

*Marriage, Inheritance and Witchcraft: A Case Study of a Rural Ghanaian Family.* By W. BLEEK. Leiden: Afrika-Studiecentrum, 1975. Pp. x + 435, bibl., tables. (Mededelingen Afrika-Studiecentrum 12). n.p.

*Prophétisme et thérapeutique: Albert Atcho et la communauté de Bregbo.* PAR MARC AUGÉ et al Paris: Hermann, 1975. Pp. 324, ill., tableau, carte FF 48.

*Marriage, Inheritance and Witchcraft* deals with social change and conflict within the context of a single matrilineage among the Kwahu of Ghana. Forty-six members of a lineage chief's family were interviewed. Such topics as childhood, sexual relations, marriage, divorce, death, religion and witchcraft, migration and economic relations were covered. Other standard ethnographic procedures were employed as well as the recording of modern 'highlife' songs later used in the analysis of cultural themes. In addition a series of essays by school children were collected on the themes: 'I and my father,' 'I and my mother,' 'I and my uncle,' and 'Good and bad qualities of the Kwahu people.' A study of social patterns including network analysis revealed that: 'Daily life gives more leeway to social change. Crisis situations are inclined to restrict change and make people return to traditional patterns of relations or norms,' (p. 129). But, sometimes crises can become an instrument of social change, 'if the persons involved refuse to act according to the conventions,' (p. 129)

Marriage among the Kwahu is no longer a 'system' There is a wide variety of types of marriage and sexual union. Temporary unions are common but people desire a final customary marriage. The term divorce is applied to customary unions, the term separation to 'free marriage.' Divorce and separation rates are high. The author concludes that 'Kinship stability is more important than marriage stability, and not only for the purpose of residence; also for the upbringing of children,' (p. 222). Thus the usual disjunction found in matrilineal societies operates here.

Hierarchical selection in inheritance is seen as a tool and expression of family unity, but inheritance is also a source of tension and conflict. On the other hand, overt accusations concerning unjust inheritance can be a reflection of other social conflicts rather than their cause. As is true among all Akan peoples intrafamilial tensions are frequently expressed in witchcraft accusations. Witchcraft is seen not as a safety valve, but rather as an aggravation of hostilities and an obstacle to cooperation.

In general this book is critical of structural (in the British sense) explanations and takes a dynamic and processual point of view. The data are copious and the arguments well integrated.

*Prophétisme et thérapeutique* is a richly textured book. It is a study of Albert Atcho, a Harris cult prophet discovered for the anthropological world in 1962 by Jean Rouche. Atcho, his activities, and his village (Bregbo in the Ivory Coast not far from the capital Abidjan) were studied by a team of French anthropologists. The book therefore consists of individual analyses expressing different foci and different points of view. In particular the sociological, religious, therapeutic, and political aspects are covered. A political synthesis is presented by Marc Augé who sees disease and its cure in the context of this syncretistic cult as a judicial-political process. As a whole the book deals with the development of a successful practice and its relation to various aspects of symbolic and social expression. Atcho is particularly interesting because he is at the same time a prophet, a curer, and the head of a modern business.

The celebration (*fête*) of November 1, All Saints Day, is the major event in the life of Bregbo and its prophet. The cult and its cures centers on the use of holy water originating in Bregbo and blessed by Atcho. According to the prophet: 'We live in a state of sin and this is why we are black as coal. We cannot approach God because of our bad odor. It is by the grace of perfume (holy water) that the angels of God protect us. The waters spiritually cleanse our black skins so that we become clean and can present ourselves before God.'

Atcho chooses his patients carefully. Those whom he believes he cannot cure are sent to the psychiatric hospital at Bingerville. Treatment consists of bathing and frequently of confessions of witchcraft as well as other antisocial behavior. Penitence is prescribed by Atcho. Confessions are made formally and recorded in legalistic documents. According to one of the authors, Andras Zempléni, patients usually arrive at Bregbo with a sense of persecution and leave with a sense of guilt. If this is the case, he asks, why do they favor Atcho as a curer? Zempléni replies that the state of guilt only represents a transition in the movement towards individualization and therefore cure. This conclusion is extracted from case histories one of which is presented in a useful appendix.

The theme of guilt and individualization is played again in the last chapter, but Augé develops an interesting, if strident, political analysis. In so doing he enters into an internal dialogue with Zempléni. This technique gives the reader some sense of the interplay between data and analysis that marks this book. For Augé self guilt functions to attribute the responsibility for actions on the individual. It therefore acts to break the indigenous notion of collective action and responsibility. Thus 'this monadization of the self is also the death of the former social order based on lineage and village ties and founded on the cross cutting notions of heredity and inheritance.' Thus for Augé Bregbo occupies both a symbolic and a real place in the process that transforms people from members of social networks typical of precapitalist social formations, to the 'naked' selves of the capitalist world. Individualization goes along with free enterprise. The latter requires 'free' labor. The ideology of Atcho and his version of the Harris cult is, therefore, the ideology of emergent capitalism. This analysis is heavily influenced by the work of Gilles Deleuze and Félix Guattari members of the so-called post-structuralist movement.

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*Action and Interaction: Social Relationships in a Low-income Housing Estate in Kitale, Kenya.* By M. S. MULLER. Leiden: Afr. Studiecentrum, 1976. Cyclostyled. Pp. xv + 149, bibl.

*Proletarians and African Capitalism: The Kenyan Case, 1960-72.* By RICHARD SANDBROOK. (Perspectives on Development 4) Cambridge: University Press, 1975. Pp. ix + 222. £8.00

*Freedom and Labour: Mobilization and Political Control on the Zambian Copperbelt.* By PETER HARRIES-JONES. Oxford: Basil Blackwell, 1975. Pp. 256, bibl., illus. £6.50.

*Town and Country in Central and Eastern Africa: Studies Presented and Discussed at the Twelfth International African Seminar, Lusaka, September 1972* Edited with an Introduction by DAVID PARKIN. London: Oxford University Press for the International African Institute, 1975. Pp. vi + 362, bibl., illus. £6.50

THERE IS increasing support among social scientists for the view which characterizes the economies of Central and East Africa as 'dependent capitalist'. Indeed, Kenya, recently discussed in this vein by Brett, Leys and others, is described by Sandbrook as the 'archetype' of such a system. Leaving aside reservations as to its basic tenets, we may agree that 'dependency theory' forces us, as Parkin shows in his Introduction to the IAI volume, to make connections between a whole range of problems too often seen in isolation. Thus, ethnicity, women, rural development, trade unions, may all be located within a single framework which at the macro- (what Mitchell now calls 'molar') level greatly assists comprehension. The virtues of such a global theory (and its vices) emerge in a contrast between the work of Sandbrook and Muller, both concerned with Kenya.

Muller's account of a small provincial town is the least ambitious of the four books under review. Her study is based on fieldwork between 1969-72 on two estates housing ethnically mixed migrants—unskilled and skilled workers, with some clerks—living *en famille*. The author examines the structure of relations between neighbours concluding that these are guided by two contradictory ideals: sociability (entailing establishment of 'working

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