# Book Reviews

***These Are the Names: Studies in Jewish Onomastics, Vol. 3,*** edited by Aaron Demsky. Ramat Gan, Israel: Bar-Ilan University Press, 2002. 324 pp. (154 in English and 170 in Hebrew). $20.

A few years ago I read a vignette in *The New York Times* that superbly illustrates that we can learn many things of sociological, historical, psychological, and demographic significance from names. It appeared in the *Times*'s weekly Monday "Metropolitan Diary," which publishes vignettes of sights and sounds seen and heard by New Yorkers and visitors to the Big Apple. Here is the story as I recall it:

A woman wrote that she had overheard the following conversation between two other women on the Staten Island Ferry:

A: I was to the Bar-Mitzva party of my grandson [her son's son] last night.

B: How nice. What's the boy's name?

A: Shloimee. (Yiddishized version of the Hebrew Shlomo; Solomon in English)

B (apparently of a sector of the Jewish community where names like Shloimee, Suree for Sarah, Ruchee for Rachel, etc. are not "in"): Oh my! Is that what he's actually called? Whom is he named after?

A: His maternal grandfather, Scott.

End of vignette.

Of course, from this we can make a learned guess as to the name of Grandpa Scott's probably European-born grandfather, according to the old custom among Jews of Central and Eastern European origin to name children after beloved kin, especially the parents' parents, who have passed away. And this particular vignette, of course, hints at certain trends in the history of American Jewry of the past hundred

years—Americanization of the immigrant generation (hence "Scott"), often followed by return to "roots."

In a commentary on the talmudic work "Ethics of the Fathers" 1:1, Rabbi Hayim Soloveitchik of Volozhin wrote, "One's name is the very essence of one's soul." Or as Israel Literature laureate Aharon Megged said in his keynote address to the Third International Conference on Jewish Onomastics held at Bar-Ilan University, "The Hebrew names given to male and female children have always been fraught with meaning right from the beginning of Creation... Adam called his wife "Havva [Eve]—because she was the mother of *kol ha'i* / all the living" (Genesis 3:20).

This book contains 17 papers read at that conference, seven in English and ten in Hebrew, plus English abstracts of the Hebrew papers and Hebrew abstracts of the English papers. It also contains lists of the names mentioned in the respective sections.

Megged, "1948-Palmah generation" veteran novelist, short-story writer, polemicist, and winner of many literary prizes and the 2003 Israel Prize, told the conference (in Hebrew) that "especially here, in Eretz Yisrael [Land of Israel] and in the State of Israel, parents do not choose names for their children on mere whim." What is more, they don't necessarily give them names commemorating deceased ancestors, "as the Gentiles and Jews in the Diaspora do," but choose their names "with great and profound intentions."

He suggests that the history of modern Jewish resettlement in Eretz Yisrael could be written just on the basis of the names Jews here gave their children in successive periods: What Zionist history calls the First Aliya (the first modern wave of immigration, in the early 1880s, comprising largely religious, Yiddish-speaking Jews, was characterized by Hebrew translations of Yiddish names—e.g. the Yiddish Gittel, meaning "good one," became Tova in Hebrew; other East European-type Jewish names—e.g. Pessia, Yerahmiel; "traditional" biblical names—e.g. Moshe, Leah; and "Zionist"

names—e.g. Tikva/Hope, Gideon (the biblical warrior-hero). The Second Aliya, the immigration wave of the first decade of the 20th century, comprising largely secular Jews who had been raised in Orthodox homes and many of whom had attended rabbinical schools, was characterized by biblical names rarely if ever given by religious Jews: Nimrod (a wicked Gentile king mentioned in Genesis), Anat (a Canaanite goddess), Hagar (Ishmael's mother), Yael (Kenite woman who killed the Canaanite general Sisera), Michal (King Saul's daughter and David's wife). The Third Aliya, in the decade after the 1917 Balfour Declaration, was characterized by "upbeat" Zionist names and feminized versions of heretofore masculine names; the Fourth and Fifth Aliyot were characterized by biblical names of every variety, plus newly coined names based on this country's flora and fauna—e.g. Rakeffet / Cyclamen, Ilan & Ilana / Tree, Lavie & Leviah / Lion[ess]. In recent decades we have the flourishing of unisex names—the same names given to both male and female babies.

