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Ginetta E. B. Candelario. *Black behind the Ears: Dominican Racial Identity from Museums to Beauty Shops.* Durham: Duke University Press, 2007. xiii + 340 pp. $84.95 (cloth), ISBN 978-0-8223-4018-8; $23.95 (paper), ISBN 978-0-8223-4037-9.

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Indigenism, Hispanicity, and Anti-Haitianism in Dominican Identity

Black behind the Ears is an intriguing study of racial and cultural identification among people of Dominican descent, both in the Dominican Republic and in two major cities in the United States. Ginetta E. B. Candelario, a professor of sociology and Latin American and Latina/o studies at Smith College, uses a variety of historical writings as well as statistical data and ethnographic research to study the construction of Dominican identity as racially Indian and culturally Hispanic, concurrent with a repudiation of African ancestry based in Negrophobia, white supremacy, and anti-Haitianism. In contrast to the "one-drop rule" of African descent that is the legacy of slavery in the United States, Dominicans conceive of "whiteness" as a social, political, and economic status that is achieved through the negotiation of identification strategies. While Americans determine racial identity based on skin color and African heritage, no matter how remote, Dominicans rely on hair and anti-Haitianism as the physical and ideological basis to determine race.

Candelario stresses the importance of context to the formation and expression of identity as a simultaneously internally and externally driven process. To this end, she concentrates her analysis within four specific spheres of what she terms "identity displays": travel narratives, the museum, the beauty shop, and the female body. After the introduction, each chapter focuses on one of these particular contexts. Chapter 1 analyzes the travel narratives of European and American governmental envoys from the late eighteenth century through 1947. Chapter 2 is a detailed description of the national and cultural ideologies expressed by permanent displays in the Museo del Hombre Dominicano in Santo Domingo, which opened in 1974. In chapter 3, then, Candelario transitions to the United States to focus on the Dominican immigrant community's relationship with African American identity in Washington, D.C., as represented in the 1994 exhibition Black Mosaic: Community, Race, and Ethnicity among Black Immigrants in Washington, D.C., at the Anacostia Museum of the Smithsonian Institution. Chapter 4 details Candelario's findings concerning the expression of Indo-Hispanicity among patrons of a Dominican beauty shop in New York City as a result of six months of fieldwork in 1998. Developing from this research, chapter 5 comprises a sociological study of body techniques utilized by Dominican women to determine racial and cultural identity, specifically focusing on hair as the primary signifier of class, status, and material advantages and disadvantages.

The book examines a wide range of sources, from the historical to the institutional and ethnographic. As a result, Candelario achieves breadth by founding her contemporary observations in historical discourse concerning Dominican racial and cultural identity, and analyzing how personal affirmations of Dominicanidad ("Dominican-ness") resonate with institutional narratives in both the Dominican Republic and the United States. However, she has to cover great distances in time and place in relatively few words, and the reader is left feeling as though there might be a lot more detail that had to be left out. Three of the five chapters focus on research and data concerning Dominican immigrants in the United States to analyze if and how Dominican identity, as constructed through interactions with others, is transformed when codes of interpretation are not shared. Thus, while the discussion of travel narratives and Dominican national institutions is informative as background for the analysis of Dominican identification processes in the United States, it leaves the reader curious about the more personal accounts of those Dominican individuals who remain in the country. Is their identification with Indio/a and Hispanic identities and

their repudiation of African ancestry consistent with that reflected in travel narratives by outsiders and official national discourse? How much of the institutional and literary ideology is internalized by the general Dominican public, and what disparities are there as a result of exposure to globalized media or other countries through travel, for example?

Candelario concludes that "historically, Dominican identities developed in counterpoint to Spain, Haiti, and the United States" (p. 257). The emphasis on Indo-Hispanicity emerged in the context of resistance to Spanish, Haitian, and U.S. domination. Such ideology was and continues to be reinforced in national identity displays of institutions, like the Museo del Hombre Dominicano. Dominican beauty shops in the United States likewise sustain such racial and cultural identification. In both cases, patrons internalize the standards set for Dominicanidad. Hair, in particular, marks boundaries between Dominicans as indigenous (or Indio/a) and Haitians as African, and between Dominicans and African Americans in the United States. However, many more Dominicans in Washington, D.C., embrace African American identity than in the rest of the country; the ratio is about 2 to 1 compared with Dominicans in New York City. Candelario suggests that the city's cohesive community of middle-class African Americans, particularly from the 1960s onward, was an incentive for Dominicans to assimilate. Dominican identity among immigrants in the United States is thus complicated by the ambiguity between the categories of "Hispanic" and "African," which are not conceived of as oppositional. Instead, Candelario uses the phrase "systematic multiplicity" to describe such ambiguity as a strategic response to power and its structures (p. 262).

It is the multiplicity of Dominican ethnic and racial identities, particularly the various combinations between the two extremities of "white" and "black," that *Black behind the Ears* seeks to explain, particularly in relationship to strategies of social as well as national identification developed as a response to colonial and imperialist pressures, and in the United States, to racism and conflicting American racial and cultural definitions. Candelario enumerates no less than twenty-one Dominican racial terms organized into broader categories of white, white-mulatto range, mulatto, mulatto-black range, and black. Some of these appear in the interviews with beauty salon clients during her fieldwork research, but unfortunately they are neither explored further nor illustrated. One of the limitations of this study is that the very diversity that characterizes Dominican identity is not explored in more detail with relation to these specific subcategories. It is clear that Dominican identity, rather than based on phenotype alone, is predicated on both a personal and societal interpretation of hair, skin, and facial features; one of its most compelling qualities is the racial and social mobility offered by these interpretations. *Black behind the Ears* reveals identity as far from rooted to a set of physical or historical factors; instead, identity is a complex negotiation of these factors constructed through one's interaction with others in a specific context, and when that context shifts, so does one's identity.

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