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INTRODUCTION: AFFECTIVE ARRANGEMENTS AND VIOLENCE IN LATIN AMERICA

This introductory article sets out to review the applicability and productivity of affect as a high-impact concept in the humanities. With a particular focus on a cultural studies perspective, it evaluates the different strands in affect theory and surveys the most recent approaches in the field. The authors argue for adopting a relational approach, focusing on specific formations or “affective arrangements”, which considers affect as a site of convergence of different actors, discourses, media, etc. instead of an isolated process. The second section of the article provides a short overview of the study of violence in Latin Americanist scholarship and underscores the relevance of affective arrangements when studying the multiplicity of violences in cultural expressions from the region.

Keywords: affect; violence; affective; arrangements; Latin American literature; Latin American cinema

Affect as a high-impact concept

Since the beginning of the twenty-first century, the term affect has dominated the analysis of social, political, and cultural life. Affectivity has become key to research into the most diverse phenomena, from the new feminist and LGBTIQ+ movements, sexuality, and gender in Latin America (Macón, Solana, and Vacarezza 2021), to the affective politics of contemporary cinema (Podalsky 2011), from nineteenth-century sentimental fictions (Peluffo 2006), to the centrality of fear and hate in the current political debate (Nussbaum 2018; Giorgi and Kiffer 2020; García 2021) or the study of violence in contemporary Latin American culture (Dhondt, Mandolessi, and Zícari 2022). The pervasiveness of the term allows us to postulate affect as a “high-impact concept”. High-impact concepts are characterised as being “epistemically productive, open-ended and widely applicable” (Haucis and Slaby 2022, 2–3).

First, affect has turned out to be truly productive in epistemological terms, since it has contributed to generating new knowledge, not only in relation to contemporary phenomena – for example, the characterisation of neoliberal ideology as increasingly addressing and exploiting people’s emotions and seeking to establish new forms of affective governance, or the study of reactionary forms of populism as an attempt to mobilise negative feelings such as resentment – but also in its ability to illuminate historical or cultural phenomena in which emotionality and the sensory had previously been invisibilised or downplayed as a consequence of the textual turn and the overvaluation of the role of reason in human attitudes and decision-making. In the field of Latin American history, for instance, Pilar Gonzalbo Aizpuru and her team’s seminal research on love and fear has opened up new venues for (archival) research and humoral theory (Gonzalbo Aizpuru, Staples, and Septién 2009; Gonzalbo Aizpuru 2014).

The concept of affect has also proven to be widely applicable, spanning the entire spectrum of the social sciences and humanities, amounting to what Mieke Bal (2002) has termed a “travelling concept” that cuts across disciplinary boundaries: film and television studies (Abel 2007; García 2016), photography and visual studies (Brown and Phu 2014; Cartwright and Wolfson 2018; Depetris Chauvín and Taccetta 2019), queer studies (Cvetkovich 2003; Garcia-Rojas 2017), religious studies (Schaefer 2015), memory and heritage studies (Tolia-Kelly, Waterton, and Watson 2018; Micieli-Voutsinas 2021), literary studies (Ahern 2019; Hogan 2011; Houen 2020), critical race studies (Cheng 2000; Muñoz 2006), postcolonial studies (Ahmed 2012; Kim 2019), political studies (Hoggett and Thompson 2012), or Internet studies (Benski and Fisher 2014; Boler and Davis 2021; Karatzogianni and Kuntsman 2012).

Finally, affect is undoubtedly an open-ended concept, whose meaning has evolved with its use in various empirical and theoretical circumstances. It is precisely this malleability that turns affect into a privileged instrument of analysis and, at the same time, constitutes a problem in terms of its operationality. When affect becomes a fuzzy term to refer in a general way to everything that is “subjective”, “non-representational”, or beyond the limits of discourse, reason, or ideology, the concept loses its meaning (van Alphen 2008, 21) and its critical potential. This potential – the scope, the radicalness, but also the accuracy and the rigorousness of an affective critique – is still a matter of dispute.

