# REVIEWS

*Real Places: An Unconventional Guide to America's Generic Landscape.* By Grady Clay. Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 1994. Pp. xxiii-297, ISBN (cloth) 0-226-10946-1.

Two years ago during a visit to Shanghai I met a social misfit who could adapt neither to the new China of market reform nor to the remaining trappings of revolutionary zeal that had nurtured her. When I met her, she sought life's meaning as well as mastery of English through the reading of Western philosophical works in translation and had settled into a steady diet of existentialist writings. These suffused her vocabulary and thought to the virtual exclusion of the mundane. Missing skeins of commonplace vocabulary crippled her small talk, yet she could readily mimic metaphysical discourse.

I was reminded of her plight as I explored Grady Clay's expedition into the American cultural landscape's semantic jungle. *Real Places* truthfully claims to be an "unconventional" guide to Americans' facility for generic naming in their ongoing encounter with landscape. But the book echoes what J.B. Jackson characterized as "the field of perpetual conflict and compromise between what is established by authority and what the vernacular insists upon preferring" (1984, 148). Clay selects 124 generic placeterms gleaned from media sources, planners and scholars, government, and conversational encounters. Most but not all terms are corroborated by documented usage; a few, though, such as *The Ice* and *The Sand Castles* are decidedly idiosyncratic. In other words, *Real Places* is neither disinterested nor neutral as landscape inquiry (Relph 1981, 48-50).

In "The Lie that Blinds," Jonathan Smith argues that symbolic meanings are "held in place by power, and it is only by challenging a definition that we can discover where this power lies" (1993, 89). Just so, and in fact Clay's Introduction holds fiercely to the ideal that generic terms *should* be widely used and understood, tested always by "everyday experience in the marketplace of language" (xviii). But that stricture is repeatedly forgotten as the lexicon of

*Real Places* unfolds. *Drawdown* and *Growth Control District* are the language of landscape management, not public discourse. Such terms, and more specifically trendy acronyms such as *Lulu* 'locally unwanted land uses' and *Toad* 'temporary, obsolete, abandoned, derelict site' are the exclusionary vocabulary of linguistic communities and their real intent, if not meaning, tends to be debased by more widespread use (Jackson 1989, 161). In the context of imperialism, Derek Gregory discusses the practice of "dispossession through naming," imposing the language of the colonial power on places, settlement features, and the natural environment (1994, 173). In *Real Places* whiffs of dispossession abound, because so many names convey exclusion, segregation, obfuscation and even legal definition in space and time. Examples include *Cultural Arts District*, *Wetlands* and the (all-too-often ironic) *Public Domain*. Such terms disempower by codification and restriction, but they also serve to inhibit observation and expression as well. Edward Relph dreads the coming of a society whose landscape words are

> vague, abstract ones like housing, dwelling unit, central business district, retail facility, or recreational resource; their only aesthetic responses...to cliche picturesque scenes designated for them by markers or historical plaques; they mistrust the evidence of their own eyes and thoughts but regard the opinions of remote experts as sacrosanct. (1989, 151)

The arrangement of *Real Places* precludes this sort of discussion, because the book is a glossary of terms treated piecemeal. Thus the *collective* implication of *Whale Watching Site*, *Tourist Information Center*, *Photo Opportunity*, *Meeting Place*, *Fall Color Country* and *Viewshed/The View* is never specifically addressed.

The organization of the book is troubling. Grady Clay intends it to be a *transect* across the contexts of landscape transformation in contemporary America. In favoring this scheme he pays homage to the inspiration of J.B. Jackson (1970) and Gordon Cullen (1961) as well as Jane Jacobs and transect-based cultural geographic study inspired mainly by Fred Kniffen. Thus *Real Places* is a kind of journey with three legs. It begins in *The Center*, crosses *The Front* and ends *Out There*. These headings are elaborated somewhat to evoke the waxing and waning of urban centrality, change and control on America's urban margins, and a potpourri of landscape trends in

rural and wilderness America. Each leg of the journey is assigned three chapters, and these are loosely arranged by topical and contextual emphases ('Ephemera,' 'Patches,' 'Perks,' 'Power Vacuum'). As a result, the reader is rarely gripped by kinesthesis, and the tripartite structure of *Real Places* is its only real attempt to sequence content experientially from America's most modified settings to its minimally altered landscapes. Most tellingly, *within* each chapter the generic terms are sequenced in *alphabetical* order. This device entirely eliminates any sense of smooth geographical transition. It does however result in many quixotic and always entertaining juxtapositions, as when the reader proceeds from *Flea Market* on to *Flight Path*, *Furrow*, *Ice*, *Mailboxes* and *Pacific Rim*.

