

Book Reviews

The Name Book, 1200 names — their meanings, origins and significance. By Dorothea Austin. Minneapolis: Bethany House Publishers, 6820 Auto Club Road, Minneapolis, Minn. 55438, 1982. Pp. 352.

Here is a collection of given names, each with Cultural Origin, Inherent Meaning, Spiritual Connotation with Supporting Scripture, all mostly imaginary, of very little value. The author is claimed to have worked under the direction of a capable Minneapolis based development team in collecting and preparing the material, but they are not named and no authorities are listed.

Elsdon C. Smith

Name Me, I'm Yours! by Joan and Lydia Wilen. St. Louis Park, Minnesota: Mary Ellen Enterprises, 6414 Cambridge St., St. Louis Park, Minn. 55426-4461. 1982. 137 Pp. Illustrated. \$3.95 (paper).

What, another book on what to name the baby! There are already so many of them. But this claims to be "the most complete baby name book" and "not only better than the rest . . . this book is better than the best." That's what it says on the back cover. According to its other less-than-modest claims, it contains the correct origins and meanings of over 10,000 names and variations; including middle names, nicknames, and initials; "20 easy steps to select the right name, the psychology of names and its (sic) effect, registering your baby's name, writing creative birth announcements"; lists of name-changes by entertainers and athletes; and briefs on naming customs of selected ethnic groups. And if that's not enough, it smells like baby powder. Literally. The book is saturated with the stuff.

In one of the preliminaries, references are made to several "studies" and "surveys" but nothing is said about who made these or when. In fact, no sources are given for any of the information provided, including such errors of fact as that country and gospel singer Ernie Ford's first name is *Tennessee* and that there really was someone named *If-Christ-Had-Not-Died-For-Thee-Thou-Wouldst-Have-Been-Damned Barebones*. Now really — I thought we laid that one to rest years ago. Moreover, the authors notwithstanding, Catholic children are no longer required to be named for a saint; nor are all Jewish children named for deceased relatives. And children named Dallas, Denver, and Cleve-

land may as well have been given old family names as were named for their parents' home towns. Readers really deserve better than this.

While the naming advice offered is reasonable and probably would be helpful, the book cannot be said, by any stretch of the imagination, to be comparable, let alone superior, to such outstanding works as Nurnberg and Rosenblum's *What to Name Your Baby* (NY: Collier, 1962).

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The Surnames of Lancashire. English Surnames Series, Vol. IV. By Richard A. McKinley. London: Leopard's Head Press, Limited, 69 Aldwych, London WC2B 4DY, 1981. Pages xiii + 501. Price £12.00.

This brilliant study of surnames in Lancashire is by Richard McKinly who is the March Fitch Research Fellow in the Department of English Local History at Leicester University. He is engaged in research into surnames from the historical and genealogical points of view rather than from the linguistic standpoint. Also he has recognized the social and economic impacts on names. This is his fourth published volume. He is currently investigating surname history in other parts of England.

The author has found that Lancashire surnames have retained their own distinctive character and discusses how hereditary names first grew up in the county. Some have multiplied greatly in numbers without dispersing very much geographically. Many are thus extremely common within limited areas. This is not just a dictionary of county surnames although it does discuss the origin, meaning, and history of many Lancashire names, and also considers genealogical evidence with some consideration on how links existed between certain categories of surnames and certain social classes in the county.

The principal purpose of this book is not to give just the meanings of Lancashire surnames. The author has, after an introduction and a short chapter on the rise of hereditary surnames in the county, devoted the main part of the book to chapters referring to the classes of surnames and their derivations: Locative Surnames, Topographical Surnames, Occupational Surnames, Surnames Derived from Personal Names, Surnames of Relationship, and Surnames Derived from Nicknames. No attempt has been made to consider every surname found in Lancashire within a certain classification. A more detailed examination of the surnames in Salford Hundred from 1500 and in Rochdale Parish in the 19th century is included.

Dr. McKinley discusses the problem of classifying surnames as to meaning, and has done much in outlining the development of many Lancashire surnames. He finds that hereditary surnames became general at a later date in Lancashire than in most of England. Copious references support his statements, but typographical errors are numerous.

