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Revolutionary Visions: Jewish Life and Politics in Latin American Film, by Stephanie Pridgeon. Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2021. 194 pages.

Stephanie Pridgeon's first monograph, *Revolutionary Visions: Jewish Life and Politics in Latin American Film*, is a welcome and timely contribution to the field of Jewish Latin American Studies. Pridgeon asks how film (primarily from 1993-2013) represents Jewish Latin American revolutionary experiences of the 1960s and 1970s. In *Revolutionary Visions*, the author argues that these films reveal how Jewish Latin Americans identified with revolutionary movements in a way that was (and is) both vital and incomplete.

In her excellent introduction, Pridgeon asserts the need to move beyond a binary view of cultural and religious assimilation vs. isolation to consider ways Jewish Latin American identity also includes the affirmative adoption of cultural values. Combining Levinas's idea of "a sort of affinity" among religious, economic and political realms with Jon Beasley-Murray's concept of posthegemony (self-aware participation in ideological practices, of which she considers debates over Zionism, for example, paradigmatic), Pridgeon considers Jewish Latin American cultural representations must be understood as a complex form of self-fashioning.

Though the majority of Pridgeon's analysis concerns eight films spanning the twenty-year period from 1993-2013, Chapter 1 ("Saintly Politics: Christianity, Revolution and Jews" begins with a flashback to the role of Catholicism in the revolutionary cinema of the 1960s and 1970s in Argentina, Brazil and Cuba. This allows Pridgeon to establish key historical events and intertexts that appear in the later period.

Pridgeon suggests that Catholicism plays a deep and sometimes paradoxical role in Latin American revolutionary movements, and that its presence both impedes and facilitates Jewish identification with these movements. In other words, Latin American revolutionary movements have fundamental Catholic underpinnings – conscious and unconscious – which comes through in revolutionary self-representation of the 1960s and 1970s. For example, the "Christification" of Che Guevara "meant that Jews were tacitly "Othered" vis-à-vis one of the most iconic figures associated with Latin American revolutionary culture" (49). Nonetheless, the "Christianity" of revolutionary movements was not easy to disambiguate from "Judaism": writers such as Adrián Krupnik found in Che a symbol of the paradox of Jewish revolutionary identification itself, as the *hombre nuevo* was "both in keeping with Jewish culture because of the importance of the kibbutz and working the land and, on the other, a distraction from Jewish youths' obligation to work on the kibbutz" (49).

The later chapters of the book build on this central conceit of the tension or ambivalence in Jewish revolutionary identification. Chapter 2, "Here We Are to Build a Nation: Jewish Immigrants to Early Twentieth-Century Latin America," focuses on the represen-

tation of Jewish Latin American immigrants qua citizens in three documentary films, all three of which feature interviews about childhood memories. In Gonzalo Rodríguez Fábregas's *El barrio de los judíos* (Uruguay, 2011), for example, Pridgeon analyses how in a single scene Rodríguez Fábregas points simultaneously to "the transmission of memory across generations and across insider/outsider groups" (76). Though each documentary addresses explicitly the interviewees' views about Jewish citizenship constituted through political engagement, Pridgeon maintains equanimity in "explor[ing] the construction of Jewishness without making any assumptions about it" (83).

Chapter 3, "Poner el cuerpo femenino judío: Jewish Women's Bodies and Revolutionary Movements," offers situated close readings of two films: Guita Schyfter's *Novia que te vea* (México, 1993) and Jeanine Meerapfel's *El amigo alemán* (Argentina, 2012). Using the idea of *poner el cuerpo*, as it is broadly conceived in feminist praxis, to take both responsibility and agency for changing reality, Pridgeon suggests that both films show Jewish female protagonists debunking a negative stereotype of the "Jewish princess who doesn't sweat." *Novia que te vea* articulates a distinctively Jewish Mexican model of citizenship by bringing the representation of Ashkenazic and Sephardic differences into dialogue with prevailing categories of race, including Vasconcelos's *raza cósmica*. Meerapfel represents a mixed couple, both Argentines of German descent – Friedrich, the child of Nazis, and Sulamit, the child of Jewish refugees. Both films suggest analogies between Jewish and indigenous experience.

The final chapter, "Lost Embraces: Jewish Parent-Child Relationships and 1970s Politics," offers analyses of how films by Daniel Burman (Argentina) and Cao Hamburger (Brazil) foreground a father's abandonment due to political involvement (fighting in the 1973 Israeli-Arab war, and against the Brazilian dictatorship, respectively). Pridgeon's analysis puts León Rozitchner's ideas of Jewish identity formation into dialogue with Hirsch's notion of "postmemory" to propose that in each case the filmmaker defines Argentine-Jewish or Brazilian-Jewish identity through an emotional transmission of intergenerational memory.

In her epilogue, Pridgeon doesn't offer definitive answers; rather, she considers a field open for further exploration. Flexible, inclusive, open-ended definitions of both Latin America and Judaism seem particularly important in such a broad study. At the same time, I wonder how this malleable double frame may itself contribute to the ambivalence Pridgeon ascribes to Jewish Latin American representation. I'm left with a pang at the metonymic proximity of "incomplete" identification to stereotypes of Jewish dual loyalty; and I find myself wondering, unfashionably, if it isn't generally true that human beings identify incompletely (yet vitally) with revolutionary movements, have mixed feelings about this fact, and are tempted to externalize the ambivalence.

Pridgeon, of course, is analyzing *how* Jewish Latin American revolutionary ambivalence is represented, rather than *whether* such ambivalence differentiates Jewish Latin Americans from other communities. An inherent challenge in Latin American Jewish Studies is how to balance continuities and differences. Throughout her book, Pridgeon is consistent in her effort to “make no assumptions” about Jewish identity while delineating continuities across decades and countries. By centering Jewish Latin American identification with revolutionary politics of the 1960s and 70s in films produced during the 1990s and 2000s, Pridgeon’s book ably juxtaposes genres and historical moments, from *docuficción* to memoir, autofiction and history, to reflect on how a present sense of self is full of troubled relationships to the past.

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