IN MEMORIAM

G. Kingsley Garbett
1935–2006

Kingsley Garbett at his desk at UCRN, Harare, 1958

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George Kingsley Garbett—Kingsley, to all his friends and colleagues—the Managing Editor of *Social Analysis*, was involved in the journal in different capacities since its foundation in 1980. He performed the editorial role for the longest period of time, guiding it through various changes of direction. His energy and inspiration are evident in the formation of thematic issues. He always took a keen intellectual interest in the contributions, and the mark of his thought is apparent in many of them.

Kingsley was born in 1935 in the north of England, in Stoke-on-Trent. Both his parents worked in the potteries, and Kingsley never lost his interest in pottery, about which he was very knowledgeable. He took a keen and rigorous interest in many things especially of a scientific nature, which shone through in his anthropological research and thought. He took his initial training in anthropology at the LSE and was awarded a Leverhulme Scholarship and later a Field Research Fellowship from the International African Institute. He conducted fieldwork among a Shona group, the Korekore, in Zimbabwe, and during his early stay there, became closely associated with Clyde Mitchell and Jaap van Velsen, who had formed the nucleus of a small group of anthropologists at the then University College of Rhodesia and Nyasaland (a college of the University of London that was later to become the University of Zimbabwe). Mitchell had been a Director of the Rhodes-Livingstone Institute, and three years before Kingsley's arrival in 1958 had become Foundation Professor of the Anthropology Department. Both Mitchell and van Velsen (also later a Director of the RLI), of course, were influential members of the so-called Manchester School, and its approach to social and political life attracted Kingsley's interest. He would join Gluckman's Manchester Department as a Research Assistant for some 15 months (1961–1962), during which time he completed his doctoral dissertation on the Korekore materials.

Mitchell appointed him as Lecturer to his department in Harare (then Salisbury), where Kingsley continued his Korekore research. He would later take a post in the Department of Social Anthropology at the University of Manchester when Mitchell's group broke up. This was the period of Ian Smith's regime in Southern Rhodesia. All of the anthropologists in that department had been sharply critical, and after Smith's infamous Unilateral Declaration of Independence, they left. Kingsley and Mitchell went back to Manchester, and van Velsen accepted a professorship in Zambia. All became politically prohibited immigrants.

It is worth stressing that there was a close intellectual association (and bond of friendship) between Mitchell and Kingsley. Both were very interested in the application of mathematical techniques to anthropological problems. Some of Mitchell's innovations in statistical analysis, as well as the application of mathematic concepts to the idea of social networks, owe a great deal to Kingsley's input. Many of his publications and his later work on a variety of relevant committees in Adelaide having to do with changes affected by computerization reflect Kingsley's skills.

Kingsley's major research was in Zimbabwe, although he conducted important work in Malawi, Sri Lanka, and also South Australia. He wrote several papers on the land crisis in Zimbabwe before Independence and especially on the spirit medium cult. This work was of extraordinary importance in understanding the political situation in Zimbabwe, both in the colonial period and since. It was Kingsley who first saw many of the full implications of the notorious Land Husbandry Act, which was responsible for the alienation of much of the best arable land from the African population (see, e.g., "The Land Husbandry Act of Southern Rhodesia," pp. 185–200 in *African Agrarian Systems*, ed. Daniel Biebuyck, London: Oxford University Press, 1966). This continues to have reverberations in the current situation of Mugabe's Zimbabwe, and the article is required reading for those concerned with the history of the crisis. His research on the Shona spirit medium cult (including, e.g., "Spirit Mediums as Mediators in Korekore Society," pp. 104–127 in *Spirit Mediumship and Society in Africa*, ed. J. Beattie and J. Middleton, London: Routledge and Kegan Paul, 1969; "Disparate Regional Cults and a Unitary Ritual Field in Zimbabwe," pp. 59–92 in *Regional Cults*, ed. R. P. Werbner, London: Academic Press, 1977; and his sadly unpublished PhD thesis, *The Political System of a Central African Tribe with Particular Reference to Spirit Mediums*, University of Manchester, 1963) is classic and has been vital in fueling later understandings, including those of Peter Fry, David Lan, and Terence Ranger. Kingsley identified the importance of the spirit mediums in Rhodesian politics, especially in the circumstances of the weakening of the chiefs in the colonial administration. They were critical as a fertility cult closely connected to the land and the control of territory in the gathering resistance to white domination. It was Kingsley who identified a close connection between the spirit cults and the ancient site and ruins of Zimbabwe, the center of Monomotapa's pre-colonial empire, the largest stone buildings of a pre-European kind south of Egypt. These ruins were conventionally seen by the white settlers of Rhodesia as being of non-African origin, further depriving the people of their heritage. Kingsley correctly saw

them as indigenous constructions and recognized their built form as having a close connection to Shona ritual practice. Kingsley himself maintained a deep love for Zimbabwe and its people throughout his life, and the country was in many ways his second home, in spirit at least.

Kingsley was an important participant in the Manchester anthropological experiment in Central Africa and in Manchester. Gluckman saw in him potentialities for the development of the Manchester tradition, and it was for this reason that he was chosen to give the prestigious Malinowski Lecture in 1970 ("The Analysis of Social Situations," *Man* 5, no. 2 [1970]: 214–227). In this lecture, Kingsley lays out the various directions in the Manchester perspective.

I invited Kingsley to come as Reader to the then fledgling Department of Anthropology at Adelaide, and he arrived in 1976 from the post of Senior Lecturer that he then held at the University of Aberdeen. Kingsley had in many ways been a mentor of mine, and it was because of his skills and deep knowledge of the Manchester tradition that I wanted him to come. At the time, we both saw Adelaide as an opportunity to develop aspects of the Manchester approach in Australia. Kingsley threw himself into the task, becoming a major influence in steering the department administratively and intellectually. He was among the more important persons responsible for the department becoming, for a time, one of the major centers for anthropological research in Australia. He was involved in the establishment of the journal *Social Analysis* in 1980, a journal that was intended, as is clear in its very title and declared aims, to be a publication that followed in the steps of Gluckman's Manchester.

Kingsley was a committed teacher, an exciting intellectual, a concerned colleague, and a warm friend. His death after a stoic fight with cancer is a serious loss for anthropology. He leaves behind him his wife, Christine, and four daughters, Jocelyn, Claire, Jacqui, and Kirsty, from earlier marriages.

— Bruce Kapferer