

Throwing a *tantum*: Voice morphology in denominal 'statives' revisited

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The problem

- ▶ Distribution of active vs. middle (nonactive) morphology in IE: contexts of alternations are reasonably well understood (causative alternation, passives, reflexives, etc.), but what about “*tantum*”-behavior?
- ▶ Why do some verbs surface as *activa tantum* and some as *media tantum*, and why is there variation across the IE languages w.r.t. which verbs are which?

Alternating vs. non-alternating verbs

(1) Alternating verbs, *actīva tantum* & *media tantum* in Latin

a. Active only	b. Alternating		c. Nonactive only
	Active	Nonact./Passive	
<i>e-ō</i>	<i>am-ō</i>	<i>am-or</i>	<i>hort-or</i>
‘go’	‘love’	‘am loved’	‘exhort’
<i>rube-ō</i>	<i>dūc-ō</i>	<i>dūc-or</i>	<i>fru-or</i>
‘be red’	‘lead’	‘am led’	‘enjoy’
<i>mane-ō</i>	<i>mone-ō</i>	<i>mone-or</i>	<i>mori-or</i>
‘stay’	‘admonish’	‘am admonished’	‘die’

Alternating vs. non-alternating verbs

“*Tantum*”-behavior is by no means a marginal phenomenon:

- (2) P-, \bar{A} -, and U-verbs in ancient IE languages (from Grestenberger Forthcoming)

	Classical Skt.		Homeric Gk.		Toch. B		Toch. A	
	#	%	#	%	#	%	#	%
P (only active)	1,038	51.9	129	36	150	28	148	33.9
\bar{A} (only nonact.)	485	24.2	89	25	103	19.2	104	23.8
U (alternating)	478	23.9	141	39	283	52.8	185	42.3
Total	2,001		359		536		437	

PIE *tantums*

... and of course routinely reconstructed for PIE as well:

(3) PIE *activa tantum*

a. root presents:

- (i) **h₁es* ‘be’ (Hitt. *ēšzi*, Ved. *ásti*, Gk. *ἐστί*, Lat. *est*, etc.)
- (ii) **h₁eǵ* ‘go’ (Ved. *éti*, Av. *aēitī*, Gk. *εἶμι*, etc.)
- (iii) **h₂enh₁* ‘breathe’ (Ved. *ániti* etc.)
- (iv) **h₂ueh₁* ‘blow, breeze’ (Ved. *vāti*, JAv. *vāiti*, Gk. *ἄησι*, etc.)
- (v) **ses* ‘sleep’ (Hitt. *šašzi*, Ved. *sásti*, etc.)

b. root aorists:

- (i) **b^huH* ‘grow; become’ (LIV²: **b^hueh₂*; Ved. *ábhūt*, Gk. *ἔφῶ*)
- (ii) **ǵneh₃* ‘recognize’ (Gk. *ἔγνω*, Ved. 2sg. opt. *jñeyáḥ*, etc.)
- (iii) **k̑leu* ‘hear’ (Ved. *ásrot*, Gk. ipv. *κλύτε*, etc.)
- (iv) **steh₂* ‘step, stand’ (Ved. *ásthāt*, Gk. *ἔστην*, etc.)

PIE *tantums*

(4) PIE *media tantum*

a. root presents:

- (i) **kei* ‘lie’ (CLuv. *zīyar(i)*, Ved. *śáye*, Gk. *κεῖμαι*, etc.)
- (ii) **h₁es* ‘sit down’ (LIV²: **h₁eh₁s*; Ved. *áste*, YAv. 3pl. *āṇhāire*, Gk. *ῥῖμαι*, Hitt. *eša(ri)*)
- (iii) **d^heug^h* ‘be/make useful’ (Ved. *duhé*, Goth. *daug*, Gk. *ἔτυχον*)
- (iv) **ues* ‘wear clothes’ (Hitt. *wēšta*, Ved. *váste*, Gk. *εἴμαι*, etc.)

b. root aorists:

- (i) **h₃er* ‘start to move’ (Ved. *ārta*, Gk. *ἔρτο*, TB *ertār*)
- (ii) **leuk* ‘become bright’
- (iii) **men* ‘get an idea’ (Ved. *ámata*, OAv. *maṇtā*)
- (iv) **sel* ‘jump’

Why *tantum*?

→ *tantum*-behavior is a regular and widespread feature of these voice systems, not just a “peripheral” irregularity. So how do we account for it?

