



## Book Review

**Names and Naming: Multicultural Aspects.** Edited by OLIVIU FELECAN and ALINA BUGHEȘIU. London: Palgrave Macmillan, 2021. Pp. xxx + 490. ISBN13: 978-3-030-73185-4 (Hardcover) £119.99. ISBN13: 978-3-030-73186-1 (eBook) £95.50.

Professor Oliviu Felecan and Dr. Alina Bugheșiu, colleagues from the northern branch of the Technical University of Cluj-Napoca, located in Baia Mare, Romania, have been responsible for several notable publications in the past, including *Onomastics in Contemporary Public Space* (2013). Additionally, Professor Felecan has edited, among other undertakings, an important work on current and historical aspects of onomastics: *Name and Naming: Synchronic and Diachronic Perspectives* (2012).

In the publication under review here, these same author-editors extend their onomastic interests into the multicultural sphere. There is certainly good reason to do so. Multiculturalism had in many quarters been the norm until the mid-19<sup>th</sup> century, when the rise of the nation state saw parts of Europe in particular retreat into a conformist monocultural orthodoxy. But in recent years multiculturalism has resurfaced widely, as a consequence both of today's wider travel and employment opportunities, and of the unfortunate waves of enforced migration which have brought different cultures together in unexpected situations. Given that multiculturalism clearly involves multilingualism and other language issues, and hence by extension concerns onomastics too, it is both pertinent and timely for the editors to have compiled a publication which, in their words, "brings together, for the first time in specialised literature, multiple aspects of multiculturalism and the way in which they are manifested in onomastics" (4). To achieve this, the editors have invited contributions from thirty-five authors from seventeen different countries.

After a brief editorial introduction in Chapter 1 (1-6), there follow twenty-nine chapters on specific topics concerned with onomastics and multiculturalism, these being divided into two main parts. Part I, containing seventeen chapters of a theoretical or practical character, is titled "Naming Policies, Trends and Practices in



the Context of Multiculturalism". Part II is titled "Naming as a Form of Identity Construction in Multicultural Societies", and its 12 chapters illustrate in various specific ways the manner in which names and naming form a vital and integral part of identity formation.

The various sub-groups—the so-called "onyms"—that together constitute onomastics are all covered to varying degrees in the twenty-nine chapters. There are eleven chapters on anthroponymy, five on toponymy, and a further five which combine those two "onyms". There are also five chapters dealing with chretonyms (names of institutions and brands), two considering literary onomastics, and one outlier dealing with toponymy and lexicography. For review purposes, it makes sense to group these chapters together in a thematic rather than a sequential fashion.

The first venture into anthroponymy is found in Chapter 2 (9-25), where Frank Nuessel outlines the various meanings that the term "multiculturality" can convey. He notes that some interpretations of the term limit themselves to the rather self-evident statement that it involves the coexistence of various cultures and heritages, whereas others hint that the definition inherently carries the belief that all the cultures involved should be valued positively. Nuessel then proceeds to a consideration of personal names and naming in the United States, principally since the 19<sup>th</sup> century. He considers both first names and surnames in some depth, using U.S. government data as his principal source, illustrating the geographical origin of surnames and the popularity of first names over time.

In Chapter 5 (57-72), Halyna Matsyuk considers the names of saints created in the Ukrainian Greek Catholic Church in the years since Ukraine's independence. She observes that the saints involved can for the most part be grouped together as individuals who met an untimely death at the hands of political authorities, principally during the periods of the Russian Empire and the Soviet Union. In Chapter 7 (91-105), Sergey Goryaev and Olga Olshvang consider single-word "neo-pagan" names found in the current anthroponymic lexicon of the Russian Federation, adopted by individuals living outside mainstream monotheistic traditions. The authors conclude that such names are largely used pseudonymically, as an ethnic counterpoint to the traditional Russian structure of given name, patronymic, and family name. Using quantitative analysis, Anna Tsepkova in Chapter 8 (107-131) examines in considerable detail non-native influences on Russian nicknames, demonstrating that the most frequent sources for these are names from the English language. In Chapter 9 (133-148), Eugen Schochenmaier then looks at patronymic naming patterns in Romania, France, Russia, Germany, and the United Kingdom, and shows that surnames based on given names predominate in all these countries except Germany, where occupational surnames prevail.

In Chapter 10 (149-163), Oliviu Felecan considers the anthroponyms of Transylvania, informing us that their multicultural nature dates from the era of the Habsburg Empire and noting that the prevalence of traditional Central European first names is increasingly being challenged by Western baptismal names. A somewhat similar situation is noted by Mariann Sliz in Chapter 11 (165-180), when discussing the anthroponyms of Hungary. In Chapter 12 (181-195), Andrea Bölskei considers the development of Hungarian given names through time, noting three key phases: the early arrival of Christian names, a partial separation of Catholic and Protestant preferences following the Reformation, and in modern times a gradual blurring of religious distinctions and the arrival of a wider name stock, both religious and non-religious.

