

Book Reviews

Dictionary of Proper Names and Places in the Bible. By O. Odelain and R. Séguineau. Garden City, New York, 1981: Doubleday & Company, Inc., 245 Park Avenue, New York, NY 10167. Pages xl, 481. Maps XII, Price \$22.50.

Since such a large proportion of personal names in the Western World are derived from the Bible, this comprehensive study of proper names and places in the Bible fills a long-felt need. Here on 403 pages every proper name and every place mentioned in the Old and New Testaments are listed in alphabetical order. The spelling is that of the Jerusalem Bible. Each of the more than 3,500 entries cites the scriptural references and number of times a name occurs in the Bible, provides a transcription of the name from the original language or one of the other ancient languages, defines it, and gives the etymological kinship with other names.

Adding to the practicality of this authoritative dictionary is an Appendix which gathers the most-used information from the Bible into one section for handy reference by the inclusion of lists of proper names, the Tribes of Israel, David's champions and military leaders, the sons of David, the genealogy of the high priests, the descendants of Levi, the lists of the twelve, New Testament Christians, and women of the Bible. It also contains extensive cross-references for ease in finding proper names mentioned. Twelve pages of full-color maps detailing every important aspect of biblical lands complete the final section.

There is also a general chronology of various periods of the Bible, and a chart of the Hasmonaean and Herodian dynasties, a list of words in ancient languages and English equivalents of biblical names, the successors of Antiochus the Great, and an overview of the major personalities of the Bible.

The authors, O. Odelain and R. Séguineau, are theologians with the prestigious *École Biblique de Jerusalem*, the home of the Jerusalem Bible. The work was first compiled in French and translated and adapted by Matthew J. O'Connell.

In first looking at a book on Christian names I have become in the habit of looking up the meaning of several common names, to test the scholarly accuracy of the meanings given. Here, the meaning of John is given as "Yah has shown favor," and Jonathan "Yah has given." All right. The meaning of Mary is given as "Seeress or Lady" and is followed by a question mark to indicate that the meaning is not certain. Numerous other writers have given all sorts of meanings and usually without any question as to authenticity. Other names, such as Solomon "The Peaceful," are pretty well in agreement with other writers. When no meaning is given the authors say it is because it is completely unknown or very uncertain. One can have great confidence with the meanings given in this dictionary.

In this most comprehensive study of the personal names and places in the Bible is a unique reference tool that will have to be in the library of every student of personal names as well as in the possession of every critical scholar of the Bible. It is a unique work, really a one-of-a-kind Bible dictionary.

Muslim Names. Compiled by Fatima Suzan Al-Jáfari. Indianapolis, IN:46231: American Trust Publications, 10900 W. Washington St. \$2.25, plus mailing.

This booklet on Muslim Arabic names begins with a brief introduction to transliteration from Arabic to English. After this appears a brief article by Ismáil R. Al Faruqi on proper-naming practices for Muslims. One point is that when names such as Yusuf, Yaqub, and Ishaq are changed to Joseph, Jacob, and Isaac, the Biblical personalities convey entirely different meanings to the Christian or Jew than they do to the Muslim.

The main contribution is the listing in English alphabetical order of about 550 names: 230 women's, 320 men's, with meaning and Arabic spelling for each entry. *Muslim Names* is easier to use than Qazi's *What's in a Muslim Name?* [Names, 24 (1976), 61]. The latter does not follow the English alphabet. It is hoped that a subsequent edition would include a phonetic index, an Arabic index, and perhaps more extended comments on the origin and meaning of names.

Edwin D. Lawson

State University College, Fredonia, NY

GALE RESEARCH PUBLICATIONS

This survey of recent publications by Gale Research Co., Book Tower, Detroit, Michigan 48226, serves as prominent notice of books of interest to readers of *Names*. Titles and bibliographical information appear below:

- Alkrie, Leland G., Jr., compl. and ed. *Periodical Title Abbreviations: By Title*, 3rd ed., Vol. 2. Detroit: Gale Research Co., 1981. Pp. xx + 698. \$90.
- Brewer, Annie M., ed. *Abbreviations, Acronyms, Ciphers & Signs*. Detroit: Gale Research Co., 1981. Pp. xiv + 323. \$48.
- Urdang, Laurence, and Charles Hoequist, Jr. *-OLOGIES and -ISMS: A Thematic Dictionary*, 2nd ed. (Howard G. Zettler, ed., 1st ed.). Detroit: Gale Research Co., 1981. Pp. xiv + 365. \$55.
- Wilstach, Frank J. *A Dictionary of Similes*, new ed., rev. and enl. Originally pub. in New York, 1924. Republished, Detroit: Gale Research Co., 1981. Pp. lvi + 578. \$33.

