# *The Cambridge Encyclopedia of* HUNTERS AND GATHERERS

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INTRODUCTION

# Foragers and others

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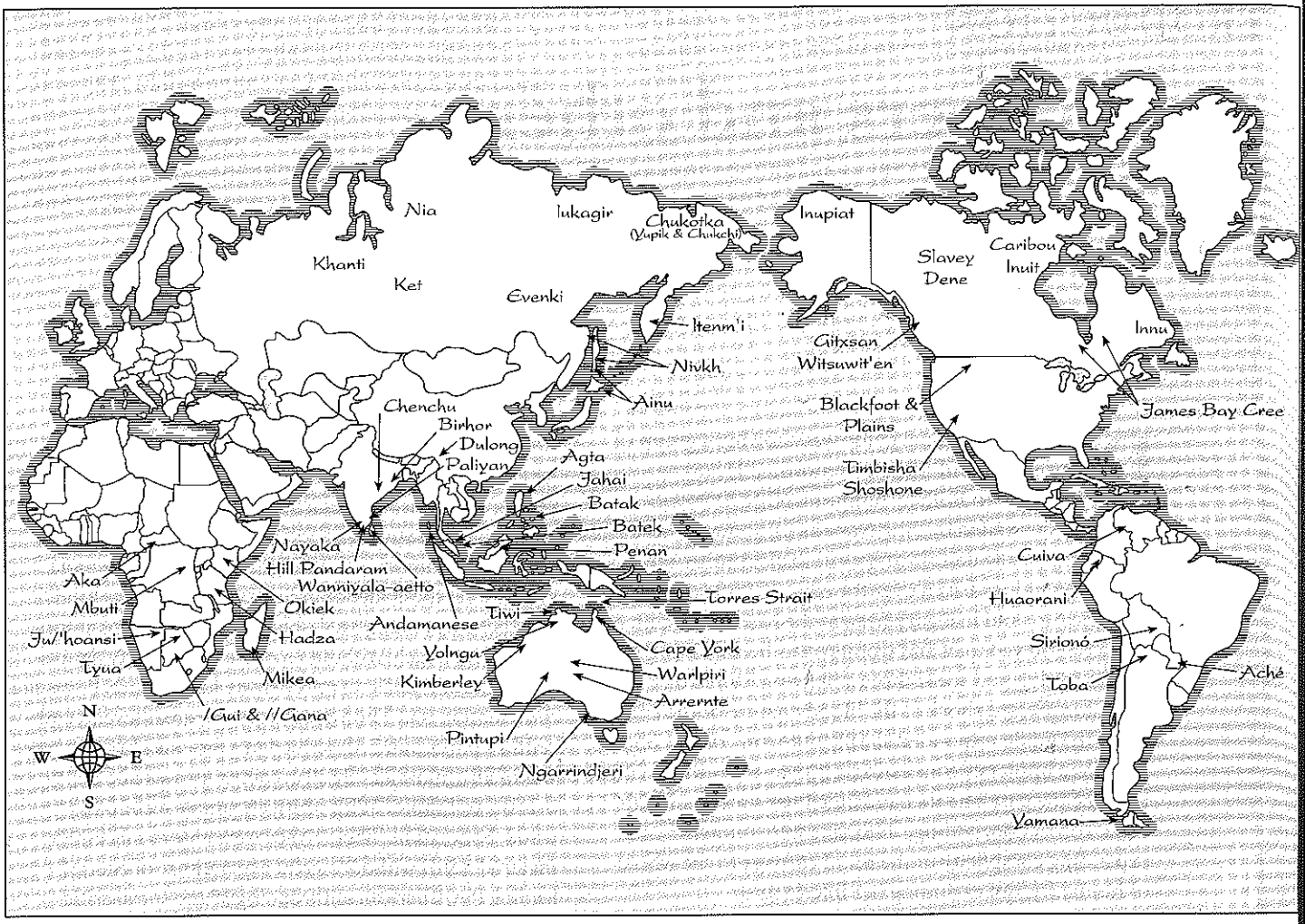
Recently an aboriginal guide was showing a group of tourists around Alberta's renowned Head-Smashed-In Buffalo-Jump, a UNESCO World Heritage Site staffed by First Nations personnel. The guide graphically described how in ancient times the buffalo would be driven over the edge of a fifteen meter precipice, to land in a gory heap at the base of the cliff. A diorama showed men and women clambering over the bodies to club and spear those still living. When one tourist expressed shock at the bloody nature of the enterprise, the guide responded simply but with conviction, "We were hunters!" connecting her own generation with those of the past. She then amended her statement with equal conviction, adding, "Humans were hunters!" thus expanding complicity in the act of carnage to the whole of humanity, not excluding her interlocutor.

This incident summarizes neatly the historical conjuncture that brings *The Cambridge Encyclopedia of Hunters and Gatherers* to fruition. The world's hunting and gathering peoples – the Arctic Inuit, Aboriginal Australians, Kalahari San, and similar groups – represent the oldest and perhaps most successful human adaptation. Until 12,000 years ago virtually all humanity lived as hunters and gatherers. In recent centuries hunters have retreated precipitously in the face of the steamroller of modernity. However, fascination with hunting peoples and their ways of life remains strong, a fascination tinged with ambivalence. The reason for public and academic interest is not hard to find. Hunters and gatherers stand at the opposite pole from the dense urban life experienced by most of humanity. Yet these same hunters may hold the key to some of the central questions about the human condition – about social life, politics, and gender, about diet and nutrition and living in nature: how people can live and have lived without the state; how to live without accumulated technology; the possibility of living in Nature without destroying it. This book offers no simple answers to these questions. Hunter-gatherers are a diverse group of peoples living in a wide range of conditions. One of the themes of the book is the exploration of that diversity. Yet within the range of variation, certain common motifs can be identified. Hunter-gatherers are generally peoples who have lived until recently without the overarching discipline imposed by the state. They have lived in relatively small groups, without centralized authority, standing armies, or bureaucratic systems. Yet the evidence indicates that they have lived together surprisingly well, solving their problems among themselves largely without recourse to authority figures and without a particular propensity for violence. It was *not* the situation that Thomas Hobbes, the great seventeenth-century philosopher, described in a famous phrase as "the war of all against all." By all accounts life was not "nasty, brutish and short." With relatively simple technology – wood, bone, stone, fibers – they were able to meet their material needs without a great expenditure of energy, leading the American anthropologist and social critic Marshall Sahlins to call them, in another famous phrase, "the original affluent society." Most striking, the hunter-gatherers have demonstrated the remarkable ability to survive and thrive for long periods – in some cases thousands of years – without destroying their environment.

The contemporary industrial world lives in highly structured societies at immensely higher densities and enjoys luxuries of technology that foragers could hardly imagine. Yet all these same societies are sharply divided into haves and have-nots, and after only a few millennia of stewardship by agricultural and industrial civilizations, the environments of large parts of the planet lie in ruins. Therefore the hunter-gatherers may well be able to teach us something, not only about past ways of life but also about long-term human futures. If technological humanity is to survive it may have to learn the keys to longevity from fellow humans whose way of life has been around a lot longer than industrial commercial "civilization." As Burnum Burnum, the late Australian Aboriginal writer and lecturer, put it, "Modern ecology can learn a great deal from a people who managed and maintained their world so well for 50,000 years."

Hunter-gatherers in recent history have been surprisingly persistent. As recently as AD 1500 hunters occupied fully




**Map 1** Case studies in the Cambridge Encyclopedia of Hunters and Gatherers

one third of the globe, including all of Australia and most of North America, as well as large tracts of South America, Africa, and Northeast Asia. The twentieth century has seen particularly dramatic changes in their life circumstances. The century began with dozens of hunting and gathering peoples still pursuing ancient (though not isolated) lifeways in small communities, as foragers with systems of local meaning centered on kin, plants, animals, and the spirit world. As the century proceeded, a wave of self-appointed civilizers washed over the world's foragers, bringing schools, clinics, and administrative structures, and, not incidentally, taking their land and resources.

The year 2000 will have seen the vast majority of former foragers settled and encapsulated in the administrative structures of one state or another. And given their tragic history of forced acculturation one would imagine that the millennium will bring to a close a long chapter in human history. But will it? We believe not. Hunter-gatherers live on, not only in the pages of anthropological and historical texts, but also, in forty countries, in the presence of hundreds of thousands of descendants a generation or two removed from a foraging way of life, and these peoples and their supporters are creating a strong international voice for indigenous peoples and their human rights.

Among the public-at-large, images of hunters and gatherers have swung between two poles. For centuries they were regarded as "savages," variously ignorant or cunning, beyond the pale of "civilization." This distorted image was usually associated with settler societies who coveted the foragers' land; the negative stereotypes justified dispossession.