One fascinating paper is "The Use of Matronymics in Prayers for the Sick," by Rabbi David Golinkin, of the Schechter Institute of Jewish Studies in Jerusalem and the Israeli Conservative movement's authority on religious law. In the special prayer for healing of the sick canted by the reader in the synagogue service, the sick persons are mentioned by their mother's name—e.g. Joseph son of Rachel, Dinah daughter of Leah—rather than the father's name used in calling people up for the reading of the Torah portions or in memorial prayers for the dead. He notes that the use of the matronymic "is odd given the patriarchal nature of Jewish society throughout Jewish history."

Golinkin joins four other rabbis and scholars in rejecting the popular explanation that the matronymic is preferred because it is certain who a person's mother is, whereas the father is not certain. From a bibliography of some 50 sources, Jewish and other, he shows that, at least since the

talmudic period, the Jews of Eretz Yisrael and Babylonia, like many ancient peoples, used the mother's name in their spells and amulets because they considered women to be proficient at sorcery. Later on, this use of the matronymic was transferred from the realm of magic to the realm of prayer."

Marlene Schiffman of the Gottesman Library of Yeshiva University, New York City, deals with "The Role of the Library of Congress in the Establishment of English Names for Authors of Hebrew and Yiddish Works." This deals with the efforts to establish a uniform standard for the transliteration of authors' names written in Hebrew or Yiddish that can have several possible pronunciations and transliterations. For example, a name written in Hebrew as H-R-V-TZ could stand for Horowitz, Horovitz, Horwitz, Horwich, Hurwich, and Hurwitz. Living authors could be asked how they spell their names in Latin characters; for the others, a transliteration had to be invented. In both instances, the relevant libraries throughout the world had to establish a uniform spelling, plus other identifying signs where there was more than one author with the same Hebrew spelling.

Dr. Chana Tolmas of the Hebrew University, Jerusalem, examines (in Hebrew) the name-change processes among Bukharan Jews since the 1940s. In the first four decades, she finds "a gradually increasing tendency to abandon Hebrew names in favor of Russian (or Western in their Russian form). In the 1960s-1980s, there was also an almost total rejection of names that had been popular with earlier generations. With the massive immigration of Bukharan Jews since the end of the 1980s, the process was reversed, and classical and modern Hebrew names became popular.

Prof. Rachel Hachlili of the Haifa University Archeology Department deals with "Names and Nicknames at Masada." Jewish names found at the site of that ancient stronghold are written in Hebrew, Aramaic, and Greek. Women are identified as "daughter of..." or "Wife of..."

Among the kinnuyim are special epithets similar to those common in the Second Temple period. Some tell of a person's origin; others tell of his profession; and some are of praise or contempt.

The other papers in English are: Prof. Aaron Demsky of Bar-Ilan University (BIU), organizer of the Jewish Onomastics conferences and editor of the *These Are the Names* series, on "Hebrew names in the Dual Form and the Toponym *Yerushalayim* [Jerusalem]"; Dr. Aharon Gaimani, of BIU, discusses and lists "Family Names and Appellations Among Yemenite Jews"; Dr. Ephrat Habas-Rubin, of Ben-Gurion University of the Negev, discusses "Ioullanus—A Jewish Name in Late Antiquity"; Dr. Tal Ilan, of the Schechter Institute, discusses "Pagans Bearing Jewish Names."

In the Hebrew section, Dr. Yoel Elitzur, of Herzog College in Alon Shvut, discusses the name Talmai (the Hebrew version of the Greek Ptolemy-Ptolemaios); Dr. Leah Bornstein-Makovetsky, of BIU, discusses "Jewish First Names in Smyrna in the 18th and 19th Centuries"; Estee Dvorjetski, of Haifa University, discusses the geographical and historical significance of the various names of the Hellenistic-Roman village of Kefar Agon (Umm Juni) on the southwestern shore of Lake Kinneret Sea of Galilee); Prof. Yosef Tobi, of Haifa University, discusses "Translations of Personal Names in Medieval Judeo-Arabic Bible Translation"; Dr. David Lifshitz, of Ashkelon and Ariel Colleges, tells of "Humorous Names and Nicknames in the Talmud," one of his conclusions being that "humor...is used [by the talmudic Sages] to achieve didactic goals as well as to create a generally light educational atmosphere"; Dr. Emmanuel Friedheim, of BIU, discusses "The Names 'Gad', 'Gada', and 'Gadya' among Palestinian and Babylonian Sages, and the Rabbinic Struggle Against Pagan Influences"; Dr. Yuval Shahar, of Tel Aviv University, discusses the origin of the name "Mount Asamon" and its location in Galilee; and Prof. Shlomo Spitzer, of BIU, tells of the significance of "the alphabetical registers of male and

female names and nicknames [in order to] provide the rabbi with an auxiliary means for ascertaining the correct names of the spelling in the [Jewish writ of divorcement] because an incorrect spelling might render this document invalid."

