Literary Onomastics and the Descent of Nations: the Example of Isidore and Vico

MARK E. AMSLER

THE SCHOLARLY STUDY OF names, particularly place-names, has contributed much to the historical knowledge of the course or descent of the world's nations and peoples. But the scholarly use of onomastics to verify the origins and development of peoples must not let us forget that in literary works, as in folk culture and folklore, the legendary national and racial eponyms and etymologies are often more important than the true histories of names. As the late Francis Utley cautioned us, it is the art, rather than the science, of etymology which most often motivates the significance of eponymous, national, or Biblical names in literature.[1] The often-studied account of the peoples in Genesis 10 is laced with invented eponyms and onomastic associations.[2] Likewise, the supposed derivations of *Britain* from *Brutus* and *Roma* from *Romulus* have more to do with national consciousness and social values than with scientific etymology.

In this paper I want to discuss how two very different writers, Isidore of Seville (d. 636) and Giambattista Vico (1668-1744), combine scientific and artistic etymology to explain the descent of nations in systematic, epistemological ways. Isidore, whom I shall take here to typify the mediaeval onomastic tradition, elevated etymology to a "category of thought"[3] in order to explain and justify Christian salvation history. In the eighteenth century, Vico combined onomastics and philosophical analysis to comprehend the development of human

[1] "From the Dinnsenchas to Proust: The Folklore of Placenames in Literature," *Names*, 16:3 (September, 1968), 273-75.

[2] For example, the author of Genesis 10 associates the Cimmerians with Gomer, the Medes with Madai, Ham with Egypt, and Shem with the Semites (through a connection with the eponymous Heber). See Eugene Maly, "Genesis," *The Jerome Biblical Commentary*, eds. R. E. Brown, J. A. Fitzmyer, and R. E. Murphy (Englewood Cliffs, N.J.: Prentice-Hall, 1968), I, 13-14, 17-18.

[3] See Ernst R. Curtius, *European Literature and the Latin Middle Ages*, trans. Willard R. Trask (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1953), Excursus XIV.

society. In Isidore and Vico we have two of the most thoroughly systematic "poetic anthropologies," each providing examples for the poetic use of anthropology and the descent of nations by a variety of writers. In this paper we shall examine more closely two such writers—the *Beowulf*-poet and James Joyce.

Isidore's *Etymologiae sive origines* is primarily concerned, as its title suggests, with etymologies as they reveal the true origins of things. Most important for the discussion of the names of the peoples and nations is Book Nine. Incorporating materials from Plato, Varro, Jerome, and the Gospel of Matthew, Isidore recapitulates Christian salvation history from Eden to Babel to the birth of Christ and on into his own time.[4] Like the earlier Church Fathers, Isidore links the development of the different races to the fragmentation of languages after Babel; there are 72 races and 72 languages. Isidore traces the origins of all races and languages back to the first "Hebrews" in Eden—Adam and Eve (9,1,1; 9,2,2). In the *Etymologiae,* Hebrew origins are the basis for the Christian's study of both language and anthropology.

Using primarily extraverbal criteria, Isidore suggests several kinds of derivations for the names of the various peoples. Eponymously, the Goths and the Scythians descend from Magog and take their name from the second element of that Old Testament name (9,2,27 and 89). Other peoples derive their names from geographic associations: the Hebrews from the Heber River, the Ephesi from the town of Ephesus, and so on. Still other names are explained with recourse to psychological appropriateness, as when the Britons are said to be named not after Brutus but because they are *bruti* (9,2,102). Indulging in some onomastic wordplay, Isidore explains that the *Germanicae gentes* receive their name because their huge (or barbarous) bodies and immense (or barbarous) tribes ("inmania corpora inmanesque nationes") are hardened and rendered ferocious by the cold climate (9,2,97). Likewise, peculiar social customs can provide etymological explanations; for Isidore, *anthropophagi* is an epithet turned name which describes what those people do—eat human flesh (9,2,132).

