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Matter for Metaphor from Ancient Rome to the Present

Edited by

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Bernhard Jussen,
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Preface

The nexus of kinship and blood has a taste of age-old ideologies. Today, the connection between kinship and blood is little more than a metaphoric one. But current notions of kinship still owe a great deal to ideas about the physiological connections between kin and what these imply: ideas about shared and exchanged matter and bodily substances, about combining and genes, DNA-sequences, or about passing on characteristics, abilities, and diseases from one generation to the next. What are the continuities and ruptures in conceptions of physiology of kinship—and of metaphors of blood? This book wants to contribute to a history of the substances of relatedness. Its particular focus is on blood, and on how blood went in and out of the ways in which kinship was imagined, conceptualized, attributed relevance and meaning—and related to broader communities such as religious communities, estates, nations, and ethnic groups. It takes up a number of critical moments in these developments between ancient Rome and the present, focusing its gaze for the most part on Europe.

Blood and Kinship has grown out of an extended discussion among an international group of historians who want to take kinship seriously as an approach to the history of Europe. These discussions have, besides individual publications, led to several collective volumes representing stages in the group's work. The initial volume, *Kinship in Europe: Approaches to Long-Term Development (1300–1900)* took issue with ideas about the long-term development of kinship implied in most modernization narratives, namely that kinship in Europe over centuries lost ever more of its importance. Instead we sketched alternative models of long-term development and pointed to how kinship played a productive

role in processes usually associated with modernization such as state building, migration, or industrialization. The subsequent volume, *Sibling Relations and the Transformations of European Kinship, 1300–1900*, took a closer look at developments of one particular dyad to show how kinship organization went through major transformations between the Middle Ages and the nineteenth century. The recently published volume *Transregional and Transnational families in Europe and Beyond: Experiences since the Middle Ages*, relates kinship organization to patterns of migration and thus demonstrates the role of kinship in highly dynamic social processes. The decision to do a fourth volume on blood came as response to the observation that genetics and technologies of fertility today provide some of the principal occasions to debate kinship—and to do so, once more, in terms of bodily substances.

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Introduction

David Warren Sabean and Simon Teuscher

Cultural assumptions about how kinship is related to physiology and sexual reproduction have come in for reexamination in light of a series of new issues. The rapid acceleration in decoding DNA together with progress in reproductive technologies has brought renewed interest in the biological dimensions of parenthood, heredity, and filiation. Around such questions as medical genealogies, paternity testing, new reproductive technologies, and race-specific medicine, a new direction in social anthropological research has developed, calling itself the "New Kinship Studies."[1] This renaissance in research also comes in the aftermath of the 1984 critique by David Schneider, which had already destabilized kinship studies, once at the core of social anthropology.[2] Schneider claimed that traditional anthropological research was inevitably compromised by its tendency without reflection to project assumptions about "American" or "Western" kinship onto foreign cultures—in particular, assumptions about common physiological substance, blood, or genetic material. The new kinship studies pick up the challenge by reconceptualizing processes of "relatedness" and reexamining how different cultures construct an understanding of the substances that are thought to determine who kin are and how people are related to one another.[3]

While anthropologists have taken on a new research agenda for non-Western cultures and occasionally turn their attention today to Western subjects, they have not yet begun historical critical work on Western categories themselves. Schneider failed to notice that kinship in Europe

has been anything but a stable entity, that it has gone through numerous reconfigurations over the centuries, that is has been the topic of controversies, and that it has always been the subject of comment in one way or another by theologians, lawyers, physicians, philosophers, and scientists. And today's anthropological studies of Western constructs such as "blood," "substance," and "relatedness" display the same ahistorical point of view. Yet these ideas also have complex historical stories necessary to a balanced understanding and waiting to be told. This book takes on the task of following the career of that substance, "blood," that appears to offer the most difficulty for cultural analysis. It is meant to open up discussion about mapping the use of blood in representations of family and kinship relations from the ancient world to the present, with a primary, reflective focus on Europe.

We can now see that anthropologists, writing in the 1980s, were symptomatic of a shift in research that affected more than one discipline. At the same time, historians began to reconceptualize the study of the family in the West by boldly—or perhaps naively—taking up the concept of "kinship," just as anthropologists were losing heart.[4] Historians found the idea to be a genial construct with which to think through a critique of the modernization paradigm and the self-sufficiency and exceptionality of the West. There had been a configuration of fields in the nineteenth century, consolidated during the first three quarters of the twentieth, which had understood the history of the family in the West essentially to be tied up with a progressive narrowing down of people related to each other and a steady shrinking of households to essentially "mom, dad, and the kids." The "rise of the nuclear family" was closely tied up with schemes of modernization and histories of the development of individualism and capitalism. The discipline that had taken over the responsibility for tracking the changes was sociology. In the meantime, the non-Western world was described as having kinship, and its investigation had been relegated to anthropology. The result was a sharp contrast in studies between the sociology of the family inside the West and the anthropology of kinship for the rest. One of the things that historians have been busy doing is challenging the old assumptions that anthropologists held about their own societies.

