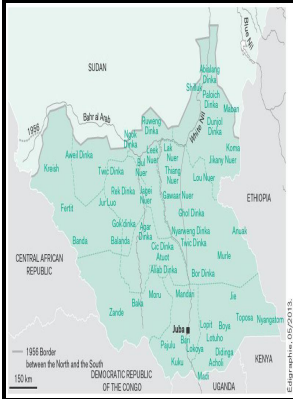


Divinity and experience - the religion of the Dinka.

Clarendon Press - Divinity and Experience: The Religion of the Dinka / Edition 1 by Godfrey Lienhardt



Description: -

Dinka (African people) -- Religion and mythology

Divinity and experience - the religion of the Dinka.

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9780198234050: Divinity and Experience: The Religion of the Dinka

My main issue with Lienhardt is that in all of his categorizations of how the Dinka understand cattle and their relationship to cattle, and especially the essential nature of their relationship to cattle, it was all done in terms of the men of the tribe. Lienhardt examines the complex meanings of divine imagery and relates these to the Dinkas' experience of life and death. Lienhardt sets out to show how the Divinities are a reflection of the actions of the Dinka and he gives it considerable consideration in the first part of his book.

Divinity and Experience: The Religion of the Dinka

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While Lienhardt explains the religion of Dinka, he does not seem to cast judgement on their practices or merely dismiss them as symbols, whereas Geertz seems to reduce religion and the practice of religion to symbols. In this part, he details the Dinka distinctions between different Divinities, both Free-Divinities and Clan-Divinities, and how said Divinities are encountered in the daily lives of the Dinka. I was also intrigued by your categorization of the attitude of the Dinka as blasé; I wonder if this is similar to how Maia Darren describe the experience of the Haitians as life as something that was holy beyond their control, and to a certain extent as Thomas Hobbes would say it, nasty, brutish, and short? While these Divinities serve as emblems, Lienhardt notes that they are more than that Lienhardt p.

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As Jackson mentioned in his comment the work of Lienhardt and Geertz do in fact have several points of commonality.

Divinity and Experience

Throughout the work, the author examines how the reality of the divine has influenced every aspect of Dinka culture. The work does what it set out

to do, but it would seem that Lienhardt was more concerned with a deep understanding of the distinctions between Divinities than an in-depth exploration of how these interactions play out in the day to day life of the Dinka.

Divinity and Experience: The Religion of the Dinka

I think this could be due to the method that Lienhardt used in his study of religion. Does Lienhardt over-read meaning and significance into various Dinka rituals? From the role of priests to the translation of hymns, prayers, and myths, Lienhardt provides an unparalleled analysis and interpretation of this people and their religion.

Divinity and Experience: The Religion of the Dinka

However, as the author described this order of existence, I recognized a couple of observations I had not see in earlier works we read.

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What changes if we have to conceive of religion and religious practice without written texts? The second part of the text focuses on the origins of the Spear-Masters, invocations and prayer, symbolic actions, and a brief section on being buried alive. How much work can his appeal to common human nature actually do? I think these two works provide a rich conversation together.

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