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An examination of diathesis and its didactic practices in Latin grammars from Late Antiquity to the Early Middle Ages

A Thesis
by
Jason O’Rorke

In Fulfilment of the Requirements for the Degree of Doctor Philosophiae

Classics
School of Languages, Literatures and Cultures
College of Arts, Social Sciences and Celtic Studies
National University of Ireland, Galway

December 2016

Research Supervisor: Dr. Jacopo Bisagni
Head of Discipline: Prof. Michael Clarke
# Table of Contents

Declaration Regarding the Work ................................................................. iv  
Abstract ........................................................................................................... v 
Acknowledgements ......................................................................................... vi  
Translator’s Notes .......................................................................................... vii  
List of Abbreviations ....................................................................................... viii  

## Chapter One

**Introduction** ............................................................................................... 1 
1.1 Introductory remarks ................................................................................. 1  
1.2 Diathesis according to modern linguistic theory ........................................ 3  
1.3 Diathesis according to the γραμματικοί/grammatici ................................ 5  
1.4 Literature review ........................................................................................ 7  
1.5 Structure and content of thesis ................................................................. 9  
1.6 The emergence of grammar in Antiquity .................................................. 10  

## Chapter Two

The grammatical tradition before Donatus: the origin and the development of the category of diathesis between the fourth century BC and the third century AD .................................................................................................................. 25  
2.1 Introductory remarks .................................................................................. 25  
2.2 Διάθεσις .................................................................................................... 25  
2.3 The term διάθεσις in the works of Apollonius Dyscolus ............................ 26  
2.4 Διάθεσις in the Τέχνη Γραμματική ............................................................. 32  
2.5 Latin equivalents to the term διάθεσις ..................................................... 33  
2.6 Genus ........................................................................................................ 35  
2.7 Gender and diathesis .................................................................................. 36  
2.8 Significatio .................................................................................................. 39  
2.9 Active and passive ..................................................................................... 41  
2.10 Neuter ....................................................................................................... 45  
2.11 Common ..................................................................................................... 50  
2.12 Deponent .................................................................................................. 52
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Chapter Three</th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Donatus and the authors of the fourth century artes</strong></td>
<td>67</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3.1 Introductory remarks</td>
<td>67</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3.2 Donatus</td>
<td>67</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3.3 Charisius</td>
<td>73</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3.3.1 Genera A</td>
<td>77</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3.3.2 Genera B and C</td>
<td>78</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3.3.3 Genera D</td>
<td>83</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3.3.4 Significatio</td>
<td>94</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3.3.5 Concluding remarks</td>
<td>97</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3.4 Diomedes</td>
<td>99</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3.5 Probus</td>
<td>108</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3.5.1 Probus’ use of terminology</td>
<td>110</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3.5.2 Probus’ description of diathesis</td>
<td>113</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3.6 Concluding remarks</td>
<td>118</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Chapter Four</th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Servius and authors of artes between the fifth and sixth centuries</strong></td>
<td>125</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4.1 Introductory remarks</td>
<td>125</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4.2 Servius</td>
<td>125</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4.2.1 Servius’ account of diathesis in the commentary on the <em>Ars Minor</em></td>
<td>127</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4.2.2 Servius’ account of diathesis in the commentary on the <em>Ars Maior</em></td>
<td>128</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4.3 ‘Sergii’</td>
<td>129</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4.3.1 Serg.1</td>
<td>130</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4.3.2 Serg.2, Serg.3 and Serg.4: an introduction</td>
<td>133</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4.3.3 Serg.2’s description of diathesis</td>
<td>135</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
4.3.4 Serg.3’s description of diathesis ................................................. 139
4.3.5 Serg.4’s description of diathesis ................................................. 140
4.3.6 Concluding remarks ...................................................................... 141
4.4 Cledonius .......................................................................................... 143
  4.4.1 Cledonius’ account of diathesis in the commentary on the Ars Minor ....... 144
  4.4.2 Cledonius’ account of diathesis in the commentary on the Ars Maior ....... 145
4.5 Pompeius ............................................................................................ 146
  4.5.1 Pompeius’ description of diathesis .................................................. 148
4.6 Phocas .................................................................................................. 153
  4.6.1 Phocas’ description of diathesis ....................................................... 155
4.7 Consentius ............................................................................................ 157
  4.7.1 Consentius’ description of diathesis .................................................. 159
4.8 Concluding remarks ............................................................................ 165

Chapter Five
Macrobius and Priscian: the incorporation of Greek grammatical thought into Latin grammar ................................................................. 173
5.1 Introductory remarks .......................................................................... 173
5.2 Macrobius ............................................................................................ 173
  5.2.1 De verborum Graeci et Latini differentiis vel societatibus ......................... 175
5.3 Priscian .................................................................................................. 183
  5.3.1 Priscian’s use of terminology ............................................................ 190
  5.3.2 Priscian on diathesis ......................................................................... 192
  5.3.3 An alternative classification of verbs .................................................. 202
  5.3.4 Concluding remarks ......................................................................... 205
5.4 Conclusion .............................................................................................. 211

Chapter Six
Conclusion ............................................................................................... 212

References ............................................................................................... 229
Primary sources ......................................................................................... 229
Secondary sources ..................................................................................... 234
Declaration Regarding the Work

I hereby certify that this thesis is all my own work and that I have not already obtained another degree in this university (or elsewhere) on the basis of this work.
Abstract

This thesis traces the origin and development of the category of diathesis (or voice) in Antiquity. According to modern linguistic theory, diathesis is a verbal category which describes the relationship between the action expressed by the verb and other participants involved in the sentence. There are two primary diatheses, active and passive, the former signifying that the subject performs an action and the latter indicating that the subject experiences an action.

This thesis primarily examines the Late Antique Latin grammatical artes which date between the third and sixth centuries AD. However, it also incorporates discussions of various other texts in an attempt to shed light on the understanding of diathesis prior to the third century. For example, it deals with philosophical treatises composed by Plato and Aristotle, grammatical and philosophical fragments attributed to Alexandrian philologists and Stoic philosophers, rhetorical treatises authored by Dionysius of Halicarnassus and Quintilian, and encyclopaedic texts compiled by the Roman polymaths Varro and Aulus Gellius. In addition, it treats the Greek grammatical works by Apollonius Dyscolus and the Τέχνη Γραμματική ascribed to Dionysius Thrax. This thesis demonstrates that, up to the fourth century AD, there was a great variety of opinions regarding how best to characterise diathesis. It also reveals that by the fifth century authors were starting to reach a consensus as to the most appropriate way of explaining this category. And, finally, it evaluates Macrobius and Priscian’s contribution to development of the theory of diathesis: in particular, it shows that their understanding of the category was greatly enhanced through direct reliance on the works of Apollonius Dyscolus.
Acknowledgements

First and foremost, I would like to thank my Supervisor, Dr Jacopo Bisagni, as my research would not have been possible without his constant help and guidance.

Secondly, I would like to thank the members of my GRC (General Research Committee) Prof. Michael Clarke and Prof. Dáibhí Ó Cróinín for their invaluable insight and encouragement.

I would also like to acknowledge the financial support I received over the course of this research, from the NUIG College of Arts Fellowship (2010–2011) and the IRC Postgraduate Scholarship (2011–2014)

Finally, I owe a special thanks to my family, my parents Cyril and Anne and brother and sisters, Alan, Amy and Suzanne for their unrelenting support and love over the past few years.
Translator’s Note

The Greek and Latin translations in this thesis are all my own, except when it is otherwise stated. However, I would like to sincerely thank Dr. Jacopo Bisagni for his assistance with translating a number of complex Latin and Greek passages. That being said, I take full responsibility for any error found in translation.
### Abbreviations

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<thead>
<tr>
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<th>Work</th>
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<tr>
<td><strong>AM</strong></td>
<td><em>Anno Mundi</em></td>
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<td><strong>Bon.</strong></td>
<td><em>Boniface, Ars grammatica</em></td>
<td>B. Löftstedt and G.J. Gebauer, <em>CCSL</em> 133 B, Turnhout, 1980.</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>CCSL</strong></td>
<td><em>Corpus Christianorum Series Latina</em></td>
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<td><strong>Char.</strong></td>
<td><em>Charisius, Ars grammatica</em></td>
<td>K. Barwick, Leipzig, 1925.</td>
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</table>
Abbreviations

**Cherob.** Choerobosci scholia in Canones verbales et Sophronii exerpta e Characis commentario, ed. by A. Hilgard, GG IV.2, Leipzig, 1894.

**Cic. Acad. Post.** Cicero, Academica priora sive Lucullus, ed. by O. Plasberg, Leipzig, 1922.

**Cled.** Cledonius, Commentarium artis Donati, ed. by H. Keil, GL 5, Leipzig, 1880, 9–79.


**Cons.** Consentius, Ars de nomine et verbo, ed. by H. Keil, GL 5, Leipzig, 1880, 338–385.

**Cons. De bar.** Consentius, De barbarismis et metaplasmis, ed. by M. Niedermann, 1937.

**De nom. excerpt.** Probus (?), De nomine excerpta, ed. by Passalacqua, Tre testi grammaticali bobbiesi, Rome, 1984, 61–75.

**Diom.** Diomedes, Ars grammatica, ed. by H. Keil, GL 1, Leipzig, 1857, 299–529.


Abbreviations


GG *Grammatici Graeci*.

GL *Grammatici Latini*.


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<td>Serg.4</td>
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1. Introduction

1.1 Introductory remarks

In the past few decades, there has been a resurgence of interest in the study of ancient grammar, which has resulted in the publication of a series of important monographs that have shed new light on our understanding of the discipline. In particular, we now know a great deal more about the origins of grammar, about the circumstances in which it emerged as an autonomous discipline, and about how it developed in Antiquity and the Middle Ages. Many of the monographs are concerned with historical figures and assess how significant their achievements were with respect to linguistics. In particular, we should highlight the notable studies on the Hellenistic philologists Aristophanes of Byzantium and Aristarchus of Samothrace by K. Callanan (1987) and S. Matthaios (1999) respectively; on the late Republican theorists Marcus Terentius Varro, Julius Caesar and Dionysius of Halicarnassus by D. J. Taylor (1974), A. Garcea (2012) and C. de Jonge (2008) respectively; on the Late Antique grammatical authors Apollonius Dyscolus, Pseudo-Dionysius Thrax, Aelius Donatus, Diomedes and Julius Romanus by D. Blank (1982), J. Lallot (1998), L. Holtz (1981), R. Dammer (2001) and D. Schenkeveld (2004) respectively. However, concentrating on individual authors is not the only way to investigate the history of linguistics: we can also isolate a grammatical feature, category or concept and track how the approach to its description evolved over time. Monograph-length, diachronic studies of this sort are certainly less common; in fact, I can only think of three recent monographs which approach the history of grammatical theory in this way: two written by A. Luhtahla (one on syntax (2000) and another on the use of philosophical categories in grammatical definitions (2005)) and one by M. Seppänen (2014) (on definitions of ‘grammar’ = grammatica / γραμματική). The reason why scholars now favour synchronic studies on individual figures over diachronic studies involving several may be a natural consequence of new historicism – the critical notion which emphasises the importance of
historical context for the interpretation of texts (Hamilton, 1996: 1–2). Those who adopt this perspective are, first and foremost, interested in understanding ancient views about language in their proper historical context. As a result, we now accept, for example, that Aristotle’s views about language differed from those of the Stoics, not simply because the views of the former represent an earlier phase in the development of linguistics, but also because both Aristotle and the Stoics dealt with grammatical issues in different contexts and for different purposes:

Aristotle tackled them in his treatises on poetics, logic and rhetoric, whereas the Stoics mainly dealt with them in the context of dialectic. This nuanced approach has certainly made broader diachronic studies more difficult to undertake, as it is easy to inadvertently present an oversimplified reconstruction of the development of grammar by not paying sufficient attention to the specific contexts in which different views were expressed. That said, we should not dismiss diachronic studies outright, but rather be aware of the possible pitfalls that may come with them. In fact, I would argue that significant benefits can derive from the correct use of a broad diachronic approach.

Diachronic studies can track the evolution of grammatical theory over a long period of time and, therefore, help us to answer questions that synchronic studies simply cannot, such as: did the understanding of grammatical theory in antiquity progress with the passing of time? If it did, how did it progress? Did a series of different authors bring about incremental progress over a long period, or were the advances down to a few individuals who, at specific moments in time, made contributions that drastically changed the way in which authors approached the description of grammatical theory? These are just some of the questions I hope to answer in this thesis, but before I can attempt to do that, I need to isolate a single grammatical feature, category or notion that will provide the main focus for

---

1 On the relevance of context in the reconstruction of ancient grammatical theory, see in particular Sluiter (1990) and Swiggers and Wouters (1996: 123–161).

2 Compare, for example, P. Swiggers and A. Wouters’ (2015b: 759–797) more nuanced reconstruction of the system of parts of speech to that of R. H. Robins (1966: 13–19).
this study. I have elected to examine the representation of diathesis in the Latin grammatical tradition, mainly because it has received only limited attention in modern scholarship. The aim of this thesis will be not only to shed new light on the ancient understanding of this category, but also to use my findings to make more generalised conclusions about the nature and development of grammatical theory in Antiquity.

1.2 Diathesis according to modern linguistic theory

According to modern linguistic theory, diathesis (or voice)\(^3\) is a category of the verb, along with mood, person and tense, that describes the relationship between the action conveyed by the verb and the participants, the latter being represented morpho-syntactically by nominals and / or pronominals.\(^4\) Most scholars agree that there are three primary types, namely active, passive and middle (Andersen, 1994: 10–11; Klaiman, 1991: 3; Wackernagel, 2009: 157–186; Weiss, 2009: 380–383). The active is the basic diathesis indicating that the subject participant performs an action upon the object participant. The passive is a derived diathesis that reconfigures the relations of the verb to its core nominals, leading to a reduction of the verb’s valence (thus, a transitive verb in an active construction becomes an intransitive in the passive).\(^5\) This results in the demotion of the subject to an oblique relation and the promotion of the object to the subject relation, which, in semantic terms, equals to say that the agent of an active construction becomes the patient of a passive one, and

\(^3\) There is debate among linguists as to the application of terminology, some using voice and diathesis as synonyms (Andersen, 1994: 10), while others applying them to label specific types of categories. According to Flobert (1992: 37), ‘la diathèse concerne la face signifiée, la fonction, et désigne le rapport qui s’établit entre le procès verbal et le sujet grammatical selon que celui-ci est la source, le centre ou la cible du procès, tripartition optimiste, on le verra. La voix relève du significant et est caractérisée par de procédés grammaticaux: alternances, suffixes, désinences, réfléchi, périphrases, et parfois lexicaux, quand la langue recourt au supplétisme, ainsi en Latin fio face à facio, à l’infectum (cf. les composes calefio et calefacio), ou encore les paires pendeolendo, veneo, vendo.’ See also Joffre (1995: 9–10) and Shibatani (2004: 1146).


the patient of an active construction becomes the agent of a passive one. This can be expressed diagrammatically as follows:

<table>
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<th>active construction</th>
<th>passive construction</th>
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<td>subject active verb</td>
<td>subject passive verb</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>agent</td>
<td>patient</td>
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<tr>
<td>patient</td>
<td>oblique agent</td>
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The middle, by contrast, cannot be defined in neat syntactic terms, but is distinguished on the basis of its semantics, as it signifies that the subject benefits from, is the recipient of, or is affected by its own action (Baldi, 1999: 392; Klaiman, 1991: 103; George, 2005: 4–5; Sihler, 1995: 448–449). English does not have a morphologically distinct middle, but its expression is found in Ancient Greek, for example, in the following sentence: παρασκευάζομαι τὴν σκηνήν ‘I prepare my tent / I prepare the tent for myself’. This sentence conveys that the tent is being prepared for my benefit, but when it is rendered in the active, as in the example παρασκευάζω τὴν σκηνήν ‘I prepare the tent’, it is not indicated for whose benefit the tent is being prepared. Note, however, that even though these two examples express pragmatically and semantically different communicative loads which are moreover distinguished morphologically, nevertheless they are syntactically indistinguishable, given that both the active and the middle form govern a direct object marked with an accusative. With regard to Latin, although it is commonly accepted that deponent verbs (e.g. loquor ‘I speak’, sequor ‘I follow’, etc.) are relics inherited from the Indo-European medio-passive (Baldi, 1999: 395; Kurzová, 1993: 209; Sihler, 1995: 448–449), there is no consensus among scholars as to the question whether or not Latin ever had a productive middle category. That said, it is undeniable that many deponents possess

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6 The most comprehensive study of the middle known to me is by Kemmer (1993).
7 On the deponent in Latin, see in particular Flobert (1975) but also Joffre (1995: 211–245).
8 For scholars in favour of the view that there was a productive middle class in Latin, see Baldi (1976: 222–257; 1999: 392–396) and Stempel (2002: 329–336); against this view, see Flobert (1975: 704).
‘middle-like’ meanings (for example *contemplor* ‘I think’, *arbitror* ‘I judge’, *conspicor* ‘I notice’, etc.).

1.3 Diathesis according to the γραμματικοὶ / grammatici

Turning now to the ancient grammatical tradition, Greek authors used the term διάθεσις to label a category of the verb characterising the disposition of the subject which they divided into three types, ἐνεργητική ‘active’, παθητική ‘passive’ and μέση ‘middle’.9 The active was typically expressed by a verb ending in ω (in the 1sg. present indicative) and signified that the subject performed an action; the passive was often conveyed by a verb terminating in μα (in the 1sg. present indicative) and denoted that the subject experiences an action (e.g. τύπτω → τύπτομαι);10 the middle, by contrast, cannot be explained in just a few words like the active and passive. In truth, the term applied to a rather substantial, heterogeneous group of anomalous verbal forms, which for various reasons could not be classified as either active or passive. Admittedly, this is a rather cursory and, indeed, unsatisfactory description of the middle, but, for the moment, it will have to suffice until I take the topic up again in the next chapter.

As for Latin authors, they generally employed the terms *genus* and *significatio*11 to designate various verbal classes, the most important being active (*genus activum* or *significatio activa*) and passive (*genus passivum* or *significatio passiva*). The verbs were commonly distinguished on the basis of morphology, the former being described as a verb ending in -o (in the 1sg. present indicative) that acquires an -r to ‘become’ passive, the latter being in turn characterised as a verb terminating in -r (in the 1sg. present indicative) that drops its ending to ‘become’ active (e.g. *lego* → *legor*). Regarding semantics, the former was obviously considered to express

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9 Throughout this thesis I will consistently use ‘category’ to designate verbal accidents like tense, mood and diathesis, and ‘class’ to represent a group of verbs that share similar grammatical characteristics.
10 For a more detailed treatment of these verbs, see chapter two.
11 Latin authors deployed a broad repertoire of terms relating to diathesis. All the important terms will be treated in chapters two and three.
activity and the latter passivity. Latin authors also realised that there were many verbs that could not be assigned to either of these classes, because: (1) some looked active but did not embrace all the characteristics that commonly pertained to an active; (2) some appeared passive but did not possess all the characteristics usually associated with a passive; (3) some exhibited a combination of active and passive characteristics. As a result, the Latin grammatici established additional classes like the neuter (neutrum), which comprised of active forms that lacked passive inflection (e.g. curro), the deponent (deponens), which applied to passive forms that did not have a corresponding active (e.g. sequor), and the common (commune), which inflected like a deponent, but conveyed active meaning when construed with an accusative complement, and passive meaning with a prepositional phrase (e.g. osculor te and osculor a te). Some authors also included descriptions of the inchoative (inchoativum), frequentative (frequentivum), impersonal (impersonalis), and defective (defectivum), but these classes are attested infrequently in accounts of diathesis.¹²

Thus far we have acknowledged the tendency that Latin authors had to differentiate verbs on account of morphology and semantics; however, these two criteria were not the only ones exploited by them, as they also made use of syntax, pointing out that certain verbs take complements marked with particular cases (e.g. see the above-mentioned commune class). In addition, they characterised verbs on the basis of the degree of transitivit, identifying two types: transitive, governing two human participants (e.g. verbero te), and intransitive, governing a single human participant (e.g. sedeo). Note here the operative word ‘human’: whereas modern linguists view transitive action as a process involving human or non-human participants alike (e.g. ‘love conquers all’ and ‘he killed the man’), ancient theorists conceived of transitive action purely in terms of human participants. Luhtala (2000: 187) has argued that this understanding of transitivit may have originated among the Stoics, since they too appear to have exclusively ascribed action and the undergoing of action to human participants.

¹² For detailed accounts of all these classes, see especially chapter two.
1.4 Literature review

How authors approached the description of diathesis in Antiquity has received limited attention in modern scholarship. As far as I am aware, the modern study of this topic was inaugurated in the late nineteenth century by scholars such as H. Steinthal (1863: 646–650), H. Müller (1864), L. Jeep (1893: 197–212) and L. Job (1893:112–120), who provided the first systematic treatments of the ancient theories of diathesis. Steinthal and Müller focussed on the Greek grammatical tradition, dealing in particular with authors like Apollonius Dyscolus, (Pseudo-)Dionysius Thrax, and a number of scholiasts who commented on (Pseudo-)Dionysius’ grammar, while Jeep and Job concentrated on the Latin grammatical tradition, examining the Grammatical artes compiled by authors like Donatus, Charisius, Diomedes and Priscian, which, at that time, had been recently edited by Keil and others in the Grammatici Latini series. Job’s treatment of diathesis was especially thorough insofar as he not only concerned himself with Late Antique grammatical thought preserved within the extant Artes, but also with Classical Latin grammatical thought best exemplified by the works of authors such as Varro and Quintilian.


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published devoted to the Greek middle, including those by A. Rijksbaron (1986: 427–444), P. K. Andersen (1994: 154–162), M. Benedetti (2012: 45–58; 2014: 9–20) and J. Signes-Codoñer (2005: 1–33), and to the Latin deponent by R. Lamacchia (1961: 185–211). Of these, J. Signes-Codoñer’s contribution in 2005 is, in my opinion, the most important, as it carefully documents and explains almost every definition of the middle that has come down to us between the second and sixteenth centuries AD.

Although it is not my intention to diminish the achievements of the scholars mentioned above, nevertheless it is only right to point out that no one has done more than P. Flobert to improve our understanding of the ancient representation of diathesis. In several publications (Flobert, 1981: 25–32; 2009: 331–340), most notably in his magnum opus, Les verbes deponents latins des origines à Charlemagne (1975), Flobert has made countless insightful observations about the nature of diathesis according to the ancient authors. In particular, we should acknowledge his work in relation to how Greek and Latin authors apply terminology and characterise verbal classes. It is certainly not an understatement to say that this thesis has significantly benefitted from Flobert’s fundamental contribution.

Finally, we should mention the study entitled Genera verborum quot sunt? Observations on the Roman grammatical tradition by E. Hovdhaugen (1987: 133–145)\(^ {14} \), which concerns diathesis according to the authors of Latin artes. This study, although brief, stands apart from those that we have already referenced above, insofar as Hovdhaugen is the first scholar to not only analyse accounts of diathesis, but also to compare one account to another. What this reveals is that authors of the third century had somewhat different views about diathesis than those of the fourth century, and those of the fourth century had somewhat different views than authors of the fifth century. In essence, Hovdhaugen’s findings challenge the traditional position upheld by scholars such as K. Barwick (1922), who maintained that Late Antique authors were essentially copyists who indiscriminately passed on grammatical theories established during the second century BC and the

\(^ {14} \) See also Hovdhaugen (1982: 95–97).
first century AD. Hovdhaugen suggests that the situation was far more complex: certainly, Late Antique authors relied on the *auctoritas* of their predecessors, but they did not blindly adhere to their predecessors’ views; rather, they subtly modified them in ways that suited their own interpretations of diathesis.

1.5 Structure and content of thesis

This thesis has four main chapters besides the present introduction, plus an overall conclusion. Each one characterises diathesis and covers a specific chronological period.

Chapter two treats the grammatical category from the fifth century BC up to the third century AD, taking into account descriptions of the verb found in the works of Plato and Aristotle, in fragments ascribed to Stoic philosophers and Alexandrian philologists, in the rhetorical treatises of Dionysius of Halicarnassus and Quintilian, in the linguistic works of Varro and Aulus Gellius, in the Greek grammatical treatises composed by Apollonius Dyscolus and Pseudo-Dionysius Thrax, and in the earliest extant Latin *ars* attributed to Sacerdos. In this chapter I shall argue that the understanding of diathesis significantly advanced in the two centuries following the emergence of grammar as an independent discipline in the first century BC.

Chapter three is concerned with Latin *artes* datable to the fourth century AD and will examine not only the works of one the most celebrated grammatical authors, namely Donatus, but also the works of lesser-known figures such as Charisius, Diomedes and Probus. Contrary to the traditional scholarly consensus upholding the view that the fourth century was a dull and merely derivative phase in the history of linguistics, I shall argue that this was, in fact, a rather contentious period in which authors often disagreed with each other on specific points of grammatical theory.

Chapter four deals with *artes* from the fifth and sixth centuries, focussing in particular on commentaries on Donatus by authors such as Servius, Cledonius, Pompeius, various figures named Sergius, and the
grammatical handbooks by Phocas and Consentius. It will show that many accounts of diathesis compiled in this period present significant similarities, and these similarities can largely be explained by the fact that most authors depended on works of Donatus and Servius.

Finally, in chapter five I shall assess Priscian’s contribution to the development of the grammatical theory relating to diathesis, and I shall argue that he presented the most comprehensive account that has come down to us in Latin from Late Antiquity. It will also be shown that Priscian’s understanding of grammatical category was clearly enhanced by his reading of the works of Apollonius Dyscolus, the most sophisticated Greek grammatical thinker of Classical Antiquity.

However, before we deal with these matters, we will first provide an account of the history of the discipline of grammar, in order to put the main arguments of this thesis into their proper context.

1.6 The emergence of grammar in Antiquity

Grammatical theory has been studied in the West since at least the fifth century BC by philosophers, such as Plato, who pointed out, for example, that a λόγος ‘statement’ comprises of two parts, namely an ὄνομα ‘noun’ and ἰδέα ‘verb’ (Plat. Soph., 261e–262c).\textsuperscript{15} His student and successor, Aristotle, provided systematic definitions of these parts, defining ὄνομα as a sound possessing meaning (Arist. Poet., xx, 8, 1457a10–14), but lacking tense, and ἰδέα as a sound possessing meaning which signifies tense (ibid., xx, 9, 1457a14–16). In his Poetics, he also introduced two additional types of words, namely the σύνδεσμος ‘connector’ (ibid., xx, 6, 1456b38–1457a6) and ὁδός ‘joint’ (ibid., xx, 7,1457a6–10), which were later adapted and incorporated into the grammatical system of eight parts of

speech. However, it was undoubtedly the Stoics who made the greatest advances as far as the study of language is concerned, identifying new categories of words like the προσηγορία ‘common noun’ and μεσότης ‘adverb’ (DL, 7.57–58), and also making important observations on more technical matters like syntax (ibid., 7.64), tense (ibid., 7.141), and the distinction between the signifier and the signified (ibid., 7.43–44). The contributions of the Stoics to the field were so profound that it was once thought that they may have been the first to recognise grammar as an autonomous discipline (Pohlenz, 1939: 156; Traglia, 1956: 42); however, this hypothesis is no longer accepted, as most scholars now believe that they actually only dealt with grammatical issues in treatises on dialectic (Frede, 1987a: 337).

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16 Swiggers and Wouters (1996: 125) have warned against seeing the classification of words (μέρη λέξεως) mentioned in Aristotle’s Poetics as a direct antecedent of the grammatical system of eight parts of speech (μέρη λόγου), because: ‘(1) Aristotle is not discussing these parts [i.e. ὄνομα, ῥήμα, σύνδεσμος and ἄρθρον] in terms of subdivisions of the λόγος, but he defines them in terms of sound stretches (φωναί), endowed with meaning or not; (2) Aristotle is not interested in morphological properties, but in meaning, possible composition and (freedom of) positioning of elements; these are aspects which are of course relevant to the make-up of literary discourse, but which are not definitory of word-classes [i.e. parts of speech] in an exhaustive way. This is not to deny that one can not set up some correlation between the four units recognised by Aristotle on the level of words, on the one hand, and the later parts of speech which go by the same name, on the other hand. Only, it is necessary to stress that Aristotles’ account belongs to a different approach and is based on other axiomatic criteria.’ Concerning grammatical theory in the works of Aristotle, see Arens (2000: 367–375), Baratin and Desbordes (1981: 18–26), Hovdhaugen (1984: 31–39), Ildefonse (1997: 72–117), Luhtala (2000: 40–54), and Swiggers and Wouters (2015b: 764–772).

17 As in the case of the Aristotle’s classification of words in the Poetics, the Stoic classification should not be regarded as a direct antecedent of the system of eight parts of speech. The Stoics classify types of words (μέρη λόγου) primarily on the basis of the ontological differences that they express, distinguishing, for example, the proper noun (ὄνομα) signifying a proper quality (ποιότης ἰδίη), the common noun (προσηγορία) indicating a common quality (ποιότης κοινή) and the verb (ῥήμα) conveying an incorporeal predicate (κατηγορία). In general, they did not differentiate words on the basis of morphological properties, as later grammatical authors did (Schenkeveld, 1994: 271–272; Swiggers and Wouters, 2015b: 779).

One of the earliest definitions of ‘grammar’\(^{19}\) (grammatica) in Latin comes down to us in Quintilian’s *Institutio Oratoria* ‘The institutes of oratory’, composed in the first century AD. Quintilian tells us that *grammatica* is constituted by two distinct parts: a technical part which is preoccupied with speaking correctly, and a historical part dealing with the interpretation of texts (*Inst. Oraf.*, 1.4.2, 1.9.1). This definition highlights an important fact about the discipline of ‘grammar’ in Antiquity, namely that it had a much broader scope than its modern counterpart, encompassing two distinct fields of study: what we nowadays call *normative grammar* – that is to say, the discipline concerned with how to speak (and write) correctly – and *philology* – that is, the discipline preoccupied with the establishment and the interpretation of the meaning of texts. Grammar, in this broad sense, began to emerge in the third century BC in Alexandria, where scholars were producing editions (ἐκδόσεις) of, and commentaries (ὑπομνήματα) on foundational texts like the works of Homer and Hesiod (Fraser, 1972: vol.1, 447–479; Pfeiffer, 1968). Besides philology, these scholars also showed an interest in grammatical theory, although they did not compile systematic treatises on such matters; instead, they employed grammatical theory as a tool in the service of philology (Ax, 1991: 288; Schenkeveld, 1995: 44).

