

The Genitive Case

Letting One Nominal Modify Another

A lesson for the *Paideia* web-app
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The Genitive Case

- The "genitive case" is another role a nominal can play in a clause
 - We have actually learned this already!
 - The "possessive" pronouns are actually the "genitive" form of personal pronouns
- possession is only one idea the genitive case can convey
 - The genitive case nominal is somehow related to the "lead" nominal

	Masc. or Fem.
nom.	ἐγώ
gen.	(ἐ)μου
voc.	-



	Masc. or Fem.
nom.	σύ
gen.	σου
voc.	-

	Masc.	Fem.	Neut.
nom.	αὐτός	αὕτη	αὐτό
gen.	αὐτοῦ	αὐτῆς	αὐτοῦ
voc.	-	-	-



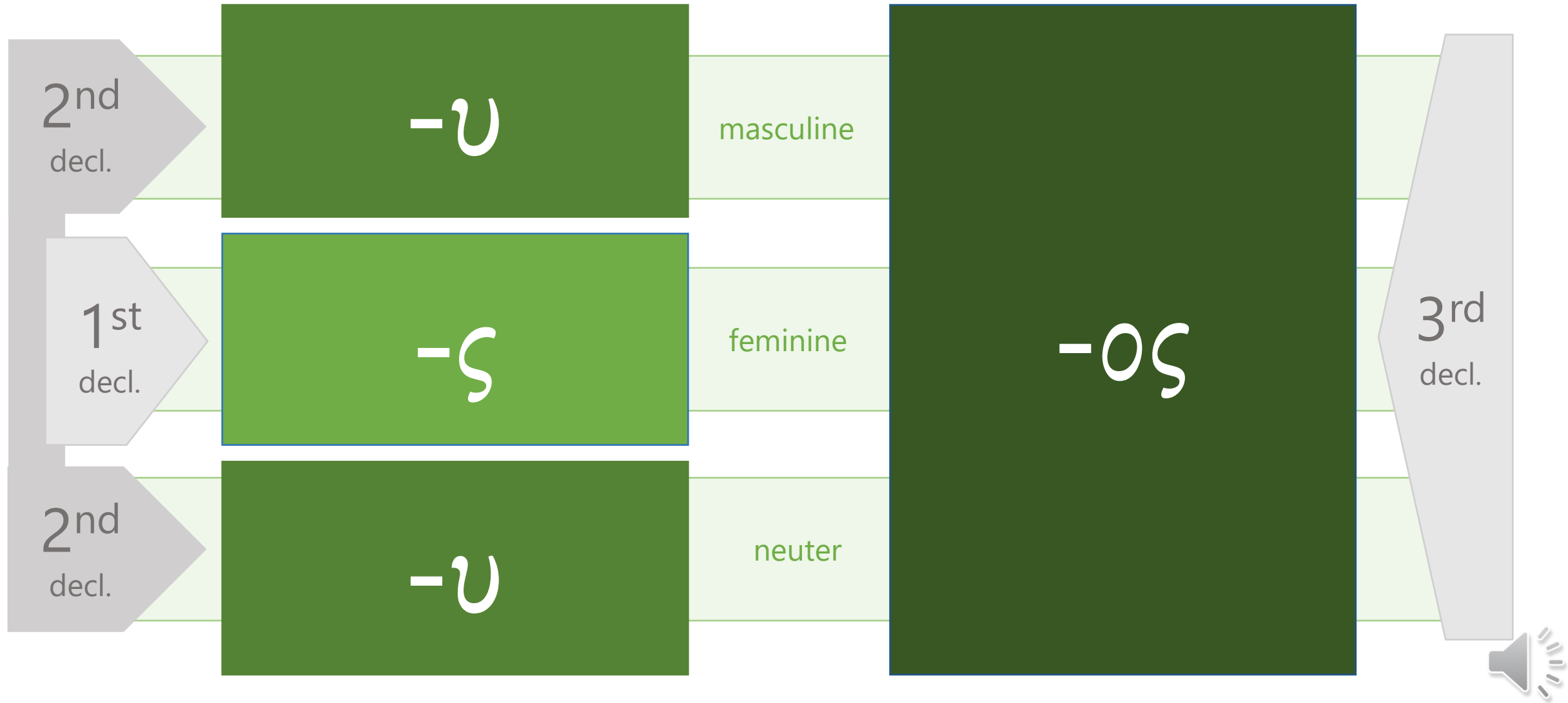
The Genitive Case

- The genitive nominal is *somehow related to* the lead nominal
 - Possession is one kind of genitive relationship