The three representatives of New Kinship Studies who write chapters in this book—Janet Carsten, Kath Weston, and Sarah Franklin—are led, each in her own way, to ask questions about history. Franklin, for example, argues that the current debate over the cultural consequences of genetics and the new reproductive technologies has become "blooded." By this she means that even in the discourses about revolutionary scientific discoveries, traditional ideas about physiologically founded ties are mo-

bilized by notions of "blood communities," "pure blood," or "mixing of blood." Blood awakens associations with ancient ideas. But the problem is that we know very little about the history of thinking about blood and kinship in Western cultures. We do know, however, that there have been radically different notions in medical, theological, and juridical thought that have shaped how blood has been conceptualized and what roles it has played. Long before any excitement about genetic technologies, there were central themes, around 1500, for example, which for lack of a better word might be summarized as "proto-racism." Here, blood became the core of intensive debates about hereditary nobility or about essential differences among groups with different descent. While these ideas can be seen at work in the discrimination against Christians of Jewish descent in Iberia that developed around the notion of *limpieza de sangre*, they were also marshaled to rethink notions of connectedness, group recruitment and cohesion, and the distribution of rights and duties in many different ways throughout all the European cultural areas. In some ways, the "work" that blood came to do—which Franklin recognizes in the new genetics discourse—began its historical development in this period.

Anthropologists were quick to talk about popular or "folk" ideas of reproduction in the West without knowing much about them—much less about their history. And the anthropological literature has taken from a cursory, thoroughly ahistorical consideration of canon law the idea that the West "always" or "essentially" has been dominated by "cognatic" structures, bilineality, and "ego-focused" reckoning, notions that preclude the formation of groups through descent. These various terms imply that Western notions of kinship have always rested on an equal mixing of maternal and paternal blood, and that, therefore, lineage constructs, such as those based on agnatic or uterine descent, are impossible. This is simply false, as has been demonstrated by a growing number of historical studies of conceptions and practices of kinship in Europe from the Middle Ages to the present time. In three earlier books, the editors of this volume called on scholars to explore aspects of kinship in their regional and temporal complexity, always with an emphasis on social interaction.[5] Perhaps it is safe to say that their conceptual apparatus was largely developed through reflection on the long, "pre-crisis" anthropological scholarship and a concern with social practices. Yet, clearly, the time has come to engage more directly with the New Kinship Studies and to explore ideas of "relatedness" and offer an historical, critical account of the ways "substance"—in this case "blood"—has been employed in the European past to make connectedness.

This collection of current scholarship is a first attempt to reflect on many of the ways that kinship and substance have been thought about

and put into play in Europe from ancient societies to the present. There is no attempt to cover all of the issues. On the contrary, the further we opened up the theme, the clearer it became that it raises many new questions for further reflection. We could not really clarify but only point, for example, to the important arc from the early discussions of evolutionary biology after Darwin and the rise of a scientific discourse about heredity in the early twentieth century to advances in cell theory, hematology, and the physiology of reproduction, current research in reproductive technologies, and the many implications of DNA research for biological identity. We know very little about the interplay between medical and biological research and popular ideas of blood and sexuality, the dissemination of ideas, and the epistemological filiations of metaphors. One of the desiderata of future research might well be to understand just how anthropologists from the late nineteenth century until the present have been situated within these variable discourses. But there is a further problem that needs to be taken into consideration as well. It is now becoming clear that European history is marked by structural breaks and regional and class distinctions within its kinship practices and cultural constructions. Parallel to the scientific reworking of the physiology of human substance has been a reordering of the dynamics of kinship. Recent work in nineteenth-century kinship dynamics needs to be brought into direct confrontation with current analyses of regional kinship by anthropologists who have turned their gaze to their own societies in order to begin to take up the quite recent historical construction of European kinship practices. New models of relationship, filiation, and blood, new social relationships among kin: there is a need to situate the anthropologist and the historian in their own particular contexts by thoroughgoing critical historical research that relates developments in the natural and the social sciences.

The project of this book is "reflexive" in that it takes as its point of departure the questions that anthropologists are now asking about how thinking about substances in different societies produce either "kinship"—where that is still considered to be a relevant category—or "relatedness," if one wants a more neutral term. Certainly any answer must be approached from a radically historical perspective. "Blood" has come and gone in European culture, just as kinship has constantly been reconfigured. Both have been moving, sometimes in parallel and sometimes in divergent directions. And both have taken on quite different meanings over time. Indeed the current understandings of blood in European culture emerged only gradually within the past 150 years.

