

**Where does the hendiadys
in Phil. 1:1 come from?
About the origins, misunderstandings,
and argumentation of a questionable
theory in English commentaries
on Philippians 1:1**

**Skąd wziął się hendiadys w Flp 1,1?
O początkach, nieporozumieniach i argumentacji
uporczywie powracającej
w anglojęzycznych komentarzach do Flp teorii**

Key words: hendiadys, hendiadyoin, Philippians, figure of speech, bishop, deacon, New Testament.

Słowa kluczowe: hendiadys, hendiadyoin, List do Filipian, figura mowy, biskup, diakon, Nowy Testament.

Abstract

In Philippians 1:1 two terms can be found that sound puzzling for a Pauline greeting: *σύν ἐπισκόποις καὶ διακόνοις*. There are English speaking exegetes who consider a hendiadys in this fragment as one possibility among many other interpretations. The following article is dedicated to the question of why a hendiadys, of all things, would be found in Phil. 1:1 and why this idea occurs almost exclusively in English commentaries – in contrast to German commentaries. Four commentaries mentioning a hendiadys are subsequently analyzed to explore and verify the rationale in favour of a hendiadys. In the analysis, the concept of hendiadys is explained in more

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detail followed by the suggestion that hendiadys in Phil. 1:1 is primarily based on unclear definitions and misunderstandings.

Streszczenie

W Liście do Filipian 1,1 można znaleźć dwa terminy, które brzmią zagadkowo jak na Pawłowe pozdrowienie: σύν ἐπισκόποις καὶ διακόνοις. Są anglojęzyczni egzegeci, którzy uważają hendiadys w tym fragmencie za jedną z istotnych możliwości interpretacji. Poniższy artykuł jest poświęcony zagadnieniu, dlaczego właśnie w Flp 1,1 niektórzy dopatrują się hendiadysu i dlaczego ta idea pojawia się prawie wyłącznie w anglojęzycznych komentarzach – w kontraście do komentarzy niemieckojęzycznych. Następnie zostaną poddane analizie cztery komentarze wspominające o hendiadysie, aby zbadać i zweryfikować argumentację za tą figurą. W analizie dokładniej wyjaśniono pojęcie hendiadysu, a następnie zwrócono uwagę na fakt, iż dostrzeganie hendiadysu w Flp 1,1 opiera się przede wszystkim na niejasnych definicjach i nieporozumieniach.

1. Hendiadys in Phil 1:1?

In the very first verse containing the introductory greetings of Paul's Letter to the Philippians, some perplexing words can be found which have initiated a quest for explanation: σύν ἐπισκόποις καὶ διακόνοις. This precise combination of words, their plural form, and the big question regarding the reality behind these words have led to a search for solutions - one of them being the idea of the possible figure of hendiadys. One of the latest occurrences of this proposal is found in Paul Holloway's commentary in the Hermeneia series from 2017 and Lidija Novakovic's commentary from 2020. The following article is dedicated to the question of where the idea of a possible hendiadys comes from, why it reappears in literature and whether the basis for it could possibly be a misunderstanding. It is interesting that nobody applies a hendiadys when translating Phil. 1:1, but why then is it presented as a real possibility?

The article will first present works and commentaries which consider the use of a hendiadys a possibility. English and German definitions of

the figure of hendiadys and possible application in Phil. 1:1 will then be referred to. In the third part, an analysis of the common grounds for an assumption of hendiadys in Phil. 1:1 and alternative interpretations will be put forward.

2. Which commentaries do consider a hendiadys in Phil. 1:1?

In four commentaries from the last 15 years, mention is made of a possible hendiadys in Phil. 1:1. Two of them mention it very briefly – it is the commentary of Lidija Novakovic (Novakovic 2020, 3) and of Joseph H. Hellerman (Hellerman 2015, 12-13). Paul Holloway in *Hermeneia* connects a proposal of hendiadys with John Chrysostom's Homily on Philippians (Holloway 2017, 67). The most elaborate consideration of hendiadys is found in the Anchor Commentary by John H.P. Reumann (Reumann 2008, 64 and 86-89).

