Et Macaum advenit Verbum — The Study of Classical Languages and Theology in Macao

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ABSTRACT: Since the Late Antiquity that the study of Classical Languages, its authors and civilisations, has been a cornerstone for what we commonly call *Culture*. The relation of Europe and the West with these languages derives from the *imperium* which Rome exercised over the peoples of Europe and beyond. These peoples later on spread these studies to the four corners of the world, including to Southeast Asia.

The foundation in 1594 of College of Saint Paul established Macao as the very first centre for studying classical languages and their civilisations in the Far East. At the college, Latin was not only a subject but also the language of learning, as was the case in the old universities of Europe. Together with Latin, Greek and Hebrew were also learnt.

400 years later, in a completely different world, in a city which is hardly recognisable, Latin, Ancient Greek and Hebrew are still being taught in Macao. After some reflections on how *words* matter in our dealing with the world, this article will show how relevant the knowledge of these ancient languages is for those studying theology in Macao in the 21st century, despite the natural difficulties that native speakers of Sino-Tibetan languages may have when learning languages with a high degree of grammatical complexity as Latin and Classical Greek have.

KEYWORDS: Classical Languages; Theology; Latin; Ancient Greek; Hebrew; Macao.

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Fig. 1: Folium 86v of *Les Très Riches Heures du Duc de Berry*, a French medieval book of hours from the 15ᵗʰ century. The book of hours was a medieval hand-copied prayer book which has the psalterium, or book of psalms, organised for recitation by hours of the day, days of the week and the seasons of the liturgical year. These prayer books were often very richly decorated, especially on the front page of each liturgical season and the great festivities of the religious calendar. *The Very Rich Hours of the Duke of Berry* is the most extravagantly decorated book of hours that has survived. Source: https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Folio_86v_-_The_Funeral_of_Raymond_Diocr%C3%A8s_(cropped).jpg

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IN THE BEGINNING WAS *THE WORD*

Ἐν ἀρχῇ ἦν ὁ λόγος (Jo 1:1)

This sentence which opens Saint John's Gospel is universally known, and it is almost invariably rendered in English as '*In the beginning was the Word* '[1], but its meaning is not as straightforward as it may seem. The Greek word λόγος (*lógos*), derives from the root of the verb λέγω (*légō*) 'to speak'[2], much more than just *word,* it means the result of men's capacity of speaking with all that *being able to speak* entails and is, therefore, often translated as *reason*. This *logos*, which materialises itself in *speech* or *words*, is what makes men different from the rest of the animals. The birth of philosophy, the signal of men's rational maturity, is commonly described as a journey from *myth* to *logos*. This is the *logos* according to the Greeks.

The Biblical use of *logos* in John 1:1 raises some questions. Does it refer to Christ as the mere materialisation of God's Word, the דְּבַר יהוה (*dəḇar adonay*) of the Old Testament — in which case *logos* would simply be the Greek for *word* — or could it be that *logos* refers to the *word* as the actualisation of God's Intelligence, that which gives the world, in Plato's terms, its form and makes it to be what it is[3]? The composers of the gospels, whoever they might have been, were unlikely to have been educated and probably not native speakers of Greek, at least the majority of them; furthermore, they were putting down in writing hearsay from others. Despite these idiosyncrasies, we could still think that underneath the gospel *logos* lies a concept more sophisticated than just *word*. First, because the Gospel of Saint John itself is by far the most sophisticated of the four canonical gospels, bringing it closer to an embryonic theological treaty on the nature of Christ than the other three which are clearly more biographic in nature[4]. Second, because the Greek concept of *logos* had already made its way into Hebrew thought through the pen of Philo, a first century Alexandrian Jewish thinker, who tried to synthetise Mosaic Law with Greek philosophy[5]. Following Plato's dualist philosophy, Philo described the *logos* as a sort of divine entity, equivalent to the platonic concept of *demiurge*, responsible for imprinting into the world its forms[6].

In view of this, perhaps we could consider that the Johannine *logos* stands for the essential rationality intrinsic to the Cosmos, its first underpinning principle, that is to say, the creational power of God — his mind — which informs the world and gives it its natural laws and its internal logic.

The association between the faculty of *reason* and the word *logos* made by the Greeks suggests that for them the first expression of *logical thought* is speech or *words*. The *logos*, or *word*, it follows, is the true strength of men — hence the saying *mightier is the pen than the sword*. And so, words become a powerful tool with which men interact with the world: words are used for describing the world, for trying to lead the world, words even allow us to manipulate and misrepresent reality. Ultimately, the *word* is power and it can be used for good or evil, for building or destroying.

THE POWER OF *THE WORD*

It is by no other means but through words that we can describe the reality of the world, even when that reality does not seem to be there. Words have, indeed, the power to describe what is outside the grasp of the senses; it is almost as if words were the creating force of a reality which didn't exist prior to their utterance — the *reality* only becomes *real* when it is uttered.

When the second presocratic cosmologist, Anaximander of Miletus (c. 610–546 B.C.), went looking for a principle which gave the universe its essence, contrary to his predecessor Thales (c. 624– 546 B.C.), or his successor Anaximenes (c. 585–525 B.C.) who argued that it was water, the former, and air, the latter, he insisted that the first principle could not be determined and having nothing to point to, he described it by means of words alone, namely τὸ ἄπειρον (*tó ápeiron*), the *undetermined thing, the boundless, the unclassified* [7]. Later on, Plato, in trying to describe the world as dual, also had nothing to show but words with which he tried to illustrate the intrinsic logic of his ideas.

If we look at the philosophical discipline of Theodicy, the arguments for the existence of god, that is to say, the rational proof for the existence of a being commonly referred to as *god*, is made on the basis of logical arguments alone which take the form of words; there is nothing inside a test tube to be put under a microscope so to testify as to its (in)existence[8].

A more prosaic example for this would be fantasy or novels which describe a world or people who do not exist outside the pages of a book, outside the imagination of its author and our reading of his words.

Apart from describing even what does not seem to be there, words can also act. The *Law* is a good example of the word's *postestas agendi*. The law is not only itself made up of words, but also delivered by means of words; legal decisions are made actual by the utterance of words: *I find you guilty as charged* is a sequence of words which has the power of changing someone's life in one of the most radical ways possible, even onto death. Also, after the utterance of words such as *I pronounce you husband and wife*, individuals become different people before society or the State. Another good example, even if for all the worst possible reasons, was the *Nuremberg Laws* which, after their publication, turned former German citizens into outcasts without any legal rights[9].

Religious formulas used, for instance, in the administration of sacraments, phrases such as '*I absolve you from all your sins*', '*I baptise you*', '*Take, eat, for this is my body*', or the prayer for ordination have the power, for those who believe, to change not the status of the things upon which these words are recited, but the actual nature of these things, even if no change perceivable to the senses occurs[10].

THE WORD AS A MANIPULATIVE FORCE

As said before, the *word* being a force, can be used for good or for evil; it can be used to produce a desired effect independent of its intrinsic moral value and, thanks to their psychagogic effect[11], with words we can even compel someone to act against their better judgment. The awareness that we can lead or compel another to do what we want them to through the use of the right word is old, as the *cohortatio* shows. The *cohortatio* or general's harangue is a very common rhetorical mechanism in literature which takes the form of a speech, usually in *oratio recta*, used to rally the troops before battles. One such speech, perhaps one of the most important too, as it served as a model for posterity, is the one given by Agamemnon in Book 4 of the *Iliad* before a battle against the Trojans. Agamemnon compels the demoralised Achaeans to fight by challenging their bravery and reminding them of past glories[12].

More modern examples of *cohortatio* would be Hitler's famous Sportpalast Speech *In uns selbst allein* (1933) or Churchill's *We shall fight on the beaches* (1940)[13]; though the former wasn't exactly an exhortation to fight, the rhetorical techniques in these speeches follow from the old classics.

