

Gabaccia, Donna. *From Sicily to Elizabeth Street: Housing and Social Change Among Italian Immigrants, 1880-1930*. Albany: State University of New York, 1984. Pp. xxi, 167. Tables, index. \$34.50

Andrew Rolle

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towns, particularly Dedham, Andover, Rowley, Hingham, Northampton and Ipswich. But a convincing argument never coalesces around these comparisons. The starting point — a shared institutional experience across what appear to be widely different contexts — is promising, though flawed; it is not clear that Newtowners' ideas of town life differed significantly from those of New Englanders. Most of the town's settlers seem to have migrated from Connecticut, and it might be argued that residents developed a sense of community in the town's early years because the Dutch treated Newtown as a specially privileged foreign enclave.

More important, the explanatory device cannot bear the burden placed upon it. Kross presumes because of these different contexts, that there was a great difference in the purposes of and approaches toward town life in Newtown and New England. She attempts to explain the similar course of institutional development in both places by residents' adherence to a common English value system built around "liberty, the sanctity of private property, the legitimacy of profit, family, and harmony" (p. xv). This belief systems seems to have remained a constant throughout the period the author discusses. Kross's references to it, however, appear sporadically and are insufficiently supported and elaborated upon to achieve sustained force.

Overall, the book suffers from a lack of rigor in maintaining the necessary distinctions among the institutional course of town life in Newtown and New England, ideas about town life in each place, and presumably-shared general ideas about life in society and polity. Constant reference to the New England literature at all three levels confuses the reader, and the invocation of early modern English ideology is poorly integrated and supported. Therefore, while Kross's conclusions regarding Newtown's institutional patterns are unexceptionable, her comparison of Newtown with New England towns is unfortunately not as rewarding as it might be.

Marc L. Harris
Division of Research Services
and Department of History
Louisiana State University

Gabaccia, Donna. *From Sicily to Elizabeth Street: Housing and Social Change Among Italian Immigrants, 1880-1930*. Albany: State University of New York, 1984. Pp. xxi, 167. Tables, index. \$34.50.

No previous histories have dealt with the precise management of living space in the lives of immigrants. This former doctoral dissertation focuses upon how environment, block by block, and house by house, affected a small group of

Sicilians who settled in a particular New York City neighbourhood. Gabaccia deals as well with the changes in social attitudes that occurred after they left their homeland. She has also scrupulously examined living arrangements in the small rural villages which they abandoned in favour of life in crowded tenements. In presenting a mass of statistical demographic data, she has attempted to humanize the material within a systematic sociological framework, making good use of manuscript census and municipal records.

Gabaccia compares the agrotown of Sambuca in western Sicily to the Sicilian neighbourhood along Elizabeth Street on New York's Lower East Side. She regrets the adjustments which every immigrant group, not merely Sicilians, had to make in a harsh new tenement environment. She sees the resultant experience as *mezzo amare e mezzo dolce*, half bitter, half sweet. On this score she seems to have ignored the findings of a book whose theme this is: *The Italian Americans: Troubled Roots* (1981).

Finding the right niche in America included confronting poverty, hunger for success, feelings of exclusion, and all those internal hatreds directed against one's foreignness. These disabilities were reflected in clashes within the immigrant family that appear and reappear in the writings of Italo-American novelists.

Former peasants who suffered lost feelings of anomie scarcely realized that part of their unease also lay in the provincial life from which they had only recently emerged. Deprivations suffered in Italy's *Mezzogiorno* had masked insecurities that came alive in new forms within America's so-called melting pot.

We need more volumes which speak with new authority and independence as compared with the hackneyed clichés of the old immigration history perpetuated by Oscar Handlin's outmoded volume *The Uprooted*. This is one of them.

Andrew Rolle
Cleland Professor of History
Occidental College

Hirsch, Arnold R. *Making the Second Ghetto: Race and Housing in Chicago, 1940-1960*. Cambridge, England: Cambridge University Press, 1983. Pp. xv, 362. Maps, illustrations, tables, notes, index. \$24.95.

Most of the significant histories of Black urban communities begin in the 1890s and conclude at the onset of the Great Depression. In the study of the "Black ghetto," as in many other areas of Afro-American history, the immediate post-World War II period has remained, in Richard Dal-