

**A DIM APTITUDE:  
THE ANCIENT CHURCH FATHERS  
AND THE GREEK GRAMMAR**

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**I. The Category of the Church Fathers  
as a Weberian Ideal Type**

The Ancient Church in the Roman Empire flourished with the intellectual life and brought forth thinkers who were due to the relevance of their literary legacy styled the Church Fathers. However, in theological terms the vast heritage of the Church Fathers appears not only diverse but also incoherent. A development of the patristic thought was a process but not always a progress because it happened that the theologians of the later period misinterpreted elements of the doctrine which the theologians of the earlier period comprehended. Besides, there is no formal list of the Church Fathers ratified by any church authority. Thus, the category of the Church Fathers functions

as a Weberian ideal type<sup>1</sup> for it enables us to research multifarious utterances of the Ancient Church literati as a meaningful, abstract concept unifying diffuse and distant phenomena.

In the present study the Church Fathers' aptitude for the Greek grammar is analysed on the basis of explicit, grammatical comments dispersed in their works which have survived in writing. Since the paper is focused on the grammatical aptitude, the hermeneutical differences between the Alexandrian and Antiochian schools were put aside. Similarly, the division into Latin and Greek Church Fathers was suspended because the vast majority of them was able to communicate both in Greek and Latin. The fact that a theologian decided to write in Greek and therefore was recognised as the one of Greek Fathers, does not indicate that he had any theoretical knowledge of the Greek grammar. On the contrary, Tertullian, Ambrose, Augustine and Jerome, classified as Latin Fathers, made comments about the Greek grammar.

The Greek competence of the early Christian thinkers called the Apostolic Fathers was high because they were well-versed in the classical literature to which they appealed for apologetic reasons, advocating the concept of λόγος σπερματικός. Except Origen and Jerome, not many Church Fathers knew Hebrew. Therefore, the Septuagint was considered semi-inspired which ultimately led the Eastern Church to the conclusion that Greek suffices in the theological profession. Since the fall of Rome the Western Church had been gradually losing its ability to communicate in Greek so that in the 6th

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<sup>1</sup> Max Weber, "Die »Objektivität« sozialwissenschaftlicher und sozialpolitischer Erkenntnis," in *Gesammelte Aufsätze zur Wissenschaftslehre*, ed. Johannes Winckelmann (Tübingen: J. C. B. Mohr, 1985), 146-214.

century Gregory I, the Bishop of Rome, could confess his absolute ignorance of that language.<sup>2</sup>

## II. Native versus Non-Native

It cannot be presumed that native Greek speakers had an advantage over the non-native speakers as far as the grammatical aptitude (defined as the theoretical knowledge of the grammar) is concerned. On the one hand, native speakers usually do not struggle with lexical questions. On the other hand, they easily lose sight of phenomena, that puzzle non-native speakers, and they are prone to come to terms with everything found in their native language.

In fact, even this statement is an oversimplification because Origen, though he was a native Greek speaker, was lexically challenged by the adjective ἐπιούσιος occurring in the Lord's Prayer.<sup>3</sup> Similarly, Chrysostom, a native Greek speaker, could not grammatically determine whether the conditional clause from Mt 26:39 (εἰ δυνῆτόν ἐστιν, παρελθάτω ἀπ' ἐμοῦ τὸ ποτήριον τοῦτο) expresses a real (δυνατόν) or unreal (ἀδύνατον) condition,<sup>4</sup> though

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<sup>2</sup> Gregorius I, "Epistola ad Narsem Patricium," in *Patrologiae cursus completus: Series Latina*, ed. J.-P. Migne, vol. 77 (Paris: J.-P. Migne, 1896), 707-708 [IV, XXXII]; Idem, "Epistola ad Anastasium Presbyterum," in *Patrologiae cursus completus: Series Latina*, ed. J.-P. Migne, vol. 77 (Paris: J.-P. Migne, 1896), 889-90 [VII, XXXII].

<sup>3</sup> Origenes, "Libellus de Oratione," in *Patrologiae cursus completus: Series Graeca*, ed. J.-P. Migne, vol. 12 (Paris: J.-P. Migne, 1857), 505-22 [§ 27].

<sup>4</sup> Joannes Chrysostomus, "In illud, Pater si possibile est, transeat a me calix iste," in *Patrologiae cursus completus: Series Graeca*, ed. J.-P. Migne, vol. 51 (Paris: J.-P. Migne, 1862), 31-32 [α (Mt 26:39)].

it is evident to us that the condition is real.<sup>5</sup> In contradistinction to Dionysius Trax,<sup>6</sup> Chrysostom called εἰ the particle of doubt (ἡ προσθήκη τοῦ ἀμφιβάλλοντός) instead of the hypothetical conjunction (σύνδεσμος συναπτικός).

### III. The Institution of Textbook

The Greco-Roman antiquity gave birth to many grammatical works<sup>7</sup> which were, however, not meant for non-native speakers.<sup>8</sup> At that time a language acquisition relied on a personal intercourse because the knowledge was passed from parents to children and from a tutor to a tutee. The Ancients were concentrated on the aural dimension of the language and were not familiar with reading a text quietly. Therefore, they had a lot of interest in phonetics even though in the antiquity the Greek pronunciation varied according to a region.

Since the vast majority of Greek speakers immersed in this language quite naturally, the Ancient instruction in the Greek grammar was oriented not at the exposition of Greek as a second language but

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<sup>5</sup> To my knowledge, Ancient and Byzantine grammarians were unaware of a connection between the grammatical features (the conjunction, the tense and the mood in the protasis and in the apodosis) and the type of the conditional. As Apuleius treated of conditional sentences, he approached them in purely logical terms. Apuleius Madaurensis, "De dogmate Platonis," in *Opera omnia*, ed. Franciscus van Oudendorp, vol. 2 (Leiden: Luchtmans, 1823), 264-81 [III].

<sup>6</sup> Dionysius Thrax, "Ars grammatica," in *Bibliotheca Graeca*, ed. Johann Albert Fabricius, vol. 7 (Hamburg: Felginer, 1727), 34 [§ 25].

<sup>7</sup> Johann Albert Fabricius, ed., *Bibliotheca Graeca*, vol. 7 (Hamburg: Felginer, 1727), 34-75 [V, VII].

<sup>8</sup> Paul Botley, *Learning Greek in Western Europe (1396-1529): Grammars, Lexica, and Classroom Texts* (Philadelphia: American Philosophical Society, 2010), 3-6 [1, 1].

rather at the aesthetic experience thereof. Generally, native speakers live their own language to the fullest instead of deliberating on it. For that reason, Greek grammarians of the antiquity were preoccupied with the accentuation to the detriment of other important topics. Moreover, in the antiquity the boundary line between philosophy, philology, rhetoric and logic was vague by today's standards.

In the twilight of the Roman Empire the Latin grammars by Donatus<sup>9</sup> and Priscian,<sup>10</sup> which resemble contemporary textbooks, came out. Undoubtedly, without an instruction in Latin intelligible to non-native speakers the Latin culture would not live through the fall of the Western Empire symbolised by the Sack Rome (410 AD). The study of the Greek grammar can be tracked down to Dionysius Trax<sup>11</sup> whose masterpiece showed signs of the grammatical presentation in the modern sense of the term. Besides, Diogenes Laertius recapitulated the Stoic theory of language which included the rudiments of the Greek grammar<sup>12</sup> and in Philo's writings there are grammatical statements.<sup>13</sup> Since the 9th century the Byzantine scholars had been inventing a special system (of punctuation, accentuation and orthography) to facilitate the Greek instruction.

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<sup>9</sup> Donatus, "De arte grammatica libri," in *Grammatici Latini*, ed. Heinrich Keil, vol. 4 (Leipzig: Teubner, 1864).

<sup>10</sup> Priscianus Caesariensis, "Institutionum grammaticarum libri," in *Grammatici Latini*, ed. Heinrich Keil, vol. 2-3 (Leipzig: Teubner, 1855-1859).

<sup>11</sup> Dionysius Thrax, "Ars grammatica," 26-34.

<sup>12</sup> Diogenes Laertius, "Zeno," in *De clarorum philosophorum vitis, dogmatibus et apophthegmatibus*, ed. Anton Westermann and Carel Gabriel Cobet (Paris: Firmin-Didot, 1862), 159-93 [VII, 1].

<sup>13</sup> Philo Alexandrinus, "De agricultura," in *Opera omnia*, vol. 2 (Leipzig: Schwickert, 1828), 132-33 [§ 31]. Idem, "De congressu quaerendae eruditionis gratia," in *Opera omnia*, vol. 3 (Leipzig: Schwickert, 1828), 100-101 [§ 26]. Idem, "De Abrahamo," in *Opera omnia*, vol. 4 (Leipzig: Schwickert, 1828), 24-25 [§ 20].

Additionally, the elements of the Greek grammar are found in the Latin compendia by Martianus Capella,<sup>14</sup> Isidore of Seville<sup>15</sup> and Pseudo-Augustine<sup>16</sup> as well as in Macrobius' excerpts.<sup>17</sup> In Medieval Europe Roger Bacon prepared a course in Greek<sup>18</sup> which originated from the Byzantine standard namely from the mature system of the Greek grammar hammered out by the Byzantine scholars.

