BOOK REVIEWS

Acronymania: A Celebratory Roundup of Nomenclature-Yielding Mischief: Abbreviations, Neologisms, Initialisms, Acronyms. By Don Hauptman. Bantam, Doubleday, Dell, 666 Fifth Avenue, New York, NY 10103. 1993. Pp. 271. Paper, $5.99.

Don Hauptman, advertising writer and author of *Cruel and Unusual Puns* (with especially good spoonerisms such as the one from Crayola's back-to-school sale: "It's enough to make your kin scrawl"), offers another chock-full laugh riot in Dell's "Intrepid Linguist's Library." Such titles as *Get Thee to a Punnery, The Power of Babble,* and *The Superior Person's Book of Words* are now joined by the last word in acronyms and initialisms, *Acronymania*. In its acknowledgements are mentioned such members of the American Name Society as John Algeo, Don Nilsen and myself. The book will surely delight many other a-n-s-ers.

It is *ALOE* 'a little of everything.' It covers *snafu, POSSLQ, NIMBY, ZIP, BCNU, Tanzania, Fiat* and *COMSUBCOMNELMCOMHEDSUPPACT* and more. It tells how initialisms and acronyms arose, and how they differ from one another. It examines the opposition they have faced from critics who have considered them "a menace," "agglomerese," "etymologically rootless," "pseudo-coinages," "alphabet soup," "linguistic pests," and probably the cause of *GRID, AIDS and SIDA* as well as their names. As early as 1908 the British (who invented *radar, FATDAD* and *DYI*) heard a magazine complain about "the modern lazy habit of substituting initials for names of various organizations or institutions." Today we have *MADD, NOW, COYOTE, NOTSAFE, TASS, GESTAPO, and SESAME*, among scores of others.

Technocrats and (notoriously) the military have created so many initialisms and acronyms that vast dictionaries of them have been compiled. They are always out of date. Or should we say behind the *TIMES* 'Technological Idiots, Military, Environmental, Scientific?'

Onomasticians will be chiefly interested in the names of people (*Rambam* '*Ra*bbi *M*oses *b*en *M*aimon'), places *(Pakistan),*

systems (*MUDPIE* 'Museum and University Data Processing Information Exchange,' the computer world having been a major source of such words), companies (*Quantas* 'Queensland and Northern Territory Aerial Services'), and so on. We learn that *SAAB* is from *Svenska Areoplann Aktieboglat* 'Swedish Airplane Company,' *SWATCH* is a blend of *Swiss* and *watch*, *IKEA* is from the founder Ingvar Kamprad and *Elmtyard*, his farm in the village of Agunnaryd, and that *TRW* "stands for nothing at all." (Here Hauptman is, I fear, at fault, for elsewhere he notes that *TRW* was "formerly *Thompson-Ramo-Wooldridge*.")

We learn further that *T.G.I.F.* 'Thank God It's Friday' is an initialism, but not that New York City has a singles bar called *T.G.I.Friday's* or often just *Friday's*. We hear of the origins of *Amoco, Texaco, and Necco*, and that *I.R.A.* is "Irish Republican Army" but *IRA* is "Individual Retirement Account." We see *UNICEF* keeping those initials even after the name is changed to "United Nations Children's Fund."

In acronyms, minor words (especially *of, and*, and *the*) are sometimes counted and sometimes not. The idea is to get something that can be pronounced, hence *WAVE* 'Women Accepted for Volunteer Emergency Service.' The 53 meanings given to *PAL* 'Police Athletic League' are among the most numerous.

NOISE 'National Organization to Insure a Sound-Controlled Environment' is a NOISE '*Noxious, Original, Inventive but Stupid Exercise*,' I believe. *CORECT* 'Citizens Organized to Restore an Effective Corporate Tax' doesn't know its Rs from its elbow, in my opinion.

Some of these creations produce "words" one can pronounce. *H.M.M.W.V.* is "High Mobility Multipurpose Wheeled Vehicle." Only the army would perpetrate that! It is, in fact, *humvee*. But *Rotcee* 'R.O.T.C.', Flub-Bub 'F.H.L.B.B.,' the 'Federal Home Loan Bank Board,' and *Snick* 'S.N.C.C.,' the 'Student Nonviolent Coordinating Committee,' later the "Student National Coordinating Committee,' I can do without. They make one want to call *CRAP*, 'the Committee to Resist Acronym Proliferation.'

Brevity, fadishness, cleverness, mnemonic devices—initialisms and acronyms are many things. Some are as simple as Apple *PIE* (the computer company's "Personal interactive electronic division"). Some are as unfortunate as the *RAF*'s alleged *SHIT* "School of Higher Instructional Technique." Some are as useful as *sonar, laser and quasar* and some are just *fubar* 'f**ked up beyond all recognition.' Some mean one thing one place and one thing another. *WASP* 'White Anglo-Saxon Protestant' in Israel is 'White Askenazi Sabra [native] with Pull.'

Acronymania has many delightful surprises for the student of letters, many informative trivia bits for the student of names, and a lot of laughs. Some of the latter come from the jokes that John Q. Public reads into names. *FORD* yielded "Fix or Repair Daily." The airlines come in for a lot of disgruntled humor: *Alitalia* 'Always Late in Takeoff, Always Late in Arrival,' *TWA* 'Try Walking Across,' *Delta* 'Doesn't Even Leave the Airport,' *Sabena* 'Such a Bad Experience, Never Again,' *Lufthansa* 'Let Us Fondle The Hostess And Not Say Anything,' and (formerly Allegheny Airlines), *USAir* 'Unfortunately Still Allegheny in Reality.'

