

God in Chinatown: Religion and Survival in New York's Evolving Immigrant Community, by KENNETH J. GUEST. New York: New York University Press, 2003, 219 pp., \$55.00 (cloth), \$19.00 (paper).

The introduction of *God in Chinatown: Religion and Survival in New York's Evolving Immigrant Community* dazzles the reader with testimonies from several undocumented Chinese immigrants in New York who have made harrowing voyages, having been smuggled in to the United States by a network of "snakeheads" who make their living in human traffic. Kenneth Guest proceeds to raise several important questions that invite readers to ponder the two sides of the coin in ethnic enclaves. On the one hand, Chinatown, including its religious institutions, protects undocumented immigrants from authorities in the United States and helps the Chinese to find jobs and housing. On the other hand, Chinese migrants are often exploited as cheap labor by restaurant and garment shop owners as they struggle to pay back the snakeheads, who often charge \$20,000 for the harrowing passage by boat from China to the United States.

Most of Guest's examples focus on undocumented immigrants, leaving the reader to wonder whether his critique of the ethnic enclave applies equally to documented immigrants. Nonetheless, while most books on immigration herald ethnic ties as social capital, Guest's book presents some of the downsides of ethnic ties. One unanswered question is whether this exploitation can in part be explained by Chinatown's tremendous ethnic and religious diversity.

Guest studies exclusively immigrants from Fuzhou, a region in China that is a relatively new sending region of migrants to Chinatown. Fuzhouese form their own religious institutions in Chinatown, separate from those of previous waves of Chinese migrants, in part because they have their own dialect, and in part because they re-create specific Christian and Buddhist religious traditions from Fuzhou.

Although the focus of the book is on New York's Chinatown, readers will appreciate the two background chapters on migration from Fuzhou and religion in Fuzhou. These two extremely engaging chapters situate the reader in the historical and cultural circumstances that shape the religious institutions Guest examines in this book. I was amazed at Guest's ability to present an overview of the history of religions in China in a clear way. By the end of these two chapters, a novice to Chinese studies feels like an expert in Chinese migration and religion.

The central thesis of the book is contained in the two chapters on religion in Chinatown. One chapter examines the ecology of all of the Fuzhouese major religious institutions, and another chapter focuses specifically on the development of two Protestant congregations in Chinatown. In these chapters, we see how religious institutions may on the one hand provide an escape from the harsh realities of being a recent Chinese immigrant. At the same time, the interior structures of these institutions replicate many of the class and regional boundaries present in China and Chinatown. While one might assume that congregations are internally harmonious, Guest shows how they often split over theological issues or differences of opinion about religious events and leaders in China.

Guest does an excellent job of helping the reader understand the place of these religious institutions both within Chinatown and the religious landscape in China. For example, Chinatown's religious institutions send money to build new places of religious worship in China, and they provide a liminal space in Chinatown where new arrivals can create social networks and find meaning in their migration process.

Guest also helps the reader understand the different styles of worship and belief of the two main congregations he studies—the Church of Grace and the New York House Church. However, the focus of the book is less on religious beliefs than the place of religion in the ethnic enclave. Guest's work is an important contribution

to the growing subfield of immigration and religion, and would make excellent material for both undergraduate and graduate courses in these fields.

The book is so stimulating that it leads the reader to formulate more questions. For example, do business owners in Chinatown give preferential treatment to members of their church or temple? In other words, is there anything different about being a Fuzhounese Christian or Buddhist? Is the salience of religious and ethnic identity different for the first and second generation Chinese?

As work like Guest's penetrates the fields of sociology of religion and immigration, I hope that scholars no longer have to justify their topic by asserting "to fully understand the dynamics of New York's Chinatown as an ethnic enclave, one must consider religion." (p. 10)

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Main Street Mystics: The Toronto Blessing & Reviving Pentecostalism, by MARGARET M. POLOMA. Walnut Creek, CA: AltaMira Press, 2003, 288 pp., \$26.95 (Paper); \$72.00 (Cloth).

Main Street Mystics is a self-proclaimed "metanarrative" that sets the stage for greater understanding of the Pentecostal/Charismatic ("P/C") revival among varied faiths via the TACF (Toronto Airport Christian Fellowship). The book is divided into two distinct sections: the mystical self and the mystical body.

In the first (and heaviest) section, numerous personal accounts are detailed, including carpet time, being drunk in the Spirit, holy laughter, and the throwing of skeptics to the ground by the Spirit (p. 28).

The work of theologians such as Ted Dobson (1986) and Kilian McDonnell (1983, 1989, 2003) would enrich our understanding of these descriptions. Links by these P/C scholars are made to studies of the power of suggestion in various modes (hypnosis, for example, is mentioned only once in Poloma's book, when she references McClenon 1994). Prophecy (hearing and responding to the voice of God) is a considerable part of the focus and is empirically revealed to be more common for P/C Christians than others, though 90% of Americans claim to pray and many (79%) experience a strong presence of God as a result (p. 118).

Before section two on the "mystical body" begins, an interlude is offered which is one of the most powerful sections of the book. Here for the first time, prophecy blends with healing. The most compelling testimony ends this passage, where a "pilgrim" (a local renewal leader, in this case) steps somewhat hesitantly into the role of Jesus, upon God's command, to comfort a dying homeless man (pp. 140-141). It is at this point that the thus far passive response to being filled with God's spirit becomes active. A further consideration is in order here on the spiritual, intellectual, and moral conversion levels becoming more active. It is one thing to go to prayer meetings filled with the Spirit, praying for others there, and concentrating on "end times," which is the "me"-centered approach. It is quite another to move into true moral conversion, which is "other"-centered. This approach is all about extending past the prayer meetings, doing what God wants us to do out in the gritty, real world. At that more active, elevated level, we are truly acting (or at least trying to act) as Christ's presence in the world. Remaining at that lower "me"-centered rung of the conversion ladder is the main criticism leveled at the P/C movement. It needs to be addressed head-on in a book of this depth.

Only in a cursory fashion are gender, regional, or even racial biases mentioned in this account (p. 211). "Pilgrims" (meaning all members) of the movement are "overwhelmingly white, middle-class, middle-age" (p.215). To leave that as an observa-

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