Modern textbooks of Greek emerged along with the Byzantine literati who after the fall of Constantinople (1453) escaped to Europe (primarily to Italy). In the 15th century the grammars by Chrysoloras(1484),<sup>19</sup> Lascaris(1495)<sup>20</sup> and Theodorus Gazes(1495)<sup>21</sup> were released in bilingual editions and Greek-Latin dictionaries<sup>22</sup>

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<sup>14</sup> Martianus Capella, *De nuptiis Philologiae et Mercurii et de septem artibus liberalibus libri novem*, ed. Ulrich Friedrich Kopp (Frankfurt am Main: Varrentrapp, 1836), 253-324 [III].

<sup>15</sup> Isidorus Hispalensis, "Etymologiarum libri XX," in *Patrologiae cursus completus: Series Latina*, ed. J.-P. Migne, vol. 82 (Paris: J.-P. Migne, 1878), 73-124 [I].

<sup>16</sup> Augustinus Hipponensis, "De grammatica liber," in *Patrologiae cursus completus: Series Latina*, ed. J.-P. Migne, vol. 32 (Paris: J.-P. Migne, 1841), 1385-408.

<sup>17</sup> Macrobius, "De differentiis et societatibus Graeci Latini que verbi," in *Grammatici Latini*, ed. Heinrich Keil, vol. 5 (Leipzig: Teubner, 1868), 599-655.

<sup>18</sup> Roger Bacon, *The Greek Grammar of Roger Bacon and a Fragment of his Hebrew Grammar*, ed. Edmond Nolan and S. A. Hirsch (Cambridge: University Press, 1902); Idem, "Compendium philosophiae," in *Opera quaedam hactenus inedita*, ed. J. S. Brewer (London: Longman, 1859), 432-519 [VI-XII].

<sup>19</sup> Emanuel Chrysoloras, *Quaestiones grammaticae* (Paris: Wechelus, 1539).

<sup>20</sup> Constantinus Lascaris, *Grammatices graecae epitome* (Venice: [sine nomine], 1495). Cf. Urbano Bolzanio, *Institutiones graecae grammatices* (Paris: Gilles de Gourmont, [1510]).

<sup>21</sup> Theodorus Gazes, *Introductio grammatica*, vol. 1-4, trans. Erasmus Roterodamus (Basel: Ex officina Valderiana, 1541).

<sup>22</sup> Johannes Crastonus, ed., *Dictionarium graecum copiosissimum secundum ordinem alphabeti cum interpretatione latina* (Venice: In aedibus Aldi Manutii, 1497); Valentinus Curio, ed., *Dictionarium graecum* (Basel: Cratander, 1519).

were initiated. This laid the foundations for the Reformation manuals of Greek fashioned by Philipp Melanchthon(1518)<sup>23</sup> and by Johannes Oecolampadius(1520).<sup>24</sup>

#### IV. A Lexical Challenge

The Church Fathers were challenged by ἐπιούσιος from the Lord's Prayer. It seems that this adjective was intelligible to the readers of the New Testament period for lack of any textual variants. However, Origen, a native Greek speaker, claimed that this word was alien to the Greek literature and must be a sort of neologism invented by the New Testament authors to render an unidentified Hebrew notion.<sup>25</sup> Origen noticed the morphological similarity between ἐπι-ούσιος and περι-ούσιος (used by the Septuagint in Ex 19:5) for both adjectives are composed of various prepositions (ἐπι and περι) and the same stem οὔσια. This comparison was later drawn by Ambrose,<sup>26</sup> Jerome<sup>27</sup> and

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<sup>23</sup> Philipp Melanchthon, "Grammatica graeca integra," in *Opera quae supersunt omnia (Corpus reformatorum)*, ed. Karl Gottlieb Bretschneider and Heinrich Ernst Bindseil, vol. 20 (Braunschweig: Schwetschke, 1854), 3-180.

<sup>24</sup> Johannes Oecolampadius, *Graecae literaturae dragmata* (Basel: Cratander, 1546).

<sup>25</sup> Origenes, "Libellus de Oratione," in *Patrologiae cursus completus: Series Graeca*, ed. J.-P. Migne, vol. 12 (Paris: J.-P. Migne, 1857), 505-22 [§ 27].

<sup>26</sup> Ambrosius, "De fide," in *Patrologiae cursus completus: Series Latina*, ed. J.-P. Migne, vol. 16 (Paris: J.-P. Migne, 1880), 638-40 [III, XV].

<sup>27</sup> Hieronymus Stridonensis, "Commentarius in Evangelium Matthaei," in *Patrologiae cursus completus: Series Latina*, ed. J.-P. Migne, vol. 26 (Paris: J.-P. Migne, 1845), 43-44 [Mt 6:11-13].

Basil of Caesarea.<sup>28</sup> Furthermore, Origen linked ἐπι-ούσιος to the compound verb ἔπ-ειμι which appears legitimate.<sup>29</sup>

Origen and other Church Fathers were less accurate exploring the sense of ἐπιούσιος. The Alexandrian theologian asserted that the meaning of a compound adjective is equal to the meaning of its parts so that ἐπι-ούσιος denotes what contributes to the being (εἰς τὴν οὐσίαν συμβαλλόμενον) and περι-ούσιος what is related to the being (περὶ τὴν οὐσίαν καταγινόμενον). Such an approach is unwarranted because the meaning of a compound word is seldom the sum of its parts. Moreover, the preposition ἐπι can govern three cases and has more than one meaning. On the contrary, the Ancients tended to overlook the complex nature of this issue. For Augustine ἐπι means "over, above" and σκοπός denotes a "watcher" so that ἐπί-σκοπος must mean an overseer and ἐπι-σκοπέω - to oversee.<sup>30</sup>

Since the Church Fathers (cf. Origen, Cyril of Jerusalem,<sup>31</sup> Jerome and John of Damascus<sup>32</sup>) were indebted to the Platonism and Neoplatonism, they insisted that in the Lord's Prayer ἄρτος ἐπιούσιος must denote the spiritual, heavenly bread (cf. Jn 6:51) namely Christ's body present in the Lord's Supper. In their opinion no one

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<sup>28</sup> Basilus Caesariensis, "Epistola CCCLXI (Apolinario)," in *Patrologiae cursus completus: Series Graeca*, ed. J.-P. Migne, vol. 32 (Paris: J.-P. Migne, 1857), 1099-102.

<sup>29</sup> Adolf Kaegi, ed., *Benseler Griechisch-deutsches Schulwörterbuch* (München and Leipzig: Wissenschaftliche Buchgesellschaft, 2004), 291 [s.v. ἐπιούσα]; Wilhelm Pape, ed., *Handwörterbuch der griechischen Sprache*, vol. 1 (Braunschweig: Vieweg, 1866), 860 [s.v. ἐπιούσα].

<sup>30</sup> Augustinus Hipponensis, "De civitate Dei," in *Patrologiae cursus completus: Series Latina*, ed. J.-P. Migne, vol. 41 (Paris: J.-P. Migne, 1845), 647-48 [XIX, XIX].

<sup>31</sup> Cyrilius Hierosolymitanus, "Catechesis XXIII (Mystagogica V)," in *Patrologiae cursus completus: Series Graeca*, ed. J.-P. Migne, vol. 33 (Paris: J.-P. Migne, [sine anno]), 1119-20 [XV].

<sup>32</sup> Joannes Damascenus, "De fide orthodoxa," in *Patrologiae cursus completus: Series Graeca*, ed. J.-P. Migne, vol. 94 (Paris: J.-P. Migne, 1864), 1151-52 [IV, XIII].



would dare ask God for an earthly, common bread which is finally excreted (εις ἀφεδρῶνα ἐκβάλλεται). Consequently, ἄρτος ἐπιούσιος is designated for the existence of the soul (ἐπὶ τὴν οὐσίαν τῆς ψυχῆς κατατασσόμενος).

Jerome cited the Gospel according to the Hebrews (*Evangelium secundum Hebraeos*), which, as he wrote,<sup>33</sup> was regarded by some Jewish Christians as the original version of Matthew's Gospel. According to Jerome the Hebrew adverb  $\text{רמחר}$  (tomorrow) represented ἐπιούσιος. On this basis he argued that ἄρτος ἐπιούσιος denotes the future (*cras*) and super-substantial (*supersubstantialis*) bread tantamount to Jesus as the promised living bread who surpasses every substance (*super omnes substantias sit*) and every creature (*universas superet creaturas*). Similarly, John of Damascus pointed to the christological and eschatological significance of ἄρτος ἐπιούσιος which for him is a germ of the future bread (ἡ ἀπαρχή τοῦ μέλλοντος ἄρτου) namely of Christ who is to come (τόν μέλλοντα).