- ▶ In approaches in which voice morphology is assumed to “do something” (e.g., reduce argument structure, add a semantic component of affectedness, etc.), *tantum*-behavior is a problem.
- ▶ Especially because there is no straightforward uniform semantics for either class
 - ▶ ...if *media tantum* include agentive transitive verbs (**deponents**, e.g., Lat. *hortor*) as well as intransitive inchoative and stative verbs (e.g., Lat. *morior* ‘die’)
- ▶ A possible way out is to analyze *tantum*-verbs as lexically specified for [±active] or [±] passive (e.g., Kiparsky 2005, Weisser 2014) or active/nonactive morphology as a “paradigm-dependent morpheme” (Stump 2007) whose semantic content depends on whether or not it alternates within a paradigm.

Why *tantum*?

- ▶ But such approaches effectively reduce a rather large chunk of voice-marking in these languages to lexically determined conjugational class morphology (cf. Grestenberger 2019, Forthcoming for further discussion).
- ▶ ... and render the generalizations concerning the semantic subclasses of *media tantum* obsolete (e.g., Kemmer 1993, Zombolou and Alexiadou 2014, Inglese 2021, Fortson 2022...)
- An account that 1) takes these generalizations into account and 2) derives the distribution of active and nonactive-marked verbs independently of whether or not they alternate is to be preferred.

Why *tantum*?

Crucially, argument-structure reduction accounts cannot explain instances in which one and the same semantic class surfaces with different voice marking in closely related IE languages:

- ▶ Obligatory middle morphology on *yá*-passives in Vedic vs. active in Avestan; active (ϑ)η-passives in Greek
- ▶ Active vs. nonactive anticausative/change-of-state verbs in Vedic, Greek, Latin...
- ▶ **Active vs. nonactive “pseudo-agent” verbs** in Greek vs. Latin, Vedic etc.

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Today’s goals:

- ▶ Use *tantum* behavior in (synchronically productive) denominal pseudo-agent verbs as a window into the properties of voice morphology across IE
- ▶ Implications for reconstructing alternating vs. *tantum* verbs in PIE
- ▶ Especially w.r.t. different types of “stative” verbs

Theoretical background: Voice

Because there are more syntactic contexts (e.g., active, passive, reflexive ...) than there are voice markers (active, nonactive), a promising approach is to define a syntactic-semantic condition in which nonactive/“middle” morphology appears and treat active morphology as “Elsewhere”.

- ▶ The condition has to be fairly broad because of the many different environments in which we encounter this morphology → “no external argument DP”, [-ext.arg.]/[-D].
- ▶ essentially, “no agent subject” in the functional projection/piece of verbal structure related to voice alternations (“Voice”)

(5) Spell-Out condition on nonactive morphology
Voice → **Voice[NonAct]/_ No DP specifier**

(Embick 1998, 2004, Alexiadou 2013, Kallulli 2013, Alexiadou et al. 2015, Grestenberger 2018, 2021, Kastner 2020, Oikonomou and Alexiadou 2022...)

Theoretical background: Voice

Assume further that this piece of structure (“Voice”) can be absent. This gives us the following typology of contexts for active/middle-marked verbs (note that whether or not they are alternating is irrelevant).

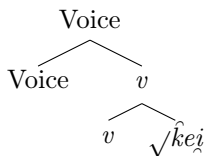
(6) Distribution of active vs. nonactive/middle morphology:

	+ext.arg./+D	-ext.arg./-D
Voice	ACT	NONACT
—	n/a	ACT

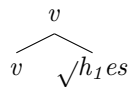
Theoretical background: Voice

This means that we have two available structures for verbs without an external argument (\approx non-agentive verbs), one which will surface with middle/nonactive endings by (5), (7a.) and one that will surface with active-as-Elsewhere endings, (7b.):

(7) a.



b.



- ▶ This has been argued for intransitive verbs of the causative alternation (Alexiadou and Anagnostopoulou 2004, Schäfer 2008), but it can easily be extended to *states* as in (7)—there is also evidence for different types of stative verbs.
 - ▶ (7a) = “expletive Voice” (Wood 2014, Schäfer 2017), semantically inert/identity function only

Theoretical background: stative verbs

Maienborn (2003), Rothmayr (2009):

- ▶ **Davidsonian states**, e.g., Engl. *sit, stand, lie, wait, gleam* have a “stative event argument”
- ▶ **Kimian states**, e.g., Engl. *be intelligent/tired/angry, weigh, resemble ...* express properties and have no event argument.
 - ▶ Davidsonian states can be unaccusatives or unergatives (Kratzer 1995)

Main diagnostic: compatibility with manner adverbs that modify the event and event-related locative modifiers (Davidsonian states: yes, Kimian states: no).