So the book is best appreciated as 124 short essays by an accomplished scholar/journalist, astute observer, and compulsive collector of landscape etymology. Grady Clay's esoteric grasp of our evolving lexicon of landscape reminds one of William Safire's ear for Beltway prose or Colin Dexter's facility for abstruse poetic allusion in crossword design. But the price of esoterica is imbalance and distortion of significance. Grady Clay's trawling of America's generic shoals makes for a very odd catch. The inclusions and omissions alike come as surprises. *The Ice* is there, *Snowbelt* and *Lake Effect* are not. *Sand Castles* make the cut, but *Fitness* and *Health*-related terms do not. Terms deriving from planning and government parlance are numerous, but the many compounds and neologisms found in American commerce are under-represented. I counted a mere half dozen names descriptive of retail settings, and they did *not* include *Strip Mall, Minimart, Superstore, Mega-mall, Outlet, Warehouse, Factory* or *Discount*. Similar inconsistencies of inclusion and omission characterize the changing fabric of downtown, leisure and entertainment settings, care facilities, outdoor advertising, roads and travel, and the argot of American real estate. Granted, any selection of a mere 124 terms was bound to exclude far more than it embraced, but novelty and interest, not importance or balance, seem to have impelled the selection process. And *Real Places* is novel, and interesting too, well worth reading as a thought-provoking anecdotal smorgasbord by a first-rate essayist and raconteur. The illustrations were selected with care and, very commonly, an acute sense of the ironic. There is a visionary zeal in

this work that transcends superficial discussion of commonplace terms. For Grady Clay, it is not usage that matters but semiological context and meaning. He is the Charles Kuralt of the generic place, and that is more than enough to make this book worth reading.

Darrell A. Norris
State University of New York, Geneseo

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*Placenames of Northern Ireland, Volume Two. County Down II. The Ards.* By A. J. Hughes and R. J. Hannan. The Queen's University of Belfast, 1992. Cloth £20Stg, Paperback £8.50Stg.

This is the second volume in the series being prepared by the Northern Ireland Place-Names Project, Department of Celtic, Queen's University, Belfast under the general editorship of Professor Gerard Stockman and it follows the same general form as Volume One.

Although Dr. Kay Muhr's introduction to placename study in Ireland is reprinted here from Vol. I, as is the "Introduction to Co. Down," Volume 2 consists mainly of a detailed analysis of the toponymy of each parish in the baronies of Upper Ards, Lower Ards, and a small contiguous portion of Lower Castlereagh. This territory commences a few miles to the east and southeast of Belfast. It is lodged between Belfast Lough, the Irish Sea, and Strangford Lough. Upper Ards contains ten parishes; Lower Ards a further four. Each section begins with a succinct parish history followed by a discussion of the parish name; then comes an investigation of each townland name within the parish boundaries, and the section is usually rounded off by an analysis of a small selection of minor names occurring within the area.

Each name study is backed by a rich array of evidence. For example, the name *Clandeboy* was first recorded in the *Annals of Loch Cé* in 1319 in the form *Cloinn Aedha Buidhe.* The Clann Aodha Buidhe was a branch of the Northern Uí Néill who once ruled much of the north of Ireland. The sept in question here were descended from Aodh Buidhe Ó Néill who died in 1283. They became increasingly powerful during the fourteenth, fifteenth and sixteenth centuries, but their rule was finally broken by the English and Scottish plantations of the early seventeenth century. R. J. Hannan lists some 70 versions of the name (which once designated an extensive territory in North Down but is now fortuitously linked to an estate in Bangor parish) to show how the original evolved into the present anglicization.

Bangor, in the heart of this territory, was one of the great centers of early Christianity. The monastery was founded by St. Comgall in

either 555 or 559. Because of its coastal location it was vulnerable to Viking attacks. In 810 the shrine of Comgall was pillaged and many of the monks slain. Due to its ecclesiastical significance Bangor is frequently mentioned in Latin, Irish and English sources. The *Annals of Ulster* refer to it as *Beannchair, nativatas Comgaill,* the *Annals of the Four Masters* as *Bendchair.* As far back as 1302 the church of *Bangowre* was valued at 28 marks in the Ecclesiastical Taxation of Ireland. The last native Irish source — a funeral oration at the graveside of Eoghan Ó Néill in 1744 — gives the form *Beanchor.* The meaning of the name is uncertain.

