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Reports

The Giving Environment: Another Perspective on the Economic System of Gatherer-Hunters[1]

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For the past 25 years anthropologists have been interested in the relation between man and environment in reference especially to gathering and hunting societies. They have viewed these as "societies which by definition share the characteristic that their members obtain their food and other requirements directly from wild natural sources" (Woodburn 1980:95). Approaching the environments of these societies in terms of Western ecological criteria, they have examined how food collectors have adapted to them. For example, on discovering that giving without expecting an equivalent return is more common among food-gathering peoples than among any others and is a feature of most food-gathering societies, they have explained it as a way of reducing risk —a kind of "collective insurance against natural fluctuations" (Ingold 1980:144; cf. Lee 1968; Woodburn 1972; Gould 1982; Wiessner 1977, 1982; Cashdan 1985; and Smith 1988).

This account, however, invoking modern economic and ecological ideas, is unlikely to be acceptable to food-gathering people themselves, for their own ideas about their environment are summed up by /Xashe, a !Kung man from Mahopa: "Why should we plant, when there are so many mongongos in the world?" (Lee 1979:v). Furthermore, it makes little sense of these people's demand for generosity and practice of what has been recently described as demand sharing (Barnard and Woodburn 1988:12; Peterson 1986:1). Why do they make constant demands for sharing and not require people to produce more (cf. Barnard and Woodburn 1988:11)? Why do they have this "collective insurance against natural fluctuations" when they have little difficulty in obtaining their material requirements and desires, setting these well within their capacity to achieve and allowing themselves much leisure (Sahlins 1968:85–89; 1972:1–39), and when some of them have access to alternative sources from farming neighbours?

Moreover, recent work has erased the "great divide" between food-collecting and food-producing peoples (Hamilton 1982:232), showing that some gatherer-hunters (especially of Woodburn's [1980, 1988] "immediate-return" type) have, and have had, close economic links with farming neighbours and have themselves pursued cultivation and husbandry periodically or occasionally (see Schrire 1984, Headland and Reid 1989, and case studies by Gardner 1985, Endicott 1984, and Bird-David 1988). This work has led to doubts over how satisfactory it is to distinguish between them and other peoples in relation to their mode of subsistence and, hence, to explain their distribution practices in terms of that subsistence mode (see Barnard 1983, 1987; Williams and Hunn 1982; Hamilton 1982; and Schrire 1984).

Because the traditional approach has reached its limits with respect to certain important issues, in this paper another perspective on gatherer-hunters' economic arrangements is explored. This perspective suggests that gatherer-hunters are distinguished from other peoples by their particular views of the environment and of themselves and, in relation to this, by a particular type of economy that has not previously been recognized. They view their environment as giving, and their economic system is characterized by modes of distribution and property relations that are constructed in terms of giving, as within a family, rather than in terms of reciprocity, as between kin.

This perspective is offered in reference to the South Indian gatherer-hunters called Nayaka, among whom I conducted fieldwork during 1978–79 and again in 1989,[2]

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2. In earlier publications I spelled the name of the people "Naiken." My doctoral research was financially supported by a Trinity College Bursary (Cambridge University), the 1978 Anthony Wilkin Studentship, the 1979 H. M. Chadwick Studentship, and grants from the Smuts Memorial Fund, the Wyse Fund, and the Radcliffe-Brown Fund. For ethnographic background see Bird-David (1983*a*, *b*, 1987*a*, *b*, 1988, 1989, n.d.). The 1989 investigation was financed by the Horovitz Institute for Research of Developing Countries, Tel-Aviv, and by the Jerusalem Foundation for Anthropological Studies, and I am grateful for their help. I am grateful for the generous assistance in the field of ACCORD of Gudalur.

in three ways. First, Nayaka are contrasted with their cultivator neighbours, the Bette and Mullu Kurumba,[3] who hunt and gather extensively. Second, a similarity is shown in passing between the Nayaka versus their neighbours and other forest gatherer-hunters (e.g., the Mbuti Pygmies and the Negrito Batek) versus their respective neighbours. Third, a hypothesis concerning gatherer-hunters in general is offered.

