

**RONALD GODFREY LIENHARDT, 1921-1993:  
BIOGRAPHICAL NOTES AND BIBLIOGRAPHY**

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*Introduction*

NEITHER Godfrey Lienhardt nor his brother Peter kept systematic records of their publications or of their academic activities. While they did give copies of some of their publications to the Tylor Library at Oxford's Institute of Social and Cultural Anthropology, where they both taught, they failed to provide other information for the records, so that until now the Institute has kept only very brief biographical notes. Moreover, although they kept copies of their books and off-prints of some of their articles, it has required much detective work to track down the rest of their publications. For example, as executor of both their literary estates, since their deaths I have frequently found among their papers undated typescripts of papers and book reviews that give no clue as to where—or, indeed, whether—they were published.

Godfrey was modest in talking about his contributions to social anthropology in general and to the anthropology of the Southern Sudan (and especially the Dinka) in particular. The bibliography provided here, however, is testament to both the quality and quantity of his contribution to the subject, as represented in his published work. The 136 entries have been arranged in purely chronological order, rather than by category, as I think this shows more clearly Lienhardt's developing intellectual and academic interests. Those who know and admire the style of his anthropological writings may be particularly interested to know of his early contributions to F. R. Leavis's critical journal *Scrutiny*, which are listed here.

Lienhardt's major contribution has been through his books and articles, which show his profound understanding of Dinka culture and of the discipline of anthropology. The many reviews he wrote, however, provide further insights into his wider intellectual interests and reveal the extent of his range of reference. Like all his writings, his reviews were meticulously drafted and redrafted until he found their form and content satisfactory. Given the intrinsic interest of these reviews, I have tried to track down all of them but recognize that there may be some I have missed. For example, it has not been possible to discover if Lienhardt reviewed for the *Times Literary Supplement* before the introduction of signed reviews in 1974. I quite expect, therefore, that additional material may come to light and will be pleased to receive (via the editors of *JASO*) corrections and additions to the information published here.<sup>1</sup>

### *Biographical Notes*

Ronald Godfrey Lienhardt was born on 17 January 1921 in Bradford, Yorkshire, to a Swiss father and a British mother. He was educated at Eastborough Council School, Dewsbury (1926–31) and Batley Grammar School, Batley, West Yorkshire (1931–39), where he held an Akroyd Scholarship. In 1936 he gained his Matriculation Certificate from the Northern Universities Joint Matriculation Board. From 1936 to 1937 he was Secretary of the school's literary society. He contributed to the school magazine and was its editor from 1938 to 1939. In 1938 he gained his Higher School Certificate from the Northern Universities Joint Matriculation Board in English, French, and History (with Distinction in English). In 1939 he participated in school plays (*The Purple Bedroom* and *Le Pharmacien*). He was also a member of the school athletics team.

1. My original intention was to publish these combined biographical notes and bibliography together with those I had prepared on Godfrey Lienhardt's brother Peter. For editorial reasons, however, it was decided to publish them separately. The biographical notes and bibliography for Peter Lienhardt appeared in an earlier issue of *JASO* (Vol. XXVII, no. 2 (1996), pp. 107–112), where a version of this text also appeared. I should like to thank the following for their help in compiling the information presented here: Jeremy Coote, Mrs Isabella Birkin (Administrative Secretary, Institute of Social and Cultural Anthropology, University of Oxford), Mr Mike Morris (Tylor Librarian, Institute of Social and Cultural Anthropology, University of Oxford), Mr C. S. Parker (former headmaster, Batley Grammar School, Batley, West Yorkshire), Mr Leslie Spurr (former master at Batley Grammar School, Batley, West Yorkshire), Dr Philip Howell (former Archivist, Downing College, Cambridge), Anne Macdonald (College Secretary, Exeter College, Oxford), Dr Shirley Ardener (Queen Elizabeth House, Oxford), and Mrs Janet Walker (former College Secretary, Wolfson College, Oxford). I should also like to thank Margaret Tulip for her help in preparing the material for publication.

