ABSTRACT

The paper examines the translation of Greek active voice into Gothic with mediopassive or periphrastic passive. There are 13 such cases, 8 for mediopassive and 5 for periphrastic passive. While the list is rather short, the qualities of the occurrences diﬀer drastically. The periphrastic occurrences turn out to mostly be mistakes, one of which was made by the translator and one – by the scribe, or they are conspicuously close to Latin, which points to a common, but lost Greek source. The mediopassives, on the other hand, demonstrate that the Gothic mediopassive retained enough of its true middle reading to be used for translating some of the Greek unaccusative or intransitive verbs. Another interesting feature is the abundance ofthe causative suﬃx in both Greek and Gothic forms in question. The results call for a broader investigation of the strategy utilized by the Gothic translator, for example, analyzing the translations of the Greek media tantums into Gothic.

Gothic has two kinds of passive: the synthetic passive or mediopassive that only has the present-tense paradigm, and the periphrastic passive formed in the present and past tenses with the help of wisan ‘to be’ and wairþan ‘to become’.

The periphrastic forms have long been a subject of discussion. For a long time, they were viewed as analogous to the German Zustandspassive and Vorgangspassive, that is, statal and processual passive . However, the ist + PP form did not always ﬁt the description of Zustandspassive and was generally interpreted as having a ‘double nature’ , that is, able to convey both stative and processual meaning. As a way out of this ‘double-naturedness’, the diﬀerence in the chosen linking verb was seen by some scholars as dependent on the telic/atelic properties of the participle , and thus the resulting form could be either durative, resultative or punctual . This view was largely seconded by Kotin who described the wisan + PP as ‘durative’ versus wairþan + PP as ‘mutative’, and Pagliarulo who gave the wisan + PP passive a stative and durative meaning versus the terminative meaning for wairþan + PP. In a recent account, the wisan + PP is seen as an ‘entailed-state resultative’ versus the ‘attained-state resultative’ of the wairþan + pp construction .

The whole Gothic passive system and the place of the mediopassive in it have also seen various analyses. The original mediopassive form was inherited from Proto-Indo-European and retained only its present-tense paradigm in Gothic; its past-tense counterpart is, therefore, the wairþan + PP periphrasis, while the wisan + PP forms serve to denote end-states, and that

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KLEYNER – CHANGED IN TRANSLATION 113

destabilize the whole system because such forms sometimes also describe actions and not states . Abraham and Leiss see the mediopassive as already becoming redundant, despite its frequent and productive use in Gothic, largely because the periphrastic forms were, as Abraham claims, less ambiguous in meaning. Rousseau sees a two-fold system – the ﬁrst level consists of the mediopassive for the present tense and ist + PP for the past tense, while on the second level ist + PP codes the present tense, and the past tense is coded by was + PP. Overall, the Gothic system of passives is usually analysed in terms of its relations to -nan verbs and reﬂexives that also serve to describe actions we perceive as ‘middle’ or ‘agent-oriented’.

What is unclear is how and why the frequent mediopassive form might have died out. Interestingly, the eventual dying out is something researchers tend to agree upon despite the fact that we have no data concerning the eventual fate of the mediopassive in Gothic. One viewpoint claims that the mediopassive was too ambiguous, and was on its way to being replaced by reﬂexives on the one hand and the periphrastic passive on the other – or, as Lhr puts it, Gothic tried to ‘avoid the ambiguity between the functions passive and middle of the synthetic mediopassive’, despite the conspicuous prevalence of the passive function . There is, however, another approach: Bennett and Drinka see the Gothic Bible as a slavish translation that borrows heavily from Greek. In Koine, the ‘to be + participle’ constructions were well-developed and included both passive and active participles; thus, periphrastic passives become more easily grammaticalized and eventually replace the mediopassive form.

One common issue in assessing the fate of the Gothic mediopassive is an attempt to grasp a diﬀerence in meaning between it and the periphrasis.

Some scholars, such as Gukhman , Abraham , Ferraresi , etc., claim that there are numerous middle readings of Gothic mediopassives, and that this category cannot be equated to passive voice only. Instead, it is an ambiguous category that creates diﬃculties in readers and speakers of Gothic. Ferraresi compares the middle and passive readings of mediopassive verbs and claims that they competed with reﬂexive forms and -nan verbs, but the latter groups were less ambiguous and thus eventually preferred.

On the other hand, Pagliarulo calls the mediopassive simply ‘passivo sintetico’ – the synthetic passive. Vogel does the same, and regards mediopassive entries as simply passive. This approach has a long tradition. Skladny notes that the mediopassive form translated exclusively passives; Schrder starts his work repeating Streitberg’s claim that the Gothic language uses the form of the PIE middle, but in the passive sense. More recently, in the opinion of Katz , ‘there exist only one or two examples maintaining readings that could be interpreted as middle readings, that is, as unaccusatives. Elsewhere, this category is a transformative passive, representing straightforwardly the de-agentivization of transitive verbs’.

At this point, it is necessary to clarify the term ‘middle’. The framework for this paper is essentially the one described in Kemmer , that is, the one that values the semantical properties of the verb over its syntactic features. She lists several semantic classes that middles tend to gravitate to, such as body-related actions, emotions, changes in body postures, non- translational movement, naturally reciprocal events, spontaneous events, etc. Of particular importance is the notion that while the morphosyntactic characteristics of the middle are better explored as a dynamically changing system, its semantic properties can be delimited with two factors: initiator as aﬀected entity; and low degree of elaboration of events . Thus, the Gothic system had three possible sources of ‘middle’

semantics: the mediopassive, the reﬂexive, and the -nan class. The scope of this paper prevents from going into a detailed overview of the relationship between the three groups, but some analysis and references will be given further on. What is important is the emphasis on the semantical component as the central feature of the middle voice.

In this paper, I am interested in the instances when a passive Gothic verb or phrase translates an active Greek verb. Given the secondary nature of the Gothic text, that is, being very close to the original text, this phenomenon should be rare and unsystematic. Presumably, the deviations are occasional decisions of the translator, and sometimes the decision will be a ‘bad’ one stylistically – but even bad decisions show what is possible in a language, what will be understood, so they are also a valid source of information. Such cases may contribute to a better understanding of the diﬀerences between the passives; perhaps, one of the passives is used to translate the Greek active voice more frequently, or limits itself to certain verbs only. If this should prove to be the case, the diﬀerence between the passives could indeed become more tangible.

