
Book Reviews

Personal and Family Names: A Popular Monograph on the Origin and History of the Nomenclature of the Present and Former Times. By Harry Alfred Long. Rutland, VT: Tuttle, 1988. Pp. 362. Index. Paper \$21.50.

Personal and Family Names, by Harry Alfred Long, was originally published in London in 1883. A major contribution for its day and a work of impressive scholarship (Long explains in the preface that he spent twenty-seven years in preparation), this book demonstrates how far onomastic scholarship has come in the past 106 years. This is a wide-ranging volume with over 10,000 entries of first names and surnames. Included are chapters on first names, biblical names, women's names; names derived from mythology, animals, war, location, occupation; and patronyms. Many of the entries mention famous bearers of the name, as *John Milton, Isaac Newton, and Admiral Benbow*.

For the lay reader the book may be an interesting source of a great deal of information. For the serious scholar, there are difficulties. Sources for Long's explanations of the meanings of names are not given and thus cannot be challenged. The onomastician is bound to be upset here and there with some of the interpretations.

One problem is the references to *Jehovah* (50) and all the explanations related to the name (now, more properly *YAHWEH*), but we have to remember when the book was written. There are a few others which can be cited as other examples of doubtful validity. *Clara* is said to mean "clear skinned, hearts, blondes" (113). Yet Hanks and Hodges (53) give the meaning as "famous"; Dunkling and Gosling (51) as "bright, shining, clear"; and Withycombe (67) as "bright, clear." These last three may disagree somewhat among themselves but they do give some explanation for their interpretations.

Other explanations that cause me difficulty are *Margaret*, which usually means "pearl," as "grit of the sea" (112) and *Harry*, when not a form of *Henry*, as "one who harries, plunders" (108). I find no confirmation for this meaning in any other source.

Surnames, also, may cause some problems. *Sullivan* is an example. Long explains that it is from *Bain* 'white; fair eyes' (30). Reaney

gives "black-eyed" (258), as does Hook (105). While there are a number of ideas presented which invite interest and further research, the problem with working with this kind of reference is that one doesn't know what to accept and what to reject. Probably most of Long's interpretations are correct, but how is one to know which is which? What the scholar can do is to use some of Long's interpretations as possible clues with which to look further for confirmation.

The publishers have provided a service in bringing out this book which has been unavailable for some time. It has a place in collections which contain historical material on names.

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Dictionnaire étymologique des noms géographiques. By André Cherpillod. Paris: Masson, 1986. Pp. xvi + 527. Approximately 300 French francs.

This remarkable book must be one of the most comprehensive dictionaries of world placenames ever to be published. It is certainly one of the most unusual and original.

It contains around four thousand entries, alphabetically arranged, and aims to include the origins of the names of all the countries of the world and their capitals, the names of many peoples and nationalities, both modern and historic, the names of all fifty American states, fifteen Soviet republics, eighteen Chinese provinces, twelve Canadian provinces,

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and the like, as well as British counties, Swiss cantons, French *préfectures* and *souspréfectures*, and even all French bishoprics (episcopal sees), present and past. In addition, it takes in a large number of biblical names, as well as placenames generally encountered in literature, together with a selection of names of imaginary or mythical places, such as *Atlantis* and *Lilliput*. And as if that were not enough, the book concludes with a separate section devoted to the names of the chief stars and constellations.

What makes the book unusual is its linguistic approach to the etymologies. To begin with, all words are presented in their native alphabets or writing systems, thus producing, as one flips through the pages, a colorful panorama of scripts, ranging from the more conventional Roman, Greek, and Cyrillic to the less familiar Arabic and Hebrew and to the downright exotic cuneiform (for words of Babylonian origin) and hieroglyphic (for Egyptian words). But, except for the Greek, which the author credits the reader with the ability of reading, all scripts and ideograms are followed by a Roman transliteration, which facilitates their comprehension considerably. All the different scripts and pictorial symbols were computer-generated by the author himself, and indeed the whole book was produced by him in this fashion, so that it was entirely camera-ready for the printer. The final text is remarkably error-free as a result.

