

## **Anarchism, individualism and South Indian foragers: memories and reflections**

**Brian Morris** examines the relationship of anthropology and anarchism in reflection on his work with South Indian forest hunters, the Malaipantaram.

This article brings together two long-standing interests of mine, as reflected in two of my books, namely *Forest Traders* (1982), a study of the socio-economic life of the Malaipantaram, a group of South Indian foragers, and *Kropotkin: the Politics of Community* (2004), which offers a critical account of the political philosophy and social ecology of the Russian revolutionary anarchist Peter Kropotkin.<sup>1</sup> The books have one thing in common. Both have been ignored by academics.

Apart from Peter Gardner,<sup>2</sup> no hunter-gatherer specialist ever mentions, or even cites, my study of the Malaipantaram. In a paper that emphasises the heterogeneous subsistence strategies among contemporary (not modern) hunter-gatherers, and aims to mediate between the 'traditionalists' (Richard Lee) and the 'revisionists' (Edwin Wilmsen) in the rather acrimonious Kalahari debate, Nurit Bird-David argues that contemporary ethnographic inquiry should concern itself with the 'dynamics of contact' between modern hunter-



Photo: Brian Morris

Hill Pandaram family outside their leaf shelter, Achencoil forests, Kerala, 1972

gatherers and capitalism at the *local level*.<sup>3</sup> This was precisely what my ethnographic study *Forest Traders*, published a decade earlier, had entailed! Anyone who reads this book will recognise that I don't treat the Malaipantaram as social isolates, nor do I deny them social agency – either individually or collectively – and I certainly do not describe the Malaipantaram as an unchanging society.<sup>4</sup>

Likewise, apart from a review in an obscure anarchist magazine, published by the Anarchist Federation, my book on Kropotkin has

never been reviewed in any academic journal, nor mentioned in recent academic texts on anarchism. A pioneer ecologist and a renowned geographer – his portrait still adorns the library of the Royal Geographic society – Kropotkin was also an anthropologist, the author of the classic text *Mutual Aid* (1902).<sup>5</sup> Yet the reviews editor of the *Journal of the Royal Anthropological Institute* did not consider a book on such an obscure Russian anarchist as having any interest to anthropologists. And given the current academic fashion with so-called post-

anarchism, which invokes the ghosts of such radical individualists as Max Stirner and Friedrich Nietzsche, a book on Kropotkin seems of little relevance also to contemporary academic anarchists.<sup>6</sup>

The dean of Khoisan studies, Alan Barnard, once wrote a perceptive paper on primitive communism: it was aptly subtitled ‘Kropotkin Visits the Bushman’.<sup>7</sup> In like fashion, in this paper, I want to bring together my two books – linking the Malaipantaram ethnography to Kropotkin’s social anarchism – and to address the question: are South Indian foragers anarchists, or more precisely, can the social life of the Malaipantaram and other South Indian foragers be described as a form of anarchy?

### Anarchy and anarchism

I begin this discussion with a confession. When I completed a draft of my Ph.D thesis

it for any grammatical or stylistic errors or indiscretions. When she returned the thesis to me she declared: ‘I don’t believe a word of it’. When I asked why she responded: ‘It is just a description of your own anarchist politics. I think you’ve made the whole thing up’.<sup>8</sup>



Kropotkin: anthropologist and anarchist

That hunter-gatherers and tribal people, more generally, have been described as living in a state of anarchy, has long been a common theme in anthropological writings. In recent years, with the

in the relationship between anarchism and anthropology. Indeed, I long ago suggested that there was a kind of ‘elective affinity’ between anarchism as a political tradition and anthropology. For scholars like Celestin Bouglé, Marcel Mauss and A.R. Radcliffe-Brown had close associations with anarchism: Radcliffe-Brown in his early years was a devotee of Kropotkin and was known as ‘Anarchy Brown’; while anarchists such as Kropotkin, Elie and Elise Reclus, Murray Bookchin and John Zerzan have all drawn extensively on anthropological writings in developing their own brand of anarchism.<sup>10</sup>

In his classic study *The Nuer*,<sup>11</sup> Evans-Pritchard famously described their political system as ‘ordered anarchy’ while Marshall Sahlins, equally famously, described the ‘domestic mode of production’ as a ‘species of anarchy’. In true Hobbesian fashion, Sahlins negatively portrayed the

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on the Malaipantaram in 1974 – *Forest Traders* was a drastically shortened version of my thesis – I asked a close friend of mine who had a degree in English literature and is a talented poet, to read the manuscript and to check

highlighting of the presence of anarchists within the anti-capitalist and Occupy movements, together with the publication of James Scott’s seminal *The Art of Not Being Governed*,<sup>9</sup> there has been an upsurge of interest

social organization of tribal peoples as akin to a ‘sack of potatoes’.<sup>12</sup> But, more importantly, long before the current interest in anarchist anthropology, the Canadian scholar Harold Barclay wrote a perceptive little book *People*

*Without Government*, which is subtitled ‘The anthropology of anarchism’.<sup>13</sup> The book affirms that ‘anarchy is possible’ and describes not only hunter-gatherers – such as the Inuit, Bushmen, Yaka Pygmies, and the Australian Aborigines – as having

twentieth century, and is still a vibrant political tradition.<sup>15</sup>

In Kropotkin’s own understanding of anarchist history, anarchism sought to actualize the rallying sentiments of the French revolution – liberty, equality

less as some fixed, benign essence. A form of existential *individualism* is then a defining feature of anarchism as a political tradition.

Secondly, there is an emphasis on equality, and the affirmation of the community

## **In Kropotkin’s own understanding of anarchist history, anarchism sought to actualize the rallying sentiments of the French revolution – liberty, equality and fraternity**

anarchic societies, but also tribal societies more generally. Finally, we may note that Peter Gardner, in his pioneering study of the Paliyan foragers of south India, entitles one of his key chapters ‘Respect, Equality and Peaceful Anarchy’ – emphasizing the fierce egalitarianism, the high value placed on individual autonomy, and the non-violent ethos that pervades the social life of these foragers.<sup>14</sup>

A distinction needs to be made, of course, between anarchy, which is an ordered society without government (or any enduring structures of domination and exploitation), and anarchism, which refers to an historical movement and political tradition. Emerging in Europe around 1870, in the aftermath of the defeated Paris Commune, mainly among workers in Spain, Italy, France and Switzerland, anarchism as a political movement subsequently spread throughout the world in the early years of the

and fraternity (social solidarity) – and entailed a creative synthesis of radical liberalism, with its emphasis on the liberty of the individual, and socialism (or communism) which implied a repudiation of capitalism, and the development of a society based on voluntary co-operation, mutual aid and community life.<sup>16</sup>

Anarchism may be defined for the purposes of the present essay in terms of three essential tenets or principles. Firstly, a strong emphasis is placed on the liberty of the individual, for the moving spirit of anarchism entails a fundamental focus on the sovereignty of the individual, and thus a complete rejection, not only of the state power but all forms of hierarchy and oppression that inhibit the autonomy of the individual person. For social anarchists the individual was viewed, of course, as a social being, not as a disembodied ego, or as some abstract individual, still

as a ‘society of equals’. For anarchists this implied a complete repudiation of the capitalist market economy along with its wage system, private property, its competitive ethos, and the ideology of possessive individualism. Anarchism thus upheld *egalitarianism* as both a social premise, and as an ethical principle.