A contempt for corporeality, which was typical of the Greek philosophy, impelled the said Fathers to resort to the allegorical interpretation. Thus, the context of ἄρτος ἐπιούσιος was ignored and the only correct meaning of ἐπιούσιος was determined. In addition, the Fathers presupposed that the living bread from Jn 6:51 is identical to the bread referred to in the Lord's Supper, which is arguable. Nevertheless, Chrysostom properly interpreted ἐπιούσιος as ἐφήμερος (meant for one day)<sup>34</sup> and the Suda, a Byzantine encyclopaedia of the

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<sup>33</sup> Hieronymus Stridonensis, "Commentarius in Evangelium Matthaei," in *Patrologiae cursus completus: Series Latina*, ed. J.-P. Migne, vol. 26 (Paris: J.-P. Migne, 1845), 78 [Mt 12:13].

<sup>34</sup> Joannes Chrysostomus, "Homilia XIX in Matthaeum," in *Patrologiae cursus completus: Series Graeca*, ed. J.-P. Migne, vol. 57 (Paris: J.-P. Migne, 1862), 280 [ε (Mt 6:1)].

10th century, proposed a simple and accurate definition of ἐπιούσιος which suits the context of the Lord's Prayer and matches modern lexicons:

"ἐπιούσιος ἄρτος ὁ ἐπὶ τῇ οὐσίᾳ ἡμῶν ἀρμόζων. ἢ ὁ καθημερινός."<sup>35</sup>

"ἐπιούσιος bread is a bread convenient for our existence namely a daily bread."

### V. Spurious Etymologies

A Greco-Roman approach to the etymology was highly speculative and Ancient etymologies accidentally conform to contemporary findings.<sup>36</sup> In the antiquity an etymological analysis was not only the quest for (λογία) a true origin (ἔτυμο) of a word (ἔτυμολογία) but also a proof instrumental in any argumentation. The idea, that the use of a word constitutes its meaning, was not ingrained in the Ancient linguistics.

As the 7th ecumenical council of Nice (787 AD) was formulating its position on the theological status of images,<sup>37</sup> the etymology came to light but to the detriment of the study of the words' use. The

<sup>35</sup> Ludolph Küster, ed., *Suidae lexicon: Graece et Latine*, vol. 1 (Cambridge: Typis Academicis, 1705), 823 [s.v. ἐπιούσιος ἄρτος].

<sup>36</sup> Aulus Gellius, *Noctes Atticae*, vol. 1-2 (Zweibrücken: Ex Typographia Societatis, 1784).

<sup>37</sup> The Greek original: "Synodica Epistola ad Imperatores," in *Concilia Generalia Ecclesiae Catholicae*, vol. 3 (Rome: Ex Typographia Vaticana, 1612), 672-76. The Latin translation only: "Epistola Synodi ejusdem ad Imperatorem," in *Sacrorum Conciliorum Nova et Amplissima Collectio*, ed. Giovanni Domenico Mansi, vol. 13 (Florence: Zatta, 1767), 740-44.

Council Fathers insisted that sacred images ought to be an object of προσκυνέω (noun: προσκύνησις) but not of λατρεύω (noun: λατρεία). Thus, they supposed that προσκύησις only applies to man's attitude to the creatures, whereas λατρεία - to man's relationship with God. In view of the New Testament use of λατρεύω and λατρεία the latter statement is accurate. Augustine noted that λατρεύω pertains to God alone in contradistinction to δουλεύω.<sup>38</sup>

It is evident to us that προσκυνέω and προσκύνησις can refer either to the Creator (e.g. Mt 4:10, 28:17; Jn 4:20-24, 9:38; Heb 1:6) or to the creatures, depending on the context. The Council Fathers listed some passages from the New Testament (cf. Heb 11:21) as well as from the Septuagint (cf. 1Sa 20:41) to emphasise the reference to the creatures but failed to mention the classical passages in which προσκυνέω / προσκύνησις is synonymous with λατρεύω / λατρεία.

As a matter of fact, the Council Fathers recalled Mt 4:10 (κύριον τὸν θεόν σου προσκυνήσεις καὶ αὐτῷ μόνῳ λατρεύσεις) to prove that the adjective (virtually in the adverbial function) μόνῳ limits λατρεύω to God and lack thereof permits προσκυνέω to be applied to the creatures. Syntactically, both parts of the commandment are chiasmic so that αὐτῷ μόνῳ λατρεύσεις explicates κύριον τὸν θεόν σου προσκυνήσεις stressing God's exclusiveness. This structure has nothing to do with the significance of προσκυνέω which is determined by its use that is clearly related both to the Creator and to the creatures. The equivocation of προσκυνέω seems to be admitted by the Council Fathers who termed this verb homonymous (ὁμόνυμον) and

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<sup>38</sup> Augustinus Hipponensis, "De Trinitate," in *Patrologiae cursus completus: Series Latina*, ed. J.-P. Migne, vol. 42 (Paris: J.-P. Migne, 1886), 827-28 [I, VI, 13]; Idem, "De civitate Dei," in *Patrologiae cursus completus: Series Latina*, ed. J.-P. Migne, vol. 41 (Paris: J.-P. Migne, 1845), 277-79 [X, I]; Ibidem, 645-46 [XIX, XVII].

recognised its different meanings (διάφορα σημαινόμενα). From the perspective of contemporary linguistics it is not a typical homonymy but rather one and the same verb of which meaning is to a degree influenced by diverse objects thereof.

Ultimately, the Council Fathers attempted to secure the distinction between προσκυνέω and λατρεύω by an etymological argument. Since προσ-κυνέω is the compound verb, they claimed that the verb κυνέω (to kiss) denotes an ordinary relationship among people which manifested itself as in the antiquity friends were greeting (ἀσπάζομαι) one another with a kiss (cf. 1Pe 5:14). In their opinion the preposition (πρόθεσις) πρὸς intensifies (ἐπίτασις) the verb κυνέω in the same way as it happens in the compound verbs προσ-φέρω and προσ-κυρῶ.<sup>39</sup> Certainly, the greeting of friendship (φίλια) is inherent in κυνέω and even in προσ-κυνέω<sup>40</sup> which should not overshadow other aspects of the meaning. Actually, the preposition πρὸς may indicate a disposition to but the lexical comparison of προσ-φέρω to φέρω and of προσ-κυρῶ to κυρῶ does not uncover any intensification (ἐπίτασις) caused by the said preposition.

According to the Church Fathers the etymology of a word appertains to its meaning. Therefore, they discussed various etymologies of θεός circulating in the antiquity which have no support of the modern linguistics.<sup>41</sup> Plato derived θεός from the verb θέω (to run) arguing that apparent motions of the sun, moon and stars, which

<sup>39</sup> This contract form derives either from προσ-κυρῶ or from προσ-κυνέω which is irrelevant to the Council Fathers' point.

<sup>40</sup> Henry George Liddell and Robert Scott, ed., *A Greek-English Lexicon Based on the German Work of Francis Passow* (New York: Harper & Brothers, 1859), 1276 [s.v. προσκυνέω].

<sup>41</sup> Edward Ross Wharton, ed., *Etyma Graeca: An Etymological Lexicon of Classical Greek* (London: Percival, 1890), 57 [s.v. θεός].

people always worshipped, induced them to call these phenomena θεοί (gods).<sup>42</sup> This argument was repeated by Clement of Alexandria<sup>43</sup> who also proposed to derive θεός from the nouns θέσις (the setting) and θεσμός (the ordinance) providing that God is the One who establishes (i.e. sets, places) the covenant.<sup>44</sup> Both nouns listed by Clement originate from the same verb τίθημι (to set). Plutarch tracked down θεός to the noun θεατής (the one who sees), which is a cognate of the verb θεάομαι (to behold), and to the verb θέω (to run).<sup>45</sup>

Theophilus of Antioch wrote that θεός derives both from τίθημι (to set) and from θέω (to run) because God sets (the creation of the world) and runs (the preservation of the world) all things.<sup>46</sup> It should be noticed that Theophilus felt comfortable speaking of God as the active, dynamic being (cf. the verbs τρέχω, κινέω and ἐνεργέω employed) which was far from the Aristotelian concept of God as the inactive, static, immutable and isolated being. On that account Tertullian vehemently objected to the derivation of θεός from θέω (to run) and σείω (to shake)<sup>47</sup>. Gregory of Nyssa linked θεός to the verb θεάομαι

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<sup>42</sup> Plato, "Cratylus," in *Dialogi Selecti*, ed. Ludwig Friedrich Heindorf, vol. 3 (Berlin: Nauck, 1806), 49-50 [§ 31, 397d].

<sup>43</sup> Clemens Alexandrinus, "Cohortatio ad gentes," in *Patrologiae cursus completus: Series Graeca*, ed. J.-P. Migne, vol. 8 (Paris: J.-P. Migne, 1857), 95-96 [II].

<sup>44</sup> Alexandrinus, "Stromata," in *Patrologiae cursus completus: Series Graeca*, vol. 8, 915-916 [I, XXVI]. Ibidem, 929-30 [I, XXIX].

<sup>45</sup> Plutarchus, "De Iside et Osiride," in *Moralia*, ed. Daniel Wytttenbach (Oxford: Clarendon, 1796), 368-69 [LX].

<sup>46</sup> Theophilus Antiochenus, "Ad Autolyicum," in *Patrologiae cursus completus: Series Graeca*, ed. J.-P. Migne, vol. 6 (Paris: J.-P. Migne, 1857), 1029-30 [I, 4].