This mediaeval method of anthropological investigation parallels the use of sacred onomastics in the Bible and elsewhere. Mediaeval writers like Isidore adopted the glossing of names in the Old Testament and the explanations of Christ's epithets in the New Testament in terms of His

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[4]References in the text are to book, section, and line number in Isidore's *Etymologiae sive origines,* ed. W. M. Lindsay (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1911).

spiritual nature. Jesus is *Emmanuel* because "He will become the savior of His people" (7,2,8), *Christus* because He is God's anointed (7,2,2). Isidore explains that this sort of prophetic naming also operates in the history of nations:

> Plerique primorum hominum ex propriis causis originem nominum habent. Quibus ita prophetice indita sunt vocabula, ut aut futuris aut praecedentibus eorum causis conveniant. (7,6,1)
> [Many early men had names originating from "proper" causes. And their names have been given in such a prophetic way that they are in harmony with either their future or their antecedent causes.]

Noah is so named because he is *requies,* Shem because he is *nominatus* (one of the first rank) (7,6,15-16). These names are typologically significant since Noah and Shem are the distant ancestors of Jesus (Matt. 16). In addition, such derivations reflect Isidore's and the Middle Ages' use of Latin glosses to explain the origins and significances of Hebrew names. The Middle Ages generally accepted this procedure, since God was believed to have unfolded the truth of salvation history through the successive languages of the Scriptures (Hebrew-Greek-Latin) (9,1,2-3).

With its Biblical sanction, the use of prophetic names to elucidate salvation history and the descent of nations is evident in much mediaeval literature.[5] In the *Historia Ecclesiastica Gentis Anglorum,* Bede's account of Gregory's onomastic wordplay is well known but not always well understood. When the future pope derives *Angle* from *engla* and *Dere* from *de ira* and hears Alleluia in *Ælli,* he comes to understand in the Anglo-Saxon names the truth of God's plan for salvation and the subsequent course of the Christian mission in the world. In the context of Bede's history, the Christianization of England was no accident but a clearly ordained part of the divine plan as revealed by the onomastic knowledge of that nation's position in salvation history. Bede's description of the Gregorian etymologies indicates that he considered Britain to be not an area of diverse races, languages, and institutions, but one island whose peoples professed one Christian faith.[6]

To cite another Old English example which reflects Isidoran onomastics, the *Beowulf*-poet's assertion that Grendel belongs to the race of

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[5]Among several fine studies, see Curtius (note 3, above) and Fred C. Robinson, "The Significance of Names in Old English Literature," *Anglia,* 86 (1968), 14-58.

[6]See Peter Hunter Blair, *The World of Bede* (London: Secker and Warburg, 1970), pp. 13-14.

Cain has created a rich, if controversial, crux in the poem. Usually Cain is identified as the founder of the race of monsters and so an appropriate ancestry for Grendel.[7] Recently, Robert Kaske has suggested that the name *Grendel* may reflect the poet's debt to the apochryphal Book of Enoch. *Grendel* may then be understood as a compound of *grindan* (grind) or *grund* (bottom) + *êl,* where the second element traditionally signifies divinity or strength in the names of the fallen angels who mated with mortal women to produce the race of giants.[8] But I think there is a more accessible and mainstream onomastic explanation for Grendel's ancestry, one which embodies the Biblical and Isidoran notion of prophetic names. Following Jerome, Isidore says that *Cain* signifies *possessio* since at his birth Eve exclaimed, "I have gotten a son from God" (7,6,7). Jerome had more fully glossed *Cain* as "possessio vel adquisitio" and said that the name prophesied greed and envy for Cain's descendants.[9]