Davide Astori, in Chapter 14 (213-226), looks at multicultural aspects of anthroponyms in Italy, showing that the Romanian language provides by far the greatest quantity of first names (almost 25 per cent) among the roughly five million inhabitants of foreign origin. Astori also notes that, in general, "male children born from foreign parents residing in Italy reflect more the tradition of their countries of origin, while the female ones more often have Italian names" (220). In Chapter 25 (387-403), Daiana Felecan and the late Nicolae Felecan discuss the role of the Greek Catholic Church in endowing the anthroponymy of Transylvania with a multicultural nature, while at the same time enhancing a general sense of Romanian identity.

Chapter 28 (437-453) sees Idowu Odebo conduct a fascinating sociolinguistic study of anthroponyms in Nigeria. He looks at the issue regionally—Hausa names in the north, Yoruba names in the west, and Igbo names in the east—and concludes that several factors are at work in producing multicultural aspects to Nigerian anthroponyms, including marriage, religion, and colonialism. In the author's words, such names "become instruments of multilingualism, creativity, historicity, ethnicity and memorability" (449).

The five chapters on toponymy begin with Chapter 6 (73-89), in which Marina Golomidova explores street-name changes in three large cities of the Russian Federation which act as the capitals of ethnically based republics: Kazan (Tatarstan), Ufa (Bashkortostan), and Yakutsk (Yakutia/Sakha). These changes have in each case enhanced the multicultural flavor of the urban linguistic landscape. In Chapter 13 (197-212), Staffan Nyström lucidly considers the multicultural toponymy of Scandinavia and Finland, noting in particular the parallel existence of indigenous Sami names in northern parts of the region and the presence of names borrowed from elsewhere in the world, as seen for example in the names of streets.

In Chapter 20 (315-329), Jaroslav David and Tereza Klemensová consider Czechia, providing a history of the fluctuating nature of competition and coexistence that has characterized the relationship between German toponyms and their Czech equivalents. The late Barbara Czopek-Kopciuch follows this in Chapter 21 (331-343) with an essentially geographically focused examination of the multicultural elements in Polish toponymy, which are visible especially in Poland's borderlands. Vladislav Alpatov, in Chapter 26 (405-420),

examines multicultural aspects of and influences on toponymy in Russia, a seriously complicated issue in a country comprising almost 200 ethnic affiliations. Alpatov necessarily limits his range, concentrating on Russia west of the Urals, and tackles the subject diachronically, from antiquity to the present day.

There are also five chapters combining anthroponymy and toponymy. In a wide-ranging study forming Chapter 4 (41-56), Justyna Walkowiak examines, diachronically and synchronically and with many pertinent examples, the consequences that migrations and border shifts in Europe have had for anthroponyms and toponyms. She also notes that these consequences are often problematic, resulting from attitudes and policies embedded in the idea of the nation state. In Chapter 15 (227-241), Marie A. Rieger studies personal names and street names in postcolonial East Africa, principally Tanzania. She concludes that multicultural contact of personal names has given rise to a synthesis of process which remains in progress, and that the street names of Dar es Salaam form “a site of juxtaposition between the local, the national, and the cosmopolitan” (238).

Bertie Neethling, in Chapter 16 (243-260), considers aspects of anthroponymy and toponymy in the multicultural environment that is South Africa. He examines the semantic categories of first names in the Bantu languages and contrasts their presence with the general absence of meaning among English and Afrikaans first names. Regarding toponymy, Neethling notes how political and social shifts since the end of the apartheid era have led to many place name changes, especially of a commemorative nature. Turning to Chapter 17 (261-275), it is refreshing to see a focus on the Arab world. Wafa Abu Hatab considers anthroponyms in Sudan, Egypt, Algeria, Morocco, and Jordan, and then returns to Jordan and Egypt to look at toponymy as well, where she finds that changes often involve the replacement of negative-sounding names. In an informative appraisal of the multicultural aspects of Shona-Ndebele anthroponymy in Zimbabwe and Bukusu-Sabaot toponymy in Kenya in Chapter 27 (421-436), Tendai Mangena and Solomon Waliaula note the fluid linguistic, cultural, and ethnic nature of names in a selected region in each of those countries, concluding that names in these two regions form “metaphors of cross-cultural contact and confluence” (434), with colonialism just one of several factors at play.

