

Doctrine of the NAME Instead of Onto-Theology: On the Difficulties with the European Notion of “God”¹

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One unsolved problem within Chinese Christianity is the proper translation of the English term “God”, or “Deus” in Latin (cf. Eber 1999, 135-161). Among Protestant Christians, two alternative concepts exist: on one side, the generic noun *Shén* (“spiritual being”); on the other, *Shàngdì* (“Above Sovereign”), a name from the Shang Dynasty (1500-1050 BC) to whom the emperors offered sacrifices in an exclusive Temple of Heaven rite once a year. The inability to resolve this terminological conflict resulted in the Protestant standard edition of the Chinese Bible, the *Chinese Union Version* (CUV) of 1919, being printed in two different editions, the “*Shàngdì* edition” and the “*Shén* edition” (See Zetzsche 1999).

On the other hand, within the Roman Catholic church the title *Tianzhǔ* (“Lord of Heaven”)—a neologism introduced by the Jesuits in the 16th century—is used exclusively. It was Pope Clement XI with the *bull Ex illa* die of 1715, who, in the midst of the Chinese rites controversy, finally endorsed *Tianzhǔ* as the only Chinese God-term for the Roman Catholic church. The magisterium came to the conclusion that the Chinese world view, in its Confucian outlook, was genuinely atheistic and materialistic. Thus “God” was unknown to the Chinese and could not be invoked under the name *Shàngdì*.

“Name is sound and smoke”

Europeans as well as Americans find it difficult to assess the impact of different names on the unity of Christianity in China, since they generally consider the use of different names for “God” a rather marginal theological issue. In particular Germans are reminded of Goethe’s famous “Gretchen question” in his drama *Faust I*, where Faust finally answers Gretchen’s question, “Do you believe in God?”

Call it happiness! Heart! Love! God!

1 This text is the revision of my farewell lecture at Lutheran Theological Seminary in Hong Kong delivered in September 2008. I thank Annie Lau and Luke DeKoster for stylistic and textual amendments. For further elaboration see Teuffel 2009.

I have no name
 For it! Feeling is everything;
 (The) name is sound and smoke,
 Enshrouding heaven's glow.
Faust I, lines 3454-3458.

“Name is sound and smoke.” Such a statement denies the genuine meaning and importance of names. Of course, names do fade away, seemingly non-essential, arbitrary and therefore changeable, like adhesive labels on a package—removable and replaceable by newer names. Western theologians can talk about “names of God” with ease, for it does not affect their idea of “God” in the least. Within European (and American) culture, which is profoundly shaped by Greek metaphysics, a name does not contribute anything to the conception of a nameless being. This is the reason why the ancient philosopher Celsus, in his tract against Christians, *Alēthēs Logos* (“True Word”) could say: “It makes no difference whether you call the highest being Zeus, or Zen, or Adonai, or Sabaoth, or Ammoun like the Egyptians, or Pappaeus like the Scythians” (Quoted after Origen, *Against Celsus* V,41).

However, when it comes to non-European cultures, cultures not immersed in Greek metaphysics, there is hardly any way to differentiate between names and beings (or persons) or to abstract from concrete names. Different names equal different persons, which does not exclude the application of various names to the same name-bearer. However, whenever different names come into play, one is recognized as the proper name, with all other names qualified as epithets, cognomens or titles. In addition, most cultures may avoid using proper names in daily communication for moral or apotropaic reasons—e.g., the titular address of parents. Names are not simply replaceable by other names, with the exception of an official renaming by a superior (2 Kings 23:24; 24:17). When it comes to allegedly powerful gods, any renaming by humans is unthinkable. Only where gods have been convicted of being powerless can one tinker with their names.

“God” And “The God”

Though the so-called “Term question” is considered problematic in the Chinese language, the dilemma actually originates in the European concept of “God.” If we talk about “God,” we do not address by name the ONE² who introduced himself to Moses as the “*I will be what I will be*” (Ex 3:14) and revealed himself as “*the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ*.” (Rom 15:5; 2 Cor 1:3). The Hebrew terms *’el* and *’elōhīm*, as well as the Greek *theós*, are common nouns and hence cannot address the ONE, whose identity is rendered by the Tetragrammaton YHWH. In the

Bible the primary expression is “the Name of LORD”³ but not “the name of God.” It was largely due to the late ancient writing *Divine Names* (*De divinis nominibus*) of pseudo-Dionysius the Areopagite, where an essential namelessness (*anōnymia*) of “God” is maintained, that “the name(s) of God” became a common notion within the European context.

