Neuropolitics, antidepressants and the rise of neuro-narratives in Catalonia (Spain)

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The dramatic increase in the consumption of antidepressants in many countries can be taken as one example of the contemporary cerebralization of human affliction. This process has been led by expert systems and has already leaked into popular culture, creating new biosocialities or neurosocialities, and new ontologies of self as well: the neural self. I define the neural self as an interiorized, cerebralized, centripetal, inwardly-oriented process from which is derived a cerebral idea of personhood. The result is the emergence of neuro-narratives. This paper, based on fieldwork among consumers of antidepressants in Catalonia, analyzes how neuro-narratives show their fetishistic power, since while they de-socialize the human affliction, they also naturalize the conventions of a world of created needs.

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