The long tradition in the anthropological and historical literature was to assume that Europe had always had a particular form of kinship. Eu-

ropean kinship was thought to be based on the idea that an individual is composed of a substance—more or less explicitly thought of as blood—that comes in equal parts from two parents. Most of the evidence for this position comes, as noted above, from a cursory reading of canon law proscriptions about marrying within prohibited degrees, since counting degrees proceeds equally through paternal and maternal lines. But there are at least three different problems with the tradition of reading canon law as indicative of "the" kinship system.

First of all, modern observers did not take canon law on its own terms, for there, what we call "affinal" relationships presented the same problem of forbidden marriage as those we bring under the heading of "consanguinity." If you were forbidden to marry a first cousin, you were not only forbidden to partner with the children of your aunts and uncles but also to marry a first cousin of a previous spouse. In other words, in canon law kinship has always been understood as constructed in the sense that marriage and affinal relations in principle present the same problematic as relations through descent. Second, canon law, despite its frequent use of the term "consanguinity" (from the Latin *sanguis*, blood) during its many centuries of formulation, rarely insisted that the substance that connected people was "blood." With regard to both of these issues, it is well worth quoting the regulations issued in 1215 at the Fourth Lateran Council, where the rules were clarified and simplified: here, the prohibition of marriage included the fourth degree (third cousins) of "consanguinity and affinity" without any distinction between the two kinds of relationship. It is clear from the quote below that it follows a logic that is rather different from contemporary Western notions of blood-relatedness. There *were* bodily substances mentioned, but nothing particular about blood—just the humors and the number "four": "The number four agrees well with the prohibition concerning bodily union about which the Apostle [1 Cor. 7:4] says, that the husband does not rule over his body, but the wife does; and the wife does not rule over her body, but the husband does; for there are four humors in the body, which is composed of the four elements."[6] And that is all the explanation that is given. Furthermore, this definitive statement of canon law from the High Middle Ages comes from a period in which blood was seldom used to model kinship. And, as Anita Guerreau-Jalabert shows in chapter 3 in this volume, *consanguinity*, a term borrowed from antiquity, was mostly deployed to gloss relations that were described as based on "flesh." Her chapter, as well as those by Simon Teuscher and Gérard Delille, chronicles the semantic shifts during the later Middle Ages and explains the importance of paying close attention to the language of the "natives."

There is a third problem with taking canon law as the starting point for depicting a "European model" of kinship. By putting that law in the first place in thinking about the construction of kinship relationships, anthropologists have failed to take into consideration the complexity of substances that connect people down the generations or to see all the ways that those substances flow differentially or disproportionately. Certainly, in studying non-Western societies, anthropologists would take notions and practices of property devolution, naming practices, familial claims to office and estates, ideas of reproduction, and the like into consideration when commenting upon the dynamics of kinship for any particular society. If the same questions also are asked about Europe, its kinship systems appear as composite and convoluted. It can be shown, for example, that kinship came to be organized around agnatic lineages throughout large parts of Europe during the early modern period. Moreover, a sharp break with such structures issued in the modern period, along with a horizontalization of relationships, fostered by new emphases on cousinship, repeated marriages within well-integrated kindreds, and a new valence given to in-law relationships. And it also can be shown that the systemic endogamy characteristic of the nineteenth century began to break up in the decades around World War I. How a person might find him or herself inscribed within a web of kinship varied substantially over time, with descent, marriage, residence, guardianship, tutorship, god parentage, gender, class, neighborhood, and milieu playing varied roles.

While this book is mostly not about "substance" in general but confines itself to issues of blood, it might be interesting to explore briefly some of the other kinds of "things" that have been understood to be crucial for mapping the circle of relatives. Anthropologists for the most part have worked with a narrow construction of "substance," proceeding from Schneider's critique and, as becomes evident when one surveys the history of the profession, thinking of substance as a matter of physical incorporation. In some societies, the woman who gives a child her milk creates a special bond; any children who receive milk from that woman become "siblings" by that very fact. In much recent work, emphasis has been placed on nurturing and feeding as creating the ties of relatedness. All of this, it seems to us, stems from a desire to continue the idea of kinship arising from reproducing bodies. But it is important to think of substance in much more complex ways, since after all, it might be property that offers bonds of inclusion or matrices of exclusion, to offer an oxymoron. Anthropologists nowadays place great emphasis on all of the practices that *construct* kinship or relatedness. Whereas feeding might be thought of as progressively communicating the kind of substance that

