

zise: "Die Mehrzahl der Einwohner Sudans, vor allem im Norden des Landes, bekennt sich zum Islam. Daneben glauben zahlreiche Menschen an christliche und afrikanische Religionen" (9). Mehr ist über die ethnische und religiöse Zusammensetzung des Sudan nicht zu finden.

"Das Buch analysiert die seit mehreren Jahren im Sudan herrschende Krise, die sich aus Nationalitäts-, Religions- und Stammeskonflikten zusammensetzt" heißt es auf dem Buchdeckel. Doch fehlt gerade die Analyse, und keiner der verwendeten Begriffe wird überhaupt definiert. Damit schweben die Aussagen im leeren Raum. So kann ich mir auch aus dem Schlusssatz des Artikels von Melha Rout Biel, Doktorand der Politikwissenschaft, keinen Reim machen: "Während die Chancen für Frieden im Süden gut sind, bleiben jedoch noch viele Fragen unbeantwortet, z. B. ob man von einem Frieden im Sudan sprechen kann, wenn die Krise in Darfur weitergeführt wird. Die Krise in Darfur stellt ein deutliches Zeichen für das Scheitern des Zusammenlebens zwischen arabischen und afrikanischen Stämmen im Sudan dar" (36f.). Ich frage: Sind die arabischen Stämme im Sudan keine Afrikaner? Weiter heißt es: "Aus meiner Sicht spielt es dabei keine Rolle, ob ein Schwarzafrikaner an den Islam oder das Christentum glaubt. Wenn er oder sie durch die seit der Unabhängigkeit des Sudans regierende arabischen Minderheit nicht an der Macht und Ressourcen des Landes beteiligt und als Bürger zweiter Klasse behandelt wird, sind Widerstand und damit kriegerische Auseinandersetzungen nicht vermeidbar" (37). Ich frage weiter: Hat der Frieden eine Chance oder nicht, und wo kann es Frieden geben, wenn nicht im ganzen Lande?

Der zweite Beitrag über die "Warlords im Sudan" von der Psychologiestudentin Maria Roth könnte als ein Referat für das Studium durchgehen, doch für eine "wissenschaftliche" Publikation weist er doch zu große Schwächen auf: "Neben den innerlich zutiefst verletzten Frauen sind es vor allem die Leichen, die das Bild der Neuen Kriege kennzeichnen" (60). Roths Schlussfolgerungen überzeugen kaum: "Möglichkeiten, diesem grausamen Treiben (der Warlords) ein Ende im Sudan zu bereiten, würden darin liegen, dem Land Sanktionen über Öl und Waffen aufzuerlegen. Doch genau dies geschieht nicht. Nur schwacher Druck wird auf das sudanesisches Regime ausgelöst, da der Ölreichtum des Landes für andere Staaten eine zu hohe Rolle spielt" (68f.).

Der 18-seitige Aufsatz des Studenten der Politikwissenschaft Isaac Wel Majak macht mir die Zusammenhänge im Sudan auch nicht besser begreiflich. Nachdem kurz über drei Militärputsche der postkolonialen Zeit berichtet wird, folgt ein kurzer Abriss über den Konflikt im Darfur. Dann lese ich bereits das Fazit: "Es lässt sich zusammenfassend festhalten, dass die Periode der politischen Unabhängigkeit des Sudans von Machtkämpfen, Orientierungslosigkeit der Parteien und einem völligen Versagen der in Angriff genommenen parlamentarischen Demokratie gekennzeichnet war. Gründe für dieses Scheitern und den ständigen Wechsel zwischen parlamentarischem System und Militärdiktatur sind wohl nicht zuletzt in den Kolonialzeiten zu suchen" (88). Es macht sich immer gut, den Kolonialismus anzuprangern, aber ich

wüsste gerne, woran er in diesem Falle schuld ist. Wel Majaks Schlusssatz ist nur als Polemik zu deuten und keineswegs aus seinen Ausführungen abzuleiten, wenn er schreibt: "Die Versklavung der schwarzen Afrikaner ist deshalb Ausdruck eines alten rassistischen Glaubensprinzips, welches besagt, dass Schwarzafrikaner dazu geboren würden, Sklaven der Araber zu sein" (89).

Ich frage mich, ob der Peter Lang Verlag seine AutorInnen überhaupt betreut? Zahlreiche Grammatik-, Orthographie- und Ausdrucksfehler hätten ohne Weiteres vermieden werden können. Schwieriger wäre es geworden, die inhaltlichen Ungereimtheiten zu korrigieren. Aber was ist eigentlich die Aufgabe eines wissenschaftlichen Verlags? Godula Kosack

Bollig, Michael: Risk Management in a Hazardous Environment. A Comparative Study of Two Pastoral Societies. New York: Springer, 2006. 442 pp. ISBN 0-387-27581-9. Price: \$ 125.00

The two societies that are considered here are the Pokot of northern Kenya and the Himba of northwest Namibia. Both have a mixed economy with an ideological emphasis on pastoralism. The Pokot grew out of displaced migrants from surrounding patrilineal societies in the early nineteenth century. The unifying force that emerged from this growing assortment of peoples was the adoption of a shared age and generation system, which enabled them to assume a dominant position in their region. Because of their remoteness and egalitarian belligerence, they have retained an aloof autonomy and have only recently begun to participate in the developing economy of Kenya.

The Himba as a people have a less flamboyant but more chequered history. They accepted a subservient role as mercenaries and local traders in the early European conquest of the area. Then, their economic involvement was suppressed by the colonial administration during much of the twentieth century, and they emerged from this period with a system based largely on local barter that did not prepare them for adaptation to the modern economy. While residential groups were patrilineal, cattle passed down matrilineally in adelphic succession from brother to brother, leaving younger men to rely on cattle loans from their wealthy senior kin. This created a system of patronage with considerable inequalities and random windfalls of wealth, credit, and responsibility with each inheritance.