This is a most important work on English surnames and, while it has made no effort to include a history of all surnames found in the county, it has explained quite efficiently the history of numerous individual family names.

Publication of the English Surnames Series is financed by the Marc Fitch Fund. Has

sufficient attention been given by our American Name Society to the proper establishment and development of a fund for the publication of a really comprehensive dictionary of American surnames? American surnames are the surnames of the world.

Elsdon C. Smith

A Graeco-Slavic Controversial Problem Reexamined. By Demetrius Georgacas. *Pragmateiai tēs Akadēmias Athēnoi*, Tomos 47, Athēnai 1982. Pp. 400.

As a result of languages in contact/conflict interferences occur both in the lexical and grammatical spheres of their oral or written manifestations. The work under review deals primarily with the latter sphere concentrating on the hitherto controversial problem in comparative and historical linguistics: the *-its-* suffixes in the Greek language. Marginally the suffix *-ava* is also discussed.

Like previous studies of Georgacas, Distinguished University Professor, Research Professor and Director of the Greek Dictionary Center at the University of North Dakota, Grand Forks, USA, this book is an impressive compendium of well organized material, sound methodology and bright persuasive conclusions. After a critical discussion of the pertinent literature (pp. 27–47), the author covers extensively the Greek mainland and its colonies (Pontic, Cappadocia, Cyprus, Dodecanese, Chios, Ikarian and Ionian Islands, Crete, the islands of Kerkyra and Paxi, “Magna Graecia” in the South Italy, etc.) with regard to the occurrence of the *-its-* suffixes (pp. 48–180), touches upon “another controversial suffix” (exclusively Pontic) *-ava* and comes to the conclusion that “Slavic origin for these suffixes (i.e. *-its-*) is proven negative” (p. 273): they are, in his opinion, genuine Greek formations, not borrowed, but parallel morphological elements (in the present writer’s typology, “enclavo-symbiotic” elements, cf. *Garmisch 80*, pp. 631–632). Not so persuasive in his derivation of the suffix *-ava* in the Pontiac Greek dialects from Kartvelian in Transcaucasia in the rather sketchy part of the book (pp. 273–291). A very useful and important part is the “annotated bibliography” of books and articles, ca. 360 titles (pp. 293–384). *Addenda* and *Indexes* on pp. 384–435 and one page of *Errata* close the volume. Unfortunately the latter is not full and exhaustive; the following additional errors are found in the text:

Page		
41	“affrication”	to read: affixation
43,374	“tas”	” las
43	“sbVbVb”	” šbVbCb
84	“South Russia”	” Ukraine
95	“Russian/s”	” East Slav/s
97	“Antonovič”	” Antonovyč/vych
143	“Rydneykyj”	to read: Rudnyčyj
170	“prefixes”	” suffixes
371	“grodziecze”	” grodziszcze
378	“in Ukrainian”	” in Polish
387	“... has the language”	” ... is silent
387	“compatriot”	to be omitted.

Naturally, the above oversights do not diminish the high scholarly value of Georgacas' work. There is no question that it will remain for many years to come as a source of stimulation and research of further problems connected with interlingual and intercultural relationships between Greeks and Slavs. As the author himself states, ". . . I hope I have given incontrovertible, indisputable proof for the interpretation here presented, that would be satisfactory and this Graeco-Slavic controversy would end" (p. 14). With this qualification in mind we recommend his book very highly as an indispensable compendium in this particular problem both for classicists and Slavists. The Athenian Academy deserves the highest praise for its publication.

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The Study of Names in Literature: A Bibliography. Supplement. By Elizabeth M. Rajec. München/New York/London/Paris: K. G. Saur Publishing, Inc., 175 Fifth Avenue, New York, N.Y. 10010, 1981. Pp. ix + 298.

When I reviewed the original volume of this bibliography [*Names* 27, 1979, pp. 60—61], I called it "a sound foundation on which to build" and suggested that "the next important step will obviously have to be the compilation of a supplement." This *Supplement* is now available but do not be fooled by its designation, for it adds almost 1700 new items to the original 1200–1300 and is therefore more extensive than its parent volume. These additional items do, on the whole, three things: They considerably extend coverage, especially into Scandinavian, Slavonic and Celtic literature; they fill gaps for the last fifteen years or so; and they bring the listings up to date. The arrangement is fundamentally the same, in so far as the bulk of the volume (254 pp.) consists of an "Author Index" followed by a "Subject Index" which provides references and cross-references under a large number of quite varied headings, from *Aberdeen* to *Zošćenko*. One practical improvement is that both indices are now continuous in alphabetical order and no longer display blanks before each section beginning with a new letter. The most important function of the "Subject Index" is obviously its ability to draw together all published items on particular writers, like Shakespeare, Scott, Dickens, or even Walter Benjamin.

