

## The Importance of Kata

In mid-summer of 2009 I set out to write on the subject of *arete* or virtue as understood by the ancient Greeks but after several weeks of researching the matter, had an abrupt change of plans. Part of the reason was a vague uneasiness of tackling a subject with explicit moral overtones. Certainly morality is important, but there's something inherently sticky, almost uncomfortable, about the enterprise. How do you wrap your mind around something that ultimately is subjective and open to all sorts of interpretations? Then we have the opposite point of view, one which claims to have all the answers about moral behavior and that any other persuasion is wrong. Unfortunately this tendency is common, one most of us are familiar with. It has dominated and influenced people, mostly in a negative fashion. To top it off, getting a handle on virtue nowadays is more complex due to advances in science as they impinge upon human relationships. However, that seems the province of morality, closely allied with virtue. On a personal level there's the challenge of not living up to accepted standards of virtue, of constantly falling short of this or that goal. The matter becomes even more complicated when situating the practice of virtue within a religious context. The play of religion upon morality can give rise to guilt (especially among Roman Catholics) in that we're reminded constantly of failing to live up to certain standards. So instead of treading on territory fraught with difficulties, I decided to look in a more familiar place which pertains to the roots of our Western tradition. I approached the task by checking as many references to *arete* in Plato and Gregory of Nyssa as I could, authors familiar to me. This is an plan of attack I've used in other instances: taking a representative from the classical world and another from the Christian. Once having seen how both wrestle with a given issue, I weigh their differences and similarities. Regardless of their points of view, what makes the task pleasurable is their common, native language, Greek. I figure that by stringing out key excerpts a picture of *arete* would emerge and emerge it did in a way different from initial expectations. After having obtained a better picture of *arete* through both Plato and Gregory, I felt more confident to proceed. At the same time the ancient Greek notion of *arete*, along with important contributions from Christianity, has special interest from my position within a monastic community. In that special context virtue and the practice of the presence of God are linked indissolubly.

It was at this point that I decided to shelve the project after having taken two unexpected detours. Instead of confronting *arete* head-on, I brought in another concept which initially seemed not quite in place, *anagke* or necessity. This term with strong Stoic associations came to clearer light after having just read a newly published (2009) book by David Bentley Hart, *Atheist Delusions*, the subtitle of which is *The Christian Revolution and Its Fashionable Enemies*. I wasn't much interested in the first half of the book which deals with challenges to Christianity from contemporary philosophers and scientists hostile to it such as Daniel Dennett and Richard Dawkins. Admittedly that subject matter is boring despite all the attention it receives. I say boring because in the end much of the polemics is immature and really not appealing, something you pick up instinctively after you've been exposed to the perspective of someone like Plato, admittedly a biased, personal point of view. Then there's the general lack of appreciation in the West for the contemplative dimension of life which makes it infinitely easier to attack religion but religion in the more superficial or commonly held use of the term. Despite initial misgivings I kept ploughing through Hart's book, more daunting by reason of his difficult style of writing. I was curious to see what he had to say about Christianity in ancient times, how it came to birth and spread through philosophical concepts borrowed from the Greco-Roman world. Part Three got my attention where after having described the Emperor

Julian's attempt to restore the old order of the gods, Hart launched into a fine presentation of how the new religion contrasted with the milieu in which it had come to birth.

At heart was a struggle between a new, radical concept of freedom vis-à-vis fate or necessity, *anagke*. There are a number of terms for fate, one of which is *heimarmene* with more direct Stoic roots, and I give references to it below. *Heimarmene* is a comprehensive word, *anagke* being, if you will, a particular manifestation of it. Anyway, from time immemorial ancient societies had considered themselves as subservient to higher, divine powers, some of which were benign and others no so beneficent. Not only was that true then, but today we're pretty much in the same condition. Anyone can see how little things have changed. It seems that our contemporary society suffers from just as much subservience to fate and superstition if not more. To re-enforce this subservience there comes along authors such as Dennett and Dawkins who appeal to chance as well as necessity which on the surface seems valid. Throw in current interest with regard to astrology, and you have a potent mix. Given the eloquence of such authors, their views are accepted widely and unable to be refuted as they should. Though both Dennett, Dawkins and others like them don't seem to touch upon virtue, I suppose they consider it nice but superfluous if not an aberration with respect to mankind's normal condition of subservience to fate. Nevertheless, we all know that a person outstanding in virtue seems almost not of this world and affects us very much. We have difficulty figuring him or her out; such a person transcends forces which stem from fate and compulsive behavior. Thus I was curious to see if I could come with some insights by contrasting the noble, seemingly free quality of *arete* with the compulsive one *anagke*. While the two merit separate essays, my original focus was to see if a relationship exists between them. That led to the second and final detour which unexpectedly ended up with the examination of a simple Greek preposition.

Ultimately that second detour became the topic of this essay. Seeing a connection between *arete* and *anagke* came to clearer light while I was doing a re-read of *Homoiosis Theo* (1952; the book is written in German) by Hubert Merki, a Benedictine monk. The re-read had the goal of supplementing another project related directly to Gregory of Nyssa, notations on key words from his *Life of Moses*, a work still in progress as of this writing. Actually I had read the book some fifteen years ago, considered a classic of sorts, and now had further need of reference. As the title suggests, Merki details the classical and Christian background to a central idea of our Western heritage, of being made in God's image and likeness. This he does by examining several key authors (all Greek as opposed to Latin), non-Christian and Christian, one of whom is Philo of Alexandria. In that section Merki dwells specifically upon the Greek preposition *kata* or "according to." *Kata* also applies to a downward motion and the contents of a sequence. When I came across the section where Merki expanded upon the apparently insignificant preposition *kata* in light of Philo's works, I discovered what I had been looking for relative to *arete* and *anagke*. Not that I became enamored over a preposition in and by itself but saw *kata* as essential for a re-appreciation of important theological concepts. I say "re-appreciation" because much of what I found there seemed to have been lost or simply overlooked. That led, of course, to considering one of the most important uses of *kata* from a theological point of view, the Septuagint version of Genesis 1.26: "Let us make man *according to* our image and *according to* our likeness." The original Hebrew differs significantly though it hasn't taken root within the Christian tradition. Without getting into what we had lost from this omission, I stick with the Septuagint interpretation since it has had more impact upon us through the Church Fathers and their comments on this phrase. *Kata* requires that we pay close attention to nouns (I include verbs with *kata* as a prefix) which endows them with a more specific interpretation.

For example, consider the references from Plato's Republic below, starting with the first citation: "When the appetites relax and cease to importune (*katateino*) us...we escape from many mad masters" 329c7. Here we have the basic verb *teino* (to stretch, extend). In and by itself this word has its own proper meaning but is enhanced with *kata* prefaced to it. Should *teino* in and by itself be used, the sentence would lack refinement and specificity. The appetites simply would "stretch" us out. However, the addition of *kata*, while not altering the essential meaning of *teino*, does imply (and this is virtually untranslatable) that the unruly nature of the passions "stretch" us in accord with a pattern peculiar to each one of them. The same principle is at work with Philo where the citations are longer, deliberately so, in order to see how his use of "according to (*kata*) the image and according to the likeness of God" is fleshed out. And finally, the list of *kata* references from Gregory of Nyssa demonstrates many variations these nouns can assume.

