

took on meaning, and circulated as part of a powerful but malleable discourse among Oaxaca's varied social classes, including the business and clerical elite as well as prostitutes, artisans, and laborers. It is an effective approach: while recognizing and at times ceding to the elusiveness of the word, he avoids the extremes of either analytical paralysis or excess. Instead he is able to highlight the very paradoxes and contradictions that inhere in such concepts in the first place. For example, in a carefully crafted chapter, Overmyer-Velázquez shows how progress could have very tangible, contradictory effects. Local officials expressed concern over a booming commercial sex trade—an activity on the one hand deemed unwholesome and antithetical to ideas of progress yet booming as a consequence of such progress. He also emphasizes the particular ways in which modernity seemed to take shape in a place like Oaxaca City, neither imperial nor national metropole. For example, here modernization did not march in stride with secularization. In fact, at least in Oaxaca City, it would appear that modernity was birthed in part by the Church itself which, forgiven by Porfirio Díaz for past sins, arose as the mediating institution between labor and the state and helped smooth the jagged edges created by changing social relations, spatial orderings, and economic circumstances.

This is an empirically rich and methodologically suggestive work. As well as contributing importantly to Mexican urban historiography, Overmyer-Velázquez shows how the idea of modernity itself is unsettled by attentive readings of the historical record in a place like Oaxaca City. In clear prose he demonstrates nicely how the very notions of progress and modernity were tightly entwined with a kind of emerging visual field, of which the burgeoning bureaucratic state as well as its purported subjects made very effective use. It is, in sum, an excellent and original contribution to Mexican historiography and should provoke further research on the intersection of visual studies and history.

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JUDITH BOKSER LIWERANT, ELIEZER BEN-RAFAEL, YOSHI GORNY, and RAANAN REIN (eds.): *Identities in an Era of Globalization and Multiculturalism: Latin America in the Jewish World*. Leiden: Brill 2008.

How do you fit (or misfit) “Latin American” with “Jewish”? Lately, a debate has been smoldering between adherents of the time-honored formula “Latin American Jewish” and the upstart proponents of the appellation “Jewish Latin American.” The difference isn’t merely dancing on grammatical pinheads but a shift in thinking about nation, identity, minority, and belonging. Are *los judíos*

of the southern republics first and foremost Latin Americans, or are they first and foremost Jews? Are they shaped more by the local or by the trans-local, *tele* or Torah, *fútbol* or *kreplaj*? And, depending on how you answer the question (if you can answer it), how should they be studied—within the consecrated “contemporary Jewry” paradigm with its emphasis on Jewish organizations, Zionism, and, above all, on Jews as a segment of a broad international collective, or, rather, within the recent trend toward “Latin Americans primarily,” a paradigm that focuses on Jews as part and parcel of their respective countries, on how they are “just like everyone else”?

The collection of essays, *Identities in an Era of Globalization and Multiculturalism: Latin America in the Jewish World*, wants to have it both ways, in a productive sense of the term. On the one hand it forms part of the *Klal Yisrael* Project, *klal yisrael* being the traditional Hebrew appellation for what Solomon Schechter, the early twentieth century scholar and theologian, famously translated as “catholic Israel”—the whole of the Jewish community, everywhere. This choice of phrase points to the deeply ingrained feeling that Jews worldwide are linked through a religious-cultural heritage that, however battered and morphed, continues to play a role. Previous volumes published by the Project include titles on Jewish identity, anti-Semitism, the Jewish state, and the Jewish historical experience. In that sense, the “contemporary Jewry” paradigm shapes the present book: the first of its four sections deals with *klal yisrael* in the contemporary era; the last section deals with comparative perspectives of Jews, society, and statehood. The two middle sections deal with Jews in Latin America, so that Latin America is cushioned between meditations on the meanings of *klal yisrael* today and on various permutations of Jewish identity in North America, Europe, and Israel.

On the other hand, it is not the good old “contemporary Jewry” mode, but rather a mode in flux. An essay by one of the editors of the volume and of the series, Eliezer Ben-Rafael, is entitled “Contemporary Threats to Klal Yisrael.” This essay looks at disagreements about religious practice in a secular world, the place of the “Land of Israel” in a time of globalization, and the existence of a Jewish “people” as an actual collective. Ben-Rafael claims that Latin America “constitutes a singular case” as it “epitomizes the contemporary character of Jewish life, in which unity and continuity are extraordinarily interwoven with pluralizing and fragmentation of identities, institutional forms, values, ascriptions, and self-ascriptions. In the region diverse historical times converge ...” (2).

