Reviews

Onomastique et Histoire/Onomastique littéraire. Pierre-Henri Billy and Jacques Chaurand, Eds. Publications de l'Université de Provence, Aix-en-Provence, France. 1998. Pp. 3-386. 350.00 French francs.

The twin titles of this work reflect the contents of the Proceedings of the Eighth Conference (*Colloque*) of the French Onomastic Society, of which I am a member. At this conference, held 26-29 October, 1994, 26 papers were read, many by the acknowledged leaders of French onomastics, including the absolute authority on Provençal onomastics, Charles Rostaing, to whom the volume is dedicated. Rostaing is perhaps best known to readers of *Names* for his *Dictionnaire des noms de lieux de France* (1984), written in collaboration with Albert Dauzat. I was flattered to be received by Rostaing, in his home, many years ago, in 1972, when he was still teaching at the same university which hosted (but did not organize) the conference in 1994 in the South of France, his abode and primary area of research. Rostaing's kind dedication in my copy of his volume reflected some apparent amazement that an American under forty (I was at the University of California at the time) should carry on what he thought was valid French toponymic work by the shores of the Pacific, a symptom of a common attitude in French academe at the time, and today still, though less, so.

I have undertaken here only a partial review of *Onomastique et Histoire/Onomastique littéraire* since no one can claim expertise in all areas of French onomastics, still less of all onomastics and a conference records many topics and approaches, and the sheer amount of material in these proceedings is staggering, not so much by the number of pages, though this is substantial, but by the sheer density of data and analyses propounded. A selection thus had to be made and this is why one will find here a review of only one historical-toponymic paper, on a subject on which I myself have written in the deep past, and a review of two out of the five papers on literary onomastics, on which I have concentrated in the latter part of my onomastic career. Other papers, while not reviewed, will be mentioned briefly.

First, a general description of the contents: In addition to the two broad areas reflected by the twin titles of the volume, the following

subdivisions obtain: 1) Toponymy and History (15 papers); 2) one instance of pluridisciplinary research by a team of scholars concentrating on the Priory of Nottonville in Normandy (4 papers); 3) a section on Anthroponymy, History and Text Editing (2 papers, including one by Marie-Thérèse Morlet, who completed Albert Dauzat's well known *Dictionnaire étymologique des noms de famille et des prénoms de France*); and 4) the section on literary onomastics (5 papers).

I shall not translate titles of papers, but I will translate all textual excerpts quoted, without rendering the originals thereof, for reasons of space and also for ease in locating the various papers through the Table of Contents by any interested reader, who would not need such translations. But the general readership of *Names* may be interested in some of the considerations in the text itself, and excerpts therefrom will be duly translated, the originals mentioned only if directly relevant.

The historical-toponymic paper, "Le *Mons Gaudii* de la Jérusalem médiévale et les Mon(t)joie de Saran (Loiret) et d'ailleurs" (166-176), by Marie-Pierre Perseval (a good name for a medieval subject!) with the collaboration of Michaël Wyss, of the University of Saint-Denis, deals in part with what seems to be the perpetual etymological enigma of the war cry of French knights of old, *Montjoie Saint-Denis*, which still seems to cause problems. If I may be allowed to dispose of a bit of personal pique first, but it is not just that, it is also continual surprise and amazement at a perennial widespread tendency of French scholarship to ignore American-based work in the same areas of endeavor, as if it did not exist: I myself have written two short articles, in English, both published in *Romance Notes*, way back in 1971, while teaching at the University of California, on the same basic subject, also in an onomastic vein, and nary a reference to these publications is to be found in the paper under consideration. Any interested party could and can locate the exact references in a good bibliographical index, and surely such were available to Ms. Perseval, and to her cohort M. Wyss, at the University of Saint-Denis Library, or any of the nearby Paris research libraries, including the rather complete onomastic holdings of the *Archives Nationales*. Even though they bring in a lot that is new, and their work seems thorough, they might have avoided some duplications by referring to my two articles among the authors surveyed on the question at hand, or, if that was not practicable, or desirable, they might have given me credit for some then new ideas on the origin of the war

cry, very much involving *Montjoie* (ideas of which they seem unaware) or at least have bothered to disprove these ideas if they disagree with them (if they were aware, which I doubt). Let there be no misunderstanding; their article is generally quite good, but they sound a little too cocksure at times, while trying ostensibly not to appear so. Surely the English language could not have been an obstacle to reading my modest contributions!