In *Beowulf,* the terms "greedy" and "ravenous" (*grǣdig, gīfre*) are used several times, almost always in connection with the monsters. Befitting descendants of Cain, Grendel and his mother are each formulaically described as "grim ond grǣdig" (121a,1499a).[10] The first instance immediately follows the poet's account of Grendel's ancestry and the Cain and Abel legend; it also initiates Grendel's first approach to Heorot. In the second instance, the formula appears when Grendel's mother realizes Beowulf has intruded into her personal territory, and it is coupled with a reference to her merehall as the region of monsters. Only once in the poem is "greedy" (*gīfre*) used outside the Grendel-Cain context. In the Finn digression, the funeral fire which swallows up the Danish and Frisian dead is called the "greediest of spirits" (*gǣsta gīfrost;* 1123a). Since, outside of this one instance, the word *gǣst* or its compounds in *Beowulf* refer only to Grendel, his mother, or some devil, it seems inescapable that the fire which engulfs the kinslayers in the Finn digression is to be associated with the descendants of Cain in

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[7]See O. F. Emerson, "Legends of Cain, Especially in Old and Middle English," *PMLA,* 21 (1906), 831-929 (esp. 882). *Cf. Beowulf and the Fight at Finnsburg,* ed. F. Klaeber, 3rd ed. (Boston: D.C. Heath, 1950), pp. l-li, and the items listed in Klaeber's bibliography (p. clviii).

[8]"Beowulf and the Book of Enoch," *Speculum,* 46 (1971), 424-26. *Cf.* Niilo Peltola, "Grendel's Descent from Cain Reconsidered," *NM,* 73 (1972), 284-91.

[9]*Liber interpretationis Hebraicorum nominum,* p. 63, 1. 2; *Hebraicae quaestiones in libro Geneseos,* 4, 7. Both works are edited by Paul de Lagarde, CCSL, 72 (Turnholt: Bredpols, 1959). For additional Patristic evidence on the relation between Grendel and Cain, see John Golden, "A Typological Approach to the 'Gifstol' of *Beowulf* 168," *NM,* 77 (1976), 190-204.

[10]References in the text are to Klaeber's edition (note 7, above).

the poem. The poet also seems to connect the ravenous funeral fire with the light "most like to fire" (*ligge gelīcost;* 727a) which shines in Grendel's eyes as he hungrily surveys the troop of Beowulf's men sleeping in the hall. This association of fire with Cainites and kinslayers is accented by the fact that the funeral fire which cremates Beowulf is described as "great" (*mǣst;* 3143b) and "roaring" (*swōgende;* 3145b) but not "greedy." Beowulf was no kinslayer. Later, the poet says that "Heaven swallowed the smoke" from Beowulf's byre (*Heofon rēce swealg;* 3155b), perhaps in contrast to the hellish merehall which received the mortally wounded Grendel (852b). It seems likely, then, that God's approval of Abel's offering and disapproval of Cain's looms behind the respective fates of Beowulf and Grendel.

The last instance of *grǣdig* reveals the complexity of the *Beowulf*-poet's stylistic and thematic variation. When Beowulf fights Grendel's mother, he uses a sword called Hrunting, given to him by Unferth, the *thȳle* in Hrothgar's court who challenges Beowulf's credentials. At the court Beowulf clearly establishes that Unferth is a kinslayer (587-89). Then when Beowulf strikes out with Hrunting, the poet says, "He put his whole force behind his sword, did not withhold the two-handed swing, the sharp ring-patterns sang greedily" (*mægenrǣs forgeaf/ hildebille, hond sweng ne ofteāh/þæt hire on hafelan hringmǣl āgōl/ grædig guðlēoð;* 1519b-22a). The poet emphasizes Beowulf's mighty swing, but he specifies the sword's Cainite behavior. Such is the sword of Unferth the kinslayer, and significantly Hrunting fails in the contest. By contrast, the "sword made by giants" (*ealdsweord eotenisc;* 1558a) which Beowulf finds hanging in the merehall does succeed against Grendel's mother. It is therefore highly appropriate that on the hilt of this sword with which Beowulf slays the mother and beheads the son there is inscribed the story of the Flood which wiped out the sinful race of giants who were born from the race of Cain (1688b-93).[11]

