

group of persons who may be expected to listen less attentively to another person's paper than to concentrate upon the opinions which *they* wish to assert. The colloquium provides, therefore, a temptation to overassert and falsely to generalize which is difficult for most people to resist.

Hence, the present book reiterates—as the lectures did—and is less a “pulling together in a connected form” than one might wish. In closing, Ngugi quotes a poem of Bertholt Brecht which urges man to overthrow all masteries over man. Ngugi adds, “That is what this book on the politics of language in African literature has really been about: national, democratic, and human liberation.” To Brecht's and Ngugi's desire for such a truly brave new world of men and women, one easily adds one's own—even though one is not persuaded that Ngugi's “native languages” provide a way towards it.

—David K. Bruner
Iowa State University

Lydio F. Tomasi, ed. *Italian Americans: New Perspectives in Italian Immigration and Ethnicity*. (New York: Center for Migration Studies, 1985) x, 486 pp., \$17.50.

There are those who have heralded the 1980s as “The Decade of the Italian American” as many of the 20 million Americans of Italian descent achieve increasing prominence in politics, business, education and the arts. This new role assumed by Americans of immigrant stock has necessitated revised patterns of investigation addressing the impact of socio-economic mobility, the effects of transmigration and the growing phenomenon of exogenous marriage. For example, of the Italian American women born since 1950, between two-thirds and three-quarters have married outside the ethnic group. Finally, the size and multi-generational sampling provided by the Italian American population invites careful study of rural versus urban assimilation patterns, analysis of the relationship of sojourner settlement patterns to politico-economic conditions in the homeland, and an investigation of the myriad variations of acculturation affected by class, age and extent of social support network.

All of these subjects are addressed in an extraordinary volume of proceedings of the Conference of the Italian Experience in the United States held at Columbia University in 1983, sponsored by the Italian Government and organized by the University's Center for Migration Studies. Thirty of the papers presented are compiled in this handsome, well-indexed and well-annotated volume accented by an artistic rendering by Frank Stella.

While the book achieves editor Lydio Tomasi's objective of providing a publication of interest to the many who are or are associated with Italian Americans, multiple authorship results in an unevenness and a sometimes distracting variation of style. Nevertheless, the reader's understanding of today's Italian American is richly enhanced by such essays as Humbert Nelli's, "Italian Americans in Contemporary America," which documents their contributions to the common culture as their own process of acculturation. Of equal interest is Nampeo R. McKenney's enlightening essay based on the 1980 census, "A Sociodemographic Profile of Italian Americans."

Among the papers representing a variety of approaches ranging from political science and social history to psychohistory and microhistory, one of the most interesting is Rudolph Vecoli's "The Search for an Italian American Identity—Continuity and Change" which carefully traces the changing self-image of the Italian American through the third generation where rapid upward mobility has caused a reorientation of both kin relationships and values. By the 1970s Italians represented approximately one-third of the City University of New York system and one-half the student body of Fordham University. In addition, in 1979 the median income of Italian Americans (\$21,700) in New York State was \$1,500 higher than the median income of all families in the state, a far cry from the street peddlers and sweatshop workers of earlier decades.

Of equal interest is Joseph Velikonja's study of the geographic regions investigated in current Italian studies research demonstrating that while two-thirds of Americans of Italian descent continue to live in the Northeast, researchers have focused upon the life patterns of Italian Americans in the Sunbelt and the Far West as well. The extent of the current study is documented in several essays summarizing research projects on immigrants and their descendants in the United States and Canada. Researchers on both sides of the Atlantic are examining the ethnic press and media, community structures, mental health and the various roles of Italian immigrant women and their descendants, the latter representing by far the largest area of research.

Particularly helpful is the volume's useful compendium of resources in Italy and the United States for the study of Italian American history. This information is complemented by sections in the Velikonja and Samuel Baily essays which outline areas of needed research, ranging from the study of social space in village networks to migrant networks in receiving communities.

The final section of the volume examines the various dimensions of the Italian American experience, cataloguing contributions in the arts, the history of the Italian press, and the impact of Italian politics, particularly in the 1930s, on the social structure of Italian immigrant communities, a topic rewardingly pursued by Philip V. Cannistarof in "Genevoso Pope and the Rise of Italian American Politics, 1925-1936." Additional papers tracing the interactions within the Italian American

communities of Greenwich Village, Long Island and Tampa underscore some key differences as well as the enduring commonalities shared by the descendants of the 4.5 million adventurers who, leaving Italy between 1879 and 1924, established in their adopted American homeland a communal life centered on the family, enriched by the teachings and traditions of the Roman Catholic Church, and largely predicated upon the values of *campanilismo* or village life.

—Gloria Lothrop
California State Polytechnic University, Pomona

Wen-Shing Tseng and David Y. H. Wu, eds. *Chinese Culture and Mental Health*. (Orlando, FL: Academic Press, 1985) 412 pp., \$49.50; \$29.95 paper.

Tseng and Wu have performed a creditable task in editing this book that involved twenty-nine delegates from the Conference on Chinese Culture and Mental Health (Hawaii, 1982). Their purpose was to have “insiders” produce a definitive work on the Chinese culture and its interaction with the mental component of health. The Chinese are described in the preface as “having a history of at least 5000 years of civilization,” with China comprising “. . . one quarter of the world’s people,” but having people of the Chinese culture who live in various geographical areas, including “. . . Mainland China, Taiwan, Hong Kong, Singapore, Australia, Canada, and the United States.”

As one who is “outside” both, the Chinese culture and the field of mental health, I hesitated to review Tseng and Wu’s book. However, I am pleased that I proceeded, as I found it to be a reference that will be invaluable for teaching community health and interpersonal skills for medical students. I expect that persons from a variety of disciplines will find it equally as useful.

The organization of the book is such that it can be read as a whole or in sections or even by separate chapters. Overall, the book conveys the feeling that it was written with the reader in mind. The impression given is that skillful educators are at work. The editors encouraged repetition but not redundancy, they provided essential detail, and knew precisely how to time them both.

The format of the book enhanced the educational goal. The editors authored the opening and closing chapters in which they provided cogent introduction and conclusions, respectively. Their use of four organized questions probably helped the writers as much as it helps the reader. The book has thematic continuity; the editors provide additional continuity by providing introductions for each of the six sections rather than let the twenty-six chapters stand alone.

For a book that contains so much that is basic to wholesome introspection, the title is an austere one. The book is more than Chinese