The Nayaka, who are found on the lower northwestern slopes of the Nilgiri Hills in Tamil Nadu (South India), in jungle areas of what is called the Nilgiri-Wynaad, provide a good case to draw on for a number of reasons. They conform to most of Woodburn's (1980) criteria for the "immediate-return" type of gatherer-hunters (see Bird-David 1983*b*). They have had close contact with various other peoples (see Bird-David 1988), including the shifting-cultivator Bette Kurumba and the plough-cultivator Mullu Kurumba. They occasionally work for other people and sell minor forest produce, and they occasionally practice sporadic and unsystematic cultivation and husbandry.

I first examine their ideas about the environment, showing that they center around a metaphor of the kind Pepper (1942) has called a "root metaphor" (see Ortner 1972): "forest is as parent." Drawing on Gudeman (1986), I consider this metaphor and its tropes a "local economic model": "a culturally constituted relationship between two entities, or referents. One may be called the 'schema' and the other the 'object.' The model is a projection from the domain of the schema to the domain of the object. . . . [it] offers a means of 'seeing' something [in the domain of the object], of knowing" (p. 38), and in this case it is both derived from and applied to social activity (p. 37). Gudeman argues, in brief, that exotic peoples have their own economic models, just as modern Western people have theirs, though there is little resemblance between them. Unlike Western models, exotic economic models are constructed about primary metaphors that are frequently drawn from the human body or family. These models are in many respects "extended" primary metaphors, although they may be built upon several primary metaphors and may contain elements that are not strictly metaphoric (p. 40).

I go on to examine Nayaka's patterns of distribution and property relations in relation to their local economic model, to some extent following Lakoff and Johnson's (1980) view that, though people may not be normally aware of them, metaphors not only offer means of "seeing" the world but also govern everyday functioning down to the most mundane details.[4]

3. Little has been published about Bette and Mullu Kurumba (but see von Fürer-Haimendorf 1952, Rooksby 1959, and Misra 1971). I draw on the available sources and on my own field experience in the area.

4. Lakoff and Johnson focus on linguistic metaphors in English but make speculative reference to other cultures (1980:146).

GIVING ENVIRONMENT AND RECIPROCATING ENVIRONMENT

Nayaka differ considerably from Bette and Mullu Kurumba in the way in which they view their shared environment. The differences are reflected amongst other things in myriad everyday verbal expressions and actions, in kinship terms, and in ritual.

In general, whereas the Bette and Mullu Kurumba, like the Malay-speaking neighbours of the Batek Negritos and the Bantu-speaking neighbours of the Mbuti Pygmies, see themselves as living "not in [the forest], or by it, only despite it . . . opposing it with fear, mistrust and occasional hate" (Turnbull 1976 [1965]:21), and attempt to "carve out an island of culture in the sea of nature" (Endicott 1979:53), the Nayaka, like the Mbuti and Batek, view themselves as living within the forest (Endicott 1979:10; Mosko 1987). Nayaka look on the forest as they do on a mother or father. For them, it is not something "out there" that responds mechanically or passively but like a parent; it provides food unconditionally to its children. Nayaka refer, for example, to the spirits that inhabit hills, rivers, and rocks in the forest and to the spirits of their immediate forefathers alike as *dod appa* ("big father") and *dod awa* ("big mother") and to themselves in that context as *maga(n)* ("son") and *maga(l)* ("daughter"). They believe that *dod appa* and *dod awa* look after them and provide for their needs. If Nayaka misbehave, as parents do these spirits inflict upon them aches and pains, removing them when they express regret and promise to mend their ways; they never punish by withholding food.

Similarly, the Mbuti Pygmies refer to the forest as giving "food, shelter and clothing just like their parents" (Turnbull 1976 [1965]:19). In a ritual performed by youth on their return to their forest camp after two months' participation in the initiation cerermony of their neighbours (a ceremony concerned with detaching children from their parents and attaching them to the ancestors), their first act is to sit on the laps of their mothers, showing "that they still consider themselves as children in the forest world" (Turnbull 1976 [1965]:65; cf. Mosko 1987).