At first glance, playing around with various twists and turns relative to two Greek prepositions might appear a bit overboard where a few valid though insignificant points are blown out of proportion. However, texts with important bearing upon our heritage such as the Septuagint quote of Genesis 1.26 are rooted within a significant experience which was passed down and reflected upon by many generations. It would be better to say that such texts were part and parcel of a lived spirituality where every nuance had significance, a fact we tend to breeze over today. Orthodox Jews are the one exception. Their well-renowned attention to details of the Torah is foreign to most Christians even though we may admire them from afar. Nevertheless, nothing stops us from imitating them by paying close, loving attention to those texts which pertain to how we understand the spiritual realm and articulate what happens once we've come back from there. Over time the connection between the two realms has been watered down so much that we've lost the will and way to make a re-connection. Nevertheless, the examination of several key terms is in line with two appealing features of our Western tradition: first, the Jewish one just noted where loving care is poured out upon a text and second, the Christian and classical one consisting of a broad, loosely defined field which precludes getting bogged down by procedural and legal questions. This broadness is attributed largely to Christian influence upon Hellenistic culture...perhaps more like a marriage of the two. Such is the essence of a liberal atmosphere (in the older, almost nostalgic sense of liberal education) which was in effect for many generations. Despite having fallen by the wayside and given the dismal options we have now, it remains as attractive as ever. The chief demand is a requirement of paying close attention to details of a literary, philosophical and theological nature. Not many folks are up to the task. Not that they are less smart compared with earlier generations, but sustained attention required which is won only after a lengthy apprenticeship, not a quick exposure to the material. Here all three—Jewish, Hellenistic and Christian—comprise one discipline without each losing its identity, rather hard for us moderns to appreciate. At the same time this liberal atmosphere has something inherently vague about it. It's a broad field in which to play without being constrained tightly by rules. Perhaps our current desire for clarity—and to attain it as swiftly and effortlessly as possible—contributes to its unpopularity and discredit (and politicalization) of the term "liberal." However, this ambiguity, in need of proper understanding, for still it remains at the basis of our culture and gives impetus to our striving. As for this striving, there's a genuine thrill about setting on a quest despite the fact that it may or may not turn out to your expectations...even more so exciting that you may not attain your goal. Such is the nature of an adventure over and beyond a venture.

Getting to the heart of the matter, what more precisely does it mean to be made "*kata* the image and

*kata* the likeness of God?” An important question, for it lies at the heart of this essay. As an aide to answering this question, the lists below relative to this preposition is intended to show if any pattern or trend can be found which later may be applied to the most important theological use of *kata*, namely Gen 1.26. In other words, first it’s helpful to check out *kata* as it pertains to most of the situations in which we find ourselves. After getting acclimatized to its various uses we can shift more easily to its theological application. For this reason I find it important to insert *kata* in the Genesis phrase since we’ve come to think of these words as being made “*in* (or even *after*) the image and *in* or *after* the likeness of God.” Something more vital here is involved than semantics, for history reveals that key words, phrases and sentences have taken root in our cultural heritage because they express fundamental insights into the human condition and continue to impact the way we think. Not only that, a restored insight as with the phrase from Genesis has a lot going for it when we ponder how we’re constituted as human beings. Such a newly restored root concept, if you will, goes a long way to making the text more appealing in order that we may become attuned to God’s presence. From there we can garner new insights, building them upon people like Philo, Origen and Gregory of Nyssa, all of whom pondered the Genesis story of man’s creation. Perhaps that was the intent of both the original author(s) of the Septuagint and Christians who came later. Present a theological insight based within a contemplative appreciation of Scripture and let others take it from there. Not that this insight into the Genesis phrase automatically effects his presence—those who composed it never had this intention nor should we—but it enables us to become more disposed to the operation of divine grace. More accurately, we become sensitive to the way that grace had been communicated to our forebears prior to all the clutter that has accumulated over the centuries. From there we can re-construct an original experience and bring it into present circumstances which differ significantly from the era in which it had been developed. At the same time quite a lot of swimming against the current or against subsequent reflections is involved, that is, when confronted with the Latin tradition which grew with its own valid insights yet ignorant of how *kata* governs our being made in the divine image and likeness.

Having in mind the intent of employing the preposition *kata* as a way of leading us to God, at first I was tempted to suggest it as a type of prayer word. That might be perfectly fine for someone versed in the way both pre-Christian and Christian Greek authors express themselves. It presupposes an appreciation of the subtle use of Greek prepositions and the difficult task of doing them justice in translation. Since the use of *kata* as proposed here is unfamiliar to most folks, it requires some fleshing out. Some may find it odd to focus upon a preposition as a kind of prayer word, but this doesn’t have to be the case. It might be better to say that *kata* offers not a method but is descriptive of our relationship with God which covers every aspect of our lives. When engaged in silent prayer you don’t sit around with *kata* rolling through you head like a mantra; after all, it’s only a preparation for prayer and a means of reflection afterwards. Walking around with the words themselves or some kind of image tied in with “*kata* the image and *kata* the likeness of God” admittedly is absurd. Yet to a certain degree that was behind my intent when compiling the lists below. Then the thought came to mind, what is the benefit of a list except to bolster this idea that had pre-occupied me? Actually the list is a documentation reflecting an approach which seems to work. Those with whom I’ve shared it liked the approach and found it more flexible and representative of their personal experiences compared with the traditional expression of being made “*in* the image and *in* the likeness of God.” As one person said, being “*in*” the divine image and likeness is too strong, like a fish constantly thinking of its presence within water. Such a creature can’t appreciate the environment unless it gets out and reflects upon the experience once back in the water. On the other hand, the

simple preposition *kata* allows you to stay in the water and appreciate the various degrees of density or whatever else you may wish to add to it which contributes to an overall comprehension of where you live, move and have your being.

The desire for applying *kata* with reference to being in...according to...God's presence was the motive behind the compilation of the list below which I consider a poor man's way to lay hold of a topic. Then I recalled an insight gained after having read quite a few books and articles about several authors under consideration here (Plato, Philo and Gregory). "Secondary sources" is the phrase given to such material. When you examine them closely, they boil down to a string of references with an added commentary here in order to flesh them out, nothing new, really. This observation is valid only after you've become acquainted with the authors first hand and (preferably) as they express themselves in their own language. The same may be applied to what I'm presenting in this article. As in the case at hand, I began culling citations of *kata* from the three authors after having read many if not most of them in the original Greek. By inserting the preposition *kata* in these citations I was attempting to discover its concrete, actual use, especially as it governs a sequence or shows the close unity between the subject "doing the *kata*" and what follows from this *kata*, of how it is altered or enhanced. What had I discovered as I jotted down reference after reference (for convenience, the lists below have been reduced significantly)? Yes, there is a valid reason to latch onto *kata* as used in Gen 1.26 as a basis for theological and philosophical reflection as well as a means to foster silent meditation. That reason rests on a deep desire to realize what it means being made *according to* the divine image and *according to* likeness as well as not being satisfied with other interpretations. It turns out that the goal aimed at is achievable, not outside the reach of us all, provided we stick at the practice.

Due to the wonderful complexity Greek prepositions bring to bear upon a text, especially that of a theological and philosophical nature, allow me to make a brief observation about another preposition, *pros* or towards-which. Both Philo and Gregory employ this preposition with respect to *eikon* and *homoiosis*, so it bears consideration. Compared with the "downward" motion implied with *kata*, *pros* suggests a linear movement, a direct...horizontal...relationship with the person or object doing the *pros* and that which is on the receiving end. In the case at hand, *pros* means immediate access with respect to being made "towards" the image and likeness of God. Distance and time are involved which can be either long or short though I get the impression the latter is favored. *Pros* thus gives pretty much the same flexibility as *kata* only on a different level. Ideally both should be combined. On the other hand, *kata* or "according to" suggests a downward movement (another way of rendering this preposition) though not necessarily in the negative sense. It might be better to say that *kata* applies to a hanging-on or a dependance not just of one thing but an indefinite number of items in one category. This is not unlike the compilation of a list or to borrow a common reference from Gregory of Nyssa (it's not listed due to the high frequency of occurrences), "the Gospel according to St. John." Here the Gospel, a written document, is composed by John as opposed to someone else. John spells out events and details within this document in a sequence proper to him and no one else. And so, one item (the Gospel according to...*kata*...St. John) can contain several different items which are related and in the case at hand, form a narrative. This dependance suggesting the pull of gravity means a close proximity between the agent doing the hanging and that which is being hung. No question about it. *Kata's* downward pull is easier to realize in practice than the horizontal proximity with regard to *pros* simply because *kata* goes with the natural gravitational pull we all experience. On the surface of it, we might find *pros* governing *eikon*

and *homoiosis* better suited for describing how we're divinely made, but the Septuagint authors favored *kata* in the Genesis verse to describe our essential constitution which consists of varying degrees of proximity to God. And given our changeable human condition, this turns out to be more appealing by reason of its flexibility.

