From Altoids to Zima: The Surprising Stories Behind 125 Famous Brand Names. By Evan Morris. New York: Simon & Shuster, Inc., 2004. Pp.199. $10.95.

Evan Morris, author of the syndicated newspaper column and website *The Word Detective*, presents a fascinating and informative look at the product-naming and marketing industry in the United States. The book provides a humorous, behind-the scenes, tongue-in-cheek glimpse into the little-known etymologies of the names associated with 125 of the most famous brands that have become American icons, ranging from the names of well-established products to newer ones. Some of the stories are factual, some folklore, some unknown, others pure speculation, but all quite interesting. Having gathered information primarily from product manufacturers or their websites, Morris reveals the origins of some of America's most popular brands.

Uncovering the stories behind the innovative naming and marketing strategies used by inventors, manufacturers, linguists, CEO's, public relations firms, advertising agents and naming consultants, Morris observes that successful product naming involves creating a word that is "unrecognizable as anything resembling a meaningful word . . . , a meaningless name, cobbled together from powerful consonants and sexy vowels with hints of wealth, white teeth, and low taxes" (7). His naming stories are based on the industry's six criteria for successful naming: names must be simple, easy to remember, impossible to mispronounce, not compete with an existing trademark, not have negative suggestions in English, and not have an offensive meaning in a foreign language.

These criteria became increasingly important during the late twentieth century when the profusion of brand naming led to a diminishing supply of useful English words protected by trademark laws, ushering in the age of what Morris calls "synthetic" brand naming—made-up, never-before-heard-of names in which the letters *V* and *S* connote

speed, though not to the extent of *Z* (Zantac, Prozac), and the letters *L* and *S* connote luxury (Lexus).

The book is organized into five product category chapters, with stories related to the naming histories of selected products in each category: food and drink; clothing; technology, toys, and assorted bright ideas; cars; and drugs and cosmetics. An interesting complementary feature of the book is the inclusion of six sections that focus on brief accounts of unsuccessful brand naming and other interesting naming facts.

The first chapter, "Food and Drink," discusses naming stories behind products such as Alpo (dog food), Fig Newton, Grape-Nuts (with neither grapes nor nuts), Haagen-Dazs (a nonsense word), Krispy Kreme (neither crispy nor creamy), Milk Duds, Ovaltine, Pringles, SPAM, Starbucks (from a *Moby-Dick* character), and Twinkies.

The "Clothing" chapter highlights such popular brands as Adidas, Banana Republic, Gap, Keds, Nike, and Playtex. "Technology, Toys, and Assorted Bright Ideas" traces the names of such familiar brands as BIC, Canon, Chia Pets, eBay, Exxon (formerly Esso), and Formica. Others brands featured in this chapter include Google, IKEA, Kodak (a nonsense word), LEGO, Pentium, Pyrex, Random House, Rolex, Velcro, Xerox, and WD-40, among others. In the "Cars" chapter, the naming histories of makes such as Hummer, Jeep, Saab, and Volvo are given. The complementary "Motoring Monikers" section provides a brief look at the name origins of major car companies: Audi, Buick, Chevrolet, Ferrari, Mazda, Rolls-Royce, and Toyota, among others.

The chapter on "Drugs and Cosmetics" includes the naming etymologies of some of America's best-known brands: Noxema, Oil of Olay/Olay (a nonsense word), Prozac, Q-Tips, Vaseline, and Viagra (think of Niagra).

Among the most interesting complementary sections, "Soap Satanists to Blow up Oprah on June First" addresses some of the interesting urban legends associated with some

consumer products, for example, that mixing Pop Rocks and soda can be deadly or that Mountain Dew will shrink the genitals. The humorous "What Were They Thinking?" section features product names (and their products) that, for whatever reason, went terribly wrong. Edsel, Boring Business Systems, McDATA, Fifth Third Bancorp, Poolife, and Zzyzx, are among some of the unusual but unsuccessful names in this section, illustrating how a brand can make or break a product's image. Of particular interest also is the "Famous Long Ago" section, which presents brand names that have become genericized, though once protected by trademark laws, for example, aspirin, Allen wrench, cellophane, dry ice, escalator, and LP.