But the linguistic uniqueness of the book does not stop there, as the author simply cannot resist giving a detailed semantic and multilingual treatment for almost every common word where it occurs. This means that the reader is confronted with a most impressive range of scripts and languages on almost every page. A sample of the distinctive approach occurs in the very first entry, for *Aa*, the river in the north of France. Its basic meaning is "water," and not only does the author give us the origin in over a dozen languages (including Gothic, Danish, Old English, Icelandic, Hindi, and Sanskrit), but he also adds one of his characteristic *aperçus* regarding the word. In this instance, it is that many languages have an apparent correlation between the word "water" and the word "what," as English itself does. (He also cites Latin *aqua* and *quid*, German *Wasser* and *was*, Hebrew *máyim* and *ma*, and so on.)

Although such information is undoubtedly both curious and interesting, one wonders to what extent its inclusion in a dictionary of placename origins is entirely justified. The same obsession with words and their origins is manifest in the entries dealing with placenames derived from personal names, where M. Cherpillod additionally furnishes

the origin of the personal name itself. Thus in the entry for *Kalinin*, the Russian town, he tells the reader that the Soviet politician's name itself derives from the forename *Kalina*, which itself represents Greek *kalinikos* 'obtaining a beautiful victory,' in turn from *kallos* 'beautiful' and *nīkē* 'victory'; and he similarly speculates on the origins of President Tito's name when dealing with Titograd. Once again, this is certainly interesting, but how directly relevant is it?

M. Cherpillod is good at cross-referrals, where appropriate, so that he links *Abu-Simbel* and *Abbeville*, *Alcazar* and *Luxor*, *Cameroon* and *Cambrai*, *Turku* and *Trieste*, and many similar instances where names share, or supposedly share, a common etymon. In similar fashion the *Abidjan* entry reminds the reader of other names that arose as the result of a "misunderstanding" (*méprise*), such as *Banjul*, *Dakar*, and *Toleara*.

The whole subject of world placenames and their etymologies is, of course, a potential minefield, or least a quicksand, in which the intrepid researcher and expounder can soon do himself and his reputation a serious injury, or become hopelessly enmeshed. But M. Cherpillod boldly confronts the challenge, openly stating that it is better to give doubtful origins than none at all, and expressing the unreliability of the etymology in several instances by the use of the conditional mood, in the traditional French manner for such cases.

Clearly a polyglot, M. Cherpillod seems most at home with oriental languages and placenames, and his handling of biblical names and origins is particularly impressive, as is his treatment of Chinese and Japanese names.

Although, as mentioned, one wonders about the exact appositeness of his extreme linguistic detail, where it occurs, one cannot help being seduced by his equally absorbing (although strictly irrelevant) toponymical asides. Under *Greenwich*, for instance, he points out that Louis XIII decreed the establishment of a meridian to pass through *Valverde*, in the Canary Islands, while Louis XIV set his meridian to pass through *Vauvert*, south of Paris. All three names have a common "green" element, therefore. Similarly, the *Central African Republic*, now an independent state, has a European-style name, whereas as a former French colony it was known as *Ubangi-Shari-Chad*, a native name. The country's name thus runs counter to the usual African pattern.

As far as one can tell, M. Cherpillod's etymologies, where well attested, are reasonably sound, although some quite well-known British names appear to have garbled origins. *Brighton*, for example, does not mean "Bartholomew's farm" but "Beorhthelm's farm," and the hoary old

story about *Halifax* meaning “holy flax” has now long been discredited. One wonders where the author obtained such etymologies. It is hard to tell, for the book—another unusual feature—contains no bibliography. But the assiduous M. Cherpillod consulted experts worldwide (in many cases corresponding in Esperanto) for much of his material, and the resulting tome undoubtedly has a positive value, not a negative one. Indeed, of its kind it is not only a *magnum opus* but a veritable *chef d’oeuvre* in the literal and best sense, and we owe its French author our gratitude.

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Der Name als Stigma: Antisemitismus im deutschen Alltag 1812-1933. By Dietz Bering. Stuttgart: Klett-Cotta, 1987. Pp. 567. Tables, illustrations. DM. 98.00.

Through this notice I humbly wish to make it known that I have, with official permission, changed my family name. From today on I will be called “Körner.”

Sincerely,

Paul Kohn

Wilhelmsaue 12

This brief notification in the *Berlin-Wilmersdorfer Zeitung* of April 19, 1913, conveniently and disturbingly heightens (on page 167) the central theme of this fascinating book, whose title translates into English as *The Name as Stigma*. The book is an absorbing, well researched and very fully documented account of the numerous onomastic aspects of anti-semitism in Germany from 1812 to 1933; that is, before the National Socialists gained power. Nowhere, in my extensive reading of literature pertaining to the function of names in society, have I come across a more persuasive presentation of the ways in which names and their bearers become one, indivisibly, existentially, and, in the case of so many bearers of Jewish names, fatally.

