

# The concept of the logos in Philo of Alexandria, Clement of Alexandria, and Origen

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## ABSTRACT

The text offers an account of the concepts of the Logos in Philo of Alexandria, Clement of Alexandria, and Origen, in an attempt to show the abundance of the ontological-religious conceptions of different theories. The Logos in Philo is analyzed as being multi-named (Word of God, utterance, image of God, angel, Son, Wisdom), as well as being immanent, through which God (as transcendent and unknowable) exteriorizes into the world. The Christological theory of Clement of Alexandria is shown through the prism of understanding the generation of the Logos; through adherence to the thesis of a one-stage or two(fold)-stage of generation; and, through the concept of the Logos as first principle and creator of the cosmos, a first physical and ethical principle. The Logos in Origen is briefly analyzed through several approaches, according to its quality as Wisdom, First-born, Wisdom of God, or God's reflection. Also, some attention is paid to the similarity to the ontology of Numenius, and the question of whether it is possible to speak of a *second God*, as well as on the relation between God and Logos (and Christ, as Logos incarnate), which touches upon the problem of shared essence or substance.

*Key words: Logos, Philo (of Alexandria), Clement (of Alexandria), Origen, God*

The text will briefly explore the complex and versatile ways of understanding the Logos in three Alexandrians (by affiliation or by birth), Philo, Clement, and Origen; not so much in terms of influences, inter-connections and significant comparisons and divergences, but in terms of the richness of the concept in each of them, allowing for a potentially more profound study of the overlaps and intricacies of the development of the concept in different theories.

The concept is first found in Heraclitus, for whom it is a sort of differentiating or ordering principle of the world in which opposites coincide; this can be best described through the doctrine of flux. The Logos is the intelligible Law of the universe and its reasoned statement by Heraclitus. All things come into being in accordance with this Law (fr. 1), and one must follow it, as that which is common (fr. 2); still, even though this law is universal, most live like they have an understanding peculiar to themselves. [1] The ordered universe (cosmos) has been forever and shall be ever-living Fire, kindled and quenched in measure (fr. 30); the changes of fire attain their measure according the Law (fr. 31). The element of rationality is not only the principle itself, but also the understanding of it – it is wise to understand the purpose which steers all things into all things (fr. 41). According to Heraclitus, the soul has its own Logos, which increases itself according to its own needs (fr. 115); and is unfathomable (you could not find its ends... so deep is its Logos, [fr. 45]). All things are one, if one listens to the Law (Logos) (fr. 50). [2]

Plato does not have a systematic theory of the logos, although the notion does occasionally come up in the sense of discourse, rational explanation, or in the context of an ideal model of the world, which is rationally ordered. In *Theaetetus* (201d), true belief with the addition of a logos is conceived as knowledge. A thing is knowable when a logos can be given of it, and if not, then it is not knowable. [3] Plato's ideas about Nous, Craftsman (god) and a (sort of intermediary) cosmic soul have inspired Philo of Alexandria and other authors. In *Timaeus*, the world is a result of a rational, deliberate and good agency of the Demiurge, who wants the world to be as excellent and supreme as its nature allows it to be. In making the world, its maker (or father) looked at the eternal model for it, and, since he is good and wants nothing to be less good than he is, it is clear that of all the things that have come to be, our universe is the most beautiful. It has come to be as "...a work of craft, modelled after that which is changeless and is grasped by a rational account, that is, by wisdom" (28c-29a). In the realm of things naturally visible, god reasoned, no unintelligent thing as a whole could be better than anything which does possess intelligence as a whole; and only the soul possesses intelligence. Therefore, he placed intelligence in the soul, and "soul in body, and so he constructed the universe", meaning that divine providence brought our world into being as a truly living thing, endowed with soul and intelligence (30b-c). One of the main distinctions in *Timaeus* is that of being and becoming, between the eternal and unchangeable, and that which is ephemeral: one kind of being was proposed as a model, intelligible and always changeless, a second as an imitation of the model, something that possesses becoming and is visible; there is also a third kind, the Receptacle of all becoming (49a; 52a, pass). [4] Intellect is not the eternal realm of being, and it obviously transcends the becoming, so it bears some similarities to the Abrahamic concepts of God, [5] and seems to be some of the inspiration behind the eclectic Graeco-Judaic concepts of Philo of Alexandria, and later the Judaeo-Christian (platonian) concepts of God. [6]

Philo of Alexandria offered an illuminating synthesis of Hebraic mythico-religious and theological thought and Greek philosophical achievements, enabling it to be incorporated, transformed and expanded in the development of Christian thought. Philo's many understandings of the Logos inspired by his two cultures are very complex: in his works, they sometimes differentiate, like separate and distinct concepts; they sometimes overlap; and, at times, they seem to exclude one another. In discussing the notion and essence of God, Philo mainly applies an apophatic approach (and is credited as being one of the first strong apophaticists of the tradition); so, the unknowable God [7] and the Logos do not fully identify. God's essence remains transcendent, but He is known through the exteriorization of the immanent Logos in the world. God alone exists in essence (*LA*. I, XLIV, 160) and speaks of himself in necessity (referring to *Ex*. 3.14); is a place to himself, self-sufficient and full of himself, surrounding everything, but not surrounded by anything, one with the universe, omniscient and the Cause of all things (*LA*. I, XIV, 44; XVII, 57, XVII, 58); but, these affirmations do not mean that men know him fully. Philo marks a distinction between *the God*, and cases in which the word is used incorrectly, without the article. [8] In the examination to see whether there really are two Gods, and whether the Logos can be seen as God, Philo, despite the statements that might point to some other god, goes with the opinion that there is one true God only. There are numerous who are called *Gods*, he warns, by which he directs attention to the abuse of language, which is why it is indicated in Scripture that the true God is meant by the use of the article (the expression being "I am the God"). When the word is used incorrectly, it is used without the article, the expression being "He