This work concerns the experience and perception of hazards in the two pastoral economies, and their coping strategies for reducing uncertainties and minimizing the risks. Growing population pressure among the Pokot and overgrazing has had its impact on their pastureland, which has been reduced to semidesert. By comparison, pressure on Himba pastures has been relatively stable, and this has enabled their herds to provide the human population with a richer diet than the Pokot, despite the fact that there is also evidence of diminishing rainfall and diversity in their habitat. Of particular interest is the contrast between their networks of exchange, which are

more uniformly dense and extensive among the Pokot, reflecting a more egalitarian distribution of wealth and a widespread sharing of foods and access to resources. Whereas among the Himba, there is a substantial proportion of marginal players who depend heavily on senior kin as their patrons at the nodes of a more loosely integrated network. This is characterised by loans rather than free exchange and it restricts the widespread sharing of resources. Correspondingly, intermarriage is between wholly unrelated families among the Pokot, whereas it is ideally between close kin among the Himba.

The most impressive aspect of this work is the mass of detail that the author systematically brings to bear on his subject, drawing tables and illustrations from a wide range of sources. This is essential for any work that seeks to raise economic anthropology above the level of generalization and anecdote, and it is no mean task. By examining the management of risk in these two marginal economies from so many points of view, the book deserves to become a standard reference work for future research on this topic.

By selecting two very different and unrelated types of pastoral society, the author is in a position to highlight some of the similarities that appear to have a more general significance. However, the choice of comparing these two particular peoples appears to have been due to chance rather than design, presumably because the opportunity to switch his research from Pokot to Himba presented itself. In anthropology, there is a widespread practice of comparing pastoral societies within the same region and culture complex, and this has been very fruitful in raising local insights to a higher level. Age/generation systems in East Africa (Pokot) on the one hand and matrilineal systems elsewhere (Himba) have each posed paradoxes and dilemmas that lend themselves to comparative resolution. In as much as the analysis of risk has an institutional dimension (11), one would have liked to probe further into the ramifications of these examples through more comparison with their near neighbours. The Pokot and Himba are too far apart in too many ways, and this lessens the value of comparison, except at this very general level.

Again, the collation of tables in this work relies on material that is available, and this is valuable in itself. But it also points to limitations of this material. Thus, demographic data have a clear relevance in the analysis of risk, but the quality of what is available from these remoter parts is rather uneven. Polygyny, for instance, has a vital bearing on strategies for family development and growth, but the estimate that the Pokot have a rate of 2.6 wives per elder while the Himba have only 1.5 and frequent divorce is too crude. How do these rates vary with age and with wealth? Do the figures relate to current, serial, or terminal polygyny – and, of course, how were they collected? Again, factual details of the workings of the Pokot age-generation system are sparse, whereas restrictions on marriage with age and generation in this region have a critical bearing on resource management, and this raises more questions than are answered here.

Finally, we should all be grateful for the immense care that the author has taken in collating data from

a wide variety of sources as a gift for future research. However, his references frequently omit the actual page of a cited work, leaving any quizzical reader with the unrealistic task of searching through a whole article or even book to pursue some obscure reference. Thus in his concluding chapter, which ranges widely over the literature, I counted 160 references of which only 37 actually cited the relevant pages. This loose usage is very common in anthropological publications, although it would be regarded as bad practice in any doctoral dissertation and unheard of among historians. Rather than castigate the author for this lapse, I would just note with sadness that it diminishes the value of the effort that he has put into this volume for the very readers that it is primarily intended.

Paul Spencer

Boyer, Dominic: *Spirit and System. Media, Intellectuals, and the Dialectic in Modern German Culture.* Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 2005. 323 pp. ISBN 0-226-06891-9. Price: \$ 22.00

As the title suggests, this is an ambitious and complex book, but also very unconventional. Dominic Boyer, assistant professor of anthropology at Cornell University, begins his study of German dialectics and journalism with a highly theoretical chapter on the conceptualization and formation of dialectical social knowledge. This very cerebral, but also problematic chapter is followed by three others, of a more analytical and historical nature, examining first the *Bildungsbürgertum* and the “Dialectics of Germanness” in the nineteenth century and proceeding to a discussion of the “Dialectical Politics of Cultural Redemption in the Third Reich and the GDR,” before focusing on “Self, System, and Other in Eastern Germany after 1989.” The book’s final chapter seeks to combine a theoretical section with a series of case studies on “Dialectical Knowledges of the Contemporary.”

My understanding of the study was severely hampered by two problems: (1) The author’s language is very specialized and/or rich in Americanisms. Much of his diction was incomprehensible to me, despite having been a British resident for almost forty years. Here just one example: “With ‘dialectical social knowledge,’ I mean specifically knowledges of social dynamics, relations, and forms that center on perceived ontological tensions between the temporality of potentiality and actuality and between the spatiality of interiority and exteriority” (10). If the source were not known, one might be forgiven for believing this to be a spoof on a George Bush speech. (2) Boyer employs terms which deviate significantly from their traditional use in history and philosophy. He maintains that both “dialectical social knowledge” and *System* “inhere” in theory and philosophy and that they are very much at home in German epistemological thought, “a speciality (or an obsession) within German intellectual culture” (12). For Boyer a *System* is “an apt metaphor for social totality in a variety of informal speech contexts”; he observes that these terms, when employed by Habermas and Luhmann, appear in “a different, more formal and elite register, in the