incorporates, nurturing describes a more diffuse set of actions that attach people to each other, offering one basis for inclusion and exclusion and for the many shifts that alter status over the lifetime of individuals. Once it is possible to broaden the scope of kinship studies in this way, then the path is open to examine all the material actions that bind people together. In a curious way, an historian of nineteenth-century bourgeois society might want to develop a metaphor of ink: witness the flood of correspondence during the central decades of the nineteenth century that circulated between individuals, especially women, who managed to continuously construct and reconstruct kinship through patterns of reciprocal communication. Anyone who emphasizes the way food builds kinship in flexible ways in Southeast Asian or Pacific societies might well find parallels in the way the exchange of letters shaped familial ties in nineteenth-century Europe, since each letter was often thought of as a gift and many of them continuously conveyed moral, practical, and emotional claims.

Of course, the flow of letters might be seen as stretching a point. However, it does seem important to consider a wealth of both material and abstract things that mediate relations, and even more important to get away from the somatic assumptions built into anthropological treatments of the subject. After all, blood and other physical substances are usually only one of several interdependent ways of making kinship bonds plausible and "visible." Discourses about blood and the like always operate in conjunction with other "things": "matter" and "concepts" that shape kinship structures and provide the means for incorporation and exclusion. An impressive example is provided by the founding of Registered Family Associations (*eingetragene Familienvereine*) and their notion of "names," in Germany, toward the end of the nineteenth century.[7] These associations were founded expressly for the purpose of locating and bringing together family members, doing genealogical research and publishing family histories, promoting family solidarity and networks, helping young relatives with education and career opportunities, caring for the elderly, and periodically assembling everyone. What makes these associations interesting for our purposes is that, stereotypically, the "substance" that bound the relatives together was the name. Many of the association constitutions make it clear that the central purpose was to support the honor and reputation of the family surname. What entitled a person to membership in the association was in the first instance descent from a common ancestor—sometimes expressly named, typically someone alive at the turn from the seventeenth to the eighteenth century. By the fact that it was the name that bound people together, the main criterion was descent in the male line. And yet there were

interesting inclusions and exclusions. Daughters could be fully fledged members until they married and took the name of another lineage (*Geschlecht*): of course, their children would be excluded from the association. Furthermore, illegitimate children with the name were excluded, since they would have acquired the name by virtue of their mother and thus not through agnatic descent. On the other hand, those women who married in and took their husband's name were expected to join, leaving the association once again, not immediately upon widowhood but upon subsequent remarriage.

There are several points to notice here. Clearly, such a phenomenon provides a very good example of "making kin." In so many of these cases, the people who came together had not had significant social dealings with each other, and in others, had not even had prior knowledge about the existence of one another. Furthermore, this provided a discourse about family that only in the rarest of instances employed the terminology of *blood*. Names mediated relationships and set up new fields of exchange—i.e., they worked much like blood or other substances in the previous examples. Finally, by the very fact that each generation in principle branched, diversified, and proliferated, we can imagine the clan or lineage as a pyramid with apex pointed back to a single ancestor and with all the descendants providing an increasingly widening base. When "blood" began to make its way back into familial discourse in the early twentieth century, it reversed the pyramid, with the apex focused on the individual, concerned as it was with the flow of substance to the individual and with the nature of personal identity—whether in racial identity, medical genealogies, or transfusion.

Agnatic descent could, of course, work quite differently from the nineteenth-century German instance of family societies. In early modern Europe, for example, where property, in the form of an estate or an office, mediated descent, one finds a variety of practices, but never the relatively undifferentiated sense of a family cohesion passed down generations like with the German nineteenth-century emphasis on the name, which, of course, is easier to share than an estate. The substance of property differentiated sharply among siblings and organized kinship around privilege. Still it was all a matter of descent. In England, for example, in a general process from the late Middle Ages, brought to completion by the late seventeenth century, first daughters and then younger sons were excluded from landed estates. Much of the dynamic of the novels of Jane Austen or Anthony Trollope works around agnatic inheritance issues and the relationships between senior and cadet branches of a family. But the key point is that a dynamic interaction within a group, perhaps over several generations, was constituted around the devolu-

tion of property, distributing claims, rights, duties, names, resources, expectations, standing, and the like, more-or-less around a line of descent that sloughed off kin in every generation. In his study of Italian noble families during the early modern period, Delille distinguishes sharply between different kinds of goods, real and movable property, offices, statuses, seniority, and so forth.[8] In lineages more and more characterized by primogeniture, the senior branch, rigorously selected through agnatic succession, became sharply differentiated from junior branches. Delille describes a situation in which the sets of cities and towns were differentially ranked as well, such that the senior noble branch would occupy the chief central city, while junior branches were distributed in each generation to centers of ever less prestige and importance. Should a senior branch die out, the next most senior branch took over the noble status, name, offices, rank, and residence. Those scholars who read canon law as reflecting the constitution of a self through blood equally mediated through both parents cannot understand how different kinds of substances such as names, real property, statuses, and offices each provide complex ways of connecting and differentiating kin.

