

just might be the single aspect that is common to those who claim crypto-Jewish ancestry in northern New Mexico. What may be most interesting for future generations is the extent to which those who embrace crypto-Jewish identity now form new communities, or at least perpetuate this identity over time. *¿Quizás?*

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Writing National Cinema: Film Journals and Film Culture in Peru. By Jeffrey Middents. Hanover, N.H.: University Press of New England, 2009. Pp. vii, 276. Illustrations. Notes. Bibliography. Index. \$50.00 cloth.

The scarcity of academic publications about Peruvian cinema in English makes this monograph a welcome addition to Latin American film scholarship. Its major contribution consists of an approach that rethinks the boundaries of the field by focusing on film criticism as the primary object of study and a point of departure for the examination of historical, sociological, and political issues affecting the formation of a national cinema canon. In the process of tracing the history of the specialized film journal *Hablemos de cine* (1965–2002), this book provides a survey of Peru's major directors, plot summaries of the most salient feature films, a discussion of the role of shorts as training for filmmakers, and an inquiry into the effects of the Film Law of 1972 on production and distribution.

Middents's aim is to determine how a journal constructs an identity and the authority necessary to shape a nation's cinematic culture (p. 44). In order to do so, he reconstructs the ideology underlying the journal *Hablemos de cine* and its long-lasting effects on Peruvian filmmakers' aesthetic and narrative choices, the reception of their works inside and outside the country's borders, and the impact of European and North American films on Peruvian audiences. He meticulously analyzes formats, covers, tables of contents, contributors' lists, editorial statements, interviews, and articles to reveal trends, uncover external affiliations, and expose conflicts of interest. Far from adopting a neutral stance, the author sets out to lay bare the biases and shortcomings of those who contributed to *Hablemos de cine* over the years with the goal of demonstrating that, without substantial qualifications, they set themselves up as the arbiters of cinematic taste in Peru and exerted an undue influence on shaping notions of "national cinema" that extended well beyond the journal's demise after nearly 20 years. They did so, Middents argues, by imitating European models, privileging Hollywood genre films, and defending "mise-en-scène to the detriment of any other contributing factor to film style" (p. 51). They also valued an urban aesthetic centered in Lima to the exclusion of other regions of the country, and utilized a formalist approach that elevated their preferred filmmakers to auteur status. As he analyzes these critics' choices and language, Middents exposes them as elitist, provincial, uninformed, and at times racist, and censures the journal's lukewarm criticism of government policies that adversely affected the local film industry. Most importantly, he establishes a direct cor-

relation between the journal's coverage of international festivals and the isolation of Peruvian cinema from other Latin American filmic trends and movements, especially the militant New Latin American Cinema, which *Hablemos de cine* found "too extreme" (p. 115). Only the advent of twenty-first century developments such as digital video, international coproductions, and online film criticism has led to a wider variety of styles and subjects, bringing an end to the dominance of specialized Peruvian film journals as the sole determiners of taste in the country.

Middents's study offers a metacritical analysis of the phenomenon, far from unique to Peru, of the influence of print journalism on molding film culture. In the process, he also characterizes the ideal function of the Peruvian film critic: objectivity regardless of the film's national origin. Nevertheless, he argues, critics have "a responsibility to *write* about [Peruvian] film" because of their familiarity with local aspects and historical background, though their actual motivation may well be to establish their own relevance within the context of global film criticism (p. 196). In sum, this book enriches our understanding of the role of cinephilia and print culture in the development of one of Latin America's least-studied film industries and will be of great interest to Latin American film scholars.

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GLOBAL AND TRANSNATIONAL HISTORY

The Other West: Latin America from Invasion to Globalization. By Marcello Carmagnani. Berkeley: University of California Press, 2011. Pp. xi, 328. Maps. Acknowledgments. Bibliography. Index. \$24.95 paper; \$60.00 cloth.

Marcello Carmagnani, a professor at the University of Turin and the Colegio de México, has produced a provocative interpretation of Latin American history since the sixteenth century; it was originally published in Italy in 2003. Author and editor of several works on the Latin American past, Carmagnani aims to relocate the region's historical framework within "the recurring patterns of Latin America's participation in world history" (p. 1). While he affirms greater Westernization as the fundamental outcome of the experience of the last 500 years, he seeks to walk a fine line between the "shared history" of Latin American nations and any notion of a "common destiny" (p. 3).

For Carmagnani, Westernization has not been the passive Latin American "assimilation of European and North American standards" (p. 283). Instead, it is the outcome of the reciprocal processes by which "Latin Americans and the rest of the world" over time "invented a trajectory that made the subcontinent converge with Iberia, Europe, and the West" (p. 283). Explicitly rejecting dependency theory or any other interpretation that would place Latin America on the margins of the central historical trends