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(Series in Language and Linguistics), Wilmington, Del.:
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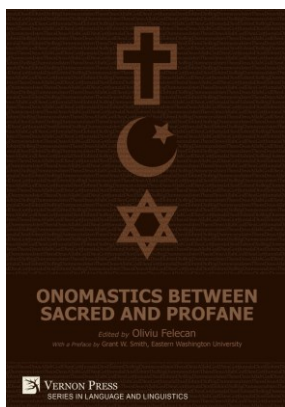
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Since earliest times, names and the act of naming, especially with regard to a new-born child, have been seen in connection with the sphere of the numinous, the sacred. Magical practices or religious rites around names and naming abound in many cultures while the name of the Highest Being is often surrounded by many taboos. Opposed to the sphere of the sacred is the sphere of the profane, or mundane. Considering the omnipresence of these phenomena, a book on this topic is very welcome, especially if it is written from a multicultural viewpoint. However, in spite of the contribution of 22 researchers, those from Europe and North America still dominate this work, with Africa represented by five contributors, and one researcher each dealing with East Asia and the Middle East. Thus, this is obviously a biased approach, but nevertheless a step in the right direction.

The book starts with the editor's "Foreword", containing summaries of all articles (chapters), a list of the contributors, and a "Preface" by Grant W. Smith. The contributions have been divided into five parts which are then subdivided into chapters alphabetically ordered according to the authors' names.

Part One deals with onomastic theory and theonyms in different religions and languages. – Islam is probably the religion that more than any other stresses the significance of the names for God. In chapter 1, Wafa Abu Hatab explains that though knowledge of the ninety-nine names of Allah is important for any Muslim in order to go to Paradise, theologians are of the opinion that God has not revealed all of his names and that the number of Allah's names is indefinite. The author also describes how ancient Islamic scholars already tackled theoretical onomastic questions concerned with the concepts of *name bearer* and *naming* and speculated on the etymology of the word *ism* (name). More recent scholars deal with the problem of *naming*, *reference*, and *referent* or discuss whether Allah's names are really *proper names* or rather *attributes*. Finally, the researcher provides a highly valuable

semantic classification of divine names and a table of the collocations of these names in the *Qur'aan*. – Davide Astori examines how the names of God and his adversary are treated in invented languages like *Esperanto* and *Volapük*. As most of these languages are based on Western Indo-European languages, the names for God and the Devil can easily be derived, whereas sign-languages reflect the axiological Up-Down opposition based on the anatomy of the human body. – “Names of Gods and Goddesses in Old Romanian Culture” is the title of Gheorghe Chivu’s contribution. The author argues that the scarcity of cited names of classical Greek and Roman divinities in old Romanian writings (16th to 18th centuries) must not be interpreted as a sign of their ignorance but must be attributed to the prohibition by church officials to mention these “heathen” names. – Based on relevant literature, Daiana Felecan in her “Theoretical Outlook on the Sacred and the Profane in First Names” introduces a differentiation between *sacredness per se* (the names of the Supreme Being) and a *sacredness surrogate* (reached by clerical or secular convention), whereas the *profane* stands in total opposition to both of these spheres which leads to the given name occupying an ambivalent position between the sacred and the profane. – Alexandru Gafton and Adina Chirilă in the chapter “The Name Giver” analyse from a Christian point of view the role of God (or man – *Adam* – in His behalf) as name giver and the consequences that ensue from the Biblical assumption that words not only represent reality but “are” that reality. Logically, as the differentiation between proper and common names is of more recent origin than the Biblical texts, both kinds of *nomina* are considered. – Artur Gałkowski in the chapter “Names of Sects: Between the Unusual and Manipulation” cites an astonishing number of sectonyms and analyses them in regard to their linguistic form and semantic content. – Shintoism is still very palpable in contemporary Japanese name-giving trends, as Leo Loveday demonstrates with popular girls’ names derived from plants, flowers, or the sun. Additionally, traces of ancient name taboos are detectable in present-day Japan, whereas the much practised custom of onomancy only appeared as late as in the 19th century. – Bertie Neethling examines in his religious-historically, etymologically, linguistically, and culturally orientated study of the names employed among the South African amaXhosa people and still used for their concept of a Supreme Being. – Ephraim Nissan interprets the most frequent names of God in the Hebrew *Bible* and points out the errors committed by Christian translations of them, explaining the substitutes for tabooed names and highlighting the transformation of the name of God in the Christian Kabbalah.

Part Two, dedicated to “Toponymy Between Sacred and Profane”, starts with Vladislav Alpatov’s chapter “Prayers in Place Names”. The author differentiates between “desiderative names” like *Bog v pomosch, Gotthilf,*