Thirdly, it expressed a vision of society based solely on mutual aid and voluntary co-operation, a community-based form of social organization that would promote and enhance both the fullest expression of individual liberty, and all forms of social life that were independent of both the state and capitalism. The anarchists thus believed in voluntary co-operation, not in chaos, ephemerality or ‘anything goes’, and anarchists like Kropotkin viewed both tribal and kin-based societies as exhibiting many of the features of anarchy.<sup>17</sup> *Communism* or

what Kropotkin described as free communism, was therefore one of the defining values (or characteristics) of anarchism as a political tradition – or at least a defining feature of the kind of anarchist communism that Kropotkin advocated.<sup>18</sup>

Anarchists like Kropotkin therefore did not view anarchy as something that existed only in the distant past, in the Palaeolithic era, nor as simply a utopian vision of some future society, but rather as a form of social life that had existed throughout human history – albeit, often hidden in contemporary societies, buried and unrecognised beneath the weight of capitalism and the state. As Colin Ward graphically put it: anarchy is like ‘a seed beneath the snow’.<sup>19</sup>

India – such as the Kadar, Paliyan, Malaipantaram and Jenu Kurubu – express what has been described as an individualistic ethic or culture.<sup>20</sup>

To understand what this individualism entails, an initial note of clarification seems essential. For there has been a lamentable tendency on the part of many anthropologists to set up, in rather exotic fashion, a radical dichotomy between Western conceptions of the individual – misleadingly identified with Cartesian metaphysics or the ‘commodity’ metaphor – and that of other cultures. This radical dichotomy suggests that Western culture views the human subject as an egocentric, isolated, non-social, and rigidly bounded individual, whereas in other

criticisms.<sup>23</sup> We need, in fact, to go back to Immanuel Kant, and to commonsense understandings of the world.

Kant famously described anthropology as the study of ‘what is a human being’, or in contemporary parlance ‘what it means to be human’. In his seminal work *Anthropology from a Pragmatic Point of View*<sup>24</sup> published in the last decade of his life, Kant suggested the understanding of the human subject in terms of a triadic ontology, viewing the individual as a universal human being (*mensch*), as a unique self (*selbst*) and as a social being, a member of a particular group of people (*volk*). Kant, of course, focussed on the individual as a universal, rational subject, while his student and later critic Johann

## **the key distinction has to be made between the individualism of the South Indian foragers, and the various kinds of individualism associated with capitalist economy**

I turn now to the ethnography of South Indian foragers, and will address the question as to whether their social life can be described as a form of anarchy in terms of these three defining features of anarchism as a political tradition, namely, individualism, egalitarianism and communism.

### **Individualism**

It has long been recognised that the foragers of south

cultures – specifically Bali, India and Melanesia – people have a sociocentric concept of the subject. They view people as intrinsically social beings, a ‘microcosm of relations’, who conceive of themselves in terms of their social roles rather than as unique individuals.<sup>21</sup> There exists in the world, therefore, we are told, ‘two types of person’.<sup>22</sup> This kind of dualistic approach is quite untenable, and has been subject to several telling

Herder stressed that humans were fundamentally cultural beings. Many years later the anthropologist Clyde Kluckhohn expressed this triadic ontology in simple everyday terms. Critical of dualistic conceptions of the human subject in terms of the nature (biology) versus culture dichotomy, Kluckhohn suggested, in contrast, that there were three essential ways of understanding the human subject. Every person,



he wrote, is in some respects like every other human being as a species being (humanity); that they are like no other human being in having a unique personality (or self);

subject, like the existentialists (but unlike Durkheimian sociologists), places a fundamental focus on the individual as an independent person. They value and

psychologically and economically independent at a very early age, and to respect the autonomy of other individuals. Thus, in contrast with neighbouring caste

**strong adherence to individual autonomy, and thus an 'intense' individualism ... has been recognised by all researchers on South Indian foragers**

and, finally, that they have affinities with some other humans, in being social or cultural beings (or persons).<sup>25</sup>

The Malaipantaram, and other foragers of South India, like people everywhere, clearly affirm this triadic ontology. They recognise that the people they encounter are human beings (*manushyan*) as distinct from, say, elephants and monitor lizards; and that they have unique personalities, and a sense of their own individuality (which ought not to be equated with individualism as a cultural ethos). They recognise too that other humans, both within their own society, and with regard to outsiders, are social beings with ethnic affiliations and diverse social identities.<sup>26</sup>

Significantly, the Malaipantaram and other South Indian foragers' conception of the human

stress the autonomy of the individual. Both in terms of their child-rearing practices and their gathering economy the Malaipantaram place a high degree of emphasis on the person as an existential being – self-reliant and autonomous. Socialisation patterns – as a dialectical process – are largely geared to making a child socially,

communities, the Malaipantaram individual may constitute a unit of both production and consumption; and to live a solitary existence is not only possible but by no means unusual for older men, and it is not portrayed negatively.<sup>27</sup> A strong adherence to individual autonomy, and thus an 'intense' individualism (as it has been described), has been recognised by all researchers on South Indian foragers.

