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Immigrants on the Land: Agriculture, Rural Life, and Small Towns
(Review)

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Immigrants on the Land: Agriculture, Rural Life, and Small Towns. Volume 4: American Immigration and Ethnicity. Edited by George E. Pozzetta. (New York: Garland Publishing, Inc., 1991. xiv + 396p.; illustrations, notes. \$60.00.)

In the introduction to the twenty-volume collection of essays, *American Immigration and Ethnicity*, editor George E. Pozzetta quotes Oscar Handlin, "Once I thought to write a history of the immigrants in America. Then I discovered that the immigrants were American history." *Immigrants on the Land*, the fourth of the Garland Press series, highlights the diversity of immigration and ethnicity in relation to American agricultural history. Pozzetta's concerns for twentieth century immigration and labor history are apparent in this distinctive collection representing the experience of small proprietary and tenant farmers as well as sharecroppers and rural laborers in several regions of the United States. Individual essays examine immigration and ethnicity in the context of social and economic developments as well as processes within ethnic enclaves, families, kinship networks, and neighborhoods of adaptation to American and specific regional and historical conditions.

I found that the organization of the seventeen essays in alphabetical order by author obscured both the development of immigration scholarship over time and some significant connections between studies. Two articles, for example, provide overviews of immigration history *vis-a-vis* American agriculture; in Theodore Saloutos, "The Immigrant Contribution to American Agriculture" and Robert P. Swierenga, "Ethnicity and American Agriculture," both authors discuss streams of ethnic settlement, cultural continuity and adaptation in patterns of farming as well as immigrant/ethnic contributions to agricultural innovation. The two selections also point to a repetitive reliance on Benjamin Rush and J. Hector St. John de Crevecoeur's comments on ethnicity and farming (pp. 288-89 and 357-58).

Several essays examine aspects of European migration to the Upper Midwest and Great Plains states. John C. Hudson traces Canadian, German, German-Russian and Scandinavian migrations and influences on the cultural geography and economy of North Dakota between 1874 and 1915, and Frederick C. Luebke's essay deals with similar patterns of settlement across the Great Plains. In "White Eagles in the North Woods," Richard H. Zeitlin examines the less well-developed history of rural settlement, social institutions and cultural patterns related to the massive waves of Polish immigration in the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. Ann M. Legreid and David Ward look at conflicts and tensions within Norwegian Lutheran communities through data on church membership and religious schisms. Robert C. Ostergren makes a comparative analysis of the impact of economic conditions, social relationships and cultural patterns in the regions of origin on settlement patterns and ethnic communities in South Dakota. Murray W. Nicolson also uses a comparative method to argue that rural Irish Catholics shared in a distinctive culture that had emerged in and spread from the Irish ghettos of Toronto.

The anthology's greatest strength is in its selection of essays exploring non-European immigration, ethnic groups and rural labor patterns. Terry G. Jordan examines the interactions between ethnic minorities and the host/dominant group in Texas between 1836 and 1986, suggesting that at different times northern Anglo migrants shared, to some extent, the ethnic group experience of European and Mexican immigrants, Amerindians, and African-Americans in relation to the southern Anglos. The earliest essay in the collection, Robert L. Brandon's "The End of Immigration to the Cotton Fields" (1946), discusses the failure of efforts to attract Italian immigrants to the post-Reconstruction South. Brandon's essay analyzes the fascinating concerns and interactions of planters, local politicians, railroad interests and Italian politicians in the context of southern economic developments. Because Brandon presents the planter perspective on African-American labor without analytical commentary on either strategies to maintain white economic ascendancy or the racial stereotyping that supported Jim Crow segregation, this article is best read in relationship to other studies of sharecropping and segregation. Pozzetta's essay, "Foreigners in Florida: A Study of Immigration Promotion, 1865-1910" and Jean Ann Scarpaci's "Immigrants in the New South: Italians in Louisiana's Sugar Parishes, 1880-1910," complement the Brandon essay. Scarpaci analyzes the experience of Italian immigrant laborers in the context of a specific crop and locale, while Pozzetta looks both at efforts to promote Florida as a destination for Italian, Chinese, and Japanese immigrants as agricultural laborers and at the ensuing economic, cultural and religious tensions.

The Pacific coast is represented in three essays. Theodore Saloutos provides an overview of immigration patterns up to 1940. Sucheng Chan examines changing patterns of work among Chinese immigrants in rural counties of California between 1860 and 1890, including manual labor such as mining, tenant farming, paid farm labor, industrial labor and domestic service as well as entrepreneurs, professional, artisans and merchants. Robert Higgs, "Landless by Law: Japanese Immigrants in California to 1941," analyzes the impact on Japanese American assimilation and economic status in relation to both economic and legal discrimination against Japanese under the California Alien Land Law and other restrictive legislation.

Pozzetta's introduction, which along with the list of supplemental reading is the same for each volume of the series, emphasizes the significance of gender as a strand in immigration history: "The broader challenge has been to reveal how women confronted the multiple dilemmas posed by migration, and, more generally, to insert the issue of gender into the wider interpretations of the immigrant experience." However, the selection of essays for *Immigrants on the Land* slights interpretations focused on the intersections of gender, immigration and ethnicity which are, however, well developed in volume twelve of the series, *Ethnicity and Gender: The Immigrant Woman*. An introduction specific to each volume rather than Pozzetta's generic introduction could guide the reader to examine relationships between essays. In addition, some repetition could have been omitted in favor of even greater development of the themes of comparative analysis, non-European immigration and rural labor patterns that make this volume so rewarding.