The newspaper “advertisement” quoted at the beginning of this review is only one, although a very significant, example not only of the

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wish to divest oneself of a name with strongly Jewish associations but also, in the discussion which follows, of the reaction of non-Jews, unofficial and official, bigotted and tolerant, to such name alteration. The irony of long drawn out, highly publicized battles in newspapers and the courts, of this particular celebrated Kohn-Körner case is that the Paul Kohn in question was not Jewish himself but wanted to divert even the slightest suspicion that he might be, from himself and his family who were the accidental bearers of a name that in everybody's eyes was marked more highly than any other as distinctly Jewish. The unwarranted and desecrating usurpation of a name so closely identified with the poet and hero of the so-called *Freiheitskriege* (the Wars of Liberation) of a hundred years earlier, Theodor Körner, on which so much of the protest hinged, therefore had no basis in fact, but nevertheless expresses, in its gullible perception, a dormant or rampant racial hatred that is at the heart of the historical developments and behavioral patterns described and analyzed by Bering, as a result of much painstaking research. In the end, it does not matter whether Paul Kohn is Jewish or not; it is the manner in which the name Kohn (Cohn) as symbol triggers anti-semitic and less hostile reactions that is important. It is also well to remember that the year is 1913, not 1933 or 1943.

Bering's extensive study, the recognition of which gained him the *venia legendi* (the right to lecture) at the University of Cologne in 1986, is not an attempt to show that the despicable anti-semitism preached by the Nazis and its tragic consequences were the inevitable outcome of developments which had their roots in the late eighteenth or early nineteenth centuries—far from it. It is rather the dispassionate—if lack of passion is possible under the circumstances—delineation of government edicts, informed opinion, newspaper accounts, public and private racial resentment, etc., that concentrated on personal names as the focus of attention and conviction, in the assimilation or exclusion of Jews in Prussian and German society. Again, ironically, it is the surprisingly liberal emancipation edict of March 11, 1812, which, in its insistence on a societally acceptable onomastic formula of given name and family name for every officially accepted and admitted member of that society, ultimately created the handles which made the atrocities of the years 1933-1945 possible.

Jews, many of whom at that time had only given names, sometimes given greater genealogical precision by patronymics, were thus required to choose fixed family names in order to conform with the prescribed anthroponymic system. Among the most commonly chosen surnames

among Berlin Jews at that time were *Levi (Levy, Levin), Hirsch, Moses, Markus, Nathan, Salomon, Liepmann, Bendix, Isaak (Isaac), Samuel, Joseph, Oppenheim, Israel, Cohn, and Itzig*, although others selected similarly sounding and looking or completely different names (Bering has the exact statistics). The top half dozen first names which were changed from Jewish to what were then non-Jewish associations were *Moses (to Moritz, Moser, Martin), Abraham (to Albert, August, Adolph, Johann, Herz), Joseph (to Eduard, Gumpel, Gustav, Jean), Levin (to Ludwig, Carl, Wilhelm, Leonhard), Salomon (to Siegfried, Siegmund, Sigismund, Gotthold, Martin, Jonas, Jacob), Samuel (to Sigismund, Siegfried, Anton, Martin)*.

Although the new rules facilitated and guaranteed assimilation, it was the new combination of, let us say, *Moritz Bendix* or *Siegmund Freud* that created a kind of onomastic ghetto, with all the desirable and undesirable consequences that attach to it, within the state approved system. This is not the place to summarize Bering's findings, to present further extracts from his many instructive tables, or to recreate the meanderings by which, for instance, *Isidor* as a first name and *Cohn* as a surname became the most heavily marked Jewish names within the system and could therefore be used *pars pro toto* as, for example, *Cohn* in numerous jokes and, much more seriously, in Goebbels' derogatory designation of the Vice President of the Berlin police, Dr. Bernhard Weiss, as *Isidor*. Bering's study is a rare and therefore so welcome investigation of the psycho-social conditions under which names exist, and of the frightening range of onomastic power, prejudice, vulnerability, inclusion, exclusion, assimilation, rejection, impact, stigma, and so on, and one wonders whether there are in our lives any symbols more powerful than names. Those of us who tend to look at names and interpret and analyze them in the abstract, will find it difficult to do so again after reading this book. One can only hope that there will be an English translation of it soon, to make Bering's material and conclusions more widely accessible.

