

**Book Notice: A New Book of Germanic, Jewish, Romance and Slavic Linguistic Interest**

**Gold, David L. 2009. *Studies in Etymology and Etiology (With Emphasis on Germanic, Jewish, Romance, and Slavic Languages)*. Selected and Edited, with a Foreword, by Félix Rodríguez González and Antonio Lillo Buades. Alicante. Publicaciones de la Universidad de Alicante. 870 pp..**

Dictionaries usually accord only brief treatment to etymologies and even etymological dictionaries often do not lavish on them the attention they deserve. To help fill the gap, the author deals in depth with certain words and expressions in various Germanic, Jewish, Romance, and Slavic languages, all of which have hitherto either been misetymologized or not etymologized at all (the three most detailed chapters — 14, 16, and 31 — are respectively 105, 131, and 135 pages long). Sometimes, he succeeds in cracking the nut; sometimes, he can propose only possible solutions; but always he clears away misunderstanding and sets the stage for further serious treatment.

Usually, the author marshals not only linguistic but also historical and cultural information, his approach thus being both linguistic and philological (as William Labov has said, “All linguistics is sociolinguistics”). He deals too with etiology, an often essential but not infrequently neglected component of etymological research. For example, dictionaries in all languages that include an expression translating literally as ‘Molotov cocktail’ not only misetymologize it but also either fail to etiologize it (*why* does it commemorate Vyatsheslav Mikhailovitsh Molotov?) or misetiologize it. Chapter 10 (42 pages), based in part on an examination of relevant Finnish military terms and other Finnish sources, presents, for the first time, the right etymology and the right etiology.

This book, which consists of thirty chapters in English and one in romanized Yiddish, **(a)** raises the level of the discussion in a discipline plagued by unprofessionals; **(b)** discusses methodology (notably in chapter 11 but also in most others) and thus has the makings of an introduction to the science, art, and craft of etymology; **(c)** can be used as a reader in courses in diachronic linguistics in general, in etymology in particular, in the history of several families of languages, and in the history of a good number of individual languages; **(d)** is profitable reading for the educated laity interested in the origin of words and expressions, especially if curious why certain etymological proposals are right or likely and others are wrong or unlikely; and **(e)**, because it contains chapters of varying degrees of difficulty, deals with diverse languages, tries to tackle different kinds of problems, and employs a variety of methods in that endeavor, appeals to a broad variety of readers.

The titles of the chapters are:

1. The Alleged Russian Origin of French *bistro* ~ *bistrot* ‘wine merchant; public house’ Versus Its Probable Ultimate Origin in Vulgar Latin or Gallo-Romance (On the

Persistence of a Folk Etymology and Folk Etiology Despite the Suggestion of Better Etymologies)

2. The Origin of Chicano Spanish *blanquillo* ‘testicle’ (On How Emulated Dyosemy Can Defeat the Purpose of a Euphemism)

3. The British English Origin of Informal Israeli Hebrew *braso*

4. American English Slang *copacetic* ‘fine, all right’ Has No Hebrew, Yiddish, or Other Jewish Connection

5. The American English Slangism *fink* Probably Has No Jewish Connection

6. Definite and Possible English Reflexes of Spanish *garbanzo* ‘chickpea’

7. Originally American English *glitz*, *glitz up*, and *glitzy* Probably Have No Yiddish Connection

8. Towards a Dossier on the Still Unclear Immediate Etymon(s?) of American English Slang *hooker* ‘whore’ (With Remarks on the Origin of American English *Barnegat*, *Dixie*, *fly* ~ *vlei* ~ *vley* ~ *vlaie* ~ *vly*, *Gramercy Park*, *Hell Gate*, *jazz*, *slougher*, and *Spuyten Duyvil*)

9. American English *jitney* ‘five-cent coin; sum of five cents’ Has No Apparent Jewish or Russian Connection and May Come from (Black?) Louisiana French *jetnée* (On the Increasing Difficulty of Harvesting All the Grain)

10. Etymology and Etiology in the Study of Eponymous Lexemes: The Case of English *Molotov cocktail* and Finnish *Molotovinkoktaili*

11. Nine Criteria for Assessing the Likelihood of Yiddish Influence on English (With Examples)

12. English *paparazzo* < Italian *paparazzo* = Commonization of the Label Name *Paparazzo* (in Federico Fellini’s *La Dolce Vita*) < ?