Here is the name-creating public at work. Here are the jokes of the folks and the jargon of the sciences, in English and (to a much more limited extent in this swift survey) in foreign languages: *velcro* is from French *velours* '*velvet*' *and croché* 'hooked.' Here are *DORA, CAROL, RITA, AMANDA, LOLITA, RACHEL* and other names you should know along with explanations of *PASCAL* (French), *GUM* (Russian), *MAAS* (Hebrew), *ELAS* (Greek), and so on. Here are *Benelux, Texarkana* and *Tribeca* among toponyms. Here are *LEGO, AGFA* and *NYNEX* among trade names. Here are *LORD* 'Let Oral Roberts Die,' *EVIL* 'Eastern Verbal Investigators Group,' *DRAG* 'Diminished Reliance on Acronyms Generally,' and *DEAD* 'Dedicated to Eliminating Acronymic Designations.' Here are acronymic pseudonyms: John Locke's *Tarptola* from a Latin description, *Smectymnuus* from the initials of a group of seventeenth-century collaborators, Addison's *Clio* from the places where he wrote his pieces for *The Spectator* (*C*helsea, *L*ondon, *I*slington, and his *O*ffice).

Here, in fact, is *LOIS* 'Lots of Interesting Stuff' for *ONOMASTS* 'Ordinary Name Organization Members And Serious Trivia Seekers.' They will certainly not find this book initially unattractive or a *WOMBAT* 'Waste of Money, Brains And Time' in the long run. Hats off to acronymble Don Hauptman. He's *OK*.

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Příjmení v současné češtině. [*Surnames = Family names in contemporary Czech*]. By Miloslava Knappová. Liberec: AZ Kort, a.s., 1992. Pp. 185. Price not given.

The particular strength of this book is not in its study of etymologies of names or in its tracing their origin in various languages. Indeed, only thirty pages (the first chapter) are given to these topics: one section of the first chapter deals with surnames that originated in personal (= given, baptismal) names that were themselves of Slavic, Hebrew, Greek, Latin, or German origin. Source names are given in their Czech forms (with the exception of the German ones); hence, the surnames *Gregor, Gregora, Grygar, Řeha, Řehák, Říha,* etc. are listed as derivations from *Řehoř,* which is quite all right for the last three names, whereas in order to understand the derivation of the first three, readers will have to have their own, independent knowledge that Czech *Řehoř* is from Greek *Gregorios* and that the first three names go back to this unmentioned Greek form. This lack of distinction of the sources permeates this section, with the partial exception of the names of German origin: names such as *Onderka, Ondrouch* are derived from *Ondřej,* but *Anderle, Enders*, although listed in the same paragraph with them, get the remark that they go back to Ger. *Andreas;* all of them are correctly listed

among the names of Greek origin, but their ultimate source, the Greek form *Andreîos* is not given. The whole section is constructed in this way. Occasionally, the translations of the meaning suggested by the morphemes of which the name consists is not exact: *Kryštof* < *Christophóros* is not 'confessor of Christ' but 'carrier of Christ;' *Adalbert* is not 'noble' but 'noble' and 'glorious'. But these are trifles.

The next section of the first chapter deals with names derived from place names (Czech and German), from configurations in the terrain, from the physical or mental properties of the original bearer of the name (surname at that point of time), from occupations, social status, atmospheric conditions ('Frost, Cloudy') and the like. In this group, I miss a remark that names like *Biskup* 'bishop,' *Papež* 'pope,' *Král* 'king' occasionally go back to surnames of actors who impersonated these dignitaries in medieval plays. Taken on the whole, these names belong to the same categories of meaning as names in any other European language. Interesting are names derived from past participles, imperatives, and phrases, such as *Běhal* 'He kept running,' *Blábolil* 'He kept babbling,' *Zmrhal* 'He wasted,' Hrejsemnou 'Play with me,' *Nepivoda* 'Don't drink water,' *Ontověděl* 'He knew it,' *Zřídkakdyveselý* 'Seldom merry.' Some of such unusual formations even come from German words; e.g. *Kvis* (its graphic variant *Quis* is omitted) < Germ. *gewiß* 'for sure.'

The lists of names given in these chapters are certainly useful; however, the following chapters are much more original and interesting. Czech is an inflected language which has seven cases; the endings of these cases create various morphophonemic changes in the inflected stem. In addition to this, feminine names (in our case, the family names of women), are derived from masculine names by specific endings and have an inflection of their own. (The derivational process by which feminine nouns are derived from masculine nouns is called *přechylování* in Czech, 'motion' in English). In a further addition to this, the language absorbs foreign names (both in daily usage and in literary translations) by dealing with them as if they were of Czech origin (including the motion, or derivation, if the bearer is a woman); and in yet another addition to this, the law requires that a magistrate, when granting Czech citizenship or other rights and entitlements to a

foreigner, must also indicate his (or, much worse, her) name in the Czech form, with the proper ending.

