

ranged and well-written. Furthermore, it compiles information which was previously scattered in various publications or has not been published previously. Moreover, the illustrations – the color photographs of whole winter counts as well as the black-and-white photos of each event shown in a drawing – are impressing. And, by the way, anyone who would like to take a look at every detail of the chronicles in color or who would just like to see the Smithsonian Lakota and Nakota annals without having to buy this work can be referred to the website “[www.wintercounts.si.edu](http://www.wintercounts.si.edu),” which also gives information on single chronicles and collectors’ notes to some events in a very well-structured way. The publication hopefully contributes to the further interest in winter counts without any regard to the cultural background of the reader.

Dagmar Siebelt

**Hann, Chris, et al.:** *The Postsocialist Religious Question. Faith and Power in Central Asia and East-Central Europe.* Berlin: Lit Verlag, 2006. 340 pp. ISBN 978-3-8258-9904-2. (Halle Studies in the Anthropology of Eurasia, 11) Price: € 29.00

The collection “The Postsocialist Religious Question. Faith and Power in Central Asia and East-Central Europe” is an account of a field study conducted by various scholars in the postsocialist countries of Central Asia (Kyrgyzstan, Uzbekistan, Turkmenistan, Tajikistan, and Kazakhstan) and of Central and Eastern Europe (Moldova, Ukraine, Poland, Romania, and Hungary), with an introduction sketching the general theoretical framework of the book written by Chris Hann. As is the case with all collective books, the chapters differ in terms of theoretical sophistication, scope of interest, and level of analysis. However, they all oscillate around the notion of civility. As Hann explains “I encouraged all participants to focus on aspects of *civility*. I had in mind norms of pluralism, co-existence, and tolerance, in secular domains influenced by religion as well as in religious institutions in the narrower sense” (7f.).

The book is divided into two distinct parts. The first focuses on the countries of Central Asia. Several interesting strands emerge across these chapters. Firstly, the authors focus on religious pluralism. Despite the introduction of laws guaranteeing freedom of religion in all countries, in practice this freedom is frequently limited. Irene Hilgers shows the ways in which the Uzbek government controls religious pluralism by both tightening regulations regarding new religions and imposing the official version of Islam. This is defined and promoted as an indigenous “national Islamic heritage” and is used as an ideological tool for strengthening national identity. Other authors too report similar attempts to incorporate Islam into the national ideology in order to unite the nation, resulting in limiting freedom of religion and religious pluralism. Mathijs Pelkmans’s research shows asymmetries in the treatment of various religions in Kyrgyzstan, and Krisztina Kehl-Bodrogi’s findings show the restrictions imposed by the Turkmen government in order to prevent the rise of alternative focus of authority. A

slightly contradictory picture is shown by Paweł Jessa’s findings in Kazakhstan. On the one hand, Islam has been incorporated into the national ideology, but on the other the reinvention of various traditions within Islam can be observed. Manja Stephan shows yet another dimension of pluralism. Her analysis of Islam in Tajikistan shows the confrontations of the new Islamic elites, who accept global/universal Islam and define their religious practices as conscious and truer, with the followers of local Muslim practices.

Particularly interesting are analyses of the rhetoric of antiterrorism and Muslim extremism used by the Uzbek and Kyrgyz states. Wahhabis are a central figure in this discourse. They are defined as “Muslims with extreme views on Islam,” promoting “a political agenda aimed at overturning national governments and remaking them into Islamic states” (55). Julie McBrien reconstructs the origins, elements, and fluctuations of such rhetoric in Kyrgyzstan, but it seems that her discoveries could be to some extent generalised for the whole region. The authors examine elements of such discourse, showing its vague and inclusive character and impact on the life of the ordinary people. In this respect particularly interesting are observations made by Johan Rasanayagam on strategies applied in order to avoid the label and its stigmatising effect. Those likely to be called Wahhabis have attempted to persuade the mainstream about their inoffensiveness by joining in and actively supporting the life of the community.

The second part of the book concentrates on the countries of Central and Eastern Europe. The common theme here is a focus on various disguises and dimensions of tolerance. In this respect particularly interesting are two articles. Tanya Richardson analyses the discourse of tolerance existing in Odessa, showing how it refers directly to the Soviet era and remains somehow in contrast to the interactions and conflicts (at various levels, also between religious organisations) which emerged after the fall of the Soviet regime along with the resurgence of the ethnic lines and identities. Richardson shows that the local perception of tolerance needs to be taken into account when analyzing the tolerance of a given place. Juraj Buzalka focuses on different phenomena, analysing the role of the Greek and Roman Catholic Churches in creating a new public sphere for building the tolerance between the Ukrainian and Polish communities in Przemyśl. Buzalka scrutinises various religious rituals which are used in order to facilitate the reconciliation process. However, he concludes that despite the initial principles aiming to rebuild the local tradition of “agrarian tolerance . . . rooted in everyday sharing among peasants,” what emerges is rather an artificial tolerance, a sort of “intellectual construction, the work of the teachers and priests” (307).

