Judith Sierra-Rivera, *Affective Intellectuals and the Space of Catastrophe in the Americas*. Columbus: Ohio State University Press, 2018. xi + 217 pp. (Paper US\$ 29.95)

Affective Intellectuals and the Space of Catastrophe in the Americas is one of the most important books in the field of Affect Studies in Latin America. Judith Sierra-Rivera ranges over different parts of the Americas, discussing five artists, activists, and writers who used alternative perspectives in relation to catastrophic events, each of which produced strong emotions that she situates in the context of neoliberalism.

Chapter 1 analyzes Carlos Monsiváis's chronicles regarding the earthquake that struck Mexico City in 1985. Chapter 2 expands on political events, such as immigration, the Sandinista Revolution, and the invasion of Panama, that took place in Central America and were analyzed by Francisco Goldman in American publications such as *Harper's* and *The New York Times*. Chapter 3 is dedicated to the *desaparecidos* during the 1973 military coup against Salvador Allende in Chile, in the context of the radio broadcasts and subsequent publications of Pedro Lemebel. Chapter 4 examines the Puerto Rican combat casualties during the successive American wars as they were documented in Josean Ramos's journalistic work. Finally, Chapter 5 reflects on *blogger* Sandra Álvarez Ramírez's publications about the circumstances affecting black lesbian women in Havana. Sierra-Rivera argues that the purpose of the discussions in question is to draw attention to marginalized communities: Blacks, the indigenous, the poor, and members of the LGBT community, among others.

The book is a contribution to the theoretical framework of Affect Studies, which have grown in importance in recent decades, especially in Anglophone cultures. Affect Theory is a multidisciplinary compilation of disciplines, from anthropology, psychology, philosophy, and cultural studies to sociology, post-structuralism, and queer studies. A special contribution made by this book is the variety of affective discussions that Sierra-Rivera chose for her analysis; she moves from the urban chronicles through journalism, radio broadcasts, essays and blogs. Each one of these discussions decentralizes literature as an elitist institution and focuses on alternative topics that convolute events that have taken place in what she calls a "neoliberal space of catastrophe" (p. 17). The book that comes closest to treating the same range of material is *The Language of Emotions: Affect and Culture in Latin America* (2012), an anthology edited by Mabel Moraña and Ignacio Sánchez Prado. Other authors that Sierra-Rivera relies on to develop her argument include Sara Ahmed, Henri Lefevre, Jon Beasley-Murray, and Brian Massumi.

Sierra-Rivera elaborates on Henri Lefevre's theorizations regarding a plat-

form to build the concept of “catastrophe space.” From Antonio Gramsci, she reflects on the concept of the intellectual as anyone who thinks, but only some of whom have the “function” of an intellectual. In that spirit, she discusses chroniclers, broadcasters, performers, and bloggers, among others, as intellectuals, on the grounds that they continuously generate discussions of various kinds. Of course, the book originates from the discursive matrix of “body” and “affection” by Gilles Deleuze and Benito Spinoza, which at the same time affirm the works of Brian Massumi and Sara Ahmad. Other concepts utilized in the book to articulate the political scope of the analyzed subjects include promise of happiness, cruel optimism, intellectuals and unhappy bodies, collective affects, affective politics, black LGBTQ, black feminism, and sexual revolution. Feelings included are anger, angry love, revolutionary love, and virtual love.

Sierra-Rivera has initiated an “affective turn” in Latin American cultural studies. Her discursive analysis and her proposals about the various Latin American “catastrophic spaces” deepen the emotionalization of the Latin American public sphere, proceeding from the analysis of the points of view of Latin American intellectuals and with the intent to lead to a new variety of knowledge. The sentiments and ideas produced during pivotal moments in Latin American history that have mobilized and organized the people offer a new perspective on emotions and spontaneity. Faced with a large number and variety of catastrophic events, Sierra-Rivera has selected a representative model that allows her to analyze Latin American societies through affective and contestatory speeches. The book is pioneering in that it sets a precedent for Affect Studies in Latin America. Academics, students, and general readers will find what Lauren Berlant (in *Cruel Optimism*, 2011) has called an “affective epistemology” of Latin American culture.

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