Such speeches became a rhetorical mechanism used in literature to do political propaganda *a posteriori*. Indeed, many of them were written in the comfort and tranquillity of peace after winning or losing a battle. Greek historian Thucydides became a master at this propagandistic technique. His books are filled with politically programmatic *cohortationes* to the troops which in reality were never delivered on the battlefield[14].

It should not matter if the speeches were ever delivered or not, or even if the actual battle ever took place or not, the idea is to use words to rally people and to lead them to do something, to urge them to follow someone or to believe in some ideal; that is, after all, the task of propaganda. The reality of the facts is irrelevant when one's task is to convince another to act in a certain manner and what matters is the correct choice of words.

Politicians and lawyers have long been considered masters of language manipulation — '*let's kill all the lawyers*', says Dick the Butcher — but of late there is a new kid in town: the *spin-doctor*! The spin-doctor's task

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is to manipulate the narrative — a word which is now everywhere you go — to keep public opinion under their masters' thumb. The spin-doctor is the ultimate proof that choosing the right word matters; this is, after all, his job description!

A relatively recent event involving a spin-doctor is rather revealing an acute awareness of what we can do with words; how they can lead people to act even against their better judgment.

A couple of decades ago, after the attack on the World Trade Centre in New York, the case had to be made in the British Parliament for the United Kingdom to join the United States in attacking what was at the time still Saddam Hussein's Iraq. As the evidence for the existence of the then so famous WMD, that is, Weapons of Mass Destruction, especially the lethal gases the Iraqis were said to have was not enough, Tony Blair's spin-doctor, Alastair Campbell, instructed Dr. David Kelly, the intelligence scientist responsible for compiling a dossier on Iraq's chemical weaponry, to, in Dr. Kelly's own words, *sex up the dossier*. Given that the data of the evidence in the dossier could not be falsified or misrepresented before Parliament, the wording concerning the gathered evidence had to be made *more evident*, or, as it was then referred to, *sexed up* so as to make the case for war stronger.

The declaration of war on Iraq was not the only consequence of all of this. The government's request to *sex up* the dossier made its way into the media and when Dr. Kelly was outed as the whistle-blower by BBC journalist Andrew Gilligan, Dr. Kelly committed suicide.

More than the actual ability to carry their case through parliament, the most fascinating thing about this sad episode is the language used by those trying to manipulate the language when referring to the act of their own act of manipulation: *to sex up*; it is not the lack of good evidence that mattered, rather they had to *word it better*, the evidence had to become more attractive, more appealing, *more sexy*. Now, the case for war in itself can never be sexy to anyone, except perhaps for Hitler[15], so reference to it as it *sexing up*

clearly shows the consciousness that with the right word we can make anything look appealing, *even war!*, and we can even lead unwilling people into the battlefield, just like in the *cohortationes* of old[16].

How would this be any different from lying? It is different because the data remains the same, the way to refer to it is modified so as to produce the desired effect. The intention and the motivation may well be the same as that of lying, but the information upon which the value of true/false is attached remains the same, it is the language about it which it changes; this is not telling a lie, it is spinning the truth.

In trying to describe the world or realities of which we are not even aware, in trying to change the world around us in forms that are not perceptible, or in trying to manipulate others to act in a way we wish them to despite their own interests, *words matter*. The realisation that the right word can lead us to where we might not care to go, should put us always on the alert and to be prepared to examine and dismantle the narrative with which we are fed, often in such an apparently harmless fashion.

THE *LOGOS* REACHES THE FAR EAST

At the scene of the ascension, Christ, the *logos* of God made flesh, told his disciples to *go and make disciples of all nations* (Mt 28:19). The word for disciple in Greek is μαθητής[17] which means first of all *learner* or *student*. So, in reality, the mission or task of the Church is to teach. The *logos* is at the centre of the Church's mission: The Church's teaching is not only *made of words*, it is also delivered by *means of words* and the success of its mission is dependent on the reception and understanding of words.

Since her beginnings, the Church has been in the forefront of the task of teaching and cultivating languages. Greek and Hebrew came to be associated with the Church because of the Scriptures and Latin because the Church came to be closely associated with the Roman Empire and when the Empire fell, the Church took its place in someway.

It was by the hand of the Church's missionaries that Latin and Greek entered the Far East when they brought the *logos* to these parts of the world.

One of the objectives of the Portuguese overseas expansion in the 16th century was the spread of Christianity around the world. At that time, Latin was the lingua franca in Europe associated with education and culture. The Church too used Latin in the formation of her clergy, in her liturgy and in the handling of her administrative business. It was by the hand of her priests that Latin entered the Far East.

In 1594, the Jesuits founded the College of Saint Paul (*Colégio de São Paulo*), a university college dedicated to Saint Paul, the first missionary, over the structures of the former Mater Dei College (*Colégio da Madredeus*). The Jesuits had already founded a college of Saint Paul in Goa. The new college included a primary school, a seminary for the training of missionaries, and a university with the faculties of liberal arts, philosophy and theology.

In the college, Latin was not only taught, alongside Portuguese and Chinese, but it was also the vehicular language for teaching at the higher schools within the college, as was the case in European universities such as Bologna, Paris, Oxford, Salamanca or Coimbra. Greek and Hebrew too would also have been taught at the Faculty of Theology.

In 1728, again by the hands of the Jesuits, the Seminary of Saint Joseph (*Seminário de São José*) was founded. It also offered a university-level curriculum and it coexisted with College of Saint Paul up until 1835, when the latter was completely destroyed by a fire.

After the December 1966 riots in Macao, the Portuguese administration became concerned that the bishop of Macao and the seminarians might be in danger and so the seminary ceased functioning and its students were sent to seminaries in Portugal instead. Thus, the study and use of Latin as a spoken language for teaching, which had started almost 500 years before, fell as another victim of the Cultural Revolution. Alongside Latin, Greek and Hebrew perished too. At the time, though, the study of Greek and Latin would have remained in Macao's Portuguese high schools as these classical languages were part of the official secondary school curriculum in Portugal.

As the date for the Handover approached, the Inter-University Institute of Macao (*Instituto Inter--Universitário de Macau*, IIUM) was founded in 1996, with the intention of picking it up from where the Seminary of Saint Joseph and the College of Saint Paul left off. In 2009, the IIUM was rebranded as University of Saint Joseph (*Universidade de São José*). The University, which is commonly referred to by locals as USJ, is thus the natural heir in spirit and matter to the Seminary of Saint Joseph and the College of Saint Paul, aiming to continue the work they initiated back in the 16th and the 18th centuries.

In 2007, in co-operation with the Faculty of Theology of the Catholic University of Portugal (*Universidade Católica Portuguesa*), the Faculty of Christian Studies, later rebranded Faculty of Religious Studies, opened its doors, ending the almost half-century long interregnum in theology studies in this city. A further link with the past is the fact that the Faculty of Christian Studies is located in the old Seminary of Saint Joseph, in the same place where until 1966, generation after generation of Asians and Westerners learnt Latin and used it in their studies. Along with Latin, Greek and Hebrew returned as well.

THE STUDY OF ANCIENT LANGUAGES IN MACAO TODAY

Today, just as in the 16th century, the study of Latin, Ancient Greek, and Hebrew is associated with the study of Christian Theology in Macao. In fact, most of the regular students of these languages are destined for the missions in the Far East. These students are in the great majority from Southeast Asia and are mostly speakers of either Sino-Tibetan languages, such as Cantonese or Burmese, or Polynesian languages, such as Tagalog or Tetum.

