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Imperfect indicative/aorist and present imperative

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Imperfect Indicative/Aorist and Present Imperative/Aorist Middle and Passive of Athematic Deponent Verbs in Poetry of Ancient Greece of Archaic and Classical Period

Abstract: The aim of the paper is an attempt at analysing the forms of the second-person singular ending -σο of athematic deponent verbs in Greek poetry. Verbs such as δύναμαι and ἐπίσταμαι have forms that end with -σο and -ω in the imperfect and in the present imperative. Contemporary scholars express different views on where the forms with σ and the forms ending in -ω appear and which of them are more common. This paper, discussing ancient and contemporary grammarians' opinions on the subject, points out the analogies and differences in their theories. It also presents a critical analysis of their views as compared with the attested forms found in ancient poetry.

Key words: -σο ending, athematic deponent verbs, Greek poetry

I n Greek language spirant σ remained unchanged, disappeared or was trans-formed depending on its position.[1] In the intervocalic position sigma be-haved in very different ways. In Indo-European languages intervocalic consonants

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[1] Article is based on my MA thesis: *Zachowanie sigmy interwokalicznego w końcówkach -σαι i -σο czasowników koniugacji atematycznej w poezji starożytnej Grecji okresu archaicznego i klasycznego* [The loss of intervocalic σ in the endings -σαι and -σο of athematic verbs in archaic and classical Greek poetry]. Katowice 2011.

tended to become weakened.[2] This resulted in their voicing, spirantisation or disappearance. Sigma tends to disappear, and in the transition phase it is weakened and becomes *h*. The transition phase is evident in the Laconian, Argolic and Elean dialects.[3] *s remained unchanged when it occurred after *-*n* and *-*r* (δασύς < *dns, θρασύς < *dhrsu), when it originated from gemination -σσ- (ποσί, hom. ποσσί < *pod-si) and from -τσ- (Ἄτλας < *atlants). In many cases the spirant was reintroduced by analogy: in sigmatic aorist, in dative plural with -σι and in athematic verb forms.[4]

The last case, however, raises many doubts. The most controversial are imperfect indicative and present imperative of such athematic verbs as: ἄγαμαι "I admire", δύναμαι "I can, I am able to", ἐπίσταμαι "I can, I know how", ἔραμαι "I love", κρέμαμαι "I am hanging", πέταμαι "I am flying", ἐπριάμην "I bought", δίεμαι "I am running away", ἵεμαι "I am walking", ὄνομαι, "I am reprimanding", which conjugate like ἵσταμαι.[5] Authors of handbooks disagree whether the ending in second-person sg. imperf. and second-person sg. imperat. -σο is always simplified. According to the general theory, after removing σ the deponent verbs are contracted into ω.

A handbook by Golias published in 1962 claims that -σ- in -σο ending always disappears, but the extended edition from 2000 informs: "[…] deponent verbs lose -σ- of medial ending -σο" (this statement is not firmed up by the use of an adverb "always").[6] Fiderer also does not express any doubts in this matter.[7]

Some scholars are uncertain whether σ always disappears in these forms and whether the contraction always occurs. Jurewicz claims that after the disappearance of sigma the vowels always contract into -ω and in exceptional cases into -α in the Doric dialect.[8] Goodwin believes that forms contracted into -ω occur frequently, Smyth claims that ἐδύνω, ἡδύνω and ἠπίστω occur more frequently than ἐδύνασο and ἠπίστασο.[9] Moreover, Smyth states that both the contracted form (ἠπίστω), and the form where sigma remained unchanged (ἠπίστασο) are characteristic of the Attic dialect; the ἠπίστω form occurs also in prose.[10] He observes that only in Attic poetry the imperative ἐπίστασο or ἐπίστω is used free-

[2] L. Bednarczuk: "Tendencje rozwojowe języków rodziny indoeuropejskiej". In: *Języki indoeuropejskie*. Red. L. Bednarczuk. Warszawa 1986, p. 47.

[3] C.D. Buck: *The Greek Dialects*. London 1998, pp. 55–56.

[4] A.L. Sihler: *New Comparative Grammar of Greek and Latin*. New York 1995, pp. 171–172.

[5] O. Jurewicz: *Gramatyka historyczna języka greckiego*. Warszawa 1992, p. 245.

