

COMPTEs RENDUS I REVIEWS

Demsky, Aaron, ed. *These Are The Names: Studies in Jewish Onomastics in honour of Prof. Edwin D. Lawson on his 80th birthday.* Volume 4. Ramat-Gan: Bar-Ilan University Press. 2003. 349 pages English and 125 pages Hebrew. Hard cover. ISBN 965226-267-6. \$32 (U.S.)

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This festschrift is dedicated to Professor Edwin D. Lawson on the occasion of his 80th birthday and in recognition of his contributions to international onomastics for over thirty years. Professor Lawson has been a visible presence at the biennial International Conferences on Jewish Names. The fifth conference (2001) was dedicated to him in honour of his 78th birthday. His papers on Jewish names have been recognized worldwide. His annotated bibliographies of Jewish personal names (over 900 entries) have proved to be invaluable to scholars in several disciplines. Indeed, a major portion of this festschrift is comprised of Lawson's "Some Jewish Personal Names - 2," which extends and expands his first paper that was published in volume two of this series. In 2004 he contributed the section on Jewish onomastics to the Jewish Language Research Website <<http://www.jewish-languages.org/onomastics.html>>.

Contributors include onomasticians from Canada, the United States, and Israel. Aaron Demsky, coordinator of the Project for the Study of Jewish Names at Bar-Ilan University, presents a succinct summation of the contents of this volume noting that of the seven English articles only two are concerned with toponymic topics. Of the four Hebrew articles, one examines marriage certificates and

gravestones of Salonikan Jews, another contemplates the esoteric meaning of Hebrew names, and two others are in literary onomastics. The latter two analyze Jewish poetry and literary devices in the Talmud. Both English and Hebrew articles contain abstracts in the other language.

Edwin D. Lawson began his academic career as a professor of psychology. After receiving tenure he began performing research in onomastics, which has not traditionally been perceived as a distinct and legitimate discipline within the Academy. Lawson legally changed his own surname in 1951. This act may have inspired him to examine society's attitudes toward personal names. Lawson subjected his early scrutiny of them to traditional psychological methodology, using the technique of semantic differential analysis.

Lawson's onomastic interests became more diversified over time as is apparent from his long and varied list of publications (pp. 27-40). A few minor omissions occur in this list. In the entry for his 1968 report on Fredonia schools, the subtitle, report number, publisher, and place of publication are missing, while publisher and series title are omitted from the entries for his bibliographies (1987, 1995) published by Greenwood Press.

The late Donald M. Lance provided the timeline of Lawson's life, career, and professional achievements. Edward Callary states that "Ed professionalized onomastics and the American Name Society ... increasing the visibility of name study and its reception in the academic community." By 1993, Ed Lawson was a visible presence within the entire world of international onomastics. Andr  Lapierre notes that Lawson organized and chaired the first session of onomastic journal editors at the XVIII International Congress of Onomastic Sciences (ICOS) in Trier, Germany. It has since become a regular, productive, and well-attended forum at all ICOS congresses.

It is unfortunate that an important festschrift such as this will very likely remain almost invisible to those outside of onomastics. According to WorldCat, the leading bibliographic database maintained collectively by more than 9,000 member institutions in

80 countries, this book appears to have been acquired thus far by just two participating libraries. Certainly, it deserves a place in the Lurline Coltharp Collection of Onomastics at the University of Texas at El Paso, which owns volumes one and two of this series.

Professor Lawson's boundless enthusiasm and energy are evident to all who come into contact with him. Through his mentoring activities, Lawson has inspired generations of budding and blooming onomasticians. The outstanding papers in *These Are the Names* pay homage to the pervasive influence of Edwin David (Asher/Cooper) Lawson upon and within contemporary onomastics.