In recent years a different view has dominated, with hunter-less gatherers as the repository of virtues seemingly lacking in the materialism and marked inequalities of contemporary urban life. How to balance these two views? For many current observers the contrast between savage inequities of modernity and the relative egalitarianism of the so-called "primitives" gives the latter more weight on the scales of natural justice. Jack Weatherford's eloquently argued book, *Savages and civilization: who will survive?* (1994), draws on a long intellectual tradition dating from Rousseau which, contemplating the horrors of the modern world, raises the question of who are the

truly civilized: the "savage" with his occasional blood-feud, or the "civilized" who gave the world the Inquisition, the Atlantic slave trade, the Gatling gun, napalm, Hiroshima, and the Holocaust? (For an opposing view see Robert Edgerton's *Sick societies* [1992].)

The present work thus grows out of the intersection between three discourses: anthropological knowledge, public fascination, and indigenous peoples' own world-views. The Encyclopedia speaks to scholars, to general readers, and particularly to the members of the cultures themselves. The book offers an up-to-date and encyclopedic inventory of hunters and gatherers, written in accessible language by recognized authorities, some of whom are representatives of the cultures they write about.

## Foraging defined

Foraging refers to subsistence based on hunting of wild animals, gathering of wild plant foods, and fishing, with no domestication of plants, and no domesticated animals except the dog. In contemporary theory this minimal definition is only the starting point in defining hunter-gatherers. Recent research has brought a more nuanced understanding of the issue of who the hunters are and why they have persisted. While it is true that hunting and gathering represent the original condition of humankind and 90 percent of human history, the contemporary people called hunter-gatherers arrived at their present condition by a variety of pathways.

At one end of a continuum are the areas of the world where modern hunter-gatherers have persisted in a more or less direct tradition of descent from ancient hunter-gatherer populations. This would characterize the aboriginal peoples of Australia, northwestern North America, the southern cone of South America, and pockets in other world areas. The Australian Pintupi, Arrernte, and Warlpiri, the North American Eskimo, Shoshone, and Cree, the South American Yamana, and the African Ju/'hoansi are examples of this first grouping, represented in case studies in this volume. In pre-colonial Australia and parts of North America we come closest to Marshall Sahlins' rubric of "hunters in a world of hunters" (Lee and DeVore 1968). But even here the histories offer examples of complex interrelations between foragers and others (see chapters by Peterson, M. Smith, Feit, and Cannon).

Along the middle of the continuum are hunting and gathering peoples who have lived in degrees of contact and integration with non-hunting societies, and these include a number whose own histories include life as farmers and/or herders in the past. South and Southeast Asian hunter-gatherers are linked to settled villagers and their markets, trading forest products: furs, honey, medicinal plants, and rattan, for rice, metals, and consumer goods. Some of these arrangements have persisted for millennia (see chapters by Bird-David, Morrison, Endicott, and Bellwood). Similar arrangements are seen in central Africa where Pygmies have lived for centuries in patron–client relations with settled villagers while still maintaining a period of the year when they lived more autonomously in the forest (see chapters by Bahuchet and Ichikawa). And in East Africa the foraging Okiek traditionally supplied honey and other forest products to neighboring Maasai and Kipsigis (see chapter by Cory Kratz).

South American hunter-gatherers present an even more interesting case, since archaeological evidence indicates that in Amazonia farming replaced foraging several millennia ago. In the view of Anna Roosevelt, much of the foraging observed in *tropical* South America represents a secondary readaptation. After the European conquests of the sixteenth to eighteenth centuries many groups found that mobile hunting and gathering made them less vulnerable to colonial exploitation (see chapters by Rival and Roosevelt). Other groups had been operating this way far longer, back into the pre-colonial period. And almost all *tropical* South American foragers today plant gardens as one part of their annual trek. There are parallels here with Siberia, where most of the "small peoples" classified as hunter-gatherers also herded reindeer, a practice which greatly expanded during the Soviet period.

Finally, at the other end of the continuum are peoples who once were hunters but who changed their subsistence in the more distant past. And that includes the rest of us: the 5 billion strong remainder of humanity.

## Social life

In defining foragers we must recognize that contemporary foragers practice a mixed subsistence: gardening in tropical South America, reindeer herding in northern Asia, trading in South/Southeast Asia and parts of Africa. Given this diversity, what constitutes the category "hunter-gatherer"? The answer is that **subsistence is one part of a multi-faceted definition of hunter-gatherers: social organization forms a second major area of convergence, and cosmology and world-view a third. All three sets of criteria have to be taken into account in understanding hunting and gathering peoples today.**

The basic unit of social organization of most (but not all) hunting and gathering peoples is the *band*, a small-scale nomadic group of fifteen to fifty people related by kinship. Band societies are found throughout the Old and New Worlds and share a number of features in common. Most observers would agree that the social and

economic life of *small-scale* hunter-gatherers shares the following features.

First they are relatively *egalitarian*. Leadership is less formal and more subject to constraints of popular opinion than in village societies governed by headmen and chiefs. Leadership in band societies tends to be by example, not by fiat. The leader can persuade but not command. This important aspect of their way of life allowed for a degree of freedom unheard of in more hierarchical societies but it has put them at a distinct disadvantage in their encounters with centrally organized colonial authorities.

*Mobility* is another characteristic of band societies. People tend to move their settlements frequently, several times a year or more, in search of food, and this mobility is an important element of their politics. People in band societies tend to "vote with their feet," moving away rather than submitting to the will of an unpopular leader. Mobility is also a means of resolving conflicts that would be more difficult for settled peoples.

A third characteristic is the remarkable fact that all band-organized peoples exhibit a pattern of *concentration and dispersion*. Rather than living in uniformly sized groupings throughout the year, band societies tend to spend part of the year dispersed into small foraging units and another part of the year aggregated into much larger units. The Innu (Naskapi) discussed by Mailhot would spend the winter dispersed in small foraging groups of ten to thirty, while in the summer they would aggregate in groups of up to 200–300 at lake or river fishing sites. It seems clear that the concentration/dispersion patterns of hunter-gatherers represent a dialectical interplay of social *and* ecological factors

A fourth characteristic common to almost all band societies (and hundreds of village-based societies as well) is a land tenure system based on a *common property regime (CPR)*. These regimes were, until recently, far more common world-wide than regimes based on private property. In traditional CPRs, while movable property is held by individuals, land is held by a kinship-based collective. Rules of reciprocal access make it possible for each individual to draw on the resources of several territories. Rarer is the situation where the whole society has unrestricted access to all the land controlled by the group.

## Ethos and world-view

Another broad area of commonalities lies in the domains of the quality of interpersonal relations and forms of consciousness.

*Sharing* is the central rule of social interaction among hunters and gatherers. There are strong injunctions on the importance of reciprocity. Generalized reciprocity, the giving of something without an immediate expectation of return, is the dominant form within face-to-face groups. Its presence in hunting and gathering societies is almost universal (Sahlins 1965). This, combined with an absence of private ownership of land, has led many observers from Lewis Henry Morgan forward to attribute to hunter-gatherers a way of life based on "primitive communism" (Morgan 1881, Testart 1985, Lee 1988; see Ingold, this volume).

Found among many but not all hunter-gatherers is the notion of the *giving environment*, the idea that the land around them is their spiritual home and the source of all good things (Bird-David 1990, Turnbull 1965). This view is the direct antithesis of the Western Judeo-Christian perspective on the natural environment as a "wilderness," a hostile space to be subdued and brought to heel by the force of will. This latter view is seen by many ecological humanists as the source of both the environmental crisis and the spiritual malaise afflicting contemporary humanity (Shiva 1988, 1997, Suzuki 1989, 1992, 1997).

Hunter-gatherers are peoples who live with nature. When we examine the *cosmology* of hunting and gathering peoples, one striking commonality is the view of nature as animated with moral and mystical force, in Robert Bellah's phrase "the hovering closeness of the world of myth to the actual world" (1965:91). As discussed by Mathias Guenther (this volume), the world of hunter-gatherers is a multi-layered world, composed of two or more planes: an above/beyond zone and an underworld in addition to the present world inhabited by humans. There are invariably two temporal orders of existence, with an Early mythical or "dreamtime" preceding the present. In the former, nature and culture are not yet fully separated. Out of this Ur-existence, a veritable cauldron of cultural possibilities, crystallizes the distinction between humans and animals, the origin of fire, cooking, incest taboos, even mortality itself and virtually everything of cultural significance.

