



# **Above the Forest: A Study of Andamanese Ethnoanemology, Cosmology, and the Power of Ritual**

*Vishvajit Pandya*

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Since the publication of Radcliffe-Brown's classic ethnographic study, *The Andaman Islanders* (1922), many changes have occurred with only four dialect groups now surviving on the islands. In this work the author documents the social organization of these widespread groups--their magical and religious beliefs, their ceremonial customs, as well as their myths and legends. Based on extensive field research, this work reexamines the Andamanese, their life in the Bay of Bengal, and whether their rituals are still based what was previously perceived as a "conception of cosmos." It discusses what the changing power relations among animals, humans, and spirits indicate about the Andamanese character of power and its possession, as well as the transformation of nature and culture. In presenting a holistic view of the cultural system, this work provides an absorbing view for students, scholars, and the general reader interested in this vibrant way of life of the Andaman Islanders.

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