13. New York City English *parky* ‘park-keeper’ Is Probably a Spontaneous Coinage Rather than a Borrowing from British English

14. When Chauvinism Interferes in Etymological Research: A Few Observations on the Supposed Vulgar Latin Derivation of Rumanian *pastramă* ~ *păstramă*, a Noun of Immediate Turkish Origin (With Preliminary Remarks on Related Words in Albanian, Arabic, Armenian, English, French, Greek, Hebrew, Judezmo, Polish, Russian, SerboCroatian, Spanish, Turkish, Ukrainian, and Yiddish)

15. An Immediate or Non-Immediate Jewish Connection for Dutch *poeha* and Variants (> Afrikaans *bohaai* > South African English *bohaai*), French *brouhaha* (> English *brouhaha*), French *Brou*, *brou*, *ha*, *ha*, *Brou*, *ha*, *ha*, High German *buhai* and Variants, Low German *buhê* and Variants, or Modern West Frisian *bahey* and Variants Has Not Been Proven (With Remarks on the Jewish Italian or Liturgical Hebrew Origin of Arezzo Dialectal *barruccaba* and the Liturgical Hebrew Origin of Italian *badanai*)

16. Mexican Spanish *sarape* ~ *zarape* (Whence American English *sarape* ~ *serape* ~ *serapi* ~ *zarape* and French *sarapé* ~ *sérapé*), a Word Possibly from Tarascan /’c<sup>h</sup>arakwa/, Probably Has No Jewish or Iranian Connection

17. Is Slang American English *schnook* ~ *shnook* ‘pitifully meek person’ from Informal High German *Schnuck* ‘a kind of small sheep’, Northeastern Yiddish *shnuk* ‘[elephant’s] trunk; snout [of other animals]’, or Plattduetsch *Schnüick* ‘snail’?

18. Whence American English *scrod* and Grimsby English *scrob*?
19. Does American English *shack* ‘shanty’ Come From One or More Uto-Aztecan Languages of the American Plains?
20. The Etymology of English *spiel* and *spieler* and Scots English *bonspiel*
21. English *Star Chamber* Has No Jewish Connection
22. Who Can Decipher (Yiddish?) \*‘basstem’ and (Yiddish?) \*‘ghop bagi’?
23. The (Solely Southeastern?) Yiddish Cloth Name *taniklot* and the Rare American English Baking Term *poolish* ‘leaven, starter, starter dough’
24. An Instance of Convergence: Frisian *witte* and Yiddish *mideye*
25. A Few English Words Misattributed to Yiddish (*finagle*, *finical*, *finick*, *toco*, *trantle*, and *trantlum*); a Yiddish-Origin English Word Misetymologized for at Least Sixty-One Years (*bopkes*); a Misetymologized Yiddish Pen Name (*shmul niger*); and a Misetymologized Eastern Yiddish Word (*yavne-veyasne!*)
26. Etymological and Sociolinguistic Notes of Czech and Jewish or Possible Jewish Interest (On Czech *fizl*, *frajle*, *hajzl*, *Híra*, *ke’as*, *mecheche*, *mišuge* ~ *mišuke*, *Nabuchodonozor* ~ *Nabukadnezar*, *pajzl*, *pejzy*, *šmelina*, *šmelinář*, *šmok*; Yiddish *di alt-naye shul*, *peyem* ~ *peym*; Olomouc in Yiddish Lexemes; Franz Kafka’s Early Linguistic History; and the Investigation of Yiddish in Bohemia and Moravia)
27. On the Probable Kenaanic Origin of Two Eastern Yiddish Kin Terms, *zeyde* ‘grandfather’ and *bobe* ‘grandmother’
28. *Zinfandel*: An American English Grape and Wine Name of Immediate Hungarian, Moravian Czech, and/or Slovak Origin (On How the Origin of a Significans Need Not Be Parallel to the Origin of the Corresponding Significatum)
29. *Nokh a por dugmes fun der yidisher hashpoe af ivrit*
30. Some More Israeli Hebrew Items of German Origin
31. Jewish Dickensiana, Part One: Despite Popular Belief, the Name *Fagin* in Charles Dickens’s *Oliver Twist* Has No Jewish Connection (With Appendixes on Some Laws Concerning Personal Names and on Dickens’s Authentic Yiddish Name).