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		ANCIENT LANGUAGES			MODERN LANGUAGES		
		Latin	**Greek**	**Sanskrit**	**German**	**Russian**	**English**
	Nominative	*pater*	πατήρ	पिता	*(der) Vater*	патер	father
	Vocative	*pater*	πάτερ	पितर्	*(Vater)*	(патер)	–
	Accusative	*patrem*	πατέρα	पितरम्	*(den) Vater*	патера	–
SINGULAR	**Genitive**	*patris*	πατρός	पितुर्	*(des) Vaters*	патера	–
	Dative	*patri*	πατρί	पित्रे	*(dem) Vater*	патеру	–
	Ablative	*patre*	–	पितुर्	–	–	–
	Instrumental	–	–	पित्रा	–	патером	–
	Locative	–	–	पितरि	–	патере	–

Learning these ancient languages cannot be described as an easy task for many of the students for reasons unrelated to their will or even natural capacity. The difficulties are due to the internal structure of the languages themselves.

Latin and Greek are ancient Indo-European languages genetically related to Sanskrit, Pali, Old Slavonic, Anglo-Saxon, Gothic, to name but a few[18]. These languages are characterised by being extremely rich in their morphological structure; words are divided according to morpho-lexical categories and these in turn have different patterns of morphological behaviour. This means that words will behave differently depending on their categories, that is, a verb will behave morphologically differently from a substantive or a pronoun. At the same time within the same category words will group themselves in paradigms and select morphemes or external signs of grammatical information which will differ depending on the paradigm they belong to within their own category.

To illustrate their degree of morphological complexity, let's take the example of the word for *father*. In English, a noun has basically two forms, one for the singular and one for the plural; so *father* in English will have the forms *father* and *fathers*. In Latin, the word for

father has 12 forms, six for the singular and six for the plural; Sanskrit, in turn has 24, eight for the singular, eight for the plural and eight for the dual — the dual is a plural of only two. Some modern Indo-European languages can also have more than just two forms, for instance German has eight forms, four for the singular and four for the plural and Russian has 12, six for each number.

The table above shows the forms for the singular of the word *father* in Latin, Ancient Greek, Sanskrit, German, Russian and English; all Indo-European languages, the first three ancient languages and the later three modern ones[19]. The column on the left-hand side has the names which the forms take, *Nominative*, *Vocative*, etc. These point to the syntactic functions the different forms of the word play within the structure of a sentence.

As can be seen from this example, Indo-European languages, modern and ancient, are quite different from Sino-Tibetan languages, the family from which Sinitic languages, such as Cantonese or Mandarin, are derived. The Sinitic languages are characterised by all words being monosyllabic, having no derivational or inflexional morphemes attached to them, and the existence of pitch stress, commonly

referred to as tone[20]. This means that in Sinitic languages all words, despite their category, behave alike and what distinguishes them is the meaning, their position in the sentence, and the tone which allows the distinction between homophonous words with different meanings. We must not forget that this simple laymen-like description of the structure of Sinitic languages is here being made through the eyes of Western grammar and its categories, which have themselves been highly moulded by the internal structure of Indo-European languages[21]. From a strictly Sinitic outlook, this description would not be correct, but here it serves a comparative purpose.

From a didactic point of view, these differences in language structure represent a big challenge in the teaching–learning process especially under the so-called *Traditional Method*. The Traditional Method is the usual form of teaching ancient languages which are not spoken but mainly written and it is based on the morphosyntactic analysis of graded texts for translation.

In the teaching–learning process of modern spoken languages similar difficulties can be smoothed out by applying appropriate methodology and with the aid of support materials, such as videos, films, games, songs, etc. Language teaching methodologies are not universal; they tend to take into consideration their target. The methodology for teaching Cantonese to Portuguese cannot be the same as to teach Cantonese to Mandarin or Burmese speakers. Depending on the structure of the mother tongue we can distinguish patterns of problems which will need specific strategies to solve them. This approach is not consensual though and there are those who advocate that the linguistic structure of the learner's native language should have no bearing whatsoever in the way the teaching–learning process of the second language develops.

Putting aside these not unimportant theoretical questions and looking at this question even if with the eyes of a lay person, it should not be difficult to understand how challenging it has to be for one whose native language has practically no inflectional morphology to be confronted with a language such as Latin with its 12 different forms for the same word and the need to know which of the 12 to select correctly at any given time. This can, indeed, be a daunting task!

A further difficulty arises from the fact that the language of teaching is English, meaning that the students have to learn a second language through a third one, in which often they might not feel confident enough.

In order to deal with this last question, in the Latin courses offered at night time for the general public a new strategy was adopted which consists of trying to teach Latin as if it is a spoken language. Accordingly, in our night courses no other language is used but Latin from the very first day of classes, and visual aids and the like are used to assist in the teaching–learning process[22]. The results have so far been most encouraging!

THE REASONS FOR STUDYING ANCIENT LANGUAGES IN MACAO TODAY

The benefits of learning Latin, Greek, and Hebrew greatly outweigh the difficulties in the learning process as mastering languages with this degree of morphosyntactic complexity flexes the linguistic muscle of any learner. Eventually, the student will develop the mental tools which will, in turn, prove very useful when confronted with the task of learning yet a new language. Latin and Greek are often said to be the *Mathematics* and *Physics* of the Humanities!

Apart from this, there are more specific benefits directly related to the area where at present in Macao Latin, Greek, and Hebrew studies are active, that is in theological studies.

Most of the relevant texts, such as the Bible, are translated into modern languages, but those who opt for ready-made translations place themselves at the mercy of the choices of others. The most important reason for someone studying theology to learn the ancient languages is because they will provide *direct* and *unmediated* access to the textual sources for Catholic theology.

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Fig. 2: The Sistine Hall of the Vatican Apostolic Library (*Bibliotheca Apostolica Vaticana*) in Rome, was officially established by Pope Sixtus IV (1471–1484) in 1475. In its current format it answers to the Humanistic vision of Pope Nicholas V (1447–1455), but its origins go back to the Late Antiquity. It houses one of the biggest collections of ancient texts counting over 75,000 codices and 8,500 incunabula. Source: https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:The_Sistine_Hall_of_the_Vatican_Library_(2994335291).jpg

When we say that *most of the relevant texts are translated into modern languages*, that may not be totally true. Sometimes knowing these languages is actually the only way to have any access at all to certain textual sources.

UNTRANSLATED TEXTS STILL EXIST

Up until the modern age, the Church was the greatest producer of literature — *the word literature taken here in its broader sense*. For the first 1,600 years of its existence, the Church had no rival in what concerned the production of written materials. In fact, there were periods of history when the Church was the only serious producer of the written word. As a consequence, millions of written documents came into existence, of which many were lost and many have not yet been found. It is not uncommon for Church documents, such as the acts of some local synod we did not even know had taken place, to be found by chance in the old library of some monasteries. Most of these documents will never be published let alone be translated into modern languages, as they are of interest to a few scholars only and the task of translating such documents would be economically unfeasible.

As an example, let's take the case of the *Acta Synodalia Sacrosancti Concilii Oecumenici Vaticani II* [23], that is the minutes of the Second Vatican Council. These comprise 32 volumes making a total of 27,334 pages all written in Latin (these were obviously not just found in some monastery libraries…).

The Second Vatican Council gathered over 3,000 people together in Rome from 1962 to 1965: c. 2,400 *patres* or members entitled to vote and c. 480 *periti* or assistant experts, plus the secretarial staff. All the work of the council was held exclusively in Latin[24] which included very heated discussions where even the occasional Latin swear word was thrown in.

The *Acta Synodalia* are not the same as the *Constitutiones*, *Decreta* and *Declarationes* which represent the official deliberations of the Council and are translated in many modern languages. On the other hand, translating the *Acta*'s 27,000 pages into any modern language would also prove to be of no practical use as theologians and scholars who would be interested in these documents are supposed to know Latin.

