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 Van Bruinessen, Martin (1997). Kurden zwischen ethnischer, religiöser und regionaler Identität. In *Ethnizität, Nationalismus, Religion und Politik in Kurdistan*, Carsten Borck, Eva Savelsberg, and Siamend Hajo (eds.), 185–216. Munster: Lit.

Joshua A. Fishman, editor: *Handbook of Language and Ethnic Identity*. New York: Oxford University Press, 1999, xii+468 pp. US \$50.00 hardback.

In his concluding comments Joshua Fishman explicitly states that “the very breadth and diversity of perspectives provided here makes it exceedingly difficult to summarize the views encountered” (p. 444). This should also apply to the reviewer. As Fishman points out, there are other books on ‘language and ethnic identity’ — Fishman refers to Gudykunst and Schmidt’s (1988) publication with this title — and this may give us a hint why this volume is called *Handbook of Language and Ethnic Identity*: this title somehow gives weight to the book (which can be understood in a highly competitive market) — but it is a misnomer! The editor himself characterizes “the field of ethnicity-related research and theory [as] particularly alive,” states that “the outpouring of scholarly and popular writings related to it is truly torrential and shows little sign of diminishing in the foreseeable future,” and therefore concludes that “it would be unwise to try to ‘summarize’ any field that is as large, as variegated and as rapidly evolving as ‘language and ethnic identity’” (p. 444). So this book is not a handbook, but it offers an interesting attempt to reflect what is going on in this lively “field of ethnicity-related research.” The book certainly achieves its goal, namely “to bring to the nonspecialized reader a substantial selection that reflects the ... regional and disciplinary variations in views toward and experiences with ethnicity” (p. 3).

The anthology (which the editor dedicated to his grandson) is divided into two parts. After the table of contents, a list of contributors, and the editor’s introduction (pp. 3–5), Part I presents “Discipline and topic perspectives.” This part contains chapters on “Economics” by Francois Grin (pp. 9–24), on “Linguistic and ethnographic fieldwork” by Nancy Dorian (pp. 25–41), on “Education of minorities” by Tove Skutnabb-Kangas (pp. 42–59), on “History” by Harald Haarmann (pp. 60–76), on “Nationalism” by William Safran (pp. 77–93), on “Political science” by Robert Phillipson (pp. 94–108), on “Psychology” by Amado M. Padilla (pp. 109–121), on “Sign language and the deaf community” by Colin Baker (pp. 122–139), on “Social psychology” by Karmela Liebkind (pp. 140–151), on “Sociolinguistics” by Joshua Fishman (pp. 152–163),

on “Sociology” by Glyn Williams (pp. 164–180), and on “Second-language learning” by Bernard Spolsky (pp. 181–192). These chapters vary strongly in quality. Some are excellent — as for example Nancy Dorian’s contribution. Others are more pamphlet-like — as for example Tove Skutnabb-Kangas’s paper — or, even for a nonspecialist audience, rather cursory — as for example Harald Haarmann’s chapter. This clearly reflects the state of the art in this field. What is very helpful in all these chapters, however, is the section “Questions for further thought and discussion” and a selected bibliography at the end of every chapter. This section and selected bibliographies are to be found in all the chapters of the second part of the book as well.

This second part provides the reader with “Region and language perspectives.” It is subdivided into four sections. The section on the Americas contains chapters on the “Amerindians” by Terese L. McCarty and Ofelia Zepeda (pp. 197–210), on “African American Vernacular English” by Sonja L. Lanehart (pp. 211–225), on “Latin America” by Ofelia Garc’ia (pp. 226–243), and on “The United States and Canada” by Richard Y. Bourhis and David E. Marshall (pp. 244–264).

The section on Europe presents papers on “The Celtic world” by Colin H. Williams (pp. 267–285), on “Germany” by James R. Dow (pp. 286–299), on “Scandinavia” by Leena Huss and Anna-Riitta Lindgren (pp. 300–318), on “The Slavic world” by Miroslav Hroch (pp. 319–333), and on “Western Europe” — or rather on France, Britain, Spain, and Belgium — by Andre’e Tabouret-Keller (pp. 334–349).

The section on Africa has contributions on “Sub-Saharan Africa” by Samuel Gyasi Obeng and Efurosibina Adegbija (pp. 353–368), on “Afro-Asian rural border areas” by Tope Omoniyi (pp. 369–381), and on “The Arab world (Maghreb and Near East)” by Moha Ennaji (pp. 382–395).

The section on Asia and the Pacific, finally, contains essays on “The Far East” by Florian Coulmas (pp. 399–413), on “The Pacific” by Heather Lotherington (pp. 414–430), and on “South and Southeast Asia” by Harold F. Schiffman (pp. 431–443). At the beginning of each of these four sections there are maps of the geographic areas covered.

After the editor’s “Concluding comments” (pp. 444–454) the book ends with a carefully compiled and rather helpful index.

My general criticism of Part I also holds for Part II of this volume: these chapters also vary in quality: some provide the reader with much new and insightful information with respect to the field of ethnicity-related research and theory in the geographic areas covered; others are outdated and sometimes even boring. It is a pity that the editor was not more rigid in rejecting some chapters. He is obviously aware of these differences in quality, but he cannot excuse them all by referring to the

fact that “it is not easy for specialists to write for ... the nonspecialized reader ... [and to communicate] complex concepts and findings simply” (p. 4). There are a number of shortcomings and typos; for example, the list of contributors does not mention Heather Lotherington; p. 90: read “Russian-speaking.” for “Russian-speaking..”; p. 99: read “McRae 1983 on Switzerland” for “McRae 1983on Switzerland”; p. 152: read “the sociology of language and sociolinguistics” for “the sociology of language and sociolinguistic”; p. 185: read “elementary school.” for “elementary school..”; p. 190: read “language teachers must face” for “language teachers much face”; p. 281: read “so that” for “so that that”; p. 299: read “Reclam” for “Reklam” and read “Hessische Blatter fur Volkskunde” for “Hassische Blatter fur Volkskunde”; p. 324: read “Croatian” for “Crotian”; p. 341: read “children” for “chidren” and read “exclusive affair” for “excusive affair”; p. 429: read “Canberra” for “Can-berra”; p. 438 read “because” for “beause” and read “some of the languages” for “some of languages”; p. 445: Berlin (1992) is not given in the bibliography; and p. 446 and p. 453: Hertz (1994) is quoted in the bibliography as Hertz (1944) — but all this is rather carping.

It is not easy to come up with a fair review of this *Handbook of Language and Ethnic Identity*. When I agreed to review it I expected more than I finally got (my review copy is full of both exclamation and question marks). Reading some of these contributions or rather some parts of some of these contributions made me really angry — it is not acceptable to refer to genocide with the phrase “displacing aboriginal peoples,” and I take it as a sign of ideology and chauvinism if the word *liberation* in the phrase “the ‘liberation’ of South Vietnam” is set between quotation marks. On the other hand, as was already mentioned above, some of the papers provided me with new insights, good comprehensive information, and much material for further thought. So how to come up with my final evaluation? This book on “language and ethnic identity” is certainly not a handbook, but it is a collection of essays that reflect the multidisciplinary character of this “field of ethnicity-related research” and that document the state of the art and all the basic definitional problems of, and controversial discussions in, a field that is large, variegated, and rapidly evolving. It is a provocative volume for both specialized and nonspecialized readers — and therefore surely worth reading.

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Reference

- Gudykunst, William B.; and Schmidt, Karen L. (eds.) (1988). *Language and Ethnic Identity*. : Multilingual Matters.