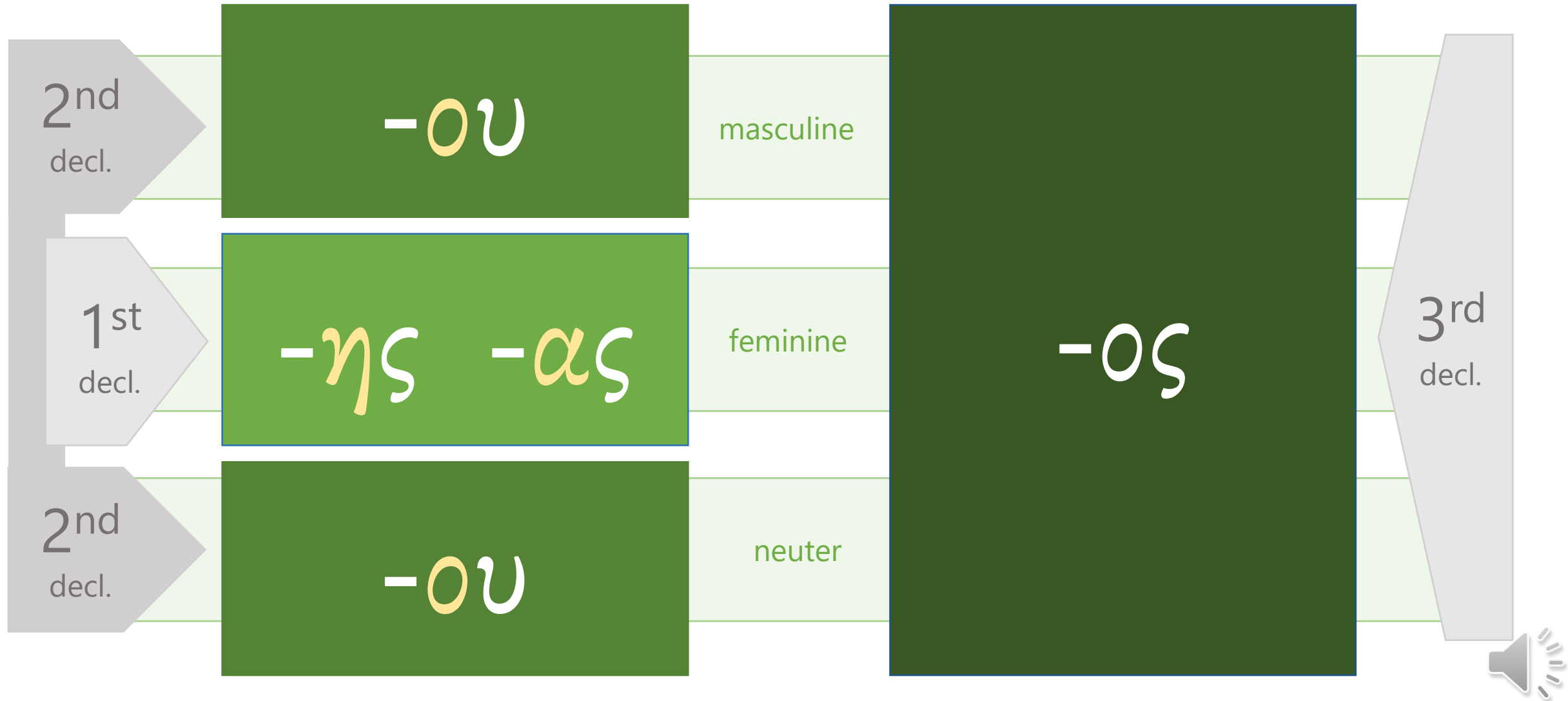
 ο πατήρ μου	the father <i>related to me.</i>	"my father"
 αὐτῆς ὁ οἶκος	the house <i>related to her</i>	"her house"