To be more specific: in their section I, they start by reviewing what lexicographers have been saying over the generations about the possible original meaning of the term *Montjoie,* and they say there are "at least seven or eight" proposals. That is conversational style; it is not scholarly style. Did they find seven, or eight? They make the point that even in the *Chanson de Roland* the "Carolingian" warriors would utter the cry, but already "no longer understood it." Only one thing wrong with this, the *Chanson* was written *circa* 1080, and the Carolingian dynasty, specifically Charlemagne himself, one of its main characters, lived in the eighth century A.D., and the famous battle of Roncevaux (Rencesvals), the crux of the tale, took place in 778. So the ignorance of the meaning of the war cry is rather that of the presumed 1080 Anglo-Norman author, Turold, instead of that of the knights at Roncevaux, three full centuries before. We have no way of knowing what they understood about it, nor even whether it was already used in 778. The authors suggest, tantalizingly, but, it seems, gratuitously, that *Munjoie* might have been uttered in a language "that was neither Germanic nor Romance" (165), very surprising indeed on the part of Frankish, if not yet French, knights. (The two ethnonymic categories are blurred at the time; cf. my recent article in *De l'aventure épique à l'aventure romanesque/Hommage à André de Mandach,* Peter Lang, Bern, 1997 [9-28], "Deux toponymes mystérieux de la Chanson de Roland....") The two authors simply refuse the etymology *Mons Jovis*, which Joseph Bédier had accepted in his day, but several isotoponyms (toponymic cognates, or at least apparently so) such as Italian *Mongiovi*, or, even better, *Montjovis*, in Limoges, France, in *langue d'oc* country, not adduced in their study, seem to lend credence to such an etymology, which I, for one, have upheld as a plausible hypothesis. (They also refuse the French toponyms *Montjou, Montjoux*, and Catalan *Montjuich*, which, being consistent, they also reject even as indications, if not outright proof, of a *Mons Jovis* origin, of which more *infra*.) This

attitude is rather opinionated, hence exaggerated. The authors are not open, they do not state *why* this etymology should be rejected out of hand, or at least they do not do so on acceptable diachronic phonological grounds. The fact that they belong to a department of archaeology rather than of linguistics or French may have something to do with it (or at least M. Wyss does; the twin signatures are not clear on this point).

In their section II (167), their subtitle asks: "Are these seven words with different meanings etymologically similar?", so we know, at last, that there are seven, not eight. Quite a few etymological proposals are cogently criticized, except, it would seem, their renewed rejection of *Mons Jovis* 'mountain of Jupiter', on the grounds that the "laws of phonetics," i.e., *Ausnahmslosigkeit*, preclude this. They say that *Jovem* can only yield *Joeuf* in French. (In a good History of French approach, one should speak of the Old French oblique case as an etymon, based in turn on the accusative of Vulgar Latin, i.e., *Monte(m) Jove(m)*, the genitive having been absorbed by all oblique cases in the evolution of Old French from its parent Vulgar Latin, the accusative case acting as a kernel for this phenomenon, but that is secondary under the circumstances. Toponymic attestations by clerics, however, would generally be in proper Latin.) Apparently they never looked up *Joeuf* in Dauzat and Rostaing's dictionary of placenames (1984), for the latter authors see it as a cognate of *Juif* "Jew" and indeed adduce the toponym *Juif*, with an attestation *villa Judaeis,* dated to 970; *Joeuf*, in Lorraine, is attested as *Juf* in 1128, and as *Juef* in 1404, thus there seems little doubt on grounds of attested renditions that *Joeuf* refers to Jewish residents of that village (Jewish settlement, quite early on French soil, as far back as Gaul, is fully corroborated by history), and Jews have had precious little to do with Jupiter historically (indeed their refusal to worship Roman, pagan gods, including the Emperor, is what precipitated the dreadful three-year "Jewish War" described by Flavius Josephus, in which they were finally defeated, their Temple in Jerusalem destroyed by Titus in 70 A.D., and they were scattered over the known world, their independence apparently lost forever, but little did anyone suspect for 1900 years that it would be resurrected as modern Israel). The two authors have thus failed to make their point, since they have not illustrated "phonetic laws" as rejecting *Mons Jovis* through this example. But on page 168, after their calling etymologies based on Jupiter "aberrant" in the case of Montjoux and others (but the final *-x* often