This perception of the forest as ever-providing parent may be contrasted with the construction of nature as reciprocating ancestor. In this latter model, suggested for cultivator and cultivator-hunter groups in Africa (Gudeman 1986:chap. 5), nature is viewed as providing food in return for appropriate conduct. When the descendants make offerings and follow the customary code of behaviour, the ancestors bless them with success in their hunting and in cultivation. If the descendants fail to satisfy the ancestors, harvests and hunts fail.

The Bette Kurumba (like the Bemba and the Bisa of Africa) view nature as ancestors. Both Nayaka and Bette Kurumba worship the deity Hetaya, but each insists that its Hetaya is different from the Hetaya of the other (von Fürer-Haimendorf 1952:28). For the Nayaka, Hetaya means "birth-giver" (p. 24), that is, a parent. For the Bette Kurumba, Hetaya means "the old man who died

first" (p. 27), that is, an ancestor. Furthermore, Nayaka make offerings to their Hetaya upon gathering fruit, catching game, and collecting honey and after the harvest (p. 24), that is to say, in thanks for what Hetaya has given them. Bette Kurumba make offerings to their Hetaya at the time of the first sowing (p. 26), that is, in a bid to secure blessings for a successful harvest. Mullu Kurumba also pray to their gods before they go out hunting (Rooksby 1959:361–62; Misra 1971:58) and consider failure and success in hunting in terms of divine approbation or disapproval (Rooksby 1959:373).

Nayaka's view of the forest as parental is reflected in their view of themselves as siblings. While the nuclear family is the primary social unit, all groupings beyond it are referred to as *sonta*, which means something like an aggregate of relatives as close as siblings. The people who live in one's own hamlet are one's *sonta*, and in other contexts so are all Nayaka who reside in the locality. Nayaka project themselves as members of a joint household in other metaphorical ways. They call all children in the local group *maga(n)* ("son") and *maga(l)* ("daughter") and all older people *cikappa(n)* ("little father") and *cikawa(l)* ("little mother"). (The Mbuti, incidentally, have a similar usage [Turnbull 1983:33].) In general, Nayaka attach equal weight to ties on the mother's and on the father's side and can be broadly described as a bilateral society.

In contrast, Bette and Mullu Kurumba have groups aggregated about patrilines and, in some restricted contexts, matrilines. They conceptualize the constituent social groups as descendants of particular ancestors. Their view of nature as ancestors is in harmony with their view of their society as constituted of patrilineal exogamous clans, wherein elders and their descendants are tied to each other by complex obligations (Misra 1971:41; Rooksby 1959:238; von Fürer-Haimendorf 1952:21, 26).

The ethnographic details above all point to the metaphor "forest is parent" distinguishing the Nayaka from their neighbours, who hold the primary metaphor "nature is ancestor." In relation to the material dimension of the relation between people and the environment, "forest is parent" entails a view of the environment as giving, like a parent, while "nature is ancestor" entails a perception of the environment as reciprocating, like an ancestor. The local economic models that are centered around these two metaphors I sum up by the phrases "giving environment" and "reciprocating environment." Drawing on these, it is possible to achieve a fresh perspective on various economic aspects of Nayaka life.

GIVING AND REQUESTS TO BE GIVEN

The metaphor "forest is parent" and its entailment "Nayaka are siblings" imply that food is shared as among siblings (especially within the same household). Nayaka give to each other, request from each other, expect to get what they ask for, and feel obliged to give what they are asked for. They do not give resources to each other in a calculated, foresighted fashion, with a view to receiving something in return, nor do they make claims for debts.

Most day-to-day interactions between Nayaka concerning food are indeed, as between siblings, conducted in the idiom of "giving" and "requests to be given." For example, an old woman lived in a lean-to attached to the hut occupied by her daughter, son-in-law, and grandchild. She was in her seventies and slightly senile. She frequently asked her daughter and other people in the hamlet to give her food, even though she might have been able to provide for herself, since she received a small monthly payment from the local plantation and gathered leaves and fruit in the forest. She did not invoke other people's moral obligations to help her or their obligation to reciprocate for the provisions she had given them in earlier times. Instead she invoked their generosity, constantly telling them, and passersby, how hungry she was. Her complaints embarrassed people, many of whom, especially her daughter, did give her food every now and then; they implied that the people around her were stingy. In consequence people began to avoid her so as not to be asked for food and be placed in the position of having either to refuse or to give her food. Eventually, the daughter and her husband built a new hut two meters away from their old one, leaving no room in the new one for the old lady, and she moved to another hamlet.

