

chen, jedoch vorwiegend “fremdbestimmt” in das Land im Pazifik geschickt wurden, ist eine Selbstverwirklichung wohl nur schwer gegeben. Stadlbauer konstatiert hingegen, dass “offene und mobile Zukunftsentwürfe” charakteristisch und beschreibend für ihr Untersuchungsfeld sind (vgl. p. 157).

Diese luzide ethnografische Arbeit trägt anhand ausgewählter InterviewpartnerInnen zur Bereicherung translokaler Migrationsforschung bei. Das empirische Material gibt dem Leser einen gelungenen Einblick in die alltäglichen Lebensweisen und Aushandlungsprozesse des Samples. Wie bereits die Herausgeberin der Reihe, Brigitte Bönisch-Brednich, im Vorwort treffend herausstellt, ist “dieses Buch in vieler Hinsicht als eine Art offene Kommunikation gestaltet, bei der die Interviewsituation immer offengelegt wird; die Leser werden eingeladen, sich ins Gespräch einzumischen” (8). Uwe Schellenberger

Stroeken, Koen: *Moral Power. The Magic of Witchcraft.* New York: Berghahn Books, 2010. 269 pp. ISBN 978-1-84545-735-8. (Epistemologies of Healing, 9) Price: £ 35.00

“Moral Power” is an ethnographic account of healing, witchcraft, and divination among contemporary Sukuma people in Tanzania. Published as part of Berghahn’s “Epistemologies of Healing” series, this is a volume thick with detail which will appeal primarily to those interested in the micro specifics of divination in African healing practice.

The aspirations of the volume are, however, far-reaching. Stroeken aims to resolve theoretical difficulties inherent in the Western study of witchcraft as practice by resolving the imposed binary between gift and sacrifice which he believes imposes a flawed interpretation on the social process of categorisation which creates witches.

The author calls for the reintegration of experience as the primary lens through which phenomena like magic and witchcraft can be comprehended; and this not by forms of rationality nor through representation but in the interaction of encounter between self and other, witch and accuser, and anthropologist and informant.

Stroeken writes from a position of authority. He was himself initiated into a society of diviners. A strength of the book is its demonstration of how such experiences constitute the magical world materially. This occurs through engagement with medicines, plants, sensations, and other people, as well as through the resources of divination, such as the living chickens which are cut open to reveal signs in blood on their internal organs.

While the book offers insights through its presentation of diverse experiences of healing and divination, its theoretical claims are more problematic. This is not necessarily because they are mistaken. Stroeken’s argument is complex and difficult to follow. The detail of cases obscures the theories set out to elucidate them. Some of the claims made would have benefited from greater detail in their exposition.

Stroeken seems to be suggesting that a greater emphasis on experience would demonstrate that witchcraft

is comprehensively and emotionally compelling as part of Sukuma social order. Healing “works” because of its place within the political system in which the majority of adults are situated in relation to cults and access to medicines and powers.

Paradoxically, the immorality of witchcraft stems from its excessive morality in relation to the fact that women can never be compensated for being the ultimate medium of exchange. This gives them, Stroeken argues, a kind of latent right to the lives of their brother’s children, hence the association of paternal aunts with witchcraft.

Accusation as a social process resituates the witch in relation to formal principles of Sukuma law. Accusation can be resolved through not taking specific action. The action taken by victims to heal them is not necessarily directed at the witch. Consequently, not all witches are subject to violent attack and belief in witchcraft does not inevitably lead to the incidences of witch killing which have occurred in this part of Tanzania since the 1990s.

According to Stroeken, what leads to witch killing is a situation where knowledge of witchcraft is divorced from social experience, so that being a witch or not becomes a matter of provable truth. It is this modernist knowledge of witches what puts lives at risk, not Sukuma knowledge of witchcraft.

This is a complex and important argument. It is indeed the case that more people are accused of witchcraft than alleged witches are killed, and only a minority of accusations lead to the murder of older women. The larger claims about modernity and forms of truth are more difficult to evaluate. There is virtually no historical or even wider social cultural context in the book that could inform the reader about social dynamics in this part of Tanzania, nor indeed why some of the Sukuma population strive to maintain a lifestyle which we are assured is so distinct from their urban Christian counterparts. Without this kind of context this book, rather like the case studies which comprise it, is locked in a self-referential circle of meaning. Fascinating and intriguing, certainly, but it raises more questions than it answers, when it comes to the relationship between Sukuma magic and wider Tanzania.