It is understandable that a publication designed and designated as a *supplement* does not make any radical changes in its arrangement; nor can it respond to all those critics who have suggested improvements. It is, however, worth noting that, should the kinds of revision and continuation which Dr. Rajec envisages as a collective enterprise ever come about, several valuable suggestions should be taken into account which have already been made in the course of Hendrik Birus's detailed review of the first volume [*Beiträge zur Namenforschung*, Neue Folge, 14, 1979, 325–350] and of its much shorter forerunner. These desiderata include: Selection of items according to well defined criteria, thematic arrangement, and presentation of all entries following unified principles. Everybody is agreed that this cannot be achieved by one person, however dedicated and knowledgeable. On the other hand, it would be a pity if there were to be no follow-up to the two

volumes published by Dr. Rajec. Perhaps such a task goes even beyond the powers and competence of such an enthusiastic, though loosely organized, group of scholars as that gathering annually in Brockport or Rochester, N. Y. (for the tenth time in June 1982). It is pleasant to report, therefore, that at the Fourteenth International Congress of Onomastic Sciences at Ann Arbor, Michigan, in August 1981, an international committee was formed with the express purpose of encouraging and facilitating international co-operation in Literary Onomastics. To this reviewer, such a committee could do worse than making the extension, revision, and regular updating of an International Bibliography of Literary Onomastics its first co-operative venture.

In the meantime, Dr. Rajec's two volumes will be more than a stopgap for they are something which no other branch of the onomastic sciences has available at present. For that achievement and for all the time and effort she has put into this impressive undertaking we owe her thanks. Let others emulate her.

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GALE RESEARCH PUBLICATIONS

This survey of publications by Gale Research Company, Book Tower, Detroit, Michigan 48226, continues the series of notices giving prominence to books of interest to readers of *Names*. Titles and bibliographical information follow:

Mossman, Jennifer, ed. *Pseudonyms and Nicknames Dictionary*, Detroit: Gale Research Co., 1982. Pp. 995. \$125.00.

Urdang, Laurence, and Frederick G. Ruffner, Jr. *Allusions — Cultural, Literary, Biblical, and Historical: A Thematic Dictionary*. Detroit: Gale Research Co., 1982. Pp. xx + 464. \$45.00

Readers of some literacy should be capable of interpreting allusions to current or near-current persons and events, such as "As silent as Coolidge," "Watergate," of Ruthian dimensions," "meticulous as Nicklaus," "give my regards to Broadway," and similar ones. Trouble occurs, however, when writers, pretentious or otherwise, extend their similes to "as noble-minded as Adam Bede," "as innocent as Topsy," or "as conceited as Simon Tappertit." These can stop a reader in mid-blink. Urdang and Ruffner have set about providing some help for such a frustrated and confused reader who wishes to examine the advantages taken by the writer and passed on by the editor. *Allusions* "identifies approximately 7000 metaphorical items," enough to cover just about all that most of us can even expect to encounter in everyday reading.

The allusions "are identified under 628 alphabetically arranged thematic headings, such as "Frustration," "Hair," "Transformation," "Treachery," "Wisdom," "Witchcraft," and, surely as a sop to the currently superstitious, "Zodiac." If a reader has some difficulty with conceptualizing the abstractions, then the index will take care of the matter. For instance, "as innocent as Topsy" will not be found under "Innocence,"

but under “Naiveness,” which is also cross-referenced to “Inexperience” and “Innocence.” Recourse to the index will make the task easier, for *Topsy* is keyed to 418.6. The task is completed, except for the flipping to the section. A good index can Swiss knife — a quick fix — nearly anything in a book.

