

Neobaroque as an Approach to the Contemporary Polycrisis

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English and Spanish

Call for Papers:

The concept of the neobaroque, emerging in Latin America, namely in the poetic and essayistic writing of authors such as Severo Sarduy and José Lezama Lima in Cuba, or Néstor Perlongher in Argentina, offers a productive framework for rethinking the aesthetic and discursive dynamics of contemporary Latin American literature. However, recent global circulation of the neobaroque as in the works of Omar Calabrese (1999) or Christine Buci- Glucksman (1994) rises questions not only regarding their mutual theoretical relation, but also as to the very status of the concept in the current discourse of Humanities.

The neobaroque not only inherits the polycentric semantics of baroque but poses additional problems due to the multiplicity of senses attached to the prefix neo. The aesthetics of excess, abundance that stretches its own limits, as well as fractal repetition or repetition with variations, all point to the same cultural phenomenon that Omar Calabrese describes as “a spirit of the age,” which “consists of a search for, and valorization of, forms that display a loss of entirety, totality, and system in favor of instability, polydimensionality, and change” (1992: xii). These circumstances find reflection in a concern about the variety of relationship between history, aesthetics and politics in available conceptualisations of the return of the baroque in (European, Western, Latin American, global) Modernity, and variously conceived neobarocoques only recently discovered and rehabilitated or presently arising as ways of interpreting possible futures of our planet.

Mabel Moraña, for instance, revisits the decolonizing relationship between the European Baroque and its Latin American reformulations, noting that “el Barroco de Indias es un producto original, articulado activamente a la circunstancia histórica de la Colonia y a las condiciones concretas de producción cultural en la Nueva España [the Baroque of the Indies is an original product, actively articulated within the historical circumstances of the Colony and the particular conditions of cultural production in New Spain] (1998: 43). In this sense, the Latin American neobaroque emerges as a methodology with broad hermeneutic potential, capable of articulating approaches ranging from posthumanist perspectives to anticolonial readings, thus consolidating itself as a relevant analytical framework for addressing contemporary literary expressions in Latin America.



In asking what use is neobaroque in coping with the polycrisis of the current global moment, we seek to encourage discussions of possible recent reworkings of the concept of the neobaroque and to tease out its intersections with the theoretical perspectives that captivate contemporary mind, such as Anthropocene, Affective Turn, Non-human Turn, and Forensic Turn, as well as implementations of such theoretical frameworks to readings of the critical challenges of our time.

We adopt a very broad definition of the neobaroque as a sensibility, political aesthetics, episteme and research paradigm, and recognize its transhistorical and transgeographical character. We invite researchers, doctoral candidates, translators, and professionals working in literary and cultural studies to submit paper proposals for a panel dedicated to the Latin American neobaroque within the framework of the Congress.

Contributions addressing, among others, the following thematic axes are welcome:

- contemporary reinterpretations of the neobaroque in twenty-first-century Latin American literature and beyond,
- connections between the neobaroque, posthumanism, and decolonial studies,
- poetics of excess, fragmentation, and hybridity,
- dialogues between literature, art, and other cultural practices from a neobaroque aesthetic perspective,
- discovering multiple (neo)baroques,
- neobaroque global spectacle of power, political turmoil and social chaos,
- the resurgence of the (neo)baroque sensibility and epistemology in the 21st c. and its intersections with the Anthropocene discourse,
- ecology, climate change and neobaroque affect,
- the vulnerability of the neobaroque tremulous body,
- neobaroque *Kunstkammer*, automatons and the Artificial Intelligence discourse

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