The distinct strands of affect theory

From the beginning, affect theory has not emerged out of a single concept but from two distinct strands: one which traces back to Baruch Spinoza’s *Ethica* (1677), elaborated by Gilles Deleuze and Félix Guattari and popularised by Massumi (1995, 2002), versus one inspired by psychologist Silvan S. Tomkins’s basic emotions theory of the 1950s and 1960, as rediscovered by Eve Kosofsky Sedgwick and Adam Frank in their research on shame as a constitutive emotion for queer identity (Sedgwick and Frank 1995; Sedgwick 2003). In the Spinozian-inspired strand, affect is conceived as an intensity, a point of encounter between bodies that causes a change in the energy gradient or, in the Spinozian definition,

“a body’s capacity to affect and to be affected” (Gregg and Seigworth 2010, 2), derived from the Latin *ad-facere* (“to do something to”). Emerging as a reaction to the hegemony of “theories of signification”, and the conception of culture as a text without subjects, affect is conceived of as its necessary counterpoint. In this view, affect refers to an experience of non-conscious intensity, a moment of unstructured potential, unable to be fully realised in language because it is prior and/or outside of consciousness. Affects are non-intentional sensations on a psycho-corporal level, extra-discursive and autonomous intensities that move too quickly to be perceived. The concept of emotion, traditionally associated with the second current, designates instead a subjective content, a discursively recognisable category that can be catalogued in a taxonomy that includes culturally and socially codified contents such as anger, disgust, fear, joy, anguish, or pain – in sum, familiar conceptual registers of conscious states of mind which can be narrativised.

While some scholars have tenaciously defended the irreconcilable character of both concepts (Massumi 2002; Shouse 2005), others have argued with the same insistence against this distinction, and against the strict opposition between affect and language, or body and cognition (Hemmings 2005; Leys 2011; Wetherell 2012). Conceptually, conceiving of affect as a radical break with discourse and language, they argue, would be a mistake, since Spinoza’s affect/*affectus* comes precisely to question and dynamise – rather than reify – the body/mind, human/non-human, intelligibility/materiality dichotomies (Slaby and Mühlhoff 2019, 33–34). But above all, the problem with a definition of affect understood as a non-symbolised, pre-conscious and pre-discursive intensity that is only properly registered in the stirrings of a body is that it renders the concept critically inoperative. If affect is “the invisible glue that holds the world together” (Massumi 2002, 117), how to observe then a phenomenon that is by definition invisible? (Kahl 2020b, 8). In this respect, film and media scholar Eugenie Brinkema states categorically that “[i]f affect as a conceptual area of inquiry is to have the radical potential to open up ethical, political, and aesthetic avenues for theoretical inquiry, then, quite simply, we have to do better than documenting the stirrings of the skin” (Brinkema 2014, 37–38). In *The Forms of the Affects*, Brinkema criticises the neglect of formal aspects in affective criticism, such as light, colour, or rhythm in the case of cinema, arguing that “affects take shape in the details of specific visual forms and temporal structures” (2014, 37). Formal analysis, attention to the materiality of texts – be they literary, visual, or auditory – proves indispensable to account for the way in which art and literature can mobilise the public affectively. This focus on aesthetic forms seeks to counter a critique centred on the affected subject, on his or her interiority and personal feelings. In this sense, it is striking that, although the matrix of affect theory rests on the questioning of the notion of a centred and autonomous Western individual subject, affective criticism often ends up being an impressionistic account of how the subject is affected by the aesthetic object, thereby reinstating the notion of the subject it claims to question.

In an interview published in *The Affect Theory Reader* (2010), Lawrence Grossberg criticises some scholars for leaping from a set of ontological concepts to a description of an empirical and affective context without attending to the historical ontologies and “conjunctures” that affects articulate. This claim is central to cultural

studies, a discipline in which the term “conjuncture” is key. Grossberg and Bryan Behrenshausen argue elsewhere that “rather than identifying affect as the ‘other’ of signification and representation, thus ‘subtracting’ it from the conjuncture, one should understand the question of affect to point to the multiplicity of forms of sign behaviors – or, better, of forms of expression or collective assemblages of enunciation that constitute a conjuncture in all its complexity” (Grossberg and Behrenshausen 2016, 1001). This concern with capturing the functioning of affect also takes the form of a renewed interest in methodology. Recent publications (Knudsen and Stage 2015; Kahl 2020a) precisely explore innovative methods and review the usefulness of traditional instruments to account for the role of emotion in temporally and spatially situated social, political, and cultural phenomena.