[6] M. Auerbach, M. Golias: *Gramatyka grecka*. Warszawa 1962, p. 101; Idem: *Gramatyka grecka*. Warszawa 2000, p. 163.

[7] E. Fiderer: *Gramatyka języka greckiego – szkolna*. Cz. 1. Lwów–Warszawa 1920, p. 99.

[8] O. Jurewicz: *Gramatyka historyczna języka greckiego...*, p. 221.

[9] W.W. Goodwin: *Greek Grammar*. Boston 1900, p. 144; H.W. Smyth: *Greek Grammar*. Rev. by G.M. Messing. Cambridge, MA 1956, p. 154.

[10] H.W. Smyth: *The Sounds and Inflections of the Greek Dialects: Ionic Dialect*. Oxford 1894, p. 503.

ly.[11] Schwyzer is more precise and provides information on both the forms and the place where they occurred (dialects, works or authors): ἐπρία – Doric form[12] imperf. ἐπρίω, ἠπίστω, ἐδύνω, imperat. ἐπίστω – appear in Attic tragedy; ἐπίστασο – in Herodotus and in the Attic dialect; Attic prose notes the occurrence of ἐπίστασαι, -σο, ἠπίστασο (along with ἠπίστω), δύνασαι and ἐδύνω; in Aristophanes – imperat. πρίασο[13] occurs. Monro and Seymour found one form with -ω in Homer: ἐκρέμω < ἐκρέμαο.[14] Smyth also mentions the ἐκρέμω form. He states the place of occurrence and points to the opinion of Herodian,[15] who regarded the ἐκρέμω form to be Attic and the ἐκρέμαο form to be Ionic because of the loss of sigma.[16]

According to Herodian, the contraction of vowels is characteristic of the Attic dialect. He gives the example of the contraction of α and ο into ω in ind. imperf.:

> ἐκρέμω ἀπὸ τοῦ κρέμαμι κρέμαμαι δευτέρας συζυγίας τῶν εἰς μι, καὶ ὁ παρατατικὸς ἐκρεμάμην, ἐκρέμασο, καὶ Ἰωνικῇ ἀφαιρέσει τοῦ σ, καὶ συναλοιφῇ Ἀττικῇ τοῦ αο εἰς ω μέγα ἐκρέμω.[17]

> ἐκρέμω of κρέμαμι and κρέμαμαι (is) in second person of verbs with -μι and imperfect ἐκρεμάμην, ἐκρέμασο, with the disappearance of σ in the Ionic dialect and with the contraction of αο into ω in the Attic dialect (thus) ἐκρέμω.

Brugman claims that forms with -ω occur in works of tragedians but he does not mention the exact locations. He makes an interesting point, however, regarding these forms as they occur in Attic prose. He claims that the forms with the reintroduced sigma are regular, while ἠπίστω and ἐδύνω remained in use because of the aorist ἐπρίω.[18]

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[11] Ibidem, p. 517. In Herodotus one can find the ἐπίστασο form, although the Ionic form would be ἐπίσταο (p. 516).

[12] Ahrens in his *De dialecto dorica* also discusses aorist indicatives and aorist imperatives of the verb ἐπριάμην in the Doric dialect. Doric equivalent of the ἐπρίω form is according to him ἐπρία < ἐπρίαο < ἐπρίασο. Thus imperative πρία < πρίαο < πρίασο instead of πρίω (H.L. A h r e n s: *De Graecae linguae dialectis*. Vol. 2: *De dialecto Dorica*. Gottingae 1843, p. 198).

[13] E. S c h w y z e r: *Griechische Grammatik*. Bd. 1. München 1939, p. 668.

[14] Monro gives information on the exact place of occurrence (*Il.* XV 18) (D.B. M o n r o: *A Grammar of the Homeric Dialect*. Oxford 1882, pp. 4, 10; T.D. S e y m o u r: *Introduction to the Language and Verse of Homer*. Boston 1902, p. 69).

[15] *Grammatici Graeci*. Pars 3: *Herodiani technici reliquiae*. Collegit, disposuit, emendavit, explicavit, praefatus est A. L e n t z. Vol. 2, fasc. 1: Scripta de nominibus, verbis, pronominibus, adverbiis et librum monadicorum continens. Lipsiae 1867, pp. 317, 21–23.

