ENCYCLOPEDIA OF ANCIENT GREEK LANGUAGE AND LINGUISTICS

Volume 1
A–F

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TUTA SUB AEGIDE PALLAS
1683

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LEIDEN • BOSTON
2014

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MARGALIT FINKELBERG

Diathesis (*diáthesis*), Ancient Theories of

The term *diáthesis* 'condition', which in the Greek world never acquired a univocal technical meaning, mainly indicated verbal → voice when used in a grammatical setting, although in Apollonius Dyscolus (first half of the 2nd c. CE) a broader range of meanings is observed, designating various conditions of the verb (see below).

The earliest attestations of the term *diáthesis* are found in philosophy, where, however, it was used with different meanings compared to its subsequent utilization in linguistic analysis. Aristotle took *diáthesis* to mean 'condition', as one of the *species* of the category 'quality' (*poiótēs*), together with 'attitude' (*héxis*) (*Cat.* 8b26–9a13; see Brague 1980). The expression also became widely used in medical studies, starting with Hippocrates, to indicate the body's various conditions or modes of being (on the possible meanings of the term: Bécares Botas 1985:123–124; Dickey 2007:231; cf. Lambert 1978; Matthaios 1999:303–309).

In linguistic contexts, the original distinction within the concept of *diáthesis* taken as verbal voice was between active and passive. Verbs were characterized as expressing either an action or a condition resulting from an action. This opposition derived, coherently, from the conception of the verb reconstructable from numerous ancient definitions invoking the ability of this part of speech to indicate an action (*enérgeia* or *prâxis*) or condition caused by an action (*páthos*) (cf. Dion. Thrax §13, 48.1–49.3, *PSI* VII 761 [5th–6th c. CE], 3–5 and *P.Yale* I 25 [1st c. CE], i 28–30). This theory probably arose from the opposition between *poieîn* 'make' and *páskhein* 'undergo', which was central in the linguistic-philosophical thought both of Aristotle (cf. e.g. *Cat.* 4.2a3–4; 9.11b 1–8; *Soph. el.* 166a) and the Stoics (cf. Diog. Laert. 7.134 [= *FDS* 744]; Simpl. *in Cat.* 313.16–26 [= *FDS* 800]; *ibid.* 333.24–334.3 [= *FDS* 801]) (see Bécares Botas 1985:123; Ax 1993:22; Matthaios 1999:305). That the oldest grammarians did not recognize a separate middle voice (*diáthesis mésē*) is also testified by Theodosius of Alexandria (4th–5th c. CE), according to whom they classified some middle forms as active and others as passive (Theodosius in *GG* IV/I 49.17, cf. Choerob. in *GG* IV/II 98.30ff.: Rijksbaron 1987:436 n. 11).

The Stoic philosophers proposed a subdivision among types of predicate (*katēgórēma*) that foreshadowed the later categorizations of *diáthesis* (Ax 1993:22). As indicated by a passage from Diocles of Magnesia in Diogenes Laertius (Diog. Laert. 7.64 [= *FDS* 696]), the Stoics distinguished predicates into: 1) 'active' (*orthá*), predicates constructed with an 'oblique case' (*plagía ptôsis*, i.e., any case other than the nominative, cf. Diog. Laert. 7.65), namely, requiring a complement, like *akoúō* 'listen' (constructed with the genitive), *horáō* 'see' (constructed with the accusative), *dialégomai* 'talk' (constructed with dative or *prós* + accusative); 2) 'passive' (*húptia*), predicates accompanied by a part of speech characteristic of the passive (*pathētikòn mórion*: e.g. the preposition *hupó* 'by'), like *akoúomai* 'be heard' or *horáomai* 'be seen'; 3) 'neuter' (*oudétera*), predicates whose description matches neither that of the passive nor that of the active and which today would be called intransitive, like *phronéō* 'think' or *peripatéō* 'walk around'; 4) 'reciprocal' (*antipeponthóta*), predicates whose subjects are active in undergoing either another person's act or an act of their own (in which

case the construction is reflexive), such as *keíromai* 'have oneself shaved', 'shave oneself'; on this kind of predicate, see also the testimony of Philo *Cher.* 79–81 (= *FDS* 804), who provides further details clarifying the internal distinction. The terminology used by the Stoics to indicate active and passive was metaphorically derived from the language of gymnastics, alluding to the position of victorious (*orthós* 'upright', 'erect') and defeated (*húptios* 'supine') athletes, according to the explanation given in the scholia to the *Tékhnē grammatikḗ* attributed to Dionysius Thrax (*Sch. Dion. Thrax* 247.10–11 [= *FDS* 802] and *Sch. Dion. Thrax* 401.1–20 [= *FDS* 803]). The second of these passages further attributes to the Stoics the use of the adjective *drastikḗ* to indicate the active, from the verb *dráō* 'act'; cf. Steinthal 1890–1891²:300–302; Rijksbaron 1987:431). Chrysippus of Soli apparently devoted a special monograph to this issue, in one book, entitled *Perì orthôn kaì huptíōn pròs Phúlarkhon* 'On active and passive predicates, addressed to Phylarchus'; Diog. Laert. 7.192 [= *FDS* 194]).