LOST SOMEWHERE IN TRANSLATION

If access to some Church documents can be problematic for those who do not know any Latin, that should not be the case with the biblical languages, as both Testaments are transacted into almost every known spoken language — and if they are not yet, an effort is constantly being made to achieve that. Nevertheless, direct access to Scripture is still relevant because important information can be *lost in translation*, as we shall see.

The Italians have an expression '*traduttore, traditore*' which means something like 'the translator is a traitor'. More than the cynical phrase it sounds to be, it is the expression of a real problem which every translator is confronted with. Anything that goes beyond common substantives or simple action verbs can get tricky. Sometimes even common substantives can be problematic, the typical example is that of the Inuit who are said have quite a lot of words for what in English is just snow.

In the case of ancient languages, this *loss* can be substantial because often the texts report to us worlds with which we are not acquainted except through the very texts in front of us. Indeed, lack of context is a common hermeneutic problem when translating this type of texts.

Differences in language structure are not a problem exclusive to the classroom, they can make life difficult too at the translation desk. This is a problem common to both modern and ancient texts. When a satisfactory enough solution cannot be found, actual meaningful information can be lost. For cases such as this, the best way to deal with it is to have direct access to the original text so as to retrieve any lost relevant information.

What follows is an episode taken from Saint John's Gospel (21:15–19), where after his Resurrection and before the Ascension, Jesus has a conversation with Peter. This text can help to illustrate how sometimes what is said in one language cannot be said exactly in another:

> *When they had finished eating, Jesus said to Simon Peter: 'Simon, son of John, do you love me more than these?'*
> *'Yes, Lord,' he said, 'you know that I love you.' Jesus said, 'Feed my lambs.'*
> *Again Jesus said, 'Simon son of John, do you love me?' He answered, 'Yes, Lord, you know that I love you.' Jesus said, 'Take care of my sheep.'*
> *The third time he said to him, 'Simon son of John, do you love me?' Peter was hurt because Jesus asked him the third time, 'Do you love me?' He said, 'Lord, you know all things; you know that I love you.' Jesus said, 'Feed my sheep.'*
> **(Jo 21:15–17)**

This text, as it reads, seems slightly awkward and one might feel inclined to take the side of Saint Peter in being somewhat bothered by being asked the same question three times; it all seems rather senseless. It would not seem so senseless though were one to read it in the original Greek.

Greek had three different words for *love*, namely: ἀγάπη (*agápe*) and the verb ἀγαπάω (*agapáō*), φιλή (*philḗ*) and the verb φιλέω (*philéō*), and finally ἔρως (*érōs*) and the verb ἐρωτάω (*erōtáō*). These are not

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exactly synonymic, instead they specify each one of them a different kind of love: *agape* and its verb refer to the love we have for our parents, our children or a spouse, *philḗ* and its verb represent something on the lines of what we call friendship, the love we have for friends. Finally, *érōs* describes a more physical type of love, and it could thus be translated as *desire* which can be of a sexual nature; the corresponding verb, *erōtáō* does not mean *to love* at all, but *to ask* or *to beg*, because that is what one does when one desires.

Back to the text, the first two times Jesus asks Peter if he loves him, he uses the verb *agapáō*; Peter, in turn, answers with the verb *philéō*. The third time Jesus asks Peter, he too uses *philéō* instead of *agapáō* and Peter answers once again with *philéō*. This prompts Jesus to say:

> *'Very truly I tell you, when you were younger you dressed yourself and went where you wanted; but when you are old you will stretch out your hands, and someone else will dress you and lead you where you do not want to go.' Jesus said this to indicate the kind of death by which Peter would glorify God.*
> (**Jo 21:18–19**)

These last verses constitute a prophecy which means to say that the friendship-type of love which Peter has towards Jesus now will later become *agape* when Peter will be asked to hand his life over for Christ.

Theological questions aside, this text is a very good example of how differences in language can determine how successful the transmission of the message really is. In English, the text sounds rather awkward — *why ask the same thing three times in a row?* — especially when the answer is always '*Yes!*'. And since Peter's answer is always in the affirmative, the prophecy which follows seems to be rather out of place. Something is lost, but once we glance over the Greek it all becomes clearer and we see an actual purpose to the repetition.

This *loss in translation* is caused by no other reason than the fact that English has one single word where Greek has three[25]. In some cases, the context may compensate for the lost information but in this particular case it does not and the text becomes almost illogical, having lost at least part of its meaning.

NOT QUITE LOST, JUST CORRUPTED

A common hermeneutic problem is to come across passages of difficult, sometimes almost impossible, interpretation. This problem can be caused not by the loss of context or differences between the languages but because the original text is corrupted. This corruption is caused by the text's transmission process, by being hand copied over and over again. When confronted with such a problem knowledge of the language alone may not be sufficient and some extra philological work may be required.

There is a very good case which illustrates this point better than any other. The sentence '*It is easier for a camel to pass through the eye of a needle than for a rich man to enter the Kingdom of Heaven*' is an expression which is now part of our universe of cultural references and for some it is still meaningful. We are so used to this sentence, having heard it so frequently, that it may be very difficult for us to realise that this sentence, in its current form, does not make any sense at all. *What could a camel have to do with a needle? Much less with the eye of the needle! Why would anyone ever try to pass a camel through the eye a needle? And why a camel?*

In Greek the word for camel is κάμηλος (*kámēlos*), corresponding to Hebrew גָּמָל (*gāmāl*), But there is in Greek another word which is very similar to the word for camel, namely κάμιλος (*kámilos*) which refers to an entanglement of ropes used to tie ships to the harbour, in English 'hawser'. Wouldn't it make more sense if the actual expression were '*it would be easier for a thick rope to pass through the eye of a needle than for a wealthy man to enter the Kingdom of Heaven*'? Instead of the usual thread passing through the eye of a needle we would have a thick rope failing to do so. This seems to be much more to the

point because, while we can see some sort of relation between a thread and a rope, there is absolutely no relation between a camel and a sewing needle. The solution might be that at some point there came to be a confusion between κάμιλος (*kámilos*) 'thick rope' and κάμηλος (*kámēlos*) 'camel'. *But how could such confusion take place?* Though the words are very similar, the objects they refer to are nothing alike.

At some point in the history of Greek, there was a vowel shift[26] which caused the vowel Eta '-η-' (the mid-vowel of κάμηλος [*kámēlos*]), formerly pronounced as '-*e*-', to rise and to be pronounced as '-*i*-'. As a consequence, Eta '-η-' came to sound exactly like Iota '-ι-' (the mid-vowel of κάμιλος [*kámilos*]) and so, κάμηλος (*kámēlos*) 'camel' and κάμιλος (*kámilos*) '(thick) rope', 'hawser' became homophone words, both now sounding like *kámilos*, and hence the confusion. In modern Greek, *camel* is written καμήλα, still with an Eta '-η-', but pronounced *kamíla*.

This mix-up could have been helped by the fact that some of the scribes copying the text in Europe had never seen a camel in their lives and might not even have known what a camel was; according to them they were writing *rope* (*kámilos*), only that they spelt it incorrectly!

This 'error' was then accepted and normalised into the vulgate text because camel made the adynaton even more hyperbolical than the original version as it emphasises even further the difficulty for the wealthy to enter heaven. The doctrinal opportunity of such a notion is totally beside the point, what matters was that for listeners it seemed to *hit the nail on the head*, and so no one, especially the poor, could object to it and challenge the internal logic of the argument.

FREEDOM AND TRANSGRESSION IN TRANSLATION

The case for unmediated direct access to the textual sources is made even stronger when we consider that sometimes the translator may imprint onto the text his own personal mark and the result may be a compromised translation.