<sup>47</sup> Tertullianus, "Ad nationes," in *Patrologiae cursus completus: Series Latina*, ed. J.-P. Migne, vol. 1 (Paris: J.-P. Migne, 1879), 661-64 [II, 4].

(to behold) as God is the One who sees all things.<sup>48</sup> Finally, John of Damascus mentioned that θεός could be derived from three verbs: from θέω (to run) as the Lord handles (περιέπω) everything, from αἶθω (to burn) for He burns down (καίω) every evil (cf. Dt 4:24) and from θεάομαι (to behold) because He is the One who watches over (ἐπόπτης) all (cf. Est 5:1; 3 Mac 2:21).<sup>49</sup>

In the works of the Church Fathers an etymological argument was often unnecessary from the logical point of view. According to Lactantius the noun ἄνθρωπος (man) is composed of three parts:<sup>50</sup> of the preposition ἄνα (upwards), of the verb τρέπω (to turn) and of the noun ὄψ (the face),<sup>51</sup> which for him implies that man is heaven-oriented. Origen putting forward his system of emanation based on the Middle Platonism commented that certain souls (ψυχαί) alienated themselves from the One because their love for the Divinity got cold (ψύχω) enticed by the corporeality.<sup>52</sup> In fact, Origen's etymology appears legitimate<sup>53</sup> though his method of argumentation is alien to the contemporary humanities. The Church Fathers showed a tendency to generalise etymological remarks. For instance, Augustine maintained

<sup>48</sup> Gregorius Nyssenus, "Contra Eunomium," in *Patrologiae cursus completus: Series Graeca*, ed. J.-P. Migne, vol. 45 (Paris: J.-P. Migne, 1863), 1107-8 [XII].

<sup>49</sup> Joannes Damascenus, "De fide orthodoxa," in *Patrologiae cursus completus: Series Graeca*, ed. J.-P. Migne, vol. 94 (Paris: J.-P. Migne, 1864), 835-38 [I, IX].

<sup>50</sup> Lactantius, "Divinae Institutiones," in *Patrologiae cursus completus: Series Latina*, ed. J.-P. Migne, vol. 6 (Paris: J.-P. Migne, 1844), 257-58 [II, I].

<sup>51</sup> Lactantius, "The Divine Institutes," in *The Ante-Nicene Fathers*, ed. Alexander Roberts and James Donaldson, vol. 7 (New York: Scribner, 1913), 41 (n. 6) [II, I].

<sup>52</sup> Origenes, "Περί ἀρχῶν interprete Rufino Aquileiensi," in *Patrologiae cursus completus: Series Graeca*, ed. J.-P. Migne, vol. 11 (Paris: J.-P. Migne, 1857), 218-25 [II, VIII].

<sup>53</sup> Edward Ross Wharton, ed., *Etyma Graeca: An Etymological Lexicon of Classical Greek* (London: Percival, 1890), 135 [s.v. ψυχῆ].

that the noun δαίμων (a spirit) is related to the knowledge (scientia)<sup>54</sup> while Plato just explained that δαίμονες (spirits) are φρόνιμοι (wise) and δαήμονες (knowing).<sup>55</sup> The latter adjective is actually a cognate of the verb δάω (to know, to learn). Nowadays it is assumed that δαίμων derives from the verb δαίω (to divide).<sup>56</sup>

## VI. The Art of Predicate

In Greek a word order does not differentiate the subject from the predicate. This can be usually distinguished by the article's use in light of the context. Until the 17th century<sup>57</sup> no one noticed that the predicate tends to be anarthrous whereas the subject - arthrous, except a total reciprocity between the subject and the predicate. The Greek Church Fathers were dealing with the issue of predicate in Jn 1:1c (θεὸς ἦν ὁ λόγος). Augustine touched it commenting on 1Jn 4:8, 16 (ὁ θεὸς ἀγάπη ἐστίν) as he insisted that ἀγάπη is the subject and ὁ θεὸς is the predicate ("*Dilectio Deus est*" [Love is God]) contrary to the Vulgate ("*Deus caritas est*" [God is love])<sup>58</sup>.

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<sup>54</sup> Hipponensis, "De civitate Dei," 273 [IX, XX].

<sup>55</sup> Plato, "Cratylus," in *Dialogi Selecti*, ed. Ludwig Friedrich Heindorf, vol. 3 (Berlin: Nauck, 1806), 51 [§ 33, 398b].

<sup>56</sup> Edward Ross Wharton, ed., *Etyma Graeca: An Etymological Lexicon of Classical Greek* (London: Percival, 1890), 41 [s.v. δαίμων].

<sup>57</sup> Salomon Glass, *Philologia sacra*, ed. Johann Gottfried Olearius (Leipzig: Gleditsch, 1705), 702-5 [III, II, De articulo graecorum praepositivo, IV].

<sup>58</sup> Augustinus Hipponensis, "In Epistolam Joannis ad Parthos Tractatus," in *Patrologiae cursus completus: Series Latina*, ed. J.-P. Migne, vol. 35 (Paris: J.-P. Migne, 1845), 2029-53 [VII-IX (1Jn 4:4-21)].

Encountering Jn 1:1 (Ἐν ἀρχῇ ἦν ὁ λόγος, καὶ ὁ λόγος ἦν πρὸς τὸν θεόν, καὶ θεὸς ἦν ὁ λόγος) the Church Fathers asked about the significance of the arthrous λόγος (1a, 1b, 1c) and of the anarthrous θεὸς (1c). In addition, they investigated the tense of the linking verb (ἦν) in Jn 1:1-2 especially with reference to the prepositional phrase (Ἐν ἀρχῇ) from Jn 1:1a. Appealing to the "rule of faith" (*regula fidei*) Augustine repudiated a punctuation advocated by the Arians and the Semiarians according to which in Jn 1:1c θεὸς and ὁ λόγος are disconnected so that ὁ λόγος opens the next sentence (καὶ θεὸς ἦν ὁ λόγος οὗτος ἦν ἐν ἀρχῇ πρὸς τὸν θεόν).<sup>59</sup>

For Origen in Jn 1:1 λόγος is arthrous (ἄρθρον) because this Logos is definite and unique as compared to λόγος σπερματικὸς inherent in every human being.<sup>60</sup> Furthermore, this Logos is the ultimate source (πηγή) of all existing λόγοι. In his opinion θεὸς (1c) is anarthrous for it refers not to God who exists on His own (αὐτόθεος) but to the Logos that is God by the participation (μετοχή) in αὐτόθεος namely by virtue of the deification (θεοποιούμενον). Then, Origen presented his christology formed by the philosophical concept of the ontological emanation.

Cyril of Alexandria commenced with a review of the article's use.<sup>61</sup> Accordingly, the noun accompanied by the article is exactly (κυρίως) and truly (ἀληθινῶς) distinct (μόνον), whereas lack of the

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<sup>59</sup> Augustinus Hipponensis, "De doctrina christiana," in *Patrologiae cursus completus: Series Latina*, ed. J.-P. Migne, vol. 34 (Paris: J.-P. Migne, 1845), 66 [III, II, 3].

<sup>60</sup> Origenes, "Commentaria in Evangelium Joannis," in *Patrologiae cursus completus: Series Graeca*, ed. J.-P. Migne, vol. 14 (Paris: J.-P. Migne, 1862), 107-10 [II, 2].

<sup>61</sup> Cyrillus Alexandrinus, "Commentarius in Joannis Evangelium," in *Patrologiae cursus completus: Series Graeca*, ed. J.-P. Migne, vol. 73 (Paris: J.-P. Migne, 1864), 69-72 [I, IV (Jn 1:2)].



article implies that the noun is indefinite and denotes a category. He provided two examples. Firstly, the arthrous θεός means God, while the anarthrous θεοί, denotes those who are called gods by grace (cf. Jn 10:34). Secondly, ὁ υἱὸς τοῦ ἀνθρώπου signifies Christ, whereas υἱὸς ἀνθρώπου - man (cf. Heb 2:6). In Cyril's view the article's presence makes λόγος (1a, 1b, 1c) absolutely unique for only this Logos is consubstantial with the Father. Speaking of the article's use, Cyril employed a technical term προταπτόμενον ἄρθρον. In the Ancient Greek grammar ἄρθρον means either the article (προταπτόμενον ἄρθρον [the article placed in front]) or the relative pronoun (ὕπροταπτόμενον ἄρθρον [the article placed after]).<sup>62</sup>

Similarly, Chrysostom stated that the article distinguishes (χωρίζω) the Logos from other words (λοιποὶ λόγοι)<sup>63</sup> so that no one might confuse the very Logos with an ordinary word which man thinks (λόγος ἐνδιάθετος) and then utters (λόγος προφορικός).<sup>64</sup> In his opinion θεός (1c) can be anarthrous due to λόγος which is arthrous all over (συνεχῶς) Jn 1:1.<sup>65</sup> Chrysostom was focused on the definite function of the article and deemed the article with θεός (1c) superfluous (περιττῦν) because the arthrous λόγος makes θεός definite apart from the article's absence. He argued that in Jn 4:24

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<sup>62</sup> Dionysius Thrax, "Ars grammatica," in *Bibliotheca Graeca*, ed. Johann Albert Fabricius, vol. 7 (Hamburg: Felginer, 1727), 32 [§ 20].