Although clearly linked to a gathering economy, both for subsistence and trade, such individualism is also expressed in the diversity of their economic strategies, and their individual mobility and flexibility with regard to group membership. Indeed, individualism has been interpreted as a characteristic feature of hunter-gatherer societies generally, or at least those with an immediate-return economic system.<sup>28</sup>



Photo: Brian Morris

Pandaram hunter, Achencoil valleys, 1972

Nobody has expressed this individualistic ethos with more cogency than Peter Gardner, who in relation to the Paliyan and several other foragers, views it as intrinsically linked to individual decision-making, social mechanisms that undermine any form of hierarchy, a non-violent ethos, in that inter-personal conflicts are generally resolved through fission and mobility, and a general absence in the formalization of culture.<sup>29</sup>

In *Forest Traders*, I noted that the ethnographic data on the Paliyans, who were characterised by a 'very extreme individualism',<sup>30</sup> seemed to run counter to Louis Dumont's argument that the presence of the individual – in its modern, normative sense – was not recognised in Indian society.<sup>31</sup>

I have written elsewhere on this apparent paradox,<sup>32</sup> but what has to be recognised in the present context is that not only must a distinction be made between individuality (and the agency of the individual – acknowledged in most societies) and normative or cultural conceptions of the human subject, but also the fact that there are many distinct and contrasting forms of *individualism*.<sup>33</sup> Dumont himself devotes a good deal of discussion to two forms of individualism, besides that of economic individualism. One is that of the ascetic 'renouncer' in Hindu society, the *Sannyasin* whose individual identity is achieved by repudiating all ties that bind a person to the caste system (society) and the world. The other form of individualism is that

associated with the concept of *bildung* or 'self-cultivation' that was particularly associated with literary intellectuals in Germany at the end of the 18th century, and was later developed by Nietzsche and by his poststructuralist devotees.<sup>34</sup>

But the key distinction that has to be made is that between the individualism of the South Indian foragers, and the various kinds of individualism that are generally associated with the capitalist economy, if not with many aspects of Western culture. These range from that of Cartesian philosophy, with its notion of a disembodied ego radically separate from nature and social life;<sup>35</sup> the abstract or possessive individualism of liberal theory that was long ago lampooned by Marx and Bakunin; the methodological individualism of optimal foraging theory;<sup>36</sup> and the radical egoism of Ayn Rand which advocates a form of selfishness that has little or no regard for other humans.<sup>37</sup>

All four kinds of bourgeois individualism were repudiated by Kropotkin and the early social anarchists, as all tended to deny the social nature of the human subject. The mode of individualism that Kropotkin advocated, in contrast, he described as '*personalismus or pro sibi communisticu*' – the



Distribution of foraging groups in India

kind of individuality that is inherently social.<sup>38</sup>

More recently, Susan Brown has followed Kropotkin in making a clear distinction between instrumental or possessive individualism, manifested through the market, and the existentialist individualism advocated by the social anarchists – as expressed in the individuals capacity to be autonomous and self-determining.<sup>39</sup> Clearly, the kind of individualism expressed by the Malaipantaram and other South Indian foragers has close affinities with the existentialist individualism described by Brown. Indeed she defines social anarchism as combining existential individualism with free communism.<sup>40</sup>

Making a distinction between the individualism of hunter-gatherers and the rugged individualism of modern capitalism is not saying anything new or original. Long ago, Stanley Diamond emphasised that the mode of thought expressed by tribal societies, specifically hunter-gatherers, with respect to the human subject, was one that was concrete, existential and personalistic.<sup>41</sup>

### **Egalitarianism**

In *Forest Traders*, I emphasised that an egalitarian ideal permeated Malaipantaram society, and that this ethos contrasted

markedly from the emphasis on hierarchy in surrounding agricultural communities, particularly in relation to gender, and with regard to the higher castes.<sup>42</sup> In fact, I argued that Malaipantaram society was both egalitarian and individualistic in its essential ethos.<sup>43</sup> Around the same time, James Woodburn published his seminal paper on 'Egalitarian societies',<sup>44</sup> although it is well to recall that as a concept 'egalitarianism' is hardly mentioned in what constitutes one of the founding texts of hunter-gatherer studies.<sup>45</sup> But it is generally recognised that egalitarianism is a fundamental characteristic not only of South Indian foragers, but all hunter-gathering societies with an immediate-return economic system.<sup>46</sup>

Among the Malaipantaram and South Indian foragers egalitarianism is manifested in diverse ways, both as an ethos, as a constellation of values and normative expectations, and in their social relationships (indeed, their cultural values and social actions are inter-linked and dialectically related). We can briefly mention, with regard to such egalitarianism, three topics of interest: the emphasis on sharing, their attitude towards authority structures, and their general emphasis on equality, especially in relation to gender.

As in many other hunter-gathering societies, among

the Malaipantaram meat from wild animals is always shared within the camp or settlement and every person is entitled to a share. Although the hunting of mammals such as sambar, chevrotain and various monkeys is practised, most of the meat obtained is through eclectic foraging, and what almost amounts to the 'gathering' of small animals – specifically tortoises, bats, monitor lizards and squirrels.<sup>47</sup> Apart from the sharing of meat, sharing is in fact limited among the Malaipantaram, and economic exchange within the community is best described in terms of reciprocity and mutual aid.

Although in various Malaipantaram settlements there are recognised 'headmen' (*Muppan*), these are largely a function of administrative control introduced by the state via the Forest Department, in order to facilitate communication. Such headmen have little or no control over the lives or movements of other members of the local group.<sup>48</sup> There is, in fact, among the Malaipantaram and other South Indian foragers, a marked antipathy towards any form of authority, or any form of hierarchy, whether based on wealth, prestige or power. In their everyday life the emphasis is always on being modest non-aggressive and non-competitive, engaging with others in terms of an ethos that puts a fundamental

emphasis on mutual aid and on respecting the autonomy of others, especially those with whom a person regularly associates. But as many scholars have indicated, the stress on egalitarian relationships does not simply imply a lack of hierarchy, but is actively engendered by forms of social power – diffuse sanctions or levelling mechanisms – expressed and enforced by means of criticisms, ridicule, ostracism, desertion, or by the simple, voluntary adherence to customary norms, as I am doing in writing this essay in intelligible English.<sup>49</sup>

Photo: Brian Morris



Boy with Giant Hornbill

It seems to me that to describe this form of social power, and the diffuse sanctions that are entailed, as implying ‘reverse-dominance hierarchy’<sup>50</sup> or as a form of ‘governance’<sup>51</sup> is quite misleading, for the Malaipantaram have a marked aversion to all forms of domination and governance; this, of course, does not imply that they live in the forest in a state of *anomie*.