stands for a final *-s* in medieval scribal practice), I do not see what else it could be in the case of Montjoux (unless the final *-s* be paragogic), but even as *-jou* the etymology is *Jovem* according to Dauzat and Rostaing (1984). Under the entry *Jou-sous-Montjou* (double proof, it would seem, but in all fairness the two illustrious authors consider this probable, not certain), they again claim that *Jovem* yields only *Joeuf* in French, but make a concession, reluctantly ("maybe, at most, the Jeu of Montjeu..." (168), which shows them to be less sure of themselves. I even find their term "aberrant" to be an aberrant characterization, for Dauzat and Rostaing (1984) mention a 1278 attestation for Montjoux as *Castrum Montis Jovis;* surely this reinforces what historical phonology has to say anyway, and just what do they have to say to convince the reader that a *Jupiter* etymology is aberrant? They say nothing, except for the sacrosanct "laws of phonetics" which, as we all know, do in fact suffer apparent exceptions, which the proponents of *Ausnahmslosigkeit* themselves, in the last century, did take into account and explain on other grounds, such as analogy, phonological attraction in some environments, etc. One could even raise the question as to whether exceptions to "exceptionlessness" are not more frequent in onomastics than in the ordinary lexicon of any language.

In their section III (169), dealing with *Jois*, with final *-s*, they state that it, "just as Juis," comes from "*judicium* in the singular." Obviously *judicium* is singular; it cannot be plural, unless this refers to the nominative singular of the Old French term, rather than to its presumed etymon. This is a lexical item, not a toponym. They do not find *Jois* in Godefroy's dictionary, which is a lexical, not an onomastic work, but track it down under the entry *Juis*, which seems good enough for their purpose, and might be. The *Dictionnaire de l'Ancien français* by A.J. Greimas does not list *Juis* as such, but it does exist as an ethnonymic noun in medieval French literature, and sure enough, again, it means 'Jews', in the plural; cf. Joinville's *Histoire de Saint Louis*, chapter X, where the *sainz roys* 'holy king' states, *inter alia*, that "no one, except the most learned cleric, should argue with Jews, but that lay people, if they hear anything said by them that casts doubt on Christianity, should not try to defend the faith, but should plunge their sword into the Jewish miscreant's belly as far as it will go" (p. 212 of the Pléiade Edition of *Historiens et chroniqueurs du moyen-âge*, Gallimard, Paris, 1972), which he thought would solve the problem raised by these redoubtable

Jewish arguers. On that same page Joinville's text states that there was "une grande desputaison de clers et de Juis" (i.e., a great theological dispute between clerics and Jews), the latter word in the oblique case, and in the nominative plural we see an alternation between "li Juis" and "li Juif," one of which is wrong grammar and suggests that the Old French double case system was already breaking down. So *Juis* need not come exclusively from *judicium*, but this point is nowhere made by our two authors.

As we read on, a surprise awaits us. When reaching the bottom of page 170, what follows on the top of the next page makes no sense, till one discovers that it is again page 169, on the other side of which there is, of course, again page 170. Far be it from me to blame the hapless authors for this printing mixup, but it is strange that no one involved in the production of the book, among editors, proofreaders, or printing staff, should have noticed it.

As stated above, the article is fairly thorough, the research bona fide if a bit incomplete and this in spite of some opinionated statements. It is not possible, within the limits of this review, to analyze their work thoroughly; there are just too many data and I would consider it required reading for anyone interested in the twin questions of the onomastic origin of the medieval war cry as well as the toponymic versus lexical meanings of *montjoie* throughout the Middle Ages and beyond.

One last remark, though, before leaving this subject: On 175, concerning *Montjuich,* a mountain in Barcelona, they again say it is "doubtlessly" a reflex of *Mons Judicii*. They refuse the oft-adduced etymology (in which I do not believe myself) of *Mons Gaudii,* and we have seen that they reject *Mons Jovis*, but the reason why they refuse the former hardly appears to be proof positive. They remind the reader that the Spanish Hospitalers did not believe in the "joie" (joy) of *Mons Gaudii,* a bit strange since this refers to martyrdom. With all due respect to the memory of the Hospitalers of yore, what they believed or did not believe can hardly constitute a decisive fact of toponymic etymology. *Mons Jovis* does the trick, it seems, in Catalan historical phonology, and there is no reason why the tall hill, Montjuich, should not have been dedicated to Jupiter in pagan antiquity. The Catalan ending in *-ich*, in all fairness, could account for a Latin genitive *-is* just as well as for another Latin ending in *-icii,* and the Christian appellation

have been substituted for the pagan one, so that we would have a rather remarkable phonological coincidence here, and it is hard to decide whether two possible Latin genitive endings can indeed yield the same Catalan toponymic morpheme, and I will not go out on a limb on this, just suggest it. Had the authors made some such analysis in the light of Catalan historical phonology (in which I do not claim expertise) they might have been more persuasive than by their argument of faith in the beliefs and impressions of a monastic order of yore, and one would not be wondering.