A few duplications occur: *the Palace Guard* appears under “Guardianship” as “sobriquet for the zealous spokesmen-defenders of the Nixon Administration,” and as *Palace Guard* under “Zeal” as “term used in alluding to Richard Nixon’s zealous, ardent staff, with reference to Watergate and coverup”; *Friday* from *Robinson Crusoe*; and the different *Davids*.

Do not look for an explanation of “as speedy as Lou Brock” or “of Ruthian dimensions.” Urdang steers clear of “Sports” and “Athletics,” neither listed. The fictional character, Henry “Rabbit” Angstrom (*Rabbit Run*) is listed under “Frustration,” “former basketball star frustrated by demands of adult life.” The nearest to “Sports” probably would be “Gambling,” but even *The Greek* does not make the list. Some gamblers do: *the Cincinnati Kid*, *Mr. Lucky*, *Jim Smiley*, and *Mutt and Jeff*, the latter as “hapless punters always looking for a quick buck.” Funny, I do not remember that they were football players or boatsmen. But then I was too young to know much about *faro*. And that illustrates the merit and fascination of *Allusions*, simply the reading through it without thinking of any utilitarian need, other than enjoyment, perhaps a major utility.

A different kind of reference is the 2nd edition of *Pseudonyms and Nicknames Dictionary* which “gives over 50,000 pseudonyms, nicknames, and other assumed names used by nearly 40,000 real persons.” Whereas Urdang and Ruffner cover metaphorical use of names, Mossman works into the naming process itself by listing “other” names used by writers, entertainers, athletes, politicians, criminals, popes, and others. The majority of those listed seem to be in the entertainment fields. Both the “other” names and the “real” names are listed in one alphabetical arrangement, which allows for easier use, with an asterisk marking the “other” name. Still, some problems exist, such as Paul Bransom having an “other” name of “The Dean of American Animal Artists.” Nothing is glossed under *Dean*. Also, many additional names occur for some of those listed, but to add these would constitute rewrites, and probably Mossman already has them in Gale Research files. Each name is keyed to a source listed in the front matter where some 200 publications are cited, most of them specialized encyclopedias and who’s-who-in-what compilations.

With the rather sudden twist toward sociological studies in names, now that onomatologists have discovered Lévi-Strauss, Derrida, Lucan, and Barthes, pseudonyms and nicknames have become respectable for research and commentary. They have become signs, anthropological artifacts, that need interpretation in the context of the process of naming. A spate of books and articles has been published, none yet of sufficient stature to challenge or equal the same movement in literary criticism, but subtle and germinal studies are on their way, if recent articles in *Nomina* can be judged as meaningful statements on nicknames and similar names. Gale Research Company has published many older and some original compilations of nicknames and pseudonyms, including Cusing’s *Initials and Pseudonyms*, Dawson’s *Nicknames and Pseudonyms*, Haynes’ *Pseudonyms of Authors*, Frey’s *Sobriquets and Nicknames*, Latham’s *Dictionary of Names, Nicknames, and Surnames*, Ruffner and Thomas’ *Code Names Dictionary*, and Brewer’s *The Reader’s Handbook*. These furnish a large amount of raw source material and are still in print.

Non-Gale compilations include Julian Franklyn’s *A Dictionary of Nicknames* (Random

House, 1962) and Frank Atkinson's *Dictionary of Literary Pseudonyms*, 3rd ed. (London: Clive Bingley, 1982). George Earle Shankle's *American Nicknames* (H. W. Wilson, 1955) is out of print but still dependable in a quirky way. Adrian Room's *Naming Names* (Jefferson, NC: McFarland & Co., 1981) contains histories of several hundred nicknames and pseudonyms. Room also gives the best general account to appear yet of nicknaming. Anyone interested in the process should probably begin with Room, then graduate to Morgan, O'Neil, and Harré's *Nicknames* (Routledge & Kegan Paul, 1979), the best book-length study. After that, the article by Peter McClure, *Nomina*, No. 5 (1981) should be studied, along with McClure's notes and references, especially to Iona and Peter Opie, *The Lore and Language of Schoolchildren* (Oxford, 1959).

Such compilations as the ones by Mossman, Atkinson, and Room should serve as catalysts for further investigation in the little-studied area of multi-layered naming in European and European-American cultures, an area that is also beginning to be noticed by genealogists.

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