

***Explorations in Sights and Sounds*, No. 13 (1993)**

ethnic group, while the Vietnamese are recent arrivals. Soviet Jews are more similar in terms of class and religious background than the Vietnamese, who are highly diverse. And while the Vietnamese possess extensive experience in running small businesses, Soviet Jews lived in a society where the state controlled many aspects of life.

In comparing these two groups, Gold examines several issues of theoretical importance to refugee adaptation: reactions to minority status, effects of group history on the development of ethnic communities, and the significance of earlier business experience on refugee entrepreneurship in the United States. Like many recent social scientists, Gold views ethnic communities as a positive influence in refugee adaptation. He takes the contemporary position that ethnicity is flexible and situational, providing a basis for community organization in new contexts.

Gold's most important contribution is his examination of factors influencing ethnic group solidarity. He argues that societal tolerance, resettlement programs, socioeconomic disadvantages, and cultural issues may simultaneously promote ethnic solidarity and lead to assimilation. Ethnic consciousness emerged as a necessary but not sufficient condition for collective action (the highly diverse Vietnamese, with a history of activism, were more effective at group formation than the relatively homogeneous Soviet Jewish refugees). Gold finds that among these newcomers, small-scale local groups and networks predominate. However, ethnic consciousness, and perhaps political power, is slowly growing.

Both specialists and undergraduate students will enjoy this book, which features refugees as creative actors rather than helpless beneficiaries. It is enriched by frequent quotes from interviews and two beautiful photographic essays.

Janet E. Benson
Kansas State University

Bill Hosokawa. *Nisei—The Quiet Americans*. (Niwot, CO: University Press of Colorado, 1992) xvii, 550 pp., \$19.95 paper.

Nisei, meaning American-born second-generation Japanese, is an epic scale undertaking of the recording of a brief but eventful history of the Japanese immigration to America by a Japanese American journalist. The book consists of twenty-seven chapters which are divided into three parts. The initial focus is on the settlement of the first generation Japanese immigrants in the 1870s, mainly in California and the Pacific states. Then the topic shifts to the emergence of a substantial *Nisei* population during the 1930-40 period, followed by their maturation through prewar segregation and

the wartime internment experience. The third part accounts for the post-internment social ascension of Nisei as respected Americans, along with their success stories in practically every social position and professional field. In legal areas, the determined struggles of Nisei for equality and justice were finally fulfilled when their alien parents who had been "ineligible" for reasons of their racial origin were finally granted citizenship. Their efforts were extended into the 1960s until racial barriers were removed from the immigration law.

The final chapter, "Afterward," which was added to the 1969 original text, is a detailed account of the Japanese Americans' campaign to redress wartime injustice under the effective leadership of the JACL (Japanese American Citizens League). Among several positive outcomes, Executive Order 9066, established to evacuate west coast Japanese Americans as a security risk, was successfully repealed in 1976. They also won the Civil Liberties Act of 1988, the presidential apology for wartime injustice, which enacted the restitution of payments to approximately 60,000 surviving former internees into law.

Probably no other immigrant group has experienced the severity of discrimination nor been held accountable for conflicts between the US and the country of their ancestry than Japanese Americans on the west coast. In the 1940s race was a legitimate basis to single out an ethnic group, condemning them as a threat to national security, and confining them in detention camps. The Nisei had to persevere these adversities with discipline and hard work which they inherited from their immigrant parents. On the other hand, unlike their alien parents, they were thoroughly American in outlook and aspired to integration into mainstream America by demonstrating unshaken patriotism and loyalty. Hosokawa succeeds in portraying Nisei in these terms. The book is not a rigorously objective history of Nisei, however, and is marked with personal prejudice and deficiencies. In glorification of a handful of Nisei achievers during the postwar era, for example, the destiny of the majority of Nisei population in ordinary walks of life was virtually forgotten. The reader is little informed of such matters as their post-internment social diaspora and cultural assimilation, reconstruction of their lives, and in particular, their parental roles in ensuring or disrupting ethnic continuity. In addition, no explicit acknowledgement was given to the larger civil rights movement which was concurrent with the Japanese American "Redress," which, even if indirectly, paved the way to repair the human right violation committed against the Japanese Americans.

Kumiko Takahara
University of Colorado, Boulder