I highly recommend this book, and the previous two volumes in this series, for onomasts interested in background material on Jewish names and libraries with collections on onomastics. They also contain articles of interest to the general reader, and for all readers they bring together much information not available in other sources.

*Moshe Kohn is a veteran commentator on Israel and Jewish affairs in general at the Israeli English-language daily newspaper* The Jerusalem Post. *He can be reached at* moshbarb@netvision.net.il.

***I nomi di luogo di Bellinzona: Aspetti sociolinguistici e di costume onomastico nella Città dei castelli ("Placenames in Bellinzona: Sociolinguistic Aspects and Onomastic Customs in the City of the Castles")*** by Adrian Pablé. Fratelli Jam Editori. CH-6526 Prosito (Lodrino), Switzerland. 2000. Pp. 131. Soft-cover: ISBN: 88-87278-24-5

This is a book about placenames in Bellinzona, the southern Swiss town and capital of the Ticino canton, near the Italian frontier. The author states that his purpose is to apply concepts of sociology to the names of some landmarks in his native region of Switzerland. Departing from the more usual historical-etymological approach to onomastics, Adrian Pablé applies the principles and parameters of socio-onomastics as outlined by H. Naumann in his 1984 article, "Soziolinguistiche Aspekte der Onomastik" (reprinted in F. Debus. & W. Seibicke, *Reader zur Namenkunde I: Namentheorie*, 1989, Hildesheim/Zurich/NY: Georg Olms Verlag, 391-401).

Pablé's work itself has two main parts: the first, a theoretical section covering all the current trends from sociolect to socio-toponomastics, from macro- to micro-toponomy, etc.; a second section, an applied practicum where the author uses field techniques with a questionnaire to elicit information from eight categories of informants ranging from indigenous dialect speakers to young newcomers with non-Swiss backgrounds. Pablé chose to investigate the solicited data on four landmarks in the historical and commercial center of Bellinzona: the three medieval castles, the five major squares and adjacent important buildings, the main thoroughfares both new and old, and finally the name of the town itself. The questionnaire, delivered as needed in either Standard Italian or the local northern regional one, was cleverly set up to pretend that the informant was showing the sites to a newcomer. For instance, Pablé would say "After visiting one of the three castles, the little one, by the way, what is it called?" And then the informant would give a response.

The data from each of the eight informant groups for each of the four landmark groups was presented with precision and with over three hundred copious footnotes.

The author concludes that the toponymns are not deprived of semantic meaning as claimed by S.A.Kripke in his 1972 article "Naming and necessity" (in G. Harman & D. Davidson *Semantics of Natural Language.* Dortrecht: 253-355, 763-769), but that instead of denotative meanings, they have connotative ones often influenced by extra-linguistic information at a particular instance in time, i.e., they have both synchronic and diachronic meaning. For example, all three castles built by three different Italian families over three centuries to protect Milan from northern invasion went from a simple name of "Castello" when there was only one, to numbering them "one, two, three" when there were three, to "Uri, Svitto, Untervaldo," the Italian names of the first three cantons in the Swiss federation, used in school civic lessons, and elicited by the older informants, to "San Michele, San Martino, Santa Barbara," religious names used by the devout, practicing Catholics, to the more modern "Castelgrande, Montebello, Sasso Corbaro" (Big Castle, Beautiful Castle, and Rock Raven, 'corvo = raven and perhaps blended with Barbara), used by the younger informants, wishing to vaunt the noted Swiss localism and particularism. Thus, names often reflect the state of mind of the speakers, their religion, their educational background, their narrow- or open-mindedness. Pablo has proven that placenames in Switzerland with its numerous social divisions, its axes of communication both north and south, and its unique ethno-linguistic regions cut across religious, regional, and class lines. Since subgroups in Switzerland remain relatively open, this landlocked nation of 7 million is an ideal location to investigate socio-onomastics.