Theoretical background: stative verbs

- ▶ Some stative verbs are ambiguous between a stative and an eventive reading, e.g., instrumental alternation verbs like *fill*, *decorate*, *cover*, *connect*, *block*, *obstruct*, *surround*... (Kratzer 2001):

- (8)
- a. *The army surrounds the village* (eventive)
 - b. *The wall surrounds the village* (stative)

Rothmayr (2009) discusses evidence that suggests that verbs like (8b) are Kimian states.

- ▶ Some verbs are ambiguous between a stative and an unergative/activity interpretation:
 - ▶ Rothmayr 2009: verbs of sound and light emission, verbs of body posture, perception verbs; Nash 2021: stative/unergative ambiguity in Georgian verbs from property-denoting roots, verbs of sound/light emission, onomatopoeic verbs, and manner of motion verbs.
 - ▶ External argument is a HOLDER rather than an AGENT

Summary

- ▶ Stative verbs are not a uniform class w.r.t. transitivity, argument structure and Aktionsart
- ▶ Ambiguity between stative and eventive/unergative interpretation (Kimian vs. Davidsonian statives)
- ▶ Difference boils down to 1) presence/absence of event variable and 2) thematic role of surface subject (\pm agent/ext.)
 - ▶ Which corresponds to a structural difference in this framework
 - ▶ The relevant event variable is associated with Voice
- ▶ Assuming that voice morphology is sensitive to these differences and these are mostly non-alternating verb classes, we expect *tantum*-behavior in these classes.

Pseudo-agent verbs & Aktionsart

= denominal verbs that appear to be based on nouns that are prototypically used as agents, i.e., animate nouns of profession, agent nouns, appellatives (Bleotu 2019)

- ▶ Other terms: “essive” (Mignot 1969, Steinbauer 1989);
“*prédicatifs*/predicative” (Flobert 1975); “to act like *y*”-verbs (Xu et al. 2007)
- ▶ BE or ACT?

Pseudo-agent verbs

Examples:

- (9) a. English: *to butcher, to nurse, to proctor, to author, to referee, to monitor*, etc.
- b. Latin: *arbitror* ‘to act as/be a witness’ (*arbiter* ‘witness’), *fūror* ‘to steal, rob’ (*fūr* ‘thief’), *ancillor* ‘act like a handmaid’ (*ancilla* ‘handmaid’), etc.
- c. Ancient Greek: *basileúō* ‘be king; rule’ (*basileús* ‘king’); *hippeúō* ‘be a horserider’ (*hippeús* ‘horserider’), *khalkeúō* ‘be a coppersmith’ (*khalkeús* ‘coppersmith’, etc.
- d. Hebrew: *hitkamtsen* ‘was stingy’ (*kamts-an* ‘stingy person’), *hitbaxjen* ‘complained’ (*baxj-an* ‘crybaby’), *hiftaxtsen* ‘acted arrogantly’ (*faxts-an* ‘arrogant person’), *hitril* ‘trolled’ (*trol* ‘troll’), etc.
- e. Romanian: *a măcelari* ‘to butcher’, *a pilota* ‘to pilot’, *a păzi* ‘to guard’, *a păstori* ‘to shepherd’, etc.

(Grestenberger and Kastner Forthcoming)

Pseudo-agent verbs in Indo-European

- ▶ How these types of verbs are treated in the older IE languages could be a window into inherited *tantum* behavior in verbs with stative/unergative ambiguity
- ▶ Present study looks at the oldest (reasonably accessible) stages of Latin (Plautus), Greek (Homer) and Vedic (RV, some AV).

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Disclaimer:

- ▶ I'll exclude denominal verbs that are derived from instruments and other nonanimate objects (Flobert: “*situatifs*”), which give rise to “ornative” or “factitive” verbs (“provide with X”, etc.)
- ▶ Also excluded: verbs derived from *adjectives*, which are also sometimes called “essive” in the literature:
 - ▶ E.g., Lat. *albeō* ‘be bright’ (*albus*), *clāreō* ‘be clear’ (*clārus*), *rubeō* ‘be red’ (*ruber*), etc.