In addition to these four commentaries, one must mention Ralph P. Martin's revision from 2004 of Gerald F. Hawthorne's work from 1982. Although a hendiadys is not listed, the translation of Phil. 1:1 is altered, and the exegetical *καί* is proposed as the best solution for translation of Phil. 1:1 (Martin, Hawthorne 2004, 2 and 9). They do see a possible hendiadys in Phil. 1:20; 2:1 and 2:17 but not in Phil. 1:1 (Martin, Hawthorne 2004, 84-85 and 148-149). The commentary on Philippians by Ulrich B. Müller explicitly mentions Hawthorne's proposal but considers his interpretation as an exegeticum unconvincing (Müller 1993, 36).

The fact that an assumption of hendiadys in Phil. 1:1 occur almost only in English language commentaries, but not in German commentaries, demands an explanation. Erich Haupt's Commentary in *Kritisch-Exegetischer Kommentar* from the year 1902 (Haupt 1902, 30) is the only German language text to consider something similar to hendiadys. What is striking is that the English counterpart for Haupt's Commentary, Marvin R. Vincent's work in the ICC Series from 1897 discusses hendiadys in Phil. 1:7; 2:17; 3:8, and 3:21 but not in Phil. 1:1 (Vincent 1897, 4 and 9–10 and 71–72 and 100–101 and 121–122). He dedicated

a long section to consideration of the possibilities of understanding ἐπίσκοποι καὶ διάκονοι, and his cautious remark about the level of our uncertainty and hypothetical status of many reconstructions regarding this phrase is still valid (Vincent 1897, 37-51).

3. What is a hendiadys?

According to the Historisches Wörterbuch der Rhetorik (HWR), the figure of hendiadyoin or hendiadys is a difficult phenomenon to describe and must be differentiated from synonyms, expegetical constructions, tautology, enumeration, and Zeugma. In the HWR, Peter von Möllendorff proposes the following definition:

In der Gedankenfigur des Hendiadyoin wird ein Epithet (seltener: Adverb) durch Nominalisierung (Verbalisierung) und syndetisch parataktische Beifügung in seiner Bedeutung aufgewertet (Möllendorff 1996, 1344-1350).

Hendiadys was and is mainly discussed in Latin literature (not earlier than II/III Century CE), its status and existence in Greek literature are debatable (Möllendorff 1996, 1345-1347). In 1984 David Sansone wrote an article arguing that the figure of hendiadys is a valid interpretation for some techniques present in Greek texts (he lists more than 60 examples), understanding hendiadys as combining “simultaneously the immediacy of co-ordination and the logical precision of subordination” (Sansone 1984, 24). Sansone asserts, that hendiadys in Greek is mostly reciprocal in contrast to Latin: “it coordinates two elements, *either of which* could be logically and gramatically subordinated to the other”, so it differs substantially from Latin and from definitions based on Latin examples and categories, that clearly state the subordination of one part of hendiadys (Sansone 1984, 19).

Posing the question of whether the figure of hendiadys is to be found in New Testament literature, one finds a limited scope of examples and varying definitions. In his Grammar, Archibald T. Robertson adds an

example of hendiadys from Jas. 4:2 (Robertson 1919, 1206 and 1383) only in the second edition and Moulton-Turner lists it under the adverbial (or exegetical) *καί*, so the definition of hendiadys and its relation to other phenomena could be misleading (Moulton, Turner 1963, 335). Max Zerwick differentiates hendiadys and lists it under *καί* in the «hendiadys» - in chapter “XV. Particles”, section “1) The particle *καί*”, paragraph 460, where the subordination is clearly stated (Zerwick 1963, 155).

