

gieren, kann die Lektüre dieses Buches allen empfohlen werden, die sich mit den aktuellen Diskussionen und Ausstellungspraxen ozeanischer Kunst beschäftigen. Viele unterschiedliche Aspekte werden aufgezeigt und diskutiert. Dabei gewinnt der Band vor allem durch die Beiträge jener Autoren, die sich seit vielen Jahren mit dem Thema befassen – nicht nur theoretisch, sondern auch praktisch: als Ausstellungsmacher im Spannungsfeld von und Dialog mit Galeristen, Besuchern, Museumskollegen, vorgesetzten Behörden sowie pazifischen Künstlern und Gesprächspartnern.

Hilke Thode-Arora

Edwards, Jeanette, and Carles Salazar (eds.): *European Kinship in the Age of Biotechnology*. New York: Berghahn Books, 2009. 224 pp. ISBN 978-1-84545-573-6. (Fertility, Reproduction, and Sexuality, 14) Price: £ 55.00

This book is a collection of articles resulting from a research project called “Public Understanding of the New Genetics.” It comprises eleven chapters, the last of which, written by one of the editors, functions as a kind of theoretical review and analysis of the previous; as well as an introduction by the other editor. The book further includes an author and a subject index, and notes on the contributors. The project included anthropologists from across Europe who met and communicated regularly, but who each pursued their own individual research. It is probably due to this set-up that the book achieves the feat of combining incredibly varied chapters whilst still retaining a clear common focus and to some extent internal consistency. What holds it all together is the theoretical situation within the “new kinship” studies; unsurprisingly, nearly every author refers to David M. Schneider as well as to Marilyn Strathern and/or Sarah Franklin.

The opening chapter (Joan Bestard) explores meanings given to gametes by Spanish donor egg recipients. It shows nicely how the relationship-establishing meaning of genetics can flexibly be relativised in order to create nongenetic continuity between mother and donor-egg child. This is followed by a discussion of kinship and, distinctively different, family thinking in the context of assisted reproductive technologies in Lithuania (Aukšulė Čepaitienė). The author explores how a child binds a family together and creates kinship between its parents. The next chapter revolves around food, particularly genetically modified food, and kinship in northern England (Cathrine Degnen). The author finds that feeding and eating are involved in the reproduction of social relationships in that feeding your child in a particular way makes you a particular parent. Further, she highlights the responsibility of parents towards children; by feeding them, parents make particular children (smart, healthy, pure ones). From here we return to Spain, specifically to Catalonia (Diana Marre and Joan Bestard). Here, the contributors discuss how in adoption contexts, resemblance is constructed as something that is discovered, after which it can serve as underlying basis for the kinship

between parents and adoptees; from which the child can later individuate. Turning to France, the focus now lies on homoparental families. The author (Anne Cadoret) conceptually distinguishes between production (of human beings) and reproduction (of kinship). As the two tend to coincide in heterosexual families, she argues that homoparental families are an ideal site to study them separately, thus illustrating kinning processes which often remain obscure. Chapter six (Nathalie Manrique) again takes us to Spain, though this time to a minority Gypsy community. Here, according to the author’s argument, the symbolic meaning of blood is distinguished from the meaning of genes; the former can take on more various implications than the latter. She interestingly continues to elaborate the entanglement between monogenetic procreation ideologies based on blood and power relations. From here we move to a historical analysis of European incest regulations (Enric Porqueres i Gené and Jérôme Wilgoux). Following the transition from thinking in terms of blood to thinking in terms of genes, the authors emphasize historical as well as geographical continuities rather than radical novelty as it is often attributed to the Western late modern period. This they achieve by assuming a universality about kinship, namely, that it has to do with consubstantiality. Next, focusing again on a particular ethnographic context, fostering in Hungary (Enikő Demény) reveals the value given to “own” children, i.e., children conceived by sexual relations between their parents. Foster mothers do endeavour to create social relations to their foster children by emphasizing intention and agency, however, this happens in a context where only the biogenetic relation is valued. In Norway, in contrast, a clear transition has taken place towards valuing and legitimising adoptive relationship “as if” they were biogenetic (Marit Melhuus and Signe Howell). This was possible only in recognition of the difference between biological and social connectedness. Exploring adoption and reproductive technology legislation, the authors show that at the same time a clear shift occurred towards thinking in terms of genes; biogenetic origins and rights are collapsed and seen to confer identity. The penultimate chapter (Ben Campell) takes us back to England and debates about genetically modified food. The author illustrates how, deprived of the possibility of arguing in social or economic terms against scientific truth claims, protesters construct a kind of nonhuman kinship solidarity with birds, symbolising the natural environment in general. Kinship, he concludes, always needs to be placed in context; and this context must include non-human interactions. Finally, the theoretical last chapter (Carles Salazar) distinguishes between truth knowledge (genetics) and symbolic knowledge (kinship) and is thus able to understand how the two need not necessarily coincide; this conceptualisation might prove useful for grasping the seeming paradoxes of situations where people oscillate between different ways of explaining kinship.