Among the Alexandrian philologists, Aristarchus of Samothrace (ca 215–144 BCE) presupposed, again based on the categories of *enérgeia* and *páthos*, a subdivision of verbs into *energētiká* (endowed with active form and meaning; indication of the active is also attested by the expression, of Stoic descent, *drastikè énnoia* 'active sense') and *pathētiká* (with passive form and meaning), as emerges from examination of the Aristarchean fragments of Homeric exegesis pertaining to diathesis (Matthaios 1999:302–326). Verbs with passive form but active meaning were apparently subsumed under the category of *pathētiká*: no term for the middle is attested in Aristarchus. In cases of lack of correspondence between the semantic and morphological aspect of the verb in the Homeric text, Aristarchus sometimes resorted to the concept of diathesis exchange, conjecturing that the poet used the active instead of the passive or vice-versa, as also found among his contemporaries Comanus of Naucratis (fr. 13 Dyck) and Callistratus (fr. 181 Barth) and later also in Dionysius of Halicarnassus. The latter maintained the distinction between active and passive, which, depending on the passage, he termed respectively *poiētikón*/*energētikón* and *pathētikón* (*Amm.* II 7.427.17–8.428.18), *drastéria* 'active forms' and *pathētiká* 'passive forms' (*Amm.* II 2.423.8–9), *orthá* 'upright' and *húptia* 'supine' (*Comp.* 6.29.8),

with clear Stoic influence (see above; cf. de Jonge 2008:156).

The oldest attested mention of middle voice is found in a small papyrus fragment containing rules on participle formation, datable between the 1st c. BCE and the 1st c. CE (*P.Rain.* I 19), in which the adjective *mésos* 'middle' is simply cited – not defined – together with *pathētikós* 'passive'; on the use of the term 'middle' in linguistic analysis, cf. Collinge 1963.

In the linguistic system formulated by Apollonius Dyscolus, *diáthesis* appears mainly in the part of book III of the *Syntax* that is reserved to the verb. Here *diáthesis* is indicated as the distinctive characteristic of this part of speech (*Synt.* 1.16, 18.5–8, cf. *Adv.* 127.16). In Apollonius, *diáthesis* has numerous meanings, although it generally suggests a typology of characteristics and conditions of the verb (cf. van Ophuijsen 1993:744; Lallot 1997:II 62). Thus one finds *diáthesis psukhikḗ* 'mental disposition' or *diáthesis tês psukhês* 'disposition of the mind' absent in the infinitive, which, as a mood that has no persons, cannot show the mental disposition affecting it (*Synt.* 3.25, 55, 59). Apollonius also mentions *diáthesis khronikḗ* 'temporal disposition', 3.98: cf. 1.114, where he states that the imperative has within itself *diáthesis toû méllontos* 'disposition of the future'. Further meanings include *diáthesis diabatikḗ* or *diabibastikḗ* 'transitivity', referring to verbs or constructions that involve transitivity towards a person who undergoes the act involved (*Synt.* 1.70 and 3.185); *diáthesis energētikḗ, pathētikḗ, mésē* 'active', 'passive', 'middle voice', when discussing the accidents of the verb (3.54, *al.*); finally, *diáthesis psukhikè è sōmatikḗ* 'disposition of the soul or body' concerns the semantic aspect of verbs (3.150; cf. Steinthal 1890–1891[2]:II 276–278, 293–295; Lambert 1978 who claims that all uses of *diáthesis* in Apollonius can be explained by the last-mentioned acceptation; Julien 1985; van Ophuijsen 1993:739–751; Pantiglioni 1998:254–260). Specifically on the meaning of 'verbal voice', Apollonius identifies active verbs, constructed with a complement (direct or otherwise), that allow passivization through the addition of *hupó* 'by' + genitive (*Synt.* 3.157), since activeness (*enérgeia*) was interpreted as something in transit towards an object (3.148, with a link between transitivity and active diathesis, cf. Lallot 1997:II 243; Benedetti 2013); passive verbs, resulting from the passivization of active verbs; verbs in

the middle voice, often mentioned as a secondary aspect compared to active and passive (e.g. 3.60) and defined as something "situated midway between these, without deriving from either one" (3.54) (Benedetti 2013; cf. Signes-Codoñer 2005 for a study on definitions of middle voice up to the late Byzantine grammarians). All middle verbs share a coincidence of form (*sunémptōsis*), namely failed differentiation between active and passive diathesis; consequently some may have active meaning, others passive. Apollonius believed that the apparent use of passive instead of active forms could be explained by this phenomenon, rather than by an 'exchange' (*hupallagḗ*) of diathesis (3.30; Benedetti 2013; cf. also Pantiglioni 1998:258–259).