The commentaries on Philippians do mention BDF § 442 (16) in connection with the idea of hendiadys in Phil. 1:1 (BDF 1961, 228). There is no explicit mention of this verse in BDF and Phil 1,1 does not have anything in common with a chain of dependent genitives, so the references in the commentaries to BDF are difficult to understand and have nothing in common with synonymy. Even in newer versions, the German BD/BDR does not differ substantially regarding hendiadys – the 14th edition from 1976 brought major changes, but not in § 442, now point 9b with footnotes 28 and 29 (BDR 1976, 369), where Phil. 1:11 is listed as an example of hendiadys, but not Phil 1:1 (BDR 1976, 372). BDR from 15th to the 19th edition does not differ at all in § 442. Thus there is not a hint in BDF and BDR of *σύν ἐπισκόποις καὶ διακόνους* being interpreted as a hendiadys.

Walter Bühlmann und Karl Scherer in *Sprachliche Stilfiguren der Bibel* mention that some interpreters also include synonyms under the term hendiadys (Bühlmann, Scherer 1994, 33-35). In the *Einführung in das Studium der Gräzistik*, there is a note stating that an increasing number of synonyms in Greek literature are often interpreted as hendiadys (Reimer, Weißenberger, Zimmermann 2000, 107). In *Griechischer Grammatik zum Neuen Testament*, Heinrich von Siebenthal mentions hendiadys as a figure of repetition and increasing number at § 294.15 and defines it without stressing the subordination, making an interpretation as synonymy also possible (von Siebenthal 2011, 571) – he uses

only one example - Lk. 6:48 - with two verbs to illustrate hendiadys. Daniel B. Wallace in *Greek Grammar beyond the Basics* does not even mention hendiadys at all (Wallace 1996).

It is clear from the examples listed above that a hendiadys is not precisely defined and the relation to synonymy and epexegetis vary in the literature on the Greek New Testament, which could be misleading for exegetes if they depend only on one grammar of the New Testament Greek. The most striking discovery is the use of BDF in commentaries to consider a possibility of hendiadys in Phil. 1:1 because it is difficult to apply the idea of a chain of genitives to a chain of datives in the introductory formula of the Letter to the Philippians.

4. Origins and misunderstandings

4.1. John Chrysostom and too many bishops in Philippi

Holloway's commentary to Phil is the only one which connects hendiadys with John Chrysostom's Homilies (Holloway 2017, 67) – supposedly under influence of the latest Greek-English Edition of Chrysostom's Homilies on Philippians by Pauline Allen from 2013 (Allen 2013, 16-19). In the introduction to the second Homily, Allen notes Chrysostom's problem of ἐπίσκοποι in one city and his proposal of interchangeable understanding of offices at that time, but there is no hint of hendiadys at all: Τότε γὰρ τέως ἐκοινώμουν τοῖς ὀνόμασί καὶ διάκονος ὁ ἐπίσκοπος ἐλέγετο (Allen 2013, xvi-xvii).

4.2. Possible synonymy – not precisely defined and understood

Another reason for the further consideration of hendiadys in Phil. 1:1 is a misunderstanding or lack of clarity in defining what a hendiadys actually is. For Reumann and Hawthorne/Martin, there is no clear difference between hendiadys, synonymy and epexegetical phenomena – they are blended into one, especially in Reumann's commentary, who offers a possible translation as follows: “overseer-agents”, “episkopoi who serve” (Reumann 2008, 64). None of them is precisely a hendiadys – it is synonymy and καί epexegeticum.

Reumann deals also with the interpretations of Josef Hainz and André Lemaire, incorrectly interpreting their stance as a hendiadys – their assumptions were more of synonymy and possible exegetical meaning than the former (Reumann 2008, 86–87; Lemaire 1971, 96–103 and 186; Hainz 1972, 20–28; Hainz 1976, 91–1070). It is difficult to find any clear reference in passages studied from the works of Hainz and Lemaire that they interpret the phenomenon as a hendiadys, so it seems that for Reumann the definition of hendiadys was very broad, enclosing synonymy and exegetical use. But there arises another problem – why there was no reference to the Word Biblical Commentary commentary, where the exegetical interpretation is used in translation as follows: “with the overseers who serve [*or, overseers and deacons*]” and should be interpreted as a hendiadys by Reumann (Hawthorne, Marin 2004, 2). In the commentary of Hawthorne/Martin, the difference between synonymy and exegesis is not clear – they combine the idea of addressing one group with an explanatory interpretation (Hawthorne, Martin 2004, 2 and 9)². Dieter Georgi’s work is also mentioned by Reumann, where he sees synonymy between terms in Phil. 1:1 and should be interpreted as a hendiadys, but it is not (Reumann 2008, 35-36; Georgi 1964, 31-38).