The world of the Past and the above-and-below world of myth are in intimate contact with the normal plane of existence. The Australian Aborigines present the most fully realized instance of this process of world-enchantment. The famous "songlines" of the Dreamtime criss-cross the landscape and saturate it with significance. Every rock and feature has symbolic meaning and these are bound up in the reproduction of life itself. It is these totemic elements that are the sources of the spirit children that enter women's wombs and trigger conception. Parallels are found in many other hunter-gatherer groups.

The *Trickster* is a central figure in the myth worlds of many hunting and gathering societies. A divine figure, but deeply flawed and very human, the Trickster is found in myth cycles from the Americas, Africa, Australia, and Siberia. Similar figures grace the pantheons of most

village farming and herding peoples as well. The Trickster symbolizes the frailty and human qualities of the gods and their closeness to humans. These stand in pointed contrast to the omnipotent, all-knowing but distant deities that are central to the pantheons of state religions and their powerful ecclesiastical hierarchies (Radin 1956, Diamond 1974, Wallace 1966).

*Shamanism* is another major practice common to the great majority of hunting and gathering peoples. The word originates in eastern Siberia, from the Evenki/Tungus word *saman* meaning "one who is excited or raised." Throughout the hunter-gatherer world community-based ritual specialists (usually part-time) heal the sick and provide spiritual protection. They mediate between the social/human world and the dangerous and unpredictable world of the supernatural. Shamanism is performative, mixing theatre and instrumental acts in order to approach the plane of the sacred. Performances vary widely. Among the Ju/'hoansi the "owners of medicine," after a long and difficult training period, enter an altered state of consciousness called *!kia*, to heal the sick through a laying on of hands (Marshall 1968, Katz 1982). The northern Ojibwa practiced the famous shaking tent ceremony or *midewiwin*, while other shamans used dreams, psychoactive drugs, or intense mental concentration to reach the sacred plane. The brilliant use of language and metaphor in the form of powerful and moving verbal images is a central part of the shaman's craft (Rothenberg 1968). So powerful are these techniques that they have been widely and successfully adapted to the *visualization therapies* in the treatment of cancer and other conditions in Western medicine.

Ethos and social organization are both essential components of hunter-gatherer lifeways. Laura Rival (this volume) makes the point, that two South American tropical forest peoples may well have a rather similar subsistence mix, but different orientations: analyzing them on the basis of their social organization and mobility patterns, as well as mythology, rituals and interpersonal relations, the researcher finds that one has a clearly agricultural orientation, the other a foraging one.

What is remarkable is that, despite marked differences in historical circumstances, foragers seem to arrive at similar organizational and ideational solutions to the problems of living in groups, a convergence that Tim Ingold, the foremost authority on hunter-gatherer social life, has labeled "a distinct mode of sociality" (this volume).

## Divergences

Despite these commonalities, there are a number of significant divergences among hunters and gatherers. And consideration of these must temper any attempt to present an idealized picture of foraging peoples. First the foragers as a group are not particularly peaceful. *Interpersonal violence* is documented for most and warfare is recorded for a number of hunting and gathering peoples. Although peaceful peoples such as the Malaysian Semang are celebrated in the literature (Dentan 1968), for many others (Inupiat, Warlpiri, Blackfoot, Aché, Agta) raids and blood-feuds are common occurrences, particularly before the pacification campaigns of the colonial authorities (see for example Bamforth 1994, Ember 1992, Moss 1992). But mention of the colonial context raises another important issue. Did high levels of "primitive" warfare represent a primordial condition, or were these exacerbated by the pressure of colonial conquest? The question remains an ongoing subject of debate (Divale and Harris 1976, Ferguson 1984).

*Gender* is another dimension in which hunting and gathering societies show considerable variation. As Karen Endicott argues (this volume), the women of hunter-gatherer societies *do* have higher status than women in most of the world's societies, including industrial and post-industrial modernity. This status is expressed in greater freedom of movement and involvement in decision-making and a lower incidence of domestic violence against them when compared to women in farming, herding, and agrarian societies (Leacock 1978, 1982, Lee 1982). Nevertheless variation exists: wife-beating and rape are recorded for societies as disparate as those of Alaska (Eskimo) and northern Australian Aborigines (Friedl 1975, Abler 1992) and are not unknown elsewhere; nowhere can it be said that women and men live in a state of perfect equality.

A third area of divergence is found in the important distinction between *simple vs. complex* hunter-gatherers. Price and Brown (1985) argued that not all hunting and gathering peoples – prehistoric and contemporary – lived in small mobile bands. Some, like the Indians of the Northwest Coast (Donald 1984, 1997, Mitchell and Donald 1985) and the Calusa of Florida (Marquardt 1988), as well as many prehistoric peoples, lived in large semi-sedentary settlements with chiefs, commoners, and slaves, yet were entirely dependent on wild foods. In social organization and ethos these societies showed significant divergence from the patterns outlined above, yet in other ways a basic foraging pattern is discernible. For example the Northwest Coast peoples still maintained a concentration-dispersion pattern, breaking down their large permanent plank houses in the summer and incorporating them into temporary structures at seasonal fishing sites (Boas 1966, Daly, this volume). A related concept is James Woodburn's notion of *immediate-return vs. delayed-return societies* (1982). Although both were subsumed under the heading of "band

society," in immediate-return societies food was consumed on the spot or soon after, while in delayed-return societies food and other resources might be stored for months or years, with marked effects on social organization and cultural notions of property (Woodburn 1982).

In a superb synthesis Robert L. Kelly has documented these divergences on many fronts in his book *The foraging spectrum: diversity in hunter-gatherer lifeways* (1995). Recently Susan Kent (1996b) has attempted a similar exercise for the diversity and variation in the hunting and gathering societies of a single continent, Africa. The point is that hunter-gatherers encompass a wide range of variability and analysts seeking to make sense of them ignore this diversity at their peril!

## The importance of history

Any adequate representation of hunting and gathering peoples in the twenty-first century has to address the complex historical circumstances in which they are found. Foragers have persisted to the present for a variety of reasons but all have developed historical links with non-foraging peoples, some extending over centuries or millennia. And all have experienced the transformative effects of colonial conquest and incorporation into states. Situating the foraging peoples in history is thus essential to any deeper understanding of them, a point that was often lost on earlier observers who preferred to treat foragers as unmediated visions of the past.

One recent school of thought has questioned the validity of the very concept "hunter-gatherer." Starting from the fact that some hunter-gatherers have been dominated by more powerful outsiders for centuries, proponents of this school see contemporary foraging peoples more as victims of colonialism or subalterns at the bottom of a class structure than as exemplars of the hunting and gathering way of life (Wilmsen 1989, Wilmsen and Denbow 1990, Schrire 1984). This "revisionist" view sees the foragers' simple technology, nomadism, and sharing of food as part of a culture of poverty generated by the larger political economy and not as institutions generated by the demands of foraging life. (There is a large and growing literature on both sides of this issue known in recent years as "the Kalahari Debate." Readers interested in pursuing this issue should begin with Barnard [1992a]).

While recognizing that many foraging peoples have suffered at the hands of more powerful neighbors and colonizers, *The Cambridge Encyclopedia of Hunters and Gatherers* challenges the view that recent hunter-gatherers are simply victims of colonial forces. Autonomy and dependency are a continuum, not an either/or proposition, and as John Bodley documents (this volume), despite the damage brought by colonialism, foragers persist and show a surprising resilience. Foragers may persist for a variety of reasons. As illustrated by the example of the Kalahari San of southern Africa, where much of the debate has focused, some San *did* become early subordinates of Bantu-speaking overlords, but many others maintained viable and independent hunter-gatherer lifeways into the nineteenth and twentieth centuries (Solway and Lee 1990, Guenther 1993, 1997, Kent 1996a; Robertshaw, this volume). Archaeological evidence reviewed by Sadr (1997) strongly supports the position that a number of San peoples maintained a classic Later Stone Age tool kit and a hunting and gathering lifeway into the late nineteenth century. When Ju/'hoan San people themselves are asked to reflect on their own history they insist that, prior to the arrival of the Europeans in the latter part of the nineteenth century, they lived as hunters on their own, without cattle, while maintaining links of trade to the wider world (Smith and Lee 1997).

The general point to be made is that outside links do not automatically make hunter-gatherers subordinate to the will of their trading partners. Exchange is a universal aspect of human culture; all peoples at all times have traded. In the case of recent foragers, trading relations may in fact have allowed foraging peoples to maintain a degree of autonomy and continue to practice a way of life that they valued (Peterson 1991, 1993).