The five chapters on chrematonyms begin with Chapter 3 (27-39), in which Laurel Sutton takes the expressions “melting pot” and “salad bowl”, frequently used metaphorically in discourse about multiculturalism, and examines them more literally, in relation to food. She shows how immigrant cuisine from all over the globe has been adopted into American culture, though sometimes with adaptations, such that the resulting dish, even though it may still carry the foreign name, is not always quite the same as the original. In Chapter 18 (277-292), following a short but useful explanation of the Japanese writing system, Kazuko Tanabe and Yuan Jiang take onomastics onto the streets by considering the names of shops and signboards in urban Japan. The authors see the ongoing proliferation of such names in languages other than Japanese as a sign of an increasing multiculturalism within contemporary Japanese society.

In Chapter 22 (345-360), Angelika Bergien looks at current multicultural aspects of brand names and advertising in Germany, demonstrating that marketing considerations are always deemed paramount. Language is exploited with the objective of selling products, with multilingual communication deployed in advertising in an attempt to target multicultural customers. Paola Cotticelli-Kurras, in Chapter 23 (361-376), also looks at the multicultural aspects of brand names, this time in Italy, but does so more from a diachronic point of view, tracing significant developments since the turn of the 20<sup>th</sup> century and concluding that the language used at various junctures in time provides a mirror of the Italian culture of the day. Chapter 24 (377-386) sees Alina Bugheşiu take a close and well-constructed look at the names of street food vendors in Romania. She finds both global and local elements at work, and concludes that we can “construe names of street food vendors as markers of liminal multicultural and multilingual spaces” (385).

Literary onomastics forms the subject of two further chapters. In Chapter 29 (455-466), Alleen Pace Nilsen and Don L. F. Nilsen discuss aspects of names and naming in American literature, selecting for exploration one novel from each of the following categories: American Indian, Hispanic, Japanese American, Chinese American, and African American. However, although each novel is competently dissected, there are no threads or conclusions drawn as to what similarities or contrasts there may be among the novels under examination. In Chapter 30 (467-481), Grant W. Smith treats the reader to an absorbing account of the multiculturalism that is to be found in the literature of Shakespeare. With apt examples, Smith shows how close examination of Shakespeare’s works brings to light the many occasions on which he makes clear his concern for inclusivity and diversity, and indeed his advocacy of social and individual justice too.

Chapter 19 (295-314), by Joan Tort-Donada, evaluates the work of the 20<sup>th</sup>-century Catalan philologist Joan Coromines, highlighting the three significant dictionaries which Coromines compiled. Emphasis is placed on the “interdisciplinary and intercultural nature of his body of work” (296), with Tort-Donada judging Coromines to have been a giant figure of 20<sup>th</sup> century Romance philology.

Given that neither the editors nor the bulk of the authors have English as their first language, the resulting publication is admirable, and its occasional small infelicities of language are for the most part easily excused. Inevitably, though, a few faults of note can be spotted. Among the rankings given in Table 2.3 (21), the female name *Mia* appears twice, in both fifth and seventh positions (where one of the instances should probably read *Charlotte*). In chapters 4 and 6, the spelling of the adjective “topographic/topographical” has

not been standardized. In Chapter 16, some of the sub-headings are somewhat convoluted, and the same piece includes several instances of imperfectly constructed English, notably a rather inelegant “extremely many” (244). The romanized Arabic for “the garden” is given correctly as Al-Rawda in Table 17.1 (272), but on the following page it appears incorrectly as AlrawDa. In Chapter 18, the title of section 3 (280) appears to bear no relation to the section’s content. And in an otherwise well-compiled pair of indexes (author and subject), there is only one page reference given for “street name(s)”, whereas in reality there are more than twenty separate pages on which this important term can be found.

But these imperfections do not fundamentally detract from the value of this publication, which overall has excellent content and clarity of presentation. Most of the chapters have their own internal clarity too; they all provide comprehensive references, almost all begin with helpful introductory remarks, and most finish with a useful conclusion or summary, or with considered thoughts for the future. The literary quality, though unsurprisingly variable in a compendium of such wide-ranging nature and diverse authorship, is sometimes impressive, as for example in chapters 4 (Walkowiak), 13 (Nyström), 24 (Bugheşiu), 27 (Mangena and Waliaula), 28 (Odebode), and 30 (Smith). All in all, the claim made by the editors that the chapters “are simultaneously unitary and diverse in their approach to multiculturalism” (5) is amply justified, and although the disappointingly high price of the publication is an obvious deterrent, it is a rewarding pleasure to have this book in one’s hands.

## References

- Felecan, Oliviu, ed. 2012. *Name and Naming: Synchronic and Diachronic Perspectives*. Newcastle upon Tyne: Cambridge Scholars Publishing.
- Felecan, Oliviu, and Alina Bugheşiu, eds. 2013. *Onomastics in Contemporary Public Space*. Newcastle upon Tyne: Cambridge Scholars Publishing.

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