

estudios adicionales, como los que la autora viene desarrollando actualmente sobre las guerras civiles del siglo XIX.

Natalia Sobrevilla Perea

Universidad de Kent

RAANAN REIN AND DAVID M.K. SHEININ: *Muscling in on New Worlds: Jews, Sport, and the Making of the Americas*. Leiden: Brill, 2014.

Raanan Rein and David Sheinin's wide-ranging edited volume *Muscling in on New Worlds: Jews, Sport, and the Making of the Americas* opens important new avenues at the intersection of physical activity, sport, and Jewish identity in the Americas. At its best, it is a provocative exploration of the ways that Jews in the Americas understand, or elide, their sense of double identity. Though the contributions occasionally slip into easy dichotomies in efforts to show how Jews overcame (or continue to deal with) stereotypes about Jewish weakness and effeminacy, by and large they offer insight into the complex nature of identity formation and negotiation. Collectively, the volume seeks to insert Jews into the creation of American sporting identities—and sports into the creation of American Jewish identities—while at the same time arguing against the stereotype of Jews as people of the book.

The chapters focus on the ways that Jews “have been adjusting their identities for centuries” (page 1). In exploring how sport played a role in helping Jews “thread...the needle of asserting a Jewish identity while...integrating...a range of other identities” (page 4), the volume covers topics ranging from boxing in Argentina and the United States (Sheinin) to football fandom in Argentina (Rein); from the spiritual marriage between yoga and Jewishness (Odenheimer, Buchanan, and Prewitt) to Jewish athletes, uniforms, and scheduling in the NCAA; from Jewish sport and American identity (Gems) to Jewish masculinity and baseball (Alpert); and from stereotypes of Jews in U.S. films (Abrams) to Jews and sport in fiction (Meter). The epilogue, by Ari Sclar, looks to the future of Jewish sports studies. It is an impressively wide array of topics, one that may have felt unwieldy to the editors as they attempted to put it together. And, perhaps unsurprisingly, it is an uneven volume.

Intentionally or not, the chapters raise the question of what qualifies as sport. Is any physical activity a sport? Does there have to be an element of competition involved? Most definitions of sport suggest that competition of one form or another is essential. Yoga, by this definition, is physical activity but decidedly not sport. This is by no means a criticism of Odenheimer, Buchanan, and

Prewitt. Their chapter on Jewish-based yoga is both engaging and enlightening as it demonstrates how Jews adapt their spirituality to encompass other religious and spiritual traditions by connecting “yogic philosophy and Jewish principles” (page 59). The same question holds for Abrams’ contribution on mimicry in the *Madagascar* film franchise, a topic very far afield from sport. Though an insightful discussion of stereotypes of urban Jewish masculinity, it does not really address questions of sport or athleticism *per se*.

Some contributions imply the always relational aspect of Jewish sporting practices. Rebecca Alpert, for example, calls for a re-imagining of Jewish masculinity, based on what she calls the “macho-mensch.” Using Hank Greenberg and Sandy Koufax as ideal types—athletes who excelled at their sport and upheld both Jewish identity and intellectuality—Alpert effectively argues that Jews can have it both ways. There is no need, she suggests, to “assimilate” into dominant American notions of masculinity, bereft of moral compass or community connection. The Jewish relation to a “Christian” sports culture forms the backdrop to Gerald Gems’ chapter on Jewish sports, assimilation, and American identity. Concluding that a “merger of traditional Jewish values and American principles” meant that there was “no longer a question of Jewish assimilation” (page 100), his overview of Jewish sport in the twentieth century notes that sports were historically an uneven field for assimilation. He notes that immigrants of all ethnicities viewed the White Protestant reformers of the progressive era with “suspicion,” and rather than conform, Jewish organizations such as the Chicago Hebrew Institute sought to assimilate by creating their own sporting clubs, much as they did in Europe. He highlights the very concrete ways in which Jews in Chicago fought to counter stereotypes of weakness and cerebralness.

The volume is not without weaknesses, however. While the individual chapters offer much, the book is not a cohesive whole. (Few edited volumes are.) *Muscling in on New Worlds* could cohere better, however, had the introduction offered more of a roadmap to it, or to Jewish sports studies more generally. The introduction is a valuable piece in its own right. It suggests how Jewish sports studies have moved beyond the dichotomy of assimilation through erasure or unexpected success to a more complicated vision of partial and ongoing integration. At the same time it points out some of the little-explored avenues of research: Jewish fandom and Jewish athletes’ self-perception, for example. Still, a synthetic introduction that worked to frame the disparate contributions would have helped this reader. Oddly, such a piece is included in the volume: Ari Sclar’s excellent epilogue not only covers the historiography of Jewish sports studies, but it places the chapters in conversation with each other and the rest of the book.

This quibble notwithstanding, *Muscling in on New Worlds* raises a number of important issues about the nature of sport, religion, and identity that may suggest

the need for new research. Primary among them is the question of whether sports is always the purview of dominant society. That is, if Jewish sport is a form of “adjusting identities” then can Jews ever be inherently athletic? Another way to put this question is to ask if Jewish athleticism is *always* relational. Along the same vein, is Jewish “adjusting” any different from that of any other group—be they ethnic, racial, or religious minorities? Finally, does the continuing need for “adjustment” highlight both Jewish ability to fully adapt but also failures of dominant societies? That is, are sports in the Americas—like society at large—always coded white and/or Christian? These are some of the provocative questions raised by Rein and Sheinin’s volume which are of immense value to the field of Jewish sport and to sports studies as a whole.

Joshua Nadel

North Carolina Central University

PABLO YANKELEVICH (coord.), *Inmigración y racismo. Contribuciones a la historia de los extranjeros en México*. México, D.F.: *El Colegio de México*, 2015.

El libro que coordina Pablo Yankelevich abona a una conversación sobre la historia de la migración y de la extranjería en México que en la última década se ha enriquecido y complejizado. La atención de los estudiosos se ha dirigido menos hacia la conformación y las lógicas internas de las comunidades extranjeras, que a explorar la manera en que quienes venían de fuera se insertaron en la sociedad receptora, los imaginarios que engendraron y los dispositivos que creó la autoridad política para controlarlos. Así, la población extranjera se erige, como escribe Yankelevich, en un “extraordinario mirador” (p. 15) para rastrear la construcción contenciosa del Estado y de la Nación. Éste, tema clásico de la historia política, se entrelaza con una cuestión central, que sin embargo ha ocupado, hasta hace muy poco, un lugar marginal e incómodo dentro la historiografía mexicanista: el racismo y el papel que éste ha desempeñado “en la formulación del orden político” (p. 17).

De esta forma, los seis artículos que reúne el libro nos acercan al lado oscuro de la democracia y de la política revolucionaria, de los saberes científicos y de las políticas de salud pública y del nacionalismo. Los dos primeros artículos contextualizan el caso mexicano, insertando el primero la legislación mexicana de esta época —restrictiva y racista— en un marco cronológico y geográfico más amplio: el de la legislación migratoria continental, del siglo XVIII al siglo XX; y rastreando el segundo la forma en que, durante el periodo de entreguerras, los

Copyright of Estudios Interdisciplinarios de America Latina y el Caribe is the property of Instituto Sverdlin de Historia y Cultura de America Latina and its content may not be copied or emailed to multiple sites or posted to a listserv without the copyright holder's express written permission. However, users may print, download, or email articles for individual use.