monde naturel. Ce monde miniature du «comme si» représente pour l'auteur «l'un des exemples les plus probants et les plus spectaculaires qu'on puisse trouver de la survivance des métamorphoses rituelles au sein des sociétés industrielles, les bénéficiaires étant transformés symboliquement en Comme-Nous, voire en Nous ou en Tel-Nous» (p. 194-195). Ces séjours de plusieurs années dans ces résidences constituent, pour l'auteur, non pas un rite de passage, mais un rituel de transition permanente. Réalistement, tant pour les animateurs que pour les bénéficiaires, le but n'est pas la réintégration sociale, mais la simple maximisation du développement de leur potentiel. L'expérience de terrain et l'écoute des animateurs et des bénéficiaires mettent clairement en évidence les avantages pour les déficients mentaux légers, de ces structures de rééducation : retrouver la dignité, le prestige, l'égalité, le respect, la fraternité, la solidarité, l'amitié, la capacité à relever des défis, de se dépasser. Cette sensibilité à la réalité du vécu et des limites de cette population conduit l'auteur loin des sentiers battus des théoriciens de la marginalité et des discours utopistes sur la réintégration sociale autant irréaliste que non souhaitée par ceux qui n'y trouveraient que frustrations. Ceci n'empêche pas Michel Desjardins de conclure sur une dénonciation d'une société qui cloître les déficients mentaux dans une «marge voilée» sise au cœur de la ville. Le centre d'accueil «homogénéise la société en masquant le lieu clos à l'intérieur duquel il confine les bénéficiaires» (p. 222) en invitant les bénéficiaires à simuler le mode de vie des autres citadins. Le travail demeure immense pour une véritable inclusion sociale libre de préjugés et de préjudices. Mais cet ouvrage a le mérite d'analyser avec grande finesse les contributions et les limites de ces structures de rééducation sociale tout en illustrant, pour les étudiants et les administrateurs, les contributions du terrain ethnologique en milieu institutionnel urbain.

Colin Renfrew, April McMahon, and Larry Trask (eds.), *Time Depth in Historical Linguistics 1-2*, Papers in the Prehistory of Language, Cambridge, England: McDonald Institute for Archaeological Research; or Oakville, CT, U.S.A.: David Brown Book Company, 2000, 681 pages.

Reviewer: *Paul Proulx*
Heatherton, Nova Scotia

These two volumes are collections of papers by several linguists, several anthropologists and archaeologists, some Orientalists, one specialist in molecular genetics, one Classicist, and several by people whose return address did not reveal their specialties. The linguists fall into three main categories, which for convenience we may call Traditionalists, Experimenters, and Exotic.

Traditionalists contribute several fine papers, replete with anecdote and important detailed refinements to the Comparative Method, an approach which has consistently proven its worth over the last two centuries. A few of these papers merit special mention. Lyle Campbell's paper (I: 3-19) provides a welcome detailed review of most of the traditional topics related to time, amply illustrated.

Bernard Comrie (I: 33-44) tackles some new as well as old but often forgotten insights, notably the idea that rates of linguistic change are more rapid in small societies, and in societies with word taboos. He also discusses the often forgotten fact that it is easier to reconstruct using several daughter languages than it is using only two, something Greenberg's scapegoaters always seem to forget.

Larry Trask (I: 45-58) provides a long and insightful account of Basque as a 2000 year linguistic adstratum to Latin and later Spanish, discussing the types of loans that took place and the extent to which they can be dated. This is required reading for anyone working on languages in contact or the borrowing process.

Kalevi Wiik (II: 463-480) also takes up borrowing over long periods, and the dating of loans, but from the point of view of a substratum language (Uralic) and its effects on the superstratum (Indo European), and how this progresses in time. The model he proposes here suggests the best account I know of the relationship between a pair of language families I work on, Aymara (substratum) and Quechua (superstratum).

Experimenters provide a wealth of exciting new ideas, as well as discussions of possible refinements of much less exciting old ones. Two proposals stand out particularly among the new ones, both exploring the possibility of using language data to go boldly back in time, where linguists have never gone before. Johanna Nichols (II: 643-664) attempts to use language data to help date human entry into the Americas. This is only one of a long series of papers, in which she works on these questions. Dixon does not contribute a paper to the present volumes at all, but is richly present in the discussions.

To my mind, the Nichols paper should be thought of not so much as a research report, but rather as a research proposal. It contains a great number of very preliminary formulations and estimates that are in need of testing and refinement, over a substantial period of time. Only then can the reasoning used be tested in a meaningful way.

Meanwhile, the virulent criticisms to which the paper is subject are premature, as would be any acceptance of its conclusions. One senses a defensiveness on the part of scholars who have made their reputations with traditional approaches to language, and do not want to share the limelight with upstarts. It leaves me with the uneasy feeling that this is academic warfare, and that, as in all warfare, the first casualty is likely to be the truth. These same likely applies to Dixon's theories as well.

