

**Ivan Light and Edna Bonacich. *Immigrant Entrepreneurs: Koreans in Los Angeles, 1965-1982.* (Berkeley: U. of California Press, 1988) xi, 495 pp., \$9.95.**

This latest study of immigrant entrepreneurs to come out of the collaborative efforts of sociologists Light and Bonacich is another significant contribution to Asian American Studies specifically, but also to ethnic studies, immigrant studies, urban studies, and business-economic studies in general. It contributes to our understanding of the history of Los Angeles, and it constitutes an important companion piece to existing studies of Korean Americans, such as Illsoo Kim's work on Koreans in New York City. As a case study, it also elaborates on the related theoretical models of "middlemen minorities" and "immigrant entrepreneurs," and how, in this case, both models can be integrated for a more accurate analysis of Korean entrepreneurs.

In their analysis, Light and Bonacich distinguish between *ethnic resources* (sociocultural features of the whole group, such as the sojourning orientation of the immigrants, hard work for low wages, solidarity, rotating credit associations) and *class resources*, which are cultural and material and common to bourgeois everywhere (such as money and education). The Korean immigrants combine both ethnic and class resources, the authors argue, to produce a successful business community. They also place the phenomenon of Korean immigration and entrepreneurship in the U.S. in a "world systems analysis" of U.S. military and economic intervention in Korea, and U.S. quest for cheap labor worldwide. Finally, this and other studies of ethnic immigrant entrepreneurs dispute the view that the giant corporations of postwar America have closed off all economic space for small businesses to start, flourish and function as avenues of social mobility. On the other hand, the authors note that these successful immigrant petty entrepreneurs often operate in extreme environments, such as rundown inner-city neighborhoods populated by ethnic minorities and racked by high unemployment, drugs and crime. Relative prosperity of the newcomers generates resentment and gives rise to inter-ethnic hostility, a topic beginning to receive serious attention from ethnic studies scholars, including the present study.

Light and Bonacich reach conclusions that are as blunt and pointed as the study is comprehensive and detailed. They argue that immigrant businesses are a form of cheap labor that threatens to lower labor standards in general. Apart from perpetuating labor exploitation, immigrant enterprise tends to create intergroup competition along ethnic lines, thus intensifying inter-ethnic tension that in the end benefits the ruling class while leaving the poor and the workers fragmented and defenseless. The greatest irony in the immigrant entrepreneur experience is that, while as immigrants they were propelled from their own countries

by the forces of world capitalism, they end up pursuing the very competitive values of capitalism that created their own oppression. This often meant providing whatever service or commodity will sell, irrespective of its moral character or impact on the nonimmigrant community, in which they do business but do not reside, and hence feel no moral responsibility for its well being. This is a strong indictment indeed of the social cost of immigrant entrepreneurship, as exemplified by the Los Angeles Korean community. Having come this far in their analysis, Light and Bonacich feel compelled to end with a moral suggestion: that these immigrants have an alternative, which is to join together with oppressed peoples (i.e. American born minority groups) to construct a social order that is based on concern for all humanity, regardless of ethnicity.

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**Luciano Mangiafico. *Contemporary American Immigrants: Patterns of Filipino, Korean and Chinese Settlement in the United States.* (New York: Praeger, 1988) 232 pp., \$35.95.**

Since the passage of the immigration acts of 1965, a large number of skilled Asians have migrated to the United States. Scholars have noticed this trend, labelling these, along with other skilled third world sojourners, “the new immigration.”

*Contemporary American Immigrants* deals with three of the most numerous Asian nationalities to enter the U.S. since 1965: Filipinos, Koreans and Chinese. The book explores their experience through three sources of data. First, the author offers a short description of each population’s history of migration to the United States. Second, census data regarding their present status is summarized. Finally, the decade-old census of 1980 is updated with information from the author’s own non-random sample survey of 849 immigrants who entered the U.S. from 1980-1985.

Because Mangiafico served as a high-ranking consular official at the U.S. Embassy in Manila and made research visits to embassies in Taiwan, Hong Kong and Seoul, he brings special knowledge and insight to the process of immigration from the Pacific Rim. His comments regarding the number of visa applications from these nations and the various techniques would-be immigrants develop to subvert regulations are among this book’s major contributions.

After reviewing numerous sources of data, Mangiafico concludes that despite popular stereotypes and the predictions of some demographers, the most recent entrants to the United States from Asian nations—many