

authors find that it is the emotional responses that tend to precipitate change. There is, therefore, a connection between the type of violence, how a victim is treated after death and the shaping of political and social processes.

Chapter 4 shifts the focus more explicitly to direct political change in the wake of these murders, such as hastening presidential elections (Kosteki and Santillán), the end of military service (Omar Carrasco) and a decline in feudal politics in Catamarca (María Soledad Morales). Although concrete political shifts are difficult to unpack, the authors measure change based on their own analysis of elites and institutions and the perception of change by those who lived through it. Although the chapter indicates that change is possible, interviews with residents in the case of Morales make it very clear that history could be repeated.

The final chapter is perhaps the most insightful, focusing on deaths that have failed to reverberate beyond the locality in which they occurred, as a counterpoint to the previous chapters. The case studies encompass places of different sizes, demographics and geographies. In understanding why some deaths come to matter, we also need to probe the reasons why others do not provoke national collective mourning and calls for change.

Indeed, this final chapter raises an important point in its discussion of the ways in which deaths are framed, metabolised, represented and politicised by a range of state and non-state actors. At the heart of this is the question of societal forgetting and political amnesia. The '*muertes que importan*' ('deaths that matter') discussed in the first four chapters are the ones we know about, but what about the others, the ones deemed not to matter? Indeed, *this* is the troubling aspect of the book; not only the grim subject matter, but touching on other deaths that have not, for various reasons, garnered the same attention.

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Niall H. D. Geraghty, *The Polyphonic Machine: Capitalism, Political Violence, and Resistance in Contemporary Argentine Literature*

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The titular metaphor of this ambitious book references some works by Gilles Deleuze and Félix Guattari, of which *A Thousand Plateaus: Capitalism and Schizophrenia* (1980) and *Kafka: Toward a Minor Literature* (1975) are especially relevant here. In the introduction to *The Polyphonic Machine: Capitalism, Political Violence, and Resistance in Contemporary Argentine Literature*, Niall

Geraghty cites Deleuze and Guattari's conception of knowledge as 'machinic assemblages of desire and collective assemblages of enunciation' (p. 14) and identifies selected works by César Aira, Marcelo Cohen and Ricardo Piglia as component parts of a 'literary machine' (p. 15) that enacted collective forms of knowledge and resistance in Argentina between 1969 (the year of the Cordobazo) and a point in the future that is not specified. Against that broad and open-ended historical backdrop, the military dictatorship of 1976–83 is a crucial landmark, partly on account of the political violence that was unleashed but also in terms of the early development of a neoliberal capitalist economy which would burgeon under President Carlos Menem in the early 1990s.

The literary texts chosen for study coalesce in pairs in each of the three main sections of Geraghty's book, where he engages with them in a deliberately 'provocative reading' (pp. 18, 25). The first text studied is Aira's comic novel, *Enma, la cautiva* (1981), which is set on the eve of the culminating episode of the Conquest of the Desert in 1879. Along with references to several nineteenth-century literary texts, including Lucio V. Mansilla's *Una excursión a los indios ranqueles* (1870), the setting of Aira's novel ties it to a narrative of the Argentine nation's history where military and economic expansion brought the 'Desert' within the sphere of capitalism. What is especially significant about this dyad is the precise, indeed overstated, way in which it maps on to the moment of composition of *Enma, la cautiva*, in October 1978. The critiques of repression, colonisation and forced unification under the command of General Julio Argentino apply to conditions obtaining a hundred years later, including disappearances under the military dictatorship and economic crisis (namely the high levels of inflation both before and after, but especially during, the years of the dictatorship). In view of the parallels between the two historical periods in question, Geraghty detects in Aira's novel 'a latent critique of capitalism' (p. 43): a claim reinforced with further reference to Deleuze and Guattari and, towards the end of the chapter, Immanuel Kant, G. W. F. Hegel and Karl Marx.

Aira's position vis-à-vis neoliberal commodity culture is elaborated upon in the following chapter, which pays significant attention to *La prueba* (1992), with other works – especially the essays, 'La nueva escritura' (1998) and 'La innovación' (1995) – providing strategic insight into Aira's 'literary project' (p. 76). As in *Enma, la cautiva*, the setting of *La prueba* interleaves the contemporary moment with an earlier period in Argentine history, in this case, the late 1960s. In the plot of *La prueba*, two lesbian punks, Mao and Lenin, conduct a hold-up on a supermarket, which calls to mind the revolutionary atmosphere in the disciplines of art and politics around the Cordobazo. Teasing out similarities and differences between the two moments of struggle, Geraghty uses Alain Badiou and Deleuze (again) to argue that Aira's text is principally concerned with 'the production of the new by means of subjective struggle' (p. 61). This is enacted in the narrative arc, which plots the 'becoming-other' envisaged by Badiou and illustrates the importance of transformation in Aira's political and artistic programmes. Some thoughts of Deleuze on Franz Kafka round off the section on Aira, in a pattern that will be repeated in the analyses of works by Cohen and Piglia.

The principal foci of attention in subsequent chapters are *La ilusión monarca* (1992) and *Insomnio* (1986) (Chapter 3) and, in Chapter 4, *El oído absoluto* (1989), paired with *Varietades* (1998), all by Cohen; in Chapters 5 and 6, the

argument revolves around *Respiración artificial* (1980) and *La ciudad ausente* (1992), by Piglia. The author's reading of works by Cohen highlights correspondences with the model of the 'sovereign society' (Michel Foucault) and the society of control theorised by Deleuze. Other important elements are Jean Baudrillard's concepts of simulacra and hyperreality, and a range of literary sources including the Book of Ecclesiastes, *Ulysses* (1922) by James Joyce, and the novels of Kafka. Cohen is read as the author of a 'sociological and philosophical project' (p. 129) centred on revolutionary desire, the acknowledgement of failure and the importance of resistance.

In *Respiración artificial*, Piglia offers a philosophical reflection on the nature of the military regime and the discursive structures that underpinned it. Primacy is granted to the conception of the law that was earlier established by René Descartes and developed by Kant and which Geraghty proposes 'constitutes the microfascism that sustains the modern state' (p. 148) in Piglia's novel; Kafka also contributes to the network of ideas in *Respiración artificial*, where the imprint of Deleuze is again manifest. At this point, the reader appreciates the interconnectedness of the chapters of Geraghty's study and between the authors featured in it. With unquestionable mastery, Geraghty develops a multi-faceted argument that moves in various directions: forwards, sideways and performing various loops. Certain key terms (capitalism, violence, resistance) are constant, from the title page to the conclusion. The same goes for a set of thinkers (Deleuze, Kafka *et al.*) who emerge as the theoretical mainstays of *The Polyphonic Machine*. To these we must add the names of Bernard Stiegler (theoriser of 'psycho-power' (p. 168)), the Joyce of *Finnegans Wake* and Piglia himself *qua* author of both *Respiración artificial* and *La ciudad ausente*, a science-fiction novel that offers a dystopic vision of contemporary capitalist society and envisages 'new ways of being' (p. 199) to which Aira and Cohen are also committed. A well-wrought conclusion summarises the main lines and intricacies of Geraghty's argument, where similar yet distinctive voices resonate in a powerful polyphony.

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Raanan Rein and Ariel Noyjovich, *Los muchachos peronistas árabes: Los argentinos-árabes y el apoyo al justicialismo*

(Buenos Aires: Sudamericana, 2018), pp. 315, pb.

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The study of Arabs in Latin America has grown steadily over the last 20 years, especially with regard to diaspora communities in Argentina, Brazil and Mexico, where