Maia Green

Swanson, Kate: *Begging as a Path to Progress. Indigenous Women and Children and the Struggle for Ecuador’s Urban Spaces.* Athens: University of Georgia Press, 2010. 146 pp. ISBN 978-0-8203-3180-5. Price: \$ 64.95

Across the Andean cityscape, begging is not merely a survival strategy but also a way of life fraught with contention – a means of subsistence and urban performance evoking loud municipal complaints, and, at least in some districts, repressive policing. Cultural geographer Kate Swanson takes stock of this ugly social fact. Posing a challenge borne of collaborative field research, she then asks: if street-side begging will never “go away,” might this practice be harnessed for a movement of social uplift? “Begging as a Path to Progress,” her book-length reply, follows indigenous Ecuadorians in the everyday work of eking out such a compromised yet hopeful existence.

Bringing poverty and mendicancy into focus, Swanson's ethnography seeks to educate college students, urban planners, and social workers alike, exploding their popular misconceptions about the identities and aspirations of those who fundamentally depend on the charity of strangers. The book as a whole clears new ethical ground for interdisciplinary scholarship, challenging policymakers, and academics alike to reimagine the full political range of charitable relationships.

Foremost among Swanson's accomplishments is the "unraveling" of popular myths about Andean women and child beggars. Readers familiar with regional ethnography will not be surprised to learn that most of those who beg do so in their family networks, with their home bases extending trans-regionally across urban centers (Guayaquil and Quito) as well as rural highland communities (in this particular case, Calhuasí in the Ecuadorian Sierra). The ethnography gives succinct overview to late-20th-century Ecuador's political geography, from the 1980s structural adjustment programs to the millennial aspirations of currency "dollarization," showing how modernizing programs only managed to intensify rural poverty in the aggregate. Yet new road-building developments and the commercial flows that followed them, also incentivized Calhuasí residents to seek seasonal employment in neighboring cities. Citing Colloredo-Mansfeld's notion of "hygienic racism," Swanson argues that indigenous migrants to Quito and Guayaquil have found themselves ethnically denigrated precisely within those urban corridors where begging is most lucrative. What tourists and municipal leaders currently celebrate as "urban renewal," most begging families who work the tourist zone (*gringopampa*) cannot help but appreciate with greater ambivalence, facing police repression as security forces clear out "informal workers" and create "safe zones" for commerce and "public enjoyment." Indeed, the new municipal idealization of a socially and materially "renovated public sphere" often leaves no place for the poorest indigenous day laborers, who sell inexpensive, NGO-subsidized goods and services until their merchandise is liquidated, and then resort to begging or street-side performances that encourage "donations" from tourists or wealthy locals.

"Begging as a Path to Progress" is most critically appealing in its translations of Andean lifeways, within and beyond the city. Swanson defends indigenous practices, for instance, by which Calhuasí families "rent" their children to neighbors who seek to beg in urban spaces, knowing full well that begging with young dependents (even infants) generates more empathy and stranger-donations on the streets. Public authorities decry the practice. But Swanson exhaustively points out the levels of deeply embedded misunderstanding in municipal technocrats' aversion to this so-called "traffic in children": including, for example: (a) the normalization of the nonindigenous nuclear family; (b) the misapprehension of indigenous childhood ideologies (a time of play, exploration, and collective labor); (c) the circulation of children as a form of *compadrazgo* or intergenerational "adoption"; and (d) the training of children to grow more accustomed to urban life. All the while, Swanson demonstrates the fluidity and

productive contradictions of indigenous begging as a type of labor practice steadily undergoing processes of urban transformation.