Pseudo-agent verbs in Latin: Plautus

- ▶ primary denominal verbalizer = 1st conj. ($-\bar{a}- < * \bar{a}-\dot{i}e/o-$)
- ▶ Mignot 1969, Flobert 1975, Steinbauer 1989

<i>arbitror</i>	‘act as witness’	<i>arbiter</i>	‘witness’	tr./AcI
<i>(h)ariolor</i>	‘act as prophet, prophesy’	<i>hariolus, -a</i>	‘prophet’	—
<i>aucupor</i>	‘act like a birdwatcher, watch out for something’	<i>auceps</i>	‘birdwatcher’	—
<i>bacchor</i>	‘act like a bacchant, rave madly’	<i>baccha</i>	‘bacchant’	—
<i>bubulcitor</i>	‘be an oxdriver’	<i>bubulcus</i>	‘oxdriver’	—
<i>per-graecor</i>	‘act/live like the Greek’	<i>Graecus</i>	‘Greek’	—
<i>fūror (sub-)</i>	‘steal’	<i>fūr</i>	‘thief’	tr./acc
<i>interpretor</i>	‘act as interpretor; interpret’	<i>interpret-</i>	‘interpreter’	gen; tr./acc

Pseudo-agent verbs in Latin: Plautus

<i>medicor</i>	‘act as healer’	<i>medicus</i>	‘healer’	dat.
<i>parasitor</i> (<i>sub-</i>)	‘be a parasite’	<i>parasitus</i>	‘parasite’	—/dat. (<i>sub-</i>)
<i>philosophor</i>	‘act like a philosopher’	<i>philosophus</i>	‘philosopher’	—
<i>sycophantor</i>	‘be a fraud, cheat’	<i>sycophanta</i>	‘fraud’	—/dat.
<i>vēlitor</i>	‘wrangle, fight’	<i>vēlit-</i>	‘foot soldier’	tr/acc.

States or activities?

The Aktionsart of these verbs is notoriously difficult to pin down.

- ▶ Flobert (1975: 66, fn. 2): “... l’appellation “essif” de X. Mignot, *Dénommatifs*, 67, convient peu aux déponents, même prédicatifs: *dominor* “j’agis en maître”, qui diffèrent nettement des actifs: *militō* “je suis soldat”.”
- ▶ Steinbauer (1989: 161): “Es gibt m. E. kein entscheidendes Argument, das für oder gegen eine der beiden Möglichkeiten ‘X ist Basissubstantiv’ bzw. ‘X handelt/verhält sich wie Basissubstantiv’ spricht.”

States or activities?

- ▶ Almost all forms above can be used intransitively in Plautus:

(10) *deceat me amare et te **bubulcitarier**, me victitare pulchre, te miseris modis* (Most. 50) “it’s proper for me to love and for you to be a cowherd, for me to live pleasantly and you miserably”

- ▶ Some also appear with objects/transitive use: Inf. & acc. objects.

(11) ***furetur** quod queat* “let him rob whatever he can” (Bac. 4.4)

(12) *nescio quod vos **velitati estis** inter vos duos.* (Men. 5.2) “I don’t know about what you two have quarreled among yourselves”

States or activities?

- ▶ But more commonly with dat. (less common: gen), ethical/beneficient datives?

- (13) Gen: *Quia tuae memoriae interpretari me aequom censes* (Ep. 4.1) “Because you consider me impartial (enough) to be interpreter of your memories.”
- (14) Dat: *Enim vero ego nunc sycophantae huic sycophantari volo* (Trin. 4.2) ‘For now I really want to trick that trickster’

Active vs. nonactive

(15) active pseudo-agent verbs in Plautus:

<i>aucupō</i>	‘watch out for, observe’	<i>auceps</i>	‘birdwatcher’	acc
<i>augurō</i>	‘prophesy, predict’	<i>augur</i>	‘seer, diviner’	—
<i>auspicō</i>	‘to take the auspices/omens’	<i>auspex</i>	‘bird-diviner’	—
<i>con-graecō</i>	‘live like the Greeks’	<i>Graecus, -a</i>	‘Greek’	—
<i>iūdicō</i>	‘decide, judge’	<i>iūdex</i>	‘judge’	—/acc
<i>medicō</i>	‘heal, cure’	<i>medicus</i>	‘doctor’	acc
(?) <i>mendicō</i>	‘be a beggar, beg’	<i>mendīcus</i>	‘beggar; beggarly’	—
<i>militō</i>	‘be a /serve as soldier’	<i>mīles</i>	‘soldier’	—
<i>ministrō</i>	‘serve’	<i>minister</i>	‘server, servant’	—/dat.
<i>re-charmidō</i> (<i>dē</i> -?)	‘cease to be/act like Charmides’	<i>Charmides</i>		—
(?) <i>supplicō</i>	‘beg’	<i>supplex</i>	‘begging; supplicant’	dat

States or activities?