This network of connections centering on the monsters and kinslayers who are Cain's descendants in *Beowulf* confirms one aspect of the poet's onomastic artistry as well as the moral structure of the poem. It deepens our appreciation of the poet's well thought of tendency to use

[11]For additional material on Unferth and Hrunting, which corroborates my argument here, see Lewis E. Nicholson, "Hunlafing and the Point of the Sword," *Anglo-Saxon Poetry: Essays in Appreciation,* ed. Lewis E. Nicholson and Dolores Warwick Frese (Notre Dame and London: University of Notre Dame Press, 1975), pp. 50-61, and Geoffrey Hughes, "Beowulf, Unferth and Hrunting: An Interpretation," *ES,* 58 (1977), 385-95.

puns and other wordplay. Grendel acts in accordance with the onomastic significance of his ancestry, as defined by Jerome, Isidore, and others. When we look at Cainism as a theme in the poem, we can perhaps discover a dichotomy between the spiritual descendants of Cain and those of Abel, between the takers and the givers in the poem. Such a thematic interplay would not be unique to Anglo-Saxon poetry, of course. Compare, for example, the description of romance heroes, such as Yvain, as "the best of Abel's line," often in their moments of giving, munificence, and piety, and Dante's use of *Caina* as the name for the circle of Hell for those guilty of treachery to their kinsmen.[12] Such is the descent of the people of Cain.

Given Isidore's emphasis on scriptural and spiritual authority for onomastic understanding, it may be surprising to hear Vico's name coupled with that of the Bishop of Seville. But etymology as an explanatory method is as central to the eighteenth-century *Scienza Nuova* as to the mediaeval *Etymologiae*. Moreover, Vico's derivations, like Isidore's, rely primarily on extraverbal criteria, which for Vico meant philosophical first principles. I cannot hope in the compass of this paper to do full justice to the complexities of Vico's marriage of philosophy and philology, but I would like to sketch out certain concepts of etymology and the descent of nations as they inform the *Scienza Nuova*.

Vico's theory of history locates the beginning of gentile history in the scattering of Noah's impious sons and their subsequent descent into barbarism. Vico believes that from such a low position each nation enacts a universal cycle of development, "a natural law of nations" (146),[13] from divine age to heroic age through a human age and finally to a new barbarism (31). Basing this philosophical premise upon the thoroughly Isidoran derivation of *natura* from *nascendo* (147-48), Vico adduces several patterns correlative to the "natural law of nations," so

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[12]Chrétien de Troyes, *Yvain*, ed. Wendelin Foerster and introd. T. B. W. Reid (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 1948), 11. 1811-15; Dante, *Inferno*, Canto 32.

[13]References in the text are to paragraphs in *The New Science of Giambattista Vico*, trans. Thomas Goddard Bergin and Max Harold Fisch (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1948). Although Vico's etymological principles have never been discussed in full, I am indebted to: Robert Caponigri, *Time and Idea: The Theory of History in Giambattista Vico* (Chicago: Henry Regnery Co., 1953); Tullio de Mauro, "Giambattista Vico: From Rhetoric to Linguistic Historicism," and Edmund Leach, "Vico and Lévi-Strauss on the Origins of Humanity," *Giambattista Vico: An International Symposium*, ed. Georgio Tagliacozzo and Hayden V. White (Baltimore and London: The Johns Hopkins University Press, 1969), pp. 279-95, 309-18; and Leon Pompa, *Vico: A Study of the "New Science"* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1975).

that the life of a man parallels the life of a nation and mankind. For our purposes, one of the most important of these patterns is Vico's theory of three kinds of language: 1) sacred or hieroglyphic language in which "the mute language of signs and physical objects have natural relations to the ideas they . . . express"; 2) heroic or symbolic language, the language of myth and oral poetry; 3) human or vulgar language which uses conventional diction and syntax so that "people may fix the meaning of the laws by which the nobles as well as the plebs are bound" (32).

