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Primitivism: Back to Basics?
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In such societies, community practice goes way beyond that envisaged by orthodox revolutionaries[5]. As there is no significant division of labour, specialist tyranny is no threat and there is a strong communal bond of common experience. Instead of alienation, there is particularisation, each person, animal and element of the environment dealt with individually, some societies even lacking collective nouns[6]. Individual/society, society/Nature and other classic polarities are dissolved in this particularism and it also ensures specific consideration of cases rather than appeals to abstract customs (which later become hierarchically-enforced/imposed laws) and thus a surprising toleration of diversity given conventional stereotypes of tribal societies. Attitudes to property also impress — rather than nit-picking over who should own what as orthodox revolutionaries do, primal people practice usufruct, something is someone's while their using it and everyone else's to use when not. A lot of shite is talked by precious artsy types about how Civilisation is culturally superior to the rest of the world — so show me the machine that can simulate the Baka's communal harmonic singing. Culture is not a separated activity for primal people, so they're better-developed culturally as well as socially.

We're not saying future society should be like any pre-existing society, just that we can learn from the ones that work and pick'n'mix accordingly. Culture is something we choose to do, to create, not some biological inheritance or unchangeable given. We should get informed and make the best of ourselves.

[5] All from Murray Bookchin's *Ecology of Freedom* (Cheshire, 1982), chap. 2. A reformist, he offers "new ethics" instead of following through the logical, primitivist conclusion of this chapter.

[6] People dismissing John Zerzan's critique of symbolisation in *Elements of Refusal* (Left Bank, 1988), Part 1, as weird should appreciate such thinking is more familiar to primal people.

all they wanted in life[1]. We've seen why this latter-day "communism" won't work already and note that Marxists reject the version that did work as 19th Century racist anthropologist and "Progress" proponent Henry Lewis Morgan argued Civilised men (sic) more "advanced" than pre-industrialised people[2].

The Industrial Revolution certainly warped the dreams of the people. Before it, when people envisaged a better world, it was Eden or its variants — from the medieval Land of Cockayne to the early-20th century Big Rock Candy Mountain — where the abundance of arcadia lifted the yoke of work and duty from their shoulders[3]. Fantasy met reality in the Age of Discovery, the communism of the North American Indians and South Sea Islanders being oft-quoted as alternatives to European society — some even defected. Others attempted to turn their dreams into reality by establishing communities "like the early Christians" and, ironically, the push to colonise the New World was as much about returning the poor to their own little subsistence "Edens" as the rich plundering its resources. The main current post-Industrial revolution is a faith in "Progress", a new world through technology not community.

Fantasies have been projected on stateless society because State society is so bad. And the substance? That depends on the society — some are real snakepits — arbitrary rule by tyrants, societies like this one in minature[4]. If there's one society that isn't like that — and there are many, particularly those based on hunter-gatherer bands free of shamans — then there's no reason why everyone shouldn't live their better way.

[1] "The original affluent society" of Marshall Sahlins' *Stone Age Economics*, where people only had to work a leisurely couple of hours a day to get together the basics of life — a lived just as long as people do in industrialized societies.

[2] Fredy Perlman's *Against His-Story, Against Leviathan* (Black & Red, Detroit, 1983), pp.13–15.

[3] Power-crazed scum saw Imperial Rome as their model of the ideal society. Such Classicism culminated in fascism.

[4] Eli Sagan's *At the Dawn of Tyranny* (Vintage, 1985), must reading for pop tribalists who ignorantly assume all things tribal are good, not that most get beyond facepaint and fashion . . .

Contents

Civilisation is backwards, Primitive societies are advanced!

When we say we want green anarchy, a stateless society, free and in harmony with Nature, people tell us that it's "a nice dream but it'll never happen" as "it's against human nature". The point is that is has happened — green anarchy was how all people lived for a good 90% of history, how they lived before they were even *Homo sapiens*, how some still live better than we do today. When we point this out, people start pissing and whining about "going back to the caves" and getting protective about their TVs, cars and other fruits of "Progress", particularly Lefties and "anarchists" who don't know the difference and who think "Progress" is some inevitable law of Nature and not part and parcel of State society and the self-serving elites ruling it. We'll demolish those myths in a future issue — in this we're looking at why people living in green anarchy are more advanced than those in this sort of society.

A key problem with this society, as any Marxist will tell you, is alienation. They mean alienation from product — that is, the boss takes what you make to sell back to you, it's not yours — but the intense division of labour that guarantees the commodities that people get so protective about also means we're separated from each other and the Earth. Never mind not affording all those commodities, they're no compensation for the lonely crowds, the powerlessness of being pushed around by bosses, the dependence on specialists who screw us over our basics of life, the meaninglessness of a life ruled by events beyond our own control. This isn't about "capitalism" per se — any mega-machine society based on intense division of labour's going to run the same, whatever rhetoric power / management specialists and co-ordinators use to mystify their rule.

Marxists look forward to communism, when the material abundance of capitalism is for all — but turn their back on what they call "primitive" communism where people were already equal and had