

**IN MEMORY OF GODFREY LIENHARDT**

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APPRECIATIONS AND MEMOIRS

POEMS AND SONGS

## A YEAR IN BAGHDAD

*An address given at the 'Celebration of the Life and Work of Godfrey Lienhardt, 1921–1993', held at Wolfson College, Oxford, on 7 May 1994.*

It was thirty-eight years ago that I met Godfrey as a teacher, and over the years he became a close friend. He went to Baghdad in 1955 to establish a department of anthropology and sociology at the College of Arts and Sciences, University of Baghdad. (Godfrey later told me that Evans-Pritchard was approached about going to Baghdad but recommended instead that Godfrey take up the appointment.) He was seconded from Oxford University to undertake this task with the help of the only Iraqi anthropologist at the time, Dr Shakir Mustafa Salim, who studied the Marsh Arabs and had been a student of Mary Douglas at University College London. At that time anthropology was a little-known subject and Godfrey was there to introduce and establish it as part of the curriculum.

The society in which Godfrey came to live was imbued with underlying political instability as a result of cultural, religious, and ethnic diversities, as well as from the pressure of Western countries to keep Iraq within their orbit and, in contrast, from nationalists who wanted the country to join other Arab countries in their fight against Western influence and colonialism. Godfrey became aware of these different currents and their repercussions on the state of the country. However, despite these problems there was order, a respect for the law, an air of prosperity, and an optimism about the future.

In the course of his stay in this complex society, Godfrey was able to meet a variety of people ranging from the king (through an introduction from Julian Pitt-Rivers), politicians, academics, and high-ranking civil servants, to ordinary people in the markets which he frequented. He wanted to understand the attitudes and values of the local people as well as to make friends.

I was among the first intake of nine students studying anthropology and sociology at the College of Arts. We were regarded as oddities. We were studying an unusual subject, taught by a strange Englishman at odd times of the day, and by an unusual method of instruction, the tutorial system. Moreover, we were constantly reminded as to our uncertain future career prospects; the common question was, 'What do we do with anthropology?' The nine students (including one woman) came from different backgrounds and regions of the country but we kept together because we were in a minority. Four of the students (including the female student) could not cope with the social and intellectual climate which prevailed during Godfrey's year, but the remaining five students enjoyed Godfrey's friendship and easy relationship with him. Normally a great distance was kept between staff and students, who were invited occasionally to very formal and boring tea-parties by some of their lecturers. But Godfrey used to invite us to drinks and introduce us to his circle of friends. He thought, rightly so, that the only way to get to know the students was to have drinks at home. He was always generous in his hospitality. However, it was reported to the Dean of the College

that Godfrey was corrupting the students by giving them alcoholic drinks at his home. Godfrey, as he informed me later, saw the Dean and explained to him that his parties were private, and soft drinks were available had the students wanted them; moreover, above all the students were old enough to make their own decisions. The authorities thought Godfrey was breaking the social code, but Godfrey saw these parties as a venue for sociability and making friends. No negative consequences followed, and we continued to see Godfrey at his home.

Godfrey used to teach us at an odd time, 4.00 p.m., when most people were having a rest. He chose this time in order that his lectures and seminars should not clash with those of other staff members who taught us other subjects. Moreover, his lectures and seminars often extended beyond the assigned time of one hour. He found this important as he was teaching a new subject which required patience; both in explaining the content and in delivering it in a language, English, which was difficult for students to follow. In particular, the tutorials were interesting and instructive, and less formal than lectures. The system instituted by Godfrey was contrary to the established method of instruction: learning by heart and no discussion with the lecturers. When Godfrey left, after a year in the College, the tutorials were, sadly, abolished. He always turned up to lectures and seminars well-dressed in a suit.

Unless there were justifiable reasons, nobody missed Godfrey's classes. If a student interrupted Godfrey unnecessarily or disrupted the continuity of the teaching, then Godfrey reacted in a manner which made the student regret what he had done. The usual treatment would be an assignment to be discussed in class. No student wanted this and thus his lectures and seminars were, on the whole, trouble free. He taught about the Nilotic peoples of the Southern Sudan and particularly about the Nuer, their ecology and political system. The lectures and tutorials were interesting but daunting because we knew so little about other peoples and societies. He made comparisons between the Nilotes and the Marsh Arabs—their little inhabited islands, their interest in fishing, keeping cattle/buffaloes, blood feud, and the segmentary nature of their kinship and political systems. In the method and content of his course, which was radically different from other courses in anthropology and sociology taught at the College, Godfrey was a pioneer, and he was much respected for his contributions.

Godfrey lived first in a hotel and then with a British friend. But soon he moved to live in a small extension to a large house, with two rooms and a rooftop. This small extension was located in one of the exclusive areas of Baghdad which was inhabited by, on the whole, well-to-do people and well served with transport, shops etc. He was very pleased with the new accommodation and it became the centre of his social life; it was within a few minutes' walk of the College of Sciences where he held his lectures and seminars. The extension was furnished by him, reflecting the style to which he was accustomed—simply but tastefully with local carpets and objects, and pictures. Fayyad, his manservant, was a Marsh Arab. He looked after Godfrey very well and he was protective of him. He even moved within Godfrey's social circles—he became an indispensable member of the

household. He was respected and trusted. Fayyad had a cousin who ran a taxi which Godfrey used whenever he needed to travel.

Godfrey used to frequent the Brazilian coffee-house and the Swiss café, located on Al-Rashid Street, which is the main street in Baghdad. The Brazilian coffee-house was a fashionable place to frequent and attracted artists, academics, writers, poets, journalists, expatriates etc. It served excellent coffee, ice-cream, cakes and other forms of patisserie, which were brought from the Swiss café located next door. Godfrey, like those who went there regularly, liked the Brazilian coffee-house because it was tastefully decorated, peaceful, with no radio or television, and it had foreign newspapers and magazines as well as local ones. It became a meeting-place for friends and colleagues. One used to see Godfrey there, and if there was nobody with him, then those students who knew him and happened to be there used to join him. The purpose was social and he and his expatriate friends did not mind the broken English of the students. As always, Godfrey was very sociable and showed interest in following events in the country, in the background of the students, their interests, and their reaction to learning anthropology. He always showed patience, kindness, and consideration to his students and was generous with both his time and his hospitality.

Another place Godfrey used to frequent was the Zia Hotel and Restaurant, a popular place located on the right bank of the River Tigris and frequented by the expatriate community as well as by well-to-do local people. He invariably remarked to me how much he enjoyed the views from the terrace of the hotel, the food, and having drinks with friends.

Soon Godfrey found an additional social circle which gave him an entry into the social circles of artists, writers, politicians, high-ranking civil servants, and expatriates. He used to join them at their regular meetings to discuss literary works, arts in general, cultural issues etc. Participation in these meeting was by invitation, and he informed me that he enjoyed these meetings and that they were instructive in that they were a good venue for understanding the thinking and attitudes of the educated class in Iraq as well as for dialogue between Iraqis and Europeans.

Godfrey was always an independent person and he had a sense of adventure: he took pleasure in a car journey (preferably off any motorway or major road) and there was a constant sense of exploration. Once he visited the Marsh Arabs in southern Iraq, travelling there in Fayyad's cousin's taxi. There were no hotels or restaurants in the Marshes and Godfrey had to take things as they came. By chance he met the resident doctor for the eastern Marshes and he stayed with him for a few days. He rented a small canoe and explored some parts of the Marshes and was entertained by the local tribal chiefs. He enjoyed his time there and often spoke with affection to me about some of the people whom he met. He also visited some archaeological sites and in particular Babylon; contrary to the romantic image of this civilization portrayed in books, he found it rather disappointing—a heap of rubble with a few high walls, as he described it.

He enjoyed visiting the local markets in Baghdad. In particular, on Sundays he used to take Fayyad to explore the delights of the biggest market in the country. It consisted of guilds (cloth, silversmiths and goldsmiths, grain, copper, carpets, fruit and vegetables, books etc.), with each guild occupying an assigned part of the market. Occupations were, on the whole, inherited and families occupied a particular shop for generations. Furniture and objects which he acquired from these markets were to be seen in his small extension. Some of these objects he brought with him back to Oxford.

While Godfrey was in Baghdad and enjoying himself and contributing to the educational system there, his brother Peter was in Kuwait, doing research. Peter came to visit Godfrey in Baghdad and they organized trips to some parts of the country. Later Godfrey met some of Peter's friends from the Trucial States and likewise Peter met some of Godfrey's friends from Iraq. These friends spoke with affection and respect about Godfrey and Peter. This friendship was reciprocated.

Peter died before the Gulf War but Godfrey was saddened by the invasion of Kuwait and the destruction that it caused to Kuwait and its people. At the same time he foresaw the consequences for Iraq. He followed the news with concern and he hoped that a settlement would be reached. But this was not to be. When the Gulf War broke out, he rang me up at 1.30 a.m. to tell me that the bombing of Iraq had started. He predicted that the Allied Forces would inflict a great deal of damage on Iraq. He did not care for the political authorities in Iraq or Kuwait, nor for the political leaders of the Allied forces. His concern and sympathy was for the ordinary people of both countries who would suffer greatly from the hostilities—as proved to be the case.

Godfrey's one year in Baghdad was to have a deep impression on him. He spoke of his time there with affection and nostalgia. From time to time we would reminisce, and I will miss these occasions. Most importantly, all who knew him in this country and abroad will miss him as a teacher, friend, advisor, and distinguished anthropologist.

AHMED AL-SHAHI

### YENAKAN

*An address given at the 'Celebration of the Life and Work of Godfrey Lienhardt, 1921–1993', held at Wolfson College, Oxford, on 7 May 1994.*

I am very happy to be here for this Celebration of the Life and Work of Godfrey Lienhardt. When he went to Sudan to research his thesis on divinity and experience in the religion of the Dinka I was a toddler: he didn't know me and I didn't know him. So the first time I met him was when I came to Britain in 1977. I met

him in the house of a friend, John Ryle. He welcomed me and, I remember, he said he had nothing to give me. But he offered me a pen, a biro pen. It was worth only about twenty pence, but in our tradition that gift has a meaning. I still cherish that pen and I still have that pen in my box now. It is one of my antiques. So, indeed, Godfrey has been a friend to my people and to the Sudanese people as a whole.

The study on which Godfrey Lienhardt embarked among the Dinka in the Sudan is not complete. The history of the Dinka people continues (we call it in Dinka *yenakan*, which means 'inconclusive'). I would therefore ask the University of Oxford, and this college especially, to continue to extend the hand of friendship to the peoples of that part of the world and to continue to support research in the area. We need people to continue to come here to further the work of Dr Lienhardt in this field.

In the meantime, we are all delighted to be here today to share in this celebration. Thank you very much.

STEPHEN MADUT BAAK

### PRESENCE PERFECTED: TALKING TO GODFREY LIENHARDT

Except for the last one, the exchanges that follow took place between 1981 and 1991, and I have reconstructed them as close to verbatim as I can. For those who did not know Godfrey in person, I should like to recall his way of speaking. His articulation was cultivated and deliberate; this counteracted his natural tendency, in later life, to speak with a slight slur and at a slower speed. His modal speech tempo was *adagio*, but often enlivened with a sudden *rallentando* or *accelerando*. This gave him an immediate presence, no matter what else was on his mind. The vocal unity of the man, whether he was being snappy or pensive, was encapsulated in a voice whose dark sonority had an odd shine about it: the deeply guttural consonants and the largely nasal vowels were combined with a high-pitched tinkle of upper harmonics. This vocal grace, well-suited to the expression of feelings through irony, was entirely unconscious to him. To his friends, on the other hand, it was unmistakable. I always had to laugh when, phoning me up with, 'Hello Gerhard!', he thought it necessary to explain, 'It's Godfrey here.'

#### *First encounter*

Q. What time do the pubs close here? Same as in Ireland?

A. You're the anthropologist: sit down and find out!

#### *On people in their places*

Q. You seemed completely unapproachable after that first seminar I gave here.

A. All I remember of that seminar is thinking, 'Who is this Irish communist with a German name?'

Q. That's because you're afraid of the Irish. Mind you, I would be, too, if I read the *Telegraph* every day and...

A. I do not read the *Daily Telegraph* every day; and if I did, I should have no need of a German communist to censor my reading. There is no need to be overbearing with me.

*On ethnographic plausibility*

Q. So you see, the Miri are translating the old Miri idea of divinity into Arabic and call it Allah, and they translate the new Islamic idea of Allah back into the old Miri idea of Massala. You see?