The approach that follows is based on the idea that the translator’s objective was mainly to create a comprehensible text in Gothic – a text that was, perhaps, not in the idiomatic and colloquial vernacular language, but did not contain unintelligible calques. Thus, every deviation from the original must have been motivated by some factor – and for the purposes of this research, the questions are whether the Gothic form was one of those factors, what motivated the change and how it contributed to the text.

The Greek actives, and not middles, were chosen for two reasons. First, the number of such cases is relatively low and will allow for a detailed examination of each case in the scope of one paper. A larger study of voice oppositions is under way, so this investigation can be considered a preliminary glimpse into the topic. Second, the actives – supposedly – oﬀer a starker contrast with the Gothic form and are unambiguous in terms of both classiﬁcation and interpretation, and the results may be clearer than those received from comparison of closer categories.

It has to be said that not all actives are equally active. In addition to unaccusatives such as the vase broke, some verbs, such as, for example, to rejoice, describe a state or an action that aﬀects no one and no thing but the actor/experiencer. This is also true for Greek, where there are, for example, verb pairs that have essentially the same meaning, but one verb is active, whereas the other is middle. Cases like ἀjούx – ἀjούοlaι ‘to listen’ or ἐhέkx – bούkοlaι ‘to want’ are quite numerous and invite a discussion on the range of the Greek active.

This discussion is well deﬁned by Allan . He notes that the mediopassive verbs that have an active counterpart or synonym mostly belong to two semantic classes: verbs of motion and verbs of mental processes. Upon examining ﬁve such pairs, he comes to the conclusion that in three of them, the middle verb has a slightly diﬀerent semantics that in itself involves a degree of subject-aﬀectedness, so that the middle ending emphasizes that subject-aﬀectedness, while in two other cases the semantic properties are very similar, and the middle ending is redundant .

Apart from active-middle pairs, there is also a class of Greek activa tantum that tend to belong to the same classes, that is, verbs denoting motion and physical/bodily processes. They are intransitive, and many of them have a middle future . This is something to watch for when dealing with the Greek sources for the translations, as such actives can occupy the same semantic niche as the middle.

KLEYNER – CHANGED IN TRANSLATION 115

Before analysing the Gothic examples, one must consider the issue of the Vorlage. Indeed, how do we know if the Gothic translator changed the mood of the verb when we do not know for certain which text he saw when he was making the translation? This is a diﬃcult question, because there is simply no way to know with complete certainty. I will sum up the state-of-the- art of research in this area as described by Ratkus and Falluomini .

There is no doubt that the original was Greek, not Latin. As to the nature of the Greek source, it was closest to the Byzantine text-type , with some non-Byzantine discrepancies that may have been inserted later, but most likely were present in the original text, as the Greek tradition itself was at that time still very young. The question of Latin inﬂuence is rather complex; Wulﬁla may have had a Latin text lying before him alongside the Greek one; the readings that are common for Gothic and Latin but absent in Greek may have been added later, in the course of transmission in the West, but such readings may also point to a lost Greek source that existed at the time both Gothic and Latin translations were being made.

In order to be as objective and comprehensive as possible, the Greek text is primarily given in the Byzantine version, but if a non-Byzantine reading of the verbs in question diﬀers from it, the other reading is also given – as well as Latin readings that can account for the Gothic deviations. The Gothic text is given according to Streitberg’s edition. The full contexts are provided in footnotes. The article is divided into two main parts followed by conclusions; the ﬁrst part deals with the mediopassive instances, while the second part describes the periphrastic passive.

Mark 4:291

a. þanuh biþe atgibada akran but when give.forth.MEDPASS.3SG fruit.NOM.SG ‘but when the fruit gives itself’

b. ὅsam dὲ paqadῷ ὁ jaqpός when indeed bring.forth.AOR.SUBJ.3SG ART fruit.NOM.SG ‘but when the fruit gives ’

c. ὅsam dὲ paqadοῖ ὁ jaqpός when indeed bring.forth.AOR.SUBJ.3SG ART fruit.NOM.SG ‘but when the fruit gives ’

Πaqadίdxlι means ‘to deliver, to betray’. There are thirty-seven occurrences of the active voice in the parts of the New Testament that exist in Gothic; thirteen are translated with galewjan ‘to betray’, eight with anaﬁlhan ‘to deliver’, ﬁfteen with atgiban ‘to give’, and one is translated with briggan ‘to carry’.

The exceptionality of Mk 4:29 is in the fact that the Greek usage is unaccusative: ὅsam dὲ paqadῷ ὁ jaqpός, the fruit gives itself. This is unseen in all the other numerous occurrences of the verb. The verb paqadῷ cannot have ἡ cῆ ‘the earth’ from the previous line as the subject,

because ὁ jaqpός ‘the fruit’ is in the nominative, not accusative case. This is the only such occurrence in the New Testament, both for paqadίdxlι and for all its Gothic translations.

The case of Mk 4:29 is a well-known conundrum, with a long tradition of annotation. Already the KJV translator in 1611 commented this line, ‘brought...: or, ripe’. The classic solution to this ) is to read paqadῷ as ‘to allow’; thus, the literal meaning would be ‘and when the fruit has permitted’ .

Interestingly, some Latin versions used multiple ways of rendering paqadῷ. In Vulgata, we see:

d. et cum se produxerit fructus and when self.ACC produce.FUT.3SG fruit.NOM.SG and when the fruit has produced itself

but in some Vetus Latina MSs, there is a slight diﬀerence after an external subject is added:

e. et cum ex se produxerit fructus2 and when from self.ABL produce.FUT.3SG fruit.ACC.PL and when it has produced fruits from itself

f. et cum produxerit fructum3 and when produce.FUT.3SG fruit.ACC.SG and when it has produced fruit

There are also other variants, along with fructum ediderit ‘<the earth> has given out the fruit’, mutaverit fructum ‘<the earth> has changed the fruit’, and even the literal tradiderit fructus , probably, ‘<the earth> has given over the fruits’. Overall, due to its unusual nature, this passage was translated and corrected in many ways while the translators attempted to convey its exact meaning.

Result

Atgibada stands for paqadῷ because of a translator’s decision both to recur to one of the usual options of translating paqadίdxlι, but to also render the unique unaccusative usage that would be required for such a decision. A good way to explain this usage is to see it as a case of a middle reading. Latin translators did not have and were trying to accommodate by adding an external subject to the active voice, but for the Gothic translator, this was not necessary. While it is true that the passive reading is also possible, this instance falls in line with several others where it is more diﬃcult to explain, and thus, may be part of a trend I will try to demonstrate.