The logic of the system at work in this example can be highlighted by another, presented in a simplified way: X wants something, say, a *biddi* (a type of cigarette), and he asks Y to give him one. If Y were to refuse, he would be criticised for being stingy, so he gives X a *biddi*. Some time later, Y notices that X has some *biddies*. Wanting one, he does not remind X that he gave him a *biddi* a few days ago, nor does he ask X for a *biddi* in return. He merely asks X to give him a *biddi* because X has *biddies* and he does not. What has happened in the past is irrelevant. Still, X has to comply with the request for fear of social disapproval. Both can avoid giving away *biddies* by creating circumstances in which they are not asked, for instance, by hiding them. Both X and Y act in accordance with an obligation to give, but that is all. With respect to each other, they give and request to be given; they feel obliged to give and expect to be given; they criticise others for being stingy when they do not give; and they hide in order not to be asked to give and thereby avoid giving (cf. Myers 1988:56 on the Pintupi).

Batek similarly feel an obligation to give when they are asked for something. This feeling is reinforced by their belief that to refuse a request can cause supernatural harm to the person *refused* and by their knowledge that this will evoke the anger of the community at the offender (Endicott 1988:117).

The pattern of extrahousehold distribution is very different among the Bette and Mullu Kurumba, where it follows a logic that has been well known in anthropological texts since Mauss (1954 [1911]). Here X gives Y something in exchange for what Y gave him before or in the expectation that Y will later reciprocate (and this even if X does not specify his expectation or specify a particular time). If Y does not eventually reciprocate in

one way or another, then X will request that he do so. Should Y refuse, X will criticise Y for failing to meet his obligation. In such systems, called gift economies (Gregory 1982), people act in accordance with the obligations to give, to receive, and to repay. Giving (outside the household) is also an implicit claim for a return. Generosity is thought of in terms of reciprocity, a generous person being one who gives in excess of what he previously received. In comparison with Nayaka, individuals in this system reciprocate and request reciprocity (sometimes verbally and sometimes through giving); they expect reciprocity and feel obliged to reciprocate; they criticise others for failure to reciprocate; they exhibit what they have so that others will request reciprocity by giving them initial gifts.

The difference in distribution processes is strikingly seen in the way in which game is divided. Among Nayaka game distribution is a ceremonial act of giving which emphasises the importance of sharing and implies nothing about any personal obligation of recipients towards the providers of the meat. Nayaka distribute game equally to all other Nayaka in the hamlet. The hunter who returns with game passes it on to another man, and this man, sometimes helped by the hunter, divides each part of the animal into small pieces. The butcher places the pieces in piles, each of which will be distributed to a household in the hamlet, the pile received being proportionate to the household's size. Children are given almost the same share as adults. People stand around the butcher while he works and help to assess the quality and volume of the growing piles. They constantly make suggestions as to where the butcher should place each piece of meat. Mere presence in the hamlet entitles a person to a share, and this includes the old and the infirm, who can never reciprocate. The hunter receives a share just like anyone else's, though he also usually gets the skin (cf. the similar practice among the Batek [Endicott 1988:117]).

In contrast to the Nayaka, the Mullu Kurumba share large game in a celebrational act of reciprocity that emphasises the importance of exact repayment. Hunters receive meat in return for their help in the hunt according to specific rules. For example, in one type of hunting, game distribution takes the following form: The person who detects the track of the animal and then calls others to the hunt receives a foreleg. The one whose arrow or bullet first hits the animal receives the head, the flesh contained between the five ribs counted from the neck, the liver, and the other foreleg. The one who first approaches the dead animal gets half of the meat between the lungs and the pelvic bone, and so on, with a total of 11 categories of helpers (Misra 1971:110).

In sum, Bette and Mullu Kurumba view nature as ancestors who reciprocate with them and themselves as kin, and they are linked with each other through acts of reciprocity and requests for reciprocity over time. Nayaka view the forest as a parent who gives them food and themselves as siblings, and they are engaged with each other through giving and requests to be given that do not obligate them on the morrow.