A. Do you believe this?

Q. Well obviously, I don't; but the Miri do.

A. No, they do not.

Q. How can you say this? You've never seen a Miri in your life!

A. No, I haven't; and nor do I need to. No one will ever translate one idea into another symmetrically. The symmetry of that translation reflects your own tidy mind; no matter what your notebooks say, you are imposing a symmetry that is [gasping] preposterous.

*On identity*

Q. Did that kind of thing ever happen to you?

A. I'm not sure if it did or did not [chuckling]. At school, I was called 'Fritz' at times, since my father was Swiss, as you know. Even Peter called me 'Fritz' sometimes, though he was no less Swiss than I was. But then, I am indeed a burgher of the Canton of Zurich. Have you seen that wonderful document they sent me? I'm entitled to reside in the Canton of Zurich whenever I retire! Perhaps Peter and I will both go!

*On the despicable*

Q. Why don't you like him?

A. He is...dishonest in a self-serving way. He has always made whatever use suited him of his personal past. In the end, of course, he will have to believe all the lies he has ever strewn out about himself. And I'm sure he does.

*On confidentiality*

Q. Would you mind keeping that to yourself?

A. I am so discreet, Gerhard, I can never even remember what it is I am being discreet about.

*On power (1)*

Q. You were cruel. You just used your verbal skills to put her down every time she spoke. It was...very cruel.

A. But whatever she said, it was all 'distasteful', as Peter would say, and stupid, too. What do you want me to do: nod benignly just because I am sitting in the College bar and people think 'old Godfrey is drunk again'?

Q. No. But couldn't you just remember that other people have feelings, too, and that it hurts when you sting them?

A. Well, she was wrong, in public at least. I had to say, 'Down, Towser, down!', as John Beattie used to say to his dog. But I suppose I'd better invite her for lunch in College. Will you come along?

*On ethnography and identity*

Q. Don't you know that feeling? I'd quite happily have stayed there in Miri. It was better than Belfast, and certainly better than Germany.

A. So you would have 'become a Miri' for the rest of your life?

Q. Yes. I thought that being a Miri was a better life than I'd ever had 'at home', in Germany or Belfast or, well...even here, to be honest.

A. I cannot know what you are lacking here, and nor shall I ask. I can only tell you this. I think I know who I would be if I were a Dinka. And I might well be proud of being a Dinka. But...I could never wish to become one.

*On love (1)*

Q. Would you have married her? If she hadn't died?

A. She was the finest woman I have known. To marry her would have been...

Q. I don't mean to...

A. She was quite certainly the only person I should have considered. She had that...fineness we were talking about; and since we speak of marriage, she was from a good family too.

*On class*

Q. You have this infatuation with country gentry and what you call 'good families' and, forgive me, all these bastards who got rich on the slave trade. I don't get this at all!

A. There is no need for provocative language if you wish to 'get this at all'. If you wish to find out, you should meet — whom I have known for thirty years. In fact, I would like you to meet him: he might enjoy a little provocation.

*On love (2)*

Q. You don't mind I brought my boyfriend along to the pub, last time?

A. No, of course not. He was quite delightful! A bit shy, I thought?

Q. Well, he would be shy with you. He's not used to academic conversation. But what did you make of him?

A. What do you talk about?

*On power (2)*

Q. Why didn't you take the professorship then?



A. Even E-P couldn't bear that All Souls club; and he was a parson's son, so he should have been able to. And when I imagined life at All Souls, having lunch with all those pompous people, I thought, 'Why?'

Q. Didn't the power ever tempt you?

A. Power...! When Maurice Freedman died, I felt I might have to...but gratefully, that feeling went away again.

*On exams*

'Read ethnographies for information; read novels for insight.' Discuss.

*On a reference*

Q. Would you write me a reference for that job?

A. Yes, I will gladly, and for all the reasons I can think of, except that of prudence. I think that you might do better with a younger voice.

*On music*

Q. It's amazing, the amount of literature you can quote from memory. Only with music, you seem to have none of Peter's gifts?

A. Ma-de-moi-selle in the Family Way, la-da-di daa, di-daa.

Q. What's that?

A. It's a favourite of my father's. He loved 'English Music Hall', as he called it. And if you need to know, I still do.

*On beauty*

Q. Is it out yet, the new paperback edition?

A. Yes, and they've taken the cover I asked them to take. You know, the drawing of the face of that young Dinka man I've had on the wall?

Q. That transcendental face?

A. I wouldn't call it transcendental so much as translucent.

*On the unageingly funny*

Q. Isn't that the same girl as...?

A [laughing out loud and struggling to speak while giggling]. Yes, who took my hand and said, 'Come, uncle Godfrey: take me to the cellar and frighten me!'

*On dying*

Q. I phoned you after lunching in College, but you were out.

A. Yes, I wasn't feeling well.

Q. What happened?

A. You know that bench just beyond the President's house, opposite the playing fields? I went home from College, and as I was reaching the bench, I got the *doux néant*; and I sat down on the bench and thought, 'Now let me die.'

Q. God! Godfrey?

A. But later I began to feel the cold, and I had to go home.

Q. And? Why didn't you phone me then?

A. I had an omelette with Gentleman's Relish.

*On memory*

Q. Did you hear about that wonderful feast we had at Wolfson, a year after you died, to celebrate you?

A. There was talk of that, and as you know, I left some money in my will for the wine. Was it good?

Q. It was the most astonishing occasion. Everyone loved everyone, simply because each of us had been a friend of Godfrey's. People trusted each other at first sight, simply because you.... You should have been there!

A. I was, if you noticed. But what was that you said about my voice? I do hope you're not going to make me sound ancestral!

GERD BAUMANN

### BABES, BRAS, AND BUDGIES

*An address given at the 'Celebration of the Life and Work of Godfrey Lienhardt, 1921–1993', held at Wolfson College, Oxford, on 7 May 1994.*

My name is Paul Baxter. This afternoon I have been asked to talk about Godfrey's earlier days. I first met Godfrey during the academic year 1946–7 when we were both students in Downing College, Cambridge. Peter Lienhardt, also a Downing man, and I attended tutorials together and Peter introduced me to his elder brother. We were all Leavisites who had chosen to go to Downing in order to become students of F. R. Leavis. Nowadays to assert that one was a follower of Leavis is almost like saying that you had the plague or, at the least, had been tainted by membership of a ranting cult; but, at that time, although admittedly sectarian, we felt ahead of our time, avant-garde, particular, and we were rather conceited about ourselves. Godfrey had already moved out of English and on to Social Anthropology but had not moved out of the influence of Leavis. Indeed I think that in many ways Godfrey was permanently influenced by Leavis, at any rate in directions in which it suited his own temperament to go. For example, his own loose tutorial style showed signs of his period under Leavis, whose tutorials were always more seminar than supervision. More deep were the intense concerns that they both shared for the subtleties and nuances of language and the relationships between language, society, and morality. This last did not appear on the surface so much but was, I think, integral to Godfrey's perception of the world around him and his almost immediate smelling out of charlatany. Words could be played with but not used carelessly. Godfrey acknowledged his debt to Queenie

and F. R. Leavis in his little Home University Library book *Social Anthropology* which is dedicated to them.

Godfrey completed Prelim. and Part One in English, with starred Firsts, before he went into the services. On his return he switched to Social Anthropology and Archaeology, as it then was. Godfrey was still a student in 1946 but he already had a reputation, at least within the ranks of the Leavisites and in Downing. He also had an easy, jocular relationship with both the Leavises, of whom I and most undergraduates stood in some awe. He was also treated with respect by our two postgraduate assistant teachers, Ian Doyle and Wilfred Mellors. Somehow Godfrey always had a little aura of respect around him. He already had a hard, bright, intensely accurate way with language so that you watched what you said, because he would pick you up if you were sloppy, and sometimes it was not pleasant when he did that. He left me feeling that I was plodding, but I was still encouraged by his friendship and his concern.

Godfrey was extremely mercurial and, even then, a provoker of innocent devilment, especially as a raconteur. He was serious when he was joking and joking when he was serious, which if you were slower than he was could be a little bewildering. For example, and after I had only met him a couple of times or so, he insisted that my wife and I had sold a photograph of our son to Cow & Gate (the baby milk manufacturers) to use on advertisement placards along the escalators at London Underground stations. For an earnest Leavisite that was an accusation of collusion, for advertisers were (and are) one of the main corrupters of the language. He laughed off our denials. Then I learned that he was also asserting that the formidably respectable wife of another of our coevals was posing for advertisements for big-busted bras, which were also displayed alongside the escalators!

In 1946–7 nine-tenths of the students were ex-service people and mostly male. I have been told that the college authorities had anticipated an influx of drunken ex-servicemen who would play hell with the place; but, in the event, we really were a very dull, grey cohort who just wanted to get down to our work, do our exams, and get the hell out of it. Everybody had had enough of enforced communal jollity and just wanted a quiet life. It must have been a tutor's dream time. These days, the fiftieth anniversary of D-Day and such like are generating a miasma of nostalgia, but in 1946 the only military stories which ex-service students told were of cock-ups and confusions. Everyone had had enough of service 'bullshit'.

Godfrey had a fund of anecdotal stories, but I can only recall one he told about his army days. He claimed, of all unlikely things, to have been appointed as his unit's Motor Transport Officer, though he did not drive and hardly knew the difference between a spare wheel and a carburettor. But, as he said, because he had got his very good MT sergeant on his side that did not really matter; all he had to do was sign papers which were brought to him and say, 'Carry on, Sergeant.' All seemed to him to be going on quite well. The only difficulties he experienced derived from the unit being billeted in an old chicken farm where they

all had to bunk down in the chicken coops. The advantage of being an officer was that you only had to share a coop with another subaltern, and not live eight to a coop as the men did, though you still spent your time bent double scratching flea bites.

Then Godfrey had an unexplained run in with his commanding officer and was posted briskly to another unit. He took his rail warrant and went off. When he arrived at the little station at his new place he was met by a smart corporal driver, who saluted smartly and took him off to a beautiful country house and showed him into the anteroom of the officer's mess. When Godfrey queried, 'Shouldn't I report to the adjutant?' The corporal replied, 'Don't worry, Sir, the adjutant will come and see you.' Godfrey said that he thought, 'Really, this is marvellous. A unit in which the adjutant comes to see you rather than you reporting to the adjutant.' Left alone in the anteroom he strolled over to look at the notice board, where the first thing that he read was a large notice which stated that officers must not remove cutlery from the mess. Which was odd. Then he read a series of others stating that no officer should ever leave the confines of the camp without permission, and such like. The penny dropped. He had been sent to a place for mentally disturbed officers. Immediately he realised that the very worst thing to do would be to say, 'But I am all right!', and that the best course would be to go along with events. The story continued with a few housekeeping-style details and then just stopped with, 'Well, it was all right when I got used to it.' It ended, as do so many African stories, with no ending, leaving the listener with questions to which he wants answers. There was no climax: the story just stopped. 'So, well then, what happened?' 'Oh,' he said, 'I got a posting the following week.' And that was that.

It now occurs to me, though of course it could not have crossed my mind at the time, that one of the reasons that Godfrey must have got on so well with Dinka was that he told stories like Africans tell stories. As many questions are raised as answered, and the missing bits of the story are as important as the bits which are told. The impact of the story depends on the experiences that the teller and the listener share, so that the ending is left partly open rather than coming to a denouement. The tale is a creative exchange and not just a narrative.

Godfrey's roots and family in Dewsbury were important to him and he cared for them, like all things he held dear, conscientiously but never over-piously. He had been home to see his mother and, it must have been in the pub, I asked if he had had a pleasant time. 'All right,' he said, 'but it was marred by a tragic accident.' Well you have to say, 'What?' Godfrey then took about three-quarters of an hour to tell his tragic story. I am not allowed that long and could never tell it like Godfrey anyhow.

His mother had a pet budgerigar which was the comfort of her widowed years. She was used to letting the budgie out for a flight and then calling, 'Tweet, tweet, tweet', so that it would come and perch on her finger. This afternoon she let the budgie out and then went to the kitchen to make some tea. When she returned she called the bird but it did not come to her finger: 'Where's Charlie? Where's

Charlie?’ She called it again and again but there was no response. So she got up to look for it in the kitchen and there in the chair from which she got up was the squashed budgie. His mother had sat on it.