who was seen by thee in the place" not "of the God", but simply "of God". The living God is not to be described, but only to be. What is called *God* is, Philo states, his most ancient word (the Logos). [9] The Logos is also an utterance of God (different from the Word of God, which could be explained by the Aramaic *Memra*): as God's words and actions coincide, what is uttered does not differ from what is done (*Som.* XXXI, 1.182). By speaking, God creates; there is nothing between the word and the deed (*Sac.* XVIII, 65). As God outstrips all creation, the word of the uncreated God outruns the word of creation, it can outstrip and overtake everything, Philo writes (*Sac.* XVIII, 66). The Logos (the word of God) provides a universal bond, consolidation of things in the world, and essence: it is glue and a chain for all other things, intrinsically and by their own nature loose, Philo states; for, if there is anything in any way consolidated, it is because it has been bound by the word of God, which connects and fastens everything together. The Logos, moreover, is peculiarly full itself of itself, having no need whatever of anything beyond, but filling all things with its essence (*Her.* XXXVIII, 188). If revelation is to be conceived not as through speech-acts (words), but through the "Angel of God" (*Som.* XXXIX, 1.228-239), and is spread throughout (*Cher.* 1-3.); and, if the Logos is conceived as a first born, chief angel, imitating the ways of his father (*Conf.* XXVIII, 146-147), then the Logos is also a revealer of God. God's thinking and acting (creating) are simultaneous, and it seems that the Ideas (Forms) have existed with him from the beginning; but, although in Philo inspired by Plato, they are not equal to the Platonic Forms (which is consistent with Philo's strong monism, the constant claim that nothing exists but God, and nothing acts / creates), they are eternally being created, constituting the intelligible world as God's thoughts. The sensible world is given its existence through the intelligible Forms, which serve as a principle of existence (*Det.* XXI, 75-77; *Mut.* XI, 80, XXI, 122, XXVI, 146; *Cher.* XV, 51). The Logos creates as an operator, based on an ideal model. The Logos, and not God (unlike the Demiurge, or Maker or Artificer in Plato's *Timaeus*, albeit it being a strong influence on Philo's doctrine of creation), acts as an agent of creation, as the "man of God" (*Conf.* XI, 41). The Logos creates the four elements from pre-existent primordial, chaotic matter, through the agency of his incorporeal powers (*Ideas*) (*LA.* I. 1, 329). The Logos is also shown as the shadow of God ("the shadow of God is his word"); it is the blueprint, the model, the archetype of other things, "For, as God is himself the model of that image which he has now called *a shadow*, so also that image is the model of other things" (*LA.* XXXI, 96). [10] The Logos is, in Plato's terms, the Form of (Platonic) Forms, the Idea of Ideas, or the sum total of Forms or Ideas (*Det.* XXI, 75-76), which overlaps with the understating of the Logos as Divine Mind. The archetypal model of all things, in accordance with which each thing is assigned to its proper species and limited to its proper dimensions, is the most important of all essences; and, out of that essence God created everything, without touching it himself, but by the agency of his incorporeal powers, for which the proper name is *ideas* (*Spec leg* I, LX, 329). [11] A rather confusing element of Philo's understanding of the Logos is his postulating of two primary and supreme powers of the transcendent God as united in the Logos, which is like "the third thing between the two". These are Goodness as Creative Power, by which God created everything; and Authority, as Regent Power, by which he governs the world. Since the Logos is the one through which God is, does and rules, they are present in it. [12] Since logically first it takes for something to be, for it can be ordered and ruled upon, the Creative power is conceptually older, and logically (not temporally) prior to the Regent Power. The former makes and maintains things, while they are ordered and preserved in appropriateness and equality by the latter. The Logos is not merely an agent or a characteristic of God, but more

like an extension of him. The Creative Power is the one through which God made and ordered all things, which would mean that the Logos, as the creative principle and agent of creation, is the Creative power. This might seem confusing, but is not inconsistent with Philo's ontological claims – the Logos is a manifestation of God's thinking-acting. Philo also mentions that time and eternity are the two primary powers of the living God (*Her.* XXXIV, 165), and then goes on to explain (*Her.* XXXIV, 166) that one is his beneficent power, in accordance with which he made the world, and in respect of which he is called *God*; and that the other is his chastening power (so the Regent is also punitive), according to which he rules and governs what he has created, in respect to which he is further called *Lord*. It can be gathered that Philo regards the Logos as an intermediary power, a nexus between God and the world, as it is a manifestation of God's powers, an agent or power of God in the world, a messenger or mediator. [13]

The Logos is multi-named: second God, Firstborn, Son of God, Eldest of angels, Word, Name, Image of God, Wisdom. Wisdom as form (archetype) is a paradigm for earthly wisdom; human intellect, or the terrestrial virtue of humans, is a copy, a representation of the heavenly *LA.* XIV, 43; XIV, 45-46). The Logos is also connected to "manna", in the sense that Wisdom sent by God supplies the souls, filling them with Manna, a generic thing coming indirectly from God. The most generic is God, next is the Logos, and everything else subsists in the Logos. [14] The Logos is the most universal of all things created; and, when interpreted, *manna* means "what?" explains Philo, in the sense that "what" is the most universal of all things (which equates the two), and adds that the word of God is all over and everywhere in the world, and is the most ancient thing (*LA.* III, LXI, 175). [15]