Another early Christian site was *Movilla* in the parish of Newtownards. It was founded around 540 by St. Finian and became the chief church of the Ulaid people who were once the most powerful group in the north of Ireland but who were driven eastwards by the Uí Néill and the Airgialla during the course of the fourth and fifth centuries. Like Bangor, Movilla suffered from the depredations of the Norse and was plundered by them in 824. The name signifies 'the plain of the sacred tree' and reflects the practice of establishing monasteries near pagan sites. An Irish-language version of the name, *Maghbile,* mentioned as late as c. 1700 in Mac Cana's *Itinerary.* Early versions occur in the various *Annals,* in the *Martyrology of Tallaght,* in the *Félire Óengusso Céli Dé,* in *Corpus geanealogiarum sanctorum Hibernicae* and elsewhere. Once again Hannan lists over three score sources.

Yet another such site was *Donaghadee.* The meaning of the second element is obscure (it possibly refers to an early Irish saint) but the first portion is undoubtedly *domhnach* 'a church.' The term fell out of natural use by the end of the seventh century, so this site can clearly be dated to the Early Christian period.

Much later was the monastery founded at *Grey Abbey* in 1193 by Affreca, wife of John de Courcy and daughter of Godfred, king of Man. John de Courcy was the Norman baron who conquered much of East Ulster. The first English-language reference to *Greyabbey* occurs in *De annatis Hiberniae* for the year 1491. The earliest Irish version *Monesterlee* dates to 1603. Mac Cana's *Itinerary* of c.1700 gives the name as *Mainistir Liath.*

Of course most placenames of the Ards were non-ecclesiastical in origin. Many incorporated the name of the owner at the time. A number of these names were gaelicized prior to the Plantation period. Thus *Walterston* became *Baile Bháltair* which in turn was altered to *Ballywalter, Perestoun* developed into *Ballyferris, Thurskyntone* into *Ballytrustan, Punyertoun* into *Ballyfounder, Nicholstoun* into *Ballynichol* and *Talbotyston* into *Ballyhalbert.* All these demonstrate the substitution some time between the fourteenth century and the sixteenth century of the Irish element *baile* for the Anglo-Norman word signifying *town(land):* a reflection of the gradual failure of the Anglo-Norman conquest and of the resurgence of Irish power and culture in the later Middle Ages. Not all the land units received Norman names. *Ballymaconnell* derived from *Baile Mhic Dhónaill, Ballymagee* from Baile Mhig Aodha, Ballymacnamee from *Baile Mhic Con Mí* and *Ballymurphy* from *Baile Uí Mhurchú.*

Other townland names were descriptive: *Ballycam* from *Baile Cam* 'crooked townland,' *Witter* from *Uachtar* 'the upper part,' *Ballygelagh* from *Baile Gaelach* 'Irish townland,' *Carryreagh* from *An Cheathrú Riabhach* 'the grey quarter,' *Ballysallagh* from *Baile Salach* 'dirty townland' and *Ballygrainey* from *Baile na Gréine* 'sunny townland.'

Botanical elements are found in many toponyms: *Glastry* from *An Ghlasrach* 'the green grassy area,' *Killydressy* from *Ceathrú Dhreasach* 'brambly quarter,' *Ballyskeagh* from *Baile na Sceiche* 'townland of the hawthorn,' *Tieveshilly* from *Taobh Saillí* 'hillside of the willowy area' and *Ballyree* from *Baile an Fhraoigh* 'townland of the heather.' Geomorphological aspects aspects of the land are also prominent: *Granagh* from *An Greanach* 'the gravelly place,' *Drumardan* from *Droim Ardáin* 'ridge of the little height,' *Cloghy* from *An Chlochaigh* 'the stony or rocky area,' *Dooey* from *Dumhaigh* 'sandbank,' and *Scrabo* from *Screabach* 'thinly covered rock, light stony ground.' Animals and birds do not play a big role in the toponymy here; rare instances include *Ardminnan* from *Ard Meannán* 'height of the kid goats,' *Knockinelder* from *Cnoc an Iolair* 'hill of the eagle,' *Drumhirk* from *Droim Thoirc* 'the ridge of the boar,' and *Carnalea* from *Carnán Lao* 'the small mound of the calf.' References to settlement features are more numerous: *Gransha* from *An Ghráinseach* 'the grange, or church granary,' *Lisbane* from *Lios*

*Bán* 'white fort,' and *Ballydoonan* from *Baile na nDúnán* 'townland of the little forts.'