The contemporary understanding of affect

In navigating the complex conceptual field of affect theory today, it is possible to observe that beyond the diversity of the spectrum of terms that could be encompassed under “affectivity” – such as feelings, moods, atmosphere, detachment, pathos, among others – there is a consensus in defining affect as *social*, *relational*, and *situated*. Affect is *social* – not a property of the individual, an expression of his or her interiority –, *relational* – a dynamic process unfolding between human and non-human actors in which they are mutually affected –, and *situated* – these dynamics are embodied and embedded in specific temporal and spatial contexts. The following examples show these points of confluence.

From a Spinozian perspective, Slaby and Mühlhoff understand affects as “relational phenomena unfolding dynamically and effectively in-between entities, both human and non-human, and within formative environments” (2019, 30). Affect features bodies-in-relation, foregrounding the body as a permeable entity “that registers – in all sorts of sensuous, vital, material, and dynamic ways – what goes on around it” (2019, 34). The dynamics of bodies-in-relation do not happen in an abstract register but in specific, historically and spatially determined, contexts and domains. Affective dynamics can be fully observed in what Slaby and Mühlhoff call “affective arrangements”. Inspired by Deleuze and Guattari’s notion of *agencement* and Foucault’s *dispositif*, affective arrangements are “heterogeneous ensembles of diverse materials forming a local layout that operates as a dynamic formation, comprising persons, things, artifacts, spaces, discourses, behaviors, and expressions in a characteristic mode of composition and dynamic relatedness” (Slaby, Mühlhoff, and Wüschner 2019, 4).

Preferring the term emotion, Sara Ahmed argues that “emotions shape the very surface of bodies, which take shape through the repetitions of actions over time as well as through orientations towards and away from others” (Ahmed 2004, 4). For Ahmed, emotions are not something merely located in the interiority, not a thing that subjects or objects possess. They are not psychological states, but social and cultural practices. Emotions do not reside in subjects or objects, but are produced as effects of circulation; it is this circulation which allows us to think about the social life of emotion, about the affective economies that are concerned with the

way in which emotions operate as forms of action: “Emotions are relational: they involve (re)actions or relations of ‘towardness’ or ‘awayness’ in relations to (...) objects” (Ahmed 2004, 8) and are a result of a history of past contacts. Ahmed gives the example of an encounter between a child and a bear to make clear that fearfulness is not simply a reaction to an object that is fearsome “on its own”, but mediated by cultural histories and memories that allow the bear to be apprehended as fearsome. The child might feel that the bear is the cause of her fear, while in fact the emotional meaning like this one is impressed upon the bear by circulated associations and narratives. Rather than asking what emotions are, Ahmed focuses on what emotions *do*, how “the ‘I’ and the ‘we’ are shaped by, and even take the shape of, contact with others” (10). The opposition between textuality and affect is consequently deconstructed in her work. Ahmed engages in close reading of texts, focusing on figures of speech such as metonymy and metaphor, showing how the way texts name or perform emotions generates concrete effects.

From a cultural studies-centred perspective, Ernst van Alphen and Tomá̃ Jirsa also stress the performative force of affects – something evident in the title of their volume *How to Do Things with Affects* (2020a), by means of the reference to J. L. Austin’s speech act theory. Affect does not point to an entity or an object but to a process, an action or a dynamic. This process is composed of three different phases, which, in van Alphen and Jirsa’s schematic outline, allows the integration of the most important theories of affect. The key word in the process is “trigger/triggering”. Affects are not, strictly speaking, forms, as Brinkema suggests, but forms trigger – activate, stimulate, provoke, and eventually open – affects. Van Alphen and Jirsa term the process by which artistic forms activate affects “affective operation”. The resulting affects, in turn, can trigger thoughts, feelings, emotions, moods, and bodily responses. According to van Alphen and Jirsa, “this enables us to understand what distinguishes various theories from each other, since they focus on different phases in the affective process or emphasize the other results or objects that affects trigger” (van Alphen and Jirsa 2020b, 5).