Mark 7:104

a. dauþau afdauþjaidau

death.DAT.SG kill.MEDPASS.OPT.3SG

‘may they be killed <in> death’

b. hamάsῳ sekeυsάsx death.DAT.SG die.IMP.3SG ‘let them die a death’

KLEYNER – CHANGED IN TRANSLATION 117

The verb sekeυsάx means ‘to end, to die’. This is one of the verbs that is used in the active voice in the present tense, and the middle voice is seen only in the future and aorist. It is also a verb that is very subject-oriented semantically, and thus crosses into the domain of the middle.

There are six more instances of active usage in the parts of the New Testament that we have in Gothic. 4 forms are personal: Mt. 9:18, Mk. 9:44, 46, 48 are translated with gaswiltan ‘to die’ and gadauþnan ‘to die’ ; ἤlekkem sekeυsᾶm ‘was going to die’ in Luke 7:2 is translated with swultawairþja ‘dying’, and the perfect participle in Jn 11:39 is simply rendered as dauþs ‘dead’.

In the context of Mk 7:10 the translator did not use the class IV verb gadauþnan ‘to die’, but preferred a 1-class causative afdauþjan in the mediopassive form. This could be because gadauþnan usually translates the Greek ἀpοhmήrjx ‘to die’: for 29 cases of gadauþnan, 28 correspond to this Greek verb, with only one exception . In the Gothic Bible, there is one more occurrence of afdauþjan in Mk 14:55 , and also the same formation but with a diﬀerent preverb as gadauþjan in Rom 8:36 . Both times in the Greek original we see the verb hamasάx in the meaning ‘to kill’, and the Gothic –dauþjan also meaning ‘to kill’.

There are many such pairs in Gothic, for instance gafulljan and gafullnan; they are almost all denominative, and the causative/inchoative diﬀerence is always marked. An excellent discussion in Katz ends with the conclusion that -nan verbs are most likely ﬁentive and indeed form pairs with the -jan verbs, not in order to de-transitivize them, but because the underlying adjective is a base for both -nan and -jan derivational patterns. This is important, because Mk 7:10 is not the only case in this paper, where a -jan passive was used instead of the usual -nan active form.

There is one more issue, and it concerns stylistic considerations. The expression ‘to die a death’ is a well-spread ﬁgura etymologica.5 According to Keidan , it is the only such occurrence when the Greek ﬁgura that corresponds to the Gothic one. However, the trope itself6 seems to have been much more wide-spread in Gothic. Toporova found plenty of cases which have no basis in Greek: Mt. 9:2 ἐpὶ jkίmgς bebkglέmοm = ana ligra ligandan ‘lying on a bed’, Lk. 7:25 ἱlasίοις ἠlφιerlέmοm = wastjom gawasidana ‘arrayed by clothes’, etc. – 30 instances in total. She uses the instances to stress the idea that the Gothic translator was deeply rooted in the Germanic poetic tradition. It is interesting, therefore, why the mediopassive form of the -jan verb was chosen, and not the active form of the -nan verb. The verb being one of the ‘change of state’ semantics, a middle interpretation seems more plausible than a passive one.

There is another possibility, that is, that the tradition is Latin.7 Indeed, the Latin version of Mk 7:10 is overwhelmingly morte moriatur8 , which has the same syntax as Gothic. A closer look at all such cases reveals Mt 5:16 liuhtjai liuhaþ – luceat lux ‘let there be light’, whereas in Greek, kalwάsx sὸ φῶς. Thus, the number of Gothic-Latin correspondences in these ﬁgurae is extremely small; it seems more plausible that it was the Gothic translator who favoured such clauses, and the Gothic-Latin coincidences are simply coincidences. Still, it probably

does not aﬀect the choice of the -jan form over the -nan form, which was made on semantic and grammatical grounds.

Result

The choice of wording in Mk 7:10 is slightly unusual; we would expect a -nan form with the meaning ‘to die’, and not the -jan form with the meaning ‘to kill’ in the mediopassive. Who is going to kill people who loathe their parents? The Greek text does not contain references to any kind of execution. Still, this choice was made – and I claim that this is a signiﬁcant choice because, just as in the case of atgibada in the previous example, the semantics of afdauþjaidau is preferably interpreted as middle, and not passive.

Luke 6:219

a audagai jus gretandans nu, unte ufhlohjanda.

blessed.PL you weep.PART.PRS.PL now, because laugh.MEDPASS.3PL ‘blessed you weeping now, because you <will> start laughing

b. lajάqιοι οἱ jkaίοmseς mῦm, ὅsι cekάrese. blessed.PL ART weep.PART.PRS.PL now, because laugh.FUT.3PL ‘blessed the weeping now, because you will laugh’

The verb cekάx means ‘to laugh’. This is also an activa tantum verb in the present tense. It describes emotional activity and thus is a good candidate for a middle interpretation. There is only one other instance of this verb in the active voice in the NT . Verbs of emotion are often intransitive and are reﬂexive in some languages or mediopassive in others . Thus, the mediopassive rendering is not entirely unexpected.

However, the Gothic verb ufhlohjan\* belongs to the 1st weak class, and is usually translated as a causative ‘to cause to laugh’ or ‘to make laugh’ Therefore, the literal translation is causative: ‘blessed you now weeping, for you will be made/caused to laugh’. Curiously, this is the only occurrence of ufhlohjan\* in the text. There seem to be two other verbs with the meaning ‘to laugh’ in Gothic: hlahjan\* ‘to laugh’, only attested in Luke 6:25 as hlahjandans, and bihlahjan\* ‘to laugh to scorn’ which is a class VI strong verb attested as bihlohun in Mt 9:24, Lk 8:53 and Mk 5:40 – all three times translating the Greek jasecέkxm. It is obvious then that hlahjan\* is also a class VI strong verb; and the ablaut in the causative hlohjan\* is regular .

The problem is that a causative meaning cannot be based on the Greek text . One solution would be to see ufhlohjan\* as P-labile, i.e. patient-preserving, after the classic ‘I broke the vase / the vase broke’ , and thus capable of unaccusative usage. There are other such examples of class 1 weak verbs in Gothic: gawandjan ‘to steer, to turn’, anastodjan ‘to begin’, waisjan ‘to dress’ etc. . The only objection here would be semantics: there are no mental or emotional state verbs on Stroobant’s list; nor are there any such verbs in the lists for Old English, Old Saxon, Old Frisian and Old High German.

