

The Quest for Therapy

Medical Pluralism in Lower Zaire

John M. Janzen



with the collaboration of
William Arkininstall, M.D.
Foreword by Charles Leslie

Awarded the 1978 Wellcome Medal
for Research in Anthropology
by the Royal Anthropological Institute
of Great Britain and Ireland

Quest For Therapy In Lower Zaire

Claude Brodeur, René Devisch



Quest For Therapy In Lower Zaire:

The Quest for Therapy in Lower Zaire John M. Janzen, William Arkininstall, 1978 In this book Dr John M Janzen describes patterns of healing among the BaKongo of Lower Zaire in Africa who like many peoples elsewhere utilize cosmopolitan medicine alongside traditional healing practices What criteria he asks determine the choice of the alternative therapies And what is their institutional interrelationship In seeking answers he analyzes case histories and cultural contexts to explore what social transactions decisionmaking illness and therapy classifications and resource allocations are used in the choice of therapy by the ill their kinfolk friends associates and specialized practitioners From the Preface This book presents an on the ground ethnographic account of how medical clients of one region of Lower Zaire diagnose illness select therapies and evaluate treatments a process we call therapy management The book is intended to clarify a phenomenon of which central African clients have long been cognizant namely that medical systems are used in combination Our study is aimed primarily at readers interested in the practical issues of medical decision making in an African country the cultural content of symptoms and the dynamics of medical pluralism that is the existence in a single society of differently designed and conceived medical systems

The Quest for Therapy John M. Janzen, 1978 **The Art of Medical Anthropology** Sjaak van der Geest, Adri Rienks, 1998 **The Postcolonial Turn** Rene Devisch, B. Nyamnjoh, 2011-11-04 This innovative book is a forward looking reflection on mental decolonisation and the postcolonial turn in Africanist scholarship As a whole it provides five decennia long lucid and empathetic research involvements by seasoned scholars who came to live in local peoples own ways significant daily events experienced by communities professional networks and local experts in various African contexts The book covers materials drawn from Botswana Cameroon the Democratic Republic of Congo Mozambique Nigeria South Africa and Tanzania Themes include the Whelan Research Academy rap musicians political leaders wise men and women healers Sacred Spirit churches diviners bards and weavers who are deemed proficient in the classical African geometrical knowledge As a tribute to late Archie Mafeje who showed real commitment to decolonise social sciences from western centred modernist development theories commentators of his work pinpoint how these theories sought to dismiss the active role played by African people in their quest for self emancipation One of the central questions addressed by the book concerns the role of an anthropologist and this issue is debated against the background of the academic lecture delivered by Ren Devisch when receiving an honorary doctoral degree at the University of Kinshasa The lecture triggered critical but constructive comments from such seasoned experts as Valentin Mudimbe and Wim van Binsbergen They excoriate anthropological knowledge on account that the anthropologist notwithstanding his or her social and cognitive empathy and intense communication with the host community too often fails to also question her own world and intellectual habitus from the standpoint of her hosts Leading anthropologists carry further into great depth the bifocal anthropological endeavour focussing on local peoples re imagining and re connecting the local and global The book is of interest to a wide readership in

the humanities social sciences philosophy and the history of the African continent and its relation with the North *The Social Basis of Health and Healing in Africa* Steven Feierman, John M. Janzen, 1992-09-22 These essays are an account of disease health and healing practices on the African continent The contributors all emphasize the social conditions linked to ill health and the development of local healing traditions from Morocco to South Africa and from the precolonial era to the present **Suspect Others** Stuart Earle Strange, 2021-07-22 This ethnography considers how spirit mediums interactively create self knowledge out of interpersonal suspicion in the racially and religiously diverse Caribbean country of Suriname