At the time of Clement of Alexandria, two theories on the generation of the Logos were prominent: the single stage theory, according to which the generation of the Logos from God was from eternity (Origen being a representative), and a two-stage (or twofold stage) theory, which reflects some of the concepts mentioned in Philo. Clement seems to shift between the two, especially in modern research on the subject, but it appears to be more conclusive that he should be associated with the latter. [16] According to Clement, a certain divine effluence has been instilled into all men, especially those who are occupied with intellectual pursuits; wherefore, though reluctantly, they confess that God is one, indestructible, unbegotten and that, somewhere above in the tracts of heaven in His own peculiar appropriate eminence, whence He surveys all things, He has an existence true and is eternal (*Exhort.* 6). [17] God cannot be expressed in words, and we know him through the Logos. No parts can be predicated to God, he is the One: indivisible, infinite, considered not with reference to inscrutability, but to his limitless being without dimensions. God has no form and no name, and the appellations given to it (the One, the Good, or Mind, or Absolute Being, or Father, or God, or Creator, or Lord) are not placed properly; though they may be "good" names to offer the mind points of support, they do not express God, but together they are indicative of its power. God cannot be apprehended by scientific demonstration either, for it depends on primary and known principles, and there is nothing antecedent to the Unbegotten (nor principles through which it would be explained). [18] God, as the Unknown, remains to be understood by divine grace, and by the Word that alone proceeds from him (*Strom.* V.12). Christ is the Son, God and man, Logos incarnate (When the Word went out in the world, He was the cause of creation; the Word was made flesh, *Strom.*, V, III), [19] through whom God operates and through whom people can ascend to divine life. The Word was and is the divine source of all things (called by Clement the *New Song*), is the cause of both our being

(for He was in God) and of our well-being. He is both God and man, the Author of all blessings to us; by whom we, being taught to live well, are sent on our way to eternal life. The Word was in the beginning and, before the beginning, it is the one who bestows life as Creator (when he forms beings, *Exhort.* 1). [20] Both God and the Logos are described as the ultimate first principle and as the Creator of the cosmos. According to Clement, God is unbegun, the all-complete first principle (or beginning) of all things and the maker of the first principle. In that respect, therefore, in which he is Being, he is the first principle of physical things; in the respect that he is the Good, he is the first principle of ethical things, and again in the respect that he is Mind, he is the first principle of reasoning and judging (*Strom.* IV, 162). From this, Clement states, it is entailed that he alone is teacher who is the Logos, son of the Nous which is Father, and who trains mankind (*Strom.* III, 3). However, he also states that the Son in the spiritual world is that which is oldest in origin, the timeless and unbegun first principle and beginning of all Being, through whom we can search the still more ultimate cause beyond, the Father of all things, the oldest and most beneficent of all (*Strom.* VII, 2; III, 4). [21] Admitting the light (the Logos) means admitting God, and truly becoming disciples to the Lord. Christ as light is eternal life; and whatever partakes of it lives. The Logos also partakes in distributing truth and justice, having bestowed on us the great, divine, and inalienable inheritance of the Father, deifying man by heavenly teaching, putting God's laws into the minds of people. [22]

Pythagoreanism-enthusiast and Platonist (and, although not considered in his time, a Neo-Platonist), Numenius' ideas on gods, based on his appreciation of *Timaeus* and other works, seem to have inspired Origen and other early Christian thinkers, both through references to Hebraic and philosophical ideas, and through the doctrine which possibly prefigures their trinitarianism. Referring to *Timaeus* 27d-28a in *On the Good*, he treats the Good as the supreme principle and the lower principles as gods. Being, as in Plato, he treats as intelligible, and becoming as sensible; the first order of ontology is reserved for the Form of The Good (from *Republic* 508e), identified as God, the first and highest god; then come the intelligible Forms and other entities, and then the realm of the physical and sensible. Numenius interprets Plato in the understanding of god: the first god, being in his own place, is simple; and being together with himself throughout can never be divided. The second and third god, however, is one. This "lower" god comes into contact with matter, but it is dyadic and, although he unifies it, he is divided by it, since it has an appetitive and fluid character (*On the Good*, IV or V, 11). [23] God creates another god; thereby, he states that which is first (or the first principle): the first god (God) must be considered the father of the creator god. The first god is not employed in any work at all, and is king, he it is the creator god that passes through the heavens and governs (according to PE xi. 18.6-10, 537b-d, IV or V, 12). God is, as the source of being, ontologically "above" the demiurge, which is a source of generation (differentiates and orders matter in the world), and as first intellect is being itself, unconcerned and inert. [24] The first god is befixed, concerned with intelligible objects, the second god is in motion, and concerned with intelligible and sensible objects; the natural motion of the first god is stillness, and from it pours out into the universe the order of the cosmos, its permanence, stability and safety (PE xi. 18.20-1, 539ab, IV or V, 15). [25]