The majority of Czech names yields no particular difficulties. If the name is an adjective, its forms are identical with the forms as given by the grammatical gender forms: Mr. *Zelený* 'Green' > Mrs. *Zelená,* Miss *Zelená*. If the name is a noun, the feminine is formed by the ending *-ová*: Mr. Král 'King,' Mrs. and Miss *Králová*. (Mind that in Czech, 'king' = *král*, 'queen' = *královna;* the motion of names differs from that of general nouns). In older days, unmarried girls had their names derived by *-ova* (Mr. *Král*, Mrs. *Králová,* Miss *Králova*), but that difference is now lost; therefore, we shall not distinguish the names of married women from those of unmarried girls. (Some exceptions in other languages will be indicated.) This process of motion is so natural in Czech that even a name like *George Sand,* a pseudonym chosen by its female bearer to suggest masculinity, changes into *George Sandová* in Czech translation.

So far so good. However, if a name is of Slavic origin, an *-e-* in the last syllable is lost in the oblique cases, whereas if it is (etymologically) foreign, it remains there; and the motion follows the same rule. Hence, Mr. *Hájek,* gen. *Hájka,* > Mrs. *Hájková;* Mr. *Tomaszek* (< Polish), gen. *Tomaszka* > Mrs. *Tomaszková* but Mr. *Karen,* gen. *Karena,* > Mrs. *Karenová*. However, some names ending in *-el* always keep the *-e-*, but some of them either do or do not lose it (a thing sometimes decided simply by family tradition); hence Mr. *Chmel,* gen. *Chmela* > Mrs. *Chmelová,* Mr. *Koudel,* gen. *Koudela* > Mrs. *Koudelová;* but Mr. *Strnadel,* gen. *Strnadela* or *Strnadla* > Mrs. *Strnadelová* or *Strnadlová.* Family names derived from personal (= baptismal) names ending in *-el* lose the *-e-*, but similar names in *-er* keep it; hence Mr. *Havel*, Mrs. *Havlová*,' but Mr. *Xaver,* Mrs. *Xaverová.* Obviously foreign names of Czechs can go either way by family tradition: Mr. *Wolker,* Mrs. *Wolkrová* or *Wolkerová,* Mr. *Schlegel,* Mrs. *Schleglová* or *Schlegelová;* but the motioned foreign name of a foreigner does and should keep the *-e-*: Mr. *Pfeffer,* Mrs. *Pfefferová.*

If the name has the Latin ending *-ius*, the declension and the motioned form derive either from the stem or from the nominative, by family tradition: Mr. *Pistorius,* gen. *Pistoria* or *Pistoriuse* > Mrs. *Pistoriová* or *Pistoriusová*. (This belongs to a layer of humanistic

names, as in German: *Pistorius* 'baker' was introduced for the Czech name *Pekař* 'baker'). Greek names when used in Czech decline and form the motion from the Greek nominative, which is taken as the basis for the Czech morphological processes: Mr. *Glezos,* gen. *Glezose* > Mrs. *Glezosová.* (Modern Greek has a motion of its own: Mr. *Kedros,* gen. *Kedru* > Mrs. *Kedru* [thus transcribed in Roman]. In official Czech papers, the magistrate is supposed either to change this into Mr. *Kedros,* Mrs. *Kedrosová,* or, if the person in question submits a written request, to keep Mrs. *Kedru).*

It is perhaps not without interest to insert here a remark. Ancient Greek names are, quite logically, not mentioned in the book. However, it is an interesting point that Modern Greek nouns are usually declined (and motioned) by taking the nominative as the basis for the Czech forms: in Czech contexts, Mr. *Glezos* is declined gen. *Glezose,* dat. *Glezosovi,* acc. *Glezose,* etc. On the contrary, Ancient Greek names are declined in Czech by taking not the Greek nominative but the Greek stem as the basis. Hence, *Herodotos* in Czech contexts is declined gen. *Herodota,* dat. *Herodotovi;* and similarly *Aristoteles, Aristotela, Aristotelovi; Perikles, Periklea, Perikleovi* or *Perikla, Periklovi; Aias, Aianta, Aiantovi.* (The system breaks down at *Oidipus*: the declension should be gen. *Oidipoda,* dat. *Oidipodovi,* but that would make a somewhat recherché impression; the normal forms are gen. *Oidipa,* dat. *Oidipovi.* This may be regrettable, but then, the declension of this name was confused already by ancient Greek authors). The (necessary but not sufficient) reason for this striking difference is that while practically nobody knows Modern Greek, many generations preceding the present one enjoyed Greek (and Latin) education in high school and college. (Latin names also are declined in Czech on the basis of the Latin stem, not of the nominative: *Titus*, gen. *Tita*, dat. *Titovi*; *Cicero, Cicerona, Ciceronovi*, etc).

Let us now continue with modern Czech names. The final vowel of a name is lost in motion: Mr. *Zgusta,* gen. *Zgusty,* Mrs. *Zgustová.* No need to say that in nearly all such cases, the masculine form cannot be predicted from the feminine one. In names of foreigners there is some variation: Mr. *Naske,* gen. *Naska* or *Naskeho,* Mrs. *Nasková* or *Naskeová.* There also are

some specific rules, depending on the amount of morphophonemic complication; in the most difficult cases, the motion does not take place: Mr. *Papandreu* (this is in reality the Modern Greek genitive of the father's name that became fixed as a family name), gen. *Papandrea,* Mrs. *Papandreová* or *Papandreu* (this applies to Czech contexts in which foreigners are mentioned. Should Mrs. P*apandreu* wish to be naturalized with that form of the name, she would have to petition the magistrate, [see above]); also (Hung.) Mr. *Króo,* Mrs. *Króová* or *Króo.*