Since this entire area was occupied by (English-speaking) Scots in the sixteenth century it was inevitable that many older Gaelic names would be supplanted by English ones such as *Springvale, Whitespots, Island Hill, Helen's Bay, Cotton* and the like. In some instances, e.g., *Whitespots,* documentary evidence of the older Irish name has survived. This linguistic nonconformity of the Plantation period helps to explain why so many of the names of Gaelic provenance are difficult to interpret today. The forcible eviction of the native population resulted in gross corruption of the toponymy. It is little wonder that the authors of this volume have had to place question marks after so many of their interpretations. Names such as *Keentagh, Dunover,* and *Tullyboard* are not readily amenable to translation even though the meaning of the initial element in each is usually self-evident. Hughes provides many informative notes which throw light on a highly complex situation, e.g.,

> The 1650 form (of *Fish Quarter) Carrownesker al' Fishertowne* reflects the degree of bilingualism that must have existed in the Ards in the 17th century.... While one might be tempted to see a Scots origin for *fisher* in the 17th century forms of this name it must be remembered that the term *fisher* would also have existed in the Anglo-Norman period...and it would seem that an Anglo-Norman origin is possible for *Fisher Quarter* with *Ceathrú an Iascaire* arising as a subsequent Irish translation.

The work is rounded off (as is Volume I) by Appendix A, "Aspects of Irish Grammar," Appendix B "Land Units," a Primary and Secondary Bibliography, a Glossary of Technical Terms, an Index to Irish forms of Places, and a Place Name Index. The entire volume is well produced and almost devoid of printing errors. All concerned with its production deserve high praise.

What must astonish the reader is that in this most intensively colonized corner of Ireland by some miracle much of the original Gaelic toponymy survived. At least 80% of the townland names here are of Irish provenance, though the Planters left a stronger imprint on the minor placenames. Some of the names of small hills *(Green Knoll)* and islands *(Mew Island),* of rocks *(Long Rock)* and whirlpools

*(Rowling Wheel),* of streams *(Cunning Burn)* and houses *(Mount Ross House)* are undoubtedly of English or Scottish origin. Others, however, are derived from Irish names: *Skullmartin,* from *Sceir Mhártain* 'Martin's skerry or reef,' with the word *sceir* (an Irish borrowing from Norse) converted into *skull* through folk etymology. Others are translations: *Grey Point* from an original *Rinn Riabhach* as is clear from the *Ronriagh* on a 1570 chart of Belfast Lough. Members of yet another group contain an older element onto which an English addition (often a surname) has been grafted. Often these are tautological: *Craigaveagh Rock,* the first portion of which is *Creag na bhFiach* 'rock of the ravens.'

But it is the major names — the names of land units and of large-scale physical features — which impart a particular personality to the landscape. Of the 213 townlands considered here over 45% contain the Gaelic element *baile* 'townland.' Others are formed from *tulaigh* 'a hillock,' from *ceathrú* 'a quarter(land),' from *druim* 'a ridge,' from *cill* 'a church,' from *creag* 'a rock,' from *ard* 'a height,' from *cnoc* 'a hill' and from *inis* 'an island.' Other Irish elements of less frequent incidence include *tobar* 'a well,' *taobh* 'a hillside' and *teanga* 'a tongue (of land).' These, coupled with the chief territorial names *(Ards* and the like) and the names of principal physical features such as *Scrabo* confirm that the Plantation, despite its ruthlessness, failed to obliterate the Gaelic past.

Both Hughes and his colleague Hannan are to be congratulated for tackling what is undoubtedly one of the most complex areas in the entire island of Ireland. Despite the inherent difficulties they have produced a remarkably satisfactory piece of work. While one might disagree with their findings in individual instances, the overall picture they present is worthy of general acceptance.

Breandán S. Mac Aodha
University College, Galway

*Names Old and New*. Ed. E. Wallace McMullen. Madison, NJ: Penny Press, 1993. Pp. xxxi +361. Hardcover $25.00.

E. Wallace McMullen's *Names New and Old* offers the reader a well-balanced miscellany commemorating the 25th anniversary of the Names Institute, with papers (mostly) read at the annual meetings held at Fairleigh Dickinson University from 1980-1986. A number of submissions presented elsewhere and articles previously published by longtime onomastic researchers serve to round out this volume dedicated to all aspects of name research — place name, personal, literary and other sundry categories of appellations. While the time frame of the composition of these articles is extremely broad (1959 through 1986), they all address the same focal point, names, in their myriad aspects, as the authors set out to explore and explain names and thus to enrich our understanding of a wide range of geographic, personal and literary names.