The original sixteenth-century administrative macrotoponyms, "Castelli di Uri/Svitto (Schwytz)" and "Untervaldo (Unterwald)," have lost ground over the past

half-century because the socio-demographics and the economics of the canton have removed their need. Among these factors are the increased use of Standard Italian, urbanization, the growth of regionalism, the increase in foreign immigration, and the development of tourism, all contributing to the italianization of the placenames away from the German-Swiss forms. From macrotoponyms from outside the canton, they became first hagiotoponyms from within: "Castello di San Michele, Castello di San Martino, Castello di Santa Barbara," and these names are apparently the official ones even now. However, today the Bellinzonese have secularized and localized them to visual microtoponyms: "Castello Grande, Montebello, Sasso Corbaro;" spatial ones, "Castello di Fondo, di Mezzo, da Cima ('lower, middle, on the summit');" or even ordinal numerical ones "Primo Castello, Secondo Castello, Terzo Castello." These names all follow the history, the size of the objects, and the spatial relationship to the town itself. The one constant in all the titles, however, is "Castello"; the common noun has remained unchanged from the earliest references, and only the adjectival proper noun has been changed to suit the ethnolinguistic group using it.

The objects, the castles, have not really changed, except for minor renovations, but the people referring to them definitely have. Modern Ticinos, unlike global villagers, have become more regional within the Swiss Confederation. They speak less dialect, more Standard Italian, want to diverge from other Swiss ethnolinguistic groups but at the same time hope to converge into a new Ticino solidarity. As the dialect continues to recede, Ticino speech patterns will become more alike and so will their placenames. Tourism is a big industry for the region and italianized names will have a higher value in the linguistic and economic market of European, and particularly German, tourism. The macrotoponyms thus will become microtoponyms, but the microeconomics will become the region's macroeconomics. As Pablé himself surmises, the next generation of Bellinzonese will only remember quaintly

that their grandparents referred to these three castles with German-Swiss names.

Adrian Pablé did indeed what he set out to do. His objective was to investigate the sociolinguistic aspects of placenames in a small Swiss town. He chose a control group of informants plus a chosen set of places to be named. For the "Castel Grande" alone, he found numerous names from the fifty-four informants: "Castel Maggiore" ('biggest'), "Castel Vecchio" ('old'), "Castel Nuovo" ('new'), "Castello di Fondo, in Basso" ('at the bottom, below'), "Castello di Uri" (name of the first Swiss canton), "Castello di Altdorf" (German, 'high village') "Castello di San Michele"('St. Michael'), "Castello in Piazza" ('in the square'), "Castello dell'Arsenale" ('of the armory'), "Primo Castello" (first). Some references to the castle are size- or age-oriented (note the reference to 'old' and 'new' for the same place, 'new' probably referring to being recently renovated), some geographic, some religious, some patriotic (the Swiss army trains in the castle periodically and thus the reference to the armory), as well as historical. The names reflect the speakers themselves whether indigenous or not, dialect-speaker or not, Swiss or foreigner, and again young, middle-aged, or older within each of those groups. Pablé's data proves that proper names do have connotative meaning for the speakers who use them, a type of psycholinguistic connection between the object and the referent. Names vary on axes from age, to socio-cultural or professional activity, to location and longevity of residence, and personal experience with the designated place object. For instance, one informant referred to the Sasso Corbaro castle as Castèll del Márzio because Marzio was the personal name of the owner of the restaurant in the castle itself where her family dined regularly when she was a child.

Adrian Pablé has convinced me about the importance of field linguistics in all areas related to human contact. There is really little information about placenames in the world today. Like languages themselves, they are constantly

changing. The informant method that is illustrated in Pablé's research is indispensable for the development of onomastics. Other closely related disciplines like geography, sociology, and linguistics need such field work for experimentation, data, and problem solving. Without such publications as Pablé's, we will know very little about the northern Italian dialectal names in the Ticino in a century or two. Yes, the next generation will vaguely remember about the Swiss-German names of the castles, but will their children remember such information and their dialect forms? I doubt it; if linguistics is the science of language, and language is uniquely human and keeps changing along with all other human attributes including biology, then we need to preserve all aspects of it. If language is human, then naming is too, in fact, very much so. Once a proper placename has disappeared, even though the place may still exist, there is no genetic imprint or trace to retrieve it. Only through human contact with the informant method can we hope to keep such information for future generations.

The book is well written in Italian and my only suggestion for future publications of this nature is to translate all quotations in one language alone within the text with original glosses in footnotes or endnotes. The code-switching from German to French and from English back into Italian in the first section of the book was distracting, but the second part with the informant data flowed better because it was reported in one language only. However, in all, the theory, the methodology, and the presentation of the data were first-rate and I highly recommend this compact, but plentiful text to onomastic and linguistic scholars alike.

*Edward R. Van Vliet*
*SUNY Geneseo*

*The Penguin Dictionary of British Placenames* by Adrian Room, London:Penguin Books, May 2003. £9.99 (approximately $15). 14 pp, 9 pp of maps. Soft-cover: ISBN 0-14-051453-8

The dictionary covers placenames in *England, Scotland,* and *Wales.* It includes the *Scilly Isles,* but not the *Isle of Man,* nor the *Channel Islands,* although this is not stated in the text.