[16] H.W. S m y t h: *The Sounds and Inflection...*, p. 503.

[17] Παρεκβολαὶ τοῦ μεγάλου ῥήματος ἐκ τῶν Ἡρωδιανοῦ: *E Duobus Codicibus Caes. Reg. biblioth. Vindobonensis*. Ed. J. L a R o c h e. Vienna 1863, pp. 33, 11–13.

[18] "ἠπίστω, ἐδύνω behaupteten sich, vermutlich unter dem Schutz des Aor. ἐπρίω" K. B r u g m a n n: *Griechische Grammatik: Lautlehre, Stammbildungs und Flexionslehre, Syntax*. München 1913, p. 405.

Present Imperative Middle and Passive[19]

Sigma in -σο ending was introduced by analogy with forms of ind. perf. and pluserf. med-pass. In all groups of verbs of athematic conjugation, the forms with unchanged sigma were regular in the Attic dialect. Imperative forms of deponent verbs with unchanged sigma occur only in tragedy. They are most characteristic of dialogue:

> σωτηρί ἔχοντα τόνδ᾽ ἐπίστασο (Soph. *Aj.* 1080)
> ἀνὴρ καθ᾽ ἡμᾶς ἐσθλὸς ὢν ἐπίστασο (Soph. *Aj.* 1399)
> Ἀλλ᾽ ὡς φανέν γε τοῦπος ὧδ᾽ ἐπίστασο (Soph. *OT.* 848)
> καὶ τἀμφὶ σοῦ μὲν ὧδ᾽ ἔχοντ᾽ ἐπίστασο (Eur. *Andr.* 430)
> παῦσαι λόγων τῶνδ᾽, εὐτυχεῖν δ᾽ ἐπίστασο (Eur. *Ion* 650)

One form occurs in a choral part:

> Ὄλωλεν ἀνήρ, Τεῦκρε, τοῦτ᾽ ἐπίστασο (Soph. *Aj.* 979)

Apart from the imperative where sigma does not disappear, the ἐπίστω form resulting from the disappearance of σ and the contraction of α and ο can be found in Sophocles, in dialogue parts:

> [...] τὸν γὰρ Ἀλκμήνης τόκον
> καὶ ζῶντ᾽ ἐπίστω καὶ κρατοῦντα κἀκ μάχης
> ἄγοντ᾽ ἀπαρχὰς θεοῖσι τοῖς ἐγχωρίοις (Soph. *Tr.* 182)
> Εὖ νῦν ἐπίστω, ταῦθ᾽ ὅταν ζητῆις, ἐμοὶ (Soph. *OT.* 658)
> Εὖ νῦν ἐπίστω τῶνδέ μ᾽ αἰσχύνην ἔχειν (Soph. *El.* 616)
> Ἀλλ᾽ οὖν ἐπίστω γ᾽ οἷ μ᾽ ἀτιμίας ἄγεις (Soph. *El.* 1035)
> Οὐ δῆτ᾽, ἐπίστω τοῦτό γ᾽, ἀλλὰ καὶ μέγα
> θάλλοντές εἰσι νῦν ἐν Ἀργείων στρατῷ (Soph. *Ph.* 419)
> Ὡς ταῦτ᾽ ἐπίστω δρώμεν᾽ οὐ μέλλοντ᾽ ἔτι (Soph. *Ph.* 567)
> Εὖ νῦν ἐπίστω πάντ᾽ ἀκηκοὼς λόγον (Soph. *Ph.* 1240)
> καὶ ταῦτ᾽ ἐπίστω, καὶ γράφου φρενῶν ἔσω (Soph. *Ph.* 1325)

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[19] Analysis based on editions such as: E u r i p i d e s: *Andromache*. Ed. A.S. Way. Vol. 2. London–New York 1916; Euripides: *Ion*. Ed. with introduction and commentary by A.S. Owen. London 2003 [1990]; Sophocles: *Electra*. Ed. J.H. Kells. Cambridge 1973; Sophocles: *Oedipus Rex*. Ed. R.D. Dawe. Cambridge 2006 [1982]; S o p h o c l e s: *Philoctetes*. Ed. T.B.L. Webster. Cambridge 1970; Sophocles: *Trachiniae*. Ed. M. Davies. Oxford 1991; Sophocles: *Tragoediae*. Ed. R.D. Dawe. Vol. 2. Leipzig 1979; Sophocles: *Tragoediae*. Ed. R.D. Dawe. Vol. 1. Leipzig 1986.