The question of the relationship between religion and national identity also emerges in the context of Central and Eastern Europe. However, the authors focus on the interreligious competition for the right to represent national identity. Elements of such conflicts are shown in Monica Heintz’s article on the disagreement between the Metropolitan Church of Bessarabia and Metropolitan

Church of Moldova and in Vlad Naumescu's analysis of the situation in Ukraine.

The book deserves attention for several reasons. Firstly, the authors of the collected articles apply a multidimensional approach to their subject of study. The religious situation in each country is presented from diverse perspectives. Focusing on what we could call the macro or societal level, the authors show complex relations between religions, the state, and various political actors, as well as incorporating religion in the national identity-building process. This picture is further complemented by analysis at an organisational level – relations both between old religions and those which have emerged recently, and between various streams within one religion. Finally, the authors focus on the individual level – beliefs, rituals, practices, conversion, or encounters between followers of different religions. This multidimensional approach and analyses of interactions between various levels provide an overall and detailed picture of the religious situation in the countries in question, further contextualised by the description of postsocialist conditions.

Secondly, in the light of their findings the contributors undermine existing assumptions and question existing concepts. For example, Pelkmans challenges the analytical usefulness of the concept of the free religious market, shows the effects of market politics on the religious field and emerging asymmetries in Kyrgyzstan. Naumescu's research shows the limits or hidden dimensions of the assumed pluralism. On the other hand, Richardson and Buzalka discover various dimensions of the concept of tolerance depending on the local context.

Finally, the case studies are well illustrated with the data collected in the fieldwork. As a result all discussions and analyses are strongly embedded in the empirical material, which gives a deeper insight into the topic in question and enriches the narrative of the book.

To sum up, even if the book is not about providing sophisticated theoretical elaborations, it offers a well-documented account of transformation of religion and its role in civil society in the postsocialist context. It will, therefore, make very worthwhile reading for anyone interested in the topic.

Katarzyna Zielińska

**Kahn, Hilary E.:** Seeing and Being Seen. The Q'eqchi' Maya of Livingston, Guatemala, and Beyond. Austin: University of Texas Press, 2006. 242 pp. ISBN 978-0-292-71455-7. Price: £ 12.99

Hilary Kahn presents the readership with an interesting ethnography that defies the "established" methodology and assumptions about scientific objectivism by transgressing the boundaries between, and de-essentializing, such seemingly "logical" categories as object and subject, home and field of research, self and others, "us" and "them," method and theory, and representation and reality. To accomplish this "multi-sited ethnography," as Kahn terms her work in the Introduction, she used the video methodology, the ethnographer's "third eye," that brings together at the same time and at the same place the observer and the observed, the screenwriter and the actor,

the author and the reader. This collaborative methodology not only provided empirical data but itself became a field of research to study how culturally modeled imaginary shapes the perception of what is observed. In other words, this "invisible culture" limits our apparently "objective" view of reality, as it always brings the observer to the picture along with the entire context, or the set of relationships, in which he or she was socialized. Understandably, within such conceptual framework also the reader is expected to suspend the familiar comfort of the dualist worldview, "slip between categories and identities," to use Kahn's expression, and become not only a consumer of the ethnographic description but also its interpreter, an insider, and a participant in the process of discovery of the cultural world of "the other." As such, Kahn's ethnography is an example of reflexive anthropology, a relatively recent current represented by such authors as Paul Stoller, Richard Price, Ruth Behar, Nancy Scheper-Hughes, Roger Lancaster, and others.

The introductory presentation of the methodological basis of Kahn's work is followed by ten descriptive and simultaneously analytical chapters. In chapter 2, Kahn presents a historical and sociological portrait of the town of Livingston, the "primary site" of her research, founded in 1802, once a thriving port that lost its economic importance in the beginning of the 20th century. She also introduces to the reader her "secondary field" – namely, the collaborative video methodology in which – by and in the act of collaboration with indigenous participants – she was able to put the methodological practice of fieldwork before "the intellect" of social theory that – as she argues after Prosser ("The Status of Image-Based Research." In: J. Prosser [ed.], Image-Based Research; pp. 97–112. London 1998) – strips the fieldwork experience from its intricacies and richness.

Chapter 3, "Cycles of Debt," contains a "conventional" ethnohistory of the Q'eqchi' people. This description provides the context, extending from the pre-Columbian period to the present, in which the internalized frameworks of their symbolic reference, which still inform their perception and cultural practice today, were shaped. What a German reader may find particularly interesting here is the section concerning German immigration and colonization of the Q'eqchi' territory, which should be seen in the context of the much broader phenomenon of modernization undertaken in the mid- and in the second part of the 19th century by Latin American elites. In Paraguay, for instance, it was primarily the British who carried on this task (J. Plá, The British in Paraguay, 1850–1870. Richmond 1976). Still, the preferential treatment and the extension of multiple privileges given to German settlers by Guatemalan liberal governments were unparalleled throughout the region, which, however, did not translate later into a durable political influence, comparable to the one exercised by Germans in Paraguay, particularly during the prewar and the war period (A. M. Seiferheld, Nazismo y fascismo en el Paraguay. Los años de la guerra. Asunción 1986).

In chapter 4, Kahn focuses on the Q'eqchi' imagery, beliefs, and practices associated with the *Tzuultaq'a*,