Vico explains the various applications of this "law of nations" with etymological evidence. Because language grew as mankind did, it reflects the development of the human mind from divine to heroic to rational understanding. So the etymology of a word is really the history of an idea.[14] For example, Vico derives *humanitas* from *humando,* since burial, along with marriage, was early man's most humanizing institution (12). Because he assumes that each nation develops individually with respect to historical, cultural, and physical circumstances, Vico carefully discriminates between native and foreign etymologies. "Native etymologies," he says, "are histories of things signified by the words in the natural order of ideas," that is, in man's movement from forests to fields to cities to academies. In contrast, "foreign etymologies . . . are mere stories of words taken by one language from another" (22).

Vico uses the distinction between native and foreign etymologies to explain that languages were formed in particular areas of the world, when "the founders of nations, scattered and dispersed through the great forest of the earth . . . finally came together by chance and ceased their bestial wandering" (22). For Vico, the variety of languages reflects not man's sin and spiritual confusion, as in the mediaeval tradition, but rather man's continuing attempts at community and social order. Therefore, Vico adopts the sequence from forests to academies as "a great principle of etymology, for this sequence of human things sets the patterns for the histories of words in the various native languages" (239-40). Put more generally, "the order of ideas must follow the order of things" (238). For instance, the word *lex* contains within it the entire historical development of the Roman civilization, from its original meaning ("a collection of acorns") to "a collection of vegetables" (whence *legumina*) to "a collection of citizens" or parliament

[14] *Cf.* Pompa, pp. 132-33.

to a collection of letters (whence *legere*) (240). Fanciful as some of these etymologies may be, Vico uses them to support the philosophical premise that all man's institutions have rustic, pastoral origins.

The "natural law of nations" is revealed not only in the origins of man's social terminology, but also in the migration of nations. In fact, it would appear that Vico took the idea of the *descent* of nations literally. Reworking Plato, Vico explains that after the Flood the early men known as Cyclopes lived in the mountains in caves. Gradually, they moved out of the caves and down the mountainside toward the coast. So the legend of Dardanus, founder of Pergamum (later Troy), indicates for Vico the descent of the post-deluvian fathers from the mountains to the plains, that is, from the divine to the heroic age. Ilus subsequently moved Pergamum nearer to the sea and gave the city a new name, *Ilium,* thus marking the final stage in the downward movement from the mountains to the sea (296). In Vico's system, the descent of the Trojan people is marked by the climb down from the mountains and by the consequent sequence of place-names for the city eventually known as Troy. In a related manner, Vico explains how Providence directs the course of nations, shaping with "its divine legislative mind" ferocity, avarice, and ambition into the military, merchant, and governing classes in society (132-33). Such is the Vichan version of the descent of each nation from barbarism to humanity.

Vico uses the principle of descent and seaward movement, as determined by onomastic evidence, to prove that the Hebrews were the oldest of all the earth's peoples. The Hebrew nation, which Vico thought had been founded by Noah in Mesopotamia, was the "country farthest inland of the first habitable world" and so "must have been the most ancient of all nations" (298). But unlike the gentile nations, the Hebrews were from the beginning human, rational, and of ordinary height, reflecting their status as God's chosen people. The gentiles, on the other hand, had to go through the cycle of the "natural law of nations," from barbarism to divinity to heroism to humanity. The Hebrews, then, are a static model in Vico's scheme of what all nations tend toward. In contrast, the impious sons of Noah (Ham, Japheth, and Shem) were giants living in the post-deluvian barbarism as punishment for their original sin and their repudiation of their father's religion. Vico tells us that Ham, Japheth, and Shem had to be domesticated and institutionalized, a process which defines the nature of world history and the descent of the nations after the Flood.