As has happened elsewhere, in literary studies for example, Latin America has shaken its “peripheral,” “belated” condition to become the epitome of new scenarios of dispersion and globalization, Jews included. A new understanding demands new approaches, and here the trend toward “Latin Americans primar-

ily” modulates the “broad international collective” framework by advocating a “waning essentialism.” Raanan Rein, in his essay “Latin American Jewish Studies in Israel,” says that by accepting that the national is part of the continuum of belonging along which Jewish Latin Americans operate, Jews can fruitfully be studied together with other ethnic minorities in the region, as citizens unaffiliated with Jewish communal organizations, or as Latin American Zionists whose interests do not always coincide with the interests of the State of Israel. Rein argues that Latin American studies should provide the stimulus for examining Jewish Latin Americans, a situation that prevails more in the United States than in Israel, since in the north most scholars of Jews in Latin America come out of the Latin American side of the equation. That the present volume comes out of the Jewish side shows precisely what Rein means: although the boundaries are under siege, there is a dialogic openness that previously did not exist.

Yet feather ruffling works in both directions. A pluralized “contemporary Jewry” undermines strictly constructed Latin American-ness, for instance in Mexico, whose Jewish community is the subject of Judith Bokser Liwerant’s article. As globalization and democracy have weakened Mexico’s identity myth, the merging of Spanish-Catholic and indigenous populations, the Jewish concept of a Diaspora sustaining loyalty to a national center seems relevant to a land with a hefty migration *al norte*. Jewish expertise in group solidarity and the fight against prejudice becomes a vanguard for a society that is building citizenship and human rights.

In addition to Mexican Jewry, the two Latin American sections devote essays to the large Jewish communities of Argentina and Brazil, dip into Cuba with one article, then investigate Jewish culture, largely through literature, in Mexico, Chile, Uruguay, and Argentina. The Sephardim of Latin America merit attention as does the Sephardic Diaspora embraced by late nineteenth-century Spain. A piece on the “invisible collective” of Latin American Israelis closes the survey and offers readers a broad overview of how Jews negotiate the concepts of nation, identity, minority, and belonging at a time when these categories and the tools scholars use to study them are shifting. Leonardo Senkman, Yossi Goldstein, Florinda Goldberg, and Margalit Bejarano are among the important investigators contributing to the book.

As one might expect in such an encyclopedic volume, the glue does not quite hold everything in place. The Latin American sections, though informative, still emphasize the much-analyzed collectivities of Argentina and Brazil. This might have been an opportunity for innovation by enlarging the scope to include additional countries or Diasporas, such as Jewish Latin Americans in the United States, for example. Other arts and activities might have also stood

for “culture”—film, music, painting, soccer. There is an agenda waiting to fill future tomes.

The final section, “Comparative Perspectives” is “comparative” only to the extent that the articles talk about Jewries in other parts of the world; none of them engages Latin America *from the viewpoint* of Jews elsewhere, or vice versa: How does North American Jewry during the Holocaust, the topic of one essay, compare with Latin American Jewry at the same time? What about anti-Semitism in contemporary France vis-à-vis Argentina? There is a stuck-on quality that belies the desire to use Latin America as the “epitome” of Jewish life in our multi-all things era.

Identities in an Era of Globalization and Multiculturalism: Latin America in the Jewish World should be seen as an auspicious beginning: a willingness to include Latin America in the Jewish world; a comprehension that Latin American studies has something to say to *Klal Yisrael* and “contemporary Jewry”; an awareness that novel paradigms require the breaking down of outmoded schemes.

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JULIO CARRIÓN (ed.): *The Fujimori Legacy: The Rise of Electoral Authoritarianism in Peru*. University Park, PA: Pennsylvania State University Press, 2006.

The Fujimori Legacy is not only an important contribution to our understanding of Peruvian politics and the lessons of the Fujimori era, but it also provides insights into shared challenges facing transitional democracies. This collection of essays examines the factors that enabled the emergence and durability of Fujimori’s neopopulist and authoritarian presidency, as well as the ultimate causes of his abrupt fall from power. The contributors provide a diverse set of viewpoints from which to view the Fujimori decade. The combination of these perspectives results in a nuanced analysis of a regime that was originally democratically elected and even enjoyed broad popular support throughout its tenure, but which, at the same time, severely eroded fundamental institutions and principles of democratic government. How do we understand the meaning and implications of a presidency that maintained broad popular support, and yet clearly fell far short of democratic government?

The trend in the literature has been to classify regimes that fall short of liberal democracy with an adjective, such as “delegative” democracy or “hollow” democracy. Carrión’s volume, however, convincingly shows us that Fujimori’s regime cannot be classified in any way democratic, not even with a qualifying