<sup>63</sup> Joannes Chrysostomus, "Homilia II in Joannem," in *Patrologiae cursus completus: Series Graeca*, ed. J.-P. Migne, vol. 59 (Paris: J.-P. Migne, 1862), 34 [δ (Jn 1:1)].

<sup>64</sup> Joannes Chrysostomus, "Homilia III in Joannem," in *Patrologiae cursus completus: Series Graeca*, ed. J.-P. Migne, vol. 59 (Paris: J.-P. Migne, 1862), 40 [γ (Jn 1:1a)].

<sup>65</sup> Joannes Chrysostomus, "Homilia IV in Joannem," in *Patrologiae cursus completus: Series Graeca*, ed. J.-P. Migne, vol. 59 (Paris: J.-P. Migne, 1862), 49-50 [γ (John 1,1)].

the anarthrous πνεῦμα does not impair God's incorporeality (τό ἀσώματον τοῦ θεοῦ) and that in Tit 2:13 the anarthrous σωτήρ does not imperil His mission. Consequently, in Ro 1:7, 9:5 and in Php 2:6 the anarthrous θεός has the same power as the arthrous one.

The issue of λόγος ἐνδιάθετος and λόγος προφορικός raised by Chrysostom was a part of the wider christological discussion. Early Church Fathers (cf. Justin,<sup>66</sup> Tatian,<sup>67</sup> Theophilus of Antioch<sup>68</sup> and Tertullian<sup>69</sup>) accommodated the Stoic linguistic concept of the transition (from λόγος ἐνδιάθετος to λόγος προφορικός) to the christology. First, they asserted that God created the universe by speaking His Word (cf. Ge 1:3; Ps 33:6-9; Heb 11:3) which the New Testament identified with Christ (cf. Jn 1:3; Col 1:16; Heb 1:2). Then, they maintained that the utterance of the Word, by which the universe was created, is tantamount to the transition of the mental Word (λόγος ἐνδιάθετος) to the uttered Word (λόγος προφορικός) which must be equal to the Son's generation by the Father. The mentioned theologians resorted to this transition to demonstrate that the Father does not bereave Himself of divinity by begetting the Son in the same way as a man does not deprive himself of a thought by uttering it. The Nicene orthodoxy (cf. Athanasius<sup>70</sup>) was suspicious of that model for it might

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<sup>66</sup> Tatianus, "Oratio adversus Graecos," in *Patrologiae cursus completus: Series Graeca*, ed. J.-P. Migne, vol. 6 (Paris: J.-P. Migne, 1857), 813-18 [§ 5].

<sup>67</sup> Justinus, "Dialogus cum Tryphone Judaeo," in *Patrologiae cursus completus: Series Graeca*, ed. J.-P. Migne, vol. 6 (Paris: J.-P. Migne, 1857), 613-16 [§ 61].

<sup>68</sup> Theophilus Antiochenus, "Ad Autolyicum," in *Patrologiae cursus completus: Series Graeca*, ed. J.-P. Migne, vol. 6 (Paris: J.-P. Migne, 1857), 1063-66 [II, 10]. Ibid, 1087-88 [II, 22].

<sup>69</sup> Tertullianus, "Liber adversus Praxeam," in *Patrologiae cursus completus: Series Latina*, ed. J.-P. Migne, vol. 2 (Paris: J.-P. Migne, 1879), 183-86 [V-VIII].

<sup>70</sup> Athanasius Alexandrinus, "De synodis," in *Patrologiae cursus completus: Series Graeca*, ed. J.-P. Migne, vol. 26 (Paris: J.-P. Migne, 1857), 729-32 [§ 26, V].

suggest that the Son's generation took place in time (i.e. at the moment of the creation) not in eternity. The christology of the later period taught that the Father eternally begets the Son namely that God is ever-uttering His Word.

The Church Fathers could not accept a simple exposition of the imperfect tense of the linking verb in Jn 1:1-2 according to which the imperfect was used because Ἐν ἀρχῇ points to the beginning of the world namely to the world's creation described in Ge 1:1 and the linking verb εἶμᾰ exists neither in the aorist nor in the perfect. The prepositional phrase ἀπ' ἀρχῆς in 1Jn 1:1 supports such an interpretation. Since the Fathers were not satisfied with such a solution, they tried to prove on the one hand that the meaning of ἀρχή in Jn 1:1-2 is different from Ge 1:1, on the other hand that the imperfect ἦν must be timeless.

Origen claimed that in Jn 1:1-2 ἀρχή denotes God as the invisible and ideal foundation of the world, as the Wisdom (σοφία) which conceals all latent actions that the Lord performs as the visible world emerges.<sup>71</sup> Thus, he appealed to more figurative meaning of the term (cf. Ro 8:38; 1Co 15:24; Eph 1:21, 3:10, 6:12; Col 1:16, 2:10, 2:15; Tit 3:1; Jude 1:6). Analogically, Cyril of Alexandria argued that in Jn 1:1-2 ἀρχή explicitly signifies the divine nature (ἡ θεία φύσις).<sup>72</sup>

For Chrysostom the heaven and the earth mentioned in Ge 1:1 were an invisible, ideal world prior to the visible, sensual one that was later formed in the image thereof.<sup>73</sup> The Septuagint confirmed such

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<sup>71</sup> Origenes, "Commentaria in Evangelium Joannis," 49-62 [I, 16-23].

<sup>72</sup> Cyrillus Alexandrinus, "Commentarius in Joannis Evangelium," in *Patrologiae cursus completus: Series Graeca*, ed. J.-P. Migne, vol. 73 (Paris: J.-P. Migne, 1864), 27-30 [I, I (Jn 1:1a)].

<sup>73</sup> Chrysostomus, "Homilia IV in Joannem," 47-48 [α (Jn 1:1)].

a Platonic approach describing the earth from Ge 1:2a as invisible (ἀόρατος). In his opinion Ἐν ἀρχῇ both in Ge 1:1 and in Jn 1:1-2 appertains to the eternity (πρὸ τῶν αἰώνων). According to Chrysostom in Jn 1:1a the linking verb ἦν denotes the eternal existence (εἶναι αἰδίως) beyond the flux of time (τό αἰδίον).<sup>74</sup>

## VII. A Grammatical Gender

In Greek the grammatical gender does not have to match the biological gender which was observed by Philo<sup>75</sup> and by Augustine<sup>76</sup> yet in dismay. Philo remarked that the nouns λογισμός and νοῦς are masculine (ἄρσιν) though they are "passive" (πάθος) in the sense that they are acted upon as reason and mind are moved (κινούμενοι), instructed (παιδευόμενοι) and aided (ώφελοῦμενοι). In his view their receptive nature predispose them to be feminine (θῆλυς) not masculine as far as the grammatical gender is concerned. On the contrary, the noun ἀρετή is feminine though it is "active" in the sense that it is acting upon as the virtue moves (κινεῖ) and governs (διατίθησι) noble thoughts (ἔννοιαι), actions (πράξεις) and words (λόγοι). By Philo's standards the proactive character of a noun presses for the masculine

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<sup>74</sup> Joannes Chrysostomus, "Homilia III in Joannem," in *Patrologiae cursus completus: Series Graeca*, ed. J.-P. Migne, vol. 59 (Paris: J.-P. Migne, 1862), 39-40 [β-γ (Jn 1:1a)].

<sup>75</sup> Philo Alexandrinus, "De Abrahamo," in *Opera omnia*, vol. 4 (Leipzig: Schwickert, 1828), 24-25 [ § 20].

<sup>76</sup> Augustinus Hipponensis, "In Joannis Evangelium Tractatus," in *Patrologiae cursus completus: Series Latina*, ed. J.-P. Migne, vol. 35 (Paris: J.-P. Migne, 1845), 1681 [XXXVIII, 11 (Jn 8:21-25)]; Idem, "In Psalmum LIX enarratio," in *Patrologiae cursus completus: Series Latina*, ed. J.-P. Migne, vol. 36 (Paris: J.-P. Migne, 1845), 720-21 [ § 10 (Ps 60:7-8)].

gender thereof. His terminology resembles Dionysius Trax who listed three genders: ἀρσενικόν, θηλυκόν and οὐδέτερον.<sup>77</sup>

Augustine's comprehension of the grammatical gender seems incoherent. Commenting on Jn 8:21-25, he pointed out that the grammatical gender is not inherent in things but is warranted by the convention (*consuetudo*) of a specific language so that the word "law" has a different gender in various languages, in Latin (*lex*) - feminine, whereas in Greek (νόμος) - masculine. In the exposition of Ps 60 (LXX: 59) Augustine reiterated that the grammatical gender is not a matter of sense but rather a language convention. Nevertheless, he wondered that the law (*lex*), which is in Latin feminine, still communicates a "male power" (*masculinam vim habet*) for in his view the law always rules and is never ruled.

