

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,

and blurred the boundaries of community. Chapter 6 depicts how, throughout the years, members of Fienup-Riordan's own [Anchorage-based] family have been integrated or 'made real people' in Nelson Island through their incorporation by Yup'ik into the web of reciprocal social relations associated with the Yup'ik naming system. Chapters 7 and 8 trace Yup'ik efforts to communicate cultural knowledge beyond the borders of Nelson Island and Alaska. The author tracks the movement and varied reception of Yup'ik masks in different urban and metropolitan art galleries and museums. The final chapter describes travels and fieldwork engaged in by Yup'ik elders during their 1991 trip to a national museum setting in Germany. Issues of representation, collaboration, authorship, ownership, and cultural pride emerge in these concluding chapters, as prominent features of these new intercultural dialogues. The accounts vividly describe how traditional knowledge becomes cultural capital outside Alaska, as exhibits of material culture and the elders themselves are made to represent cultural integrity.

Hunting tradition in a changing world has a number of strengths. Considerable care is taken to describe Yup'ik efforts to translate and promote their values in local, national, and international settings. The author, like her Yup'ik contemporaries, expertly navigates between different ideological terrains, from traditional sites (such as Toksook Bay or Alakanuk) to international settings (such as Seattle, New York City, or Berlin) where Yup'ik cultural productions are subject to exhibition and scrutiny. As the book progresses, core and periphery become increasingly a matter of perspective as the 'westernization' of the Yup'ik is depicted as running parallel to the powerful and prevalent 'Yupification' of the west. The effect is a broadly situated, discursive ethnography of parallel and overlapping processes of historical consciousness that invites readers to reconceptualize notions of bounded cultures, the anthropological field, and fieldwork. For Yup'ik and western scholars of Arctic colonialism, of cultural and symbolic anthropology, of ethnohistory, of rural societies, and of anthropological methods, *Hunting tradition in a changing world* offers unique and seasoned insights into a complicated series of cross-cultural encounters and exchanges that characterize communities across the north. (Nancy Wachowich, Department of Sociology and Anthropology, University of Aberdeen, Aberdeen AB24 3QY.)

References

- Fienup-Riordan, A. 1983. *The Nelson Island Eskimo: social structure and ritual distribution*. Anchorage: Alaska Pacific University Press.
- Fienup-Riordan, A. 1994. *Boundaries and passages: rule and ritual in Yup'ik Eskimo oral tradition*. Norman and London: University of Oklahoma Press.

PESCA: A HISTORY OF THE PIONEER MODERN WHALING COMPANY IN THE ANTARCTIC. Ian B. Hart. 2001. Salcombe, Devon: Aidan Ellis Publishing. 548 p, illustrated, hard cover. ISBN 0-85628-299-5. £45.00.

The whaling station of the Compañía Argentina de Pesca

Sociedad Anónima de Buenos Aires — Pesca for short — at Grytviken on South Georgia came into being through the vision of one man, Carl Anton Larsen. Its huge initial success led to a spate of land-based stations and floating factories working at South Georgia, and later throughout the Southern Ocean. Larsen had already made his name as a successful sealer and whaler in Arctic waters when he led two exploratory sealing and whaling expeditions to the Antarctic (1892–94). He noted the large populations of rorqual whales and the possibilities of setting up a whaling base on South Georgia. In 1902, as skipper of Otto Nordenskjöld's *Antarctic* expedition, Larsen visited a small bay that had been discovered two weeks earlier by a shore party and named Grytviken (The Pot Cove) after the nineteenth-century sealers' trypots found there. He realised that this deep, sheltered 'bay within a bay' with a stretch of flat ground at its head and plentiful fresh water would make an ideal place for a whaling station. When the members of the ill-fated *Antarctic* expedition were later landed and fêted at Buenos Aires, Larsen was able to persuade local financiers to back his proposed company, so Pesca came into being and whaling operations started at Grytviken in December 1904.

Ian Hart considers that the impetus for Antarctic whaling came from an increased demand for baleen (rising to £3000 per ton in 1900) rather than for oil, the market for which was being met by whaling in the north. However, Larsen's early expeditions had failed to find baleen-rich right whales. They did find plenty of the faster-swimming rorquals, but the market for whale oil was uncertain at this time, particularly with increasing competition from petroleum. Larsen's gamble eventually paid off, as within a few years the hydrogenation process enabled liquid oil to be 'hardened' into solid fat that could be used in the expanding manufacture of soap and margarine. This saved the whaling industry but sealed the fate of the whales.

The history of Pesca is the history of Antarctic whaling and follows the same course as other branches of the whaling industry throughout the world: 'initial success, high hopes, and vast profits...and final collapse.' The numbers of whales in South Georgia waters at the beginning were phenomenal: a catcher once drifted close to a pod of humpbacks in fog and harpooned three without use of the engine. In the 1911/12 season investors complained that the dividend was only 26.5%. The 'greed of whalers' has become something a cliché, but the directors and shareholders of Pesca do not seem to have been different from those in any other business. The workers were well-paid for an arduous and often dangerous job. Yet it is amazing how people harvesting the sea often blame anything for decreased catches except their own over-exploitation of the resource. In fact, within a few years of whaling starting at South Georgia, Larsen, other whalers, and outside observers were voicing concerns over the decrease in whale numbers. There was a continuous struggle to offset ever-decreasing whale stocks and retain profitability by replacing obsolete equipment and improving techniques of catching and processing whales. The whaling