

which could shed quite a contrasting light on a broader macro-level picture. Particularly, more inquiry into plural legal and state practice during the Soviet Union could be a starting point to examine contemporary prevalent (national) narratives about the Soviet period and look into contradictions between Caucasian plural legal practice and national historiographies. Such systematic historical appreciation would not only provide more insight in the specifics of “national in form and socialist in content” (see Karpov on p. 35), but also shed light on contemporary misrecognition of legal plural practice in the wider social science research on the Caucasus.

It is unfortunate that the volume is not making more explicit links to other disciplinary “languages” and debates while showing the wider implications of plural legal and state practice. In the introduction the editors relate Safiyev’s article as describing “the informal dealings of ... state representatives” (16), but they do not address debates about informal practices that have been particularly widespread in research on Central and Eastern Europe and the former Soviet Union. In particular, this could have been done by linking Safiyev’s article to Christophe’s and to Di Puppò’s, who both write on systemic aspects of corruption (in unconventional ways), refuting pure incentive-based as well as pure culturalist approaches in looking at corruption as a social institution (Christophe) and outlining the importance to market the fight against corruption as a (story that tells about) success at reforming (Di Puppò). Both with emphasis on legal and state practice in the title of this volume and the contributions they have managed to assemble, the editors have potentially built a powerful bridge to relate to the literature under the heading of “informal practices” or “informality” in the Caucasus and beyond, but missed the opportunity by disregarding this connection. In spite of an incomplete overlap of informal practices with plural legal and state practices, in many instances they describe the flip side of similar or even the same social phenomena. Specifying this linkage could facilitate a better communication across disciplinary boundaries in the social sciences, for instance, of anthropologists with new-institutionalists, and enhance the flow of anthropological knowledge into neighbouring disciplines. Further, to point out this connection could also highlight how a *longue-durée* historical perspective that looks through a prism of historical plural legal practice sheds new light on change and continuity; something which has hardly been discussed in a framework of transition and transformation debates in the post-Soviet space, of which the Caucasus is a part.

Apart from the few shortcomings that I have outlined, Voell and Kaliszewska have not only assembled contributions by a particularly impressive range of authors, who work on both the North and the South Caucasus, anthropologists and ethnographers of various generations and intellectual traditions, but also scope and perspective of this volume make it a much needed and long-awaited, seminal contribution in regional terms. This edited volume can be considered a milestone for the study of the state and politics in Caucasus, but is also of particular interest for the field of the anthropology of law, anthropol-

ogy of the state, and wider political anthropology, particularly because the Caucasus is an area with an important history of legal pluralism. While the target audience are primarily scholars of political anthropology and of the Caucasus, it is also suitable for an interested public.

Andrea Weiss

Widiyanto, Asfa: Religious Authority and the Prospects for Religious Pluralism in Indonesia. The Role of Traditionalist Muslim Scholars. Zürich: Lit Verlag, 2016. 161 pp. ISBN 978-3-643-90650-2. (Southeast Asian Modernities, 17) Price: € 29.90

This book presents the hypothesis that a traditionalism seeking harmony between Islamic values and local culture and wisdom is likely to be an appropriate basis for the prosperity of religious pluralism in contemporary Indonesia. This will happen on condition that those who promote pluralism achieve credibility and great acceptance at the grass-root level. Basing himself on this insight, Widiyanto examines the discourse and practice of religious pluralism promoted by two Indonesian Muslim figures, A. Mustofa Bisri (b. 1944) and Emha Ainun Nadjib (b. 1953), whom he categorizes as belonging to the traditionalist segment. He focuses on their roles in the encouragement of pluralism in Indonesian public life, and the methods through which their ideas have attained influence in contemporary Indonesian Islam.