The notion of aesthetics that underlies most contemporary theories of affect can best be understood in the way in which Matthew Fuller and Eyal Weizman define it (2021). Drawing on the Greek term *aisthesis*, which describes that which pertains to the senses, they define aesthetics as a notion that concerns the experience of the world. It involves *sensing* – the capacity to register or to be affected – as well as *sense-making* – the capacity for such sensing to become knowledge of some kind. In this expanded sense, as a way of perceiving the world, aesthetics does not refer exclusively to a property or capacity of human beings, but also refers to other perceiving organisms, such as animals and plants, or even to technologies, which themselves apprehend their environment but which also influence how we can enhance or diminish our own individual human perceptual capacity. Thus, “aesthetics is an approach that is fundamentally about assembling, and finding the means to recognize, a multiplicity of different forms of sensation” (Fuller and Weizman 2021, 35), and is always relational. Crucially, sensation is not something static, a capacity that we possess and that remains unchanged, but something that can be increased or diminished, as phenomena can be hyperaesthetised or anaesthetised. Sensation then becomes a political issue. For example, “a sense of injustice

can be aestheticized or anaesthetized, in fact may be primarily so as a feeling before it becomes a thought. And this can create a link between what one may tacitly perceive, see or hear; what one may feel about what one sees and hears; and how that affects one's sense of right and wrong. In this sense, to be politicized is to increase one's ability to be aestheticized to the world" (Fuller and Weizman 2021, 36). A recent example of an overtly political reading is Laurent de Sutter's *L'âge de l'anesthésie: La mise sous contrôle des affects* (2017), which precisely questions the common idea that we live in an overexcited society by diagnosing a generalised numbness that supposedly accompanies modernity's "narcocapitalism" – as the English translation of the volume's title reads – characterised by psycho-political control mechanisms that end up sedating us.

If high-impact concepts such as affect change the way in which we observe phenomena, the question would be what this concept allows us to see that the previous paradigm, centred on text and representation, did not allow us to observe.

Affect allows us to attend to contingencies, changes – especially micro-changes – dynamics that encompass multiple assemblages of human and non-human actors. These affective arrangements incorporate multiple temporalities, which helps us to understand how the present is impregnated with a long history of previous contacts and the elaboration of meanings produced out of those contacts. Affects allow us to understand the body as something open and malleable, a surface shaped and reshaped in encounters with other bodies. The body becomes, in affect theory, multiple bodies: the entanglement of human bodies with technological bodies, the interaction of human bodies in social settings, such as activism, "as well as image bodies, discourse bodies, or other textual bodies" (Kahl 2020b, 9). Affects can also help us address, as Lisa Blackman states, "the traces, fragments, fleeting moments, gaps, absences, submerged narratives, and displaced actors and agencies that register affectively" (2015, 26).

This special issue brings together articles that study affect from a relational perspective, focusing on specific formations or "affective arrangements". As we asserted before, affective arrangement is a working concept that describes the in each case unique constellation of a particular affect-intensive site of social life (Slaby and Mühlhoff 2019). It looks at affect not as an isolated entity or process but as a point of convergence of multiple actors, human and non-human, as well as spaces, artefacts, discourses, and other materials that constitute a unique assemblage. We believe that this approach is particularly fruitful for analysing violence, the second axis of this dossier and a key topic in Latin American culture.

Latin America and violence

In the global imaginary, Latin America is often stereotypically seen as "born in blood and fire", to quote the title of a bestselling graduate textbook on the history of the subcontinent (Chasteen 2016), and as caught up in an endless spiral of guerrilla warfare, state terrorism, vigilantism, drug trafficking, kidnappings, forced disappearances, and other forms of human rights abuses. For the larger part of the twentieth century, violence in Latin America was fuelled by authoritarianism,

military dictatorships, and political ideologies such as the national security doctrine. The region's democratisation and the end of the Cold War were not, however, accompanied by a decrease in rates of violence. Instead, the violence has reached alarming levels in recent decades as a result of a double transformation. First, its nature shifted from a mainly ideologically motivated (state-sponsored or insurrectionary) violence between two clearly defined adversaries, to mostly criminally inspired forms of indiscriminate violence between a multiplicity of state and non-state actors. Due to the blurring lines between (para)state forces and criminal actors, between legality and illegality, and to a tendency to commercialise and privatise violence, as illustrated by the kidnapping business, hired hitmen, and the outsourcing of public security, violence became increasingly opaque in Latin America. Second, the degree of visibility and exposure increased considerably, which influenced levels of fear and insecurity: whereas the perpetrators of political violence usually attempted to cover up visible traces of human rights violations, the new violence – especially cartel-driven violence – ostensibly displays its material and traumatising effects. This extreme and abject violence annihilates bodily integrity through massacres or dismemberment, and elicits revulsion, disgust, or numbness in its witness – what Cavarero (2009) has subsumed in the term “horrorism”. Furthermore, this expressive, more spectacular violence is no longer regarded as an aberration of a premodern, residual force, but as a standard practice of what Franco (2013) has termed a “cruel modernity” marked by a necropolitical social order. This darker side of Latin America's modernity normalises the precarisation of life and work and institutionalised an “extreme cult of masculinity” (Franco 2013, 225), especially in the context of a rapacious “gore capitalism” (Valencia 2010) at the US-Mexico border.