Let's get back to the preposition *kata* where the English translation "according to" shows that it embraces a sequence or something not unlike a list of items. A list implies a multiplicity of particulars which broadens out the sense of *kata* as opposed to viewing it as a single item more or less hanging out there. Keep in mind that *kata* was contrasted with the commonly accepted English "Let us make man *in* our image and *in* our likeness" (NB: the terms image and likeness aren't found in the Gospels but in St. Paul's Epistles). Here the tiny preposition "in" has come to govern how we perceive God, ourselves and other persons. More specifically, for most of us in the West the chief vehicle for this interpretation has been the Latin patristic tradition. The preposition "in" indicates that either we are "in" something out "out" of it; no wiggle room is allowed. "In" resembles the all-inclusiveness of the air: it contains everyone, an immediacy too much to be aware of and to grasp adequately. "In" is exclusive; it doesn't allow another vantage point from which to view one's environment. On the other hand, *kata* is not so much a watering-down of this "in-ness" but a more inclusive way of laying hold of its contents. There comes to mind a scriptural image, Jesus' proverb of a few persons being saved, which reads: "'Lord, will those who are saved be few?' And he said to them, 'Strive to enter by the narrow door'" [Mt 13.23]. Those posing the question naturally had a mind-set not unlike one focused upon the "in-ness of something where the choices are rather stark, black or white, yes or no. In response, Jesus gives the chief requirement for salvation as striving or *agonizomai*, a verb from which we get "agony." A more attractive, accurate way of viewing *agonizomai* is to contend for a prize. Such competition leaves the door open for a number of options. Statistically, chances are low that a person will get through the "narrow door," but that is secondary to the act of *agonizomai*, of contending. The point is that no one knows the result unless he or she tries. We could say that this striving is done in accord with...*kata*...certain requirements laid by the contest itself and discovered only when partakes of it as well as taking into considerations adjustments one makes along the way. This approach is at one time more demanding to comprehend yet on the other hand, worth the effort of broadening one's mind because it challenges our fairly rigid way of interpret things.

Such is the flexible mode of perception I've been trying to flesh out in light of the preposition *kata*. Becoming attuned to the various ways *kata* governs our ways of viewing reality, we're enabled to cope with the struggle of maintaining God's presence in a world full of distractions and preoccupied with failure or success. Granted that *kata* is a more indefinable and inclusive notion. To live in accord with... "in *kata* with" ...at first seems inherently vague and makes, for example, the final attainment of a virtuous life (i.e., *arete* coupled with religion) problematic: not unlike the parable above where you may or may not reach the goal. The inherent danger makes the venture all the more exciting. Such is the tenuous grasp we have upon virtue or *arete* which refers to the most excellent quality we can discern whether found in an object or a person. Similarly, *arete* is bound up intimately with us being made in...*kata*...the divine image and likeness. It is related closely to the adjective *aristos*, the best, bravest or that which is most useful. Despite this appeal to the most noble qualities available, more specifically *arete* applies to living up to one's fullest potential. After all, such qualities in a person make him or her attractive. We run across a pitfall here, of falling short of *arete* should we not live up to such excellence. Anyone knows this from real life situations, and it doesn't

have to be explained. Though a specific Greek word for that quality opposite to *arete* doesn't seem to exist, the adjective *kakos* or evil appears to fit the bill: "We must go on to the summit of our inquires and address the names *arete* and *kakia*. I don't yet understand the first of them, but the other seems clear enough since it is in harmony with everything we said before...This makes it clear that the bad movement in question is a restrained or hindered motion whose possession by a soul causes it to become filled with vice. If *kakia* is the name of that sort of thing, *arete* is the opposite" (Cratylus 415a9 & 415a10). The potential of falling short is always present, yet the struggle to attain it remains fascinating, and that fascination comprises the essence of another Greek invention, tragedy. Getting more to the point, *arete* is something we're constantly on the look-out though it may remain ever elusive. It seems to be an inbuilt capacity closely aligned with a desire to possess that which is good, *kalos*, or more accurately, that which is beautiful or fair.

As for the preposition *kata*, I have given a fairly extensive list of references which may be overwhelming for the reader. Nevertheless, I include them. After having gone through the list—and I had done this a few weeks after compiling it—then and only then was it possible to obtain a fuller understanding of what *kata* means as applied to being made "according to" the divine image and likeness. From the list it's possible to garner all those *kata* usages from daily life and hang them onto this image and likeness to show how they contribute to sensitizing oneself to God's presence. There's a practical side to implementing this. Most people would concur that the best time to ponder all this is early in the morning before the day gets underway. Soon activities start to snowball and wear us down which make us lose sight of our divine image and likeness until the end of the day when we're pretty much exhausted. It's an awful feeling, really, attempting to re-group after countless distractions. Perhaps at evening we can re-connect with our morning meditation before going to sleep in preparation for beginning the day anew. Both ends of the day are bookmarks when we're more attuned to perceive directly our divine source. We could call it a time when the preposition *pros*...in the direction-towards-which as well as *en* or in...is easier to grasp...compared with the bulk of the day sandwiched in between these two bookmarks. As for the daylight hours, that's when we find it more difficult to be aware of God's presence. Despite testimonies by holy people and their prayerful relationship with God, I'd say that for most folks this is a well nigh impossible task. Yet if we engage in prayer both morning and evening, we tend to compare the more direct presence of God at these times and are less harsh on ourselves. Here the value of *kata* and all it represents comes into play as bridge between the two pivotal points of the twenty-four hour cycle. Instead of aiming for a direct perception of God, one built upon *pros* (towards-which) or *en* (in), why not settle for one compatible with our real situation and capacities and not strain ourselves?

Let's face it. During the day or during the course of regular activities we feel a distance between ourselves and God. Over time this awareness of separation...the further you advance, the more painful it gets...a paradox begins to emerge. That is to say, awareness of distance produces a contrary feeling which can be described as a sweetness impossible to communicate. Of course, no "distance" is involved. For the sake of argument, let's say, it is a loss of that more direct perception of God as represented by the prepositions *pros* and *en*. It appears based in part upon knowledge that you're on the right track while most people around you don't have the slightest clue as to what's going on. Perception of this pain (which at the same time is sweet) comes from the realization that the present state of affairs is temporary, that it will find fulfillment. The basis for this fulfillment is known by faith and can't be "shown." Some forms of spirituality call the time when we're alive (physically speaking) an exile. In it we're more keenly aware of the distance (here space and time are

pretty much the same) between what we know is our natural state and the “less real” one which compels our attention. Here the traditional terms of supernatural and natural are reversed: the former becomes natural and the latter becomes unnatural. When a feeling of alienation arises from this state of affairs, it’s helpful having recourse to some of the *kata* excerpts from the three authors of Plato, Philo of Alexandria and Gregory of Nyssa. Since the last two are more theological by nature and may be more difficult to grasp in the thick of the day’s activities, consider Plato. His list as excerpted from the Republic deal with concrete instances where *kata* governs most aspects of our lives both as individuals and collectively. *Kata* is therefore more descriptive than the other two more direct prepositions *pros* and *en*. Once we get a hang of how they operate in all aspects of our lives, from the base to the noble, it’s easier to shift to the theological aspect of *kata* and ultimately to its root which is being made *kata* to the divine image and *kata* to the divine likeness. From there it’s an easy transition, as it were, to *pros/en* the divine image and *pros/en* the divine likeness. In sum, I’d say the most attractive feature of *kata* is its flexibility, a discovering which surprises some people, because when it comes to matters religious and spiritual, admittedly we’re quite rigid and unforgiving.

Let’s take another look at the Genesis passage which lays the foundation for theological reflection for the entire Western tradition. In light of the preposition *kata*, I give it yet again as: “Let us make man according to our image and according to our likeness.” One gets the distinct impression that when God is described as making man in these terms, he does so as not part of him. *Eikon* and *homoiosis* are external to God, a fact which earlier theological reflection has seen as a kind of demiurge (sometimes identified with Jesus Christ) situated between God and creation. From there all sorts of theological spins have been woven, valid as they may be, but overlook an important fact, namely, the “Let us make” aspect of what’s going on. When in the course of human activities we utter words such as “let us,” we do so spontaneously, most likely with the prospect of enjoying ourselves in the process about to be undertaken. Any plans arise more or less as we go along. While for the most part they’re spontaneous, the freedom and spirit of play in which we do them has a purpose which necessarily isn’t laid out beforehand. I’d say it never is which can be disconcerting to one not sharing the realm of “let us.” In a way, “let us” presupposes a non-planning. This isn’t an esoteric way of talking about the matter, just a means of emphasizing the spontaneous flow of things where adjustments are made as we move along, almost magic-like, to the uninitiated. So if we take “Let us make” in this light and apply it to *eikon* and *homoiosis*, it’s only natural that the object of making requires a pattern or type with respect to the work about to be realized. As in the Genesis citation, a plurality of persons is intimated though this doesn’t have to be the case. When we make a spontaneous, creative gesture usually we utter it in the plural as opposed to “Let me make” or “I shall make.” Inspiration governs the spontaneity which takes a plural form. In the case at hand, it suggests that *eikon* and *homoiosis* come on the scene automatically. Not that they’re produced out of thin air but from a mysterious creative process beyond our ability to describe. So with this little appreciated insight into the words “Let us make” there’s no need for theological speculation as to God being singular or multiple, let alone looking for intimations of the Trinity.