Origen's Christology is complex, and his role in conceptualising the Logos quite important [26]. Origen uses biblical analogies in his exegeses, trying to encompass Christ's functions and his position in relation to men, conceiving him as a Son who comes from the Father, like reflections come from light (*Princ.* 1.1.1, he starts off by denying that God

possesses a body, or is a body – him being incorporeal is just an extension to him being eternal, omnipresent and unchangeable), and as word comes from the mind. The son is the image of an invisible (and ineffable God), first-born creation, all that comes from God, a mediation of the unknowable God in adapting it to the sensible world. God’s revelation in the world (the rays of God) is like through light, which is the divine Logos. [27] Referring to Scripture passages, Origen examines the nature of Christ, the only-begotten Son of God and the nature he assumed for the purposes of dispensation of grace in the world, and states his many names (according to circumstances and points of view): Wisdom (created by the Lord, as the beginning of his ways and first of his works); First-born (of every creature), who is not by nature a different person from Wisdom, but one and the same; and the power and wisdom of God (*Princ.* 1.2.1; 1.2.5). Origen urges to believe that Wisdom was generated before any comprehensible or expressible beginning. Wisdom, including all the creative powers of the coming creation, and preformed and prearranged in the power of foreknowledge, contains within herself the beginnings, or forms, or species of all creation (*Princ.* 1.2.2). [28] It is to be understood as the Word of God, because of her disclosing to all other beings the nature of the mysteries and secrets contained within divine wisdom; she is called the Word because she is the interpreter of the secrets of divinity (*Princ.* 1.2.3). Origen also refers to St. John of Cross’ definition of God as the Word, defending him against accusations of impiety against the unbegotten Father for assigning a beginning to the Word or Wisdom of God, seeing he denies that He had always been a Father and had generated the Word, possessing wisdom in all (preceding) times (*Princ.* 1.2.3). [29] The Unbegotten God is the Father of the only-begotten Son, which is eternally being created, and is everlasting as the brilliancy produced from the sun. He is made a Son not by receiving the breath of life as an outward act, but by his own nature (*Princ.* 1.2.4). The wisdom of God is the breath of the power of God, and “the purest efflux of the glory of the Almighty”, splendor of eternal light, and an image of God (*Princ.* 1.2.5). This image of God contains the unity of nature and substance belonging to Father (and to Son), as the son is born of Him, like an act of his will proceeding from the mind. The existence of the Son is generated by him (*Princ.* 1.2.6). All species and even the archetypes of all particular things are eternally present in the mind of God (*Princ.* 1.4.5). God is omnipotent, and He exercises His power over everything by the means of His Word (*Princ.* 1.2.10). Origen conceives a primal goodness as residing in God the Father, from whom the Son is born and the Holy Spirit proceeds, retaining within them the nature of that goodness which comes from the source whence they are derived (*Princ.* 1.2.13). [30] The Logos is not an epiphenomenon of the Father; rather it is one of his many designations bestowed on the Second Person, in order to define his relation not to the Father (like Son or Wisdom, or Image) but to his creatures, being Logos as paradigm and parent of all rational beings who, by participating in it, exercise reason (*Comm John* 1.40; 2.9.66). Christ is righteousness relative to men (made to us of God’s wisdom, righteousness, sanctification and redemption, *Princ.* 1.42), and in enumerating the various ways in which Christ is the Logos, Origen mentions that Christ is named the *Light of the World*, *Resurrection*, *Shepherd* and *Teacher*, *King* and *Chosen*, and after the same fashion also called *Logos*, because He takes away from humans all that is irrational, and makes them truly reasonable. Through the Logos we are raised up and enlightened. Origen urges to consider whether all men have in some way part in God’s character as Logos and explains the relation to sin: when the Lord says that if he had not come and spoken unto people, they had not had sin; but now that he has, they do – the sense in this being that the Logos himself says that those unto whom he has not fully come as reason are

not chargeable with sin, while those who act contrary to his ideas are. However, Origen inquires further whether this would mean that all who lived before the advent of the Saviour will be free from sin and all those to whom He has never been preached will have no sin. But the Logos in man, he explains, in which the whole human race had part, is spoken of in two senses: first, in that of the filling up of ideas which takes place in every adult; and, in that of the consummation, which takes place only in the perfect. Before the consummation of reason comes, there is nothing in man but what is blameworthy; all is imperfect and defective, and perhaps the former meaning is to be recognised in the words "The Logos was made flesh", and the latter in "The Logos was God".

The text offered a glimpse into the various concepts of the Logos of these three authors, showing the richness of the field, its ontological and religious importance, and the many versatile possibilities for further investigation of the development of the concept in different theories.

## Notes

- [1] The fragments used are from Freeman 1948. The main meanings of logos of Heraclitus' time have been something like *statement* or *account*, *ratio*, *formula*, *definition*, *proportion*, *reckoning*, *measure*, even "*esteem*" (fr. 39), and all of the meanings in question have as their basic root the notion of "picking out" or "choosing" of a set of words to form a proposition; it is after that stage that we can effectively distinguish senses involving words (e. g., "statement", "account", "discourse") and senses not necessarily involving words but expressible in words if need be (e. g., "formula", "proportion", "measure"), Robinson T. M. 2010, 41.
- [2] This conception of the Logos as a sort of an all-permeating "divine" force, reasonable and ordering, like a universal principle which makes things be and be ruled, is what urged Justin Martyr to consider Heraclitus a Christian before Christ (Justin *Apol.* I. 46 in Lebreton 1910, 329).
- [3] This is further illustrated by Socrates' dream – the first elements which constitute everything have no logos, each of them taken by itself has but a name, they cannot be told in a logos. A name (and to be named) is all they have. The things composed of the elements, the complexes, have names that, when combined, form a logos (it is a combination of names); they are knowable, and a true notion of them can be had. If one cannot give and receive a logos of anything, one has no knowledge of that thing; but, when he has also acquired a logos, then all these things are realised and he is fully equipped for knowledge (202b). On the problem of knowable or unknowable elements and complexes, see Cross 1954, 434. See Robinson for a discussion of uncompounded elements, the tendency of which is to conclude that, if elements are unknowable because they have no logos, everything is unknowable, from which anyone who thought that knowledge does occur would have to conclude that a thing's being alogon does not make it unknowable, but also "...at the end of the Theaetetus he (Plato) offers strong arguments to show that logos does not entail knowledge, and, much worse, that some aloga must be knowable if there is any knowledge at all" (Robinson R. 1950, 15-16); here, Robinson claims that one of Plato's own favourite doctrines was that knowledge entails logos. For a discussion on Robinson see also Cross 1954, 436-438.
- [4] The figure of the Craftsman is a handy anthropomorphic representation of Intellect, but apart from that, it is unclear what the ontological status of intellect is. It cannot become present to anything apart from soul (30b), which might suggest that it is (a part of) the cosmic soul (Cornford 1937 and 1997, 38-39; Cherniss 1944, 425; Carone 2005, 42-51); but, this is not likely, as Plato is clear on the world's soul being a product of the Craftsman. The soul cannot be identified with Intellect, nor can anything from the realm of the becoming. It is repeatedly stated that Intellect is good, but that does not mean it is the Form of the Good (like Hampton 1990, 909, seems to think). If the Intellect is to be identified with the entire realm of forms (De Vogel 1970, 194-209 and 1986, 73), or even conceived as a form, it would mean it is not the efficient agent and subject with cognition and purpose, but an intelligible object. See Menn 1995 for an account that attempts to attribute efficient causality to the

