



Dictionary
of
LATIN
and
GREEK
Theological Terms

Drawn Principally
from Protestant Scholastic Theology

• Second Edition •

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To my parents,
Alfred and Kathryn Muller,
with love and gratitude

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Preface to the Second Edition

More than three decades have passed since the appearance of the first edition of my *Dictionary of Latin and Greek Theological Terms*. Reception of the book throughout the years has been most gratifying.

In many ways the first edition of the dictionary charted my own introduction both to the intricacies and, underneath those intricacies, to the incredible clarity of Protestant scholastic thought. In the years intervening between that initial attempt at grasping the vocabulary of the older orthodoxy and this new edition of the book, I have continued to study the materials of the eras of the Reformation and orthodoxy, and I have found (not surprisingly) that the language of this highly variegated, philosophically attuned, and sometimes highly technical theology was far richer than I had originally imagined. A second edition allows me to offer in print an expanded point of entry into the terminology of Protestant orthodoxy, incorporating some of what I have learned over the years.

Few readers have complained about omissions, although various colleagues and students have noted terms and phrases that they would have liked to have seen included and defined, and several colleagues have indicated places in which definitions could be improved. My thanks in particular to David Sytsma, who carefully read through the entire text, pressed me to clarify passages, and made numerous suggestions for additions and elaborations. This new edition of the dictionary permits me to thank those colleagues by adding over one hundred terms and phrases; by editing, refining, and expanding other definitions; and by correcting typographical errors (and hopefully not inserting new ones).

Soli Deo gloria

Preface to the First Edition

The ability to work productively in the field of theology, as in any long-established discipline, rests in no small measure upon the mastery of vocabulary. The task is doubly difficult for English-speaking students. In the first place, the technical language of theology is still frequently in Greek or Latin. Not only is the precision of the original languages often lost in the transition to English, but many of the standard works in the field of theology continue to use the Greek and Latin terms, assuming that students have mastered the vocabulary. The problem is complicated, in the second place, by the fact that most of the contemporary lexical aids developed for English-speaking theological students are completely in English, including both the terms and their definitions. These considerations alone were enough inducement to lead one toward writing a brief dictionary of Greek and Latin theological terms.

There is one other issue, however, which makes the need for such a lexicon even more pressing: that issue concerns the Protestant heritage and its appropriation in and for the present, for the education of future ministers and teachers, and for the good of the church. Protestants have at their disposal a wealth of finely wrought theological systems, not only from the Reformers, but also from their successors, the theologians and teachers of the late sixteenth and seventeenth centuries. These latter writers took the ideas of the Reformers and, for the sake of preserving Protestantism from external attack and internal dissolution, forged a precise and detailed technical edifice of school-theology, which is now called Protestant orthodoxy or Protestant scholasticism. Not only did these orthodox or scholastic Protestants sustain the historical progress of the Reformation and transmit its theology to later generations, but they also clarified and developed the doctrines of the

Reformers on such topics as the threefold office of Christ, the two states of Christ, the Lord's Supper, and predestination.

The work of these theologians is well described by the two terms "scholastic" and "orthodox." The former term refers primarily to method, the latter primarily to dogmatic or doctrinal intention. In the late sixteenth and the seventeenth centuries, both Reformed and Lutheran theologians adopted a highly technical and logical approach to theological system, according to which each theological topic, or locus, was divided into its component parts, and the parts were analyzed and then defined in careful propositional form. In addition, this highly technical approach sought to achieve precise definition by debate with adversaries and by use of the Christian tradition as a whole in arguing its doctrines. The form of theological system was adapted to a didactical and polemical model that could move from biblical definition to traditional development of doctrine, to debate with doctrinal adversaries past and present, to theological resolution of the problem. This method is rightly called scholastic both in view of its roots in medieval scholasticism and in view of its intention to provide an adequate technical theology for schools—seminaries and universities. The goal of this method, the dogmatic or doctrinal intention of this theology, was to provide the church with "right teaching," literally, "orthodoxy."

I cannot here engage in the debate over the theology of the Protestant orthodox; some have called it dry, rigid, and a distortion of the Reformation; others, among them Karl Barth, have declared it to be a rich and abundant source of theological insight and have viewed it as a legitimate extension of the thought of the Reformers. What is undeniable is the technical expertise of the Protestant scholastics and their impact on modern Protestant theology, as evidenced in the works of Charles Hodge, Francis Pieper, Louis Berkhof, Otto Weber, and, of course, Karl Barth. The problem here is that the theology of the Protestant orthodox is only partially available to students. Standard resources that present orthodox or scholastic Protestantism, such as Heppé's *Reformed Dogmatics* and Schmid's *Doctrinal Theology of the Evangelical Lutheran Church*, give the technical terms, frequently without full definition and, particularly in the case of Heppé, in Latin or Greek without translation. The problem of language carries over into the excellent manuals of Pieper and Berkhof. It is my hope that this dictionary will make this foundational Protestant theology and its terms more accessible and ultimately provide students not only with an incentive to study this essential terminology, but also with a point of entry into Heppé and Schmid and into the great Latin systems of authors like Francis Turretin and Johann Wilhelm Baier.

The use of both Lutheran and Reformed sources in the compilation of this vocabulary has led to a considerable amount of comparison of doctrine in the longer, more substantive definitions, like that of *communicatio idiomatum*. My attempt in all such comparisons has been to draw out in brief the distinctive elements and the common ground of the two positions without making any judgment concerning which holds the better solution to a given doctrinal problem. I hope that the dictionary will be useful to Reformed and Lutheran alike, without prejudice to either, and that it will provide a useful point of entry into the vocabulary and the thought of the two great representative orthodoxies of the Protestant world.

