

Reviews

Names in the Economy: Cultural Prospects. Ed. PAULA SJÖBLOM, TERHI AINIALA, and ULLA HAKALA. Newcastle upon Tyne: Cambridge Scholars. 2013. Pp. xii + 351. £49.99 (HB). ISBN: 978-1-4438-4945-6

Because we are living in a material world, we are surrounded by material names. Paraphrasing one of Madonna's first hits from the early 1980s (*Material Girl*, 1984), one may say that, when it comes to names in the economy, they are all about the materiality of our contemporary culture. This could be indeed one of the standpoints from which to read *Names in the Economy: Cultural Prospects*. This collection of twenty articles edited by Paula Sjöblom, Terhi Ainiala, and Ulla Hakala is based on a selection of papers delivered at the fourth Names in the Economy symposium (NITE 4) held in Turku, Finland, in June 2012.

The 351-page volume is divided into four sections, "Global Trends and the Westernisation of Names" (1–105), "Local Separation and Cultural Identity" (107–184), "Names in the Era of the Internet" (185–229), and "Changing Name Use and Naming Processes in the Changing World" (231–344), and is closed by a list of contributors (345–348) and an index (349–351). From the topics covered in the four main parts one can immediately tell that the cultural prospects mentioned in the title of the book focus on the debate about globalization and localization, the concept of "glocal" as a category to define the divide between cultural homogenization and heterogenization, and the more and more pervasive presence of the Internet in our lives. In other words, *Names in the Economy: Cultural Prospects* offers an onomastic glimpse into the fluidity of our postmodern world, in which the economic processes regulating international markets influence cultural practices, too.

No doubt onomasticians who are interested in trade names and cultural production may profit from reading this volume. As stated in its short preface (viii–xii), the book builds on the assumption that

[c]ultures . . . can be conceived as the surrounding environments — international or national — where companies operate, or they can be seen as cultures of the organisations themselves. Culture produces names and names produce culture. Commercial names forge cultures, on the one hand, and changes in cultures may affect commercial names on the other. (viii)

Commercial names certainly reflect the materiality of contemporary culture, a concept that has been extensively discussed also within Cultural Studies. It is no mistake that a few essays in the volume overtly refer to the influential cultural scholar Stuart Hall. As such, speaking of "cultural prospects" means to pinpoint the way in which economic factors shape not only corporate names but also culture and its materiality. Hence, the book investigates the relation between culture and global/local economy, and it questions the concept of globalization by applying not only linguistic but also sociological and cultural approaches to the field of onomastics. The study of names is indeed a fertile terrain to start such an enterprise since, as we all know, it is by its own nature interdisciplinary. As a matter of fact, it seems to me that one of the strengths of *Names in the Economy: Cultural Prospects* is its methodological diversification: sociolinguistics, semiotics, translation studies, multimodality, structural analysis, and functional-semantic analysis intertwine in a colorful onomastic tapestry. What is even more pleasurable is the journey around the world the reader enjoys, since the case studies touch countries like Finland, France, Germany, Italy, Japan, Romania, Spain, Thailand, and Sweden.

The first two sections of the book plunge the reader into the aforementioned debate on globalization and localization. When applying such categories to the analysis of commercial names, the authors of the first six essays share the assumption that global economy is a complex and overlapping system that cannot be reduced to the juxtaposition between center and periphery anymore. For instance, in her article Paula Sjöblom (2–14) states that “[g]localisation means that global and local features reach their meaning and identity only in relation to each other. Local is not a counterpoint to the concept of global, but rather an aspect of globalisation, and globalisation is a kind of hybridisation process” (4). When she assesses whether language choice makes a name global or local, she refers also to the ongoing critical debate on English as a global language. The status of English as an international lingua franca is considered here as a marker of how international and multilingual a name may sound in contexts where English is not a first or a second language. The term “glocal” is thus used to emphasize how names can be “appropriate globally, but they are global in a different way in relation to locality” (12).

