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### Death in Mexican Children's Literature

Mexican literature dwells on death. Christel Guzka's *Los muertos andan en bici* (2012) tells the story of a little boy whose dead grandfather accompanies the family on vacation by hitching a ride in the trunk; during one adventure, the grandfather's arm comes loose. Alberto Chimal's *La partida* (2015) explores the unexpected results of a mother's wish to restore her son to life after he dies in an earthquake; she tries various ways of re-killing him when his rotting animated corpse proves too much for her. Against the supernatural, María Baranda's *Diente de león* (2012) implies the disappearance and possible death of displaced girl's traveling companion after the pair splits up while walking through what seems to be the Mexican countryside. These stories of some 30 pages, whether through humor or unsettling detail, differ from more therapeutic efforts by peer writers Yuri Herrera, Ricardo Chávez Castañeda, and Lydia Cacho. Newcomers to Mexican literature are perhaps best served by analyses that reject exoticism and value the playful titles along with pedagogical ones. In the goal of cultivating activist readers, perhaps the first task is to recognize Mexico on its own terms, as a cosmopolitan scene. In that sense, the contributions of non-Mexican illustrators prove important: Argentinian-born Betania Zacarias partners with Guzka; Argentinian-born Nicolás Arispe works with Chimal; and although Baranda's aforementioned text is illustrated by a Mexican, her later death-themed book, *Querido pájaro* (2016) features artwork by Colombian Elizabeth Builes. These texts reveal more than a national sensibility, which, I will argue, makes them excellent representations of Mexico.