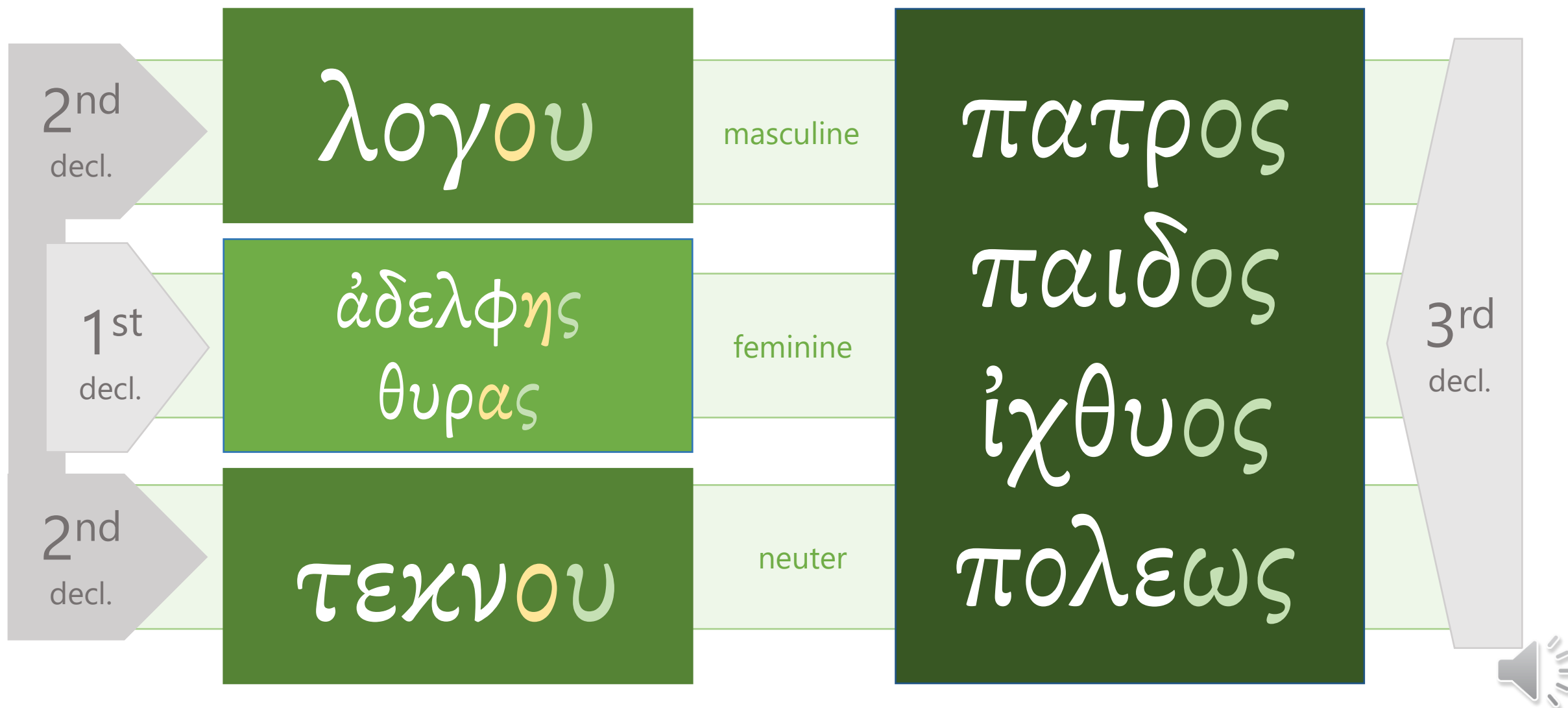
Genitive Case Endings



Genitive Case Endings



Genitive Case Examples



A or H in the 1st Declension?

- Some α-pattern 1st declension nouns switch to η in the genitive
 - Retain the α if stem ends in ε, ι, ρ
 - Otherwise switch to η in the genitive

	Switch to η	Retain α		
nom.	δοξ <u>α</u>	οἰκ <u>ι</u> α	θυρ <u>α</u>	Μαρ <u>ι</u> α
gen.	δοξ <u>η</u> ς	οἰκ <u>ι</u> α <u>ς</u>	θυρ <u>α</u> ς	Μαρ <u>ι</u> α <u>ς</u>
voc.	δοξ <u>α</u>	οἰκ <u>ι</u> α	θυρ <u>α</u>	Μαρ <u>ι</u> α



Genitive Definite Article

- T + 1st or 2nd declension genitive endings
 - Same forms regardless of declension
 - Article agrees with nominal's gender
 - Even if an unusual declension used
 - E.g., *ἡ ὁδός, της ὁδου*
- Feminine article always uses η
 - E.g., *της Μαρίας*