The general pervasiveness of violence in Latin America, and its preeminence in the global cultural market, has led to a substantial body of academic literature in both the social sciences and humanities, ranging from the Colombian *violentólogos* to scholars working on Mexican narcoscapes. The field of study also underwent a significant transition in past decades. During the Cold War, the scholarly production on this topic sought to disentangle the rhetoric of dictatorship and the dictatorship of rhetoric (cf. González Echevarría 1985), often informed by a “glacial” approach to emotions (Terada 2001, 4–5) that characterised the post-structuralism then in vogue. The primary concern with the ideological underpinning of power discourses in relation to hegemonic meta-narratives, and the legitimisation of a supposedly rational or instrumental exercise of political violence, largely overshadowed the affective and emotional dimensions of the phenomenon. The transformation of the nature and scope of violence in Latin America, which broadly coincided with what is known as the “affective turn” in US and European academia, eventually paved the way for more depoliticised or “post-hegemonic” approaches in Latin Americanist scholarship (Moreiras 2002; Beasley-Murray 2003). This turn is also symptomatic of the theoretical and methodological challenges that more ethical strands of critical theory have faced in the context of the post-“9/11” war on terror, the global war on drugs, as well as the so-called “new wars” (Kaldor 2013) in which political and delinquent interests became more interwoven.

However, the vast majority of the literature on the topic continues to focus on representational practices that narrate, process, or account for the violence, as well as on the violence that is intrinsic to literary or filmic representation itself, either by essentialising, aesthetising, or normalising violent acts. Most revealing in this respect is the lack of in-depth engagement with affect theory in the recent *Routledge Handbook of Violence in Latin American Literature* (Baisotti 2022). In the past decade, the paradigm of affect theory has opened up new venues for research on the cultural dimension of violence in Latin America. When it comes to the exploitation of violence in Latin America for entertainment purposes, a key concept is what Hermann Herlinghaus has called “affective marginalities” (2009, 14). According to Herlinghaus, the commodification of violence originating in the Global South, by means of narco-narratives or trauma tourism, caters to an audience in the Global North which is eager to exoticise violence and to purge negative affects, such as fear and guilt, by projecting them on a racial and cultural Other (particularly, the drug trafficker), who becomes the bearer of imaginaries of fear and is perceived as wholly barbaric and irrational and systematically associated with Latin America. Many literary and film scholars have addressed affect-driven forms of violence inflicted by characters who seek to turn their anxiety or frustration into a form of empowerment, as well as the way in which ugly or non-cathartic feelings (Ngai 2007), such as irritation, anxiety, or paranoia, impregnate the social and political fabric. Others are concerned with the affective operations that intervene in depictions of violence, for instance by disconcerting the reader/viewer or by triggering the audience to take a more critical or nuanced attitude through empathic unsettlement (LaCapra 2014, 80).

The case studies gathered in this dossier all discuss the pervasiveness of violence in Latin America through an affect-oriented lens, by singling out “slow violence” and “fascinating violence” (Podalsky), criminal and state violence (Mekenkamp), political violence (Piedras), gender and sexual violence (Macón), or structural violence that is exoticised in the tourist gaze (Lie). They attend to how different modalities of violence intersect and reverberate upon each other and operate along a continuum, which also correlates with an affective spectrum, ranging from what Žižek (2008, 1–3) has termed “subjective violence”, which is enacted by a recognisable agent and can be seen as a deviation from normalcy characterised by an eruption or a sudden discharge of high-intensity affects as experienced by both perpetrators and victims, to the more subterranean and steady “objective violence”, which is characterised by a different temporality and affective charge, in terms of both its incubation period and the aftereffects of a long-term exposure to this form of latent violence. Whereas the bulk of articles on affect and violence unpack a single text or focus on a specific atmosphere tied to singular affective qualities that emanate from bodies, objects or places, the contributions to this dossier deliberately adopt a relational approach. They explore how affects circulate and resonate, connecting different media, settings, actors, times, and fields: how digital affects are combined with affective investments in street protests in order to mobilise ideas of agency rather than of victimhood, how affects resonate within a heterogeneous constellation of poems and performances, how a soundtrack can “affectivise” memories in a feature film, establishing affective connections with fictional