Moving to literary onomastics, the first paper is by Davide de Camilli, who teaches at the Università degli Studi in Pisa, Italy, and also sits on the "Scientific Committee" of the *Rivista Italiana di Onomastica*, published in Rome and edited by Enzo Caffarelli, all of which insures that his scholarly credentials in the field are unimpeachable. His paper is entitled "Quelques noms de personnages dans l'oeuvre de Cesare Pavese" (347-353). First, a few words about his style. He writes generally good French, but like all bilinguals, he cannot escape occasional lapses due to bilingual interference, in his case in the form of Italianisms, some of which will be listed *infra*. Outside of these, there are occasional lapses in style simply due to bizarre use of some French words in a particular context, as when, in the very first paragraph, he tells us that Pavese has looked for proper names for his characters "either in cities or in the countryside;" so far, so good, but he adds *voire*, which means 'even', in Turin (Italian *Torino*) or *les Langhe*, a toponym unknown to me but whose plurality suggests a region, or area of the countryside, and not a city of any kind, a fact confirmed (351) when the author refers to the "peasant world of the Langhe," in which case the *voire* is quite strange in this context, since neither Turin nor the Langhe escape the original categories, so one does not see what is so special about either place name as to merit an "even."

There are also misspellings of names of writers, such as *Cogol* (347) for *Gogol* and *Russel* for *Russell* (349).

Among Italianisms, one finds "en 23 occasions" (349), where it would have been better to spell out the number instead of using the French preposition *à*, and still better to have used "dans vingt-trois cas." On the same page, one finds "de commun" instead of "en

commun" in a context in which the latter is obligatory, the former being used in other contexts. On 350 we are told that a tale by Pavese, *La Prison* in French, was "assez diffus dans le Sud de l'Italie," the Italian *diffuso* interfering with the correct French *diffusé,* or *répandu*, i.e., "fairly widely available, with a large circulation;" French *diffus* does exist, but with another meaning and use ('diffuse, verbose, wordy', none of which would be flattering to Pavese, and if such were the case one might wonder why what is verbose in Southern Italy would not be in the North).

Colloquialisms, while French, mar the scholarly style, as when Camilli writes: "C'est exactement Circé qui l'appelle comme ça dans *Les sorcières"* (350), in which "comme ça" is stylistically inferior to "ainsi," in addition to which we have "exactement," no colloquialism, but inappropriate where "précisément" would be called for. They are not exact synonyms and thus not interchangeable.

On 351, we find "Ils sont des personnages que Pavese sûrement méprise," where "Ce sont..." would have been better, and in this context "sûrement" might have been better replaced by "certainement" as a post-positioned adverb, or, better, by the construction "dont il est certain que Pavese les méprise." These stylistic remarks are not made disparagingly; there is such a thing as *Sprachgefühl,* and this is extremely hard to master no matter how cultivated the bilingual, and that is why perfect bilingualism is so rare, in or out of the academic and scholarly world. Great bilingual writers such as Julien Green or Samuel Beckett are more than rare; they are absolutely phenomenal. Outright Italianisms are again evident in the analysis of the woman's name *Clementina*: "Ce nom dérive du latin *Clemens*, et après du pape Clemente I, Clément" (351). There really was no point in translating Italian *Clemente* into Clément in French, nor was there any in mentioning the Pope under his Italian name in the first place, but the main error is "après du," which, it is to be surmised, is based on interference from Italian *dopo* in the sense of "subsequently," where the author could not even have used "d'après;" what he probably meant was that the first etymology of *Clementina* was based on the Latin lexeme, which became a man's name, from the accusative *Clemente(m)*, but this subsequent name is the one that gave rise to the derived woman's name *Clementina*. The passage, as written, is thus none too clear, and use of the cumbersome but clear adverb "subséquemment" in front of "du pape" might have prevented all misunderstanding, as might the lighter "plus tard."

There is little point in going on with this kind of grammatical/lexical /semantic/stylistic analysis of errors in French, whether due to Italianisms or to plain mistakes in French usage, something that can afflict even scholarly bilinguals, even outside of bilingual interference *per se*.