	Masc.	Fem.	Neut.
nom.	ὁ	ἡ	το
gen.	του	της	του
voc.	-	-	-



Comparing the Case Forms

	Masc. (2 nd decl.)	
nom.	ὁ	λογος
gen.	του	λογου
voc.	-	λογε

	Fem. (1 st decl.)	
nom.	ἡ	ἀδελφη
gen.	της	ἀδελφης
voc.	-	ἀδελφη

	Neut. (2 nd decl.)	
nom.	το	τεκνον
gen.	του	τεκνου
voc.	-	τεκνον

	3 rd decl.	
nom.	ὁ	πατηρ
gen.	του	πατρος
voc.	-	πατερ



Case Forms of Personal Pronouns

	Masc. (2 nd decl.)
nom.	αὐτός
gen.	αὐτοῦ
voc.	-

	Fem. (1 st decl.)
nom.	αὐτή
gen.	αὐτῆς
voc.	-

	Neut. (2 nd decl.)
nom.	αὐτό
gen.	αὐτοῦ
voc.	-



Case Forms of Demonstrative Pronouns

	Masc. (2 nd decl.)
nom.	<u>οὗ</u> τος
gen.	του <u>του</u>
voc.	-

	Fem. (1 st decl.)
nom.	<u>αὐ</u> τη
gen.	τα <u>υ</u> της
voc.	-

	Neut. (2 nd decl.)
nom.	του <u>τ</u> ο
gen.	του <u>του</u>
voc.	-



The Meaning of the Genitive Case

- Genitive nominals modify other nominals (usually)
 - "lead nominal" = the one being modified
 - "genitive nominal" = the one in the genitive case
- The genitive nominal is *somehow related to* the lead nominal
 - A lot of ways the two things might be related!
 - Can't translate until you've decided what the relation must be.

ὄνομα μου	a name related to me	"my name"
πατηρ Μαρίας	a father related to Maria	"Maria's father"
καρπος του δενδρου	a fruit related to the tree	"a fruit from the tree"



A First Rough Approach

- Textbooks often encourage you to use “of” as a default translation
- Better: Put the genitive word directly in front of the lead nominal

	Genitive word in front	“Of” with genitive word
του δουλου ὁ κυριος	the slave master	the master of the slave
ὁ πατηρ Μαριας	the Maria father	the father of Maria
καρπος του δενδρου	a tree fruit	a fruit of the tree



A Second, Proper Translation

- Identify the particular relationship behind this genitive
 - Must be inferred from context

του δουλου ὁ κυριος	the master who owns the slave
ὁ πατηρ Μαριας	Maria's father
καρπος του δενδρου	a fruit from the tree



Genitive of Relationship

- L has a personal relationship with G
 - Translate with an English possessive

της γυνης ὁ ἄνηρ	the woman's husband
ὁ πατηρ Μαρίας	Maria's father
ἡ του Γεωργίου ἀδελφη	George's sister



Possessive Genitive

- L is possessed or owned by G
 - Translate with an English possessive

του κυριου ὁ δουλος	the master's slave
ὁ οἶκος Σιμωνος	Simon's house
ἡ του Ἀλεξανδρου συκη	Alexander's fig tree



Attributive Genitive

- L has the quality G
 - Make the genitive nominal into an adjective

οἶνος του ὑδατος

watery wine



Genitive of Content

- G is the content of L
 - "full of" or "filled with"

οἶκος του βρωματος	a house full of food
το του ιχθυος σκευος	the vessel filled with fish
του υδατος γη	a land full of water



Genitive of Material

- L is made of or consists of G
 - "made of" or "consisting of"

τροφή του λεχανου	food made of vegetables
του ύδατος θαλασσα	a sea consisting of water



Exegetical Genitive

- L is the same thing or person as G
 - "that is"
 - Surround with commas
 - Sometimes just surround G with commas

γυνή μητρος	a woman, that is, a mother
ἡ τροφή του ἄρτος	the food, the bread,



Genitive of Source

- L comes from G
 - "from" or "that comes from"

ὁ ἄνθρωπος της Κορινθου	the man from Corinth
το του δένδρου συκον	the fig from the tree



Partitive Genitive

- L is a part (or member) of G
 - "that is part of" or "who belongs to"
 - Sometimes just "of"

ὁ ἄνθρωπος τῆς Ἰσραὴλ	the man who belongs to Israel
ἡ τοῦ οἴκου θυγατήρ	the daughter of the household



8 Common Kinds of Genitive Relation

Relationship	L has a personal relationship with G	<i>English possessive</i>
Possession	L is owned or possessed by G	<i>English possessive</i>
Attributive	L has the quality G	make G an adjective
Content	G is the content of L	"full of" or "filled with"
Material	L is made out of G	"made from"
Epexegetical	L is the same thing as G	"that is"
Source	L comes from G	"from"
Partitive	L is a part of G	"of" or "part of"



Useful Ambiguity

- Not always one narrow genitive relation
- Sometimes leave the genitive connection fuzzy
 - Imply a multi-faceted relation concisely
- Often impossible to translate fully into English
 - Have to use English terms that are narrower

