

valuable.

Finally then, it appears that Smart has indeed offered a scholarly work treating a very narrow sampling of Hispanic Caribbean authors writing in Central America. As valid as the study may be as related to the few authors investigated, the fact remains that one wonders at the validity of the ultimate generalization. "I see Africanness as the basis of a new culture, an identifiable Weltanschauung, 'a spirit' that is peculiarly Carribean." His avowedly central thesis embracing the entire geographical area appears to be not only a gross overgeneralization, but also one which was arrived at prior to this study and as such is assumed rather than validated by this work.

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Dennis J. Starr. *The Italians of New Jersey: A Historical Introduction and Bibliography.* (Newark: New Jersey Historical Society, 1985) ii, 130 pp., \$14.95.

This volume does not aim to be a definitive history of the Italians of New Jersey, but it is an excellent model of regionally grounded scholarship, offering not only the story of one state, but an excellent synthesis of the scholarship on the Italian role in that "greatest migration of peoples in history" to the new world at the end of the nineteenth century. "From 1891 to 1915 more Italians entered the United States than did immigrants from any other country."

Placing the story in comparative context, Starr states that the mass movement of Italians to the United States differed from that to Argentina and Brazil. Those who came to the U.S. were predominantly from southern Italy and "were neither as welcome nor as successful as quickly as those in the cities of Buenos Aires and Sao Paulo." Italian immigrants to the U.S. were regarded as a "source of cheap labor and maligned as a group that undermined the nation's institutions and cultural values."

Italians are the largest ethnic group of New Jersey and have left their imprint on the state's political and social history. In 1984 New Jersey had the largest (numerically and proportionally) state delegation of Italian American descent in the U.S. House of Representatives. Starr places this contemporary success story in the historical context of a twentieth century history of "Americanization" campaigns in the schools and churches, campaigns that aimed to remove "socialistic, anarchistic and plebian" characteristics from the thinking of Italians. "Americanization" contributed not only to political, but to religious disorientation: as early as 1907, Italians in Trenton celebrated the

festival of the Virgin with U.S. flags and militarist propaganda.

Losing the rich religious values of the old world (the Italian peasant oral tradition taught values more millennial, more equalitarian, and more woman-centered than the values of the church), today's Italian Americans have become good church-goers and supporters of the "American Way" of capitalism—with almost total suppression of the role of Italian Americans as nonviolent anarchists and socialists in the early twentieth century.

A first-rate historical study of Italians on the state level deepened by national reference and a full national bibliography, this ethnic history (like most Italian American studies in this genre) does not probe deeply. Avoiding larger questions Dennis Starr states, "ethnic consciousness has hindered the Italian Americans' full assimilation in the economy; for this reason it may be a declining force in the lives of New Jersey's Italian Americans. . . . Assimilation . . . would undermine the very need for an ethnic identity."

Assimilation to what? Do we want more U.S. citizens "assimilated" to the values of U.S. racism and sexism at home and imperialism abroad? Perhaps Italian Americans need to recover the millennial and equalitarian values Italians held in the old country, as well as the radical values they held in this country—before they were "Americanized."

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Paul J. Strand and Woodrow Jones, Jr. *Indochinese Refugees in America: Problems of Adaptation and Assimilation.* (Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 1985) x, 182 pp., \$32.50.

Since the fall of Saigon in 1975, over three-quarters of a million Indochinese refugees have come to the United States. Numerous studies have been conducted on their adjustment to American society and on resettlement policies and programs. This book covers these very topics and is organized into three sections. The first part provides some background on the cultures and political histories of the major Indochinese groups and on federal and state policies and programs. The second investigates problems experienced by the Indochinese, particularly with regard to their health, education, language abilities, and employment and is based on a 1981 needs assessment survey of refugees in the San Diego area. The third section of the book presents policy recommendations.

This book has a number of attractive features. It is one of the few attempts to date to examine most of the major aspects of the Indochinese