Given this emphasis on egalitarian relations it is not surprising that gender relations among the Malaipantaram and other South Indian foragers are

typically recognised as being equal. In *Forest Traders*, acknowledging the social and economic independence of women, I stressed that there was a high degree of equality between the sexes, especially when contrasted with gender relations among

has authority over the other.<sup>53</sup> But given the harassment that Malaipantaram have generally to contend with, or what Gardner described as ‘inter-cultural pressure’,<sup>54</sup> I never encountered a Malaipantaram woman foraging alone in the forest.<sup>55</sup>

In a widely-acclaimed essay on Marshall Sahlins’ renowned thesis describing hunter-gatherers as the ‘original affluent society’,<sup>56</sup> Nurit Bird-David seems to inflate the notion of sharing, which is a key element of egalitarianism, into a rather metaphysical principle.<sup>57</sup> Sharing thus becomes a totalising concept that incorporates almost all aspects of

the social and cultural life of the Nayaka. By implication her model applies to all foragers with an immediate-return economic system, although interestingly she makes no mention at all of other South Indian foragers. It is of interest, too, that

**the stress on egalitarian relationships ... is actively engendered by .. diffuse sanctions or levelling mechanisms ...criticisms, ridicule, ostracism, desertion**

They are, however, like other South Indian foragers, well attuned to the ‘art of not being governed’.<sup>52</sup>

caste communities. Within the conjugal family men and women have more or less equal rights, and neither party

whereas Bird-David endorses Sahlins’ thesis of the hunter-gatherer ‘Zen road to affluence’, in *Forest Traders I*



made no mention at all of this questionable thesis.<sup>58</sup>

There is nothing amiss with describing South Indian foragers as individualistic or egalitarian, or as having a 'sharing ethos', but Bird-David's analysis is a typical example of what Kathleen Morrison describes as typological and essentialist thinking,<sup>59</sup> for although this analysis obviously has a ring of truth, it gives quite a biased portrait of the social and cultural life of South Indian foragers. In following Colin Turnbull's (mis)-interpretation of Mbuti

and misfortunes, but from the maraudings of real elephants.<sup>60</sup> Indeed, rather than living in a 'giving environment',<sup>61</sup> the Malaipantaram and other south Indian foragers appeal to the ancestral spirits (*chavu*) or the forest deities (*malai devi*, mountain gods) not only when there are illnesses and misfortunes, but also when there is a *lack* of food or honey, or hunting has not been successful. Through shamanistic rituals, the reasons for the lack of food or misfortunes is explained in terms of the foragers not upholding certain customary norms or moral edicts,

reduced to a single metaphor, however engaging and illuminating.

The Malaipantaram do recognise the forest as their home, and have warm feelings towards the forest as the essential source of their livelihood and well-being. It is the abode of their ancestral spirits and the forest deities on whom they can always call upon for support and protection, and thus the forest is always a place of refuge.<sup>62</sup>

Likewise, although sharing is a fundamental ethic among the Malaipantaram,

### **an egalitarian ideal permeates Malaipantaram society, and this ethos contrasts markedly from the emphasis on hierarchy in surrounding agricultural communities**

religion as a form of crude pantheism, Bird-David tends to *conflate* natural phenomena – whether mountains, rivers, rock outcrops, stones, trees or animals (especially elephants) – as well as artefacts with the spiritual beings – malevolent spirits, ancestral spirits and forest deities – that, according to the forager's religious ideology, inhabit or have their 'abode' in the forest, or are identified with certain figurines or icons. But these two aspects of the forager's life-world are distinct. Ananda Bhanu writes, for example, of the Chola Naickan calling on the spirits, represented in an elephant figurine (*aneuruva*) to protect them, not only against illness

particularly not respecting other people's autonomy, or not sharing or offering mutual aid to their close kindred. Equally, by focusing on their religious ideology, Bird-David completely ignores the empirical naturalism that is manifested in their ecological knowledge of the natural world and in their practical activities, and which is equally a part of the foragers' culture. The metaphor 'giving environment' is misleading, for, like people in all societies, the relationship of the Malaipantaram and other South Indian foragers to the natural world, is one that is complex, diverse, multifaceted and often contradictory, and cannot be

one has to recognise that it is not ubiquitous. For the Malaipantaram are involved in market relations, and though they always strive to make these relationships inclusive – as Justin Kenrick<sup>63</sup> describes it – that is friendly, sharing, personal and one involving mutual aid and support, these relationships are essentially hierarchical and exploitative, and they are ones that the foragers do not control. As Mathur describes market relationships among the Chola Naickan, who are clearly related to the local group described by Bird-David, what the foragers attempt and prefer is to 'act as a generous kinsman rather than a self-seeking trader'

in contrast to the forest contractor who always seeks to control and exploit the foragers.<sup>64</sup>

Equally important, one has to recognise that there is very little sharing between families among the Malaipantaram, and it is the family that is the key productive and commensal unit. It always struck me as unusual that after a day spent together in eclectic foraging, both for food and for minor forest produce, co-operating, conversing, and engaging in banter, on returning to the cave in the late afternoon each of

human societies engage to some degree in sharing or generalised reciprocity<sup>65</sup> but the relationship between such sharing and reciprocity is always dialectical. Malaipantaram men who are deeply involved in hunting, especially in the marketing of the Nilgiri langur, tend to live separately with their family, in order to avoid sharing the meat, while any individual who constantly engages in demand-sharing – without any reciprocation – is likely to find his or her own kin moving elsewhere. And among

Rexroth once wrote: 'People who hunt and gather cannot be anything but communist'.<sup>68</sup> There has, of course, been a long tradition, going back to Lewis Morgan and Friedrich Engels in the nineteenth century, affirming that hunter-gatherers – those 'roving savages' as Engels described them – and tribal or kin-based societies more generally, live in 'communitistic communities'.<sup>69</sup> By communism was meant not simply the absence of private

## **The key idea expressed by the Malaipantaram is one of mutual aid – which includes sharing, reciprocity and an ethic of generosity**

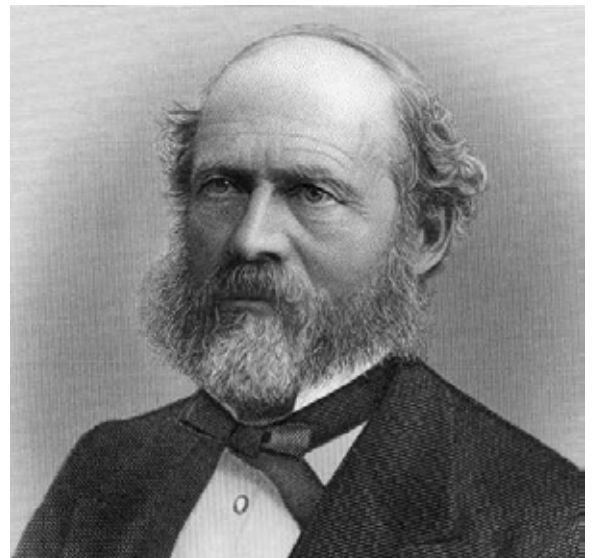
the three families would build their own fireplace, establish a distinct commensal unit and that there would be no sharing at all between the different families.