### VIII. A Force of Preposition

To defend Christ's true humanity against docetic tendencies Tertullian stressed that according to the New Testament (cf. Mt 1:16; Gal 4:4), Jesus was born out of (ἐκ [Latin: ex]) Mary providing that the preposition (*praepositio*) exercises its due force,<sup>78</sup> as we know, by modifying a verb. The docetism could admit that Mary was a mere tool, through which (*per* [διὰ]) Christ flashed as an apparition, but would not recognise her as the source of Christ's human nature.

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<sup>77</sup> Dionysius Thrax, "Ars grammatica," in *Bibliotheca Graeca*, ed. Johann Albert Fabricius, vol. 7 (Hamburg: Felginer, 1727), 29 [§ 14].

<sup>78</sup> Tertullianus, "De carne Christi," in *Patrologiae cursus completus: Series Latina*, ed. J.-P. Migne, vol. 2 (Paris: J.-P. Migne, 1879), 830-32 [XX].

Later, this topic was raised by Basil who wrote that a relationship between ἐκ and διά depends on the context for in some passages these prepositions are synonymous but in other – not.<sup>79</sup> In his view, if these prepositions are applied to any person of the Trinity, they must be synonymous but for instance in Gal 4:4 ἐκ particularly guards the true and full corporeality of Christ against docetic interpretations, which deem Jesus' body (σῶμα) spiritual (πνευματικόν), and amplifies the idea that the one who gives birth (i.e. Mary) and the one who is born (i.e. Christ) share the same human nature (ἡ κοινωνία τῆς φύσεως τοῦ τικτομένου πρὸς τὴν γεννήσασαν).

Commenting on the 3rd part of the Apostles' Creed Rufinus of Aquileia confused the syntactic function of the Latin preposition "in" (Greek: εἰς)<sup>80</sup> which pertains to the topic of the present article for the creed originated from Greek.<sup>81</sup> For Rufinus lack of preposition "in" with the phrases "*sanctam ecclesiam catholicam*," "*sanctorum communionem*," "*remissionem peccatorum*," "*carnis resurrectionem*" and "*vitam aeternam*" indicates that these phenomena are not subject to the same faith (*credo* [πιστεύω]) as the other mentioned in the Creed. In his view, no preposition implies a human trust in creatures which is separate from a divine trust in God marked by the preposition.

As a matter of fact, the above explanation proves an absolute grammatical incompetence because both in the Latin

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<sup>79</sup> Basiliius Caesariensis, "Liber de Spiritu sancto," in *Patrologiae cursus completus: Series Graeca*, ed. J.-P. Migne, vol. 32 (Paris: J.-P. Migne, 1857), 85-86 [V, 12].

<sup>80</sup> Rufinus, "Commentarius in Symbolum Apostolorum," in *Patrologiae cursus completus: Series Latina*, ed. J.-P. Migne, vol. 21 (Paris: J.-P. Migne, 1849), 373 [§ 36 (Sanctam Ecclesiam)].

<sup>81</sup> August Hahn, ed., *Bibliothek der Symbole und Glaubensregeln der apostolisch-katholischen Kirche* (Breslau: Grass and Barth, 1842), 3-59 [I].

text and in the Greek text of the Creed nouns "*ecclesiam*" (ἐκκλησίαν), "*communio*" (κοινωνία), "*remissionem*" (ἄφεσιν), "*resurrectionem*" (ἀνάστασιν) and "*vitam*" (ζωήν) are in the accusative case as they are governed by one and the same preposition "in" (εἰς) which modifies one and the same verb "*credo*" (πιστεύω). Therefore, these phenomena are subject to the same divine faith as the other. Actually, the Niceno-Constantinopolitan Creed explicitly repeats the preposition (πιστεύομεν [...] εἰς μίαν ἁγίαν καθολικὴν καὶ ἀποστολικὴν ἐκκλησίαν).<sup>82</sup> Contrary to Rufinus' assertions the verb "*credo*" (πιστεύω) cannot take a direct object. By not multiplying the preposition the Apostles' Creed professes that all phenomena listed in the 3rd article constitute an unit as the works of the Holy Spirit which corresponds to the general idea of the creeds that treat of every divine person along with its works.

In the tract *De Spiritu sancto*<sup>83</sup> Basil of Caesarea analysed how the prepositions ἐκ, διὰ, ἐν and σύν were used (especially in the relative clauses) with reference to every divine person. The Semiarians maintained that ἐκ might be only applied to the Creator (ἐξ οὐ), διὰ - to a mere instrument (δι' οὐ), that they identified with Christ, and ἐν - to an impersonal power (ἐν ᾧ), which they regarded as the Holy Spirit.<sup>84</sup>

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<sup>82</sup> "Symbolum Concilii Constantinopolitani," in *Sacrorum Conciliorum Nova et Amplissima Collectio*, ed. Giovanni Domenico Mansi, vol. 3 (Florence: Zatta, 1759), 565-66.

<sup>83</sup> Basilius Caesariensis, "Liber de Spiritu sancto," in *Patrologiae cursus completus: Series Graeca*, ed. J.-P. Migne, vol. 32 (Paris: J.-P. Migne, 1857), 67-106 [I-VIII]; *Ibid.*, 173-218 [XXV-XXX].

<sup>84</sup> Theodoretus Cyrensis, "Historia ecclesiastica," in *Patrologiae cursus completus: Series Graeca*, ed. J.-P. Migne, vol. 82 (Paris: J.-P. Migne, 1864), 1057-62 [II, XIX].

Basil on the one hand demonstrated that the said prepositions were applied to each person of the Trinity and emphasised that in defiance of the Semiarian argumentation *διά* was employed with reference to the Father (cf. 1Co 1:9; Ro 11:36) and *ἐκ* - with reference to the Son (cf. Eph 4:16) and the Holy Spirit (cf. Mt 1:20; Jn 3:6; Gal 6:8; 1Jn 3:24). On the other hand, he pointed out that an exact meaning of a preposition can be comprehended in light of its use. Thus, the preposition *ἐκ* may communicate a source or an agency, whereas *διά* with the genitive case - an impersonal or personal agency. Besides, in Greek the agency is also rendered by the preposition *ὑπό* with the genitive case, by the preposition *ἐν* or even by the genitive or dative case.

Additionally, the Semiarians appealed to the doxology (*δόξα πατρί καί υἱῷ σύν τῷ ἁγίῳ πνεύματι*) found in the writings of certain Church Fathers and claimed that the prepositional phrase *σύν τῷ ἁγίῳ πνεύματι* implies that the Holy Spirit is not to be worshipped to the same extent as the Father so that He cannot be God in the same sense. In response Basil explained that depending on the context the preposition (*προκειμένη λέξις* or *πρόθεσις*) *σύν* may function as the copula (*συμπλοκή*) *καί*. In his opinion the trinitarian formulae recorded in Mt 28:19 and in 2Co 13:13 thwart any interpretation of *σύν* in the mentioned doxology which would suggest an inferior or auxiliary status of the Holy Spirit. As compared to Dionysius Trax, Basil called *καί* either the copula (*συμπλοκή*) or the "conjunction as copulative" (*σύνδεσμος ὡς συμλεκτικός*) instead of the copulative conjunction (*σύνδεσμος συμλεκτικός*).<sup>85</sup>

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<sup>85</sup> Dionysius Trax, "Ars grammatica," in *Bibliotheca Graeca*, ed. Johann Albert Fabricius, vol. 7 (Hamburg: Felginer, 1727), 34 [ § 25].



## IX. A Relevance of Syntax

Writing on Jn 1:9 (Ἦν τὸ φῶς τὸ ἀληθινόν ὃ φωτίζει πάντα ἄνθρωπον ἐρχόμενον εἰς τὸν κόσμον εἰς τὸν κόσμον), Augustine noticed that the participle ἐρχόμενον may modify either φῶς or ἄνθρωπον and that the context allows of both interpretations.<sup>86</sup> There are two variants of this passage in the Vulgate which reflect the ambiguity of the original text.<sup>87</sup> However, he did not realise that the said participle could be used circumstantially.

Scrutinising Ro 5:12<sup>88</sup> Augustine searched for the antecedent of the relative pronoun ᾧ.<sup>89</sup> In his view, since the pronoun is masculine, it must refer to the masculine noun that is either εἰς ἄνθρωπον (i.e. Adam) or θάνατος. Thus, Augustine knew the rule that the relative pronoun shares the gender and the number of its antecedent. For that reason he denied that the said pronoun refers to ἁμαρτία which is feminine.<sup>90</sup> In light of the context Augustine leant towards εἰς ἄνθρωπος because death is a consequence of sin (cf. 1Co 15:56) and sin is not a result of death so that for him the statement "in this

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<sup>86</sup> Augustinus Hipponensis, "De peccatorum meritis et remissione," in *Patrologiae cursus completus: Series Latina*, ed. J.-P. Migne, vol. 44 (Paris: J.-P. Migne, 1865), 130-31 [I, XXV, 38 (Jn 1:9)].

<sup>87</sup> Kurt Aland and Barbara Aland, ed., *Novum Testamentum Latine* (Stuttgart: Deutsche Bibelgesellschaft, 1998), 247 [Jn 1:9].