One such case is the translation by the *Bible of Jerusalem* of an episode in the Gospel of Saint Mark (1:40–45) where Jesus cures a leper:

> *And there came a leper to him, beseeching him, and kneeling down to him, and saying unto him, If thou wilt, thou canst make me clean. And Jesus, moved with compassion, put forth his hand, and touched him, and saith unto him, I will; be thou clean. And as soon as he had spoken, immediately the leprosy departed from him, and he was cleansed.*
> **(Mk 1:40–42)**[27]

Fig. 3: The medieval copyist at his desk in the medieval scriptorium. Up until the invention of the printing with moveable types by Gutenberg around 1439 and the publication of the first ever printed book, the Gutenberg Bible, in 1455, books were copied by hand. During the Middle Ages, most of the copyists were monks working in the scriptoria of monasteries. Most of the texts which have survived from the Classical and Ancient worlds did so thanks to a network of scriptoria which developed among the great monasteries of Europe. The process of hand-copying manuscripts is responsible for the introduction of variant readings, or errors, which modern Textual Criticism tries to resolve. Source: https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:BL_Royal_Vincent_of_Beauvais.jpg

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According to the *Jerusalem Bible* translation, Jesus' answer to the leper was '*Of course I want to!* ', '*Be cured!* ' — exclamation marks included. The original Greek text has a simple θέλω 'I want', and no adverbs. What this episode apparently wants to illustrate is Christ in the exercise of his supreme will in front of someone who recognises him for what He is. What the translator seems to be doing here is trying to pass the image of Jesus as a compassionate and good fellow, approachable and promptly ready to help; all the while, the translator seems to be completely oblivious to the theological implications of such an inaccurate translation. Such a translation could with some legitimacy lead to questions such as: 'If *of course, you want to*, why am I in this situation in the first place?' 'And why are so many others like this too?' 'Why don't you just *of course* cure us all in one go?' The translator is imprinting onto the text his own vision of Jesus regardless of the actual words on the page in front of him. Since the gospel is a textual source for what Jesus is, it must precede anyone's impression of him; the source is the text, not the translator. Furthermore, the *La Bible de Jerusalem,* from which the *Jerusalem Bible* [28] derives, has '*je le veux*', i.e. 'I want it'. This objectively inaccurate translation even made its way into a Mass lectionary in England and it is now heard at Mass. This is why *unmediated* direct access to the texts is so important, so that we can make up our own minds!

Quite a different case is when the translator can, indeed has to, choose between different options because the grammar allows for more than one correct translation of the same passage. Such is the case of Versicle 9 in the prologue of Saint John's Gospel, which in Greek reads ἦν τὸ φῶς τὸ ἀληθινὸν ὃ φωτίζει πάντα ἄνθρωπον ἐρχόμενον εἰς τὸν κόσμον. This versicle can be translated as either *He was the true light which illuminates every man coming into this world,* as the Douay–Rheims (1609/1582), Luther (1552/1534) and KJV (1611) translate, or as *He*

Fig. 4: A folium from the Aleppo Codex of the Old Testament. The Aleppo Codex is a medieval manuscript of the Hebrew Old Testament dating back to the 10th century A.D. Its name derives from the fact that the codex was kept for over 500 years in the city of Aleppo (Syria) until the synagogue where the manuscript was housed was caught on fire in 1947. The codex then disappeared and resurfaced again in 1958 in Israel having lost around 40% of its folia. Up until its disappearance, the Aleppo Codex was the oldest complete manuscript of the Old Testament containing the Ben-Asher Masoretic text; now that position has been taken by the Leningrad Codex, the source for Kittel's *Biblia Hebraica* (1937) and the *Biblia Hebraica Stuttgartensia* (1977), which should be around 100 years younger than the Aleppo Codex. Source: https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Aleppo_Codex_(Deut).jpg

was the true light coming into this world to illuminate every man as do RSV, (N)RSVCE, NJB and quite a few others. This is so because the participle ἐρχόμενον 'coming' could stand for an accusative masculine agreeing thus with πάντα ἄνθρωπον 'every man' or a nominative neuter agreeing thus with τὸ φῶς τὸ ἀληθινὸν 'the true light'[29]. Both translations are possible and both are grammatically correct. In cases such as this it is up to the translator to exercise his judgment; context could lend a hand, and in this particular case theological understanding could do so too. Still, from a grammatical point of view, both are possible and both are equally correct.

THE ANCIENT LANGUAGES AS SOURCE OF THEOLOGICAL INSIGHT

Even for those who do not follow the principle of *scriptura sola*, still the Scriptures represent a fundamental source of what is usually referred to as *Divine Revelation*. According to Catholic theology, two are the sources for Divine Revelation, *Scripture* and *Tradition*.

The language of the text in itself may be a source of relevant theological information which can be retrieved through the grammatical analysis of the text. This aspect is frequently disregarded but it can be of value, as the example below will prove.

Beginning with Hebrew, the Old Testament opening line is:

בְּרֵאשִׁית בָּרָא אֱלֹהִים אֵת הַשָּׁמַיִם וְאֵת הָאָרֶץ

(*bərē'šîṯ bārā' 'ĕlōhîm 'ēṯ haššāmayim w'ēṯ hā'āreṣ*)

'In the beginning, God created Heaven and Earth'

(Genesis 1:1)

This seemingly simple versicle has hidden within its morphosyntactic structure the first hint of the doctrine of the Holy Trinity, which affirms that, to put it very simply, *God is both three and one at the same time*. The subject of the clause is the noun אֱלֹהִים (*'ĕlōhîm*) which is the grammatical plural of הֱלוֹהַּ (*hĕlôah*) meaning 'god'[30].

The formally plural *Elohim* is used in Hebrew both as the plural of *god*, referring to the heathen gods, or more frequently to refer to the ONE true God of Israel. In fact, God is never referred to with the singular הֱלוֹהַּ (*hĕlôah*) but always with the plural *Elohim*. The usual explanation is that the plural is used so as to express the greatness of God; He alone is bigger and greater than all the other gods put together.

The verb of this clause is בָּרָא (*bārā'*) '(he) created' which is the third person singular masculine of the Perfective *Qal* of ברא (*BR'*) — the Perfective refers to an accomplished action and *Qal* refers to the simple declarative action. Now, even though the subject

Elohim is grammatically a plural, the verb is in the singular, suggesting *plurality* and *oneness* at the same time. Moreover, plurality is expressed here in relation to the agent whereas unity refers to the action; a plural entity which functions as one. It could be argued that since God is always referred to in the plural and the accompanying verb is always in the singular there is nothing really extraordinary here. To that we could answer that it is not only the grammar here that counts, but the context where it happens and the content of the sentence; this is Scripture's opening line where God is presented for the first time and presented as the creator of all that follows.

In Scripture, there are no explicit references to the doctrine of the Trinity, there are only clues or statements that could be interpreted as suggesting elements of such a doctrine. In this particular case one such clue is dependent on the grammatical analysis of the text, not on its content. By the way, this morpho-syntactic peculiarity is totally lost in translation.

Turning now to the New Testament, here too we can find examples of theologically relevant grammatical information.

In 1854, the dogma of the *Immaculate Conception* of Mary was promogulated. Dogmas as expressions of Divine Revelation must draw their corroborations from both Scripture and Tradition. In this particular case corroborations from Scripture were the Vulgate rendition of Genesis 3:15[31] and the words of the Angel's salutation (Lk 1:28) to Mary at the scene of the Incarnation, namely: χαῖρε, κεχαριτωμένη, ὁ κύριος μετὰ σοῦ.

The form κεχαριτωμένη is what interests us here; it is the feminine singular of a passive perfect participle. It was rendered in Latin as *gratia plena* in the Vulgate and it is commonly translated in English as 'full of grace'.

The translation of κεχαριτωμένη has been the target of some discussion since translations of Scripture into vernacular languages become common in the years preceding and foretelling the Reformation.