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Denotationsbyte i ortnamn: Rapport från NORNA's trettonde symposium i Tvärminne 9-11 oktober 1986. [Change of Denotation in Placenames: Report from NORNA's Thirteenth Symposium at Tvärminne (Finland) 9-11 October 1986.] Edited by Peter Slotte. NORNA-Rapporter 37. Uppsala: NORNA-Förlaget, 1988. Pp. 146. Paperback. Available from NORNA-Förlaget, St. Johannesgatan 11, S-752 21, Uppsala, SWEDEN. 50 Finnish Marks/75 Swedish Crowns.

This book contains twelve papers as well as accounts of four discussions related to the papers and six extracts from the final discussion. The languages used are Swedish (chiefly), Danish, and Norwegian. This means that most scholars in Scandinavia – from Finland to Iceland – can read it without difficulty.

The theme of the symposium, *Denotationsbyte* (*denotationsförändring*), i.e., “Change of Denotation,” was presented in a circular letter sent in advance to the participants. Its author, Kurt Ziliacus, said that one of the main tasks of the symposium was to “suggest methods of determining the borderline between *utbyten* and *förskjutningar*.” He defined *utbyten* ‘exchanges’ as “conscious changes in the denotation of a placename” (for example, the river name *Borgå* became the name of a parish and later of a city), *förskjutningar* ‘shifts’ as “unconscious changes of denotation” (for example, the lake name *Hemtrasket* became the name of a meadow after the disappearance of the lake by drainage).

According to the circular letter, reprinted in the introduction, “it is impossible to know how many names we have as well as to produce onomastic statistics or write the history of our placenames without a clear borderline between these two phenomena!” This is of course a provocation since presumably many thousand scholars throughout the world work on placename statistics or history without worrying much about the difference between *utbyten* and *förskjutningar*. However, the only one who seems to have responded to the provocation was Stefan Brink. In the final discussion he muttered that the emperor had no clothes: “Perhaps a single term *denotationsförändring* ‘change of denotation’ would be enough. My ulterior motive is that terms and taxonomy ought to clarify and simplify, i.e., increase our chances of understanding a complex reality – not make it still more obscure and complicated” (135). Stefan Brink hints that instead of splitting hairs and discussing subtle terminological distinctions, Scandinavian onomasts should attend to the many unplowed fields within the domain of really fundamental and important onomastics.

Unfortunately, there are no summaries in English, and space does not permit me to give an account in detail of the contents of the book. Here is, however, a piece of good advice to Americans interested in Scandinavian onomastics: learn to *read* (with the help of a dictionary) Danish or Norwegian or Swedish. Some ninety-five percent of the everyday words of these three languages coincide, more or less, and to English speakers over half of this vocabulary is easy to understand. Then a wealth of onomastic knowledge and ideas will be available to you.

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Editor's Note: Because of the importance of this series of pamphlets, we have asked Mr. Gunnemark to furnish a list of titles in English translation, and we take advantage of this opportunity to list this series below.

1. *Terminology of Placename Study*. Reprint from *Namn & Bygd* 61 (1973).
2. *Register of Scandinavian Onomasts, 1973*. Ed. Thorsten Andersson and Eva Brylla, 1973.
3. *Scandinavian Onomastics, 1972*. Reprint from *Namn & Bygd* 61 (1973).
4. *Use of Computers at Onomastic Archives*. Ed. John Kousgård Sørensen, 1974.
5. *Scandinavian Onomastics, 1973*. Reprint from *Namn & Bygd* 62 (1974).
6. *Scandinavian Onomastics, 1974*. Reprint from *Namn & Bygd* 63 (1975).
7. *Register of Scandinavian Onomasts, 1975*. Ed. Alan Rostvik and Eva Brylla, 1975.
8. *Bynames and Family Names: Delimitation and Origins. Proceedings of NORNA'S Third Symposium, in Uppsala, 27-28 April 1974*. Ed. Thorsten Andersson, 1975.
9. *Scandinavian Onomastics, 1975*. Reprint from *Namn & Bygd* 64 (1976).
10. *Placenames and Society: Aspects, Concepts, Methods. Report from NORNA's Fourth Symposium, in Helsinki (Hanaholmen), 25-27 April 1975*. Ed. Vibeke Dalberg, Botolv Helleland, Allan Rostvik, and Kurt Zilliacus, 1976.
11. *Scandinavian Onomastics, 1976*. Reprint from *Namn & Bygd* 65 (1977).
12. *Register of Scandinavian Onomasts, 1977*. Ed. Alan Rostvik and Eva Brylla, 1977.