I should perhaps note at this point that this glossary is neither a complete comparative vocabulary of Protestant orthodoxy nor a complete system of theology arranged alphabetically. The former would be a book many times the length of this one; the latter is rendered unnecessary by the indexes to the standard systems. The object of this volume is to provide an introductory theological vocabulary that will help students to overcome the difficulties inherent in current English-language works that use Latin and Greek terms and even to move somewhat beyond the vocabulary of those works. Students will, I hope, use it with Heppé, Schmid, Pieper, and Berkhof.

The Protestant scholastics had an incredibly rich and precise theological vocabulary. They drew, first, on the heritage of the Reformation, particularly upon the Reformers' reading of the biblical message of salvation by grace alone and justification through faith alone. This first source provided a Latin theological vocabulary that took and modified terms from the medieval and patristic writers in the light of Scripture—and, in addition, a Greek theological vocabulary from the New Testament that was virtually inaccessible before the great development of linguistic scholarship in the age of the Renaissance and Reformation. Second, the Protestant scholastics drew, as the Reformers themselves had drawn, upon those terms from the patristic era and from the Middle Ages that had become the standard currency of theological discussion, such as the terms definitive of trinitarian and christological orthodoxy in the Nicene and Chalcedonian symbols. In this category, however, the Protestant orthodox go far beyond the Reformers in their acceptance and use of terms. The difficult work of rebuilding theological system and of refuting the polemic of their scholastic Roman Catholic opponents led the Protestant orthodox into detailed patristic research and into a careful reading of medieval theology, with the result that a vaster array of technical terms from the fathers and from the medieval doctors appears in their systems than in the works of the Reformers. Third, the Protestant orthodox, in the process of developing systems, and of coming to terms more fully than Reformers with

the tradition of the church, drew upon the philosophical vocabulary of the fathers and the medieval doctors. Here especially the Protestant orthodox manifest a concern to broaden and develop the technical capabilities of their theology, but not at the expense of the insights of the Reformers. As a result, they not only used a traditional philosophical vocabulary in connection with theological system but also developed a vocabulary concerned with the limitation of philosophical and theological knowledge: see, e.g., *usus philosophiae* and *theologia ectypa*. This multiplication of terms available to the theologian relates directly to the precision of thought and expression typical of the scholastic Protestant systems.

In compiling my basic list of terms, I have worked with two ends in view: first, the accurate presentation of the vocabulary of Protestant orthodoxy; second, the needs of students in their encounter with works currently accessible in which the orthodox or scholastic Protestant vocabulary appears. In order to achieve the first goal, I have consulted Lutheran and Reformed systems of the seventeenth century, principally the systems of Johann Wilhelm Baier and Francis Turretin, together with the standard compendia of Protestant orthodox theology by Heinrich Schmid and Heinrich Heppe. I have extracted all the technical terms from Schmid and Heppe, revising and modifying where necessary on the basis of Baier and Turretin. In order to satisfy the second goal, I have also worked through the systems of two standard exponents of twentieth-century Lutheran and Reformed orthodoxy, Francis Pieper and Louis Berkhof. From these works, I have extracted only terms; I have not translated either lengthy quotations in Latin or Greek or any of the biblical citations given in the original, nor have I included any of the German or Dutch words that appear here and there in Pieper and Berkhof. The resultant list, I hope and believe, will not only be of great service to students in their study of classic works in Protestant theology but will also become, for those same students, a way of entry into the realm of clear and precise theological expression.

This book would not exist, certainly not in its present form, were it not for the encouragement and help of many friends and colleagues. A first word of thanks must go to Allan Fisher of Baker Book House for suggesting this project and for his encouragement throughout the process of writing and editing. I owe a deep debt of gratitude to Pastor Luther Poellot, known to many as translator of an important work of the orthodox Lutheran theologian Martin Chemnitz, for a minute reading of the text, for his careful editorial work both in English and in Latin, and above all for his willingness to share expertise in fine points of Lutheran theology. I owe a similar debt to Dr. Richard Gamble of Westminster Theological Seminary and to Dr. Douglas Kelly of Reformed Theological Seminary, both of whom read the

entire manuscript and made several important suggestions. Special thanks of another order go to Jan Gathright of Fuller Theological Seminary, whose expertise at the word processor made the task of organization and compilation of this dictionary not only feasible, but also smooth and virtually free of textual difficulties. Finally, I must express my gratitude to my family—to Gloria, my wife, and to Elizabeth and Karl, our two children—who looked on patiently and encouragingly as I wrote definition after definition on several thousand small file cards. I take responsibility, of course, for any errors or infelicities that remain, and I set the work aside knowing full well that many more definitions might have been included and that many of the discussions of terms might have been expanded.

Note to the Reader

All definitions begin with the term in Latin or in transliterated Greek. In the case of Greek terms, differences between the Greek and Latin alphabet, plus the traditional Latinization of some Greek terms (e.g., *hypostasis*), made transliteration necessary for the sake of alphabetization. The Greek form of the term immediately follows the transliteration. The Greek form is followed by a literal translation (in some instances this translation is qualified by the adverb “literally”). Next, where a further explanation is needed, an expanded definition appears, with cross-references to related terms. Cross-references are noted either by “q.v.,” when the referenced term is an exact rendering of a phrase in the definition, or by *see*, followed by a term or terms related to the subject of the definition.