The preverb uf- is often broadly interpreted as ‘under’ , but West correctly writes that ‘its actual force is not predictable’. Examples such as ufhaband ‘they hold up’ and ufslauþ ‘he crept away’ hint at a perfective resultant meaning. Of equal importance is West’s remark that in some cases, verbs with and

KLEYNER – CHANGED IN TRANSLATION 119

without uf- seem near synonyms and are used in similar contexts .

The semantics of ufhlohjanda can be interepreted in other ways than passive; this consideration is also put forward by Lhr who lists Lk 6:21 among the long list of Gothic unaccusative examples that convey a truly middle meaning.

A good solution indeed would be to view ufhlohjanda as a middle – the meaning, therefore, would be ‘they will laugh’. An analogue is provided by Katz after Ferraresi in Lk 16:16.

c. þaþroh þiudangardi gudis wailamerjada jah hwazuh in izai nauþjada. ἀpὸ sόse ἡ barιkeίa sοῦ heοῦ eὐaccekίfesaι jaὶ pᾶς eἰς aὐsὴm bιάfesaι . thenceforth the kingdom of God is preached, and everyone presses into it

Katz’s reasoning is that nobody presses people into the kingdom of God. He calls it ‘at least one example of a more ‘middle’ semantics’ and repeatedly states elsewhere that the Gothic mediopassive is simply passive with hardly any exception. I cannot agree with the ‘more ‘middle’ semantics’ formula; the data suggests a straightforward true middle reading, as does the data for ufhlohjanda.

Result

If ufhlohjanda is indeed a middle, and not passive form, there seems to be an emerging pattern: mediopassive forms can translate Greek actives that have certain semantics , so these Gothic forms do not have any ‘passive’ semantics, and can be only interpreted as true middles.

Luke 6:3810

a. mitads goda gibada in barm

Measure.NOM good.NOM give.MEDPASS.3SG in bosom.ACC.SG izwarana.

your.ACC.SG

‘a good measure <will> be given in your bosom’

b. lέsqοm jakὸm dώrουrιm eἰς sὸm Measure.ACC good.ACC give.FUT.ACT.3SG in ART jόkpοm ὑlῶm.

bosom.ACC.SG you.GEN.PL

‘they will give a good measure in your bosom’

The verb dίdxlι means ‘to give’. There are plenty of active forms of dίdxlι in the New Testament, but only this case was translated with the passive voice. The context, however, provides a possible explanation: the gibaid, jah gibada izwis ‘give, and shall be given to you’ in the beginning of the sentence may call for parallelism rather than for an active impersonal construction later in the text. The active-passive pair is repeated in the end as mitid mitada izwis ‘measure, and shall be measured to you’. The whole syntagm was reinterpreted in Gothic: in Greek, lέsqοm can be both nominative and accusative; in Gothic, it became the

Nom. Sg. mitaþs, and the vector of the action was changed. The Gothic translator is not the only one who made this choice: the New International Version of 1973, among several recent English translations, renders this passage as ‘a good measure <...> will be poured in your lap’.

The whole sentence is: dίdοse, jaὶ dοhήresaι ὑlῖm lέsqοm jakὸm pepιerlέmοm rerakeυlέmοm ὑpeqejvυmmόlemοm dώrουrιm eἰς sὸm jόkpοm ὑlῶm ‘Give, and shall be given to you: men shall give a good measure, pressed down, shaken together, running over, into your bosom’. It is easy to see that dοhήresaι ὑlῖm lέsqοm jakὸm without the colon and diacritics reads ‘a good measure will be given to you’. As the Gothic text does not exactly follow the Greek word order, it is not a mistake of the translator skipping a line, but it certainly could have inﬂuenced the re-interpretation of the paragraph as well as the numerous active-passive juxtapositions in the paragraph.

It is also clear that the Greek dώrουrιm is impersonal. The change could have easily been made for the sake of clarity, as it was done in more modern English versions.

The only Latin version that has dabitur instead of dabunt is the cod. Palatinus. This is one of the ‘purple codices’, like cod. Brixianus and cod. Aureus itself, and was created in Northern Italy in the ﬁfth century. The similarity between the three codices has long been a source of interest for scholars of Gothic, starting from Friedrichsen’s article where he postulates that the Gothic version was heavily latinized in Ostrogothic Italy; also, he supposes the existence of a bilingual manuscript that inﬂuenced both the Gothic version and cod. Palatinus. These claims are partly refuted by Burton showing that it is far easier to prove and trace the Gothic inﬂuence on Latin than vice versa .

Result

This reinterpretation was probably caused by stylistic considerations and could have been made for better clarity of the text.

Romans 7:311

a. haitada horinondei, jabai call.MEDPASS.3SG fornicate.PART.FEM if wairþiþ waira anþaramma become.3SG man.DAT.SG other.DAT.SG

‘she is called a fornicating if she is another man’

b. lοιvakὶς vqglasίreι ἐὰm cέmgsaι ἀmdqὶ ἑsέqῳ

adultress bear,name.FUT.3SG if become.3SG man.DAT.SG other.DAT.SG ‘she will be called an adultress if she is another man’

The verb vqglasίfx means ‘to warn, to instruct’. When the verb is used intransitively, its meaning is ‘to be called, to occupy a place’ . In later texts, from Polybius onwards, it means ‘to bear a name, to be called’ . This is the only occurrence of this verb in the active voice in the parts of the NT that we have in Gothic translation.

Haitan means ‘to call, to order’. In the Gothic text, it is used sixteen times in the active voice – and never in the meaning ‘to be called’, only ‘to call, to ask, to order’. It is used seventeen times in the mediopassive and seven times in periphrastic constructions – and all in the meaning ‘to be called’ in varying degrees of passivity and middle-ness. Apparently,

KLEYNER – CHANGED IN TRANSLATION 121

vqglasίfx in the active voice and haitan in the mediopassive and the periphrasis have similar meanings.

Latin has no marked middle voice, but the usual translation of this passage is vocabitur /judicabitur ‘will be called / will be judged’. The diﬀerence between middle and passive readings is in this case a very thin line: does vqglasίreι refer to a change of state of the ‘fallen’ woman, or is it a simple reference to her status as in ‘if someone has got a medical degree, they are called a doctor’?

The Liddell-Scott-Jones dictionary has three sub-entries for this meaning of vqglasίfx, that is, ‘to take and bear a title or name’, ‘generally, to be called’ and ‘change, or be changed’. The case of Rom 7:3 is explicitly put in the second, non-mutative category, but it is quite diﬃcult to draw a line between ‘to take a name’ and ‘to be called’ in most contexts, and in this particular case the distinction is not too compelling.