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13. *Placenames: Nurturing, Preserving, Planning. Proceedings of NORNA's Fifth Symposium, in Helsinki (Hanaholmen), 23-25 September 1977.* Ed. Kurt Zilliacus 1978.
14. *Scandinavian Onomastics, 1977.* Reprint from *Namn & Bygd* 66 (1978).
15. *Scandinavian Onomastics, 1978.* Reprint from *Namn & Bygd* 67 (1979).
16. *Register of Scandinavian Onomasts, 1979.* Ed. Alan Rostvik and Eva Brylla, 1979.
17. *Placenames and Language Contact. Proceedings of NORNA's Sixth Symposium, in Uppsala, 5-7 May 1978.* Ed. Thorsten Andersson, Eva Brylla, and Allan Rostvik, 1980.
18. *Linguistic Utilization of Placename Material. NORNA's Seventh Symposium, in Copenhagen, 18-20 May 1979.* Ed. Vibeke Dalberg, Bente Holmberg, and John Kousgård Sørensen, 1980.
19. *Scandinavian Onomastics, 1979.* Reprint from *Namn & Bygd* 68 (1980).
20. *Scandinavian Onomastics, 1980.* Reprint from *Namn & Bygd* 69 (1981).
21. *Scandinavian Onomastics, 1981.* Reprint from *Namn & Bygd* 70 (1982).
22. *Register of Scandinavian Onomasts, 1982.* Ed. Bent Jørgensen, 1982.
23. *Terminology of Personal Names. NORNA's Eighth Symposium, in Lund, 10-12 October 1981.* Ed. Göran Hallberg, Stig Isaksson, Bengt Pamp, 1983.
24. *Scandinavian Onomastics, 1982.* Reprint from *Namn & Bygd* 71 (1983).
25. *Names in Scandinavia ("Norden"). Survey of Scandinavian Onomastic Institutions and Collections.* Ed. Vibeke Dalberg and Bent Jørgensen, 1983.
26. *The Ages of Settlements and of Their Names. NORNA's Ninth Symposium, in Copenhagen, 25-27 October 1982.* Ed. Vibeke Dalberg, Gillian Fellows-Jensen, Bent Jørgensen, and John Kousgård Sørensen, 1984.
27. *Scandinavian Onomastics, 1983.* Reprint from *Namn & Bygd* 72 (1984).
28. *The Meaning of Topographical Appellatives in Placenames. NORNA's Eleventh Symposium, in Reykjavik, 11-13 August 1983.* Ed. Thórhallur Vilmundarson, 1985.
29. *Regional and Social Variation in Scandinavian Personal Names. NORNA's Tenth Symposium, in Umeå, 3-5 May 1983.* Ed. Sigurd Fries and Roland Otterbjörk, 1985.

30. *Register of Scandinavian Onomasts, 1985*. Ed. Bent Jørgensen, 1985.
31. *Scandinavian Onomastics, 1984*. Reprint from *Namn & Bygd* 73 (1985).
32. *Scandinavian Onomastics, 1985*. Reprint from *Namn & Bygd* 74 (1986).
33. *Personal Names in Placenames. Articles from NORNA'S Twelfth Symposium, in Trondheim, 14-16 May 1984*. Ed. Jørn Sandnes and Ola Stenshaug, 1986.
34. *Ninth Scandinavian Onomastic Congress, in Lund, 4-8 August 1985*. Ed. Göran Hallberg, Stig Isaksson, and Bengt Pamp, 1987.
35. *Modern Trends in the Usage of Scandinavian Personal Names. Report from a Symposium at Skammestein in Valdres, 10-14 April 1985*. Ed. Tom Schmidt, 1987.
36. *Scandinavian Onomastics, 1986*. Reprint from *Namn & Bygd* 75 (1987).
37. *Change of Denotation in Placenames, Report from NORNA'S Thirteenth Symposium, in Tvärminne (Finland), 9-11 October 1986*. Ed. Peter Slotte, 188.

Place Names in Alabama. By Virginia O. Foscue. Tuscaloosa: The University of Alabama Press, 1989. Acknowledgements, Introduction, References, Maps. Pp. 175. Paper. \$12.95.

