



The AGNT Project Report—Q2 2016

As a licensee or friend of AGNT or ANLEX, we would like to update you once a quarter about our continuing work to enhance and perfect these databases and about our plans for the future.



The Project. *The AGNT Project Report—Q3 2008* introduced the team, outlined ongoing tasks, and discussed potential tasks.



AGNT Project Review

Timothy Friberg

June 2016 marks forty years since the idea that became the AGNT project first found expression. It has been a long time, full of God's grace, as well as an enriching and satisfying time of implementing the project in its various and growing facets and of interacting with volunteer scholars. In its early years, most of the project's interaction was by regular US postal mail services, phone calls, and occasional visits to various scholars. But times have changed so that most interaction today is largely done by email correspondence; often we find answers waiting for us (in our Indonesian location) when we wake up the next morning.

In any case, we are happy to provide tools that help people, especially beginners and novices, better understand the Greek New Testament. It is our sincere hope that every AGNT user will mature in his understanding of the Greek New Testament and outgrow his need for our tools!

In recent months, there has been more AGNT-related activity and progress than at any time in recent memory. We are thankful to God for our volunteer helpers, true experts in their fields, who work with us to help make one improvement after another to AGNT.

AGNT-WH (AGNT Helps on the Westcott-Hort Text of 1882)

We are well along in producing a new AGNT database, in particular, AGNT-WH. As our underlying text, we gladly embraced BibleWorks' Westcott-Hort Greek text, a precise electronic copy of the original printed text (right down to the errors, in some few cases, in my opinion). The differences between NA28 and WH—amounting to half a percent or so of the total text—were carefully accounted for in the first-stage of our database work. We are now working on the second stage, reexamining all differences in context as a further check on our morphological tags and English reference glosses (ERGs). Hopefully in a few months we will be able to offer this addition to the AGNT family of texts to vendors interested in incorporating it into their Greek

texts and helps presentations. We are thankful to Michael Bushell, Ray Gordon, and Mark Nodine for their input on various aspects of this task.

AGNT Conjunction Tags and ERGs Evaluation

Dan Hoopert continues on his important evaluation of AGNT conjunctions. To an impatient outsider, he is stuck on οὐν. In fact, he is carefully weighing this important conjunction in terms of AGNT's three propositional relation possibilities: coordinating, subordinating, and superordinating. In particular for οὐν, he is looking beyond the more obvious inferential function of the conjunction, that is, superordinating (CH), into areas where the conjunction seems to be a developmental marker. When three or four top Greek experts have different opinions on the conjunction function, Dan is working toward a new understanding of how correcting our tags, altering our ERGs, and revising the οὐν write-up in ANLEX might be put together to help the AGNT users better understand the text.

AGNT Front-back Matter Revision

Although few people read the AGNT Appendix, those who do acknowledge that it comprehensively explains the AGNT tagging system. Several years ago we began revising that front-back matter, spurred on by a user who noted that its lack of consistent Unicode made it unsearchable. We now have three distinct versions of the front-back material: (1) an electronic version of the original printed material, now to be archived as Classic AGNT (=GNT3); (2) a revised version that reflects our 1990s (and beyond) tag simplifications—the standard version available through Bible software vendors; and (3) a revised innovative version that is to be a part of the major parallel AGNT task being developed to reflect more recent scholarship on the voice of Greek verbs. Paul O'Rear graciously made all three versions Unicode compliant, a task he thought relaxing in the face of other pressure-filled duties. The completed versions are weeks away from completion. Thanks to Samuel Pflederer, AGNT now has a rather comprehensive referral system that links tags and their discussions in the Appendix.

Review of ANLEX Write-ups and AGNT ERGs

Using his expert lexicographical knowledge, Tony Pope continues to review ANLEX lexical write-ups and AGNT ERG presentations. This is not simply a final editing of an otherwise ready database, but a serious review of all relevant materials that may take a decade or more. I find Tony's revisions to be exciting corrections of Neva Miller's original contribution to ANLEX. Although Tony is primarily responsible for the scholarly review, he and I exchange many messages as I implement his suggestions in both databases, especially weighing the consistency achieved or maintained between ANLEX glosses and AGNT ERGs and, further, checking on the faithfulness of the revision to our signature AGNT approach of word-by-Greek-word analysis (all the while saving phrasal expressions for our PERGs). We hope to update our ANLEX and AGNT databases incrementally with (at least) annual upgrades for vendors, the first hopefully being that of alpha-initial vocabulary.

As an interesting spinoff of the ANLEX review, we are making changes to the form of ERGs to make them better correspond to their related ANLEX write-ups. For example, if an adjective is

used substantively in the text, we are now making the ERGs read as nominals—normally only in the singular. And when necessary, we are adjusting the text of ANLEX. Another user-friendly change we are making is to make pronominal ERGs plural where the Greek word is plural. We are not, however, adjusting the ERG to reflect Greek case. Thus, αὐτοῖς, whose ERG was once “he,” will now be marked “they” and not “to them.”