If one follows the biblical witness instead of Greek onto-ideology, such a “God” called by different names does not exist at all. Instead, “god” as a common noun should be connected to HIS proper name, which happens within the Bible three different ways: a) as a cognomen—“LORD god” (Gen 2-3); b) as an apposition—“LORD, the god of Israel” (Ex 5:1); or c) as a predicate noun—“LORD is the god” (for example 1 Kgs 18:39). The predicative reference deserves particular attention, as the subject and predicate are never reversed in the Bible—“God” is *not* YHWH (Cf. Rosin 1956, 34-54).

Once the relationship between the NAME and the common noun “god” has been clarified, one can explain what *’elōhīm* (or *ho theós*) denotes when used as a subject in the Old Testament. It is not a name of “God” among others but an antonomasia, a rhetorical figure of speech where a common noun stands for a proper name without replacing it (Lausberg 1998, 264-266). The cognomen *’elōhīm* stands for the NAME in this way—as does the cognomen “Christ,” which can function as an antonomasia for “Jesus.” Therefore we read in the Book of Exodus: “*And the God (’elōhīm/ho theós) said to Moses, «Thus you shall say to the Israelites, 'LORD (YHWH), the god of your ancestors, the god of Abraham, the god of Isaac, and the god of Jacob, has sent me to you': This is my name forever; and this my memorial for all generations.*” (3:15) The ONE who talks to Moses reveals himself by his proper name and not by the common noun “god.” Where the noun *theós* is substituted for the NAME as a subject in the Greek Bible, it generally requires the definite article *ho* (“the”).⁴ For example, at the beginning of the Decalogue: “*I am LORD (KYRIOS), the god of you (ho theós sou), who brought you out of the land of Egypt, out of the house of slavery; you shall have no other gods (theoi hēteroi) before me.*” (Ex 20:2f LXX) The definite article *ho* indicates that HE is a particular god who can be pointed at—not deity in general. Otherwise Moses would not have been so afraid to look at this god who introduced himself as, “*the god of your father, the god of Abraham, the god of Isaac, and the god of Jacob.*” (Ex 3:6)

How did it happen that those in the West—not only Englishmen but also Germans and other Germanic peoples—omit the definite article in their Bible translations without recognizing the semantic distortion? The answer is rather simple: The translations from the Greek Bible to vernacular Bibles in Europe were mediated by

2 Whenever nouns, adjectives, or personal and possessive pronouns are rendered in small capital letters within this article, they refer to the Tetragrammaton as the NAME. This practice was introduced by Martin Buber and Franz Rosenzweig in their German translation of the Hebrew writings of Scripture.

3 In the Greek Bible *kýrios* without the article generally refers to YHWH, whereas *ho kýrios* denotes Jesus Christ. Following this rule I render LORD without the article.

4 Cf. Philo of Alexandria, *On Dreams* I, 229 (Loeb 5, 418-419); Blass/ Debrunner 1961, § 254, p. 133.

the Latin Vulgate. Latin knows neither definite nor indefinite articles. Therefore *deus* can either refer to a particular god (“a/the god”) as the subject of a sentence, or it can be a predicate noun “god” denoting someone who has the properties of a deity and is thus considered divine. That *Deus* or “God” is commonly regarded as beyond the logic of genus is due to metaphysical God-thinking, as expressed by Thomas Aquinas: “The name ‘God’ signifies the divine nature, for this name was imposed to signify something existing above all things, the principle of all things and removed from all things” (*Summa Theologiae* I q 13 a 8 ad 2).

However, such “theo-physics”—unparalleled among non-European cultures—clashes with the biblical witness, where the ONE revealing himself to Israel is not to be conceived by human beings. When LORD predicates himself to be the only god (Isa 44:6-8; 45:21; 46:9), he refers to his own deeds and his own mightiness, which overpowers all other authorities and principalities. HE is not the only god by terminological definition but because of what he has done for Israel and the church. Therefore Christians are to confess with the Apostle Paul: “Even though there may be so-called gods in heaven or on earth—as in fact there are many gods and many lords—yet for us there is one god, the FATHER, from whom are all things and for whom we exist, and one lord, Jesus Christ, through whom are all things and through whom we exist.” (1 Cor 8:5f)

