Trastornos de la representación: el afecto en Macedonio Fernández, Antonio Di Benedetto y César Aira

Title: Trastornos de la representación: el afecto en Macedonio Fernández, Antonio Di Benedetto y César Aira

Authors: Lima-Vales, Dolores

Advisors: Aguilar Mora, Jorge

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Abstract: In a broad sense, categories of representation provide us with the epistemological coordinates by which we come to know and perceive reality. At the beginning of the 20th century, the avant-garde unleashed a radical rupture with codified forms of representation. Throughout the next hundred years, these categories were continually interrogated by developing new literary aesthetics. Traditionally, the anti-representational nature of such texts was often studied in terms of the principles and values they opposed. However, in this dissertation, the paradigm of "affect" is used to analyze new modes of constituting sense that these narratives put forward. The notion of "affect" delineated by Gilles Deleuze in his reading of Baruch Spinoza is defined as any mode of thought that experiences an encounter with the "being of the sensible". Such an encounter eludes representation and is subject to constant variations of force and intensity. This study shows how affects produce disruptions to categories of representation and how they offer new ways for the notion of sense to emerge and transform. This dissertation explores the notion of affect within the works of three Argentinean authors: the avant-garde novel <italic>Museo de la novela de la eterna</italic> by Macedonio Fernández; the collection of stories published during the second part of the 20th century by Antonio Di Benedetto; and the contemporary novels of César Aira, written during the end of 20th century and the first decade of 21st. In each work, the distinct modes of affect that shape each narrative are investigated: passion in the work of Macedonio Fernández, idiocy in the work of Antonio Di Benedetto, and frivolity in the work of César Aira. By shining light onto the processes used to create affective sense, the study explores how the authors use encounters with the sensible to dismantle notions of identity, causality, and finality. Furthermore, this dissertation addresses how these different sensibilities relates to the epistemological and aesthetic inquiries of their times.

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