

“modern nomads” are not the only “modern” Tuareg nor are they replacing them; other Tuareg are also constructing their own versions of modernity.

Other issues raised concern the broader context. The use of direct quotes throughout the text has value but also limitations. These personal narratives are crucial in order to convey the subjective viewpoints of the narrators. But this reader would appreciate some wider contextualization of these quotations; for example, why only Tuareg, not other African travelers, were permitted to enter Libya. Indeed, the Tuareg experiences in Libya appear to be more positive, and some historical and political background on this would explain this to nonspecialist readers. Other questions pertain to gender. Although both women and men appear in this account, many, though not all, of the voices here are male. Although it is true that initially the *ishumar* experience was male-dominated, nowadays women are increasingly among them, and many Tuareg women have always enjoyed high social prestige and economic independence. What are some effects of different cultural gender constructs on relations between the sexes?

In conclusion, this book is highly insightful and would be most rewarding to read by scholars in African, Saharan, and Middle Eastern Studies, social/cultural anthropology, cultural studies, and globalization studies.

Susan J. Rasmussen

Kürti, László, and Peter Skalník (eds.): *Postsocialist Europe. Anthropological Perspectives from Home*. New York: Berghahn Books, 2009. 326 pp. ISBN 978-1-84545-474-6. (EASA, 10) Price: \$ 85.00

It is the ambition of this volume to theorize postsocialism *from within* (6). To this end, the edited volume offers eleven contributions by anthropologists from Central and Eastern Europe (some of whom are returnee anthropologists) who had lived through and studied social change for many years. These scholars bring new perspectives to the debate around postsocialism by virtue of the fact that they are engaged in what Muršič calls “permanent ethnography” (201). Seeking to dispel the myth that Eastern European anthropology is parochial and centered on folkloric research, the volume showcases rich ethnographies that spell out the connections between local and global processes and provide insight into new social hierarchies and marginalities. The editors argue that “Western” anthropologists have often overlooked or even dismissed local scholars’ analyses of postsocialism. Muršič argues that while local scholars are enjoined to express themselves and their views, when their contributions fail to remain within certain parameters, they become “incomprehensible” to Western scholars, which in turn confirms the stereotype of “backward” Eastern Europeans (200).

The contributors to the volume challenge the concept of “postsocialism” by demonstrating, first of all, how the configurations of change may vary substantially from country to country, so that speaking of a single “transition” may not be all that useful. In their introduction, Kürti and Skalník also remind us that local populations mobilized for change starting in the late eighties, and thus

played an active role in bringing about the process of transition. There has been a tendency in Western academia to portray local populations as “victims” of transition, as well as to focus on the negative impact of capitalist developments. Instead of concentrating exclusively on the injustice and social schisms brought about by the encounter with capitalism, the contributors examine some of the positive effects brought about by capitalism, including improvements to everyday life by foreign companies that have operated, if not perfectly, at least ethically (see the contribution by Kürti). The volume also seeks to move away from what the editors point out as a tendency among Western scholars to see all social problems as caused by the transitional period. The chapter by Nagy, for example, explores how social problems such as poverty and homelessness did exist under state socialism and are merely taking on new forms under capitalism.

The chapters in the volume provide different perspectives on the way the socialist past enters the present. For example, Červinková writes about Czech military cadres and their continued identification with Soviet technology in the context of NATO military reforms, while Skalník examines continuity in the political culture of Czech citizens. Stoiciu notes that Romanian workers in multinationals invoke the sense of security they felt when employed by state-owned enterprises. Although the editors of the volume wish to challenge the notion of a “socialist *legacy*,” the kind of language used by some of the contributors in talking about continuity, e.g., “identity,” “culture” or “political culture,” “mentality,” seem to suggest instead essences or engrained dispositions that hinder people’s ability to move on. Perhaps more critical use of these terms, or the use of concepts that suggest process and negotiation, would have offered a stronger challenge to the notion of “legacy” while also doing justice to the contributors’ rich accounts of change.

Some of the contributions remind us of the important fact that the socialist experience in Eastern and Central Europe is the experience of *negotiating* socialism, so that the practices that enter the present in one form or another may at times be those associated with resistance to socialist rule. As Bitušková and Košťalová observe in their chapter on Slovakian women and political participation, Western feminists who came after the collapse of the socialist bloc were intent on educating local women about the domestic sphere as a realm of patriarchal exploitation. These feminists were unaware that the home meant something different to women in Eastern Europe and that it was construed as a realm of relative autonomy and relative freedom from the intrusions of the state.

The contributors to the volume also ask how the experienced (and imagined) *presocialist* past enters the equation, especially in countries that experienced a relatively short socialist period. In his article on property relations in Poland, Buchowski reminds us that the Soviet period might not have been the most meaningful in terms of shaping Polish attitudes toward property ownership. He claims that when it comes to land, the “transition” in Poland is not about bridging the gap between collectivism and private property, but rather about a *return*, at the

ideological level, to traditional values. Buchowski states that “neoliberal principles with respect to self-reliance and private ownership of agricultural land or means of production in fact coincided with those [Polish citizens] have held ‘forever’” (66). In other contexts, it is the recovery of national culture and identity that is framed as a “return.” Čiubrinskas writes about Lithuanian returnees to Lithuania, and the role they play, as self-proclaimed “experts on Lithuanianess,” in the nation-building and cultural preservation efforts of the country. The notion of return articulated here is important because it challenges the stereotype of an “eternal” civilizational boundary between “advanced” capitalism and “backward” socialism.