Although a distinction can be made between tribal agriculturalists and South Indian foragers like the Malaipantaram, and even between those Malaipantaram who are settled cultivators and those foragers living exclusively in the interior (on whom I focused in my research), it is misleading to set up a radical opposition between sharing and reciprocity. All

the Malaipantaram and other South Indian foragers there is a clear distinction made between food gathered from the forest, and the goods – whether rice, condiments, or artefacts – that are obtained from engaging in market relations. The latter kind tend to involve a more balanced reciprocity.<sup>66</sup> The key idea expressed by the Malaipantaram is one of mutual aid – which includes sharing, reciprocity and an ethic of generosity.<sup>67</sup>

### **Communism**

The American poet Kenneth



Lewis Henry Morgan saw 'communism in living' among the Iroquois

(exclusive) property but rather a universal collective right of access to all resources necessary for life and well-being – specifically rights to land and the means of production, the only property 'owned' being of a purely personal nature.<sup>70</sup>

In his well-known reflections on 'primitive communism', Richard Lee<sup>71</sup> noted that the concept was not only

ignored by later Marxists – Chris Harman’s *A People’s History of the World*,<sup>72</sup> for example, barely recognises the existence of tribal peoples – but was generally dismissed and belittled by most anthropologists. Lee tends to identify primitive communism with what he describes as the ‘foraging’ mode of production. He tends, therefore, to leave out of his account not only hunter-gatherers that are sedentary and non-egalitarian – such as the Ainu (Japan), Calusa (Florida) and the hunter-gatherers of the northwest coast of the Americas – but also the Iroquois. For Morgan, however, it was the Iroquois that were the prototypical primitive communists. Democratic and egalitarian, they were the exemplars of the ‘liberty, equality and fraternity of the ancient gentes’.<sup>73</sup>

In several essays Lee outlines what he terms the ‘core features’ of primitive communism, or the foraging mode of production. These are the following:

- social life in the society or ethnic community is focused around a band structure with small groups of 20-30 people, highly flexible membership and an emphasis on mobility, often with patterns of concentration and dispersal.
- Land is held in common

and everyone has free or reciprocal access to resources. There is no ownership in the sense of completely withholding access.

- An ethic of egalitarianism implies strong, even if diffuse, sanctions against the accumulation of wealth, all forms of political authority, and any expression of self-aggrandisement.
- Such egalitarianism involves co-operation and mutual aid, and patterns of sharing or generalised reciprocity are strongly emphasised, especially within the band or camp. No one goes hungry if food is available.
- An emphasis on co-operation and sociality is combined with a high respect for the autonomy of the individual, especially individual choice as to who a person lives with.<sup>74</sup>

Primitive communism or the foraging mode of production thus entails a combination

production – primitive communism – are virtually synonymous with those specified by Woodburn<sup>75</sup> in terms of immediate-return economic systems; by Gardner<sup>76</sup> in terms of the individual autonomy syndrome; and Barnard’s<sup>77</sup> specifications of the hunter-gatherer ‘mode of thought’.

Equally significant is that the Malaipantaram, as depicted in my study *Forest Traders*, as well as South Indian foragers more generally, can clearly be described as communists, as exemplars of the foraging mode of production (or thought), even though they may engage in a diversity of economic activities.<sup>78</sup>

It has become rather fashionable nowadays to suggest like Ayn Rand – Margaret Thatcher’s guru – that societies do not exist, and that all we supposedly experience is sociality, social networks or lines, with the human person simply being the nodal point or intersection of various relations; though

## **the Malaipantaram... as well as South Indian foragers more generally, can clearly be described as communists, as exemplars of the foraging mode of production**

of individualism and egalitarianism.

What is evident is that these core features or attributes of the foraging mode of

nobody seems to doubt the reality of the state and capitalist organisations. It has even been suggested that the concept of society

is not applicable to hunter-gatherers, being defined, in rather Hobbesian fashion, as entailing 'structures of domination'. The concept of

regard themselves both as Yaka (or forest people) as well as a distinct society;<sup>81</sup> and, finally, with regard to the Paliyans of South India,

and are recognised as such not only by the Indian state, but by all people with whom they come into contact. But they do not form a cohesive

**People at the settlement are intimately associated with the hill forests above the settlement,.. [forming] ritual congregations in relation to the ancestral spirits (*chava*) and mountain deities (*malai devā*) which have their 'abodes' in the same forested hills**

society, of course, emerged at the end of the eighteenth century, as a relational one, in contradistinction to the nation-state, that was then asserting its hegemony. The distinction between society and the state (entailing structures of political domination or government) was not only articulated by such radical liberals as Tom Paine, but, of course, by numerous anarchists from William Godwin at the end of the eighteenth century to Kropotkin, Reclus and the social anarchists in the twentieth century.

Like other primates, all humans live in groups of various kinds, and from the ethnographic record it is quite clear that hunter-gatherers live in societies. For the Hadza have a clear and distinctive ethnic identity;<sup>79</sup> the Ju/'hoansi of the Kalahari recognise themselves as a society of 'real people' with a distinctive culture and language – as many scholars have described,<sup>80</sup> the Mbendjele of central Africa

they are described as being 'both in their own, and in their neighbours' eyes, a separate ethnic group'<sup>82</sup> or, in everyday language, a society. Dismissing the concept of 'society' as a stereotype is hardly helpful to understanding hunter-gatherers.<sup>83</sup>

A human society, of course, is simply a group of humans who are linked to each other by enduring social ties, who share certain values, beliefs, normative expectations and purposes, and whose members have a sense of belonging to the group. A society, as Kropotkin long ago emphasised, is essentially a moral, not a political, community.<sup>84</sup> To even talk about an 'egalitarian ethos', or 'mode of thought' presupposes the existence and identity of a specific hunter-gatherer society.

The Malaipantaram, and other South Indian foragers, identify themselves as belonging to a specific society or ethnic community,

political unit, but are 'fragmented', as I expressed it in *Forest Traders*,<sup>85</sup> into diverse, flexible but inter-related social groupings. Basically, with regard to the Malaipantaram, as a society or moral community, there exists three levels of organisation, namely the forest settlements, the conjugal family, and what I termed forest camps, the loose groupings of two or three families, who are linked essentially by affinal ties.<sup>86</sup>