- ▶ But *pace* Flobert these do not really mean ‘be X’ — even in those cases where they do, it’s hard to find a difference to the nonactive counterparts, e.g., (16)–(17).

(16) *egomet quod factitavi in adulescentia, cum **militabam*** (Epid. 3.4)
 “which I myself used to do in my youth, when I was a soldier”

(17) *quamquam hoc me aetatis **sycophantari** pudet* (Trin. 3.3)
 “Even though I am ashamed to be (acting as?) a trickster at my age.”

States or activities?

Definitely not stative:

- (18) *istac iudico* (Trin. 2.2) “thus I decide/rule”
- (19) *Hercle istam rem iudicasti perfidiose, Phaedrome* (Cur. 5.3)
“Jeez, you’ve judged this thing in bad faith, Phaedromus”
- (20) *astute augura* (Cist. 4.2) “guess/augur it out shrewdly!”

States vs. activities

Contrast in *medicō* vs. *medicor*?

- (21) Dat: *Medicari amicus quin properas mihi?* (Mer. 5.2) “Why don’t you, as friend, hasten to act as a medic to me?”
- (22) *Habe bonum animum: ego istum lepide medicabo metum.* (Mos. 2.1)
“Have faith, I will elegantly remedy this problem.”
- ▶ *medicō*/*medicor* and *aucupō*/*aucupor* could suggest contrast in transitivity rather than BE vs. ACT.
 - ▶ No such difference for *per-graecor* vs. *con-graecō*

Summary

- ▶ “Essive” active pseudo-agent verbs vs. “act like”-nonactive verbs doesn’t really hold up to scrutiny
- ▶ And neither does the generalization (sometimes found in the theoretical literature, e.g., Xu et al. 2007) that verbs that mean ‘be x’ or ‘act like x’ have a “tendency” to be deponents

Pseudo-agent verbs in Greek

- ▶ Primary verbalizer = -εϋ-ε/ο- ← **-e_u-i_e/o-*; also just plain **-i_e/o-* (cf. Ilr.)
- ▶ Fraenkel 1906: 172ff.; Schwyzer 1939: 732; Chantraine 1948: 367f., Tucker 1990: 75ff.

(23) Homeric pseudo-agent verbs from nouns in -εύς

ἀριστεύω	‘be the best’	ἀριστεύς	‘the best’	—/inf
βασιλεύω	‘am king; rule’	βασιλεύς	‘king’	—/gen
ἡνιοχεύω	‘be/act as charioteer’	ἡνιοχεύς, ἡνίοχος	‘charioteer’	—
ἡπεροπεύω	‘cheat, deceive’	ἡπεροπεύς	‘a cheat’	tr/acc
χαλκεύω (1x)	‘make from copper’	χαλκεύς	‘coppersmith’	acc
ιερέω	‘sacrifice’	ιερεύς	‘sacrificer, priest’	acc
νομέω	‘am a herdsman; herd’	νομέύς	‘herdsman’	acc
πομπεύω (1x)	‘guide’	πομπεύς	‘guide’	acc

Pseudo-agent verbs in Greek

- ▶ -εύ-ε/ο- is reanalyzed as a verbal stem-forming suffix early on and extended to nominal bases without -εύς
- ▶ it continues to be used to derive denominal pseudo-agent verbs from agent(-like) nouns in -της, -ος, etc. (Fraenkel 1906: 182ff., Tucker 1990: 75ff.)
 - ▶ ἀρχεύω ‘lead, command’ (ἀρχός ‘commander’)
 - ▶ δαιτρεύω ‘distribute’ (δαιτρός ‘distributor’; or δαιτρόν ‘portion’?)
 - ▶ πτωχεύω ‘am a beggar, beg’ (πτωχός ‘beggar’)
 - ▶ ἡγεμονεύω ‘command, lead’ (ἡγῆμων ‘leader, commander’)

Pseudo-agent verbs in Greek

Originally (?) stative:

- (24) a. ὅς ποτ' ἐν ὑμῖν τοῖδεσσι**ν βασίλευε** “who once was king/ruled among you here.” (*Od.* 2.47)
- b. οὐνεκα βουλῆ **ἀριστέυεσκεν** ἀπάντων “... because with respect to counsel he was always the best of all.” (*Il.* 11.627)
- c. ἡ δὲ Πύλου βασίλευε “she acted as king/ruled over Pylos” (*Il.* 11.285)