form of *nous*. Whatever the plausibility of this account, Intellect functions as a causal agent, and not merely as an (impersonal) efficient cause, and its role as a subject of rational action is not captured in Menn's account, Zeyl claims (Zeyl 2008). Also, it is far from clear that the Platonic Forms have the capacity to be intelligent subjects as well as intelligible objects; for a short comparative account on this, see further in Zeyl 2008.

- [5] For an account on the similarities between Plato's Demiurge and the understanding of God in the *Old Testament*, see Broadie 2012, 7-26.
- [6] The concept was re-actualised in Stoic philosophy, in the belief that god is immanent to the world, identical with one of the two non-generated and indestructible first principles of the universe (the other being matter, inert and receptive of action). God is, similar to the stance of Heraclitus, identified with an eternal reason, an intervening, ordering matter according to its design, from a state where all is fire, through differentiation of the other elements, the generation of the world and a regress to fire, in a recurring pattern (its plan is immanent, not according to an external "blueprint" or model, like in *Timaeus*). The Logos-determined world order contains individual centres of potentiality, vitality and growth, the seeds, the seminal logoi. The Logos is immanent and intertwined with matter, which is how, through their reasoning faculties, humans share in this divine reason. The all-permeating Logos is, undoubtedly exteriorized in material objects as well; therefore, the system is, if not "pantheistic", then surely inclining towards pantheism (Barrett 1978, 35). Some similarities with the Stoics are traceable in Philo and St. John of the Cross, as well as in other authors, but it proves difficult to point out direct influences (for instance, in Johannine thought, the Logos is distinct from the material world, different from what was created, Harris 1994, 197).
- [7] God is the soul of the Universe, and men are ignorant of the essence of their own souls, let alone the soul of the universe – *LA*. I, XXIX, 91. All of Philo's quotes and paraphrases are from Yonge 1993.
- [8] The ambiguous expression (or one of several) being "I am the God who was seen by thee not in my place, but in the place of God".
- [9] *Som*. XXXIX, 1. 229-1. 230. Wolfson states that the Logos is conceived by Philo as both the totality of ideas and the totality of powers, and seen as created, as the first-born son, the man of God, the image of God, second to God (pointing out *LA*. II, 21), or a second God (*secundus Deus*, pointing out *Questiones in Genesis*, II, 62), and as a being merely called *god* because of insufficiencies in men's knowledge (Wolfson 1962, 234). Viviano states that, despite Philo's strong language of the Logos as the second God, there is no evidence that ancient Israelites prayed or offered sacrifices to the divine Logos (Viviano 1998, 198). However, on this matter Philo does not in the least use strong language, he merely compares the shifts of meaning when language is used inappropriately. Also, Viviano disregards that the Logos, as an immanent principle of the Universe, does not and should not need sacrifices or special rites. Williamson finds that Philo deduces the description of the Logos as 'the second God' from the statement "in the image of god he made man" from *Gen*. 9:6, underlying that he derives his usage from Scripture (which is not in the least surprising), and summarising with "...though the Logos is neither God nor a god, it is the primary, secondary layer (as it were) of the effulgence or emanation of the divine light, the Thought of God – and therefore appropriately called either *the second God* or allowed the title *theos*" (Williamson 1989, 107). The distinction between a transcendent being, *ho theos*, and the other one without the article, *theos*, which designates a being or an entity with divine quality, as a second (dependent) God, but not identified with the supreme God, is quoted in only one Christian instance, *John* 1:1, where the Logos, the word, is divine, but is not God, the Father, the One (see Hillar 2012, 69). On the importance of Philo's explanation about the incorrectness of calling the Logos *God* and the passages where this is obvious, see Hillar 2012, 68-69.
- [10] Philo describes that, in his account of anthropogenesis, Moses calls the invisible Divine Logos the *image of God* (*Op*. VI. 24; 31 and also throughout *LA*. I).