characters and drawing parallels between the action time of the story and the present of the spectator. Violence – even “autotelic” violence or violence for its own sake – has no origin that can easily be pinpointed; instead it partakes in these affective ecologies and the cultural politics of emotion. Instead of separating ideal-typical forms of violence, such as state violence, private violence, or structural violence, the articles question how different types of violence overlap and are interconnected by foregrounding affective relationalities in an open-ended process of “becoming” (Deleuze and Guattari 1987, 232). As such, the relational approach common to the articles does justice to the situated dynamics and shows how the study of violence in Latin American culture generates new research questions and angles.

The five articles compiled in this special issue explore how social practices and aesthetic objects mobilise affective dispositions and politics. The assemblages analysed have in common a particular geography, the Latin American subcontinent. The articles investigate a multiplicity of bodies, which are both individual and social, human and non-human, natural and cultural, textual and visual, shaping as well as deconstructing the surface of the Latin American territory. Affects mobilise – and are mobilised – in multiple ways and through multiple media, but all the articles share the common intent to examine the mobilisation of affects as relational, social, and situated dynamics, interrogating the particular situatedness of Latin America. The articles grasp the affective dynamics of mobilisation by focusing on how specific aesthetic modes, such as melodrama or detachment, trigger affective intensities between the work of art and the reader/viewer, and how these affects can subsequently enhance critical thought and transformative political agency. Agency, understood this way, is not intentional or rational, but always relational and multidirectional: “a force distributed across multiple, overlapping bodies, disseminated in degrees – rather than the capacity of a unitary subject of consciousness” (Bennett 2007, 134).

In “Past with Present (and Future). Affective Agency in Latin American Abortion Rights Activism”, Cecilia Macón mobilises an affective framework to look at the afterlives of the Latin American military dictatorships in the current feminisms of the region, focusing on the cases of Argentina and Chile. If in the case of Argentina’s fourth-wave feminism the activism directed to the passing of the abortion law in 2020 gained traction by going back to key figures and senses of the recent past, the Chilean feminist mobilisations pointed out that it was feminism itself which had originally voiced the historical demands against state terrorism and its neoliberal policies in the country. In this sense, Macón shows how the relationship between affective and temporal dimensions are central to the configuration of the region’s feminisms, albeit by showing that the form this relationship takes is not homogeneous, but specific to the legacies of collective action and affective agency of each country. Her study combs through an extensive array of digital and street feminist reverberances that counter the lineal temporal divide of progress logics, by mobilising what she calls “affective counter-archives” and situating the struggle in a “radical present” that is not separated from the lived experience of the recent past. The question that underlines Macón’s study is centred on the affective agency of the feminist political struggles and, finally, how to sustain a political movement in time. In Latin American feminisms, she argues, recent history

and the legacy of state terrorism spark multiple ways of collective action through the affective dimension, with the possibility of altering such an affective dimension through a different expression of temporality.

Marloes Mekenkamp's contribution engages with new social movement theory and memory studies in order to analyse "Los Muertos" ("The Dead", 2010), a long poem by María Rivera about the massacre in Mexico of seventy-two undocumented migrants by a drug cartel, and the *Nachleben* of this text through three remediations which incorporate the poem in different forms of artistic activism. Rivera's performance of her own poem on the *zócalo* in Mexico City in 2011 and the poem's afterlives Mekenkamp discusses are both activist and activating: they constitute a form of committed writing which is subordinated to a cause and which aims at intervening in the public debate on (narco)violence, but they also mobilise the public by functioning as a catalyst for empathy and solidarity. Mekenkamp shows that the poem and its rewritings deploy particular articulations of melodrama. To this end, she uncovers the textual strategies by which her corpus makes its emotional appeals, often eliciting compassion and outrage. Melodrama is not understood here in pejorative terms, as a standardised genre characterised by a sensational plot and exaggerated, flat characters, but as a narrative mode which is concerned with moral clarity and which insists upon the suffering and the innocence of the victims. Mekenkamp shows that the melodramatic mode is key to understand the political potential of the poem and of its remediations in order to counter the hegemonic discourse and to shape and articulate alternative memories and perceptions of the current violence in an affective and mobilising way.

