

Title: **Extraordinary Anthropology: Transformations in the Field**

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Just as diverse as cultures in the world with which anthropologists spend time being 'participants' as varied are experiences by these anthropologists, depending upon the circumstances in which they work. In sixteen essays of *Extraordinary Anthropology: Transformations in the Field* Jean-Guy A. Goulet of Saint Paul University in Ottawa and Bruce Granville Miller of University of British Columbia have compiled the experiential accounts of many anthropologists while encountering diverse communities all over the world beyond anthropology's disciplinary boundaries. Anthropologists have shared in this book their intimate experiences of transformations through dreams, unforgettable visions, emotional conflicts and tensions during field work, as well while at home, when 'Self' encounter the 'Others'. The book emphasizes that going into the 'field' is not just about the data collection; it has many facets further than asking questions and getting answers. Doing ethnography produces ethnographic information about the 'Others' as well as provides insights coming from the interaction between the ethnographic 'Self' and the 'Others'.

The experiences of anthropologists as they describe in this book represent unexpected situations that an ethnographer could face while in the field. Each researcher has unique experiences which may be but are not always limited to emotional conflicts or religious conversions due to personal attitudes and cultural situations in which he or she works. The way anthropologists narrate these experiences in the book are self-illustrating but they have also explained the context and presented their remarks over them.

The book distinguishes these experiences into five broader categories, which form the sections of the book, to highlight their different nature and impacts but 'Ethnographic Self' encountering the 'Others' is core of each study. The book first shares the experiences of anthropologists which took them beyond their direct 'research agenda' and 'taken-for-granted epistemological assumptions'. Then it demonstrates that researchers may not only exceed the disciplinary boundaries but they also go beyond their own 'self' and experience particular affiliation to such experiences. These transformations during engagement with 'Others' are not temporally or geographically limited; instead these have continuous impact on researchers' personal and professional development. In the course of this encounter with 'Others', there is sometimes a conflict between the previous identities and the emerging ones and a tension between loyalty to the hosts and to the profession. In many of the instances give in the book, researchers view this interaction as a potential for learning from 'Others'.

Johannes Fabians, in his preface, regards this work as 'reaping the fruits of critical labor' that anthropology carried out over decades. *Extraordinary Anthropology* is welcome in terms of its treatment of issues about the events and experiences that challenge 'our own epistemological, ontological and ethical assumptions'. Thus, it is knowledge about 'Ourselves' interacting with others in the world. It suggests how the scholastic and practical methods, in an ethical and practical way, can accommodate 'ecstatic' during the 'field'. It opens up new dimensions of studying the relationship between the researcher, the community and the disciplinary boundaries and looking into the 'field' with a different aspect. This aspect of 'field' is indeed inevitable but it may

also open a new door of dialogue over the integration of implications of such experiences with the conventional methodology, and perhaps, re-thinking the boundaries and meaning of ethnography itself. The book will no doubt prove to be helpful for researchers to understand 'themselves' while doing field work in the process of understanding 'Others'.

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