In the December 1979 issue of *Names*, I reviewed Virginia Foscue's publication on the placenames of Sumter County, Alabama, which I considered one of the best county surveys since Fred Cassidy's classic *Dane County Place Names*. Her small volume was a step toward, and in anticipation of, the state-wide placenames dictionary I am now privileged to review.

Place Names in Alabama gives information on 2,700 names of a sample of some 2,000 of the more than 52,000 named places and features known to Professor Foscue and her Alabama Place Name Survey colleagues. Her alphabetically arranged entries provide information on all towns of at least one hundred residents, many smaller settlements of economic, historical, or linguistic significance, and the major geographic features of the state, according to current USGS topographic maps and state highway maps.

Each entry includes the current name of the place or feature (and earlier or variant names, if any); the kind of place or feature unless this is obvious from the name itself; the location of the place by county and geographic coordinates taken from the Alphabetical Finding List of the

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Office of Geographic and Cartographic Research of the USGS; the name's derivation and, if known, its application to the place; and the dates of the name's first known use (and the earliest and latest known use of obsolete earlier names). The current pronunciations of names apparently considered not obvious to the readers are given in a somewhat modified form of the International Phonetic Alphabet. Earlier or variant names are cross-referenced in appropriate alphabetical positions with the main entries. Descriptive and explanatory data were derived from a variety of published and primary sources that are identified in the entries. Complete citations of all sources, including the names and home towns of individual informants, are given in the six-hundred-item bibliography at the end of the book.

A brief introduction appropriately describes the dictionary—its history, goals, and methods—while presenting a short, onomastically pertinent history of the state, and, most useful, the qualifications, restrictions, and tentative conclusions based on the available data. Professor Foscue handles fairly easily (and to an outsider) seemingly convincingly the many Indian placenames that have been preserved in the state, obtaining her etymologies from William A. Read's 1937 *Indian Place Names in Alabama*. At the very end of the volume is a progression of maps showing the changing county boundaries from 1820 to 1903.

While I am most impressed with Professor Foscue's treatment of her subject, two things trouble me. One is her location of places by geographic coordinates rather than by direction and distance from better known places. While her use of coordinates may conform to the standards of greater precision held by the federal name authorities, they are meaningless to the great majority of her readers who don't know how to use them. Coordinates can, from a historical perspective, also be terribly misleading for they suggest that communities and other man-made features oriented to them are static or highly concentrated. Many Alabama communities (like those in Kentucky and other southern and border states) are not concentrated but simply scattered homesteads over a several square mile area with the post office being half a mile up the road or creek from a store which is a hundred yards beyond the local schoolhouse and another store and above the local church. Readers are not told to what the coordinates refer—the geographic or demographic center of the community, the location of its post office, store, whatever. And what of the communities in which the points of reference have shifted, often over considerable distances within a single generation, as when a post office moved each time a new postmaster was employed? Defining and dis-

tinguishing the designator terms (town, incorporated town, community, settlement) would have been helpful too.

Professor Foscue provides a useful key to her pronunciation system (thus meeting a criticism of her Sumter volume) but she fails to apply this system to all the names. Limiting pronunciations to names "most likely to be mispronounced by persons not familiar with them" is too presumptuous. Out-of-state readers, for whom I assume the book was also intended, may have difficulty with many of the unpronounced names. For instance, I have no idea how such names as *Graball*, *Dozier*, *Nebo*, *Loxley*, *Satsuma*, *Seman*, *Ruthven*, *Rutherford*, *Blountsville*, and *Boaz*, much less *Oakfuskee* and *Ococoposo* are pronounced in their respective Alabama locales. The Kentucky pronunciations of most of these names applied to places in my state differ to some extent from what's expected by non-Kentuckians. I've learned from my Kentucky placenames research that nothing, especially pronunciations, can be taken for granted. I would have preferred that Professor Foscue had given pronunciations for all her names.

Professor Foscue's explanations are, as in a preliminary volume they should be, tentative and cautious. Undocumented information, speculations, and assumptions are so indicated; traditional or probable explanations are so labeled.

Also, as it should be, the book is a straightforward, preliminary descriptive survey of a sample of a state's major placenames. Professor Foscue ground no axes, generated or supported no great theories. No central "organizing principles" were followed. It would be entirely too presumptuous at this stage of our knowledge of American placenames to consider formulating or testing any comprehensive theories. Professor Foscue and the rest of us who have produced preliminary state placename volumes are but paving the way for, hopefully, the more analytical studies to come.

