

Enrique Rodó's classicism in the early conception of Latin Americanism. On the other hand, he convincingly argues that Latin Americanism as a field was mostly promoted in the rest of the continent as a result of the 1718 University Reform. In Chapter 5, the author focuses on Peruvian critic Luis Alberto Sánchez as a cultural agent of Aprismo and as an exile who put into practice the Reform ideal of continental unity in the region. Chapter 6 continues to analyze the role of hemispheric politics in the creation of the discipline by focusing on Pedro Enríquez Ureña's appointments in the U.S., which resulted in his *Literary Currents*, and argues that this work can be seen as an apology of political control in the region also achieved through linguistic disciplining. Finally, Chapter 7 brings to light important connections between publishing ventures, such as the FCE, and US institutions that promoted hemispheric agendas, such as the Rockefeller Foundation, through the activities of Enrique Anderson Imbert.

While this work is not intended to be a comprehensive chronological reconstruction, the focus on these hemispheric and Atlantic networks makes a very important contribution, both thematic and methodological. However, while the author does acknowledge the historical limitations of the term "Latin Americanism," engaging with the infrequent use of the notion of Latin America throughout this entire period would have afforded an even deeper understanding of, for example, the weight of Hispanism and linguistic conservatism among others. The premise about the rejection of José Enrique Rodó is also not fully convincing: while it is true that Rodó was not well-known in the U.S. and that many Latin Americans transcended and criticized him, *arielismo* continued to underpin many of the works discussed here, including Ugarte's, and many others later in the twentieth century. The book's most notable achievement is its way of situating these intellectual productions, often isolated from the contexts from which they emerged, by bringing to light the deep historical and political value of culture, and in this specific case of the birth of Latin Americanism as a discipline.

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MALENA CHINSKI & ALAN ASTRO (eds.), *Splendor, Decline, and Rediscovery of Yiddish in Latin America*. Leiden and Boston: Brill, 2018.

A photograph on this book's cover of a store sign in Buenos Aires—"Bilik vi Borsh" [cheap as borscht]—captures some of the questions driving this volume. For the thousands Jewish immigrants who migrated from Russia and Eastern Europe to settle in Argentina, Mexico, and other Latin American nations from

the nineteenth century onward, how did their most widely shared vernacular, Yiddish, fare in Latin America, and what traces has it left?

These questions are still relatively new: Latin America remains marginal within Jewish studies, and Latin American Jewish history has often relied on the analytical frames of religion, ethnicity, or race, rather than on language. In their *Rethinking Jewish Latin-Americans* (2008), Raanan Rein (editor of the Jewish Latin America series) and Jeffrey Lesser cautioned against presuming “high levels of anti-Semitism, Zionism . . . and the myth of all Jews being affiliated with community institutions” (5). The studies collected here draw from the corpus of Yiddish writings produced in Latin America, and reflect a range of class positions (peddlers became businessmen), attitudes (optimism to alienation in the new country), and ideologies (from Bundism to Zionism), as well as differing degrees of engagement with the Latin American context. In addition to covering a neglected regional landscape for Yiddish, the editors argue that a “deeper implantation of Yiddish” (2) characterized Latin America Jewries, relative to North America, with the greatest cultural production in Yiddish—the title’s “splendor”—lasting from the 1930s to the 1950s, followed by a specifically Latin American experience of “decline.”

The collection is divided into three parts: historical studies, readings of literary works, and critical biographies. The first part introduces both the extent of Yiddish culture through the 1950s and the divergent ways in which speakers imagined its future. In Brazil, some 30,000 Yiddish speakers (mainly Polish-Jewish immigrants) maintained a Yiddish press and Jewish school network, with 35 different Yiddish-language periodicals published between 1920 and 1950 (chapter 1). But this Yiddish milieu was small compared to that of neighboring Argentina. There, after the Yiddish European “center” was destroyed in World War II, some Yiddish writers continued to believe in the possibility of a resurgence of Yiddish. Argentinian Jewish writers lobbied President Juan Domingo Perón for visas that would allow surviving Yiddish writers to leave Paris in 1952 and find a new audience in Buenos Aires (chapter 2). According to Israel Lotersztain, who researched the Argentinian branch of the Jewish-Communist federation ICUF, large sectors of the Jewish working class in Argentina were shocked and distressed by the ICUF’s sudden abandonment of the language (chapter 3). Yiddish, along with socialism, had defined the organization for thousands of adherents, but by 1956, in light of Soviet anti-Semitism, ICUF’s leaders chose to sacrifice loyalty to Yiddish in order to remain pro-Soviet. They removed Yiddish from the ICUF-aligned curricula of Jewish schools and from ICUF doctrine practically overnight.

Argentina is central to the story of Yiddish “splendor” in Latin America; six of ten essays are devoted to it here. This is not surprising, since the three Latin

American nations with the largest Jewish populations ca. 1960 were Argentina, Brazil, and Uruguay: 310,000; 86,038; and 50,000, respectively (see Lesser & Rein, p. 6). Argentina became a major post-War publishing center, and projects such as the Musterverk anthologies of Yiddish literature continue to shape scholarship on Yiddish. References here to the Musterverk series (including in the chapters on Brazil, Cuba, and Uruguay) reflect the place of Argentina within Latin American Yiddish literature.