Glottochronology has of course been around for a long time, often buried, yet always returning like the "undead." The present volumes are full of criticisms of it, which Matisoff (II: 333) calls "an exercise in necrohippomachy" (beating a dead horse). It also has several defenders and revisionists (mainly mathematicians whose writing I do not understand). They seem not to be reading what linguists have written on the subject in recent decades.

In my view the main contribution of the half century long glottochronology debate has been to focus some attention to fundamental questions of scientific reasoning and the nature of knowledge in linguistics. Critics seldom bother much with this, self-satisfied in their majority opinion. But reviled proponents cannot avoid it, and their introspection is very illuminating, even to those without the slightest interest in glottochronology.

Sheila Embleton (I: 143-166) gives a detailed history of the work done on glottochronology (and lexicostatistics) over the years, and gives a very cogent account of the non-rational factors that go into decisions by linguists to accept or not some particular methodology. It gives one pause to recognize how little of the linguistic scholarly thought process seems to be rational, when carefully examined. Presumably, we are most irrational when we deal with matters we do not want to waste time on, but manage to do better in the few matters we are willing and able to devote adequate time to. Perhaps this should teach us humility, and tolerance for ambiguity.

Baxter and Ramer (I: 167-188) simply, yet elegantly, illustrate the value of statistical reasoning in linguistics. Using a computer to compare a short English and Hindi word list, they run a simple program designed to spot signs of phonetic similarity, comparing words with similar meanings. It finds nine matchings out of 33 items (where to my eye, only about three look like possible cognates). Then, they let the computer run 1000 comparisons of random matchings of the same words, to see if the nine where meanings match can be attributed to random chance or not. It turns out that only 11/1000 runs produce nine or more matchings, a statistically insignificant number. On that basis, they conclude that English and Hindi show statistically significant signs of being related. I'm impressed. Still, I wish they had tried the same thing with an additional pair, say French and Russian.

Of the non-linguistic papers, three especially stood out as especially worth reading for a linguist. McMahon and McMahon (I: 59-74) summarize new developments in biological estimations of time, comparing and contrasting recent chronological work in linguistics. Peter Bellwood (I: 109-142) compared archaeological and linguistic accounts of the Austronesian expansion out of Taiwan and across the Pacific, and more briefly of other parts of the world where he thinks agriculture was a factor in the formation of language families.

Finally, Clackson (II: 441-454) makes us aware of how we may confuse non-linguists by using a term like Proto-Indo-European in multiple contextually defined meanings. Lacking a good grasp of the (unstated) technical concepts that distinguish these multiple meanings so clearly in our own minds, he concludes that "one of the key ways in which reconstructed languages differ from actual spoken languages is that they are achronic, that is, they combine data from a wide range of different chronological layers...The method cannot distinguish between what is a late, or even post-, Indo-European feature and what is early or pre-Indo-European." This should warn us to use our terms clearly, explicitly distinguishing Proto-X, pre-Proto-X, Proto-X dialects, early daughters of Proto-X, and the like. And, when writing for non-linguists, we should probably explicitly state how we know which of these is which.

Each of the remaining authors writes on a slightly different topic, or from a different point of view. They are covering broad subjects in very little space, and as a result several papers are essentially reviews of some section of the literature, accompanied by the author's views.

There is no way a short review can even begin to point out all the errors in reasoning, out of date ideas, and crucial omissions found in many of the papers. Caveat lector! In general, authors in need of firm editorial guidance didn't get it (or resisted it). This is particularly serious in the matter of several papers evidently translated from foreign languages, where the English is unreadable without an unabridged dictionary. Readers are busy people, and are not likely to bother to decode these. That translated papers out of Eastern Europe can be clear and readable is proven by Starostin (I: 223-266), and the same clarity should be required of others. Several other papers are obviously written with only specialists in some exotic topic in mind, scholars who are intimately familiar with an enormous amount of background. These papers would have required quite a lot of introduction in order to become meaningful to a general audience.

The two volumes are printed on glossy paper, and by direct artificial light (a reading lamp) there is a serious problem with glare. Finally, the binding in one of the volumes broke almost as soon as I opened it, and the pages are not very securely bound. I presume libraries will have to have these volumes rebound almost right away, and for this there is only 2.5 cm of margin. For 50 pounds sterling, one might have expected better.

Paul Atkinson, Amanda Coffey, Sara Delamont, John Lofland and Lyn Lofland (eds.), *The Handbook of Ethnography,* London: Sage, 2002, xviii + 507 pages.

Reviewer: *Elvi Whittaker*
University of British Columbia

Rather surprisingly *The Handbook of Ethnography,* edited by three British and two American sociologists, arrives hot on the heels of another sociological *Handbook* devoted to ethnography. This earlier one edited by Norman Denzin and Yvonna Lincoln is in its second edition (1994, 2000) and in the preparation stages for its third. Both handbook efforts are encyclopedic in their scope mainly featuring writings by sociologists and anthropologists, while the Atkinson *et al* volume also adds assorted other disciplines. While the earlier *Handbook* relies mainly on American scholars, the more recent volume claims that "international excellence was our primary criterion" (p. 1) for the selection of authors. The cast includes 21 British, 20 American and 2 each of Dutch, Finnish and Australian aca-