The stated aim of the book is: "... to give the origins of over 10,000 names of places in Great Britain by 'cracking' the information each of them holds. The names are those of cities, towns and villages, of urban districts and suburbs, of counties and unitary authorities, and of rivers, lakes, hills, mountains, forests, islands and other natural features." This is not an exhaustive list of classes of entries, and the book includes hamlets, countries, archeological sites, and, in at least one instance, a proposed name for a non-existent county; such examples include: *Haywood Oaks, Albion, Stonehenge,* and *Victoria.*

Nor is each of these classes treated equally in approach: "River names are subsumed as far as possible into the name of an inhabited place so that *Thames* is treated under *Thames Ditton* and *Severn* under *Severn Stoke.* In cases where a river name is not the first word in the name of an inhabited place, it is cross- referred, such as *Humber* to *Humberston* and *Don* to *Doncaster.* It is also cross-referred where it is the last word, so that *Wye* refers to *Ross-on-Wye."*

With regard to the content the author states: "Each entry contains information as follows: (a) the placename itself; (b) a description of the place such as 'town,' 'village,' 'district,' etc., with its location by county or unitary authority; (c) the meaning of the name; (d) the language(s) of origin and generic word(s) behind the name; and (e) a historical record or records of the name. Appropriate supplementary information is often provided between (d) and (e)." Each of these sections is

discussed at length in Section 8 of the introduction; the term "unitary authority" is explained in sub-section (b).

The names are divided into seven language types: *pre-Celtic, Celtic, Latin, Old English, Scandinavian, Norman French, and Modern English,* with *Celtic* encompassing *Gaelic, Welsh,* and *British Celtic* from southern Britain. It is noted that three different language groups are involved: *Celtic, Romance,* and *Germanic.*

At the end of his introduction, the author states that: "This Introduction deals with just some of the aspects of placenames, and it is left for the entries themselves, like the component pieces of a jigsaw puzzle, to form a fuller and more detailed picture of their historical, geographical and linguistic background."

With 16.5 cms per column, two columns a page, and 549 pages there are just over 19 thousand column-cms for over 10,000 names, so on average an entry has less than 2 column-cms (0.8 column-inches). An example of a 2 column-cms entry is given below where the line length content is identical to that in the dictionary:

> **Hornby** (village, Lancs) 'farmstead on a horn-shaped piece of land'. OS *horn* 'horn', + *b_*, 'farmstead', 'village'. The village lies on a tongue of land formed by the confluence of the rivers Lune and Wenning. DB *Hornebi.* SO ALSO: *Hornby,* N Yorks (near Catterick, near Great Smeaton).

All abbreviations are explained in the introduction. The 'DB' refers to the name as listed in the *Domesday Book* of 1086 and other historical names are given in other cases. The notes on the sometimes erroneous transcription of names recorded in the *Domesday Book* are fascinating; an example being the town of *Trowbridge,* which was recorded as *Straburg.*

The 'SO ALSO' means that this explanation also serves for the other places listed called *Hornby*. The author makes the point that not all places with identical spelling have the same root explanation; for example, there are three entries for *Cowley*.

The author alludes to the concern of lack of space, where, in Section 8 of his introduction he says, "Sometimes the supplementary information is more discursive ... But such departures from the norm are restricted in number, as space for such indulgences is limited."

As a test of coverage, I consulted the Ordnance Survey Sheet 163 Edition 3 1981(OS 163), Scale 1:50,000, and in particular the area bounded by *Stow-in-the-Wold*, the A424, *Burford*, the A361, *Highworth*, the B4019, *Broad Bunson*, the A419(T), *Cirencester*, the A417(T), *The Air Balloon* Public House, the A436, and the B4068; an area of about 200 square miles. This area is well known, comprising much of the *Cotswolds*, a favorite tourist area, and considerably well researched. I listed all names which appeared to be at least of hamlet size. I listed 106 names and sought them in the dictionary. I found 64 of the names, a hit rate of about two thirds. The following paragraph contains all my names; those in brackets were not found in the dictionary.