The same applies to Czech names that have an anomalous morphology (i.e., the nominative of the name does not have the form of the nominative of any declension): Mr. *Bezstarosti* 'without worry,' gen. *Bezstarosti* or *Bezstarostiho,* Mrs. *Bezstarostová* or *Bezstarosti;* Mr. *Darmopíši* 'I am writing in vain,' gen. *Darmopíši* or *Darmopíšiho,* Mrs. *Darmopíši* or *Darmopíšová.* Original adjectives of this type usually have only one genitive of the masculine but a choice of feminine forms: *Krejčí,* gen. *Krejčího,* Mrs. *Krejčí* or *Krejčová.* Similar choices are present in family names derived from baptismal names: Mr. *Brixí,* gen. *Brixího,* Mrs. *Brixí,* or *Brixová,* or *Brixíová;* and by analogy Mr. *Gándhí,* gen. *Gándhího,* Mrs. *Gándhíová* (the normal name of the late politician in Czech texts) or Mrs. G*ándhí.*

A particularly vexing case involves those Czech family names that have the form of genitive plural. A name like *Janů* means something like 'the one who belongs to the Jans.' Since this is the genitive plural, the name either is taken as indeclinable: gen. *Janů*, Mrs. *Janů*; or the *-ů* is dropped: gen. *Jana,* Mrs. *Janová.* If the genitive plural belongs to the adjectival declension, the masculine form must be taken as declinable, but the feminine form is either motioned or indeclinable: Mr. *Jurových,* gen. *Jurovýcha,* Mrs. *Jurovýchová* or *Jurových.* If the name has the form of the possessive adjective in the genitive sing. case (which is less frequent than the genitive plural), either possibility obtains, both in the masculine and the feminine: Mr. *Jakubův* 'Jacob's,' gen. *Jakubův* or *Jakubového,* Mrs. *Jakubův* or *Jakubová.* Let us remark that if declined forms like *Jana, Janová, Jakubová* are selected by family tradition, even the native speaker of Czech cannot recognize that the basic form of the masculine name is not the normal *Jan* or *Jakub.*

Some Czech nouns ending in *-ě* and *-e* have specific declensions: *dítě* 'child,' gen. *dítěte, kuře* 'chicken,' gen. *kuřete.* Some pertinent names stick to this pattern both in declension and in motion, allowing some variation in the motioned feminine only: Mr. *Hrabě* 'Count,' gen. *Hraběte,* Mrs. *Hrabětová* or *Hraběová*; while the *-ě* is kept in the feminine form, the *-e* is dropped: Mr. *Kníže* 'Duke,' gen. *Knížete*, Mrs. *Knížetová* or *Knížová*. Another group allows, however, variation both in declension and in motion, according to the family tradition; the same choice, however, must be made in declension and in motion: Mr. *Dítě*, either gen. *Dítěte* (as in the general noun), Mrs. *Dítětová,* or Mr. *Dítě*, gen. *Dítě*, Mrs. *Dít'ová.*

What to do with hyphenated double family names? If at least one member of the pair is of Slavic origin, and particularly if the person is of Czech nationality, both members of the pair are declined and motioned: Mr. *Štěrba-Böhm,* gen. *Štěrby-Böhma,* Mrs. *Štěrbová-Böhmová.* If the person is a foreigner, either both parts are declined and motioned, or only the second part: Mr. *Saltykov-Ščedrin,* gen. *Saltykova-Ščedrina* or *Saltykov-Ščedrina,* Mrs. *Saltykovová-Ščedrinová* or *Saltykov-Ščedrinová;* Mr. *Willman-Grabowski,* Mrs. *Willmanová-Grabowská*, or *Willman-Grabowska.* (Note that a Polish name ending in *-ski* is an adjective, hence it is motioned in the same way as a Czech adjective would be changed for gender, not by *-ová;* more about this later). If both parts of the double name are non-Slavic and particularly if the bearers are foreigners, usually only the second part is declined and motioned: Mr. *Lévy-Bruhl,* gen. *Lévy-Bruhla,* Mrs. *Lévy-Bruhlová*. What happens with non-hyphenated, particularly Spanish, double family names and with the name of a Czech girl who marries a Spaniard and accepts his name while retaining her Czech citizenship is too complicated and too peripheral to relate.

It has already been mentioned that Polish names that have the form of adjectives have adjectival forms in Czech as well. The general rule is that the masculine form of Slavic adjectives is kept and the feminine form is adapted: Mr. *Krupskij,* Mrs. *Krupskaja* (Russian) become in Czech Mr. *Krupskij,* Mrs. *Krupská;* Mr. *Tolstoj,* Mrs. *Tolstaja* > Mr. *Tolstoj,* Mrs. *Tolstá* (with Czech endings, the two pairs would be Mr. *Krupský,* Mrs. *Krupská,* Mr. *Tolstý,* Mrs. *Tolstá;* the fully Czech form of the latter names would be *Tlustý,*

Tlustá 'Fat'). Mr. *Janikowski,* Mrs. *Janikowska* (Polish) > Mr. *Janikowski,* Mrs. *Janikowská.* However, not easily recognizable adjectival forms are motioned as if they were not adjectives: Mr. *Pavlov,* Mrs. *Pavlova* (Russ.) > Mr. *Pavlov,* Mrs. *Pavlovová* (Czech); Mr. *Voronin,* Mrs. *Voronina* (Russ.) > Mr. *Voronin,* Mrs. *Voroninová* (Czech). (The book does not have a historical dimension, but it seems to me that contradictory changes took place within this century or so. Within my knowledge, the Russian literary figure's name *Anna Karenina* vacillates in Czech usage; the older translations keep *Karenina,* the newer ones tend to have *Kareninová.* On the contrary, the Russian nom-de-guerre of the politician Leo Bronstein, *Trockij,* was previously changed into *Trocký,* whereas by now masculine names are not changed).