Another theme that runs through the volume is the emergence of new hierarchies both *within* and *between* East and Central European societies, whether they be class hierarchies (see the chapter by Buchowski), or the hierarchies that people construct between those considered “civilized” or “uncivilized.” For example, Kubica’s chapter on responses to the gay and lesbian movement in Poland describes how participants in the March for Tolerance equate being “civilized” with respecting human rights and being tolerant of difference in a pluralistic society. Those demonstrating against the march, in contrast, seem to associate gays and lesbians with the decline of civilization and morality. This contest over the meaning of civilization reveals that, as Giordano argues in his Afterword, “something new is actually surfacing in Eastern Europe,” especially if we consider that the two groups in Poland, as Kubica points out, had joined together in protest against the militia under socialism. Citizenries of different countries within Central and Eastern Europe also evaluate one another according to standards of civilized and cultured behavior, as demonstrated in Uherek’s account of the attitudes of Czech citizens toward Ukrainian labour migrants. Overall, more could have been said about the way in which ethnographers themselves situate themselves within these new hierarchies. It would also have been interesting to learn more about the way EU “surveillance” (e.g., in the form of standards and norms) comes to shape these new hierarchies and impact local struggles over what it means to be “normal”, “cultured,” or “civilized.”

Anna Fournier

Kumase, Wokia-azi Ndangle: Aspects of Poverty and Inequality in Cameroon. Frankfurt: Peter Lang, 2010. 153 pp. ISBN 978-3-631-59535-0. (Göttinger Studien zur Entwicklungsökonomik, 28) Price: € 39.80

Mit seiner Dissertation in Entwicklungsökonomie will der Kameruner Wokia Kumase aufzeigen, welche Hürden bei der Überwindung von Armut und Ungleichheit genommen werden müssten, sollte Kamerun die Millennium-Entwicklungsziele erreichen wollen, zu denen sich die Regierung bekannt hat: allen voran bis 2015 die Armut zu halbieren, die Grundschulbildung für alle zu sichern und Gender-Gleichheit herzustellen.

In dem ersten Teil entwickelt Kumase ein Armuts- und Ungleichheitsprofil der 10 Provinzen des Landes, das verdeutlicht, dass trotz eines Anstieges des allgemeinen Le-

bensstandards in den letzten Jahrzehnten, die drei ärmsten Provinzen (Norden, Extremer Norden und Nordwesten) weit zurückgeblieben sind. Als einen weiteren Prüfstein für Ungleichheit untersucht er das Verhältnis zwischen dem formellen und dem informellen Sektor. Angesichts der äußerst hohen Land-Stadtmigration kommt er zu dem Schluss, dass der informelle Sektor, in welchem im ganzen Land mehr als die Hälfte der aktiven Bevölkerung tätig sind, geprägt ist von jungen Leuten mit wenig oder keiner formalen Bildung und ohne Berufsausbildung. In den ländlichen Gebieten, so ermittelt er, leben fast 70 % der Bevölkerung unterhalb der Armutsgrenze.

Trotz der Bedeutung, die er der Gender-Gleichheit in der Einführung beimisst und der er auch ein Kapitel widmet, sind seine Aussagen hierzu nur wenig aussagekräftig. Er diskutiert die Thematik am Beispiel der Kakaoproduktion im Süden des Landes. Eine neue Entwicklung ist, dass Frauen dort Land erwerben können, was dazu führt, dass der Landbesitz individualisiert wird und die traditionellen Bodenbesitzverhältnisse aufgeweicht werden. Ich habe allerdings nirgends gefunden, wie hoch der Frauenanteil an dem Sample von 1.030 untersuchten Kakaobauern ist und wie groß die Anbauflächen der Frauen im Verhältnis zu der der Männer ist. Kumase stellt fest, dass Frauen produktiver sind als Männer. Denn trotz schlechterer Voraussetzungen (weniger fruchtbarer Boden, Doppelbelastung mit Haushalt und Anbau für den Eigenbedarf) fahren sie ähnlich hohe Erträge pro Anbauflächeneinheit ein wie Männer, da sie ihre strukturellen Defizite durch bessere Pflege ihrer Schollen wettmachen. Die Schlussfolgerung Kumases, es wäre dem Lande dienlich, wenn die Gender-Gleichheit in Bezug auf Landerwerb, Materialeinsatz und Technologie erhöht würde, ist gewiss zu unterstreichen, allerdings sind die dorthin führenden Argumente wenig nachvollziehbar.

Insgesamt enthält das Buch keine Überraschungen. Es mag für Wirtschaftswissenschaftler von Bedeutung sein, welche Definition des informellen Sektors bei Marktanalysen benutzt wird – Kumase widmet der Diskussion von drei verschiedenen Modellen ein ganzes von insgesamt fünf Kapiteln – aber für die Erkenntnis, dass mehr Investition in Bildung vonnöten ist, scheint das wenig relevant.

Das Buch könnte dem Kameruner Wirtschaftsministerium Argumente liefern, wo und in welcher Weise Entwicklungsdefizite auszugleichen wären, es mag einen relevanten Beitrag für die Klärung von Begriffen in der Entwicklungsökonomie liefern, an interessierte Laien, die sich ein Bild über Armut und Ungleichheit in Kamerun machen wollen, ist es nicht gerichtet.

Godula Kosack

Kupisiński, Zdzisław: Śmierć jako wydarzenie eschatyczne. Zwyczaje, obrzędy i wierzenia pogrzebowe oraz zaduszkowe mieszkańców regionu opoczyńskiego i radomskiego. [Death as an Eschatological Experience. Funeral Customs, Rituals, and Beliefs along with *Zaduszki* (Remembrance of the Dead) in the Opoczno and Radom Regions of Poland.] Lublin: Wydawnictwo KUL, 2007. 661 pp. ISBN 978-83-7363-447-3. Price: PLN 35.34