I have used the terms “Protestant orthodox” and “Protestant scholastic” synonymously, distinguishing where necessary between Lutheran and Reformed orthodox and between Protestant and medieval scholastics. Use of the term “scholastic” without modifier and in a context where the modifiers “Protestant,” “Lutheran,” “Reformed,” or “medieval” have not previously limited the discussion, indicates a term or an idea that is the common property of the several types of scholastic theology.

In addition, I have tried to distinguish between Greek terms that the Protestant scholastics drew from the New Testament and Greek terms they drew from the writings of the patristic era by the simple expedient of supplying a single Scripture reference with those terms taken from the New Testament. Here my purpose is not to attempt any analysis of the biblical term but only to indicate which lexicon ought to be consulted for a full description of the meaning and usage of the word: for terms from the New Testament, Bauer’s

Greek-English Lexicon; for terms from the fathers, Lampe's *Patristic Greek Lexicon*.

Finally, the dictionary proper is followed by a short English index to key Latin and Greek terms. The index will enable readers who approach the dictionary with an English term or concept in mind to locate the Latin or Greek original and thereby to use the dictionary as a basic theological reference work. The index is not at all exhaustive, but it does list important terms, even when they are cognates, and thereby indicates the location of major definitions in which related terms appear with cross-references.

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For Further Reading

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Transliteration of Greek

α	<i>a</i>	κ	<i>k</i>	τ	<i>t</i>
β	<i>b</i>	λ	<i>l</i>	υ	<i>y, u†</i>
γ	<i>g, n*</i>	μ	<i>m</i>	φ	<i>ph</i>
δ	<i>d</i>	ν	<i>n</i>	χ	<i>ch</i>
ε	<i>e</i>	ξ	<i>x</i>	ψ	<i>ps</i>
ζ	<i>z</i>	ο	<i>o</i>	ω	<i>ō</i>
η	<i>ē</i>	π	<i>p</i>	·	<i>h</i>
θ	<i>th</i>	ρ	<i>r</i>		
ι	<i>i</i>	σ, ς	<i>s</i>		

*γ is transliterated by *n* only when γ precedes γ, κ, ξ, or χ.

†υ is transliterated by *u* only when υ is part of a diphthong: *au, eu, ēu, ou, ui*.

Abbreviations

General and Bibliographic

adj.	adjective	NB	<i>nota bene</i> , note carefully
adv.	adverb	NRSV	New Revised Standard Version
ca.	<i>circa</i> , about	PL	Patrologia Latina [= <i>Patrologiae Cursus Completus</i> . Series Latina]. Edited by Jacques-Paul Migne. 217 vols. Paris, 1844–55.
cf.	<i>confer</i> , compare	pl.	plural
conj.	conjunction	q.v.	<i>quod vide</i> , which see
d.	died	sg.	singular
e.g.	<i>exempli gratia</i> , for example	viz.	<i>videlicet</i> , namely
i.e.	<i>id est</i> , that is		
masc.	masculine		
n.	noun		

Old Testament

Gen.	Genesis	Ezra	Ezra
Exod.	Exodus	Neh.	Nehemiah
Lev.	Leviticus	Esther	Esther
Num.	Numbers	Job	Job
Deut.	Deuteronomy	Ps(s).	Psalm(s)
Josh.	Joshua	Prov.	Proverbs
Judg.	Judges	Eccles.	Ecclesiastes
Ruth	Ruth	Song	Song of Songs
1 Sam.	1 Samuel	Isa.	Isaiah
2 Sam.	2 Samuel	Jer.	Jeremiah
1 Kings	1 Kings	Lam.	Lamentations
2 Kings	2 Kings	Ezek.	Ezekiel
1 Chron.	1 Chronicles	Dan.	Daniel
2 Chron.	2 Chronicles	Hosea	Hosea

Joel	Joel	Hab.	Habakkuk
Amos	Amos	Zeph.	Zephaniah
Obad.	Obadiah	Hag.	Haggai
Jon.	Jonah	Zech.	Zechariah
Mic.	Micah	Mal.	Malachi
Nah.	Nahum		

New Testament

Matt.	Matthew	1 Tim.	1 Timothy
Mark	Mark	2 Tim.	2 Timothy
Luke	Luke	Titus	Titus
John	John	Philem.	Philemon
Acts	Acts	Heb.	Hebrews
Rom.	Romans	James	James
1 Cor.	1 Corinthians	1 Pet.	1 Peter
2 Cor.	2 Corinthians	2 Pet.	2 Peter
Gal.	Galatians	1 John	1 John
Eph.	Ephesians	2 John	2 John
Phil.	Philippians	3 John	3 John
Col.	Colossians	Jude	Jude
1 Thess.	1 Thessalonians	Rev.	Revelation
2 Thess.	2 Thessalonians		

a fortiori: *all the more*; literally, *from the stronger*; specifically, on account of the stronger argument or reason.

a maximis ad minima: *from the greatest to the least*; viz., an order of discourse or argument; or simply, an inclusive phrase indicating “everything” or “everyone.”

a nemine: *from none, from no one*; a term used to describe God the Father, who is neither begotten nor spirated; the Father is *a nemine*, the Son and Spirit both *a Patre*, from the Father. See *agennēsia*; *flioque*; *opera Dei personalia*; *Trinitas*.

a parte Dei: *on the part of God*. In the case of a work or operation understood as performed conjointly or concurrently by God and a human being, a distinction can be made concerning what is done *a parte Dei* and what is done *a parte hominis*.

a parte hominis: *on the part of man*. See *a parte Dei*.

a posse ad esse: *from potency to actuality*; literally, from “to be able” to “to be.” See *actus*; *esse*; *essentia*; *potentia*.