It is not always clear whether the authors are giving their own or quoting someone else's opinion. Dr. Alida Poeti, a bona fide Italian literary critic at the University of the Witwatersrand, Johannesburg, has kindly consented to give me the benefit of some of her thoughts on the subject, after reading Camilli's paper. Apart from sometimes unclear referencing, she says that he seems to have missed some valid points with onomastic implications, such as Pavese's practice of giving characters antonymic names. Thus *Clelia*, in addition to what Camilli says about its being a classical, Roman and Renaissance name, should also have been a target for literary resonances, which Pavese might well have known, to which I might add that by "classical," juxtaposed with "Roman," Camilli most probably meant "Greek," but "Roman" also evokes the Classics, and also that stating the Greek etymon of Clelia might have been revealing, especially to a French audience that knows the name as Clélie from the famous seventeenth-century novel of Mademoiselle de Scudéry, written between 1654 and 1660, which contains her famous *Carte du Tendre* 'The Map of Love', a "geographical," allegorical map of the various stages and pitfalls of love, with landscape features named after human feelings on the arduous road to fulfillment, a map which onomasticians should ponder both as such and as human beings, none of whom is immune from these pangs. The etymology of *Clelia ~ Clélie* is not to be found in Dauzat, op.cit., for it is contrived, presumably on the basis of Greek, as well as based on the name of the heroic Roman maiden Clelia, itself perhaps borrowed from Greek: curiously, in mathematics, French lexeme *clélies* refers to certain types of curves, and the word has been borrowed by English and German mathematicians in its French form. My own educated guess would be to relate it to the Greek root *kleio*, meaning 'closed, closure', metaphorically 'secret'. (The nearest thing in French anthroponymy is *Cléau*, from the Old French *clael*, meaning 'enclosure' [Dauzat 1984]; cf. Latin *clavem* 'key', the verb *clauderee, clause, clausum* 'to close', etc.) This might tie in with Camilli's diagnosis of the character's name, found twice in works by Pavese; the author refers to the Clelia of *La plage* (350) and finds her "un peu ambiguë," ambiguity and secrecy

being related concepts. There is ample evidence that Pavese knew Greek; Camilli himself gives some examples of that on 351.

Of Donna Clementina, Camilli says "cette femme a eu de l'esprit" meaning, one presumes, 'this woman had wit', but the use of the *passé composé* tense in French implies that she lost that wit, which English *had* does not, nor would the English present perfect *has had*, which would imply she had it but still has it now. Camilli would have been better off with the plain imperfect, and this would be true of Italian also, so why a *passé composé* which seems to betray his meaning?

While non-specialists of Italian literary onomastics, such as myself, can learn a lot from Camilli's paper, it seems nevertheless more of a compilation than a work of onomastic analysis and deep study, though some of this is present, too. He states a number of rather obvious facts throughout. One example thereof is the need he feels to translate Italian *Irene* into French *Irène*, for the benefit of a French-speaking audience, who must be presumed to be at a loss without such a translation (352). The name would be just as obvious to English readers.

The topic chosen is certainly interesting and worthwhile, but one wishes Camilli had dug a bit deeper, even at the price of being less sweeping within the confines of a presentation at a conference.

The next paper in the Literary section is "Les noms propres dans les poèmes de La Fare-Alais, poète languedocien du XIXe siècle: les avatars de la fonction référentielle" (365-362), by Paul Fabre, of the Université Paul-Valéry of Montpelier, in the South of France. It avowedly deals with an obscure Occitan poet of the nineteenth century, but indulges in theoretical considerations together with an onomastic analysis of proper names in the poems of La Fare-Alais (1791-1846). A knowledge of Provençal, preferably modern (the language of the *Félibrige* school of poetry, of Frédéric Mistral and his constellation of bards who resurrected Old Provençal in the last century, and reclaimed its glory) is useful, but not indispensable, since Fabre obligingly provides translations into French (in footnotes) of his excerpts of the poet's works. Fabre begins by making the point that the poet belonged to a group that was able, early in the nineteenth century, to recognize in the *Langue d'Oc,* as still spoken by the people of the South, the direct descendant of the tongue of the Troubadours, Old Provençal, and who harbored a feeling of its basic unity, in spite of many dialectal variants, "from the Rhône to the Adour rivers," i.e. from the area of Old

Provençal speech proper in the east to that of Gascon in the west. He is thus considered as a precursor of the Renaissance of Oc letters which were to be so greatly illustrated by Mistral, Roumanille, Aubanel, etc.