Christians are not to reason about “godhead” or the idea of “God” but to talk about the one and only GOD, the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ. For this reason the categorical distinction between “the GOD” and “god” is absolutely crucial. If we follow the Latin Bible we get into trouble, as one can see in the Gospel according to John: “*In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God.*” (1:1 NRSV) This sentence appears contradictory: how can someone be with someone else if he is the same being: the Word being with God and at the same time being God? The reason for such confusion is simply the omission of the definite article. If we follow the Greek original, the proper English translation is: “*In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with the GOD, and the Word was god.*” “The GOD” refers to YHWH, whereas in the second sentence “god” is used as an anarthrous (i.e., not paired with an article) predicate noun (Harner 1973). Consequently the Word is predicated to be divine, sharing the qualities of a divine being. Though the Word shares the same divinity of the GOD, he is not identical with HIM. The Word is god, but not the GOD.⁵ Hence the Chalcedonian “Definition” teaches that Jesus Christ is truly god and truly man (*Decrees* 1990, 1:86), with both anarthrous predicate nouns functioning as common nouns to denote the consubstantiality (but not the identity) of Jesus with the FATHER and with human beings.

God-thinking and the NAME

When it comes to identity within the doctrine of the trinity, we have to refer to names rather than to essence. The term “name” (Hebrew *shēm*, Greek *ónoma*) appears in Scripture about 700 times, yet Western theologians have barely touched on the importance of the NAME. Instead they teach about being, essence, existence, attributes and divine properties in extension, even though these terms are not found in Scripture. Immersed in Platonic ideology as well as Aristotelian metaphysics, Western teaching largely ignores the primacy of names. Their focus lies in thinking of “God” as the idea of an ultimate being. Since the intellect cannot grasp any proper name, theology as an intellectual endeavor has to refer to the common noun “god.” Different to proper names, a common noun can be defined by referring to its *genus* (the family to which the noun belongs) and its *differentiae* (the features distinguishing it from other members of the same family). According to Philipp Melanchthon, “God” is defined as “a spiritual being, intelligent, eternal, truthful, good, pure, just, merciful, and most free, of immeasurable power and wisdom.”⁶ The generic term (*genus*) in this definition is “spiritual being,” whereas the distinguishing features of the species “God” not shared by other members of the *genus* (e.g., angels) are “intelligent, eternal, truthful, good, pure, just, merciful, and most free, of immeasurable power and wisdom.” However, such a definition is only nominal (i.e., a definition of the meaning of a concept) as opposed to a real definition of the being itself, for the divine essence is commonly regarded as incomprehensible and ineffable, which equals negative theology. Under such circumstances, definitions of “God” only depict how human beings think of him without truly comprehending what he is.

The misery of all God-defining by human reason and language is that nothing is told about HIM in particular. LORD is not simply “God,” nor *a* god or even *the* god. The identifier *ho theós* of the LXX refers to *’ēlōhīm*, a common noun, which can also be applied to other “supernatural” beings (Gen 31:30.32), human beings (Ex 4:16; 7:1) or extraordinary phenomena (Job 1:16; 1 Sam 14:15). *’ēlōhīm* with the ambiguous meaning “gods” is definitely not the real name of HIM, not even a name of HIM, but (as we have said) an *antonomasia*, a common noun used on behalf of a proper name without replacing it.

Contrary to common nouns, which we can introduce and define, the NAME is not chosen by human beings in order to identify HIM according to their understanding. Instead, the NAME is a gift to HIS people which allows them to call on HIM and thus to communicate with HIM. When HE introduces himself as “*I am who I am*”, this self-introduction is by no means an definition of HIS being, as has been misunderstood by Christian philosophers following Philo of Alexandria’s exposition of the LXX translation *ego eimi ho ōn* (“I am the being”—Ex 3:15). Instead, the Hebrew wording *’ehyeh ’āšer ’ehyeh* is a tautology rejecting any human attempt at defining HIM: “I am who I am!” (Lundbom 1978, 193-201).

5 See also Origen, *Commentary on the Gospel of John* II,2.

6 *Loci praecipui theologici*, Loc. I, Melanchthon 1978, II/1: 200.

