

Fenggang Yang, Joy Tong and Allan H. Anderson, eds. *Global Chinese Pentecostal and Charismatic Christianity*. Global Pentecostal and Charismatic Studies, Vol. XXII. Leiden: Brill, 2017. 373 pages. \$57.

Global Chinese Pentecostal and Charismatic Christianity is a rich collection of chapters that touch important dimensions of the intersection between one of the largest Christian movements, Pentecostalism, and one of the largest nations, China, and its cultures. It is important to note that the book describes the rich diversity in Chinese cultures and the way these particular expressions have embraced and express Pentecostal and charismatic Christianity. It is a fascinating reminder that in 1949 there were not even one million Pentecostal Christians in China. At the time of the writing of this book, the number is estimated to be around 80 million.

This book consists of four different sections. The first section deals with foundational issues so that novices to Pentecostalism or people unfamiliar with Chinese culture may interact with the topic intelligently. The book progresses in its theological and cultural complexity to examine mainstream Pentecostal issues in Chinese culture. The third section works through Chinese churches that are more charismatic in nature and where Pentecostal is an adjective describing affinities to Pentecostal-like practices. The fourth section deals with more marginal charismatic churches and with more of the Chinese diaspora, including Malaysia and Singapore.

Overall, these chapters work through the commonalities and differences between the different Chinese churches, such as Pentecostal Truths, Popular Gospel Truth, Patriotic Pentecostals, and the Catholic Charismatic Renewal. The chapters also labor through the interaction of culture and Pentecostal or charismatic Christianity. One particular chapter that caught my interest was related to interreligious dialogue where the author described the interaction between Confucianism and the Pentecostal church (118-136). This chapter reveals how Pentecostalism may appeal to local culture in order to construct a sustainable order inside the church (135). Pentecostalism and culture interweave and evolve dialectically (136).

One of the strengths of this book is that it seeks to debunk stereotypes of Pentecostal Christianity in China. Immediately the reader is confronted with the reality that much of Chinese Pentecostalism has developed independently from the Western world. Furthermore, it calls for a renewed look at these expressions, giving the Chinese churches necessary space to talk about themselves from their own contexts. For example, in the beginning the reader is challenged with the name that Pentecostalism gives itself in China, which differs from a Western notion of Pentecostalism (17). The churches in this study are diverse and more “Pentecostal-like” than remaining true to a classic Western Pentecostal definition.

Despite its uniqueness, Chinese Pentecostalism has many commonalities with the rise of Pentecostalism in Africa and Latin America (41). Pentecostal Christianity is an easily adaptable religion that travels and takes on characteristics of its current location (59). As it settled into its new home within China, the Pentecostal movement initiated a new form of Chinese Christianity. This form grew and expanded into a stream of diverse expressions in China and beyond through the Chinese diaspora.

Another important dimension of this book is the social presence of Pentecostals in China. For many reasons, missionaries empowered local leaders. They launched missions among the poor, provided education for women, and reached out to remote villages. In doing so, they challenged social, gender, economic, and geographical boundaries, but “also exemplified what a revival Christian should be concerned about—not personal prosperity and health, but the downtrodden millions who bore physical, emotional, and spiritual suffering” (87).

The editors have done good work in exposing the reader to Pentecostal and charismatic expressions of Christianity in Chinese cultures. It must be said that this diaspora is so large it would be impossible to record all the different expressions of Chinese culture and Pentecostal/charismatic Christianity. Nonetheless, the reader gets a good sense of how these interact in different places of the globe.

This particular book is of interest to theologians, historians, and people interested in Chinese cultures and Pentecostalism as a whole. It is a good book to use in a contextual theology course or as an introduction to Pentecostalism.

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