There are many notable Alexandrian scholars who could be discussed here, but it will suffice to mention three in particular, as their contributions to the discipline were especially profound.

The first is Aristophanes of Byzantium, who flourished between the years 265/257 and 190/180 BC, and was successor to Eratosthenes as head of the royal library at Alexandria (Montana, 2015: 118), where he championed the implementation and use of new editorial practices, most notably in his edition of the *Iliad* (Montana, 2015: 119). In this edition, Aristophanes incorporated not only lines that were clearly authentic, but also those of debatable authenticity, distinguishing the latter by the critical

sign known as ἀθέτησις. In this way, he deployed a more conservative approach to editing than some of his predecessors (for example Zenodotus), who systematically deleted lines of contested authenticity. His understanding of grammar was also fairly sophisticated: for instance, he distinguished three genders (ἀρσεν ‘masculine’, θῆλυ ‘feminine’ and οὐδέτερον ‘neuter’; cf. Callanan, 1987: 35–41) and recognised rules pertaining to nominal derivation (ibid., 42–50) and the contraction of verbs (ibid., 65).20 His successor as chief librarian and most illustrious student, Aristarchus of Samothrace (fl. 215 X 144 BC), also made fundamental advances in the study of grammatical theory and philology, compiling editions of, and commentaries on, the Homeric poems as well as other texts, which made previous editions and commentaries by scholars such as Zenodotus and Aristophanes obsolete (Montana, 2015: 130). Aristarchus was moreover the first among the Alexandrian philologists to distinguish eight word classes, namely ὄνομα ‘noun’, ῥήμα ‘verb’, μετοχή ‘participle’, ἄρθρον ‘article’, ἀντωνυμία ‘pronoun’, πρόθεσις ‘preposition’, σύνδεσμος ‘conjunction’ and μεσότης ‘middle (i.e. adverb)’ (Matthaios, 1999: 191–198).21

Despite the enormous achievements of these two scholars, Dionysius Thrax remains the most famous figure associated with Hellenistic philology. He lived between the years 170 and 90 BC and was a student of Aristarchus (Di Benedetto, 2000: 394). The most famous work which survives bearing his name is the Τέχνη Γραμματική, a grammatical treatise that contains a definition of grammar (γραμματική) and its parts (μέρη) (see below) (Robins 1996: 3–15), followed by definitions of the activity of reading (ἀνάγνωσις), as well as accounts of accent (τόνος), punctuation (στιγμή), poetic recitation (ῥαψῳδία), letter (στοιχεῖον), syllable

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20 For studies on Aristophanes’ contributions to the development of grammatical theory, see Ax (1990: 4–18; 1991: 275–301) and Schenkeveld (1990: 289–306).
(συλλαβή), word (λέξις) and the eight parts of speech (μέρη τοῦ λόγου).  

22 In the nineteenth and first half of the twentieth century most scholars accepted that this text was truly Dionysius’ work,  

23 but in 1958 V. Di Benedetto published a ground-breaking study disputing its authenticity.  

The articulation of Di Benedetto’s argument does not need to be rehearsed here, but suffice to say that it has managed to persuade most scholars that the text is spurious and was more than likely composed sometime between the third and fifth centuries AD.  

25 Although it is unlikely that Dionysius is the author of the Τέχνη Γραμματική, this is not to say that he did not compose any treatise. Sextus Empiricus explicitly tells us that he wrote a work entitled Παραγγέλματα ‘Instructions’, which certainly included a definition of grammar and an account of its parts.  

26 The definition provided by Sextus bears strong resemblance to the definition transmitted in the Τέχνη (D.Thrax, 1),  

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23 See Barwick (1922) and Schmidt (1852–53: 7.360–382; 8.231–253, 510–520).  


26 Sex. Emp., 1.57: Διονύσιος μὲν οὖν ὁ Ὄραξ ἐν τοῖς παραγγέλμασι φησὶ γραμματικὴ ἐστὶν ἐμπειρία ὡς ἐπὶ τὸ πλεῖστον τῶν παρὰ ποιητῶν τε καὶ συγγραφεῖσι λεγομένον. ‘Now Dionysius of Thrace says in his ‘Instructions’ that grammar is an experience for the most part of what is said in poets and writers.’ (transl. by Blank, 1998: 14). See also Sex. Emp., 1.250: Διονύσιος δὲ ὁ Ὄραξ ἐξ μέρη γραμματικῆς εἶναι λέγων, ἀπερ ἤμεις ἀνώτερον ὀλοσχερὸς τρία προσηγορεύειμεν, ἐν τούτως καὶ τὸ ἱστορικὸν ἀποδίδοσιν: εἶναι γάρ φησὶ γραμματικῆς μέρη ἀνάγνωσιν ἐντερβῆ κατὰ προσῳδίαν, ἐξήγησιν κατὰ τούς ἐνσαρκώντως ποιητικῶς τρόπος, λέξεων καὶ ἱστοριῶν ἀπόδοσιν, ἐτυμολογίας εὑρετεῖν, ἀναλογίας ἐκλογεῖσθαι, κρίσιν ποιήσεσθαι. ‘When Dionysius the Thracian says there are six parts of grammar, which we have spoken of above as three in general, he includes the historical part among them. For he says the parts of grammar are skilful reading aloud with attention to prosodic markings, interpretation according to the poetic figures present, explication of words and histories, discovery of etymology, calculation of analogy, judgement of poems.’ (transl. by Blank, 1998: 49).  

27 Γραμματικὴ ἐστὶν ἐμπειρία τῶν παρὰ ποιητῶν τε καὶ συγγραφεῖσιν ὡς ἐπὶ τὸ πολὺ λεγομένον. Μέρη δὲ αὐτῆς ἐστὶν ἐξ πρῶτον ἀνάγνωσις ἐντερβῆς κατὰ
leading most scholars to the conclusion that this part of the text is authentic. In regard to the contents of the Παραγγέλματα, there is debate among scholars as to whether it solely touched on matters to do with philology (Di Benedetto, 2000: 396–397) or whether it also incorporated accounts of grammatical theory (i.e. word classes and their accidents) (Blank, 2000: 411; Pagani 2010: 405–409; Schenkeveld, 1995: 41–53). Since no copy of this treatise appears to be extant, we cannot know which of these positions is true, but what we can say is that Dionysius appears to have had a fairly sophisticated understanding of grammatical theory, as a number of fragments of his grammatical thought have come down to us in medieval collections of ancient scholia (Di Benedetto, 2000: 397; Matthaios, 2015: 198). Evidently, he was influenced by Stoic philosophy (Frede, 1987b: 359; Janko, 1995: 215), as he not only recognised the ὁνόμα ‘proper noun’ and προσηγορία ‘appellative’ as two distinct word classes (Schol., 124.9–10), but also identified the ῥῆμα ‘verb’ as a λέξις ‘word’ signifying the κατηγόρημα ‘predicate’ (Schol., 161.6–8).

Most scholars now believe that grammar emerged as an autonomous discipline in the years following the death of Dionysius (i.e. from the first century BC onwards).

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προσωδίαν, δεύτερον ἐξήγησις κατά τούς ἐνυπάρχοντας ποιητικούς τρόπους, τρίτον, γλωσσῶν τε καὶ ἱστορίων πρόχειρος ἀπόδοσις, τέταρτον ἐτυμολογίας εὑρέσεις, πέμπτον ἀναλογίας ἐκλογημέρος, ἐκτὸν κρίσις ποιημάτων, διὰ δὴ κάλλιστον ἐστὶ πάντων τῶν ἐν τῇ τέχνῃ. Grammar is the practical study of the normal usages of poets and prose writers. Its six divisions comprise: (1) skill in reading (aloud) with due attention to prosodic features; (2) interpretation, taking note of the tropes of literary composition found in the text; (3) The ready explanation of obscure words and historical references; (4) discovery of the origin of words; (5) a detailed account of regular patterns; (6) a critical assessment of poems; of all that the art includes this is the noblest part.” (transl. by Kemp, 1987: 172)

28 Even Di Benedetto (2000: 397–398) concedes that this part may be authentic.

Tyrannion, a student of Dionysius Thrax, who was active in Rome between 71 and 25 BC, compiled a treatise on the parts of speech entitled Περὶ μερισμοῦ τῶν τοῦ λόγου μερῶν ‘On the classification of the parts of speech’; one of his students, Diocles, who flourished in the second half of the first century BC, authored a commentary on the aforementioned work, called Έξήγησις τοῦ Τυραννίωνος μερισμοῦ (Montana, 2015: 165–167; Pfeiffer, 1968: 272–273). In addition, Asclepiades, who lived in the first century BC, possibly in Rome, compiled treatises entitled Περὶ γραμματικῶν ‘On grammarians’ and Περὶ γραμματικῆς ‘On grammar’, and a commentary on Nestor’s cup (Blank, 1998: xlvi–xlvii; Pfeiffer, 1968: 273); moreover, Tryphon, who flourished in Rome in the same period, wrote numerous treatises, including Περὶ ἀρτιπων ‘On articles’, Περὶ προθέσων ‘On prepositions’, Περὶ συνέσμων ‘On conjunctions’ and Περὶ ἐπιρρημάτων ‘On adverbs’ (Baumbach, 2002: 885–886; Montana, 2015: 180–183). Since the works of these authors either are not extant, or merely survive in fragmentary form, it is difficult to gauge how sophisticated grammatical learning was in this period. Fortunately, Dionysius of Halicarnassus, who was active in Rome in the first century BC, gives us some insight by treating matters to do with grammar in his works on rhetoric, listing, for example, up to nine different word classes: ὅνωμα ‘proper noun’, προσηγορία ‘appellative’, ρῆμα ‘verb’, μετοχή ‘participle’, ἄρθρον ‘article’, ἀντωνυμία ‘pronoun’, πρόθεσις ‘preposition’, ἐπιρρήμα ‘adverb’ and συνέσμος ‘conjunction’ (de Jonge, 2008: 143–146), and various accidents, including mood (ἐγκλίσις) and case (πτῶσις) (ibid., 147–162). Dionysius also showed considerable expertise in the description of syntax (ibid., 251–328).

Besides Greek authors, Latin authors also contributed to the development of the discipline. Varro, for example, who was active in the first century BC, composed the monumental treatise De Lingua Latina in

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30 On the rhetorical works of Dionysius of Halicarnassus, see de Jonge (2008: 20–25).
twenty-five books, of which only six are extant, (books V–X): books V to VII deal with etymology, while books VIII to X focus on inflection. In this work, Varro made a number of important observations: for example, he discerned four parts of speech, namely the *pars apellandi* ‘part for naming’ (i.e. the noun), the *pars dicendi* ‘part for saying’ (i.e. the verb), the *pars iungendi* ‘part for combining’ (i.e. the conjunction) and the *pars adminiculandi* ‘part for supporting’ (i.e. the adverb) (8.44); moreover, he identified the ablative (*casus sextus*) for the first time in the history of linguistics (10.62), and made a distinction between inflectional and derivational morphology (*declinatio naturalis et voluntaria*) (8.21–22). He also showed a concern for the principle of analogy, as did a number of other authors in this period, including Marcus Antonius Gniphos (Suet., 7), who authored a work called *De Sermone Latino* ‘On Latin speech’, Staberius Eros (Suet., 13), who compiled a treatise entitled *De Proportione* ‘On Proportion’ (Ax, 1996: 116; Pagani, 2015: 820), and Julius Caesar, who composed a treatise entitled *De Analogia* ‘On Analogy’ in two books of which only fragments survive (Garcea, 2012; see also 2007: 339–357).

We should also mention that several authors of the first century AD produced important works on grammatical theory, including Pliny the Elder, who authored a treatise in eight books on Latin morphology entitled *De Dubio Sermone* ‘On doubtful speech’, which survives in fragmentary form (Della Casa, 1969); Quintilian, who treated a variety of grammatical concepts and categories, including orthography, the principle of analogy and the parts of speech and their accidents, in the first book of his monumental rhetorical work, the *Institutio Oratoria* (Ax, 2011: 331–346); and Palaemon, a renowned professional teacher, who composed an *ars* on the eight parts of speech, of which only fragments are extant (Barwick, 1922; Char., 241.23, 290.12, 291. 22, 299.14, 301.22, 311.10). What the activities of these scholars reveal is that there was a great diversity of voices contributing to

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the development of the discipline in the Late Republic and the Early Imperial period.

Turning now to the second century, the most influential grammatical author was undoubtedly Apollonius Dyscolus, who flourished in Alexandria and composed twenty works, only four of which are extant (Blank 1993: 708–710; Lallot, 1997: vol.1, 10–13), namely Περὶ συνέσμων ‘On the conjunction’, Περὶ ἐπιρρημάτων ‘On the adverb’, Περὶ ἀντωνυμίας ‘On the pronoun’ and Περὶ συντάξεως ‘On syntax’. Apollonius is best known as an innovator in the study of syntax, a domain in which he seamlessly integrated Alexandrian and Stoic views of language (Blank, 1982: 52; Sluiter, 1990: 40).32 His approach to syntax was essentially rationalistic, that is to say, he contended that language at all levels was orderly and so it was possible to deduce a set of rules which would govern correct linguistic usage. He defended his rationalistic position by showing that, since there is orderliness to the way in which letters (στοιχεῖα) combine to form syllables and syllables combine to form words (λέξεις), so too there must be orderliness to the way in which words combine in order to form a coherent, grammatical construction (λόγος) (Apol. Dysc., 2.3–3.2; Blank, 1982: 30–32; Lallot, 1997: vol.1, 41–45). Central to Apollonian syntactic theory was the notion of καταλληλότης, ‘congruity’, which denoted a perfectly regular sentence composed of words that are morphologically compatible and semantically consistent with one another.33 For example, the sentence ἡμεῖς γράφομεν ‘we write’ exhibits καταλληλότης because the pronoun ἡμεῖς goes with the verb γράφομεν (Apol. Dysc., 280.1–6), but if we substitute the verb γράφετε ‘you write’ for γράφομεν, the sentence is no longer grammatical because ἡμεῖς, a 1pl. pronoun, does not agree with γράφετε, a 2pl. verb. Similarly, the sentence ἔχθες ἔγραφον ‘I was writing yesterday’ displays καταλληλότης

because the meaning of the adverb ἐχθές ‘yesterday’ is entirely consistent with the meaning of the imperfect verb ἔγραφον. However, if we remove ἔγραφον and insert the verb γράφω ‘I am writing’, the sentence becomes ungrammatical, because the meaning of γράφω is incongruent with the meaning of ἐχθές (e.g. ἐχθές γράφω ‘I am writing yesterday’) (Apol. Dysc., 294.9–295.1; Sluiter, 1990: 95–99): the verb γράφω signifies that an action is occurring presently, whereas the adverb ἐχθές refers to a situation located temporally in the past. Hence, sentences like ἐχθές γράφω and ἡμεῖς γράφετε are examples of σολοικισμόι ‘solecisms’, that is to say, errors arising from combining incongruent words (λέχεις ἀκατάλληλες) (Apol. Dysc., 273.11).

Also central to Apollonian syntactic theory is the belief that there is a hierarchy of parts of speech based on syntactic position and relevance. The noun and verb, according to Apollonius, are the most fundamental parts, since they can form a complete sentence (αὐτοτελής λόγος); however, the noun is assigned first position, because it signifies a body, while the verb is assigned second position, given that it expresses either performance or experience – characteristics that pertain to a body. The participle comes next, in third position, because it derives features from both the noun and the verb. The article assumes fourth position because it joins with nouns, verbs (i.e., with infinitives) and participles, followed by the pronoun in fifth position, since it often replaces a construction involving a noun and an article. The next two positions are filled by the preposition and the adverb, because they join to the noun and verb respectively; however, since the preposition is associated with the noun, which ranks first, and the adverb with the verb, which ranks second, the preposition is accorded a higher position than the adverb. Finally, the conjunction is assigned the eighth and final position because it has no meaning of its own and merely connects

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34 On the term σολοικισμός, see Lallot (2015: 857).

In addition to being an innovator in the study of syntax, Apollonius also made significant strides in the description of transitivity. In fact, he may have been the first author to ever discuss this notion by using a technical meta-language, applying the terms μετάβασις and διάβασις, respectively derived from the verbs μεταβιβάζειν and διαβιβάζειν ‘to transition’ (Baratin, 1998: 16; Ildefonse, 1998: 64; Lallot, 1997: vol.1, 68–69). He distinguished between (1) the transitive action which is performed by one participant (πρόσωπον) and transitions (διαβιβάζεται) onto another who undergoes it (e.g. Διονύσιος ἔτυψεν Θέωνα ‘Dionysius hit Theon’), (2) the intransitive action which is carried out by one participant and does not transition onto another (e.g. Διονύσιος πνεῖ ‘Dionysius breathes’), and (3) the reflexive action, which he sometimes labelled αὐτοπάθεια ‘self-suffering’ or ἀντανακλασμός ‘reflexive’, characterising an action performed by one participant that does not transition onto another but rather turns back onto the same participant. As a result, the participant is simultaneously the agent and patient of the action expressed (e.g. Φήμιος ἐδίδαξε ἑαυτόν ‘Phemius taught himself’).

The vocabulary relating to transitivity and reflexivity is found throughout Apollonius’ works and is even used in the context of the

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35 On transitivity and reflexivity, see Apol. Dysc. Pron., 44.1–8: Συμβαθήκη τοίνυν τὰς ἀπὸ τῶν εὐθείων δράσεως μετιουσάς ἐπὶ τὰς πλαγίους ἢ ἐν μεταβάσει προσώπων νοεῖται ἢ κατὰ τοῦ αὐτοῦ προσώπου τὴν μεταβάσιν ποιεῖται. Τοῦ μὲν προτέρου Ἀριστοφάνης Ἀρίσταρχον ἐδίδαξεν, ἐγὼ σὲ ἐτύμησα, σὺ ἔμοι διελέξω· ἢ καὶ διὰ μόνων τῶν ῥημάτων ἢ εὐθεία νοουμένη μέτεις πάλιν ἐπὶ τὰς πλαγίους, ἐδωκά σοι, ἐπιμήκσα σὲ· τοῦ δὲ δευτέρου Φήμιος ἑαυτὸν ἐδίδαξεν· ἢ γὰρ τὸ διάδακτειν μεταβάσις ὡθὲ ἐπ᾽ ἐτέρου πρόσωπον συνετείνῃ ἢ ἐπὶ τὸν Φήμιον. ‘It happens that the actions arising from the nominatives pass over to the oblique cases in the transference of persons or as pertaining to one and the same person. In the first case, e.g.: Ἀριστοφάνης Ἀρίσταρχον ἐδίδαξεν Ἀριστοφάνης taught Aristarchus’, ἐγὼ σὲ ἐτύμησα ‘I honoured you’, σὺ ἔμοι διελέξω ‘you told me’. (And even by means of verbs alone the implied direct case passes over to the oblique cases.) In the second case, e.g.: Φήμιος ἑαυτὸν ἐδίδαξεν ‘Phemius taught himself’, when the transference implied in teaching does not pertain to another person but rather on Phemius himself.’ (transl. Luhtala, 2000: 185)
pronoun (ἀντωνυμία). In the Περὶ συντάξεως, he identifies two types of pronouns, simple (ἀπλόνη) and compound (σύνθετος), the former and the latter corresponding to the modern categories of personal (e.g. σό ‘you’) and reflexive (e.g. ἑμαυτοῦ ‘myself’) respectively. When a simple pronoun is inflected in the accusative (e.g.: σε), it represents the object in a transitive construction, as in ἔγω σε ἔδειρα ‘I thrashed you’. In this instance, the pronoun ἔγω refers to the agent of the action expressed, whereas the pronoun σε represents a distinct participant who experiences the action. By contrast, when a compound pronoun is inflected in the accusative, it typically amounts to the object in a reflexive construction, as in ἔγω ἑμαυτόν ἐπαισά ‘I struck myself’. In this case, the pronouns ἔγω and ἑμαυτόν refer to the same participant, but the compound pronoun reveals that the participant ἔγω is both the agent and the patient of the action signified. For this reason, Apollonius tells us that simple pronouns are called ἀλλοπαθεῖς ‘other-affected’ because they refer to a participant who experiences a transitive action, and compound pronouns are labelled ἀντανακλώμεναι ‘reflexive’36 or αὐτοπαθεῖς ‘self-suffering’ because they represent a participant who is affected by its own action (Apol. Dysc., 236.7–237.10; Garcea and Giavatto, 2004: 43–58; Lallot, 1997: vol.2, 120, n.189, 126, n.217).

In the Περὶ ἀντωνυμίας, Apollonius provided a similar account of the pronoun but applied a somewhat different repertoire of terms. Once again he made a distinction between simple pronouns, like ἔγω and ἑμέ, and compound pronouns, like ἑμαυτοῦ and ἑμαυτόν, and, as above, recognised that when the former is inflected in the accusative, it corresponds to the object in a transitive clause, as in the example ἑμέ δ’ ἔγνω ‘he recognised me’. In this instance, the verb ἔγνω signifies that an ‘action’ is carried out by an agent, while the pronoun ἑμέ refers to a separate

36 See also Apol. Dysc. Pron. (44.9–18).
participant who is also involved in the process expressed. Thus, Apollonius informs us that the simple pronoun is deployed in a ‘transitive’ fashion (μεταβατικῶς), because it is used in an expression that distinguishes two participants, (e.g. γνοὺς ‘one who recognised’ and γνωσθείς ‘one who was recognised’). By contrast, when a compound pronoun is inflected in the accusative, it is often the object in a reflexive clause, as in the example ἐμαυτόν λύσομαι ‘I release myself’. In this case, the verb λύσομαι indicates that a participant does an action, while the compound pronoun conveys that the same participant also experiences it. Hence, Apollonius tells us that the compound pronoun refers to a ἀμεταβάτων πρόσωπον ‘intransitive person’ because it is used in an expression that distinguishes a single participant (Apol. Dysc. Pron., 44.9–18; Schmidhauer, 2009: 172–173).

It should be clear from the foregoing discussion that Apollonius contributed substantially to the systematisation of the discipline of grammar. In particular, we must certainly acknowledge the advances which he made in relation to the description of syntax, transitivity and reflexivity, which authors like Priscian (Baratin, 1989: 367–485; Groupe Ars Grammatica, 2010), Michael Syncellus (Donnet, 1982) and Gregory of Corinth (Donnet, 1967) benefited from. Scholars now recognise that Apollonius was the most important grammatical figure of the second century, but this is not to say that he was the only author who contributed to the development of the discipline in this period. We should also highlight the activities of Latin authors like Flavius Caper, who authored two treatises – one entitled De Latinitate ‘On Latinity’, which dealt with morphology, and De Dubiis Generibus ‘On doubtful genders’ (Blank, 1998: 376; Dammer, 2001: 36–37; Rutella, 1977: 143–159) –, and Quintus Terentius Scaurus, who compiled a

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38 Apollonius’ excelled in areas other than syntax and transitivity. For more comprehensive treatments of his contributions, see Blank (1982), Ildefonse (1997: 253–445), the collected studies of Lallot (2012) and Sluiter (1990).
treatise on orthography, and who may be the same Scaurus who is occasionally cited by Diomedes and Charisius (Diom., 300.19; Char., 169.20), although this conclusion is debatable. Admittedly, it is difficult to evaluate how significant their achievements were given that their corpora have come down to us in fragmentary form. In any case, since they appear to be cited as authorities in the extant grammatical corpus, it is likely that they brought about some measure of progress in the discipline. In addition to these writers, we should mention Aulus Gellius (Holford-Strevens, 1988), although it is unclear whether he should be characterised as an innovator in the field (Cavazza, 1987: 85–105); nevertheless, the Noctes Atticae remain a vital source of information for modern scholars about the nature and content of grammatical, rhetorical and philosophical theory up to the second century.

The earliest extant Latin treatise incorporating an account of the parts of speech dates from the third century AD, and was composed by a certain Sacerdos, about whom we know very little (Kaster, 1988: 352–353). His *ars* consists of three books: the first deals with word classes and the vices and virtues of language, the second focusses on the morphology of nouns and verbs, and the third provides an account of meter (*Sac.*, 427.1–546.9). Several grammars survive from the fourth century, namely the *Instituta Artium* by Probus, two *artes* by Diomedes and Charisius, and the *Ars Minor* and *Ars Maior* by Donatus, which we will discuss in chapter three. By the beginning of the fifth century the works of Donatus in particular had become authoritative, motivating many authors, like Servius, Cledonius and Pompeius, to produce commentaries on them (Holtz, 1981: 223–237). The works of Donatus continued to be revered above all others up until the eighth century, when their authority was at least partially supplanted by Priscian’s *Institutiones Grammaticae* (Holtz, 2000: 525–532), written in the sixth century.

39 Law (1987b: 67–89) contended that she discovered an *ars* that ought to be attributed to Scaurus, but this assertion is debatable and requires further investigation.
This thesis, as we have already stated, will mainly focus on examining the descriptions of diathesis preserved in these extant *artes*. However, before we do that we must first of all investigate the accounts of diathesis occurring in Greek and Latin treatises that antedate the third century.
2. The grammatical tradition before Donatus: the origin and the development of the category of diathesis between the fourth century BC and the third century AD.

2.1 Introductory remarks

This chapter will treat the origin and early development of the category of diathesis in the Graeco-Roman world, concentrating in particular on the period between the fourth century BC and the third century AD, when grammar was emerging as an autonomous discipline. It will begin by tracing the origin and development of the term διάθεσις ‘disposition’ in the disciplines of philosophy, and then will examine occurrences of the term in the Greek grammatical tradition. Thereafter it will investigate the attempts to translate this term into Latin (i.e. modus and adfectus/affectus, genus and significatio) and, finally, will provide a detailed, historical account of the emergence of the most commonly attested verbal classes relating to diathesis, namely activum ‘active’, passivum ‘passive’, neutrum ‘neuter’, deponens ‘deponent’, commune ‘common’, impersonalis ‘impersonal’, frequentativum ‘frequentative’, inchoativum ‘inchoative’ and defectivum ‘defective’.

2.2 Διάθεσις

The term διάθεσις ‘disposition’ has an ancient textual tradition manifesting in Plato’s Philebus (32e), where it describes conditions of the body and of the soul, such as pleasure and pain (Boehm, 2001: 98). Thereafter it is attested in Aristotle’s Categories where it is a subcategory of quality (ποιότης), and refers to a physical or psychological condition that is subject to change, such as hotness, coldness, sickness and health. Accordingly, it stands in opposition to ἕξις which designates a physical or psychological condition that is somewhat constant, such as knowledge and virtue (Arist. Cat., 8b; Brague, 1980: 285–307). Later the term occurs in Stoic philosophy, but, in contrast with Aristotelian philosophy, applies to
conditions which are rarely subject to change, such as virtue (DL, 7.89; Preus, 2015:124). Accordingly, Stoic διάθεσις appears to be somewhat comparable to Aristotelian ἕξις.

2.3 The term διάθεσις in the works of Apollonius Dyscolus

In the grammatical tradition, διάθεσις first emerges in the works of Apollonius Dyscolus where it is assigned a variety of meanings (Ildefonse, 1997: 329–425; Lambert, 1978: 245–252; Van Ophuijsen, 1993: 739–751). We find the phrase διάθεσις τῆς ψυχῆς ‘disposition of the mind’ (Apol. Dysc., 44.10, 291.4, 320.4) which, according to Lallot (1997: vol.2, 186–187, n.123) denotes modality in opposition to the term ἐγκλίσις indicating a modal form (Sluiter, 1990: 86–93; Boehm, 2001: 96–97). Elsewhere, there is διάθεσις χρονική ‘temporal disposition’ which is comparable to the notion of tense (Apol. Dysc., 354.11). For example, Apollonius asserts that the imperative exhibits a διάθεσις τοῦ μέλλοντος ‘disposition of the future’ (i.e. future tense) (ibid., 96.10–11) on the grounds that it signifies an order and, therefore, cannot express an action that is in progress or has already taken place, but rather one that may occur in the future (Apol. Dysc., 97.3–10; Lallot, 1997: vol.2, 62, n.252; van Ophuijsen, 1993: 750). We also encounter διάθεσις σωματική ‘physical disposition’ indicating that participants are involved in physical actions such as τύπτω ‘I beat’, and διάθεσις ψυχική ‘mental disposition’ signalling that participants are

40Πῶς οὖν ὁ γελόιοι εἶσιν οἱ [μὴ] ὑπολαβόντες ρήματα προστατικὰ μέλλοντος χρόνου, ὅπου γε πάντα συνοδεῖται εἰς τὴν τοῦ μέλλοντος ἐννοιαν; Ἐπὶ γὰρ μὴ γινομένῳ ἢ μὴ γεγονόσιν ἢ πρόσταξις· τὰ δὲ μὴ γινόμενα ἢ μὴ γεγονότα, ἐπικρατείσιν ἃ ἐξοντα εἰς τὸ ἐσεθαί, μέλλοντος ἐστιν, εἴγε καὶ τῶν προσταχθέντων τὰ μὴ γινόμενα τὸν λόγον ἔρχει μετὰ ἀποφάσεως καὶ τῆς τοῦ μέλλοντος ἐννοιας, οὐ δυνήσομαι, οὐ ποιήσω. Ὅσο, obviously, people who imagine there can be an imperative of the future tense are just ridiculous, since all imperatives have a future sense. For a command is not concerned with what is already going on or finished. But what is not going on or finished, but has suitability for coming to be, belongs to the future, since when commands are not carried out, the form of refusal is with negation of the future tense: οὐ δυνήσομαι ‘I won’t be able to’ or οὐ ποιήσω ‘I won’t do it.’ (transl. Householder, 1981: 66)
involved in psychological actions such as ἀνῶ ‘I grieve’ (Apol. Dysc., 405.17–408.3).