We have much else to celebrate in addition to Godfrey’s contributions of fun and droll humour to our lives. Of his other contributions the following in particular strike me. First, as has already been said, *Divinity and Experience* is really one of the great books in our subject. It is one of the few, like *Witchcraft, Oracles and Magic*, which one can honestly urge on friends who are not anthropologists. Secondly, Godfrey always sought to connect his work, as he felt social anthropology should do, to established intellectual traditions. In a Leavisian sense he felt intellectual productions should continue as part of a ‘line’. In his very short Preface (signed also by Wilf Whiteley and E-P, but clearly by Godfrey) to the first volume of the Oxford Library of African Literature, Godfrey quotes from T. S. Eliot: ‘We shall often find only the best, but the most individual parts of his work may be those in which dead poets, his ancestors, assert their immortality most vigorously.’ Like Eliot he looked for strength in past achievements. Eliot was clearly a major influence on Godfrey and I would hold, despite the current bayings of the Sunday supplements, that Eliot was a nourishing source.

Thirdly, though similar, was his implicit insistence that our concerns should be for the traditional concerns of humanity: social anthropology is not a science. Godfrey was a regular dipper into Coleridge from whom he quotes as the epigraph to the chapter ‘Belief and Knowledge’ in his *Social Anthropology*. In so far as a sentence can do so it indicates what the aims of our discipline should be: ‘We have imprisoned our own conceptions, by the lines which we have drawn in order to exclude the conceptions of others.’ In the West we have imprisoned ourselves by holding others out. Godfrey’s life was devoted to penetrating those ‘lines’, which are the very opposite of Leavisian ‘lines’, and to opening up intellectual boundaries. We are glad for that. Thank you.

PAUL BAXTER

### AN ENCOUNTER WITH GODFREY LIENHARDT

It was September 1975, our first visit to England. I was a research student in social anthropology at Cambridge University, preparing for field research in the Southern Sudan among a Nilotic-speaking people mentioned in the literature with the constant caveat, ‘little is known of them’. Cambridge would be useful, but Oxford was clearly the target we (my wife L’Ana and I) hoped to reach. From Cambridge I could set a plan for archival research, but as we unpacked our bags and moved into a small set of rooms at Churchill College, getting to Oxford and Godfrey was the real goal.

There was soon a first trip to Oxford by coach, a chance meeting with Rodney Needham, but no chance to meet Godfrey. I let him know of our disappointment. He responded in early October by writing: 'I am sorry to have missed you when you were last in Oxford. I shall be here for the most part after term begins on 13th October and if you let me know when you will be in Oxford—preferably a week or two after the beginning of the term, I should be pleased to arrange a meeting.' Another short letter and then his response of 20th October: 'I shall be pleased to see you at 11 o'clock on the morning of 22nd December at this address. I shall be in the Common Room in the basement having coffee.'

And so he was. We drove from Cambridge in a rented Mini that Godfrey would not believe I knew how to drive. To convince him otherwise I drove him to his College so that he could attend to some details, en route to a pub (the name eludes me now) where we could talk in detail about anthropological research in the Southern Sudan. And soon there were four: Peter Lienhardt, Godfrey, L'Ana, and myself. I wasn't accustomed to beer at noon, but ordered the same as Peter and Godfrey. Cigarettes were lit and when the beer was delivered, the conversation was also ignited. Said Godfrey, 'So what do you want to do in my part of Africa?' My response was interrupted by Peter asking, 'Do you speak Arabic?' 'No,' I replied, 'but I had hopes of working on this at Cambridge.' 'Well,' Peter continued, 'then I don't suppose you know how to write Arabic.' No, I didn't know that either. 'Well, well,' he replied, as he took a small pencil and piece of paper out of his jacket pocket. He drew a small dot, put down his pencil and said, as he pointed, 'That means nothing in Arabic.' Godfrey and Peter broke into deep laughter. 'Consider this your first lesson in Arabic,' Peter added.

A second round of bitters arrived. Godfrey squinted over the top of his glasses to ask, 'Have you read *Sudan Notes and Records* in detail? I mean, have you read all the important things?' 'Well,' I said, 'I have read the whole thing up to 1972 and I thought I had a good grip on it.' 'Well, we'll see about that,' was his response. Then followed a probing inquiry about why, as an American, I wanted to do research in an area of the world that had once been under British domination, and a series of pointed questions about my knowledge of the real reasons for research in Southern Sudan. Next followed a prolonged interrogation (or so it seemed at the time: in retrospect it was more of an oral exam and defence) about my knowledge of Nilotic ethnography. My most vivid memory of this first encounter with Godfrey was his admonition, 'You don't really believe that Nuer have lineages, do you?' Shortly after I began my response, Peter and Godfrey went off to have a pee.

When they were gone, I turned to L'Ana and said, 'Who needs this colonial bullshit? Who do they think they are? Let's get out of here now. I don't need his approval to do research in the Southern Sudan.' L'Ana wisely said to let it pass and see what it would lead to.

But when they returned, there was a palpable change of mood at the table where we were seated. Some light-hearted jokes were exchanged—a number in particular about recent efforts at Freudian interpretations of Nuer custom—after

which Godfrey turned to me and said, 'Well John, you've passed your initiation. Let us meet at the Gardener's Arms tonight for drinks.' 'But I'm not sure where that is,' I replied. As he headed out from the pub and down the sidewalk, Godfrey called over his shoulder, 'If you want to find the Atuot of the Southern Sudan, you ought to be able to find the Gardener's Arms in Oxford.' That evening we talked in great detail about our plans for research, how these overlapped with an Oxford history of Nilotic studies, and how Godfrey might be able to help toward these ends.

This initial encounter resulted in a number of invaluable lessons. Don't presuppose that anyone who has an expressed interest in a matter has any knowledge of it. A master of *sanza* himself, Godfrey had offered a tutorial on how Nilotic peoples might respond to us. What Godfrey had really seemed to be saying was to let yourself be defined by local peoples before you seek a sense of their own definition.

When I stopped back in Oxford before leaving for Sudan, Godfrey and I spoke through the night at his flat in Bardwell Court. We shared a bottle of wine, but otherwise drank little. Near two o'clock in the morning he retreated to his study and read to me from his fieldnotes written while living with the Anuak in the early 1950s. The prose was astounding. To this point I had thought of fieldnotes as random, ungrammatical efforts to capture the details of an observed or described event. Godfrey's text sounded like measured poetry; indeed, it was as compelling as his published work. One phrase made him pause, to recall in detail a memory of floating up the Nile on a steamer with Radcliffe-Brown, when Godfrey was still a very junior associate of the Institute at Oxford. Just as quickly his attention turned back to his fieldnotes, now with dawn approaching the Oxford sky. He said I would have success in fieldwork because I was a good listener, but reminded me of the Anuak aphorism, 'If you see an approaching python on the way, you had better get it, because if you don't, it will get you on the way back.'

Following that fieldwork, Godfrey agreed to read a copy of my doctoral dissertation and provide a written assessment for my Ph.D. committee. I had also sent him a copy of my first substantive essay from that research entitled 'Ghosts, Ancestors and Individuals among the Atuot'. Godfrey approved of the dissertation. Of the article he replied, 'I liked it a great deal, and I'm glad to see you didn't leave anybody out.'

The probing wit, as his friends knew, was a constant reminder that Godfrey loved mystery. He loved irony and metaphor. And he loved those human inventions that made it possible to deal with each: faith, reason, and imagination. He never had an institutional responsibility to take an interest in my work. He did so only, I believe, in consequence of his passion for the peoples of Nilotic Africa. But my debt to him remains a presence with me.

JOHN W. BURTON

## STATLER, WALDORF, AND I

I first met Godfrey Lienhardt when he discovered me rifling through the contents of his pigeon-hole at the Institute. At least that's how later, to tease me, he told others the story of our first meeting. As with all Godfrey's stories, I suspect, there were some kernels of truth bound up in it. First, we did first encounter each other by the pigeon-holes at the Institute. It was the first Wednesday morning (i.e. coffee-morning) of the first term of my Diploma year and I think I rather took Godfrey aback by being so forward as to introduce myself to him. Secondly, one of the few (banal) anecdotes I had at my disposal with which to attempt to enter the lists of the conversational tourneys at the Gardener's Arms was a story about how I had been interrogated by my Jesuit headmaster about the ethics of reading other people's correspondence—before he invited me to read a letter he had just written to a Jesuit friend of the family telling him I had passed my 11+ (this was a day or two before the results were to be announced). I said it was banal. For some reason, however, the story stuck and would be referred to from time to time. Thirdly, in later years I would, at his request, rifle through the contents of his pigeon-hole so as to sort out the things worth taking to him at the pub at lunch-time.

Godfrey was a hero of mine well before I met him for the first time, or ever thought I might. *Divinity and Experience* was a central text of my undergraduate course on the anthropology of religion. I must have read it three or four times during my first degree; the eponymous Chapter Four a dozen times perhaps. It struck me then, and still strikes me now, as the profoundest of ethnographies. What sort of man I thought, as I prepared to move to Oxford, could reach such depth of understanding—and then communicate it so accessibly, and stylishly? Though not perfectly, it has to be said. This is perhaps not the place to criticize, but I do feel obliged to point out that the book's scholarship is, or at least was, seriously flawed, and that it is due to me that the extraneous footnote 1 on page 65 that repeats footnote 1 on page 64 was removed for the paperback edition—a claim to fame of which I am absurdly proud. Godfrey claimed never to have noted the repeated footnote. He was well aware, however, of the infelicity on page 1 where he claims that 'this study is *orientated* to the Western Dinka'. He rather liked that. The slip, of course, merely points up the precision of the rest of the text, indeed of all his prose.

As an undergraduate, I never dreamed I would even meet Godfrey, let alone that I would become his student; let alone become his friend; let alone visit Dinkaland; let alone write about him as I am doing now; let alone spend an uproariously funny Sunday afternoon full of roast lamb, beer, and red wine discussing with him and his brother which characters from life at the Institute most closely matched those in the Muppet show (it isn't difficult to guess who we decided were Statler and Waldorf, the two old men in the theatre box wickedly criticizing everything that happened on stage, but I had better leave the job of making other matches to the reader); let alone that he would teach me (to my



wife's continuing embarrassment) how to stand up urgently and importantly whenever there is a public announcement for 'Mr Smith to go to Information immediately', or how to wave at nobody in particular in the crowd waiting for friends and relations to emerge from airport customs; let alone that he would tell me the most amazing stories about E-P and everyone else, or that I would be too drunk at the time to remember them the next morning; let alone that on a trip on a crowded train to London he would launch into a pretence, which he kept up for the full hour (and which I had to go along with) that I was a senior Oxford don on my way to advise the Foreign and Commonwealth Office on some important matter of the day—and that he was my minder!

This memoir is as much, if not more, about me than it is about Godfrey. I make no apology for that. The person I am today owes more than I can say to Godfrey. He has influenced my life more than anyone, other than my family—and as I write this I am less conscious of their influence. For a year or so after his death I would find myself heading to the pub (in body occasionally, in mind frequently) to tell him of some piece of news, some interesting happening, coincidence, or whatever. Still today a whole category of my thought processes might be labelled 'must tell Godfrey that'. It is as if he is present in my consciousness picking up on the bits and pieces that interest him.

A week before Godfrey gave his talk on BBC Radio on 'The Sacrificial Society', P. F. Strawson spoke (28 May 1960) on 'The Meaning of "I"'. According to that week's *Radio Times*, Strawson's talk was to cover: 'How do we distinguish and identify people? What do I mean when I refer to myself? It is much easier than you might suppose to start a long line of illusion by misconceiving the uses of the personal pronouns and the illusions can be quite disastrous; Descartes, for example.' When I discovered that Strawson had spoken on the radio on this subject a week before Godfrey gave his talk, I had one of those 'must tell Godfrey that' moments. As you will see, it amounts to little, but if I had been able to tell him about it it might have set off a chain of conversational thoughts and connections of some sort. That has always seemed to me to be the point of 'only connect', not that the connection itself is necessarily significant, but that it stimulates.

Anyway, the point of 'The Meaning of "I"' is that some twenty-five years later Godfrey contributed to a series of lectures on 'The Category of the Person', held at Wolfson College. As I remember it, Godfrey spoke fairly late in the series after a number of philosophers and Indologists had had their say (for the point of the story, this has to have been so). Each week the regular attendees had been bombarded with Sanskrit, Hindu, Buddhist, and Chinese terms, many of which had been inscribed upon the whiteboard to help the non-specialists in the audience keep their bearings. As usual when speaking in public, Godfrey was surprisingly nervous to begin with, though this didn't last long. 'Before I begin,' he said, 'I had better write up on the board a word I am going to be using a lot this evening.' He then drew a single straight line down the board. With one stroke of his marker pen, he gently poked fun at the previous speakers, broke the ice, relaxed his audience, and got straight to the heart of the matter. This was something he

always seemed to be able to do. Even after seemingly sleeping through a Friday afternoon departmental seminar (as many of us should have liked to have done), he would ask the most penetrating—frequently down-to-earth—question.

