

Four Years of *Beiträge*

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[*Beiträge zur Namenforschung, in Verbindung mit Ernst Dickenmann herausgegeben von Hans Krahe; Carl Winter, Heidelberg. Vols. 1-4, 1949-1953.*]

IT IS NOT CUSTOMARY for one journal to review another. However, it may be of value to the readers of *Names* to know something about the current interests, directions, methods and achievements of European scholars who concern themselves with the study of names. The contents of one of the leading journals of the continent devoted to this branch of learning can certainly inform us on this topic, and so there will here be presented a summary survey of the contents of the first four volumes of the "Contributions to the Study of Names," the foremost German periodical in the field. No one person can be expected to have competence in all parts of the vast area encompassed by this subject, nor to be able to evaluate critically the various approaches here exemplified; I therefore do not feel called upon to take a stand upon all the controversial topics that are here discussed.

The *Beiträge*, of which three issues appear annually, constitute in a sense the continuation of the older *Zeitschrift für Ortsnamenforschung*, which commenced publication in 1925 under the editorship of Joseph Schnetz and which—since 1937 under the name *Zeitschrift für Namenforschung*—suspended after the appearance of the nineteenth volume in 1943. The first title of this journal described its field as place-name research, and this remained the area of chief interest even after the title was changed, as it does in the post-war continuation.

The *Beiträge* do not contain a programmatic statement of policy; but the character of the articles and the names of the contributors demonstrate that it is—except for the change of title and of editor—essentially an organ with the same standards as its predecessor. Schnetz apparently felt that the field of name research was one particularly attractive to the dilettante, for the first statement

of policy he made (*ZONF* I, p. 3) was that the journal was to be "strictly scientific"; and this is repeated (*ZNF* 13, p. 101) twelve years later, when he declared that "research must be carried on in the spirit of true scholarship." The roster of contributors to the earlier periodical amply satisfied this requirement, and its standard is being fully maintained by its successor. Many of the same scholars have written for both, and among their ranks are some of the most distinguished representatives of contemporary European learning. The *Beiträge*, although edited and published in Germany, are more than a strictly national organ: among the some forty-three contributors to the first four annual numbers there are, in addition to twenty-seven Germans, five Swiss, four Austrians, three Americans, two Italians, one Belgian and one Englishman; and the articles are printed in German, French, English, and Italian. Schnetz had stipulated that the *ZONF* should limit its activity to names of Indo-European origin, and this limitation has hitherto also been observed in the new journal. The character of any learned journal is certainly determined, at least in part, by the interests of those who publish in it, and the interests of those central European scholars who have contributed to the *Beiträge* lie largely in the fields of the comparative and historical grammar of the Indo-European languages, with particular emphasis on the Germanic languages, the classical tongues, Celtic, and Baltic and Slavic. Among the scores of articles contained in the issues under review there are but four devoted to extra-European names: Sanskrit names for bodies of water, two Sanskrit divine names, and two Old Persian personal names; and all of these are likewise Indo-European.

Most of the authors are occupants of professorial chairs; among them I single out for special mention the following Indo-Europeanists: the editor Krahe, Brandenstein the Austrian, Pisani the Italian, and van Windekens the Belgian; Schwarz, Bach, and Szadrowsky represent the Germanists, Pokorny—now that Holger Pedersen has died—is certainly the most prominent continental Celticist, and the ancient Near East is represented by Johannes Friedrich. All these men are leading scholars in the various branches of linguistic work. The tradition of the scientific study of names is notably older in Europe than on this side of the Atlantic, and the interest in it on the part of established scholars more

widely diffused than with us; this is testified to by the number and the age of onomastic journals that are being published in western Europe. And it is one of the reasons for the uniformly high quality of the contributions.

The contributions may be roughly classified, upon the basis of of subject matter, into four groups: general topics, personal and divine names, ethnic names, and place names. In this survey it will of course be impossible even to mention each article; only some can be referred to, to illustrate the kinds of subjects treated and the methods employed. Under the heading of general topics there are essays on the place of names in the lexical system, and on local nick-names (cf. e.g. "Hoosier" for natives of Indiana, and "Web-footer" as equivalent to Oregonian); an attack by H. Bahlow on the doctrine of 'radiation' (Strahlung) as applied to the historical explanation of the distribution of family-name types in Germany and a spirited defense by Adolf Bach, the chief protagonist of this method in historical linguistics and German dialectology; a consideration of the relationship between names and magic in medieval Ireland and the Scandinavian north; a study by Professor Pulgram of the modern family name from a historical and sociological point of view; and two articles which discuss the problem of determining the age of Germanic place names from a consideration of their grammatical structure.

A discussion of the types of meaning contained in old-Germanic personal names and of the transition from "meaningful" to "meaningless" names (especially those of women) may form a transition to the group of articles on personal names. This group contains but one study of a "living" name, the French-derived German family name "Charrier"; Professor Szemerényi of London and Professor Brandenstein of Graz discuss the etymologies of the ancient Iranian personal names 'Vištaspa' and 'Sataspes'; an attempt is made to identify as the oldest north Germanic personal name the 'Thruskanos' found in a Greek novel of the period 50-150 A.D.; and Professor Krahe claims as Illyrian (on which more below) two ancient personal names, 'Teupalos' from Elea in Greece and the 'Venulus' in Vergil's *Aeneid*.