The role of English as a marker of product quality is discussed also by Douglas Wilkerson and Kyoto Takashi Wilkerson in their study on the names of some housing typologies in Japan (55–72). As the data they analyze show, the more prestigious the living facilities are, the more frequent the use of English syntax, Western words, and pseudo-Western neologisms in their names is. A similar phenomenon is to be found also in the Romanian brand names collected by Alina Bugheșiu (73–88) and in the names of some restaurants of Bucharest listed by Adriana Stoichițoiu Ichim (89–105). The combination of functional analysis and a cross-cultural approach successfully allows the two scholars to postulate that brand name codification is a form of cultural mediation and translation. The link between culture and the economy is further theorized in Kanavillil Rajagopalan’s essay (15–25). Building on the notion that names are culturally sensitive, the author points out how global brand names need to overcome cultural specificities in the consumer’s tastes in order to be globally successful. His argument is grounded in the philosophical opposition between relativism and universalism, which he figuratively labels “the Scylla of outright relativism and the Charybdis of stock-in-trade universalism” (20).

The acceptance of cultural homogenization implied in the term globalization and the resistance against it are further discussed in the second part of the volume. The local separation and cultural identity mentioned in the title of this section go hand in hand with the idea that commercial names are bearers of local cultures and identities. The four articles concur that local identities resist globalization and/or adapt to it through a process of selection based also on linguistic strategies that reinforce the culture-bound properties of commercial names. Like in the examples from the previous section, this results in hybridized identities and names that rely, for instance, on idiomatic expressions to establish a strong connection with local or national culture, or on figures of speech and morphological, semantic, and lexical strategies, as in Paola Cotticelli-Kurras and Enzo Caffarelli’s paper (108–135) about Italian slogans.

Moreover, as Irma Sorvali (136–151) proves, the same is to be found in the visual and icon language employed in Finnish bread packages, which requires the synesthetic participation of the consumer in the creation of name meaning. In the fourth section of the book, Dina Heegen (311–331) comes to a similar conclusion as regards yoghurt names in Germany and Sweden. By underlining the complex, multi-level nature of product names, the author asserts the need for a more articulated system of classification provided by a “branding triangle” between product names, brand logo, and packaging/product design. The remaining two articles in this second section are particularly engaging also for scholars who specialize in toponyms because they treat placenames as commercial names. Although the essays by Ulla Hakala and Paula Sjöblom (152–172) and Tehri Ainiälä (173–184) do not deal with global trends in the way the previous case studies do, the term locality — here referring to the Finnish cities of Salo, Parainen, and Laitila on the one hand and Helsinki on the other — nevertheless bears the struggle for identity construction and representation that characterizes the debate on globalization.

The third section, which, with only three papers, is the shortest, takes the reader right to the core of one of the phenomena that have radically changed our everyday life and culture: the Internet. In Fabian Fahlbusch's case study (186–200), which opens this section, the analysis suggests that the way company names are shortened or modified influences our perception of the companies themselves. In other words, consumers tend to identify companies mainly by their Internet names, which testifies to which extent the Web invests and shapes our culture.

Such influence is strengthened by the fact that brand naming is becoming more and more a participatory practice. Whereas Fahlbusch focuses solely on company names and their abbreviations in Internet addresses, URLs, and logos, the selections by Nicholas Ind and Lasse Hämäläinen deal with the construction of cultural identity on the part of the consumer and/or user of online services. As Ind's paper (201–213) demonstrates, commercial names mirror the way in which the Internet allows its users direct access to discourse production and codification. Nithat Boonpaisarnsatit and Jiranthara Srioutai's article on Thai exported food names in the first part of the book (26–54) and Antje Zilg's contribution about names in the Italian, French, and Spanish food industry in the fourth (269–281) share a similar viewpoint. Indeed, the latter defines brands as a means of communication and interaction between producers and consumers and as a form of identification for the latter. Hämäläinen's essay (214–229), on the other hand, demonstrates how the Internet is the social space par excellence for the construction of cultural identities via nicknames. The author's analysis is sustained by a linguistic perspective that takes into account functional and semantic structures along with other elements such as capitalization.