Another case in point is exemplified by the Toba of the western Argentinean Gran Chaco. Gastón Gordillo (this volume) notes how the foraging Toba have maintained their base in the Pilcomayo marshes as a partial haven against direct exploitation. As the Toba say, "At least we have the bush," seeing their Pilcomayo territory as a refuge to come home to after their annual trips to the plantations to earn necessary cash. The view of the "bush" as a refuge seems to be a common theme among many hunter-gatherers. What it brings home is that foragers believe in their way of life: foraging for them is a positive choice, not just a result of exclusion by the wider society.

To the contrary, the authors of this book, led by Lakota anthropologist Beatrice Medicine in the Foreword, question whether victimhood at the hands of more powerful peoples is the only or even the main issue of interest about hunters and gatherers. The authors start from the position that the first priority is to represent the life-worlds of contemporary hunter-gatherers faithfully. This invariably includes documenting the peoples' sense of themselves as having a collective history as hunter-gatherers. Whether this foraging represents a primary or secondary adaptation, it often continues because that way of life has meaning for its practitioners. It seems unwise, if not patronizing, to assume that all foragers are

primarily so because they were forced into it by poverty or oppression.

It is more illuminating to understand hunter-gatherer history and culture as the product of a complex triple dynamic: part of their culture needs to be understood in terms of the dynamic of the foraging way of life itself, part from the dynamic of their interaction with (often more powerful) non-foraging neighbors, and part from the dynamic of their interaction with the dominant state administrative structures (cf. Leacock and Lee 1982).

## A brief history of hunter-gatherer studies

If a single long-term trend can be discerned in hunter-gatherer studies it is this: studies began with a vast gulf between observers and observed. Eighteenth- and nineteenth-century treatises on the subject objectified the hunters and treated them as external objects of scrutiny. With the development of field anthropology, observers began to know the foragers as people and the boundaries between observers and observed began to break down. Finally in the most recent period, the production of knowledge has become a two-way process; the role of observer has begun to merge with the role of advocate and the field of hunter-gatherer studies has come to be increasingly influenced by agendas set by the hunter-gatherers themselves (Lee 1992).

The more formal history of hunter-gatherer studies parallels the history of the discipline of anthropology. The peoples who much later were to become known as "hunters and gatherers" have been an important element in central debates of European social and political thought from the sixteenth century forward (Meek 1976, Barnes 1937, 1938). As described in the chapter by Alan Barnard (this volume, Part II), philosophers from Hobbes, Locke, and Rousseau onward have drawn upon contemporary accounts of "savages" as a starting point for speculations about life in the state of nature and what constitutes the good society.

These constructions became more detailed as more information accumulated from travelers' accounts, resulting in elaborate schemes for human social evolution in the works of the eighteenth-century Scottish Enlightenment – Smith, Millar, and Ferguson – as well as on the continent – Diderot, Vico, and Voltaire (Barnes 1937, Harris 1968).

Well before the 1859 publication of Darwin's *The origin of species* the question of the antiquity of humanity became a central preoccupation of scholars, initiated in part by John Frere's famous 1800 essay which made the then heretical suggestion that teardrop-shaped, worked-stone objects found buried in river gravels at Hoxne, Suffolk, UK in association with extinct mammals may indeed not have been Zeus' thunderbolts, but instead implements made by humans that could be traced "to a very distant period, far more remote in time than the modern world" (quoted in Boule and Vallois 1957:11).

With the rise of European imperialism and the conquest of new lands came the beginnings of anthropology as a formal discipline. In the academic division of labor, while sociologists adopted as their mandate understanding urban society of the Western metropole, anthropologists took on the rest of the world: classifying diverse humanity and theorizing about its origins and present condition. The nineteenth-century classical evolutionists erected elaborate schemes correlating social forms, kinship, and marriage with mental development and levels of technology. The world's hunters were usually relegated to the bottom levels. In Lewis Henry Morgan's tripartite scheme, of "Savagery, Barbarism, and Civilization," hunters were either Lower or Middle Savages, depending on the absence or presence of the bow and arrow (Morgan 1877).

William Sollas was one of the first to define hunting and gathering as a specific lifeway, and in *Ancient hunters and their modern representatives* (1911) he linked ethnographies of recent hunters with their putative archaeological analogues. Modern Eskimo resembled Magdalenians, African Bushmen stood in for Aurignacians, and so on.

Essential to the development of modern anthropology was the decisive repudiation of the classical evolutionary schemes and their implicit (and often explicit) racism. Franz Boas' watershed study *Race, language and culture* (1911) demonstrated that the three core factors varied independently. A "simple" technology could be associated with a complex cosmology, members of one "race" could show a wide range of cultural achievements, and all languages possessed the capacity for conveying abstract thought. It was only on the twin foundations of Boasian cultural relativism and the emphasis on fieldwork that modern social and cultural anthropology could develop.

It is striking that most of the founders of the discipline both in North America and in Europe carried out landmark studies of hunters and gatherers. Boas himself went to the Canadian Arctic in 1886 as a physical geographer (his doctoral dissertation was on the color of sea water), but his ethnographic study of the Central Eskimo (1888) became one of the seminal works in American anthropology. He went on to carry out decades of research with the KwaKwaKa'wakw (Kwakiutl) on the Northwest Coast of British Columbia, a classic example of a *complex* hunter-gatherer group (Boas 1966). Boas' close associates A. L. Kroeber and Robert Lowie also established their reputations through major research on hunting and gathering peoples, Californian and Crow Indians respectively (Kroeber 1925, Lowie 1935).

Founders of British anthropology shared a similar

early focus, beginning with A. R. Radcliffe-Brown's study of the Andaman Islanders in 1906–8 (1922, see Pandya this volume). The great Bronislaw Malinowski, before going to the Trobriand Islands, wrote his doctoral dissertation on the family among the Australian Aborigines (1913). In France, while neither did hunter-gatherer fieldwork, both Emile Durkheim and Marcel Mauss carried out intensive library research on foraging peoples, with the former writing about Australian aboriginal religion in *Elementary forms of the religious life* (Durkheim 1912) and the latter writing his seminal essay on the seasonal life of the Eskimo (Mauss 1906). Two decades later Claude Lévi-Strauss began his distinguished career with a 1930s field study of the hunting and gathering Nambicuara in the Brazilian Mato Grosso, before returning to Paris to write his influential works on the origins of kinship and mythology (1949, 1962a, 1962b, 1987).

Mention should also be made of the 1898 British expedition, led by A. C. Haddon, to the Torres Strait Islanders with their affinities to the Australian Aborigines (see Beckett, this volume), of the American Museum of Natural History's Jesup North Pacific Expedition to Siberia in 1897 (see Grant 1995), and of the brilliant series of expeditions by Danish anthropologists to Greenland and the Canadian Arctic led by Mattiessen and Rasmussen (see Burch and Csonka, this volume). Important research traditions can also be discerned in Australia and Russia (see Peterson and Shnirelman, this volume).

Modern studies of hunting and gathering peoples can be traced arguably to two landmark studies of the 1930s. First is the 1936 essay by Julian Steward who, in a *festschrift* for his mentor, A. L. Kroeber, wrote on "The social and economic basis of primitive bands" (1936). After four decades of scholarly emphasis on careful description without theory building, Steward sought to revive an interest in placing hunter-gatherer studies in a broader theoretical framework. Steward argued that resource exploitation determined to a significant extent the shape and dynamics of band organization and this ecological approach became one of the two foundations of hunter-gatherer studies for the next thirty years.

The second base was the classic essay by Radcliffe-Brown on Australian Aboriginal social organization (1930–1). The peripatetic R-B had begun his career in South Africa and from there moved to Sydney, São Paulo, and Chicago before taking up the chair in social anthropology at Oxford. During his Australian tenure he wrote a series of influential overviews of Aboriginal social organization. But unlike Steward, for whom *ecological* factors were paramount, R-B saw structural factors of *kinship* as primary. Australian Aboriginal societies were usually divided into moieties, and these dual divisions were often subdivided into four sections or eight subsections. These divisions had profound effects on marriage patterns, producing an intricate and elegant algebra of prescriptive alliances between intermarrying groups. Radcliffe-Brown was far less interested than Steward in what the Aborigines did for a living. While the clan and section membership ruled the kinship universe and nominally held the land, it was the more informal *horde*, a band-like entity, whose members lived together on a daily basis and shouldered the tasks of subsistence.

In the 1940s Radcliffe-Brown's kinship models were taken up by Lévi-Strauss, who placed Australian Aboriginal moieties at the center of his monumental work *Les structures élémentaires de la parenté* (1949). It is worthy of note that theories of band organization have continued to be dominated by these two alternative paradigms: an ecological or adaptationist approach which relies on material factors to account for forager social life, and a structural approach which sees kinship, marriage, and other such social factors as the primary determinants. The two approaches are by no means incompatible, and although the two tendencies are still discernible in hunter-gatherer studies, many analysts have posited a dialectic of social and ecological forces in the dynamics of forager life (see Ingold, this volume; also Leacock 1982, Sahlins 1972, Lee 1979, Peterson 1991, 1993, and others).