Though Morris takes a non-academic approach to this book, his etymologies offer thought-provoking historical perspectives of trademarks that have dominated all aspects of American life. Thus, he makes a significant contribution to the popular study of names. Onomasticians who wish to undertake more in-depth studies of these or other brand names from a semantic, lexical, orthographical, or phonological perspective can do so utilizing the six naming industry criteria that serve as the basis for Morris's naming stories.

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A Dictionary of Jewish Surnames from Galicia. By Alexander Beider. Bergenfield, NJ: Avotaynu. 2004. Pp. xxiv + 600. $85.00. Maps. Tables. 29 cm. 11 inches. ISBN: 188622319X.

Alexander Beider, known for his outstanding works on Jewish names (*Dictionary of Jewish Names from the Russian Empire; Dictionary of Jewish Surnames from the Kingdom of Poland* [*Names*, 1998:46, 133-138]; and *A Dictionary of Ashkenazic Given Names: Their Origins, Structure, Pronunciation, and Migrations*

[*Names*, 2004:52, 53-59]), has produced another major contribution to Jewish onomastics.

The volume Beider produced, like the others, is so encyclopedic that it is hard to know where to begin. The material preceding the actual list of names takes up over 108 large-format pages. This introductory material is enough for a book by itself.

This time, Beider has undertaken a formidable task when he sets out to work with the names of Galician Jews. A large percentage of American Jews either came from this region or are descendants of those who did. There are many factors to take into consideration, perhaps more than with any other cultural group. If one wants to have some understanding of how names like *Greenstein, Rosenbaum,* and *Katzenellenbogen* came into being, this book is a good place to start.

Perhaps it is best to clarify what the term *Galicia* means. Many are familiar with the name through association with the region in northern Spain, but Galicia in this book is in Eastern Europe and no longer exists politically. It is important to understand the political background in order to make sense of Jewish names from this region.

There are two main sections, Western Galicia, now a region in southeast Poland, and Eastern Galicia, now a part of West Ukraine and bordering the Czech Republic. The major cities are Kraków in Poland and Lvov in Ukraine. Originally part of the Kingdom of Poland, Galicia existed for about 130 years as part of Austria beginning in 1772 when Austria took over parts of Poland. After World War I, these went to Poland. However, most of Eastern Galicia went to Ukraine, in a 1939 deal between Nazi Germany and Soviet Russia.

Language·

When Galicia was a part of Poland, Polish was the main language. With the Austrian takeover, the official language became German. And, of course, there was the Russian rule (and language) that became dominant in East

Galicia in 1939. Besides these complications, there was the additional factor that Jewish community members spoke Yiddish and used Hebrew, Aramaic, and Yiddish in their naming.

Name Edicts and Culture Clash

Historically, Jews in the Galicia region did not have hereditary surnames, except for a relatively small minority that will be discussed below. They did not need them in their communities. They had gotten along for hundreds of years with the system of identifying a man by his name and that of his father. So when the Austrian emperor wanted his subjects to have surnames (to help collect taxes and draft men for the army), there was also a culture clash in the meaning and value of surnames.

Beider's pre-dictionary material has maps, a glossary, four chapters, four appendices, an extensive bibliography, over 30 tables, and two maps.

The glossary has over 50 terms that are used in the text. Most, like *apocope* (truncating the final element of a name, as *Liber < Libermann*), *calque* (translation of a name from one language to another, as the Hebrew *cohen* 'Cohen, priest' becoming the Polish *Kaplan*), and *toponym* (placename), are familiar to onomasts. But terms like *acronym* (a name formed from the combination of two or more words, as *Katz* < Hebrew *cohen tzedek*, 'priest of righteousness'), *kinnui* (a vernacular name from Hebrew as opposed to a sacred name [*shem qodesh*], as *Leon* < Hebrew *yehudah*, 'lion'), *metronymic* (a name derived from a woman's name, as *Margolies* < Hebrew *mahrgahleet*, 'pearl'), and *guberniya* (a subdivision of the Russian Empire equivalent to a province), may be new to some readers.

Using documents going back to the thirteenth century, Beider sketches out the various ways that names appeared, given names only, patronyms, toponyms, metronyms, personal characteristics, and occupations. They were nicknames but they were not hereditary. There were few hereditary surnames.