The inscription of that 'I' on that whiteboard that evening somehow epitomizes Godfrey for me: witty, wicked even, to the point, down-to-earth, entertaining. It may also be used here for Godfrey's own extraordinary self-awareness. He was never selfish, egoistical, or egotistical, never self-obsessed. Quite the opposite. He was, however, remarkably self-conscious in both senses (or the two of them that come to mind). He had a surprising shyness, especially when speaking in public, but he was also full of self-knowledge. I think it was the obvious fact that he knew himself so well that made one think he could penetrate others so well too. That look he had that seemed to see through any pretence. You knew it was there, so that even when it wasn't switched on, as it were, you knew it might be and never attempted to dissimulate. It was part of his 'teaching method'; one of the many things he taught me that I will try not to forget.

JEREMY COOTE

### DEBT TO GODFREY LIENHARDT

Lienhardt did his fieldwork among the Rek Dinka in Bahr-el-Ghazal, quite distant from our area of the Ngok Dinka. I had therefore not met him or heard of him until 1962 when I was a graduate student in London. As I got to know him, Godfrey became not only a dear friend, but a principal source of deepening understanding of my people—the Dinka—more than my mere membership of the group could have cultivated. But Godfrey was more than an interpreter of the Dinka. While he never pretended to have lost his Englishness, his intimate association with our people must have resulted in a significant amount of shared values and behaviour patterns that endeared him to the flood of Dinka visitors whom he frequently invited to Oxford and generously entertained.

My first encounter with Godfrey was quite unexpected, and had I reacted to him according to my normal disposition I suspect that the door to our prospective friendship would have been prematurely shut. I was standing with a group of students in the senior sitting-room of the School of Oriental and African Studies one afternoon. Suddenly, I felt a hand on my shoulder. I turned to see a rather small figure with conspicuous spectacles. Without preliminaries, he asked, 'Are you a Dinka?' I said I was. 'From which Dinka?', he probed further. Strangely enough, although I thought his manner was rather rude and, ordinarily, would have discouraged the conversation, I answered him warmly, more out of curiosity: 'From the Ngok Dinka,' I said. 'Oh! I have a rather nice photograph of your chief,' he replied. 'Who is that?', I seized the turn in questioning. 'Deng Majok,'

he answered. 'He is my father,' I said. At that moment, completely oblivious to the possibility that he might have crossed any boundary of propriety, he literally ordered me, 'Put that down and let's go to a pub for a drink.' By 'that' he was referring to a soft drink I was holding. It was my own response more than his behaviour that surprised me even then. I obeyed him almost automatically, still driven by curiosity about the behaviour of this peculiar, but intriguing personality. We went to a pub nearby and initiated a friendship in which pubs provided a lubricating environment.

I received frequent invitations from Godfrey to visit him in Oxford and often stayed overnight, sharing with him his large room at Queen Elizabeth House. As he and I sat around the fireplace with his brother, Peter, and other friends from the Oxford circle of anthropologists, I often thought of Godfrey's room as having much in common with a Dinka *luak* or cattle-byre, which men use for large gatherings, and which also provides an open sleeping-place for residents and visitors. Even sharing the room, with Godfrey generously offering me his bed, while he himself slept on the sofa, seemed more Dinka than European. My image of Godfrey's room as a Dinka *luak* was shared by the other Dinka who visited Godfrey. Even when Godfrey later moved into an apartment, our symbolic view of his home as a Dinka *luak* persisted. And indeed, it was not so much the physical environment of his residence, but rather the qualities Godfrey himself reflected, the warmth with which he received people, and the overall social climate he created, that made us feel that this was by no means a typical English environment. There was almost something Dinka about it, but its charm and attraction lay in its ambiguity; it could not be labelled in exclusive terms.

My evolving friendship with Godfrey and frequent visits to Oxford played a very important cathartic role in my life at a time when I was confronted with the serious crisis of an eye disease that threatened me with what I feared was imminent blindness. I was suffering from a case of glaucoma that went back to my time in senior secondary school, but was not detected until my last year in Khartoum University. I had my first operation on both eyes in Berlin, shortly after graduating. Except for the sight I had already lost, I was told that I had escaped blindness. In England, I was informed that the operation in Berlin had not, after all, succeeded; the pressure was back and I would have to undergo another operation. By then, I had become aware of the danger of blindness associated with glaucoma. After agonizing over the prospects, I approached my ophthalmologist for a frank prognosis. His response was that I would probably be able to see for three years, possibly five, but beyond that, he could not predict. I interpreted his remarks to mean that I would probably be blind in three years. The shock was indescribable. While the Sudanese community in London took my profile as being one of flamboyant self-enjoyment, my inner world was profoundly shattered.

Seeing little, if any, future before me and fearing that I might be blind before I could see my people again, I needed and wanted some source of spiritual return home. What deepened my friendship with Godfrey was that he provided me with the incentive and the tools to rediscover the deeper meaning of what it meant to

be Dinka. Again, this was a profound experience which cannot be fully explained without oversimplification. It began with Godfrey asking me to participate with him on a radio programme for a BBC series entitled 'Man in Society', in which we were to talk about Nilotic societies. My role was to talk about the Dinka.

That event gave me the opportunity to use excerpts from Dinka songs which I had tape-recorded before leaving home for England. The occasion of my last visit home was a sad one, associated with the death of my young uncle, Bona Bulabek Kwol, a victim of a car accident in Czechoslovakia, while in his final year of medicine at Padua University in Italy. I asked my father whether it would be appropriate for me to record Dinka songs to keep me in touch with my people and to provide me with materials for promoting Dinka culture abroad. My father not only agreed to have me record, but actually attended the recording session. An Italian missionary lent me his tape-recorder which, because of lack of batteries, we operated with the battery of the radio transmitter at the police station. My father's attendance attracted large crowds to the recording. Father had even sent for famous singers in the tribe to come to Abyei to be recorded. And so I had a large collection of individual ox songs, women's songs, initiation songs, and war songs. That was probably the first time these Dinka had seen a tape-recorder at work. As we walked back home, followed by a crowd of people who had attended the recording, I heard a voice say: 'What a clever machine. It listens to a song only once and repeats it exactly as it was sung, and in the very voice of the singer.' Godfrey and I agreed that I use extracts from the tapes, first to have the song presented in the voice of the singer, with me subsequently presenting the translation in English. The publication of a version of the broadcast in *The Listener* was the first time I saw myself in print, which was intellectually empowering.

Although I had become quite aware of the deep respect and admiration which Godfrey had for the Dinka and their culture, that occasion gave me an added insight. One of the passages from our BBC broadcast which I would quote frequently later concerned Dinka mannerism in the settlement of disputes. Godfrey wrote:

I suppose everyone would agree that one of the most decisive marks of a society we should call in a spiritual sense 'civilized' is a highly developed sense and practice of justice, and here the Nilotes, with their intense respect for the personal independence and dignity of themselves and of others, may be superior to societies more civilized in the material sense.... The Dinka and Nuer are a warlike people, and have never been slow to assert their rights, as they see them, by physical force. Yet if one sees Dinka trying to resolve a dispute, according to their own customary law, there is often a reasonableness and gentleness in their demeanour, a courtesy and quietness in the speech of those elder men superior in status and wisdom, an attempt to get at the whole truth of the situation before them.

Of course, Godfrey was not saying anything that was new to me. I had grown up sitting in my father's court and observing the process Godfrey was describing. But the fact that he said it to the global audience of the BBC, placing the Dinka in

such a favourable comparative light, put those values in focus, and gave them a significance I had not before been conscious of in precisely the same way.

Godfrey did not only want to represent the Dinka to the world; he wanted them to be understood and accepted by universal standards. He did not want to provide chauvinistic audiences with grounds for justifying their prejudices against the Dinka. In this, he was clearly better equipped than I was to promote the Dinka with appropriate sensitivity to British values and sensibilities. In preparing for our BBC broadcast, I addressed the importance of leadership among the Dinka and alluded to the Dinka belief that traditionally their chiefs, who are also spiritual leaders, were not allowed to die a natural death. When a chief was very ill and at the brink of death or too old and senile to lead, he was persuaded to say his last will and, amidst ritual dancing and the singing of ancient hymns, was placed in a specially prepared grave and buried alive. I dramatized the point by telling how my great-grandfather, the last of the chiefs to be buried alive, was reported to have remarked, 'Mind my eyes from the dirt.' Godfrey tried to persuade me to remove that from my text because it would strike the English as savagery, which he thought would give a distorted image of the Dinka.

As I became familiar with Godfrey's works on the Dinka, in particular his book *Divinity and Experience: The Religion of the Dinka*, I felt increasingly educated about my people. What I knew about the Dinka was brought to a new level of consciousness; much that I did not know was added to my knowledge; and all of that was placed in an intellectual framework that was revealing, exciting, and challenging. For me, Dinka culture and worldview were no longer facts of life to be taken for granted, but a coherent complex of values, institutions, and behaviour patterns that were both contextually specific and cross-culturally sound.

What I learned about Dinka religion from Godfrey revived in me the beliefs and ritual practices which conversion to Christianity had almost obliterated, but which had been too engrained to be erased and had survived at a deeper level of consciousness. Even more significantly, the process of reawakening was not a return to a Dinka past, but a reinterpretation of the Dinka belief system in a manner that was capable of application to all levels of sophistication and universalism. Indeed, I developed a universalist religious outlook of which I had been only vaguely or partially aware and whose roots probably went back to my Dinka origins. The world to come, in terms of the Christian and Muslim hell and heaven, became less significant to me, as I appreciated the significance of experience in religion; the range of questions connected with where we come from, what life in this world signifies, and where we go to from here became more focused on this worldly life and the memory of the dead by the living. Ultimately, it is well-being in this world and the projection of life as we know it into the unknown world of the dead, whose identity and influence remain among us, that give practical meaning to immortality.

This may seem too much of a worldly view and too simple, if not simplistic, to those who believe literally in the Christian and Islamic concepts of hell and heaven. But here is where I would say, at the risk of revealing some Dinka

chauvinism without apology, that at least in this respect, Dinka religion may be some steps ahead of these two so-called universal religions. Ironically, if taken literally, the Christian and Islamic belief in the world to come, with its hell and heaven, strikes the Dinka as utterly superstitious—a remarkable turning of the tables.

This is perhaps illustrated by an exchange my brothers and I had with our father when we converted and were about to be baptized as Catholics. As the permission of the guardian was required by law, we approached our father for his consent. Father wondered why we wanted to be baptized. We gave him the line we had been taught by the Christian missionaries, that unless one was born again by being baptized, one would not join the kingdom of heaven, but would instead burn in the fire of hell. Father, and the elders in his company, looked at us with an amused sense of curiosity. It was as though we sounded so ridiculous that they did not know whether to argue with us or to dismiss the whole affair as a joke. Father chose something in between, posing the question, ‘Assuming that the Christians are right, that those whose heads are blessed with the water of God will go to heaven, and those who are not will burn in hell, are you boys going to be happy in heaven while the rest of the family burns in hell?’ In our naïveté, we gave the response that the missionaries had taught us: we would be judged as individuals and not as members of the family. It took me personally considerable educational and intellectual growth to see the wisdom of my father’s question and the degree to which our response had been a flawed negation of that wisdom.

Reading *Divinity and Experience* I was struck and indeed amazed at the ability of an outsider to come into a society and, within only two years, acquire so penetrating an understanding of the people and their culture as to write a book of such breadth and depth as Godfrey did. With its few negligible errors, the book was almost a miracle to me. And although Godfrey might not be flattered by the association, to me it was a Dinka Bible. What was even more striking was that I do not remember coming across anything in the book that offended me as a Dinka.

In this respect, I believe Godfrey stood out in sharp contrast to some of his contemporaries, who seemed oblivious to the fact that their works would one day become available to the people about whom they were writing. A positive interpretation of this is that the world has become unified at a much faster rate than was predicted by those authors. At the same time, these writings reveal the gulfs that we are called upon to bridge in order to foster a more positive interaction and cross-fertilization among peoples of varied cultural backgrounds.

