

burdens, employing Enlightenment-inspired “conceptions of ‘utility’ and the ‘common good’ in which local practice and justice had to serve the benefit of all” (p. 181). In short, they “pitted new customs against old ones” (p. 197) in an effort to effect beneficial change.

While the book provides numerous examples from central Mexico, its main emphasis is the province of Oaxaca. This perhaps helps explain the work’s broad temporal focus. Yannakakis suggests that codification of customs in central Mexico occurred promptly following the fall of the Aztec Empire. In contrast, her discussion of Oaxaca’s legal evolution continues deeply into the eighteenth century, justified by Oaxaca’s much less profound penetration by Hispanic settlers. Oaxaca’s isolation meant that the development of postconquest legal practices was much more drawn out and that the process lasted far longer.

*Since Time Immemorial* shows persuasively how preconquest custom shaped the laws governing the Indigenous world of postconquest Mexico. But it equally demonstrates the complex ways that traditional customs were manipulated to reflect new realities as well as how new customs contributed to the evolution of legal practices in colonial society.

Yannakakis’s book is highly recommended but readers should be warned that the ideas and concepts are quite difficult. Much of the discussion revolves around definitions or interpretations of Zapotec (or other) Indigenous terms and can be overwhelming to non-linguists, including many colonial scholars. The overarching conclusions, however, are important and the reader is clearly rewarded.

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AMY K. KAMINSKY, *The Other/Argentina: Jews, Gender, and Sexuality in the Making of a Modern Nation*. Albany: SUNY Press, 2021.

Professor Emerita Amy Kaminsky’s new book, *The Other/Argentina*, is an outstanding contribution to the vast body of scholarship on Argentine Jewry and identity. Kaminsky seamlessly weaves together an array of cultural texts to illustrate the complexities of Jewish representation and self-depiction in Argentine society. Her compelling work allows the reader to understand how the Jewish identity has played a central role throughout history and into the present.

The book’s early chapters address how Argentina emerged as a nation with a substantial Jewish immigrant presence in the early twentieth century. The country’s Jewish population spanned from Argentina’s agricultural centers to more cosmopolitan areas as well—most notably, the capital city of Buenos

Aires. Kaminsky wisely emphasizes the history of Argentina as a nation of immigrants, from the land's colonial roots to the mass migrations between world wars and into the modern era. She reflects upon the paradoxes that come with this complicated past, with Argentina serving as a shelter for both Holocaust refugees and fugitive members of the SS.

As we immerse ourselves in this book, we enter into this ambiguous zone of Argentine national identity in which the Jews are the others, the most noted foreigners. Yet, simultaneously, Jewishness is inseparable from the making of modern Argentina. Kaminsky offers profound critiques of gender and sexuality, reflecting on how these conceptualizations inform our understanding of Argentine modernity. Past cultural studies have left out such themes, but *The Other/Argentina* explores them thoroughly in its chapter "Troubling Difference." Here, Kaminsky features the stories of Jewish prostitutes, feminized Jewish men, and those possessing sexualities deemed transgressive by Argentine society, examining the intersection between their experiences and Jewish identity.

The book goes on to underscore the importance of Jewish women writers as keepers of memories and recorders of the family past, as in the work of Ana María Shua. Such writers present narratives of personal Jewish identity vis-à-vis a national one. Of particular interest to modern Argentine history is the treatment of Jews during the military dictatorship, discussed in the chapter on "Embedded Jewishness." It was during these years that Jews once again became outsiders—the "others"—regarded as dissidents and tortured as political prisoners. The particular persecution of Jews during the years of the Dirty War brings to light the pervasive antisemitism of this society, especially within the culture of the military, in its singling out of Jewish political actors to be punished for their Jewishness and political vision.

Kaminsky's work is a meaningful addition not only to the field of Argentine historical literature and the arts, but also as an exploration of how a minority group such as the Jews define themselves. Kaminsky considers how Jewish identity, from religion to secularism, fits into the tapestry of a nation that continues to remake itself. Moreover, Kaminsky has the insight to understand the complex questions familiar to a large part of Jewish cultural studies, such as otherness and the interplay between presence and absence. Kaminsky ends the book with an excerpt from *El ghetto*, the work of the poet Tamara Kamenszain. Kaminsky singles out one particular poem in which the narrator mourns for her father. She traverses the neighborhoods of Buenos Aires towards the Jewish cemetery, coming to the revelation that nothing in this city belongs to her, but finds herself reclaiming the space nonetheless.

Perhaps this is the most poignant image about the duality of Jewish identity in Argentina—a duality between insider and outsider in a country that both

welcomed the Jews and persecuted them. Kaminsky's thoughtful narrative offers readers the ability to contemplate these seeming contradictions, as well as the meaning of Jewishness as part of a national identity.

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