Culture and Sexual Risk Hans ten Brummelhuis, Gilbert Herdt, 2004-08-02 Brummelhuis and Herdt provide an intense examination of sexual risk and its cultural configurations heretofore missing from the AIDS literature The chapters on Western gay men speak to the pressing methodological conceptual and theoretical needs in HIV AIDS research while providing an understanding and documentation of gay men's lives within the emerging corpus of lesbian and gay studies Chapters on the Philippines Brazil Haiti and Africa explore the cultural political and economic contexts surrounding the transmission and prevention of HIV AIDS in these cultures **Health System, Sickness and Social Suffering in Mekelle (Tigray - Ethiopia)** Pino Schirripa, 2010 In medical anthropology medical system refers to all the healing practices therapeutic knowledge and traditions that in a specific social context people can use in order to cope with health problems It refers as well to all the social actors involved policy makers health professionals healers priests patients and their family Starting from this perspective this book presents the first results of an ethnographic research which was carried out in Tigray the northernmost of the nine ethnic regions of Ethiopia between 2007 and 2008 It analyzes in the social context of Mekelle the capital of Tigray the different healing practices and therapeutic traditions as well as the strategies of the actors acting in the social arena It also explores the health care seeking behaviors of the patients in a context characterized by social suffering and inequalities Series Mekelle University Social Science Series Vol 1 *A Companion to African History* William H. Worger, Charles Ambler, Nwando Achebe, 2018-09-17 Covers the history of the entire African continent from prehistory to the present day A Companion to African History embraces the diverse regions subject matter and disciplines of the African continent while also providing chronological and geographical coverage of basic historical developments Two dozen essays by leading international scholars explore the challenges facing this relatively new field of historical enquiry and present the dynamic ways in which historians and scholars from other fields such as archaeology anthropology political science and economics are forging new directions in thinking and research Comprised of six parts the book begins with thematic approaches to African history exploring the environment gender and family medical practices and more Section two covers Africa's early history and its pre colonial past early human adaptation the emergence of kingdoms royal power and warring states The third section looks at the era of the slave trade and European expansion Part four examines the process of conquest the discovery of diamonds and gold military and social response and more Colonialism is discussed in the sixth

section with chapters on the economy transformed due to the development of agriculture and mining industries The last section studies the continent from post World War II all the way up to modern times Aims at capturing the enthusiasms of practicing historians and encouraging similar passion in a new generation of scholars Emphasizes linkages within Africa as well as between the continent and other parts of the world All chapters include significant historiographical content and suggestions for further reading Written by a global team of writers with unique backgrounds and views Features case studies with illustrative examples In a field traditionally marked by narrow specialisms A Companion to African History is an ideal book for advanced students researchers historians and scholars looking for a broad yet unique overview of African history as a whole

The Problem of Money Bernhard Bierlich, 2007 Based on long term medical anthropological research in northern Ghana the author analyses issues of health and healing of gender and of the control and use of money in a changing rural African setting He describes the culture of medical pluralism so typical for neo colonial states and people's choices of traditional local medicine plants and sacrifices Islamic medicine charms and various written solutions and modern therapy biomedicine in particular western pharmaceuticals He concludes that the rural urban divide is a fiction that demarcations between these areas are frequently blurred linked by a postcolonial capitalist discourse of local markets regional economies and national structures which frequently emerge in local African settings but often originate in global and multinational markets

Health and disease in tropical Africa Akhtar R, 1987-01-31

Morality, Hope and Grief Hansjörg Dilger, Ute Luig, 2010-05-01 The HIV AIDS epidemic in sub Saharan Africa has been addressed and perceived predominantly through the broad perspectives of social and economic theories as well as public health and development discourses This volume however focuses on the micro politics of illness treatment and death in order to offer innovative insights into the complex processes that shape individual and community responses to AIDS The contributions describe the dilemmas that families communities and health professionals face and shed new light on the transformation of social and moral orders in African societies which have been increasingly marginalised in the context of global modernity

The Moral Discourse of Health in Modern Cairo Mohammed Tabishat, 2014-03-21 In The Moral Discourse of Health in Modern Cairo Persons Bodies and Organs Mohammed Tabishat posits that health care practices in Egypt constitute an index to read the way political economic and social conditions are experienced by those who use embody or live them and cope with their outcomes These practices carry the code of the socio cultural matrix in which they are embedded they speak of the rationalities of different help seeking efforts In doing so they represent the moral principles underlying the social efforts to alleviate pain and maintain life as a whole Health related practices in this sense constitute a critical platform to know feel and live in both the physical and moral sense

A Bed Called Home Mamphela Ramphele, 1993 In the last three years the migrant labor hostels of South Africa particularly those in the Transvaal have gained international notoriety as theaters of violence For many years they were hidden from public view and neglected by the white authorities Now it seems hostel dwellers may have