Imperfect Indicative Middle and Passive[20]

Here, the reintroduction of sigma by analogy was also a regular feature. Forms with sigma do not occur in Homer, however, there are two instances of the ἐκρέμω form, created as a result of contracting α and ο:

ἦ οὐ μέμνῃ ὅτε τ᾿ ἐκρέμω ὑψόθεν, ἐκ δὲ ποδοῖιν (Hom. *Il*. XV 18)
ἐκρέμω ἠλάστεον δὲ θεοὶ κατὰ μακρὸν Ὄλυμπον (Hom. *Il*. XV 21)

The form with -ω also appears in the Fourth Homeric Hymn: Πῶς ἐδύνω δολομῆτα δύω βόε δειροτομῆσαι (*H*. 4, 405).

The ἐκρέμω form in Homer is also noted by Herodian, the grammarian:

τὸ ἐκρέμασο γίνεται κατὰ ἀποβολὴν τοῦ σ Ἰωνικῶς ἐκρέμαο καὶ κατὰ κρᾶσιν Ἀττικὴν τοῦ αο εἰς ω ἐκρέμω «ἦ οὐ μέμνῃ ὅτε τ᾿ ἐκρέμω ὑψόθεν, ἐκ δὲ ποδοῖιν» (Hom. *Il*. XV 18).[21]

ἐκρέμασο, after losing σ, the Ionic form ἐκρέμαο is formed and after the Attic contraction of αο into ω the ἐκρέμω form appears «ἦ οὐ μέμνῃ ὅτε τ᾿ ἐκρέμω ὑψόθεν, ἐκ δὲ ποδοῖιν» (Hom. *Il*. XV 18).

We do not know why a form with Attic contraction appears in Homer where the Ionic ἐκρέμαο would be expected.

In lyric and comedy there are no occurrences of ind. imperf. In tragedy, apart from the regular ἠπίστασο with sigma intact, ἠπίστω appears, with α as a result of the contraction of α and ο:

Μισοῦντ᾿ ἐμίσει, καὶ σὺ τοῦτ᾿ ἠπίστασο (Soph. *Aj*. 1134)
Ἀλλ᾿ ἦν ἄν, εἰ σύ γ᾿ εὖ φρονεῖν ἠπίστασο (Soph. *El*. 394)
σὺ δ᾿ ἐς μὲν εὐνὰς κρύφιος ἠπίστω μολεῖν (Eur. *HF*. 344)

The ἠπίστω form is also characteristic of the Attic dialect. Apart from tragedy, it can be found in Xenophon (Xen. *Hell*. III 4,9) and Plato (Plat. *Euthyd*. 296 d, *Ion* 531 b). In tragedy the choice between the form with or without sigma may be dependent on meter.

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[20] Analysis based on editions such as: Euripides: *Heracles*. In: *Fabulae*. Ed. G. Murray. Vol. 2. Oxford 1913; Homeri: *Ilias*. Ed. T.W. Allen. Vol. 2–3. Oxonii 2000 [1931]; *Homeric Hymns, Homeric Apocrypha, Lives of Homer*. Ed. M.L. West. Cambridge, MA–London 2003; Platonis: *Opera*. Ed. J. Burnet. Vol. 1. Oxford 1900; Platonis: *Opera*. Ed. J. Burnet. Vol. 3. Oxford 1903; Xenophons: *Hellenika*. Hrsg. von F.G. Sorof. Leipzig–Berlin 1906.

[21] *Grammatici Graeci*. Pars 3: *Herodiani technici reliquiae*. Collegit, disposuit, emendavit, explicavit, praefatus est A. Lentz. Vol. 2, fasc. 1 scripta de nominibus, verbis, pronominibus, adverbiis et librum monadicorum continens. Lipsiae 1867, p. 317, 21–23.

Indicative and Imperative Aorist II Middle[22]

The aorist of ἐπριάμην appears in Aristophanes, in the spoken part: "[…] εἰ […] ἐπίδεσμον ἐπρίω […]" (Aristoph. *V.* 1440). In -σο ending sigma disappeared after a short vowel, contracted with ο: ἐπρίασο > *ἐπριαο > ἐπρίω.

