

Revolutionaries (2010), for example, offers a complex portrait of contemporary disillusionment in a neoliberal present without diminishing past accomplishments. Todd might have told us a bit more about the context in which her interviewees remembered the past. She notes at the beginning and end of the book that conditions remain difficult. Certainly, many international supporters have turned elsewhere (water systems and schools are not as dramatic as massacres). Through her clear text and precise words, Todd convinces us that many northern Salvadoran campesinos sought to be “agents of positive change” (p. 14). She might have reflected on the implications of these subjectivities for the present, considering whether the skills learned through past mobilizations are rallying people to new realities.

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A Tale of Two Cities: Santo Domingo and New York After 1950. By Jesse Hoffnung-Garskof. Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2008. Pp. xxxi, 319. Appendix. Illustrations. Notes. Bibliography. Index.

Since the 1990s, there have been numerous efforts to internationalize the fields of American Studies and United States history in ways that go beyond traditional diplomatic history and contemporary international relations. While many of these efforts are still underway, one of the fields where transnational American Studies has flourished is migration history, and Jesse Hoffnung-Garskof’s book *A Tale of Two Cities* should be recognized as an important contribution.

Using archival and oral history methods, Hoffnung-Garskof explores the experiences of Dominicans in both Santo Domingo de Guzmán and New York City and in the process advances new historiographical arguments about the role of ordinary migrants in both the Dominican Republic and the United States. Hoffnung-Garskof pays close attention to the ideological and political developments of the Dominican Republic and their influence on people moving to both Santo Domingo and New York City; thus, his account does not fit into a narrative of what happens to immigrants only after they reach their destination in the United States. Indeed, he views the immigration of Dominicans to New York City as part of a larger process of urbanization that includes the movement from the Dominican countryside to Santo Domingo and the circular migration between Santo Domingo and New York. Although most of the research focuses on two neighborhoods, the Dominican neighborhoods of Cristo Rey in Santo Domingo and Washington Heights in New York City, the conclusions advanced can be applied to the two cities at large.

At the beginning of the twenty-first century, Dominicans constituted the largest foreign-born immigrant group in New York City, with almost all of those immigrants arriving after the mid-1960s. Historians have credited the Immigration and Nationality Act of 1965 as the main reason for increased immigration from Latin America.

However, Hoffnung-Garskof argues that this act was not necessarily advantageous: it actually placed numerical limitations on Latin Americans as a way to reduce immigration from south of the U.S. border. This means that other reasons must be sought to explain the increased numbers of Latin American immigrants. In the case of the Dominican Republic, the political aftershocks of the U.S. military invasion of 1965 and the demands of Dominicans for greater access to the United States forced the U.S. government to liberalize its visa policy and numerical restrictions. This explains the fact that by the 1980s, this small Caribbean nation was the largest source of emigration to New York City.

To advance his cultural explanations, Hoffnung-Garskof uses two racialized concepts *progreso* (progress) and *cultura* (culture). Developed by Dominican intellectuals who were influenced from Europe and maintained by the elites, these concepts were nonetheless appropriated by ordinary Dominicans who in the process redefined Dominican identity. The *progreso* concept implies that things improve over time and that individuals better their conditions through urbanization and social mobility; *cultura* defines the boundaries of cultural belonging and exclusion. Hoffnung-Garskof argues that these concepts both inform the thinking and actions of migrants and undergo a process of adaptation during and after migration, as conditions in Santo Domingo and New York City seldom satisfy the original assumptions. For example, low-income residents of Santo Domingo used the official language of *progreso* in their fight against spatial displacement and their demands for government services. Moreover, given the deteriorating neighborhood and material conditions that many Dominicans have encountered in both Santo Domingo and New York City, the meaning of *progreso* has been modified—it now implies an idealized version of the way that things should work. Ordinary Dominicans have also challenged the idea of *cultura*, which the elites have used in order to celebrate the popular customs they like as “Dominican” and dismiss cultural practices that they dislike as foreign (usually, Haitian or U.S.-inspired). For example, neighborhood leaders in Santo Domingo used *cultura* to regulate behavior and define the parameters of decency, while Dominicans in New York City used a combination of *cultura* and *progreso* to differentiate themselves from African Americans and Puerto Ricans. Finally, some returning migrants to the Dominican Republic tried to use their material well-being to show that they had progressed to a higher status, only to discover that middle- and upper-class Dominicans used *cultura* in order to reject these claims of cultural advancement.

As he professes, Hoffnung-Garskof is skeptical of the recent fascination of scholars with transnational studies, since Latin Americanists have been incorporating the international context in their local and national histories for a long time. However, from an American Studies and U.S. history perspective, this book is invaluable. It shows the extent to which students of the United States need to become experts on other nations and regions if they are to explain transnational and global processes.

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