## The Man the Hunter conference

In 1965, Sol Tax announced the convening of a conference on "Man the Hunter" at the University of Chicago; the conference, organized by Irven DeVore and Richard Lee, took place April 6–8, 1966 and proved to be the starting point of a new era of systematic research on hunting and gathering peoples. One commentator called the Man the Hunter conference "the century's watershed for knowledge about hunter-gatherers" (Kelly 1995:14). Present at the conference were representatives of many of the major constituencies in the field of hunter-gatherer studies (though no hunter-gatherers themselves), including proponents of the *ecological* and *structural* schools. There were critics of the late Radcliffe-Brown's theories as well as supporters; there were archaeologists, demographers, and physical anthropologists, reflecting the revival of interest in evolutionary approaches then current in American anthropology. Among the key findings of the Man the Hunter conference were the papers focusing on the relative ease of foraging subsistence, epitomized in Marshall Sahlins' famous "Notes on the original affluent society" (1968). Gender and the importance of women's work was a second key theme of the conference. The name "Man the Hunter" was a misnomer since among tropical foragers plant foods, produced largely by women, were the dominant source of subsistence.

## After Man the Hunter

A burst of research activity followed the convening of Man the Hunter and the publication of the book of the same title (Lee and DeVore 1968). Scholars present at the conference brought out their own monographs and edited volumes (Balikci 1970, Bicchieri 1972, Binford 1978, Damas 1969, Helm 1981, Laughlin 1980, Lee 1979, Marshall 1976, Sahlins 1972, Suttles 1990, Watanabe 1973).

The field of hunter-gatherer studies has always been a fractious one and consensus is rarely achieved. After 1968 new work critiqued key theses from Man the Hunter. The irony of the mistitle was not lost on feminist anthropologists who produced a series of articles and books with the counter theme of "Woman the Gatherer" (Slocum 1975, Dahlberg 1981, Hiatt 1978). The feminist critics were certainly taking issue with the concept of Man the Hunter, and not necessarily with the book's content since the latter had gone a long way toward reestablishing the importance of women's work and women's roles in hunter-gatherer society. This last point was taken up in detail by Adrienne Zihlman and Nancy Tanner in an important article which drew upon the evidence assembled in Man the Hunter to place "woman the gatherer" at the center of human evolution (Tanner and Zihlman 1976).

At the same time a counter-counter-discourse developed among scholars who questioned whether women's subsistence contribution had been *overestimated*, and several cross-cultural studies were produced to argue this view, summarized in Kelly (1995:261–92). A related development was the discovery that women in hunter-gatherer societies *do* hunt, the most famous case being that of the Agta of the Philippines (Griffin and Griffin, this volume).

Original "affluence" came in for much discussion and critique, with a long series of debates over the definition of affluence and whether it applied to all hunters and gatherers at all times or even to all the !Kung (Altman 1984, 1987, Bird-David 1992, Hill *et al.* 1985, Hawkes and O'Connell 1981, 1985, Kelly 1995:15–23, Koyama and Thomas 1981). Seeking to rehabilitate the concept, Binford (1978) and Cohen (1977) addressed some of these issues, while James Woodburn's introduction of the distinction between immediate- and delayed-return societies (1982) helped to account for some of the variability in the level of work effort among hunter-gatherers.

A major development in hunter-gatherer research was stimulated by this debate. Struck by the often imprecise data on which arguments about affluence (or its absence) had been based, a group of younger scholars resolved to do better. They adopted from biology models about *optimal foraging* (Charnov 1976) and attempted to apply these rigorously to the actual foraging behaviors observed among the shrinking number of foraging peoples where it was still possible to observe actual hunting and gathering subsistence. Important work in this area was carried out by a close-knit group of scholars, often collaborating, and variously influenced by sociobiology and other neo-Darwinian approaches: Bailey (1991), Blurton Jones (1983), Hawkes (Hawkes, Hill, and O'Connell 1982, Hawkes, O'Connell, and Blurton Jones 1989), Hewlett (1991), Hill and Hurtado (1995 and this volume), Hurtado (Hurtado and Hill 1990), Kaplan (Kaplan and Hill 1985), O'Connell (O'Connell and Hawkes 1981), Eric Smith (1983, 1991), and Winterhalder (1983, 1986). Reviews and summaries of Optimal Foraging Theory are found in Winterhalder and Smith 1981, Smith and Winterhalder 1992, Bettinger 1991, and Kelly 1995. For critiques see Ingold (1992) and Martin (1983).

More classically oriented research on hunter-gatherers attempted to bring together much of the rich historical and ethnographic material that had accumulated since the 1940s. *The Handbook of North American Indians*, under the general editorship of William Sturtevant, chronicled the 500 Nations of the continent in a series of landmark regional volumes. Six of these deal largely if not exclusively with hunting and gathering peoples: *Northwest coast*, edited by Wayne Suttles (1990); *Subarctic*, edited by June Helm (1981); *The Great Basin*, edited by Warren D'Azevedo (1986); *California*, edited by Robert Heizer (1978); *Arctic*, edited by David Damas (1984); and *Northeast*, edited by Bruce Trigger (1978) (see also Trigger and Washburn eds. 1996). On other continents Barnard (1992b) and Edwards (1987) produced overview volumes on the Khoisan peoples and Aboriginal Australians respectively.

## A new generation of research

While the optimal foraging researchers based their work on models from biology and the natural sciences, a larger cohort of hunter-gatherer specialists were moving in quite different directions. Drawing on symbolic, interpretive, and historical frameworks this group of scholars grounded their studies in the lived experience of foragers and post-foragers seen as encapsulated minorities within nation-states, who still strongly adhered to traditional cosmologies and lifeways. Examples include Diane Bell's *Daughters of the dreaming* (1983), Hugh Brody's *Maps and dreams* (1981), Julie Cruikshank's *Life lived like a story* (1990), Fred Myers' *Pintupi country, Pintupi self* (1986), Elizabeth Povinelli's *Labor's lot* (1993), and Marjorie Shostak's *Nisa: The life and words of a !Kung woman* (1981).

## The Conferences on Hunting and Gathering Societies (CHAGS)

One way of tracking broader trends in hunter-gatherer research is to follow the CHAGS series of conferences through the 1970s, 1980s, and 1990s. In 1978 Maurice Godelier convened a Conference on Hunting and Gathering Societies in Paris to observe the tenth anniversary of the publication of *Man the hunter.* The conference brought together scholars from a dozen countries including the Dean of the Faculty of the University of Yakutia, himself an indigenous Siberian (Leacock and Lee 1982). The conference proved such a success that Laval University offered to host a follow-up conference in Quebec in 1980. Organized by Bernard Saladin d'Anglure and Bernard Arcand, the conference continued the tradition begun in Paris, wherein anyone who wanted to participate could do so as long as they were self-financing. Inuit broadcasters were among the several members of hunter-gatherer societies present.

By now it was becoming clear that a need existed for continuing the series, and Professor I. Eibl-Eibesfeldt of the Max Planck Institute in the Federal Republic of Germany took on the task of organizing CHAGS III. The Munich CHAGS in 1983 was a smaller, by-invitation affair, and the book that resulted reflected one particular school (revisionist) of hunter-gatherer studies (Schrire 1984). CHAGS IV, held at the London School of Economics in September 1986, returned to the more open policy with a wide range of constituencies represented. The active British organizing committee led by James Woodburn and Tim Ingold along with Alan Barnard, Barbara Bender, Brian Morris, and David Riches produced two strong thematically organized volumes of papers from the conference (Ingold *et al.* 1988a, 1988b).

CHAGS then moved to Australia. Hosted by Les Hiatt of Sydney University, CHAGS V convened in Darwin, capital of the Northern Territory, in August 1988. CHAGS V proved to be a marvelous world showcase for the active community of anthropologists, Aboriginal people, and activists working on indigenous issues in Australia.

Fairbanks, Alaska was the location of CHAGS VI (1990), the first of the CHAGS series to be held in the United States since the original 1966 Chicago conference. Convened by the late Linda Ellanna, the Fairbanks conference was memorable for being the first CHAGS at which a large delegation of Russian anthropologists was present, flying in from Provedinya just across the Bering Straits in Chukotka. Indigenous Alaskans played a prominent role in Fairbanks as well (Burch and Ellanna 1994). CHAGS VII, in Moscow in August 1993, convened by Valeriy Tischkov and organized by Victor Shnirelman at the Russian Academy of Sciences, is discussed below. The international hunter-gatherer community convened for CHAGS VIII, at the National Museum of Ethnology in Osaka, Japan, in October, 1998, with future meetings projected in the new millennium for Scotland, India and southern Africa.