a posteriori: *from the latter or from a subsequent instance or perspective*; a description of inductive reasoning that moves from effect to cause, from the specific instance to the general principle; specifically, a term applied to proofs of the existence of God that begin with the finite order and ascend toward the first cause (*prima causa*, q.v.), or first mover (*primum movens*, q.v.). See *causa*.

a praesenti statu: *from the present state or present condition*.

a priori: *from the former or from a prior instance or perspective*; a description of deductive reasoning that moves from cause to effect, from the general or principle to the specific; a term applied particularly to the so-called ontological proof of God’s existence developed by Anselm, which moves from the idea of God to the actual existence of God. The term can also be applied,

a quo

although less precisely, to the order of the systems of theology that begin with foundational principles (*principia theologiae*, q.v.), Scripture and God, and then move more or less deductively through the works of God (*opera Dei*, q.v.) to the doctrine of the last day (*dies novissimus*, q.v.). The term is not applied with absolute precision to these systems since they are not purely deductive in structure but frequently pattern themselves consciously on the Apostles' Creed.

a quo: *from which*; as opposed to **ad quem**, *to or toward which*. See *terminus*.

Ab actu ad posse valet consecutio: *The conclusion or induction from the actual to the possible is valid*; a logical rule or maxim indicating that one may legitimately draw a conclusion from the actual, namely, from what is to what is possible in the future. See *actus*.

ab aeterno: *from the eternal or from eternity*.

ab ante: *from what is before*; i.e., beforehand.

ab extra: *from without*; as opposed to *ab intra* and as distinct from *ad extra* (q.v.); toward the outside.

ab inconvenienti: *from inconvenience*; an argument appealing to the inconvenience or inconvenient consequence of accepting a particular position or view.

ab initio: *from the beginning*; **ab initio mundi:** *from the beginning of the world*; in a loose sense, forever. See *creatio*.

ab intra: *from the inside*; as opposed to *ab extra*.

ab origine: *from the beginning or from the first*.

abalietas: *having being from another*. See *aseitas*; *aseitas/abalietas*.

ablutio: *a washing or cleansing*; a term used as a synonym for *baptismus* (q.v.).

abrenuntiatio: *absolute renunciation*; specifically, the *abrenuntiatio Satanae*, or renunciation of Satan and all his works, which takes place in the traditional baptismal liturgy. Thus in Lutheran orthodoxy, one of the effects of baptism signified by the use of water is the deliverance of the infant from the power of Satan by the grace of the Spirit, together with the concomitant gift of spiritual freedom.

absolute (adv.): *absolutely, simply, perfectly, completely*; not relative or partial.

absolutio: *absolution or acquittal, pardon*; i.e., the pronouncement of the forgiveness of sins following true penitence (*poenitentia*, q.v.) and a genuine confession (*confessio*, q.v.) of sin. In general both Lutherans and Reformed follow a pattern of corporate confession and general pastoral absolution during the service of worship; Lutherans, however, maintain also a doctrine of private absolution (*absolutio privata*) upon personal confession of sin to a minister of the gospel. *Absolutio* belongs to the church and its ministers according to the power of the keys (*potestas clavium*), i.e., the binding and loosing of sins. Both Roman Catholics and Lutherans affirm fully the churchly power (*potestas ecclesiae*, q.v.) of absolution; the Reformed tend to view the *absolutio* as only an announcement of the forgiveness pronounced by God in Christ.

absolutus, -a, -um (adj.): *absolute, simple, perfect, complete, unconditioned*; with reference to things, an understanding of the thing according to its essence, as distinct from its relations to other things. In this sense, *absolutus* is opposed to *relativus*. See *in se*; *simplicitas*.

abstractum: *an abstraction*; i.e., not an existent thing as such, but its essence or one of its attributes considered apart from its existence; also, a non-self-existent nature inhering in another nature. See *anhypostasis*; *communicatio idiomatum*; *concretum*; *in abstracto*.

abusus: *abuse*; namely, improper use or practice (*usus*, q.v.). Thus the maxim **Abusus non tollit usus:** *An abuse does not remove the use*; i.e., wrongful or improper use does not abolish rightful and proper use. Similarly **Ab abusu ad usum non valet consequentia:** *Consequences or conclusions concerning use cannot be drawn from abuse*; or conversely, **Ex abusus non arguitur ad usum:** *The use cannot be argued from the abuse*.

acatalepsia (from the Greek ἀκαταληψία, *akatalēpsia*): *doubt, lack of certainty*, the negation of *katalēpsis* (κατάληψις), or comprehension; a term drawn from ancient Skeptical philosophy indicating the absence of certainty and the reduction of knowledge to probabilities. In the seventeenth century the Baconian version of methodological doubt argued that knowledge (*scientia*, q.v.) should begin with *acatalepsia* and go in search of *eucatalepsia*, good comprehension, or certainty. See *akatalēptos*.

acceptatio: *acceptation*; specifically, an act of grace and mercy according to which God freely accepts a partial satisfaction as fully meritorious. The idea is of particular importance to the Scotist and the Grotian theories of atonement, according to which God accepts as full payment for sin the finite

satisfaction offered by Christ. In these theories Christ's work does not have infinite value or value commensurate with the entire weight of sin, but God, who is all-powerful, can and does freely accept it as if it were full payment. *Acceptatio*, which abrogates the usual patterns of debt and payment, occurs under the *potentia absoluta* (q.v.), the absolute power of God. In the Grotian theory, the divine acceptance of Christ's work rests primarily upon a view of God as *rector* (q.v.), or governor, of the universe and upon a divine exercise of rectoral justice (*iustitia rectoris*, q.v.) rather than of a strict remunerative justice. See *iustitia remuneratoria sive distributiva; meritum Christi*.