Aside from these applications, the term διάθεσις also characterises the relationship between the action expressed by the verb and the other participants involved in the action (Lallot, 1998: 167; van Ophuijsen, 1993: 744).\(^{41}\) There are two primary διάθεσεις, namely the active (ἐνέργητική) and passive (παθητική),\(^{42}\) which Apollonius explains accordingly.

\[\text{Ὅυκ εἰ} \text{ τὶ ῥῆμα ὀριστικὸν ἔστιν ἢ τινὸς ἄλλης ἐγκλίσεως, τοῦτο πάντως ἐν διάθεσι καταγίνεται τῇ ἐνέργητικῇ. Χρὴ γὰρ νοεῖν ὅτι ἡ ἐνέργεια ὡς πρὸς ὑποκείμενον τὶ διαβιβάζεται, ὡς τὸ τέμνει, τύπτει, τὰ τούτων παραπλήσια ἢς καὶ τὸ παθητικὸν ἐκ προϋφεστώτης ἐνέργητικῆς διάθεσις ἀνάγεται, δέρεται τύπτεται (Apol. Dysc., 395.12–16).}

‘Just because a verb occurs in the indicative (or any other mood) it does not necessarily follow that it will be a true active. For you must consider that activity is something that passes over to some object, as in verbs like τέμνει ‘he cuts’, τύπτει ‘he beats’, and similar verbs, and from these basic actives is derived the passive δέρεται ‘he is skinned’, τύπτεται ‘he is beaten’.


\(^{41}\) According to J. Lallot, this use of διάθεσις may have originated in Aristotelian philosophy: ‘La relation entre la réflexion philosophique, notamment aristotélicienne, sur diathése et l’usage ultérieur du terme chez les grammairiens reste à établir rigoureusement. Je suggérerai toutefois, à titre d’hypothèse, que le double point de vue – subjectif, ou intrinsèque, (qualité) et objectif, ou extrinsèque, (relation) – sous lequel Aristote envisage la disposition ‘préparait’, en quelque sorte, l’invention du concept grammatical de diathése comme catégorie verbale caractérisant le procès en tant qu’il met en relation les actants qu’il affecte’ (Lallot, 1998: 167).

\(^{42}\) For Apollonius the active and passive are the two primary διάθεσεις (Lallot, 1997: vol.2, 242, n.348). See Apol. Dysc. (18.5–8): καὶ τοῦ ῥήματος δὲ ἀναγκαῖος πρόκειται τὸ ὄνομα, ἐπεὶ τὸ διατίθεναι καὶ τὸ διατίθεσθαι σῶματος ἰδίον, τοῖς δὲ σῶμασιν ἐπίκειται ἢ θέσις τῶν ὄνομάτων, ἐξ ὧν ἢ ἱδιότης τοῦ ῥήματος, λέγω τὴν ἐνέργειαν καὶ τὸ πάθος. ‘The noun necessarily precedes the verb, since influencing and being influenced are properties of physical things, and things are what nouns apply to, and to things belong the special features of verbs, namely doing and experiencing’. (transl. by Householder, 1981: 25) The opposition between active and passive probably arose out of the grammatico-philosophical categories of ποιεῖν ‘to do’ and πάσχειν ‘to undergo’ which manifest in the Aristotelian and Stoic philosophical traditions (Arist. Cat., 1b27; DL,7.134).
'In general actions which proceed from a nominative affect an accusative, so that the sentence presents both an active agent and an entity which receives the effect, as in δέρω σε 'I skin you', τύπτω σε 'I beat you'; or else the recipients are transformed, in the passive construction, [from accusative] to a nominative, while agents are changed to the genitive with ὑπό 'by' e.g. ἐγὼ δέρομαι ὑπό σοῦ 'I am skinned by you'. ' (transl. Householder, 1987: 212)

As we can see, the active diathesis is signified when an action involves two participants: an agent who performs an action and a patient who experiences it. The agent corresponds to an actant marked with the nominative case and the patient corresponds to an actant marked with an oblique case (often the accusative). Therefore, the active disposition is expressed by transitive verbs and indicates that the subject does an action (e.g. δέρω σε 'I skin you').

The passive diathesis, by contrast, is expressed when an active construction undergoes a morpho-syntactic transformation. The result is a passive construction (παθητικὴ σύνταξις) in which the passive verb (παθητικόν) requires the semantic roles to be reassigned in such a way that the role of agent is conveyed by the genitive prepositional phrase and the role of patient is overtly denoted by the actant marked with a nominative case or covertly by the verb itself. Thus the passive disposition is also signified by transitive verbs, but indicates that the subject is the patient (e.g. ἐγὼ δέρομαι ὑπό σοῦ 'I am skinned by you') (Luhtala, 2000: 170–171).

Besides the active and passive, Apollonius also mentions the middle (μέση) (Apol. Dysc., 319.7–8), which applies to middle aorists that are formally distinguished from corresponding active (e.g. ἐποίησα 'I made' and ἔλησα 'I washed) and passive forms (e.g. ἐποιήθην 'I was made' and
ἐλύθην ‘I was washed’), and yet convey either active (e.g. ἐποιησάμην ‘I did for my benefit’) or passive (e.g. ἐλουσάμην ‘I washed myself’) διάθεσις (Apol. Dysc., 296.1–297.17). Moreover, it labels verbs such as βιάζομαι ‘I force’, μάχομαι ‘I fight’ and χρωμαί ‘I consult’ which have active meaning (ἐνέργεια) despite exclusively inflecting like passives (Apol. Dysc., 398.5–9). Hence, the term ‘middle’ appears to label any verb that does not display a clear-cut relationship between form and meaning (Signes-Codoñer, 2005: 4–5).

In addition to these three διάθεσις, Apollonius draws attention to διάθεσις διαβατική / διαβιβαστική ‘transitive disposition’ which describes an action performed by one participant that is directed towards another (e.g. παλαίω σοι ‘I wrestle you’) (Apol. Dysc., 427.9–428.4). He also refers to ἀντιδιάθεσις ‘counter-disposition’ concerning actions that provoke reactions, such as actions pertaining to sense perception. For example, when an individual touches a warm object, he/she carries out the act of touching, but also is affected by the warm sensation emanating from the object. Since ἀντιδιάθεσις indicates that the subject experiences something as a result of performing an action, it is appropriate, according to Apollonius, that the verbs signifying this particular διάθεσις govern a genitive, because the genitive is commonly construed with verbs conveying passivity (πάθος), as the construction denoting passive διάθεσις proves (ibid., 417.3–418.2; Blank, 1987: 71; Luhtala, 2000: 179).

43 Kai τὰ ἐξ ἵσης διάθεσεως ἀναγόμενα, τουτέστι τὰ ἐν δυσὶ προσώποις τὴν αὐτὴν ἔχοντα ἐνέργειαν κατ’ ἄλληλων, ἐν δοτικῇ καταγίνεται, ὡς ἔχει τὸ μάχομαι σοι [...]. Καὶ ὅτι μὲν ἔδει τὰ τοιαῦτα ἐπὶ πλαγίαν φέρεσθαι, παντὶ προῦπον ἐγκεκριμένης διαβιβαστικής διάθεσις ἐπὶ πρόσωπον ὑποκείμενον [...]. ‘The verbs of equal influence, that is those referring to the action of two persons directed at each other, govern a dative, like μάχομαι σοι ‘I fight with you’ [...] It is obvious enough that such verbs must take an oblique case complement since there is clear transitive activity directed towards an object person.’ (transl. Householder, 1981: 222)

44 Αἱ μὲν οὖν ἐκ τῶν αἰσθήσεων διάθεσεως πείσιν ἀναλαμβάνοι τὴν ἀπὸ τῶν ἔξωθεν, ἐγε καὶ ἄκουσικι ἐπεισεύοσα τῇ ἄκοι ἡ φωνὴ προσδιατίθησι τὸ Ἰδόν σώμα ὦτε τὰ γὰρ τῶν πρώτων ἤχοι καὶ αἱ βρονταὶ οὐχ ὑπεχομένην ἔχουσι τὴν ἀκοήν τῇ φωνῇ. Τοῦ μὲντοῦ πάθως ἐγγίζει ἡ κατὰ γενετὴν σύνταξις, καθὼς ἐπέμενον οὐ μὲντοι μετὰ τῆς ὑπὸ τὰ τῆς συντάξεως γίνεται, καθὸ καὶ ἐνέργεια
Apart from these διαθέσεις, Apollonius refers to a number of states conveyed by the verb such as ἀυτοπάθεια ‘self-suffering’, indicating that a participant undergoes an action without being acted on by an external participant (e.g. τρέμω σε ‘I fear you’) (Apol. Dysc., 413.5–8)\(^{45}\); περιποίησις ‘acquisition’ indicating that a ‘datival’ participant is the beneficiary of an action (e.g. λέγω σοι ‘I speak to you’) (ibid., 422.6–7)\(^{46}\); and ἀντιπεριποιουμένη ‘mutual involvement’ (ibid., 429.3–5) characterising a verbal idea involving two participants, who do the same action to each other at the same time (e.g. γυμνάζομαι σοι ‘I train with you’). Verbs conveying ἀντιπεριποιουμένη cannot govern complements marked with an accusative because this case represents the participant who is affected in an active construction, nor can it take a genitive, as this case denotes passivity in conjunction with a verb, and so it must take the dative.

σώνεστιν ἢ γενομένη ἐκ τῆς διαθέσεως, ἐπεὶ τὸ ἀπεσθαὶ μετ’ ἐνεργείας καὶ ἀντιδιατίθεται διὰ τῆς τῶν θερμῶν ἐπαφῆς ἢ ψυχρῶν ἢ ἄλλων τῶν τοιούτων. Οὕτως ἔχει τὸ διαφαίνεσθαι, τὸ γεύεσθαι περισσῶν ἄν ἐπὶ περὶ τῆς τῶν τοιούτων ἄντιθεσεως διαλαμβάνειν, καθ’ πρόδηλον ἐστιν ὡς ἂεὶ ἢ γινομένη τῶν πικρῶν γεύσις ἀντιδιατίθησι τὴν γεύσιν καὶ τῶν δυσωδῶν ἢ δόφησις τὴν δόφησιν. ‘The senses receive and are affected by an external influence; even against one’s will the sound of a voice entering the sense of hearing affects the whole body. The sounds of sawing and thunder sometimes produce an unbearable effect on the ear. The construction with the genitive is appropriate for passivity as we have remarked. The structure, however, does not take the preposition ὑπὸ since there is also activity arising from the reaction. Touching does involve an act, but it entails in turn a sensation resulting from the feel of warm objects or cool ones, or some such properties. The same holds for smelling and tasting. It would be redundant to discuss the counter-reaction to such sensations, as it is quite obvious that the taste of bitter things counter-disposes the sense of taste, and the smell of stinking things counter-disposes the sense of smell.’ (transl. Householder, 1981: 217)

45 Καὶ ἐνεκα τοῦ τοιούτου ἐπιτάθεσες ἄξια τὰ τοιαῦτα, τρέμω σε […] ὡς οὐδεμιᾶς ὑπὸ ἐνεργείας ἐμφατικά φέρεται ἐπ’ αἰσθητικήν μᾶλλον γάρ ἀυτοπάθειαις σημαίνει […]. ‘In this connection we must not overlook verbs of fearing like τρέμω σε ‘I fear you’ […] because they govern the accusative even though there is no action; in fact it is rather the case that they signify self-suffering […]’. (transl. Householder, 1981: 215)

46 Χωρήσαν δὲ καὶ ἔπι τὰ τῇ δοτικῇ συντασσόμενα. Καὶ δὴ ἠπαντᾶ τὰ περιποίησιν δῆλοντα […] ‘Now we must move on to verbs that take the dative. All verbs which indicate someone’s profit or acquisition, whether verbal or physical, take the dative […]’. (transl. Householder, 1981: 219)
as it is the only available oblique case form remaining (ibid., 428.5–429.3; Lallot, 1997: vol.2, 272, n.448; Luhtala, 2000: 182).

Thus far we have investigated the way in which Apollonius Dyscolus employed the term διάθεσις. We have observed that he assigned numerous meanings to it, including modality (διάθεσις τής ψυχῆς), tense (διάθεσις χρονικῆ), and physical and mental action (διάθεσις σωματικῆ καὶ ψυχικῆ). In addition to these uses, he also applied the term to describe the relationship between the action expressed by the verb and other participants in an expression (διάθεσις, i.e. voice). There are two primary διαθέσεις, namely the active and passive, which are conveyed by two verbal forms, one ending in -ω (ἐνεργητικὸν ‘active’) and another ending in -μαι (παθητικὸν ‘passive’). The active signifies a transitive action that involves an agent corresponding to a nominative and a patient corresponding to an oblique case. The passive too denotes a transitive action, but in a passive construction the genitive prepositional phrase expresses the role of agent and the nominative case expresses the role of patient. In this way Apollonius took morphology, semantics, syntax and transitivity all into account when he explained διάθεσις. Not all authors, however, applied such a comprehensive approach to the description of the category. As we shall see,
some authors, like the author of the Τέχνη Γραμματική, only displayed a preoccupation for morphology and semantics and neglected syntax and degree of transitivity entirely.

2.4 Διάθεσις in the Τέχνη Γραμματική

In the Τέχνη, διάθεσις is an accident of the verb like mood (ἔγκλισις), form (étrδος), shape (σχήμα), number (ἄριθμός), person (πρόσωπον), tense (χρόνος) and conjugation (συζωγία) (D.Thrax., 47.1–2) that is divided into three classes: ἐνέργεια ‘performance’, πάθος ‘experience’, and μεσότης ‘middle’.

Διαθέσις εἰσὶ τρεῖς, ἐνέργεια, πάθος, μεσότης ἐνέργεια μὲν οἴον τύπτω, πάθος δὲ οἴον τύπτομαι, μεσότης δὲ ἢ ποτὲ μὲν ἐνεργειαν ποτὲ δὲ πάθος παριστάσα, οἴον πέπηγα διέφθορα ἐποιησάμην ἐγραφάμην (D.Thrax., 48.1–49.3).


We can make the following remarks about this account: firstly, διάθεσις is an accident of the verb that characterises the disposition of the subject. Secondly, there are only two διαθέσεις, namely ἐνέργεια and πάθος: the former is often expressed by present active forms and indicates that the subject does an action, and the latter is typically conveyed by present middle forms and denotes that the subject experiences an action. Thirdly, μεσότης cannot be regarded as an autonomous διάθεσις, as it accounts for verbs that have perfect active form and passive meaning (e.g. πέπηγα ‘I am fixed’) or middle aorist form and active meaning (e.g. ἐποιησάμην). Thus, μεσότης is a morphological class consisting of verbal forms that exhibit a

2.5 Latin equivalents to the term διάθεσις

Turning now to the Latin grammatical tradition, we encounter several attempts to translate the term διάθεσις, one such attempt being modus (Flobert, 1975: 9.n.4; Nuchelmans, 1973: 129) which crops up in Quintilian’s Institutio Oratoria (and possibly also in Gellius’ Noctes Atticae, 18.12)\(^{48}\) and stands for the form of a verb.

\begin{quote}
Et in verbis, ut ‘fabricatus est gladium’ et ‘inimicum poenitus es’. Quod mirum minus est, quia in natura verborum est et quae facimus patiendi modo saepe dicere, ut arbitror, suspicor, et contra faciendi quae patimur, ut vapulo; ideoque frequens permutatio est et pleraque utroque modo efferuntur: luxuriatur, luxuriat; fluctuat, fluctuat; adsentior, adsentio (Inst. Orat., 9.3.7).
\end{quote}

‘[Figures may also affect] verbs: for example, we find such phrases as fabricatus est gladium ‘he made a sword’ and inimicum poenitus es ‘you punished an enemy’. This is the less surprising, since the nature of verbs is such that we often express the active by a passive form (modus patiendi), as in the case of arbitror ‘I think’ and suspicor ‘I suspect’, and the passive by an active form (modus faciendi), as in the case of vapulo ‘I am beaten’. Consequently, the interchange of the two forms is of common occurrence, and in many cases either form can be used: for example we may say luxuriatur or luxuriat ‘he luxuriates’, fluctuat or fluctuat ‘he fluctuates’, adsentior or adsentio ‘I agree’. (transl. Butler, 1921: vol.3, 445)

This use of modus appears only sporadically in the extant artes\(^{49}\) as authors generally reserved the term to designate mood.\(^{50}\) This alternative application

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\(^{48}\) Morem istum veteribus nostris fuisse verba patiendi mutare ac vetere in agendi modum. ‘That our forefathers had the custom of changing passive verbs and turning them into active.’ (transl. Rolfe, 1927: vol.3, 337) The term modus is only found in a lemma and not in the actual text of the Noctes Atticae. The lemmata are transmitted in only late manuscripts and thus it is possible that they were not part of the ‘original text’ of the Noctes Atticae. Consequently, we cannot be certain if Gellius actually used the term modus in relation to diathesis.

\(^{49}\) See Char. (195. 21–23): Et ut generaliter dicam, propemodum per passivum modum ablatico utimur, septimo casu activo modo. ‘Consequently, I generally say that we combine
may also be related to the Greek διάθεσις (Flobert, 1975: 9.n.4; Nuchelmans, 1973: 129; Schenkeveld, 1984: 338–340), since the ninth century Byzantine scholar Choeroboscus⁵¹ tells us that the earliest authors deployed διάθεσις to label mood (ἐγκλίσις) as well as diathesis.

Iatéon δὲ ὅτι τὰς ἐγκλίσεις οἱ παλαιοὶ καὶ τὰς διαθέσεις καινῶς ἐκάλουν διαθέσεις, καὶ λοιπὸν ὑστερον διεμέρισαν, καὶ τὰς μὲν ψυχικὰς ἐκάλεσαν ἐγκλίσεις, τὰς δὲ σωματικὰς διαθέσεις (Cherob., 5.4–7).

‘One must know that the ancients used to call dispositions and moods διαθέσεις. Later, however, they distinguished them by calling moods διαθέσεις ψυχικά ‘psychological dispositions’ and dispositions διαθέσεις σωματικά ‘physical dispositions’.’

Aside from modus, we also find the term affectus/adfectus ‘disposition’ which first emerges in the third century in Sacerdos’ ars, where it is used as a synonym of genus, significatio and species and refers to a verbal accident that is subdivided into nine separate verbal classes.

Genus in verbis, id est species vel adfectus vel significatio, dividitur in novem: activum, passivum, deponentem, neutrum, commune, inchoativum, defectivum, frequentativum, inpersonale (Sac., 429.27–29).

‘The kind of a verb, that is to say its form or its disposition or its signification, is divided into nine [categories]: active, passive, deponent, neuter, common, inchoative, defective, frequentative and impersonal.’

the ablative with the passive form and the seventh case with the active.’ and Diom. (345.4–14): Hiare et hietare veteres dixerunt [...] Laberius etiam in Tauro passivo modo enuntiavit ‘hietantur fores’ inquit, pro eo sane quod est hietant, id est patent. ‘The ancients said hiare and hietare ‘to be open’ [...] Even Laberius in the [mime ‘the] Bull’ expressed [this verb] in the passive hietantur fores ‘the doors are open’ instead of correctly saying hietant, that is they are open.’

⁵₀ Modi quot sunt? V: indicativus, ut amo, doceo, lego; imperativus, ut ama, doce, lege; optativus, ut amarem et utinam amarem, docerem, legerem; coniunctivus: cum amem, doceam, legam; infinitivus: amare, docere, legere (Dos., 63.7–64.2). ‘How many moods are there? Five: the indicative, like amo ‘I love’, doceo ‘I teach’ and lego ‘I read’; the imperative like ama ‘love’, doce ‘teach’, lege ‘read’; optative like amarem ‘I would love’, utinam amarem ‘If only I would love’, docerem ‘I would teach’, legerem ‘I would read’; the subjunctive like cum amem ‘when I love’, doceam ‘when I teach’, legam ‘when I read’; the infinitive like amare ‘to love’, docere ‘to teach’, legere ‘to read’.’

The term is attested again in the *Anonymus de Verbo* \(^{32}\) (and also in Priscian’s *Institutiones Grammaticae* \(^{33}\)) where it is equated with διάθεσις.

> Quae Graeci διάθεσις appellant, Latini genera nominaverunt; διάθεσις autem hoc significat apud Graecos, quod apud Latinos adfectus: nam et qui agit et qui patitur mente adficitur (Anon. Verbo, 52.6–8).

‘What the Greeks call dispositions (διάθεσις), the Latins name kinds (genera). However, the [term] διάθεσις signifies among the Greeks what [the term] adfectus signifies for the Latins: for he who performs or experiences an action is affected in the mind.’

How to properly interpret this term is not altogether clear, but it appears to represent an accident of the verb that characterises the physical and psychological disposition of the subject (*qui agit et qui patitur mente adficitur*). The author distinguishes two possible dispositions: an active (*qui agit*) and a passive (*qui patitur*).

Apart from these three occurrences, the term does not feature in any other account of diathesis. Flobert (1975: 13) has proposed the following hypothesis in order to explain its limited attestation: he suggests that it possesses a subjective/passive meaning (*affici*) (‘sens exclusivement subjectif/passif’) which prevents it from being applied to the active (*afficere*) (‘qui interdisait de l’appliquer à l’actif’). Consequently, it may have been dismissed as an inadequate translation of the term διάθεσις.

### 2.6 Genus

In addition to *modus* and *adfectus/affectus*, the term *genus* ‘kind/category’ also features in accounts of diathesis and is not a translation of διάθεσις *per se*, but is related to Greek γένος, a technical term associated with the notion of diaeresis (διαίρεσις/divisio) (Flobert, 1975: 52).

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\(^{32}\) Abbreviated as *Anon. Verbo*.

\(^{33}\) Significatio vel genus, quod Graeci affectum vocant verbi, in actu est proprie, ut dictum est, vel in passione, et omnia verba perfectam habentia declinationem et aequalem vel in o desinunt vel in or (Prisc. I.G. 1, 373.10–12). ‘The signification or kind of a verb, which the Greeks call the disposition, strictly speaking is concerned with the performance or experience of an action as we have already stated. Moreover, all verbs which have complete and regular inflection end in either -ο or -ο.’
11). In the *artes, genus* has two applications: either it refers to gender, or it stands for a class of verbs that share morphological and semantic characteristics (Andersen, 1994: 172–179; Hovdhaugen, 1987: 134). The former manifests for the first time in Varro (*LL*, 9. 57) and the latter in Quintilian (*Inst. Orat.*, 1.4.27).

### 2.7 Gender and diathesis

Now that we are on the subject, we should take a moment to discuss a view that appears to have prevailed among several authors, namely that there was a close affinity between the categories of gender and diathesis. The view is first detected in the *Institutio Oratoria*.

> Fiunt ergo et circa genus figurae in nominibus; nam et ‘oculis capti talpae’ et ‘timidi damae’ dicuntur a Vergilio; sed subest ratio, quia sexu altero significatur, tamque mares esse talpas damasque quam feminas certum est; Et in verbis, ut ‘fabricatus est gladium’ et ‘inimicum poenitus es’. Quod mirum minus est, quia in naturam verborum est et quae facimus

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54 *Diairesis* is a method of division possibly developed by Plato whereby a large group or concept is repeatedly subdivided into roughly equal parts until a more precise definition is ascertained (Philip, 1966: 335–358).

55 *Genera nominum sunt tria vel, ut quibusdam placet, quinque, masculinum, feminum, neutrum, commune promiscuum* (*Char.*, 194.7–9). ‘Either there are three genders of nouns or, as some contend, five: the masculine, feminine, neuter, common and epicene.’ *Genera pronominum sunt haec: omnia pronomina aut masculina sunt aut feminia aut neutra aut communia [...]* (*Pomp.*, 206.17–18). ‘The genders of pronouns are the following: all pronouns are masculine, feminine, neuter or common [...]’.

56 *Genera verborum quot sunt? Quinque, id est activum, passivum, neutrum, commune, deponens* (*Aud.*, 346.6–7). ‘How many kinds of verbs are there? Five, that is the active, passive, neuter, common and deponent.’ The term *species* is also used to classify types of verbs. *Breviter autem et apertius ab aliis significatio verborum definita est, qui in species quinque eam diverunt hoc modo: activa est, ut lego, passiva, ut legor, neutra, ut sto, deponens, ut nascor, communis, ut populor* (*Char.*, 214.26–215.1). ‘The signification of verbs is defined briefly and rather clearly by others who divided it into five categories (*species*) in the following manner: there are actives such as *lego* ‘I read’, passives such as *legor* ‘I am read’, neuters such as *sto* ‘I stand’, deponent such as *nascor* ‘I am born’, and common such as *populor* ‘I ravage’.

57 *Natura cum tria genera transit et id est in usu discriminatum, tum denique appareat, ut est in doctus et docta et doctum.* ‘When the nature goes through the three genders and this distinction is made in use, then finally it is seen, as it is in *doctus* ‘learned man’ and *docta* ‘learned woman’ and *doctum* ‘learned thing’.’ (transl. Kent, 1938: vol.2, 481)

58 *Sed in verbis quoque quis est adeo imperitus, ut ignoret genera et qualitates et personas et numeros?* ‘If we turn to verbs, who is so ill-educated as not to be familiar with their various kinds and qualities, their different persons and number?’ (transl. Butler, 1920: vol.1, 77).

‘Figures, then, may affect the gender in nouns; for we find oculis capti talpae ‘blind moles’ and timidi damae ‘timid deer’ in Virgil; but there is good reason for this, since in these cases both sexes are covered by a word of one gender, and there is no doubt that there are male moles and deer as well as female. ‘[Similarly figures may also affect] verbs: for example, we find such phrases as fabricatus est gladium ‘he made a sword’ and inimicum poenitus es ‘you punished an enemy’. This is the less surprising, since the nature of verbs is such that we often express the active by a passive form, as in the case of arbitror ‘I think’ and suspicor ‘I suspect’, and the passive by an active form, as in the case of vapulo ‘I am beaten.’ (transl. Butler, 1921: vol.3, 445)

Here Quintilian is concerned with words whose forms are incongruent with their content, citing active verbal forms that possess passive meaning, passive verbal forms that convey active meaning, and feminine nominal forms that are assigned epicene gender (i.e. both masculine and feminine). Even though he does not explicitly compare gender to diathesis, the fact that he discusses the two categories simultaneously in a single passage suggests that he considers them to be affiliated in some way. A more explicit connection, however, is made between the two categories in the scholia on Тέχνη attributed to Stephanus59, a Byzantine scholar who possibly flourished in the seventh century (see Lallot, 1998: 35). He states:

Τρεῖς δὲ εἰσίν αἱ διαθέσεις, ἐπειδὴ καὶ τρία γένη ὀνομάτων, καὶ πέντε ἐγκλίσεις, ἐπειδὴ καὶ πέντε πτώσεις. Ὡς οὖν ἐπὶ τῶν γενῶν τὸ οὐδέτερον οὐκ ἦν φύσει, ἀλλὰ πρὸς τῶν γραμματικῶν διὰ τὴν φωνῆν ἐπινεομένων, οὕτω καὶ ἐπὶ τῶν ῥημάτων ἡ μὲν ἐνεργεια καὶ τὸ πάθος διάθεσις, ἡ δὲ μέση ἢ ἐκάτερον ἢ οὐδέτερον.

Ἀναλογήσει οὖν ἀρρενί πὸ τὸ ἐνεργητικόν, θηλεία δὲ τὸ παθητικόν ἁρρένων γὰρ ἢ ἀνδρείως τῶς ἐχόντων τὸ δρᾶν, θηλείαν δὲ ἢ θηλυδριῳδὸς διακειμένων τὸ παθεῖν ἢ δὲ μέση διάθεσις τοῖς

59 The scholia attributed to Stephanus come down to us in the Scholia Vaticana which survives in Vaticanus gr.14 dated to the thirteenth century (Lallot, 1998: 36).
‘There are three diatheses just as there are three genders of nouns and five moods just as there are five cases. As far as genders are concerned, the neuter is not natural, but was invented by experts in grammar on account of their form. As far as verbs are concerned, the active and passive are each a diathesis, while the middle is either active or passive or neither. The active will be analogous with the masculine and the passive with the feminine: for performing is particular to males or to those whose disposition is male and experiencing is particular to females or to those of a feminine orientation. The middle diathesis will be compared to the neuters: for the verbs which manifest either diathesis [will be compared to] nouns that admit both genders: for example βιάζομαι ‘I force’ [will be compared to] τέκος ‘the young one’; and the one that accepts no diathesis [will be compared to] those [that admit] no [gender]: for example πλουτῶ ‘I am wealthy’ [will be compared to] βέλος ‘missile’.

In this passage, the scholiast likens the masculine to the active and the feminine to the passive, but does not propose any rational linguistic reason to account for their association, and instead predicates their affinity on a misogynistic belief that only males demonstrate a proclivity for performing actions whereas females, by contrast, are naturally predisposed to being passive. The scholiast goes on to equate nouns of common gender (e.g. τέκος ‘the young one’) with middle verbs that signal both performance and the experience (e.g. βιάζομαι ‘I force’), and neuter nouns (e.g. βέλος ‘missile’) with middle verbs that exhibit states of being (e.g. πλουτῶ ‘I am wealthy’). Since there is no rational, grammatical justification given for any of these comparisons, it is likely that they were imposed on the categories for didactic purposes. These comparisons may function as mnemonic devices which help students to learn and later to recollect the categories of diathesis and gender.'
2.8 Significatio

The final term that will be discussed is significatio which is a Latin rendering of the Greek κατηγόρημα ‘predicate’ (Flobert, 1981: 27–32). Typically, it conveys the meaning of a word, but occasionally also refers to the signifier.\(^{60}\) According to Flobert (1975: 9), the term is first used in relation to diathesis in Pliny the Elder’s *De Dubio Sermone* (transmitted in Pompeius’ commentary). However, contrary to Flobert, Garcea argues that Pliny did not apply the term in this way.\(^{61}\) Let us examine the passages in which the term manifests in order to determine which position is more likely to be true.