Common nouns applied to the NAME in a non-predicative way are only antonomasias, used on behalf of HIS name without replacing HIM. The most prominent ones in Hebrew Scripture are *'ēlōhîm*, as already mentioned, and *'ăḏōnāy*. *'ăḏōnāy*, literally meaning “My Lords,” refers to the exclusive Lordship of YHWH (Isa 45:5; Ex 20:3f)—*'ăḏōnāy* YHWH (as in Amos 7:1; 8:1). Because of the custom of avoiding the pronunciation of the NAME (Ex 20:7), particularly among the Alexandrine Jews, this title became a permanent substitute for the NAME; not in writing but in speaking and reading. The Masoretes placed the vowels of *'ăḏōnāy* (a-o-a) under the Tetragrammaton to remind the reader that he was not to voice out YHWH but was instead to read the word as *'ăḏōnāy*. Likewise, the translators of the Septuagint consistently avoided rendering the NAME and substituted for it the title *kýrios* (“Lord”), which matches the Jewish practice of reading *'ăḏōnāy* instead of YHWH.

Metaphysical Syncretism

When Hebrew Scripture became translated into other languages, it was not the NAME which was translated, but the two Hebrew antonomasias *'ēlōhîm* and *'ăḏōnāy*. The reason is quite obvious: names carry a unique story, and a person's name cannot be rendered by another proper name; otherwise two different stories are mixed up and create a multiple personality whose identity is no longer recognizable. The decisive example for all Bible translations was the Septuagint, where *'ăḏōnāy* was rendered as *kýrios* and *'ēlōhîm* as *ho theós*. This translation of *'ēlōhîm* as *ho theós* laid the foundation for a syncretism that has had a long-lasting effect in European culture. In contrast to other cultures where the common noun “god” had no particular story of its own, *ho theós* was already interwoven into a philosophical story called “metaphysics,” where it was determined to be the first principle (*archē*) of all beings as well as the “first unmoved mover” in a cosmological sense.⁷ When the ancient Greco-Roman culture embraced Scripture, the NAME became absorbed into the philosophical notion of “God” via the identifier *ho theós*, which was no longer recognized as an antonomasia. Consequently Philo of Alexandria in his *Life of Moses* let such a “god” speak the following words to Moses: “First tell them that I am He Who Is, that they may learn the difference between what is and what is not, and also the further lesson that no name at all can properly be used of me, to Whom existence belongs” (I,75, Loeb 6, 314-315). According to Philo, “God needs no name; yet though He needed it not, He nevertheless vouchsafed to give to humankind a name of Himself suited to them, so that men might be able to take refuge in prayers and supplications and not to be deprived of comforting hopes” (*On Abraham* 51, Loeb 6, 31). Under such circumstances the revelation of the NAME becomes a pedagogical vehicle serving the spiritual needs of human beings out of divine mercy. In line with

this, Philo maintains that proper names are generally unconnected with the divine being:

Thus in another place, when he had inquired whether He that is has any proper name, he came to know full well that He has no proper name, and that whatever name anyone may use of Him he will use by license of language; for it is not the nature of Him that is to be spoken of, but simply to be. Testimony to this is afforded also by the divine response made to Moses' question whether He has a name, even “I am He that is.” It was given in order that, since there are not in God things which man can comprehend, man may recognize His substance (*On Dreams* I,230-232, Loeb 5, 419-421).

It was this combination of Platonic ideology and Aristotelian ontology that eventually purged the primacy of the NAME from the Western church during the Middle Ages and gave way to an anonymous onto-theology. The enduring impact of Greek philosophy has meant that Western culture is still focused on this most general, and therefore timeless being, which is thought to be nameless. Or, as Thomas Aquinas contends: “The less determinate the names are, and the more universal and absolute they are, the more properly they are applied to God” (*Summa Theologiae* I q 13 a 11 c). However, the anonymity of Western onto-theology fundamentally contradicts the biblical witness of the NAME. Onto-theology is nothing less than the human attempt to escape from the life-encompassing demand of the NAME. As already stated, Scripture does not know any ontology that allows differentiation between names and beings. To be, or not to be, that is *not* the biblical question. A name does not refer to a nameless being who can be comprehended by thinking, but to the name-bearer, to whom we cannot refer apart from that name. Therefore it is the name which makes someone accessible to others.