Blood, of course, does show up frequently in Western culture as a substance that connects a person to parents and siblings. But several caveats are in order. There are different discourses, in some cases, which may be operating at the same time, but which cannot be seen to cohere in a single viewpoint. It is quite possible for a strictly agnatic lineage property system to develop and coexist with marriage prohibitions that interdict alliances with both paternal and maternal kin; or for medical science to model heredity in one way, while jurists model it in quite another. For example, in the seventeenth century, there were schools of medicine that followed Aristotle's understanding of generation, whereby the male contributed form and the female matter. Sperm from the male was brought under the category of thought, while the material contribution from the female was conceptualized as "blood." And yet, in the same culture, and sometimes by the very figures who followed Aristotelian notions of generation, blood could be thought of as a matter of agnatic descent. All of the categories seem to have been unstable. Rival schools of Galenic medicine thought of sperm (both male and female) as a form of blood, and many described milk as substantially blood under different accidents. One example of the complexity of meaning possible here is an interesting seventeenth-century treatise from a Bavarian official, Aegidius Albertinus, who "translated" an original Spanish text by Juan de la Cerda.[9] The point of the argument was to encourage women to breastfeed their own children. Indeed, so went the text, any child sent out to a wet nurse could be considered a bastard, an illegitimate child

as far as paternal descent was concerned. The milk given to a child is nothing more than the mother's blood, but that blood is constituted by her husband through the act of generation. The wet nurse, therefore, cannot impart the power of the father of the child through her milk. And she becomes the real mother, while the woman who bore the child can only be a "stepmother." The child then is not only *not* hers but also cannot be the child of the father. By engaging a wet nurse, the mother essentially smuggles into her family, as the paternal heir, a child whose blood contains the power not of her husband, but of another man. But there were many other ways of thinking about blood and descent in the seventeenth century. Harvey, for one, in his empirical study of generation came to the conclusion that there was no blood relationship, indeed no relationship of substance of any kind between either parent and their progeny. A very different set of assumptions on how blood was passed on through descent, marriage, and sexual intercourse lay behind the politics of *limpieza de sangre*. Laws demanding "purity of blood" were first issued to keep converts from Judaism and Islam out of official positions. But these notions were also part of the baggage Portuguese and Spanish administrators brought overseas and used in developing visions and divisions of the new societies, drawing lines between indigenous populations, descendants of slaves imported from Africa, and various kinds of "mixed-bloods." These categorizations anticipated important elements of the kind of racism that later developed in the Americas. There is a growing literature on *limpieza de sangre* and related lines in the genealogy of modern racism. But how ideas about kinship and blood are operative in these concepts is one of the many important questions remaining to be addressed.

As David Warren Sabean shows in chapter 7, blood became a central category for descent and alliance in seventeenth-century discourse. Where medieval discourse, for example, had talked about the fleshly relationship between the Virgin Mary and Christ, baroque treatises made the relationship a matter of blood. Guerreau-Jalabert argues, in part, that "blood" became coded as something that could have spiritual content and could be configured as "pure," with the possibility of transmitting inherent qualities. Theologians found this to be a genial construction for thinking through the notion of the Immaculate Conception and understanding the intimate connection between Mother and Son. Indeed, a theologian such as Jacques-Bénigne Bossuet went so far as to argue that the salvific blood that Christ shed on the cross was uniquely and univocally Mary's blood. And blood could be fitted for alliance, as well, with the idea that the blood shared in the Eucharist is also Mary's blood. Secular texts would talk about two lineages "mixing" their blood through

the marriage and carnal intimacy of a particular pair, and Bossuet drew an analogy between sexual intercourse and partaking of the Eucharist—both forms of incorporation. Sabean argues that the new theological representations were closely allied with seventeenth-century notions of lineage, which in turn were modeled on a semantics of blood descent; that Mary was seen as a conduit for the blood of Old Testament kings to reach her son. And yet there were ambivalences about just whose blood was understood to flow in the veins of a son. Bossuet himself in an unpublished text emphasized the bloodline as agnatically structured. Blood in the seventeenth century, therefore, could do complex duty, emphasizing descent, identity, purity, stability, paternity, or maternity. What it never seems to do is offer a model for cognaticism or bilineality.