‘Look at Pliny the Elder’s definition, as he provided robust definitions, and also defined what an active is and what a passive is. And if you require a rational explanation, this is what Pliny the Elder said: he says that an active is an action which we perform on someone else who can experience, and the passive is an action which we experience through the agency of another. Think, for example, if you say verbero ‘I beat’, verberor ‘I am beaten’, these forms here are respectively active and passive in the proper sense. For when I say verbero, I perform an action [and] another experiences it; when I say verberor, someone performs an action [and] I experience it.’ I have highlighted in bold the part of the passage that has to do with Pliny.

As we can see, Pompeius mentions that Pliny recognised two verbal classes,

\(^{60}\) *Sunt nomina, quae appellantur synonyma, hoc est quae variis significationibus unam rem designant, ut puta tellus, terra, humus et cetera talia* (Prob., 120.6–8). There are nouns which are called synonyms. These are nouns which indicate one thing with various signifiers, such as *tellus, terra, humus* ‘earth’ and others

\(^{61}\) A. Garcea related this to me during my thesis defence.
active and passive, but does not attribute to him the use of the term significatio. Let us now examine the next pertinent passage:

*Quid est adulo et quid est adulor? Dicit [Plinius Secundus] discretionem per casus. Quando vis quasi activam significationem introducere, fac accusativum, adulo illum; quando vis quasi passivam significationem introducere, dativum fac, adulor illi (Pomp., 234. 1–4)*

‘What is *adulo* and what is *adulor*? Pliny says that they can be distinguished by means of case. When you wish to form [what is] to some extent an active signification, acquire an accusative case (e.g. *adulo illum* ‘I fawn upon him’). When you wish to form [what is] to some extent a passive signification, acquire a dative case (e.g. *adulor illi* ‘I fawn upon him’).

Once again I have highlighted in bold the part of the passage that is concerned with Pliny. As we can see, Pompeius does not ascribe the use of significatio to Pliny; instead the term appears in Pompeius’ commentary on the Plinian fragment. Thus, on the basis of these two passages, we cannot conclude that Pliny deployed the term significatio in the context of diathesis.

In reality, the term is first used in relation to diathesis in the *ars* of Sacerdos where it represents a verbal class (Sac., 429.27; see above). Thereafter, it is attested almost as frequently as genus in accounts of the diathesis and typically has two functions: either it denotes the meaning of a verb, or is deployed as a synonym of genus, and stands for a verbal class (Hovdhaugen, 1987: 134). This latter application of significatio is also found in accounts of the participle, probably since the term genus cannot

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62 *Verborum genera quinque sunt, activa, passiva, neutra, communia, deponentia. [...] omnia ista quinque duas habent significationes, id est aut agentis aut patientis* (Serv., 413.35–38). ‘There are five kinds of verbs: actives, passives, neuters, common and deponents. [...] all these [kinds] have two significations, that is to say performance and experience.’

63 *Genera verborum, quae ab aliis significationes dicuntur, sunt quinque: activa, passiva, neutra, deponentia, communia* (Mai., 635.5–6). ‘There are five kinds of verbs which others call significations: actives, passives, neuters, deponents and common.’ *Significationes verborum V: activa, passiva, neutra, deponens, communis* (Dos., 64.13–14). ‘There are five significations of verbs: the active, passive, neuter, deponent and common.’

64 *Significationes participiorum quinque sunt, quem ad modum in verbo, activa, passiva neutra deponens communis* (Diom., 401.15–17). ‘There are five significations of participles (as there are in the verb): the active, passive, neuter, common and deponent.’
apply to a participial class, because in that context it is reserved to indicate gender.\textsuperscript{65}

Having traced the origin and development of several terms in Greek and Latin associated with diathesis, we will now provide a detailed account of the emergence of a number of fundamental verbal classes, beginning with active and passive.

\textbf{2.9 Active and passive}

The notions of performance and experience are first attested in our earliest surviving philosophical works. For example, Plato reports that a λόγος consists of an ὄνομα ‘noun’ and ῥήμα ‘verb’, the former corresponding to the πρᾶγμα ‘referent’ and the latter to a πράξις ‘action’ (\textit{Plat. Soph.}, 261e–262c). Aristotle too provides us with descriptions of actions, most notably in his \textit{Metaphysics}, where he discerns two types, ἐνέργεια ‘activity’ and κίνησις ‘movement’. Ἐνέργεια describes an action that is complete from the moment that it is first performed. For example, when an individual is looking at a house, we can say that he sees but also that he has seen the house. Κίνησις, by contrast, labels an action that is incomplete when it is first performed and remains incomplete throughout its process until an end (τέλος) is achieved. For example, when an individual is building a house, we can say that he is building a house, but we cannot say that he has built the house because the task of building has yet to be completed. Only when the house is built can we say that the action is complete and a τέλος has been reached (\textit{Arist. Meta.}, 1048b19–34; Ackrill, 1965: 121–142). Elsewhere in his corpus he also makes a distinction between performance and experience, differentiating between ποιεῖν ‘to do’ exemplified by verbs such as τέμνειν ‘to cut’ and καίειν ‘to burn’, and πάσχειν ‘to experience’ exemplified by verbs such as τέμνεσθαι ‘to be cut’ and καίσθαι ‘to be burned’ (\textit{Arist. Cat.}, 1b). The

\textsuperscript{65} \textit{Genera participiis accidunt quattuor: masculinum, ut lectus; femininum, ut lecta; neutrum, ut lectum; commune, ut legens (Mai., 644.6–7). ‘Participles have four genders: the masculine like lectus; feminine like lecta; neuter like lectum; common like legens.’}
Stoics applied precisely the same terminology in the context of physics contending that only the body is capable of performing and experiencing actions (Long and Sedley, 1987: vol.1, 272–274; Luhtala, 2000: 117–134).

Besides philosophers, authors working in the context of other disciplines also availed of a terminology to signify performance and experience. The Homeric scholar Aristarchus uses the verbs ἑνεργεῖν to indicate performance, πάσχειν to indicate experience and the phrase δραστική ἔννοια to denote active meaning (Matthaios, 1999: 78. frag. 20). Moreover, the rhetorician Dionysius of Halicarnassus utilises a somewhat similar meta-language arguing, for example, that the verb (ῥημα) ought to precede the adverb (ἐπίρρημα) in an expression because the circumstance of an action (e.g. τρόπος ‘manner’, χρόνος ‘time’, τόπος ‘place’) expressed by an adverb presupposes something that acts or undergoes an action (τὸ ποιοῦν ἢ πάσχον) which is conveyed by a verb (Dion. Hal. Comp., 5). A comparable terminology is also attested in one of our earliest extant grammatical treatises, namely papyrus P.Yale 1.25, dated to the first century AD (Wouters, 1979: 47–60), which defines the verb as a word (λέξις) that signals either the performance (πράξεις) or the experience of an action (πάθος) (ibid., 50).

Moving now to the second century, Apollonius Dyscolus applies an extensive vocabulary to express performance and experience, establishing a dichotomy between ἑνεργεῖν ‘to perform’ (Apol. Dysc., 103.11) and πάσχειν ‘to experience’ (ibid., 396.4), between διατιθέναι ‘to dispose (i.e. to perform)’ and διατίθεσθαι ‘to be disposed (i.e. to experience)’ (ibid., 18.6), and between δραν ‘to act’ and δρασθαι ‘to be acted on’ (Apol. Dysc. Pron., 45.22). He also deploys a number of terms to signify the notions of performance (e.g. ἑνέργεια, see Apol. Dysc., 18.8; δρασις, see ibid., 405.7; πράξις, see ibid., 108.14) and experience (e.g. πάθος, see Apol. Dysc., 18.7; πείσις, see ibid., 417.4).
In Latin there were several terms available to convey performance and experience including *afficere* ‘to dispose (i.e. to perform)’ and *affici* ‘to be disposed (i.e. to experience)’, which are translations of the Greek verbs *διατίθέναι* and *διατίθεσθαι* (*Char.*, 211.2; *Diom.*, 336.29–30), and also *facere* ‘to do’ and *pati* ‘to experience’, which are related to the Greek verbs *ποιεῖν* and *πάσχειν* (*Inst. Oration.*, 9.3.7; *LL*, 10.33; *Pomp.*, 227.26; *Sac.*, 430.13). *Agere*, however, is the most commonly attested verb to denote activity, and is generally placed in opposition to *pati* (*Cons.*, 365.30–366.1; *Min*, 591.6–7; *Pomp.*, 213.21). From these verbs authors establish two designations for the agent, namely *agens* (*Aud.*, 344. 9–11) and *faciens* (*Prisc. I.G.1*, 373.23; *Sac.*, 430.13), and one for the patient, namely *patiens* (*Cons.*, 366.1). Latin authors also employed a number of related terms to express the idea of performance and experience such as *actio/actus* and *passio* (*Char.*, 213.15; *Prisc. I.G.1*, 373.10–11), and *activitas* and *passivitas* (*Ps. Aem. Asp.*, 551.11). 66

Having discussed the terminology relating to performance and experience, we will now turn our attention to classifications of verbs which first appear in the works of the Stoic philosophers. According to Diogenes Laertius (7.64), the Stoics differentiate predicates (*κατηγορήματα* 67) designated *ὁρθά* ‘direct’ which take complements marked with oblique cases (*πλάγια πτώσεις*) (i.e. accusative, genitive, dative). He exemplifies them by means of active and middle verbal forms such as ἀκούει ‘he hears’, ὁρᾷ ‘he sees’ and διαλέγεται ‘he converses’, indicating that ὁρθά are transitive predicates which signify active meaning. Besides ὁρθά Diogenes also mentions ὑπτια ‘reversed/passive [predicates]’ exemplified by verbs such as ἀκούομαι ‘I am heard’ and ὁρῶμαι ‘I am seen’. These predicates are ‘constructed with a part characteristic of the passive’ (*συντασσόμενα* 67)

66 Sacerdos (430. 2–5) the uses the phrases *activitas/passivitas in declinatione* to signify active/passive form, and the phrases *activitas/passivitas in intellectu* to denote active/passive meaning.
τὸ παθητικῶ μορίῳ (DL, 7.64). If the curious construction τὸ παθητικῶ μορίῳ means a genitive prepositional phrase, as some scholars contend (i.e. ὑπὸ + genitive) (Lallot, 2015: 874; Pagani, 2013), this entails that ὑπτία are transitive predicates conveying passive meaning.

As well as this classification, we find a different approach in the fragments attributed to Aristarchus in which there is a distinction made between ἐνεργητικά ‘actives’ exemplified by verbs such as ναιετάουσι, and παθητικά ‘passives’ exemplified by verbs like ναιετάονται (Matthaios, 1999: 97. frag. 55a–b). In one fragment he also recognises that the passive verb (παθητικόν) τιμήσονται is used instead of the active (ἐνεργητικόν) τιμήσωσι in the Homeric phrase: θεὸν ὅς τιμήσονται ‘so that they will praise the god’ (ibid., 99–100. frag. 59a–b), indicating that he was aware that verbs could have meanings that were contrary to their form.

A similar classification is also found in the works of Dionysius of Halicarnassus, although he employs a much broader range of terms, including ἐνεργητικόν, ποιητικόν (Dion. Hal. Amm. 2,7), δραστήριον (ibid., 2) and ὁρθόν (Dion. Hal. Comp., 6) to refer to the active (exemplified by verbs such as κωλὺει ‘he hinders’) and παθητικόν (Dion. Hal. Amm. 2, 2) and ὑπτιόν (Dion. Hal. Comp., 6) to represent the passive (exemplified by verbs such as κωλὺεται ‘he is hindered’). As for Apollonius Dyscolus, we have already pointed out that he employs only two terms to label the active and passive, namely ἐνεργητικόν and παθητικόν respectively, which is in stark contrast to the later Medieval Byzantine scholiasts on the Τέχνη, who avail of multiple designations including ἐνεργητικόν, δραστικόν and ὁρθόν for the active, and παθητικόν and ὑπτιόν for the passive (Schol., 548. 34–37).

68 This terminology is also found in the fragments of Comanus Naucratis, a close contemporary of Aristarchus (Com., 248. frag. 13).
69 According to Schenkeveld (1983: 84), this use of ποιητικόν is found nowhere else.
Turning now to the Latin grammatical tradition, we first encounter a description of diathesis in the works of Varro, who not only makes a distinction between the *species faciendi* ‘active form’ and *species patiendi* ‘passive form’ exemplified by the verbs *uro* ‘I burn’ and *uror* ‘I am burned’ respectively (*LL*, 10.33), but also designates certain verbs *contraria* ‘alternating’ because they inflect in active and passive form (e.g. *amo*/*amor* ‘I love / I am loved’) (*LL*, 8.58; Collart, 1954: 183; Flobert, 1975: 8–9). We should also highlight the account of diathesis preserved in a fragment of Pliny the Elder’s *De dubio Sermone* which identifies two types of verbs, namely *activum* ‘active’ and *passivum* ‘passive’.

*Hoc est quod dixit Plinius Secundus: dicit activum est quod alio patiente nos facimus, passivum est quod alio faciente nos patimur* (*Pomp.*, 227.25–27). ‘This is what Pliny the Elder said: he says that an active is an action which we perform on someone else who can experience it, and the passive is an action which we experience by the agency of another.’

As we can see, Pliny explains the active and passive in terms of semantics and degree of transitivity, characterising them as transitive verbs which signify active and passive meaning respectively. We should also mention the description of verbs provided by Quintilian, who was a contemporary of Pliny and employs a somewhat different repertoire of terms, exploiting the gerund phrases *modus faciendi* to designate active form and *modus patiendi* to refer to passive form (see above). This terminology, however, very soon fell into disuse and by the third century was dropped in favour of the labels *activum* and *passivum*.70

### 2.10 Neuter

In addition to the active and passive, we find the neuter (*neutrum*/*οὐδὲτέρον*) which was first used by the Stoics to label intransitive predicates such as *περιπατεῖν* ‘to walk’ and *φρονεῖν* ‘to think’ (*DL*, 7.64). Apollonius Dyscolus also treats neuters but without

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70In the *artes* the terms *activum* and *passivum* appear in every account of diathesis except on one occasion in the *Ars* of Charisius where we find *agens* and *patiens*. See *Char.* (210.10).
availing of a technical term to designate them and instead documents a series of intransitive active verbs that typically do not have endings in μαί.

For example, he draws attention to verbs like ὑπάρχω ‘I exist’ and ζῶ ‘I live’ signifying verbal ideas involving one participant who neither does nor experiences anything (Apol. Dysc., 395.16–396.4),\(^1\) to verbs like κοπιῶ ‘I am getting tired’, ὀφθαλμῶ ‘I have got eye trouble’ and πάσχω ‘I suffer’ denoting αὐτοπαθεία ‘self-suffering’ (ibid., 397.10), and to verbs like ἐπιπατῶ ‘I walk’, πλέω ‘I sail’ and τρέχω ‘I run’ conveying verbal ideas involving one human participant who performs an action and one non-human participant (i.e. ἄψυχον ‘soulless thing’ e.g. ἡ ὄδος ‘the road’ and ἡ γῆ ‘the land) that cannot undergo it (ibid., 398.15–399.1).\(^2\) Occasionally, some of these verbs have ‘passive form’ (παθητική ἐκφορά), but only when they are inflected in the third person singular and used as impersonals (e.g. ἐπιπατεῖται ἡ ὄδος ‘the road is being walked’ and οἰκεῖται ἡ γῆ ‘the land is inhabited’; ibid., 399.2–5).\(^3\)

As for the term οὐδέτερον, it is attested in the Scholia Vaticana (see above) where it is ascribed to the seventh century Byzantine scholar Stephanus (see above), who applies it to verbs like πλούτω ‘I am rich’ and

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\(^1\) Οὐ δὲ τούτοις ὁμοιά τὸ ὑπάρχον, ζῶ [...]. Τόν δὲ τοιούτων ἀναλόγως ἡ παθητικὴ ἐγκλίσις ὑποσταλήσεται, ὅτι μηδὲ διὰ τῆς ἐνεργητικῆς ἐγκλίσεως τὰ ἐνεργοῦμενα πρώσωπα παρέστησαν, ἀ πάντως διατεθέντα τὸ παθεῖν ὀμολογήσει. ‘However, there are other verbs like ὑπάρχω ‘I exist’, ζῶ ‘I live’ [...]. The passive inflection of such verbs is regularly lacking because there are no persons acting upon in the active, so there can be no persons affected in such a way as to need to show passivity.’ (transl. Householder, 1981: 208)

\(^2\) Ἐστιν δὲ καὶ διάθεσιν σημαίνει ἐνεργητικῆν, οὐ μὴν ἔχει ἀντιπαρακεμένην παθητικὴν ἐκφοράν, καθοδὲ τὰ διατιθέμενα ἄψυχα καθεστῶτα οὐκ ἥδυναν ὀμολογήσαι τὸ παθεῖν [...]. ‘Some other verbs signify an activity, yet have no corresponding passive form because the non-human participants affected by these verbs cannot be considered to experience or to feel anything [...].’ (transl. Householder, 1981: 209)

\(^3\) τούτων γὰρ οὐ συστάτων τὸ περιπατοῦμαι οὐδὲ τὸ περιπατῆ καθό οὐδὲ πρός τὰ ὄψυχα αἱ ἀποτάσεις τῶν λόγων, οὐδὲ εξ ἄψυχων αἱ ἀποφάσεις γίνονται, περὶ γε μὴν αὐτῶν, περιπατεῖται ἡ ὄδος, οἰκεῖται ἡ γῆ. ‘You cannot make περιπατοῦμαι οἱ περιπατῆ since we do not address speech to non-humans and non-humans cannot make assertions, but we do talk about them, and therefore can say περιπατεῖται ἡ ὄδος ‘the road is being walked’ and οἰκεῖται ἡ γῆ ‘the land is inhabited’.’ (transl. Householder, 1981: 209)
δύναμαι ‘I am able’ which express a state (Schol., 246. 3–5).\textsuperscript{74} It also manifests in the works of the ninth century Byzantine scholar Choeroboscus (see above); however, in contrast with Stephanus, Choeroboscus exclusively employs the term to label active forms indicating a state (Cherob., 101.16–17).\textsuperscript{75} Stoppie et al. (2007: 214–216) suggest that this application of the term has two possible origins: either it is derived from Stoic logic or is based on the Latin verbal class neutrum, which first appears in the grammatical tradition in the third century AD (see below).

Turning now to the Latin grammatical tradition, Varro is the first author to discuss neuter verbs; though, like Apollonius, he does not ascribe an overarching designation to them. He makes a distinction between the verbs curro ‘I run’ and amo ‘I love’ on the basis that the former has two participial forms, present and future (e.g. currens ‘running’ and cursurus ‘about to run’) whereas the latter has three, past, present and future forms (e.g. amatus ‘loved’, amans ‘loving’, amaturus ‘about to love’) (LL, 8.58–59). Quintilian too provides an account of the neuter, specifically the verb vapulo ‘I am beaten’, describing it as a modus faciendi ‘active form’ signifying passive meaning (Inst. Orat., 9.3.7; see above). Regarding the term neutrum ‘neuter’,\textsuperscript{76} it is first attested in the Ars of Sacerdos where it designates active verbal forms that cannot inflect in the passive (Sac., 430.7–9).\textsuperscript{77} But this is not the only label assigned to these verbs, as

\textsuperscript{74} οὐδέτερα δὲ ἡ μὴτε ἐνέργειαι μὴτε πάθος σημαίνουσα, οἶνον ζω πλούτῳ δύναμαι βούλομαι: ‘[There are] also neuters which signify neither performance nor experience, such as ζω ‘I live’, πλούτῳ ‘I am rich’, δύναμαι ‘I am able’ and βούλομαι ‘I wish’.’

\textsuperscript{75} Ιστέον δὲ ὅτι τὸ ζω πλούτῳ ὑπάρξῃ οὐδέτερα λέγονται, ἐπειδὴ οὕτε ἐνέργειαι οὕτε πάθος δηλοῦσιν. ‘It should be realised that the [verbs] ζω ‘I live’, πλούτῳ ‘I am rich’ and ὑπάρξῃ ‘I exist’ are called neuters, because they express neither a performance nor an experience.’ (transl. Andersen, 1994: 162)

\textsuperscript{76} The term is probably derived from Stoic logic (Flobert 1975: 17).

\textsuperscript{77} Neutrum o littera terminatur et r accipere non potest: nam Latina non sunt, ut ambulo, sedeo, pendeo vapulo; ambulor, sedeor, pendeor, vapulor nemo dicit. ‘The neuter ends in the letter -o and cannot accept the letter -r, like ambulo ‘I walk’, sedeo ‘I sit’, pendeo ‘I depend’ vapulo ‘I am beaten’. Nobody says ambulor, sedeor, pendeor, vapulor because they are not [grammatical] Latin.’ According to Consentius, the term neutrum, at one point, referred not only to active verbs that were bereft of passive inflection, but also passive verbs that were lacking active inflection commonly knowns as deponents. Cons. (367.34–368.14): Illud sane advertere debemus, quod, cum neutrale verbum agendi fere
Pompeius tells us that certain authors consider *neutralis* ‘neutral’ to be a more suitable designation, since the term *neutrum* should only be applied in the context of nouns.


‘There are certain neuter or neutral verbs, as we have said, which end in -o like actives. However, [some authors] wished to distinguish when something is neuter and when something is neutral. They contend that the neuter is a noun, but the neutral a verb, as if you said ‘what kind of noun is this?’ ‘It is a neuter’, and ‘what kind of verb is this?’ ‘It is a neutral’. But [these authors] made this distinction for no logical reason whatsoever.’

One author who favoured the term *neutralis* was Audax who used it to describe neuter verbs signifying a state. He also employs the term

(significacionem habeat, deponens patiendi, tamen contra hoc inveniuntur pleraque verba. Nam vapulo ardeo veneo, cum neutralis verbi modo terminentur, non activam, sed passivam vim habent: non enim agit, sed patitur qui vapulat aut qui ardet aut qui venit. Item fungor loquor liceor cum deponentis verbi modo terminentur, non passivam vim habent sed activam: agit enim ipse aliquid qui fungitur aut qui loquitur aut qui liceat, non patitur. Ex quo plerique etiam hanc deponentem significacionem neutralem appellant, tribus de causis. Nam sicut illa quae neutralis dicitur passivam declinationem non habet, tia ne haec quidem activam; et sicut illa interdum passionem significat, ut est vapulo, ita haec vicissim actum, ut est loquor metior; et sicut illa ideo activa non est, quia passivam non recipit, ita haec quoque ideo passiva dicit non potest, quia non redit ad activam. ‘Of course, we should acknowledge that although the neutral verb certainly may have active signification and the deponent passive, nevertheless many verbs are found to contradict this. Even though vapulo ‘I am beaten’, ardeo ‘I am burned’ and veneo ‘I am sold’ seems to end like the neutral verb, they do not have active meaning, but passive: for he who is beaten, burned and sold does not act but experiences an action. Likewise, even though fungor ‘I do’, loquor ‘I speak’ and liceor ‘I auction’ seems to end like the deponent, they do not have passive meaning, but active: for he who does, speaks and auctions performs an action but does not experience one. Because of this, many call the deponent signification neutral for three reasons: for just as the signification that is called neutral does not have active form, in the same way [the one that is called deponent] certainly does not have passive form; and just as one occasionally signifies the experience of action, for example vapulo ‘I am beaten’, the other, on the contrary, signifies performance, for example loquor ‘I speak’ and metior ‘I measure’; and [finally] just as one is not active because it does not accept a passive, in the same way the other cannot be called a passive because it does not revert into an active.’
semineutralis ‘semi-neutral’ to stand for analogous verbal forms expressing either active or passive meaning.

Neutralia quare [dicuntur]? Quia nec agunt nec patiuntur, ut sto, iaceo, sedeo. Sunt autem et semineutralia, quae agunt aliquid et non patiuntur, ut nato, curro; item alia semineutralia, quae patiuntur et non agunt, ut vapulo, sudo, ferveo, langueo (Aud., 346.16–19).

‘Why are neutrals so called? Because they do not perform nor experience actions, like sto ‘I stand’, iaceo ‘I am lying down’, sedeo ‘I sit’. There are also semi-neutrals which perform but do not experience actions, like nato ‘I swim’ and curro ‘I run’. Similarly, there are other semi-neutrals which do not perform, but only experience actions, like vapulo ‘I am beaten’, sudo ‘I sweat’, ferveo ‘I am warm’ and langueo ‘I am ill’.

Aside from these, we also find supinum ‘supine’ which labels neuter verbs conveying passive meaning. Supinum is the Latin rendering of the Greek term ὅπτην (NA, 13.9.5), deployed by certain authors to designate the passive (see above).

Aut supina, quae ut activa quidem declinantur, sed significatam habent passivam, ut vapulo, pendeo, veneo (Phoc., 430.30–32).

‘There are also supines which inflect like actives, but have passive signification, such as vapulo ‘I am beaten’, pendeo ‘I fall’ and veneo ‘I am sold’.

The final term that will be discussed is absolutum ‘absolute’ (or absolutivum ‘absolutive’ see Diom., 337.13), the Latin translation of the Greek ἀπολεξόμενον (Mazhuga, 2005: 171–187), which discerns neuter verbs on the basis of their syntax. Verbs are considered to be ‘absolute’ if they do not govern complements marked with an oblique case.

‘[...] activum est, ubi altero agente alter patitur, passivumque est quando altero patiente penes alterum est actus. Nam multa etiam o terminata

78 According to Priscian (Prisc. I.G.2, 270.11–13) however, the term absolutum can apply to active as well as passive verbal forms. Absoluta, sive activae sive passivae sint voces, cum nominativo perfectam habent constructionem, ut Plato vivit, Aristoteles deambulat, Socrates philosophatur; ego esurio, tu dormis, ille volat. ‘Absolute may be either of active or passive form when they make a complete construction with a nominative, for example, Plato vivit ‘Plato is alive’, Aristoteles deambulat ‘Aristotle wanders’, Socrates philosophatur ‘Socrates philosophises’, ego esurio ‘I am hungry’, tu dormis ‘you are asleep’ and ille volat ‘he hastens’.”
passivae significationis sunt, ut algeo, esurio; sed quoniam minime altero patiente penes alterum est actus, ideo nec passiva dicuntur: rursusque plura sunt in o exeuntia quibus actus aliquis inest, ut nato, ambulo, curro; sed quoniam minime altero faciente alter patitur, non activa, sed neutra et absoluta dicuntur. Denique nec dativo aut accusativo vel ablativa sociari possunt: nam nec nato tibi aut te aut curro tibi aut curro te nec esurio a te aut alegeo a te vel vapulo a te dicimus, quod non est latinum [...]. (Anon. Verbo, 52.22–53.4).

‘[...] the active is when a participant experiences an action as a result of the agency of another, and a passive is when an action is associated with one participant and another experiences it. However, there are many verbs ending in -o [which have] passive signification, like algeo ‘I am cold’ and esurio ‘I am hungry’. These verbs cannot be characterised as passives because although someone experiences an action, the action is not associated with someone else. Moreover, there are many verbs ending in -o to which some action is ascribed, like nato ‘I swim, ambulo ‘I walk’ and curro ‘I run’. These, however, cannot be characterised as active, but neuter or absolute because no participant experiences an action as a result of the agency of another. Consequently, these verbs cannot be joined with the dative, accusative or ablative cases. For we do not say nato tibi nor nato te ‘I swim you’, curro tibi nor curro te ‘I run you’, esurio a te ‘I am hungry from you’, algeo a te ‘I am cold from you’, nor vapulo a te, because it is not [grammatical] Latin [...].’

2.11 Common

The common class first emerges in the second century AD in Aulus Gellius’ Noctes Atticae and accounts for passive verbal forms that have both active and passive meaning.79

Utor et vereor et consolor communia verba sunt ac dici utroqueversus possunt: vereor te et vereor abs te, id est tu me vereris; utor te et utor abs te,

79 In the Medieval Period, Byzantine authors established a new διάθεσις called επιρεκτική ‘inclusive’ referring to middle forms that express active as well as passive meaning such as βιοζωμαί σε ‘I force you’ and βιοζωμαί ύπο σοβ ‘I am forced by you’ (Schol., 246. 12–14). It is probably based on the commune class of the Latin grammatical tradition (Flobert, 1975: 26; Lallot, 1998: 165–166).
id est tu me uteris; hortor te et hortor abs te, id est tu me hortaris; consolor te et consolor abs te, id est tu me consolaris (NA, 15.13.1).

‘Utor ‘I use’, vereor ‘I respect’ and consolor ‘I console’ are common verbs and can be used either way: vereor te ‘I respect you’ and vereor abs te ‘I am respected by you’, that is you respect me; utor te ‘I use you’ and utor abs te ‘I am used by you’, that is you use me; hortor te ‘I exhort you’ and hortor abs te ‘I am exhorted by you’, that is you exhort me; and consolor te ‘I console you’ and consolor abs te ‘I am consoled by you’, that is you console you.’ (transl. by Rolfe, 1927, vol.3, 91).

Sacerdos too provides an account of the common which he explains in a similar way:

Commune r littera terminatur et eam amittere non potest; quam si amiserit, latinum non erit, ut criminor te et criminor a te (Sac., 430.9–11).

‘The common verb ends in the letter -r and cannot lose it. Should it lose this [ending], it will not be grammatical Latin, like criminor te ‘I accuse you’ and criminor a te ‘I am accused by you’.’

The origin of this class is not altogether clear, but it may have been an attempt by Latin authors to form an equivalent of the middle (μέσον) in Latin (Flobert, 1975: 9–10, 25–26). We can detect evidence in support of this hypothesis in the following extract taken from one of the surviving testimonia to Macrobius’ ars.