Writer's block can be as fatal as Herod's worms even though desire may be as fervent as Hesper in the brow of Eve and as fierce as Achilles was. A bit of plagiarism from Wilstach's *Dictionary* can be a kind of cure and furnish a well-worn cliché, which may be fresh as the foam, new-bathed in Paphian wells, to the unaware. The trouble with the cure is that 'twill not last; the writer's block is the old block yet. No doubt, we live by metaphorical concepts, although similes usually are accounted analogies, in which a part of one thing is "like" a part of another, not quite the one-to-one identification of metaphor. Wilstach brought together

“about 19,300 similes arranged under more than 4,600 subject headings.” The authors (“more than 1,400”) represented cover both American and English literature to 1920, with emphasis on “Victorian writers,” but the works of Shakespeare provided possibly a thousand. Foreign writers also are represented, such as Hugo (“Tears like pears”), Edmond and Jules de Goncourt (“A girl with teeth like the pieces of broken glass people put on their walls”), from Sanskrit (“The rattling of dice is as tantalizing to a penniless man as the sound of drums to a dethroned monarch”), or Tolstoy (“Fresh as a daisy”). Further, throughout the listing can be found similes containing names; these furnish raw material for a close study of this phenomenon, which seems to be basic in human perception, perhaps endemic. The fear that “general use of the dictionary might incite the intellectual lacunae to a slavish reliance” was met by Wilstach, who wrote, “Certainly it was not my purpose to provide a grabbag out of which stencilled intellects might snatch tinselled phrases, scented sentiments, and jewelled periods.” Well, it is a grabbag, rather good and dangerous, like several boxes of chocolate creams before a fat boy. Eat one, eat another, another. . . .

Laurence Urdang (Editor of *Verbatim*) and Charles Joequist, Jr., have added some 1,000 items to the first edition of *-OLOGIES*, edited by Howard G. Zettler. Many names are scattered throughout this useful text, all of them of eponymic quality, such as Leninism, Marxism, Menshevism, Buckuninism, Bolshevism, Stakhanovism, Stalinism, Titoism, Trotskyism, but not Reaganism yet. The heading, “NAMES,” is rather skimpy, same as in the 1st edition, with such entries as anthroponymy, antonomasia, caconymic, eponymism, filionymic, hypocorism, onomasticaon, and the like. These should be supplemented by the list compiled by George H. Scheetz, “An Onomastic Onomasticon,” *ANS Bulletin*, No. 65, October 28, 1981. Some rearranging of items has made the “dictionary” much more practical, such as the listing of all phobias in one section. Many suggestions could be made to improve the format so that the contents could be more easily used, but I will timidly advance only one: A partially reverse listing would be advantageous in finding particular suffixes. Still, with some patience and incidental learning along the way, the entry searched for can be found. Now that this collection has been published, I wonder how I got along without it. Surely, we can look for future editions and additions.

Volume 2 of *Periodical Title Abbreviations* complements Volume 1 in that it lists by title rather than abbreviation. They are otherwise the same. The third edition of this almost indispensable reference contains 35,000 titles, *Names* being one, with the abbreviation we never use, NA. *Names in South Carolina* is more sensible, NSC. Titles beginning with *Annual*, *Bulletin* and language variations, *Proceedings*, *Journal*, *Review*, and *Studies in* dominate the entries, so it is advisable to search among those for subject areas. Duplications occur as necessary; for instance, *Atlantic Monthly* has nine entries, one for each different abbreviation found in published material. The editor points out that when researchers or bibliographers note the many different abbreviations, they “might see the wisdom of employing one of the existing abbreviations, for that title rather than creating” another redundant form. A uniform system would be appreciated; but given the subjectivism and individuality of harried documenters, it is doubtful that such restrictions will be followed, much as the need is. The *American Standard for Periodical Title Abbreviations* does provide a sensible system, one that obviously is not followed and possibly not known or available to the writer who should use it. Alkrie discusses the problems of abbreviated citations and initials in other publications, but lists some of the major ones in excerpts located in the front matter of Volume 2. They are not minor in our world of AIDs DUAs, DDs, and DDTs. A text such as this one can help thread our way through the jungle of short forms.

Abbreviations is an attempt to bring together all reference book titles that are concerned with

“short forms of communication.” Brewer lists, through the reproduction of the main entry in the Library of Congress subject tracings, 900 titles that “include dictionaries of abbreviations, code and cipher books, specialized dictionaries of abbreviations, books on symbols in art and architecture, mathematical tomes, glossaries, and similar works.” The arrangement leaves a lot of blank space on the pages, some card rectangles merely that, with no information. The arrangement follows the Library of Congress classification (LC), which may be somewhat awkward for the non-initiated, but, again, some patience will be rewarded with researchers’ success. The key word index is an additional aid, although a spot check turned up errors in pagination and some misleading entries. The Alkrie text noted above appeared in the section “Z Bibliography and Library Science,” and was correctly indexed.

These texts point up symptomatic of the times, for the enthusiastic adoption of short forms in communication systems invites a theory that something hysterical is occurring in the drive to push communication further into sub-microscopic detail. Search for an explanation goes beyond my ability, but it needs to be done if only to map out some of our cultural patterns and behaviors. Gale Research contributes to an understanding by simply bringing together the mass of material now proliferating around and among us.

Kelsie B. Harder

The State University College at Potsdam, New York

* * *

. . . although I fully support and am personally committed to recent demands for greater rigor in our discipline, for higher standards, for more articulated theory, and for a satisfactory methodology, I would also just as strongly urge greater sensitivity, and more, well, more love, certainly at least more sympathy and more understanding, even more vulnerability, so that we will no longer be smugly content with dissecting the names we study and with exposing them to the cold glare of the arc-lamps of science and to the invasions of the microscope, but that sometimes we cup our hands around them to enjoy their beauty and their fragrance, or beat them with a stick to eliminate their serpentine hurt or venom. For names are that, too, aren’t they, promise, threat, caress and bruise, delight and dismay, healing and destruction.

Perhaps, for me, that is the most important reason why I study names in literature.

W. F. H. Nicolaisen, “Why Study Names in Literature,”

Literary Onomastic Studies IX (1982)