From 1939 to 1941 he was a State Scholar (Open Major Scholar) at Downing College, Cambridge, achieving First Class Honours in Part I of the English Tripos. In 1941 he joined the Royal Army Ordinance Corps (RAOC) as a private. In March 1943 he was commissioned as a Lieutenant in the Royal Army Service Corps (RASC) and posted to East Africa. In 1945 he returned to Cambridge on 'B' release (i.e. 'at the request of the Ministry of Labour and National Service in order to perform work of national reconstruction'). He was awarded an MA under war regulations. In 1947 he took First Class Honours (with Distinction) in the Archaeological and Anthropological Tripos, Section A.

In 1947 the government of the Sudan awarded him a grant to study the Dinka; Downing College, Cambridge, also made a grant towards his initial expenses. This fieldwork was carried out between 1947 and 1951. In 1948 he became a post-graduate student at Exeter College, Oxford. In 1952 he was awarded his D.Phil. for his thesis 'The Dinka of the Southern Sudan: Religion and Social Structure'.

In 1949 he was appointed Research Lecturer (later Lecturer) in African Sociology at the University of Oxford. From 1950 to 1952 he held a Research Fellowship from the International African Institute to study the Anuak of Southern Sudan. Through the Institute of Social Anthropology, he also received a grant from All Souls College, Oxford to extend his researches in the Sudan. This fieldwork was carried out between 1952 and 1954.

From 1955 to 1956 he was given leave to start a department in Sociology and Social Anthropology at the College of Arts and Sciences in Baghdad, Iraq. During this time he held the post of Professor of Sociology and Social Anthropology. Also in 1955 he was appointed Senior Lecturer in African Sociology at the University of Oxford. From the late 1950s until the middle 1960s he was a Member of Common Room at Queen Elizabeth House, Oxford, where for much of the time he was also resident. In 1964 he was Visiting Professor at the Institute of African Studies, University of Ghana, Accra.

In 1967 he was appointed a Governing Body Fellow of Wolfson College, Oxford, later becoming a Professorial Fellow. In 1972 he was appointed to an *ad hominem* Readership in Social Anthropology. From 1973 to 1975 he was Vicegerent at Wolfson College. From 1975 to 1976 he was Acting Head of the Institute of Social Anthropology. In 1983 he received an honorary D.Litt. from Northwestern University, Illinois. In 1988 he retired, after some forty-one years' service to the Institute of Social Anthropology and to the University of Oxford. He became Reader Emeritus in Social Anthropology and an Emeritus Fellow at Wolfson College, positions he held until his death in 1993.

Lienhardt was an active member of university and college committees throughout his career. At various times he served on, amongst others, the Board of the Faculty of Oriental Studies, the Board of the Faculty of Anthropology and Geography, the Committee for the Pitt Rivers Museum, the Inter-Faculty Liaison Committee for African Studies, and the Standing Committee on Matters Referred to the General Board. In addition, he served on the Advisory Board of the *Oxford Review* (University College, Oxford), as a Judge for the Amaury Talbot Prize, as

Faculty Board Liaison Officer with Oxford University Press, as an Elector for the Bagby Studentship, as a Member of Council of the Royal Anthropological Institute, as co-editor (and later General Editor) of the Oxford Library of African Literature, and (for a number of periods) as President of the Oxford University Anthropological Society.

He also frequently served as an examiner. He was Chief Examiner for Social Anthropology on the International Baccalaureate from 1968 to 1976 and on various occasions external examiner at the University of Ghana, at the University of Khartoum, at the University of Cambridge, at the University of London (London School of Economics and Political Science), and at the University of Newcastle upon Tyne.

He gave a number of lectures outside Oxford. In 1957 he gave a series of lectures on Social Anthropology for the University of Birmingham at Selly Oak. In 1958–59, in collaboration with John Beattie, he gave a series of twenty lectures to the Workers' Educational Association at Thame, Oxfordshire. In 1961 he gave the second Malinowski Memorial Lecture, 'On the Concept of Objectivity in Social Anthropology', at the London School of Economics and Political Science (later published as 1964b). In 1969 he gave the Spalding Memorial Lecture, 'Birth and Death among the Anuak', at the University of Sussex. In 1983 he gave the Munro Lecture, 'Ceremony and Farce', at the University of Edinburgh. In 1992 he gave the Frazer Lecture in Social Anthropology for 1991, 'Frazer's Anthropology: Science and Sensibility', at the University of Cambridge (later published as 1993a).