THE ENVIRONMENT THAT GIVES TO ALL

These same themes come to the fore in questions of ownership of land. Nayaka believe that the forest as parent gives wild resources to all Nayaka, that is, that all Nayaka are born with rights of direct personal access to land and unearned resources. For Nayaka, not even preparatory work entitles the labourer to an exclusive right over a resource in situ. For example, in order to fish, Nayaka block a section of the river, put poison in the water, and then catch the fish by hand. The preparatory work takes three to four hours, yet other people may catch the intoxicated fish in the water alongside those who did the work (the situation among the Batek is similar [Endicott 1988:114–15]).

Nayaka recognize particular groupings that are associated with particular localities. These groupings are formed around families who are thought to be the descendants of those who first settled in the area, and the male descendant of the first family is called *modale* ("first, oldest"). The economic implications of this association can best be understood in relation to the metaphor "forest is parent," which entails that land is not an object that can be owned but something that people can be closely associated with and related to. The particular relation "parent," which is not necessarily the same as "genitor," entails furthermore a relation that is not ascribed but practiced, not closed but adoptable.

This relation is reestablished once a year, or at least once every few years, during a 24-hour festival. Throughout the day, the celebrants, who refer to themselves as *maga(n)* and *maga(l)* ("children"), and the spirits of local forefathers and the local forest, addressed as *dod appa* and *dod awa* ("big father" and "big mother"), converse through the mediation of shamans. My taped records of such conversations on three separate occasions show that they are elaborations on the responsibility of the celebrants "to follow the ways of the big-parents"—the spirits—and the responsibility of the latter "to look after the children"—the celebrants. At the end of the day people and spirits share a meal that has been cooked on one hearth.

The *modale's* main responsibility is to organize the annual feast in his locality, but all Nayaka who live there and in the surrounding areas may and normally do contribute to the provisions and attend the feast. They all thus establish their rights to collect wild resources in the locality,[5] for by their contribution they reaffirm their ties with the *modale* as siblings and thereby their attachment to the local forest as children. The *modale* occupies a pivotal point in the relation between particular groupings and particular localities, but he is neither an owner nor a boss; he is in this context the first, the eldest child and sibling.

Among the Mullu and Bette Kurumba, in contrast, land is associated with households, many of them com-

5. Nayaka do not request the permission of the *modale* to gather wild resources in the territory he is associated with, other than implicitly through participation in the annual celebration (see, in contrast, Williams and Hunn 1982).

posite. The *mupan*, the head of the composite household, allocates land to the heads of the constituent families, who later inherit it, establishing their direct association with it (Misra 1971:74–75; von Fürer-Haimendorf 1952:29–30).

OBJECTS "TO THE SELF"

With respect to material things other than land, Nayaka recognize personal associations between individuals and material objects. They usually employ a phrase that can be translated approximately as "such-and-such an object is 'to the self' of such-and-such a person" with reference to objects that individuals make from natural materials (for example, bamboo baskets), objects that individuals find lying around and take (for instance, metal rods), and articles that individuals purchase (for instance, knives and pots).[6] This phrase can be roughly equated with the English possessive "my" as it is used amongst siblings in reference to objects that they habitually use. It does not imply rights of exclusion, for siblings ideally give things to each other, but it does imply a personal association and a related type of right.

The association is expressed, for example, when a person dies. One item associated with him (or her)—a knife, coin, pot, or string of beads—is set aside until the next annual celebration, whereupon Nayaka decorate it along with the objects of others who have died in previous years and offer them small gifts of food. Relatives take some of the other things as keepsakes, notably for use. Anyone present can take something; occasionally no one will, and what is left is then buried with the deceased. The items that are kept by people may long remain associated with the deceased. For example, Mathi used cooking pots that Kunyan had taken as keepsakes of his mother when she had died two years previously. For Mathi, the pots were "to the self of" Kunyan's mother; she did not regard them as "to the self of" Kunyan, nor did Kunyan himself.