acceptilatio: *acceptation, acceptilation*; basically, a variation of *acceptatio* (q.v.) but having the connotation from Roman law of release from a debt by means of a formal declaration by debtor and creditor that, though there has been no payment, the debt is now considered paid. The term has been used incorrectly as a characterization of the Scotist and Grotian theories of atonement, although both theories presuppose a payment, and Grotius explicitly attacks the theological application of the term.

acceptio personarum: *partiality toward persons, respect of persons*; used with particular reference to the doctrines of predestination, the dispensation of grace, and the just punishment of sin, the phrase is based on the Vulgate text of Romans 2:11: *Non est enim personarum acceptio apud Deum*, "There is no partiality toward persons with God."

accidens: *accident*; viz., an incidental property of a thing, specifically, a secondary form, not essential to a thing, added to it and capable of being removed from it. Thus an accident is a property conjoined to a thing that can be withdrawn from the thing without substantial alteration; or in other words, an accident is a property contingently predicated of a thing. Given, moreover, that accidents are properties that inhere in substances by addition, they do not have an independent existence.

accommodatio: *accommodation*; also **attemperatio:** *adjustment* or *accommodation*; and **condescensio:** *condescension*. The Reformers and their scholastic followers all recognized that God must in some way condescend or accommodate himself to human ways of knowing in order to reveal himself. Accordingly, they followed the assumption of the church fathers like Chrysostom and medievals like Aquinas that the Scriptures conveyed divine truths in language reflecting common human usages and sense perception as, notably, in the interpretation of such texts as Genesis 1:6 with reference to the "firmament" and Genesis 1:16 with reference to the "greater and lesser lights."

This accommodation occurs also in the use of human words and concepts for the communication of the law and the gospel, but it in no way implies the loss of truth or the lessening of scriptural authority. Thus the *accommodatio* or *condescensio* refers to the manner or mode of revelation, the gift of the wisdom of infinite God in finite form, not to the quality of the revelation or to the matter revealed. A parallel idea occurs in the orthodox Protestant distinction between *theologia archetypa* (q.v.) and *theologia ectypa* (q.v.), where the former term refers to an infinite and inaccessible divine knowledge, and the latter term to the various forms of theology resting on truths revealed or accommodated. The ancient, medieval, and early modern understanding that such accommodation did not imply a loss of truth rested in large part on an assumption of the trustworthiness of sense perceptions and the universality of common, innate, or implanted conceptions or notions (*notiones communes*, q.v.) concerning the most basic truths.

A shift in epistemology occurred with the rise of various forms of skepticism in the early modern era, leading also to an alteration of the concept of accommodated language. Cartesian philosophy in particular assumed the unreliability of the senses and the necessity of doubting commonly received understandings in order to discern truth, with truth understood as clear and distinct perceptions arrived at through a process of methodological doubt. Reformed resistance to Cartesian philosophy rested in part on recognition that this identification of common language and knowledge as imprecise and erroneous was destructive of biblical authority. Late in the seventeenth century, Reformed Cartesians like Christopher Wittich did conclude that the use of popular language in the text amounted to an accommodation to human error, and in the eighteenth century, with the loss of traditional philosophical epistemology, the assumption that accommodation implies not only a divine condescension but also a use of time-bound and even erroneous statements as a medium for revelation, became a standard view, as evidenced in the thought of Johann Semler. This later notion of accommodation to custom and error was also found among the Socinians and was emphasized in Spinoza's reading of Scripture. It is therefore quite distinct from the positions of the Reformers and of the majority of Protestant scholastics, whether Lutheran or Reformed. See *sensus accommodatitius*.

acedia: *sloth, apathy, despair.* See *septem peccata mortalia*.

achōristōs (ἀχωρίστως): *without separation.* See *adiaretōs kai achōristōs*.

acroamaticus or, sometimes, **acroaticus:** *having to do with discourse or public speaking,* as distinct from the written word; from **acroama**, *something that*

is heard, usually with pleasure. The two terms can also (rarely) imply something that is reserved for ears only, namely, something esoteric. See *theologia acroamatica*.

actio, sometimes also **actus**: *action, activity*. Action is the way or manner that an agent or cause accomplishes or effects something, as distinguished from passion (*passio*, q.v.), which is the way or manner that a subject receives the action or effect of a particular agent. In short, an action is a flow (*fluxus*) of effect from the agent to its terminus in a subject. Every action must have an agent (*agens*), a subject (*subiectum*, q.v., or *patiens*), a terminus a quo, and a terminus ad quem—thus an action has an actor, something that is acted upon, and in the subject both a quality or characteristic that can be altered (the terminus a quo) and a quality or characteristic that can be effected or brought about (the terminus ad quem). The sole exception to this structure of *actio* is creation, which does not require a subject on which the divine agent acts.

An action can be either immanent (*immanens*) or transeunt (*transiens*), which is to say, either bringing about its effect in the agent (in which case the agent is also the subject) or bringing about its effect in another. The latter, *actio transiens*, can be distinguished into four kinds, depending on the result or terminus ad quem of the action: first, an action can be generative or corruptive of a substance; second, it can indicate a change in quantity either by accretion or by diminution; third, it can indicate an alteration of quality; and fourth, it can indicate a change of place (locus, or *ubi*). Action can also be univocal, productive of an effect belonging to its own kind or *species* (q.v.), or equivocal, productive of an effect belonging to a different *species*—in the first instance, heat univocally produces heat; in the second, light equivocally produces heat. Action can be further distinguished as an *actio perficiens* or an *actio corrumpens*, an action that completes or accomplishes a positive effect, or an action that is destructive or damaging. See *actus; motus; operatio; passio; praedicamenta*.

