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Book review

Mary Mee-Yin Yuen, *Solidarity and Reciprocity with Migrants in Asia: Catholic and Confucian Ethics in Dialogue*, Palgrave Macmillan: Cham, Switzerland, 2020; xiv + 239 pp.; ISBN 978-3-030-33364-5; eBook ISBN 978-3-030-33365-2, €62.99

All over the world, but especially in the Global North, there has been a convergence of repressive policies towards immigrants even in previous “settler” societies (Dauvergne, 2016). Immigration detention, deportation without due process, criminalization of undocumented migrants, among other measures deemed illegal under international law have grown exponentially in the last two decades or so. Some argue that international refugee law or international human rights law has not done enough to protect the rights and the needs of different refugee and migrant populations worldwide (Byrne and Gammeltoft-Hansen, 2020; Harvey, 2015). However, the fault may not lie solely upon the protection mechanisms provided by international law but also on a “moral blindness,” the “globalisation of indifference” and humanity’s global civilisation crisis (Bauman and Donskis, 2013; Ehrlich and Ehrlich, 2013; Napolitano, 2017). On *Solidarity and Reciprocity with Migrants in Asia*, Professor Yuen explores how the spheres of law and ethics intersect each other in international and intra-national migration in Asia, particularly concerning women migrants. Although it has a regional approach, this volume is a great contribution to global scholarship on issues of refugee and migration studies, as it is intrinsically interdisciplinary and explores the human rights and ethical responses towards migration.

Solidarity and Reciprocity with Migrants in Asia is part of the Religion and Global Migrations book series which explores the phenomenon of religion and migration from a variety of disciplinary perspectives at different global locations. However, this book is not confined to a single theoretical viewpoint, instead, it navigates through different themes, subjects and scholarship traditions. Divided into ten chapters, the book discusses more general issues surrounding migration in Asia while exploring the specifics of (i) women migrants in Asia and Hong Kong; (ii) principles of justice, Catholic values, Confucian ethics and human dignity; and the (iii) international human rights obligations that Asian countries have in relation to migrants, especially minority migrants.

The author writes from both her scholar and pastoral work with Catholic organizations. Her goal with this book was to demonstrate the importance of integrating virtue ethics and Catholic-based principles in order to motivate the Christian community (and people in general) in Hong Kong and elsewhere to embrace a comprehensive commitment to social justice, particularly by showing concern and hospitality towards migrant communities (see the Introduction on p. 5).

Chapter I establishes the scope of the book and lays out its general structure and objectives. The focus is on labor migration and how ethical principles from Catholicism and Confucianism as social values can help strengthen and protect the rights and well-being of migrants. Chapter II discusses migration and women migrants in Asia and Hong Kong, focusing especially at female labor migration and issues of social exclusion, inferring from both theory and the author’s own practical experience. Chapter III explores the concepts of justice and human dignity and how they apply to women migrants. Here,

emphasis is given to the “Catholic human rights discourse,” and the characteristics of Catholic human rights theory. Chapter IV provides an analysis of the human rights obligations states (and people) have in relation to migrants, from the Catholic perspective. This chapter is of great relevance because it presents a distinctive account of legal and moral responsibility: it diverges from the Western liberal tradition of rights and duties, putting the emphasis on solidarity and the common good. Chapters V to X investigate the role of religion and ethics in delivering better integration, hospitality and compassion towards migrants in receiving communities. Here, professor Yuen analyses how Christian values and Confucian ethics complement each other in achieving the goals of addressing the issue of marginalized migrants in Hong Kong and elsewhere.

Ultimately, this book is of great relevance for both practitioners and scholars working with migrant populations in Asia, especially those migrants that are marginalized and in situations of increased vulnerability. It teaches how to overcome prejudice and the anti-immigration sentiment through communitarian social values rooted in religion and ethics. This book offers not only an in-depth account of personal experiences of migrant women in Asia but also offers a rich, interdisciplinary investigation of international and intra-national migration in Asia through the lens of Catholic and Confucian social ethics. This volume is certainly very unique and innovative in its approach, confronting the reality of migration in Asia with essentially Asian values.

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