

and culture, between the sound of languages and their political inscription, and the definition of a value of indigenous languages for the nation-state.

In the fourth and final chapter, borrowing the term “anthropotechnologies” (*antropotecnía* in Spanish) from Ludueña, Ochoa Gautier explores the way in which Miguel Antonio Caro, philologist Rufino José Cuervo (1844-1911), and composer and poet Diego Fallón (1834-1904) employed a series of techniques—eloquence, etymology, and orthography, respectively—to substantiate notions like the use of the voice as an instrument for the “proper” enculturation of the population, the development of a means to control language and its potentially dangerous change amid postcolonial diversification, and the use of alphabetic writing for the encryption of music and the avoidance of its inherent emancipation from language, as had occurred in Europe. Taken together, these so-called anthropotechnologies produced a politics of immunization that generated an understanding of orality that was crucial to the political theology of the state. Both chapters 2 and 4 discuss the articulation of a racialized culturalism that transformed the politics of blood purity into cultural theories of exclusion and discrimination, a development that applies equally well to other corners of the Americas.

The volume is a must for enthusiasts of sound studies and/or Colombian history. Ochoa Gautier has done a fine job chronicling the way in which the aural played a key role in the definition of a relation between humankind and the body politics of the nation-state. It deserves wide recognition and ample endorsement. Amid considerations of autocratic grammarians, it is only ironic that more attention was not awarded to language, which occasionally comes across as a tad verbose.

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MARCIA OCHOA: *Queen for a Day: Transformistas, Beauty Queens, and the Performance of Femininity in Venezuela*. Durham: Duke University Press, 2014.

Within the same analytic frame, Marcia Ochoa’s *Queen for a Day* analyzes *misses* (beauty pageant contestants) and *transformistas* (transgender women), producing a queer reflection on the cultural logic of Venezuela. Moving from the transnational to the national to the local, her critical analysis of the “frivolous” space of spectacle addresses serious questions about how both marginalized populations and the country of Venezuela itself use glamour to negotiate power

within a post-colonial and neo-liberal landscape of contradictions and marginalization. Decentering political analysis to the realm of the affective, Ochoa's "queer diasporic ethnography" seeks to "honor the forms of survival and style" and to celebrate *transformistas*' "alterity and perversity" that have emerged from Venezuela's "failure to be modern" (*el fracaso*) (p. 62).

Ochoa's analysis of the performance of femininity—*spectacular femininity*—focuses on the practices, technologies, and ideologies through which Venezuelans accomplish the "national brand" of *belleza venezolana*. She conceptualizes the accomplishment of femininity as a process that requires on the one hand disciplining nature to make it obey the imperatives of order, civilization, and modern hygienic citizenship, and on the other hand allowing nature to express itself by using technology to bring out desirable qualities that may be hidden. For *transformistas* and *misses* alike, this involves medicalizing the body (using plastic surgery, hormones, cosmetics, and other means) and embodying the national aesthetics of racial democracy (or "miss-ing race" as the author puts it). The underlying logic—that of development, management, and control—connects bodily transformation toward a desirable feminine body and self with the production of modernity.

Transformistas, *misses*, and the nation of Venezuela, Ochoa argues, all "use beauty and glamour to negotiate power and marginality" (p. 6). Beauty queens, after petroleum, have been Venezuela's top export; and thus beauty pageants serve simultaneously as a path to social mobility for young women and a means for Venezuela to project itself onto the global stage. In contrast, the "inconvenient" *transformistas*—equally a product of the cultural logic of the Venezuelan nation in Ochoa's analysis—subvert coercive relations of power through their irreverent actions and disruptive public occupation of Caracas' central transportation artery, "*Avenida Libertador*." Among the most visible and provocative of the *transformistas* who frequent *Avenida Libertador* is one who dubbed herself "Venezuela," mocking and reinscribing the nation that subjects her to violent policing, but to which she insists on belonging. By so doing, Ochoa argues, the *transformista* Venezuela (with her community of *transformistas*) "appropriates, negotiates, and transforms Eurocentric ideals of beauty, value, and modernity" (p. 67).

Ochoa contextualizes her theoretically informed analysis in empirical passages that detail: the history of beauty pageants in Venezuela; material circumstances that made beauty pageants a leading national "industry"; competing representations of racialized *belleza venezolana* in commercial trademarks and political logos; the history of urban development; and the geography of poverty and wealth that marks the Caracas landscape.

Ochoa conducted fieldwork in Venezuela during 2002-2003, a period of political crisis and conflict over Chávez's "Bolivarian Revolution" that threatened to cancel the annual Miss Venezuela pageant. But if Venezuelans' attention has shifted toward the traditional realm of politics, Ochoa presents a case that marginal populations—as they "[make] survival out of impossibilities" (p. 245)—both expose the contradictions of modernity in Venezuela (and beyond) and invent political possibilities for change. *Queen for a Day* makes important contributions to our understanding of how colonial legacies at the local, national, and international levels—along with contemporary mass media and other technologies—shape cultural politics and the possibilities for change in our post-modern, global world.

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ALEJANDRO DUJOVNE: *Una historia del libro judío: La cultura judía argentina a través de sus editores, libreros, traductores, imprentas y bibliotecas.* Buenos Aires: Siglo Veintiuno, 2014.

Years ago, Alejandro Dujovne found himself in possession of a box full of Yiddish books, given to him by a Jewish couple from a small town in the Argentine province of Córdoba. The books became the starting point for a doctoral dissertation and resulted in the work we are reviewing. This story is not purely anecdotal. It shows that a book itself is actually a riddle hiding the processes and conditions that allowed it to exist and circulate.

In the absence of both previous research on the history of the Jewish book in Argentina and relevant databases, Dujovne had to uncover appropriate sources on the basis of heterogeneous archival resources. The meticulous reconstruction of catalogues and trajectories remains one of the most impressive contributions of this book.

From a theoretical perspective, this work has important precedents in the fields of the history and sociology of book publishing, both throughout the world and in Argentina. The articulation of these fields with that of Jewish studies results in an original depiction of 20th-century Argentine Jewish culture through the lens of Jewish book publication. This analysis permits the recovery of actors' trajectories and voices largely forgotten by historiography.

Dujovne states clearly that the production and circulation of Jewish books in Argentina must be understood within a transnational perspective, and that language is essential to understanding the logic of the world of Jewish books.