

en su texto al casi inexplorado campo de las políticas de traducción entre el ídish y el español.

Con distintas perspectivas, dos trabajos se internan en el estudio de fenómenos religiosos. Mientras Laura Schenquer, a través de un estudio de caso, da cuenta de la emergencia del judaísmo conservador como alternativa a la radicalización política de la juventud judía en la década de 1970, Damián Setton recurre a las herramientas de la sociología de la religión para estudiar la militancia religiosa de Jabad Lubavitch en Argentina.

Las diferencias entre los diversos trabajos no impiden que encontremos denominadores comunes entre ellos, o consecuencias que se desprenden del conjunto de las lecturas. En primer lugar, la preeminencia del diálogo con el marco nacional –la dictadura militar, los procesos de radicalización, el liberalismo de la década de 1920, entre otros procesos– y con la historiografía nacional para tornar inteligibles los fenómenos analizados. Aunque menos desarrollado, el diálogo con contextos internacionales redonda en la provisión de explicaciones de alcances muy amplios, por ejemplo, en las tensiones entre sionismo y comunismo, las posiciones del judaísmo norteamericano, las políticas israelíes o las de los países de origen de los emigrados.

En segundo lugar, constatamos la práctica ampliamente compartida de la reducción de escalas: de la “comunidad” a las instituciones u organizaciones y de allí a los individuos o conjuntos de individuos.

En tercer lugar, es notoria la des-heroización y des-victimización de las perspectivas, acompañada del énfasis en el estudio de la cotidianeidad y la apelación a las narrativas nativas.

En síntesis, *Marginados y consagrados* es un texto que expresa una positiva renovación de los estudios sobre los judíos argentinos, resultado de la combinación de perspectivas teóricas pertinentes y sólidas con aportes empíricos contundentes, de la dialéctica entre la atención a los particularismos y su inclusión en narrativas más amplias, y del delicado equilibrio entre el compromiso y la distancia.

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AMALIA RAN and JEAN AXELRAD CAHAN (eds.): *Returning to Babel: Jewish Latin American Experiences, Representations, and Identity*. Leiden, Boston: Brill, 2011.

Returning to Babel: Jewish Latin American Experiences, Representations, and Identity, edited by Amalia Ran and Jean Axelrad Cahan, presents an inno-

vative look at the field of Latin American Jewish studies—an interdisciplinary area that has been deepening and broadening for the last three decades—and enables a richer platform for discussion about both Latin American and Jewish academic themes.

In one of the leading articles, Raanan Rein offers an epistemological analysis of Latin American Jewish studies, postulating new approaches in the treatment of ethnic studies. He presents a picture of under-addressed topics (e.g., intra-ethnic discontinuities, the sense of identity of “unaffiliated ethnics,” and of those who relocated outside the region) and over-emphasized themes (e.g., anti-Semitism). Furthermore, he maps *a priori* assumptions and categories that should be re-examined, such as the relationship between ethnicity and nation, and the exceptionalism of the ethnic experience. Accordingly, Rein advocates expanding the disciplinary borders of Latin American Jewish studies to include broader geographical contexts and transnational communities. He also suggests, moreover, crossing frontiers to allow for comparative studies between Jewish and other ethnic minorities’ topics within the national context, among other issues. In this way, Rein encourages de-essentializing the Latin American Jewish scholarly field.

Among the overarching semantic areas of this volume are the notions of crossing boundaries and exploring border areas which, in turn, invite us to re-think topics in wider geographical, historical, social, and cultural settings. In the literary realm, Sergio Waisman sets Jewish Latin American letters in a linguistic and cultural frontier area, a twice peripheral zone—Jewish and Latin American—that spawns creativity. He analyzes Sergio Chejfec’s novels in which writing becomes an interstitial enunciation that emerges from a liminal space between past and present, silence and language, memory and oblivion/imagination.

Ariana Vigil studies the American writer Francisco Goldman’s novel *The Divine Husband* (2004), situated in nineteenth-century Guatemala. She articulates the notion of community as an alternative way of belonging for ethnic, religious, and sexual minorities, as well as non-heteronormative families, posing challenges to citizenship and traditional forms of membership to the nation-state, and enabling national and transnational cross-boundary relationships. Further studies by Joanna L. Mitchell, Lourdes Barranco-Cortés, and Dayana Soto y Caballero de Galicia reopen and provide new venues for questions such as diasporic identity, otherness, transculturation, and exile.

Tzi Tal’s chapter on contemporary Latin American Jewish film, a post-dictatorial phenomenon, brings a different perspective to identity debates, in which Jewishness does not appear to be directly related to otherness, but rather constructed as a form of whiteness, getting away from the ethnic past, and fitting into Latin American multicultural societies.