Result

Here we may be dealing with the middle or with the passive, depending on whether the Gothic translator saw this as a change of state or not. The grammar of his language, though, did not oblige him to clarify his perception. However, the usage of haitan in the true middle sense of ‘to bear a name’ was so important and apparently so widespread in Gothic and other Germanic languages that this was the only verb to have preserved its mediopassive form in other Germanic languages: Old English htte/htton, Middle Low German hette, Runic haitika, etc. .

, 1 Corinthians 7:2812 and Mark 10:1213

a. jah jabai liugada mawi

and if marry.MEDPASS.3SG maiden.NOM.SG

‘and if a maiden gets married’

b. jaὶ ἐὰm cήlῃ ἡ paqhέmος

and if marry.AOR.SUBJ.3SG ART maiden.NOM.SG

‘and if a maiden marries’

a. jah jabai qino liugada anþaramma and if woman.NOM.SG marry.MEDPASS.3SG other.DAT.SG ‘and if a maiden gets married to another ’

b. jaὶ ἐὰm aὐsὴ calήrῃ ἄkkοm and if she.NOM.SG marry.AOR.SUBJ.3SG other.ACC.SG ‘and if she marries another ’

c. jaὶ ἐὰm cυmὴ calήhῃ ἄkkῳ and if woman.NOM.SG marry.AOR.PASS.SUBJ.3SG other.DAT.SG ‘and if a maiden gets married by another ’

Γalέx means ‘to marry’. In 1 Cor 7:28 the one marrying is a woman; in contexts when rules for men as well as women are set, the usual expression seems to be οὔse calοῦrιm οὔse calίfοmsaι ‘neither marry nor get married’ .

In 1 Cor 7:28 there also is a second usage of the same verb, cήlῃς, speaking of men, but here the Gothic translation is nimis qen ‘takes a woman’, and it looks as if the translator was deliberately trying to distinguish the two diﬀerent situations: from the male and the female

perspective. A similar distinction was done in Latin: acceperis uxorem ‘take a wife’ vs nupserit virgo ‘the maiden will marry’, although Latin has no passive voice here.

Generally, in 1 Cor 7, a lot is said on marriage; of special interest in our context are 7:8 and 7:11, where the ‘unmarried’ are mentioned: dὲ sοῖς ἀcάlοις jaὶ saῖς vήqaις ‘to the unmarried and widows’ and ἐὰm dὲ jaὶ vxqιrhῇ, lemέsx ἄcalος ἢ sῷ ἀmdqὶ jasakkacήsx ‘if she departs, let her stay unmarried or reconcile with her husband’. The ﬁrst passage is about men; the second, about women. The Greek word is the same; the Gothic translator, however, uses two diﬀerent words: unqenidam for men and unliugaidai for women.

One consideration, however, is also important. The jabai qino in Mk 10:12 ‘if a woman’ translates ἐὰm cυmὴ ‘if a woman’ instead of ἐὰm aὐsὴ ‘if she’. This points to the fact that the original in Mk 10:12 was indeed closer to the Byzantine version that contains the passive aorist calήhῃ – the passive, and not active aorist. Therefore, Mk 10:12 may not even be a case when the Gothic passive translates a Greek active. The same, however, cannot be said of 1 Cor 7:8, where the active Greek form is present in all versions.

In the North-Western European cultures, a woman may have been seen as a passive participant of the marriage ceremony. For Germanic, this is corroborated by the fact that in the Old English Wessex gospels where there was no option to use the middle voice, a diﬀerent verb is used for women, so ni liugand ni liuganda corresponds to ne wiﬁað hig ne ne giftiað ‘they neither take a wife nor are given in marriage’, and liugaidedun jah liugaidos wesun corresponds to and wifedon, and wæron to gyftum gesealde ‘and took wives, and were given in marriage’. In Gothic, we see the root gift ‘that which is given’in Lk 2:5 sei in fragiftim was imma qeins ‘who was his wife in marriage’, and in Skeireins 3: fragift weihis ahmins ‘the gift of the Holy Spirit’.

Result

It is likely that regardless of the Greek form of the verb calέx – be it the active or the passive aorist – the Gothic translator had to use the passive voice when he was talking about women who get married, so the active would have necessarily been turned into passive.

2 Timothy 2:2614

a. jah usskarjaindau us unhulþins wruggon and tear.out.MEDPASS.OPT.3PL from unholy.GEN.SG snare.DAT.SG ‘and they may tear out of the devil’s snare’

b. jaὶ ἀmamήwxrιm ἐj sῆς sοῦ dιabόkου and become.sober.again.AOR.SUBJ.3PL from ART ART devil.GEN.SG pacίdος

snare.GEN.SG

‘and they may become sober again from the devil’s snare’

The verb ἀmamήφx means ‘to come to one’s senses’. 2 Tim 2:26 is the only occurrence of this verb in the whole of New Testament. It can also be used transitively, meaning ‘to make somebody sober again’ , but generally it’s an activa tantum verb with middle-like semantics.

The only other time the Gothic verb \*usskarjan is used is 1 Cor 15:34: ἐjmήwase dιjaίxς jaὶ lὴ ἁlaqsάmese – usskarjiþ izwis garaihtaba jannifrawaurkjaid ‘awake to righteousness and sin not’. This passage is the only occurrence of ἐjmήφx, so it is hard to draw any conclusions.

Before the reading usskarjaindau, the dominant version was usskawjaindau . At the same time, unskawai ‘sober’ in 1 Thess 5:8 was amended to usskawai.

KLEYNER – CHANGED IN TRANSLATION 123

After Braune , Sturtevant has usskarjaindau as the correct reading; he goes further, however, and claims that there can be no doubt about the reading usskarjiþ in 1 Cor 15:34 , but claims that both cases represent scribal errors; the r in usskarjiþ is not very clear, so both instances could in fact reﬂect the verb \*usskaujan, and thus still be connected to unskawai with the whole complex meaning ‘not seen to > not provided with food and drink > sober’. The main problem with Sturtevant’s hypothesis is its complexity. First, it requires two identical scribal errors made in diﬀerent parts of the book and in diﬀerent verbal forms. Second, it suggests the co-existence of two diﬀerent forms, unskaus and usskaus, with the same meaning. Third, while connecting the ON skar ‘good’, ørskar ‘wary’, and the verbs with the semantics ‘to look at’ , he creates a rather complicated semantic chain . 15

Lehmann proposes Germanic cognates for \*usskarjan, such as OE ascierian ‘cut oﬀ’, OI skera, OHG skeran ‘shear’, etc.. The semantics would then be ‘to cut out’, ‘to separate’, and the meaning ‘to sober up’ would be metaphorical.