The articles by Donald Orth, "Motive in Placenaming," and Allan Rayburn, "Presenting the Study of Names as a Scholarly Discipline in North America," would have fit better at the beginning of the section on geographic names, as they comprise ideas of a more general nature and offer an introduction to the need and motives for the process of naming. Richard Randall's contribution "Political Changes and New Names" highlights the dilemmas of geographers and cartographers as new nations emerge from former federations, while others merge or re-merge because of linguistic or ethnic concerns. Benjamin Nuñez takes the reader back in time to the age of the first maritime explorations in his examination of the toponyms assigned by the early Portuguese navigators to land features and settlements encountered on the western coast of Africa. He demonstrates systematically how in less than a quarter of a century the Portuguese placed their linguistic-onomastic mark on the whole occidental coastline of this southern continent. Allen Walker Read, a veritable pioneer of the American Name Society, contributes to this volume with his reprint of a 1969 ICOS paper, "The Rivalry of Names for the Rocky Mountains of North America," in which he ferrets out documentary evidence of the earliest appellations assigned to this majestic chain, and traces the subsequent names suggested by later explorers and settlers. The article by Robert Rennick highlights

an opposite current, that of "no-naming" of land features and municipalities, and constitutes an exhaustive survey of so-named sites, conveniently categorized in six classifications. Irving L. Allen's contribution "Informal Names for Wealthy Neighborhoods in American Cities" turns the reader's attention to a more localized and popular type of naming practice, that of designating a given neighborhood with a name reflecting the established presence of a financial elite or the influx of the nouveau riche who thus sought to differentiate their "domain" from other areas of the city.

The second section of the volume centers on names created for literary works, both of characters as well as fictional settings. In a sense, literary naming is far more demanding an act than giving names in the external world. A mountain peak may receive a commemorative name, a descriptive name, or even a no-name, a mere human response to its present. It need not "sound right." A literary name, on the other hand, needs a sort of "ring of authenticity;" it has to sound right for the epoch and place portrayed; thus the greater talent and ingenuity required on the part of the writer of fiction. The seven articles contained in this section all plumb the onomastic microcosm in a number of works of literature, from past classics to contemporary creations. Leonard R. N. Ashley's perceptive analysis of names and non-names in Bret Ellis' *Less than Zero is* a veritable tour de force in which he explicates many of the novel's fictional and real names and focuses on the importance of their sociological context over that of their literary creation.

Lynn Hamilton's "Character Names in *Jane Eyre*" convincingly relates character naming with the principles of the four earthly elements of the ancients: fire, water, air and earth, the concepts of mobility versus fixity and the contrast between nature's vibrant, beneficent elements and those arid and malevolent ones. Russell Brown's study of Segher's *Revolt of the Fishers* looks at name analysis as onomastic detective work. Geographic names in this novel are found to be non-European, thus lending a universality to the work. Character names in this novel are shown to possess a Breton--Celtic base, which may reflect a reference to the novelist's personal interest in art history and modern communism.

Other foreign literature occupies the interest of Betty J. Davis in her "Names in *Le Malade Imaginaire,* in which she explains the

comedic element of Moliere's character names, as well as Catherine Rovira in her paper, "Feminine Allegorical Names in *El Criticon*," where this critic stresses the allegorical nature of character names in Gracian's work and the Baroque preference for contrasts or opposing elements, rather than any purported latent misogyny. Maxine Bernard pursues a comparative onomastic path in an examination of similar names of fictional heroes in the works of horror by Sir Walter Scott and the French writer Barbey d'Aurevilly. Lastly, Vivian Zinkin examines place names in Trollop's *The Warden* and explains how the novelist goes beyond the simple use of a toponym as a background prop and seeks to recreate place names imaginatively in order to evoke a determined response in the reader on coming across a fictive town name in the course of the text.

Section III of the volume collects articles focusing on personal names. Kelsie Harder, the *doyen* of American onomastics, begins the section with an article on the popularity of literary names used in naming children and the changes over the generations. Herbert Barry III and Aylene Harper [erroneously listed as "Aylmar" in the general index] offer a detailed statistical analysis of the top 100 male and female names and conclude that while the former derive from northern European linguistic roots designating strength and prowess, the latter originate in Latin and Greek forms and tend to highlight things, objects, thus conveying the traditional subservient role of women in society. A. Ross Eckler contributes with a fascinating article on "Single-letter Surnames," and concludes that the most common family name of this type is "O," followed by the surnames "U" and "I." His source material reveals that the vast majority of these names are held by those of Oriental background. Penelope Schott's contribution focuses on a single name, Rosamond Clifford, mistress of King Henry II of England, and shows how, after 1592, this "Fair Rosamon" was viewed as the victim of poisoning in English literature. Though slim in onomastic content the article carefully traces the historical figure's purported demise in the works of British writers over the centuries. Dorothy Litt, long a specialist in things Renaissance, offers an intriguing look at collections of sixteenth-century epistolary writing, in particular the subscriptions contained therein which held much more meaning for the people of that distant era.