Actio Dei neminem facit injuriam: *An act of God does wrong to no one*; a maxim also used in law.

actio Dei praevia: *prior or preceding act of God*. See *causae secundae; concursus*.

actio efficax: *effective action or effective act*; especially the power of *providentia* (q.v.) in its *conkursus* (q.v.), or concurrence, with good acts of human beings; i.e., the divine providential support of the good.

actio sacramentalis: *sacramental action or activity*; i.e., the rite (*usus*, q.v.) of the sacrament as performed by all participants. Thus in the Lord's Supper, the *actio sacramentalis* consists in the consecration (*consecratio*, q.v.), distribution (*distributio*, q.v.), eating (*manducatio*, q.v.), and drinking (*bibitio*). Neither the Lutherans nor the Reformed allow any continuance of the sacrament beyond the *actio sacramentalis*. See *Nihil habet rationem sacramenti extra usum a Christo institutum*.

actiones theandricai (θεανδρικοί): *theandric activities*; viz., actions or works of Christ that are the common works of both natures or, more precisely, the conjoint work of the divine-human person. See *apotelesma*.

actualiter: literally, *actually*; specifically indicating something that exists *in actu* (q.v.), or in actuality, as distinguished from something that exists *potentialiter*, potentially, or *in potentia* (q.v.). See *actus*; *potentia*.

actus: *act, actualization, actuality, or reality*. According to the Aristotelian ontology at the root of scholastic language concerning being, *actus*, or actuality, designates that which exists or that which is actualized, as distinct from *potentia* (q.v.), that which can exist or has potential for existence. *Actus* is sometimes used as a synonym of *actio* (q.v.), indicating activity or action, but its primary philosophical and theological usage references the actuality, actualization, or reality of a being or thing. The scholastics use the concept of *actus*, or actualization, to describe that which is real, existent, perfect, complete, including a perfect or complete action or operation; thus as synonymous usages, actuality (*actualitas*), in act (*in actu*), to have act or actuality (*habere actum*), and actual being (*ens actuale*). *Potentia* (q.v.), by contrast, refers to the possible, to essence (as distinct from existence), to the imperfect and the incomplete, and therefore to the faculty (i.e., *intellectus* or *voluntas*, q.v.) that can perform an action or operation. Thus the *intellectus*, as a faculty, is *in potentia* (q.v.), in a condition of potency, capable of knowing; while the *intellectus*, in its knowing of an object, is in a condition or state of actualization, so that the knowing or understanding can be called an *actus intellectus*, an actualization or perfecting operation of the intellect. Finally, *actus*, or actuality, can be defined only in relation to *potentia*, or potency, with the sole exception of God, who is fully actualized, or pure actuality (*actus purus*, q.v.). As Aristotle argues (*Metaphysics* 9.6.1048a.31–b.8), not all things exist really or actually in the same sense; their actuality is defined over against a potency, so that seeing is actual in relation to the passive capacity to see. A seed is actual in relation to the matter from which it is formed, but clearly potential in relation to a tree. Thus *actus* is always logically prior

to *potentia* insofar as *potentia* is a potency toward something, even though in some instances potency precedes actuality in time. Thus the process or motion (*kinēsis*; *motus*, q.v.) from potency to actuality describes both the continuity and change of the phenomenal world (*natura*, q.v.) and explains the relationship of form (*forma*, q.v.) to matter (*materia*, q.v.).

A further distinction can be made between *actus absolutus* (q.v.) and *actus respectivus* (q.v.), absolute or simple and respective or relative actuality, the former referring to a fully actualized or complete being (*ens completum*), such as a man, a horse, or an angel; the latter to an incomplete being (*ens incompletum*), such a matter lacking form. See *actio*; *actualiter*; *actus decernens*; *actus fidei*; *actus purus*; *energeia*; *ens*; *in actu*.

actus absolutus: *absolute or simple actuality. See actus.*

actus apprehendi: *apprehension, the act or actuality of apprehending; as, e.g., the apprehensio fiducialis* (q.v.), or faithful apprehension, that completes faith (*fides*, q.v.). See *actus*; *actus fidei*; *actus fiduciae*.

actus cogitandi. See *substantia cogitans*.

actus consolatorius: *consolatory realization or actualization. See actus fidei.*

actus decernens: *the decreeing act or actuality; viz., the divine essence as willing or decreeing the eternal decree. See actus; actus purus; decretum.*

actus depositionis: *act of deposition; contrasted with actus propositionis, an act of presentation. See regnum Christi.*

actus dispositivus sive praeparatorius: *a dispositive or preparatory act or actuality. See actus; praeparatio ad conversionem.*

actus essendi: the act or actuality or being, namely, the datum of the thing existing. See *esse*; *essentia*; *substantia*; *suppositum*.