In this respect, I found a contrasting example in the comments of E. E. Evans-Pritchard on the Dinka from a Nuer perspective. Although Godfrey’s works projected a positive image of the Dinka, Evans-Pritchard’s classic works on the Nuer and his unfavourable comparative references to the Dinka left indelible impressions on anthropologists throughout the world. Evans-Pritchard, whose only perspective on the Dinka was through the Nuer, wrote that the Nuer consider the Dinka ‘and rightly so—as thieves, and even the Dinka seem to admit the

reproach'. The words 'and rightly so' completely destroyed Evans-Pritchard's objectivity and credibility as far as I was concerned. Of course, Evans-Pritchard's observations focused only on sections of the Nuer and their view of their Dinka neighbours. They did not represent the views of all Nuer about all Dinka. And certainly, he did not know what the Dinka thought of the Nuer. Most readers of his works, however, took them at face value, believing them to represent the Nuer and the Dinka as a whole.

Understandably, Godfrey chose to describe the Dinka and let the facts speak for themselves rather than try to refute explicitly Evans-Pritchard's Nuer-flavoured allegations about the Dinka. After all, Evans-Pritchard was Godfrey's senior colleague and supervisor of his doctoral dissertation. Courtesy dictated the discreet manner in which he corrected the distortions of Evans-Pritchard's perspective on the Dinka. I also realize that this was not an easy feat.

In a way, I confronted a similar dilemma from a very different perspective. I was, needless to say, enraged by Evans-Pritchard's comments on the Dinka, which were not only subjective but sharply in contrast with what I knew about the Dinka and their comparative view of the Nuer. On the other hand, I had a political and national responsibility to transcend tribal differences in the interest of our national unity. Unlike Evans-Pritchard, who felt free to write down what he thought and felt about the Dinka, I was not at liberty to share my knowledge, thoughts, and prejudices about the Dinka and the Nuer.

Beyond cultivating a deeper understanding of my people through Godfrey's scholarship, the social climate of Oxford continued to be intimate and very enjoyable. Godfrey found the meaning of his life in the circle of close friends, the essential meetings at the pubs, and a perpetual search for the eclectic union between the mind, the soul, and the human person. In many ways, the pubs became the defining framework. I must confess that there were times when I felt ambivalent about Godfrey's association with the pub culture. I thought to myself that the amount of time he spent in pubs drinking beer was a waste of his talents. But, increasingly, I accepted that it was not possible to dichotomize between the brilliance I recognized in him, and in his writings, and the personality that was driven to the pub culture. And despite episodes associated with that pub culture, I did not see his intellectual and personal integrity significantly compromised.

So much did I come to expect and accept Godfrey's attachment to the pub that I once called and reached him from the United States at a pub. Since I knew only the name of the pub, but not the number, I called telephone enquiries, identified myself as calling from the United States, and asked for the number of a given name, adding that it was a pub. The telephone operator on the other end responded, 'A pub?', and then proceeded to get the number. I knew the time when I expected that Godfrey would be at the pub and I was right.

Although Godfrey's field experience predisposed him to close ties with the Dinka and the Southern Sudanese in general, it would be wrong and limiting to project him as a friend of the Southern Sudan only. He was genuinely a friend of the Sudan as a whole. Many of the people who visited him in Oxford were

Northern Sudanese. And his students were varied in their interests between the North and the South. There was indeed a time when he and Evans-Pritchard were so intent on avoiding politics and being impartial and even-handed between the North and the South that they ran the risk of being misunderstood by Southerners as pro-North. But although they sometimes appeared to be genuinely torn, they soon became unequivocal in their support for the Southern cause, as the Sudan government and the North in general appeared almost totally oblivious to the human tragedy that afflicted the South.

I witnessed something of Godfrey's tension in this regard when I was confronted with a political crisis. I was suddenly recalled to the Sudan for reasons which I learned from my own sources in Khartoum were political. The government suspected me of masterminding the activities of the Southern Sudan Liberation Movement in Europe. My travels around Europe were misconstrued as part of the campaign for the movement. Even my frequent visits to Oxford were given a political interpretation. Of course, going to the Sudan would have meant persecution. I chose delaying tactics by writing letters asking for clarification. As a result, the government terminated my fellowship and, by implication, my position on the Faculty of Law. Meanwhile, I made contacts in England to ensure that I would receive political asylum, if it became necessary. Chief Enharo of Nigeria had just been extradited, a precedent which created a climate of uncertainty for African asylum-seekers.

Godfrey was spending a term teaching in Ghana at the time. His brother, Peter Lienhardt, also an Oxford don and anthropologist, gave me a great deal of support, both morally and politically. He made contacts in the Foreign Office and accompanied me in meetings with potential supporters. One of those was the Foreign Students' Advisor in London University, whom I knew was well-disposed towards me and who was most sympathetic and helpful. As Peter and I explained the situation to her, she said that the Home Secretary was a dear friend of hers, and reaching for the phone said, 'Let me talk to him.' She got him, explained the situation, and after hanging up, announced, 'He has assured me that you will not be forced back to the Sudan.' She was also able to secure financial support for me.

I wrote Godfrey a letter explaining my predicament. In his response, he said he had learned from senior university officials that there was an acute shortage of lecturers and that it was possible I was needed back for that purpose. By implication, he was reconciling himself to my going to the Sudan. His brother, Peter, on the other hand, was from the start unequivocally against my going back. I understood Godfrey to be torn on the issue. I have no doubt that he would not have wanted me to expose myself to possible persecution. But he did not also want to come to the conclusion that the situation had deteriorated that much. At that time, both he and Evans-Pritchard were somewhat ambiguous on the North-South politics. Their scholarship bound them deeply to the South and they were unquestionably concerned about the welfare of the Southern people. At the same time, they also had very close ties to the North, and most Northerners shared a common



view of the Southern problem. The cleavage between Northerners and Southerners seemed so unbridgeable that to sympathize with the South by definition meant alienating the North, a choice which many scholars of the Sudan tried to avoid. It would be, however, only a matter of time before the escalation of the conflict and the gross insensitivities of the Abboud regime, and of the Northern Sudanese in general, made this ambiguous position untenable and both Godfrey and Evans-Pritchard found themselves becoming increasingly, and eventually unequivocally, pro-South.

My political crisis was compounded by the eye problem to which I have already alluded. When the crisis with the government was added and I refused to return, the pain was exacerbated by the thought that by the time I would be able to return to the Sudan, I would almost certainly have lost my sight and would not be able to see my relatives. Fortunately, I was able to undertake a study tour to Scandinavia which helped divert attention from my worries. During the summer vacation, I accepted an invitation from a Swedish writer, Percy Bucklund, who wanted an African perspective for a book he was writing on Scandinavia. An intensive four-month tour of all the Scandinavian countries was a significant distraction from my agonizing introspection. On my return, I wrote several essays about cross-cultural perspectives on the themes I had developed during my Scandinavian tour.

Godfrey introduced me to an advertisement for an essay competition on the subject of race relations in Britain. He thought that the essay in my notes on cross-cultural perspectives, which I wrote on my Scandinavian tour, could be rewritten to meet that purpose. I wrote the essay and gave it to him to edit. There was a prize for the top essay and the ten top essays were to be published in a book, with an honorarium for the authors. Over ninety students competed. I received a letter informing me that my essay had been a front-runner for the first position, but I was pleased that it was among the top ten selected for publication.

Godfrey also suggested that he and I co-operate on producing a volume of Dinka songs for the Oxford Library of African Literature which he, Evans-Pritchard, and W. H. Whiteley co-edited. He had his own collection of songs and our BBC programme made me aware of the literary potential of my own tapes of Dinka songs. I immediately embarked on transcribing and translating the songs. Wendy James, Godfrey's postgraduate student, assisted me with the translation of the songs, thereby giving me a sense of how to combine scholarly authenticity with literary merit. Listening to the Dinka songs, and striving to convey the meaning vividly and authentically, generated in me a mixture of emotions: an elating spiritual journey back home, the satisfaction of communicating my indigenous culture to English readers, and the frustration of realizing the limitations of translation. I wanted to be as literary as possible, while Godfrey and Wendy were more concerned with making the translation intelligible to English readers. An example of our different approaches was the translation of the Dinka morning greeting *Ci yi bak*, which literally means, 'Are you dawned?'—in other words, 'Has dawn found you well?' I wanted to use the literal translation and put 'Good morning'

in a footnote, for I felt that the Dinka way of putting it said more about the context, the fears of the night, and the happiness of waking up in the morning, in good health, or at least alive. Godfrey preferred using 'Good morning' in the text with the literal translation in the footnote, because he thought it would be more cross-culturally understandable that way.

Godfrey made yet another suggestion for co-operation on a book project. He had been asked by the Spindlers, the editors of the Stanford series in social and cultural anthropology, to write a book on the Dinka. He suggested to the editors that I be a co-author with him, an idea they warmly welcomed.

Beyond these specific projects, I visited Oxford frequently and found in the circles of my friends there a source of spiritual rejuvenation. Indeed, since my tour of Scandinavia, I had reasonably transcended the frustrations of the worry over the eye problem, had reconciled myself to whatever would be, and had resolved to make the most of the time I had with my sight. Working with Dinka materials gave me a creative means of bridging the gap between home and the scholarly world in which I now lived and in which Oxford, even more than London where I was officially enrolled, played a crucial and informal part.

During a state visit by President Ibrahim Abboud, and as a result of interventions by a number of people, including a message to the president from my father, I was asked to see the president, as a result of which the government dropped its demand for my return and reinstated my fellowship. Meanwhile, however, I had made arrangements to study for a doctorate in law at Yale Law School. My former British lecturer in Khartoum, William Twining, had already introduced me to two professors from Yale Law School in the United States, Quinton Johnstone and Robert Stevans, who were visiting professors at the London School of Economics, through whom I received a fellowship from Yale University.

Before leaving Britain for the United States, Evans-Pritchard and Godfrey arranged for me to be invited to a conference being organized at the University of Ife in Nigeria, then located in Ibadan, on the theme of the High God in Africa. The conference was eventually held in December 1964, a few months after my joining Yale. It was my first trip to Nigeria, and although I was the only one who was not an anthropologist or a theologian, I enjoyed the experience. The reunion there with Godfrey was particularly gratifying.

Godfrey visited me in New Haven while I was significantly advanced in my doctoral work. We seized the opportunity to discuss our joint projects. His generosity of spirit continued to manifest itself. He suggested that since I had enough material to produce a book of Dinka songs by myself, it would be advantageous for me to be the sole editor instead of having his name on the cover with mine. Likewise, he welcomed the suggestion made by Professor John Middleton to the Spindlers that I be asked to write alone the book which Godfrey and I were originally supposed to co-author.

Godfrey's contribution to my intellectual and professional progress went beyond the works he inspired. Through a fortuitous chain of events, my joining the United Nations Secretariat in New York was also connected with him. While

he was visiting me in New Haven, he suggested that we visit an old Oxford friend, then a senior official in the Secretariat. We spent a delightful evening with the family. This contact led eventually to my appointment to a position in the UN Division of Human Rights. And so, in many ways, Godfrey did not only set me on the path of writing about my people, the Dinka, inspiring me with his own works and providing me with guidance and the tools for getting the work done, but he also facilitated the connection that led to my career in the field of international affairs. Without my UN experience, it is almost certain that I would not have joined Sudan's foreign service as Ambassador and Minister of State for Foreign Affairs. Nor would I have moved into the think-tank world of the United States, which I joined after leaving government service, and in which I find a great deal of fulfilment.

One of the passages I often quote from Godfrey's work relates to the Dinka concept of immortality. He wrote, 'Dinka greatly fear to die without issue, in whom the survival of their names—the only kind of immortality they know—will be assured.' I often wondered how he personally felt about that Dinka notion of immortality, having been single all of his life. But then, I often recall what my brother, Dr Zachariah Bol Deng, said in congratulating me on my first book, *Tradition and Modernization*: 'That is the only immortality in which I believe,' he wrote. On the other hand, Bol fell back on Dinka values when he wrote later to congratulate me on the birth of the first of my four sons: 'Now you can die in peace.' For a Dinka, having a son ensures the continuity of the agnatic line, the Dinka source of immortality.

