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Gabriela Jonas Aharoni, *Argentinian Telenovelas: Southern Sagas Rewrite Social and Political Reality* (Brighton: Sussex Academic Press, 2015), pp. ix + 152, £50.00, hb.

While *telenovelas* are an incredibly popular and important form of Argentine cultural production, they have received limited critical attention in existing scholarship. This is particularly the case in the English language. In this book, Gabriela Jonas Aharoni seeks to address this omission by analysing the effects of globalisation on Argentine telenovelas produced in the period 1989–2006. Aharoni first demonstrates that, following President Carlos Menem's economic reforms of the early 1990s, Argentine telenovelas were increasingly produced for the transnational market. By drawing on the work of Mikhail Bakhtin, Homi Bhabha and Néstor García Canclini, however, Aharoni argues that, through the very process of preparing the telenovelas for export, they became hybrid texts which more closely engaged with specifically Argentine social and political debates.

The book opens with two introductory chapters which set the scene for the analysis to follow. The first provides a brief overview of Argentine social, economic and political history from 1983 to 2006; the second, a history of the television industry in Argentina, and of the telenovela as a genre. While the opening chapter may prove useful for those with little knowledge of recent Argentine history, the second benefits from providing information which is far less well known. Following these preparatory chapters, the author divides her analysis into three historical periods. In each section Aharoni examines three different telenovelas, describes the 'hybridisation strategies' which typify the period, and explores the relationship between the televisual texts and Argentine socio-political reality. The first of these chapters examines telenovelas produced during 'the golden years of Menemism' (p. 46) in the early nineties; the second analyses texts produced at the end of the nineties as Menem's economic reforms began to falter and precipitated an economic and social crisis; and the final section considers the ways in which telenovelas produced during the period 2002–6 responded to President Néstor Kirchner's decision to reopen the trials of those responsible for the crimes of the Dirty War. Throughout the text, Aharoni is effective in demonstrating that the telenovelas she examines are hybrid texts and her theoretical argument is well developed and promising. Moreover, she engages with an impressive range of political and cultural debates within Argentina, and her analysis is innovative and interesting. Aharoni is particularly effective at demonstrating that the creation of telenovelas for the transnational market paradoxically 'paves the way for a debate on topics related to local identities that are territorial by definition' (p. 54), and that the onset of economic and social crisis in the late 1990s allowed for the depiction of alternative identities which had previously been marginalised from mainstream Argentine culture.

While Aharoni's analysis is undoubtedly thought provoking, the inclusion of more textual evidence, and further close analysis of the specific telenovelas under discussion, would strengthen her argument. Indeed, her analysis (which is completed in around 70 pages) can, at times, seem a little too brief. For example, Aharoni suggests that the telenovela *Más allá del horizonte* (1994), set in the nineteenth century, creates a link between the historical Governor of Buenos Aires Province, Juan Manuel de Rosas, and contemporary president Carlos Saúl Menem. Aharoni refers to Menem's decision to repatriate Rosas's remains in 1989 and suggests that it was a symbolic act designed to promote reconciliation in a country that had been subject to dichotomous division

during Rosas's rule and again following the dictatorship of 1976–83. While this discussion is particularly interesting, it could be more carefully grounded in close analysis of the televisual text. Moreover, the author could further improve her argument by considering the various attempts to repatriate Rosas's remains pursued throughout the twentieth century, and the tradition of historical revisionism in Argentina which supported these efforts and underpinned numerous important political movements. In another similar case, Aharoni discusses the depiction of a homosexual relationship in the telenovela *Central 099* (2002), and argues that such issues had 'not yet been addressed' by either 'public opinion at large or by the communications media of the time' and that they 'were dealt with several years later [...] by the governments of Néstor and Cristina Kirchner' (p. 82). Although never named in the text, the author is presumably referring to debates surrounding the legalisation of same-sex marriage enacted in 2010 by the administration of Cristina Fernández de Kirchner. However, the fact that the Autonomous City of Buenos Aires legalised civil unions for same-sex couples in 2002 (some six days after the final broadcast of *Central 099*) suggests that the situation was rather more complex than the author acknowledges, and her analysis could be improved by considering this historical reality more carefully.

The book would also have benefited from much more rigorous copy-editing to eliminate the many errors which it contains. Two inaccuracies, however, warrant specific comment. First, the author refers to cutbacks in the television industry which 'began at the end of the sixties, after the fall of Frondizi's government (1966–1973)' (p. 24). Arturo Frondizi was actually president from 1958 to 1962, and it was the dictatorship which called itself the *Revolución Argentina* which ruled from 1966 to 1973. At no point does the author name, or discuss, this dictatorship. Secondly, the author consistently confuses the presidential pardons granted by Menem to those convicted of crimes during the Dirty War with the *Ley de Punto Final* enacted by the government of Raúl Alfonsín which effectively ended the trials of military personnel. Indeed, Aharoni refers directly to 'Menem's Punto Final law' (p. 72) despite the fact the law was passed by Congress in 1986, some three years before Menem assumed the presidency. While these errors are particularly unfortunate, the book nonetheless constitutes an innovative and interesting analysis of an important, yet under-examined, Argentine cultural phenomenon. The book provides a useful introduction to the study of Argentine telenovelas and provides an excellent bibliography for those who wish to explore any particular topic in greater detail.

*Institute of Latin American Studies, University of London*

NIALL GERAGHTY

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Charles V. Heath, *The Inevitable Bandstand: The State Band of Oaxaca and the Politics of Sound* (Lincoln, NE, and London, University of Nebraska Press, 2015), pp. xii + 218, £20.99, pb.

Brass bands, equipped with European instruments and repertoire, often funded from the proceeds of the sale of common lands, proliferated across the cities, towns and villages of south-eastern Mexico from the mid nineteenth century. Various called *músicas de viento* or *filarmónicas*, these novel ensembles expressed community solidarity and dignified the aural space of the remote rural communities in which the Liberal state hoped to forge active and productive citizens. Apart from serving as a conduit for external civilising influences while satisfying the military and patriotic demands of the