actus fidei: *the act, actualization, perfecting operation, or actualizing operation of faith; in addition to their objective, doctrinal definitions of fides* (q.v.), the Protestant orthodox also consider faith as it occurs or is actualized in the believing subject. In the subject, faith can be considered either as the disposition or capacity of the subject to have faith (*habitus fidei*, q.v.), which in the case of saving faith (*fides salvifica*) is a gracious gift of God, or as the *actus fidei*, the act or actualizing operation of faith, in which the intellect and will appropriate the object of faith (*obiectum fidei*, q.v.). The *actus fidei*, then, can be described by the Lutheran and Reformed scholastics as an *actus intellectus*

and an *actus voluntatis*, an operation of intellect and of will. Both *notitia* (q.v.), knowledge, and *assensus* (q.v.), assent to knowledge, belong to the intellect, while the *apprehensio fiducialis*, or faithful apprehension, of that knowledge is an act of will. Saving faith in Christ comprises, therefore, the *actus credendi in intellectu*, the actualization of believing in the operation of the intellect, and the *actus fiduciae* (q.v.), or *actus fiducialis voluntatis*, the actualization of faithfulness in the operation of the will. The soul may be considered as the *subiectum quo* (q.v.), or “subject by which,” of faith, since soul may be distinguished into the faculties of intellect and will.

The scholastic language of faith as *actus* (q.v.) must not be construed as a description of faith as an activity that accomplishes for the mind and the will a saving knowledge of and trust in Christ. Such a view would constitute a denial of the doctrine of justification by grace alone (see *iustificatio*). Instead, the language of *habitus fidei* (q.v.) and *actus fidei*, of the disposition or capacity for faith and the actuality or perfecting operation of faith, needs to be understood in the context of the scholastic language of potency (*potentia*, q.v.) and act, or actuality (*actus*). The disposition, or *habitus* (q.v.), is a potency for faith that can be actualized as faith. The act or *actus* of faith, although it may be defined as an operation, is not an activity in the sense of a deed or a work, but an operation in the sense of an actualization in which faith comes to be faith or, in other words, moves from potency to actuality.

The Reformed orthodox further distinguish the *actus fidei* into several parts. The first distinction is twofold: an *actus directus* and an *actus reflexus*. The *actus directus fidei*, or direct operation of faith, is faith receiving or, more precisely, having its object. By the *actus directus fidei* an individual believes the promises of the gospel. The *actus reflexus fidei*, the reflex or reflective operation of faith, is the inward appropriation of the object, according to which one knows that one believes. These two acts can be further distinguished, since, in particular, both *notitia* and *assensus* can be considered as *actus directus*. The *actus directus* can be distinguished into (1) an *actus notitiae*, or actualization of knowledge, and (2) a twofold *actus assensus*, or actualization of assent (*assensus theoreticus* and *assensus practicus*), consisting in an *actus refugii*, or actualization of refuge, and an *actus receptionis et unionis*, an actualization of reception and union.

By way of explanation, each of these components of the *actus fidei* is direct insofar as it refers to the object of faith as appropriated. This is clear in the case of the *actus notitiae*, according to which the *obiectum fidei* (q.v.), the supernaturally revealed Word of God, belongs to the intellect, and also in the case of theoretical assent, according to which the intellect agrees to

the certainty of the truth of its knowledge. The *assensus practicus et fiducialis*, or practical and faithful assent, still belongs to the intellect, which here recognizes as certain and as the *obiectum fidei* not only scriptural revelation but also the revelation of grace and sufficient salvation in Christ that God has promised to believers. The actualization of refuge follows immediately as the realization that Christ himself and union with him provide faith with the means of salvation. This *actus* is primarily of the will but still direct. Finally, on the ground of all that has preceded, but also now as a result of the *actus voluntatis*, or actualization of will toward Christ, there is an *actus receptionis sive adhaesionis et unionis Christi*, an operation of the reception of, adhesion to, and union with Christ. The next operation of faith is the *actus reflexus*, in which the soul reflects upon itself and knows that it believes what it believes and that Christ died for it. Whereas the *actus reflexus* is primarily an *actus intellectus*, the final *actus fidei* belongs to the will. The *actus consolationis et confidentiae*, or actuality of consolation and confidence, is an acquiescence of the will to Christ and the knowledge of salvation in Christ. The scholastic analysis of the *actus fidei* is, in short, an attempt to isolate and define the elements of faith, which must all be actualized in the believer if the graciously given disposition toward faith, the *habitus fidei*, is to bear fruit in a full realization of *fides*.

actus fiduciae: *the actualization of trust*; actual faith resting on the faithful apprehension by the will (*apprehensio fiducialis* or *apprehensio voluntatis*) of the truth of Christ. The *actus fiduciae* is, in the view of many of the Reformed orthodox, of the very essence of faith, since it represents the full realization or actualization of all the other elements of the *fides* (q.v.), or faith, in the individual believer. Thus it can also be called the fiducial actualization of the will, *actus fiducialis voluntatis*, which parallels and completes the actualization of belief in the intellect, the *actus credendi in intellectu*. See *actus fidei*.

actus forensis: *forensic act*; i.e., the actualization of a legal state or condition, such as occurs in the justification of the sinner by God on account of faith. The sinner is not made just but is, by the will of God, declared just, legally or forensically, and is thenceforth in a condition of being justified or counted righteous. See *actus iustificatorius*; *iustificatio*.

actus iustificatorius: *justificatory act or operation*; viz., the formal appropriation of the divine *actus forensis* (q.v.) of justification in the believer; the realization or recognition that God no longer counts one as sinful but as righteous in Christ. See *iustificatio*.

actus mixtus: *mixed or incomplete actualization*; a term used with reference to a being or substance that is not fully actualized but is not merely potential. See *actus*; *in actu*; *in potentia*.

actus praedestinationis: *the act of predestination*; i.e., the divine decree understood as God's act or action; a reference either to the decree understood as consisting in both election and reprobation or, given the alternative definition of predestination used by many medieval scholastics and some of the Reformed (e.g., Vermigli), the decree of election. See *decretum*; *praedestinatio*.