Highlighting ANLEX to Boost a User’s Independent Evaluation

It is normal for vendors to link AGNT ERGs (or the Greek words themselves) with their corresponding ANLEX lexical write-ups. We are working to take this one step further by highlighting the *specific* ANLEX gloss for a given AGNT ERG or Greek word. We encourage serious students to look behind our ERGs to their fuller ANLEX write-ups in order to broaden their understanding of the ERG. An AGNT ERG is simply our understanding of what a Greek word means in context, and this is represented in ANLEX by an italicized gloss. But one gloss hardly does justice to the fuller nonitalicized information in each ANLEX entry. Highlighting an ERG’s corresponding gloss in its lexical write-up makes it easy to contextualize the ERG in that write-up.

Here is an example of what we are working towards. The yellow highlighting is the ANLEX gloss, and the teal highlighting is significant nongloss material in the ANLEX write-up that we wish you to be aware of.

ἀγαθός, ἡ, ὄν *good*, opposite κακός (*bad*); (1) of the benevolent character of persons *kind, generous* (MT 20.15), as a noun *benevolent person, good-natured person, kind-hearted person* (RO 5.7); of the moral character of persons *good, upright, well-behaved* (JN 7.12), as a noun *good person* (MT 5.45); (2) of outward performance *capable, excellent, good* (LU 19.17); (3) of the quality of things *good, beneficial* (MT 7.17), as a noun *good thing, fine thing* (LU 16.25); of materially valuable things, as a plural noun *goods, possessions* (LU 12.18; GA 6.6); of soil *fertile* (LK 8.8); of gifts *beneficial, wholesome* (MT 7.11), as a noun *good thing* (LU 1.53); of talk, as a noun *helpful word* (MT 12.34); of deeds of goodwill *good, generous, kind* (2C 9.8), as a noun *kind deed* (PM 1.14); of moral deeds *good, righteous* (RO 2.7), as a noun *good deed* (MT 19.16; JN 5.29), τὸ ἀγαθόν *what is good, right* (GA 6.10)

We are grateful to several experts for helping us conceptualize how to implement the AGNT ERG-to-ANLEX gloss linking and make it vendor-compliant. We are especially grateful to Ray Gordon who is working to add tags to AGNT ERGs that will point to gloss and nongloss material in ANLEX write-ups. Ray’s work will be implemented after Tony Pope has completed his review of ANLEX and his changes have been incorporated. We plan to make the AGNT-to-ANLEX linking available to vendors in stages (not only at end of project).

Generic Reference Pronouns and Substantives

All languages have ways to indicate generic reference. Traditionally in English this has been the masculine singular pronoun “he,” though for several hundred years “they” (and not just recently under the pressures of political correctness) has competed for the honor. In Greek, the masculine singular pronoun was regularly used to point to a generic audience. We plan to note this usage in AGNT, not in the tags themselves, but in an offline annotation. (Our estimate is that there are roughly 3,000 such instances in the Greek New Testament, though there are obviously differences between the perceptions of opposite ends of the exegetical continuum on such matters.) Thus in John 3.16, πᾶς ὁ πιστεύων clearly refers to all individuals, whether male or female, even though the Greek expression is necessarily masculine.

Revised, Innovating AGNT

Carl Conrad continues to help us develop a parallel AGNT (it is not now even under consideration whether or when this innovation will replace the traditional AGNT presentation) that reflects the new linguistic understanding of middle-passive verbs in Greek (and Latin and other languages). This will effectively pare our seven voice symbols (A-M-P-E-D-O-N) down to three (A-M-P), though on another understanding only two are needed (effecting, E, and affected, A). To that end, Carl has rewritten our Appendix article 5.3 (and thus the third version of the revision of our AGNT front-back matter noted above) and added a new, longer essay on the subject, both of which we have previously shared with readers of the AGNT newsletter. Other matters remain, which Carl is working diligently on in his beautiful retirement redoubt in the Blue Ridge Mountains of western North Carolina.

We have not yet decided when to introduce this parallel AGNT. Although we can introduce the revision of ANLEX lexical write-ups incrementally, it is much more difficult to introduce a systemic change of tags, even when relatively restricted to verbal voice, in a step-by-step fashion. How does one mix two systems?

Summary

Now that you have read the most recent summary of current AGNT activity, if you wish to help us, please contact us! Our work is preeminently a group undertaking, and I think you will find us very open to your input.



As always, we remain open to developing AGNT and ANLEX in ways that are most useful to the needs of students and readers of God's Word.

Thank you for your continued support of *The AGNT Project*, for faithfully marketing the AGNT and ANLEX databases, and for making these state-of-the-art tools for studying the Greek New Testament available to students, scholars, pastors, translators, and laymen worldwide.

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