If there is a weakness in this volume, it lies with its less than robust historical critique of Ecuadorian antibegging campaigns, or the politics of charity in the re-establishment of agro-industrial and "postindustrial" clientelist networks. In today's NGO-organized urban sphere, Calhuasí women and childrens' reliance on philanthropic nonprofit *fundaciones*, which provide them with cheap merchandise and strategic cover for urban begging, oddly enough does not come in for ethnographic critique. As Ecuadorianists Eduardo Kingman Garcés and Mercedes Prieto have demonstrated, liberal political movements and the discourse of urban hygiene simultaneously promised broader participation in national politics while reinscribing signs of agrarian and ethno-racial "Fallenness" onto indigenous bodies. In the process, indigenous communities were so dispossessed *from within* – citizens without citizenship – that, indeed, begging was for many the exclusive means of "work" beyond extractive and exploitative industrial contexts (the hacienda, the factory, etc). The critic of this system need not endlessly rehearse Andrés Guerrero's now-famous account of the Ecuadorian "ventriloquy" of political liberalism – i.e., *blanco-mestizo* political bosses making claims to "protect" indigenous interests – in order to demonstrate how clientelist relations still govern the horizons of Ecuadorian political cultures. Today, different charity-based "regimes of donation" form a powerful yet ill-understood modality of governance, a strategy of moral indoctrination and population management that takes place both by commission (relations of bureaucratic philanthropy) and by omission (relations of informal charity). While indigenous begging is currently subject to urban social cleansing, for instance, municipal leaders "manage" the city through nonprofit NGO foundations that depend on private sector funding and seasonal philanthropic largess. And yet, Swanson shows how this fox-like "politics of charity" also works from the ground up, creating new potentialities for the collective subversion of unchecked gentrification and urban forms of revanchism.

Swanson admirably demonstrates the resilience – if not the open resistance – of indigenous women and children who are caught within this ethnoracial and predatory spiral. The author empirically demonstrates how the complex performance of "begging" is part and parcel of individual and intergenerational strategies for collective social uplift. Many Calhuasí residents who engage in this type of labor have returned home to build locally admired cinderblock and multigenerational-occupancy houses. Such individuals/families returning to their *pueblos* with hard-won charitable earnings do not always meet with the approval of other Calhuasí neighbors, who find the practice beneath their dignity. Here as elsewhere, creating a political economic system of advantages around a charitable ethic, or the goodwill of international strangers, will always multiply a patchwork of privately motivated exclusionary practices – narrowing local political community in the process. In sum, Swanson's volume derives much of its political charge from the millennial high point

of Ecuadorian neoliberalism. At what other moment could begging have served as “a path to progress”? This book’s ethical challenge is deeply symptomatic of the extent to which political potentialities had reached a certain limit point shortly before Rafael Correa’s “21st-century socialism” / Citizen’s Revolution emerged as an electorally viable populist and counter-neoliberal agenda. But Swanson’s contribution to understanding indigenous peoples’ survival and urban uplift strategies should stand the test of time as a pioneering ethnographic work on the ethics and politics of Latin American charity.

Chris Garces

Tylor, Edward B., Alfred R. Radcliffe-Brown, Claude Lévi-Strauss y otros: *El parentesco*. Textos fundamentales. Introducción, selección y traducción de Federico Bossert, Pablo F. Sendón y Diego Villar. Buenos Aires: Editorial Biblos/Culturalia, 2012. 417 pp. ISBN 978-950-786-980-8

Los estudios de parentesco son sin duda uno de los monstruos sagrados de la antropología. Desde su surgimiento como disciplina institucionalizada en la segunda mitad del siglo XIX, la antropología dedicó un lugar especial y unos esfuerzos enormes al estudio de los sistemas concretos de parentesco, o bien a las discusiones teóricas (y a veces acérrimas controversias) sobre el tema. Acudiendo a Marcel Mauss, los editores de este volumen constatan: “este ‘hecho social total’ fue concebido como una manifestación institucional que permitía comprender la realidad social o cultural de diversos grupos humanos” (17).

Si bien los sistemas de parentesco son “ante todo, sistemas de clasificación” (17), el propio afán de la antropología fue, por así decirlo, clasificar estas clasificaciones y buscar elaborar modelos más universales que permitan acercarse a una comprensión de las sociedades particulares. Estos afanes, retrazados en este libro a lo largo de un siglo de desarrollos sobre la materia, son los que colocaron los estudios de parentesco en el altar mayor de la disciplina – herramienta sagrada para aquellos que encuentran en los diagramas, modelos y análisis computarizados el sello por fin “científico” de la antropología; o también herramienta monstruosa y desalentadora para quienes piensan perder, en los mismos diagramas, la sustancia misma de la sociedad concreta que estudian.