- [11] The ideas, or powers or, in their total sum, the Logos, after having served as patterns for the design of the world, are introduced into it, to act as the immutable laws of nature. In this phase the Logos is not a property of God, nor the totality of created powers, but a synthesis – a totality of powers of God in the world.
- [12] Williamson uses the fact that Philo calls the Creative Power *God*, while the Regent Power is called *Lord* (or, rather, Philo remarks that this is how these two powers are described in Scripture) to illustrate that Philo, without intending to infringe his Jewish monotheism, and without in fact doing so, calls the Logos *the second God*, in whose image man has been made (Williamson 1989, 107). One of the problems here is that Philo assigns to God actions that at other times he assigns to the intermediate reality. God exists everywhere at once by means of his tensile motion, Cox notices. In *Plant.* IX Philo describes the Logos as having a similar cosmic ubiquity and purpose. Philo does not limit the intermediate reality to the Logos alone, which is confusing, and instead includes the Deity's goodness and authority as intermediaries, both above and also subsumed under the Logos (Cox 2005, 111). Cox describes the manifold intermediate realm as akin to Russian matryoshka (nested) dolls – the powers appear at times to be nested together, one within another, and at times stand separately (Cox 2005, 113). He carries this analogy further, applying it to the Logos as a creative principle: in cosmology, what is said about the other members of the nexus in their cosmological function is said of the Logos (Cox 2005, 118). Mackie sees no problem in the differentiation and employment of powers, apparently as Philo's allegiance to the doctrine of divine transcendence in many texts necessitates the inclusion of intermediaries as, occasionally, they are all the noetic philosopher can see of God (Mackie 2012, 148) - which is true, but not too helpful in the understanding of the relation Logos-Powers. For an extensive account on Philo's involving of the Logos in all of the aspects of cosmology, and the separation into distinct functions, even in the cases where he converges the multiple powers into the Logos and there still remains some ontological or performative gradation, see Wolfson's distinction between *transcendent Logos* and *immanent Logos*. The Logos begins as the mind of God or his thinking power, and hence as identical with the essence of God, but then enters upon a second stage of its existence, as an incorporeal mind created by God, having existence outside of God's essence, and containing within itself the intelligible world and the myriads of ideas of which the latter consists (Wolfson 1962, 233). This is an instance of the concept of two-stage generation of the Logos, according to which the Logos existed from eternity in God, and was then generated from God's essence (*ousia*) before the generation of the world as a separate person (meaning the Logos' nature is eternal, but his person isn't, having been brought forth by the Father, as an instrument of creation before the ages).
- [13] It is doubtful, remarks Williamson, if we should do justice to Philo's view of the Logos if we described it as an intermediary, for to regard the Logos as an intermediary in the proper and fullest sense would involve a departure from the Jewish view of God as a living God, himself active in the world and history - a step not taken by Philo. Williamson emphasises: the Logos for Philo is God's Logos, the incorporeal Word or Thought of God, not a distinct and separate being having its own divine ontological status, subordinate to God (Williamson, 1989, 107). However, Williams does claim that the thought which was perhaps uppermost in Philo's mind when he used the term *Logos* was that of mediation, which makes sense because even if God is seen as transcendent, he communicates through a messenger, through his Thought expressed in a form at least partially available to men's cognitive abilities (Williamson, 1989, 105, 107).
- [14] Philo writes that it is through the wisdom of God which, being both sublime and the first of things, he quarried out of his own powers, and that he gives drink to the souls that love him; and they, when they have drunk, are also filled with the most universal manna, "for manna is called something which is the primary genus of every thing" (*LA.* II, XXI, 86).
- [15] The wisdom of God (the Logos), which is the nurse and foster-mother and educator of those who desire incorruptible food (by this Philo means spiritual food for the soul), as the mother of those things which exist in the world, supplies such food, but not all souls are equally worthy of divine nourishment (*Det.* XXXI, 115-117; also in *Her.* XXXIX, 191, *Fug.* XXV, 138). The Logos is real,

intelligible and created before the world, like Wisdom is. The Logos is an eternally begat "product" of God's essence, and if essence is seen as a property, then, the Logos is a property of God, and so is Wisdom.

- [16] Wolfson distinguishes a few identifications in Clement: the Christian Logos from John with (at least some of) Philo's conceptions, with two stages of existence – as a thought of God, and then as a distinct personal being (after having gotten "out" of God and created the world). The historical person of Christ is also Logos incarnate, being in the world, leading a life of wit and truth (Wolfson 1956, 268).
- [17] All references from Clement of Alexandria are from Wilson W. in Roberts, A., Donaldson, J. Cleveland Coxe, A. 1885.
- [18] The Son is wisdom and knowledge and truth and whatever else is akin to this, proof and description can be given of him (*Strom.* IV, 156; 11, 317, 21). Mind is God, according to Clement, and while knowledge of the transcendent is unavailable, the Son in the world can be demonstrated and described.
- [19] It seems that Photius accused Clement of denying the incarnation of the word (He stands convicted of a strange assertion of two logoi in the Father, of which it is the lesser that appears to humans, and indeed not even that. For he says: "The Son too is called logos, by homonymy with the paternal logos. But this is not the one who became flesh; nor indeed is it the Father's logos, but a certain power of God, as it were an effluence of his logos, that, becoming mind, has permeated the hearts of men" – Photius, *Bibliotheca* 109 (Henry 1960). Edwards, however, argues that there are issues with the different readings of this passage (Edwards 2000, 168), and that Photius was certainly capable of misreading Clement in the first place (Edwards 2000, 170).
- [20] Clement's account of the Son is governed by two contrasting themes, Osborn notes. The Son is considered a being in some way distinct from the Father, yet one with the Father. He is the oldest among intellectual objects, a mediator of knowledge and power between God and man. Clement makes a contrasting emphasis on the unity of the Son with the Father. He is of the Father, God in God, and Almighty God. His unity and his being are inseparable from the unity and being of the Father (Osborn 1957, 39).
- [21] There appears to be a confusion in Clement's description of the first principle and the Creator of the cosmos, Osborn continues, but this confusion might be explained by the different meaning of 'first principle' and 'creator' (like Aristotle employs in *Metaphysics*, for instance). God the Father creates, and so does the Son, and in that sense they can both be understood as a first principle, which, of course, not always preserves the distinction of the meanings. Also, Clement both distinguishes and unites the Father and the Son: on one hand, there is a clear distinction between the Father and the Son; on the other hand, Clement saw a unity of the Father and the Son and he considered that unity as important as he considered the distinction (see further Osborn 1957, 40).
- [22] The Logos not only distributes truth, but is truth that contains all ideas / Forms (similar to Plato's positioning of truth as a fundamental property of all Forms). On the subject of adherence to the one stage or two stage theory of generation, Zahn claims that Clement "always makes a sharp distinction between the only Unbegotten God the Father and the Son or Logos who was begotten or created before the rest of creation." (Zahn 1884, 144, in Wolfson 1951, 71). Edwards argues that this doctrine would have lost ground in Alexandria by the time of Clement's death, and that the two-stage concept (basically a concept of an outgoing logos, logos prophorikos, which supervenes upon an immanent word, logos endiathetos), was not a universal datum in Clement's time (Edwards 2000, 159, 164-169). Wolfson questions Zahn's opinion, summarising it as based upon four considerations. There are statements in Clement, he lists as a first consideration, that God and the Logos are one, that the Son is in Him, and the Father is in the Son, taken to mean that God and Logos were from eternity related as Father and Son (so, the generation from the Father is eternal). Second, Wolfson lists, Clement reportedly said that the Son or the Logos was generated without beginning, which would imply that he believed in the eternal generation. However, the text from which this opinion is read, actually reads not that the Logos was generated without beginning, but