There is more yet to come. In Polish (as in Lusatian = Sorabian, Lithuanian, and Latvian), names of married women have other endings than those of unmarried girls: Mr. *Dudek,* Mrs. *Dudkóva,* Miss *Dudkóvna;* Mr. *Plug,* Mrs. *Plużyna,* Miss *Plużanka;* Mr. *Mucha,* Mrs. *Muszyna,* Miss *Muszanka.* (The choices of *-óva*, *-yna* and *-óvna*, *-anka* depend directly on the ending of the masculine form: the girl's name is not a derivation from the other feminine form). An adjectival name either has the normal forms of the adjective, or it is taken as indeclinable, or it is motioned with the usual endings; hence: Mr. *Ciepły,* Mrs. *Ciepła,* Miss *Ciepła,* or Mr., Mrs., Miss *Ciepły,* or Mr. *Ciepły,* Mrs. *Ciepłóva,* Miss *Ciepłóvna.* If Czech magistrates are faced with a Polish woman who is to be naturalized, or who wishes to get a Czech driver's licence, they must first decide what the masculine form of the name is in Polish and then motion it by the Czech derivation. This is not always easy: Mrs. *Langóva* is married to Mr. *Lange,* Mrs. *Lanżyna* to Mr. *Lang*: the choice of these endings is determined by the masculine form, so that the latter is predictable from the former; but Miss *Lanżanka* can be the daughter of either gentleman, *Lang* or *Lange;* and Mrs. *Wilgóva* and Miss *Wilżanka* are the wife and daughter, respectively, of Mr. *Wilgo.* Disregarding the marital status of the women, the Czech magistrate, having established the masculine form, will form the names *Langeová* or *Langová,* and *Wilgová.*

The book then gives advice to putative magistrates on what to do with Icelandic names. There are no family names there, only

patronymics. The son of a man called *Gardar* who was baptised *Thor* is called *Thor Gardarson,* his daughter named *Vala* is called *Vala Gardardóttir.* Thor's son will have the patronymic *Thorson* instead of the family name, e.g. *Thordar Thorson,* the next generation will be *Sturla Thordarson,* etc. The advice to the magistrates creating the Czech form of the feminine name is to go for *Gardardóttirová,* but if they settle for *Gardarsonová,* no harm in that, either. A form like **Gardarová,* which would be the first choice of the learned, is not preconized, undoubtedly, I think, because of the general ignorance of the language and rarity of the names in Czech: obviously, Ancient Greek and Latin are, at least for the time being, the last preserve of the learned, if not their last stand. The rest of the book discusses how to handle various Oriental names, variant orthographies of names, relative frequencies of names, and the legal procedures necessary to have a name changed.

The preceding resumé of the rules, although it omits many details and some important rules, will strike readers as somewhat complex; they also may feel that it is too prescriptive. It is not. The element of prescription enters only when official decisions are to be made about rarely occurring, particularly foreign, names; there also is some artificiality in the creation of the Czech forms of Slavic names. However, as far as the bulk of Czech names of whatever origin is concerned, the whole system offers next to no difficulties to the native speaker (with the exception of names like *Janů,* and *Kubův*) and is well described in the book.

Since languages that do not have many morphological cases and in which female names are not motioned are spared all these complications, the phenomena described here are not much discussed; nor is the decision-making process in the domestication of names a frequent subject of research. Therefore, it is in these areas that the book is particularly interesting. On the whole, this book, quite apart from its linguistic and onomastic interest, should be made accessible to the registrars and officials in U.S., British, French, German and other passport offices, should they ever have the daring to complain that their work is too hard.

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The Book of African Names. By Molefi Kete Asante. Africa World Press, P. O. Box 1892, Trenton, New Jersey 08607. 1991. Pp. 64. Illus. Cloth $24.95, paper, $8.95.

What's in a Name? Unaitwaje? A Swahili Book of Names. By Sharifa M. Zawawi. Africa World Press, P. O. Box 1892, Trenton, New Jersey 08607. Pp. 86. Illus. Cloth $24.95, paper $9.95.

African Names: Names from the African Continent for Children and Adults. by Julia Stewart. Citadel Press, 120 Enterprise Avenue, Secaucus, New Jersey 07094. Pp. xxvii + 171. Paper $9.95.

Asante is a popular presentation on African names intended for those who are interested in selecting an African name and are interested in African culture. The orientation is Pan-African but does not give language or tribal classifications. Instead the names are presented by region: Southern, Central, Eastern, Western, and Northern. The entries (roughly 1200) give each name and its English meaning; e.g., *Kwaku* is a male name from the Western Region and means "Born on Wednesday." *Fatimah* is a female name from the Northern Region and means "Daughter of the prophet." There are a number of illustrations by Geoffrey Williams, Ife Nii Owoo, and Barbara Nickens which enhance the book a great deal. It contains no bibliography or references.