The big change and the formation of surnames came first in 1772 when the First Partition of Poland took place. Then, in 1787, all Jews in the Hapsburg Empire were required to have hereditary surnames. Given names were to be drawn from a list of 110 male and 35 female names. With the Third Partition of Poland in 1795, the rest of Galicia was taken over by Austria and Jews there had to have surnames. So by the end of the 18th century, all Jews in Galicia had to have surnames.

A few notes are in order. The Austrian Empire recognized only civil marriages. Most Jews had only religious marriages, which were not accepted by Austrian officials, so the civil records showed the children as illegitimate. Beider reports that in 1895, 78.9% of newborns were considered illegitimate in civil records since the Christian clerks did not accept Jewish religious marriage certificates. These children received the surnames of their mothers.

Table 1 shows the distribution of names by type. It is an average of the many communities that were studied. Different regions had higher or lower percentages in the categories.

The types and percentages of Jewish names are somewhat different than would be expected in other countries, such as the United States or the United Kingdom. While surnames derived from patronyms, toponyms, occupations, and personal characteristics are found both in the United States and the United Kingdom, the Galician Jewish sample varies in percentages and categories. Some of the different types are:

Metronyms (naming a child after a female) are quite uncommon in the United Kingdom and the United States, but there are a few, like *Margeson* and *Margetts*, both derived from a form of *Margaret*. Examples from Galicia include *Malkin* < *Malka* and *Sirke* < *Sarah*.

Table 1. Percentages of Jewish surnames by type.

Type	Percentage	Examples
Artificial	70%	*Goldberg, Rosenfeld, Weinbaum*
Toponymic	11%	*Chodorower* (< a town), *Tarnopoler* (< a district)
Patronyms	6%	*Bernstein, Hirschhorn*; Acronyms: *Baram*, abbreviation for 'son of Rabbi Moses'; *Charag*, abbreviation for 'son-in-law of Rabbi Gershon'
Metronyms	1%	*Malkin, Sirke*
Occupational	11%	*Brenner*, 'brewer'; *Schneider*, 'tailor'
Rabbinical	3%	*Horowitz, Landau* (famous rabbis)
Kohen/Levite	1%	*Kohen, Lewi*
Personal characteristics	2%	*Roth*, 'red'; *Weiss*, 'white'

Rabbinical names were highly regarded by Galician Jews. They were in existence for a hundred years before the compulsory naming edicts. They were not assigned by Christian officials but were chosen by the Jews themselves because of the high prestige of the rabbis.

Kohen and Levite names are special creations of the Jewish community. They trace to the custom of calling up members of the congregation to participate in the Reading of the Law. The first to participate is a Kohen, descended from the ancient priestly class; the second participant is a Levite. These names were hereditary and were around for a long time.

Artificial names are probably the most unusual group. Another author, Gold, refers to them as *ornamental* (1988, xliv-xlv). Artificial names are clearly the largest category of names from Galicia, averaging 70%. There are some regions with

higher and others with lower percentages. Beider defines artificial names as "those [names] that, in contrast to all other types of hereditary names, are unrelated to any characteristics of their first bearers."

What are they? Briefly, they are the names approved by Austrian commissions in the period around the beginning of the nineteenth century. As noted above, the Austrian emperor had decreed that all subjects had to have surnames if they did not already have them. This meant in practical terms that the names had to be assigned relatively quickly. Variety was also required, probably because the officials did not want a great deal of duplication.

Beider's view is that the Jews were relatively free to choose their own names with the approval of the district deputies and the local rabbi. There are legends of how some contemptuous names were acquired, but Beider considers them a small percentage.

Artificial surnames are themselves of several types. Some are from common nouns in several semantic groups, such as:

Animals: *Biber*, 'beaver'; *Hecht*, 'pike'; *Sperling*, 'sparrow.'

Flowers, trees, plants: *Bohne*, 'bean'; *Apfel*, 'apple'; *Kirsch*, 'cherry.'

Gems and metals: *Diamant*, 'diamond'; *Gold*, 'gold'; *Eisen*, 'iron.'

Placenames: *Berliner*, *Franfurt(er)*, *Schlesinger* (from Silesia). Although possible, it was unlikely that Galician Jews might have had a direct association with these places.

German personal names: *Konrad*, *Paul*, *Werner*. Names like these were not in use at that time by Jews. Beider attributes these names to Austrian clerks.

