Carla Manzoni

Collage-like Resistance: Aesthetic Heritage of Cinematic Post-Dictatorial Memory of the New Millennium

This presentation articulates a fragment of my dissertation where I trace the aesthetics of post-dictatorial contemporary cinema to avant-garde collage, assuming it as a broader concept, “a category”, as understood by Marjorie Perloff. In that line, I assert that the collage-like audio-visual artifacts produced in the margins of the mainstream cultural realm (avant-garde/independent/experimental), lead the way to the films of memory of the new millennium. In this segment, I put in dialogue an amateur film from 1936 by Horacio Coppola; Grete Stern’s photomontages from 1930s to 1960s; an independent short film of the late 1950s by Generación del 60 author, David Kohon; and an underground piece of the first half of the 1970s by experimental filmmaker, Narcisa Hirsch. All these artifacts are studied vis-à-vis Los rubios (Albertina Carri, 2003) and La Mujer sin cabeza (Lucrecia Martel, 2008). This presentation points out the potential of collage as a unique vehicle to study narratives of resistance, particularly counteracting what Hugo Vezzetti and Andreas Huyssen have described as the “crystallizations-freezing” of memory.

Ross Sandell

The Monstrous Self: The Medieval Origin of Spain's Identity Crisis and Early 20th Century Conceptions of Spanishness in Totalitarian Rhetoric

Spain's 20th century totalitarian regimes relied heavily on rhetoric stressing the unity of the nation, rhetoric that necessarily concerned itself with producing an interpretation of the nation's history. Both the legitimacy of these regimes in the eyes of the Spanish people and Spain's connection to Europe required the historical narrative that stressed the existence of an essential Spanish character, rooted in the peninsula's Roman past, that had endured and ultimately overcome the influence of groups presented as non-Spanish. This study examines how the same basic narrative present in the writings of essayist and preeminent Medieval historian Claudio Sánchez-Albornoz that marginalized the influence of Moors and Jews on Spanishness in the Middle Ages was able to be turned against new groups in the 20th century and the importance of this process in the rise to power of Francisco Franco. Borrowing from Monster Theory, it is put forth that the marginalization of the hybrid nature of Spanish history and the diversity of its people has served to render Spain monstrous to itself, and as a result produced instability in Spanishness as a category and threatens the integrity of the nation even today.

In memory of our group’s co-founder, Isabel de Sousa Ramos