This ongoing series of CHAGS gatherings held on four continents has provided an excellent monitor on the state of hunter-gatherer research in recent decades, and a unique perspective on its increasingly international and cosmopolitan outlook.

While the theoretical debates of the Man the Hunter conference of 1966 had revolved around issues of the evolution of human behavior, the recent series has moved relatively far from evolutionary and ecological preoccupations. In their stead hunter-gatherer specialists have developed several major foci of inquiry.

At the Moscow CHAGS in August 1993 and at Osaka, 1998, a large and active scholarly contingent focused on foragers in relation to the state; papers on land rights, court battles, bureaucratic domination, and media representations documented the struggles of foragers and former foragers for viability and cultural identity in the era of Late Capitalism. Many of the research problematics grew out of close consultation with members of the societies in question. Increasingly it is they who are setting research agendas, and in some cases – Aleuts at Fairbanks, Evenkis at Moscow and Ainu at Osaka – presenting the actual papers. This branch of hunter-gatherer studies is closely aligned with the emerging worldwide movement for recognition of the significance of "indigenous peoples" and their rights (see chapters by Trigger and Hitchcock, this volume).

The humanistic wing of hunter-gatherer studies has been represented by a major focus at the recent CHAGS on symbolic and spiritual aspects of hunter-gatherer life. Here were found richly textured accounts of forms of consciousness, cosmology, and ritual, while other papers dealt with the changing world-views of foragers under the impact of ideologies of state and marketplace. To showcase the offering of the Moscow CHAGS there is an excellent volume of papers edited by Biesele *et al.* (1999), with an equally rich set of publications planned for Osaka.

One theme unifying these diverse scholars from many countries was that all were able to see in hunter-gatherer society *some* component of historical autonomy and distinctiveness. The notion of "pristine" hunter-gatherer was nowhere in sight, but neither did anyone argue that the cultural practices or cosmological beliefs observed were simply refractions of dominant outsiders, Soviet or Western. Refreshingly, the "other's" reality was not considered to be so alien that the ethnographer was incapable of representing it with some coherence.

Another unifying theme was the recognition that change was accelerating, and that the magnitude of the problems faced by these indigenous peoples was enor-

mous, especially those in the Russian North, for whom ecologically destructive socialist industrialization has been followed directly by the advent of get-rich-quick capitalism. Similar conditions were replicated in most of the world's regions where foragers persist.

## Hunter-gatherer studies today

As humankind approaches the millennium, what are some of the main currents in research about hunter-gatherers, present, past, and future? Four principal tendencies can be discerned. These are set out below with two provisos: first, none of these approaches has a monopoly on "the truth"; each has something to offer and each has its shortcomings. Second, none in practice is air-tight, and many scholars may participate in two or more.

1. *Classic.* The internal dynamics of hunter-gatherer society and ecology continue to interest many scholars. Kinship, social organization, land use, trade, material culture, and cosmology provide an ongoing source of ideas, models, and analogies for archaeologists and others reconstructing the past. When due account is taken of the historical circumstances, ethnographic analogies can be a valuable tool. Archaeologists are now arguably the largest "consumers" (and producers) of research on hunting and gathering peoples, even though the opportunities for basic ethnographic research are shrinking rapidly. Robert Kelly's book *The foraging spectrum* (1995) is an excellent example of work in the classic tradition (with a minor in behavioral ecology). Tim Ingold has authored several works which sought to integrate the social and the ecological through an application of neo-Marxist theory (1986), and Ernest Burch Jr. continues to produce meticulous ethnographies on arctic Alaska and Canada in the classic tradition (e.g. Burch 1998). Theorists *beyond* anthropology continue to turn to the hunter-gatherer evidence in constructing their own models about economics or gender roles or cosmology or many other subjects where a basic human substrate is sought. The results are highly variable.

2. *Adaptationist.* Discussed above, the second "tendency" is the area of behavioral ecology and Optimal Foraging Theory, with a strong presence in the US, particularly at the Universities of Utah and New Mexico. The adaptationists are the prime advocates of a strictly "scientific" paradigm within hunter-gatherer studies and this places them, to a degree, at odds with others in the field for whom humanistic and political economic approaches are primary (cf. Lee 1992). While some behavioral ecologists approach issues of demography and subsistence from a historically contextualized position, a significant number continue to march under the banner of neo-Darwinian sociobiology. And while some acknowledge the impact of outside forces – such as dam construction, logging, mining, rainforest destruction, bureaucracies, missionaries, and land alienation – on the people they study, others focus narrowly on quantitative models of foraging behaviors as if these existed in isolation. In addition to criticizing their science, critics of this school have argued that by treating foragers primarily as raw material for model building, the behavioral ecologists fail to acknowledge foragers' humanity and agency, as conscious actors living through tough times and facing the same challenges as the rest of the planet's beleaguered inhabitants. Having fought to maintain their scientific rigor as anthropology-at-large moves in a more humanistic direction, the challenge for the behavioral ecologists now is to make their work also relevant and useful to their subjects in their fight for cultural, economic, and ecological survival.

Within the field of behavioral ecology of hunter-gatherers, and in relation to the terms of this field, Kristen Hawkes has been the most articulate spokesperson, while Hill and Hurtado (1995) and Smith and Winterhalder (1992) offer some of the best recent work.

3. *Revisionist.* This school of thought argues that the peoples known as "hunter-gatherers" are something quite different: primarily ragged remnants of past ways of life largely transformed by subordination to stronger peoples and the steamroller of modernity. Two of the principal authors of this view are Schrire (1984) and Wilmsen (1989). Although the evidence presented in this volume challenges this thesis at a fundamental level, the "revisionists" do raise serious questions. For too long students of hunter-gatherers and other pre-state societies tended to treat in isolation the peoples they researched, regarding them as unmediated visions of the past. Today history looms much larger in these studies. Hunter-gatherers arrive at their present condition by a variety of pathways. By acknowledging this fact and being sensitive to the impact of the wider political economy, the authors of this volume are responding to the challenges made by the revisionists. Beside the archaeological and historical evidence contra the revisionist position, the most eloquent testimony in the revisionist debate is the voices of the people (found in sidebars throughout the book) setting out their ongoing sense of themselves as *historically rooted* peoples with a tradition and identity as hunters and gatherers. Their eloquence, resilience, and strength demonstrate that even in this hardbitten age of "globalization" other ways of being are possible.

4. *Indigenist.* This fourth perspective brings the people studied, their goals and aspirations, firmly into the center of the scholarly equation. For many of the authors in this book the indigenist perspective represents the outcome of a long search for an anthropology of engagement that is also scientifically responsible. The long revolution in

the ethics of anthropology has come to the present conjuncture in which the still-legitimate goals of careful scholarship must be situated *in tandem with ethical responsibilities* to the subjects of inquiry. This involves at the very least attempting to account for the forces impacting on peoples' lives in ways that valorize their choices and give them useful tools to work with.

For example, in the volume *Cash, commoditization, and changing foragers* (1991), co-edited with Toshio Matsuyama, Nicolas Peterson offers a coherent framework for understanding the complex impacts of the market economy on the internal dynamics of foraging peoples. This issue has tended to polarize the field of hunter-gatherer studies into two camps: the revisionists who see capitalism as having long ago destroyed the foraging economy, and the "pristinists" who deny or minimize these effects. Peterson's subtle and insightful analysis succeeds in bridging these two entrenched positions and showing areas of common ground. The market and the welfare state, in Peterson's view, have altered but not destroyed foraging economies; in many cases the impacts have been absorbed and put to use in reproducing forager communities and identity *within* the wider society. A similarly lucid and original analysis underlies Peterson's re-analysis of the subject of sharing and gift-giving (1993). He focuses on the ways in which sharing reproduces core values within foraging communities, enabling them to maintain independent identity in spite of the vastly greater power and reach of the enveloping market-based society.

Researchers in the indigenist perspective must perform a difficult balancing act: how to combine advocacy and good rigorous scholarship, without subsuming ethical obligations of the scholar to political expediency (or vice versa).

In addition to a number of authors in this volume, the "indigenist" perspective on hunter-gatherers is evident in the work of such scholars as Eugene Hunn (1990), Joe Jorgensen (1990), Basil Sansom (1980), Janet Siskind (1980), and Polly Wiessner (1982).