With regard to the creative process of “Let us make,” the preposition *kata* or “according to” is one way of fitting in nicely with its spontaneity. We could say that the “let us” represents the spontaneous part whereas *kata* represents the order which flows from it. Both complement each other. The resulting order is less spontaneous, if you will, in that it implies a close association or dependence to the act of creativity transpiring at the moment, the pattern by which this creativity is

spelled out. Never does the order precede “Let us make” though it can be argued that when applied to God, the order (played out in space and time through the intermediate agent of *kata*) is present with him though not revealed. Attention to the creative act of “let us” allows for a different view when we survey creation. Perhaps this gesture can balance the modern theory of evolution and even comprises the very way things come into being and later pass away. It’s born out by observation and just as valid. The mistake, it seems, is not so much failing to appreciate this insight but by failing to stay with the necessary spontaneity which accompanies it. Quickly we take on unnecessary baggage which has been around long before Darwin and goes under the guise of fate, a compulsive submission to the workings of the universe. That’s part of the reason for the list pertaining to *heimarmene* or fate listed below. Though the Stoic notion has definite value, the compulsion remains pretty much the same. Still, one can be tempted to see the spontaneity relative to “let us” as another form of *heimarmene*: all the stuff around us, including ourselves and that which we hold dearest, is just as fate-ful as any inexorable law promulgated by a capricious divinity.

Though we tend not to consider scripture as representative of that spontaneity associated with “let us,” nevertheless it is evident not just at man’s creation but throughout chapter one of Genesis when God brings everything into existence. This is revealed by the words uttered by God at each day of creation, “Let there be.” One could argue that the so-called fall of man is a loss of appreciating both “let there be” and “let us.” Actually, “let us” is uttered only in 1.26 as opposed to the “let there be” relative to the other divine creative acts. While interpreting Scripture is a serious matter, it’s helpful to be aware of those personal and cultural influences that governed this interpretation. Perhaps some elements belonging to fate indirectly crept in which had dominated this or that interpretation. Be that as it may, I present some excerpts from St. Paul’s Epistles which demonstrate an important aspect of the Good News, freedom from fate or *heimarmene* whether from within or imposed from without as through submission to the repetitive nature of yearly cycles and religious rites associated with them. St. Paul in his Epistles spells out this freedom from a compulsive fate governing the world, one of the terms pertinent to it being *arche*, a beginning or first principle. Since *arche* by its very nature comes first, it’s bound to...well...dominate everything else under its cosmic sway. Five chief references to *arche* are:

- “Neither death, nor life, nor angels, nor *principalities*, nor things present, nor things to come, nor powers, nor height, nor depth, nor anything else in all creation, will be able to separate us from the love of God in Christ Jesus our Lord.” Rom 8.38-9
- “Through the church the manifold wisdom of God might now be made known to the *principalities* and powers in the heavenly places.” Eph 3.10
- “Put on the whole armor of God, that you may be able to stand against the wiles of the devil. For we are not contending against flesh and blood, but against the *principalities*, against the powers, against the world rulers of this present darkness, against the spiritual hosts of wickedness in the heavenly places.” Eph 6.12
- “In him all things were created, in heaven and on earth, visible and invisible, whether thrones or dominions or *principalities* or authorities—all things were created through him and for him.” Col 1.16
- “He disarmed the *principalities* and powers and made a public example of them, triumphing over them in him.” Col 2.15

Despite the advent of Jesus Christ who did away with these supra-human entities, there’s a long history showing that we prefer subjection to them instead of being set free. We’ve come to know

these entities well and have developed a *modus vivendi* we're reluctant to exchange for something completely unknown despite invitations to move in that direction. Admittedly preference for servitude is embarrassing to acknowledge. In fact, for countless generations submission to cosmic powers was a given, so it was difficult to stand outside their influence. To bolster this fact, some fifty years ago the classical scholar E. R. Dodds devoted the last chapter (The Fear of Freedom) of his *The Greeks and the Irrational* to the age-old preference for subjection which flies in the face of all reason. Dodd recounts the lengthy and painful advance of philosophy and science among the ancient Greeks which would make you think it would usher in a golden age with indefinite duration. It turned out to be quite the opposite. Actually, such has been the case with many subsequent civilizations which promised one kind of olden age or another. However, the erosion of philosophical inquiry didn't occur at once but gradually due to numerous external factors which Dodd terms the "return of the irrational." Astrology was one of the prime vehicles for this or more accurately, astral determinism. All sorts of "reasons" can be proposed for why this had happened—foreign invasions and the like—but leave out an innate human preference for the irrational. These instances when the bonds of voluntary servitude intensify may in part be demonstrated by the references below related to *heimarmene* or fate. They contain nouns and verbs prefaced with the preposition *kata* as well as free-standing examples. *Kata* serves to add an extra push, if you will, to the intensification of *heimarmene* and therefore our preference for bondage. And so this preposition works many ways. Such is the exact opposite of choices we make which run counter to how *kata* reveals our being made "according to" the divine image and likeness. Not only that, fate runs directly counter to the "Let us make" gesture of God which imparts true meaning to that tiny preposition *kata*.

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### *Kata* in Plato's Republic

Here *kata* is given as prefaced to nouns and verbs. While references are quite numerous, those which struck my fancy are singled out as not to overburden the reader.

#### Book One

-When the appetites relax and cease to importune [*katateino*] us...we escape from many mad masters. 329c7

*Katateino* (*kata* + *teino*, to stretch). The tension involved with stretching and drawing tight here are in reference to the compulsive nature of the appetites (*epithumia*) which signify desire and longing, often of a sexual nature.

-Stories he used to make fun of. 330e1

*Katagelao* (*kata* + *gelao*, to laugh scornfully, mock). An intensive form of mocking; implied is the "downward" aspect of *kata*, putting a person down.

-When it must be deposited [*parakatatithemi*] for safekeeping, Socrates. 333c7

*Parakatatithemi* (*para* + *kata* + *tithemi*, to put, place). Reference to the use of silver or gold. The preposition *para* (beside) suggests a placing-beside with respect to *kata*, a depositing with respect to that which is laid aside.

-Why do you act like idiots by giving way [*kataklinō*] to one another? 336c2

*Kataklinō* (*kata* + *klino*, to incline): a laying down or yielding in order to conform with another's outlook and behavior.

-When it was clear [*kataphanes*] that his account of justice had turned into its opposite. 343a1

*Kataphanes* (*kata* + *phaino*, to bring into light, appear). Implied is a manifestation such as the perversion of justice of become evident in all its aspects.

-Having emptied [*katantleo*] this great flood of words into our ears all at once like a bath attendant. 344d2

*Katantleo* (*kata* + *antleo*, to bail out bilge water): a systematic diatribe with regard to persons who reproach injustice yet are afraid of suffering it.

-If we oppose [*antikateino*] him with a parallel speech about the blessings of the just life. 348a7

*Antikateino* (*anti* + *kata* + *teino*): *teino* was noted in 330e1 above. Here the preposition *anti* (against) with *kata* implies an organized *resistance* to those against the value of a just life.

-nod [*kataneuo*] yes and no, as one does to old wives' tales. 350e3

*Kataneuo* (*kata* + *neuo*, to nod, beckon): to promise by making a gesture with one's head.

-It is unjust for a city to try to enslave other cities unjustly and to hold them in subjection [*katadouloo*] when it has enslaved many of them? 351b2

*Katadouoo* (*kata* + *douleo*, to enslave): here more a reduction to slavery from a previously held freedom.

Book Two

-And took over the kingdom [*katecho*]. 360b2

*Katecho* (*kata* + *echo*, to have): to possess as well as restrain in accord with one's own plans.