The Zawawi book is a bit more sophisticated. It focuses on the names of the Waswahili people who speak Kiswahili, a Bantu language spoken widely, especially in eastern Africa. In the excellent 25-page introduction, Zawawi points out that the background of the names points to an ancestor language that has been variously identified as Sumerian, Semitic, Akkadian, Aramaic, or several others. The introduction is especially good for a newcomer to African names.

Part I describes and lists Swahili names in the United States. Approximately 75 female and 100 male names are included. Many are familiar to those with a knowledge of Arabic names: *Amira*

'princess,' *Jamila* 'beautiful,' and *Salama* 'peaceful' for girls; *Anwar* 'light,' *Daud* 'David,' and *Musa* 'Moses' for boys. Others are original Swahili: *Fasaha* 'eloquence' and *Nia* 'intention', 'purpose' for girls and *Jitu Jeusi* 'big black man' and *Mtembezi* 'one who roams about,' 'playboy' for boys.

Part Two, the main part of the book, is devoted to listing Swahili names and their meanings. There are approximately 500 male and 500 female names listed along with their meanings. Following the main listing, there are nine pages of notes and a 17-item bibliography. As with the Asante book, the illustrations do a great deal to enhance reader interest. The illustrations are by Geoffrey Williams.

The third volume, by Stewart, has some good introductory material. There are two maps of Africa, one of the political boundaries, the other of the areas where the main languages are spoken. The text also describes the main languages, where they are spoken, and how many people speak them. Thus, Hausa is spoken in Nigeria, Niger, and Ghana by an estimated 30 million people. Stewart does acknowledge that there is a heavy concentration of Swahili and East African languages in her collection. She points out that she has had extensive experience in this area and also that Swahili is one of Africa's best-known languages.

Stewart explains that she chose the names to be included on the basis of the esthetics of sound, that the names had to be "easy to pronounce for English speakers and at the same time to be memorable and meaningful." She also explains how a Western name can be converted to an African name with a simple change of a few letters. For example she recommends changing

Barbara 'strange,' 'foreign' to *Baraka* 'blessing' and

Jim (<*Jacob* 'supplanter') to *Jimbo* 'country,' 'province' [meanings supplied by reviewer].

There is attention paid to pronounciation with a simple guide that is quite helpful although strict practitioners of the International Phonetic Alphabet might be horrified.

The main part of *African Names* is the dictionary. There are about 1500 entries which appear to be evenly divided between male and female. Here are a few entries which will serve as samples:

Female names:

ASURA (ah-SHOOR-ah) Swahili and Hausa name for female children born during the Muslim month of Ashur.

CHIKU (CHEE-koo) A Swahili female name meaning "chatterer."

ONAEDO (oh-nah-ay-DOH) An Ibo of Nigeria female name meaning "gold."

Male names:

KAYIN (kah-YEEN, kah-YIN) Yoruba of Nigeria male name meaning "long-awaited child."

KITABA (kee-TAH-bah) According to the Basogo people of Uganda, Kitaba is a god who creates earthquakes by walking quickly. (Could be shortened to KIT).

TABU (TAH-boo) Tabu Ley Rochereau is a world-famous Zairois jazz musician. His genre of music is called "soukous," which means "having a good time."

The dictionary also contains names of prominent Africans. Presumably, their names can also be used for children. An example is

> CLEOPATRA (KLEE-uh-PA-truh) Called "the Queen of Kings," Cleopatra VII reigned as Queen of Egypt from 51-30 B. C. She was born in 69 B. C. in Alexandria, Egypt and is believed to have been black African. Cleopatra supported Marcus Antonius against Octavius in the Roman Civil War. Antonius was defeated and Egypt was conquered by Octavius. The turn of events led Cleopatra to commit suicide by snakebite in 30 B. C. The name Cleopatra means "famous." (This name can be shortened to CLEA).

Other aspects of African culture that can also be used as names include the names of peoples and tribes (*Indri*, a people in Sudan, as a female name; *Kirdi*, a mountain-dwelling people of Northern Cameroon, as a male name), cities (*Kamina*, a city in Zaire, also a town in Togo, as a female name; *Massawa*, a port town on the Red Sea in Eritrea, as a male name), and rivers (*Issa Beri*, the Songhai name for the Niger River, as a female name; *Offin*, the name of a river in Ghana, is a male name that is also used as a surname).

Following the dictionary, there are three appendices. One lists about 300 African names that are used as surnames and the parts of Africa they are from. The list includes: *Boesak* (South Africa), *Dali* (Tunisia) and *Ngala* (Kenya). The second appendix lists about 130 leaders by country, and the third appendix lists a number of suggested readings on Africa. There is also an extensive bibliography.

How can we evaluate these three books? They seem to go in a progression. Asante does provide some information about names in various parts of Africa, but the documentation is minimal. It is really a baby-name book at a popular level. The Zawawi book is a bit more sophisticated. It introduces names and African culture. Its value is at an intermediate level.

Finally, Stewart is a real contribution to African names. Not only does it give 1500 names with their pronunciation and meanings, it also gives a great deal of information on African culture in general. One feature is that each alphabetic section of the dictionary is introduced by a quote from a writing by an African. Since it so inexpensive, I highly recommend it to all those interested in personal names and for library reference collections.

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Historia del nombre y de la fundación de México. By Gutierre Tibón. Prologue by Jacques Soustelle. Mexico: Fondo de Cultura Económica [Carretera Picacho Ajusco #227, Col. Bosques del Pedregal, Del. Tlalpan, Código Postal 14200, Mexico, D.F.], 1993. Pp. 893. Price not given.