*Ablington, Aldsworth, Ampney Crucis, Ampney St Mary, Ampney St Peter, (Arlington), (Aylworth), Bagendon, Barnsley, Baunton, Bibury, Birdlip, Bourton- on-the-Water, (Bradwell Grove), Broad Blunsdon, (Calcot), (Calcutt), Calmsden, (Cassey Compton), Castle Eaton, Chedworth, (Chedworth Beacon), (Chedworth Laines), Clapton-on-the-Hill, Coberley, (Cockleford), Cold Aston, Colesbourne, (Coln Rogers), Coln St Aldwyns, (Coln St Dennis), Compton Abdale, Cowley, Down Ampney, Driffield, (Dunfield), Eastleach Martin, Eastleach Turville, Eastington, Elkstone, Fairford, Farmington, (Foss Cross), (Fossebridge), (Foxcote), Fyfield, Great Barrington, Great Rissington, (Hampen), Hampnett, Hannington, (Harford Bridge), Hatherop, Hazleton, Highworth, (Hilcot), (Hilcot End), Holwell, Kempsford, Latton, Little Barrington, Little*

*Rissington, Lower Slaughter, Marston Meysey, Meysey Hampton, (Mill End), (Nethercote), Nettleton, (Norcote), North Cerney, Northleach, Notgrove, (Pegglesworth), Poulton, (Preston), Quenington, (Ready Token), Rendcomb, Salperton, (Seven Bridges), (Seven Springs), Sherborne, (Shipton), (Shipton Oliffe), (Shipton Solers)* [Solers OS 163; or Sollars www.genuki.org.uk], *Southrop, (Stockwell), (Stowell), (Sunhill), (Swanborough), Taynton, Turkdean, (Upper Coberley), (Upper End), (Upper Inglesham), Upper Slaughter, (Upton), Westwell, (Whelford), Windrush, Winson, Withington, (Woodbridge), Woodmancote, Wyck Rissington, and Yanworth*

The issue is not whether these should have been in the dictionary or not, but what could a reader reasonably expect to be in it. We know that there are "over 10,000 names" but after that we are adrift. Names dictionaries often claim a large number of names but that is meaningless without the selection criteria being made explicit. We have seen that with the real estate available the author has done sterling work to cover 10,000 names, and with succinct pithy commentary, but 10,000 out of how many, and why these names?

The *Select Bibliography* records that the *English Placename Society*, active since 1926 with a goal to publish the placenames of the counties of England, has, to date, published 76 volumes which reflect 24 counties completed, five ongoing, and nine not yet commenced. It is reasonable to assume that the 76 volumes extant contain more than 10,000 placenames. What were the selection criteria used in this dictionary?

Unfortunately, there is nothing in the dictionary that addresses this. This is a deficiency in any book of this nature, but not an unusual one. It is necessary for authors and publishers to inform their readers of the selection criteria. This can be informal to formal; from: "I thought that these were the most interesting" to completely rule driven as in "This dictionary contains X thousand names, which is Y% of all known surnames, and represents Z% of the population." It is

no longer acceptable to offer a package of "1000 stamps – All different" except at the most basic introductory level, and the current dictionary is at a much higher level.

The second issue is that many of these names, besides being of interest in their own right, also connote other meanings as the author points out in the first paragraph of his introduction. "*Dundee* is not merely a city in eastern Scotland but a place noted for its cake and its marmalade." It is ironic that the entry for Dundee does not mention cake or marmalade. Likewise, consider the names *Wembley, Wimbledon, Henley-on-Thames, Chelsea, Old Trafford, Earls Court,* and *Cowes;* all have such associations, viz.: soccer and rugby, rowing, flowers, cricket, exhibitions, and sailing respectively, but the text of none of the entries for these placenames mentions the association that immediately comes to mind. It may be argued that none of this has any impact on the origin of the placenames, but it is clearly part of their current meaning. As an illustration, look at the entries for *Vauxhall* where the association of entertainment from the 18th Century *Vauxhall Gardens* of London gave their name to the now defunct Birmingham *Vauxhall,* but the name survives as the name for a district in Birmingham. The link is that *Vauxhall* represented entertainment; and this entertainment traveled from London to Birmingham. This is a little gem of information but there are few like it. More would make the book more interesting and more relevant to today's world. But the author has excluded them in his aim statement that probably would not be read by most purchasers prior to purchase. It would be clearer if the book were entitled: *The Penguin Dictionary of the Origins of 10,000 British Placenames.*