-It will be easier to learn [*katamathano*] what it (justice) is. 368e8

*Katamathano* (*kata* + *mathano*, to learn): to examine closely, to perceive; here with respect to justice in a city or *polis*.

-Must each of them contribute [*katatithemi*] his own work for the common use of all? 368e3

*Katatithemi* (*kata* + *tithemi*, as in 33c7 above): to put down, place, lay up in store.

-They should recline [*katakeimai*] on proper couches. 372d7

*Katakeimai* (*kata* + *keimai*, to lay, repose): to lay down, to be idle.

-Nor must they (poets)...tell [*katapseudomai*] us other stories of that sort. 381d5

*Katapseudomai* (*kata* + *speudo*, to urge, strive eagerly): to be very earnest or serious.

Book Three

-When one omits [*kataleipo*] the words between the speeches. 394b5

*Kataleipo* (*kata* + *leipo*, to quit, leave): to leave behind.

-Rhythm and harmony permeate [*kataduo*] the inner part of the soul more than anything else. 401d6

*Kataduo* (*kata* + *duo*, to enter, make one's way into): to go down, sink.

-He'll praise fine things, be pleased by them, receive [*katadechomai*] them into his soul. 401e5

*Katadechomai* (*kata* + *dechomai*, to receive): to take back.

-Prosecuting [*katatribo*] someone else. 405b8

*Katatribo* (*kata* + *tribo*, to rub): to wear out, rub down.

-When someone gives music an opportunity [*katecha*: cf. 368e8 above] to charm [*katauleo*] his soul with the flute. 411a5

*Katauleo* (*kata* + *auleo*, to play on the flute): to play upon the flute, overpower by flute-playing.

-If he had a spirited nature, his spirit becomes weak...and extinguished [*katasbennumi*] as easily. 411c1

*Katasbennumi* (*kata* + *sbennumi*, to quench, quell): to put out, extinguish.

-Rulers and guardians must be *selected* and appointed [*katastasis*] in some such way as this. 414a6

*Katastasis* (*kata* + *stasis*, standing, position): appointment, state.

Book Four

-The first thing I think I can see clearly [*katadelos*] in the city is wisdom. 428a11

*Katadelo* (*kata* + *delos*, visible, conspicuous): quite manifest, plain.

- Someone who had embezzled a deposit of [parakatatheke] of gold. 442e6  
*Parakatatheke* (*para* + *kata* + *tithemi*, cf. 368e8 above): entrusted to one's care. The preposition *para* signifies a more intensive keeping, of surrounding this object of care.
- To produce health is to establish [kathistemi] the components of the body in a natural relation of control and being controlled. 444d3  
*Kathistemi* (*kata* + *histemi*, to make to stand): to set down, place.

#### Book Five

- Organizations [kataskeue] of the individual soul. 449a4  
*Kataskeue* (*kata* + *skeue*, equipment, attire, dress): preparation, equipment.
- They'll (children of inferior parents) hide [katakrupto] in a secret and unknown place as is appropriate. 460c4  
*Katakrupto* (*kata* + *krupto*, to hide): to cover, conceal.
- Are my views [kataphaino] about this right or not? 468a3  
*Kataphaino* (*kata* + *phaino*, cf. 343a1 above): to declare, make known.
- This is a sudden attack [katadrome] that you've made on my argument. 472a1  
*Katadrome* (*kata* + *drome*, *dromos* or course, running): raid, inroad.
- A wave of laughter that will simply drown [katakluzo] me in ridicule and contempt. 478e3  
*Katakluzo* (*kata* + *kluzo*, to dash like a wave): to dash over, overwhelm.

#### Book Six

- Ready to cut to pieces [katatemno] anyone who says that it is. 488b8  
*Katatemno* (*kata* + *temno*, to cut, hew): to cut into pieces.
- The one who believes that it is wisdom to understand [katanoeo] the moods and pleasures of a majority gathered from all quarters. 493d1  
*Katanoeo* (*kata* + *noeo*, to perceive by the eyes, observe): to observe well, understand.
- Trying by their flattery to secure [prokatalambano] for themselves ahead of time the power that is going to be his. 494c1  
*Prokatalambano* (*pro* + *kata* + *lambano*, to take, find): to seize beforehand, be preoccupied, be frustrated. The preposition *pro* (in front of) intensifies the securing, here by flattery.
- Kept down [katalambano] by exile. 496b1  
*Katalambano* (*kata* + *lambano*, cf. 494c1 above): to seize upon, lay hold of.
- The philosopher, seeing others filled [katapimplemi] with lawlessness. 496d8  
*Katapimplemi* (*kata* + *pimplemi*, to fill up): to fill full of a thing.
- Whenever one turns them (colors) on things illuminated [katalampo] by the sun, they see clearly. 508d1  
*Katalampo* (*kata* + *lampo*, to shine, illumine): to shine upon.
- Comes down [katabaino] to a conclusion. 511b8  
*Katabaino* (*kata* + *baino*, to go): to go down, dismount, descend.

#### Book Seven

Due to the importance of this Book relative to the analogy of the cave, several words which have been noted above are mentioned again.

- human beings living in an underground, [katageios] cave-like dwelling...open to the light. 514a3  
*Katageios* (*kata* + *ge*, earth): in or under the earth.
- If this man went down [katabaino] into the cave again. 516e4  
*Katabaino*: cf. 511b8.
- And before his eyes had recovered [kathistemi], and the adjustment would not be quick. 517a1  
*Kathistemi*: cf. 444d3 above.

- The instrument with which each learns [*katamanthano*] is like an eye that cannot be turned around from darkness to light without turning the whole body. 518c6  
*Katamanthano*. cf. 368e8 above.
  - To stay [*katameno*] there and refuse to go down [*katabaino*] again to the prisoners in the cave. 519d4  
*Katameno* (*kata* + *meno*, to stay, abide): to stay behind, remain fixed.  
*Katabaino*. cf. 511b8.
  - The law produces such people in the city, not in order to allow them to turn in whatever direction they way, but to make use of [*katachraomai*] them to bind the city together. 520a4  
*Katachraomai* (*kata* + *chraomai*, to be subject to, treat): to make full use of, to apply.
  - Each of you in turn must go down [*katabaino*] to live in the common dwelling place of the others and grow accustomed to seeing in the dark. 520c1  
*Katabaino*. cf. 519d4 above.
  - Can you *name* any life that despises [*kataphroneo*] political rule besides that of the true philosopher? 521b2  
*Kataphroneo* (*kata* + *phroneo*, to think, be wise, prudent): to think down upon.
  - By studying ornaments on a ceiling it looks as though you'd say he's studying [*katamanthano*] not with his eyes but with his understanding. 529b1  
*Katamanthano*. cf. 518c8 above.
  - He will arrive in Hades and go to sleep [*epikatadarthano*] forever. 534d1  
*Epikatadarthano* (*epi* + *kata* + *darthano*, to sleep): to fall asleep afterwards.
  - By refuting him often and in many places shakes [*kataballo*] him from his convictions. 538d9  
*Kataballo* (*kata* + *ballo*, to throw, cast): to throw down, bring down.
  - And after that, you must make them go down [*katabaino*] into the cave again. 539e2  
*Katabaino*. cf. 520c1 above.
  - Then having educated others like himself to take his place [*antikataleipo*] as guardians of the city, he will depart for the Isles of the Blessed and dwell there. 540b6  
*Antikataleipo* (*anti* + *kata* + *leipo*, cf. 394b5 above): to leave in one's stead.
- Book Eight
- They distribute [*katanemo*] the land and houses as private property. 547b8  
*Katanemo* (*kata* + *nemo*, to spend, hold, pasture): to allot, pasture.
  - Where people have this license, it's clear that each of them will arrange [*kataskeuazo*] his own life in whatever manner [*kataskeue*] pleases him. 557b8  
*Kataskeuazo* (*kata* + *skeuazo*, to prepare, make ready): to get ready, represent.
  - Isn't democracy's insatiable desire for what it defines as the good also what destroys [*kataluo*] it? 562b10  
*Kataluo* (*kata* + *luo*, to loosen): to dissolve, bring an end to.
  - by making peace with [*katallasso*] some and destroying others. 566e6  
*Katallasso* (*kata* + *allasso*, to make other than, chance): to exchange.
  - who hold positions of power [*sugkatastasiazo*] within it (tyranny). 557b3  
*Sugkatastasiazo* (*sug* or *sun* + *kata* + *stasiazo*, to revolt, rebel): to help in stirring up.
  - The one who is tyrannical but doesn't live [*katabioo*] a private life. 578c1  
*Katabioo* (*kata* + *bioo*, to live): to pass one's life.
- (No citations for Books Nine and Ten).

