

fotografias, mostra como historiadores podem transformar uma complexa pesquisa de história, com suas questões metodológicas e historiográficas expostas, em um livro atraente ao público leitor em geral.

**Roney Cytrynowicz**      *Arquivo Histórico Judaico Brasileiro, São Paulo*

BARAK KALIR: *Latino Migrants in the Jewish State: Undocumented Lives in Israel*. Bloomington and Indianapolis: Indiana University Press, 2010.

This is a fascinating ethnographic study, documenting the lives of some 12 thousand undocumented migrants who reached Israel in the mid-1990s from various Latin American countries. Of special importance is the effort to analyze the full circle of this migration flow. The book is based on extensive field work among these migrants in Israel, as well as among returnees, deportees, and potential migrants in Ecuador.

Kalir describes the Latino experience in Israel, how these migrant workers “found accommodation and jobs, made friends, developed a rich recreational scene, formed families, raised children, attempted political mobilization, and developed a deep sense of belonging to Israeli society” (p. 2).

The author highlights the contradictory nature of Israeli policies. On the one hand, Israel was looking for a cheap and “flexible” work force to replace Palestinian workers excluded from the labor market following the outbreak of the *intifada*. On the other hand, Israeli policy makers were always worried about possible challenges to the Jewish and Zionist character of the state. This partially explains why Israel turned a blind eye to the presence of approximately 100 thousand undocumented migrants from different continents in the 1990s, and why it decided in 2003 to deport the majority of them.

Kalir also points to the gap between the policies of state institutions and the attitudes of civil society towards the migrant workers. While the Ministry of Interior, under the orthodox Eli Yishai, adopted an aggressive policy towards these migrants, many civil society actors challenged and tried to subvert repressive state policies against non-Jewish migrants. Latin American workers interviewed by Kalir emphasized the relative absence of racism in Israeli society (one of them, pointing to cultural similarities between the migrants and their host society, proclaimed that “Israelis are the Latinos of the Middle East”).

Thus Kalir can talk about *de facto* integration into society versus official rejection by the state. Indeed, Israelis have had positive images of Latin Americans, Jews and non-Jews alike. The number of intermarriages between Jewish Israelis and non-Jewish Latino migrants also attests to a kind of openness towards

everything Latin. Latin American music, *telenovelas*, and football have been very popular in Israel. The fact that the Latinos' phenotypical appearance did not cause them to stand out in an Israeli crowd certainly helped. This does not mean, obviously, that undocumented migrant workers, from Latin America or other regions, have not been exploited by their employers or badly treated by the immigration police.

Kalir's book is about the accumulation of practical national belonging of Latino undocumented workers in Israel. It deals with their efforts to integrate into Israeli society and their daily social-emotional interactions with members of the dominant national society. Well aware of the small chance for legalization of their status, they still invested their energy into cultural assimilation, and many of them tried hard to learn Hebrew. Kalir, therefore, correctly sees undocumented migrants as part of the society in which they live, in this case of Israeli society. Thus these migrants are given effective agency, and their efforts to subvert their Otherness are highlighted.

Kalir distinguishes between three groups of Latino migrants in Israel: economic migrants, religious migrants, and spontaneous migrants. Each of these groups is driven by its own motivations, although, obviously, some of the economic migrants might espouse Christian Zionism and some of the religious ones might be motivated by cost-benefit calculations. At any rate, all of them entered Israel on a legal tourist visa and then overstayed it. Of special interest is his discussion of "migratory disposition" of certain groups in Latin America in general, and in Ecuador in particular. Kalir's research shows that many of the migrants who arrived in Israel came from families that a generation earlier had migrated from rural areas to urban centers in their countries of origin.

Comparing the experience of guest workers and undocumented migrants, Kalir argues that "undocumented migrants in general and Latinos in particular enjoyed better salaries and working conditions, and enhanced social contacts with Israeli employers and ordinary citizens" (p. 29). He convincingly shows how these migrants maneuvered to achieve a better position as informal members in society, trying to acquire practical nationality.

The *de facto* integration into Israeli society came at a very high price when Israeli authorities began the deportation of migrant workers. A prolonged struggle led by a wide variety of Israeli groups forced the government to at least legalize the status of several hundred Latino families with children who lived in Israel for more than six years, went to Israeli schools, spoke Hebrew and expressed their identification with the state. This might serve as an example as to how the gradual absorption of practical national belonging leads to the acquisition of citizenship.

Kalir's book is highly recommended for anyone interested not only in Latin American migrant workers but also in undocumented workers from other regions

as well. His theoretical and conceptual contribution, especially his insistence on the question of belonging – both formal and practical – can be applied to other ethnic groups in different nation-states. This issue is of special importance at a time of conservative backlash against the failures, real or imagined, of the multicultural conditions of inclusion in Europe and North America.

**Raanan Rein**

*Tel Aviv University*

**HERNÁN DOBRY: *Operación Israel. El rearme argentino durante la Dictadura (1976-1983)*. Buenos Aires: Ediciones Lumiere, 2011.**

El Estado de Israel fue uno de los mayores proveedores de armas de la dictadura militar argentina que se inició con el golpe de estado del 24 de marzo de 1976 y que finalizó abruptamente como consecuencia de la crisis política y las protestas sociales desatadas después de la invasión militar a las Islas Malvinas en abril de 1982. De acuerdo a Dobry, “Israel se convirtió en uno de los principales proveedores de equipamientos militares de la Argentina, entre 1976 y 1986, con negocios del orden de los 707 millones de dólares, según datos recabados en esta investigación, lo que equivaldría a 1.548 millones de dólares en diciembre de 2010” (p. 165).

En ese período de sólo siete años se sucedieron cuatro juntas militares que gobernaron a sangre y fuego el destino de los argentinos. La sangre la proporcionaron los argentinos, pero una parte del fuego fue aportada por diversos países, entre ellos Israel, que abastecieron a las fuerzas golpistas y las pertrecharon para “enfrentarse” con la población civil argentina en el marco de la “guerra sucia”, con Chile al suscitarse la disputa en torno al canal de Beagle, y finalmente en la guerra desatada contra el imperio británico.

El libro de Hernán Dobry trata de echar luz sobre las circunstancias que rodearon las ventas de armas de Israel a las Fuerzas Armadas argentinas, que no se habían realizado en los decenios anteriores, en un contexto muy particular: la masacre sistemática de opositores, muchos de ellos de origen judío, por parte de una oficialidad que mantenía una clara visión de mundo antisemita. Escribimos “echar luz” pues aún no existe acceso, a casi una generación desde los hechos, a gran parte de la documentación sobre el caso, particularmente en Israel. Por lo tanto, no se ha publicado hasta el día de hoy un trabajo exhaustivo sobre el tema. Con todo, el mismo sigue despertando polémicas en los dos países, y en los últimos meses se ha estrenado un largo documental de co-producción argentino-israelí, proyectado el 15 de enero de 2012 por la emisora estatal israelí Canal 1 en *prime time*, que lleva por título *Sin punto final*, realizada por el periodista y