- Ad (24c): interestingly not *βασιλειάει, βασιλειᾶ, cf. πειράω, πειράομαι ‘try’ ← πείρα; μοιράω, μοιράομαι ‘distribute; receive one’s lot’ ← μοῖρα (Tucker 1990: 244, 271)

Pseudo-agent verbs in Greek

But transitive use prevails already in Homer:

- (25)
- a. τῆσι παρ' εἰνάετες **χάλκευον** δαίδαλα πολλά “With these I cunningly fashioned many things for nine years ...” (*Od.* 18.400)
 - b. καὶ εννέα βοῦς **ιέρειυσεν** “and he sacrificed nine oxen.” (*Il.* 6.174)
 - c. ἑσπέριος δ' ἦλθεν καλλίτριχα μῆλα **νομεύων** “He came in the evening, herding his fairfleeced sheep.” (*Od.* 9.336)

Pseudo-agent verbs in Greek

Passivization?

- (26) καί οἱ τοῖς ἄλλοις ἐτάροις, ... ἄλφιτα δῶκα ... καὶ βοῦς ἱρεύσασθαι
“And to his other comrades I gave barley and bulls to be sacrificed/to
sacrifice for themselves.” (*Od.* 19.190)

Pseudo-agent verbs in Greek

Other types:

(27) -ος → -έω (including compounds; Tucker 1990: 75ff.)

- a. οινοχοος ‘winepouurer’ → οἰνοχοεω ‘to be/act as a winebearer’; pour wine’ (+ οἶνον, *Od.* 3.472)
- b. βουκόλος ‘cowherd’ → βουκολεύω ‘act as cowherd, herd cattle’
- c. θεοπρόπος ‘prophet’ → θεοπροπέω ‘act as/be a prophet, prophesy’ (only as ptcp., no obj.)
- d. κοίρανος ‘leader’ → κοιρανέω ‘be a leader, lead’

(28) *-mḡ/-μαν → *-man-ḡe/o-:

- a. ποιμήν, -μενος ‘herdsman’ (*-mēn, -mn-) → ποιμαίνω ‘herd/tend a flock’ (tr. +acc); mid. ‘be herded’
- b. ἄφρων ‘foolish’ → ἀφραίνω ‘be foolish’
- c. εὐφρων ‘cheerful’ → εὐφραίνω ‘cheer up, gladden’, εὐφραίνομαι ‘become cheerful, enjoy oneself’

Summary

- ▶ Greek consistently treats pseudo-agent verbs, deadjectival states, and deadjectival factitives alike: they're all *active*
- ▶ But the pseudo-agent verb-forming class in $-\epsilon\acute{\upsilon}\omega$ is transitive fairly early on
- ▶ There is no morphological “act like x”/“be like x” distinction as claimed for Latin

Pseudo-agent verbs in Vedic

Primary verbalizer = *-ya-* < **-iē/o-*; lit. Sütterlin 1906, Tucker 1988, Insler 1997, Vine 2016.

- ▶ *indrayante* (*índra-*); only in RV 4.24.4d *ād ín néma indrayante abhīke* “just then do those on the one side seek Indra at the moment of confrontation.” (Jamison and Brereton 2014; Geldner 1951); ‘they act like Indra’ (Tucker 1988).
- ▶ *amitráya-nt-* ‘being hostile, acting as an enemy’ (*a-míttra-*), 3x (only act. pctp.), e.g., 5.35.5a–b: *tuvám tám indra mártiyam / amitrayántam adrivaḥ* “You, Indra, possessor of the stone — run down the mortal who acts the foe,…” (JB)
- ▶ *vīraya-te* ‘act like a hero’ (*vīrá-*), 3x, e.g., RV 1.116.5ab: *anārambhaṇé tád avīrayethām / anāsthāné agrabhaṇá samudré* “Then **you two acted as heroes** upon the unsupporting sea, which has no place to stand and nothing to grasp, …” (JB)

Pseudo-agent verbs in Vedic

- *vṛṣāyá-te* ‘act like a bull’ (*vṛṣan-*), 10x.

(29) a. Itr.: RV 10.21.8:

ágne súkréṇa śocíṣā

urú prathayase bṛhát

abhikrándan vṛṣāyase

“O Agni, with your blazing flame you spread yourself wide and lofty. **Roaring, you act the bull;**” (JB)

b. With beneficent dat.: RV 3.7.9a:

vṛṣāyánte mahé átyāya pūrvīr

“The many (mares) [=flames?] act like bulls for the great steed [=Agni or the sun];” (JB)

c. With goal acc.: RV 1.58.4c:

trṣú yád agne vaníno vṛṣāyáse

“When, Agni, thirstily you rush like a bull upon the woods, ...”