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## References to *Kata* in Philo of Alexandria

The following are references with respect to *kata* or man being made “according to” the image and “according to” the likeness of God.

-This is the doctrine [*dogma*] of Moses, not mine. Accordingly he, when recording [*anagrapho*: to engrave] the creation [*genesis*] of man, in words which follow, asserts [*homologeō*: to speak together, agree, confess] expressly, that he was made [*diatuptō*: to form perfectly, give a lasting form. Compare with the biblical *poieō*, to make, produce] in the image of God [*kata with eikon*]-and if the image be a part [*meros*] of the image, then manifestly so is the entire form [*eidos*: that which is seen, shape], namely, the whole of this world [*kosmos*: order, embellishment] perceptible [*aisthetos*; noun is *aisthesis* or perception by senses] by the external senses, which is a greater imitation [*mimema*: copy, counterfeit] of the divine image [*eikon*] than the human form is. It is manifest also, that the archetypal [*archetupos*: pertaining to a model or pattern] seal, which we call that world which is perceptible only to the intellect [*noetos*: perceptible to the mind, thinkable], must itself be the archetypal model [*paradeigma*: plan, example], the idea [*idea*: form, outward appearance] of ideas, the Reason [*logos*: word] of God. On the Making of Man 25.3

-So then after all the other things, as has been said before, Moses says that man was made in the image and likeness [*kata with eikon and homoiosis*] of God. And he says well [*kalos*, adverb: beautifully]; for nothing that is born [*emphero*: to bring in] on the earth is more resembling [no Greek word given here] God than man. And let no one think [*eikazo*: to make like, infer from comparison] that he is able to judge of this likeness from the characters [*charakter*: a mark engraved or impressed] of the body: for neither is God a being with the form of a man [*anthropomorphos*], nor is the human body like the form of God [*theoeides*]; but the resemblance is spoken of with reference to the most important part of the soul [*psuche*, with *kata*], namely, the mind [*noos*: perception]: for the mind which exists in each individual has been created [*apeikazo*: to form, express, resemble] after the likeness of that one mind which is in the universe as its primitive model [*archetupos*], being in some sort [*meros*, with *kata*] the God of that body which carries it about and bears its image [*agalmatophoreō*: to bear impressed upon one's mind; *agalma*, glory, statue in honor of a god] within it. In the same rank that the great Governor [*hegemon*: one who leads] occupies in the universal world [*kosmos*], that same as it seems does the mind of man occupy in man; for it is invisible [*aoratos*], though it sees [*horaō*] everything itself; and it has an essence [*ousia*] which is indiscernible [*adelos*: unknown, obscure], though it can discern [*katalambanō*: to grasp] the essences of all other things, and making for itself by art [*technē*: skill, trade] and science [*epistēmē*: acquaintance with] all sorts of roads leading in divers directions, and all plain; it traverses land and sea, investigating [*diereunao*: to search through] everything which is contained in either element. On the Making of Man 69.2

-Now the heavenly man [*ouranios*], as being born in the image [*kata with eikon*] of God, has no participation [*ametochos*] in any corruptible [*phthartos*] or earthlike essence [*ousia*]. But the earthly man is made of loose [*sporas*: scattered, dispersed] material [*hulē*], which he calls a lump of clay. On which account he says, not that the heavenly man was made, but that he was fashioned according to the image of God [*kata with eikon*]; but the earthly man he calls a thing made [*plasma*: anything molded], and not begotten [*gennema*] by the maker [*technites*: artisan]. And we must consider that the man who was formed of earth, means the mind [*noos*] which is to be infused into [*eiskrino*: to enrol, penetrate] the body, but which has not yet been so infused. And this mind would be really earthly and corruptible, if it were not that God had breathed into [*empneō*: to be alive] into it the spirit [*dunamis*: power, capacity] of genuine life." Allegorical Interpretation I 31.5

- Therefore, the man modeled after [*kata*] the idea [*idea*] of God, is perceived [*exetazo*: to examine

well, inspect] not only amid the planting of the virtues [*aretē*], but, besides this, he is their cultivator and guardian; that is to say, he is mindful of [*eisagō*: to introduce, admit] the things which he has heard and practiced. Allegorical Interpretation I 54.1

-Accordingly, when you hear the name Adam, you must think that he is an earthly and perishable being; for he is made according to an image [*kat' eikona*], being not earthly but heavenly. Allegorical Interpretation I 90.9

-Therefore there is no need of addressing either command, or prohibition, or recommendation to the man who is perfect [*teleios*], and made according to the image [*kat' eikona*] of God; For the perfect man requires none of these things; but there is a necessity of addressing both command and prohibition to the wicked man, and recommendation and instruction to the ignorant man.

Allegorical Interpretation I 94.1

-For there are two kinds of men, the one made [*gignomai*: to come into being] according to the image [*kat' eikona*] of God, the other fashioned [*plassaō*: to mold, shape] out of the earth; for it longs for [*ephiemi*: to set on, incite] its own likeness. For the image of God is the antitype [*archetupos*] of all other things, and every imitation [*mimema*] aims at this of which it is the imitation, and is placed in the same class with it. And it is not good for either the man, who was made according to the image [*eikon*] of God, to be alone: nor is it any more desirable for the factitious man to be alone, and indeed it is impossible. For the external senses, and the passions, and the vices, and innumerable other things, are combined with and adapted to the mind [*noos*] of this man. But the second kind of man has a helpmate for him, who, in the first place, is created; "For I will make him," says God, "a helpmate for him." Allegorical Interpretation II 4.4

- "Man was made after the image [*kat' eikona*] of God," and not after the image of any created being [*gignomai*]. It follows, therefore, since the soul [*psuchē*] of man has been fashioned [*apeikazo*] in accordance with [*kata*] the archetypal [*archetupos*] word [*logos*] of the great cause [*aitios*, adjective: blameworthy, responsible for] of all things, that his body also, having been raised up to the purest portion [*moira*: fate, destiny] of the universe to the heaven, must extend [*anateino*: to stretch up] its vision, in order that, by a comparison with what is visible, it may attain [*katalambano*] to an accurate comprehension [*ekdelos*, adverb: most clearly] of what is invisible [*aphanes*]. Noah's Work as a Planter 19.4

-For which reason I was induced a little while ago to praise the principles of those who said, "We are all one man's Sons." For even if we are not yet suitable [*hikanos*: worthy] to be called the sons of God, still we may deserve to be called the children of his eternal image [*eikon*], of his most sacred word [*logos*]; for the image [*eikon*] of God is his most ancient word. On the Confusion of Tongues 147.1

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#### References to *Kata* in the Song of Songs by Gregory of Nyssa

As noted earlier, the preposition *kata* is prefaced to many verbs and nouns. In many ways it would be desirable to include them, but their abundance precludes inclusion. At the same time enough are given to appreciate the value of this preposition. In most instances the same word governed by *kata* is given once. In some instances the translations here do not refer literally to *kata* in the sense of "according to." However, chances are that the reader will be able to get a sense of how this small word governs the context of the sentence in which it is included. Often an accompanying adjective will be omitted to save space.