Compound names: *Blumenthal*, *Rosenfeld*, and *Silberberg*. Names like these constitute the largest group of artificial names and probably the largest category of names held by American Jews. The first part often comes from precious metals and gems, names like *Gold*, 'gold,' or *Silber*, 'silver.'

Other groups prominent in this category are adjectives designating beauty or color, such as *Fein*, 'fine,' and *Braun*, 'brown.'

For the second part of compound names, there are also several groups. Some are topographical terms, such as *–bach*, 'brook,' or *–feld*, 'field.' Others represent human habitations, plants, and parts of the body.

The Dictionary

The dictionary has about 25,000 surname main entries plus about 13,000 variants. Each entry shows the surname; whether it is an alternate form, Polish spelling, or German spelling; the districts where the name was found; the type of name (artificial, patronymic, occupational, etc.); source word; related surnames.

Notes: The entries show the districts of Galicia where the name was found. The letter *A* indicates an artificial name; *O* an occupational name; the source word of the name; its language; related surnames.

It has not been possible to summarize all of the various aspects of Galician names that Beider covers. There is a great deal more dealing with such topics as language shifts and aspects of suffixes. It is clear that Beider has gone a great way in untangling the various factors underlying the complicated structure of Galician names.

This book is highly recommended for scholars of Galician names and for libraries that have Judaica collections. It is a must for those interested in Jewish names.

References

Gold, David L. 1988. In Hanks, Patrick & Hodges, Flavia. *Dictionary of Surnames*. New York: Oxford University Press.

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A Dictionary of German-Jewish Surnames. By Lars Menk. Bergenfield, NJ: Avotaynu. 2005. Pp. xxviii + 824 pp. $89.00. Map. 29 cm. 11 inches.

Lars Menk got into onomastics and to this topic in a rather unusual way. A native of Bremen, he became interested in his family's history going back to his ancestral villages in the Hunsrück mountain ranges of the Rhineland. After a year, he discovered his own hidden Jewish roots, hidden even before the Nazi era. He, like others, became hooked on onomastics and as a result produced this magnificent large-format volume with almost 13,000 German-Jewish surnames and almost 51,000 entries.

The text is well organized and appears to be for the serious scholar. The parts consist of:

Introduction
How to Use the Dictionary
Transliteration from Hebrew Letters
Abbreviations Used
About This Dictionary
Chapter 1: History of Jewish Surnames in Germany
Chapter 2: Number of Jews in Germany and Prussia
Chapter 3: Historical Jewish Surnames in Germany before the 17th Century
Chapter 4: List of Locations with a Jewish Population in the 19th Century
Glossary
Bibliography
Dictionary of German-Jewish Surnames

The "Introduction" is straightforward. The "How to Use the Dictionary" section explains how the dictionary items are set up. Each name entry has up to three sections:

1. Etymology.
2. Before 1800. Where in German lands the name appeared before 1800.
3. After 1800. Where the name appeared after 1800.

Here is an example:

Eisner *1)Etymology:* A: borrowed from South and Middle German surname "Eisner" from "isener" [M.H.G.] "iron-dealer"; possibly partly adopted for => Eisig. <G:1,056x>. {cf. Isner}. *3) After 1800:* Berlin, B (1840 from Fraustadt); Crossen, Cro. (18..); Dombrowka, Gle. (1812); Dorotheenhof, Grü. (1825); Fraustadt, Fra. (1808); Guttentag, Lub. (1812); Jellowa, Opp. (18..); Juliusburg, Oel. (1845); Leschzin, Ryb. (1812); Leipzig, L (18..); Neuhaus, Oel. (1812); Regensburg, R (1805); Schwabach, SC (1813); Ujest, Grs (18..); Unter-Meitingen, A (18..); Woschczytz, Pls. (1812); Zabrze, Zab. (18..)

In interpreting the entry, we first examine the etymology and notice the "A." This indicates that the name is an *artificial* surname. What *artificial* means here is that it is one of the names created in the period from 1787 to 1811 when surnames were mandated in different jurisdictions for the convenience of the various governments. An artificial surname is one that is not a patronymic, a metronymic, a toponymic, an occupational name, or a name based upon a personal characteristic. More familiar examples of artificial surnames are: *Bernfeld, Goldberg,* and *Rosenbaum. Eisner* comes from the Middle High German surname meaning 'iron-dealer.' The reader is also referred to *Eisig,* which is linked to *Yitzhak* (Isaac). Apparently, the name did not appear as a Jewish name before 1800. In the angled brackets <G:1,056x>, the "G" stands for Germany and the 1,056x indicates there are 1,056 entries for the name in the 1998 German telephone directory. The "cf. Isner" indicates that name should also be checked as a possible link. It is a German surname.

