siders associate the Koriak themselves with the bear—primitive, wild, travelling widely, consuming omnivorously. From the Koriak point of view, however, people and bears are much alike. The collectivization of reindeer herding under the Soviet state was, for them, an issue of human-animal relations. The animals of the tundra became "related beings" as Rethmann learned "how to read the animals' sounds and movements socially" and make appropriate ritual offerings (p. 50). Particular animals have their individuality and hunting is far from metaphorical.

The women's stories are chosen to represent the diversity of standpoints within the contemporary community. Taken together, they lead the reader into everyday life broadly framed in terms of global political, economic and cultural forces that impinge upon local worlds. This book is both ethnography and ethnology; there is particular description and amplification of local voices but also interpretation of the ethno-nationalism and identity debates which replaced the Soviet preoccupation with class distinctions at the core of communist social engineering. Readers are invited to move between these standpoints with Rethmann, as she assures us the Koriak already do.

Paul Dresch, Wendy James and David Parkin (eds.), *Anthropologists in a Wider World: Essays on Field Research,* New York and Oxford: Berghahn, 2000, xiv + 310 pages.

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As the editors of this volume remind us, times are tough for British anthropology, for reasons that will resonate with Canadians: neo-conservative budget priorities are making it hard to carry on the tradition of extended, open-ended fieldwork. From a certain "managerial" standpoint, anthropology's brand of research compares poorly with the "rapid field assessment" practices of other disciplines and corporations. In this context, it seems a token bit of money was granted to the Institute of Social and Cultural Anthropology at Oxford University for a workshop on methods (held in 1997). To their credit, the Oxford faculty used the occasion to defend anthropological fieldwork as a "patient engagement" with the "wider world." Since then, they have discussed, revised, and collected their papers into this volume, the seventh in a series on "Methodology and History in Anthropology" edited by David Parkin, Director of the Institute. The series abstract promises to offer timely reflections on the state of the discipline:

> Just as anthropology has had a significant influence on many other disciplines in recent years, so too has [*sic*] its methods been challenged by new intellectual and technological developments. This series is designed to offer a forum for debate . . . The intention is for critical essays to complement the intensive ethnolgraphic [*sic*] studies on which anthropology fundamentally depends.

The critical intent of the present volume is declared in the introduction by Paul Dresch and Wendy James. They argue that recent trends in anthropology have neglected "method" due to an excessive concern with the "personal experience" of the fieldworker. "Feminist arguments have been effective and powerful here," they observe (p. 3); but after this perfunctory bow (cf. Caplan, 1992:85) the volume speaks no more of feminism (until a parting nod on page 268), focusing instead on what the editors call a "complementary" mission: to "redress the balance" in favour of the realities of "an intransigent historical world." Searching for a method for apprehending that world, Dresch and James survey a time-honoured trail through the imperatives of listening for the "unsaid" and looking for patterns behind events, arriving finally at the sine qua non of long-term fieldwork. Many—perhaps most—anthropologists are charting new routes through this territory. The editors, however, seem determined to go it alone. For example, they discover, without the aid of a single citation of their many fellow travellers, the challenge of connecting local field experience to global processes. Undeterred, they offer this methodological conclusion: "One cannot see the whole, however. One can only be on guard against self-centredness, and a certain cross-cutting of experience with history deserves noting" (p. 18).

One certainly cannot argue with that. More on history and self-centredness comes in a separate essay by Wendy James. Her reflection on a long fieldwork career in North East Africa is quite interesting in its own right. The narrative supports her strong conviction that fieldwork, far from being a singular encounter, is embedded in a dynamic historical process. Most readers will surely be convinced, if they were not already. Having established this point, James turns her critical attention to Clifford and Marcus' *Writing Culture* (1986), observing that the book promotes an unhistorical approach to ethnography and a "simplistic notion of 'culture'" (p. 88). The source of both errors, she says, is an overemphasis on personal experience. She concludes by contrasting the "whimsies" of "postmodernism" (and this passage is helpfully indexed: "postmodernism: whimsies of, 89") to the "humble," "hard work" invested in "those analytical accounts of human life and experience which might outlast in their significance the emotional ups and downs of the author in producing them" (pp. 89-90). Her case against "postmodernism" rests exclusively on three references to Writing Culture, including a single quotation of two (consecutive) words. Given the gravity of her argument, James shows remarkable restraint in not pressing it forward. Mind you, if "postmodernism" is just a trifling emotion that is bound to be outlasted, then any in-depth critique would be worse than unnecessary; it would be immodest.