The semantics of us- is rather complex: it is the second most frequent preverb after ga- . Its basic meaning is ‘motion away’ as in us-tiuhan ‘to lead out’. However, sometimes the meaning of the verb cannot be deduced from its components; for example, usqiman in Jn 7:20 means ‘to kill’ , usfulljan means ‘to complete’ , etc. Some other exapmles of non-spatial us- are Jn 9:15 aftra þanfrehun ina jah þai Fareisaieis hvaiwa ussahv = pάkιm οὖm ἠqώsxm aὐsὸm jaὶ οἱ φaqιraῖοι pῶς ἀmέbkewem ‘and then the Pharisees asked him again how he received his sight’, and 1 Thess 3:5 usfaifraisi izwis safraisands = ἐpeίqarem ὑlᾶς ὁ peιqάfxm ‘the tempter has tempted you’ where the preﬁx gives the verb a distinctly ﬁnite semantics, but is not connected with any kind of ‘motion away’. In this light, the emendation of \*unskaus to \*usskaus looks reasonable, and its meaning is that of ‘seeing completely’ 16 or ‘seeing through’.

The main reason for joining \*usskarjan with \*unskaus is Greek: in 1 Thess 5:8, where we see the Gothic adjective for the only time, mήφxlem is translated as unskawai sijaima, and being sober is contrasted with being drunk in the previous sentence. The context of 2 Tim 2:26, however, is diﬀerent: the word pacίς means ‘a trap’, something that holds you fast , and its Gothic counterpart has cognates such as OE wringan ‘to squeeze’ and OS ut-wringan ‘to press out’, so ‘to tear out’ would be a good ﬁt despite the semantics of the Greek ἀmamήφx.

One possible way, therefore, is to amend unskawai to usskawai, usska.jiþ as usskarjiþ and leave usskarjaindau as it is. It does create a question of two separate and very similar roots that are used to translate one Greek root, but this is not a suﬃcient reason to try and reduce them to a single Indo-European word. Such a reduction also requires a lot of emendations to be made and seems too complicated at this point.

What, then, would usskarjaindau mean? The Greek verb means ‘to become sober’. The Gothic likely uses usskarjan metaphorically, as well as in 1 Cor 15:34: to tear out > to wring out, to awaken, to become sober. If that is so, the semantics needs to be middle in order for that transition to take place. Who will sober those people up? Who will wring them out of the devil’s snare? The Greek original presumes that people will do that themselves. II Tim 2:26 It

is one of the true middle examples cited by Ferraresi that Katz calls ‘ambiguous at best’, although it is unclear in what way it is more ambiguous than the nauþjada example in Lk 16:16 that he recognizes as such . Such usage is, however, prompted by the Greek verb itself, and reﬂected in the Gothic translation.

Out of the eight cases translated with mediopassive, one is a result of stylistic reinterpretation of the phrase, two are passives because of the Germanic usage of the verb ‘to marry’, but ﬁve oﬀer a true middle reading – something that is widely regarded as a rare exception rather than a rule. These ﬁve examples also follow Kemmer’s ‘checklist’ for middles . ‘To appear’ is one of existential state actions, as is ‘to die’ . ‘To laugh’ is an emotion; ‘to bear a name’ is a property of an object; ﬁnally, ‘to wake up’ is a spontaneous event or a change of state. In all the situations, both conditions for middles apply: the initiator is the endpoint, and the granularity of description is low: we don’t see other participants, we don’t know anything about them, we don’t know what happens or what triggers the event, etc. They also tend to translate Greek verbs that denote physical/bodily processes, emotions or change of state, some of which are activa tantum. The Gothic translator felt it necessary to convey those semantical properties, and did it with the help of an instrument that he had at his disposal – the mediopassive form.

It seems that the concentration – ﬁve out of eight – speaks in favour of the hypothesis that the mediopassive indeed retained its ‘medial’ side, and used it. One usage can theoretically be accounted for by Latin, but given the characteristics of the Codex Palatinus where the Latin variant is seen, the source might well have been Gothic, and not vice versa. It may be that the middle reading was a limited tool, but again, this was obviously something that the addressees of the Gothic text were supposed to understand and interpret correctly, and thus something that did exist in the language.

The Gothic periphrastic passive existed along the synthetic form, the reﬂexive and the middle/ inchoative -nan forms. Summarizing the discussion brieﬂy provided in the Introduction, it was distinct from the mediopassive formally – that is, it had past tense forms along the present tense ones – but its semantic diﬀerence has remained unclear. For those who accept that the synthetic form was purely passive semantically, the periphrastic passive looks like a fuller, richer alternative that essentially makes the synthetic form redundant. For those who claim that the synthetic form still possessed some middle properties, the periphrastic form provided a less ambiguous alternative – and with the other middle functions overtaken by -nan verbs and reﬂexives, the new system became clearer, and eventually there was no longer a niche for the synthetic form.

Therefore, if the patterns of translating the Greek actives with periphrastic and synthetic forms are similar, this may indeed indicate that the semantic diﬀerence was very small. On the other hand, if the patterns turn out to be diﬀerent, it may indicate the opposite, and a further investigation of that diﬀerence will be in order.

Mark 3:917

a. ei skip habaiþ wesi

so that ship have.PASS.PART be.OPT.3SG

‘so that a ship may be had’

KLEYNER – CHANGED IN TRANSLATION 125

b. ἵma pkοιάqιοm pqοrjaqseqῇ

so that ship wait.PRES.SUBJ.3SG

‘so that a ship waited’

The verb pqοrjaqseqέx means ‘to remain in attendance, to wait’. It is essentially an activa tantum verb, albeit with one attested medio-passive form in D.S. 2.29. There are three more instances in the New Testament; in Col 4:2 and Rom 12:12 sῇ pqοreυvῇ pqοrjaqseqeῖse and sῇ pqοreυvῇ pqοrjaqseqοῦmseς ‘constant in prayer’ are translated as bidai haftjandans ‘exalting in prayer’; in Rom 13:6, pqοrjaqseqοῦmseς is translated as skalkinondans ‘serving’.

In Mk 3:9 pqοrjaqseqῇ is rendered as habaiþwesi‘would be had’. Apart from this case, the past participle of haban in the Gothic Bible is only seen when it has a preﬁx: anahaban ‘possess’ in Lk 4:38 and Lk 6:18, dishaban‘take’ in Lk 8:37 and gahaban‘to take hold of’ in Rom 7:6. However, the Greek sources for the other translations are: ἦm rυmevοlέmg ‘was possessed’, ἐmοvkούlemοι ‘troubled’; rυmeίvοmsο ‘they were gripped’ and jaseιvόleha‘we were held’. Thus, one case is a full calque, another is a participle translated by a participle, and the other two are haban+preﬁx translating ἔvx+preﬁx. This makes the case of Mk 3:9 unique in terms of its Greek source.

