

Book Notice

Administrative Subdivisions of Countries. By Gwillim Law. McFarland & Company, Inc., Box 611, Jefferson, NC 28640. Pp. 457. 1999. \$95.00.

This extensive reference work, which is intended primarily as a guide to the countries of the world and their political subdivisions, contains a great deal of onomastic information as well. Typical entries include identifier codes (ISO and FIPS), the official language(s) of the country, and a list of "other" names, past or present. Other names for Myanmar, for instance, include Birma (German-obsolete), Birmania (Italian-obsolete), Birmanie (French-obsolete), Mianmá (Portuguese), Myanmar Naingngandaw (formal), Union of Myanmar (formal-English). Further, according to Law, most western organizations have honored the country's 1989 request to be known (in English) as the Union of Myanmar, with the notable exception of the United States. We further learn that the name of the country originated in Burmese *myamma naygan*, meaning 'strong' and the name of the capital, Yangon, is from Burmese as well, meaning 'armistice'. All this is tucked in among lists of the administrative subdivisions, population and area statistics, and thumbnail sketches of the recent history of the country and its divisions where they impact upon present conditions. These include, of course, many name changes and name variants.

Most valuable for many onomasts is the 37-page, quad-columned index (set in very small type and remarkably complete as far as I can tell). If you want to know the particular Brazza for whom Brazzaville, Republic of Congo, is named, the index will direct you to page 95, where we find that the honored one was Count Pietro Paolo Savorgnan di Brazza, who founded the city in the late 19th century. My rough count suggests that slightly more than 11,000 names appear in the index, enough to cover most of the major political divisions and subdivisions of the world's countries. If you want to know the formal name of Jordan (al Mamlaka al Urduniya al Hashemiyah) or the etymology of Limerick (Irish *luimneach* 'barren land', you can find it quickly and conveniently in this book.

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Important Notice

Members of the American Name Society:

This year, 2001, marks the 50th anniversary of our organization; ANS was founded in Detroit, Michigan, on the 29th of December, 1951.

Names will mark the golden anniversary of the Society by devoting the December, 2001 issue to a projective and retrospective look at the American Name Society and at onomastic study as it has been and as it is currently practiced.

To that end, I call for contributions from ANS members which will illuminate aspects of the past, present, and future of the Society and of onomastics. These may be personal essays, reflecting on the people and events which have formed ANS, reminiscences of annual or other meetings, contemplations on the state of name study, needed work in onomastics, considerations of noteworthy events in onomastics, etc. The choice of subject matter is yours. What I am not interested in, however, is scholarship for its own sake; these essays should not be reports of original onomastic research, but personal impressions and reflections on onomastics and/or ANS.

I am consciously modeling this issue on the current publication of *American Speech*, which is devoting its Fall and Winter, 2000 issues to celebrating its 75th anniversary. The Fall issue (volume 75, number 3) has recently been published and your library should have a copy. You might want to look at some of the short essays printed there for examples of the kinds of essays which would be appropriate for the special issue of *Names*, but you need not, of course, be limited to these.

Essays should be no more than 2000 words each and the editor would appreciate receiving them as soon as possible, in any case no later than 15 September, 2001.

Questions and comments should be directed to the editor as well.