Named after particular forest locations, the dispersed *settlements* are local groups, consisting of between 18 and 36 people. They are situated in specific valleys or forest ranges. At the settlements the Malaipantaram often engage in the cultivation of tapioca or rice, as well as certain fruit-bearing trees, and often engage in casual agricultural labour on nearby estates. People at the settlement are intimately associated with the hill forests above the settlement, and have extensive knowledge of the forest environment and its diverse inhabitants. They also



form ritual congregations in relation to the ancestral spirits (*chava*) and mountain deities (*malai devi*) which have their 'abodes' in the same forested hills. The settlement or local group is rarely a cohesive unit, and is often divided into several 'clusters' or hamlets, each composed of 2-4 families.<sup>87</sup> Though widely dispersed over the Ghat mountains south of Lake Periyar, the settlements are by no means isolated,

do not have corporate, land-owning kin groups, is no reason to suggest that they do not live in groups! I have discussed in *Forest Traders* at some length, the forest groups of the Malaipantaram, and have suggested that although membership is often flexible and transient, and all Malaipantaram are highly mobile, acting as independent persons, such groups are in the nature of a kindred, and people are united in terms

camps.<sup>90</sup>

Malaipantaram social life, and that of other South Indian foragers, can therefore be described, in important respects, as communistic. But many scholars have suggested that there is an inevitable tension, or contradiction, between egalitarianism (with the emphasis on mutual aid, sharing and sociality) and individualism (with stress on the autonomy of the

## **Anarchists like Kropotkin and Reclus always recognised that the basic principles of anarchism were characteristic of hunter-gatherers and tribal society generally**

for all Malaipantaram are linked by a universal system of kinship,<sup>88</sup> and thus there are kinship links, particularly affinal ties, between members of the various settlements.

In contrast the conjugal family is a fairly cohesive unit, forming a distinct social and economic grouping. As noted above, the family is the basic productive and commensal unit, even though marriage ties are often transient. Conjugal relations are generally warm and affectionate, essentially reciprocal and complementary.

Between the dispersed settlements or local groups, and the conjugal family there are social aggregates that are difficult to define. But the fact that the Malaipantaram

of affinal ties. As I put it: 'Affinal links seem to serve as a guiding principle in structuring friendships and camp aggregates.'<sup>89</sup>

People that constitute the camp aggregates are drawn together by 'dyadic bonds of affection' and express enduring relationships of mutual aid, as well as expressing an ethic of sharing and reciprocity. Malaipantaram social structure cannot therefore be interpreted simply as consisting of independent families with floating 'single persons' (mostly adolescents) giving social cohesion to the local group. All Malaipantaram act, and are expected to act, as autonomous individuals; it is affinal ties that structure their relationships and their forest

individual).<sup>91</sup> Indeed liberal scholars like Isaiah Berlin stressed that there was an inherent conflict between the values of equality and liberty. But as anarchists have always emphasised, the two concepts are dialectically related, and necessarily imply each other. As Kropotkin put it: you can hardly be free and independent in a society based on inequality and hierarchy.

Among the Malaipantaram, and it seems hunter-gatherers more generally, an egalitarian ethos seems to co-exist with an equal emphasis on the autonomy of the individual. As I wrote long ago: 'A viable ethnographic portrait can be drawn only if we stress the co-operation and the individualism, the warm attachments Malaipantaram

hold towards each other and the fragility and ephemeral nature of these ties'.<sup>92</sup>

ever envisaged a society without some form of social power, immanent within

the plains, the exactions of the Indian state bent on their development and settlement

## **the Malaipantaram attempted to retain their independence and cultural integrity despite being ridiculed and harassed by the caste communities of the plains**

### **Conclusion**

Having outlined above the individualism, egalitarianism and communism that is undoubtedly manifested in the social life of the Malaipantaram and other South Indian foragers, can such foragers be described as living in a state of anarchy?

Judging by the ethnographies of Peter Gardner and myself the answer seems to be in the affirmative.

Indeed Jana Fortier certainly suggests that the micropolitics of both the Paliyan and the Malaipantaram can be depicted as anarchy.<sup>93</sup> Yet other scholars have balked at the idea. Christopher Boehm, for example, dismisses the whole idea that the 'egalitarian blueprint' of hunter-gathering is a form of anarchy, suggesting that anarchy implies a complete absence of power and control.<sup>94</sup> Apart from Stirnerite individualists, no social anarchist has

the community – power as mutuality and equality, as Barclay expressed it.<sup>95</sup>

In my study of the Malaipantaram, written



Paliyan women from Sirumali hills, Tamilnadu

almost forty years ago, I emphasised how much of their social life and culture – their nomadism, their flexible organization, and their reluctance to take up agriculture and become a settled community – was an attempt to retain their autonomy as a forest people. Thus the Malaipantaram attempted to retain their independence and cultural integrity despite being ridiculed and harassed by the caste communities of

and the intrusions of a mercantile economy focused around the trade of minor forest products. The suggestion that in emphasising the external social factors that impinge on Malaipantaram social life, I thereby deny them social agency<sup>96</sup> is misleading. The whole ethnography is, in fact, about their social agency: how the Malaipantaram derive their basic livelihood; how they organise their kin relations and forest camps, and how through their nomadism and flexible social organization – and many other ploys – they retain a sense of autonomy and independence. And I also stressed, like many other late scholars of hunter-gatherers, that among the Malaipantaram a strong emphasis on personal autonomy and independence co-existed, as I noted above, with an equal emphasis on mutual aid, sharing and egalitarian relationships. Malaipantaram social life could therefore be described

as a form of anarchy.

Anarchists like Kropotkin and Reclus, of course, always recognised and affirmed that the basic principles of anarchism – the liberty of the individual, egalitarianism and a form of social life based on co-operation, sharing and

mutual aid – was characteristic of hunter-gatherers and tribal society generally.<sup>97</sup> What they advocated was not a return to hunter-gathering, and the advocacy of some form of anarcho-primitivism,<sup>98</sup> but rather, drawing on the knowledge, technics, arts and sciences that humanity has

accumulated over the past five thousand years or so, their aim was to engender an anarchist-communist society, where productive activities and all social functions, would be organised through voluntary cooperation and mutual aid, the wealth produced being shared equally with *all*. 🌿



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## Notes

1. B. Morris 1982. *Forest Traders: A socio-economic study of the Hill Pandaram*. LSE Monograph 55, London: Athlone Press; B. Morris 2004. *Kropotkin: The Politics of Community* Amherst: Humanity Books.
2. P. Gardner 2000. *Bicultural Versatility as a Frontier Adaptation Among the Paliyan Foragers of South India* Lewiston: Edwin Ellen Press.
3. N. Bird-David 1992. Beyond the hunting and gathering mode of subsistence: observations on the Nayaka and other modern hunter-gatherers. *Man* 27: 21.
4. cf. N. Bird-David 1996. Puja, or sharing with the god? On ritualised possession among the Nayaka of South India *Eastern Anthropology* 49: 260; Norstrom 2003. *They Call For Us: Strategies for securing autonomy among the Paliyan hunter-gatherers of the Palni Hills, South India*. Stockholm: Stockholm Studies in Social Anthropology 53, p.49. In fact, a decade before the revisionist controversy, I was emphasizing, while explicitly acknowledging the earlier seminal work of Richard Fox (1969 'Professional primitives': Hunter gatherers in nuclear South Asia *Man in India* 49: 139-160) and Peter Gardner (1972 *The Paliyans*. In M.G. Bichieri (ed.) *Hunters and Gatherers Today*. New York: Holt, Rinehart & Winston pp. 404-47), that the Malaipantaram had long been incorporated into a wider mercantile capitalist economy. But in dialectical fashion, I also stressed their social agency in maintaining their autonomy and cultural integrity as a foraging community.
5. P. Kropotkin 1939 [1902]. *Mutual Aid: A factor in evolution*. Harmondsworth: Penguin Books. Essentially this text was a repudiation of the Social Darwinism of Herbert Spencer and Thomas Huxley that was prevalent at the end of the nineteenth century.
6. e.g. D. Rouselle and S. Evren (eds) 2011. *Post-anarchism: A Reader*. London: Pluto Press.
7. A. Barnard 1993. Primitive communism

