

Book Notice

You Name It: Perspectives on Onomastic Research. Eds. Ritva Liisa Pitkä and Kaija Mallat. *Studia Fennica Linguistica* 7. Finnish Literature Society, Hallituskatu 1, Box 259, Fin-00171 Helsinki, Finland. 1997.

All North American onomasts should read this book carefully. It is a *Festschrift* for Eero Kiviniemi marking his 60th birthday; but it is also a statement of onomastic science as practiced elsewhere in the world, most notable in Europe. It deals in considerable detail and extent with what North American onomasts have generally gone to great lengths to avoid—theories of names and principles of naming.

Most of the articles here were written in languages other than English, yet the editors, to their eternal credit, have seen to it that all the articles appear in an English edition. Are German and/or French versions available as well?

Since this is a tribute to Kiviniemi, containing contributions from associates and friends, there is a descriptive section as well as a theoretical section, but the descriptive section is clearly subordinate to the primary concerns of the issue, theoretical onomastics and methodologies of onomastic research.

Among the topics addressed in these 29 articles:

The place of names in the lexicon of a given language

Names as similar to or opposed to other linguistic items

Names as they are subject to the rules and processes which affect other words; is there a “name-specific phonology?”

Categorization and sub-categorization of names in the lexicon

The semantic-syntactic status and/or properties of names

The semantic/morphological/syntactic constraints on name formation

The role of analogy in the structuring and spreading of placenames

Statistical modeling as an aide to understanding the extension or contraction of individual placenames or placename sets.

Bengt Pamp’s remark (13) should be taken as much as challenge as comment: “[Onomastic] research is a relay race.” The baton in the race to understand the rules of names and naming is clearly with the Europeans; let’s hope we are all at least in the same event.

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