Given the growing political visibility of modern foragers within their respective nation-states and the world-wide movement for indigenous rights (see chapters by Trigger and Hitchcock), recent research has been based increasingly on agendas arising from within the communities themselves. Land claims, social disintegration, substance abuse, and the concomitant movements to reconstitute "traditional" culture and revitalize institutions have become central concerns.

## About this book

Part I is arranged into seven sections, based on the world's principal geographical regions. Each is introduced by an overview of the region's foraging peoples by the regional editor, followed by an essay on the area's prehistory. The heart of the Encyclopedia is the individual case studies of the history, ethnography, and current status of over fifty of the world's best-documented hunter-gatherer groups. The goal here is to present a balanced account that includes both the traditional culture and social forms, and the contemporary circumstances and organization for resistance. Authors were chosen not only for their expertise as authorities but also for the contributions they have made as advocates for the well-being of the people they write about. Each chapter also contains a sidebar in which members of the society speak to the reader in direct quotations.

Part II contains thematic essays covering a broad array of topics: from mythology, religion, nutrition, gender, and social life, to experience at the hands of colonial forces and status in contemporary states and human rights. Other essays address the traditional and contemporary music of hunter-gatherers on the "Worldbeat" scene, and their current position in world art markets where works by aboriginal artists may fetch four and five figures. These essays thus situate the hunting and gathering peoples not only in their own world but also in the wider world's political economy and the emerging global culture.

## The regions

### *1 North America (regional editor: Harvey A. Feit; archaeological background: Aubrey Cannon)*

Prior to colonization about two-thirds of North America was occupied by hunters and gatherers, including most of what is now Canada and much of the United States west of the Mississippi. Some of the best-known recent foragers reported in the Encyclopedia include the James Bay Cree (Feit) and Labrador Innu (Mailhot), the Subarctic Dene in western Canada and Alaska (Asch and Smith), and the Inuit (Eskimo) of Arctic Canada (Burch and Csonka) and Alaska (Worl). The foragers of the Great Basin are represented by the Timbisha Shoshone of Nevada (Fowler). The mounted hunters of the Plains and intermontane West represent a successful secondary adaptation to big-game hunting by former farmers and foragers after the arrival of the horse in the seventeenth century (Kehoe). Complex foraging societies, with slavery and rank distinctions, occupied all of the west coast of North America from California to the Alaskan panhandle (Daly).

### *2 South America (regional editor: Laura M. Rival; archaeological background: Anna C. Roosevelt)*

The southern cone of the South American continent was occupied by foragers including, at the extreme south, the

Ona, Yamana, and Selknam of Tierra del Fuego (Vidal) and the Toba of the western Chaco (Gordillo). Some of the hunters of the southern cone became mounted hunters with the arrival of the horse, paralleling processes in North America. The numerous peoples of the Amazon and Orinoco basins combined foraging with shifting horticulture, with some like the Equadorean Huaorani (Rival) relying largely, and a few peoples like the Cuiva of Venezuela (Arcand) almost entirely, on foraging. South American foragers like the Sirionó (Balée) show evidence of having been more reliant on farming in the past. The Paraguayan Aché (Hill and Hurtado) are well known in anthropological circles for the detailed behavioral ecological studies made about them.

*3 North Eurasia (regional editors: Victor A. Shnirelman and David G. Anderson, with Bruce Grant; archaeological background: Victor A. Shnirelman)*

In northern Siberia and the Russian Far East a number of hunter-gatherer groups exist, combining foraging with small-scale reindeer herding. These groups vary widely in the timing of colonial encounter (some being reached only in the late nineteenth century), and in the degree to which they have suffered from the industrialization of the Soviet period. Notable among those who were primarily foragers are the Khanti (Nemysova, with Bartels and Bartels), Nia/Nganasan (Golovnev), Iukagir (Ivanov), Ket (Alekseenko), and the Chukchi and Siberian Yupik (Schweitzer), the latter close relatives of the Alaskan Eskimo. The Evenki of central Siberia (Anderson) and the Nivkh of Sakhalin Island (Grant) have been particularly hard hit by industrial pollution and the breakup of the Soviet Union. In addition Svensson discusses the well-known Ainu culture of Hokkaido, Sakhalin, and the Kurile Islands.

*4 Africa (regional editor: Robert K. Hitchcock; archaeological background: Peter Robertshaw)*

Although most of the continent pre-colonially was occupied by farmers, herders, and agrarian states, Africa was home to several well-known foraging peoples. The Pygmies occupy the equatorial rainforest in a broad belt across central Africa from Cameroon to Rwanda, represented in the volume by the Mbuti of the Congolese Ituri Forest (Ichikawa) and the Aka of the Central African Republic (Bahuchet). In East Africa the Hadza of Tanzania (Kaare and Woodburn) have remained staunchly independent of neighboring farmer-herders, while the Okiek of Kenya (Kratz) have long-established trade relations with the Maasai. In the Kalahari Desert of Botswana, Namibia, and Angola live the well-known San or Bushmen peoples. Some, like the Ju/'hoansi (Biesele and Kxao Royal-/O/oo) and the central Kalahari /Gui of Botswana (Tanaka and Sugawara), remained relatively autonomous until recently; others like the Tyua of eastern Botswana (Hitchcock) have a long history of close contact. The Mikea of southeastern Madagascar became foragers in the nineteenth century, adopting the relative security of forest hunting and gathering during a period of instability and warfare (Kelly *et al.*).

*5 South Asia (regional editor: Nurit Bird-David; archaeological background: Kathleen Morrison)*

In this region of ancient civilizations a surprising number of foragers exist, occupying upland forested areas and providing forest products (honey, medicinal herbs, furs) to lowland markets. It is this economic niche presumably that has allowed the South Asian hunter-gatherers to persist to the present and remain viable. Examples include the Wanniyala-aetto (Veddah) of Sri Lanka (Stegeborn), the Nayaka of Kerala (Bird-David), the Paliyan (Gardner), and the Hill Pandaram (Morris) in the southern tip of the subcontinent, and the Birhor (Adhikary)and Chenchu (Turin) in central and eastern India. Most famous are the Andamanese, occupying a series of islands in the Bay of Bengal, who remained isolated into the late nineteenth century and in one case well into the twentieth (Pandya).

*6. Southeast Asia (regional editor: Kirk Endicott; archaeological background: Peter Bellwood)*

Orang Asli is a cover term for the indigenous non-agricultural peoples of the Malay peninsula and insular Southeast Asia. Among the best known are the Batek (Endicott) and Jahai (Van der Sluys) in the Malaysian forest and the Batak (Eder) on the Philippine island of Palawan. Other groups are found in Thailand, Myanmar, Laos, and China's Yunnan province (Song and Shen). On the island of Borneo live the Penan of Sarawak (Brosius), firmly rooted in hunting and gathering until recent displacement by multi-national logging interests. The Philippine main islands have several pockets of foraging peoples, including the Agta of northeastern Luzon famous for their female hunters (Griffin and Griffin).

*7. Australia (regional editor: Nicolas Peterson; archaeological background: Michael A. Smith)*

Prior to European colonization in the late eighteenth century, Australia was entirely occupied by hunting and gathering peoples. These suffered a precipitous decline after 1788. Nevertheless in the centre, north, and west, Aboriginal people have persisted, the last nomadic Pintupi foragers in the Western Desert coming in to settlements in the 1950s and 1960s (Myers). Arnhem

Land Aborigines such as the Yolngu (Keen) retain significant elements of social and ritual organization, as do some of the desert groups like the Warlpiri (Dussart), Pintupi (Myers), and Arrernte (Arunta) (Morton). The Aborigines of Cape York in northeast Queensland (Martin) and the Kimberleys (Toussaint) and the famous Tiwi of Bathurst and Melville Islands (Goodale) give a sense of the range of variation among contemporary Aboriginal peoples. A significant percentage of Aborigines are urbanized and, like the Ngarrindjeri in South Australia (Tonkinson), are struggling to preserve and revivify their cultures and land rights in the face of the indifference and tokenism of Australian society at large. The Torres Strait Islanders (Beckett) lie geographically and culturally midway between Australia and Papua-New Guinea. They are active partners with Aborigines in political movements, legal challenges, and administrative structures.

Although the main story of hunters and gatherers today is carried by the fifty-three case studies and their regional introductions, important themes cross-cut the focus on regions and cultures. The special topic essays focus attention on broader issues involving or affecting hunting and gathering peoples world-wide.

Alan Barnard traces the complex perceptions (and misperceptions) of hunter-gatherers through Western intellectual history. As noted above (p. 7), Barnard sensitizes us to the fact that foragers have always been viewed through a thick lens of ideology and this became even more pronounced when European colonialism and its oppositions became predominant sites of political and cultural discourse about foragers. Barnard documents how current debates are actually reprises of older controversies resurfacing anew.