First published in 1975, this extraordinary tour de force, in its revised and enlarged third edition, is meant to be the definitive study of the mysteries behind the name *Mexico* and the mythological image of the eagle seated on a cactus while eating a

snake, ubiquitous on Mexican currency and the nation's flag. Gutierre Tibón, a native European who for decades has devoted his restless intellectual energy to the aboriginal idiosyncrasy south of the Rio Grande, is the author of some three dozen books, including a 1945 study of the word *American*, monographs on Hispanic American onomastics, and the *Enciclopedia de México* (1962-68). The title under review, which was thirty years in the making, links the Aztec views of religion, geography and the afterlife to the development of Mexico as a modern state and its cultural ties to the past.

While *Mexico* has been an established name since the 1810 independence movement of Padre Miguel Hidalgo y Costilla, the region was known during the colonial period as "Nueva España," and as "Mexicco Tenochtitlan" before the arrival of Hernán Cortés and his Iberian conquistadors. (Among the Aztecs, the *x* was pronounced *sh*; and although the Spanish spelling of *México* carries an accent, as does *Tenochtitlán*, Tibón prefers their ancient representations; consequently, he doesn't indicate accents and he doubles the *c*). Through an enchanting if unconventional scholarly method, the author, building the early chapters in a novelistic fashion, juxtaposes his analysis with quotes from ancient chronicles in which Aztec rulers, government advisers, and military men, as well as subsequent Spanish historians, speak for themselves. The result is an entertaining mosaic of voices put in perspective by a researcher always eager to offer guidance and objective viewpoints. As the massive book progresses, it switches to a more straightforward narrative, but never loses its humor and entertainment value. Peripheral anecdotes and marginal dissertations on the meaning of this term or that accepted popular belief pervade the text, making reading this book a highly pleasurable experience.

As a scene fixed in collective memory, the true meaning of the mythological eagle seated on a cactus (known in Spanish as "nopal") devouring a long snake evaded scholars for many generations until Tibón, along with Eduardo Seler, Angel Mariá Garibay, Miguel León-Portilla, Alfredo López Austin and other contemporary anthropologists specializing in ancient cultures and onomastics set the record straight. To explain its symbolism, Tibón begins by introducing the magical universe of the Aztecs,

a nomadic tribe that, like the Biblical people of Israel, after enduring a hostile environment and political oppression, wandered in search of a promised land, their own Canaan, later justified in canonical scriptures. The final destination proved to be a land with five lakes, Mexicco Tenochtitlan, where the Aztecs built a magisterial city beginning in 1325, now the globe's most populated metropolis. According to legends, the Aztec odyssey began in Aztlan Aztlatlan, the Aztecs' first habitat, located in either what is today New Mexico (across the so-called "Tortilla Curtain"), or in the northern Mexican state of Nayarit. Aztlán — the passing of time has dropped the word *Aztlatlan* and *Aztlán* is now accented in Spanish — is at the core of Chicano (e.g., Mexican-American) history, an edenic region glorified during the political struggle lead by César Chávez and others in the sixties; Chicanos, consequently, consider themselves "the first Mexicans."

Confessing to having often ingested "magical" substances to generate alternative levels of conscience in order to better understand his subject, Tibón describes a dreamlike voyage that chosen messengers of one of the Aztec emperors, Moctezuma (also spelled *Motehcuzoma* or *Montezuma*) underwent centuries after the departure from their original land, to find the place where Aztlan Aztlatlan was once located. He argues that Aztec thinkers before the conquest in 1523-25 conceived their theology as based on two opposing forces: the powers of the sun and those of the moon, and the city of Mexico was founded as an altar where the moon's heart was sacrificed to the sun. Thus, their urban center was part of a geography meant to glorify and to pay constant tribute to the sun.

The meaning of the name *Mexicco Tenochtitlan* is explained by telling the mythical tale of two deities who left Aztlan Aztlatlan, Colibrí Zurdo (or Huitzilopochtli) and Flor de Zacate (or Malinal Zóchitl), together with a segment of the Aztec population, to look for the Valley of the Volcanoes, a place to create an empire *ad hoc*. When they finally arrived, the Aztec male citizens understood that their patron, Huitzilopochtli, would only defend them if they could offer him human hearts of virginal maidens in sacrifice. Malinal Zóchitl strongly opposed any form of sacrifice. The couple split: Huitzilopochtli settled in the Chapultepec region and Malinal

Zóchitl went to the valley, was welcomed by the king, married him (the exact place of their encounter is known today as Malinalco) and had a child: Corona Real (or Cópil). Years later Cópil persuaded the neighboring people of the valley — Xochimilcas, Tepanecas, and Chalcas — to fight the Aztecs, who were still led by the villainous Huilzilopochtli. A fight between the Sun and the Moon (represented by Cópil) occurred and the latter was defeated. Huilzilopochtli opened the young man's breast and took his heart out; he then asked a loyal follower to throw it away in the Zócalo, the capital's exact center. Cópil's heart began to grow and was immediately called Tenochti. In a dream, Huilzilopochtli named the place Tenochtitlan, or Cópil's heart's resting place, meaning where an eagle sits on top of a cactus while devouring a snake.