Needless to say, I still share the Dinka belief that immortality lies in the memory of the dead by the living. This memory is not passive, but is an active means of ensuring a form of continued existence, participation, and influence beyond death. While the Dinka tend to stress the biological aspect, the circle of continuity is wide and extensive. When Godfrey qualified the Dinka need for children as 'the only kind of immortality they know', he might have thought of the Christian and Muslim concepts of heaven and hell as other forms of immortality, but he could also have contemplated continuity through scholarly and literary contributions, as well as through friends and all those whom one touches in one's lifetime in a profound and lasting way. As a Dinka, I could not help being saddened by the fact that Godfrey left no children, but I also have no doubt in my mind that he touched so many of us, so deeply, and in so many ways, that he continues to live through us and with us, wherever else he might be in accordance with other forms of immortality. This volume is a testimony to that concept of permanent identity and influence.

FRANCIS M. DENG

## THIENYDENG

*An address given at the 'Celebration of the Life and Work of Godfrey Lienhardt, 1921–1993', held at Wolfson College, Oxford, on 7 May 1994.*

Having come from the Sudd region of the Sudan where people grow tall in order to avoid drowning, I think I need to raise this microphone.

My name is Bol Deng. I am honoured to be able to talk on this occasion, dear sisters and brothers. We have gathered here today in order to celebrate and not to mourn the departure of our dear friend Godfrey Lienhardt—or, as I should prefer to call him, Thienydeng. For those of you who might not have not heard this name before, I should explain that Thienydeng means a stick of lightning, or lightning as such, in Dinka. It also refers to a black bull with a white stripe on its side. Godfrey was a senior person among the Dinka, so that is why he was given this senior colour.

The idea of celebrating rather than mourning actually is not strange to many of us. In fact, when a Dinka chief dies there is always a huge celebration. The great man is not considered lost. He is expected to continue to watch over his people in a more detached but not necessarily less effective way. According to the Dinka, Thienydeng has not really left us. He is with us in the form of a shadow with supernatural powers. We need him as a shadow and to use his super powers in order to guide us through the maze of troubles we are still in today.

I first met Godfrey in the early 1960s when I was working as a junior doctor in south London. But I really became close to him in 1970 when a personal tragedy happened to me. Like a good doctor, I closed myself in my room and cried my head out for two days. Then I remembered Thienydeng and came to him here. His answer to my ordeals was to throw me a pen and introduce me to a journalist. I took the message and, as a result, an article came out in *The Times* which shook the Sudanese government of the day. By doing this, Godfrey taught me a different way of mourning. Thienydeng is still teaching us, even in his absence, another way of mourning him.

Thienydeng was a simple man who took great care of detail. He was humble, a humble man, and yet full of dignity and pride, which he used to the advantage of those around him. He was always there to give a helping hand to those who needed him. I will illustrate this with a simple example. Once, when my brother Francis was living in Connecticut in the United States he needed a question to be answered. So at 10.00 p.m. he rang the Victoria Arms and found Godfrey there.

Godfrey was always there to give a helping hand to those who needed it. Godfrey, Thienydeng, will always be remembered as a man of the people. Thank you very much.

ZACHARIAH BOL DENG

## LOOKING BACK

We tried to cut your death—  
That massive lump of granite, your bequest—  
To manageable pieces.

Tears we chipped off.  
Splinters of verse. Fragments of conversation.  
Searching recall of where and when and how.  
Memorial fund for helping others journey  
As you had done. Postcards. A book or two.  
The echo of your laughter.

Something to carry home, a token.  
No one could carry much. The heavy core  
We had to leave behind.

But when we came to look  
Back at the rock that had defeated us  
We found we'd freed your image from the stone,  
To follow us with that far-seeing smile  
Archaic statues have.

Now,  
We can begin to mourn.

EVA GILLIES

## GODFREY

*Memoir written on 11 November 1993, two days after Godfrey's death, while Professor Goody was teaching in Atlanta, Georgia, USA.*

Godfrey is dead. The yellow leaves of the ginko trees lie scattered on the sidewalks. It is dark and the campus is black despite the myriad lights. What comes back? Driving an ancient Ford from Oxford to Cambridge and eating cherries out of a bag. It was that astringent flavour one lacks in the tropics and he had just come back from the Dinka. Or somewhere.... Stopping for a pint at a pub on the way—it was always pints, never wine, never whisky. And it was a Saturday morning, for we had stayed for the Friday seminar and then went to have more pints with E-P and his coterie in the Lamb & Flag.

That too brings back other pints, with Emrys in the Bun Shop, with Crick and Watson huddled in another corner, in the pub off Benet Street, the ceiling of which was covered with the signatures of American servicemen, the Baron of Beef in Bridge Street, and all those innumerable pubs in Oxford. We had been students together, Emrys Peters, Godfrey Lienhardt, and myself, reading anthropology. Like me, Godfrey had read English, where he had got a starred first. He was to do the same in anthropology, quite the most brilliant student of the subject.

As an undergraduate at Downing, he had been close to Leavis and had reviewed for *Scrutiny*, the avant-garde critical journal of its day. Indeed a review of the collected works of Auden was reprinted in a later anthology of 'the best of *Scrutiny*'. But he got worried by the nature and source of Leavis's moral and aesthetic judgements and shifted to read a Part II in anthropology, which at the time included archaeology and physical anthropology. The only intellectual stimulus he found was in the lectures by Evans-Pritchard, who came over each week from Oxford, allegedly writing his lectures on the train (but they were basically on the Nuer anyway). Godfrey was supervised by Glyn Daniel, a bright and sociable archaeologist, but he soon attracted the attention of Evans-Pritchard who planned to offer him a lectureship in Oxford before he had finished his Ph.D. Godfrey and he had other matters in common as both had become interested in Catholicism as a source of faith, but that I think had little to do with his election. He was the brightest, most intelligent, and in many ways the most sensitive student around; sensitive to the people he worked with, to their cognitive and social concerns, as well as to the intellectual currents around him.

Godfrey's visits to Cambridge, which he enjoyed, became less frequent, as did mine to Oxford. Even when I went I was loath to get caught up in a lunchtime drinking session, and even the evening pints seem to have had more of a formality. So I saw less and less of him. But we occasionally wrote, he in reply to me rather than the other way round. And not long ago we exchanged books on flowers. His flowers would have been the cherry, astringent but sweet, not the actual flower (which it would have been sinful to pluck) but the fruit, out of a paper bag.

JACK GOODY

### A GLASS OF MADEIRA

*An address given at the 'Celebration of the Life and Work of Godfrey Lienhardt, 1921–1993', held at Wolfson College, Oxford, on 7 May 1994.*

I am Wendy James, and together with a number of others in this room I belong to the Diploma class of '63. That was a vintage year. I had already met Godfrey in the bar billiards room of the Colonial Services Club, later the Commonwealth

Services Club, in South Parks Road. And I remember over that game of bar billiards learning a number of other things besides the rules of that game. He asked, 'And what are you reading?' I admitted, 'Geography.' He sniffed: 'Ah well. Suppose you start by getting yourself a *first-class* degree in Geography, and then you can come to the Institute and do Social Anthropology.'

It was a buoyant time, those years in the early '60s. One African country after another was getting its independence and there were parties. There were parties in the colleges here, parties in the departments. There were parties in London, and mini-buses and coaches were hired to take people to them. This is how Godfrey and I both met Francis Deng, for example, for the first time, at such a party. I forget which country had its independence that particular week, but the excitement seemed endless. And it was that buoyant social atmosphere in which one learned one's anthropology. The memory of Godfrey in those years is completely inseparable from the memory of Peter, the two of them gave each other such support, and their circle of friends was as large and as flexible and as lively a group as it was because the two of them were at the centre of it.

I remember hearing the reputation of the Institute: they were all Roman Catholics, always in the pub, and all of them brilliant. I wasn't used to drinking beer at that time and I sort of prepared myself mentally for it, though I didn't see myself going over to Rome. My first tutorial in anthropology was in Godfrey's room in Queen Elizabeth House. It started with Godfrey saying, 'My dear, would you like a glass of madeira?' That set the tone, and we never looked back.

Godfrey has impinged on my life in ever so many ways. Five minutes is not enough to give a hint. But let me just tell you how I met my husband in June Anderson's library at the Institute as a result of Godfrey having had too much of American students for the time being. Here was yet another American student coming through Oxford, and Godfrey said, 'Oh Wendy, look, I'm busy, can you deal with this one?' So I said, 'All right'; and again I never looked back.

It was when Godfrey came to Khartoum as an external examiner to the University of Khartoum in the late '60s that I saw another side of him. This was when the civil war in the Sudan was escalating and Godfrey hadn't been back in the country since the early '50s. He had long conversations with old friends, mostly along the lines of, 'Where's so-and-so, what about so-and-so?' The answers came back more and more quietly. There was a large community of Southern Sudanese in Khartoum at that time (including some among our friends here today) and Godfrey would insist on visiting them or having them round to my flat, asking again, 'What happened to old so-and-so?' And the answer was again and again, 'He's died. They've died. That village no longer exists.' I saw a different side of Godfrey, sad and tragically distracted from his normal lively self. And that's a side of Godfrey that we saw again more recently in the later years, partly because of the renewed civil war in the Southern Sudan and partly because of the loss of Peter.

However, turning to brighter memories too, in this very room, in this very hospitable college, we had a wonderful retirement party in 1988 and many of you

were here then too. And I'd just like to finish by saying let's remember that time, with the champagne and the wonderful Zaïrean band, when Godfrey took to the dance floor with something of the old gusto.

WENDY JAMES

### GODFREY AND THE REDISCOVERY OF SECOND-HAND KNOWLEDGE

I was one of a large number of people taught by Godfrey who were, in fact, never formally his students. When I was finishing my thesis on African prophets Godfrey suggested (I believe at coffee one Wednesday, or at the pub over lunch shortly after, or in his flat for a post-pub drink) that I ought to have a look at Nora Chadwick's book *Poetry and Prophecy*. He clearly had recommended this short book to a number of students, because it was permanently out of the library, and after a few attempts to find it I gave up looking for it. Years later, when I was trying to make a book on the same subject, Godfrey again casually mentioned that I ought to read Chadwick. This time it was available and I did read it. Now, there are a good many problems with the book: it has a grand diffusionist hypothesis about shamanism, and its African data is no more detailed and up-to-date than can be found in the published writings of David Livingstone. Yet it had one redeeming quality, and that was its discussion of prophecy as a type of mantic activity. This idea enabled me to escape from the functionalism of the jargon of 'ritual experts', still popular in African studies, as well as to avoid the formal typologies of Weber's model of charisma, to develop a historical analysis of prophecy set within the context of other forms of spiritual knowledge and religious activity.

Godfrey's role in this was characteristic of his style of teaching. In fact, Godfrey the teacher was very much like Godfrey the friend and colleague: his advice was often oblique, and he left it to others to discover for themselves the significance of his hints and asides. Basil Davidson told me that he had exactly the same experience when he first met Godfrey in Ghana. Godfrey never told him bluntly, 'You ought to read...', but by various turns of conversation Basil found himself delving into works of Africanist anthropology which his political journalism and his historical reading had bypassed. But more than that, Godfrey did not accept that an intelligent idea or (more importantly) an intelligent piece of writing was no longer valid, relevant, or interesting merely because it was old and superseded by new theory or fashion. In contrast with much of today's anthropology, where so many seek professional recognition by lusting after the conference topic next but one at the expense of developing any coherent or consistent set of ideas



of their own, Godfrey constantly recycled old knowledge, refashioned in new and refreshing ways.

His research methods were similarly unorthodox: he never had a Bodleian Library card, but he seemed to do most of his reading from books combed from second-hand bookstores—frequently the same stores where he found his endless supply of appropriate postcards for all occasions ('White's the Son' on Walton Street was one of his favourite sources). Many benefited from his finds. I first discovered Collingwood's *Autobiography* when I found an old Pelican edition (printed on wartime rationed recycled paper, and kept together with a bulldog clip) in his office. He made a present of that copy (along with its bulldog clip) when I later started my own research on Collingwood, father and son.

Other discoveries he allowed us to make were not always literary and were perhaps ultimately more important. He was surprised when I told him that *Divinity and Experience* had been more useful than *Nuer Religion* in helping me make sense of much I was told in the field about Nuer divinities and their prophets, but he received that assertion without much comment. One point in particular was the spiritual importance of *ring* among the Nuer, which E-P had virtually ignored, but which is prominent in Godfrey's discussion of the Dinka spearmasters. Over the years I wrote about this in some detail, but it was only when my writing was completed (and my manuscript in the hands of the publishers) that he remarked, somewhat casually, 'Of course, E-P used to say that he hadn't realised the importance of *ring* among the Nuer until he had read my book.' 'Did he?', I exclaimed, surprised. 'Oh, yes,' Godfrey replied, eyes innocently wide. 'Didn't I tell you?'