rather that it was impassable without beginning (see Wolfson 1951, 73), which would mean that the Logos' freedom from passion is inherent and not a matter of struggle, like in men (the issue with the passage Wolfson locates in the Latin translation of the *Stromata* reading that the Logos is impassible and begotten without a beginning). The third consideration are the statements in which the Son is described as timeless, beginningless, oldest in generation, a first principle of existences, which makes him seem eternally generated from God, who is without a beginning. This is inconclusive, Wolfson argues, as even on the assumption of the two-stage theory, the second stage of the Logos may still be described as timeless or beginningless, in the sense that time did not exist before the world, so his generation would not have been in time (also, this calls to mind much of Philo's understanding of the Logos as a principle / firstling of existence, most generic of created things, and older than anything that has been an object of creation). And finally, the eternal Son taken in context of post-resurrection, seems to point to a single stage theory, but is also inconclusive, as *eternal*, just as in Philo, may mean that he does not end (eternal as unending, Wolfson 1951, 73-74). Wolfson, thus, roots for the two-fold stage theory, like the passages of the *Stromata*, where Logos is identified with truth, and truth with a Platonian Form as a conception of God.

- [23] The references of Numenius' fragments are from Boys-Stones 2014.
- [24] God is the principle of substance, while the creator is the god of becoming; therefore, the creator stands in relation to the good, which it imitates, and becoming imitates substance (V, 15).
- [25] For whether the high God is identical with the Form of the Good from the *Republic* or not, as the latter is beyond being, and the first god is being itself (which is also debatable, as the Good is also being in *Republic* 518c9, 526e3-4, 532c5-6); and, for Numenius' insistence on the first principle as being and his hierarchy of being, see Origen, *Cels.* IV.64.14-28. Whether it might be conceived as being like in *Gen.* 3:14, see Dodds 1960, 15-16; Edwards 1989. Still, it is not a biblical reference: his incomprehensible and ineffable, distant source of being is more like the One in Plotinus than like God of *Genesis*. Numenius does not overlap the divine demiurge with the Form of the Good, either. The demiurge is being used as a second intellect by the high god (the first intellect) (VI, 16), as an instrument of thinking. The second intellect thinks of the Forms and serves to create by differentiating the Forms, imposing them on matter (like Nous in Plotinus). It also contains all Forms, or amounts to all other Forms, apart from the Form of the Good (considering that all other Forms participate in it). The order goes: the first god, the good-itself; the imitator of this, the good creator; then substance: "one which is that of the first [sc. god], and another that of the second [god]; and the imitation of this is the beautiful cosmos, made beautiful by participation in the beautiful" (PE xi. 22.3-5, 544ab, V, 16). Otherwise put, this means that Numenius "raises a hymn to the three gods" – the first father, the second maker and the third, artefact – for according to him the cosmos is the third god. This means that, according to him, the creator is double: the first god and the second, while what is created is the third (or an ancestor-offspring-descendant relation) (Proclus, in *Tim.* i. 303.27 - 304.7 Diehl, VI, 12).
- [26] His Logos is not the Christ from Christian worship and deeds, nor yet the *New Testament* Son of Man; while the Christ of faith is God and man, the Christ of Origen is neither (Edwards 2002, 65).
- [27] The human soul of Jesus unites with the Logos, and comes to share its properties. The Logos is coeternal with the Father, but also subordinate to him (McGrath 2010, 283). The Father is the creator of the world, the son redeems it, and the Holy Spirit sanctifies it, which gives each Person a different realm of agency, and unequal ontological status: the Father is preeminent to both Son and Spirit, he is the source and origin, the principle of being and divinity.
- [28] In the sense of Numenius' duplication of intellects / gods (the Demiurge being a second nous to the first, real intellect, which is being itself) and Plato's occasional identification of Nous with the Form of the Good, Origen seems to faithfully follow more of a Platonian than an apophatic (Philo-inspired) path, in affirming that nothing is higher than intellect. This does not mean that in other respects he abandons the line that God's essence or ousia can be known; on the contrary, be it noetic or supranoeitic, God is known by his exteriorization in the world, by his power of action