Of all the literary works which have been influenced by Vico's theory

of history, Joyce's *Ulysses* and *Finnegans Wake* loom largest. I shall not attempt here to treat in any thorough way the impact of Vico on Joyce's writings.[15] But I would like to discuss one instance from *Finnegans Wake* which I think is typical of the way Vichan onomastics and the descent of nations permeate the thought and texture of that work.

In Book II, Chapter 3 of *Finnegans Wake* a great feast is underway in Earwicker's (HCE's) tavern. The phantasm of the scene ends with a mob which storms the tavern and denounces HCE for his scandalous encounter years ago with the two young girls in Phoenix Park (*FW*, I.2). As the tumult increases and closing time approaches, the mob cries:

> Wait till we hear the Boy of Biskop reeling around your postoral letter! Epistlemadethemology for deep dorfy doubtlings! As we'll lay till break of day in the bunk of basky, O! Our island, Rome, and duty! Well tried, buckstiff! Batt in, boot! Sell him a breach of contact, the vendoror, the buy-lawyer! One hyde sack, hic! Two stick holst, Lucky! Finnish MakeCool! First you were Nomad, next you were Namar, now you're Numah, and it's soon you'll be Nomon. Hence counsels Ecclesiast.[16]

The sequence Nomad-Namar-Numah-Nomon locates HCE precisely in the Vichan theory of the descent of nations, while it also recapitulates the significance of that cycle of which he is so much a part.[17] Paralleling Vico's idea of the nomadic Noah and his wandering descendants, HCE (the post-deluvian patriarch) journeys to Dublin by ship and succeeds the old giant Finnegan. As a supposed center of social order, HCE is ideally a namer (*Namar*),[18] since according to Vico the nomadic peoples heard the thunderclap and took it as a sign from Jove indicating what they should do (9, 379). Vico's primary requirement for civilization is a strong system of kinship laws and, analogously, linguistic laws, both

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[15] I have found especially helpful: M. Hodgart, "A Viconian Sentence in *Ulysses*," *Orbis Litterarum*, 19 (1964), 203; A. Walton Litz, "Vico and Joyce," *Giambattista Vico*, ed. Tagliacozzo and White, pp. 245-55; and J. Mitchell Morse, "Where Terms Begin/Book I, chapter i," *A Conceptual Guide to "Finnegans Wake,"* ed. Michael H. Begnal and Fritz Senn (University Park and London: The Pennsylvania State University Press, 1974), pp. 1-17.

[16] *Finnegans Wake* (New York: Viking Press, 1939), p. 374, 11. 16-23. Further references to *FW* in the text will be to page and line numbers from this edition.

[17] See Edward A. Kopper, Jr., "'. . . but where he is eaten': Earwicker's Tavern Feast," *A Conceptual Guide*, ed. Begnal and Senn, p. 116.

[18] Adaline Glasheen has noted that *Namar* might be an anagram for Rama(n), the name of the sixth, seventh, and eighteenth avatars of Vishnu, the second God of the Hindu triad; see *A Second Census of "Finnegans Wake,"* rev. and expanded (Evanston: Northwestern University Press, 1963).

of which regulate combination and creation.[19]

But it is precisely as namer, as lawgiver, that HCE fails. Not only are his name and identity uncertain, but he has also instigated incest, the direct violation of the very kinship laws he is supposed to uphold. So the mob outside the tavern says he is now *Numah.* In Vico's universal chronology, Numa Publius (or Pompilius) was a king of Rome and a contemporary of Homer; both Numa and Homer stood on the threshold of the democratic age and looked back on the decayed age of Greece. It was a time, says Vico, "when heroic law had already decayed in Greece and the period of popular liberty had begun," when Homer depicted heroes who "contract marriages with foreigners" and "bastards [who] succeed to kingdoms," when Hercules—the heroic ideal—went mad and died. (802). So the image of democratic license and the violation of kinship laws in the age of Numa and Homer is appropriately conjured up in Joyce's Dublin by the mob's reference to HCE as *Numah.*