Mexico is morphemically *mex* 'Moon or rabbit turned into a cactus,' *xic* 'belly button,' and *co* 'in.' On top of a cactus an eagle, symbolizing the sun, the Aztec's ultimate force, conquers the darkness of night. *Tenochtitlan* is morphemically *te* 'stone,' which in Aztec mythology refers to the belly button; *noch* 'red juice,' i.e., blood symbolizing the human heart being sacrificed to the Sun, and *titlán*, which locates the reference in a particular geography. In Tibón's thesis, the belly button and the rabbit play crucial roles. *Tezcoco*, one of the five lakes on which Tenochtitlán was founded, means "of the moon," and, according to the Aztecs, the moon's craters, when seen from this point on the earth, have the shape of a rabbit. Theologically, a symmetrical line can be drawn between Tezcoco and the moon. Furthermore, since rabbit and belly button are often used indistinctly (Aztecs saw rabbits as central to creation), Mexico is believed to be the earth's cosmic center — in Borges's view an Aleph where everything begins and ends. Also, the Aztecs believed Sun and Eagle to be a semantic unity; and so were Moon and Rabbit. *Mexicco*, thus, means "the moon's belly button" or "the rabbit's belly button."

Tibón accomplished his task by exploring seventy different versions of the current name "*Mexico*" and by making a comparative analysis of alternative words, like *tlalxicco* 'the earth's belly button' or 'the world's belly button,' *tlexicco* 'the fire's belly button,' and *Xicco* 'the valley's belly button;' this latter now

known as Xico, a region between Tláhuac and Chalco, near Mexico's capital. In brief, this new edition of *Historia del nombre y de la fundación de México* (92 pages were added), with a chronological bibliography and black-and-white illustrations as interesting as the text itself, is a masterful example of the crossroads where onomastics, mythology and anthropology meet.

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Claims to Name: Toponyms of St. Lawrence County. Edited by Kelsie B. Harder and Mary H. Smallman. North Country Books, Inc., 18 Irving Place, Utica, NY 13501. 1992. Pp. xii + 265. Cloth $25, Paper $15. (County map at end, several interior maps and other illustrations).

It's hard to read about a northern county, at least as a southerner not used to towns or townships as political entities between local communities and their counties. But after a while one gets used to it, especially when helped along by the dean of onomastic studies, Kelsie Harder, the senior editor of *Claims to Name*.

I have long awaited this book, the second modern account of the placenames of a New York county and the most recent published evidence that New York's place names are, in fact, being systematically studied. That Professor Harder and his co-editor, the county's historian, Mary Smallman, chose the state's largest county to be the first to be studied is also significant. St. Lawrence County is interesting for a number of reasons. It has only one official city, Ogdensburg. And, as is mentioned in the Forward, it is a depressed county economically, largely overlooked by tourists, and it has the highest unemployment and lowest per capita income in the state.

Like most good county place names books, this one begins with a brief review of the significant naming patterns in the county. The editors point out that most St. Lawrence County names are "conservative," with little deviation from "the standard practices of naming for possession, flora and fauna, and commemoration;" that is, from "traditionally English and European" -type names. Few Indian names and few exotic names occur.

The book is a place names dictionary of St. Lawrence County and its scope is general, with entries on each of its towns (called townships in some other Northern states), places of habitation (settlements), all of its geographic features, all of its artificial features (including roads and city streets and even the academic buildings of several colleges).

Although the editors attempted to track down all name origins, they undoubtedly missed a few. The entries begin with a "main name" and follow with all other places and features whose names derive from it. Since, characteristically, printed data sources are not plentiful, the editors relied heavily on interviews and original records. All sources are listed in the bibliography. Places and features given in the entries are keyed to USGS topographic maps. Other names applied to the site or feature are given along with spelling changes over the years.

To be fair and objective, I must point out some things that, hopefully, will be corrected in promised future editions. First, while St. Lawrence is, indeed, New York State's largest county, it is not the largest east of the Mississippi; four counties in Maine are larger.

A map of New York State putting the county in its proper geographical perspective would have been helpful to those of us not familiar with New York's geography. So would have been a short history of the county. But since the editors point out that the book is intended primarily for local people who already know these things, outsiders have no call to complain. For the same reason pronunciations of most of the names are omitted, as are precise locations of most of the places. But I would like to know how to pronounce these (admittedly few) Amerindian names: Oswegatchie, Otsikwake, Niionenhiasekowane, Massawepie, Akwasasane, Anshezophen.

I shall be eternally grateful to the editors for not burdening us with countless sets of geographic coordinates. But they could have located places and features somewhat more precisely than identifying their towns (i.e. townships) and their USGS maps.

Since this is a dictionary one isn't expected to read it from cover to cover. And dictionaries, as we know, are terribly expensive to produce. Thus editors are probably justified in sacrificing clarity for comprehensiveness by using abbreviations. This does reduce a book's size somewhat. But it does make it more difficult to use when readers have to frequently refer to the "explanatory notes," since they are apt to forget to what the abbreviations refer.

These demurrals aside, I really liked this book. It is one of the few books I have on New York placenames and I hope it won't be the last. With the few suggestions mentioned above it could become a model for other New York State county place names books and, ultimately, the comprehensive New York State volume. Professor Harder is certainly the person to see these through, and I hope I will be called upon to review more of them.

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Western States Meeting

The 1994 meeting of the Western States Geographic Names Council will be held in the Black Hills, in Rapid City, South Dakota, September 7-10. Abstracts for papers on aspects of names and naming in the Western States and Provinces are invited. For further information, write to the coordinator:

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