actus praeparatorius: *preparatory act*; viz., the fulfillment of the condition or state preparatory to a subsequent condition or state; also **actus praecedaneus:** *preceding act or actualization*. See *praeparatio ad conversionem*.

actus primus: *primary actuality*; i.e., the bare existence of a thing distinct from its operations. See *actus*; *in actu*.

actus primus / actus secundus: *primary actuality / secondary actuality*. See *in actu*.

actus purus: *pure or perfect actualization or actuality*; sometimes **actus purissimus:** *most pure actuality*; a term applied to God as the fully actualized being, the only being not in potency; God is, in other words, absolutely perfect and the eternally perfect fulfillment of himself. It is of the essence of God to be *actus purus* or *purissimus* insofar as God, self-existent being, is *in actu* (q.v.), in the state of actualization, and never *in potentia* (q.v.), in the state of potency, or incomplete realization. This view of God as fully actualized being lies at the heart of the scholastic exposition of the doctrine of divine immutability (*immutabilitas Dei*, q.v.). Immutability does not indicate inactivity or unrelatedness, but the fulfillment of being. In addition, the full actualization of divine being relates strictly to the discussion of God's being or essence *ad intro* and in no way argues against the exercise of divine *potentia ad extra*, potency or power toward externals (see *opera Dei ad extra*). In other words, God in himself, considered essentially or personally, is not *in potentia* because the divine essence and persons are eternally perfect, and the inward life of the Godhead is eternally complete and fully realized. The generation of the Son, e.g., does not imply the ontological movement of the Second Person of the Trinity from a state of incomplete realization to a state of perfect actualization. Nonetheless, the relationships of God to the created order, to the individual objects of the divine will *ad extra*, can be considered *in potentia* insofar as all such relations depend on the free exercise of the divine will

actus respectivus

toward an order of contingent beings drawn toward perfection. See *actus*; *ad intra*; *opera Dei ad intra*.

actus respectivus: *respective or relative actuality*. See *actus*.

actus reus: *a guilty act*.

actus secundus: *secondary actuality*; i.e., the existence of a thing in its operations, as contrasted with the bare existence of a thing in *actus primus* or primary actuality. See *actus*; *in actu*.

actus simplex: *simple or uncompounded actuality*. See *actus*; *simplicitas*.

actus simplicissimus: *most simple or utterly uncompounded actuality*. See *actus*; *simplicitas*.

actus unionis: *the actuality or actualization of union*; specifically, of the *unio personalis* (q.v.), or personal union, of the two natures in Christ. Preferably, the term *actus personalis*, or actualization of the person, should be employed, following the majority of orthodox dogmaticians. The *actus personalis* refers to the *actus primus*, or primary actuality, of Christ's person, which is the actuality of the two natures in the one person or, simply, the existence of the personal union as such. The orthodox note that an *actus naturalis*, or actuality of the nature or humanity, of Christ must logically (but not temporally) precede the *actus personalis*. See *actus*; *anhypostasis*; *in actu*; *natura*.

ad arbitrium: *at one's choice, at will, arbitrarily*.

ad baculum: *to the stick or club*; a rhetorical argument that attempts to intimidate one's opponent.

ad eundem: *to the same*.

ad extra: *external, outward, toward the outside*. See *ad intra*; *opera Dei ad extra*.

ad extremum: *at last, finally; to an extreme*.

ad finem: *to the end*. See *causa finalis*; *fnis*.

ad fontes: *to the sources*; an assumption associated with the Renaissance and early modern humanist approach to texts in their original or source languages that emphasized direct recourse to original texts, whether biblical or traditionary, rather than to translations, later appropriations, references, or summaries.

ad hoc: *to or for this*; i.e., to or for this case alone, special. In rhetoric and in philosophical argumentation, *ad hoc* can indicate an arbitrary or dubious attempt at proof of a point.

ad hominem: *to the person*; a form of argument that rests on prejudice rather than on proof, designed to influence feelings rather than intellect.

ad ignorantiam: *to ignorance*; a rhetorical argument resting on false but not readily apparent premises, intending to convince the ignorant by deception; alternatively, an argument that rests on a claim of the ignorance of one's opponent.

ad infinitum: *to infinity, without end*; usually said of a series.

ad interim: *for the meantime*.

ad intra: *internal, inward, toward the inside*. The distinction between *ad intra* and *ad extra* (q.v.) is particularly useful in discussing acts and operations of God, given, e.g., the eternal decree of God (*decretum Dei*) as an inward or internal act of God, one of the *opera Dei ad intra* (q.v.), but is enacted or executed *ad extra*, the *ad intra* act being eternal, the *ad extra* execution being temporal. See *decretum*.

ad iudicium: *to judgment*; a rhetorical argument resting on common sense or the assumed general judgment of the audience.

ad libitum: *as it pleases* or *as you wish*.

ad misericordiam: *to mercy*; a rhetorical argument by appeal to the emotions of the hearers.

ad populum: *to the people or populace*; a rhetorical argument by appeal to the sentiments or interests of the population at large.

ad quem: *to which*. See *causa finalis*; *fnis*; *terminus*.

ad rem: *to the thing*; i.e., regarding the matter at hand; to the purpose; often, to the point, understood as a proper object of an argument or debate, as distinct from arguments *ad hominem* (q.v.), *ad hoc* (q.v.), or *ad baculum* (q.v.).

ad summam: *in short, in conclusion, to sum up*.

ad usum fidelium: *for the use of the faithful*.