According to Fabre, La Fare-Alais' inspiration stems from four sources: 1) a comical one; 2) a "fantastic" one; 3) one due to familiar surroundings; and 4) religious considerations, to which must be added some pieces reflecting his affection for the Provençal (Occitan) language, his native tongue more than French, as the entire group felt, though as educated Frenchmen they all of course knew French perfectly. It is a fact that in spite of the French Revolutionaries' attempts of the late 1700's to declare war on all regional languages, dialects and *patois*, a policy pursued by the various Republics since, the latter had survived rather well into the late nineteenth century, and it is only within the last two generations that they are really threatened, some actually dying out, some half-hearted belated attempts to save them being made here and there, such as a Provençal foreign-language option for the French *bac* examinations, the high school diploma so difficult to obtain that it is considered as a first university diploma, automatically entitling its holders to enter a French university, without all the rigmarole American would-be college students have to go through in order to obtain admission. By age eighteen, the rigmarole is behind them, they have either made it, or they will never go on to University or the professions, a rather harsh school environment, in which 30% of youngsters fail (not so long ago, it was 50%, but requirements have been relaxed).

Fabre stresses the point that proper names abound in the works considered, and that among those toponyms are the more numerous, and this is true across all four sources of inspiration. As an example, perhaps an extreme one, he cites *La Fieira de Sent-Bortomieu* 'The Feast of Saint Bartholomew' in which, amid seventeen lines of verse, there are nineteen names, of which sixteen are place names.

There follows some quotes from general onomastic literature about the functions of names, all well known to professionals in the field. Fabre then identifies two main directions in Literary Onomastics: The first, rather symbolic, plays with the proper name, it illustrates the "impressive function" of language, acting intimately upon the reader, suscitating feelings, impressions, and reactions, a trend he associates with Céline, a writer the French swear by with stupendous admiration, but who to this reviewer, except for his very first book, published in

1932, *Voyage au bout de la nuit*, is to be mainly identified with delirious anti-Semitism (he was a notorious collaborationist during the Vichy period), so the comparison falls rather flat, because wild exaggeration can hardly be a model, no matter how much the man may be admired for "esthetic" reasons, but then so is the Marquis de Sade, whose French admirers call him "the divine marquess," no less. If he is divine, then who is diabolical? The second direction is the "referential" function, the extra-linguistic one, linking language with the real world, for which Fabre adduces the example of George Sand, a good choice.

In a further paragraph Fabre elaborates on this, in a theoretical passage which I translate and quote in full:

> This dichotomy (symbolism/realism, impressive versus referential function) is nevertheless richer and doubtless more complex than this binary opposition might lead one to think, even though useful albeit, in reality, a bit oversimplifying. To locate a description in a place known by one's readers immediately establishes among the latter associations of ideas, information of a cultural order: There is a recognition of reality through the place names and there is also the discovery of networks, of relationships one may not perhaps have thought of, but which reading invites us to indulge in; the more postponed the reading will be (for instance by a twentieth century reader of a nineteenth century text, and this is the case of La Fare-Alais), the greater, doubtless, recognition and discovery will be, because one is indeed dealing with reality, but it is a "shifted" reality, and one which perhaps thereby heads in another direction. If, instead of citing a simple description in known places, one locates fiction within these known places, it seems that one asks the cited places to perform a function other than merely referential... Thus, perhaps, onomastic realism may be useful to onomastic symbolism, and the referential function may be overtaken by its contextual situation (356).

Fabre then proceeds to illustrate this basic principle by the analysis of specific examples, drawn from the poems, which are discussed in detail (357-362), and which seem to confirm the above principles. The author has, it seems successfully, combined principles of linguistics, stylistics and modern literary criticism with a very interesting analysis of the function of names in poetic fiction; indeed he finds this function to be of a "saving or revealing kind" (362). Fabre goes so far as to say that for the less successful poems examined, the proper name remains the item of "major interest" of the text (362); for other poems, which

he regards as more successful, he states that inspiration is sufficient unto itself, but that even there the proper name underlines, rather than replaces, inspiration. With the passing of time, from one text to another, the proper name, called upon by the poet to be first and foremost a referential element, sees its function moving from emotion to discovery and from historical recognition to a direct participation in poetic evocation. Altogether, Fabre's paper is intensely interesting, informative, and keenly probing. One wishes this were true of each and every paper in the volume.

