
This book is a major contribution to the linguistic field of onomastics, the politics of naming. The author, Valerie Alia, has collected her insights from the Inuit by conducting formal and informal research in Nunavut since 1970. Occasionally Alia writes in the first person and notes the parallels and similarities between traditional Inuit naming practices and Jewish naming practices, and the negative impacts that powerful outsiders have had upon both groups. She sees many similarities between Jewish names, which were forced upon her ancestors by the Germans, and the names forced upon the Inuit by the Canadian government. The Nazis and Canadians obviously had different reasons for changing the names of the Jews and Inuit, respectively. Nazi-assigned Jewish names branded Jews for the concentration camps, whereas in Canada, government-assigned Inuit names were used to register Inuit for government services because bureaucrats were unable to spell or pronounce authentic Inuit