



Kosher Feijoada and Other Paradoxes of Jewish Life in São Paulo (New World Diasporas)

Misha Klein

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“The special strength of this book, aside from its lyrical writing, is that the author effortlessly blends the meaning of being Jewish in Brazil with that country’s much noted racial and cultural tolerance and shows how Jewish identity is impacted by Brazilian concepts of race and ethnicity. It is a delight to read.”—Maxine Margolis, University of Florida

“A fascinating ethnography of contemporary life among middle- and upper-middle class Jews in São Paulo, Brazil, one of the world’s largest cities. Although representing a tiny fraction of Brazil’s multicultural population, the Jewish community consciously creates and carefully maintains a tightly organized, lively haven in a chaotic urban center, while also embracing much of Brazil’s national culture.”—Robin Sheriff, University of New Hampshire

Being Jewish in Brazil—the world’s largest Catholic country—is fraught with paradoxes, and living in São Paulo only amplifies these vivid contradictions. The metropolis is home to Jews from over 60 countries of origin, and to the Hebraica, the world’s largest Jewish athletic and social club.

Jewish identity is rooted in layered experiences of historical and contemporary dispersal and border crossings. Brazil is famously tolerant of difference but less understanding of longings for elsewhere. Celebrating both Carnival and the High Holidays is but one example of how Jews in São Paulo hold themselves together as a community in the face of the forces of assimilation.

Misha Klein’s fascinating ethnography reveals the complex intertwining of Jewish and Brazilian life and identity.

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