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The 'unauthorised' old English translations, such as the *Wycliffe Bible* (1382–1395), *Tyndale's Bible* (1526), *Coverdale Bible* (1535), *Matthew Bible* (1537), *The Great Bible* (1539) still render it as 'full of grace'[32], as did the Douay–Rheims (1609/1582), the Catholic translation from the Latin Vulgate[33]. Luther's translation of the Bible (1552/1534), in turn, broke this apparent consensus when it translated as '*Gegrüßet seiest du, Holdselige!*' something like 'Greetings to you, pleasing one'. In his *Sendbrief vom Dolmetschen*, in view of the complaints that he had corrupted the Angelic Salutation, he justifies his translation saying that a better translation would have been '*Gott grüsse dich du liebe Maria*' because '*so viel wil der Engel sagen und so würde er gered haben wenn er hette wöllen sie deudsch grüssen*'[34]. It is clear that for Luther the Angel's words had no doctrinal implication, they represented nothing but a simple greeting.

The *Bishop's Bible* (1568) and the *Geneva Bible* (1599), both published after Luther's translation opted for '*thou that art freely beloved*' and the authorised King James Version (1611) which, like Luther's, is translated from the Greek originals prefers 'Hail, thou that art highly favoured'.

The problem with this somewhat peculiar form of greeting is that the vocative κεχαριτωμένη is a participle of the Perfect. The Perfect represents in most modern Indo-European languages a past tense whose action is accomplished or finished at the time when the verbal action has been uttered. This is so in Latin, Portuguese, Spanish, Modern Greek, etc. and even in English where the Perfect takes the name of *Simple Past*. In Ancient Greek, however, the Perfect does not represent an accomplished or finished action in the past, that is the function of the Aorist.

Originally in Indo-European, as we can reconstruct it thanks to Ancient Greek, Vedic and Avestan, the Aorist represented a fully accomplished action in the past whereas the Perfect represented the continuing effect in the present time of an action which happened somewhere in the past. This is still what we find in Ancient Greek. It

may be difficult for us to envisage it because we have no such distinction in our system. An example which could help us understand how this distinction works and what the Perfect means in Greek would be this: if the sentence '*Paul went to the shop*' were the answer to the question '*Where did Paul go?*', in Greek *went* would be rendered by the Aorist; but if it stood as the answer to the question '*Where is Paul (right now)?*', then *went* would be rendered by the Perfect, the presupposition being that *he went to the shop* and *he is still there* as we speak.

The form κεχαριτωμένη is the passive Perfect participle of χαριτόω which in the passive voice means 'to have grace shown upon one'. Thus, κεχαριτωμένη would convey an idea on the lines of: *you* (fem.) *have grace* (now) *as a consequence of you having been bestowed grace upon* (at some point in the past [supposedly at your conception]). The difficulty lies in conveying this concept in one single form, as Greek does.

Modern translations still struggle with this form; the *La Bible de Jérusalem* (1974)[35] has translated it as '*car tu as trouvé grâce auprès de Dieu*' whereas its English versions, the *Jerusalem Bible* (1966) has '*Rejoice, so highly favoured!*' and the *New Jerusalem Bible* has '*Rejoice, you who enjoy God's favour!*' [36].

This array of translations bear witness to the semantic complexity of this form as well as to the difficulty of satisfactorily rendering it into modern vernacular.

It is important to point out that the theological insight which these two examples we have analysed offer, is not evident at all when the text is translated.

THE ANCIENT LANGUAGES AND THE SPEAKERS OF SINITIC LANGUAGES IN MACAO

Having seen how, in general, learning ancient languages is important for those undergoing theological training for all the motives explored above, the study of Latin, Ancient Greek and Hebrew is particularly important for the speakers of Sinitic languages, such as Cantonese or Mandarin, in the context of Macao for the following three reasons.
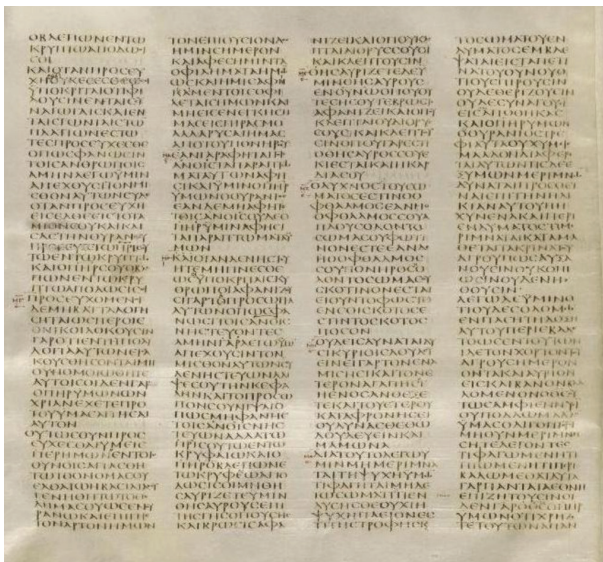
Fig. 5: A folium from the Codex Sinaiticus. The Codex Sinaiticus is one of the four great uncial codices of the Bible. These are the only remaining uncial codices that contain, or have contained, the entire text of both the Old and the New Testaments in Greek. The four codices are: the Codex Vaticanus (abbreviated: B, from c. 325–350), the Codex Sinaiticus (א, from c. 330–360), the Codex Alexandrinus (A, from c. 400–440), and the Codex Ephraemi Rescriptus (C, from c. 450). The Sinaiticus was discovered in 1844 in the library of the Monastery of Saint Catherine in the Sinai — thence its name — and it was first published in 1862. The possibility exists that both the Sinaiticus and the Vaticanus were copied by order of the Emperor Constantine the Great. Source: https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Codex_Sinaiticus_Matthew_6,4-32.JPG

The biblical texts have been translated into English since around the 7th century A.D. and there are well over 400 known English versions of the Biblical text. Translations are also frequently revised so as to reflect better the language of the time, or to reflect editorial revision of the originals or even to reflect new perspectives in Biblical theology. The *Authorised Version* alone has had since the 1960s over 20 revisions and adaptations.

Since the publication in 1943 of Pius XII's encyclical letter *Divino Afflante Spiritu,* followed by the *Dogmatic Constitution Dei Verbum,* great importance has been given to the translation of Scripture and presently the Church recognises over 20 different English versions of the Bible.

When it comes to the Bible in Chinese there are also many different versions, but *how many are translated from the Hebrew and Greek originals and how many are*

translations of translations? Officially the Catholic Chinese version is translated from the original tongues. However, this translation is highly influenced by other translations. The question which Jesus asks Judas at the Garden just before being arrested can provide us with an example of what we mean by influence from other translations. The Greek is (Mt 26:50): 'ἑταῖρε, ἐφ' ὃ πάρει;', meaning '*Friend, why are you here?*'. The Chinese version has '朋友，你來做的事就做罷！' (*Péngyǒu, nǐ lái zuò de shì jiù zuò bà*), meaning 'Friend, just do what you come to do!', which follows, not from the original Greek, but from the fact that *La Bible de Jérusalem*[37] chose not to see these words of Jesus as '*une question, «Pourquoi es-tu ici ? », ou un reproche «Que fais-tu là ! »*', but as '*une expression stéréotypée, que veut dire: «(fais) ce pour quoi tu es ici », «sois à ton affaire »*' which led it to be translated as '*Ami, fais ta besogne.*'[38]: this in turn entered the JB and the NJB as 'My friend, do what you are here for'.

So, the first reason is the need to periodically revise existing and future Chinese versions of the Bible and to be able to produce fresh new translations directly from the originals. In the particular case of China, different translations are also needed for the different Sinitic languages spoken inside the territory of China. The current Catholic translation is a pan-Chinese version, that is to say, it is written in Chinese characters which each person will then read in their own local language or dialect. This will always be a problem because different languages and even different dialects of the same language use different words, expressions and different *modi dicendi* which can not only sound awkward in another language or dialect, but may actually compromise the correct understanding of the text. In this case, learning Hebrew and Greek is not only for one to have direct and unmediated access to the original texts, it is also to give access to others in their own local languages.

