

Shakespeare, William. 2009. *The Complete Works of Shakespeare*. Edited by David Bevington, 6th ed. New York: Pearson Longman.

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Socio-Onomastics: The Pragmatics of Names. Edited by TERHI AINIALA AND JAN-OLA ÖSTMAN. Amsterdam: John Benjamins Publishing Company. 2017. Pp. vi + 231. \$143.00. ISBN-13 978-902-725-6805.

Pleasantly, this reference does not center around Anglo-American contexts. Instead, as editors Teri Ainiala and Jan-Ola Östman explain in Chapter 1, the book's overall introduction, this collection explores how names are used 'to accomplish a variety of culturally, socially and interactionally relevant tasks' within Scandinavia (1). For this reason alone, the work is to be highly commended. However, this is not the sole reason why the publication deserves praise. Without exaggeration, every chapter in this volume provides the reader with genuinely intriguing research questions. Still, as with every multi-authored work, the chapters vary greatly in their ability to address these questions satisfactorily. This variability is manifest in both segments of the conceptually bifurcated volume.

Part One explores the intersections among 'Tradition, Identity and Transmission'. The four chapters in this section address the two of the largest branches of onomastics. The first, anthroponomastics, is the focus of Chapter 3 by Emilia Aldrin (Halmstad University) and Chapter 4 by Guldbrand Alhaug (University of Tromsø) with Minna Saarelma (University of Helsinki). Both contributions investigate parental naming in Scandinavian families by using a combination of interviews and statistics. In the Aldrin study, the empirical data come from a postal survey of 621 Swedish parents in Göteborg. By contrast, the Alhaug and Saarelma investigation relies on national statistics compiled by the Central Bureau of Population of Norway. This is not the only contrast evident between these two chapters.

The Aldrin contribution excels in the level of sophistication and insight of its qualitative analyses. However, the relative depth, detail, and transparency of the quantitative analyses are less satisfactory. For example, although the chapter provides the conceptual model used for mapping the parents' onomastic choices, the reader is left to guess which precise criteria have been used to differentiate between the conceptually overlapping categories for data coding and analysis. This lack of procedural transparency makes it relatively difficult to assess the statistical reliability of the findings. Interestingly, where the Aldrin piece falls short, the Alhaug and Saarelma contribution excels, and vice versa. While the co-authors' presentation and discussion of their empirical findings are logical, robust, and rich with fascinating details, the two pages reserved for reporting the qualitative analyses of the interview data are disappointingly meager in both substance and specificity. Despite the unevenness in their execution, Chapters 3 and 4 come to a similar conclusion: the Scandinavian parents examined consciously selected names to signal publicly their own cultural identity and that of their children.

The other chapters in Part One examine the use of a different type of name as a public identity signpost, placenames. The first toponomastic contribution is made in Chapter 2 by Aud-Kirsti Pedersen (The Arctic University of Norway). This extremely ambitious study examines the contrasting use of toponyms by majority and minority communities across three different temporal and geolinguistic contexts: (1) contemporary Norway, where Norwegian has eclipsed Sami and Kven; (2) 9th-century Orkney, where Scots replaced the Old Norse dialect, Norn; and (3) 11th-century Normandy, where Norman

French gradually edged out Scandinavian languages. This contextual triad in Chapter 2 provides a strong contrast to the multiplicity of spaces examined later in Chapter 5. Written by Jarno Raukko (University of Helsinki), this latter chapter offers an interesting albeit somewhat haphazard examination of toponyms and their exonymic ‘translations’, e.g., *Keulen* and *Cologne* are the Dutch and English exonymic alternatives for German endonym *Köln*. Onomasticians will surely enjoy the placename selection offered in Chapters 2 and 5. However, some of the conclusions drawn may be less satisfying. Pederson, for example, makes the following unqualified assertion:

When language shift takes place, one must assume that a minority group adopts the negative attitudes toward their own group from the majority and subsequently denies their ethnic origin and language in order to achieve a positive social identity [emphasis added]. (35)

Alongside the inherent danger in generalizing from one isolated study to other contexts, this blanket statement fails to acknowledge the true complexity and multiplicity of (extra-)linguistic factors related to language shift. As unfortunate as such occasional overgeneralizations may be, they do not undermine the overall quality of Pederson’s contribution. The same cannot be said, however, for Raukko. Take, for example, the assertion that the ‘European languages do not use exonyms e.g. for most African rulers, because these rulers are not part of European everyday knowledge’ (98). Ignoring the distinct probability that Raukko has grossly overestimated the average EU citizen’s familiarity with European leaders’ names, it’s not difficult to find counter-examples that directly undermine the underlying hypothesis, namely that translated names necessarily ‘reflect the cultural and historical importance of the bearers of the translated name to the target culture’ (98). If this assertion were true, surely the US and Germany, two countries with undeniably significant socio-economic ties, would have official translations for the names *President Barack Obama* and *Chancellor Angela Merkel*. The variation in quality and subject matter found in the first part of the book is also present in the second, ‘The Variability of Names’.

