

A F R I C A

JOURNAL OF THE INTERNATIONAL AFRICAN INSTITUTE

VOLUME XXVI

JANUARY 1956

NUMBER I

OBITUARY

ALFRED REGINALD RADCLIFFE-BROWN

IT is with deep regret that we record the death of Professor A. R. Radcliffe-Brown on 24 October 1955.

As many members will know, Radcliffe-Brown fostered the interests of the Institute and rendered it many services over a long period. He became a member of the Council shortly after he returned from the United States in 1937 to occupy a Chair of Social Anthropology at Oxford; his advice on research projects and publications was always freely available and greatly valued by the Council and officers of the Institute.

Radcliffe-Brown had made important contributions to the development of anthropological teaching and research in South Africa, where he worked for some years as ethnologist in the Transvaal Museum at Pretoria and from 1921 to 1926 held a Chair in Anthropology at the University of Cape Town. This experience afforded an invaluable background for the encouragement of African studies. He gave much time to the discussion of their researches with Fellows and others associated with the Institute, and his lucid and constructive advice on the analysis and presentation of field material is reflected in the quality of many of the monographs published by the Institute.

He sponsored the preparation of *African Political Systems*, the first of the Institute's collective studies of a particular aspect of African social life. This volume, to which he contributed a valuable Preface, has become an established and widely used introduction to the subject. He also gave much time and thought to editing a similar volume on *African Systems of Kinship and Marriage*, his Introduction to which provides a masterly analysis of the main features of African kinship systems and the theoretical problems arising from the study of them.

The death of Radcliffe-Brown will be felt as a personal loss by two generations of students, for he was unfailingly accessible and helpful, in discussion and correspondence, both to the small group who were at work before the war and to the many younger scholars who have more recently entered the field of African research. Not only did he give them valuable insights into their problems, but, through his urbane friendliness and enthusiasm, he created a sense of common endeavour in a scientific quest which was a source of encouragement and confidence to his colleagues and evoked the affection and respect in which he was so widely held. DARYLL FORDE

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