Pseudo-agent verbs in Vedic

- ▶ *gopāya-ti* ‘protect’ (*go-pā* ‘cattle-protector; herdsman’), 3x (tr.), e.g., 10.154.5ab: *sahásraṇīthāḥ / yé gopāyānti sūriyam* “The poets of a thousand devices who protect the sun, ...” (JB)
- ▶ *satvanāyánt-* ‘acting like a warrior’ (*sátvan-*, *satvaná-*), AVŚ 5.20.1.
- ▶ *kavīyánt-* (1x), *kavīyāmāna-* (1x) ‘act/be like a *kaví-*’
- ▶ *sakhīyánt-* ‘being a friend/friendly with; seeking friendship’ (+ instr; *sákhī-*), 8x, e.g., 1.131.5c: *sakhīyató yád ávitha* “that you aided those acting as comrades” (JB)
 - ▶ active inflection and desiderative meaning generally agreed to be secondary developments that started in the participial forms (Tucker 1988, Vine 2016), so no argument against assuming that this class originally consisted of *media tantum*

A PIE pseudo-agent verb?

A (potentially) reconstructable pseudo-agent verb:

- ▶ Ved. *pátyate* ‘possess, own’ (+acc); rule over (+loc)’ (*páti-* ‘lord’), YAv. *paiθiiete*, Lat. *potior* ‘be(come) master of; possess’ (+acc/gen/abl; *potis*) < **poti̯-e/o-* ‘to be/act as lord’ (?)
 - ▶ Act.: Lat. *potīre* ‘take into possession’, YAv. *paiθiieiti* (?)
- ▶ Problem: *-*e/o-* as verbalizer seems unlikely (*pace* EWA II), must be **póti-ie/o-* > / → *pótīe/o-*

Summary

- ▶ Eventive pseudo-agent verbs are *media tantum* in Vedic and Latin (Plaut.)
- ▶ Some (Kimian?) pseudo-agent verbs are *activa tantum* in Latin; some seem to be transitive & agentive (*iūdicō, medicō...*)
- ▶ In Homeric Greek, *all* pseudo-agent verbs are active

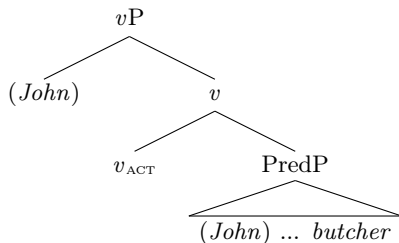
Pseudo-agents in PIE

- ▶ Taken together, Vedic and Latin suggest that Davidsonian/“complex” states with an event argument were originally marked with nonactive morphology
- ▶ Greek is the outlier - but Greek is more consistent in using active morphology to mark stat(iv)es and inchoatives in general (cf. the $-(\vartheta)\eta$ -aorists, Jasanoff 2004, García Ramón 2014, Grestenberger 2021)
- ▶ Specifically, Greek seems to have given up the “expletive Voice”-option for productively formed verbs — inherited *media tantum* like $\chi\epsilon\tilde{\iota}\mu\alpha$ are archaisms

Analysis: Structure(s) of pseudo-agents

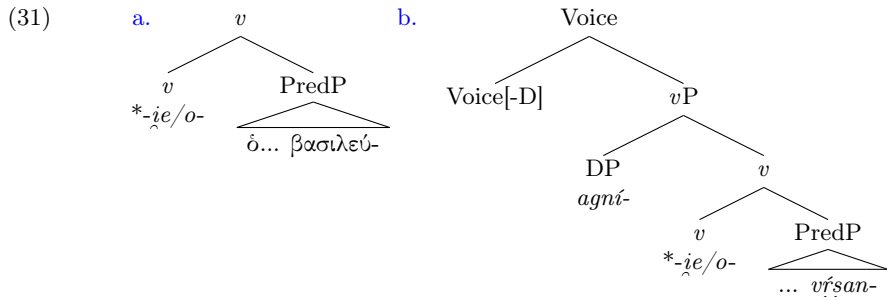
- ▶ Theoretical accounts agree that the base of pseudo-agent verbs cannot be the actual agent of the derived verb (incorporation of agents is excluded).
- The pseudo-agent is base-generated in the complement domain of the light verb/verbalizer it conflates with/incorporates into.
 - ▶ Complement = prep. *like/as* + N (Bleotu 2019)
 - ▶ Complement = comparative PP or Small Clause (SC; Oltra-Massuet and Castroviejo 2014)

(30)



Analysis

(31a) = Greek (originally?) stative pseudo-agents, (31b) = Vedic, Latin eventive pseudo-agents.