Professor Foscue, a member of the English Department at the University of Alabama, has produced an entirely creditable addition to the growing list of statewide placename studies and I enthusiastically welcome her to our select circle of published state placename scholars. I also applaud her continued pursuit of Alabama's placenames.

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Studien zur Semantik der Eigennamen (Studies in the Semantics of Proper Names). By Ernst-Michael Christoph. *Namenkundliche Informationen – Beiheft 10*. Leipzig: Karl-Marx-Universität, 1987. Pp. 131. Paper. 3.00 Marks.

A few years ago, I praised in this journal the “vigorous scholarship conducted by good minds and encouraged by name-minded dissertation directors in several universities” in the Federal Republic of Germany (168). I have just had the pleasure of reading another such onomastic dissertation, this one produced in the German Democratic Republic, at the Karl-Marx-University in Leipzig, where the study of names has, since the Second World War, found a prospering academic home, as those of us who participated in ICOS 15 in 1984 can testify. What is particularly gratifying is that, like its counterparts in West Germany, this published thesis from East Germany is primarily concerned with onomastic theory, its central theme being one of the knottiest problems in that field, onomastic semantics, and therefore automatically also the contrast between proper names and appellatives (or, as I prefer to see this juxtaposition, between names and words), although this is not the major issue.

Integrating several recently advocated approaches but taking as his main starting point Lorenz’s and Wotjak’s work on the boundary zone between cognitive theory and semantics (1977), Christoph, after an extensive introduction to some of the basic reasoning involved in his exploration of component analysis, presents an inventory of forty-five so-called “semes,” i.e. elements of meaning in lexical units, on various levels of abstraction. As he regards proper names as linguistic signs and is therefore solely concerned with linguistic meaning, such a conceptual transfer of semantic components from the analysis of words to the systemic, synchronic analysis of names is, of course, appropriate within this propositional framework. The components in question range from /adult/ = for grown-up persons, via /desid/ = wishful thinking as part of the naming process, and /domicil/ = indicating that a place is inhabited, to /vol/ = for the free choice of names within limits. Each component is presented with special reference to its place in the seme typology, its area of validity or application, its hierarchical locus, and its actualization in an example. This detailed alphabetical presentation is followed by diagrammatic representations of the general seme hierarchy for proper names, with special reference to the two name “classes” of personal names and placenames.

Christoph’s approach is impressive and undoubtedly legitimate within the parameters which he sets himself. As he himself hints, it also

offers new perspectives for the relationships between onomastics and such ancillary fields as translation theory, text linguistics, communication research, epistemology, sociology, psychology, etc. It certainly makes sense within itself and avoids some of the pitfalls encountered but not recognized by earlier students of onomastic theory. As is undoubtedly well known by now, this reviewer prefers a more onomastic and less linguistic orientation in all attempts at shaping a "theory of names" or, at least, a "theory about names," and therefore would probably opt for the reinstatement of "onosemes" which the author rejects. Christoph's theoretical construct nevertheless looks like a powerful tool in the analysis of the meaning of names and is certainly worth testing on a large sample.

If there is something the reviewer missed in this monograph, it is a substantial corpus of illustrative examples, not only under each seme but also in the introductory section which is exclusively devoted to terminological and conceptual matters, and to theory advanced previously by others. If one wants to persuade in as complex an intellectual quest as the one undertaken by the book under review, one has to descend from time to time from a high level of abstraction to more mundane levels of application, in order to demonstrate how the whole proposed system might work. Such an occasional descent from Olympus would certainly have helped this reviewer (who, by the way, applauds the author for including a four-page English summary).

It is to be hoped that, having made such a splendid beginning, Dr. Christoph will continue to incorporate onomastics in his future research interests. We need thinkers like him in our field.

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Names, Vol. 37, No. 1 (March 1989)

Shetland Place-Names. By John Stewart. Lerwick: Shetland Library and Museum, 1987. Pp. xii + 353. Introduction, illustrations. £9.00.