Among the remaining papers of this Literary Section, which can only be dealt with cursorily in spite of merit, one finds "La toponymie dans l'oeuvre romanesque de George Sand" (363-369), by Jacques Lerale, of Bourges, currently the Secretary of the *Société Onomastique de France*. No academic affiliation is mentioned. The paper reflects the author's efforts in identifying Sand's place names with real or not-so-real toponyms in the French landscape, in the Berry region so dear to the illustrious writer. The paper is thus of interest to both literary critics, specialists of George Sand, and to French toponymists at large, and represents a thorough effort within a circumscribed field. Lerale gives credit to his collaboratrix, Marielle Caors, who received her Ph.D. by defending her thesis on George Sand's Berry.

Next, there is a paper by Céline Magrini, entitled "De *Fournigueto* à l'*Angloro*: l'héroïne du *Pouème dou Rose*" (371-377), who states she is from Villeneuve-lès-Avignon, again with no academic affiliation. The poem analyzed is one by Frédéric Mistral, and this is again a *Langue d'Oc* paper, as befits the overall atmosphere of the conference. It charts the changes of names of the central character in various stages of Mistral's manuscript. The paper is short and to the point, and well researched, praising what can be produced by "the alliance of perfect knowledge of the use of a language with a poet's deep sensitivity" (377). The author provides French translations throughout.

Last, there is the paper by Béatrice Weis, a veteran onomastician from the *Centre Nationale de la Recherche Scientifique* in Strasbourg, and an excellent medievalist, of the *chartiste* kind. It is entitled "L'onomastique dans les romans courtois: Chrétien de Troyes, Hartmann von Aue, Wolfram von Eschenbach" (379-384). As befits a

French scholar and an Alsatian, the author is at ease in both French and German cultures, and this is reflected in her medieval research. Hers, incidentally, is the only paper among those listed here to have an appended Bibliography, an apparent rarity in French papers, just as, *mutatis mutandis*, one rather rarely finds a usable Index in French scholarly books in general, contrary to those of the English-speaking world, which causes this reviewer to often prefer "Anglo-Saxon" sources and reference works to French ones *in matters French,* even though I am a native of France and deal with French culture and scholarship. How paradoxical! I seem to have been "contaminated" by twenty-five years in America! Would that French scholarship on home grounds were similarly contaminated!

The style is light and interesting, and the presentation not overspecialized, the intent being, apparently, to be comprehensible and attractive to scholars from a variety of disciplines attending the Aix Conference. The author does not even disdain inserting German colloquialisms in her expository French text, as when she says (p. 382) that in the work of Wolfram "the names are, so to speak, **ins Kraut geschossen**" (literally, they are 'shot in the grass', a *pro domo germanico* allusion destined for Germans or fellow-Alsatians, but it is doubtful that the predominantly French audience and readership would get it. I myself read German fluently, but I don't get it in this instance). The only explanation added by the author in the same sentence being that Wolfram has "an unbridled imagination in the realm of sound effects." I am willing if others, equally untutored in German colloquialisms, are, though I do not detect much in the way of acoustic effects when names are shot into the grass, or herbs. Just as *de coloribus et gustibus non disputandum est*, I guess one should not argue about national preference in idiomatic metaphors. All told, this is a very informative presentation in a few pages of text.

Summing up, *Onomastique et Histoire/Onomastique Littéraire* is certainly, in spite of some inevitable blemishes, a goldmine of information, the auriferous content varying with the different veins explored. As such, it is a welcome addition to any specialist's onomastic library, be it personal or institutional. The only thing to deplore is its rather high selling price, probably made higher through foreign exchange, handling

and mailing costs, etc., before it reaches an American library. But it should definitely become part of every university research library, to be used by both French and history departments.

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Reference

Dauzat, A. and Ch. Rostaing. 1984. *Dictionnaire étymologique des noms de lieux en France*. Paris: Guénégaud.

Editor's Note: Henri Diament died in January, 1999, before he had an opportunity to revise or correct the review printed above. I have constructed the review from Professor Diament's original draft, hoping to keep intact both the substance and interpretations which he had given it. Errors, of course, are mine alone.

Deep Talk: Reading African-American Literary Names. By Debra Walker King. Charlottesville: U P of Virginia. 1998. Pp. xl+248.