Widiyanto utilizes the concepts of “role,” “agency,” and “authority,” proposed by R. H. Turner (Role Theory. In: J. H. Turner, Handbook of Sociological Theory. New York 2002), Emirbayer and Mische (What Is Agency? *American Journal of Sociology* 103.1998: 962–1023), and Zambrano (Authority, Social Theories of. In: N. J. Smelser and P. B. Baltes [eds.], International Encyclopedia of the Social and Behavioral Sciences. Amsterdam 2001), respectively. He engages with these concepts to investigate the positioning of both figures in their encouragement of religious pluralism. He sees the notion of “role” as an appropriate tool to understand their influence on the reception of pluralism ideas among Indonesian people. The concept of “agency” is utilized to clarify the notion of role, emphasizing its reliance upon interaction and communication, and pointing out that a “role” is something that needs to be achieved, and cannot be considered as given. The recognition of this role by the society is, in turn, translated into “authority” (10–17).

The book proposes a stimulating argument that religious pluralism is likely to grow smoothly on the basis of traditionalist ideas. Accordingly, efforts to promote the idea of pluralism under the framework of liberal or modern Islam are considered unnecessary (30). For Widiyanto, the roles of both figures in encouraging pluralism in public life are distinct when compared to those of liberal Muslim network (JIL)-affiliated scholars and purely Muslim intellectuals.

One significant point is the method by which both figures are identified as what Widiyanto calls “traditionalist scholars” (for example, see p. 30). Bisri no doubt belongs to the core current of traditionalist scholarship,

being a member of Nahdlatul Ulama (NU). Moreover, he is the son of a renowned NU scholar, Bisri Mustofa (1915–1977), and is believed to have inherited charisma from his father (5, 94). Emha Ainun Nadjib, on the other hand, is believed to have a close connection with the modern Muslim organization, Muhammadiyah, but grew up in the NU milieu in Jombang (59, 90), but, nevertheless, is said to be an independent figure (84). He completed his primary education in the NU-affiliated Pesantren Tebuireng and his secondary education in a Muhammadiyah school in Yogyakarta. Widiyanto locates them in the realm of traditionalism on the grounds that both of them have remained committed to the encouragement of Islamic values in harmony with local cultures and wisdoms. Moreover, the expressions that have won support among their followers are very much inspired with the Sufism developed in the pesantren milieu, a body of Islamic thinking that promotes more peaceful Islamic teachings (6).

The whole book is divided into three main chapters with exception of the introduction and the conclusion. Chapter 1 (19–30) discusses the issues of intolerance, pluralism, and politics among contemporary Indonesian Muslims. This chapter underlines the fall of Suharto in 1998 as the entry point to the freedom of expression among the Indonesian people. A number of radical groups benefited from that situation and have subsequently been able to grow and expand. Widiyanto points out that both Bisri and Nadjib consider religious pluralism itself as a civic-political concept, not as theological discourse (21 f.). It is on this basis that both figures have ob-

tained high acceptance among the society (131–135). A different situation appeared when JIL-affiliated scholars and other independent intellectuals attempted to develop a theological basis for pluralism. As Widiyanto notes, they were not successful in this project due to its complexity in content and the difficulty of understanding it posed at grassroots level (29 f.).

The main argument of this book is presented in the next two chapters. Chapter 2 focuses on the roles of Bisri and Nadjib in their efforts of encouraging pluralism in public life. Chapter 3, on the other hand, highlights the methods relied upon by these figures in their lifelong endeavors to develop their authority. It also highlights the ways they circulated their ideas through intensive communicative interactions and discussion with the society, especially with their respective followings. Their ideas appeared in and are accessible through various media such as essays, poetry, paintings, musical performances as well as through web 2.0., such as twitter, blog, facebook, and website.

In the conclusion, Widiyanto re-emphasizes the importance of looking at pluralism as discourse and practice in the context of Indonesian public life, in which both Bisri and Nadjib play important roles. In so doing, both have remained focused on the application of religious pluralism as civic-political concept that is more understandable and acceptable at the grassroot level. Widiyanto is very optimistic about the future of religious pluralism on the grounds that it can be asserted in harmony with the traditionalism to which a great segment of the Indonesia population is affiliated.

Ervan Nurtawab

