

kommt es jedoch – wie Galinier überzeugend darlegt – zu dem gegenteiligen Vorgang: Konflikte und soziale Probleme finden ihren Ausdruck im Karneval, der so nicht nur eine überraschende Resistenz, sondern auch unerwarteten Auftrieb und Wiederbelebung erfährt.

Die Anwesenheit eines Ethnologen gehört sicherlich ebenso wie die Auswirkungen eines allgemeinen Kulturwandels zu den Herausforderungen der neueren Zeit. In bewährter Manier haben die Otomí diese Neuerung in ihrer Gesellschaft im Karneval thematisiert – ein Ereignis, durch das Jacques Galinier nach eigener Aussage auf einen Weg geführt wurde, den die Otomí für den richtigen halten und der die Annäherung an eine indianische Lebensphilosophie und Kosmvision ermöglichte.

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Gardner, Peter M.: *Bicultural Versatility as a Frontier Adaption among Paliyan Foragers of South India*. Lewiston: The Edwin Mellen Press, 2000. 262 pp. ISBN 0-7734-7819-1. (Studies in the History and Civilizations of India, 2) Price: \$ 109.95

South India is home to a number of foraging cultures like Mala Pandaram, Nayaka, or Jenu Kurumba. This monograph is about another culture in this category, the Paliyar of Tamil Nadu. The introduction explicates the study's well-founded argument that the Paliyar are neither an isolated tribe, untouched by time nor other cultures nor are they fully assimilated into the broader social system and Tamil culture. Instead, having interchange and contact with outsiders for centuries, Peter M. Gardner explicates what he calls the "bicultural oscillation" (22) of Paliyar as a specific "mode of adaption" (218). Particular emphasis is, thus, given not only to the processes of enclavement into the larger social terrain but also to the various strategies of the Paliyar to maintain, in the face of outside pressure, economic autonomy, and cultural integrity.

The second chapter introduces the economic strategies of the Paliyar living in that "frontier zone" (24) between forest areas and the agricultural Tamil villages. Numbering about 3,300 people they live in 84 groups, either in forest-based bands of 15–30 individuals or in settlements at the forest edge. All, however, share the pattern of oscillation between the forest, where on the one hand they gather, hunt, and collect forest products for sale, and on the other hand, the external economic and social environment where they work in plantations or the rice fields owned by Tamils.

Chapters three and four explore this topic in further detail and show how the forest provides an economic niche enabling the Paliyar to make a living from the collection of forest products for subsistence or sale to Tamil contractors but also through paid labour. He, thus, refutes earlier arguments (R. G. Fox, *Professional Primitives. Hunters and Gatherers of Nuclear South Asia*. *Man in India* 49.1969: 139–160) about the inability of South Indian foragers to live off the forest. At the same time, he presents evidence how this environment and its resources allows a considerable amount of freedom,

retreat, and avoidance of caste society and its values of hierarchy and social interdependence. These chapters make clear that the Paliyar are not excluded by caste society and its values of ritual impurity but that they are regarded as a part of the system of local economic exchange. Nevertheless, intimate knowledge of the forest as a symbolic and cultural capital allows the Paliyar to maintain their key value orientations and their particular social fabric.

These aspects are analyzed in the next two chapters which focus on Paliyar patterns of behaviour and social organization. Like other South Indian foragers, the Paliyar are not organized on the level of the tribe as a whole, neither in political terms (they have no chiefs, no councils of elders, no headmen, etc.) nor in social terms (they have no clan- or lineage-system, etc.). Instead, as chapter four and five show, the bands and settlements are based on bilateral and rather flexible personal relationships. Moreover, personal autonomy, respect for the individual and equality among all human beings are the most valued principles in social life. The principle that individuals and their decisions should be deeply respected also reflects itself in the, as it were, (bilateral) marriage patterns and in the flexible composition of band membership, though certain preferences for cross-relatives are apparent. In contrast, any superordination is regarded improper behaviour. If it occurs, the main response is avoidance or tacit personal diplomacy.

This theme is further explicated in chapter six where the fabric of kinship relations is shown in detail. Though the Paliyar do not, as Gardner points out, practise the Tamil system of affinal marriage across generations, they do use the Dravidian kinship terminology and, in particular in everyday affairs, they highly value immediate affinal relatives like cross-cousins and cross-nieces. "In sum," says Gardner (116), "Paliyan affinal and cross-relatives are special, small sub-sets of the full set of relatives," thus confirming B. Morris' data on the Malapanadaram (Forest Traders. London 1982) and Demmer's on the Jenu Kurumba (Always an Argument. *Anthropos* 96.2001: 475–490).

Another vital dimension of contemporary Paliyar culture is the relationship and interaction of the people with their deities and spirits (both called *caami*). In contrast to the pattern of equality among humans, these beings are accorded a super ordinate status where individual self reliance and autonomy is suspended. In contrast, this sphere allows for the open articulation of dependency and the need for help and support. As chapter seven shows, most of the adult Paliyar are able to embody the gods and spirits and, during séances of possession, humans are able to converse with them in ordinary language. Like the Malapanadaram (B. Morris, *Hill Gods and Extatic Cults*. *Man in India* 61.1981: 203–236), the Nayakar (N. Bird-David, *Puja or Sharing with the Gods? The Eastern Anthropologist* 49.1996: 259–276) and the Jenu Kurumba (Demmer 2001) interaction and conversation with the gods and spirits constitute cultural performances, where people ask the other-than-human beings for advice, where they