A crucial term that shows up throughout the history of Western culture is *consanguinity* or *consanguinitas*. It is often simply taken for granted that the word means "blood relation" and, further, that it stands for connections that flow equally from both parents—a person is just as much the blood relative of a mother as of a father. This is one of the issues that concerns the first two chapters in this volume, by Ann-Cathrin Harders and Philippe Moreau, which deal with Roman law and culture. Moreau shows that the term emerged in law in a very precise context that had to do with intestate inheritance, designating the sons and daughters of one father. Indeed anyone adopted by a *pater familias* was part of his *consanguinitas*, and in the rare institution of *manus*, where a wife assumed the character of a daughter, she too became part of the *consanguinitas*. Thus in Roman culture, consanguinity was constructed as a subcategory of agnatic kin within the dynamics of absolute domestic power (*patria potestas*). The extensive exogamy rules in Roman society had nothing to do with blood. Rather, they were founded on social values that encouraged extensive intertwining of different families. As both Moreau and Harders argue, blood (*sanguis*) is not the point in "consanguinity." Still, as a large number of literary texts make clear, blood *was* a substance that descended bilineally. By the Middle Ages, the term *consanguinitas* has taken on quite different meanings, among them, as Guerreau-Jalabert points out, the rather diffuse one of "kin in general." The concept of "blood" very rarely was used as a metaphor or thought of as a substance for kinship relationships. Filiation was a matter of "flesh" (*caro*), and consanguines were those who partook of the same flesh. The related term *consanguineus* covered all those who were near kin, including affinal relatives, in an undifferentiated manner. (A French translation of Gratian's Decretals uses the single word *lignage* to translate *consanguineus*, *consanguinitas*, *cognatio*, *propinquitas*, and *parentela*.) Simon Teuscher follows the term *consanguinitas* from flesh to blood during the late Middle Ages

and argues that *consanguinity* from the fifteenth century onward became confined to notions of descent. In Teuscher's conceptualization of the problem, blood is delimiting, and is precisely *not* that which connects people bilineally, but rather that which marks out a group through filiation. Where the discourse of flesh had been mostly concerned with marriage and sex, blood was largely a matter of descent. He argues that the differentiation in terminology reflected crucial changes in the vision of kinship, with the emergence of a greater emphasis on descent, linearity, historical depth, and agnatically structured lineages. He shows that only in the fifteenth century were the lines between affinity and consanguinity clearly drawn. Then blood took on new meaning as people began to speak of lineages mixing their blood upon the conclusion of a marriage alliance.

In order to understand the fate of blood during the Middle Ages, the historian has to pay close attention to a series of semantic shifts. Guerreau-Jalabert undertakes a careful philological study of the key terms used in the Middle Ages to deal with kinship. She shows that the early binary opposites, *caro* and *spiritus*, became mapped on to social categories. In complex ways flesh and spirit were called into play to differentiate the laity from the clergy, and with time flesh and blood reflected this same opposition—in the Eucharist, for example, blood was reserved for the priest, and the emergence of the notion of *sanc royal* (royal blood) in the fourteenth century was a semantic move to claim spirituality for the royal family. Teofilo Ruiz and Guillaume Aubert, as well as Teuscher and Delille, follow the fortunes of blood as a spiritualizing or socially valorizing idea to further aristocratic claims for purity of blood. And these contributors point to an important aspect of the development of blood discourse in the early modern period—it was associated with power and with assertions of rightful rulership, with hierarchies of value, and with ascriptive rights based on descent and purity of blood.

During the nineteenth century, as new forms of legitimate authority emerged, blood became increasingly associated with the nation and race, rather than with kin and succession. Aubert follows notions of blood in early modern France as aristocratic notions of purity, agnaticism, and pollution were reconfigured in the French colonies, where initial projects of creating a single blood from French males and native females collapsed. By the time of the French Revolution, fears of contaminating "French blood" in France itself through black and native immigrants shifted the focus of blood away from the family to the nation. Christopher Johnson continues the story, chronicling the disappearance of blood metaphors for family relations with the "horizontalization" of kinship structures and the fall of lineage ideologies. Johnson documents the centrality of blood

in everyday familial discourse, particularly in the exchange of letters, in seventeenth-century France, but he shows that its use fades during the eighteenth century. Utilizing an extensive sample of familial correspondence, he is able to show how blood disappears from kinship discourse. Family constructs became useful for the new ideology of the nation, and blood shifted its focus to the ethnic group, race, and nation.