- ▶ (31a) = active by Elsewhere, (31b) middle/nonactive by (5)
- ▶ on the structural difference of AGENT vs. ACTOR/DOER arguments: Doron 2003, Kastner 2020: 51, Massam 2009, Tollan and Oxford 2018, etc.

Analysis

- ▶ (31b): reanalysis of ACTOR as AGENT automatically results in morphologically *active* pseudo-agent verbs that behave like ordinary (transitive) agentive verbs
 - ▶ Not all languages systematically distinguish between AGENT and DOER/ACTOR
- ▶ This could be what happened to the Greek -εύω-type, and at least some of the Latin active pseudo-agent verbs (e.g., *iūdicō*).
- ▶ (31a), on the other hand, is the structure of genuine “Kimian” stative pseudo-agent verbs like Gk. ἀριστεύω and (Plautine) *mīlitō*.
 - ▶ Note that this is true both for adjective- and for pseudo-agent noun-derived Kimian states.

Conclusion & implications for PIE

- ▶ Productively formed pseudo-agent nouns: a diagnostic for how different types of stative/unergative verbs were treated w.r.t. voice marking
- ▶ These verbs usually do not alternate, hence provide insights into synchronic *tantum* behavior
- ▶ Vedic and Latin evidence suggests that unergative/eventive states were middle-marked in PIE

Conclusion & implications for PIE

The $*h_2e$ -connection: This could explain how/why so many “proto-middle” $*h_2e$ -conjugation presents from stative/unergative semantic classes ended up as formally *active* (thematic) verbs, e.g., the “root present” class of Jasanoff 2003:

- (32)
- a. $*d^hou-$ / $*d^heu-$ ‘run’ (Ved. *dhāvati* etc.)
 - b. $*g^hōng^h-$ / $*g^heng^h-$ ‘stride, go’ (Go. *gangan* etc.)
 - c. $*h_2uos-$ / $*h_2ues-$ ‘abide, spend the night’ (OIr. *foaid*, etc.)
 - d. $*sor-$ / $*ser-$ ‘watch’ (Gk. ἐπί ὄρουαι vs. Hsch. ὄρει, etc.)

... as well as the varying voice marking of perception verbs like $*kleu-$, $*ueid-$, and *derk-*.

- ▶ ACTOR → AGENT reanalysis

Thank you!



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Appendix: Denominal instrument verbs

- ▶ Verbs derived from instruments and other nonanimate objects (Flobert: “*situatifs*”) give rise to “ornative” or “factitive” verbs (“provide with X”, etc.); which voice morphology tends to be relatively transparent:
 - ▶ Nonact.: Lat. *lignor* ‘collect/provide oneself with wood’ (*lignum*), *piscor* ‘to fish’ (*piscis?*), *praedor* ‘pillage, get spoils’ (*praeda*)
 - ▶ Act.: Lat. *auxiliō* ‘provide with help’ (*auxilium*), *dōnō* ‘provide with gifts’ (*dōnum*), *mōnstrō* ‘show, indicate’ (*mōnstrum*)
- ▶ In terms of thematic roles, these look like instrument/manner or theme/goal incorporation verbs

Appendix: Deadjectival verbs

Verbs that are derived from *adjectives* are mostly factitive alternation verbs in which the stative-intransitive variant is also sometimes called “essive” in the literature:

- ▶ E.g., Lat. *albeō* ‘be bright’ (*albus*), *clāreō* ‘be clear’ (*clārus*), *rubeō* ‘be red’ (*ruber*), etc.

Because of the well-known adjective/adjectival substantivization ambiguity in IE (especially in Greek w.r.t. the τμός-class) the distinction between these and pseudo-agent verbs isn’t always clear-cut, which has implications for the interpretation of specific cases:

- ▶ Relationship of Gk. φιλέω ‘love, hold dear’ to φίλος ‘dear’, ὁ φίλος ‘dear one, friend’, φίλον ‘what is dear, loved’? (cf. Tucker 1990: 88ff.)
- ▶ Lat. *mendicāre* ‘beg’ from adj. *mendicus* ‘destitute, beggarly’ or *mendicus* m. ‘beggar’?

But at least in Latin there is a fairly solid generalization w.r.t. to voice marking and verbalizing morphology that distinguishes deadjectival from (at least some) pseudo-agent “essives”.

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