So, given that it has been a good decade and a half since the “new kinship” studies really took off, what new insights does this book provide? I would argue that it goes beyond filling gaps in the understanding of varying

ways of kinship thinking across Europe, although this is clearly an important contribution as well; too often is “European” or even “Euro-American” kinship thinking subsumed into one large and apparently homogeneous category. This book’s approach, focusing always on local rather than general kinship, demonstrates how varied actual kinship thinking across Europe is. Particularly, it reveals that what distinguishes different European localities from each other is how the contradictions between modern biogenetics and older kinship symbols such as blood, breath, seed and soil, love and solidarity, or nurturing, are made sense of. What further distinguishes this book is that every chapter, in some way or other, pushes at and expands the boundaries of “new kinship.” This occurs where kinship thinking is connected to seemingly unrelated technologies such as GM food or the nonhuman environment, just as much as where distance is sought from high tech and novelty and the focus lies instead on making sense of “old” kinship topics such as fostering, adoption, and incest rules – albeit from a perspective situated in an “age of biotechnology.” On a theoretical level, though all contributors acknowledge Strathern’s influence on their work, they seek to move beyond her concepts, experimenting with crossovers from Actor-Network-Theory (Latour), Foucault, Descola, or even “new structuralism.” However, whilst this boundary-stretching makes the book very intriguing, it is also where it fails in being internally consistent. Each contributor points to new and exciting ideas, topics, or concepts; but due to their shortness, the chapters cannot fully develop those ideas, must remain vague and, therefore, not fully convincing. Put together as a book, it seems clear that the authors are coming from a similar starting point, but there is confusion as to where they are going – each pushing in a slightly different direction. This might very well be an effect of taking the “new kinship” studies out of the context in which they were originally developed – which was mostly England, and to some extent the United States, rather than continental Europe. Overall, this book, therefore, also could be said to reveal a certain Anglo-American bias in “new kinship.” Its strength lies in exploring possible avenues of what ethnographically researching “new kinship” across Europe could look like and where it might go, without however providing any definite answers.

Shahanah Schmid

Eldredge, Elizabeth A.: *Power in Colonial Africa. Conflict and Discourse in Lesotho, 1870–1960.* Madison: The University of Wisconsin Press, 2007. 275 pp. ISBN 978-0-299-22370-0. Price: \$ 65.00

Historians of Africa, following developments in anthropology and in literary theory, have made enormous advances in our understanding of the colonial encounter. Thirty years ago, historians had begun questioning the ethnic categories that had organized knowledge about Africa’s past and present, but they still largely accepted the divisions of colonizer and colonized. Closely-textured studies of rule were still to come, the daily ex-

ercise of power, the nature of authority and, crucially, the ways Africans understood and ultimately shaped the emerging colonial order. Exploring these themes requires extended work in a wide range of archival and oral sources. There are also daunting interpretive challenges that raise the possibilities, but perhaps also the limits, of an anthropologically engaged history.

“Power in Colonial Africa” takes up the early colonial history of Lesotho, a tiny mountain kingdom surrounded by South Africa. Its modern political history is rooted in the early part of the nineteenth century, when a centralized state emerged during a period of enormous conflict in the wider region. Eldredge, who has written extensively on Lesotho’s history, is mainly concerned with the era of rising British imperial supremacy. Lesotho became a protectorate, much like Bechuanaland (now Botswana) to the north. But throughout the period Eldredge explores, there was always the real possibility that Lesotho might be absorbed by the region’s behemoth, South Africa.

Eldredge is principally interested in a close reading of rule and what less subtle scholars might simply term “resistance.” This brings her attention toward magistrates and chiefs, the ways people subverted the claims of the more powerful, processes such as legal proceedings as well as moments of outright rebellion. Parts of “Power in Colonial Africa” revisit events explored by an earlier generation of historians interested in describing African resistance, for example, the famous Moorosi Rebellion. The general outline of Eldredge’s narrative is well-known: the coming of colonial rule; the importance of BaSotho elites in negotiating with the British; the politics of law and custom; and the making of an independent Lesotho. Eldredge, however, wants to dig beneath the proverbial surface of formal politics, to understand BaSotho conceptions of power and authority and the ambiguities of rule. The result is an empirically rich social and cultural study of the colonial order that will be a great help to scholars of Lesotho.

In other respects, “Power in Colonial Africa” seems much less fresh. It has now been nearly twenty years since anthropologists and historians have embarked on the cultural history of colonialism. This literature has been especially strong with regard to Southern Africa and in other areas of the world such as South Asia. Many of the analytical points Eldredge makes seem unsurprising. It is not at all clear how “Power in Colonial Africa” substantively advances the literature. Eldredge struggles to poke holes in the works of others, often without attribution. Often the tone is unnecessarily mean-spirited. Her understanding of theory is quite suspect. She seems especially angry with “postmodernism,” arguing that it is largely influenced by anthropology. Some scholars get mislabeled as “Marxists.” And so on. Fads come and go. Certainly scholars are capable of writing silly things, including Eldredge, who seems to think murder is a “discursive act.” What we sorely need is work that fundamentally changes the way we approach the study of colonialism. “Power in Colonial Africa” is not that work.

Clifton Crais