One must ponder if the hendiadys should be considered identical to synonymy and exegesis. Why, then, do none of the commentators consider the following interpretation: “servants/agents, who administer”? It seems as if the reciprocal quality of hendiadys and the newer discussion about the role of *διάκονοι* in John N. Collins (Collins 1990 and Collins 2014) and Anni Hentschel (Hentschel 2007 and Hentschel 2013) is still under influence of hierarchical understanding in previously mentioned commentaries, even though *διακονία* is a prominent word in Pauline literature and *διάκονος* as a title or office of some kind can be found for example in Rom. 16:1.

² Commentary to the verse Phil 1:1 regarding *σύν ἐπισκόποις καὶ διακόνοις* differs from the translation: “overseers who are also deacons” versus “overseers who serve”.

The suggestion that there is a synonymy to be found in the address in Phil. 1:1 is one of the oldest – from Erich Haupt’s commentary from 1902 (Haupt 1902, 2-3) to the commentary of Angela Standhartinger in *Handbuch zum Neuen Testament* from 2021 (Standhartinger 2021, 76-79). Interestingly, it is very hard to find a commentary in German which interprets σύν ἐπισκόποις καὶ διακόνοις as a hendiadys. One may argue that Haupt’s commentary contains a basis for it but it is not mentioned explicitly: „Will man aber von ihrem Verhältnis zu der Geldspende völlig absehen, so würde der Doppelausdruck sich schon dadurch begreifen, dass ihre ἐπισκοπή selbst als διακονία bezeichnet werden soll: der Form nach sind sie der Gemeinde übergeordnet, dem Wesen nach ist aber ihre Stellung eine dienende.” (Haupt 1902, 3).

4.3. Misleading reference to BDF

The two commentaries that mention hendiadys in Phil. 1:1 are only based on BDF § 442 (16), and, paradoxically, on the Series of Commentaries that should be focused on the Greek Text and precise exegesis. Novakovic mentions but one paragraph from BDF (Novakovic 2020, 3), while Hellerman combines and blends into one BDF and commentary of Hawthorne/Martin, seeing no difference between hendiadys and exegetical interpretation (Hellermann 2015, 12).

Connection with the BDF is most interesting because it is the only mention of hendiadys in BDF, with no reference at all to Phil. 1:1 and it is a commentary on the chain of genitives and is being applied to formal datives from the introductory formula by Reumann, Novakovic and Hellerman. That mistake probably originates from looking for possibilities to interpret and translate καί in the BDF and it is here that the misunderstanding arises that BDF § 442 (16) could be applied to Phil. 1:1.

5. Conclusions

To sum up, it is difficult to find any assumption of hendiadys in Phil. 1:1 which is not based on a misunderstanding, vague definition of hendiadys, or an unvalidated quote from BDF.

The words σύν ἐπισκόποις καὶ διακόνους in Phil. 1:1 can be understood as a synonymy or καί expegetical, but the four commentaries mentioned above lack a precise definition of a hendiadys and they do not differentiate it at all from synonymy and expegesis.

The question is why there is such a difference between English and German commentaries? In both languages, there is a problem with the precise definition of hendiadys, and a whole spectrum of possible interpretations is to be found among many definitions.³ Perhaps it was Reumann in 2008 who was the first to raise the idea of hendiadys in Phil. 1:1 and the three subsequent commentaries simply borrow some parts of his argumentation without critical examination.

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³ Compare e.g. Dietz 1999, 114–117; Möllendorff 1996, 1347–1350; Wright 2012, 1639; Peters 2001, 328.

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