

possibility that Collinson intended 'not to succour the lost expedition, but to seek, remove, and conceal the records they had left' (page 128); the *possibility* that Forsyth was ordered to 'effectively sabotage the only expedition dispatched to search in the right place' (page 86); the *possibility* that Belcher had been ordered to 'ensure Franklin was not found, whatever the cost' (page 141); the *possibility* that the Admiralty destroyed the ship *Resolute* 'in a clear and deliberate act designed to keep her from doing what so clearly had to be done' — that is, find Franklin (page 163); the *possibility* that the Admiralty arranged for the murder of Thomas Simpson in the American Great Plains in order to obtain and suppress 'papers which revealed the secret of the Northwest Passage' (pages 290, 294); and many others.

In his confusing web of speculation, Latta has tried to connect such disparate events as the replacement of the Dorset culture by the Thule culture, John Ross' sighting of the mythical Croker Mountains, the discovery of a pair of gloves on Beechey Island, the contradictory translations of Inuit testimony at Cape York, Bellot's drowning, Simpson's suicide or murder, the recovery of the derelict *Resolute*, and a stone grave seen on the Barren Grounds in the 1930s. But he does not provide a logical sequence of events, offer solid evidence that they were connected, or explain why the Admiralty might have wanted to send Franklin to King William Island and then prevent any discovery of his location. It is 'all about conjecture,' as he tells us at the end.

To take a fresh look at the Franklin expedition and search is a worthwhile objective, and Latta has applied a spirit of inquiry to many of the rather strange aspects of the search, such as the absence of messages from Franklin along his route, the curious tale told by Adam Beck, and the apparent lack of Admiralty interest in the bits of wreckage found near Victoria Island by Rae and Collinson. But he has not satisfactorily explained these things. Despite its title, the book is really about what *might* have happened. It is closer to 'virtual history' than to history, and I think this should be indicated in the title. But I wonder why he chose this approach. With his inquisitive mind, vivid imagination, flair for the dramatic, and familiarity with Arctic exploration, he might have combined many of his fanciful speculations into a fascinating historical novel. There are some excellent precedents for this, including Mark Adlard's *The Greenlander* (1978), Andrea Barrett's *The voyage of the Narwhal* (1998), James Houston's *The white dawn* (1972), and — specifically on the Franklin theme — Mordecai Richler's *Solomon Gursky was here* (1989), Rudy Wiebe's *A discovery of strangers* (1995), and John Wilson's *North with Franklin: the lost journals of James Fitzjames* (1999). (W. Gillies Ross, Department of Geography, Bishop's University, Lennoxville, Quebec J1M 1Z7, Canada.)

A LITTLE PIECE OF ENGLAND: MY ADVENTURES AS CHIEF EXECUTIVE OF THE FALKLAND ISLANDS. Andrew Gurr. 2001. London: John Blake Publishing. 290p, illustrated, hard cover. ISBN 1-903402-37-9. £16.99.

I enjoyed this book. It is light-hearted, and its declared

purpose is simple: Andrew Gurr narrates his varied experiences as the former Chief Executive of the Falkland Islands government between 1994 and 1999. A great deal changed in those five years. When Gurr took up his post, the Falklands was classified by the British government as a 'dependent territory,' but by the time he left, it was simply an 'overseas territory.' But there is more to this book than simply unreconstructed nostalgia, as the unfortunate title might initially imply. Gurr also shows himself to be a shrewd observer of the changing contours of the Falklands and Anglo–Argentine relations. The best chapter is unquestionably 'Pinochet, poaching and politics,' which deals with the political fallout for the Falklands following the arrest of General Pinochet in London during October 1998, following a request from Spanish authorities investigating alleged human-rights abuses. I had a fascinating interview with the author in December 1998, and we were able to reflect upon this saga as well as the reforms planned for the Falkland Islands government.