Although the fourth and last section combines language and culture as standpoints from which commercial names can be studied, the overall topic of changing names in the changing world somewhat lacks the cohesiveness of the previous parts and results in a quite heterogeneous assortment of papers. The article by Elke Ronneberger-Sibold and Sabine Wahl on the preferred sound shapes of German brand names (232–249) and that by Maria Chiara Janner on the syntax of Italian commercial names (250–268) have an exquisitely linguistic slant. By contrast, the contributions by Sabina Buchner on the culture of competition in the sugar beet industry (282–299), Marcienne Martin on car brands as myths (300–310), and Angelika Bergien on Lady Gaga as an example of paragon in business discourse (332–344) take the reader to an exploration of the cultural backgrounds in which those names are used.

The papers in this section, however, effectively recall some of the issues discussed in the previous parts. In Ronneberger-Sibold and Wahl's article, for instance, the choice of foreign sounds in German brand names is linked to the use of English as an international language and as a symbol of exoticization and globalization. Martin's paper, on the other hand, goes back to the idea that in a consumerist society brand names become cultural items, symbols, and carriers of identity. Finally, in the last paper, the way the name Lady Gaga is used returns to the mutual influence between culture and the economy which is the epistemological backbone of the whole book.

Playing a little bit with the supposed rivalry between Madonna and Lady Gaga, I would like to conclude by saying that, even though we still may have to struggle against a Lady Gaga economy, we keep living in a material world in which commercial names constantly inform our daily lives. *Names in the Economy: Cultural Prospects* successfully and enjoyably proves it. The interdisciplinary approaches adopted in this book and its wide variety of case studies make it a profitable read for scholars who want to know the latest directions in the study of commercial names. Although a few papers jump directly into the analysis of their data, the overall collection is soundly grounded in the theoretical background of trade name studies and provides a thorough list of references on the subject. One might regret the fact that several articles are, according to the authors themselves, but exploratory or the first part of wider research projects that we will hopefully be able to see fully developed elsewhere. As a starter, however, this book anticipates a hearty onomastic meal.

Man in the Street: From Dirt Roads to Blacktop: A History of Baltimore Street Names. THE BALTIMORE SUN. Arr. Zachary J. Dixon. LaVergne, TN: Lightning Source, 2014. Pp. 147. \$19.99 (PB). ISBN: 978-1-893116-28-3

A population of 623,000 travels the avenues, boulevards, streets, roads, and lanes of Baltimore on a regular basis. The latest collection published by the city's daily newspaper, the *Baltimore Sun*, offers readers the stories behind the routes they follow: a history of the men and, less often, women whose names appear on ubiquitous metropolitan street signs.

Man in the Street comprises 130 entries and 80 photographs from the files of the *Baltimore Sun*, all framed by a contents page and a one-page foreword as prefatory material and an index of street names and index of photographs at the end. With names arranged alphabetically, the table of contents is simply a list of letters aligned with the page numbers at which entries for each letter begin. Articles refer, by last name, to namesakes rather than to the streets themselves. While, in terms of organization, it is seldom necessary to make the distinction, there are occasional individuals or families whose name appears on more than one street. Among them, John Eager Howard exceeds all expectations, having left every part of his tri-part name to John Street, Eager Street, and Howard Street. All three are accounted for in the single "Howard" entry (65–66) but appear separately in the index in the end pages.

The selections, Chris Kaltenbach explains in the foreword, derive from a series of columns that appeared in the *Sunday Sun* from 1949 to 1954, each addressing the origin of one or more Baltimore street names. Nearly all of the columns are the work of William Stump, under his own name or one of his pen names, James C. Bertram and Henry C. Rauch, apparently adopted lest he appear too prolific; a small number of entries are contributed by other reporters, notably Elizabeth H. Moberly and Ralph Reppert. Following Stump's death in 2013 at age ninety, after a long career in journalism, the *Sun* elected to publish this collection of the serial features.