THE RIGHT TO GIVE

People have the right to give material items that are "to their selves" and the right to be asked for permission to use them (cf. Myers 1982, 1986*a*). Permission to use is usually granted, for Nayaka feel obliged to give what they are being asked for and expect to (and normally do) get what they ask. But the right to give permission remains important. A Nayaka who wants to use an object must ask the person "to whose self" it is for permission even if that person does not have the thing at the time. For example, Chathen and Bomi once quarreled over this right, and quarrels are rare among Nayaka. Bomi and her husband moved away from a hamlet in which their daughter and her husband, Chathen, lived, leaving behind an axe. Chathen used the axe to tidy the area around a banana tree that Bomi had planted, not having asked beforehand for her permission. Tension subsequently arose between the two parties. Bomi was angry with Chathen because of his failure to request permission, while he felt bitter about her anger, since he had got the axe from her daughter and used it to tend her tree. For Bomi, the point at issue was neither the tending of her tree nor the physical use of the axe but the violation of her right to give.

Batek provide another example of the importance of the right to give in this economic system and the vesting of this right in the person "to whose self" the thing is. Men occasionally borrow and use the darts of others when they hunt. The game then belongs to the person whose dart it is, not to the hunter who has used it. In either case the meat is normally shared equally amongst all members of the group who are present (Endicott 1988:115–16). To have right over the meat means to have the right to give it (cf. Lee 1979:247 on the !Kung).

In sum, among Nayaka, where the idioms that guide material transactions are giving and requests to be given, people have the right to give objects that are "to their selves," objects that are in our terms their personal possessions.

TIES BETWEEN GIVERS

A particular type of social tie is created between people who give personal possessions to each other. Nayaka husband and wife provide the most extreme example, for they use, alternately, the same tools and other material things (including even clothes) whilst they jointly carry out most subsistence pursuits and the majority of domestic chores. Other Nayaka can often no longer clearly associate objects they use with one of the pair rather than the other, and this is indeed often true of the couple themselves. In reply to my enquiries they would say that a particular thing was "to the self of" the woman, that the same item was "to the self of" the man, or (infrequently) that it was "to the selves of both the man and his wife." The use of the same objects thus expresses and reaffirms an aggregation of separate selves through the use of the same material items, both in the eyes of people around them and in the eyes of the users.

The logic of the system at work can be shown by a simplified example of a more complex case. X has, say, an axe "to his (or her) self." Y asks him (or her) for the axe, and X gives it to Y. Y keeps the axe, and Z wants to use it. Z still has to ask X for permission to take the axe as well as ask Y for the axe. When Z has the axe, W, who wants it, has to ask X for permission as well as ask Z for the axe, and so on. The outcome of the circulation of the axe amongst X, Y, Z, and W is the formation of a "wheel" of givers centered around X. The more intense the circulation of the axe amongst them, the more they are habitually associated with it and viewed as a close aggregate of individuals. The material thing itself becomes a sign of their closeness.

The social ties created between transactors in a gift economy, which the Bette and Mullu Kurumba presum-

6. Individual Nayaka also sometimes have "to themselves" certain trees in which nests of a certain kind of bee *(Apis dorsata)* are found every year (cf. the similar situation among the Batek [Endicott 1988:115]).

ably have, are quite different. Here, X gives a gift, say, an axe, to Y and Y has to repay for it later. The transaction forms a relation of obligation between X and Y. Y, however, can later give the same axe to Z, and that transaction forms a reciprocal relation of obligation between Y and Z. Z can then give the object to W, and so on. The outcome of the circulation of objects is the formulation of "paths" of gift debt (see Gregory 1982:57) that bind people together in a complicated temporal web of reciprocal relationships.

Nayaka, in sum, are engaged in giving with people they view as siblings, and their transactions reaffirm and reproduce the close and immediate ties between them. Bette and Mullu Kurumba, in contrast, are engaged in reciprocity with people they view as kin, and the transactions reaffirm and reproduce reciprocal obligations between them.