Gurr was appointed Chief Executive to the Falkland Islands in 1994, following a rigorous appointment procedure in the UK and the Falklands. After spotting the initial advertisement in *The Sunday Times*, the particulars attached to the post stressed the need for a developed sense of humour. Following on from his successful interviews, he and his wife Jean travelled to the Falklands in June 1994 to begin their five-year posting. Gurr is keen throughout the book to demonstrate that he did indeed possess a capacity for humour, and this is somewhat forced after the first chapter. However, when he focuses on his posting and, *inter alia*, the challenges of implementing pay and conditions for the civil servants following the Hay Report, he offers an informative overview of how much the Falkland Islands government has changed in the last 20 years. Life has become more complicated as affluence has diffused across that society, and administration of everyday life has grown accordingly. The Falklands, like many other places, is now an 'audit society.' I also liked the fact that he provides an insight into the social and cultural life of the Falklands, even if it is clearly shaped by his position as a highly paid expatriate. Some of these insights may seem a little trivial, but I was genuinely interested to read about what lay behind the door that divides the VIP waiting lounge at Mount Pleasant Airbase from the rather plain lounge in which I have spent many hours waiting for the northbound Tristar. I was pleased to read that it could never compete with a civilian airport's executive lounge! Other readers may enjoy his accounts of visiting penguin colonies, military culture in the Falklands, and the pitfalls of travelling in the Camp.

Constitutionally, as Chief Executive, Gurr liaised closely with the elected Falkland Islands Councillors and the Governor of the Falkland Islands. He was privy to many debates surrounding the economic and political future of the Falklands. The prevailing context is thus important here. When Gurr arrived in 1994, the Islands' economy had been thoroughly metamorphosed by fishing licensing, and public infrastructure was similarly trans-

formed in comparison with those desperate pre-1982 days. It was not all plain sailing, however. While fishing revenues have been variable, the word on the Stanley streets in 1994 was 'oil' rather than 'fish,' and Gurr tells the story of how the Falkland Islands government negotiated the oil-licensing process despite the misgivings of the Argentine government. Thankfully, for many Islanders at least, the talk of an oil boom and a new 'South Atlantic Kuwait' appeared far-fetched. While many Islanders feared further social-cultural change, others worried that hydrocarbon exploration might encourage Argentina to become more militant. Luckily, the then (and now sadly recently deceased) Argentine Foreign Minister, Guido Di Tella was intent on developing better relations with the Islanders, despite former President Menem's fiery rhetoric. Given the current unstable condition of Argentina, many may well have wished that he stayed in post longer.

In the chapter concerning the so-called Pinochet affair and the events leading to the signing of the 14 July 1999 Joint Statement, Gurr is incisive and, interestingly, his style changes as he increasingly positions himself as an 'insider' ('if we became Argentine' page 263) rather than an expatriate in charge of the machinery of local government. He offers a good account of how the arrest of an old dictator in London in October 1998 had real implications for the Falklands, as the Chilean government suspended their air link with Stanley in retaliation. Pressurized by Argentina, other South American countries such as Brazil and Uruguay also refused to allow the RAF planes to use their airports in case of any emergencies over the South Atlantic. The prospect of total isolation loomed for the Falklands. At the same time, the Falkland Islands government was also concerned that fishing revenues were declining in the face of Asian currency crises and local competition from Argentina. By May 1999, the Falkland Islands Councillors felt that a new dialogue with Argentina was vital for the long-term security of the Islands. The resulting 14 July 1999 Joint Statement was a bitter pill for many Islanders to swallow, as Argentine passport holders were allowed to re-enter the Falkland Islands in return for Argentine co-operation over fisheries and the resumption of the air link with South America. Gurr is quite rightly critical of those Islanders who simply poured scorn on the need for the Joint Statement but frustratingly does not give due emphasis to the complaint of many that the Councillors did not consult with the local electorate before agreeing to the general provisions. Many Islanders viewed the restriction of entry on Argentine passport holders as the 'jewel in the crown.' It was the one thing that the Falkland Islands government could do to register their displeasure at the continued Argentine claim to the Falklands, and in July 1999 that restriction was lifted. I, for one, think the seven elected Councillors (bar one who objected to the provisions and process) were right in their actions, given the prevailing pressures of isolation and vulnerable (if renewable) living resources. At the end of the book, Gurr expresses a hope that the Falkland Islands, Britain, and Argentina can find a long-term working relationship but

disappointingly never explores how the sovereignty dispute can be settled. His reluctance is quite understandable, as many have been made to look foolish with their predictions concerning a final political and legal settlement.

