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Fernando J. Rosenberg 2016, *After Human Rights: Literature, Visual Arts, and Film in Latin America, 1990—2010*, Pittsburgh: University of Pittsburgh Press.

By Kathleen Cunniffe Peña, Temple University

What is the artistic language of truth and reconciliation, and how is it shaped or influenced by the transnational editorial market? How does an artist create visual representation of the disappeared, and what happens to that work, or its aura, when presented to an international audience? Fernando J. Rosenberg of Brandeis University considers these and other questions in *After Human Rights: Literature, Visual Arts, and Film in Latin America, 1990—2010*. Rosenberg's research explores interrelated concepts of justice, rights, violence, security, and commodity in the post-Cold War era. In seven chapters and an epilogue, he discusses a period of cultural production, which coincides with the turn of the twenty-first century and identifies a cultural shift where texts, films, and visual arts attempt to foster human dignity at the same time that they serve as commodities in an international market. As Rosenberg clarifies later, in his Epilogue, the term "after human rights" does not imply that the narrative of human rights has closed; rather, "[w]hat the human rights corpus contains and the way different aspects of it might be mobilized to different aims has changed dramatically and will keep changing in ways that are impossible to predict" (199).

His first chapter, "After Human Rights," serves as an introduction to the interpretative framework used throughout the book. Rosenberg acknowledges the importance of human rights narratives during the 1980s and 1990s, in Latin America and around the world. At the same time, he theorizes that human rights were significantly altered in the process, resulting in more focus on self-determination and collective activism—concepts not originally part of the universal liberalism that gave birth to human rights. Following this movement from its beginnings, he signals the 1948 Universal Declaration of Human Rights as a

watershed moment that helped to usher in a new international order whereby individuals could be legally represented outside of a particular nation state. The universal language and global legitimacy of human rights narrative would promote a new political imagination while also presenting new challenges to justice at the level of the nation state, as the idea of universal rights had the (perhaps unintended) effect of unhinging justice from individual governments. Drawing on the legal and political philosophies of Jacques Derrida, Ronald Dworkin, Alain Badiou, Aldo Shiavone, and Nancy Fraser, among others, Rosenberg traces the intersection of justice, law, and culture at the national and global levels. In each subsequent chapter, the author presents examples of this changing narrative in novels, visual arts, collaborative performance, and film.

In “Literature Between Rights and the Possibility of Justice” (Chapter 2), the author offers a comparative reading of Juan Rulfo’s *Pedro Páramo* (1955), Laura Restrepo’s *La multitud errante* (2001), and Fernando Vallejo’s *La virgen de los sicarios* (1994). Each of these novels has a justice-seeking subject at its center, and Rosenberg’s analysis focuses on the conditions and shortcomings of legal subjection in each case. Given that the title points to an epoch “after human rights,” it is helpful that Rosenberg provides an earlier work to contrast with contemporary pieces, thus demonstrating the cultural shift he proposes in his thesis. In this case, *Pedro Páramo* serves as a theoretical matrix to consider Latin American literature’s earlier (self-assigned) role of mediation in national hegemonic culture, versus later works, such as *La multitude errante* and *La virgen de los sicarios*, which demonstrate literature’s displacement and its capacity to challenge hegemonic power from the margins—a refugee camp in *La multitude errante*, and a criminal assassin in *La virgen de los sicarios*.

The third chapter, entitled “Global Fictions, Truth and Reconciliation, and the Judgment of History” discusses a corpus that Rosenberg calls “novels of truth and reconciliation”—“not because they promote either term of the pair, but because they re-create the conditions of enunciation, investigating the

possibilities, limitations, and legacy of this global metajudicial framework [...]” (59). This is a very ambitious chapter in that it includes a significant amount of novels: *La hora azul* (2005) by Peruvian writer Alfonso Cueto, *Abril rojo* (2006) by Peruvian Santiago Roncagliolo, *El desierto* (2005) by Chilean Carlos Franz, and *Insensatez* (2004) by Salvadorean Horacio Castellanos Moya. Although it seems, at times, that Rosenberg only skims the surface on some works, he makes important points on the legacy of Nazism in the Americas, the shortcomings of truth and reconciliation projects, and the emergence of a second generation of human rights—one focused on communal and indigenous rights.