DOUGLAS H. JOHNSON

### IN MEMORY OF A TRIBAL FRIEND

I cannot believe that it is already nearly five three years since Godfrey Lienhardt, the Oxford don who is universally known to my people, the Dinka of Sudan, as Thienydeng, 'The Rod of the Spirit' or 'The Stake of Rain', died in Oxford in November 1993. So vivid are one's memories of Godfrey's personality, that it seems like yesterday that I was talking with him at his memorable flat at 14 Bardwell Court in Oxford. His ever-keen presence of mind and memory of things past, his intelligence, wit, extreme humility, and kindness live on in myself and in the members of my family who came to know and to love Godfrey over the years. These qualities continue to be a talking-point as we commemorate, remember, and honour this man who did so much, and in such a very special way, to put the Dinka of Sudan on the map of academia and scholarship. His book, *Divinity and Experience: The Religion of the Dinka*, is now a classic textbook around the world about the Dinka ways of life, beliefs, and ethical values. The bulk of the material

for this book, which so endeared Godfrey to the Dinka, was researched and gathered in my native Dinka district of Gogrial in Bahr-el-Ghazal, Southern Sudan, where he carried out his fieldwork.

It was in 1947, when I was in the fourth grade of my primary education, that I first saw Godfrey at Mayen Abun in the Twic Dinka country of northern Gogrial. I cannot now recall how I first met him personally. After all, the man was a European, and English at that. This was during the colonial period and the British were the colonial masters of Sudan. It did not seem possible for there to be any social contact between a 'native' African school pupil and a British scholar. All non-missionary Europeans seemed to us to be colonial officials, who, out of prudence, had to be avoided. The only contact people of my age and level had with Europeans was with the Christian missionaries who were our teachers and preachers. Godfrey was visiting the Comboni Catholic fathers who were running my primary school at Mayen Abun.

It transpired later that Godfrey had been mainly visiting the legendary Reverend Father Arthur Nebel, the Catholic priest who designed and perfected the Dinka alphabet system and wrote all the Western Dinka textbooks for the Dinka vernacular schools. We did not know until much later that Godfrey was studying the ways of the Dinka and was therefore interested to learn from Father Nebel and us schoolchildren how both to speak and write the Dinka language.

At Mayen Abun, Godfrey was noted for being interested in getting away from the European community of the Comboni Fathers and coming to mingle with us schoolchildren for much of the day. The only time he was not around with us was at meal times, no doubt because he needed to go back to the fathers' compound to have his meals with the European priests. It was just as well, for the type of food fed to us as schoolchildren by the missionaries, come to think of it now, was not really fit for human consumption. It is still a mystery that so many of us survived it.

Godfrey frequented our company because he wanted to learn the Dinka language from us. As I was in the most senior class of my school, the fourth year, I spoke some English. English had been introduced to us as a foreign language at grade three. At class four we all spoke reasonably comprehensible English. This seemed to suit Godfrey fine, for he only needed to ask someone who spoke some English what a particular Dinka word meant. He did not want to ask Father Nebel or any of the other Italian priests what these words meant as they were not mother-tongue speakers. None of them would have had enough time for him anyway, so he preferred to come to us. So that is how for the first time I came to know Godfrey personally. I saw him on and off in Gogrial over the next three years, including sometimes at the Dinka cattle-camps, where he was a familiar but strange face among the camp-goers. It soon became clear that he had no colonial administrative functions in the Dinka country. Colonial officers kept their distance from the 'natives' to preserve the aura of authority. Godfrey did not, and the 'natives' noticed that he behaved as if he was their friend and guest, not a member of the ruling authority, and treated him as a friend with special deference.

The Dinka do not believe that any non-Dinka can master and endure their ways. They regard their life as very specially superior to any there is anywhere in the world. To endure one rainy season in a cattle-camp or a summer of many sacrifices in the dry Dinka country is a special qualification. Godfrey met both of these qualifications with distinction, over and over again for several years, so that the Dinka came to accept him as one who had learned and accepted their ways. What especially endeared Godfrey to the Dinka was not just that he was learning the Dinka language and was indeed speaking it, but as a European he did not carry with him his European food or bring native cooks and servants to serve him while visiting the Dinka country, as the colonial administrators used to do; he accepted and ate what he found with his Dinka hosts. The Dinka do not much appreciate those who seem to be looking down on their ways of life and food. Godfrey had proved that he wanted to be treated like a Dinka man, even though the colour of his skin was different from theirs.

Godfrey and I were of different generations. He was many years older than myself, but the fact that I had helped him learn some Dinka during the few weeks he was visiting my school at Mayen Abun and later at Kuajok, also in Gogrial, and at my junior secondary school at Bussere outside Wau, made us almost contemporaries. Years later, when we were both older, we met frequently in Sudan and at Oxford, and we became lifelong friends.

Godfrey was an individual of deep humility and compassion. He was generous of heart and of spirit and extremely sensitive not to do anything that would offend. It was always easy for him to read in one's actions what his role in helping out a friend might be. I recall a very personal encounter with Godfrey when I had completed the draft of my first book on Sudan in the late 1970s, *People and Power in Sudan*. I was a Senior Associate Member of St Antony's College at the time of writing that manuscript. Both being at Oxford, Godfrey and I saw each other several times a week. He knew I was working on a book and I kept him informed of the various stages in the development of my writing. But Godfrey was Reader in Social Anthropology at the Institute of Social Anthropology and I was writing a book on the contemporary politics of Sudan. I did not think I should bother him or involve him in a field where he might not want to venture an opinion. Godfrey had many Sudanese friends from both the North and the South. While I knew he was deeply committed to fairness and justice and felt that Southern Sudan had a very raw deal in the Sudanese state, he did not necessarily feel that having a strong political opinion on the matter would help the cause of Southern Sudan. He would always seek a consensus view in discussions of the Sudanese political situation. I did not think that I should put such a close friend on the spot by giving him my manuscript to read, when he might be forced to take a view contrary to mine. Besides, I had many other colleagues at St Antony's College who kindly volunteered to read the manuscript once it was done. Godfrey knew what I had decided, but did not ask about my manuscript until he knew that it had gone to the publishers.

One day, putting it very delicately and to my great embarrassment and shame, he said to me, 'Bona, do you think that I would ever let you down or fail to support the just cause of the Dinka people?' My book was not at all about the Dinka, but that was Godfrey's tender and intimate way of putting things. I asked him why he felt that way. He asked me how I could complete the manuscript and not show it to him. I pretended that the manuscript was not totally done and that he would have the final look at it. A few weeks later, I handed him a photocopy of a 400-page manuscript. Although Godfrey knew that the book had gone to the publishers, and was indeed on its way to being printed, he sat down with this long manuscript, read through it thoroughly as if his comments were still needed, and made elaborate annotations and suggestions on it. But he did not return the manuscript to me and said nothing further. Eventually, the book was published and he received his personally autographed copy from me. He certainly knew and noted that his ideas and suggestions, which he had not passed on to me, were not incorporated. He later made a suggestion to me that perhaps I should write another book on Sudan which he advised should be titled 'The History of the Great Rebellion'.

What I did not know was that Godfrey had kept his copy of that original manuscript, with his elaborate editing and comments, in his archives until his death. Somewhere in the manuscript he left a note to the executor of his literary estate, Dr Ahmed Al-Shahi, that the manuscript should be returned to me. Dr Al-Shahi dutifully gave me Godfrey's copy of my old manuscript only several months ago, having just then reached that section of Godfrey's archives in which it was stored. Being reminded of a personal shame of more than twenty years before, I received the manuscript, read through it and found good reason to regret that I had not asked for it from Godfrey at the time. There is much in his comments that would have greatly enriched the completed book.

*People and Power in Sudan* is currently out of print. As a commemoration to Godfrey Lienhardt, I have decided that I shall soon revise the old text of that book and incorporate his extremely valuable suggestions before reprinting the book again. I was a personal friend to Godfrey, but so was every Dinka who ever met him. The Dinka nation will ever be grateful to a man and a scholar who has put them with pride and dignity into the annals of academia.

BONA MALWAL

### HOW ANTHROPOLOGISTS THINK

The last chapter of Godfrey Lienhardt's *Social Anthropology* was entitled 'How Anthropologists Think'. As someone who knew him rather well as a friend over more than thirty years, and who suffered from his acerbic wit as well as profiting

from his thoughts and companionship, I am not sure I know how anthropologists think.

Dan Sperber, who as a postgraduate student was also acquainted with Godfrey, tells the striking story of how, as a little boy, he went into a room in which his father was sitting still by a window with his chin in his hand and asked him what he was doing. His father replied, 'Working'. This story can provoke many responses. In Dan's case, one of (I think) fruitful work. But Godfrey, as a pupil of F. R. Leavis, always suspected the impulse to theorization. What form, for him, ought the thought of anthropologists to take, granted that he thought it ought to go beyond ethnographic description? Godfrey cited Marcel Proust:

One can place indefinitely in succession, in a description, the objects which figured in the place described: truth will not begin [to appear] until the moment when the writer will take two different objects, will place them in a relationship, analogue in the world of art to the unique relationship of the causal law in the world of science. (*Social Anthropology*, p. 153)

I recall that he once felt that he should, reluctantly, come to terms in print with 'structuralism'. Though his book about the Dinka gave ample scope for structuralist approaches to the experiences he reported of their culture, he was clearly uneasy. How could he reconcile his old experience of Dinka life, and his continuing friendships, with these abstractions? Versed as he was in the then technicalities of his discipline, he wrote: 'we have to *start* with observations of cultural phenomena, and of how people behave and what they say about themselves, for social structure is not, of course, there to be seen' (*ibid.*, p. 156; original emphasis).

Godfrey had a kind of human but pungent empiricism from which many who knew him profited. I think of the fine lines of Dr Johnson about Charles of Sweden, that hero of the enlightenment:

His fate was destined to be a barren strand  
A dubious fortress and a dubious hand;  
He left a name at which the world grew pale  
To point a moral or adorn a tale.

I do not recall putting these verses to Godfrey, admirer of the Enlightenment as I remain, but I think that he might have dismissed and disliked them as falsifying the intimate structures of social life. I may be wrong. With Godfrey, one might always be wrong, and might always have to think twice: he was not a person at whose name the world grew pale, though he did sometimes challenge the assumptions of young students; and if his name points a moral, the moral is to pay attention to others in a humane and disinterested way, and to be willing to realize and act in light of their problematic affinity with ourselves.

F. C. T. MOORE

## CYMBALS FOR STRAUSS

TO GODFREY LIENHARDT

Gaps between  
 idiotically  
 with theories  
 as wave—

cymbals  
 resound  
 of forms  
 shaped as

Chaos

between sky and the archaic mound,  
 the punconscious confusion of image and clay,  
 which feeds the bubbling cauldron, that dark sea  
 of blind and gaseous desires, and activates

the worlds  
 of Erebus  
 the pit  
 the  
 id

where Eurydice and her serpent hid.

Symbols clashing like Wandering Rocks  
 splinter brave Argonautic thoughts  
 in quest of the golden pleas  
 for commonsense. But though Charybdis  
 gulps thought down, a hundred limbs  
 still beating wildly the salt, astonished air,  
 a few shards get through. The others—  
 well, who knows? Perhaps down there  
 under the weeds and turmoil dark with teeth  
 of monsters new and ancient rocks  
 some Rhadamanthus still unlocks  
 opposing doors to glittering lands.  
 Perhaps there are silver, singing sands  
 under the contradictory dark,  
 from which images, new fabricated,  
 rise like eggs on one shore or another,

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*Editors' note:* Reprinted, with the kind permission of the Editor, from the *Times Literary Supplement*, no. 3824 (20 June 1975), p. 696. Ruth Padel has provided the following gloss on the poem and the time of its composition: 'I wrote this poem as a joke when structuralism reigned, and when I, a Junior Fellow in Classics luckily landed in Wolfson College, Oxford, was getting to know Godfrey. Anthropology was suddenly everywhere (e.g. the *TLS*), was the key to everything; Lévi-Strauss held new keys to it, but Godfrey saw furthest and deepest. I was reading anthropology most of the time, but I learned to stand back from it from Godfrey. If the poem has a point, it is the seriousness of play—which Godfrey embodied.'

to poet and anthropologist, to a lover,  
to some hopeful argument of the dedicated.  
Asphodel and Syphilis no doubt resemble each other  
on some structural, deep, phonetic level,  
but somewhere beyond or underneath the drivel  
Elysium still corners the market, inflating  
her goods and gods, creating a rise,  
source of expensive images and jade-bright Ayes.