- and mutual aid: Kropotkin visits the Bushmen. In C.M. Hahn (ed) *Socialism: Ideals, ideologies and local practices*. London: Routledge pp 27-42.
8. This raises the interesting question as to what degree anthropologists, in their ethnographic accounts, impose upon the data their own epistemological and political pre-conceptions?
9. J. C. Scott 2009. *The Art of Not Being Governed: An anarchist history of upland Southeast Asia*. New Haven: Yale University Press, see *Radical Anthropology* 5: 27-35 for an extensive review by Graham Purchase.
10. B. Morris 1998. Anthropology and anarchism. *Anarchy* 45: 35-41.
11. E. E. Evans-Pritchard 1940. *The Nuer*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.
12. M. Sahlins 1972. *Stone Age Economics*. London: Tavistock, pp.95-96. For an important critique of his neo-liberalism, see J. Overing 1993 *The anarchy and collectivism of the 'primitive other': Marx and Sahlins in the Amazon*. In C.M.Hann (eds) *Socialism: Ideals, ideologies and local practices*. London: Routledge pp. 43-58.
13. H. Barclay 1982. *People without Government: the anthropology of anarchism*. London: Kahn & Averill.
14. Gardner 2000, pp. 83-100.
15. L. Van Der Walt and M. Schmidt 2009. *Black Flame: The revolutionary class politics of anarchism and syndicalism*. Edinburgh: AK Press.
16. R. N. Baldwin 1970 [1927]. *Kropotkin's Revolutionary Pamphlets*. New York: Dover. This synthesis is well illustrated by Michael Bakunin's familiar adage: 'That liberty without socialism is privilege and injustice, and that socialism without liberty is slavery and brutality.' (A. Lehning ed. 1973 *Michael Bakunin: Selected Writings*. London: Cape, p. 110).
17. Morris 2004, pp. 173-190.

18. Morris, pp. 69-74.
19. C. Ward 1973. *Anarchy in Action*. London: George Allen & Unwin, p.11.
20. P. Gardner 1966. Symmetric respect and memorate knowledge: the structure and ecology of individualistic culture. *Southwestern Journal of Anthropology* 22: 408; R. G. Fox 1969: 145; P. K. Misra 1969. The Jenu Kuruba. *Bulletin of the Anthropological Survey of India* 18: 234; Morris 1982, pp.109-110.
21. C. Geertz 1975 [1973] *The Interpretation of Culture: Selected Essays*. London: Hutchinson, pp. 360-411; R. A. Shweder and E.J. Bourne 1984. Does the concept of the person vary cross-culturally? In R.A. Shweder and R.A. Levine (eds) *Culture Theory: Essays in mind, self and emotion*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, pp. 158-199; M. Strathern 1988 *The Gender of the Gift*. Berkeley: University of California Press.
22. J. Carsten 2004 *After Kinship*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, pp.84-88.
23. M. E. Spiro 1993 Is the western conception of the Self 'peculiar' within the context of world culture? *Ethos* 21: 107-153; B. Morris 1994. *Anthropology of the Self: The individual in cultural perspective*. London: Pluto Press, pp.16-18; E. Lipuma 1998. Modernity and forms of personhood in Melanesia. In M.Lambek and A.Strathern (eds) *Bodies and Persons Comparative Perspectives from Africa and Melanesia*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, pp. 53-79.
24. I. Kant 2007. *Anthropology, History and Education* (trans. M. Gregor et al). Cambridge: Cambridge University Press. By 'pragmatic' what Kant intended was the use of such knowledge to further human enlightenment, to widen the scope of human freedom, especially from religious dogma and political oppression, and thus to advance the 'dignity' of humans.



