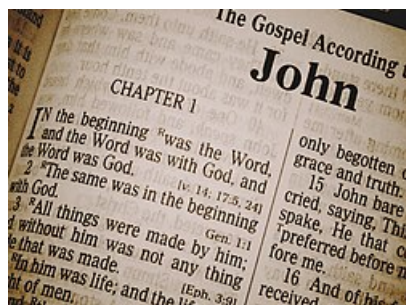




There is some controversy as to how should [John 1:1](#) be translated. Trinitarians often use the verse to support their contention that Jesus is the eternal Almighty God.

The traditional rendering in English is:

In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God.

There are many other variations of rendering [John 1:1](#) which are more accurate according to the Greek text, both in translation or paraphrase, [John 1:1c](#) also exist:

- 1808: “and the Word was a god” – [Thomas Belsham](#) *The New Testament, in an Improved Version, Upon the Basis of Archbishop Newcome’s New Translation: With a Corrected Text*, London.
- 1822: “and the Word was a god” – *The New Testament in Greek and English* (A. Kneeland, 1822.)
- 1829: “and the Word was a god” – *The Monotessaron; or, The Gospel History According to the Four Evangelists* (J. S. Thompson, 1829)
- 1863: “and the Word was a god” – *A Literal Translation of the New Testament* (Herman Heinfetter [Pseudonym of Frederick Parker], 1863)
- 1864: “and a god was the Word” – *The Emphatic Diaglott* by [Benjamin Wilson](#), New York and London (left hand column interlinear reading)

- 1879: “and the Word was a god” – *Das Evangelium nach Johannes* (J. Becker, 1979)
- 1885: “and the Word was a god” – *Concise Commentary on The Holy Bible* (R. Young, 1885)
- 1911: “and [a] God was the word” – *The Coptic Version of the New Testament in the Southern Dialect*, by George William Horner.^[17]
- 1924: “the Logos was divine” – *The Bible: James Moffatt Translation*, by James Moffatt.
- 1935: “and the Word was divine” – *The Bible: An American Translation*, by John M. P. Smith and Edgar J. Goodspeed, Chicago.^[19]
- 1955: “so the Word was divine” – *The Authentic New Testament*, by Hugh J. Schonfield, Aberdeen.
- 1958: “and the Word was a god” – *The New Testament of Our Lord and Saviour Jesus Anointed* (J. L. Tomanec, 1958)
- 1970, 1989: “and what God was, the Word was” – *The New English Bible* and *The Revised English Bible*.
- 1975 “and a god (or, of a divine kind) was the Word” – *Das Evangelium nach Johnnes*, by Siegfried Schulz, Göttingen, Germany
- 1975: “and the Word was a god” – *Das Evangelium nach Johannes* (S. Schulz, 1975);
- 1978: “and godlike sort was the Logos” – *Das Evangelium nach Johannes*, by Johannes Schneider, Berlin
- 1985: “So the Word was divine” – *The Original New Testament*, by Hugh J. Schonfield.
- 1998: “and what God was the Word also was” – This translation follows Professor Francis J. Moloney, *The Gospel of John*, ed. Daniel J. Harrington.
- 2017: “and the Logos was god” – *The New Testament: A Translation*, by David Bentley Hart.

GREEK ANALYSIS

“Jn 1:1 should rigorously be translated ‘the word was with the God [= the Father], and the word was a divine being’” (Dictionary of the Bible, 1965, by scholar John L McKenzie, S J).

“Was God: lack of a definite article with ‘God’ in Greek signifies predication rather than

identification” (NAB note on [John 1:1](#)).

When there is an anarthrous predicate nominative preceding the verb, in languages such as English, which have indefinite articles (a,an) the translators supply the articles, or make clear in the translation what the meaning of the Koine’ Greek is. Other examples of this are:

Mark 6:49 - “a ghost”

John 6:70 - “a devil”

John 9:17 - “a prophet”

Acts 28:6 - “a god”

CONCLUSION

The common rendering of [John 1:1](#), “and the Word was God”, is not the most accurate rendering of the Greek text.