

Women and Men in Marriage: Some Atuot Texts (Southern Sudan)*

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Atuot collective representations apropos relations between the sexes in marriage accord closely with impressions one gains of their actual behavior. In this essay I describe a variety of forms which marriage takes in Atuot society and discuss what is most commonly cited for as the cause of its dissolution. This is followed by some selected texts collected from adult women and men in response to the query, "What are the relations of a wife and husband (*kue kam den*; lit.: what is between them) and how do they come to quarrel?" (*ku guac thuke thok*; lit.: what makes their words go in opposite directions, or contradict). Many Atuot songs and folktales convey related images of this relationship, though that material awaits the attention of a separate essay. The present article can be compared with works by LIENHARDT (1963), EVANS-PRITCHARD (1945, 1948, 1950, 1951), HOWELL (1953, 1954), SANTANDREA (1977), GOUGH (1971), HUFFMAN (1931), and DENG (1971, 1972) for the Nilotic world, and more generally, with reference to the burgeoning literature on the position of women in society.

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