The literary works discussed include memoirs, plays, and fiction, and they reflect decades of contact with the cultures and languages of Latin America. Susana Skura and Lucas Fisman have documented at least three hundred Hispanicisms occurring in Argentine Yiddish, and they argue here for the existence of “Yiddish *criollismo*” (107) as a literary genre, adducing the illustrations of book covers as well as these books’ linguistic and cultural contents, which were influenced by the social realities of the Argentine countryside. Other examples of contact are more limited but nevertheless reflect an awareness of Yiddish among non-Jews. Cuban poet Andrés de Piedra-Bueno translated Eliezer Aronowsky’s poem “Maceo,” a tribute to the Cuban national hero, and one of thousands of Yiddish poems about Cuba that Aronowsky wrote in his lifetime (chapter 9). Mexican painter Diego Rivera collaborated with Isaac Berliner to illustrate his 1936 novel *Shtot fun palatsn* [City of Palaces] (chapter 4). And the cadre of surviving Yiddish writers who came to Argentina in July 1952 arrived thanks to Yiddish writers’ petition on their behalf to President Perón.

On the other hand, these chapters suggest the limited transfer of Jewish culture out of Yiddish during its peak decades. Especially interesting in this respect is the example of Lithuanian Jewish performer Jevl Katz, whose cabaret-style musical performances of the 1930s, so popular with Jewish immigrants, remained all but unknown outside Yiddish-speaking circles (chapter 10). As Ariel Svarch suggests, Jews’ linguistic difference may have enforced a cultural boundary (245-246). Perla Sneh’s portrait of her father provides a counterpoint: Polish Jewish Argentine writer Simja Sneh defied charges of linguistic betrayal by devoting himself to the “*iberdikhtn* [repoeticizing]” (168) of his own wartime memoir from Yiddish into Spanish (chapter 7).

The “decline” of Yiddish in Latin America was a familiar and longstanding trope among interwar and post-World War II immigrants. Jose Winiecki in Mexico (chapter 4) and Meir Kucinski in Brazil (chapter 1) wrote of their distress over the Yiddish-to-Spanish language shift, attributing the loss of Yiddish to assimilation, Jews’ entry into the middle classes, and generational change. “Vilifying Yiddish,” writes Perla Sneh, “served as a way to disassociate oneself from a past that it seemed urgent to shed” (155). The editors explain the renewed interest in—or “revival” of—Yiddish in Latin America from the 1980s on as part of a

broader global phenomenon. This volume sheds light on that phenomenon, while also being a part of it. As journalist Javier Sinay writes, “translating Yiddish still feels as though one is revealing something confidential” (190).

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CAROLINA ROCHA, *Argentine Cinema and National Identity (1966-1976)*. Liverpool: Liverpool University Press, 2017.

El libro de Carolina Rocha contribuye a llenar un vacío al enfocarse en un periodo preciso de la historia para examinar dos géneros ligados a la imagen de la argentinidad: películas históricas, que representan hechos y personajes verídicos del pasado nacional, y películas que ponen en pantalla narrativas gauchescas. La autora define este conjunto de películas como cine de herencia cultural nacional, en pos del género británico denominado *heritage films*. Se trata de cinco filmes de ambientación gauchesca y cuatro sobre figuras del pasado, producidos entre 1966 y 1976, con el apoyo del Instituto Nacional del Cine y adaptándose a las exigencias de la censura y el control ideológico, en una era de inestabilidad política, agitación social y alternancia en el poder de civiles y militares.

Partiendo de las premisas que el nacionalismo es un componente ideológico en la construcción de la Nación y que es un elemento esencial de la cultura nacional diseminada por las películas, Rocha considera que los filmes responden a la demanda por consolidar un sentimiento de argentinidad luego de largos años de disidencias y proscripción de las masas peronistas. Analiza la renovación tecnológica y la introducción del color, el elenco, el efecto de la televisión sobre la concurrencia de público a las salas de cine y en particular la dependencia económica de la actividad cinematográfica, que no podría subsistir sin el apoyo financiero estatal, condicionado por el control ideológico e intereses diversos. La base teórica del estudio sería más consistente si hubiera incluido las afirmaciones de Marc Ferró sobre el cine histórico, más apropiadas para el periodo analizado que las del citado Robert Rosenstone, enfocadas en el cine posmoderno con el cual estas películas no pueden ser identificadas.

La primera sección contextualiza el proceso político social desde la toma del poder por la dictadura del General Onganía en 1966, hasta la caída del gobierno electo de Isabel Martínez de Perón en 1976, subdivido en dos capítulos: bajo la dictadura 1966-1973 y la turbulenta democracia 1973-1976. Basándose en fuentes periodísticas, reconstruye la intervención del Instituto Nacional del Cine como ejecutor del especial interés del Estado en el control de la industria cultural y el estímulo a la representación de temas nacionales, al mismo tiempo que empujaba

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