## First Homily

- once the literal meaning [*kata & lexis*: speaking, saying] becomes purified by a correct understanding. 3.5
- Paul uses exegesis with an eye to what is useful and best [*kata & areskos*: pleasing] for him. 5.16
- In all these different expressions and names of contemplation according to the mind [*kata & noos*: perception] Paul is teaching us an important lesson. 6.13
- of tracing in every way [*kata & tropos*: turn, direction] possible how something more sublime might be found. 10.2
- to teach us the necessity of contemplating the words according to their deeper meaning [*kata & dianoia*: mind, understanding]. 12.3
- according to divine testimony [*kata & marturion*]. 16.16
- descended from the seed of David according to the flesh [*kata & sarx*]. 17.3
- Solomon inflamed the desire of the one still young according to the inner man [*kata & psuche* soul]. 21.15
- an image of the pleasures of life [*kata & bios*] as a preparation for its instruction. 23.15
- the bridegroom does not initiate the desire according to normal human custom [*kata & sunetheia*: acquaintance, intimacy]. 23.18
- many songs in the divinely inspired teaching [*kata & didaskalia*] by which we acquire great knowledge about God. 26.17
- The Word testified to his disciples that they were more than men [*kata & anthropos*]. 29.17
- the wealth of divine milk by which the soul is nourished and draws grace in proportion to [*kata & analogia*: resemblance, correspondence] its faith. 33.13
- If we anoint ourselves with these aromas according to our own capacity and choice [*kata & dunamis* or power & *proairesis*]. 35.18

## Second Homily

- even if things happen to be light by nature [*kata & phusis*]. 48.9
- the evil guard of idolatry exercised in impiety and greediness [*kata & asebeia & pleonexia*]. 59.1
- in the day [*kata & kairos*: special event or time] of judgment he becomes a goat instead of a sheep. 66.15
- He did not make the heavens in his image...nor anything else you see in creation [*kata & ktisis*]. 68.4

## Third Homily

- How could anyone obtain knowledge while he is ignorant [*kata & agnoia*] of himself? 72.7
- Paul...gave himself to others as incense to take according to their ability [*kata & exousia*: power, authority]. 91.11

## Fourth Homily

- to wherever the inclination [*kata & gnome*: the organ by which one knows, mind] of free will moves, it is changed accordingly. 102.4
- The wise architect Paul knew how to express such things in a becoming, harmonious manner [*kata & taxis*: arranging, battle order]. 112.20
- the apple tree...has material similar [*kata & homoiosis*: likeness] to human nature. 116.17
- the virtues, once ordered in us in all their variety, are named according to their different operations [*kata & energema*: action, activity]. 123.18
- They are not to swear by the passing world [*kata & kosmos*: order, embellishment] but by the angelic nature which always exists. 134.6

## Fifth Homily

- It (the Word) was announced in advance by the prophets and then made manifest through the appearance of God in the flesh [*kata & sarx*: cf. 17.3].140.12

-He is in one sense [*kata* & *logos*: word] fittingly compared to a gazelle, and in another sense he is likened to a young stag. 141.3

-the lover speaks through the windows to the bride dwelling within [*kata* & *mesos*: the middle]. 144.14

-The anagogical interpretation [*kata* & *anagoge*: spiritual sense], however, is close to the understanding which we developed earlier. 144.18

-When God draws a human soul to participate in himself, always he remains in equal measure superior to the participating soul because of his super-abundant [*kata* & *huperochē*: projection, eminence] goodness. 158.14

-Because there is always an unlimited [*kata* & *hyperkeimai*: to lie or be situated above] good beyond what the bride has attained, she always seems to be just beginning her ascent. 159.9

-how much more lovable will be the sight of you face to face [*kata* & *prosopon*!]! 164.1

#### Sixth Homily

-Thus it is among persons advancing in virtue [*kata* & *arete*: the most excellent quality of someone or something]. 186.6

-The bride's companions ask each other about her as if she appeared in a form [*kata* & *morphe*] different from her first one. 187.9

#### Seventh Homily

-The Lord in himself [*kata* & *phusis*, nature; cf. 48.9] who is truth, wisdom and power is their essence. 202.16

-This is the most accurate definition of judgement: not to yield to one's own whims [*kata* & *prospatheia*: inclination, propensity] or contenders. 204.7

-to each person the Spirit gives prophecy according to the proportion [*kata* & *analogia*: cf. 33.13] of his faith. 210.2

-the chariot's parts can be adapted to each order within the Church [*kata* & *ekklesia*]. 211.10

-Thus the Word receives his bride's love because in imitation [*kata* & *mimesis*] of the Lord, she wishes all me to be saved. 214.20

-our conversion brought us from a Gentile way of life to one of philosophy with regard to God [*kata* & *theos*]. 223.5

--the Church has one lip and one voice in harmony [*kata* & *sumphonia*] with the good. 228.13

-the mystery of the Passion [*kata* & *pathos*: anything that befalls one] by the symbol of myrrh. 243.15

#### Eighth Homily

-analogically speaking, always they will receive as much as [*kata* & *analogia*: cf. 210.2] their minds can comprehend. 246.7

-The Word desires us who are changeable by nature [*kata* & *phusis*: cf. 202.16] not to fall into evil. 252.10

-God's manifold wisdom was made known to principalities and powers in the heavens by his concern for mankind in Christ [*kata* & *Christos*]. 254.19

-through the Church according to the eternal purpose [*kata* & *prothesis*: statement, that which is laid before] which God made in Christ Jesus. 255.1

-God is truly alone, contemplated in one nature with no separation or division according to the difference of persons [*kata* & *hupostasis*: substance, essence]. 258.6

#### Ninth Homily

-If any of the former spices were sweet smelling to the Lord, it is due to their deeper meaning, not to their superficial [*kata* & *emphainō*: to exhibit, display] or literal meaning. 267.12

-not become soft by indulgence and enjoyment of this present life [*kata* & *pareimi*: to be present,

near]. 283.1

#### Tenth Homily

-such fruit are transformed into every kind of nourishment according to the desire [*kata & epithumia*: yearning, longing] of those who enjoy them! 306.10

#### Eleventh Homily

-If we achieve this with the Word's [*kata & logos*: cf. 141.3] assistance, we will attain the angelic life. 317.16

-according to the pattern [*kata & typos*: impress, form] received on the mountain. 330.3

-in the age to [*kata & aion*] come all limitations will yield to that life...beyond anything seen, heard or understood. 336.1

#### Twelfth Homily

-a certain unpleasantness is evident from the obvious meaning [*kata & ennoia*: thought, notion] of the text. 361.9

-in every kind of evil by which the power of Christ [*kata & Christos*: cf. 254.19] is perfected in virtue. 366.5

-Her heart was struck by the arrow tip of faith [*kata & pistis*]. 370.9

#### Thirteenth Homily

-The bride adjures the daughters of Jerusalem neither by God's throne [*kata & thronos*] in heaven. 372.14

--Christ continually sanctified the common mass of mankind by uniting it to himself in a mysterious fellowship [*kata & koinonia*]. 382.1

-whoever views the world of this new creation [*kata & kosmos*: cf. 134.6] in the Church sees in it him who is all in all. 386.5

#### Fourteenth Homily

-Only gold which conforms to the form [*kata & eidos*: shape, figure] of the head's beauty must remain. 409.10

--Thus the prophets see Lebanon in its different manifestations [*kata & phaino*: to appear]. 422.8

-No member is of less account because of another's superiority [*kata & hyperbole*: a throwing beyond, excess]. 426.7

#### Fifteenth Homily

-the Gospel's words which are in accord [*kata & akolouthos*: following, attending] with the Song of Songs. 434.7

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### References to Fate or Heimarmene

#### Plato

-That is the reason why a man should be of good cheer about his own soul...he as adorned his soul not with alien but with its own ornaments...and in that state awaits his journey to the underworld when *fate* calls. Phaedo 115a3

-Now you, Simmias, Cebes and the rest of you, Socrates continued, will each take that journey at some other time but my *fated day* calls me now, as a tragic character might say...for I think it better to have it before I drink the poison and save the women the trouble of washing the corpse. Phaedo 115.a6

-I resign myself; take me with you where you like. In any case, I see, I have got to put up with the

*fate* you spin for me and submit to your inquisition. Theaetetus 169c5

-When the time of all these things had been completed and the hour for change had come, and in particular all the earth-born race had been used up, each soul having rendered its sum of births, falling to the earth as seed as many times as had been laid down for each, at that point the steersman of the universe, let go—of the bar of the steering-oars and retired to his observation post; and as for the cosmos, its *allocated* and innate desire turned it back again in the opposite direction. Statesman 272e6

-While he was floundering about at a loss, Prometheus arrived to inspect the distribution and saw that while the other animals were well provided with everything, the human race was naked, unshod, unbedded and unarmed, and it was already the day on which all of them, human beings included, *were destined* to emerge from the earth into the light. Protagoras 321c6

-He should not be attached to life but should commit these concerns to the god and believe the women who say that not one single person can escape *fate*. Gorgias 512e3

-In his folly and greed he chose it (tyranny) without adequate examination and didn't notice that, among other evils, he *was fated* to eat his own children as a part of it. Republic 619c1

