
Brief Biography

- 1929 Born in Jaffna City, Sri Lanka
- 1951 Obtained a B.A. from the University of Ceylon (First Class Honours)
- 1951-60 Lecturer, University of Ceylon
- 1954 Obtained a Ph.D. from the Cornell University (Sociology, Social Anthropology, Social Psychology)
- 1960-63 UNESCO Technical Assistance Expert in Thailand
- 1964-72 Lecturer, University of Cambridge
- 1968 Malinowski Memorial Lecture, London School of Economics
- 1970-72 Fellow of King's College, Cambridge
- 1973-76 Professor, Department of Anthropology, University of Chicago
- 1973 Rivers Memorial Medal awarded by the Royal Anthropological Institute of Great Britain and Ireland
- 1976- Professor, Department of Anthropology, Harvard University and Curator of South Asian Ethnology, Peabody Museum, Harvard University
- 1979 Radcliffe-Brown Memorial Lecture, British Academy
- 1981 Fellow of the American Academy of Arts and Sciences
- 1984 Lewis Henry Morgan Memorial Lectures, University of Rochester, USA
- 1989-90 President, American Association for Asian Studies
- 1991 Doctor of Humane Letters, University of Chicago
- 1991 Doctor of Letters, University of Peradeniya, Sri Lanka
- 1991 Daryll Forde Memorial Lecture, University College London
- 1994 Fellow of the United States National Academy of Sciences
- 1995- Esther and Sidney Rabb Professor of Anthropology, Harvard University
- 1997 Huxley Memorial Medal awarded by the Royal Anthropological Institute; and Huxley Memorial Lecture, Royal Anthropological Institute
- 1997 Awarded the Balzan Prize (Fondation Internationale Prix E. Balzan - Fonds)

Major Works

- Buddhism and the Spirit Cults in Northeast Thailand*, Cambridge University Press, 1970
- Bridewealth and Dowry* (co-author), Cambridge University Press, 1973
- World Conqueror and World Renouncer; A Study of Religion and Polity in Thailand Against a Historical Background*, Cambridge University Press, 1976
- The Buddhist Saints of the Forest and the Cult of Amulets, A study in Charisma, Hagiography, Sectarianism and Millennial Buddhism*, Cambridge University Press, 1984
- Culture, Thought and Social Action*, Harvard University Press, 1985
- Sri Lanka: Ethnic Fratricide and the Dismantling of Democracy*, University of Chicago Press, Chicago, 1986
- Magic, Science, Religion and the Scope of Rationality*, (translated into Japanese) Cambridge University Press, 1990
- Buddhism Betrayed? Religion, Politics and Violence in Sri Lanka*, University of Chicago Press, Chicago, 1992
- Leveling Crowds: Ethnonationalist Conflicts and Collective Violence in South Asia*, University of California Press, Berkeley, 1996

*Titles without place of publishing are published in Cambridge.