In the *Tékhnē grammatikḗ* attributed to Dionysius Thrax, but now commonly recognized as a later work (at least concerning the treatment of the parts of speech), *diáthesis* is listed second among the accidents of the verb, and then divided into three types: active (*enérgeia*), passive (*páthos*), middle (*mesótēs*). The active is exemplified by the form *túptō* 'I strike', the passive by *túptomai* 'I am struck', while the middle is said to be a diathesis "that expresses now the active, now the passive", as in the case of *pépēga* 'I am pierced', *diéphthora* 'I am ruined', *epoiēsámēn* 'I made [for myself]', and *egrapsámēn* 'I wrote [for myself]' (see Dion. Thrax § 13, 48.1–49.3). The latter definition, "commode, sinon paresseuse" (Lallot 1989:166), conceals ambiguities, especially in the exemplification, performed with two active perfects and two middle aorists and thereby complicating the situation. This difficulty was already perceived in antiquity, as testified by various attempted explanations in the scholia (see Rijksbaron 1987:428–435 for the complete picture): e.g. a note preserved under the name of Heliodorus proposes integrating the passage of the *Tékhnē* to give the meaning "which expresses now the active in passive form, now the passive in active form" (*Sch. Dion. Thrax* 401.29–35; cf. *Sch. Dion. Thrax* 558.34–35); in another case (*Sch. Dion. Thrax* 246.7–13), five diatheses are listed: active, passive and middle, and additionally *oudetéra* 'neuter', which means neither action nor affectedness (verbs like *zô* 'live'), and *emperiektikḗ* 'inclusive', where the same form relates to action as well as affectedness (e.g. *biázomai se* 'I compel you'/*biázomai hupò soû* 'I am compelled by you'). An exegetic tradition substantially established in modern studies

relates the concept of middle in the *Tékhnē* to a discordance between form and function: passive forms with active meaning and, *vice versa*, active forms with passive meaning (e.g. Rijksbaron 1987:428, 433; Andersen 1994; cf. Benedetti 2013 for further bibliography). However, this hypothesis, which agrees with 'Heliodorus', does not fully abide by the text of the *Tékhnē*. A more faithful interpretation links the definition of middle in the *Tékhnē* to the concept of 'failed morphological differentiation' between active and passive expressed by Apollonius (Benedetti 2013).

Attribution of active or passive *diathesis* to the part of speech 'noun', as in *Tékhnē* § 12 (Bécares Botas 1985:124; Pantiglioni 1998:252–253), refers, as already noted by the ancient writers, exclusively to deverbal nouns.

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LARA PAGANI

Diathesis/Voice (Morphology of)

Ancient Greek has three morphologically distinct voice categories: the → active voice, the → middle voice (also → mediopassive) and the passive voice (→ Passive (syntax), → Passive (morphology)). The act. and mid. voices are primarily distinguished by contrasting sets of personal endings. The passive voice is marked by a special morpheme *-thē-* or *-ē-* and only occurs in the → aorist and future stems.

The act., mid. and pass. inflection of the indic., imp., inf. and ptc. of the thematic verb *lúō* 'untie, release' (→ Thematic and Athematic Verbs) in Class. Greek is represented in the following table.

The inflection of the subj. and opt. moods have not been included in the table since they have the same endings as the primary and secondary indic., respectively. For the morphology of the mid. (mediopassive) inflection and its history, see → mediopassive. For the semantic distinction between the sigmatic mid. and the pass. aor. and fut. in *-(th)ē-*, see → voice.

Athematic verbs (verbs lacking a → thematic vowel) have act. endings which partially diverge from the act. thematic endings. The diverging athematic endings are: primary indic. 1st sg. *-mi*, 2nd sg. *-s*, 3rd sg. *-si*, 3rd pl. *-āsi*, secondary indic. 3rd pl. *-san*, inf. *-nai*, ptc. nom. m. sg. *-s*. In → Doric and Northwest Greek, the 1st pl. act. ending (thematic and athematic) is *-mes* (instead of *-men*) which may go back to the PIE primary ending **-mes* (→ Indo-European Linguistic Background). The athematic 3rd plural endings *-āsi* and *-san* are not old. In → Mycenaean, the primary ending *-ensi* is found which is inherited from PIE, e.g. *(h)i-ensi* (from *híēmi* 'send'), *e(h)-ensi* (from *eimí* 'be'). The older ending is preserved in the Attic form *eisí* and Doric *entí*. The secondary ending *-san* is probably taken from the sigmatic aor. The old ending **-(é)nt* is