-What penalty ought he (a murderer) to undergo? I am talking about the man who kills himself, who uses violence to take his *fate* out of the hands of destiny, is not acting in obedience to any legal decision of the state. Laws 873c4

-So all things that contain soul change, the cause of their change lying within themselves, and as they change they move according to the ordinance and law of *destiny*. Laws 904c5

### Philo

-These men (Chaldeans), then, imagined that this world which we behold was the only world in the existing universe, and was either God himself, or else that it contained within itself God, that is, the soul of the universe. Then, having erected *fate* and necessity into gods, they filled human life with excessive impiety, teaching men that with the exception of those things which are apparent there is no other cause whatever of anything, but that it is the periodical revolutions of the sun, and moon, and other stars, which distribute good and evil to all existing beings. On the Migration of Abraham 179.3

-But up to what time this is to be he tells us himself, when he says, "For the wickednesses of the Amorites are not yet Fulfilled." And such words as these give an occasion to weaker brethren to fancy, that Moses represents *fate* and necessity as the causes of all things that exist or take place; but we must not be ignorant that he was well acquainted with the consequences, and connection, and reciprocal dependence of the causes of things, inasmuch as he was a philosophical man, accustomed to converse with God: and he does not attribute the causes of things which exist, or which take place, to these powers; for he imagined to himself some other more ancient power, mounted upon the universe, like a charioteer, or like the pilot of a ship; for this power steers the whole common vessel of the world in which all things sail, and he bridles the course of the winged chariot, the entire heaven, exerting an independent and absolute sovereign authority. Who is the Heir of Divine Things? 300.4

-And, indeed, I myself, am," said he, "all the evils which I have just enumerated: I am a whirlwind, I am war, and deluge, and thunderbolt, and the calamity of famine, and the misery of pestilence, and an earthquake which shakes and overthrows what stood firm before, not being merely the name of a necessity of *fate*, but actual, visible power, standing close to you." What then can we say that a man who says, or who merely thinks such things as these, is? Is he not an evil of an extraordinary nature? He surely must be some foreign calamity, brought from over the sea, or from some other world,

since he, a man in every respect miserable, has dared to compare himself to the all-blessed God. On Dreams 2.129.3

-Moreover, if we saw that there was no such thing as any eternal nature to be seen, those who assert the liability of the world to destruction would not appear to be so guilty of disparaging the world without any excuse, since they would have no example whatever of anything being everlasting; but since *fate*, according to the doctrine of those who have investigated the principles of natural philosophy most accurately, is a thing without any beginning and without any end, connecting all the causes of everything, as to leave no break and no interruption, why may we not in like manner also affirm of the nature of the world that it subsists for a great length of time, being, as it were, an arrangement of what is otherwise in no order, a harmony of what is otherwise wholly destitute of such harmony, an agreement of what is otherwise without agreement, a union of things previously separated, a condition of stocks and stones, a nature of things growing from seed and of trees, a life of all animals, the mind and reason of men, and the most perfect virtue of virtuous men? But if the nature of the world is uncreated and indestructible, then it is plain that the world is held together and powerfully preserved by an everlasting indissoluble chain. On the Eternity of the World 75.4

-While repeating these things over and over again and writhing with his agony, he awaited the end of his *destiny*, and his uninterrupted sorrow agitated, and disturbed, and overturned his soul. But Gaius, being a man of an inhuman nature and insatiable in his revenge, did not, as some persons do, let go those who had been once punished, but raged against them without end, and was continually contriving some new and terrible suffering for them; and, above all men, he hated Flaccus to such a degree, that he suspected all who bore the same name, from his detestation of the very appellation. Flaccus 180.2

#### Marcus Aurelius (Meditations)

-If you find in human life anything better than justice, truth, temperance, fortitude, anything better than your own mind's self-satisfaction in the things that it enables you to do according to right reason, and in the *condition* that is assigned to you without your own choice; if, I say, you see anything better than this, turn to it with all your soul and enjoy that which you have found to be the best.

Book Three, 6

-“Prescribed” means something like this: he prescribed this for this man as a thing adapted to procure health; and in the second case it means that which happens to every man is fixed in a manner for him suitable to his *destiny*. Book Five, 8

-Just as there is one harmony of all things and just as from all bodies the universe is made up into such a body as it is, so from all causes is *destiny* made up into such a cause. Book Five, 8

-Think of the universal substance of which you have a very small portion; and of universal time of which a short and indivisible interval has been assigned to you; and of that which is fixed by *destiny* and how small a part of it you are. Book Five, 24

-But, my good friend, reflect whether that which is noble and good is not something different from saving and being saved; for as to a man living such or such a time, at least one who is really a man, consider if this is not a thing to be dismissed from the thoughts: and there must be no love of life: but as to these matters a man must entrust them to the deity and believe what the women say, that no man can escape his *destiny*, the next inquiry being how he may best live the time that he has to live. Book Seven, 46

-As the nature of the universal has given to every rational being all the other powers that it has, so we have received from it this power also. For as the universal nature converts and fixes in its *predestined* place everything that stands in the way and opposes it, Book Eight, 35

-Either there is a *fatal necessity* and invincible order, or a kind of Providence or a confusion without a purpose and without a director. If there is a Providence that allows itself to be propitiated, make yourself worthy of the help of the divinity. But if there is a confusion without a governor, be content that in such a tempest you have yourself a certain ruling intelligence. Book Twelve, 14

### Gregory of Nyssa

Gregory composed a short treatise (On Fate) devoted exclusively to the subject...*heimarmene*...and goes by that name which sums up the Christian attitude towards it within Hellenistic culture. The text in its entirety may be found in the Gregory of Nyssa Homepage linked with this home page.

-If a Christian subjects himself to *fate*, he will indeed fall into its trap which is clearly inimical to our position. On the other hand, if a person prevents himself from being governed by *fate*, it will have no influence at all. Having said this, I believe that we must shun knowledge of Greek superstition which can captivate and hinder us from following our faith. Since *fate* is inexorable, people say that everyone is subject to its demand and that they are reduced to its domination.

-Thus the unchanging nature of *fate* establishes a person either in a loftier mode of life, poverty or freedom. It similarly applies to a grave robber, pirate, a person living profligately or someone characterized by effeminate behavior. No one should think that these examples compel us to accept *fate* where our capacity to make choices plays no role; rather, they demonstrate that we should depend upon necessity, the source of our impulses, which is imposed upon us against our will and abrogates our free choice.

-This person claims that *fate* interprets such matters because its unalterable nature is responsible for the union existing among stars. When told of such a novel idea (I am neither acquainted with it nor instructed in these matters), I was expected to know *fate's* intention as revealed through the stars.

-If *fate* directs the universe, then no other higher principle exists.

-Should we concede that the stars do not move by themselves nor by a perpetual circular motion either with respect to each other or an external source but always retain their unchanging form, then *fate* does not exist. If the stars' revolution begets *fate*, they are mistakenly considered to govern other things or subject them to its rule; however, only movement can be held responsible.

-In a short period of time each star's property influences life by foretelling and influencing [the *fate* of] every person. Just as a seal impresses its form upon wax, so a person whose life is influenced by the stars' movement conforms to their properties and retains their influence right from the beginning. Having been sealed in such a manner, this influence expands to one's activities because the stars have determined his beginning and continue to motivate him.

-If *fate* were a guiding principle, it would not follow but precede the order of creation. In this light *fate* exists before a person is born although it plays no role in supporting such a birth.

-If a person is either born or dies under one of these signs (i.e., the zodiac), *fate* naturally ascribes their properties to him.

-With these in mind, how can anyone insist upon *fate*? Both our lives and those of our ancestors have abundant afflictions.

-Both the time of each person's birth and death is different, a fact which reveals the absurdity and inconsistency of *fate*

-In conclusion, I think that examples above are not true divinations because they are refuted by numerous contradictions. If anyone shows that *fate* prefigures a future event, each one strikes us as being some form of prediction. Every case is erroneous because their fulfillment appears true yet is the result of demonic deception which stamps them. The influence of *fate* turns man from God, the

source of every good, and makes them hasten after demons. Therefore, people are easily persuaded not to direct their lives according to God's counsel but by the combination of stars. This depravity makes them hasten after that deception so typical of demons. If the demons rejoice at a person who rejects God, their duplicity makes them revolt. Clearly their influence causes error, for it is thought to lie in such deceitful methods which avert us from the authority of God all-powerful.