The name *Eisner* was not found until after 1800. Then it was found in Berlin in 1840, in Crossen, Poland, in an undated record, and in Dombrowka, Poland, in 1812. The name was also found in the 13 other communities listed.

The next sections, "Hebrew Letters" and

"Abbreviations Used," provide background information. There are General Abbreviations, such as "M.H.G." (Middle High German) and "obl." (oblast, administrative region in Russia). Then, there are Types of Surnames (over 20 of these). Examples include: "A/T" (Artificial name based on a toponym) and "O/S" (Surname of Sephardic origin based on an occupation). Finally, there is the section for Abbreviations for Location Names, the approximately 600 communities where the names cited in the dictionary were found. These locations range from Schleswig-Holstein in the north to Baden in the south, from Westfalia in the west to the former parts of Prussia in the east.

The next section, "About This Dictionary," gives more details about the geographical scope and the types of surnames. Then it goes on to provide many statistical tables.

Chapter 1 gives a short history of Jewish surnames in Germany from the 12th century on. In the earlier periods, there were only a few surnames, mainly for religious scholars. In the 16th century, Frankfurt am Main became a center for surname development. Then, in the 17th century Hamburg and Altona began surname development. However, the real impetus for surname creation came in the period from 1787 to 1811 when governments (as noted above) for administrative purposes wanted citizens to have surnames.

Chapter 2 provides four tables showing the number of Jews in German territories in three periods around 1800 and one period in 1925. Thus, Berlin had 3,373 Jews in 1816 and around 175,000 in 1925.

Chapter 3 lists over 200 communities that had historically Jewish surnames before the 17th century. For Rothenberg ob der Tauber, there is a single name, *Gans*. It was recorded in 1378. For Frankfurt am Main, there are well over 200 names. These include *Gans* in 1381, *Auerbach* in 1542, and *Rothschild* in 1567.

Chapter 4 lists about 9500 locations with a Jewish population in the 19th century. Thus, in Leipzig, there were 136

Jews in 1834, 2,564 in 1875, and 7,676 in 1905.

The "Bibliography" is extensive; most items are in German. The principal sources are listed, published and unpublished, and then the secondary sources. The total number of sources is 300.

The Dictionary itself follows with the almost 13,000 surnames. The cross-references make the total number of entries much higher. There are some photographs scattered through this section showing prominent holders of the name, including Anna Frank, diarist; Gertrud Kolmar, poet; Ernest Ising, physicist; and Erich Pommer, film producer.

Specific names

One primary use of the dictionary would be to look up a specific name. An example of an entry was given above showing some of the types of information available. Other entries give different types of information about location and frequency.

One question that many might have is whether the name is historically German, Jewish, or both. Fortunately, this information is presented in the entry. Where the name was held by non-Jews, it is identified as a German (or other nationality) name. Where there is no such statement, the name was historically Jewish. This kind of information may be helpful to those seeking information about ancestors.

The information showing the locations where the name was recorded will be of interest to those working on family genealogies. This may provide clues as to where the family originated and will be of value to Jews and to those who suspect they may have a Jewish ancestor.

Those interested in looking around in the dictionary can learn a great deal about German and Jewish names.

Toponyms. Examination of the background of the surnames shows that 34% of the names are based on location, what onomasts call toponyms or geographic names. Names like *Berliner* ('from Berlin') or *Brandeis* ('from Brandeis, Bohemia') are toponyms in that they are derived from the

names of cities. Menk points out that *Berliner* is also a surname used by non-Jews.

 Artificial surnames. The next largest group is composed of artificial names. This may be a new term for some readers and is a bit tricky to understand. This group of names probably represents what most people perceive as a "Jewish" name. This class of names is the one created around 1800 by those governments who wanted their citizens/ subjects to have names for taxes, military, censuses, and other administrative reasons. Names were created by adding suffixes like *–berg,* *-thal,* and *-wald* to other roots. Examples are *Grünebaum* ('green tree') and *Morgenstern* ('morning star').

