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 homogenous 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 exercise 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 Eldrege 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