Lienhardt also gave a number of talks on the radio. 'The Birth of Civilization in the Near East', a talk about Henri Frankfort's book of the same name, was broadcast on the BBC Third Programme on Saturday 6 October 1951. 'Modes of Thought', in the series 'The Values of Primitive Society', was broadcast on the BBC Third Programme on Tuesday 7 April 1953 (and was later published twice; as 1953a and 1954a). The first of a number of talks about the Dinka, 'Dinka: People of the Southern Sudan', was broadcast under the heading 'Geography: Life and Work in Africa' on the BBC Home Service for Schools on Wednesday 13 May 1953. A second talk about the Dinka, 'Dinkas of the Sudan', was also broadcast on the BBC Home Service for Schools on Friday 1 March 1957 (and is published for the first time below; as 1997a). A third talk about the Dinka, 'Sacrifice in Primitive Societies', was broadcast in the series 'The Sacrificial Society' on the BBC Third Programme on Saturday 4 June 1960 (and published in revised form as 1960a). A fourth talk about the Dinka, under the title 'Man in Society', was broadcast in the series 'Ancient Civilizations' on BBC Network Three on Wednesday 3 April 1963 (and published in revised form as 1963b); Francis Deng contributed to this broadcast. Lienhardt also took part in 'What is Civilization?', a further programme in the series 'Ancient Civilizations', which was broadcast on BBC Network 3 on Easter Sunday, 14 April 1963. This was a discussion programme featuring, in addition to Lienhardt, Stuart Piggott, M. I. Finley, and Richard Hoggart. Two further talks by Lienhardt were broadcast in 1965: 'Plato and the Vailala Madness' was broadcast on the BBC Third Programme on

Tuesday 16 February 1965 (and is published for the first time below; as 1997b); 'Simpler Societies in an Industrialized World', a contribution to the series 'Man and His Environment', was broadcast on Monday 12 April 1965 on the BBC Third Network (and again is published for the first time below; as 1997d). A discussion with Dennis Duerden, John Nagenda, and Lewis Nkosi on 'The Oral Tradition', recorded in London in 1966 for broadcast by a number of African radio stations was also later broadcast by Deutsche Welle, Cologne (it was also published as 1966f). Finally, he was the principal speaker on 'An Outline Map of the Social World: The Contribution of the Social Anthropologist', a programme in the series 'Understanding Other Societies', broadcast on the BBC Third Network (Study Session) on Monday 15 May 1967.

Lienhardt died on 9 November 1993. His death was marked by this and other journals. An Obituary Notice appeared in these pages (Vol. XXIV, no. 2 (1993)) as did the text of the address delivered by Peter Rivière at the Requiem Mass (*ibid.*, pp. 101–3). Obituaries appeared in the *Independent* (17 November 1993; by Douglas H. Johnson), the *Guardian* (19 November 1993; by André Singer), the *Sudan Democratic Gazette* (December 1993; by Bona Malwal), and *Cambridge Anthropology* (Vol. XVI, no. 3 (1992/1993; by Achol Deng)).

Lienhardt's intellectual legacy has yet to be fully appreciated. His contribution to anthropology was, of course, discussed by the writers of his obituaries and is also discussed by many of the contributors to this Special Issue. The contributors to *Vernacular Christianity: Essays in the Social Anthropology of Religion Presented to Godfrey Lienhardt* (edited by Wendy James and Douglas H. Johnson; Oxford: JASO, 1988 (JASO Occasional Papers No. 7)) also discussed it; and a select bibliography of his publications dealing 'most directly with the anthropological study of morality and religion' appeared there (pp. 183–4). Dominique Casajus has also discussed Lienhardt's contribution to anthropology in his entry on him in the *Dictionnaire de l'ethnologie et de l'anthropologie* (edited by Pierre Bonte, Michel Izard, and others; Paris: Presses Universitaires de France, 1991, p. 421). The publication here of a complete listing of his writings, plus the publication below of seven previously unpublished talks, will enable a fuller appreciation of his contribution to emerge in due course.

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**SEVEN TALKS**