

The Immigrant World of Ybor City: Italians and their Latin Neighbors in Tampa, 1885–1985. By GARY R. MORMINO and GEORGE E. POZZETTA. Champaign: The University of Illinois Press, 1987. Tables. Notes. Bibliography. Index. Pp. 368. Cloth. \$24.95.

This splendid, conceptually sophisticated examination of Italians and their Spanish and Cuban neighbors in Ybor City, Florida during the past century is the first volume in a new series published by the University of Illinois Press—The Statue of Liberty/Ellis Island Centennial Series—and although it focuses on a city in the United States, it is of considerable interest to Latin Americanists. It is a case study of the formation of an Italian and a Latin community in an “Anglo” context which significantly expands our understanding of the wider immigrant and ethnic experience both in the United States and in Latin America.

The authors skillfully place the Italians within the broader socioeconomic context of Ybor City and greater Tampa. They stress diversity and unity, continuity and change, and the interaction of Old World cultures and New World structures. Working-class culture was crucial to the emergence of the Italian and the Latin communities, but more than one working-class culture “operated among Latins. . . . Class and ethnicity therefore emerge more as reflections of the accommodations people fashioned to cope with the insecurities that came with social change rather than ends in themselves” (p. 320). Mormino and Pozzetta reject linear models of community development and instead argue for one that “can provide for varying arrangements over time and that depends largely on how class, culture, and community consciousness intersected” (p. 320).

The first three chapters set forth the general context in which the Italian and Latin communities developed: the nature of the area of western Sicily from which most of the Italians came, the growth of Tampa as a southern urban center, and the initial contact of the Italian, Spanish, and Cuban workers both in the cigar industry and as neighbors in Ybor City. Chapters 4–6 delineate the three most important influences that determined Italian immigrant adjustment and the emerging communities’ broader social relationships. These were unionism, radicalism, and mutual aid societies. The authors describe and analyze the nature of the cigar industry, labor relations, strikes, and the hostility of the native “Anglo” elites. The Italians entered this radical culture with “guideposts” from their own activist past, and they used it for purposes of their own. Radicalism was a means to gain economic benefits and to move on to more middle-class occupations. “In the end,” the authors note, “the issues of class gave way to those of culture and community that were increasingly co-opted by middle-class American values” (p. 11). In a fascinating chapter on mutual aid societies, the authors point out that the Ybor City Italian societies were quite distinct from those in other cities of the United States: they were broad based and fulfilled many more functions than those found in New York, Chicago, and other major cities. What is interesting to me is that

these Italian societies were very similar to those found in Buenos Aires at the same time, and they provide an excellent topic for more extensive comparison.

The remaining chapters discuss the less important influences on community development: religion, social relations, and economic adjustment. They were less influential precisely because of the strength of the unions, radical culture, and the mutual aid societies. The final chapter discusses the period from World War II to the present.

This is an impressive book that has a great deal to offer those interested in the complex relationships of class and culture in the formation of communities. The authors have combined traditional written sources with oral interviews to produce what is a tour de force. I recommend it most highly for both Latin American and U.S. historians.

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Economic History of Puerto Rico: Institutional Change and Capitalist Development. By JAMES L. DIETZ. Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1986. Plates. Tables. Notes. Bibliography. Index. Pp. 337. Cloth.

James L. Dietz has produced a timely, comprehensive, and well-documented work on Puerto Rican economic development. It encompasses Puerto Rico's economic experience from Spanish colonization to the present. However, its primary focus is on the late nineteenth century, the economic crisis of the 1930s, the origins of "Operation Bootstrap," and the present crisis. The author provides an appropriate blend of economic "facts" and political-historical events, woven together within a somewhat eclectic theoretical framework. Although Dietz stresses Marxist and dependency-theory interpretations of events, he also occasionally relies on neo-classical explanations. This turns out to be a very successful mix, although it will probably cause consternation among those who examine history through blinders.

The book will surely find its way into courses in Puerto Rican or Caribbean economic development. It is must reading for those unfamiliar with the Puerto Rican case, and a good reference for more knowledgeable scholars. It is well written and devoid of jargon. Footnotes are plentiful—212 within the first 78 pages. They do not merely contain citations, but rather, incisive quotes that lend fine points to the analysis. A major contribution of the book is that it introduces works of historians of the Centro de Estudios de la Realidad Puertorriqueña (CEREP) to non-Spanish-speaking scholars. Heretofore, this research was not well known outside of the island.

One need not agree with all of Dietz's analyses to enjoy the work. Three controversial points are worth mentioning. First, he states that, with regard to the organization and evolution of the production process and social relations in the nineteenth century, "Puerto Rican production and social relations were both