In addition to exploring new literary and film production, the book also addresses the need to revisit canonical texts. Edna Aizenberg rereads Alberto Gerchunoff, whose *Los gauchos judíos* (1910) became a paradigm for twentieth-century Latin American Jewish studies. She finds that Gerchunoff's later work poses questions for post-Holocaust writing (e.g., the problems of disaster representation, the relationship between the Holocaust and Latin America, and non-nostalgic Jewish writing beyond identity fixation) that can be used as a model for current research. In a similar vein, Nelson Vieira reads Clarice Lispector. He examines the closeness of Lispector's views of alterity to Emanuel Levinas' ethical philosophical inquiries. Vieira underscores the idea of an ethical transcendence of the self, beyond confining identity categories, by accepting responsibility for and approaching the existence of the other for the sake of a better world.

In the historical context, Adriana Brodsky focuses on the role of the Sephardic educational system in Argentina between the 1920s and 1960s. She points out that Talmudei Torah schools were not only providers of religious education, but also spaces where children learned how to perform both their Jewish and Argentine identities, and to become members of their new nation, thereby questioning the claims that these institutions aimed mainly to preserve Jewish identity. Brodsky stresses the Sephardic schools' intra and extra-ethnic connections, challenging assumptions that perceive this educational system as monolithic and isolated.

Alejandro Dujovne addresses the translation projects of Yiddish books into Spanish that took place in Argentina between 1919 and 1938. The translations' main objective was to transfer a Jewish cultural legacy to younger generations, among whom Yiddish was no longer spoken, while another goal was to introduce this legacy to the general Argentine public. By using different cultural channels, Brodsky's and Dujovne's historiographical studies demonstrate the Jewish Argentine communities' attempts to reach out for integration while also maintaining the ethnic identity of younger generations.

Less conventional approaches to the Latin American Jewish field are explorations in visual art and popular music. Saúl Sosnowski writes about his joint project with plastic artist Mirta Kupferminc. The hand-crafted work *Borges and the Kabbalah: Paths to the Word*, created around Borges' texts and Kabbalistic imprints, opens a perennial and ongoing intertextual dialogue between image and text. The multiple exhibitions of this book-object are ever-changing events that invite the reader-viewer-spectator to embark on a journey of unlimited and challenging possibilities.

Moshe Morad finds social, anthropological, and musical parallels between *salsa* and *muzika mizrahit* (Israeli oriental pop music). Both result from immigrant-made fusion of different ethnic genres and Western pop that Latin Ame-

ricans in the United States and Jews from Muslim countries in Israel produced in the 1960s-1970s, having attained mainstream acceptance in the 1990s. This comparative study of transnational music phenomena developed mainly as a result of Morad's fieldwork, during which he observed in Tel Aviv the musical practices of a transnational community of undocumented, non-Jewish, Latin American workers who manifested a preference for *muzika mizrahit*. This essay also adds to the new challenge to the boundaries of Latin American Jewish studies that cuts across the entire book.

A close look at the selections made by Ran and Cahan constitutes an invitation to explore newer modes of Latin American Jewish literary and cultural production. The book brings up different ways in which ethnic minority identity is experienced and represented when it arises out of a multicultural national landscape, as well as from transnational communities. In a self-reflexive attitude, this collection of articles proposes textual re-readings and canon revisions, and it reopens questions posed in this literary and cultural tradition, such as immigration and exile, alterity and sameness, exclusion and integration. In addition, it calls for methodological re-examination of assumptions and categories of analysis, thus stimulating non-traditional multidisciplinary cross-boundary explorations. Finally, the Babel metaphor refers not only to the diversity of languages and symbolic orders, but alludes also to the multiplicity of academic disciplines and perspectives that meet within the realm of Latin American Jewish studies, to which this volume makes a significant and very valuable contribution.

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MÔNICA RAISA SCHPUN: *Justa Aracy de Carvalho e o resgate de judeus: Trocando a Alemanha nazista pelo Brasil*. Civilização Brasileira, 2011.

Escrita pela historiadora Mônica Raisa Schpun, esta é a biografia de Aracy de Carvalho e a história da amizade que a uniu a Maria Margarethe Bertel Levy, duas mulheres com perfis e trajetórias distintas e cujo encontro se deu em circunstâncias trágicas: a necessidade de Margarethe e seu marido Hugo emigrarem da Alemanha nazista e a atuação de Aracy, funcionária do consulado brasileiro em Hamburgo entre 1934 e 1942, facilitando a obtenção de vistos e auxiliando nos trâmites de emigração de judeus alemães cuja entrada no Brasil seria legalmente vetada. As duas voltariam a se encontrar em São Paulo, nos anos 1940, e estabeleceriam uma duradoura relação de amizade. Por sua atuação, Aracy se tornou em 1985 uma "JUSTA", honraria concedida pelo "Yad Vashem", em