The Latin versions oﬀer two ways of interpretation; the Vulgata translation is ut navicula sibi deserviret ‘that a boat would wait for him’; a common variant of this is ut in navicula sibi deservirent ‘that they would wait for him in a boat’, or a contamination of the two. Another version is ut navicula praesto esset illi ‘that a boat would be at hand for him’. This can either be a Latin innovation, a variant inﬂuenced by Gothic that found its way into cod. Palatinus and then somehow to Gatianus, or a lost Greek version that inﬂuenced the Gothic and the Latin texts alike.

It has to be noted that Gothic and Latin do not translate each other and are probably independent. It is also unclear why the translator did not use the word ‘to wait’ . This is not typical of the Gothic Bible. The connection between cod. Palatinus and cod. Gatianus is also tentative at best,18 and thus this similarity should be seen as probably stemming from a common, but lost source.

Result

It is most likely that habaiþ wesi and praesto esset have a common source that was not preserved to our day. If that is so, this translation was made from a diﬀerent source and is not indicative of anything.

John 16:2119

a. iþ biþe gabauran ist barn

indeed when bear.PASS.PART be.3SG child.NOM.SG

‘and when the child is born’

b. ὅsam dὲ cemmήrῃ sὸ paιdίοm

when indeed bear.AOR.SUBJ.3SG ART child.ACC.SG

‘and when <the woman> bears a child’

The verb cemmάx means ‘to give birth’. There are only four other active voice instances of gabauran in the Gothic New Testament ; all are translated with bairan in the meaning ‘to bear, to give birth’.

In Jn 16:21 in Greek, the subject of the sentence is the woman, and not the child;20 but in Gothic, the phrase was reinterpreted, and the child became the subject. Perhaps, the translator changed the structure on purpose; but then the next verb in the sentence, gaman ‘remember’, as in ‘she does not remember the anguish ’ would also refer to the child, as there is no indication of the subject switching back to the woman. This would make no sense, because it is the woman, not the child, who supposedly forgets the labour pains. The translator seems to have made a mistake in this case.

This mistake is also found in Latin cod. Brixianus and Palatinus, where the usual peperit infantem/puerum ‘she will have given birth to a child’ was replaced with natus est/fuerit infans ‘the baby is/will be born’. It may, along with the Gothic gabauran ist, have its source in the version ἐcemmήhg – a passive form found in the Greek MS 1009 according to an anonymous reviewer. I haven’t been able to look at the MS in question, but I tend to doubt that it could have belonged to a tradition that was the source for the Gothic translation. 1009 is a thirteenth century manuscript which is hard to attribute reliably; according to Von Soden , it belongs to a Ιj type, but Wisse groups it with MS 472 and and loosely attributes it to a K-type related group. While the group itself is old, both MSs belong to a cluster to a tradition that has its source in the twelfth century. Curiously, Von Soden in his edition of the New Testament does not provide the variant ἐcemmήhg in the apparatus , and all the ‘seminal’ MSs unequivocally contain cemmήrῃ or variations thereupon.

Thus, while it is quite possible to read ὅsam dὲ cemmήrῃ as ὅsam d’ ἐcemmήhg, it looks like it was done independently by the scribe of 1009, and Latin and Gothic translators, which makes it a translator’s mistake; this suggestion is corroborated by the absence of a pronoun in Gothic, which essentially makes the barn ‘child’ the subject for ni gaman ‘does not remember’.

Result

This is probably a translator’s mistake and as such is not indicative of any trend.

Mark 3:2121

a. qeþun auk þatei usgaisiþs ist

say.PT.3SG also that be.mad.PASS.PART be.3SG

‘they also say that he has gone mad’

b. ἔkecοm cὰq ὅsι ἐξέrsg

say.IMPF.3SG indeed that be.mad.AOR.3SG

‘and they say that he went mad’

The verb ἐξίrsglι means ‘to displace’; used unaccusatively, it means ‘to become mad, astonished’. There are three more active usages of ἐξίrsglι in the Gothic New Testament; two mean ‘to be astonished’ , and one means ‘to be mad’ .

However, in Mk 3:21 the 1-class verb usgaisjan is used. We have already seen such variation in gadauþnan/afdauþjan above. This is the only time usgaisjan is ever employed in Gothic, so it is unclear why in the very similar contexts of 2 Cor 5:13 and Mk 3:21 diﬀerent variations of

ἀjούramseς οἱ paq’ aὐsοῦ ἐξῆkhοm jqasῆraι aὐsόm, ἔkecοm cὰq ὅsι ἐξέrsg. And when his friends heard of it, they went out to lay hold on him: for they said, He is beside himself

KLEYNER – CHANGED IN TRANSLATION 127

the stem are used. A 4-class active form and a 1-class passive form are interchangeable just as it was for sekeυsάx.

The majority of Latin versions prefer dicebant quoniam in furorem versus est ‘they said that he was turned into fury’22 , which may account for the passive form in Gothic. However, it is equally likely that both Latin and Gothic translators were trying to convey the meaning of the Greek ἐξέrsg. The Latin translator chose a form that described a change in the state of mind. If the Gothic ist + PP really is an ‘entailed-state resultative’ , then for the Gothic translator the ﬁnal picture of a seemingly mad Jesus would have been more important than the process of him turning mad.

Result

This usage was likely chosen by the translator to create a certain picture in the minds of his addressees – a picture where Christ is already perceived as mad. It may have also been inﬂuenced by Latin sources – both the ‘Vulgata-like’ and the ‘Gothicised’ texts render this passage periphrastically.

2 Thessalonians 3:723

a. unte ni ungatewidai wesum in izwis

that not unordered.NOM.PL be.PT.1PL in you.DAT.PL

‘that we were not turned disorderly in you’

b, ὅsι οὐj ἠsajsήralem ἐm ὑlῖm

that not be.disorderly.AOR.1PL in you.DAT.PL

‘that we didn’t become disorderly in you’

The verb ἀsajsέx means ‘to be disorderly’. 2 Thess 3:7 is the only occurrence of this verb in the New Testament. It is not clear whether ungatewiþs was perceived as an adjective more than as a participle – this is its only occurrence in Gothic – but technically it is a participle and there is no reason not to see it as such. Grewolds lists it among many other similar participial formations, such as unsaltans, unandhuliþs, and so forth.