chosen physical violence to draw attention to the structural violence of their appalling conditions of life Yet we should not lose sight of the fact that the majority of hostel dwellers are peace loving people who have over the years developed creative strategies to cope with their impoverished and degrading environment In this challenging study Dr Mamphela Ramphele documents the life of the hostel dwellers of Cape Town for whom a bed is literally a home for both themselves and their families Elaborating the concept of space in its many dimensions not just physical but political ideological social and economic as well she emphasizes the constraints exerted on hostel dwellers by the limited spaces they inhabit At the same time she argues that within these constraints people have managed to find room for manoeuvre and in her book explores the emancipatory possibilities of their environment The text is illustrated with a number of black and white photographs taken by Roger Meintjes in the townships and hostels *Healing and Religion in Africa. Therapy Management Group and Cosmology Among the BaKongo* Regina Reinart, 2020-07-23 Bachelor Thesis from the year 2000 in the subject Theology Practical Theology grade 1 0 language English abstract In this essay I will look at the medical system of the people of Kongo in Lower Zaire My account is based on the fieldwork done by John M Janzen among the BaKongo in the late 60s early 70s He offers a concrete description of six cases and examines them I chose a typical case of these namely patient Lwezi Diagnosis and treatment of a BaKongo patient are skillfully directed by the institution of therapy management group a group made up of the kin of the patient which takes care of the well being of the ill This institution is strongly influenced by the cosmology of the BaKongo and is vital for the therapy The major features in Lwezi s healing process were the therapy management group the paternal blessing and the payment of the bride price each of which I will refer to in the following sections Many people think that the healing practices of traditional societies are irrational but I will show that for the BaKongo medical practices must engage with the supernatural in order to guarantee healing To anthropologists and many non BaKongo the medical system in Lower Zaire appears to consist of various medical traditions be it the traditional BaKongo therapies or the Western conventional medicine The general perception is that the latter is not only universally applicable but might eventually replace traditional medical practices I will show that only by taking into account the BaKongo way of healing especially the therapy management group with its unique perception of illness and healing is successful cure of these people possible **The Law of the Lifegivers** Claude Brodeur, René Devisch, 2018-12-07 African societies are gifted with a rich creativity often expressed in intimate corporeal terms For the Yaka people of southwestern Congo such manifestations can have individual social or even cosmic significance The Law of the Lifegivers investigates the importance among the Yaka of body and space in their daily life exercise of power and initiatic traditions Through this analysis Devisch and Brodeur show that body desire and symbol are intertwined so that bodily expression can act as sensuous and powerful symbol The domestication of passion and the institutionalizing of a subject are all expressed in bodily terms particularly during initiations the ethical order of law rests on many bodily symbols including the importance of maternal and paternal lifegivers The authors vividly describe the

different life giving or life threatening roles which function in this society such as sorcerer diviner therapist and chief as well as the funeral drama which shapes the passage to the afterlife with the ancestors as experienced by the dying subject and his community Through their dialogue and correspondence Devisch and Brodeur an anthropologist and a psychoanalyst respectively bring together two sometimes conflicting intellectual approaches They aim to unravel a truth which is freed as much as possible from the presumption that only the West possesses the knowledge of objective discourse and science Through the interaction the authors reveal the semantic threads located at the very heart of the most vital life giving processes which weave the fabric of the practice and thought of a riveting passionate Africa

Body and Affect in the Intercultural Encounter Devisch, Rene, 2017-01-17 The volume draws from Ren Devisch's encounters with groups in southsaharan Africa primarily The author had the privilege to immerse himself around the clock in the Yakaphones activities and thoughts in southwest DR Congo from 1972 to 1974 and intermittently in Kinshasa's shanty towns from 1986 to 2003 The author first examines what sparked his choice to come to Congo and then to pursue research among the Yakaphones in the borderland with Angola He then invites us to follow the trajectory of his plural anthropological view on today's multicentric world It leads us to his praise for honorary doctor Jean Marc Ela's work He then examines the proletarian outbursts of violence that rocked Congo's major cities in 1991 and 1993 These can be read as a settling of scores with the disillusioning colonial and missionary modernisation along with president Mobutu's millenarian Popular Movement of the Revolution Furthermore after considering the morose reduction of a major Yaka dancing mask into a mere museum bound curio in Antwerp the book unravels the Yakaphones perspectives on spirits and sorcery's threat It also analyses their commitment to classical Bantu African healing cults along with their parallel consulting physicians and healers By sharing the Yakaphones life world the analysis highlights their body group world weave interlaced by the principle of co resonance A phenomenological and perspectivist look unfolds the local actors views thereby disclosing the Bantu African genius and setting for a major reversal of perspectives Indeed seeing here from there allows the author to uncover some alienating dynamics at work in his native Belgian Flemish speaking culture To better grasp the realm of life beyond the speakable and factual reasoning the approach occasionally turns to the later Lacan's focus on the unconscious desire the body and its affects The book addresses students and researchers in the humanities and more broadly all those immersed in the heat of the encounter with the culturally different

Beyond Rationalism Bruce Kapferer, 2003-02-01 This book seeks a reconsideration of the phenomenon of sorcery and related categories The contributors to the volume explore the different perspectives on human sociality and social and political constitution that practices typically understood as sorcery magic and ritual reveal In doing so the authors are concerned to break away from the dictates of a western externalist rationalist understanding of these phenomena without falling into the trap of mysticism The articles address a diversity of ethnographic contexts in Africa Asia the Pacific and the Americas

