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*Shared Presence in Ritual Practice: Religion, Hierarchy and Equality*

If societies are not only made up of human individuals but can also encompass a variety of non-human entities—as it is now increasingly accepted in anthropology—what are the implications for the ways in which we understand hierarchy and equality in these social formations? Are seemingly egalitarian societies actually hierarchical states of domination *avant la lettre* because they prefigure in the religious domain what then turns into relations of domination in (other) political domains? Are their rituals the gateways through which hierarchy enters an otherwise egalitarian system? This paper addresses these problems by ethnographic elucidating prototypical cases of egalitarian societies, namely foragers in Southern Africa. It further refers to prototypical cases of hierarchical formations within the Roman Catholic Church.

All are welcome!

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