Andrew Smith follows with a magisterial survey of the world prehistory of hunting and gathering peoples. Smith notes that for much of human history hunting and gathering was the universal mode of life. His overview offers a sense of the world-historical events that led first to the 2 million year ascendancy and then the eclipse of hunting and gathering as, continent by continent, farmers, herders, and states arose, ultimately to marginalize and encapsulate the foraging world.

John Gowdy represents a refreshing incursion by a sister discipline to the world of hunter-gatherers. An economist, Gowdy makes good use of hunter-gatherer materials to take a sharp look at the conventional wisdom economists (and the rest of us) live by. Gowdy questions in turn the economic concepts of scarcity, production, distribution, ownership, and capital and in each instance counterposes alternative examples from the hunter-gatherer literature. Following on Marshall Sahlins' pioneering work (1968, 1972), Gowdy portrays these economic core concepts more accurately as culturally bound constructions specific to a time and place and not eternal expression of basic human nature. These themes are developed in greater depth in Gowdy (1998).

For over twenty years Tim Ingold has been reflecting on hunting and gathering as a way of life, a mode of production, and an ecological adaptation. Here he brings these lines of inquiry together to ponder the nature of hunter-gatherer sociality. Ingold asks whether hunter-gatherers, living in direct, face-to-face groupings, do not exhibit a form of sociality of a qualitatively different nature from that of the rest of humanity, living in hierarchical, often anonymous, often alienated circumstances. After reviewing theories of the patrilocal band and of "primitive communism" Ingold then draws out some of the profound implications of this line of inquiry for social theory more generally.

The second group of special essays surveys six major aspects of hunter-gather life in cross-cultural perspective. Karen Endicott addresses the large ethnographic and critical literature about gender in hunting and gathering societies. Noting the persistent male bias of older ethnographies that pushed women to the margins, Endicott discusses a number of recent studies that rectify this misperception. Women's roles in subsistence, kinship, and politics are explored. Drawing on her own familiarity with Southeast Asian foragers, Endicott considers the well-known views of Eleanor Leacock about women in foraging societies (1978, 1982) in opposing the doctrine of universal female subordination.

Catherine Fowler and Nancy Turner discuss Traditional Ecological Knowledge (TEK). Hunter-gatherers are notable for the intensity of their spirituality and connection to the land, a connection further intensified by the experience of dispossession. Fowler and Turner show how, among hunter-gatherers, systems in the natural world are incorporated into the spiritual and social worlds. "Particularly important," in their view, "is the sense of place and purpose communicated by the oral tradition, and the cumulative wisdom derived from knowledge of complex ecological relationships." The authors point to the negative consequences of breaking this connection, leading to loss of purpose, language, and culture. They also speak of groups in which the connection to land and foraging is being recaptured.

Mathias Guenther presents a rich account of the intellectual and spiritual world of hunter-gatherers, a vast continent of myth and practice that is a major world-historic heritage. While Fowler and Turner show how Nature is an encyclopedia of practical knowledge, Guenther views the cosmologies of foraging peoples as wellsprings of supernatural and ontological meanings. He explores the ubiquity of the Trickster figure in world mythology and traces the anthropological history of shamanism from its first documentation in eastern Siberia in the late nineteenth century to its recognition as

a religious phenomenon found in every continent. Guenther also documents the successful adaptation of some shamanistic methods into healing practices of contemporary medicine.

In an original synthesis Victor Barac explores the world of hunter-gatherer music. Presenting examples from Africa, Australia, and North America, Barac documents the core features of this genre and its points of difference from the musics of non-foraging peoples. He then gives an account of the extraordinary impact made by hunting and gathering musicians and singers upon the "Worldbeat" and pop music scenes. In examples ranging from the Australian Aboriginal group Yothu Yindi to the Canadian Inuit artist Susan Aglukark, Barac documents the unique interweaving in the music of these artists of traditional elements along with profound reflections on contemporary themes of poverty, violence, racism, and loss.

Howard Morphy follows with an overview of the art of hunting and gathering peoples. He first notes variation in artistic production and the wide variance in the permanence of this art – from body and sand painting which lasts a day to rock art lasting millennia. Morphy traces three cases of hunter-gatherer art which have reached world status: Northwest Coast art, Aboriginal Australian bark paintings, and Inuit soapstone carvings. Each has enjoyed extraordinary success on international art markets, as well as becoming part of the iconography of their respective nation-states.

One of the recurrent themes in hunter-gatherer research is the surprisingly good nutritional status of foraging peoples. As S. Boyd Eaton and Stanley Eaton point out, there are many lessons to be learned from the study of foragers' diet and exercise regime. In the pre-colonial period foragers led healthy outdoor lives with a diet consisting entirely of "natural" foods. Salt intake and refined carbohydrate consumption were low and obesity rare, as were many of the diseases associated with high-stress sedentary urban living such as diabetes, heart disease, and stroke. While infectious diseases took their toll, some of these were evidently introduced during the colonial period well before the colonists themselves arrived in local areas.

One of the strangest episodes in the history of hunter-gatherer studies began in 1972 when a Philippine–American team reported finding a "Stone Age people" who were claimed to have been living in caves on a diet of wild foods out of touch with the rest of the world for over five hundred years! The Tasaday, as they came to be known, became world-famous, featured in international media and in several *National Geographic* specials. Despite the public's acceptance, nagging doubts remained among scholars about the authenticity of such a seemingly far-fetched story. Gerald Berreman traces the history of the Tasaday from the beginning and reveals it as an elaborate hoax, probably the biggest anthropological hoax since the Piltdown fraud. With painstaking detail Berreman invites the reader to evaluate the evidence in what has become a fascinating detective story of greed in high places and otherwise blameless indigenous people drawn in as accomplices.

John Bodley chronicles the complex history of the encounter between hunting and gathering peoples and European colonialism. In the 500 years of European incursions into the rest of the world, band and village societies faced insurmountable odds and many succumbed to a combination of military predation, land loss, and the effects of introduced diseases. Yet despite the horrors of the colonial period, a surprising number of foragers survived and are present to witness the dawn of the third millennium. Bodley documents the tenacity and ingenuity of these survivors and how they combined resistance and accommodation to preserve a way of life they valued.

As long as they had the frontier, hunting and gathering peoples could survive by moving beyond the reach of the colonial authorities. But with the arrival of the modern nation-state, administrative structures reached everywhere. David Trigger surveys the ways in which states of the First, Second, and Third Worlds first pacified and censused and then divided and ruled foraging peoples, attempting to make them conform to the role of "good citizens." Trigger offers important insights into the lived realities of foragers and post-foragers today as they adjust to bureaucratic domination. He notes significant differences between the situation of former foragers in the Western capitalist states, and those in the developing world and the former USSR.

In the last chapter, Robert Hitchcock surveys the state of human rights for indigenous peoples. Given their new status as "wards" of states, foragers have undergone transformations in political consciousness. Foragers are increasingly coming to see themselves as encapsulated minorities, as ethnic groups, and as stakeholders within the civil societies of states. At a broader level they are coming to see themselves as part of the larger global community of indigenous peoples. Indigenous peoples now are a force on the world stage, but despite the UN's declaration of the period 1995–2004 as the "Decade of Indigenous Peoples" the human rights of many continue to be abridged, violated, and denied. Hitchcock surveys the complex terrain on which foragers and post-foragers make claims on the political agendas of states and international organizations. Hitchcock appends a useful up-to-date list of over fifty indigenous organizations and advocacy groups.

## An after word

These fourteen essays and the case studies that precede them convey a sense of what makes present-day hunters

and gatherers so intriguing. Long the subject of myth and misconception, the hunting and gathering peoples have come into focus in recent years. Far from being simply the cast-offs of creation or victims of history, the foraging peoples have become political actors in their own right, mounting land claims cases, participating in the environmental movement, and lobbying for their rights with governments and the UN. Also they are being sought out by spiritual pilgrims from urban industrial societies seeking to recapture wholeness from an increasingly fragmented and alienated modernity.

As humanity marks the new millennium, there is an increasing preoccupation with where we have come from and where we are going. The accelerating pace of change and the ceaseless transformations brought about by economic forces have had the effect of obliterating history, creating a deepening spiritual malaise. For centuries philosophers have sought the answers to humanity's multiple problems in the search for the holy grail of "natural man," the search for our ancestors. *The Cambridge Encyclopedia of Hunters and Gatherers* does not offer simple or pat answers to the questions of the social philosophers. Yet it is our hope that in the documentation of foragers' history, culture, and current situation, readers will find a rich source of ideas, concepts, and alternatives to fuel the political imagination.

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