suggesting that "Pandit Chaube's insanity not only is a personal tragedy, but is symbolic of the consequential nature of certain aspects of colonial scholarships that have either been looked over or not questioned" (xlvi). Yet neither Naithani nor the enchanted readers of this engrossing collection can regret Chaube's participation, or imagine that he himself was not committed to its production as a work of enduring relevance and value.

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KAMATH, M. V., and KALINDI RANDERI. *Indian Names: From Classical to Contemporary (For People, Places and Products)*. Mumbai: Arkansh, 2001; 2nd impr. 2002. x + 1023 pages. Indian Rs. 795.00, US $29.95, CAN $45.95. ISBN 81-88131-00-8.

This work is a first attempt to collate and order a Sanskrit onomastikon. The introduction informs us that the names have been culled from modern oral usage (friends, friends of friends, etc.) and from ancient and medieval literature. The quantity of names listed is overwhelming—over 38,000! For comparison: the Mahābhārata carries 641 names (MAZUMDAR 1988); for Hebrew 3188 names are listed (includes Biblical, early medieval, and modern names, 2229 of them male and 959 female, see EVEN-SHOSHAN 1970, vol. III, 1496–1508). The Introduction informs the reader how this enormous project was accomplished by the efforts of two authors only, through many years of hard work. The Introduction also gives concise information about the morphology of the names (thus a user can go on creating new names), the methods used for transcription of the Sanskrit devanāgarī script into Latin script and the pronunciation of the devanāgarī letters.

The work carries a main list of all 38,000 names, in Latin alphabetical order. The names are written in Latin transcription and in *devanāgarī* letters. Each name is accompanied by a short commentary in English as to its meanings (and these can be confusingly many!). The authors inform us in their introduction that the translation of names is based on the dictionary by MONIER-WILLIAMS (1872). Wherever applicable, a very short indication is added as to which figure in mythology and literature bore it. For prospective practical uses the same names are listed in a second list grouped according to themes: divine names and appellations; attributes; objects; actions; states; feelings, etc. Thus a person can easily find the kind of name he wishes. In this second list only the bare name is given in Latin transcription and *devanāgarī* letters; its meaning and further details have then to be looked up in the main list.

The social side of name giving is mentioned in tantalizing glimpses; the reader would like to know more. But this is a separate research project, the execution of which might take a long time. A chapter in the Introduction describes very briefly some rites, prayers and blessings used in ceremonies accompanying the early life cycle: conception, birth and name-giving (vii–x); the reader would like to be told more.

The immense work of collecting and annotating all these names has been done with a practical goal in mind: to help people choose names for their children or to name locations and products. The reviewed book comes to fill a socio-psychological need: the need of the modern,

uprooted urbanite to augment his feeling of belonging, of roots. The employment of a "national" name is one way to develop roots. For India, the Sanskrit language provides "national" names, which are valid not only for the Indo-Asian North, but also for the Dravidian South. The lively public interest in the work, which was quickly sold out, shows that it fills a real need. Seven Indian English-language newspapers and five Gujarati papers carried reviews of the book; all of them emphasize the public interest in it.

From here on research can start. Questions, such as, for instance, the proportion of names used either as unisex names or as names for a specific sex; proportion of names inspired by religious vs. secular concepts; proportion of classical vs. modern names; morphology of name-producing; etc. Such questions can be asked and now easily answered. Questions and problems of the sociological order have to wait for more data. For instance, how is it that India features so many names? Or, which names are used when, by whom, and why? The attitudes to names and their use will vary from one community, whether if be social, ethnic, religious, language, or otherwise, to the next. As in other fields of culture, here too it can be expected that all logical possibilities will be found in India, where other cultures feature only a limited number of possibilities.

The authors are busy preparing a similar list of names used in Buddhist literature (private communication); we are eagerly awaiting it.

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Kamath's and Randeri's work is an exhaustive, high quality reference book for Indian names, which can be consulted for various purposes. The names are given in simplified phonetic translation (without diacritics; vowels are duplicated to indicate length) and are accompanied by their *devanāgarī* original. The book is undoubtedly a considerable contribution to the Indian community; it can also be recommended to the student of Indian culture. It is noteworthy that most of the names listed in the book can be found in MONIER-WILLIAMS' dictionary (1872), in APTE's dictionary" (1997) and also partly in MANI's encyclopaedia (1979). These three reference works seem to have thus far served as the major sources for *Indian Names*. Most of the names are translated and explained in the reference books, or their meaning can be figured out without much effort. In many cases the said works mention the sources in which the name appears, and contain a list of these sources. In addition to names from literary sources, *Indian Names* lists also a small number of vernacular names. The use of existing and authoritative reference books by no means belittles the usefulness of *Indian Names*, as the majority of its potential readers are not expected to read Sanskrit or to use these dictionaries.

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LAMB, RAMDAS. *Rapt in the Name: The Ramnamis, Ramnam, and Untouchable Religion in Central India*. Albany: State University of New York Press, 2002, x + 237 pages. Paper US$21.95, ISBN 0-7914-5386-3; Hardcover US$57.50, ISBN 0-7914-5385-5.

The ex-Untouchables of India form about sixteen per cent of the Indian population. They are spread all over India. They are called by various names, such as "Harijans," "Exterior Castes," "Depressed Classes," "Outcastes," "Scheduled Castes," and "Dalits." They are not a homogeneous community and are divided into several sub-castes in the hierarchical caste system of the Brahmanic social order. So, among the Untouchables themselves there is superior and inferior ranking in terms of social status. Today, they are politically very active.

Lamb's study of the Ramnamis is concerned with the religious practices of the Untouchables of Chhattisgarh in Central India. Economically Chhattishgarh is one of the most backward states in India having nearly two-thirds of the Scheduled Castes and a large number of the tribals. This region of India was a part of the Kosala kingdom in the fourth century AD. Since that time it has been subsumed in various kingdoms. The Maratha conquest of Chhattisgarh around 1758 brought Brahmin priests to this area whose language and culture are different from the local population. The Maratha Brahmins began to Sanskritize the culture and people of this area. Their gods and their notions of purity-pollution were introduced among the people of this region.

The upper caste Hindus worship Ram as the incarnation (*avatar*) of Vishnu. The lower castes also have their own version of Ram devotion. The religious practice of the Harijans consists of reading and reciting the Ram story (*Ramkatha*) and the chanting of the name of Ram (Ramnam). It may look as if the Harijans have borrowed this worship pattern from the upper castes. But, Lamb suggests that the original Ram devotion is that of the non-Sanskritic (Harijan) people. It is the upper castes who have appropriated their Ram worship from the lower castes. This is not surprising because a few anthropologists have suggested that the Brahmins have appropriated many of indigenous cultures and Sanskritized them according to upper caste philosophy and ideology.

This suggestion of Lamb comes from the fact that the *Ramkatha* has been in existence as an oral tradition for the last twenty-five hundred years in South and Southeast Asia, influencing the religious, artistic, and literary history of cultures beyond the borders of India. Since the time of the earliest known elaboration of the Ram story attributed to the poet Valmiki, this epic tale has inspired over three hundred versions in at least twenty-five Asian languages. Its history and growth in many ways parallel the evolution and maturation of the