

Arab communities. The book only hints at the new roles women have adopted, but it never really explores them.

Arabs in the New World serves well as a primer about Arab immigration into the United States and about the process of acculturation. Further, it lays the basic ground for more analytical studies which need to be done about Arab communities, about their changing structures and accompanying changes in socio-political roles within them, and about racism which they encounter as an ethnic group, especially in the wake of the Palestinian and Israeli conflict and its repercussions throughout the Middle East and the rest of the world. For the reasons cited here, I recommend *Arabs in the New World* as a text and as a resource book.

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Richard D. Alba. *Italian Americans: Into the Twilight of Ethnicity*. (Englewood Cliffs: Prentice-Hall, Inc., 1985) ix, 182 pp., \$15.95, \$12.95 paper.

Rejoice, students of ethnicity and Italian Americans generally! A body of scholarly literature on the Italian American experience is growing. Richard Alba's book, one of the Ethnic Groups in American Life Series (Milton M. Gordon, editor) is a recent addition to the quality social science writings about this ethnic group.

Never mind that Alba quotes only from studies of Italian Americans in the East and Midwest, ignoring research over the past decade, or that he describes only the original culture of the *Mezzogiorno*, still he has summarized the most salient facts and theories about the Italian immigrant experience in this book which, though relatively small (fewer than 200 pages), may be the best summary extant of the general literature about this ethnic group.

Alba, a sociologist, demonstrates that immigration patterns and generational changes have resulted in assimilation of Italians who now have little ethnic cohesion remaining outside the family rituals. He supports his conclusion that Italian Americans are moving into the twilight of ethnicity with evidence including the growing intermarriage rates, the close correspondence between occupational and educational status of Italians and WASPs.

Because Alba has ignored the Western and Southern experiences of

Italian Americans in his extensive set of references, I want to cite several recent works about Italian Americans in other regions. Micaela deLeonardo's *The Varieties of Ethnic Experience: Kinship, Class and Gender among California Italian Americans* (Cornell University Press, 1984) illustrates how history, economy and generation affect the ways in which individuals respond to their ethnicity. An anthropologist, deLeonardo uses excerpts from her interviews and observations of families in the San Francisco area to analyze the class and gender aspects of the ethnic experience.

Other studies overlooked by Alba include Dino Cinel's *From Italy to San Francisco: The Immigrant Experience* (Stanford University Press, 1982) and several dissertations, some published, such as Vincenza Scarpaci, *Italian Immigrants in Louisiana's Sugar Parishes* (Arno Press, 1980), Phylis Cancilla Martinelli, *Ethnicity in the Sunbelt: Italian American Migrants in Scottsdale, Arizona* (Arizona State University, 1984) and my own study, *The Italian American Community of San Francisco: A Descriptive Study* (Arno Press, 1980).

Even though there have been two U.S. Presidents from the West over the past decade, the East Coast still does not know we exist. Although Italians came in relatively small numbers to the West (and current immigration is just a trickle), the experience here was different from that in the East, with a different historical and socio-economic context. Students of ethnicity could learn much by analyzing these regional differences!

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Paula Gunn Allen. *The Woman Who Owned the Shadows*. (San Francisco: Spinsters Ink, 1983) 213 pp., \$8.95 paper.

Paula Gunn Allen's novel, *The Woman Who Owned the Shadows*, is important—one of few written by an American Indian woman focusing on an Indian woman's life. (Other examples are Sophia Alice Callahan's *Wynemia: A Child of the Forest*, 1891, and Mourning Dove's *Cogewea, the Half Blood*, 1927). Allen writes out of her Laguna Pueblo heritage (she says she is Laguna Pueblo/Sioux/Lebanese-American), and gives the reader a view of a contemporary Indian woman's life through her character, Ephanie.