RUTH PADEL

### MASTER OF THE FISHING SPEAR?

*An address given at the 'Celebration of the Life and Work of Godfrey Lienhardt, 1921–1993', held at Wolfson College, Oxford, on 7 May 1994.*

Mr Vicegerent, fellow friends of Godfrey. I can not tell you what an honour it is to be asked to say a few words today, because I am one of Godfrey's oldest friends. In fact, it is one of the delights and honours of my life to have been counted among his friends, as I am sure many of you here who have been his friends would agree. To be given five minutes to speak now gives me, according to my calculations, one minute for every eight years I knew Godfrey; and I can hear him saying over my shoulder, 'Well you'd better get on with it then!'; which I will try to do.

I first met Godfrey in the Upper Nile where he did so much creative work (and what a pleasure it is to see so many people with us today from those days and those places where I first knew him). There have been many fine obituaries written about Godfrey, one of which I was surprised to see was entitled 'Master of the Fishing Spear'. When I first met him he was walking along the road with his finger in the air and blood trickling down his arm from a very severe gash from his amateur efforts at fishing in the Nile. He had to be rushed off to a mission hospital for treatment.

Later, as our friendship developed, he was my best man at our wedding; which was 35 years ago now. We needed him as best man because I had five parents at the time and many concomitant relations. He said, 'If you hadn't had an anthropologist as best man, we'd never have got through.' (I may say that only two of those parents were biological.) Well, our union was blessed and Godfrey became godfather to our son Edward who is here today. And a very successful godfather-ship it was. Edward's room is festooned with fishing spears (that he doesn't use), clubs, walking-sticks, and all sorts of et ceteras, and one or two unusual books, all of which he prizes very highly.

Although Godfrey was not married he was very much a family man. He adored children, and vice versa. Many of us will remember how he used to keep in touch with such a wide variety of friends, particularly his younger ones, with his endless postcards, all of which were exactly apropos of where you were or who you were, or what your interests were. He had this astonishing capacity for friendship—hoops of steel.

He also extended this family in a much wider sense, in an international sense. He was a one-man United Nations. He brought people together much more successfully than some of the highly paid agencies which are trying to do it today. In fact it was said that there was talk of widening North Parade because there was there such a congestion of Rolls Royces belonging to his former students, all of whom at one time seemed to become ambassadors and ministers, and they were all, of course, trying to get to the Gardener's Arms at the same time.

Although Godfrey died prematurely and too young, it was wonderful that he lived long enough to deliver the Frazer Lecture in Cambridge in 1992. I think we would agree that he bridged the two cultures—that is to say, the cultures, of course, of Oxford and Cambridge—and this lecture was the quintessence of Godfreyism, the quintessence of intellectual wit. It was as though his two mentors F. R. Leavis and E. E. Evans-Pritchard had conspired in heaven (assuming that's where they are) to combine their efforts to put at Godfrey's disposal their wit and intellect for that occasion.

I mustn't go beyond my five minutes. So let me end by saying what a tribute this is to our dear friend and let us all remember him today.

PHILIP LYON ROUSSEL

### A SOCIABLE ANTHROPOLOGIST

*An address given at the 'Celebration of the Life and Work of Godfrey Lienhardt, 1921–1993', held at Wolfson College, Oxford, on 7 May 1994.*

I belonged to one of the later generations of Godfrey's students. We benefited from the visits of our predecessors, who returned to the shrine bearing news of the world beyond. The shrine, in those days, was one of a succession of north Oxford public houses—the Horse & Jockey, the Victoria Arms, the Gardener's Arms in Plantation Road, the Gardener's Arms in North Parade—watering-places that were linked in an ancient transhumant cycle.

Drinking and thinking went together for Godfrey; it was here, in the company of publicans and students, that the oblique process of his teaching became apparent. Oblique in the sense that you might take your leave at closing time certain that you had learned something, but not entirely sure what it was. Godfrey's



conversation was full of jokes and anecdotes and fragments of wisdom, but important aspects of what he had to teach could only be arrived at indirectly: by absorption and by example, rather than by precept or study. Perhaps the most important lesson was to show how social anthropology can and should be truly social, a discipline involving mutuality, one that begins in field research, but ends by keeping company with its subject on a global journey.

I recollect an occasion when I had been studying the Nilotic expansion in Southern Sudan, producing an essay that included a map shaded to represent the territories of the peoples of the South. When I arrived to discuss it I found Godfrey ensconced with three visiting Southerners, former students or friends from the field, now diplomats or professors. One of them pointed at my map and said, 'I think you have given my village to our Arab brothers.' It was Francis Mading Deng, author of a book on the Ngok Dinka of Southern Kordofan, at that time ambassador of Sudan to the Scandinavian countries. The second visitor, a colleague of Francis's, added to this reproach. 'You'll find there's a dispute over grazing grounds along that river,' he said. 'Might it not have been better left unshaded?' The third visitor, a provincial commissioner, joined the discussion at this point. 'I wonder,' he said with a rueful air, 'why you have put my village in Ethiopia?'

Godfrey said nothing, but he was clearly the instigator of this cunning piece of pedagogy. And it was not only for my benefit. To Godfrey the dialogue between neighbouring peoples was a constituent part of what anthropology was. His principal research had been, of course, among the Dinka, and he had a deep and abiding love for them and their ways. But he did not suffer from that affliction of anthropologists, deuterocentricity, the unquestioning identification with a single host culture. One of his most elegant contributions to Nilotic studies is a comparative account of the myth of the bead and the spear, a story widespread among the peoples of the region. This study is an examination of the meaning of the gift, of borrowing and exchange—of what it implies in Nilotic societies to be lent something and lose it—but it also demonstrates how a story itself can be a shared resource, how culture can be transferred between one people and another.

Once we were discussing Father Santandrea's article on the ethnography of Western Bahr-el-Ghazal province, 'The Tribal Confusion Around Wau', which documents the complex pattern of ethnic identity in the hinterland of the provincial capital. There were two young Southerners studying in Oxford at the time, one a Nuer, another a Dinka, each very certain of their ancestry and the centrality of their culture. Another Southerner, recently arrived, listened silently to the discussion. One of us asked him where he came from. 'Oh,' he replied, 'I'm from the Confusion.' 'As we all are,' said Godfrey.

This was how Godfrey prepared his students for fieldwork: by launching us into the great archipelago of his acquaintance. In north Oxford pubs, unbeknown to us, we began to learn the anthropologist's art, the art of participant observation. And when we finally left for the field there was liable to be someone Godfrey knew in the place we were headed for. We would take gifts from him—books or articles of clothing, socks or cardigans from Marks & Spencer—for Godfrey

(though he himself took pride in dressing from thrift shops) knew that the gift was the thing, the social institution that spans tribes and nations, that opens the door of culture.

The gift that Godfrey leaves to the world is his writing—luminous, rigorous, free of obscurity, attuned to the genius of language and the hard task of translation. It is a gift that he has bequeathed both to the world of learning and to the world currently emerging from the tribal cultures of the Upper Nile. But Godfrey's greatest gift to his friends and pupils—he made no distinction between them—was to introduce them to each other. Godfrey fostered friendship and took pleasure in its continuation in his absence, as many of us here have reason to know. And this, I sense, is how we will remember him, not simply as a great social anthropologist but as an anthropologist who was also eminently sociable, who conspired for our collective and individual good, who was generous, a giver of people to each other.

JOHN RYLE

### **TENE THIENYDENG: IN MEMORY OF GODFREY LIENHARDT**

*Songs sung at the 'Celebration of the Life and Work of Godfrey Lienhardt, 1921–1993', held at Wolfson College, Oxford, on 7 May 1994.*

#### *Introduction*

The first song is a traditional Dinka song, sung at great memorial occasions such as that held for Godfrey Lienhardt. The second and third songs were composed especially for the occasion. The 'big grey thing with horns curved towards the earth' is an image of death. Abuk is the first woman, Garang the first man. Thienydeng is Godfrey Lienhardt's Dinka ox-name; the expression means 'stick of the rain', i.e. lightning, a metaphor for the black-and-white pattern of the ox Majok. Tim Atiep is the ox-name of Ranald Boyle, the last colonial district commissioner of Gogrial, where Godfrey Lienhardt conducted field research among the Rek Dinka in the late 1940s; the expression means a shady tree, a metaphor for the colour of a black ox, Macar. The songs were performed by the composers with Kon Deng Thiepf, Wol Mayer Ariece, and others.

#### I

*Kedit maluul ci tung gaal be pek piny;  
caa yin be waac weng ee;  
Kedit maluul ci tung gaal be pek piny;*

Big grey thing with horns curved towards the earth;  
I shall appease you with a cow;  
Big grey thing with horns curved towards the earth;

*Deng Abuk lang wei ee;*  
*Deng Garang lang wei ee;*  
*Lang wei ee lang wei weng ku raan;*  
*Yen lam Mabior be Nhialic thiok*  
*be Wa ok yek wei ee.*

Spirit Deng of Abuk, pray for the soul;  
Spirit Deng of Garang, pray for the soul;  
Pray for the soul of cow and for the soul of mankind;  
We offer Mabior in prayer to bring Divinity  
and our spirits closer to our own souls.

*Yen lam Mabior be Nhialic thiok*  
*be Wa ok yek wei ee;*  
*Deng Abuk lang wei ee;*  
*Deng Garang lang wei ee;*  
*Lang wei ee lang wei weng ku raan;*  
*Yen lam Mabior be Nhialic thiok*  
*be Wa ok yek wei ee.*

We offer Mabior in prayer to bring Divinity  
and our spirits closer to our own souls;  
Spirit Deng of Abuk, pray for the soul;  
Spirit Deng of Garang, pray for the soul;  
Pray for the soul of cow and for the soul of mankind;  
We offer Mabior in prayer to bring Divinity  
and our spirits closer to our own souls.

## II

*Muonyjangda,*  
*Ku Thienydeng aci ok luel;*  
*Muonyjangda,*  
*Ku Thienydeng aci ok luel;*

Our Dinka Nation,  
Thienydeng has presented us so well to the world;  
Our Dinka Nation,  
Thienydeng has presented us so well to the world;

*Ci ok luel be ok ping wuoot;  
ku Thienydeng aci ok luel;  
Muonyjangda,  
ku Thienydeng aci ok luel;*

That the nations of the world now know of us;  
Thienydeng has presented us so well;  
Our Dinka Nation,  
Thienydeng has presented us so well to the world;

*Ciengda ku piirda;  
ku Thienydeng aci ok luel;  
Muonyjangda,  
ku Thienydeng aci ok luel;*

Our ways of life and our culture;  
Thienydeng has presented us so well;  
Our Dinka Nation,  
Thienydeng has presented us very well;

*Ke yeko theek,  
ku Thienydeng aci ok luel;  
Muonyjangda,  
ku Thienydeng aci ok luel.*

/

Our beliefs and all that we worship as a people,  
Thienydeng has presented us so well;  
Our Dinka Nation,  
Thienydeng has presented us very well.

*Beny Tim Atiep,  
ku Thienydeng aci ok luel;  
Muonyjangda,  
ku Thienydeng aci ok luel.*

Chief Tim Atiep,  
Thienydeng has presented us so well to the world;  
Our Dinka Nation,  
Thienydeng has presented us very well.

*Yin Wendy James, Bany Bona Malwal,  
Bany Gordon Muortat, Bany Bol Deng,  
Bany John Ryle, Bany Douglas Johnson,  
Cak ping week wuoot*

*ku Thienydeng aci ok luel;  
Muonyjangda,  
ku Thienydeng aci ok luel.*

You, Wendy James, Chief Bona Malwal,  
Chief Gordon Muortat, Chief Bol Deng,  
Chief John Ryle, Chief Douglas Johnson,  
We sing songs of thanks and universal praise  
Because Thienydeng has presented us so well;  
Our Dinka Nation,  
Thienydeng has presented us very well.

III

*Piny Abuk,  
Yin abuk aa long akolkol;*

World of Abuk,  
We shall always pray to you;

*Piny Garang,  
Yin abuk aa long akolkol;*

World of Garang,  
We shall always pray to you;

*Aye ku wic ku be pinyda lac door,  
ku buk Thienydeng la lui dhor.*

We pray that peace returns to our country soon,  
So that we may erect a shrine for Thienydeng  
amongst the shrines of our ancestors.