Sunt apud Graecos communia, quae ab illis μέσα vocantur, quae, dum in μαί desinant, et actum et passionem una eademque forma designat, ut βιάζομαι σε καὶ βιάζομαι ὑπὸ σοῦ, ἀνδραποδίζομαι σε καὶ ἀνδραποδίζομαι ὑπὸ σοῦ (Mac., 163.20–24).

‘There are common verbs among the Greeks which they call middle. Although they end in -μαί, they signify performance and experience by means of a single form such as βιάζομαι σε ‘I force you’ and βιάζομαι ὑπὸ σοῦ I am forced by you’ and ἀνδραποδίζομαι σε ‘I enslave you’ and ἀνδραποδίζομαι ὑπὸ σοῦ ‘I am enslaved by you’.’

That said, it ought to be pointed out that the middle is a far more comprehensive class than the common, applying to passive verbs (παθητικά) that signify active meaning such as μάχομαι ‘I fight’ (Apol.
Dysc., 398.9), or both active and passive meaning such as βιάζομαι (Schol., 401.20–22), to perfect active forms such as πέπηγα ‘I am fixed’ and διέφθορα ‘I am ruined’, and to middle aorist forms such as ἐποιησάμην ‘I did/made’ and ἐλουσᾶμην ‘I washed myself’ (D.Thrax., 49). Hence, the common cannot be an exact counterpart to middle but may be an attempt to represent one of its subclasses.

Alternatively, the use of term commune in the context of the verb may have some affinity with the use of the term in the context of gender. Latin authors typically recognise five different genders, namely the masculinum ‘masculine’, femininum ‘feminine’, neutrum ‘neuter’, commune ‘common’ and epicoenon ‘epicene’. The term commune refers to (pro)nominals that are assigned multiple genders, i.e. masculine, feminine and neuter (e.g. hic/haec/hoc felix, Diom., 17.13). As some ancient authors point out, this use of commune in the context of the noun clearly resembles its application in the context of the verb, where it applies to passives forms that signify both active and passive meaning.

2.12 Deponent

Varro is the first author to recognise the deponent, although he does not apply an overarching term to label it. He makes a distinction between the verbs loquor ‘I speak’ and amo/amor ‘I love’ / ‘I am loved’, because the former does not possess a corresponding active form (LL, 8.58–59). Quintilian too mentions the deponent without using a specific label to

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80 Μέση δὲ καλεῖται διάθεσις, ὅταν ἡ αὐτὴ φωνὴ χωρῇ εἰς τε ἐνέργειαν καὶ εἰς πάθος, ὡς τὸ βιάζομαι: αὐτὴ γὰρ ἡ φωνὴ χωρεῖ καὶ εἰς ἐνέργειαν καὶ εἰς πάθος, οἷον ἔν εἴποι βιάζομαι σὲ καὶ βιάζομαι ὑπὸ σοῦ. ‘It is called the middle disposition when the same form gives way to performance and experience, as the verb βιάζομαι ‘constrain’; for this form gives way to both performance and experience, as when I say βιάζομαι σὲ ‘I constrain you’ and βιάζομαι ὑπὸ σοῦ ‘I am constrained by you’. (transl. by Anderson, 1994: 160)

81 Communita autem dicimus, ut in nominibus quae sub una specie genera diversa admittunt, ita in verbis quae sub passiva declinatione dumtaxat diversi actus significationem exprimunt (Diom., 337.19–22). ‘In addition, just as we say that there are ‘common nouns’, which admit various genders under one and the same morphological form, likewise [we say that there are ‘common] verbs’ that express a signification [which includes] diverse [types of] actions under passive form alone.’
designate it, identifying it as a passive verbal form (modus patiendi) that conveys active meaning (e.g. arbitror ‘I think’ and suspicor ‘I suspect’) (Inst. Orat., 9.3.7). As for the term deponens ‘deponent’, it first features in Sacerdos’ ars where it applies to passiva tantum verbs (Sac., 429.31–3383) expressing either active (e.g. luctor ‘I wrestle’) or passive meaning (e.g. labor ‘I slip’). Sacerdos tells us that the deponens is so called because it ‘puts aside’ (deponere) passive meaning; (2) it ‘puts aside’ active inflection; (3) it cannot ‘put aside’ passive inflection; (4) it ‘puts aside’ a participial form (i.e. the gerundive).

Deponens dictum est tribus causis, vel quod activitatem in intellectu teneat et passivitatem deponat, vel quod passivitatem in declinatione teneat et activitatem deponat, vel e contrario, quod r litteram deponere non potest.

‘The deponent is so called for three reasons: either because it puts aside passive meaning and possesses active meaning, or because it puts aside active inflection and inflects only in the passive, or conversely because it cannot put aside the letter -r. Certain people think that the deponent is so called because it puts aside one of its four participial forms. However, they err because the deponent has four, e.g. luctans ‘wrestling’, luctatus ‘wrestled’, luctandus ‘ought to wrestle’.

Instead of deponens, certain authors use simplex ‘simple’ to refer to deponent forms (Char. 211.486; Prisc. I.G.1, 374.587). Flobert (1975: 23) has

82 In Late Antiquity this term was borrowed into Greek as ἀποθετικός. See Dos. (64. 14). On the origin of the Greek term, see Flobert (1975: 21–23) and Lallot (2007: 75–78).
83 Deponens r littera terminatur et eam amittere non potest; si autem amiserit, latinum non est, ut luctor loquor. ‘The deponent ends with the letter -r and cannot lose it. If, however, it loses this letter, it is not grammatical Latin, like luctor ‘I wrestle’ and loquor ‘I speak’.
84 On the definitions of the deponent, see Flobert (1975: 27–29) and Hovdaugen (1987: 143–144).
85 Quare ergo dicitur verbum deponens? Quoniam deponit paticipium futuri temporis, quod in dus exit (Pomp., 228. 28–29). ‘Why is the deponent verb so called? Because it puts aside the future [passive] participle which ends in -dus.’
86 Etiam quintum genus verborum alii dixerunt, simplex vel deponens, de quo dicendum est. Simplex vel deponens verbum intellegitur quod r littera terminatur et eandem numquam amittit et habet in unam cadit passutatem agentis, ut luctor irascor (Char., 211.4–8). ‘Others said that there is a fifth kind of verb, i.e. the simple or deponent, about which the following should be said. The simple or deponent is regarded as the verb which ends in the
argued that this term was established in order to stand in opposition to *commune* ‘common’. The terms *commune* and *simplex* both apply to passive forms that lack active inflection; however, the former are designated as ‘common’ because they signify both active and passive meaning, while the latter are described as ‘simple’ because they convey active meaning only.\(^88\)

2.13 Impersonal, inchoative, frequentative and defective

Besides the five types of verbs already discussed, Sacerdos mentions four others in his account of diathesis, namely the impersonal, inchoative, frequentative and the defective. Regarding the impersonal, it is first discussed in Greek in the works of Apollonius Dyscolus. Apollonius tells us that the Stoics distinguish between between *συμβαμάτα* ‘accidents’ and *παρασυμβάματα* ‘quasi-accidents’, the former referring to personal intransitive verbs requiring a nominative in the subject role (e.g. Θέων *περιπατεῖ* ‘Theon runs’), and the latter corresponding to impersonal intransitive verbs governing a dative (e.g. μέλει *Τρύφων* ‘Tryphon cares’) *(Apol. Dysc., 429.10–430.3)*\(^89\); Baratin, 2009: 142–144; Luhtala, 2000: 96).

\(^{87}\) *In or vero terminantia tres species habent: passivam, [...] communem, [...] deponentem, quae cum similem habeat communibus positionem in or desinendi, tamen deponens vocatur, quasi simplex et absoluta, quod per se ponitur, vel quae deponent alteram significationem et unam per se tenet (Prisc. I.G. 1, 374. 1–6). ‘In fact there are three classes of verbs ending in -or: the passive, [...] the common, [...] and the deponent, which has similar morphology as common verbs ending in -or, but nevertheless is called deponent, as though it is simple and absolute, because it is used autonomously, or because it puts aside (deponent) one meaning (significatio) and embraces another.’

\(^{88}\) On the opposition between *simplex* and *communis*, see *Prisc. I.G. 1*. (412.19–413.20).

\(^{89}\) ‘Εστι καὶ ἐπὶ τρίτου προσώπου τὸ μέλει καὶ μεταμέλει δωτικὴ συντασσόμενα, ὡς ἔχει τὸ μέλει Τρύφων καὶ ἔτι μεταμέλει, ἂπερ παρὰ τὴν τῶν ἄλλων ῥημάτων σύνταξιν ἐξήλλακτα, καθό πάντα μὲν εὔθεια συντάσσεται μόνη, ὡς Θέων περιπατεῖ, ἣ καὶ συντείνει πλαγία, περὶ ἵς καὶ τὴν σύνταξιν ἐπισημάζει. Οὐ μὴν τοῖς προκειμένοις τοιούτοις σύνεστιν μεταμέλει γὰρ Σακράτει καὶ ἔτι μέλει, τὴς ὁρθῆς οὖ συνουσίας. Δι' ὃ καὶ παρασυμβάματα αὐτὰ ἐκδέσαν οἱ ἀπὸ τῆς Στοιχείας, τῶν ἄλλων ῥημάτων κατὰ τὰς συμβαίνοντας διαθέσεις παρ' αὐτότις συμβαμάτων προσαγορευομένων ἢ καὶ ἔτι κατηγορημάτων. ‘There are also some verbs that take the dative which occur only in the third person, e.g. μέλει ‘It is a concern to’ and μεταμέλει ‘It is a matter of regret to’. These verbs vary from the syntax of all others in that the others may always have a nominative, as in Θέων περιπατεῖ ‘Theon walks’, and there may also be an oblique whose construction we have been discussing. But
In Latin, Varro is first author to mention the impersonal (e.g. *fodiatur* ‘one digs, there is digging’, *seritur* ‘one sows, there is sowing’), although he does not assign a specific label to it, and instead describes it as a verbal form (*declinatus*) in which the category of person is not marked (*sine personis*) (*LL*, 10.32). As for the term *impersonalis*, it manifests for the first time in the *ars* of Sacerdos and applies to verbs that cannot express the category of person unless they are joined to (pro)nominals marked with cases (e.g. *itur* ‘one goes’ and *taedet* ‘it offends’).

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90 Quintilian too refers to impersonal constructions, such as *habitatur urbs* ‘the city is inhabited’ and *mare navigatur* ‘the sea is navigated’, but does not employ a technical terminology to describe them (*Inst. Orat.*, 1.4.28).

91 Impersonalis species est, quam supra diximus, ut *itur* sedetur ambulatur statur *taedet* pudet paenitet. Haec species verborum duo recipit participia, praesentis temporis, *taedens* pudens paenitens, et futuri dux syllaba terminatum, taedendus pudendus paenitendus. Hoc tamen scire debemus, quod impersonalis species tur quidem terminata sic figuratur, quasi a tertia persona numeri singularis verbi passivi additis personis omnibus utriusque numeri veniat, ut *itur* a me a te ab illo a nobis a vobis quasi non dicatur eor eis: etiam *taedet* amatur a me, id est amo, *et cetera*. *Ei vero* syllaba finita quasi sua tertia persona numeri singularis coniugationis secundae declinantur personis additis omnibus utriusque numeri de verbo o littera finito, ut *taedet* me te illum nos vos illos, quasi dicatur *taedae* *taedes* *taedet*. Sed illa species tur ablatiuo regitur casu, haec vero et accusativo (*Sac.*, 431.25–432.2).

‘There is an impersonal form, which we have mentioned above, like *itur* ‘one travels’, *sedetur* ‘one settles’, *ambulatur statur* ‘one walks’, *taedet* ‘it offends’, *pudet* ‘it shames’ and *paenitet* ‘it displeases’. This form has two participles: a present, like *pudens* ‘shaming’, *paenitens* ‘displeasing’, and a future ending in the syllable *-dus*, like *taedendus* ‘ought to be offended’, *pudendus* ‘ought to be shamed’ and *paenitendus* ‘ought to be displeased’.

Furthermore, we must know that the impersonal inflects with an ending in *-tur* accordingly as though it derives from a third person singular passive verb, with every person of either number added [separately], like *itur a me a te ab illo a nobis a vobis ab illis* ‘it is travelled by me, you, him/us, you, them’, while nobody says *eo* and *iris*. [We must also know that the impersonal applies] to all verbs ending with the letter *-r*, like *amatur a me, id est amo* ‘it is loved by me’, *docetur a me, id est doceo* ‘it is taught by me’, *luctatur a me, id est luctor* ‘it is wrestled by me’, *criminatur a me, id est criminor* ‘it is accused by me’, *taedet a me, id est sedeo* ‘it is settled by me’. [We must also know that each impersonal verb] which ends in a syllable as though [derived] from the third person [singular of the second conjugation] is in fact derived from a verb ending with the letter *-o*, with every person of either number being then added [separately], like *taedet me te illum nos vos illos* ‘It offends me, you, him, us, you, them’, as if we had *taedeo* ‘I am offended’, *taedae* ‘you are offended’ and *taedet* ‘he is offended’. But the former verbal form, i.e. [the one ending] in *-tur* is governed by the ablative case, while the latter is governed by the accusative.’
In addition to impersonal, Sacerdos includes discussions of secondary forms such as the inchoative\textsuperscript{92} and frequentative which he characterises in terms of form and meaning. He identifies the former as a verb terminating in -sco denoting inceptive meaning (\textit{Sac.}, 430.20–28)\textsuperscript{93}, and the latter as a verb ending in -so or -to conveying a recurrent action (ibid., 431.11–13).\textsuperscript{94} Prior to Sacerdos, the inchoative is not mentioned by any other author, but the same cannot be said for the frequentative. Varo makes a distinction between the verbs \textit{scriptito} ‘I re-write’ and \textit{scribo} ‘I write’, because the former denotes an action that occurs rather frequently (\textit{saepius}), while the latter conveys an action that only happens once (\textit{semel}) (\textit{LL}, 10.33).

Finally, we should also mention the defective which first crops up in the grammar of Sacerdos\textsuperscript{95} and accounts for verbs that have an incomplete conjugation.

\textit{Defectiva species tribus modis fit: elocutione, quam quidam figuram vocant, ut fero tuli, feror latus sum, <sum> fui; specie, quam quidam genus vel}

\textsuperscript{92} Inchoatives are called \textit{ἀρκτικά} in Greek, see \textit{Char.} (329.24) and \textit{Dos.} (63.5).

\textsuperscript{93} Inchoativa species sco terminatur, ut calesco fervesco, incipio calere fervere. Haec non habet tempus praeteritum perfectum rationabiliter: nam res quae modo incipit perfecta esse non potest. Senesco autem et cresco inchoativae speciei non sunt, sed neutrae, ideoque faciant tempore praeterito perfecto servi crevi: non enim veniunt ab aliis, sicut calesco a caleo et fervesco a ferveo. Figurantur autem inchoativa verba aut ab his quae o littera terminatur, ut horreo horresco, vel ex his quae or terminantur, ut misereor miseresco. \textit{Haec species participium temporis praesentis tantum modo recipit, calecens fervescens miserescens.}

\textit{The inchoative form ends in -sco, like calesco and fervesco, that is I begin to be warm and cold. Therefore, it is reasonable that this verbal form does have a perfect tense: for an action that is only beginning cannot be complete. Moreover, senesco ‘I grow old’ and cresco ‘I arise’ are not inchoatives, but neuters, and therefore form a perfect tense (e.g. servi ‘I grew old’ and crevi ‘I arose’). For these verbs do not derive from others, like calesco ‘I become warm’ from caleo ‘I am warm’ and fervesco ‘I become cold’ from ferveo ‘I am cold’. In addition, inchoatives are formed both from verbs ending in -o, such as horreo ‘I dread’ and horresco ‘I begin to dread’, and from verbs ending in -or, like misereor ‘I pity’ and miseresco ‘I begin to pity’. This verbal form only has a present participle (e.g. calecens ‘becoming warm’, fervescens ‘becoming cold’ and miserescens ‘beginning to pity’).}

\textsuperscript{94} Frequentativa species est quae non semel sed aliquotiens quid agi declarat, quae to vel so syllaba terminatur, ut aucto curso. Haec duo gradus recipit, ut aucto et auctito, curso et cursito. \textit{The frequentative is a verbal form which indicates that something is done not once but several times, and which ends in the syllable -to or -so, like aucto ‘I increase’ and curso ‘I rush to-and-fro’. The form has two inflectional grades, like aucto ‘I increase’ and auctito ‘I keep increasing’, and curso ‘I rush to-and-fro’ and cursito ‘I rush about habitually’.}

\textsuperscript{95} Quintilian draws attention to certain verbs that are only partially conjugated (\textit{multa verba non totum declinationis ordinem ferunt}), like fero, but does not call them defective (\textit{Inst. Orat.}, 1.4. 29).
adfectum vel significationem dicunt, ut soleo solitus sum, fio factus sum, audeo ausus sum, gaudeo gavisus sum. [...] Fit defectiva species et tempore, ut odi, novi, memini, pepigi. [...] (Sac., 430.29–431.2).

‘A defective form manifests itself in three ways: in speech, which some call ‘figure’, like fero ‘I carry’, tuli ‘I have carried’, feror ‘I am carried, latus sum ‘I was carried’, sum ‘I am’ and fui ‘I was’; in form, which some call either kind, disposition or signification, like soleo ‘I am accustomed’, solitus sum ‘I was accustomed’, fio ‘I am made’, factus sum ‘I was made’, audeo ‘I dare’, ausus sum ‘I dared’, gaudeo ‘I am glad’, gavisus sum ‘I was glad’. [...] The defective form also manifests itself in tense, like odi ‘I hate’, novi ‘I know’, memini ‘I remember’ and pepigi ‘I am disgusted’.

2.14 Concluding remarks

We have traced the origin and development of diathesis between the fifth century BC and third century AD and have shown that almost all the fundamental terms and concepts associated with the grammatical category were already in use in some of our earliest extant Greek literature. We have observed that διάθεσις ‘disposition’ featured prominently in the philosophical works where it signified a person’s mental or physical condition, although for Aristotle διάθεσις was a condition that was subject to change, such as ‘being cold’, whereas for the Stoics it was a condition that was somewhat constant, such as ‘being virtuous’. By second century AD Apollonius Dyscolus was using the term in the context of grammar, applying it in order to describe various accidents of the verb including mood (διάθεσις τῆς ψυχῆς), tense (διάθεσις χρονική) and diathesis (διάθεσις). The precise origins of the various grammatical applications of διάθεσις, however, remain very unclear, as this topic has received limited scholarly attention in print. That said, we should not forget the important observations made by Lallot in relation to this topic, who has tentatively suggested that διάθεσις may derive from Aristotelian philosophy (Lallot, 1998: 167; 2015: 875).
We have also seen that philosophers had at their disposal a subtle and highly nuanced terminological repertoire to express various kinds of actions. Aristotle, for example, distinguished between ἐνέργεια ‘activity’ and κίνησις ‘movement’, the former applying to actions that are complete from the moment that they are first carried out (e.g. seeing), and the latter referring to actions that are incomplete when they are initially performed and remain incomplete until an end has been reached (e.g. building). Aristotle also made a distinction between ποιεῖν ‘to do’ and πάσχειν ‘to experience’ which would later become a fundamental opposition in grammatical theory. In fact, this terminology was adopted by authors such as Dionysius of Halicarnassus, who used it as a basis to form designations for the active and passive (e.g. ποιητικόν and παθητικόν). Latin authors too were influenced by this terminology deploying the corresponding Latin verbs facere and pati to express performance and experience of an action respectively (for more on this see below).

As well as developing fundamental terminology, we also pointed out that philosophers were the first to provide classifications of verbs. The Stoics recognised several different types of predicates including ὁρθὸν ‘upright’ referring to transitives signifying active meaning (e.g. ἀκούει ‘he hears’), ὑπτικὸν ‘reversed’ labelling transitives conveying passive meaning (e.g. ἀκούομαι ‘I am heard’), οὐδέτερον ‘neuter’ corresponding to intransitives (e.g. φρονεῖν ‘to think’) and ἀντιπεπονθότον ‘reflexive’ designating reflexives (e.g. κείρεται ‘he shaves himself’) (DL, 7.64). We know that the authors of the τέχναι and artes drew heavily on these accounts as they often avail of Stoic terminology in their descriptions of diathesis, employing ὁρθὸν/ rectus to style the active, ὑπτικὸν to designate the passive, and οὐδέτερον/ neutrum and supinum to label types of neuter verbs.

We have also investigated the understanding of diathesis in the earliest philological, grammatical and rhetorical treatises, and noticed that by the
second century BC philologists like Aristarchus and Comanus of Naucratis made a distinction between actives (ἐνεργητικα) on the one hand and passives (παθητικά) on the other. Moreover, between the first centuries BC and AD most authors maintained this dichotomy but also introduced new terminology. For instance, Dionysius of Halicarnassus used δραστήριον, ποιητικόν and ὑπτίον to style the active and ὕπτιον to label the passive. During this period Latin authors too were inventive as far as terminology is concerned, conceiving of new labels like species faciendi, modus faciendi and activum for the active and species patiendi, modus patiendi and passivum for the passive.

Even though the majority of Greek and Latin authors between the second century BC and the first century AD only recognised two classes of verbs, this does not mean that they had a rudimentary understanding of their respective verbal systems, as they were keenly aware that there were a variety of anomalous verbal forms which could not be classified as actives or passives. For example, Varro singled out active forms that were bereft of passive inflection (e.g. curro) and passive forms lacking active inflection (e.g. loquor), and Quintilian discerned active forms expressing passive meaning (e.g. vapulo ‘I am beaten’) and passive forms conveying active meaning (e.g. arbitror). In addition to having a keen grasp of the morphology and semantics, they appear to have had something akin to the notion of transitivity, as Pliny the Elder appears to have identified the active and passive as transitives, although he did not use a technical terminology to characterise this and instead simply pointed out that they denote actions involving two participants, an agent and patient. The fact that he did not avail of a technical terminology is not surprising, since, as far as we can tell, the first author to develop a systematic meta-language to characterise the notion of transitivity (μετάβασις/διάβασις) was Apollonius Dyscolus. He distinguished between a transitive verb governing two participants (e.g. δέρω σε), an intransitive (ἀδιαβίβαστον) governing one (e.g. ὑπάρχω) and a reflexive conveying a verbal idea, occasionally designated
αὐτοπάθεια, involving a participant who is simultaneously the agent and the patient of the action expressed (e.g. Φήμιος ἐδιδάξει ἑαυτόν). He also tells us that the verb πάσχω ‘I suffer’ indicates αὐτοπάθεια, despite the fact that it conveys a somewhat different verbal idea. Certainly it denotes that a participant is affected, but on this occasion the same participant cannot be understood as having performed an action as well. On this occasion, in fact, there is no participant involved in the verbal process who can be described as the agent. Different again is a construction like τρέμω σὲ ‘I fear you’ which involves two distinct participants and yet it too expresses αὐτοπάθεια. In this case, one participant certainly is affected (by fear), but the other participant neither does nor experiences anything. Thus, αὐτοπάθεια is certainly not an equivalent of our modern notion of reflexivity; rather it signifies that a participant experiences something without being acted on by an external agent.

Apollonius also discussed the middle (μέση/ μεσότης) which is first attested in the papyrus P. Rain 1.19, dated to the beginning of the first century AD (Wouters, 1979: 237–238).


‘The masculine participle passive or middle, that ends in the genitive in -ος, forms its plural by the change of -ος to -ες; when it ends in ου, by the change of -υ to -ι.’ (ed. and transl. by Wouters, 1979: 238–239).

The middle, as we have already mentioned, not only embraced passive verbs (παθητικά) that denote active meaning such as μάχομαι ‘I fight’, or active as well as passive meaning like βιάζομαι ‘I constrain’, but also perfect active forms such as πέπηγα ‘I am fixed’ and middle aorist forms that exhibit either active meaning such as ἐποιησάμην ‘I did’ or passive meaning such as ἔλουσάμην ‘I washed myself’. Thus, the middle was a
highly inclusive class composed of verbs that did not display a clear-cut relationship between form and meaning.

Between the second and third centuries Latin authors too began to form new classes in addition to the active and passive, such as the commune, which was used in relation to passive verbal forms signifying both active and passive meaning, the neuter, which applied to active verbal forms that were typically denied passive inflection, the deponent, which classified passive verbal forms lacking active inflection, the impersonal, which designates verbs inflected in the third person singular active or passive that only denote a person in conjunction with a pronoun, the inchoative, which is a derived verbal form terminating in -sco conveying inceptive force, the frequentative, which is also a derived verbal form culminating in -so, -to, or -ito signifying a recurrent action, and defective which refers to verbs possessing an incomplete conjugation. As we have seen, some of these verbs were treated prior to the second and third centuries by authors such as Varro and Quintilian, but were not ascribed specific designations. We can express the development of the classes in tabular form accordingly:

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<tr>
<th>date</th>
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<th>active</th>
<th>passive</th>
<th>middle</th>
<th>common</th>
<th>neuter</th>
<th>deponent</th>
<th>impersonal</th>
<th>defective</th>
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<td>Dion.</td>
<td>ἐνεργ.</td>
<td>ἀσαστ.</td>
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<td>act.</td>
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According to Diogenes Laertius (7.192), Chrysippus composed a treatise entitled Περὶ ὀφθὸν καὶ ὑπτίων πρὸς Φυλαρκην Ὀν τὸν ὑπτίων πρὸς Φυλαρκην ‘On the upright and reversed predicate dedicated to Phylarchus’. Whether or not this treatise included a description of neuter predicates is unknown.
Turning now to the subject terminology, we observed that terms designating diathesis are first manifest in Latin in the first century AD in the works of Quintilian, who deployed *modus* to refer to the form of a verb and *genus* to represent a verbal class. By the third century this particular application of *modus* started to go into disuse and, by the fourth century, was mainly reserved in order to represent mood. We suggested that the term *modus* may be an attempt to render διάθεσις into Latin and, if this is the case, it means that διάθεσις was also in use in the first century AD. In any event, the term διάθεσις was certainly being employed by the second century, as it features prominently in the works of Apollonius Dyscolus, where it had a variety of different functions such as standing for modality (διάθεσις τῆς ψυχῆς), tense (διάθεσις χρονικῆ), and diathesis (διάθεσις).

By the third century there were two additional terms used in the context of diathesis, namely *affectus* (the Latin equivalent of διάθεσις) and *significatio*. They first manifest in the *ars* of Sacerdos where they are deployed as synonyms of *genus* and *species* and refer to verbal classes. Thereafter, we saw that the author of the *Τέχνη Πραματική* applied the term διάθεσις in order to represent the disposition of the subject and recognised two dispositions, ἐνέργεια and πάθος.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Period</th>
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<td>modus</td>
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<td>Pliny</td>
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<td>διάθεσις</td>
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<td>Ps. Dion. Thrax</td>
<td>διάθεσις</td>
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</table>

In contrast with Apollonius Dyscolus, the author of the *Τέχνη* deployed διάθεσις exclusively to describe what we now call voice or
diathesis. Moreover, instead of using the terms διάθεσις τῆς ψυχῆς and διάθεσις χρονικῆ for mood and tense, he preferred χρόνος and ἔγκλισις. Clearly, then, the author of the Τέχνη applied terminology in a more straightforward and unambiguous way than Apollonius did. This invites the question: why?

As I have asserted in the previous chapter, I do not believe that the text which comes down to us entitled Τέχνη Γραμματική was authored by Dionysius Thrax, the scholar who was active towards the end of the second century and the beginning of the first century BC; rather I am in agreement with Di Benedetto and others who contend that it is a spurious treatise composed by an unknown figure sometime between the third and fifth centuries AD. If this hypothesis is accurate, it is conceivable, then, that the author of the Τέχνη may have known (and even consulted) the works of Apollonius. He may have thought that Apollonius' application of terminology was too arcane97 and chose to scrap it in favour of a more straightforward one which his readership could more easily comprehend. Moreover, if the Τέχνη was written for the benefit of teachers, guiding fledgling students through the intricacies of grammatical theory, as some Byzantine scholars contended98, the use of a more straightforward terminology is all the more understandable, since novices find it easier to

97 For a study dealing with Apollonius' intricate use of terminology, see Van Ophuijsen (1993: 730 –770).
98 See Schol. (166.30 –167.4): Πῶς οὖν ὁ τεχνικὸς εἱρμένει ἐμπειρίαν τὴν γραμματικὴν; ἄρα ἡ ἀλογον ώσαν, ἢ ἡ ἀὐτός ἀγνωστός ἄν τοῦ καλῶς ἔχοντος; Φαμέν ὅτι οὐ, ἀλλ’ ἐπειδὴ ὁ σκοπός αὐτοῦ πρὸς εἰσαγομένους γράφειν, δεῖ δὲ τὰς εἰσαγωγικὰς τέχνας ἀπέχεσθαι τῶν δυσχερῶν προβλημάτων, τῶν δὲ εὐλήτων ἀντέχεσθαι, εἰδὼς δὲ ὅτι καὶ ἡ ἐμπειρία πολλαχῶς παρὰ τοῖς ἀρχαῖοις φράζεται ἔστι γὰρ ἡ ἀλογος τριβὴ καὶ ἡ λογικὴ γνώσις, ἔστι δὲ καὶ ἡ ἀκριβὴς μάθησις. Ἀπλόστερον δὲ τὸν λόγον ἐποιήσατο ὡς πρὸς εἰσαγομένους, σημαίνον ἀπὸ ἐμπειρίας τὴν γνώσιν ὅστε ἡ γραμματικὴ γνώσις ἐστὶ. ‘Why did the technician call grammar experience? Is it because it is irrational or because he does not know the matter well? I say no; since his aim was to write for beginners, difficult problems had to be left out of these preliminary grammars, while easier things had to come first, for he knew that experience is frequently discussed by ancient writers: it is irrational practice and rational knowledge, and it also means accurate learning. He made the definition of grammar simpler for the beginners to understand by using the word experience for knowledge. Therefore, grammar is knowledge.’ (transl. by Seppänen, 2015: 214)
learn new concepts when those concepts are expressed in a simple and unambiguous language.