Debra Walker King's *Deep Talk: Reading African-American Literary Names* is a fascinating investigation of the symbolic and cultural implications of names in a wide range of African-American fictions. This focus does make the subtitle somewhat misleading—there is virtually no analysis of names in African-American poetry or drama in King's study. This limitation is not, however, a serious one since King does such a detailed and convincing job of "unpacking the [multiple] voices that speak though...name[s]" (29) in several important African-American novels that one could easily apply her method to other texts. Her practice of "unpacking the voices" is derived from several major literary critics and theorists including Stanley Fish, Jacques Lacan, Julia Kristeva, Henry Louis Gates and most crucially Mikhail Bakhtin. Concluding her study, King asserts too self-consciously and perhaps a little disingenuously that, despite the predominantly white Western

identity of most of these sources, she "privileges [an] Afrocentric focus:"

> I use [the concept of] *deep talk* to resist and reject the adverse political implications of subsuming white critical practices within my own.... Mine is an appropriative gesture that transforms some of the fundamental concepts within a few white theoretical paradigms.... Each reading in this study examines the generative potential and magic of transformative black discourse (214-215).

However much she ultimately "transforms" the essential whiteness of Fish, Lacan, Kristeva, and Bakhtin, her readings of fictional texts are uniformly creative and rewarding.

King's title is borrowed from a 1993 interview with Maya Angelou in which Angelou "advised her interviewer to 'do as West Africans do,...listen for the deep talk'." For King "deep talk" means excavating the levels of "utterance" and "discourse" that exist in names in fictions by African-American writers: "the readings and discussions [deep talk] offer examine the metatext of names and naming, a place where names create streams of metaphoric, metonymic, allegorical, and other meanings that avail themselves of multiple interpretive possibilities" (1). The archaeological metaphor employed by King to describe her method is an effective one since the search for levels of meaning in names usually takes her to other texts (often "classical" Western) as well as to African folklore and African-American history. She is consistently aware of, and sensitive in delineating the levels of complexity inherent in the syncretism of diverse, and often oppositional, literary and cultural legacies. Moreover, she is aware of the necessity of probing multiple layers of narrative consciousness to perform effectively the critical analysis demanded by her methodology. Especially successful is her contrast of "body" and "flesh" in African-American culture and history. Extending Hortense Spillers' use of the distinction, King defines the "flesh" as "a strategy of discourse production concealed beneath the 'body' of surface texts" (4). In essence, the "flesh" of African-American culture has historically been the place where "deep talk" affirms, in the face of overwhelming opposition, inviolate identity.

Deep Talk is persuasive in its application, in theory and in practice, of three kinds of "name fragmentation" in African-American fictions:

"supranaming" or "name supplementation;" "unnaming," the often, but not always pernicious, silencing of a name; and "renaming," the redefining or reaccenting of a name.

King's study is divided into two parts. In Part One, she devotes four chapters to a theoretical development of her concept of "deep talk," followed by an application of it to texts by writers as far apart in chronology and style as William Wells Brown and Toni Morrison. In this first section, King's excavations of the classical origins and poetic implications of names in Zora Neale Hurston's *Their Eyes Were Watching God* and of the submerged Biblical commentary of the names in James Baldwin's *Go Tell It on the Mountain* are especially successful. In fact, King's explication of these two canonical novels ranks with the best that we have. She is almost as impressive in exploring the archeological levels of the name *Tod Clifton* in Ralph Ellison's *Invisible Man*.

Part Two of *Deep Talk* consists of three chapters, with the first two devoted to extensive "unpackings" of the levels of onomastic meaning in Sherley Anne Williams' *Dessa Rose* and Ernest J. Gaines' *A Gathering of Old Men*. Each richly illustrates the rewards of King's kind of archaeological examination of onomastic meaning. The Williams novel allows her to examine the "name fragmentation" denoting the shifting subject positions occupied by its central characters. While "unpacking" the names in *A Gathering of Old Men*, she provides a perceptive analysis of the shifting subject position "mathu" and of the nicknames in the novel.

The third chapter in Part Two of *Deep Talk* treats comparative examples of name fragmentation in a number of African-American texts, including Maya Angelou's *I Know Why the Caged Bird Sings*, Toni Morrison's *Song of Solomon*, and Gloria Naylor's *The Women of Brewster Place*, as well as the literary and cultural implications of such name fragmentations as "boy," "girl," "girlfriend," and "boyz."

In summary, *Deep Talk* is both a fascinating exercise in onomastics and a valuable contribution to African-American literary criticism.

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