Most probably, as in the case of ἠπίστασο and ἠπίστω, it is a contracted Attic form determined by meter.

The Attic contraction occurs also in aorist imperative. In comedy there are three forms of the ἐπριάμην aorist:

[…] πρίασο τῶν ἰὼ φέρω (*Ach.* 870)
[…] Ἄνθρακας πρίω (*Ach.* 34)
[…] οὐδ᾽ ᾔδει πρίω (*Ach.* 35)

Apart from the imperative πρίασο, where sigma does not disappear, there is the imperative πρίω. According to Goodwin in aorist II, σ in the -σο ending disappears after a short vowel and is contracted with ο: πρίασο > *πριαο > πρίω. The πρίασο form is, according to him, typical for poetry.[23] Colvin, however, claims that it is Beaotian imperat. aor.[24] Colvin and Olson in commentary to *The Archanians* describe the contracted form πρίω as Attic.[25] Herodian also believes these forms to be Attic. In his lexicon of Atticisms one can find forms of the verb ἐπριάμην – ἐπρίω and πρίω in the imperative.

To conclude, there are twelve contracted forms, and eight with sigma in -σο ending. In comedy there are three forms with -ω of the verb ἐπριάμην which are considered to be Attic.[26] Based on the above, one may agree with Smyth[27] that the contracted forms occur more often. However, it must be remembered that those forms can also be found in prose. Certainly not in all these forms the disappearance of σ and the contraction take place. It is also problematic which dialect these forms belong to. This type of contraction was regarded by Herodian as Attic.[28]

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[22] Analysis based on editions such as: Aristophanes: *Wasps.* Ed. D.M. MacDowell. Oxford 1971; Aristophanes: *Acharnians.* Ed. S.D. Olson. Oxford 2002.

[23] W.W. Goodwin: *Greek Grammar…*, p. 164.

[24] S. Colvin: *Dialect in Aristophanes and the Politics of Language in Ancient Greek Literature.* Oxford 1999, p. 218.

[25] S. Colvin: *Dialect in Aristophanes…*, p. 218; Aristophanes: *Acharnians.* Ed. S.D. Olson. Oxford 2002, p. 290.

[26] Colvin and Olson suppose that the forms πρίω and ἐπρίω might be Attic. (S. Colvin: *Dialect in Aristophanes…*, p. 218; Aristophanes: *Acharnians.* Ed. S.D. Olson…, p. 290).

[27] H.W. Smyth: *Greek Grammar…*, p. 154.

[28] Παρεκβολαὶ τοῦ μεγάλου ῥήματος ἐκ τῶν Ἡρωδιανοῦ: *E Duobus Codicibus Caes. Reg. biblioth. Vindobonensis.* Ed. J. La Roche. Vienna 1863, pp. 33, 11–13.

Contemporary scholars in most cases state only the place of their occurrence.[29] If both forms with -ασο and with -ω were to be considered Attic,[30] then, the theory of Golias (1962), Jurewicz and Fiderer, who claim that these forms are always contracted, would not be correct.[31] In order to establish in which dialects the contracted forms and those where sigma does not disappear are present, the analysis of prose is recommended.

Only Schwyzer illustrates all his arguments with examples. The analysis by Herodian is also valuable, mostly as it contains a large number of examples. Grammar textbooks do not provide much information on forms occurring in the narrative. In fact, in some cases they are not mentioned at all, for example the ἐκρέμω or ἐδύνω forms. Usually scholars (even those discussing the language of Homer exclusively) state the forms and note their place of occurrence, however, without any commentary.

I tried to analyse this problem on the basis of texts originating from only two periods in the Greek literature. As a result, further analysis is required. Also, to criticise scholars whose conclusions are often very general and concern mainly the Attic dialect would be inappropriate.

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[29] The concept of the textbook also plays an important role. It may be assumed that Golias regards forms with -ω as Attic.

[30] See. H.W. Smyth: *The Sounds and Inflections...*, pp. 503, 517.

[31] E. Fiderer: *Gramatyka języka greckiego – szkolna*. Cz. 1..., p. 99; M. Auerbach, M. Golias: *Gramatyka grecka...*, p. 101; O. Jurewicz: *Gramatyka historyczna języka greckiego...*, p. 221.