<sup>88</sup> Διὰ τοῦτο ὡσπερ δι' ἐνὸς ἀνθρώπου ἡ ἁμαρτία εἰς τὸν κόσμον εἰσηλθεν καὶ διὰ τῆς ἁμαρτίας ὁ θάνατος, καὶ οὕτως εἰς πάντας ἀνθρώπους ὁ θάνατος διήλθεν, ἐφ' ᾧ πάντες ἥμαρτον.

<sup>89</sup> Augustinus Hipponensis, "Contra duas Epistolas Pelagianorum ad Bonifacium," in *Patrologiae cursus completus: Series Latina*, ed. J.-P. Migne, vol. 44 (Paris: J.-P. Migne, 1865), 614 [IV, IV, 7].

<sup>90</sup> There is no evidence that Pelagius opted for ἁμαρτία as the antecedent. Albert Bruckner, ed., *Quellen zur Geschichte des Pelagianischen Streites* (Tübingen: Mohr, 1906), 58 [II, A, 53].

death all men sinned" would be illogical. He did not consider another interpretation that the mentioned pronoun is neuter and the phrase ἐφ' ᾧ has a causal meaning (because).<sup>91</sup> As to a precise significance of ἐφ' ᾧ in Ro 5:12, the Vulgate versions vary and contain either "in quo" (i.e. in Adam/in sin) or "eo quod" (because).<sup>92</sup>

Commenting on Ps 105:12 (LXX: 104:12), Augustine discerned the syntactic construction (*locutio*),<sup>93</sup> called nowadays the articular infinitive with preposition (here ἐν), in which the subject, the object and the predicate are put in the accusative case in a similar way as it happens in the Latin *accusativus cum infinitivo*. He reminded that in a decent Latin translation the Greek predicates (βραχεῖς ὀλιγοστούς παροίκους), which are in the accusative case by virtue of ἐν τῷ εἶναι, must be rendered by the nominative case, for both in Greek and in Latin the linking verbs take nominative predicates. Augustine observed that some manuscripts (*nonnulli codices*) of the Latin translation (probably *Vetus Latina*) contained an improper interpretation of this fragment (*paucissimos et incolas*) which was however not adopted in the Sixto-Clementine Vulgate.<sup>94</sup>

Augustine understood that in many instances the syntax is decisive in interpreting grammatical features. Speaking of the noun ὁρός (neuter) in Ps 68:15 (LXX: 67:16), he remarked that with the

<sup>91</sup> Henry George Liddell and Robert Scott, ed., *A Greek-English Lexicon Based on the German Work of Francis Passow* (New York: Harper & Brothers, 1859), 499 [s.v. ἐπί, B, VI].

<sup>92</sup> Kurt Aland and Barbara Aland, ed., *Novum Testamentum Latine* (Stuttgart: Deutsche Bibelgesellschaft, 1998), 417 [Ro 5:12].

<sup>93</sup> Augustinus Hipponensis, "In Psalmum CIV enarratio," in *Patrologiae cursus completus: Series Latina*, ed. J.-P. Migne, vol. 37 (Paris: J.-P. Migne, 1865), 1394-95 [§ 8 (Ps 105:12)].

<sup>94</sup> Antoine Vitre, ed., *Biblia sacra Vulgatae editionis* (Venice: Apud Nicolaum Pezzana, 1754), 448 [Ps 104:12].

Greek neuter nouns the nominative is the same as the accusative both in the singular and in the plural so that the syntactic function of such a noun (either as a subject or as a direct object) must be conclusive to determine its case.<sup>95</sup> Accordingly, the subject entails the nominative, whereas the direct object - the accusative. Similarly, approaching γενῆς from Ps 72:5 (LXX: 71:5) Augustine explained that such a form could be either the genitive singular or the accusative plural for with certain nouns<sup>96</sup> these forms are alike.<sup>97</sup>

Discussing the doctrine of the Trinity, Tertullian expounded the Latin text of Jn 10:30 (ἐγὼ καὶ ὁ πατήρ ἐν ἑσμεν)<sup>98</sup> but his arguments also apply to the Greek original. In his opinion, two nouns (to be precise: a personal pronoun and a noun) joined by the conjunction "et" (καὶ) and followed by the plural verb "sumus" (ἑσμεν) indicate that the Father and the Son are two distinct persons that are the same thing<sup>99</sup> (*unum* [ἔν]) though they are not the same person (*unus* [εἷς]), for "*unum*" (ἔν) is neuter, not masculine (*unus* [εἷς]).

In the commentary on Mt 16:28, Origen struggled with the conjunction ἕως ἄν which he elucidated with Mt 28:20 where ἕως was

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<sup>95</sup> Augustinus Hipponensis, "In Psalmum LXXVII enarratio," in *Patrologiae cursus completus: Series Latina*, ed. J.-P. Migne, vol. 36 (Paris: J.-P. Migne, 1845), 827 [§ 22 (Ps 68:15)].

<sup>96</sup> It is about feminine nouns ending in α in the nominative singular and in ας in the genitive singular. They belong to the declension pattern which was in the Byzantine standard classified as the 2nd and which is nowadays categorised as the 1st declension feminine.

<sup>97</sup> Augustinus Hipponensis, "In Psalmum LXXI enarratio," in *Patrologiae cursus completus: Series Latina*, ed. J.-P. Migne, vol. 36 (Paris: J.-P. Migne, 1845), 907 [§ 8 (Ps 72:5)].

<sup>98</sup> Tertullianus, "Liber adversus Praxeam," in *Patrologiae cursus completus: Series Latina*, ed. J.-P. Migne, vol. 2 (Paris: J.-P. Migne, 1879), 207-8 [XXII].

<sup>99</sup> I. e. the Father and the Son share the same divinity.

used as the preposition.<sup>100</sup> In his view ἕως indicates pressing on to what is stated in the subordinate clause and does not necessarily imply that after the completion of an action from the subordinate clause the action from the main clause must cease. To Origen it is obvious that Christ will be with His disciples not only till the completion of the age (ἕως τῆς συντελείας τοῦ αἰῶνος) but also afterwards. On that account he did not conclude that after Christ's appearance those persons taste death. To clarify the meaning of ἕως in Mt 16:28, Origen intentionally resorted to the biblical use (κατὰ συνήθειαν τῆς γραφῆς) thereof.

In Ro 5:20 Chrysostom studied the function of ἵνα<sup>101</sup> and came to a conclusion that depending on the context this conjunction might communicate not only a purpose (αἰτιολογία)<sup>102</sup> but also a result (ἔκβασις). Often both functions of ἵνα cannot be separated. In light of the context of Ro 5:20 it can be said that the Law entered in order to (i.e. purpose) unveil human sin so that (i.e. result) the trespass might abound by being exposed.

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<sup>100</sup> Origenes, "Commentaria in Evangelium secundum Matthaum," in *Patrologiae cursus completus: Series Graeca*, ed. J.-P. Migne, vol. 13 (Paris: J.-P. Migne, 1862), 1059-62 [XII, § 34 (Mt 16:28)].

<sup>101</sup> Joannes Chrysostomus, "Homilia LVI in Joannem," in *Patrologiae cursus completus: Series Graeca*, ed. J.-P. Migne, vol. 59 (Paris: J.-P. Migne, 1862), 307 [α-β (Jn 9:1-2)]; Idem, "Homilia X in Epistolam ad Romanos," in *Patrologiae cursus completus: Series Graeca*, ed. J.-P. Migne, vol. 60 (Paris: J.-P. Migne, 1862), 478 [γ (Ro 5:12)].

<sup>102</sup> Formally, αἰτία means the cause as the main sentence provides a cause for the subordinate sentence which provides a purpose for the main sentence. Dionysius Trax counted ἵνα among σύνδεσμοι αἰτιολογικοί. Dionysius Thrax, "Ars grammatica," in *Bibliotheca Graeca*, ed. Johann Albert Fabricius, vol. 7 (Hamburg: Felginer, 1727), 34 [§ 25].

## X. A Puzzle of Tenses and Moods

Lecturing on Jn 17:22a (κἀγὼ τὴν δόξαν ἣν δέωκάς μοι δέδωκα αὐτοῖς), Augustine observed that in Greek the future might be expressed by the verbs of the past tense (*verbi praeteriti temporis*).<sup>103</sup> The latter notion is imprecise because the Greek<sup>104</sup> and Latin<sup>105</sup> grammar of that time operated with the category of the past (*praeteritum*, παρεληλυθώς) which was divided into the imperfect tense (*praeteritum imperfectum*, παρατατικός) and the perfect tense (*praeteritum perfectum*, παρακείμενος). Probably Augustine was thinking about the perfect tense which sets forth an action completed in the past but with a present impact. This aspect of the Greek perfect was noticed by the Byzantine grammarians.<sup>106</sup>

Origen adduced Tatian's statement that in Ge 1:3(LXX)the verb γενηθήτω (imperative aorist passive) expresses God's plea (εὔχομαι) rather than God's command (προστάσσω).<sup>107</sup> Paradoxically, Origen did not reject Tatian's thesis by appealing to the Hebrew original or to the grammatical form of γενηθήτω but confuted it because "γενηθήτω not always (οὐ πάντοτε) turns out to be the optative

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<sup>103</sup> Augustinus Hipponensis, "In Joannis Evangelium Tractatus," in *Patrologiae cursus completus: Series Latina*, ed. J.-P. Migne, vol. 35 (Paris: J.-P. Migne, 1845), 1921-22 [CX, 3 (John 17,21-23)].