Before we conclude this discussion of terminology, we should say something about the terms used to indicate the opposition between the active and passive. Between the fourth century BC and the first century AD most Greek authors expressed this opposition using a terminology derived from the verbs ποιεῖν ‘to do’ and πάσχειν ‘to experience’. We observed that Aristotle and the Stoics signified performance and experience by means of the verbs ποιεῖν and πάσχειν, and that Dionysius of Halicarnassus employed the terms ποιητικόν and παθητικόν to refer to active and passive verbs and τὸ ποιοῦν and τὸ πάσχον to represent the agent and patient. Between the first century BC and first century AD Latin authors expressed the same opposition utilising a terminology derived from the verbs facere and pati which were essentially translations of the Greek verbs ποιεῖν and πάσχειν. For example, we saw that Varro and Quintilian deployed the phrases species faciendi and species patiendi and modus faciendi and modus patiendi to refer to active and passive verbal forms. By the second century, however, terminologies derived from the verbs ποιεῖν and facere were largely abandoned in favour of those derived from the verbs ἐνεργεῖν and agere.

As we have already stated in the previous chapter, most scholars now agree that grammar emerged as an autonomous discipline in the first century BC. In this period it is thought that scholars for the first time composed treatises which provided systematic accounts of grammatical theory (Matthaios, 2015: 198). Unfortunately, as we have mentioned, there is only a minuita of surviving textual evidence and so our understanding of this foundational phase in the history of grammar remains fragmentary. This chapter has examined treatises that predate, postdate and are contemporary with this seminal moment allowing us to gauge, to some extent, how sophisticated grammatical theory was prior to, at the time of, and after the emergence of grammar as an independent discipline. In the second century
BC we observed that philologists, such as Aristarchus and Comanus of Naucratis, had a somewhat rudimentary understanding of diathesis distinguishing only two types of verbs, namely an active and passive. This approach to the description of diathesis was perfectly appropriate for philologists whose primary preoccupation was philology, grammatical theory being only a secondary concern of theirs. Philologists considered grammatical theory to be merely a useful instrument that they could be put in the service of philology facilitating philological comprehension and the interpretation of literary contents (for references, see 1.7). Thus, it is not altogether unsurprising that their understanding of diathesis was somewhat underdeveloped.

By the first century BC several new terms to label active and passive verbs had come into use (e.g. δραστήριον and ποιητικόν). By the first century AD a terminology (i.e. modus, genus and διάθεσις) to describe the category of diathesis was developed. Between the second and third centuries several new classes were established in order to categorise anomalous verbal forms (e.g. the common, deponent and neuter) and the notions of transitivity and reflexivity were explained systematically for the very first time by Apollonius Dyscolus. Hence, the way that authors approached the characterisation of diathesis became more sophisticated in the centuries following the emergence of grammar as an autonomous discipline. This raises the question: why were these scholars more innovative than their second century BC predecessors with respect to the treatment of diathesis?

In contrast with Hellenistic philologists, like Aristarchus, scholars of the first century BC appear to have more highly esteemed the study of grammatical theory, deeming it a subject worthy of investigation in its own right. These scholars, as we have already stated, were the first to compose systematic treatises devoted entirely to the elaboration of grammatical theory and so it is possible that they reflected more deeply than the majority of other authors before them on matters pertaining to descriptive grammar. The greater emphasis that they appear to have placed on the elaboration of
descriptive grammar may have resulted in the advances that we have discerned above.
3. Donatus and the authors of the fourth century artes

3.1 Introductory remarks

Some of the earliest extant Latin grammatical treatises which come down to us from antiquity date from the fourth century AD. The most famous of these treatises are undoubtedly the Ars Minor and Ars Maior penned by Aelius Donatus, but besides the artes Donati, a number of lesser known grammars also survive such as Probus’ Instituta Artium and the artes of Charisius and Diomedes. In this chapter, we will examine the accounts of diathesis preserved in these works in order to shed new light on the understanding of diathesis in this period.

3.2 Donatus

[Aelius]99 Donatus was a professional teacher (i.e. a grammaticus)100 who was active in Rome in the middle of the fourth century AD (Holtz 1981: 15–16; Kaster, 1988: 275). He taught St. Jerome, who referred to him as praeceptor meus,101 and composed several didactic treatises, including two commentaries, one on the works of Virgil and another on Terrence. The commentary on Terrence underwent significant redaction during its medieval transmission and, as a result, comes down to us in an abridged form (Zetzel, 1975: 339–340). The earliest witness is a French manuscript of the eleventh century (Paris, Bibl. Nat., Lat. 7920) (Beeson, 1922: 283–385), while the rest mainly date from the fifteenth century or later (Reeve, 1978: 608–618; 1979: 310–326).102 The commentary on Virgil, by contrast, does not survive as an independent work, but some fragments may be embedded within another (allegedly Irish, see Barwick, 1911: 106–145)

99 On the historicity of the name Aelius, see Kaster (1988: 275).
100 Late in life Donatus may have been promoted to the chair of rhetoric, but this assertion is speculative (Kaster, 1988: 276–278).
101 Victorinus rhetor et Donatus Grammaticus, praeceptor meus, Romae insignes habentur. (Hier. Chron. AM 2370 = AD354). ‘Victorinus, the rhetor, and Donatus, the grammaticus, my teacher, received awards.’
102 There is also a thirteenth century manuscript, namely Bern, Burgerbibl. 276, which contains fragments of the commentary in the margins, see Reeve and Rouse (1978: 235–249).

Besides the commentaries, Donatus also wrote two grammars, the \textit{Ars Minor} and the \textit{Ars Maior},\textsuperscript{105} which were compiled for the benefit of teachers guiding native Latin speaking students through the intricacies of grammatical theory.\textsuperscript{106} The \textit{Ars Minor} provides a basic description of the eight parts of speech in one book arranged according to a question and answer format (\textit{Min.}, 585.1–602.5), whereas the \textit{Ars Maior}, by contrast, is a systematic grammar in three books covering almost all aspects of ancient grammatical theory. The first book is characteristic of the \textit{Schulgrammatik} genre (Law, 1987a: 191–192), that is to say, it has a hierarchical structure, providing descriptions of the utterance (\textit{vox}), letter (\textit{littera}), syllable (\textit{syllaba}), metrical foot (\textit{pes}), accent (\textit{tonus}) and punctuation (\textit{positura}) (\textit{Mai.} 603.1–612.8), the second deals with the parts of speech (\textit{Mai.} 613.1–652.13) and the third with the vices (e.g. \textit{de barbarismo} ‘on the barbarism’, \textit{de soloecismo} ‘on the solecism’) and virtues of the Latin language (e.g. \textit{de metaplasmo} ‘on metaplasm’, \textit{de schematibus} ‘on figures’, \textit{de tropis} ‘on tropes’) (\textit{Mai.} 653.1–674.10).\textsuperscript{107} The verb is treated in the \textit{Ars Minor} (591.5–595.23) and the second book of the \textit{Ars Maior} (632.5–639.12). Both accounts begin with a definition, followed by detailed explanations of verbal

\textsuperscript{103} The ‘compiler’ of Servius Danielis may have been active in the British Isles (possibly in Ireland) in either the seventh or the eighth century (Barwick, 1911: 106–145; Murgia, 1974: 257–277; Myles, 2011: 25–32). On the manuscript tradition of Servius Danielis, see Savage (1932: 77–121).

\textsuperscript{104} Donatus’ \textit{Vita Virgilia} also survives (\textit{Don. Vita}, 17–56).

\textsuperscript{105} On the transmission and manuscript tradition of the \textit{Artes}, see Holtz (1981: 354–423).

\textsuperscript{106} On the paedagogic function of the manuals, see Holtz (1981: 49–121).

\textsuperscript{107} On the vices and virtues, see Baratin and Desbordes (1987: 41–66) and Holtz (1981: 136–216).
accidents (i.e. qualitas ‘quality’, coniugatio ‘conjugation’, genus ‘kind’, numerus ‘number’, figura ‘shape’, tempus ‘tense’ and persona ‘person). The Ars Minor concludes with a description of the paradigm of the verb lego ‘I read’ and the Ars Maior climaxes with discussions of impersonals, the syntax of verbs, orthography and defectives. Diathesis is the third accident treated by Donatus and is explained as follows:


‘How many kinds of verbs are there? Five. What are they? Actives, passives, neuters deponents and commons. What are actives? The verbs which end in -o and make passives out of themselves by accepting the letter -r, such as lego ‘I read’, legor ‘I am read’. What are passives? The verbs which end in -r and revert into actives by losing it, such as legor ‘I am read’, lego ‘I read’. What are neuters? The verbs which end in -o, like actives, but do not render grammatical Latin if they receive the letter -r, such as sto ‘I stand’, curro ‘I run’. What are deponents? The verbs which end in -r, just like passives, but do not render grammatical Latin if they lose it, like luctor ‘I wrestle’, loquor ‘I speak’. What are common verbs? The verbs which end in -r like the deponents, but occur in two formae, i.e. the forma of acting and of experiencing, like osculor ‘I kiss’, criminor ‘I accuse’: for we say osculor te ‘I kiss you’ and osculor a te ‘I am kissed by you’, criminor te ‘I accuse you’, and criminor a te ‘I am accused by you’.

Genera verborum, quae ab aliis significaciones dicuntur, sunt quinque: activa, passiva, neutra, deponentia, communia. Activa sunt, quae o littera terminantur et accepta r littera faciunt ex se passiva, ut lego legor. Passiva sunt quae r littera terminantur et ea amissa redeunt in activa, ut legor, lego.
Neutra sunt quae o littera terminantur et accepta r littera Latina non sunt, ut sto, curro. Sunt etiam neutra, quae i littera terminantur, ut odi, novi, memini. Sunt item, quae in um syllabam desinunt, ut sum, prosum; item, quae in t litteram exeunt et inpersonalia dicuntur, ut pudet, taedet, paenitet, libet. Sed haec et simila defectiva existimanda sunt. Deponentia sunt, quae r littera terminantur et ea amissa Latina non sunt, ut convivor, conluctor. Communia sunt, quae r littera terminantur et in duas formas cadunt, patientis et agentis, ut scrutor, criminor: dicimus enim scrutor te et scrutor a te, criminor te et criminor a te (Mai., 635.5–636.5).

‘There are five kinds of verbs, which others call significations: actives, passives, neuters, deponents and common. Actives are those which end in a letter -o, and they make passives out of themselves by accepting the letter -r, such as lego ‘I read’, legor ‘I am read’. Passives are those which end in the letter -r and revert to actives by losing that letter, such as legor ‘I am read’, lego ‘I read’. Neuters are those which end in the letter -o and do not render grammatical Latin if they receive an -r, such as sto ‘I stand’ and curro ‘I run’. Neuters are also those which end in the letter -i, such as odi ‘I hate’, noui ‘I know’, memini ‘I remember’. Similarly, there are those which end in the syllable -um, such as sum ‘I am’, prosum ‘I profit’; likewise, there are those which end in -t (these are called impersonal), such as pudet ‘it shames’, taedet ‘it offends’, paenitet ‘it displeases’, libet ‘it pleasing’. However, these and similar ones ought to be considered defective.

Deponents are those which end in the letter -r and do not render grammatical Latin if they lose that letter, such as convivor ‘I feast’, conluctor ‘I struggle’. Common are those which end in the letter -r, and occur in two formae: i.e. the forma of acting and the forma of experiencing, such as scrutor ‘I examine’, criminor ‘I accuse’: for we say scrutor te ‘I examine you’ and scrutor a te ‘I am examined by you’, criminor te ‘I accuse you’ and criminor a te ‘I am accused by you’.

Donatus lists five classes of verbs (genera or significations) which he primarily describes in terms of morphology. He discerns the active from the passive on the basis that the former ends in -o and the latter in -or but, at the same time, is aware that they share a feature in common, namely the facility to transform: by that I mean, the active changes into passive if it acquires an
-r and the passive reverts into an active whenever it loses an -r. The neuter and deponent, by contrast, are set apart on account of being *activum* and *passivum tantum* respectively: that is to say, they manifest in a single form, either active or passive. The account of the neuter in the *Ars Maior* is particularly striking, as it not only incorporates intransitive verbs like *curro* ‘I run’, but also miscellaneous ones, such as *odi* ‘I hate’, *sum* ‘I am’ and *libet* ‘it pleases’ (which some call impersonal). These verbs are almost certainly assigned to the neuter class because they too lack passive inflection. The account culminates with a discussion of the common that attests an unorthodox use of the term *forma* (i.e. *forma agentis* and *forma patientis*). Usually, the term is rendered in English as ‘form’ (Schad, 2007: s.v. *forma*) referring to the morphological structure of a word, but if this translation is applied, the account would read as follows: ‘Common verbs are those which end in the letter -r and occur (cadunt) in two forms (formas)’. This translation is erroneous as it presents an internal contradiction: common verbs lack active inflection and, therefore, cannot inflect according to two distinct morphological patterns. Flobert (1975: 13) has suggested that ‘meaning’ (‘signifié’) may be a suitable translation, citing the following occurrences of the term which he maintains may corroborate his interpretation.

_Aut communia similia deponentibus et passivis sed agentis et patientis formam amplectuntur* (Phoc., 430.34–431.1).

‘The common verbs are similar to both deponents and passives but include both the *forma* of acting and the *forma* of experiencing.’

*Communia sunt, quae in r litteram similiter desinunt, ut deponentia, sed in duas formas cadunt patientis et agentis, ut scrutor amplector ulciscor.*

_Dicimus enim scrutor te et scrutor a te, amplector te et amplector a te, ulciscor te et ulciscor a te* (Asp., 50.7–10).

‘Common are those verbs which in the same way end in the letter -r, like the deponents, but occur in two formae: i.e.: the *forma* of acting and the *forma* of experiencing. For we say *scrutor te* ‘I examine’ and *scrutor a te* ‘I am examined’, *amplector te* ‘I embrace you’ and *amplector a te* ‘I am embraced by you’, *ulciscor te* ‘I avenge you’ and *ulciscor a te* ‘I am avenged by you’.’
Flobert’s interpretation, however, ought to be rejected on the grounds that it assigns *forma* an otherwise unattested meaning. As I have already stated, the term typically refers to the signifier, not what is signified. A more appropriate translation may be inferred by examining the characterisation of the common verb in the grammar of Consentius.

Communia sunt quae r littera terminata in duas formas cadunt patientis et agentis, ut consolor criminor. Haec enim specie tantum passiva declinantur, sed activa significatio casum accusativum sequitur: dicimus enim consolor fratem, criminor inimicum; passiva vero ablativum, ut consolor a fratre, criminor ab inimico (Cons., 367.30–34).

‘Common are those verbs ending in the letter -r which occur in two *formae* (i.e. the *forma* of acting and the *forma* of experiencing), such as consolor ‘I console’ and criminor ‘I accuse’. These verbs exclusively inflect in passive form (*species*), but active signification (*significatio*) requires the accusative case, for we say consolor fratem ‘I console the brother’, criminor inimicum ‘I accuse the enemy’. In contrast, the passive signification requires the ablative case, such as consolor a fratre ‘I am consoled by the brother’, criminor ab inimico ‘I am accused by the enemy’.

As we can see, the account is almost identical to Donatus’, but integrates some material that is not attested in either the *Ars Minor* or *Ars Maior*. Here Consentius discusses two different grammatical constructions involving the common verb. The *forma agentis* may refer to the construction that denotes active signification (*activa significatio*) (i.e. common verb + accusative case) and *forma patientis* to the construction that indicates passive signification (i.e. common verb + ablative case). If this suggestion is accurate, a suitable translation of *forma* might be ‘construction’.

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108 Donatus’ application of *forma* appears to be similar to Priscian’s use of the term *constructio* ‘construction’. Cf. Prisc. I.G. I (373.15–25): *Et activa quidem semper actum significat et facit ex se passivam absque duobus verbis, metuo et metuor, timeo et timeor; haec enim contrarias vocibus videntur habere significaciones, quamvis etiam ad sensus pertinientia verba, si quis altius consideret, in activis vocibus passionem et in passivis actionem fieri inventat, ut audio te, video te, tango te; ostendo enim, pati me aliquid in ipso actu. Cum enim dico audio te, ostendo, quod vocis tuae actum patiuntur aures meae; et e contrario audior a te dico, cum vox mea agit aliquid in aures tuas. Sed tamen quia nobis agentibus, id est sentientibus et aliquid facientibus, et oculi vident et aures audient et tactus corpori event; non irrationabiliter activorum et vocem et constructionem habuerunt.*
rendering is applied to Donatus’ description of the common verb, it would read as follows: ‘common are those which end in the letter -r, and occur in two constructions (formas): i.e. the construction associated with acting and the construction associated with experiencing, such as scrutor ‘I examine’, criminor ‘I accuse’: for we say scrutor te ‘I examine you’ and scrutor a te ‘I am examined by you’, criminor te ‘I accuse you’ and criminor a te ‘I am accused by you.’ If this translation is correct, it implies that Donatus characterises the common primarily on account of semantics and syntax: it has active meaning whenever it joins with an accusative case and passive meaning if it combines with an ablative.

3.3 Flavius Charisius Sosipater

Flavius Charisius Sosipater was the author of an ars who probably flourished sometime in the second half of the fourth century, possibly during the reign of Julian the Apostate (AD 332–363) whom he mentions (Char., 54.3; Schmidt, 1989: 126; Tolkiehn, 1910b: 1054–1055). He is identified as a magister (Char., 1.2) indicating that either he was a teacher or held an office in the Roman administration (see Kaster, 1988: 392–393). If the latter hypothesis is correct, the name Flavius takes on new significance, as it is the family name of Constantine the Great, who became emperor in the second decade of the fourth century. After Constantine ascended the throne, the name Flavius became an official title bestowed on

‘And the active always signifies the action and generates a passive, except in two verbs; metuo ‘I fear [someone/thing]’ and metuor ‘I am feared [by someone/thing]’, as well as timeo ‘I fear [someone/thing]’ and timeor ‘I am feared [by someone/thing]. For these verbs seem to have meanings in contradiction with [their] forms, although, if one reconsiders what has been said above, he may find that also the verbs pertaining to senses and emotions express the experience of an action with an active, and performance of an action with a passive, as in audio te ‘I hear you’, video te ‘I see you’, and tango te ‘I touch you’. Indeed, [with these verbs] I mean that, by doing the action of ‘hearing’, ‘seeing’, ‘touching’, I actually experience something. Indeed, when I say ‘I hear you’, I mean that my ears experience the action of your voice. Conversely, I say ‘I am heard by you’ when my voice does something to your ears. Nevertheless, since the eyes see, and the ears hear, and the sense of touch manifests itself in the body, when we are performing (that is when we feel and therefore do something), it is not irrationally, after all, that these verbs were given the same form and construction (constructio) as actives.’

men entering the Roman administration (Keenan, 1973: 33–63). If Charisius acquired the name after gaining employment in the Roman administration, he certainly lived no earlier than the middle of the fourth century (Kaster, 1988: 393). A terminus ante quem of the beginning of the sixth century is provided by Priscian, who often cites him in the company of Diomedes (Prisc. I.G.1, 470.13).

Where he lived has been the subject of debate since the late nineteenth century. St. Jerome (Hier. Chron. AM 2374) tells us that a certain Chrestus (or Charistus in Bern, Burgerbibl. 219) left Africa for Constantinople to succeed the Grammaticus Evanthis in AD 358. H. Usener (1868: 490–507) argued that the proper names Chrestus (and Charistus) are scribal errors which ought to be emended in favour of Charisius. Kaster (1988: 253), however, rejects the hypothesis on the grounds that ‘Charistus’ looks like the idiosyncratic result of a scribal error or a botched interlinear correction, with the name ‘Charisius’ failing in the attempt to drive out the unknown ‘Chrestus’.

More recently, Schmidt (1989: 126) has argued that Charisius was an inhabitant of the Eastern Roman Empire arriving at this conclusion on the strength of place names which he detected in the ars (Char., 45.15–17, 243.27–244.2) suggesting that he was born in Skythopolis (in modern day Jordan), studied in Sidon, Carthage and Beirut, and possibly lived in Chrysopolis (modern day Üsküdar). This hypothesis, however, has been questioned by J. Uría Varela (2006: 99–107) who has rightly pointed out that the ars is a compilation of sources, and so the place-names mentioned may tell us more about the individuals whom Charisius cited than they do about Charisius himself. In any case, several scholars have noticed that the ars appears to have been written for a Greek audience arriving at this conclusion for a number of reasons (Schenkevel, 2007: 181–189; Stoppie, 2005: 123–139; Tolkiehn, 1907: 1020–1022): firstly, because the preface informs us that the ars was written for Charisius’ son who was not a native speaker of Latin (Char., 1.1–16). The obvious inference is that he was a Greek speaker; and secondly because of the extensive application of Greek.
If the *ars* was indeed compiled for a Greek audience, it is likely that Charisius was an inhabitant of the Eastern half of the Roman Empire.

Charisius may have been a Christian, but the evidence supporting this assertion is limited. It depends entirely on the presence of a passage referencing biblical figures (e.g. Adam and Abraham, see *Char.*, 151.15–17). Hence, the argument is predicated on the belief that Charisius is the author of the passage in question, but it is equally as likely that he is not and that he derived the passage from a grammatical source whose author was Christian. If this latter hypothesis is true, we cannot assume that Charisius himself was a Christian.

The *ars* itself spans five books beginning with a short preface (*Char.*, 1.4–16). Initially, the first book displays characteristics of the *Schulgrammatik* genre (Law, 1987a: 191–192), that is to say, it is arranged in ascending order providing accounts of *vox* ‘utterance’, *littera* ‘letter’, *syllaba* ‘syllable’ and *dicito* ‘word’ (*Char.*, 4–15.5), but the later sections are more consistent with the *regula* type grammar (Law, 1987a: 191–192), dealing with matters to do with inflection (*Char.*, 15.6–192.18)\(^{110}\). The second book incorporates accounts of logical concepts, such as *de definitio in* ‘on the definition’, *de genere* ‘on the genus’ and *de specie* ‘on the species’ (*ibid.*, 192.20–193.2), and also descriptions of the eight parts of speech (*ibid.*, 193.4–315.27). The third is concerned with miscellaneous topics associated with the verb (*ibid.*, 316.1–349.15),\(^{111}\) the fourth deals with the

\(^{110}\) *De casibus* ‘on cases’, *de generibus nominum* ‘on the gender of nouns’, *de numeris et pronomininibus* ‘on number and pronouns’, *de ordinibus nominum* ‘the declensions of nouns’, *de observationibus nominum quibus genera et numeri discernuntur* ‘on observations concerning nouns which are discerned by gender and number, *de monoptotis* ‘concerning nouns with a single case-inflection’, *quae nomina hypocrismata non recipiant* ‘on nouns that do not receive hypocorisms’, *de nominativis ad regulam redactis* ‘on nominatives subjected to the rule’, *de extremitatis nominum et diversis quaestitionibus* ‘on the endings and diverse questions about nouns’, *de gradibus comparationis sive conlacionis* ‘on the grades of comparison’ *de analogia* ‘on analogy’, *de ablativo casu* ‘on the ablative case’ and *de formis casualibus* ‘on case forms’.

\(^{111}\) *De perfectis ordinum quattuor* ‘on the complete verbs of the four conjugations’, *de defectivis* ‘on defective verbs’, *de inchoativis* ‘on the inchoatives’, *de impersonalibus* ‘on impersonals’, *de frequentativis* ‘on frequentatives’, *de paragogis* ‘on derived verbs’, *de confusis* ‘on confounded verbs’ and *de qualitatis Latini sermonis et temporibus* ‘on the qualities and tenses of Latin speech’.
vices$^{112}$ and virtues$^{113}$ of Latin and also metrics (e.g. *de saturnio* ‘the saturnial metre’, *de rythmo et metro* ‘on rhythm and metre’) (ibid. 349.17–378.15) and the fifth offers extensive lists of *idiomata* and *differentiae* (ibid. 379.1–480.31; see Baratin, 1989: 336–342).

Charisius’ treatment of diathesis is in book two, chapter eight. It begins with a definition, followed by an account of *qualitas* ‘quality’ (*Char.*, 209.24–210.2). Diathesis is the second accident discussed by Charisius; however, his treatment is unique insofar as he provides, not one, but multiple descriptions of diathesis, one after the other, which we will call respectively *Genera A* (ibid., 210.3–8), *Genera B* (210.9–211.3), *Genera C* (211.4–24) and *Genera D* (211.25–213.28). Following the discussion of diathesis, Charisius turns his attention to other accidents, specifically *figura* ‘figure’, *numerus* ‘number’, *modus* ‘mood’, *tempus* ‘tense’ and *persona* ‘person’ (214.1–25). The account of tense is striking as it appears to be made up of two distinct accounts perhaps based on different sources, one that we will label *Tempus* (214.5–6) and another more sophisticated one that we will name *Tempus B* (214.7–18). After the discussion of tense, he returns again to treat diathesis in an account that we will designate *Significatio* (214.17–215.17), before devoting the remaining sections to an exhaustive description of the Latin conjugational system (215.18–232.8). The following diagram details the overall structure of the chapter.

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$^{113}$ *Tropus* ‘trope’, *metaplasmus* ‘metaplasm’, *schema lexeos* ‘figure of speech’ and *schema dianoaes* ‘figure of thought’
Throughout the chapter, Charisius refers to anonymous scholars (i.e. *quidam* or *alii*) to whom he attributes accounts of accidents. The source of these accounts has been a matter of debate among scholars since the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. K. Barwick (1922: 63–66) argued that Charisius copied them from his main source, a now lost work which he designated the ‘Gewährsmann’. In his reconstruction, the *Ars Grammatica* of Dositheus and the *Anonymus Bobiensis* were also related to the Gewährsmann, but indirectly via an intermediary source called the ‘Mittelquelle’ (1922: 9). He further hypothesised that Charisius had access to a number of other grammatical works, including the grammars of Cominianus (see Kaster, 1988: 259) and Julius Romanus (see Kaster, 1988: 424–426; Schenkeveld, 2004: 29–30). In recent years, however, this reconstruction has been rejected, most notably by Peter Schmidt (1989: 127) and Dirk Schenkeveld (2004: 20–21), in favour of one that was first proposed by Joannes Tolkiehn (1910a: 134) which identifies Cominianus’ *ars* as Charisius’ main source\(^{114}\) and, indeed, the ultimate source of the passages ascribed to *alii/quidam*.

### 3.3.1 Genera A

Now that the preliminary matters have been sufficiently discussed, let us turn our attention to the accounts of diathesis, beginning with *Genera A*.

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\(^{114}\) Bonnet (2000: 7–16) and Dammer (2001: 167–172, 180–182) have also arrived at this conclusion: the former by comparing the *ars* of Dositheus with that of Charisius and the latter by contrasting the *ars* of Diomedes with that of Charisius.
Verborum genera sunt quinque, activum, ut lego scribo, passivum, ut legor scribor, neutrum, ut sedeo curro, commune, ut adulor criminor, deponens, ut luctor convivor. Praeterea sunt et impersonalia, ut sedetur itur videtur. Non minus et illa impersonalia dicuntur, ut taedet pudet paenitet (Char., 210.3–8).

‘There are five kinds of verbs: active, such as lego ‘I read’, scribo ‘I write’; passive, such as legor ‘I am read’, scribor ‘I am written’; neuter, such as sedeo ‘I sit’, curro ‘I run’; common, such as adulor ‘I flatter’, criminor ‘I accuse’; deponent, such as lucto ‘I wrestle’, convivor ‘I attend’. Besides these, there are also impersonals such as sedetur ‘one sits’, itur ‘one proceeds’, videtur ‘one sees’. Moreover, there are verbs which are equally impersonals, such as taedet ‘it offends’, pudet ‘it shames’, paenitet ‘it displeases’.

The account lists five types (genera) of verbs (i.e. active, passive, neuter, common and deponent, which are not characterised in terms of linguistic criteria, but merely exemplified by two lexemes. As such, it offers a very basic description which does little more than introduce the reader to terms and classes relating to diathesis. The account culminates with a short discussion of the impersonal which is divided into two subclasses, one consisting of active verbal forms (e.g. taedet ‘it offends’) and another of passive verbal forms (e.g. sedetur ‘one sits’). The impersonal is not explicitly labelled a genus: though it appears to be related to the other genera in some way, the exact relationship between them is not ultimately made clear.

3.3.2 Genera B and C

Genera B and C are accounts of diathesis incorporating four and six classes respectively: the former includes the active, passive, common and neuter and the latter embraces the four just mentioned plus an additional two, specifically deponent and supine. Genera B begins with a discussion of the active and passive which is as follows:

Quibusdam placuit verborum genera esse quattuor, agens, patiens commune neutrum. Agens verbum intellegitur quod o littera terminatur et adsumpta r

‘Some people believe that there are four kinds of verbs, performing, experiencing, common and neuter. The performing verb is regarded as the one that ends in the letter -o and that turns into an experiencing verb by receiving an -r, such as moneo ‘I remind’, scribo ‘I write’. It has two participles, i.e. present and future, such as monens ‘reminding’, scribens ‘writing’, moniturus ‘about to remind’, scripturus ‘about to write’. When it receives the letter -r, it turns into a passive, such as moneor ‘I am reminded’, scribor ‘I am written’: it has two participles, past and future, such as monitus ‘reminded’, monendus ‘ought to be reminded’, scriptus ‘written’, scribendus ‘ought to be written’. The active cannot be without the passive nor can the passive be without the active. For when there is someone who acts, it is unavoidable that there is someone [else] who undergoes the action.’

