



The Author

Eike Hinz, born in 1945 in Goslar/Harz (Germany), studied Ancient American Languages and Cultures, Ethnology and General Linguistics, and, in addition, Philosophy, Sociology, and Psychology at the University of Hamburg (1964-1969). He received his Ph.D. in 1969 (1970) and spent one and a half years as a Visiting Scholar at the University of California at Irvine on the basis of a ‘Habilitation’ grant from the German Science Foundation (1972-74) for the “*Analysis of Aztec Systems of Thought*” (in German, F. Steiner 1978) and for Cognitive Anthropology. He received his ‘Habilitation’ (equivalent to ‘Docteur d’État’) in 1975 and became a ‘Privatdozent’ (equivalent to a ‘Maître de conférence’ or ‘Associate Professor’). Since 1977 he has been a life-tenured Professor of Ancient American Languages and Cultures at the University of Hamburg. He participated in the one-month Cognitive Science workshop “Artificial Intelligence and Natural Language Processing” in 1978 at Yale University, New Haven. He did his field-work among the Q’anjob’al Maya of Guatemala (1980-1981 and 1983; “*Mistrust leads to Death*”, in Q’anjob’al and German [data], 2 vols., Wayasbah 1991; “*Existence and Identity: Reconciliation and Self-organization through Q’anjob’al Maya Divination* [analysis], Books on Demand 2008 [in English]). In 1991, he took early retirement because of a ‘working accident’ in Guatemala. He has conducted private studies in Cognitive Neurobiology. He has since lived predominantly in the regions of the Indian Ocean and the Pacific, and in 2005, served as Honorary Research Fellow in Anthropology at the University of Western Australia, Perth. Part of his more recent research and experience is summarized in his book “*Outline of a Philosophical Anthropology. Regulators of Freedom: Reciprocity and Self-organization*”, Books on Demand 2006 [in English]. His research on the cognitive and political anthropology of early Inner Switzerland resulted in his book “*Landsgemeinde und Bundesbriefe*” (Online-Druck.biz & Research Gate 2016).

The Book

I wrote the present book “*The Political Anthropology of Inner Switzerland*” as a social anthropologist and ethnohistorian. I focus on the analysis of the standardized terminology, concept formation and routines (1) in the Letters of Freedom (exemplified by the key Letter of 1240 which I show to have been issued for Uri and Unterwalden, too, in addition to Schwyz); (2) in the Concessions of Local Jurisdiction (highlighted by the Concession of 1309 for Unterwalden); (3) in the Federal Charters covering the treaties of the Swiss Confederation (exemplified by the Federal Charter of 1315 containing a critical concept of power and sovereignty). (4) I deal with the social composition of the Cantonal Assembly on the basis of direct and indirect evidence, e.g. the addresses of official letters. (5) My analysis of the organization and function of the Cantonal Assembly is primarily based upon its earliest collection of decisions and regulations, the ‘Landbook of Schwyz’. (6) The more documents I read in context the more I developed doubts on the authenticity of some pertinent documents. Thus I reevaluated and reinterpreted several central documents. (7) Analyzing features of the struggle for freedom and mutuality in early Inner Switzerland leads me to consider explanatory mechanisms and structural contexts of the operation of the Cantonal Assembly. I consider the Cantonal Assembly to represent an institutional case of strong reciprocity. In terms of state formation and nation building, we are dealing with a fascinating, historically unique and theoretically still inspiring case. At the basis is the swearing-in of the whole (adult male) population constituting the organization of the Cantonal Assembly, the Confederation and society itself at that time.

Eike Hinz The Political Anthropology of Inner Switzerland in the 13th and 14th Centuries

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The Political Anthropology of Inner Switzerland in the 13th and 14th Centuries The Struggle for Freedom and Mutuality

Cantonal Assembly, Federal Charters
and Letters of Freedom