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26. S. Rupp 2011 *Forest of Belonging: Identities, ethnicities and stereotypes in the Congo River Basin*. Seattle: University of Washington Press, pp.14-17.
27. Morris 1982, pp.140-147.
28. J. Woodburn 1982. Egalitarian societies. *Man* 17: 431-451.
29. P. Gardner 1966; P. Gardner 1991. Foragers' pursuit of individual autonomy. *Current Anthropology* 32: 547-549; Gardner 2000, pp.83-85.
30. Gardner 1966, p.409.
31. L. Dumont 1970. *Homo Hierarchicus. The caste system and its implications*. London: Weidenfeld & Nicolson.
32. B. Morris 1978. Are there any individuals in India? A critique of Dumont's theory of the individual. *Eastern Anthropology* 31: 365-377; B. Morris 1991 *Western conceptions of the Individual*. Oxford: Berg, pp.262-269.
33. S. Lukes 1973. *Individualism*. Oxford: Blackwell.
34. L. Dumont 1986a. *Essays in Individualism*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press; L. Dumont 1986b. Are cultures living beings: German identity in interaction. *Man* 21: 587-604.
35. Critiqued by C. Levi-Strauss 1977 [1973] *Structural Anthropology* Vol. 2 (trans. M. Layton). Harmondsworth: Penguin Books, p.41. The tendency of many postmodern anthropologists to equate Western culture with Cartesian metaphysics and mechanistic philosophy is, of course, reductive and facile.
36. Critiqued by T. Ingold 1996. The optimal forager and the economic man. In P. Descola and G. Palsson (eds) *Nature and Society: Anthropological Perspectives*. London: Routledge pp 25-44.
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38. Kropotkin 1970 *Selected Writings on Anarchism and Revolution*. M.Miller (ed.) Cambridge, Mass.: MIT Press, p. 297.
39. L. S. Brown 1993. *The Politics of Individualism*. Montreal: Black Rose, pp. 32-33; Morris 2004, pp.183-186.
40. Brown 1993, p.118.
41. E. R. Service 1966, *The Hunters*. Englewood Cliffs: Prentice Hall, p.83; S. Diamond 1974. *In Search of the Primitive: A critique of civilization*. New Brunswick: Transaction Books, p.146.
42. Morris 1982, p.49.
43. Morris, p.110.
44. Woodburn 1982.
45. R. B. Lee and I. DeVore (eds) 1968. *Man the Hunter*. Chicago: Aldine.
46. Gardner 1991; C. Boehm 1999 *Hierarchy in the Forest: The evolution of egalitarian behaviour*. Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press; T. Widlok and W.D. Tadesse (eds) 2005 *Property and Equality Vol 1: Ritualization, sharing, egalitarianism*. Oxford: Berghahn; J. Solway (ed.) 2006 *The Politics of Egalitarianism: Theory and practice*. Oxford: Berghahn.
47. Morris 1982, pp.71-79.
48. Morris, pp.158-159.
49. On diffuse sanctions among hunter-gatherers see R. B. Lee 1979. *The !kung San: Men, women and work in a foraging society*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, p.457; Barclay 1982, p.22.
50. Boehm 1999, pp.86-88.
51. C. Norstrom 2001. Autonomy by default versus popular participation: The Paliyans of South India and the Proposed Palni Hills Sanctuary. In I. Keen and T. Yamada (eds) *Identity and Gender in Hunting and Gathering Societies*. Osaka: National Museum Ethnology. *Senri Ethnological Studies* 56: 27-50.
52. Scott 2009.
53. Morris 1982, p.40.
54. Gardner 1966, p.391.
55. On gender relations among South Indian foragers see U. R. Ehrenfels 1952. *Kadar of Cochin*. Madras: University of Madras Publications, p.209; P. R. G. Mathur 1977. *Tribal Situation in Kevala*. Trivandrum: Kerala Historical Society, p.178; N. Bird-David 1987. Single persons and social cohesion in a hunter-gathering society. In P. Hockings (ed) *Dimensions of Social Life*. Berlin: Mouton, p.154; Gardner 2000, pp.101-103.
56. Sahlins 1972, pp.1-39.
57. N. Bird-David 1992 Beyond 'the original affluent society': A cultural deformation. *Current Anthropology* 31: 25-47.
58. See D. Kaplan 2000 The darker side of the 'original affluent society'. *Journal of Anthropological Research* 56: 301-324 for a measured critique of its limitations.
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61. N. Bird-David 1990. The giving environment: another perspective on the economic system of gatherer-hunters. *Current Anthropology* 31: 189-196.
62. Morris 1982, p.50.
63. J. Kenrick 2005 Equalizing processes, processes of discrimination, and the forest people of Central Africa. In T. Widlok and W.G. Tadesse (eds) *Property and Equality Vol 1: Ritualization, sharing, egalitarianism*. Oxford: Berghahn, p.135.
64. Mathur 1977, p.36.
65. J. A. Price 1975. Sharing: the integration of intimate economies. *Anthropologica* 17: 3-27.
66. cf. Norstrom 2003, p.221.
67. Morris 1982, p.161.
68. K. Rexroth 1975. *Communalism: From its Origins in the Twentieth Century*. London: Owen, p.1.
69. K. Marx and F. Engels 1968 *Selected Works*. London: Lawrence and Wishart, p.579.
70. E. Leacock 1983. Primitive communism in T. Bottomore (ed.) *A Dictionary of Marxist Thought*. Oxford: Blackwell, pp.445-446.
71. R. Lee 1988. Reflections on primitive communism. In T. Ingold, D. Riches and J. Woodburn 1988 (eds) *Hunter and Gatherers vol 1. History, Evolution and Social Change*. Oxford: Berg, pp.252-268.
72. C. Harman 1999 *A People's History of the World*. London: Bookmarks.
73. L. H. Morgan 1907 [1877] *Ancient Society*. New York: Henry Holt, p.552.
74. E. Leacock and R. Lee (eds) 1982 *Politics and History in Band Societies*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, pp.7-8; Lee 1988, p.254; R. Lee 2005 Power and property in twenty first century foragers: A critical examination. In T. Widlok and W.G. Tadesse (eds) *Property and Equality Vol 1: Ritualization, sharing, egalitarianism*. Oxford: Berghahn, p.20.
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76. Gardner 1991.
77. A. Barnard 2001 *The Hunter-Gatherer Peoples*. Buenos Aires: Fundacion Navarro Vida.
78. J. Fortier 2009 The ethnography of South Asian foragers. *Annual Review of Anthropology* 38: 102.
79. Woodburn 1988: 439.
80. S. Kent (ed.) 2002 *Ethnicity, Hunter-Gatherers and the 'Other': Association or assimilation in Africa*. Washington: Smithsonian Institution Press.
81. J. Lewis 2005 Whose forest is it anyway: Mbendjele Yaka pygmies, the Ndoki Forest and the wider world. In T. Widlok and W.G. Tadesse (eds) *Property and Equality Vol 1: Ritualization, sharing, egalitarianism*. Oxford: Berghahn, p.57.
82. Norstrom 2003, p.4.
83. It is often said that foragers (or tribal people) do not have a concept of 'society' that matches that of the anthropologists. Why on earth should they? Foragers may not have a concept of the 'economy' or 'culture' but this does not imply that they have no economic life or no culture. Terms such as Kudumbam (family, kin group) like the English terms 'group' or 'society' have a wide range of meanings (or referents). This does not imply they have no society, or that the Malaipantaram is not a society.
84. cf. Boehm 1999, p.12.
85. Morris 1982, p.112.
86. Morris, p.30.
87. cf. Misra 1969: 206 on the Jenu Kuruba; N. Bird-David 1983 Wage gathering: Socio-economic changes and the case of the food-gathering Naikens of South India. In P. Robb (ed.) *Rural South India*. London: Curzon Press, pp.57-88, on the Nayaka.
88. Barnard 2001, p.94.
89. Morris 1982, p. 157.
90. cf. Bird-David 1987: 151-165; U. Demmer 1997. Voices in the forest: The field of gathering among Jenu Kurumba. In P. Hockings (ed.) *Blue Mountains Re-visited*. Delhi: Oxford University Press, pp.164-191.
91. D. Riches 2000. The holistic person, or the ideology of egalitarianism. *Journal of the Royal Anthropological Institute* 6: 671-672.
92. Morris 1982, p.114.
93. Fortier 2009: 103.
94. Boehm 1999, p.87.
95. H. Barclay 2009 *Fresh Alternatives*. Lake City Printers, pp.7-26.
96. Nostrom 2003, pp.48-51.
97. Kropotkin 1939 [1902], pp.74-101; Morris 2004, pp.173-190.
98. J. Zerzan 1994. *Future Primitive and Other Essays*. Brooklyn, NY: Automeia.