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David W. Kim (ed.), *New Religious Movements in Modern Asian History: Sociocultural Alternatives* (Lanham, Boulder, New York and London: Lexington Books, 2020); xix, 285 pp.; ISBN: 978-1-7936-3402-3; Hardback; US \$115.00.

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David W. Kim's edited volume *New Religious Movements in Modern Asian History: Sociocultural Alternatives* contains a "Foreword" by Eileen Barker, doyenne of new religious movement (NRM) studies, an "Introduction" by Kim, and a range of highly interesting and relevant chapters on Asian new religions. Barker and Kim emphasise distinctive Asian themes (ancestor veneration, political systems like Maoism, world peace, syncretism, multi-faith societies, anti-colonialism, and the question of what constitutes newness in the Asian context); their musings set the scene for the eleven individual contributions that focus on single, specific case studies in the main. Chapters are organised into two parts, "West, South, and Southeast Asia" and "East Asia".

The opening chapter is Lauren Drover's "The Ahmadiyya Muslim Jamaat: A New Religious Movement Derived from Islam?" For insiders, Ahmadiyya is an Islamic reform movement started by Ghulam Ahmad (c. 1835–1908). However, the bulk of Muslims reject this claim and argue that Ahmad's incorporation of "aspects of other religions into their unique Islamic theology" (p. 22) renders Ahmadiyya a heretical sect or a completely non-Islamic new religion. Drover examines three contentious beliefs (continuous prophecy, Ahmad as a reincarnation of Jesus, and "jihad and living under a non-Islamic government" (p. 23) and argues that other Islamic groups hold similar or the same ideas. She concludes that while NRM qualities are present (charismatic leader, opportunities for female participation) Ahmadiyya is better characterised as a sect of traditional Islam. Next is Catharine Dada's "Sri Sri Ravi Shankar, the Art of Living, and the Association for Human Values," which situates the charismatic leader Sri Sri Ravi Shankar as a Hindu, but the Art of Living Foundation as a NRM. Dada argues that AoL's universalism, spiritual focus, and engagement with humanitarian and ecological values mark it as a new form of religion/ progressive spirituality, rather than a Hindu sect.

The third chapter is Fabio Scialpi's "The Radhasaomi Satsang: A New Religion Between Mysticism and Social Service." Scialpi discusses the founder Swami Shiv Dayal Singh (1818–1878), who was born into a Sikh family, but as a youth was taught by Tulsi Sahib, a follower of the Sant tradition. He lived in Agra, taught yoga, and after his death his followers consolidated Radhasaomi (alternative to Radhaswami), which is focused

on the oneness of God, the soul's yearning to join with God --- hence the identification of Radha with Sakti, the divine feminine. Communities were founded in India, and from the 1930s Westerners joined the movement; current estimates of membership are around two million. The next contribution, Lionel Obadia's "When New is Not-So-New: On the Meaning of 'Modern' in a New Tibetan Movement: The New Kadampa Tradition," is focused on a 1990s group which is highly controversial in Tibetan Buddhist circles. The NKT was founded in the United Kingdom in 1991 by Kelsang Gyatso, rejects the authority of the Dalai Lama, and employs fairly traditional Tibetan Buddhist techniques in different, arguably contemporary and pragmatic, fashion. Part I ends with Christopher Hartney's "*The Thánb Ngôn Hiệp Tuyển: Translating and Understanding the Central Scripture of Caodaism*," which focuses on the initial fifty-six messages of the Cao Dai new religion, that were received in the first year, 1926. Cao Dai combined spiritist traditions from French Kardecism and from Vietnam itself. The messages cover issues of ritual space, the meanings of symbols, and the nature of god, Đức Cao Đài, and include specific communications in French to Western colonial figures. Hartney argues that these messages are "a process of reinstituting a virtual and spiritual emperor God to help negotiate a colonial presence ... seeking to make Vietnam central to the emergent and unified world" (p. 128).

Part II opens with "The Filial Sectarian: Confucian Values and Popular Sects in Late Imperial China and Modern Taiwan" by Nikolas Broy, which examines the Chinese concept of filial piety (*xiao*) in the Dragon Flower Sect (which traces its genealogy to Patriarch Luo in the late fifteenth to early sixteenth centuries). This sect is usually classified as "popular lay Buddhism" (p. 140) but Broy focuses on Confucian aspects of the teaching and practice, such as the lists of favours members must repay; for example, "to repay the kindness of one's mother and father" (p. 141), and how these obligations are enacted in ritual vowing, to persuasive effect. The next contribution is editor Kim's "The International Moral Association (IMA): A Chinese New Religious Movement in Modern Korea," which examines the Yiguando movement, which has established centres in approximately 80 countries as a result of Taiwanese missions. His focus is on the IMA, founded by Kim Buck Dang (1914–1991), a group known for their interest in the ethnic unification of Korea (a major theme in most Korean NRMs), rituals to deliver the dead from the unsaved state, aspects of Korean shamanism, and Buddhist millenarianism. The spotlight on (North) Korea continues with Emma Leverton's "The (New) Religious Dimensions of *Juche*-Kimilsungism." *Juche*, the ideology of North Korea, is a combination of the words for master and subject and is more than a reconfiguring of Marxism-Leninism. Combined with the personality cult of the ruling Kim family, Leverton argues, *Juche* becomes a religion, or at least religious.

The ninth chapter, Petra Tlcimukova's "Dislocating Soka Gakkai International," shifts attention to the controversial Japanese NRM's presence in the Czech Republic, which

was especially interesting to this reader, who was entirely unaware of the presence of Nichiren Buddhism in Eastern Europe. Jiro Sawai's "Scriptures and their Restoration: A Case Study of Tenrikyo" is a historical study of the development of sacred texts in Tenrikyo, which have been periodically revised and redacted for various reasons. Last in the volume is Leonardo Sacco's "Aum Shinrikyo: Millenarianism, Anti-Semitism, and Fundamentalism" which examines the most notorious Asian NRM to date, with the emphasis on the negative and criminal aspects of its existence. Overall, this edited book makes an important contribution to study of Asian new religions and should be of interest to scholars and students of Religious Studies generally.