Two final points are worth making about the material presented here. First, the title of the book is rather careless and seems designed to boost book sales rather than serve as a prompt for serious contemplation. Slogans such as 'More British than British' and 'A little piece of England' deserve careful reflection. During the 1960s and 1970s, the so-called Falklands lobby in London and Stanley made such racial and political claims in the face of fears that the Islands were going to be transferred in favour of Argentina. It has, of course, been argued retrospectively that Mrs Thatcher's decision to launch the British task force to recover the Falklands was taken partially because the inhabitants were white subjects, even if their citizenship was in some doubt. If the Falklands is or was 'A little piece of England,' then in what way might this be so? Is it because the Falklands reminds Gurr of a long-lost England based on all white and rural communities? Is it because just like England one can find racism, xenophobia, and homophobia? Is it because both places share a common passion for football? And why 'A little piece of England,' not Scotland, Ireland, Wales, nor the British Isles more generally? There is a serious point here, because as the Falkland Islands have become more prosperous and politically autonomous in the post-1982 period so many Islanders have become more culturally confident in talking about an Islander identity rather than simply describing themselves as 'British.' Any claims to national identities are inevitably informed by a political sociology of inclusion and exclusion. Folks from St Helena (often employed as contract workers in the Falklands) will in private talk about how these claims to a 'Falkland' identity can exclude others in a manner that is at the very least hurtful and at worst racist.

Second, as someone who has carried out academic research in the Falkland Islands, I would have liked to read a little more on the actual writing process and the process of recollection. When one builds close relations with people living in a small community, it can become difficult to write about that place in a manner that does not compromise those who supported you. It may also prevent the writer from being as critical as one might have been of a larger community. Many Falkland Islanders have understandably been horrified at the manner in which other visitors have painted unflattering profiles of the Islands and its inhabitants. There are some interesting tensions nonetheless worth exploring here because Gurr occupied an awkward political and social position. He was high-profile and drew a large salary, and many native-born Falkland Islanders still remain deeply resentful of such positions being filled by 'outsiders.' While all Islanders wish to remain under British sovereignty, they most certainly do not agree with one another on how to manage the Falklands and/or prioritize the developmental needs of the islands. But we also need to avoid excessive claims to uniqueness: the Falklands share with other small, isolated

island communities problems of economic and political development. While there is much more to say about the topic, *A little piece of England* provides insights into this fascinating and complex micro-society, even if Gurr appears curiously unaware that he follows in a long tradition of ex-governors and Colonial Office officials reflecting on their tours of duty in the outer reaches of the British Empire. While this is not an academic account, it is largely enjoyable and I certainly learnt new things about the Falkland Islands. (Klaus Dodds, Department of Geography, Royal Holloway, University of London, Egham, Surrey TW20 0EX.)

HUNTING TRADITION IN A CHANGING WORLD: YUP'IK LIVES IN ALASKA TODAY. Ann Fienup-Riordan. 2000. New Brunswick and London: Rutgers University Press. xx + 310 p, illustrated, hard cover. ISBN 0-8135-2805-4. £38.95.

The various ways in which indigenous peoples negotiate ideas of cultural difference to assert distinct identities in the globalizing world have formed the basis of an innovative body of literature by social anthropologists in recent years. *Hunting tradition in a changing world* falls neatly within this field while setting new high standards for anthropologists concerned with inter-cultural relations. The author's experience extends over 25 years living and working with the Yup'ik of southwestern Alaska. Her book (which includes excerpts from her Yup'ik contemporaries William Tyson, Paul John, Marie Meade, and John Active) centres on contemporary cultural encounters and on strategies of culture-making that have emerged in varying sites, or 'points of engagement,' between the Yup'ik and western worlds. Highlighting a process of what Fienup-Riordan calls 'metaphoric incorporation,' the chapters illustrate ways in which Yup'ik and westerners map different (and sometimes conflicting) domains of meaning onto one another. This ongoing and creative process of identity construction (often hinging on 'tradition'), the author contends, creates 'passages' or 'bridges of understanding' between sometimes separate and 'bounded' worlds.