This prevailing island spirit is evident in many of the contributions. Notable exceptions are Roger Goodman's respectable effort to salvage the "culture-translation" model from Asad's critique (in *Writing Culture*); and Frank Pieke's intriguing call, in an endnote to his refreshing study of "serendipitous" events, for a poststructuralist adjustment of Manchester School methods. The book as a whole, however, is not greatly concerned with "critical" theory, i.e., the discordant polyphony of feminist, Marxist, and poststructuralist

voices that has stirred the discipline. As such, the book represents a provocative attempt to converse about method in the absence of those voices, and to revisit certain questions in more placid theoretical company.

Curiously, though, some of the essays actually corroborate major preconceptions of those absent critical perspectives; they labour in apparent isolation only to arrive at what is precisely the point of departure for much of contemporary theory. For example, Peter Rivière's essay is a controlled comparison of two fieldwork experiences in northern Brazil; under no acknowledged theoretical influence, he reaches the conclusion that "the nature of the ethnography produced is partly dictated by the nature of the society in question" (p.42)—a belief that is common to nearly all Marxists and poststructuralists, even if they do quarrel over the meaning of "partly." In her contribution, Louella Matsunaga recounts her experience of a miscarriage while living in Japan, and how it may shed light on Japanese concepts of kin relations and "foreigners." She tells this difficult story with great care and ethnographic precision. Indeed, the quality of her writing only underlines the exceptional modesty of her general question, which is: "Can personal experience illuminate anthropological analysis?" (p. 167). Her provisional answer is that reflections on "the personal" are inevitably partial and partisan, but nonetheless potentially revealing—a stance that is definitely in line with many "feminist arguments" although Matsunaga resolutely does without their support.

Other contributors perform unassuming tasks, solidly, with few surprises. Marcus Banks describes the making of his film about Jain migration, pointing to the dilemma of reconciling the "big picture" of history with the "close up" of personal experience. He does not aim to engage with other work on this ubiquitous issue, but simply drives home its continuing salience. Hélène La Rue reports on some innovative community projects that she organised as the music curator of the Pitt Rivers Museum, and challenges a few assumptions in ethnomusicology, such as the apparent bias against doing fieldwork "at home." David Parkin addresses the neglected topic of the aging fieldworker, and analyzes "fieldwork memory" through the concepts of "template" and "evocation." Robert Barnes looks back in painstaking detail on a lifetime of research in Indonesia. He contemplates the alarming possibility that fieldworkers in the same area might produce contradictory accounts, but calmly observes, "So far no reason has appeared to panic" (p. 242).

Two essays deal with greater matters of interpretation. Paul Dresch evokes qat-chewing sessions with Middle Eastern informants in order to play enigmatically with the dilemma that "listening for the unsaid" in every conversation can invite suspicion and result in "unsociable" breaches of tacit understandings. Michael O'Hanlon relates how "a single unsettling event" during his fieldwork in Papua New Guinea has "resisted domestication" into ethnographic knowledge. The event is a battle that he witnessed accidentally, with mixed feelings of guilt and exhilaration; he describes his repeatedly frustrated efforts to convert the "spectacle" into something "anthropologically informative." Both Dresch and O'Hanlon stumble unwittingly onto key motivations behind the critique of cultural hermeneutics. O'Hanlon's essay is a wonderfully honest study of interpretive uncertainty, and it would make an excellent prefatory reading for units on poststructuralism in undergraduate anthropology courses.

Nicholas Allen rounds out the volume with a vigorous argument that fieldwork should not define the discipline, as many "anthropological" questions simply do not demand it. The epilogue is provided by David Parkin, who takes a measured approach. In a preliminary paragraph, he mentions works by Clifford, Marcus, Fischer, Scholte and Asad, and makes the (questionable) discovery that they are mostly concerned with issues of power and representation, and not fieldwork per se. Conceding that territory in good humour, he moves on; there is one passing reference to the groundbreaking book by Gupta and Ferguson (1997), rightly recognized as a "focus on fieldwork as a concept" (p. 261), but Parkin's task is to delve into his own volume, not theirs. He does so thoroughly and judiciously, in a perceptive review of the individual essays.

One thing that Parkin might have elucidated is the claim, made in the introduction, that the volume is "complementary" to other trends in the discipline. As those other trends are only scantily (if at all) addressed in the subsequent essays, it is often hard to see the complement. More attention to this question would have underscored the series' very commendable service as a forum for debate. Research funding is a vital concern, but surely the continuation of anthropology is only meaningful if it sustains a lively conversation. The wider world might be intransigent, but our theoretical debates do not have to mirror it.

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