The importance of the NAME is highlighted by the third commandment of the Decalogue, “*You shall not make wrongful use of the name of LORD your God, for LORD will not acquit anyone who misuses his name*” (Ex 20:7), as well as the first petition of the Lord's Prayer, “*Hallowed be your name*.” (Mt 6:9) When it comes to the NAME, the question is not whether or how human beings can name an ineffable divine being, but how to deal with the NAME as a gift inseparable from its giver. Therefore the question of the divine NAME is not epistemological, but ethical: How can one be faithful to this NAME? As the prophet tells us: “*For all the peoples walk, each in the name of its god, but we will walk in the name of LORD our god forever and ever*.” (Mic 4:5)

The primacy of the NAME

In order to be faithful to Scripture we have to bear in mind the categorical difference between proper names and common nouns. Once we start our talk with “God” we are already lost in our own God-thinking. Anonymous God-thinking is the intellectual re-enactment of the Fall under the false promise of becoming like God(s), knowing good and evil (Gen 3:5). What bears promise towards the future are neither

7 The master text for such philosophical God-thinking is Aristotle's *Metaphysics* XII,7 (1072b 7-30).

general concepts or ideas nor generalized occurrences but proper names which convey particular stories. Whereas metaphysics and sciences are based on common nouns, the sacred history (*historia sacra*)—like all stories—depends on proper names. Without names—supplemented by personal, possessive and demonstrative pronouns—events and incidents can neither be remembered nor narrated. Words and deeds not attributed to particular names are irretrievably lost in the anonymous past. If a name has fallen into oblivion, the deeds of the bearer of that name are likewise forgotten. Hence it is the proper name to be remembered, the proper name which comprises a unique life with all its experiences and actions and makes it addressable. The name epitomizes a whole life: whenever the name is addressed, the life of the name-bearer is present as well.

Though the concept of “God” serves as an invitation, at least for Americans and Europeans, to become lost in life-abstractions by their own reasoning or imaginative leading, the NAME does not allow such intellectual high-handedness. Instead the disclosure of the NAME is a gift which establishes an ethical (not a cognitive) relationship. In order to get to know the name of LORD, one has to be drawn into HIS life. Under such circumstances “*the salvation of our God*” (Isa 52:10) receives a new sound. Within the Western church salvation has traditionally been understood in a twofold way: either as an intellectual apprehension of “God,” a non-sensory vision of God (e.g. Thomas Aquinas, *Summa Theologiae* I-II, q 3 a 4) or, in a more concrete way, as the apprehension of a divine gift, “grace” (based on a sacrificial transaction), which can be appropriated and thus become real in one’s own life. However, both ways ignore the NAME, making salvation anonymous. For a Biblical understanding of salvation, everything depends on the relationship with the NAME. As St. Peter told the rulers, elders, and scribes assembled in Jerusalem:

Let it be known to all of you, and to all the people of Israel, that this man is standing before you in good health by the name of Jesus Christ of Nazareth, whom you crucified, whom the God raised from the dead. This Jesus is 'the stone that was rejected by you, the builders; it has become the cornerstone.' There is salvation in no one else, for there is no other name under heaven given among mortals by which we must be saved. (Acts 4:10-12)

It is the name of Jesus Christ that stands for HIS covenantal faithfulness. Salvation, therefore, is neither a divine gift of grace to be appropriated, nor an intellectual apprehension of “God”, but a NAME-related life in Jesus Christ which is sacramentally consummated through baptism and the Lord’s Supper. The salvific event which is decisive for our entire lives is somehow included in the NAME. It is not a divine being but the NAME voiced who evokes faith and trust. One cannot really trust a ‘being,’ even if it is thought to be divine. Therefore it is a misunderstanding to talk about faith in “God.” “God” is a common noun whose semantic extension can be conceived in a rational way; similar to comprehending “man” or “human being.” What makes someone a human being can be understood. What is significant in terms of trust and faith is not essence or being but the particular story of a life full of virtue. Faith and trust arise from virtuous words and deeds which are condensed in a proper name, not in common nouns.

What we can think or imagine of “God” is a timeless, universal being with general properties or attributes, devoid of any particular time-related occurrences. Such a name- and deedless divine being bears no promise and therefore remains a hopeless idea—a metaphysical monster born out of our own thoughts, in whom no one can really believe. Christian faith means nothing less than entrusting our own lives to the one particular GOD, whose name is encompassed by the Paschal mystery of his Son Jesus Christ.