The central theme is eloquently depicted by Fienup-Riordan in the book's early stages by her incorporation of a myth, 'The boy who went to live with the seals,' told by Paul John of Toksook Bay. This myth will be familiar to readers of her earlier works, most notably *The Nelson Island Eskimo* (1983) and *Boundaries and passages* (1994). It describes how a shaman, endeavouring to make a Yup'ik boy strong, prescribes for him an education among the seals. The boy's apprenticeship under the sea ice where the seals reside gives him a glimpse of the human world from the seal's point of view and teaches him those 'essential rules for living' necessary to maintain healthy reciprocal relations between the two forms of beings. He learns that seals strive to stay awake while they are being hunted in order that their souls are not killed along with their bodies. The boy also learns prescribed rules for hunters, relating to caring for one's eyesight, being respectful of other beings, and keeping passageways between igloos and the outdoors clean, and between seals and humans (breathing holes in

the ice) clear. Earlier versions and analysis of this myth feature ways in which the protagonist (the boy) learns rituals, rules, and observances that help him be a proper Yup'ik hunter. In previous works, the story was used to relay Yup'ik ideas about structured relationships between humans and animals as well as ideas of personhood and the fundamental aspects of what it means to be 'Yup'ik.'

In *Hunting tradition in a changing world*, however, the story takes on new layers of meaning. Rather than forging a connection to the past, this tale of a Yup'ik ambassador to the seals is used to offer further insight into intercultural practices and processes of cultural translation, particularly in the context of contemporary hunting communities. Ethnographic examples in the eight chapters illustrate the Yup'ik struggle to 'stay awake' and 'take care of their eyesight' in a landscape incorporating (among other things) features of urban Alaska, the Catholic Church, museum sites, and growing numbers of outsiders with differing understandings of Yup'ik culture and traditions. Ideas of apprenticeship, code-switching, agency, and cyclical processes at the 'boundaries and passages' between western and Yup'ik ideological systems are evoked by this myth. The author's proposal that the power of figurative speech lies in its 'recognition that meaning is indeterminate' is employed to strategic effect with the use of this myth, such that the reader is prompted to ask: 'who stands for the hunters and who stands for the seals?' Indeed, mixed meanings and skilful metaphoric play by Fienup-Riordan allow this story to stand simultaneously for her own journey as well as for the greater Yup'ik venture, their continuing efforts to clear the channels of communication and maintain good relations with western society.

Reflections on travel, agency, identity construction, and cross-cultural translation that make up 'The boy who went to live with the seals' underpin the chapters that follow. The organization of the chapters conjures images of shifting locations and shuttling movement of Yup'ik, missionaries, anthropologists, cultural artefacts, and knowledge between metropolitan centres and local communities. Chapter 1 is located in southwestern Alaska, where Fienup-Riordan situates Yup'ik engagement with the western world within the longstanding Yup'ik world view regarding animal/human relations. She contends that, in the context of contemporary settlement life, hunting ideologies have acquired new significance beyond that of traditional subsistence. Chapter 2 addresses the changing politics of representation and creatively reflects upon the author's own ongoing efforts to bridge Yup'ik and anthropological systems of meaning. The next two chapters speak to Christian colonialism in Alaska and how Yup'ik 'traditions' have been creatively invoked, fashioned, and refashioned in dialogue with the Catholic Church and Christianity. Historically, both Yup'ik and missionaries have relied upon metaphors to draw parallels between their often conflicting ideological systems. Chapter 5 addresses how increased travel and the migration of Yup'ik to urban centres in Alaska have prompted new forms of Yup'ik cultural consciousness, created new ideological terrains,