“Ereignisnamen” (eventonyms, like *Amen Corner*), names given in remembrance of property endowed to the Church, and finally names that refer to the “House of Prayer”. All these names have in common that they refer to spatial landmarks by means that cognitively are completely unrelated to space. – Nicolae Felecan analyses some Transylvanian toponyms which in communist times were changed either because their etymology was falsely interpreted as having negative religious connotations or because they referred to old professions which to the new regime did not appear acceptable any longer. In any case these changes relate to a cultural and historical impoverishment. For the uninformed reader, the authors of this and the following chapter might have explained that in Romania the linguistic term “Saxon” refers to the dialect of the German population in that country and has nothing to do with the historical or actual dialects of Lower or Upper Saxony in Germany. – Oliviu Felecan in his chapter “Transylvanian Oikonyms and Hodonyms: Between Sacred and Profane” explains how originally transparent oikonyms became opaque, though the majority of Transylvanian oikonyms with religious connotations are still transparent. As the vast majority of oikonyms is of profane origin, the researcher concentrates on two categories: names that, though originally harmless, later erroneously were interpreted as improper or obscene and subsequently changed under the communist regime, and names that were changed by the atheist regime because of their religious connotations. The same holds valid for street names with religious connotations, though with this onymic category a return to the former, religiously motivated names can be observed. – Frank Nuessel analyses “Ethnophaulic Toponyms in the United States”. He concentrates on toponyms containing derogatory designations for African, Native, and Asian Americans and explains the way in which they are changed or avoided in present-day America. – Roman Razumov and Sergey Goryaev deal with a similar topic as O. Felecan, namely the renaming of religiously connotated street names in a post-socialist society, in this case Russia. They explain that though the Church supports the renaming of “sacred” street names, residents often oppose the attempt for financial and other reasons, so that in Russia no mass emergence of “religious” urbanonyms took place. – The result of Joan Tort-Donada’s examination of twenty relevant toponyms of the Spanish Ebro River Basin – mainly hydronyms and oronyms – is that they are characterized by a clear prevalence of the profane over the sacred. The author believes that in all names that allude to water a “sacred” motivation can be implied, but he might have found it also in the name of the *La Maladeta* (‘the cursed’) mountain massif, as every curse implies the existence of the sacred. A linguistic slip is the author’s statement that Latin *portus* meaning ‘pass’ has “been borrowed from the Basque language” (p. 220) when he should have stated that it had been

borrowed by Basque speakers from Latin. – Valéria Tóth’s chapter consists of an extensive structural and semantic study of two settlement name types in Hungary: toponyms formed from a personal name, as a rule from the name of the founder of the settlement, and toponyms formed from a patron saint’s name, so-called patrociny names. Though both name types are the result of conscious name-giving – as opposed to natural, instinctive naming – considerable structural differences between these two name types can be found, as the author demonstrates with many examples.

“Anthroponymy Between Sacred and Profane” is dealt with in Part Three. Sambulo Ndlovu and Tendai Mangena report on the “Secularization of Sacred Anthroponyms in Modern Ndbele and Shona Communities”. In these Zimbabwe communities the first names of parents and grandparents, of in-laws, of kings and political rulers, of healers and diviners, and finally of dead persons were tabooed; moreover, even similar sounding words had to be avoided – a practice which modern (i.e. Western) life makes nearly impossible. – Idowu Odebode, on the other hand, examines forty theophoric names of the fundamentally polytheistic West-African Yorubas within the framework of Austin’s theory of speech acts. Odebode demonstrates that among the eight illocutionary acts under consideration he finds the acts of informing and asserting to be the most frequent. – Mariann Slíz and Tamás Farkas in their chapter “Connections of the Sacred and Profane in the History of Hungarian Given Names” offer a richly informative overview of personal name giving from pre-Christian times until today. They demonstrate how originally profane names could become sacred names and *vice versa*, detailing the profanation of name-days in present times and introducing the concept of “national sacredness”. – Solomon Waliaula and Tendai Mangena examine “Naming and Renaming as Sociocultural Signification” in two ethnic groups, the Bukusu of Western Kenya and the Shona of Zimbabwe, both members of the Bantu linguistic group. Among other interesting cases they demonstrate that because of the widespread African view that the world is cyclic, certain rites have to be performed at birth and death and that at the transition points of this cycle naming and renaming are very important.

Part Four is dedicated to Ergonymy. Angelika Bergien deals with “Sacred Aspects of Names in the Context of Place Branding”. The author adopts a broad view of the sacred, including branded commodities like cars, jeans, sunglasses – and places. One might say, her view of the sacred is an extremely secularized one. Taking the names of the most important representatives of the Reformation, A. Bergien shows that to use historical personalities for town branding is a dangerous method which is not always met with approval. – The influence of the *Kalevala*, the Finnish national epic, on Finnish commercial naming from the 19th century to the present is studied by Paula Sjöblom. Based on Finnish oral poetry, the epic was composed by E.

Lönnrot by the middle of the 19th century. Its mythical personalities have inspired commercial names ever since, but whereas in the 19th century these names symbolized the national spirit, nowadays firms that use such names exploit them to stress the Finnish origin of their products. – Mihaela Munteanu Siserman analyses names of natural pharmaceutical products with regard to their semantic content, their grammatical structure, their etymology, and their pragmalinguistic situation. Apart from phytonyms that have been considered as designating sacred plants since Antiquity, there are others which refer to Christian characters and objects.

Part Five is titled “Literature and Onomastic Wordplay between Sacred and Profane”. In the first chapter Alina Bugheșiu analyses the semantics involved in the names of tarot cards. From its invention in Renaissance Italy, tarot has developed from a mere card game to a means of divination. Therefore, the cards can be seen as mediators of sacredness. Consequently, the lexemes included in the names of the cards undergo considerable changes. – Ephraim Nissan in his chapter “Onomastic Wordplay in Roman-Age to Medieval Rabbinic Biblical Exegesis” points out the importance and function of onomastic wordplay in the Midrashic corpus. An appendix is dedicated to onomastic wordplay in Islamic-Arabic and Judaeo-Arabic texts. – Not the sacred, but the profane is in the centre of Anna Tsepkova’s study on S. Townsend’s *Adrian Mole* diary series. She sees the profane embodied in the eponymous comic character, whose given names – *Adrian Albert* – highlight his eccentricity through irony and whose surname, which can be explained etymologically in different ways, is a *talking*, cratylic name which point to Adrian Mole’s negative character traits.

This extensive and deeply informative survey of proper names and their relation to the sacred and the profane is followed by an *Index auctorum et operum* and an *Index nominum et rerum*. It is a collection which undeniably offers fresh and inspiring insights in the field of onomastics.