There also seems to be a bias towards the older names, particularly those that are referenced by Ptolemy, the Venerable Bede, and the Domesday Book. There seems to be less emphasis on more modern places of habitation albeit with old names. The book refers to a number of hamlets yet some

large districts of major cities are ignored. As an example, *Wymering* ( Saxon; *Wygmaer*?), west of Cosham on the southern slopes of Portsdown Hill, built seriously in the 1920s mainly as part of slum clearances in Portsmouth, is not listed. Another example would be adjacent *Paulsgrove* (Saxon: *Palla*?) built after the Second World War. More than 15,000 people reside in these communities yet they are not mentioned but many hamlets such as *Nuthurst* in West Sussex are. Similarly, *Leigh Park,* another huge post-WWII relocation site of 27,000 people, part of *Havant*, is unmentioned. *Milton Keynes*, the new city, gets a mention as it incorporated the old village of *Milton Keynes*, now *Milton Keynes Village.* Nor is there any mention in the *Letchworth* entry that it is the original Garden City of 1903; one has to go to the entry *Welwyn Garden City* (1920), the home of *Welgar Shredded Wheat* since 1921, to find this out. Incidentally, the *Welgar* appellation was dropped in 1988 with the sale of the company to Nestle.

Part 1 of the Introduction concludes with: "English names (meaning names in England) predominate over those in Scotland and Wales, simply because more is known about them. But this imbalance should not detract from the overall representation of name types." If I read this correctly, it means that the number of names for Scotland and Wales is understated proportionally as more is known of English names than Scottish and Welsh names. This is an issue where there is a reluctance to identify the name and state clearly that little is known. But we know the name exists and we know that its etymology is, as yet, unknown. To suppress the name, to not make it appear, because of lack of knowledge seems counterproductive, surely we need to expose these names and see what is reflected in the light. This issue again reflects the need for overt selection criteria.

There is no pronunciation given in the entries. The unwary reader is left to the vagaries of English pronunciation with such innocents as *Beaulieu,* (Bewe'lea), *Mousehole,*

(Mauz'il), *Southwick* (Suth'ick), and *Bosham* (Bows'am). Nor is there a measure of number of inhabitants, although informal guidance is given by the city, town, village, hamlet rating, but it would have been useful to size these terms.

Rivers get particularly short shrift in the dictionary. Not only do they not get entries to themselves, they do not get a map. Roads have four of the nine maps; rivers get none. However, the *Tay, Clyde, Trent, Ouse, Thames,* and *Severn* are marked and named on the map "Anglo-Saxon Britain: Principal early kingdoms." In a placename dictionary that includes rivers, one might expect to be told much more about the *Thames* and other major rivers, rather than sharing part of an entry for a town or village. There is no way, for example, to find in the dictionary the source of the *Thames* other than searching. The ordnance survey shows the source at *Thames Head* (not listed, but see below). The monument to it is on the A433 near *Kemble,* which is listed, but *Thames* is not mentioned; *Coates* is near and it is listed but does not mention the *Thames.* One has to go to the *Ewen* entry to find:

"Ewen (village, Glos): '(place at the river) source'
OE *æwylm,* 'river source'. The 'river source' is
probably the nearby spring known as Thames
Head, the source of the Thames. 931 *Awilme.*"

Given the tight ambit of the aim, this is a concise, well written, scholarly book that we would expect of this prolific author. Full of useful and interesting information, and is a welcome addition to the library. Perhaps in the second edition the author might give us his selection criteria, as there seems to be scope for an enlarged edition.

*Ken Tucker*
*Carleton University, Ottawa*

*A Dictionary of English Names.* Compiled by Zhonghua Li and Rushan Liu. Shanghai Foreign Education Press, P.R. China. Affiliated with Shanghai Foreign Language University, 2002. Pp. 501. ¥20. Soft-covered. ISNB 7-81080-441-3.

*A Dictionary of English Names* contains a *Preface, Foreword,* and *Guide to the Use of the Dictionary,* the body of the text, ten appendices, and a reference list.

The *Preface,* written by the author of the dictionary, discusses the reasons why the dictionary was composed and also expresses the writer's gratitude towards those who provided him with assistance during its compilation. There are a few points worth our notice. The composer is an English professor. According to his *Preface,* all of his students have an English name in addition to their Chinese names. This is quite different from ten years ago, when a foreign name was considered awkward or unnecessary. As a matter of fact, in addition to these English students, a great number of other college students, even high school students, today bear names with Western origins. This reflects a deep influence from the West upon younger generations of China. Although English names are becoming popular in China, many students have obtained their English names from their teachers or from a name list in a dictionary or from a movie without fully understanding the meanings and sources of these English names. Helping these students to have a better comprehension of their English names motivated the author to complete this dictionary. This factor also determines the nature of the book: it is a reference book on explaining the meanings and rendering sounds of the English names, not academic research on them.