Sea lo que fuere, el parentesco es y sigue siendo uno de los campos más trabajados y discutidos de la disciplina, con dos inconvenientes que pretende ayudar a subsanar esta compilación: en primer lugar, y quedándose en el ámbito hispanohablante, es un hecho que son escasas las traducciones de los textos clásicos de parentesco. De ahí un primer mérito, y no el menor, de este libro, que se propone poner por primera vez al alcance de los lectores de habla hispana estos textos, en pulcras y cuidadosas traducciones realizadas por los editores.

En segundo lugar, y como suele ocurrir, no podemos negar que varios de los autores y textos compilados son hoy más celebrados que leídos – pienso particularmente en el ensayo seminal de Edward Tylor que abre el volu-

men, o en los escritos de Rivers, Kroeber o Schneider. De esta manera, “El parentesco ...” reúne a 13 autores indispensables y 19 “textos fundamentales” sobre el estudio del parentesco, escalonados desde 1889 hasta 1984. A estos textos tendríamos que agregar el sugestivo prefacio de Tom Zuidema. Algunos de los textos recopilados son “teóricos” y de alcance más general: el de Edward B. Tylor que abre la serie, “Sobre un método de investigación del desarrollo de las instituciones aplicado a las leyes del matrimonio y la descendencia” (1889) calificado por George Stocking, Jack Goody, y por los tres editores del libro, como una contribución seminal que marcó “el comienzo de un tipo de estudios que irá adquiriendo un protagonismo cada vez mayor” (16). Sin que alcance el espacio de una reseña para comentarlos a todos, deben señalarse también los textos de Émile Durkheim: “Contribución a la historia primitiva del matrimonio. Totemismo, matrimonio colectivo, derecho materno” (1896–1897); de William H. Rivers: “Terminología clasificatoria y matrimonio entre primos cruzados” (1913); “El estudio del parentesco en las sociedades primitivas” de Edward E. Evans-Pritchard (1929); la “Reseña de ‘Estructura y sentimiento. Un caso de prueba en la antropología social’” de Floyd Lounsbury (1962); “El futuro de los estudios de parentesco” de Claude Lévi-Strauss (1965) y el estudio de David Schneider sobre “Rivers y Kroeber en el estudio de parentesco” (1968).

Otros de los textos compilados se concentran sobre una región geográfica específica: África con “El hermano de la madre y el hijo de la hermana en África occidental” de Jack Goody (1959), que recapitula los estudios sobre las relaciones avunculares; Asia está representada con dos textos de Louis Dumont sobre “La terminología dravidiana de parentesco como expresión del matrimonio” y “Terminologías dravidianas de parentesco” que datan de 1953, al igual que el artículo de Alfred R. Radcliffe-Brown sobre el mismo tema. Más reciente, el artículo de Rodney Needham (1984) expone “La transformación de los sistemas prescriptivos en Indonesia oriental”. En cuanto a América, la parte norte del continente está representada otra vez por Radcliffe-Brown (“Las terminologías de parentesco en California” [1935]) y Alfred Kroeber (“Sistemas clasificatorios de relación” [1909]); Centroamérica con “El sistema de parentesco maya y el matrimonio entre primos cruzados” de Fred Eggan (1934); y Sudamérica con “Algunos aspectos del sistema de parentesco inca” de Floyd Lounsbury (1964) y “El uso social de los términos de parentesco de los indios brasileños” de Claude Lévi-Strauss, escrito en 1943, poco antes de sus clásicas “Estructuras elementales del parentesco”. Australia, patria de los sistemas *kariera* y *aranda*, no podía faltar en esta selección, con un texto muy poco conocido de Durkheim: “Sobre la organización matrimonial de las sociedades australianas” (1903–1904) y “La organización social de las tribus australianas” de Alfred R. Radcliffe-Brown (1930–1931). La selección de los diferentes textos logra abarcar entonces a todos los sistemas de parentesco: dravidiano con Dumont y Radcliffe-Brown, *kariera* con Radcliffe-Brown, *crow-omaha* con Lounsbury, el intercambio asimétrico con Needham, etc.