<sup>104</sup> Dionysius Thrax, "Ars grammatica," in *Bibliotheca Graeca*, ed. Johann Albert Fabricius, vol. 7 (Hamburg: Felgner, 1727), 31 [ § 15].

<sup>105</sup> Augustinus Hipponensis, "De grammatica liber," in *Patrologiae cursus completus: Series Latina*, ed. J.-P. Migne, vol. 32 (Paris: J.-P. Migne, 1841), 1396-97 [XIII].

<sup>106</sup> Theodorus Gazes, *Introductio grammatica*, vol. 4, trans. Erasmus Roterodamus (Basel: Ex officina Valderiana, 1541), 290-92 [Περί ῥήματος].

<sup>107</sup> Origenes, "Libellus de Oratione," in *Patrologiae cursus completus: Series Graeca*, ed. J.-P. Migne, vol. 12 (Paris: J.-P. Migne, 1857), 493-96 [ § 24].

mood (τό εὐκτικόν) but in some places (ἔσθ ὄπου) it happens also to be the imperative mood (τό προσκτικόν)." As a matter of fact, γενηθήτω is the imperative which usually communicates a command though the imperative, the optative and the subjunctive can in certain circumstances convey the same idea.

John Cassian remarked that although the Greek text of 1Co 10:13a (πειρασμός ὑμῶν οὐκ εἴληφεν εἰ μὴ ἀνθρώπινος) was intelligible, some of his contemporaries preferred to translate εἴληφεν (indicative perfect) as "*apprehendat*" (subjunctive present).<sup>108</sup> Actually, the Vulgate offers two readings "*apprehendit*" (indicative perfect) and "*apprehendat*."<sup>109</sup> The latter is attested in *Codex Fuldensis*.<sup>110</sup> Besides, Cassian reviewed the basic difference between the indicative mood, which announces (*pronuntio*) or disapproves (*exprobro*) a fact, and the subjunctive mood, which would in this context utter a wish (*opto*). In Latin the optative is eventually a function of the subjunctive mood so that Cassian used here the notion "*optativus*" in place of "*conjunctivus*".

## XI. Conclusion

In less than half century the Ancient Church changed from tolerated to imperial so that the persecuted became persecutors.

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<sup>108</sup> Joannes Cassianus, "De coenobiorum institutis," in *Patrologiae cursus completus: Series Latina*, ed. J.-P. Migne, vol. 49 (Paris: J.-P. Migne, 1846), 231-32 [V, XVI].

<sup>109</sup> Kurt Aland and Barbara Aland, ed., *Novum Testamentum Latine* (Stuttgart: Deutsche Bibelgesellschaft, 1998), 457 [1Co 10:13].

<sup>110</sup> Ernst Ranke, ed., *Codex Fuldensis: Novum Testamentum Latine interprete Hieronymo* (Marburg: Elwert, 1868), 219 [1Co 10:13].

Theodosian decrees issued by Theodosius I and reinforced by Theodosius II in Codex Theodosianus<sup>111</sup> were aimed at eradicating non-Christian religions, particularly the Greco-Roman folk religion, by external coercion and violence. Thus, the sacrifices of old were penalised and the temples were demolished. Breathing Iamblichus and Proclus as its last defenders, the vibrant, indigenous momentum of the Empire yielded to force and subsided. The symbolic gates (θύραι) recalled by Marinus of Neapolis<sup>112</sup> were irreversibly slammed. Although the Church Fathers had no heart for the religious freedom, they were committed to adapt the Ancient culture to the tenets of the patristic Christianity and to hand it down in such a "domesticated" form. That's why the classical culture survived and lingered beyond the fall of Rome.

For the Ancients the Greek and Latin grammar was a keystone of their culture and grammarians were honoured as the guardians of their civilisation.<sup>113</sup> This was duly recapitulated by Augustine who later in *De civitate Dei* proved to be unfilial to the Latin culture to which he was so indebted:

*Est autem grammatica vocis articulatae custos et moderatrix disciplina: cujus professionis necessitate cogitur humanae linguae omnia etiam figmenta colligere, quae memoriae litterisque mandata sunt, non ea falsa faciens, sed de his veram quamdam docens asserensque rationem.*<sup>114</sup>

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<sup>111</sup> Gustav Friedrich Haenel, ed., *Codex Theodosianus* (Bonn: Marcum, 1842), 1475-1630 [XVI].

<sup>112</sup> Marinus Neapolitanus, *Vita Procli*, ed. Jean Francois Boissonade (Leipzig: Weigel, 1814), 9 [v].

<sup>113</sup> Robert A. Kaster, *Guardians of Language: The Grammarian and Society in Late Antiquity* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1988).

<sup>114</sup> Augustinus Hipponensis, "Soliloquiorum libri," in *Patrologiae cursus completus: Series Latina*, ed. J.-P. Migne, vol. 32 (Paris: J.-P. Migne, 1841), 894 [II, XI, 19].

The grammar is the custodian of an articulated voice and the governing discipline of which profession must consist in collecting all figments of human language which are confided to the memory as well as to the literature, not by making them false, but by teaching the truth about them and by defending the sense.

There is no indication that the most illustrious of the Church Fathers, such as Gregory of Nazianzus, who in Athens studied along with Flavius Claudius Julianus, received a liberal arts education which was deficient as compared to the average. Nonetheless, the aptitude of the Church Fathers for the Greek grammar appears dim. Their grammatical remarks were often chaotic<sup>115</sup> and descriptive though the technical terminology of the Greek grammar already existed at that time and was recorded by Dionysius Trax whom Clement of Alexandria listed among the most eminent grammarians of the antiquity.<sup>116</sup> Moreover, the Church Fathers were liable to an ideological (ab)use of the linguistics and did not hesitate to justify their own religious or philosophical biases by means of the grammar.<sup>117</sup>

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<sup>115</sup> E.g. Tertullian on "erat". Tertullianus, "Liber adversus Hermogenem," in *Patrologiae cursus completus: Series Latina*, ed. J.-P. Migne, vol. 2 (Paris: J.-P. Migne, 1879), 246 [XXVII].

<sup>116</sup> Clemens Alexandrinus, "Stromata," in *Patrologiae cursus completus: Series Graeca*, ed. J.-P. Migne, vol. 9 (Paris: J.-P. Migne, 1857), 73-74 [V, VIII].

<sup>117</sup> E.g. Augustine on ἀδελφὴν γυναῖκα from 1 Corinthians 9.5. Augustinus Hipponensis, "De opere monachorum," in *Patrologiae cursus completus: Series Latina*, ed. J.-P. Migne, vol. 40 (Paris: J.-P. Migne, 1845), 552 [IV, 5].



## ABSTRACT

The present paper treats of the aptitude of the Church Fathers for the Greek grammar which is analysed on the basis of explicit, grammatical comments dispersed in their works. The article commences with the study of the category of the Church Fathers as a Weberian ideal type. Then, the grammatical knowledge of the Church Fathers is reconstructed and structured in the following chapters: Native versus Non-Native, The Institution of Textbook, A Lexical Challenge, Spurious Etymologies, The Art of Predicate, A Grammatical Gender, A Force of Preposition, A Relevance of Syntax.

In the survey a special attention was given to: Ambrose, Athanasius, Augustine, Basil of Caesarea, Chrysostom, Clement of Alexandria, Cyril of Alexandria, Cyril of Jerusalem, Dionysius Trax, Gregory of Nyssa, Jerome, John Cassian, John of Damascus, Justin, Lactantius, Origen, Rufinus of Aquileia, Tatian, Tertullian and Theophilus of Antioch.

## 撮 要

本文處理古教父的希臘文文法傾向，分析他們著作中明顯的文法評注。研究從韋伯的理想形式入手，看古教父的個別類型，然後再按部分重建和組織教會教父的文法知識，各部分為：本土與非本土的、課本的建立、詞彙的挑戰、虛假的詞源學、述語的藝術、文法上的性別、介詞的力量和語法的關聯。

本研究的研究對象包括：安波羅修（Ambrose）、亞他那修（Athanasius）、奧古斯丁（Augustine）、該撒利亞的巴西流（Basil of Caesarea）、屈梭多模（Chrysostom）、亞歷山太的革利免（Clement of Alexandria）、亞歷山太的區利羅（Cyril of Alexandria）、耶路撒冷的區利羅（Cyril of Jerusalem）、特拉克斯（Dionysius Trax）、尼撒的貴格利（Gregory of Nyssa）、耶柔米（Jerome）、約翰迦仙（John Cassian）、大馬色的約翰（John of Damascus）、猶斯丁（Justin）、拉克坦提烏斯（Lactantius）、俄利根（Origen）、阿奎雷亞的魯非努（Rufinus of Aquileia）、他提安（Tatian）、特土良（Tertullian）和安提阿的提阿非羅（Theophilus of Antioch）。