The dictionary also has a foreword written by Zijian Yang, an English professor from Qingdao Marine University. It is a six-paged essay on onomastics, in particular, the study of personal names. The *Forward* includes an introduction to the importance of name studies, compliments on the compiler's scholarship, and characteristics of English names. While he correctly points out that a person's name is more than just a word or words by which an individual is designated and distinguished from others, the author of the *Foreword* does not give a sufficient explanation of the

characteristics of English names. Instead, his discussion mainly focuses on Chinese personal names.

The *Guide to the Use of the Dictionary* helps readers understand the order of the entries, the symbols used in the book, and the treatment of the variations of the same names. This simple and straightforward part is two pages long.

The next section is the body of the text, which is the main part of the dictionary. According to the *Foreword,* the dictionary has nearly 8,000 entries, all of which are printed in strict alphabetical order. An entry in this dictionary begins with a word or group of words in large bold letters starting at the left-most side of the column. Under a main entry, for example, "Abigail," all of its versions and variations are listed, such as Abbey, Abbi, Abbie, Abby, Gael, and Gail. Each variation takes one line. These variations are also listed as independent entries. This method shows readers how these names are related, but also costs some extra space for repeated information. As a matter of fact, the list for the variations is not complete because it should also include Abagael, Abagail, Abagale, Abbey, Abbigael, Abbigail, Abbigale, Abby, Abbye, Abbygael, Abbygail, Abbygale, Abigale, Abigayle, and Avigail.

The pronunciation is given in IPA (International Phonetic Alphabet) at each entry and is placed after its form. The English pronunciation is followed by Chinese characters, which reflect the sound of the English version. However, the Chinese sound system is not a one-to-one equivalent to the English one. Some English sounds do not exist in Chinese and vice versa. For example, Chinese has no postalalveolar fricative consonants. When such a sound is translated into Chinese, either a palatal fricative or a retroflex one would substitute it. For instance, the first consonant in "Charlotte" is such a consonant. After translation, the first consonant becomes a palatal fricative, which is a close choice for the English equivalent. However, the same sound in "Charmaine" is rendered as a retroflex fricative. One of the possible reasons is that the early translators for the English writer Charlotte Bronte's (1816-1855) books came from the southern part of China, where retroflex sounds do not exist. And it became a tradition for this particular English name.

Another noticeable common practice is the treatment

of velar stops, such as [kh] or [k]. When these consonants are followed by a high front unrounded vowel, they are usually translated into a palatal affricate. Otherwise, a regular [kh] or [k] will be used. The reason is that the Chinese language has no such sound combination as in the word "key". When a Chinese sound is determined to translate a particular English sound, the author also has to choose the suitable characters to represent the syllable because the same syllable can be written as different characters. Some characters with the female, jade, water, or silk radicals seem to be more feminine. In addition, a name's gender, masculineness or femininess, is marked with "*m*" or "*f*" respectively.

If a name comes from an important source or was used by a famous person in history, the author provides a note of it. For example, for the name "Aaron", the author indicates that the name was from *The Old Testament* and was used by Aaron Copland (1900-1990), an American music composer.

The ten indexes include the following lists: (1) The names of all the American presidents and their cabinet members. While introducing the presidents, the author also provides readers with their short biographies, including information on their dates, birthplaces, education, occupations, religions, marriage, descendants, and party affiliations; (2) Short introductions to the fifty states, including the sources of the names, capitals of the states, area, the state flowers, birds, and anthems; (3) The names of the British kings and queens; (4) The names of all the English prime ministers; (5) The names of the United Nations' general secretaries; (6) American holidays and festivals; (7) Major religious holidays; (8) The names of various wedding anniversaries; (9) A list of Zodiac terms and their explanations; (10) A list of the most common names for men and women in the USA and UK.

As was determined by the author's motivation to compile this dictionary, this is a reference book, not a research project. It does not offer any bibliographic information on how the author came up with his translations nor about his explanations of these western names. The word "English" in its title seems to be a little confusing. Although it means much more of the English language than the place England, not every entry in the dictionary came from the English language, as many came from French, German, Russian, Spanish,

Hebrew, Latin, and some other languages. Furthermore, it does not discuss the trends, either recent or past, of naming practices in the west.

However, the significance of this book is not about its academic value, but about its efforts to increase the publicity of Western names in China. With this book in hand, a reader can pick up an English name for him- or herself more meaningfully, regardless of whether or not he or she understands the language. This dictionary is also useful for users who read western literature, for it gives them brief yet clear background information about the names. With the help of this book, other potential research can be done in the future on which western names are more popular than others in China and why. From this point of view, this dictionary has its own unique values.

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*John Yu*