The onomastic significance of the sequence Nomad-Namar-Numah thus enhances the centrality of II.3 to *Finnegans Wake* as a whole. The chaotic tavern scene, like the reign of Numa Publius, marks the Vichan turn from monarchy to democracy (i.e., mob rule), wherein "Plubs will be plebs" (312.33). Then, in the "natural law of nations," democracy is followed by anarchy and then the *ricorso* which ushers in the new barbarism. Correspondingly, the last name in the sequence is the multi-layered pun *Nomon.* A prime example of Joyce's polysemous diction, *Nomon* signifies Ulysses who is *no-man,* the anarchy which results from the denial of humanity (*no man*), and the beginning of a new barbaric age of primal understanding in terms of hieroglyphs and spiritual names —the *numen* in *nomen.*

Of course, I have only touched here on some of the uses of Isidoran and Vichan onomastics in western literature. The descent of nations and onomastics has proved to be a particularly fruitful combination. Besides writers like Milton and Proust, I might also call attention to several other works which demand closer investigation from the point of view of literary onomastics and the descent of nations. Gabriel Garcia Marquez's *One Hundred Years of Solitude,*[20] a chronicle of four generations of the Buendia family, seems to combine Isidoran and

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[19]See Margot Norris, *The Decentered Universe of "Finnegans Wake"* (Baltimore and London: The Johns Hopkins University Press, 1976), pp. 55-58.

[20]Originally published as *Cien Anōs de Soledad* (Buenos Aires: Editorial Sudamericana, S.A., 1967).

Vichan systems of onomastics in a rich mythic form. In its descendants, the Buendia family follows Vico's "natural law of nations" from divinity to heroism to humanity and from isolated, inland forest to seacoast. Moreover, Garcia Marquez seems to be especially concerned with the nature of names, as when the misnaming of twins at birth becomes no misnaming at all but a revelation through language of the ideal shape of history. Similarly, the 17 grandsons of the founder of the Edenic village of Maconda are all named Aureliano, after their father and grandfather. Although they scatter to the ends of the earth when the government changes hands, they are all eventually shot through the head, just as their ancestors had been. Their names, then, indicate their fixed place and fate in a cycle of history which they are powerless to alter. We await a full scale discussion of the onomastic significances in Garcia Marquez's work.

The intellectual history of antiquarianism is another area where the concept of onomastics and the descent of nations might be examined. In the sixteenth century, Polydore Virgil sought to prove the continental origins of Britain and so derived *Cornwall* from *Cornugallia,* thus exposing the Britons' true ancestry![21] Elsewhere, the dazzling array of names in Blake's vision poems, particularly *Jerusalem,* may owe something to Blake's belief that the Druids were descendants of Adam, Abraham, and the Phoenicians, an idea made popular by the etymological speculations of antiquarians like William Stukeley in his *Stonehenge, A Temple restor'd to the British Druids* (1740). Finally, I might suggest that the mainstream thought on the onomastic evidence for the descent of nations, as contained in writers such as Isidore and Vico, may help us better understand such peculiarities as Annius of Viterbo (1460?-1502), a Dominican scholar whose *Antiquitates Variarum* (1498) was an elaborate forgery which, among other things, rewrote the Noah legend using onomastic evidence to prove that Noah and his family settled in Italy and founded the Roman pantheon.[22] Certainly, theoretical investigation into the descent of nations has had an especially lively relationship with onomastics in literature and history. Modern students of onomastics have done much to elucidate that relationship, but there are many more areas to be studied and names aplenty.

University of Delaware

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[21]See Deny Hay, *Polydore Virgil* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1952), pp. 91, 136-37.

[22]See O. A. Danielsson, "Annius von Viterbo über die Gründungsgeschichte Roms," *Acta Instituti Romani Regni Sueciae,* 2 (1932), 1-16. There is no modern edition of Annius, but I have referred to a copy of Francis Utley's unpublished partial translation from the 1498 edition.