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Jonathan Lawley

A Road to Extinction

Can Palaeolithic Africans survive in the Andaman Islands?

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John Simpson, World Affairs Editor, BBC News

'Deeply moving. Deserves our support.'

Matthew Parris, Writer and Broadcaster

'Anthropologically important, with a message pivotal to the survival of an indigenous island society on the edge of extinction.'

Richard Luce, former U.K. government minister

'A fascinating book. I strongly recommend it.'

THE JARAWA, THE OLDEST TRIBE OF HUMAN beings in the world, may go extinct because of a road that runs through pristine forests in the Indian-administered Andaman Islands, in the Bay of Bengal, and no one seems to care.

Tourists take the road each day to try and get selfies with the tribespeople, who came from what is now Botswana over 60,000 years ago.

Proud of their independence, the Jarawa are nonetheless tempted with biscuits, as if they were exotic animals in a human safari park.

In this astonishing book, Jonathan Lawley returns to what was once a penal colony built by the British to house Indian mutineers.

He asks what responsibility colonial administrators like his grandfather may have had for the plight of these palaeolithic hunter-gatherers, and what the Indian government should now be doing to protect this last link with our most distant ancestors.

Sumptuously illustrated with the author's never-before-seen archive photographs.

THE AUTHOR

Jonathan Lawley was born in India (now Pakistan). His family links go back five generations to the East India Company. After Indian independence, his family moved to Africa where he became the last white district commissioner in independent Zambia.

RESOURCES

Photographs include

The author's aunt (aged five) in 1911 meeting a group of tribespeople.



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