Most of theology's nomenclature, and a considerable amount of philosophy's too, derive from Latin and Greek and their meaning is deeply rooted in the history of these languages. The revision and creation anew of Chinese terminology

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Fig. 6: Folium 143r of *Les Très Riches Heures du Duc de Berry*. This is a full-page miniature of *The Very Rich Hours of the Duke of Berry* showing Christ being taken to see Pilates at the Praetorium, an episode belonging to the liturgy of Holy Week. In this miniature, we can see that despite the effort to imitate as far as possible the clothing of Middle Eastern men, the architecture around them is totally European medieval. Source: https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Folio_143r_-_Christ_Led_to_the_Praetorium.jpg

is also dependent on a good understanding of the original Latin and Greek names and the linguistic mechanisms which have created them.

The question of theological terminology is old in China. In the aftermath of the Chinese Rites Controversy, back in the 17th and 18th centuries the term 天主 (*tian zhu*, 'heavenly Lord') was adopted to refer to God, instead of forms such as 上帝 (*shang di*, 'Emperor from above') which is still being used today by some Protestant communities.

Variations in terminology are still frequent amongst Chinese Christians. In some cases, this different terminology can be determined by doctrinal differences; for instance, the Eucharist for the Protestants is 聖餐 (*sheng can*, 'holy meal') whereas for Catholics it is 聖體 (*sheng ti*, 'holy body'). In other cases, it is just a difference of perspective, for instance baptism for the Protestant is 受洗 (*shou xi*, 'being purified') whereas for Catholics it is 領洗 (*ling xi*, 'receiving purification'). But in other cases, what is at stake is the mechanism for creating the terminology. Take the example of the Holy Trinity, where some Protestant communities refer to it as 三位一體 (*san wei yi ti*, 'three ranks one unit'), meaning to say 'three hypostases one ousia' which is actually not a term, but a description, while the Catholics, on the other hand, have 聖三論 (*sheng san lun*, 'Holy Trinity'), literally meaning *holy three theory,* where 論 (*lun*) functions as a determinative in a very similar fashion to the derivational Latin morpheme *-itas* which is applied to the adjective *trinus* so as to create the noun, trin-*itas* 'trinity'. This example shows how it is possible to coin theological terminology into Chinese when a correct linguistic analysis is made from the original theological Latin term.

But not only theological terminology needs reflection, even proper nouns seem to be in need of some revision. Protestants base their Chinese proper names on English or sometimes German whereas Catholics are said to take Latin names as their base

form. Protestants in China call Peter 彼得 (*Bi De),* Catholics 伯多祿 (*Bo Duo Lu*), Saint Paul is for Protestants 保羅 (*Bao Luo*), for Catholics 保祿 (*Bao Lu*). But this distribution is not always consistent, and Saint John the Evangelist is 約翰 (*Yue Han*) for Protestants and 若望 (*Ruo Wang*) for Catholics, but when it comes to Saint John the Baptist, then for Catholics he is 約翰 (*Yue Han*), with the same name Protestants use for Saint John the Evangelist.

The revision and creation of theological terminology and the like are the second reason why

Fig. 7: Folium 37v of *Les Très Riches Heures du Duc de Berry*. Here we see the beginning of the hymn *Te Deum* which is sung or recited at the end of the office of daybreak. This hymn is attributed to Saint Ambrose of Milan and, consequently, it is also referred to as the Ambrosian Hymn. Saint Ambrose, one of the four doctors of the Latin Church, was the Metropolitan Bishop of Milan. It was him who baptised Saint Augustine of Hippo in 387 when Augustine was 31, an event celebrated by the Church on the 18 August and represented by the miniature in the centre of the page. Source: https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Folio_37v_-_The_Baptism_of_Saint_Augustine.jpg

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studying speciality Latin and Greek is important for Christian speakers of Sinitic languages.

Finally, the third reason is the same reason as for everyone else; first, learning these complex languages will help to develop mental skills and learning strategies which will make learning other languages easier; secondly, they too ought to have direct unmediated access to the texts since in Chinese too something will be lost in the translation process — such as in the case of the dialogue between Peter and Jesus, where the Chinese too renders both verbs *agapáō* and *philéō* with one single verb, 愛 (*ai*, 'to love') — and finally because as for everyone else, learning these ancient languages will provide more than just access to the Biblical and religious texts. In particular, the study of Latin and Greek will open doors to the great poets of the Classical Antiquity, such as Homer, Virgil, Horace, and the great

philosophers and thinkers, such as Plato, Plotinus, Thucydides, Cicero, Caesar, and so many others, who will give their readers a different outlook on existence.

CONCLUSION

It was through Macao and by the hand of Portuguese priests that in the 16th century the *logos* made its way into these parts of the world turning three small islands into a centre for scholarship where East and West met. The restoration of Latin, Ancient Greek and Hebrew studies in Macao in the last 15 years or so represents rebuilding a link with that past and putting up a sign of hope for the future. The hope that the *logos* may always prevail over any attempts to stifle it, for the command of the *logos*, in the full extent of its meaning, is what makes us free.

scripsi, tibi gratias, Dñe! RC

NOTES

1   This phrase mirrors the opening line of Genesis 1:1 — Ἐν ἀρχῇ ἐποίησεν ὁ θεὸς τὸν οὐρανὸν καὶ τὴν γῆν 'In the beginning God created Heaven and Earth'; the striking resemblance in both form and matter between the two surely cannot be coincidental; and even though St. John's Gospel is not the first in the set of the four canonical Gospels, it is as if it served as the opening line of the New Testament as a reflex of the opening line of The Old Testament. The original Biblical texts in this article will be taken from the BHS, the VTG and the NTG.

2   From this root we have words such as logic, logical, syl*log*ism and related words, as well as the second element of words such as theo*logy*, onto*logy*, etc., -*logy* meaning 'what is said or known about something, the logic of something', the same as to say 'the science of' something. For the several meanings that *logos* can actualise in Greek, see LSJ *s.v.* λόγος.

3   According to Abbot-Smith (1937, 270–271), *logos* which stands for Hebrew דָּבָר (*dāḇār*) 'word, matter, subject' in the Septuagint usually refers to 'a word as embodying a concept or idea'. Though there are instances where *logos* appears as synonymic to ῥῆμα (*rhḗma*) or ἔπος (*épos*), two other Greek words for *word*, *logos* seems to be reserved for something more on the lines of 'utterance' and not just 'in the grammatical sense of a mere name'.

4   McNeile, *An Introduction*, 267.

5   For a short introduction to Philo, see Honderich (1995, 660), with bibliography.

6   Copleston, *A History of Philosophy*, 458–462.

7   Copleston, 22–28; Ritter et al., *Historia*, 13–19; for the actual fragment (with English translation) collected from Aristotle, where the ἀρχὴ τῶν ὄντων 'the principle of the beings' is described as *apeiron*, see Graham (2010, 50–51).

8   Maritain et al., *An Introduction*, 257–260; Reinstadler, *Elementa*, 225.

9   See Bradsher (2010): First Supplementary Decree (November 14, 1935, Article IV, 1); the facsimile of the original draft of these laws can be found at https://www.archives.gov/publications/prologue/2010/winter/nuremberg.html

10   Reflecting on cases such as these, back in the 1950s, Austin (1971), on a series of talks, described utterances such as these as 'performative utterances', they have no true or false value attached to them, they do not describe an object or a situation but they do have the power to perform changes in our reality.

11   The term 'psychagogy', from Greek ψυχαγωγέω (*psychagōgéō*) 'to lead the souls of the dead', often refers to the capacity which something, such as music, has to lead one's emotions;

etymologically 'psychagogic' means 'that can lead the spirit or the mind', hence, the 'will'.