THE VALUE OF OBJECTS GIVEN

Finally, the same theme comes to the fore in the way in which the value of the things that Nayaka give to each other is established. In the gift economy people give, receive, and repay material items that are socially recognized as gifts and normally in short supply. The way in which their value is established has been examined by Sahlins (1972:chap. 6) (in specific reference to intertribal trade partnerships, because these most clearly exemplify balanced reciprocity [p. 280]). He suggests that the value of a gift-object in terms of other gift-objects is fixed retroactively, according to what has actually been exchanged between transactors who wish to be generous and overreciprocate, and expect the other to do so, in order to ensure continuation of a reciprocal relationship between them. The transactors independently assess what counts as overrepayment according to the outcome of preceding transactions and the current equilibrium of supply and demand for the item concerned.

Presuming, for lack of sufficient data, that Bette and Mullu Kurumba transactors behave in this way, Nayaka transactors behave very differently. Perceiving the environment as giving—normally in abundance but at least sufficiently to meet requirements—Nayaka do not view material things in themselves as scarce or valuable. As do the Batek (Endicott 1986:120), they hold that things can easily be made, found, or bought. The objects of transactions for them are material items that are socially recognized as giving-things, that is, items that are "to the selves of" particular Nayaka, who thereby have the right to give them. Personal possessions of any kind that are habitually used by people are thus objects of transactions of giving.

The particular value of the items is influenced by the following (amongst other) criteria:

First, the closer the transactors, the higher the value of the object of transaction. For example, people who take personal possessions of a deceased say that they take them as keepsakes, but they take them for use and, furthermore, give them to other people upon request just as they give other objects. What they probably mean is that they take the items because they are valuable to them, the decreased having been personally close to them.

Second, the less long-standing the association, the lower the value of the object. Thus, strange as it may seem to a Western onlooker, Nayaka are careless about the recently purchased. Endicott reports an event that occurred among Batek that is very similar to what I have often observed among Nayaka: A man whose two-year-old son began using the bamboo flute he had just made as a hammer commented quietly, "It does not matter. I can make another one" (1988:121; cf. Myers 1988:61).

GATHERER-HUNTERS AND THE GIVING ENVIRONMENT

Drawing on the cases of Nayaka, Mbuti, and Batek, I have shown that gatherer-hunters, although they may not be strictly distinguished from other peoples (especially their neighbours) in terms of their bases of subsistence, do have a distinct economic system. It relates to the particular view of the environment that is entailed by their primary metaphor "forest is parent." The immediate question that arises is to what extent these groups represent gatherer-hunters in general, for they are all inhabitants of tropical and subtropical forests and all have an immediate-return system and trade extensively with their neighbours. I suspect that Nayaka (and Mbuti and Batek) present a variation on a theme that is characteristic of gatherer-hunters in general. I offer the hypothesis, which is being explored and will be assessed elsewhere, that gatherer-hunters share the characteristic that their members' views of the environment are centered around metaphors that commonly draw on primary kin relations, though not necessarily just on the "parent" relation. These metaphors entail a common view of the environment as giving, though in varied ways.

The further hypothesis then follows: that insofar as they commonly view the environment as giving, gatherers-hunters share core features of the economic system that I have discussed in reference to the Nayaka (varying in other respects, partly in relation to the varied family relations that constitute the cores of their local economic models). What they share most conspicuously is an economic system that is constructed in terms of giving. Even in its most institutionalized and formalized form, distribution amongst gatherer-hunters, for example, is, I suspect, still constructed in terms of giving. The !Kung *hxaro* (Wiessner 1977, 1982), for instance, although it is described as an exchange system, always includes family members (Wiessner 1982:70); the transactions are normally conducted in the idiom of giving and requests to be given (see Draper 1978:45); the objects of transactions are personal possessions (Wiessner 1982:70–71); and these objects carry no mystical obligations of reciprocity (cf. Barnard and Woodburn 1988:22).

CONCLUSIONS

My narrow argument has been that there is a strong case for distinguishing between gatherer-hunters and their

neighbours, though the distinction in terms of mode of subsistence may not be clear-cut in that the former pursue cultivation of a sort and the latter pursue gathering and hunting. The difference between them relates to their distinct views of the environment that they share, which center around different metaphors: "nature is parent" and "nature is an ancestor." The gatherer-hunters' economic system, constructed in terms of giving in relation to the metaphor "forest is parent," implies that people have a strong ethic of sharing and at the same time practise demand sharing; they make demands on people to share more but not to produce more.

