MAX GLUCKMAN
1911-1975

Max Gluckman's achievements as a scholar and teacher are extraordinary, and will be chronicled by students who knew him and his work far better than I. All I can try to add is a personal recollection of his scholarly interest and scrupulous fairness.

Before I went to the field in 1967 I had read his articles and books on law and politics in Africa, and like so many other young researchers, had found them the single most stimulating source of ideas about tribal society and its differences from those western institutions with which I was familiar. When I returned to London a year later and, for the first time, had the opportunity to meet Max, I was somewhat daunted by the prospect. But I found him to be personally approachable, eager to hear about my research, and ready to engage me as a colleague on questions of law in African society. This meeting led to an ongoing correspondence in which Max proved an always reliable source of sympathetic criticism.

Moreover, Max was as ready to hear criticism of his own work as to offer it to others. When, with the incaution of youth, I wrote an article attacking all my elders, and Max in particular, on methdological and conceptual grounds, his response was enthusiastic approbation. And when, in the pages of this journal, he wrote a substantial critique of my approach, he first sent it to me in draft for my comments, and then made significant changes, more than meeting my objections. I learned a great deal from that exchange, as I did from all my contacts with Max—testimony to the debt which so many members of succeeding generations of students of law in society owe to him and to his work.

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