On first meeting John Stewart, as I did in the early sixties when he visited the Scottish Place-Name Survey, one was immediately impressed by his very extensive knowledge of the place-nomenclature of his native Shetland where he was born in Whalsay in 1903. At the same time, one noticed how personal that knowledge was and how its proprietary intensity was almost matched by a perfectionist's reluctance to make it public in any but its final and complete state. Stewart's 1961 account of "Shetland Farm Names" in the *Proceedings of The Fourth Viking Congress*, his brief survey of "The Place-Names of Shetland" in *The Shetland Book*, and several occasional papers were therefore welcome though teasing introductory glimpses of the immense amount of evidence he had collected and of some of the general conclusions that might be drawn from it. There could be no doubt in anybody's mind that here was somebody who might one day do in an authoritative fashion for Shetland what his mentor Hugh Marwick had done for Orkney. Unfortunately, that day never came in John Stewart's lifetime. He died in 1977, and it was left to representatives of his family, the Shetland Library and Museum, and the Shetland Islands Council to publish his materials. For that undertaking, the actual editing was placed in the hands of Brian Smith, archivist of the Council.

The editor tells us that he was disappointed to find that "the 30,000 or so general place-names . . . were not in a suitable form for publication," and he therefore regretfully decided "to proceed with an edition of the island- and farm-names alone" (ix). As a result of that decision, the published volume is a kind of Shetland equivalent of Marwick's *Orkney Farm Names*, except for the continuing influence and legacy of Jakob Jakobsen's *The Place-Names of Shetland*, which served Stewart as a model for arranging his farm-name evidence alphabetically by Old Norse lexical elements, both generics and specifics, instead of topographically (Marwick's format) or alphabetically throughout. While this arrangement serves the basic intention of the book well, insofar as it permits immediate recognition of Scandinavian, especially Norwegian, connections, it forces the reader with an interest in individual etymologies to approach the central toponymic corpus of the book through the alphabetical index provided by the editor. However, this is only a slight inconvenience, and the editor's desire to adhere to the author's original plan is understandable.

A typical entry in the farm-name section reads like this (147):

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“Hópr”, m., “hóp”, n., a small landlocked bay or lagoon. These are found 12 times in Norwegian farm names: five times in Nordland, thrice in Troms, and twice each in Hordaland and Finmark. They are found once in Landnámabok, twice in Iceland and four times in Orkney.

HOUBIE [hubi], Fetlar: 624908. Howby 1579, Howbye 1579, Houbie 1602-1954, Hubi 1620-1733, Howbie 1625-56, Hubie 1733, Houby 1860. “Á hópi”.

This initial entry is followed by another seven examples. Indicated, therefore, are the modern spelling, the pronunciation, the national grid reference, the early spellings with their dates, and the etymology.

The introductory paragraph makes it quite clear that Stewart's underlying intention is to show the Scandinavian nature of the placenames of Shetland and to understand them as an integral part not only of *Scotia Scandinavica* but also of the West Scandinavian area as a whole (Norway, Faroe, Iceland). Placenames, in this kind of quest, become politicized in the pursuit of a general cultural and historical polemic, sometimes to the detriment of scholarly detachment (“In names Shetland is, in fact, a province of Norway”[36]). One wonders, for example, how many of the numerous instances of *Newhouse* listed (163-165) are actually of Scandinavian origin. Stewart declares that “the majority of these names are old, and probably go back to Norse times” (163), but in the absence of any reasonably early reference to them such confidence is perhaps not quite so justifiable, especially if one considers that Shetland was pledged to the Scottish Crown as long ago as 1469 and has experienced a considerable influx of Scots, particularly from the Scottish northeast, ever since. Scots or Scottish-English influence over half a millennium can therefore not be ignored.

This critical commentary is not meant to undermine the otherwise sound and incontrovertible assumption that most of the farm names of Shetland are Scandinavian through and through, and are consequently reliable witnesses for a strong Norse heritage. Stewart's systematic utilization of, and reference to, the nineteen volumes of Olof Rygh's *Norske Gaardnavne* is especially beneficial and illuminating in this respect and will save future researchers much time and work. The chronological listing of spellings culled from the historical record is also very helpful although its value is diminished somewhat by the absence of any mention of the actual sources involved (except for some of the sagas). This is not the editor's fault who faithfully followed Stewart's proposed format (see 53) but is nevertheless regrettable. One can only hope that

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references to such sources are still retrievable from Stewart's files and that these files will be accessible to *bona fide* scholars.

All in all, we should be grateful, however, for having made available to us the substantial publishable portions of John Stewart's extensive collections (over 3,400 names). The publication of *Shetland Place-Names* will greatly facilitate the exploration of the Shetland toponymy, for a variety of purposes; we do not have to speculate anymore on the extent to which Stewart may have made efforts by future researchers superfluous. We now know, and that in itself is important.

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