The last section of contributions features four articles. Douglas Hinkle makes inroads in an unusual area: names and terms employed in drug trafficking, and the high degree of forms derived from the Spanish language, owing to the mushrooming Hispanic population in the United States. Roger Wescott contributes with a linguistic article, "The Phonology of Proper Names in English," in which he examines the forms of proper names, specifically nicknames, and the reasons for these alterations. Walter Bowman's fascinating article on the titles of symphonies explores the assigning of names to musical compositions though it is far from complete. (One might add the names of Rubenstein's "Ocean" Symphony, Nielsen's "The Inextinguishable" and Gorecki's "hit parade" "Symphony of Lamentation"). Thomas Bernard's article on "Name, Nationality and The Incongruity Factor" concludes this section and points out the anomalies encountered in modern life, where people possess names that do not correspond to those expected of one's given nationality. Bernard stresses rightly the idea of the melting pot, but the jet plane has carried this process of immigration to an insignificant act of a couple of hours of flying time.

The editor, E. Wallace McMullen, rounds out the volume with a history of The Names Institute, 1980-1986, as well as complete indices of Names Institute contributors, participants, abstracts and topics. Professor McMullen is to be congratulated on this onomastic endeavor so handsomely hardbound and so easy to read, for he has provided the interested reader with a wide spectrum of papers encompassing so many aspects of names research, as well as invaluable information on the history and content of the Names Institute over a quarter of a century. In an age when regional names conferences are failing and dying, Professor McMullen's years of zealous toil in directing the Names Institute and now bringing a generous sampling of these varied papers to the printed page for greater dissemination and for posterity merit the unqualified resounding accolade of every onomastician.

Wayne H. Finke
Baruch College (CUNY)

*African Names and Their Meanings.* By S. Opunabo Abell. New York: Vantage Press, 1992. Pp. xiv + 43.

*A Handbook of African Names.* By Ihechukwu Madubuike. Colorado Springs: Three Continents Press, 1994 (Second edition; first edition, 1976). Pp. vii + 158.

These brief publications are aimed at audiences that have a general interest in Africa and African names. The format of each is similar; an introductory chapter on the continent and people of Africa is followed by a list of African names, a gloss of their meanings, and their national or ethnic origins. Each book also has a map providing some information on the distribution of African languages, and each book has citations of references.

Of the two publications, the one by Abell is cast at the most general level. The Introduction is only five pages, and it includes information on the early history of Africa and on the colonial period. The list of names is alphabetized, the glosses are liberal and simplified, and the origin is simply listed as nation-state. The majority of the origins are given as Nigeria or Kenya/Tanzania. The list also includes some items that are more likely terms of reference than personal names, e.g., Swahili *mtoto* is the generic word for 'child,' but is glossed as "youngster, little boy," and *mzee*, a generic term of reference and address, meaning 'elder,' but glossed as "elderly and wise, a sage." The book may have value for someone who knows little about Africa and wants not much more than a brief list of African names with simple glosses. There is not much in the book for the specialist.

Madubuike's book is more informative and useful for anyone who has a serious interest in African names, although it, too, has distinct limitations. The introductory chapter is addressed to the subject of names, and it gives some cultural information on the range and types of African personal names, using the Igbo of Nigeria for illustration. Part II contains the alphabetical master lists, relatively more accurate glosses, and the ethnic/linguistic group of origin. The 51 ethnic groups are drawn from all areas of the sub-continent, but West Africa is the most strongly represented. Most useful of all is Part III, which contains brief discussions of personal naming systems

and practices in individual African societies. The descriptions are not systematic, but some of them contain interesting and relevant information on personal names, as, e.g., on semantic domains that serve as sources for names in Igbo, such as the days of the week, personal qualities, and socioeconomic status. As in Abell's case, however, Madubuike's intended audience appears to be limited to individuals who happen to have a general interest in African names, but he provides more specific information and more cultural background. Specialists can glean some useful content from the enrichment, perhaps best viewed as a bonus.

Ben G. Blount
University of Georgia

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*Dictionary of German Names*. By Hans Bahlow. Translated by Edda Gentry. Madison, Wisconsin: Max Kade Institute for German-American Studies, University of Wisconsin, 1993. Pp. xxxix - 641.