As we can see, the author applies the labels agens and patiens to the active and passive respectively, an application of terminology that is only found in one other grammatical treatise, namely in Dositheus’ ars (Dos., 67.11–13). Bonnet (2000: 10–13) suggests that they may have derived this use of terminology from a common source, possibly the ars of Cominianus. The author sets the agens apart from the patiens on the basis of morphology, remarking that the former manifests with an ending in -o and the latter with an ending in -r. What is more, he distinguishes the former on the basis that it has present and future participial forms ending in -ans and -urus, while the latter has past and future forms ending in -us and -dus. The author also shows a concern for semantics and, to some extent, for transitivity pointing out that both denote actions requiring two participants, an agent and a patient (Nam ubi est qui facit, necesse est ut sit qui patitur).
Following the discussion of active and passive, the author turns his attention to the common and neuter describing them on the basis of morphology and semantics.


‘The common is regarded as a verb that ends in the letter -r and never loses it; it has two meanings, i.e. agent and patient, such as consolor ‘I console’, criminor ‘I accuse’. For we say consolor illum and ab illo ‘I console you’ and ‘I am consoled by you’, whereas it cannot produce forms such as consolo and crinimo. It has four participles: those that adhere to [the rules of] active form in the present and future tense, such as consolans ‘consoling’, consolatus ‘about to console’, criminans ‘accusing’, criminaturus ‘about to accuse’; those that adhere to [the rules of] passive form in the past and future tense, such as consolatus ‘consoled’, consolandus ‘ought to console’, criminatus ‘accused’, criminandus ‘ought to be accused’, and similar verbs such as osculor ‘I kiss’, ludificor ‘I trifle’, depopulor ‘I pillage’, blandior ‘I flatter’. The neuter is regarded as a verb which signifies a state and, although it ends in -o, it cannot receive the letter -r in order to make a passive, e.g. sedeo ‘I sit’, ambulo ‘I walk’. For it cannot produce [forms such as] sedeor or ambulor. It has two participles, present and future, such as ambulans ‘walking’, ambulaturus ‘about to walk, sedens ‘sitting’, sessurus ‘about to sit’. Moreover, neutrals are so called because they neither affect something nor are they affected, such as

Here the author identifies the common as a passive verb signifying both active and passive meaning (potestas) and neuter as an active conveying a state (habitus). He also differentiates them on the basis of their participial forms, since the common inflects according to four participial forms (i.e. present and future active and past and future passive), whereas the neuter inflects according to two (i.e. the present and future active). The final two classes mentioned are deponent and supine which are also characterised in terms of form and meaning.


‘Others said that there is a fifth kind of verb, i.e. the simple or deponent, about which [the following] should be said. The simple or deponent is regarded as the verb which ends in the letter -r and never loses it, and expresses one [semantic] force, that is of agent, such as luctor ‘I wrestle’, irascor ‘I get angry’. For it does not produce [forms such as] lucto irasco. This verb has three participles, present, past and future, such as luctans ‘wrestling’, luctatus ‘wrestled’, luctaturus ‘about to wrestle’ and others, such as sequor ‘I follow’, conor ‘I attempt’. However, we do not say
luctandum, unless we say luctandum, a form which we use in all verbs, for example luctandum mihi est ‘I ought to wrestle’, eundum mihi est ‘I ought to go’, gaudendum mihi est ‘I ought to be glad’, standum mihi est ‘I ought to stand’, veniendum mihi est ‘I ought to come’. On the contrary, there is a [type of] verb that signifies the experience of an action, and yet it possesses active inflection, such as veneo ‘I am sold, vapulo ‘I am beaten’, ardeo ‘I am on fire’, flagro ‘I am burned’; these verbs which certain [writers] have placed in the category of neuters, others have called supines. This verb has two participles: present and future. Present, such as vapulans ‘being beaten’, and future, such as vapulaturus ‘about to be beaten’. Those who placed these verbs in the category of neuters have erred, for either the letter -r is permitted in neuter verbs in some of their parts, or neuters express passive signification in some way, as in the case of impersonal verbs such as sedetur ‘one sits’, ambulatur ‘one walks’. Similarly, we can say ambulatum est ‘one walked’ and also in the case of infinitives ambulari ‘to be walking (impersonal)’.

In the passage, the author distinguishes between the deponent and the supine on the grounds that the former inflects in passive form and yet has active meaning, while the latter has active form but expresses passive meaning. Moreover, he points out that the deponent inflects according to three participial forms (i.e. past, present and future), while the supine inflects according to two (i.e. present and future).

Prior to the present investigation, E. Hovdhaugen (1987: 135) was the most recent author to analyse the grammatical theory in this account. He argues that it is ‘morphologically motivated and takes not only inflection but the morphology of the verbal lexeme into account, although semantic characteristics are also given for the genders115 established by morphological criteria’ (1987:135; my italics). In this way, he contends that the author was primarily preoccupied with morphological features, while semantics were largely of secondary concern to him. This conclusion, however, is not entirely accurate. As we have observed, the author makes a

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115 Hovdhaugen employs the terms ‘verbal gender’ or ‘gender’ instead of what I have elected to use, namely ‘verbal class’ or simply ‘class’. 

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distinction between the common and the deponent and the neuter and the supine purely on semantic grounds. What is more, he appears to have determined the order of the verbs on the basis of their meaning as I will hope to show with the help of the following table.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>genus</th>
<th>morphology</th>
<th>semantics</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>agens</td>
<td>active</td>
<td>active</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>patiens</td>
<td>passive</td>
<td>passive</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>commune</td>
<td>passive</td>
<td>both active and passive</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>neutrum</td>
<td>active</td>
<td>neither active nor passive</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>deponens</td>
<td>passive</td>
<td>active</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>supinum</td>
<td>active</td>
<td>passive</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

This table brings to light the rationale behind the arrangement of the verbs: they are organised in three groups of two, i.e. (1) active and passive, (2) common and neuter, and (3) deponent and supine, and their order appears to be motivated by the verb’s semantics. The author appears to arrange them according to two main criteria: firstly, a verb expressing active meaning precedes one signifying passive;\(^{116}\) secondly, those conveying both active and passive meaning are positioned prior to those denoting neither (i.e. stative verbs). Accordingly, the *agens* is placed in first position, given that it expresses active signification, and is followed by the *patiens*, which has passive signification. Proceeding to the second group, consisting of common and neuter, we find that the former is positioned first on the basis that it exhibits both active and passive meaning, followed by the latter since it conveys neither (i.e. a state). The final group incorporates deponent and supine: the former is placed first, given that it signifies active meaning, and is followed by the latter, which indicates passive meaning. The relationship between the various verbs appears to be too systematic to be coincidental. For this reason, it is reasonable to conclude that the author arranged the verbs on the basis of their meanings.

3.3.3 Genera D

Following this description of diathesis, Charisius provides another alternative classification consisting of three classes (*genera*), namely

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\(^{116}\) The line *Nam ubi est qui facit, necesse est ut sit qui patitur* (210. 18–19) suggests that author had this principle in mind when he arranged the classes.
activum ‘active’, passivum ‘passive’ and habitivum ‘stative’, which he characterises in terms of semantics.


‘Others agree that there are altogether three kinds of verbs, active, passive and stative, and they distinguish them in the following way: the active involves performing whatever the verb may designate, such as lego ‘I read’, or it designates a movement of the body such as salio ‘I leap’, or a movement of the soul such as provido ‘I foresee’. The passive is contrary to the active and involves experiencing whatever the verb may designate, such as uror ‘I am burned’. These verbs, as we have mentioned above, possess meanings that involve the movement of the body or the soul. Cogitatur ‘it is being thought’ designates a movement of the soul and salior ‘I am jumped’ designates a movement of the body. Statives are verbs which designate something that becomes or is naturally, such as nascitur ‘he is born’, crescit ‘he grows’, oritur ‘he rises’. These verbs, however, are separated from passives by a subtle distinction and are either only active or passive [in form].’

This account certainly bears strong resemblance to another description of verbs preserved in Consentius’ ars.

Verbum est pars orationis factum aliquod habitumve significans cum tempore et persona sine casu. Factum quod significatur agentis aut patientis vim continet: agentis, ut seco, uro: patientis, ut secor, uror. Cum vero neutrum horum significationi inest, habitus quidam tantum modo demonstratur, ut est sto sapio vivo (Cons., 365.29–366.3).

‘A verb is a part of speech which signifies that something is done or is in a particular state, with tense and person but without case: that something is
done is signified whenever the verb has an active meaning, such as *seco* ‘I cut’ and *uro* ‘I burn’, or a passive meaning, such as *secor* ‘I am cut’ and *uror* ‘I am burned’. When neither performing nor experiencing befit the meaning [of the verb], a state alone is indicated, such as *sto* ‘I stand’, *sapio* ‘I am wise’, *vivo* ‘I am alive’.

Mazhuga (2009: 141–145) has argued that *Genera D* and Consentius’ account share common grammatical doctrine which originally goes back to one common source, namely *De Dubio Sermone* by Pliny the Elder. He accounts for the disparities that exist between them by proposing that neither is based on an original account of *De Dubio Sermone*; instead, the author of *Genera D* and Consentius acquired their Plinian content from two different intermediary sources: the former procured his material from the works of Caper (142) while the latter drew his content from the works of Valerius Probus (144), whom Consentius mentions by name in his description of the verb (*Cons.*, 366.19).

Mazhuga’s study undoubtedly illuminates our understanding of grammatical passages which have received limited scholarly attention in print; nonetheless, having said this, some of his conclusions remain a matter of debate, particularly those concerning the transmission of Pliny’s *De Dubio Sermone* in antiquity. This subject is fraught with difficulties for the very fact that scholars have yet to agree on the precise channels through which fragments of this treatise were transmitted.\(^{117}\) Mazhuga’s contribution on this specific issue may prove to be significant, but we cannot know the extent of the likelihood of his conclusions until new and more comprehensive research is undertaken. For the purposes of this thesis, the most valuable insight which Mazhuga discloses concerns the possible relationship between *Genera D* and the aforementioned passage from Consentius’ *ars*. He is the only scholar, as far as I am aware, who suggests that these passages may share common source material.\(^{118}\)

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\(^{118}\) Flobert (1975: 16 n.3) has noted the similarity between the two accounts (particularly the use of the term *habitus*), without suggesting, however, that they may share common sources.
persuasive argument, but whether these accounts incorporate grammatical doctrine that is particular to Pliny remains yet to be proven. It should also be pointed out that Mazhuga’s conclusions attempt to address issues which traditionally are associated with *Quellenforschung*, but do not shed new light on the actual understanding of diathesis. For this reason, the treatment of diathesis in *Genera D* deserves further attention.

As we have already mentioned, the author of *Genera D* lists three types of verbs: *activum* ‘active’, *passivum* ‘passive’ and *habitivum* ‘stative’. The active and passive are divided into three sub-categories: (1) verbs which signify generic actions such as *lego* ‘I read’, *uror* ‘I am burned’; (2) verbs which signify a movement (*motus*) of the body (*corpus*) such as *salio* ‘I jump’, *salior* ‘I am jumped’; (3) verbs which signify a movement of the soul (*animus*) such as *provideo* ‘I foresee’, *cogitatur* ‘it is thought’. The philosophical origin of these divisions is beyond doubt and can be traced back to works of Plato (i.e. κίνησις ψυχῆς καὶ σώματος, see *Plat. Def.*, 414c). However, it should be highlighted that the use of these categories outside the discipline of philosophy is certainly not uncommon (*Anon. ad Cuim.*, 2.65–3.73; *Apol. Dysc.*, 397.6; *Prisc. I.G.* 2, 272.9–10; *Vic.*, 187.1–7).

The author then turns his attention to the class known as *habitivum* consisting of verbs which indicate ‘something that becomes or is naturally’. This term *habitivum* and its lexical variants are rarely attested in accounts of verbs and seem to be either Aristotelian in origin and related to the Greek ἐξίς (*Cat.*, 8b28, on which see Flobert, 1975: 16) or alternatively Stoic in origin and associated with the term ἐκτόν (Mazhuga, 2009: 143–4).

Typically, when the term is attested in the grammatical tradition, it represents a class of active verbal forms, more commonly known as neuter, which lack passive form and express a state (*Char.*, 210.30–31; *Cons.*, 366.2–3). However, in *Genera D*, the class is striking because it embraces both active verbal forms which do not have corresponding passive forms (commonly known as neuter) and passive verbal forms which do not have
corresponding active forms (typically known as deponent), e.g. *nascitur crescit oritur*.

After defining the three main classes (active, passive and stative) in their broadest terms, the author returns once again to describe actives and passives in a more detailed manner. Semantic considerations continue to be of primary concern to the author but, on this occasion, actives and passives are divided into two subclasses (*species*) rather than three.

*Activorum autem species duae, quarum una passivum non habet, ut ambulat currit, altera habet, ut iubet docet. Passivorum quoque species sunt totidem, quarum una est quae natura pati quid significat moritur senescit, quibus etiam illa adnumerantur quae per se quid venire significant, ut cadit, labitur tremit. Altera exstat, cum illi qui patitur accidere quid significatur, ut verberatur, uritur (Char., 212., 5–12).*

‘There are two sub-types of actives: one does not have a passive, such as *ambulat* ‘he walks’, *currit* ‘he runs’, while the other does, e.g. *iubet* ‘he orders’, *docet* ‘he teaches’. There is also an equal number of sub-types of passives: one of them involves experiencing naturally what the verb signifies such as *moritur* ‘he dies’, *senescit* ‘he ages’. Moreover, along with these are numbered other verbs which signify what comes about by itself such as *cadit* ‘he falls’, *labitur* ‘he slips’, *tremit* ‘he trembles’. The other sub-type is signified when something happens to someone who experiences an action, such as *verberatur* ‘he is beaten’, *uritur* ‘he is burned’.

The actives appear to be grouped primarily on account of their morphology, but this criterion quite clearly has no bearing on the categorisation of the passives, which are exemplified by means of forms displaying both active and passive verbal morphology (*moritur, senescit, cadit, labitur, tremit*). Although it is not explicitly stated, it is plausible that passives are categorised on the basis of their degree of transitivity: the first class consists of intransitive verbs such as *moritur, senescit, cadit, labitur, tremit*, while the second comprises of transitive verbs such as *verberatur* and *uritur*. It is also possible that the underlying rationale behind the classification of the actives may be their degree of transitivity, considering
that the first class incorporates intransitive verbs (*ambulat*, *currit*) while the second contains transitive verbs (*iubet*, *docet*). If this hypothesis is correct, the classes are ordered on the basis of a well thought-out and pre-established pattern which positions intransitives before transitives. We can express this visually in the table below.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>class</th>
<th>morphology</th>
<th>semantics</th>
<th>transitivity</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>active (e.g. <em>ambulat</em>, <em>currit</em>)</td>
<td>active</td>
<td>active</td>
<td>intransitive</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>active (e.g. <em>iubet</em>, <em>docet</em>)</td>
<td>active</td>
<td>active</td>
<td>transitive</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>passive (e.g. <em>moritur</em>, <em>cadit</em>)</td>
<td>either active or passive</td>
<td>passive</td>
<td>intransitive</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>passive (e.g. <em>verberatur</em>, <em>uritur</em>)</td>
<td>passive</td>
<td>passive</td>
<td>transitive</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

This is not the only account which appears to group verbs on the basis of semantics and degree of transitivity. A similar, but more detailed, classification is also found in the *ars* of Consentius:

_Eorum autem quae actum significant quaedam talia sunt, ut in alio actus, in alio passio constituta sit, ut cum dicimus seco uro, necesse est ut administrantem et patientem unius intellectus ratio comprehendat; quaedam vero talia sunt, ut nullum patientem extrinsecus necesse sit intelligi, ut cum dicimus sedeo et ambulo. Similiter quoque ea quae patientiam habent interdum eius modi sunt, ut agentem extrinsecus demonstrant, sicuti est secor pulsor vapulo; quaedam autem eius modi sunt, ut patientia quae significatur nullam agentis personam trahat extrinsecus, ut est esurio algeo (Cons., 366.3–11)._ 

*Among these verbs which signify a performance, some are such that a performance is caused by one participant, while another participant undergoes an experience: for example, when we say *seco* ‘I cut’, *uro* ‘I burn’, it is necessary that our understanding of the complete idea [of these verbs] embrace an agent and a patient. Some verbs, however, are such that it is not necessary to take into account any external patient, like when we say *sedo* ‘I sit’ and *ambulo* ‘I walk’. Similarly, there are verbs of one sort, which sometimes express [implicitly] the patient [but] are such that they reveal an external agent, such as *secor* ‘I am cut’, *pulsor* ‘I am beaten’, *vapulo* ‘I am whipped’. In addition, there are verbs of another sort, such that the patient which is indicated requires no external agent, e.g. *esurio* ‘I am hungry’, *algeo* ‘I am cold’.*
Here Consentius refers to four different classes: two active and two passive. The first active class (seco, uro) incorporates transitive verbs and corresponds to the second active subclass of Genera D (iubet, docet), while the second active class contains intransitive verbs (sedeo, ambulo) and mirrors the first subclass of Genera D (ambulat, currit). Moreover, the first semantically-passive class (secor, pulsor, vapulo) comprises of transitive verbs and imitates the second subclass of Genera D (verberatur, uritur), while the second semantically-passive class (esurio, algeo) embraces intransitive verbs, and can be equated with the first passive subclass of Genera D (moritur, senescit, cadit, labitur, tremit). Morphology, just as we found in Genera D, has no bearing on the classification of passive verbs. This can be expressed diagrammatically as follows:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>class</th>
<th>morphology</th>
<th>semantics</th>
<th>transitivity</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>active (e.g. seco, uro)</td>
<td>active</td>
<td>active</td>
<td>transitive</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>active (e.g. sedeo, ambulo)</td>
<td>active</td>
<td>active</td>
<td>intransitive</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>passive (e.g. secor, vapulo)</td>
<td>either active or passive</td>
<td>passive</td>
<td>transitive</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>passive (e.g. esurio, algeo)</td>
<td>active</td>
<td>passive</td>
<td>intransitive</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The similarity between the descriptions of active and passive verbs in Genera D and Consentius’ ars is striking. As we have seen, the verbs in both accounts are divided into four classes largely on the basis of semantics and their degree of transitivity. This could be interpreted as evidence shoring up Mazhuga’s claim that both accounts originally derive from one common source. Admittedly, though, as much as these accounts share some common features, the disparities that exist between them are difficult to ignore. For instance, both authors arrange the classes in slightly different ways (i.e. transitive precede intransitive verbs in Consentius’ description and intransitive precede transitive verbs in Genera D) and exemplify them by means of different verbal lexemes. Therefore, if it is true that these accounts derive from one common source, they must have undergone a great deal of modification in the course of their transmission.

In sum, Genera D provides us with an alternative way of approaching the description of diathesis. Latin authors typically explained diathesis in
terms of morpho-semantic classes (e.g. active, passive, deponent, common, neuter, etc.) which enabled them to differentiate between verbs such as *vapulo* ‘I am beaten’ and *verberor* ‘I am lashed’, the former being labelled either neuter or supine and the latter passive. In *Genera D*, this type of distinction was impossible since morphology was simply not taken into account; both of these verbs would, in all likelihood, have been identified as passives. Since morphology all but became a redundant criterion, the author of *Genera D* organised verbal classes on the basis of transitivity; this complemented his semantic approach and offered him a practical way of classifying verbs. However, this way of treating diathesis failed to achieve widespread approval among other Latin authors. The reason (or indeed reasons) why this treatment did not gain at least partial acceptance is not immediately apparent, but it is possible that some of the blame lies with the stative category (*habitum*). It seems that isolating a verb which was unequivocally a stative was no easy task because, as it turns out, some statives could be quite easily classified as either actives or passives.

Following a description of common, impersonal and deponent verbs (*Char.*, 212.13–213.12)\(^\text{119}\), Charisius turns his attention once again to the three primary semantic classes.

\(^{119}\) *Est aliud genus quod commune vocatur, ut vador ulciscor. Communiter enim tam agit quam patitur. Quaedam enim et instantis temporis et personae primae et numeri singularis significatio. Quaedam vero sine persona solam rem per tempora ostendunt, ut curritur currebatur curretur. Haec enim neque et pluralia fieri neque ad personam referri possunt. At eadem composita habent in eadem forma (nam significat quasi percurritur inambulatur) et in passivam personam referantur et numerum. Dicimus enim percurritur campus, perambulatur forum, circuitur civitas, aditiur magistratus. Similiter haec sive simplicia sive composita sine numero personaque cum tempore tamen ostenduntur, ut decet decuit decebit oportet licet taedet pudet piget. His enim cum adicitur nomen aut pronomen, personam designant, quasi decet illium pudet Gaium. Eadem ad praeteritum tempus relata tribus modis intelleguntur. Nam partim duplicantur addito aliquo verbo, ut taedet, pertAESUM est, partim sine adeccione, ut decet decuit. Nec enim aut taeditum aut taesum est nec rursus taeduit ut decuit dict potest. Tertia species est eorum quae in utramque formam cadunt, ut licuit licitum est, puduit puditum est. Sunt verba activa passivorum figura est, quasi testificatur exsecratur. Melius enim erat dicere testificatur, quasi testem facult, ut amplificat, quasi amplum facit, item exsecrat ut obsecrat, quam testificatur exsecratur, quasi ipse ab alio. Sunt etiam e contrario passiva quae speciem activorum optinet, ut veneo per praecenem, ardeo amore, fio magistratus, vapulo pendens. There is another kind which is called common, such as vador ‘I bind over by bail’, ulciscor ‘I punish’, given that it commonly acts as much as it undergoes an action. Certain verbs signify tense, number and person, such as lego ‘I read’, scribo ‘I write’. For this signification possesses first person
Cum omnia verba aut actione activa aut passione passiva aut habitu
dictantur, non imerito habitiva cum activis adnumerantur quae
habent ἐνέργειαν ut cernit videt aspicit. At contraria eorum
καταχρηστικῶς nominantur passiva. Nullum enim πάθος habet qui
cernitur ab aliis sive videtur, amatur, diligitur, et suspicitur, auditur,
excusatur, defenditur, quonia non minus haec in praesentis quam in
absentis cadunt, qui illa etiam ignorare possunt (Char., 213.16–24).

Although all verbs are described as either actives because of performance,
or passives because of experience, or indeed as statives from a certain state,
some statives are not undeservedly numbered among the actives, as they
demonstrate an ἐνέργειαν ‘performance’, e.g. cernit ‘he discerns’, videt ‘he
sees’, aspicit ‘he gazes’. However, the alternative forms of these
aforementioned verbs are improperly (καταχρηστικῶς) named passives.

For he who is discerned, seen, loved, esteemed, admired, heard, excused, or
defended by others does not undergo an experience (πάθος), because these
verbs occur as much in the presence of the subject as in the absence of it;
indeed, the subject can be perfectly unaware of them.‘

singular present tense. Certain verbs express an action along with tenses but without person
such as curritur ‘one runs’, currebatur ‘one used to run’, curretur ‘one will run’. These
verbs can neither have plural forms nor refer to a [particular] person. They can, however,
possess compound in this very form (e.g. percurritur ‘is crossed’ and inambulatur ‘is
walked up and down’) and these refer to person and number in the passive. For we say
percurritur campus ‘the plain is being crossed’, perambulatur forum ‘the forum is being
walked through’, circuitur civitas ‘the city is being walked around’, aditum magistratus ‘the
magistrate is approached’. Similarly these verbs, in either simple or compound form, are
expressed with tense but without person and number, such as decet ‘it is fitting’, decuit ‘it
was fitting’, decebit ‘it will be fitting’, oportet ‘it is proper’, licet ‘it is permitted’, taedet ‘it
offends’, pudet ‘it shames’, piget ‘it disgusts’. However, when a noun or pronoun is added
to these verbs, they designate a person, such as decet illum ‘it is fitting to him’, pudet
Gaium ‘Gaius is ashamed’. These verbs, when turned into past tenses, are categorised in
three ways: some are enlarged by adding another verb such as taedet ‘it offends’, pertaesum
est ‘it offended’, some without the addition [of an extra element], such as decet ‘it is
fitting’, decuit ‘it was fitting’: for neither does the form taedatum, nor taesum, nor indeed
taeduit ‘it offended’, exist in the same way as the form decuit ‘it was fitting’ does.
The third kind consists of verbs which can occur in both the aforementioned forms, such as
licuiut, licitum est ‘it was permitted’, puduit, puditum est ‘it shamed’. Certain actives are
expressed in form of passives, such as testificatur ‘he testifies’, execratur ‘he takes an
oath’. It would be better to say testificat (as if we said facit testem ‘he brings a witness’), or
amplificat ‘he enlarges’ (as if we said amplum facit ‘he makes something large’); likewise,
it would be better to say execratus, like in obsecrat ‘he implores’, rather than testificatur or
execratur, as if the subject was cursed by someone else. In contrast, there are certain
passives which preserve the form of actives such veneo per praeconem ‘I am sold by the
auctioneer’, ardeo amore ‘I burn with love’, fio magistratus ‘I become a magistrate’,
vapulo pendens ‘I am beaten while hanging’.’
Here the author points out one of the problems encountered by those who treat diathesis purely in terms of semantics: some verbs convey ambiguous meanings and thus it is difficult to determine to which class they ought to be assigned. For example, in the passage above, the author regards verbs such as cernit ‘he discerns’, videt ‘he looks’, aspicit ‘he gazes’ as statives, even though they appear to indicate active meaning (i.e. ἐνέργεια). This invites the question: why should these verbs be described as statives? In order to understand the rationale behind this, we need to first review what constitutes an active verb for the author of Genera D.

As we have already pointed out, the author of Genera D appears to identify two kinds of actives: intransitive and transitive. The transitive denotes an action that involves two participants: one who performs the action and another who experiences it. Accordingly, it expresses active meaning when it inflects in active form and passive meaning in passive form (e.g. docet). On the contrary, the intransitive signifies an action that requires only one participant who performs the action and typically lacks passive inflection (e.g. currit).

Verbs such as cerno ‘I discern’, video ‘I see’, aspicio ‘I gaze’, amo ‘I love’, diligo ‘I esteem’, suspicitur ‘I admire’, audio ‘I hear’ are certainly similar to transitives in some respects, but, at the same time, embrace one specific feature which sets them apart. Although these verbs inflect in both active and passive form and express verbal ideas that require two participants, their passive forms do not convey passive meaning. Take for example the sentence homo videtur a puero ‘the man is seen by the boy’: the ‘man’, in this instance, does not experience the act of seeing, but he can be characterised as being in some kind of state. Therefore, the author distinguished these verbs as statives because, although they inflect in two opposing forms which would seem to imply that they alternate between active and passive meaning, in fact they do not participate in this semantic dichotomy. Their passive forms do not actually express passive meaning ‘proper’, but rather a state.
These are not the only verbs which were considered to be consistent with more than one semantic class. The author of *Genera D* defines verbs denoting bodily sensations or dispositions as statives:

Sunt verba quae dicuntur inceptiva, ut tepescit frigescit calescit, ex quibus habitiva fiunt, cum inceptionem transierint, ut tepet friget calet pallet (Char., 213.12–15).

‘There are verbs which are called inceptives, such as *tepescit* ‘he becomes warm’, *frigescit* ‘he becomes cold’, *calescit* ‘he becomes warm’, from which certain statives arise once the initial phase of the action has passed, such as *tepet* ‘he is warm’, *friget* ‘he is cold’, *calet* ‘he is warm’, *pallet* ‘he is pale’.

However, the author of *De Verbo* and Priscian, by contrast, contend that verbs such as these express passivity.

Nam multa etiam o terminata passivae significationis sunt, ut algeo, esurio; sed quoniam minime altero patiente penes alterum est actus, ideo nec passiva dicuntur (Anon. Verbo, 52.24–26).

‘However, there are many verbs ending in -o [which have] passive signification, like *algeo* ‘I am cold’ and *esurio* ‘I am hungry’. These verbs cannot be characterised as passives because although someone experiences an action, the action is not associated with someone else.’

Sunt quaedam ex eadem forma, quae passivam videntur habere significationem, sed quae non extrinsecus fit, quam Graeci αὐτοπάθειαν vocant, id est quae ex se in se ipsa fit intrinsecus passio, ut rubeo, ferveo, caleo, tepeo, marceo, aegroto, titubo, vacillo (Prisc. I.G.1, 378. 10–13).

‘There are certain verbs of the same form that seem to have passive meaning, which the Greeks call αὐτοπάθεια ‘self-suffering’, that is passivity which happens internally in and of itself, but which does not happen as a result of an external [agent], like *rubeo* ‘I grow red’, *ferveo* ‘I am inflamed’, *caleo* ‘I am hot’, *tepeo* ‘I am warm’, *marceo* ‘I faint’, *aegroto* ‘I am sick’, *titubo* ‘I waver’ and *vacillo* ‘I vacillate’.

What all this reveals is a fundamental problem affecting a threefold semantic categorisation of verbs: although it is true that most verbs were considered to be unambiguously active, passive or stative, there were some that could be characterised as active or stative or, indeed, as passive or stative. When a verb was deemed to be compatible with more than one
Chapter Three

class, the onus was on the theorist to select the class which he judged to be the most appropriate for the verb. Consequently, the categorisation of these semantically ambiguous verbs seems to have been based on each author’s personal and subjective judgment, rather than on a systematic and universally accepted theory which could determine the ‘correct’ categorisation of each and every verb. It is, therefore, not unexpected that this kind of treatment is so rarely attested in the sources, as it was likely to cause dissent among authors, who might disagree over the classifications of particular verbs.

In order to avoid conflict, theorists sought out alternative, more ‘accurate’ means of explaining diathesis. Most recognised that there is a natural dichotomy in Latin between active and passive verbal forms (Anon. *Verbo*, 52.12; *LL*, 8.58–59; *Prisc. I.G.* 1, 373. 11–12; *Prisc. Inst.*, 24.6–7) and, on the basis of this observation, resolved that all verbs ought to be classified in terms of their morphology (and, to a lesser extent, their meaning). In particular, they realised that a simple set of morphological rules could be easily memorised, and could more easily account for the classification of almost all verbs.\(^{120}\) These rules turned out to be extremely comprehensive, as they assigned each and every verb to only one specific class (cf. *Genera B* and *C*). For this reason, morphology proved to be a more effective means of describing diathesis than semantics, as it enabled the authors of grammatical treatises to establish a standardised account which all contemporary and future writers could conceivably endorse.