The wider argument is this: whilst economic systems that are constructed about reciprocity have been discussed extensively by numerous anthropologists since Mauss (1954 [1911]), the kind of economic system that the Nayaka exhibit has not yet been recognized. On the whole (but see Price 1975), giving has not been analytically distinguished from reciprocity, and even Sahlins, for instance, regarded gatherer-hunters' "sharing" as a kind of reciprocity—in fact, as a prime example of generalized reciprocity (1972:193–94). There has been a great deal of work on the gift economy and the commodity economy and the relations between them. I argue that there is a need to explore a third kind of economy, which may be found universally, to varied extents and in varied realms, just as the other two are (see Appadurai 1986).

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The Role of the Non-Western Anthropologist Reconsidered: Illusion versus Reality[1]

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Because increasing numbers of anthropologists are engaging in research on their own societies, methodological discussion of such studies has flourished (Maruyama 1969, Jones 1970, Cassell 1977, Fahim 1977, Messerschmidt 1981, Jackson 1987). In contrast, despite expanded interest in the non-Western world, discussion of the role of the non-Western anthropologist, either at home or abroad, is infrequent. "Native" or "indigenous" or "Third World" anthropology in fact seems less fashionable in the 1980s than it was in the 1970s.[2]

In 1977, for instance, the Association of Third World Anthropologists was founded with the aim of "making anthropology less prejudiced against Third World peoples by making it less ethnocentric in its use of language and paradigms." In 1978, the Wenner-Gren Foundation for Anthropological Research sponsored a 20-participant international conference on indigenous anthropology in non-Western countries (Fahim and Helmer 1980). Concern for "acknowledging and effectively harnessing the paradigm-breaking and paradigm-building capacity of Third World perspectives" was manifested by Hsu and Textor (1978:5), and the holding of the 10th International Congress of Anthropological and Ethnological Sciences in New Delhi in 1978 served as a symbolic affirmation of indigenous efforts.

The training of non-Western anthropologists has long been of some interest to the profession. Lowie (1937:133) reports that Boas encouraged it, and two decades ago Lévi-Strauss (1974:18) issued an open invitation to non-Western anthropologists to study the West:

> Might not anthropology find its place again if, in exchange for our continued freedom to investigate, we invited African or Melanesian anthropologists to come and study us in the same way that up to now only we have studied them? Such an exchange would be very desirable, for it would enrich the science of anthropology by broadening its horizons, and set us on the road to further progress.

Keesing and Keesing (1971:369–70) were more specific:

> Anthropology has had to rely far too heavily on stretching the premises, logics, and semantic categories of European experience to fit non-Western culture. . . . We urgently need some stretching of the

1. © 1990 by The Wenner-Gren Foundation for Anthropological Research. All rights reserved 0011-3204/90/3102–0003$1.00. This article is an unplanned outcome of fieldwork on the attitudes of Koreans toward law (1963–64), funded by a research grant from Asian Foundations, on pulpwood harvesting workers in Georgia (1969–70), sponsored by the American Pulpwood Association Harvesting Research Project, and on Native Americans (1974, 1978), supported by grants from the Office of Education, U.S. Department of Health, Education, and Welfare to the Mississippi Band of Choctaw Indians and National Indian Management Services. Recent fieldwork on Korean society and culture was funded by grants from the University of Tennessee at Martin Faculty Research (1983, 1984, 1987, 1988), the Committee on Korean Studies of the Association for Asian Studies (1987), the Wenner-Gren Foundation for Anthropological Research (1988), the Institute for Far Eastern Studies of Kyungnam University (1988), and a Fulbright Award for Research (1989). The original version of this paper was presented at the 12th International Congress of Anthropological and Ethnological Sciences in Zagreb, Yugoslavia, July 24–31, 1988. I am grateful to Larry C. Ingram and Drew Kim for their comments and suggestions on that version.

2. Since 1980, no major articles on "native anthropology" or "Third World anthropology" have been published in the *American Anthropologist* or the *American Ethnologist*, and there have been only two sessions on the topic, both organized by the same person and sponsored by the Association of Third World Anthropologists, at the annual meetings of the American Anthropological Association.