For locals, *Man in the Street* has its own "curb appeal." In it, Baltimoreans read about the famous, the infamous, and the forgotten in their history. They recognize streets named for heroes harkening back to the city's colonial and Revolutionary history, including the founding Lords Baltimore of the Calvert family and, not far from Fort McHenry, a host of defenders from the War of 1812. As well, they find streets named for heroes of industry: William Wilkens, who made his fortune in hair processing; Darby Lux, the merchant sea captain whose Lux Street was anglicized to Light Street; Hugh Sisson, who was called the "marble king of Baltimore"; Alexander Russell, whose brickworks supplied the materials for New York's Flat Iron Building and the mansions of Marshall Field and Cornelius Vanderbilt. They recall that Johns Hopkins, namesake of the renowned university and its hospitals, made his fortune in the whisky trade and that Edward Hanlon, the "Father of Modern Baseball," came to Baltimore to manage the Orioles in 1892, just after the team joined the National League.

Intriguing glimpses of infrastructural history appear. "Most of Baltimore's older streets were named in one great christening — sometime between 1816 and 1822," Stump explains in his article on Jehu Bouldin and Thomas H. Poppleton, surveyors who drew up the city's master plan for new streets then and who in turn had streets named for them (14). Other entries reference the "state commission which drew a map of Baltimore in 1822 and honored prominent citizens by naming projected streets in their honor" (119) and efforts, a century later, "[w]hen Baltimore streets were renamed in the '20s to end some confusing duplications" (44). Indeed, some renamings appear among the entries: in 1918, for example, German Street was voted a new name, Redwood, after the first Baltimore officer to die in France in World War I; First Street, a duplicate, became Frankfurst Street (now Avenue), after Frank A. Furst, a businessman and major state political figure. Cross-references among entries abound. Thus, under "Eden," for Sir Robert Eden, the last royal governor of the colony, are found not just Eden Street but a reference to Caroline Street, named for his wife, and Caroline County, with Denton, its county seat, shortened from Edenton (36).

Included are short streets, probably the shortest of them Slingluff Avenue, just 150 ft long, and short entries, with Solomon Etting, namesake of Etting Street, earning a mere eighteen lines. Direct and concise, the entries reflect the approach of a journalist, not a historian. They offer compact mini-biographies of the central figures, with an eye to a popular audience. As reporter, Stump often reaches descendants of namesakes, who gladly supply corroborating material in direct quotation. Attentive to issues of reliability, he acknowledges the difference between confirmed and attributed names. The entry for “Chase,” for example, recognizes that, although the street name appears in city records at the time of a very public test of the wills between Samuel Chase (signer of the Declaration of Independence and later US Supreme Court justice) and Thomas Jefferson, correlation is not causation. As he notes: “Many historians, without reason, state flatly in various books that the street was named for Samuel Chase. This may or may not be true. But it is nothing if not logical” (24). Later, for the street that appears, variously, on records as McCullough, McCulloch, and McCulloh, its current iteration, Stump identifies a potential namesake for each spelling and then concludes that it remains “a street of mystery — nobody knows for whom it was named” (88).

The collection makes no claim to be exhaustive. Geographically, it is limited, with rare exception, to the City of Baltimore, whereas the *Sun*'s circulation extends to a readership of a dozen or more counties. Then, too, not all city streets are named for people. Absent, for example, are Joppa Road, a well-traveled east–west byway, named for its route to Joppa, Maryland, a former port named for the biblical town of Joppa, and York Road, a main north–south corridor, named for its point of origin/terminus in York, Pennsylvania, itself named for York, England. More obviously, the book's 130 entries represent only a fraction of the city's roadways, and in fact the table of contents reveals no entries for I, J, N, Q, U, X, Y, or Z. The selection criteria, never explained, appear admittedly, even delightfully, whimsical.

Certainly, this kind of book, collected from occasional pieces with local charm, will not attract a wide audience, nor was it meant to. However, names scholars will appreciate its implicit regard for the formal and informal processes, some recorded, some forgotten, by which streets acquire their names. As well, the book is notable for the way in which it is constructed, its foundation in serial articles for which a talented new reporter realized a ready readership in the Sunday paper. The popularity of his onomastic journalism, demonstrated in the five-year run of articles and, sixty years later, their publication in book form, suggests the persistence of readers' — and travelers' — fascination with names, including the way that personal names become not just toponymic markers on the land but stratonymic markers on the maps, street signs, and GPS screens that help us navigate it.

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