Henry Geitz, editor of several translations of the Max Kade Institute, states that the intent of Gentry's translation of Hans Bahlow's *German Names* (GN) is to aid American-Germans in their "new and widespread interest in genealogy.... Now those who cannot read German can inform themselves as to the meanings and origins of their own family names and those of friends and neighbors" (v). American-Germans familiar with the *Encyclopedia of German-American Genealogical Research* will notice GN listed as one of five "[important] lists which may contain a surname of interest to the genealogical researcher" (Smith & Smith 1976, 92). Within that context GN will be of aid to its intended audience. Smith and Smith, however, do not give GN the same strong endorsement that they do three of the other five German language texts, saying only: "This handy book [GN] can also be obtained as a paper-back..." (93).

As a list of names, GN does indeed supplement existing English language lists. In the entries for names that begin with Haa-, for example, GN shares eight entries with German names found in *A*

*Dictionary of Surnames* (Hanks and Hodges 1988), while adding twenty-six new entries. (HH has three entries that GN does not).

Leaving the evaluation of GN's contributions, however, to American-German genealogists, onomastics scholars will discover that the English translation of GN displays excellent translation skills. The content, moreover, validates existing scholarship already available in English.

Two translators participated in this work. Eddy Gentry translated the dictionary proper and her name appears on the book's cover. Her deft handling of the cumbersome prose of Bahlow makes the reading easier, without destroying any of Bahlow's tight scholarship.

Bahlow's entry for **Hitler**, for example, uses old German script for *-ss-* and reads:

> ***Hiss**, Hiess s. Heiss! - **Hitler** (Ö) s. Hiedler (mit Vorbehalt)! Vgl. Hüttler (wie Hüttner:Hittner).*

Gentry keeps the old German script for the *-ss-*, but separates this entry into two entries and allows the English to flow:

> ***Hiss**, Hiess see Heiss.*
>
> ***Hitler** (Aust.) see Hiedler (questionable). CF. Hüttler (like Hüttner: Hittner).*

Peter Erspamer translates the Bahlow's Forward and Author's Introduction. The translation deserves more than one reading. The English is hard to read, but the ideas worth considering.

Unlike Gentry, Erspamer has chosen to be strictly faithful to Bahlow's German syntax and pedantic vocabulary. Few sentences have fewer than five clauses and they include rather obscure English words such as *predominated* instead of *dominated*, *burgher class* instead of *urban class* or *bourgeois* and *immanent* instead of *inherent*.

Bahlow believes that the German language has, in addition to the expected High German and Low German split, a third dialect, Middle German. It is the Middle German argument that makes the close reading potentially rewarding to scholars. In addition, Bahlow mixes the usual onomastic explanations of surname origins (expanded personal names, places of residence, occupation, and personal attributes) with a fine-tuned synopsis of ways in which these origins differed in specific High German, Middle German, and Low German localities. That's the good news.

The bad news is that the mixture of origin types and geography defies any coherence or order. True, he divides the Introduction into a title-less opening three pages; a nine-page Geographical Portrait of Family Names; two one-page sections on Occupational (Sur)Names; and a three-page Names of Origin. But the divisions make no sense. He discusses occupational names, for example, in the Geographical Portrait section. The real stumbling block, however, lies in Bahlow's inconsistent use of dialect terms and geographic terms. That inconsistency calls for close concentration. Sometimes *East German* means language and sometimes geography, not only on the same page but within the same paragraph (xxiv). Sometimes geography receives the term South (or North or Middle) Germany, at other times the South (or North or Middle) German "area." Then, at times, terms like *Lower Rhine* (xxiv) defiantly remain ambiguous. Most frustrating of all is Bahlow's use of *Central German*, at times, for his favorite contribution: Middle German.

To their credit, the editors of GN have tried to make the most of a difficult situation. They have added three maps: one of Germany, Austria and Switzerland 1918-1933, one of 1930s German dialects, and one of Bahlow's unique Middle High German Literary Dialects. They have also completed Bahlow's extensive bibliographic entries. Bahlow often lists only a author's name; GN includes all names, titles, publishers, and dates. Scholars interested in pursuing the Middle German argument have plenty of sources. GN also has added 16 entries to the "Other Sources" section of the bibliography.

As mentioned earlier, Gentry's translation elicits a translator's admiration (see Fujiwara 1973). She has added over 60 abbreviations (while eliminating a half dozen of Bahlow's). The additions certainly make the reading flow, while eliminating much ambiguity. As the Hitler example above shows, she liberally separates many of Bahlow's truncated entries. She also indicates with an asterisk where German-specific puns or literary references have been omitted and, with square brackets, where she has added translations of references deemed unnecessary by Bahlow in the German edition. She also adds excellent notes of clarification, such as in the entry

**Menge** Schar [meaning 'group of people', which is also one meaning of Menge].

This new list of names, however, still must relate to other English language lists. I arbitrarily, parochially, and capriciously chose ten prominent Texas German names for comparison. I somewhat more responsibly chose Smith's (1956) *New Dictionary of American Family Names* (S), HH (1988), and Jones's 1990 *German-American Names* (J), for comparison.