The philosopher Georg Wilhelm Friedrich Hegel pointed toward a number of transitions in social structures and political ideas at the turn of the nineteenth century. He had grown up in Württemberg where, like most European states during the eighteenth century, systems of kin-coordinated politics had developed at every level, from village councils to courts, parliaments, state, and county governments. Just as many other liberal commentators at the turn of the century, he was busy worrying about the conflation of private and public interest and with the "corruption" that confused family and kinship concerns with government. In 1798, commenting on the political organization of the Württemberg state, he ridiculed the entire structure of family-coordinated government as a "feeding trough." He became a powerful spokesman for a rationally constructed state constitution that reconfigured the private possessions of the prince as public property and denied officials, in turn, any familial, patrimonial stake in political institutions. Throughout Europe during the early modern period, the holding of office had more or less officially or legally become tied up with agnatic succession, with the property rights of family syndicates or the patrimony of lineages or clans. The decades around 1800—a central political slogan of the French Revolution was "careers open to talents"—witnessed at different speeds the dismantling of "old corruption" and the construction of "rational" systems of bureaucratic recruitment throughout Europe. However, a close look at state administrations during the nineteenth century shows that the class of officials continued to reproduce itself and provide access to positions within a completely reconfigured structure of kinship. This reordering of familial ties has been characterized as a move from vertical to horizontal relationships, from a system distributing rights through patrilineal succession down the generations to a much more fluid set of networks constructed through marrying endogamously, mobilizing affinal kin, and building obligation within "sibling archipelagos."[10]

This is neither the place to consider the broad shift in the nature of kinship from the eighteenth to the nineteenth century, nor to consider the reasons for the change or explore its ramifications. What is of interest here is the disappearance of "blood" during those same decades, as a metaphor for family and kinship relationships. And Hegel, once again, is a central witness to the reframing of the language of kinship. In fact, as

the chapters in this volume show, blood as a metaphor for kin or referenced as a substance shared by descendants had a rather short and very discontinuous life in European history. Seldom used in the Middle Ages, it developed during the early modern period in parallel with the rise of agnatically structured lines and lineages, then lost its relevance for marking relatives as kinship began to be horizontalized in the late eighteenth century. But that did not at all mean that blood lost its usefulness for designating connections altogether. Rather it was refitted for a new kind of "public," ethnic groups and nations, at about the same time that it lost its place in the private sphere. Judith Butler has persuasively noted the Hegelian texts that marked the shift in the valence of blood: "For Hegel, kinship is precisely a relation of 'blood' rather than one of norms. That is, kinship is not yet entered into the social, where the social is inaugurated through violent supersession of kinship."[11] Hegel discussed some of these issues in dealing with the case of Antigone and her conflict with her uncle over the rights of kin and the power of the state. Antigone represents the claims of "blood," of the "household gods," while Creon, the head of the state, represents the temporal order of law and justice—and kinship must give way to the state. The question for us is not whether Hegel got the terms of trade between the family and the political order right. What he stands for is at once a critique of the old order of kinship and a devaluation of the symbolic importance of "blood." He caught the temper of an era that no longer needed a metaphor of blood to track moral and physical dimensions of kinship.

By the end of the century blood had returned once again for family, now in the context of newly emerging notions of heredity, and at the beginning conflating family and nation. Scientists were busy trying to figure out just how procreation worked and often borrowed categories from inheritance law to apply them to the study of physiological heredity. But the development of scientific thinking about heredity, blood, and race between the mid-nineteenth and the mid-twentieth century is one important subject that this book can only point to and that remains to be further explored. One outcome of the development was a consensus around evolutionary biology, from Charles Darwin to Gregor Mendel to August Weismann, which came to dominate both scientific and popular literature. Yet as shown in chapter 10 by Cornelia Essner, well into the first decades of the twentieth century there were many contending understandings of procreation and connection. Certainly racial ideas and ideas of the nation played a central role in imagining kinship. Her chapter is of great interest in showing how widely disseminated notions such as *Versehen* (the imagination of the mother having physical consequences for the fetus) and telegony (inheriting characteristics of a pre-

vious mate of the mother) still played a crucial role in figuring out not only how the individual was connected to his or her heredity but also how the individual was connected to encompassing constructs of nation and race. Essner explores the debate in National Socialist Germany over how much blood constituted the "German" or the "Jew." Weston, in turn, also calls attention to the issue of "blood quantum" in determining who is a Native American and to the early concerns about intermingling the blood of different races in transfusions. Late-twentieth-century anthropology has developed a model of Euro-American kinship, as Franklin points out, which bases that relation on "natural facts," genealogy, blood relations, and interconnectedness determined by sexual relations. In turning to field work within Western societies, anthropologists are examining values and models that have clearly been strongly influenced by medical and life sciences as they have developed since the late nineteenth century.