Chapters 8 and 9 both examine the variation found in business names, albeit with two very different investigative foci. First, in Chapter 8, Leila Mattfolk (Institute for Language and Folklore in Uppsala, Sweden) analyzes attitudes towards the use of English in the names of companies within the Swedish-Finnish bilingual municipality of Närpes, Finland. Then, in Chapter 9, Väinö Syrjälä (University of Helsinki) investigates the languages used in 72 business names gathered from two bilingual Finnish towns, Kauniainen and Karis. Both of these authors provide an excellent discussion of the sociocultural factors that influence the choice and reception of company names. Where both investigations fall somewhat short is in analytical procedures. In the Mattfolk study, the method used to separate the onomastic data into nominative categories appears problematic. For example, the restaurant name *Birgittas lunch och festservice* was apparently classified as Swedish, despite the English words ‘lunch’ and ‘service’ (175). In the Syrjälä contribution, a list of English companies names ‘where the line of business is transparent’ is offered. An example is *PepperStone* (196). Although Syrjälä claims the reference for this company name is clear, for the reviewer, this was not the case at all. Is *PepperStone* where one can purchase spices and herbs or does it specialize in designer kitchenware? The same criticism could be made of the other company names Syrjälä describes as being transparent. This was not the only inconsistency in Syrjälä’s analysis. It is also unclear, for example, why the author categorizes the *Pannacotta Home & Kitchen* as English despite the incorporation of the Italian food name, whereas names featuring the word *Pizzeria* are classified as being ‘universal’. Although intellectually stimulating, such inconsistencies reduce the reliability of the results reported in Chapters 8 and 9.

The remaining three chapters in Part Two examine toponymic variability. In Chapter 7, Maria Vidberg (University of Helsinki) explores 24 Swedish-speakers' usage of three different toponymic types: (1) purely Finnish; (2) Finnish-Swedish morphological hybrids; and (3) Finnish and Swedish toponyms used parallelly. Although the research design is clearly structured and the results are potentially intriguing, the analysis is minimal. Instead of detailed discussion, the reader is repeatedly referred to the author's previous publications. Unsurprisingly, one-fourth of the references provided at the end of the 8-page 'chapter' feature Vidberg as the author. Luckily, this skeletal contribution is the exception rather than the rule.

Chapter 6, by Terhi Ainiala and Hanna Lappalainen (University of Helsinki), provides an extremely interesting investigation into Helsinki residents' use of two dialectal toponyms for *Helsinki*: *Hesa* and *Stadi*. The 32 interviewees form two sub-groups, those who are and are not Helsinki natives. Moreover, in an innovative methodological twist, the respondents' self-reported and recorded toponym uses are compared. Not surprisingly, a discrepancy is found between what people say they do and what they actually do. Based on the metalinguistic analysis of the pragmatic contexts in which *Stadi*, *Hesa*, and *Helsinki* were uttered, the researchers conjecture that the respondents' self-reported toponymic preferences were used to 'indicate their identity vis-à-vis being a native or non-native' (149). Conceivably, however, in some cases, this 'nativity' may actually be a sense of 'belonging'.

The contrast between onomastically marking one's native and adopted home is at the heart of Chapter 10. In a series of interviews with five Somali youth, Terhi Ainiala (University of Helsinki) and Mia Halonen (University of Jyväskylä) examine the respondents' perceptions of the toponym *Mogadishu*. According to the authors, the name for Somalia's capital was borrowed in the 1990s by racist Helsinki residents to refer disparagingly to *Meri-Rastilan tie*, the road where many Somali refugees first settled. Despite the use of *Mogadishu* by some Helsinki natives as a pejorative nickname for the Somali-rich neighborhood, the young interviewees differed in their perception of the place name. While the younger respondents considered it to be a positive marker of their belonging, the older interviewees viewed it as a negative sign of exclusion. As the authors acknowledge, given the small subject pool, it is difficult to determine what factor(s) account for these attitudinal differences. Nevertheless, the scientific and social significance of this study remains great. With methodological elegance, this final chapter powerfully demonstrates how the application of pragmatic theories and analytical approaches to socio-onomastic data can yield critical insights into the interactional construction and communication of cultural identity.

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