Moving from novels to other artistic narratives, Chapter 4, “Exhibiting the Disappeared: Visual Arts and Auratic Distance,” analyzes key works from *The Disappeared*, a collective exhibition organized by the North Dakota Museum of Art and subsequently launched as a touring show throughout the Americas. As the chapter’s title suggests, Rosenberg draws heavily on Walter Benjamin’s notions of aura to examine the aesthetic presentation of violence, considering the international audience of this exhibition and the ethics of identification at a distance. Here, as elsewhere in the book, Rosenberg reflects on the intersection of human rights and commodity. In reference to Chilean artist Iván Navarro’s items displayed in *The Disappeared*, he pointedly notes, “By memorializing the victimizers inscribed into commodities, it makes present not only the victimization silent in the world of commodities but also the repressed memory of memory’s own commodification” (120).

“Judicial Documentary, Evidence, and the Question of Technology” (Chapter 5) examines documentary films that place truth and justice in dialogue with judicial processes. Here, Rosenberg includes *Granito: How to Nail a Dictator* (Pamela Yates, Paco de Onís, and Peter Kinoy 2011), *La Isla: Archivos de una tragedia* (Uli Stelzner 2009), *Presunto culpable* (Roberto Hernandez and Geoffrey Smith 2008), *El Rati Horror Show* (Enrique Piñeyro 2009), and *Juizo* (Maria Augusta Ramos 2007). These films, transnational in their circulation, finance, and marketability, present critiques of the legal system while also signaling other

notions of justice. Rosenberg considers, among other ideas, the documentarist as legal witness in *Granito*, state denial and erasure of legal archives (and attempts to recuperate what was lost) in *La isla*, a fundamentally rotten legal archive in *Presunto culpable*, and the erosion of direct cinema's standpoint in *El Rati Horror Show* and *Juizo*.

In his sixth chapter, "After Interpellation I: Police Violence and Spectacle in José Padilha's Films" Rosenberg puts forward an analysis of Brazilian director José Padilha's documentary (and directorial debut) *Ónibus 174* (2002) followed by his fictional saga *Tropa de Elite* (2007) and *Tropa de Elite 2: O Inimigo Agora É Outro* (2010). Picking up on a theory he also discusses in the previous chapter, Rosenberg uses Lyotard's view of the child as an exemplary figure to analyze the way in which *Ónibus 174* portrays street children and rights. Another important theme in this chapter is hypervisibility, and the link between visibility and force.

Chapter 7 functions as a continuation of previous discussions on police visibility, security, and the formation of social subjects. "After Interpellation II: Artistic Performance and Police Collaboration" examines contemporary artist-police collaborations: Francis Alys's performance and video installation *Re-enactments*, Yoshua Okón's video performance *Orillase a la orilla*, David Lozano's performance *Oficios para el cuerpo*, Tania Bruguera's series of participatory installations, *Crowd Control* and *Tatlin's Whisper #5*, and Martín Weber's re-enactment of Martín Chambi's 1923 photograph *Policía con niño*. Although Rosenberg interprets these contemporary artist-police collaborations as demonstrating the exhaustion of legal order, he concludes on a hopeful note. Like Chapter 2, an earlier work serves as a helpful point of comparison for contemporary perspectives on the same scene. So, while the chapter begins with a discussion of Chambi's iconic 1923 photograph of a police officer dragging a street child by his ear, it ends with Argentine photographer Martín Weber's contemporary re-enactment of that photo— one that "allows the subject-child

to inscribe and show an aspiration that counters the show of force” (196). Rosenberg argues that photography, in this sense, serves as a cleansing ritual, actualizing history in order to re-write the future.

Overall, Rosenberg’s research is sound, drawing not only on Latin American cultural theory and literature but on political philosophy, media studies, law, and art history. For this reason, it could be useful to scholars and graduate students in all of the above disciplines. Individual chapters would also be suitable for undergraduate courses. Just as the title acknowledges human rights while also pointing to something beyond it, the book’s most powerful moments are when it signals the before and after of human rights. Several times, Rosenberg reminds readers that as much as the human rights narrative reveals, it also erases (or threatens to erase) what came before—namely, the violence and injustice of the European conquest, which unleashed the early forces of globalization. At the same time, he leaves us with the paradoxical (but hopeful) idea that those same forces of the global market could help to create a new ethics of identification, and a new legal order that stems from collective action and rights. On this last point, Rosenberg does not offer a great deal of detail, but rather leaves the individual works to speak for themselves, each one hinting how art, literature and film might serve in “accompanying and activating the multitude’s hope” (48) in this new era.