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9.3: 1) *Review: the Greek verbal system*
 2) *Punctual aspect: the Aorist. First Aorist Indicative Active*

Review

So far we have studied two stems of the Greek verb, which are also the two first forms listed when the verb is cited in a vocabulary or dictionary: *Present Stem* and *Future Stem*. In a regular verb, the Future stem may be obtained by adding σ to the Present stem. We studied a past tense, the Imperfect, which does not have its own stem but is formed by applying to the present stem *augment* and *secondary endings*. This synopsis (in the 3rd person singular) synthesizes the forms of the Greek verb studied until now.

ACTIVE VOICE

Stems	Tenses	Moods	Indicative Mood	Imperative Mood	Infinitive (not a Mood)
Present: παυ-	Present Tense		παύει he stops (someone or something)	παυέτω let him stop (someone or something)	παύειν to stop (someone or something)
	Imperfect Tense		ἔπαυε he was stopping, used to stop (someone or something)	Only the Indicative Mood has an Imperfect	Only the Indicative Mood has an Imperfect
Future: παυ-σ	Future Tense		παύσει he will stop (s/one or s/thing)	NO FUTURE IMPERATIVE	παύσειν to be about to stop (someone or something)

MIDDLE VOICE

Stems	Tenses	Moods	Indicative Mood	Imperative Mood	Infinitive (not a Mood)
Present: παυ-	Present Tense		παύεται he ceases, rests	παυέσθω let him cease, rest	παύεσθαι to cease, rest
	Imperfect Tense		ἐπαύετο he was resting, used to rest	Only the Indicative Mood has an Imperfect	Only the Indicative Mood has an Imperfect
Future: παυ-σ	Future Tense		παύσεται he will cease, rest	NO FUTURE IMPERATIVE	παύσεσθαι to be about to stop, rest


PASSIVE VOICE

Stems	Tenses	Moods	Indicative Mood	Imperative Mood	Infinitive (not a Mood)
Present: παυ-	Present Tense		παύεται he is (being) stopped	παυέσθω let him be stopped	παύεσθαι to be stopped
	Imperfect Tense		ἐπαύετο he was (being) stopped, used to be stopped	Only the Indicative Mood has an Imperfect	Only the Indicative Mood has an Imperfect
Future: ????	Future Tense		????	NO FUTURE IMPERATIVE	????

Progressive and punctual past

You may find it useful to reread the introduction to the Imperfect as a progressive past (it may also represent a customary action in the past) in 6.2a. Now we address the concept of *punctual* (also called *punctiliar*) aspect that is characteristic of the Aorist. Any action or event has duration, obviously, no matter how minimal it may be. But some verbal forms represent that duration as continuous (they are progressive), others do not take it into consideration, and look at the action or event meant *as if it occurred at a point in time*. That is what the traditional term *punctual aspect* means. The name of our new tense, ἀόριστος, means "indefinite."

Often the contrast between Progressive verbal forms and forms based on the Aorist stem is symbolized graphically as follows:

 Progressive verbal forms (e.g. the Imperfect)

X Punctual verbal forms (e.g. the Aorist)

The two tenses we are comparing are both past tenses. So we may translate the Imperfect ἔγραφε as "he was writing, used to write," or even, in a context where these translations are not idiomatic in English, as "he wrote." In contrast, we translate the Aorist as "he wrote." It is equivalent to the English Simple Past or the Preterit in other languages. Occasionally, we may need to translate it, however, with the English Perfect ("he has written"), but we will avoid that option for the time being.

As we will see immediately, while the Imperfect exists only in the Indicative, there are Aorist Imperatives, Infinitives, etc. How to show the difference between a Present Infinitive, say, and an Aorist Infinitive? Usually we need to keep in mind that they represent their meaning from a different perspective, but must content ourselves with translating them exactly the same. For obvious reasons, we do not want to say "to write continuously" or "to write at a point in time." We will translate both γράφειν (Present Infinitive) and γράψαι (Aorist Infinitive) as "to write." When you hone your translation skills, you may find a way to suggest aspect in your English translation in other ways.

The **Aorist Indicative Active of a regular verb** (called the First Aorist because it is regular) can be constructed with the following elements:

augment (ἔ) + present stem (πειθ-) + tense suffix (-σα-) + secondary or historical endings: ἔπεισα .

The tense suffix and the secondary endings applied in the Aorist Indicative are highlighted in red

ἔ-πει-**σα** No ending in the first person singular. Note the expected drop of the dental before σ

ἔ-πει-**σα-ς**

ἔ-πει-**σε** The α of the tense suffix changes to ε in the third person singular.

ἐ-πέι-**σα-μεν**

ἐ-πέι-**σα-τε**

ἔ-πει-**σα-ν**

When the present stem of a verb ends in a consonant, the encounter with σ of the Aorist will produce the same results as in the Future.

The first person of the Aorist Indicative Active is the third principal part in the citation of a verb. From now on we can cite verbs at least with these three stems:

Present - Future - Aorist: πείθω, πείσω, ἔπεισα.