The two short articles on divine names illustrate two different trends in contemporary linguistic investigation: Dr. Mayrhofer, the young Indic scholar at Würzburg and author of the new etymolog-

ical dictionary of Sanskrit which has now commenced to appear, suggests replacing the long-accepted Indo-European etymon of the name of the Indic god 'Kubera' by one borrowed from the (non-Indo-European) Dravidian or "Austro-Asiatic" languages of India. The insight that a large and growing number of Sanskrit words are better to be regarded as loans from the pre-Indo-Aryan languages of India than as inherited from proto-Indo-European is to be commended; but extreme caution is imperative, in view of the fragmentary character of our knowledge of these languages (particularly of the so-called Munda group) and the legitimate doubt that still exists about Pater Schmidt's "Austro-Asiatic family." Professor van Windekens, who has recently published a book on "Pelagic: a pre-Greek Indo-European Language," claims that the historical Greeks took their divine names 'Thetis' and 'Phoibos' from this pre-Greek Indo-European tongue, the sound laws of which he believes he is able in part to state. Here again, attractive as some of his suggestions may appear, it will be necessary to reserve final judgment: substratum identifications of this character would have to be made in much greater number to carry conviction, and to assign words preserved in the Greek tradition which do not have clear Indo-European etymologies to the "Indo-European Pelagic" is, for the present at least, to explain one unknown by another.

Among the five articles dealing with the origins of ethnic names may be mentioned the two that constitute attempts to illuminate the perennial problem of the source of the name "Germani." Pisani emphasizes the wide distribution of the name in ancient times—from Persia to Spain—and suggests that it was—like that of the 'Veneti'—an ethnic denomination of Indo-European age; Krogmann reasserts, with new arguments, his earlier claim that the word is native Germanic and is the self-appellation of the Germanic tribes, with the meaning "the powerful, the great."

As indicated above, the bulk of the material in these issues is devoted to place-name research. With the exceptions mentioned, all the articles are concerned with European names, and, as might be expected in a German publication, a large place is occupied by treatments of problems in the sphere of German, Austrian, and Swiss names: the curiosity of many of us is stimulated by questions that arise from the data which confront us in our own local environment. In these, as in the following groups of articles, it is shown

time after time how the results of place name investigation may serve as a valuable complement to history, inasmuch as, properly interpreted, they illuminate periods in human history or prehistory for which other sources are scanty or altogether lacking. Thus an article on group-formation in Alemannic local names throws light on the process and nature of the settlement of the Germanic tribes in Switzerland during the obscure period of the fifth to the ninth centuries A.D. And the identification of many place names in widely scattered parts of Europe as Celtic strongly supports what other evidence we possess for the extensive diffusion of this people in pre-Christian times. Still other ancient names, likewise widely scattered in France, Germany, and Italy, are claimed to be Indo-European although not Celtic or Gallic, nor Germanic, nor Italic, and are assigned to an early Indo-European stratum to which the name "Illyrian" is given. Thus for example the ancient name of the Saar river (Sarāvus) on the borders of France and Germany and the town name Sulmo in central Italy are assigned to "Illyrian"; in a similar fashion Schwarz derives the German town name Fuhrn, near the Czech border, from the Venetic language, of which all we know comes from a few hundred short inscriptions around the head of the Adriatic in Italy. In these instances linguistic evidence alone can be appealed to for the quondam presence of Illyrians and Veneti in these areas, and there are some who prefer not to use these specific ethnic names for the speakers of the languages from which these names have come. The chief exponents of this "Pan-Illyrianism" are professors Krahe and Pokorny.

Some of the oldest place names in Europe are certainly those of rivers and other bodies of water, and accordingly much attention is paid to them. Schnetz had published a long series of articles in *ZONF* on German river names, and to me the most interesting and significant contribution in the new journal is a similar series of ten articles on ancient European river names written by the editor, Professor Krahe, a series which happily is as yet far from complete. I have learned from this painstaking and brilliant research, carried out in a methodologically irreproachable manner, of the surprising uniformity of river names, both in root and derivational type, over wide stretches of Europe. Thus a basic element *albh- (cf. O. Norse *elfr* 'river'), recurs, with various suffixes, as a river name in the following (cf. *BzN* IV, 40 ff.): *Elbe* (ancient *Albis*) in Germany, *Aube*

(ancient *Alba*) in France, an *Alba* in Spain, *Albegna* (ancient *Albinia*) in central Italy, and the *Alpheios* in Greece; and with a suffix *-antia* the *Lafnitz* (from ancient **Albantia*) in Steiermark in southern Austria, the *Aubance* (likewise from **Albantia*) in France, and the *Alfund-* in Norway. All these names, and I have given only a few of the many which Krahe cites, are derived from the Indo-European root **alb(h)-* "white" (> "river"); cf. the many American names 'White Water', 'White River', etc. What the final historical interpretation of this wide-spread uniformity in European hydronymy will be remains to be seen. One wishes that when this series is complete it may be issued as a separate publication.

But I have already gone beyond the normal limits of a survey. I will merely note that these fascicles also contain articles on Celtic, Lithuanian, Russian, Icelandic, middle and modern Greek names as well as many more on those of Germany and the Mediterranean basin. It is hoped that these lines will indicate the rich variety of subject matter and the fascinating problems which are here offered to the historian and the onomatologist.



Norfolk from North Fork.—The history of the naming of the city of Norfolk, Nebraska, is controversial. Since there is a county by that name in England and a town in Massachusetts it is easy to jump at the conclusion that Norfolk is simply a transferred name like thousands of others. However, the town was settled and the post office established by German farmers from Wisconsin, who would have no reason to use a name from England or New England. It appears that these first settlers intended to call their new home North Fork because of its proximity to the North Fork of the Elkhorn River. One of the pioneers suggested the syncopation *Norfork*, which would be more acceptable to the Post Office Department. The gentlemen in Washington, however, believed that it was a misspelling of the better known Norfolk and changed it accordingly. But even today one often hears the name pronounced "norfork."

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