upon created beings (*On Prayer* 25.3). His power (*dynamis*) is mediated by his Logos, the Second Person of the Trinity, who does not proceed directly from the immutable ousia of God (*Comm John*. 13.25,153; 20.18,157). In the Trinity, the Second person is another god (*Dialogue with Heracleides* 2), and a second god (*Cels.* 5.39, 5.61). Edwards suggests that this was not meant for devout Christians, nor even those who do not hesitate to subordinate the Son to the Father, perhaps due to its inclination to polytheism, and not because of its confuting of the Persons (Edwards 2006, 191-195). Edwards expands: for Origen, *hypostasis* is not a term denoting a relation, and the assertion of three hypostases in the Trinity entails that the Father and Son are distinct in number. The same point is conveyed by the notorious expression *heteros theos* (another god) (from *Dialogue with Heracleides*). *Heteros*, it is argued, implies *deuteros*, and since it is apparent from other passages in Origen that his Logos is inferior to the Father in power and dignity, his Christ is all too plainly the second god or second intellect of Numenius. Yet, even those who insinuate that Origen himself endorsed the locution *deuteros theos* do not pretend that he ever spoke of a First God, or a third, in the Christian trinity; and, in the argument in the *Dialogue*, the meaning of *other* is not that Christ is inferior to the Father in nature, but that he comes second in the train of reasoning (the divinity of the Father is a postulate, the divinity of the Son gets demonstrated – Edwards 2002, 68-69). The Logos is the absolute and transcendent *dynamis* of the Father (*Cels.* 1.66; *Comm John*. 1.18.107), which makes him properly the lord of every *dynamis* in heaven and earth (*Cels.* 5.45). This polysemic usage of the term, which aligns with that of the New Testament, "...presents no difficulty so long as every other *dynamis* is conceived as a lower or local manifestation of the undivided power which appertains to him as Logos." (Edwards 2014). The Father and Son are distinct in both hypokeimenon (substrate) and in essence or nature (ousia). It seems unlikely that Origen could have signed the *Nicene Creed* of 325, in which the Son is declared to be from the ousia of the Father, and therefore homoousios (of one essence, substance or nature) with him (as in *Comm John* 20.18); there is community of nature between the two, however, (*Comm John* 2.10.76); and in his *Commentary on Hebrews*, Origen deduces from a combination of *Wisdom* 7.25-26, where Wisdom is styled an *aporroia* or emanation of the Father, that the relation between the two persons of the Trinity is analogous to the one between an ointment and the exhalation homoousios with it (Pamphilus, *Apology* 99–104; see Edwards 2002, 68).

[29] Similarly to Philo, Origen explains the use of the definite article in *John* 1.1: for him the article is to show that the God is "very" God, in contrast with the Son who is just God (*Comm John* 2.7.16–18). Also, he claims that the world got created through the Son, which positions him as an executive force of God in the world. The Father could not have ever lacked wisdom, nor could this wisdom have taken any form different from what it now possesses as the Second Person of the Trinity (*Princ.* 1.2.2). The Logos is in the beginning, that is, in wisdom, always. Its being in wisdom, which is called *the beginning*, does not prevent it from being with God and from being God, and it is not simply with God, but is in the beginning, in wisdom, with God, insists Origen. And to let us understand that the Word has His own definite place and sphere as one who has life in Himself (and is a distinct person), we must also speak about powers, not about power. We frequently read, recalls Origen, that there are certain creatures, rational and divine, which are called powers, of which Christ is the highest. He is called not only the wisdom of God but also His power. There are several powers of God, each of them in its own form, and Christ is different from these and has His being in the beginning, in wisdom, which accounts for the "In the beginning was the Logos" (*Comm John* 1.42). The Son is eternally created (although he is not intent upon that as often as Philo is), in the sense that the three hypostases are not only eternal in nature, but in the sense that there was no time when wisdom was merely a thought of God and had not come forth as speech, which makes them eternal in hypostatic character as well. The Logos, according to many Christian writers, as well as to Philo of Alexandria, became incarnate after being as god with the Father (the God), and this again is the one stage versus two stage generation problem. Since in *John* 1.1., this speech or word created the world, there would not have been any need for it to exist before the creation as a separate hypostasis, except as a word within (before becoming utterance, like in Philo, and partially

Clement, who perhaps does not deny the Logos' eternal hypostatic character), see Edwards 2000. In Origen, however, the Logos is not speech or utterance, as that would make it a secondary function of God (*Comm John* 1.24.151), see Orbe 1991.

[30] Origen strongly affirms the ontological dependence of the Holy Spirit as third hypostasis on the second, as he was brought into being by the Son or Logos. There is, however, a slight clarification – the Logos is the author of everything that comes into being, creation goes through him, but it would be more correct to state not that the Spirit came through the Son, but that it did not come into being without the Son (*Comm John* 2.12.17–19). In *Genesis* the Spirit floats over the face of the waters before creation (probably a residual ordinary cosmogonical motif), and the Logos supplants the Spirit (*John* 1.3), but after Jesus' glorification (as the Spirit applies to the elect, unlike the Father, who applies to all creation, and the Son, who is at work in reasonable entities who possess logos).

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## Концептите за Логосот кај Филон Александриски, Климент Александриски и кај Ориген

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### РЕЗИМЕ

Клучни зборови: Логос, Филон (Александриски), Климент (Александриски), Ориген, Бог

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