 The category of artificial names also has several sub-categories. One of these is an artificial surname based upon an abbreviation (in other texts, this is referred to as an acronym). The name *Back* is an example. It is from the Hebrew ב"ק, "BaK" standing for *bney kedoshim* ('descendents of martyrs'). Another is *Badt* ב"תד, "BaDT" standing for *ben David ha-tov* ('son of David, the good one'). Using the acronym was thus a disguised way of working in a Hebrew name when the authorities would not allow it.

 Names based on a male name (patronyms). Patronyms represent another large group, 17.7%. Examples include *Aaron, Alexander,* and *Simons.*

 Names based on a female name (metronyms). At 1.8%, this group is much smaller than the male name group. Among examples, there are *Sarason* ('Sarah's son') and *Trennel.* According to Menk, *Trennel* is:

> from [the] Judeo-German feminine given name 'Trynel' or 'Treyndel' from the German 'Trina', a hypocoristic form of the Greek 'Katharina' from 'kithara' [Greek] 'pure one" (with Upper and Middle German diminutive suffix '(d)yel'; possibly used as a kinnui of Biblical given name רתסא, Est[h]er' from the Persian, meaning 'star of Venus'. . . .

Occupations. Names derived from occupations make up about 10% of the surnames. One example is *Kaufman/n.* When the name is spelled *Kauffmann*, it is likely to be a German surname referring to a trader or a businessman. When spelled *Kaufman/n* with two *n*'s, it is more likely to be a Judeo-German hypocoristic form of *Jacob*, 'Ya'akov,' which is the Hebrew form of *Jacob* with a German suffix. Another occupational name that is also a German surname is *Fischer* ('fisherman').

Personal characteristics. About 6% of the names describe personal characteristics. This group includes names like *Schwarz* ('black') in various spellings, *Klein* ('small'), and *Weiss* ('white').

Kohanic and Levite origin. Menk's main categories have been listed, but there are two other groups, comprising about 1% of the total that might be mentioned. There are two ancient tribal affiliations for Jews, Kohanim and Levites. The Kohanim assume (or presume) descent from Aaron the priest. The Kohanim have the privilege of being called first to the reading of the Torah at a service. Names such as *Caan*, *Cahn*, *Cohn*, *Cohen*, *Kohen*, *Kohn*, and many variants reflect this identification.

Levites represent the second group singled out. Their identification is established by family tradition. Today, the Levites have the privilege of being called second to the reading of the Torah. Names such as *Levi, Levy, Lewin,* and others reflect this identification.

Sephardic names. This has been a description of the major categories of surnames of Jews in German lands. Other names that came to Germany are Sephardic names, those names that originated in Spain and Portugal. Examples of Sephardic names are *Cardoso* (Portuguese, 'shepherd's rod') and *Sasportas* (Spanish, 'six gates'). Some Sephardic names came into Germany from Holland where Sephardic Jews went after the Inquisition.

Sign names. Sign names represent a somewhat unusual group. Some families, especially in the ghetto of Frankfurt,

took their name from the sign at the house. Readers can learn that *Straus(s)* ('ostrich') can appear as a German surname and also as a Jewish name associated with a house sign in the ghetto of Frankfurt. *Adler* ('eagle') is another name associated with a house sign not only in Frankfurt, but also in Worms. Of course, *Rothschild* ('red shield') was associated with the ghetto of Frankfurt, but Menk points out that it was also a North German surname.

Statistical tables. There are more than 15 tables summarizing construction of names, most popular names, and most popular names in different categories.

We can conclude by saying that Menk has provided us with a tremendous resource for understanding German-Jewish surnames. His is the most complete description of their etymology, history, linguistic structure, meaning, and usage. He used the empirical method with written records as the source of data. He has shown the impact of the German naming structure on Jews and the overlap of Jewish and Christian names.

A Dictionary of German-Jewish Surnames will be a valuable resource, of course, for onomasts. It will also be a major resource for genealogists and others interested in family history. This contribution will take its place beside the work of Alexander Beider on Russian and Polish Jewish family names. The text is highly recommended for libraries with onomastics collections, genealogy collections, general reference, and German language and literature. The publisher, Avotaynu, is to be commended for bringing this book out.

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