African Indigenous Religions and Disease Causation David

Westerlund,2006-10-01 This comparative and historical study focuses on religious aspects of disease etiologies among five systematically selected African peoples the San Maasai Sukuma Kongo and Yoruba Unlike the homogenizing tendencies of many earlier comparative works by scholars of religion this book highlights the differences between and the plurality within the religions and cultures of the selected peoples as well as processes of change The work covers a period of about 100 years from the late 19th to the late 20th century and much of the material used comes from European mission archives To different degrees among the peoples studied there has been a gradual shift from an emphasis on spiritual beings such as God and ancestors to living humans like witches as agents of disease In a theoretically eclectic analysis possible reasons for this shift are discussed

Pathological Child Psychiatry and the Medicalization of Childhood Sami Timimi,2014-04-04 Currently it is common practice among the child psychiatric establishment to prescribe powerful and potentially addictive drugs to children who have emotional or behavioural problems Pathological Child Psychiatry and the Medicalization of Childhood is a strong challenge to this way of thinking Sami Timimi uses a wide variety of sources that shape our understanding including his personal experiences to highlight the role of culture beliefs science social hierarchy and power in shaping our understanding of childhood problems and how to deal with them He urges professionals who work with children to question their assumptions in a manner that will enable them to access a greater variety of potentially helpful therapeutic frameworks Since the 1960s psychiatry has had to learn to accommodate critical analysis of its beliefs and methods The legitimacy of its core assumptions continues to be questioned Now child psychiatry too must engage with such a debate if it wishes to develop into a genuinely democratic and inclusive profession Pathological Child Psychiatry and the Medicalization of Childhood will be of great interest to professionals and trainees in psychiatry and child psychiatry social work family therapy and other psychotherapies for children and adolescents

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Table of Contents Quest For Therapy In Lower Zaire

1. Understanding the eBook Quest For Therapy In Lower Zaire
 - The Rise of Digital Reading Quest For Therapy In Lower Zaire
 - Advantages of eBooks Over Traditional Books
2. Identifying Quest For Therapy In Lower Zaire
 - Exploring Different Genres
 - Considering Fiction vs. Non-Fiction
 - Determining Your Reading Goals
3. Choosing the Right eBook Platform
 - Popular eBook Platforms
 - Features to Look for in an Quest For Therapy In Lower Zaire
 - User-Friendly Interface
4. Exploring eBook Recommendations from Quest For Therapy In Lower Zaire
 - Personalized Recommendations
 - Quest For Therapy In Lower Zaire User Reviews and Ratings
 - Quest For Therapy In Lower Zaire and Bestseller Lists
5. Accessing Quest For Therapy In Lower Zaire Free and Paid eBooks

- Quest For Therapy In Lower Zaire Public Domain eBooks
- Quest For Therapy In Lower Zaire eBook Subscription Services
- Quest For Therapy In Lower Zaire Budget-Friendly Options
- 6. Navigating Quest For Therapy In Lower Zaire eBook Formats
 - ePub, PDF, MOBI, and More
 - Quest For Therapy In Lower Zaire Compatibility with Devices
 - Quest For Therapy In Lower Zaire Enhanced eBook Features
- 7. Enhancing Your Reading Experience
 - Adjustable Fonts and Text Sizes of Quest For Therapy In Lower Zaire
 - Highlighting and Note-Taking Quest For Therapy In Lower Zaire
 - Interactive Elements Quest For Therapy In Lower Zaire
- 8. Staying Engaged with Quest For Therapy In Lower Zaire
 - Joining Online Reading Communities
 - Participating in Virtual Book Clubs
 - Following Authors and Publishers Quest For Therapy In Lower Zaire
- 9. Balancing eBooks and Physical Books Quest For Therapy In Lower Zaire
 - Benefits of a Digital Library
 - Creating a Diverse Reading Collection Quest For Therapy In Lower Zaire
- 10. Overcoming Reading Challenges
 - Dealing with Digital Eye Strain
 - Minimizing Distractions
 - Managing Screen Time
- 11. Cultivating a Reading Routine Quest For Therapy In Lower Zaire
 - Setting Reading Goals Quest For Therapy In Lower Zaire
 - Carving Out Dedicated Reading Time
- 12. Sourcing Reliable Information of Quest For Therapy In Lower Zaire
 - Fact-Checking eBook Content of Quest For Therapy In Lower Zaire
 - Distinguishing Credible Sources
- 13. Promoting Lifelong Learning
 - Utilizing eBooks for Skill Development

- Exploring Educational eBooks

14. Embracing eBook Trends

- Integration of Multimedia Elements
- Interactive and Gamified eBooks

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