Whoever thinks of “God” is already lost. Thoughts are, per se, anergic—without energy. Consequently salvation is confined to one’s own thinking, leaving out the corporeal dimension. The intellectual alliance with divine anonymity is nothing else than a hopeless ideology which in the very end affirms our own death, and human death cannot be overcome by God-thinking. Martin Heidegger has taken this into account: “Only a god can save us. The only possibility available to us is that by thinking and poetizing we prepare a readiness for the appearance of a god, or for the absence of a god in [our] decline, insofar as in view of the absent god we are in a state of decline. [...] We cannot bring him forth by our thinking. At best we can awaken a readiness to wait [for him]” (Sheehan 1981, 45-67, 57).

Doctrine of the NAME Instead Of Onto-Theology

Intellectual God-thinking is so stultifying that, even if it merely follows faith in the particular revelation of Christ, the NAME-relatedness of this revelatory Christ-event will be neutralized. Whatever can be comprehended intellectually needs no affiliation to the NAME. A divine-being-thought cannot be worshipped or adored, nor does it allow any liturgical remembrance. Academic theology itself has a problem, even when it tries to defuse its ideological surplus by preceding it with adjectives like “biblical” or “narrative.” That the sacred doctrine was renamed “theology” in the 13th century by Scholasticism is largely due to the *Metaphysics* of Aristotle. He identified theology with the primary philosophy, whose province is “to study Being qua Being; what it is, and what the attributes are which belong to it qua Being.”⁸ Therefore theology itself is tempted to devalue names in favor of an onto-ideology.

Ideological God-thinking ignores the fact that a God-concept, thought to be universal, is in fact dependent upon culturally conditioned environmental factors and therefore not truly universal. For the Jesuit missionaries in China during the 17th and 18th centuries, it was difficult to recognize the absence of ontological thinking within Chinese culture (Cf. Gernet 1985). Outside European culture, the metaphysical trinity (origin-centered cosmology, abstract ontology and epistemic ideology) does not exist. In addition there are no categorical differentiations between moral teaching (ethics) and the doctrine of nature (physics). Therefore it is not the particularity of Hebrew thinking versus the alleged Hellenization of Christianity in ancient times

8 Aristotle, *Metaphysics* VI,1. In addition *Metaphysics* I,2, VI,1, and XI,7.

that must be acknowledged (cf. Boman 1960), but the cultural bias of contemporary western theology. Without the onto-theological hierarchy of being, people in non-European cultures experience themselves within an energetic field also inhabited by anonymous powers and name-bearing spirits or gods. Naming such a worldview requires rather problematic terms like animism or dynamism that lead to evolutionist connotations.

Names to be invoked can be listed as in a telephone directory: Ahura Mazda, Anthony of Padua, Elvis Presley, Guan Yin, Lijaba, Ma-zu, Olodumare, Shiva, YHWH, Zeus ... (cf. Paper 2005). Physiological differentiations and categorizations have no relevance. The indifference of such a plurality of names, then, can be overcome only when a single name with its particular history (or story) has been recognized and invoked. That the name "Jesus" is above all other human names (Phil 2:9) is owed neither to any ritual apotheosis nor to human capacity of thought, but to HIS mighty deeds, which encompass heaven and earth, the beginning and the end: "«I am the Alpha and the Omega,» says LORD God, who is and who was and who is to come, the Almighty." (Rev 1:8, cp. 21:6; 22:13) The one who obeys the NAME is not allowed to depend on other names. According to Scripture canonically read, one can speak of the monarchy of LORD, which requires human monolatry, but not of theoretical or practical monotheism.

Christian doctrine, which appears to be a transcultural doctrine of salvation for the gentiles, is the doctrine of the NAME and not the doctrine of "God"—ONOMATOlogy instead of onto-theology. Such ONOMATOlogy teaches, in accordance with the Holy Scriptures canonically read in the Church, a) which words and deeds are comprised by the NAME, b) how the Son and the Holy Spirit are essentially related to the NAME (the doctrine of trinity) and c) how creation, and in particular human beings, are incorporated into the *oikonomia* of the NAME in a salvific way (the economy of salvation). The genuine place of such non-theistic ONOMATOlogy is the Church, the community of those who are committed to the NAME with their bodies, souls and lives through Jesus Christ. ONOMATOlogy provokes the proclamation of the Gospel of Jesus Christ, which aims at conversion and faith, as well the liturgical adoration of the NAME:

Great and amazing are your deeds, LORD God the Almighty! Just and true are your ways, King of the nations! LORD, who will not fear and glorify your name? For you alone are holy. All nations will come and worship before you, for your judgments have been revealed. (Rev 15:3f)

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