The Greek ἀsajsέx is denominative and intransitive, and thus activa tantum. The Gothic verb is also denominative – gatewjan\* would probably mean ‘to put in order’, and the participle ungatewiþs literally means ‘un-ordered’.

In Latin, we see non inquieti fuimus ‘we were not disorderly’, which is not a full correspondence, because the root is diﬀerent. It is hard to claim that the Gothic version was made under Latin inﬂuence, because both Gothic and Latin had few other means to render the sense of the Greek verb, but still this is not a version to be fully excluded.

Result

Both the Greek and the Gothic form are unique in the New Testament, and the Latin version is very similar to Gothic. This makes any conclusions dubious.

1 Timothy 1:1424

a. iþ ufarassiþ <warþ> ansts fraujins indeed abound.PASS.PART <become.PT.3SG> grace lord.GEN.SG ‘indeed the Lord’s grace became overﬂowed’

and love which is in Christ Jesus.

b. ὑpeqepkeόmarem dὲ ἡ vάqις sοῦ jυqίου abound.AOR.3SG indeed ART joy ART lord.GEN.SG ‘indeed abounded Lord’s joy’

The verb ὑpeqpkeοmάfx means ‘to abound exceedingly’ and is intransitive. 1 Tim 1:14 is the only occurrence of this verb in the New Testament.

In the Gothic edition, warþ is added because ufarassjan is a class 1 weak verb, and ufarassiþ represents half of the periphrastic passive. The problem is that it could be either warþ or was, and was is statistically more probable. In the MS, there is no trace of either verb or a space for the linking verb, but Gothic adjectives and participles are normally accompanied by a verb, so the insertion is not unjustiﬁed. The question remains: ansts is feminine, and ufarassiþ is neuter.

Pagliarulo attempted to deal with such cases. He quotes Streitberg who noticed that in all instances the participle precedes the subject and sees it as a sign that the copula was was on its way towards grammaticalization. However, the meaning of ufarassiþ was itself is not as clear as it seems.

Stroobant places ufarassjan among labile verbs. Doing that, she quotes work done by Hermodsson in 1952. I was unable to get hold of this work, so I can only assume that Tim I 1:14 plays a signiﬁcant part in such an assessment. But one could go further than that. There are a number of weak -jan verbs that are not causative or even transitive at all, e.g. sildaleikjan ‘to wonder’. Ufarassjan is present in three other lines , where it translates Greek peqιrreύx ‘to abound’, and is never causative. The inevitable conclusion is that it means ‘to abound’, just like sildaleikjan means ‘to wonder’, and both are intransitive. If this is so, ‘was abounded’ would have no sense, either semantically or grammatically.

If an emendation is in order in 1 Tim 1:14, there is a much simpler one – a missing j. The text then becomes iþ ufarassjiþ ansts fraujins ‘indeed abounds Lord’s grace’. This ﬁts the general context, because this passage could be interpreted both as describing the conditions of Paul’s past change, and a statement that God’s grace is a permanent given, so anyone can be saved . The Gothic present instead of a Greek aorist is not unique; cf. Jn 9:32 where the indicative aorist ἠmέῳξέm ’opened’ is translated with the present tense uslukiþ ‘opens’.

Result

This is not a case when a Greek active is translated with a Gothic passive.

Out of the ﬁve cases or periphrastic translations, one is a scribal error, one is a translator’s mistake, one was made on stylistic grounds, one probably had a diﬀerent-looking source that is now lost, and one is inconclusive. This picture is drastically diﬀerent from that of the mediopassive cases.

The results and their interpretation can be arranged in the Table 1.

In Rom 7:3 where, judging from the data from other Germanic langauges, haitan is probably used medially, the translator had no other choice. He also did not have a choice in 1 Cor 7:28

KLEYNER – CHANGED IN TRANSLATION 129

and Mk 10:12, because Gothic used diﬀerent verbs and adjectives for marrying/married men and women. In these two cases, the mediopassive most likely has a passive reading.

The decisions in Lk 6:38 and Mk 3:21 were made on stylistic grounds . The mistake in Jn 16:21 is also obvious. These are to be expected from any translation.

The case of Mk 3:9 is less clear: its co-occurrence with two Latin MSs, one of which is not related to the ‘Goticized’ branch, along with a non-literal, but structural correspondence of Gothic and Latin, suggests a diﬀerent common source that did not survive.

Finally, 1 Tim 1:14 is, in my opinion, a result of a scribal error and the subsequent over- interpretation. The interpretation was based on the erroneous premise that all -jan verbs must be causative, so the form was read as a passive participle with a missing copula, where in reality it was a simple active present-tense form.

The diﬀerence between the mediopassive and periphrastic forms is striking. Unlike the mediopassive forms, most periphrastic forms are dubious – they are either mistakes , or they have too much in common with Latin and may have had a diﬀerent underlying Greek source. Only one form – that of Mk 3:21 – stands up to scrutiny.

Mediopassives, on the other hand, are robust and independent. This leads to the inevitable conclusion that in some cases the actives could be translated with mediopassives, but not with periphrastic passives.

The number of -jan verbs that have a -nan counterpart that is routinely used for translating the same Greek verbs is also quite high in the mediopassive section. Interestingly, in all the instances when an active form was at all possible, but not chosen without obvious stylistic considerations, the Greek verbs are being used unaccusatively or are intransitive verbs of emotional acts like cekάx ‘to laugh’. The choice of a passive form from a causative verb makes sense only if we regard these forms as middles.

Some words have to be said about the Greek activa tantum that were the source of the

translations; in the periphrastic passive section, we ﬁnd verbs describing states, such as ἀsajsέx or pqοrjaqseqέx, whereas similar sources for mediopassives are verbs of change-of- state or actions, such as cekάx or sekeυsάx. This, although not entirely unexpected, provides another perspective into the diﬀerences between the two Gothic forms: while most periphrastic translations are abberations of some kind, those that aren’t describe a state, as does the Greek verb, but the mediopassive form does indeed describe an action and, per Kemmer , have all the semantic properties of the middle.

The approach to the Gothic mediopassive as ‘one-on-one passive’ is, therefore, incorrect. The small number of active-to-passive translations may indicate that the middle reading was becoming or had already become a relic giving way to new strategies of middle expression – but a relic that could still be used by a translator and understood by his audience. This calls for an investigation of the translation of Greek media tantum verbs into Gothic as a means to gather more examples and information.

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