The comparison adds credence to the argument that GN supplements available research although it certainly does not replace available research nor overshadow it. Figure 1 shows the comparison of the treatment of the Texas German names.

Figure 1. Coverage of selected Texas German names

| Name | GN | HH | J | S |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| Herff | M1 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| Durst | M1 | 0 | M1 | M1 |
| Nye | M1 | M1 | M1 | 0 |
| Menger | M1 | M1 | M1 | M1 |
| Fuchs | M1 | M1 | M1, M2 | M1, M2, M3 |
| Walbeck | M1, M2 | M1, M2, M3 | M1 | M1, M2 |
| Gebhardt | M1 | M1, M2, M3 | M1 | M1, M2 |
| Kleberg | 0 | 0 | M1 | 0 |
| Boos | 0 | 0 | M1 | M1 |
| Nimitz | 0 | M1 | 0 | M1 |

M1 Meaning #1 M2 Meaning #2 M3 Meaning #3

As mentioned above in the discussion of Haa- entries, the GN list of 15,000 names does add to the English-language inventory of available German surnames. The Texas list isolates another surname available only in GN: *Herff*. Bahlow mentions that *Herff* means 'swamp water'; Gentry adds some geographic explanation for those American-Germans unfamiliar with German topography.

Two Texas German names, *Durst* and *Nye*, GN shares with two of the three other English language lists. GN, S and J agree that

*Durst* is 'a daredevil, a bold or daring person'; GN, S and HH agree that *Nye* is 'the new person, the stranger'. HH does not include *Durst*; J does not include *Nye*.

GN shares three names with all of the other lists; *Menger, Fuchs, Walbeck*, and *Gebhardt*. All four lists claim that *Menger* refers to merchants or dealers in a number of various goods.

HH agrees with GN that *Fuchs* means '*fox*'. J agrees, but adds that it also means a person who dealt in furs, 'a furrier'. S accepts fox and furrier and adds that the fox in question may be the sign of a fox over a tavern.

J says that *Walbeck* is a placename in Germany; the other two sources, HH and S, agree with GN that Walbeck not only comes from a placename in Germany but that the placename in question meant 'swampy stretch of water'. HH adds that several geographic locations in Germany used this placename.

GN agrees with the other lists that *Gebhardt*, a military term, refers to a strong and brave person. S also claims that Gebhardt may refer to a kind and generous person; HH claim that a saint of the name *Gebhardt* popularized the combination of strong/brave and kind/generous.

GN, however, would disappoint scholars researching three of our famous Texas German namess. Missing from GN are *Kleberg, Boos*, and *Nimitz*. Admittedly, the names do present problems to the other scholars, but they list answers that GN misses.

Only J recognizes *Kleberg*, claiming that it refers to 'Clover Mountain', a city name.

HH joins GN in overlooking *Boos*; J and S, however, both claim that *Boos*, an attributive name, refers to a wicked, evil, or angry person.

GN appears most vulnerable, however, with the name *Nimitz*. Neither Bahlow nor GN mention the name. Nor does J. S and HH, however, convincingly argue that *Nimitz*, originated in Russian and referred to all foreigners — especially Germans. *Nemchin* (German *Nimitz*) means 'the one who cannot speak; the mute'.

Small stylistic conventions require getting used to, such as the use of American spelling but the use of British single quotes (') and placing periods and commas outside, not inside, the quotes. The edi-

tors' introduction, however, does put the book into perspective and does give easy explanations on how to use Gentry's translation.

My only uneasiness with the translation lies in the omission of Bahlow's dedication. So I pass the information on: He dedicated the book to his beloved wife Ursula Stahl Bahlow.

Every summer my East Texas State colleague Fred Tarpley and I sponsor a Family Names Heritage Booth at the four-day Texas Folklife Festival. I have already asked our university library to purchase a copy of GN, because I anticipate a heavy dependence upon it at the Festival. Our booth's thirty workers will enjoy being able to read Bahlow themselves, not having to wait for me or other (novice) German readers. The numerous Texas-German visitors to the Festival will appreciate reading, in English, that, yes indeed, their friend Kuharsch's name does mean *'cow's ass'* and yes, *Zumpf* does indeed mean *'penis'*. Their name, *Hildebrand*, however, originated in a German saga. Even after all this scholarship a bit of mystery remains.

Scott Baird
Trinity University, San Antonio

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