12 *Cohortatio* is the general Latin name for what in Greek can be referred to as *paraklēsis*, *parainesis*, or *epipōleēsis*, though there are differences between these types of orations depending on their duration and when they are delivered. For the influence of Homer in the *cohortatio* in both Greek and Latin authors, see Keitel (1987).

13 For the full texts, see Domarus (1998, 202–207) and Churchill (2013, 247–248).

14 The *cohortationes* in Thucydides have been the target of many studies, here are two of the most famous: Luschnat (1942) and Leimbach (1985).

15 This comment is not subjective, Hitler himself says in *Mein Kampf* (Hitler 1943, 177), '*Ich, überwältigt von stürmischer Begeisterung, in die Knie gesunken war und dem Himmel aus übervollem Herzen dankte, daß er mir das Glück geschenkt, in dieser Zeit leben zu dürfen.*' When he heard that what would later be known as WWI had been declared, his enthusiasm was actually caught by the photo camera of Heinrich Hoffman, see Kershaw (1998, 89) and Image 6.

16 See Day (2003), and for a journalistic analysis of how the *sexing up* was achieved based on the findings of the *Hutton Enquiry*, see MacAskill et al. (2003).

17 What actually appears in Mt 28:19 is a form from the verb μαθητεύω 'to make someone a student' which is derived from the noun μαθητής 'student'.

18 For a description of the Indo-European languages, see Fritz and Meier-Brügger (2021, 28–57) and Beekeks and Van (2011, 17–30).

19 Szemerényi, *Einführung*, 180–181.

20 For a modern general description of the Sinitic languages, for phonology, see Handel (2017, 86–87) and for morpho-syntax, see Yue (2017, 114–163).

21 Traditionally, Chinese words are characterised based on their semantics as either 實字 (*shizi*, 'full words'), the equivalent to nouns and verbs, or 虛字 (*xuzi*, 'empty words'), particles which carry only functional meaning, some of these are actually similar to morphemes.

22 Teaching ancient languages as if they were spoken languages has of late became relatively popular in parts of Europe and the US and some materials have now started to appear. This approach was started in the 1950s by Danish linguist Hans H. Ørberg who started using the so-called 'Natural Method'. The 'Natural Method' is sometimes combined with Total Physical Response (TPR). As for materials, since the 1960s some interesting materials have appeared mostly for Latin, rather fewer for Greek. A new methodology called Living Sequential Expression (LSE) is now being developed. It is inspired by two ideas from the 19th-century French linguist, François Gouin, namely the influence of sequence in the learning process, and the need to express basic human experience through the language learnt.

23 The *Acta Synodalia Sacrosancti Concilii Oecumenici Vaticani II*, abbreviated as ASSCOV or AS, consists of 32 volumes published by the Libreria Editrice Vaticana between 1970 and 1999; an extra volume was added with the indices.

24 The only exception we know is that of the Melkite Patriarchal Vicar for Egypt, bishop Elias Zoghby, who 'in his interventions flouted the "Regulation" by speaking French instead of Latin'. This bishop seemed to be a bit of a rebel as there were other rules he did not obey, such as not respecting the order of precedence when addressing the council and wearing his own oriental paramenta instead of the required ones, see O'Malley (2012, 125).

25 In Portuguese, French, Spanish and Italian translations, at least the ones we were able to consult, the exact same problem occurs, both *agapáō* and *philéō* are rendered with the same verb 'to love', just as in English. The only exception seems to be the Italian Bible translation known as *La Nuova Riveduta* (1994). This is a Protestant Bible published by the Società Biblica di Ginevra. In this version, Greek *agapáō* is rendered as Italian *amare* whereas *philéō* is rendered as *volere bene*. The Chinese translations also translate both verbs with the same word, namely 愛 (*ai*, 'to love').

26 This vowel shift is known in Greek as *Itacism* or *Iotacism* and it refers to a gradual phonetic process which culminated with the monophthongisation of ει and οι into [*i*] and the raise of η also into [*i*] with the consequent merger of these with the *iota* 'ι'; thence the name *Iotacism*.

27 The translation used here is from the King James Version (1611) because being quite close to the Greek it helps to make the point clearer.

28 See note 35.

29 The nominative case corresponds to the form a noun takes when it performs the function of the subject of a verb and the accusative case when it performs the function of object. The 'Neuter' referred to here is another grammatical gender; Greek has three genders, namely masculine, feminine and neuter. Neuter is not the equivalent to English 'it' as it can refer to animated beings.

30 This word is derived from the Semitic root *'il-* or *'al-* responsible for the word 'god' in Semitic languages such as Hebrew (אֱלוֹהַ *ĕlôah* and אֱלֹהִים *ĕlōhîm*), Aramaic (אֱלָה *ĕlāh*), Syriac (ܐܰܠܳܗܳܐ 'alâhâ), and even Arabic (إِلَٰه *ʾilāh*). The simple form אֵל (*'ēl*) 'god' still exists in Ancient Hebrew and it is the form which Jesus cries out from the cross *Eli, Eli* (אֵלִי אֵלִי) 'my God, my God', but he is perceived to be calling for the prophet Elijah, in Hebrew אֵלִיָּהוּ (*ēlîyyāhû*).

31 The case of Genesis 3:15 is from a very interesting linguistic point of view as it is based on a translation error. In English, Gn 3:15 says '*I will put enmity between you and the woman, and between your offspring and hers; he will strike your head, and you will strike his heel.*' In the Hebrew text, the pronoun הוּא 'he' is masculine but referring to the offspring עֶרַע and so it should be translated as *it* — Hebrew has no neuter. The Septuagint translates it as masculine αὐτός though σπέρμα 'offspring' in Greek is neuter. The Vulgate, in turn, has translated it in the feminine *ipsa* 'she' which is interpreted as referring to the Virgin Mary, and it is used for the corroboration of this dogma.

32 The original prints of these Bibles have been photographed and can be consulted at the website: www.originalbibles.com

33   See the previous note.

34   The *Sendbrief vom Dolmetschen* is an open letter or pamphlet Luther wrote in 1530 explaining his translation of the New Testament from Greek and Latin into German. The photographed original can be consulted in https://www.literaturportal-bayern.de/images/lpbblogs/redaktion/gross/SendbriefDolmetschen.pdf or in https://editions.mml.ox.ac.uk/editions/sendbrief/.

35   The *La Bible de Jérusalem* was published in 1956 as a translation of the whole Bible from the original texts carried by the *École Biblique de Jérusalem*. Each book of the Bible was edited, translated, and commented on by a specialist on the book in question. This particular translation was the first Catholic official translation from the originals and it represents a mark in Catholic Biblical scholarship. Its notes continue to influence new translations. An English translation of the French edition was published in 1966 known as the *Jerusalem Bible* (JB) and in 1988, the *New Jerusalem Bible* (NJB), a new English translation from the original texts, was published. In 2018, the *Revised New Jerusalem Bible* (RNJB) appeared.

36   Other modern renditions include 'Hail, O favoured one', in RSV, 'Hail, full of grace', in RSVCE, and 'Greetings, favoured one!', in NRSV, NRSVCE, NRSVA and NRSVACE.

37   See note 35.

38   See *La Bible de Jérusalem*, 1453, note c.

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BHS = Kittel 1997
JB = Jerusalem Bible
KJV = King James Version
LSJ = Scott 1996
NJB = New Jerusalem Bible
NRSV = New Revised Standard Version
NRSVA = New Revised Standard Version Anglicised
NRSVACE = New Revised Standard Version Anglicised Catholic Edition
NRSVCE = New Revised Standard Version Catholic Edition
NTG = Aland 1994
RNJB = Revised New Jerusalem Bible
RSV = Revised Standard Version
RSVCE = Revised Standard Version Catholic Edition
VTG = Rahlfs 2006

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