ὁ θεὸς Ἰησοῦ

the God in personal relationship with Jesus

the God worshipped by Jesus

the God whom Jesus represents

the God who sent Jesus



Genitive Forms of Proper Names

- Most names are declined in Greek just like other nominals

	2 decl.	2 decl.	1 decl.	1 decl.	3 decl.	3 decl.
nom.	Στεφανος	Γεωργιος	Φοιβη	Μαρια	Ίασων	Σιμων
gen.	Στεφανου	Γεωργιου	Φοιβης	Μαριας	Ίασωνος	Σιμωνος
voc.	Στεφανε	Γεωργιε	Φοιβη	Μαρια	Ίασων	Σιμων



Genitive Form of Interrogative Pronoun

- The pronoun **τίς** is a bit tricky
 - A 3rd declension pronoun
 - Genitive ends in **-ος**
 - Masc. and fem. forms the same
 - Neuter only different in nominative and accusative cases
 - Real stem **τίν-** shows up in genitive

	Masc. and Fem.	Neut.
nom.	τίς	τί
gen.	τίνος	
voc.	-	



Using the Genitive Interrogative Pronoun

- Asking to whom/what the lead nominal is related
 - By whom is L owned? ("whose?")
 - Τίνος ὁ δουλος οὗτος; "Whose slave is this?"
 - To whom is L related? ("whose?")
 - Τίνος ἡ θυγατηρ αὕτη; "Whose daughter is this?"
 - From what/whom does L come? ("from what/whom/where?")
 - Τίνος ὁ καρπος; "From where does the fruit come?"
 - Τίνος δένδρου ὁ καρπος; "From what tree does the fruit come?"
 - With what is L made? ("with/out of what?")
 - Τίνος ὁ οἶκος; "Out of what is the house made?"
 - Τίνος καρπου οἶνος; "With what fruit is wine made?"

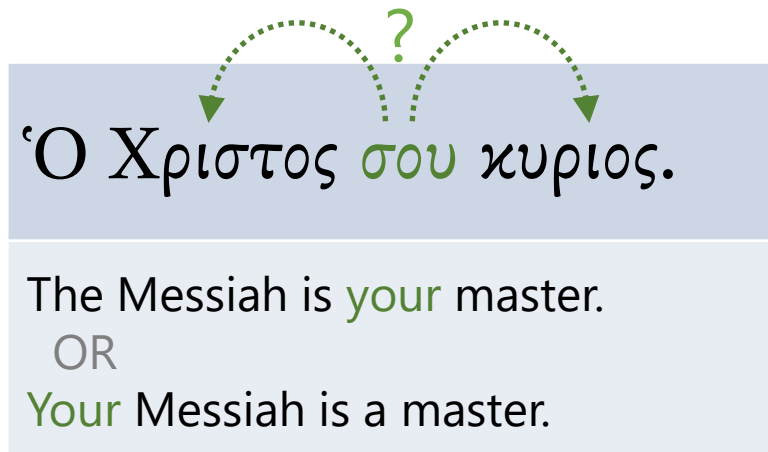


Word Order and the Genitive

- It can be ambiguous which nominal a genitive phrase is supposed to modify
 - Often have to infer from context.

Ὁ Χριστός σου κυριος.

The Messiah is **your** master.
OR
Your Messiah is a master.

A diagram illustrating the ambiguity of the Greek phrase "Ὁ Χριστός σου κυριος." (The Messiah is your master). The word "σου" (your) is highlighted in green. Two dotted green arrows originate from "σου": one points to "Χριστός" (Messiah) and the other points to "κυριος" (master). A green question mark is placed above the space between "Χριστός" and "σου", indicating the ambiguity of which noun the genitive phrase modifies.

Word Order and the Genitive

- Rule of thumb
 - Genitive phrase modifies the closest nominal (before or after).

✗

Ὁ κυριος Χριστος σου.

Your master is the Messiah.



Word Order and the Genitive

- Rule of thumb
 - Genitive phrase modifies the closest nominal (before or after).



Σου Ὁ κυριος Χριστος.

Your master is the Messiah.



Ὁ σου κυριος Χριστος.

Your master is the Messiah.



Ὁ κυριος σου Χριστος.

Your master is the Messiah.



Keep Learning

- You can learn more about Greek cases and the genitive case in particular here:
 - Mounce, *Basics of Biblical Greek Grammar* (4th edition)
 - the genitive case, 7.1, 7.3—7.4, 7.8—7.11
 - other declension patterns, 7.13—7.14
 - strategies for parsing, 7.16
 - kinds of genitive relations: Chapter 7 exegesis, "genitive" (64—65)



Mounce introduces the genitive case together with the dative case, which we will be looking at later. For now, just focus on what he says about the genitive and its forms.

