Title: Alan Pauls: Poéticas de anacronismo
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Abstract: Alan Pauls (b. 1959) is an Argentine novelist and essayist. His works have barely been studied outside of Latin America; therefore, my work will be one of the first to focus critically and theoretically on his oeuvre and raise awareness of his importance to Contemporary Latin American Literature. The fundamental concept of my thesis is anachronism, which I develop by investigating the ways in which the present and the past are interconnected in the same temporal space. My dissertation has two interconnected parts. In the first, I propose an approach to Pauls’ literary work that emphasizes its engagement with literary and cultural theory. Specifically, I analyze how Pauls’ first novels –El pudor del pornógrafo (1984), El coloquio (1989), Wasabi (1994)– are strongly influenced by various theoretical discourses, especially the work of Roland Barthes. The guiding question of my dissertation’s first part is how one can narrate a fictional text without strictly appropriating narrative devices. Namely, I suggest that Pauls’ conception of literature is inevitably related to critical discourse. In the second part, I study a trilogy that Pauls wrote about the 1970s in Argentina: Historia del llanto (2007), Historia del pelo (2010), and Historia del dinero (2013). Here I focus on how Pauls uses the 1970s to propose a new conceptualization of the “political.” For Pauls, the “political” is not represented in the great events of a particular time but rather in the “effects” that these events produce; these effects are minor, almost imperceptible, and for that reason much more powerful as a literary event mechanism per se. From my point of view, this new conceptualization of the “political” contains in itself a problematic issue: the articulation between personal experience, history, and fiction. In conclusion, this interrelation between theory, politics, history, and fiction defines the path of my dissertation, which would have been just the “starting point” in my personal attempt to reconfigure the map of the Latin American literary contemporaneity.