification is intimately associated with the social process that, as such, seems to mean that meaning involves that triple relationship between the phases of the social act as the context in which it arises and develops." (Ulin, 1999).

A social process such as the annulment, is given from four basic elements:

One, materiality: the person with a disability. Two, the Ubuesco character: bourgeois stupidity. Three, the image worked by an elite represented by the charity company. Four, the media, which carry the message everywhere.

The media are the central element for a social process specifically in this society. A society in which new technologies such as cybernetics have emerged in recent times. In this plane are born the mass media industries, Horkheimer and Theodor Adorno, they say:

"The truth that they are nothing more than business serves as an ideology, that it should legitimize the rejections they practice deliberately. They define themselves as industries and the published figures of the income of their CEOs remove any doubt regarding the social need of their products. Those who have interests in it like to explain the cultural industry in technological terms. "

In a context, in which the media are an industry, and as institutions validate a certain ideology, produced by a cultural industry, stereotyping values, behaviors and social norms. Achieving your goal, produce profits, produce money. The industry is a profitable business for the elite, but it brings about nefarious results for the most vulnerable groups. "The treatment given to people with disabilities defines the most intimate features of a society and highlights the cultural values that sustain it." (Horkheimer and Adorno, 1988).

To summarize: The indigenous population, either by the forced acculturation they have experienced, in

relation to the countryside-city migration, have faced territorial marginalization. Either, due to ignorance and lack of available information, which allows them to have access to all the alternatives so that they are in tune with the autonomous ethno-development of their cultures. And the partial knowledge that historiography has had for these peoples, the racist ideology that was provided by it. It has clouded the attempts to recognize in them an identity of their own.

The population with unconventional body formation, also called population with disability, has structural problems of poverty and exclusion. Due to social paternalism, in addition to the basic ideological problem, which has been grounded since the creation of the Nation State. And the media that have reinforced this paternalism towards these disabled subjects, creating a very remote stereotype, which is far from the real and true image of people with unconventional body formation.

### REFERENCES

- [1] García Canclini, Néstor (1989). *Hybrid cultures: Strategies to enter and exit modernity*. Mexico: Grijalbo
- [2] Foucault, Michel (2007). *The abnormal -1a ed. 4th reimp. - Buenos Aires Fondo de Cultura Económica*.
- [3] HORKHEIMER, Max and ADORNO, Theodor, (1988). *Dialectic of the Enlightenment*, South American, Buenos Aires.
- [4] Inca Garcilaso de la Vega ([1609] 1976): *First part of the Royal Comments*. Lisbon.
- [5] Guaman Pomade Ayala, Felipe ([1615] 1980). *New chronicle and good government*. John V. Murra and Rolena Adorno, eds.; Quechua translations by Jorge L. Urioste. 3 volumes Mexico City: Siglo Veintiuno.
- [6] Mead H. George (2009). *Spirit, person and society*, Paidós, Buenos Aires.
- [7] Mendez Notari Carlos (2009). *Heroes of silence: the veterans of the Pacific War (1884-1924)*. Santiago de Chile: Ediciones Centro de Estudio Bicentenario

## Ethnohistory and Disability, Disability and Culture: The Case of A Group of People With Disabilities, Indigenous in Chile

- [8] Montesinos Sonia (2007). Mothers and Guachos, allegories of the Chilean Meztisaje Catalonia, fourth edition.
- [9] Perez Serrano Gregorio Fernando, BAOJ Med Nursing 2017, 3: 2 3: 040, Wilmington, Estados Unidos
- [10] Perez Serrano Gregorio Fernando (2008), An approach to identity in the Mapuche disabled of the Mapuche community Kallfulikan, Universidad Academia de Hmanismo Cristiano Santiago Chile
- [11] United Nations (2007), Disability; Manual for parliamentarians, Chapter One General Overview, national legislation and the convention, Chapter One; General overview, United Nations Organization pp 1-8.
- [12] -\_\_\_Disability; Manual for parliamentarians, Chapter Five; National Legislation and the Convention, United Nations Organization 55-82.
- [13] -\_\_ Disability; Manual for parliamentarians, Annex 1; Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities. United Nations Organization 125-156.
- [14] Parrau Leonora (2003). Thesis. Auditory sensory impaired: testimonies of discrimination in the educational system in Santiago.
- [15] Ulin Robert (1999). Anthropology and social theory XXI century.
- [16] Web: United Nations (2015), United Nations-Enable [www.un.org/spanish/disabilities](http://www.un.org/spanish/disabilities) consulted on 15/6/2015.
- [17] personal references: person with disability for four strokes.

**Citation:** Gregorio Perez Serrano. *Ethnohistory and Disability, Disability and Culture: The Case of A Group of People With Disabilities, Indigenous in Chile*. *Open Access Journal of Nursing*. 2018; 1(1): 1-11

**Copyright:** © 2018 Gregorio Perez Serrano. This is an open access article distributed under the Creative Commons Attribution License, which permits unrestricted use, distribution, and reproduction in any medium, provided the original work is properly cited.