The consequence is a deepening of this contemporary version of naturalized kinship. In examining the configuration of nation and family during the first half of the twentieth century, Essner has underscored the understanding of blood as conferring an unchanging identity and of inherited blood as substance that defines the self. It is just that complex of ideas that Carsten, centering her focus on the British Isles, finds still dominant at the end of the twentieth and beginning of the twenty-first century in Europe. She offers an ethnographic contrast with Malaysian ideas in which blood is something that is constructed over time through maternal care and the sharing of food. It is not, as in the UK, an idiom of continuity, an inherited substance. Weston examines the idea in late Western culture that blood is the source of consanguinity, where kinship is understood as something derived from nature, the location of unalienated attachment. In her study, the quest for synthetic blood is closely tied up with the attempt to flee kinship demands and to negotiate either new possibilities of belonging or complexities of ambivalent obligations. Franklin follows the interconnection between blood and genes, and like Carsten and Weston, emphasizes blood as the paradigmatic European substance of kin connection. Biogenetics, like evolutionary biological constructs from the late nineteenth century, are posited upon an essential, blood-based bilateralism. In effect, scientific and medical notions of genes have been "blooded" through the dominance of blood as the main idiom of shared identity.

And so the question of what blood does arises again. We may need to look not only into ruptures but also into a few continuities. Despite profound changes, it seems possible to trace the genealogies of the association of blood with legitimate order, power, and stable identities fairly

far back in time. As our contributors together have shown, blood came into play during the late Middle Ages precisely when lineage groups began to form, and it proved adept at stabilizing kin-based identities, in part by elevating kinship above the temporal world with its associations to flesh and decay. The language of blood provided kinship with a touch of spiritual dignity and virtue, turning the construct and institution into an instrument of describing and prescribing legitimate forms of social organization and hierarchies among groups.

In the growing formulation of the split between public and private around the turn of the nineteenth century and as the nation came to be the receptacle of identity and the center of political imagination, blood, along with obligation, seems to have been relocated from the lineage to the nation, thus tied in a new way to political power. Then, during the late nineteenth century, blood made its way back into kinship. Within a new discourse about heredity, under the pressure of evolutionary biology but in dialogue with and through the prism of race and nation, the assumption continued that blood confers an unchanging identity, based in nature and essential to the definition of self.

The model of blood-based bilateralism and inheritance has determined the discourse of biogenetics. Yet in Europe, blood was for centuries understood more often than not as something that attaches fathers to children. What happened to the pre-modern shape of Western ideas about blood, as blood came back in twentieth-century discourses about identity? The interaction between reconfigurations of kinship in twentieth-century Europe and America and the constructions of scientific ideas of blood and genes, together with their popularization, provides the agenda for the next stage of research into the historical development of Western kinship practices.

Notes

1. See, for example, *Relative Values: Reconfiguring Kinship Study*, ed. Sarah Franklin and Susan McKinnon (Durham, NC, 2001) and Ladislav Holy, *Anthropological Perspectives on Kinship* (London, 1996). More citations and discussion of the recent literature in kinship studies are to be found in Sarah Franklin's chapter in this volume.
2. David M. Schneider, *A Critique of the Study of Kinship* (Ann Arbor, 1984).
3. See *Cultures of Relatedness: New Approaches to the Study of Kinship*, ed. Janet Carsten (Cambridge, 2000).
4. A summary of the trend for historians is found in *Kinship in Europe: Approaches to Long-Term Development (1300–1900)*, ed. David Warren Sabean, Simon Teuscher, and Jon Mathieu (New York and Oxford, 2007).
5. The three studies are *Sibling Relations and the Transformations of European Kinship 1300–1900*, ed. Christopher H. Johnson and David Warren Sabean (New York and

Oxford, 2011); *Transregional and Transnational Families in Europe and Beyond: Experiences since the Middle Ages*, ed. Christopher H. Johnson et al. (New York and Oxford, 2011); and the aforementioned Sabean, Teuscher, and Mathieu, *Kinship in Europe*.

6. http://history.hanover.edu/texts/trent.html.
7. David Warren Sabean, "Constructing Lineages in Imperial Germany: Eingetragene Familienvereine," in *Alltag als Politik—Politik im Alltag. Dimensionen des Politischen in Vergangenheit und Gegenwart*, ed. Michaela Fenske (Berlin and Münster, 2010), 143–57.
8. Gérard Delille, *Le maire et le prieur: Pouvoir central et pouvoir local en Méditerranée occidentale (XV^{e}–XVIII^{e} siècle)* (Paris, 2003).
9. Juan de la Cerda, *Weiblicher Lustgarten*, Teil 1, trans. Aegidius Albertinus (Munich, 1605).
10. The phrase is Christopher H. Johnson's, in Johnson and Sabean, *Sibling Relations*.
11. Judith Butler, *Antigone's Claim* (New York, 2002).