Nadia Lie's contribution examines the politics of detachment in the film *Las cosas como son* (2012) by Fernando Lavanderos. Instead of focusing on a particular emotion or the intensity of affect, Lie chooses to explore the apparent lack of an enduring affectional bond, captured by the notion of detachment. To do so, she analyses the affective dynamics unfolding between Jerónimo, who runs a sort of Airbnb in Santiago de Chile, and Sanne, a young Norwegian "voluntourist". Through a close reading of the formal features of the film, Lie shows that the figure of the tourist has a disruptive potential, capable of modifying the disaffected position of the protagonist, opening up a new affective dynamics. This dynamic is taken a step forward when a third character, Milton, a teenage boy from Quilicura, the barrio where Sanne works, is introduced to the story. Lie is interested in the way in which detached films refigure the political in contemporary cinema from Latin America, and particularly in Chile: "How can politics, as a place of passion, be related to an affect that seems to express disillusionment with politics at worst, and a deliberate distance from it at best?" Discussing previous readings in which this lack of emotional engagement is equated with a depoliticized position, Lie shows that this "disruptive disaffection" has a political potential that can be read in conceiving of detachment as "unsentimentality" – a notion that bridges the apparent gap between an aesthetics of detachment and the political sphere.

Pablo Piedras's article generates fresh insight into the imaginaries of violence in recent Argentine cinema by looking at how Benjamín Naishtat's 2018 movie *Rojo* triggers the affective memory of its spectatorship. Instead of exploring the psychosocial afterlife of the dictatorship, the story takes place just before the putsch that installed Argentina's military junta. It uncannily foreshadows the forced

disappearances that occurred during the period of state terrorism by focusing on the socio-cultural circumstances and intimate dynamics of middle-income families, rather than on the broader political-ideological context – a feature which, according to Piedras, is common to many recent motion pictures set in the 1970s. The article seeks to understand and explain how the film aesthetics – particularly the role of specific elements of *mise en scène* that are clearly reminiscent of popular genre cinema of the seventies – and musical intermezzos deploy sensorial appeals that extend beyond the personalistic, but articulate specific “structures of feeling” (Williams 1977) and “affective legacies” (Podalsky 2011) that encourage viewers to invest themselves emotionally and to reconsider their own roles as historical actors or implicated subjects. Piedras dwells upon an intimist and apparently trivial scene to show how the “ambi-diegetic music” – i.e. intradiegetic music that can be heard by the characters themselves, but which simultaneously contributes to the film’s dramatic development, as if it were added by the auditive narrator – supersedes merely personal associations or thematic aspects of the plot, but rather immerses viewers in affective arrangements of the *Zeitgeist*. Piedras thus shows that *Rojo*, by appropriating a specific aesthetics of the seventies which engages Argentina’s traumatic past and its affective legacies, criticises the complicity of the middle class in facilitating the coup d’état.

Finally, in “Violence, Affect, and Time-Based Media in Mexico, 2010–2019”, Laura Podalsky addresses the relationship between violence, media, and sensorial dynamics. She intervenes in the ongoing discussion on how visual media represent violence and how these representations succeed or fail to mobilise the viewer. If the sceptical positions on the ability of media to mobilise the viewer are true, how does one explain the impact of the video of George Floyd’s killing? Probably it is the particular sensorial dynamics of the video that can explain its effectiveness. Drawing on a corpus of media including commercial cinema, documentaries, and photography, among others, Podalsky explores how they articulate sensorial dynamics to mobilise affect in the audience. The article proposes a tripartite model to address this problematic: first, it is necessary to expand our definition of violence by considering different temporalities – of both violence and media; second, to examine landscapes rather than isolated media. One must identify trans-media tendencies of the movies as well as the rhythms of consumption and use associated with different media; third, recognise scopic regimes. Here affect plays a central role, since it allows us to recognise the temporal flows of audiovisual media and the differences between them as sites of encounter between bodies (between text(s), a viewer(s) and technologies). Instead of proposing a homogeneous scopic regime, characteristic of an era, the affective paradigm, in the tripartite combination proposed by Podalsky, permits us to identify tactics, practices, and dynamics (textual, industrial, and reception dynamics) that sometimes challenge and sometimes play with the parameters of the current regime.

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