

bombardment of post-modernism, kibbutzniks and others are still able to retain a sense of ideological solidarity.

While the analysis provides rich food for thought, disappointment is in store for a reader interested in the substantive investigation of the role of modern Jewish culture in particular or kibbutz ideology in general in the process of change. The religious kibbutz movement, and the innovations in the realm of Jewish culture made by the secular kibbutz are completely ignored. Even the ideological differences between the different kibbutz movements, and the ideological and economic changes taking place in Israeli society in general are not discussed in any depth. At least some of these topics seem necessary for tackling the substantive question of ideological transformation

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China's Catholics Tragedy and Hope in an Emerging Civil Society, by RICHARD MADSEN. Berkeley and Los Angeles. University of California Press, 1998, xii + 183 pp \$27.50

China's Catholics survived the Communist harsh suppression and sometimes cruel elimination during the so-called Great Proletariat Cultural Revolution (1966-1976). Indeed, Catholicism, along with other religions, has astonishingly revived since 1978 when the economic and social reforms began in China. Both the survival under the Communist suppression and the revival during the rapid economic development are intriguing to social scientists interested in the interaction between religion and society. What is more striking, however, is that, as sociologist Richard Madsen argues, China's Catholics may not be a constructive force in the emer-

ging civil society under the rule of the Chinese Communist Party.

Not all non-governmental associations are part of "civil society" — "self-governed associations through which citizens can participate in an organized way in public affairs" (p. 11) and through which people "can articulate and if necessary defend their interests" (p. 12). Some social groups are not conducive to social self-governance. China's Catholics are such a case. The Introduction describes the astonishing revitalization of the Chinese Catholic church in its social, historical context. Most of the other chapters in this book describe an uncivil Chinese Catholic church. The village-centered Catholics focus more on vertical relationships of authority and dependence rather than on horizontal relations of reciprocity and cooperation. This results in tragic factionalism within the Church, especially between the underground church and the government sanctioned "open church." The belligerent solidarity and self-containment of Catholic communities (villages), a result in part of historical repression and political persecution, make them hostile to outsiders and economic development. Madsen argues that contextual factors are also important for the lack of civility manifested in the Chinese Catholic church: the agrarian society, the authoritarian culture, and the history of harsh political repression. The characteristics of the Church may change in a different configuration of these contextual factors. Reluctantly, the author points to urban Catholicism, which is slowly adapting to the new contexts of social and economic reforms, as a possible participant in the emerging civil society.

Madsen's critical examination of the Chinese Catholic church, especially its internal conflicts, its outdated theology and moral values, is scrupulous, and probably too harsh at times. Catholics are but a tiny minority in today's China, a minority that is constantly suppressed and persecuted by the Communist government. The Chinese Catholic church's connections with the outside world were cut off for many years and are still subject to heavy-handed control by the government. Their minority status and the hostile political

contexts determine that the primary goal of the Church is still survival, self-protection, and internal growth in religiosity and in membership. In other words, unlike Catholics in Poland, Chinese Catholics are not in a position to be more externally oriented or to assume greater roles in the social transformation.

Further, Madsen is perhaps over-pessimistic regarding the function of the Catholic Church in the emerging civil society in China. If nothing else, the Church at least serves as a moral association that counter-balances the rampant consumerism unleashed in the growing market economy. More importantly, given a less restricted political context, Catholics, with their organizational infrastructure and universalistic theology, may well serve as an important force in the emerging civil society in China.

Nevertheless, Madsen's book is rich with thick ethnographic description and penetrating sociological analysis. It is not only an exceptional contribution to Chinese studies, but will also become an important reference for sociologists in general and for sociologists of religion in particular.

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Sacred Tensions, by RAYMOND L. M. LEE and SUSAN E. ACKERMAN. Columbia: University of South Carolina Press, 1997, xi+172 pp. \$29.95.

This book has two great strengths. First, it is a comparative study of four religions — Islam, Buddhism, Hinduism, and Christianity — in a single country, Malaysia. Second, the authors consistently use Weberian ideas, especially rationalization and charisma, to understand contemporary, parallel changes in the four religions.

A chapter is devoted to each of the aforementioned religions. A brief history of the religion in Malaysia is used to reveal how it has been rationalized. This term seems to be used interchangeably with "Protestantization," referring to the bureaucratization of a religion, the declining importance of magic, and the growing significance of a work ethic. Then, the authors describe recent new developments in the religion which supposedly illustrate the tendency of charisma to break out of its rationalized bonds. As the authors write: "Religious traditions have been revived, reinvented, and given new meanings to recapture the charismatic nucleus eclipsed by centuries of modernization, rationalization, and bureaucratization" (p. ix).

The authors emphasize the role of the new middle class in supporting recent charismatic movements. Members of this class seek both to rationalize the religious organization and to promote charismatic forms of religion. Regrettably, the authors do not present data about the class composition of each movement, so it is not clear whether the various religious groups discussed in the book are equally middle class.

The discussion of Islam differs from the coverage given the other religions because of the special place of Islam in Malaysia. The ruling party is basically a Malay organization. A core element of Malay ethnic identity is being a Muslim. The government controls Islamic movements more than other religious movements as a way of maintaining control of its political base, the Malays.

Sacred tensions has weaknesses. First, too often the authors make unsubstantiated assertions. Second, because readers are not told the sizes of the different religious groups, it is not clear how significant they are. Third, Lee and Ackerman cannot fit all the new movements into the charismatic category. As a result, their theoretical framework fails to encompass all they discuss. The new movements illustrate not only the appeal of charisma, but also of lay control, as well as the desire for personal religious experience. Fourth, the authors do not relate the changes in Malaysia to developments elsewhere, except in a cursory manner. Thus we con-