### 3.3.4 Significatio

The final description of diathesis is a great deal more straightforward than the treatment of verbs in *Genera D*. The author mentions the five ‘traditional’ types and explains them primarily in terms of morphology, except for the common, which requires a more semantically-oriented treatment:

\(^{120}\) Except for common verbs, which are distinguished from deponents on the basis of meaning and syntax.

‘The signification of verbs is defined briefly and rather clearly by others who divided it into five classes (species) in the following manner: there are actives such as lego I read’, passives such as legor ‘I am read’, neuters such as sto ‘I stand’, deponent such as nascor ‘I am born’, and common such as populor ‘I ravage’. Therefore, these significations can be easily understood in the following way: the active will be a verb which ends in the letter -o in the first person singular present indicative, and which can receive a letter -r in order to make a passive, such as scribo ‘I write’, scribor ‘I am written’, lego ‘I read’, legor ‘I am read’. The passive will be a verb which ends in the letter -r, and which loses it in order to make an active, such as ducor ‘I am lead’, trahor ‘I am drawn’. Once the letter -r is removed, an active is made, such as duco ‘I lead’, traho ‘I draw’. The neuter will be a verb that ends in the letter -o and does not receive the letter -r, and although it is in active form (species), it lacks the passive: for we do not say curror. The deponent is so called on account of antiphrasis: by that I mean that it is contradictory, because the verb ends in the letter -r but cannot put that letter aside (deponere), and although it is in passive form (species), it lacks the active: for we do not say nasco. The common is a verb that looks passive in form (species) but possesses active and passive significations, such as populor te ‘I ravage you’, and populor a te ‘I am ravaged by you’.’
This account, in most respects, is quite similar to *Genera A* and indeed also to Donatus’ descriptions of diathesis; nonetheless, it features some minor differences, mainly in regard to its application of terminology. That said several modern scholars have singled out this account as being somewhat unusual, or even unique, for a variety of reasons. Barwick (1992: 22–23) has argued that it may be a fragment of Remmius Palaemon’s lost grammar, but this view has been rejected by a number of scholars (Hovdhaugen, 1987: 137; Mazhuga, 2009: 133). Hovdhaugen too (1987: 137) considered this account to be unique, describing it as ‘apart from all other treatments of verbal gender in Roman linguistics’ on the basis that ‘it is the only case where verbal gender exclusively is called *significatio* [...] [and] it is the only case we have where different lexemes are used as examples of the active gender (*lego, scribo*) and the passive gender (*ducor, trahor*).’ To my knowledge, only the second of these two statements is true, since Dositheus (*Dos.*, 64.13), Asper (*Ps. Aem. Asp.*, 551.15) and Virgilius Maro Grammaticus (*Virg. Gramm.*, 193.145) all employ the term *significatio* exclusively in order to label diathesis. Hovdhaugen (1987: 137) also considers that this account is exceptional, because it attests examples such as *traho* and *populor* which do not appear in other treatments of diathesis. This assertion too is erroneous, as both are found in other descriptions (respectively in *Asp.*, 50.14 and *Prisc. I.G.*, 2, 364.8).

In truth this account is by no means entirely unique, but does display a somewhat unusual application of terminology. The terms *significatio* and *species* appear to be used here in a variety of ways. Initially, *significatio* seems to act as an umbrella term for diathesis, which is sub-divided into five distinct classes, each called a *species*. Thus, the distinction between *species* and *significatio* appears to be clear-cut, but matters soon become more complicated. The author goes on to assert *ergo hae significationes sic facillime intellegi poterunt*; this statement is followed by an account of each class, which suggests that the author, in this instance, is using *significatio* as a synonym of *species* (i.e. to mean ‘verbal class’). This, however, is not the end of the story, as both terms are given one additional function each. The
neuter is described as a verb which has *activa species* but does not have a corresponding passive (*sit activa specie, passivam non habebit*). In this instance, *species* must mean ‘form’ since the neuter is typically classified as an active verbal form lacking passive inflection. As for *significatio*, the common is characterised as a verb that looks passive (*specie passivae declinationis*) and has *passivam et activam significacionem*. In this case, the term *significatio* must refer to the semantic content of verb, since the common always expresses both activity and passivity. The various applications of the terms *significatio* and *species* are displayed in the tabular-form below.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>term</th>
<th>umbrella term for diathesis</th>
<th>class</th>
<th>morphology</th>
<th>semantics</th>
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<tr>
<td>significatio</td>
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### 3.3.5 Concluding remarks

Thus far we have treated the various accounts in isolation, but we must bear in mind that each account is merely a small part of one considerably large treatment of diathesis. Even though most of the accounts (save only *Genera A*) offer the reader fairly in-depth descriptions of diathesis, it is very likely that they were not intended to be studied independently, but in sequential order, beginning with *Genera A*. When one examines these accounts in succession (especially *Genera A* through *Genera D*), one cannot help but get the impression that the grammatical content is ordered so that it becomes increasingly complex. I am certainly not the first to make this observation (Schenkeveld, 2004: 12–14; 2007: 188), but no one has developed it in any detail and so it merits further comments.

*Genera A* acts as a preamble to the discussion and explanation of diathesis, which summarises all the most basic grammatical doctrine into one concise account. Its main function is not to present a detailed account, but rather to introduce the most important terminology and the most frequently enumerated classes (i.e. the *genera*) which would inevitably be encountered in more thorough treatments of diathesis.
Genera B and C provide readers with the first complete treatments of diathesis, differentiating verbs in terms of form and meaning. These treatments replicate certain elements which can be found in Genera A (i.e. the classes such as common, neuter and deponent and the lexemes that exemplify them), but also feature some new contents such as the supinum class, or terminology like habitus. These accounts encourage readers, on the one hand, to consolidate what they have already learned in Genera A and, on the other, to improve their understanding of diathesis with supplementary grammatical doctrine. In addition, the use of the term habitus and the organisation of the classes on the basis of their meaning, as I have argued above, ‘acclimatise’ readers to terms and criteria which turn out to be of fundamental importance in the subsequent account.

Genera D is the most complex of all the accounts of diathesis found in Charisius’ treatment of the verb. It invites readers to reconsider traditional approaches to the explanation of diathesis, in favour of a more speculative treatment which is primarily motivated by semantics and the notion of transitivity. This treatment seems to be designed for readers who have already acquired a basic understanding (which is supplied in Genera B and C) and, as result, can engage and experiment with various other ways of describing diathesis.

In short, Genera A to D guide readers through the intricacies of diathesis by beginning with basic grammatical doctrine, as well as by gradually increasing the complexity in every successive account. We might compare Genera A to Donatus’ Ars Minor and Genera B and C to Donatus’ Ars Maior. Genera D was almost certainly devised for advanced students whose interests exceeded mere ‘school grammar’: by examining this account, readers could encounter more complex issues like verbal semantics and transitivity.

How Significatio relates to these aforementioned accounts remains unclear to me. As we have seen, this account, which describes verbs primarily in terms of form and meaning, does not directly follow Genera D, but appears somewhat later following the treatment of grammatical person.
Unfortunately, I have yet to determine whether there is a rationale behind its inclusion and its position in the treatise.

3.4 Diomedes

Diomedes was the author of an *ars* in three books, who is assigned a *terminus post quem* of 350 on the basis that he uses the *artes Donati* (Dammer, 2001: *passim*; Holtz, 1981: 87–90, 220), and perhaps a slightly later *terminus* since he knows Charisius’ *ars* (possibly circa 360) (Barwick, 1922: 8; Jeep, 1893: 56–68; Schenkeveld, 2004: 18). He is assigned a *terminus ante quem* of the fifth century on the basis that his *ars* contains no explicit citations of authors of the ‘Silver Age’, like Juvenal, Martial or Lucan (P.Wessner, 1929: 296–303, 328–335), although admittedly this dating criterion is contentious. In any event, he certainly flourished before the beginning of the sixth century since he is cited by Priscian (*I.G.* 1, 470.13, 485.20, 499.19, 515.16, 535.12).

Where he lived is unknown, but since his grammar appears to be written for a Greek readership, some location in the Eastern Roman Empire is likely. The presence of numerous citations from Greek authors (see in particular book three *Diom.*, 473–529) and the extensive use of Greek throughout the *ars* points to a Greek milieu (Holtz, 1981: 82; Schenkeveld, 2007: 181–189). He also cites Deus as an example which may be an indication that he was a Christian (*Diom.*, 322.10; Dammer, 2001: 19).

As we have already stated, Diomedes’ grammar comprises of three books and begins with a preface dedicating it to a certain Athanasius (*Diom.*, 299.1–23). Book one opens with a definition of *grammatica*

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122 Wessner argued that prior to Servius, who flourished towards end of the fourth and the beginning of the fifth century, authors did not use Latin poets and historians of the ‘Silver Age’ as authorities. Thus he concluded that if a treatise contains citations of Lucan, Martial or Juvenal, it may be an indication that it should be dated to the fifth century or later. This argument was highly esteemed among scholars until recently when De Nonno (1993: 639–640) identified citations of Lucan in *De Catholicis* (*GL*. 4, 1–43), a treatise which comes down to us under the name Probus, but is now attributed by most scholars to Sacerdos (De Nonno, 1983: 385–421; Kaster, 1988: 349–350, 353), who was active in the third century. For the citations of Lucan see (*GL*. 4, 23.13, 23.32). As a result of De Nonno’s observations, we can no longer take Wessner’s argument for granted.
‘grammar’, followed by explanations of oratio ‘speech’ and a short summary of the eight parts of speech (ibid. 300.1–301.2). Next, it provides descriptions of various accidents associated with the noun, including genus ‘gender’, numerus ‘number’, figura ‘shape’ and casus ‘case’ (ibid., 301.4–308.5). After that there are several more sections focussed on case (ibid., 308.6–320.9)\(^ {123}\), followed by a meticulous treatment of the eight parts of speech and a short discussion of memoria ‘memory’ (ibid., 320.10–419.25).


Book three is exclusively concerned with poetry and metrics.\(^ {124}\) The description of the verb is found in the first book and begins with a definition, followed by explanations of verbal accidents, namely persona ‘person’, numerus ‘number’, figura ‘shape’, tempus ‘tense’, genus sive significatio ‘kind or signification’, modus sive inclinatio ‘mood or inclination’ and qualitas sive species ‘quality or form’ (ibid., 334.1–346.25). After that there are comprehensive lists of verbal conjugations and two related passages entitled coniunctio temporum ‘the combination of tenses’ and species verborum ‘the forms of verbs’ which concern what we now call the sequence of tenses (i.e. the relationship between the tenses of verbs in co-ordinate and subordinate clauses)\(^ {125}\) (Diom., 388.10–397.10). The

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\(^ {123}\) De formis casualibus simplicium/compositorum nominum ‘on the case-forms of simple/compound nouns’ (ibid., 308.6–309.37), de declinatione exercitationis chriarum ‘an exercise with chreiai (sayings) concerning declension’ (ibid., 310.1–29) and de consensus verborum cum casibus ‘on the combination of verbs and cases’.

\(^ {124}\) On book three, see del Castillo Herrera (1990).

account ends with descriptions of impersonals and the inflection of verbs in the writings of the veteres ‘ancient authors’ (ibid., 397.12–401.9). The account of diathesis begins as follows:


‘We will now discuss what we mean by kinds or significations of verbs: for just as there are genders (genera) in nouns, through which the sex is made manifest, so too there are kinds (genera) [associated] with the verb, by which the verbal process is indicated, that is whether it may be an active or a passive. There are two primary kinds or significations of verbs, the active and passive. Other [significations] are generated from these: neuter, common and deponent. Thus there are five in total, but some also accept the impersonal category.’

Diomedes classifies six types of verbs, two primary (principalia), namely the active and passive, and four secondary, the neuter, common, deponent and, more hesitantly, impersonal. He begins the account with descriptions of the active and passive characterising them in terms of morphology, semantics and degree of transitivity.

* Activa significatio est cum alio agente sit qui patiatur, id est cum actum nostrum cum alterius patientia significat, ut laudo. Haec ita o littera terminatur ut recipere possit etiam passivam significationem adiecta r littera. Itaque cum utraque persona constet in declinatione verbi, ut tam adficere quam adfici queat, proprie dicitur activum itemque passivum.

* Passiva est cum alio patiente penes alium sit administratio, id est cum patientiam nostrum cum alterius actu significat, ut laudor. Haec ita or syllaba terminatur ut recipere possit activam significationem amissa r littera, ut laudo (ibid., 336.26–337.2).

‘The active signification is when there is someone who experiences an action as a result of someone else performing it; that is, when the verb indicates our performance of an action and someone else’s experience of it, such as *laudo*
‘I praise’. This signification ends with the letter -o, so that it can also take on passive signification by adding the letter -r. Indeed, when either person [i.e. the performer or the experiencer] is inherent in the form of the verb, in such a way that he/she can affect [someone] as much as be affected [by someone], the verb is properly called an active or a passive. The passive [signification] is when the performance of an action is assigned to someone, [and] someone else experiences it; that is, it indicates that our experiencing is due to an action performed by someone else, as in laudor ‘I am praised’. This signification ends with the syllable -or, so that it can take on active signification by dropping the letter -r, as in laudo ‘I praise’.

As we can see, Diomedes describes the active and passive as transitives, that is to say, verbs which govern two participants, an agent and a patient. The former ends in -o and expresses active meaning and the latter terminates in -r and denotes passive meaning. He then turns his attention to the neuter identifying it as an active verbal form lacking passive inflection. He distinguishes three types, one conveying active meaning such as curro ‘I run’ and ambulo ‘I walk’, another conveying passive meaning such as vapulo ‘I am beaten’, veneo ‘I am sold’ and ardeo ‘I am hot’ and another signifying state such as sedeo ‘I sit’ and dormio ‘I sleep’.

Neutra est quae specie activae enuntiationis o littera cluditur, sed r litteram numquam recipit et ob id passivam formam non potest exprimere. Ubi enim vis patiendi non est, ex activa declinatione locum declinatio passiva non habet. Item si alio patiente sub activa specie penes alium non sit administratio, similitur neutra dicimus. Alterutrum itaque uniformiter significat, agentem vel patientem; agentem, ut facio ambulo curro; patientem, ut ardeo veneo vapulo. Ex hac quoque forma sunt et illa verba in quibus nec agentis nec patentis significatio plene dinoscitur nec effectus ostenditur, ut sedeo sudo dormio iaceo sto algeo sitio esurio. Nescis enim agat quis an patiatur (ibid., 337.4–13).

‘The neuter ends with the letter -o, thereby looking like an active form; however, it can never receive letter -r, and, as a result, cannot produce a passive form. For when a verb does not have passive meaning, a passive form does not have any reason [to arise] from an active form. Similarly, we also call a verb ‘neuter’ if, in spite of looking like an active, the performance
of an action cannot be assigned to anyone, and yet someone is affected. Therefore, in general, the neuter signifies either the performance or experience of an action: performance, like in facio ‘I do’, ambulo ‘I walk’, curro ‘I run’; experience, like in ardeo ‘I am on fire’, vено ‘I am sold’, vapulo ‘I am beaten’. There are also verbs of this form in which neither active nor passive signification can be clearly discerned, nor is a process plainly shown, as in sedeo ‘I sit’, sudo ‘I sweat’, dormio ‘I sleep’, iaceo ‘I am ill’, sto ‘I stand’, algeo ‘I feel cold’, sitio ‘I am thirsty’, esurio ‘I am hungry’. For you do not know who performs and who experiences the action.’

In this passage Diomedes also characterises certain neutrals as intransitives, although it is evident that he does not know a specialised technical terminology to distinguish such verbs. Instead he points out that certain verbs express verbal ideas involving one participant who is affected by an action (e.g. ardeo) (Item si alio patiente sub activa specie penes alium non sit administratio, similiter neutra dicimus).

After the treatment of the neuter, Diomedes provides an account of the common which he explains in terms of form and meaning. He characterises it as a passive verbal form which lacks active inflection and conveys active and passive meaning (Diom., 337.16–19). He then turns his attention to the deponent, which he tells us is so called by antiphrasis, meaning the label ‘deponent’ is paradoxical.127

Deponens est quae in r litteram desinit, ut passiva, sed ea dempta Latinum non est, unde per antiphrasin, id est contrario, sic appellatur, quia verbum r littera finitum deponere eam non potest, ut loquor nascor sequor. Non enim dicimus nasco. Et cum sit passiva specie, activam non habet. Itaque nec

126 Communis est quae tam activam quam passivam significacionem in se habet. Haec ita r littera terminatur ut eam non possit amittere, quem ad modum et deponens, ut osculor, criminor amplector. Dicimus enim osculor te et osculor a te, similiter et cetera. ‘The common [is the verb] that simultaneously embraces active and passive signification. This [signification] ends with the letter -r, [but] in such a way that it cannot lose it (just like in the case of deponents), as in osculor ‘I kiss’, criminor ‘I accuse’, amplector ‘I cherish’. For we say osculor te ‘I kiss you’ and osculor a te ‘I am kissed by you’, and so on and so forth.’

127 Antiphrasis est unius verbi ironia, si dicas bellum, quod non est bellum, lucum, quod non luceat, Parcae, quod non parcant (Pomp., 311.2–4). ‘Antiphrasis is the ironic application of any word, for example if you call something a war that is not a war, or a grove (lucum) even though it does not shine, or Parcae even though they do not spare.’
passiva sunt, quia activa non reddunt, nec communia esse possunt, quoniam communia sub uno genere declinationis utramque continent significationem. Placuit itaque aliis ea deponentia dici, quod una significatione deposita a communi separantur, vel quia deponit ambiguitatem sermonis qui dicit loquor (ibid., 337,24–32).

‘The deponent is the verb which ends with the letter -r, like a passive, but if that letter is taken away, then it is not grammatical Latin. Thus, deponents are so called according by antiphrasis, that is from the opposite of what it means: indeed, no [deponent] verb, whose form is complete thanks to the letter -r, can put aside that letter, as shown by loquor ‘I speak’, nascor ‘I am born’, sequor ‘I follow’. Indeed, we do not say nasco. And although [the deponent] looks passive, it does not possess an active. Therefore, these verbs are neither passive (as they cannot revert to being active), nor can they be common (since common verbs embrace both [active and passive] signification under one kind of inflection). Others contend that deponents are so called because they distinguish themselves from the common by putting aside (deposita) one signification, or because anyone who says loquor ‘I speak’, puts aside (deponit) any ambiguity of speech.’

As we can observe, Diomedes recognises that the term deponens is derived from the verb deponere ‘to put aside’ which gives the impression that the deponent ‘puts aside’ something. To be specific, he argues that it implies that a deponent verb such as sequor can ‘put aside’ its inflectional ending -r; however, it never does, because this would result in the ungrammatical form sequo. For this reason, he concludes that the label deponens is ironic because it suggests that the deponent verb can inflect in active form when in reality it cannot.

In the remainder of the passage, Diomedes offers two alternative explanations as to why the deponent might have received its name. The first is straightforward. He states the deponent is so called because it ‘puts aside’ active meaning and signifies passive, or ‘puts aside’ passive meaning and expresses active, whereas the common, by contrast, signifies both active and passive meaning. The second, however, is certainly more complicated. Diomedes tells us that the deponent is so called because ‘anyone who says
loquor ‘puts aside’ ambiguity (ambiguitas) of speech.’ In order to understand this definition, we need to take a closer look at the notion of ambiguitas (ἀμφιβολία). It refers to words (dictiones) or sentences (sententiae) that have doubtful meanings (significationes) (Char., 357.27–28). Donatus (660. 1–3) and Diomedes (450. 1–12) single out constructions involving the common verb as instances of ambiguity, since common verbs convey both active and passive meaning. Take for example the phrase *Cicero criminatur*: it could mean ‘Cicero accuses’, but also ‘Cicero is accused’. The precise meaning of this phrase can only be determined by adding a case inflected complement: if we add a complement marked with an accusative, it has active meaning (*Cicero criminatur te* ‘Cicero accuses you’), whereas if we add a complement marked with an ablative, it conveys passive meaning (*Cicero criminatur a te* ‘Cicero is accused by you’).

Deponents such as the verb loquor ‘I speak’, by contrast, denote a single meaning and, therefore, are unambiguous as far as semantics is concerned. Hence, Diomedes suggests that deponents are so called because, unlike common verbs, they ‘put aside’ (deponere) ambiguity by expressing a single meaning.

The final verb mentioned by Diomedes is the impersonal which he describes in terms of form, meaning and syntax. It inflects in third person singular active (e.g. *pudet*) or passive (e.g. *itur*) and cannot signify the category of person unless it combines with a pronoun (e.g. *pudet me, itur a me*).

*Inpersonalis verborum significatio tam sub activa specie quam passiva extat, dicta inpersona, quod sine persona pronominis intellegi non potest, quamvis formam activorum aut passivorum habere videatur. Nam etsi tertiae personae formam exprimant, tamen tribus modis verbis omnibus iungi solet. Propriis quoque personis non enuntiatur, sed, ut plenus sit sensus, extrinsecus necessario adduntur pronomina, sine quibus nihil huius modi verba significare possunt, quasi pudet me te illum, itur a me a te ab illo* (Diom., 337.34–338.4).

‘The impersonal signification can be found in active-looking as much as in passive-looking verbs. It is so called because it cannot be understood without
[the addition of] a pronominal person, even though it seems to possess the form of actives and passives. Although impersonal verbs are expressed in third-person form, [a pronominal person] is added to all [impersonal] verbs in three ways [i.e., in the three persons]. The impersonal is not expressed by means of specific personal [endings], but, in order that its meaning may be complete, an external pronoun is necessarily added, without which the verbs of this kind cannot signify anything, as in pudet me, te, illum ‘I am ashamed’, ‘you are ashamed’, ‘he/she is ashamed’, and itur a me, a te, a illum, ‘it is journeyed by me, you, him/her.’

Turning now to the subject of terminology, we find that Diomedes uses two terms in relation to diathesis, namely genus and significatio, which are deployed essentially synonyms (genera verborum sive significatones) to refer to classes of verbs; however, the term significatio has an alternative function, as it also denotes the semantic content of a verb.

Communis est quae tam activam quam passivam significationem in se habet. Haec ita r littera terminatur ut eam non posset amittere, quem ad modum et deponens, ut osculor, criminor amplector (Diom., 337.16–18).

‘The common [verb is the one] that inherently possess active as much as passive signification. This [signification] ends with the letter -r, [but] in such a way that it cannot lose it (just like in the case of deponents), as in osculor ‘I kiss’, criminor ‘I accuse’, amplector ‘I cherish’.

Et cum sit passiva specie, activam non habet. Itaque nec passiva sunt, quia activa non reddunt, nec communia esse possunt, quoniam communia sub uno genere declinationis utramque continent significationem (Diom., 337.27–30).

‘And although [the deponent] looks passive, it does not possess an active. Therefore, these verbs are neither passive (as they cannot revert to being active), nor can they be common (since common verbs embrace both [active and passive] signification under one kind of inflection).’

Besides these two terms, Diomedes also employs the term effectus, although it should be noted that the reliability of this reading was questioned by W. Christ (1862: 134), who proposed that it may be an error that should be emended in favour of affectus, the Latin rendering of διάθεσις, even though the latter term is not attested in any of the known manuscripts of Diomedes’ ars. In any event, this hypothesis was rejected by scholars such as L. Jeep
(1893: 197) and more recently P. Flobert (1975: 13), in favour of the reading, *effectus*. In Flobert’s view, *affectus* and *effectus* are two entirely distinct terms, the former representing a grammatical category signified by verbs revealing the condition of the subject, and the latter being the Latin rendering of the Greek term ἐνέργεια (Mazhuga, 2003: 154), which refers to the ‘process’ (‘procès’) conveyed by active and passive verbs (Flobert, 1975: 13. n.4). Flobert defended the reliability of the reading *effectus* by drawing attention to the following passage in which stative verbs are discussed.

*Ex hac quoque forma sunt et illa verba in quibus nec agentis nec patentis significatio plene dinoscitur nec effectus ostenditur, ut sedeo sudo dormio iaceo sto algeo sitio esurio* (Diom., 337.10–13).

‘There are also verbs of this form in which neither active nor passive signification can be clearly discerned, nor is an *effectus* plainly shown, as in *sedeo* ‘I sit’, *sudo* ‘I sweat’, *dormio* ‘I sleep’, *iaceo* ‘I lie’, *sto* ‘I stand’, *algeo* ‘I feel cold’, *sitio* ‘I am thirsty’, *esurio* ‘I am hungry’.’

Flobert argued that the term *affectus* is incongruent with the formulation of the passage, because a stative verb is perfectly capable of denoting an *affectus* since it reveals the condition of the subject (e.g. *sedeo* ‘I am sitting). Therefore, he concluded that *effectus* cannot be emended in favour of the term *affectus* (*nec effectus ostenditur*). What is more, he determined that the term *effectus* is perfectly compatible with the formulation of this passage, because a stative verb is inherently unable to convey an *effectus* (i.e. a process), as it depicts a situation that is by definition static and unchanging (e.g. *sedeo* ‘I am sitting). Since *effectus* can be reconciled with the formulation of the passage, he concluded that it is more than likely the most accurate reading. We can further corroborate the reading *effectus* by examining the earliest known fragments of Diomedes’ *ars* surviving in Hiberno-Latin grammatical treatises dated to the seventh and eighth centuries.128 These fragments were not collated by H. Keil when he edited

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the *ars* for the *Grammatici Latini* series in 1857. Keil’s edition is based primarily on three ninth century Carolingian manuscripts which descend from a single codex compiled by Adam of Masmünster for Charlemagne in AD 780.\(^{129}\) Admittedly, the Hiberno-Latin fragments are by no means as fundamental as the Carolingian witnesses for establishing a critical text, but occasionally they help to clarify disputed or corrupt readings.

One important witness to the transmission of Diomedes in the Early Middle ages is the grammatical treatises entitled *Anonymus ad Cuimnanum*\(^ {130}\), which comes down to us in a single eighth century manuscript of Northumbrian provenance, namely St. Paul in Lavanttal, Stiftsbibliothek 2/1, 21v–42r. It contains a fragment of Diomedes’ account of diathesis and transmits the term *effectus* and not *affectus* providing further confirmation that *effectus* is the most reliable reading.

### 3.5 Probus

(Pseudo) Probus is the author of an *ars* in one book entitled *Instituta Artium* (*Prob.*, 47.1–192.18);\(^ {131}\) little is known about him although he can be assigned a *terminus post quem* in the first decade of the fourth century on the basis of a reference to the Diocletian baths, which were dedicated between the 1\(^ {st}\) of May 305 and the 24\(^ {th}\) of July 306 (*Prob.*, 119.25–27; 129)


\(^ {130}\) The *Anonymus ad Cuimnanum* is a Hiberno-Latin commentary on Donatus composed around the year 700, probably in Bobbio (De Nonno, 1996: 638–653; Holtz, 1981: 284–294; 1995: 124–125; Law, 1981: 87–90; Löftstedt, 1965: 55–58; Taeger, 1991: 1–91). Bernhard Bischoff (1958: 5–20) discovered and then named the treatise after the proper name *Cuimnanus* (Cumianus) which he detected in the dedicatory portion of the work (*Anon. ad Cuim.*, 159.32). He identified the addressee as Cumianus of Bobbio who flourished in the second half of the eighth century.

\(^ {131}\) This treatise was probably not written by an author by the name of Probus. In fact it is very likely that the grammar was originally anonymous and only later was associated with this name. Marcus Valerius Probus was a very important figure associated with the study of grammar in the Early Imperial Period and, as a result, his name was often attached to anonymous grammatical works in order to give them *auctoritas*. On this issue, see Kaster (1988: 348–350). That being said, I will continue to use the name Probus throughout the thesis so that I can easily differentiate this author from others.
Barwick, 1919: 409–422), and a *terminus ante quem* of the late fourth or early fifth century on account of Servius who cites him (*Serv.*, 413.34). He may have hailed from North Africa on account of references to *Utica* and *Cirta* (*Prob.*, 155.16), and resided for a period in Rome given the mention of the Diocletian baths, although both of these assertions are highly speculative (Kaster, 1988: 348).

Several works have been wrongly attributed to him, including *De catholicis Probi*, a work now credited to Sacerdos (De Nonno, 1983: 385–421; 1993: 640; Kaster, 1988: 349–350), which concerns the endings of nouns and verbs; *De nomine excerpta*, a treatise which provides an account of the noun; *De ultimis syllabis*, a treatise dedicated to a certain Caelestinus dealing with final syllables in the parts of speech (De Nonno, 1990: 215–252); and the *Appendix Probi*, a treatise that contains lists of words, in the form *a non b*, where *a* corresponds to a correction of a vulgarism *b* (Barnett, 2006: 257–278; 2007: 701–736; De Nonno, 2007: 3–26; Powell, 687–700; Quirk, 2005: 397–409).

The *Instituta Artium* consists of a single book and appears to be divided into two main sections: the first section provides explanations of *vox* ‘utterance’, *ars* ‘art’, *analogia* ‘analogy’, *anomalia* ‘anomaly’, *littera* ‘letter’ (with subsections on the *vocalis* ‘vowel’, *semivocalis* ‘semi-vowel’ and *mutus* ‘mute’) and *syllaba* ‘syllable’ (*Prob.*, 47.1–51.16), and the second descriptions of the eight parts of speech in the order noun, pronoun, participle, conjunction, interjection, preposition, adverb and verb (*ibid.*, 51.18–192.18). The treatise culminates with an account of the verb that appears to be divided into two subsections: the first section includes a definition of the verb and descriptions of verbal accidents, namely *tempus* ‘tense’, *modus* ‘mood’, *numerus* ‘number’, *persona* ‘person’, *genus sive*

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132 *Sunt nomina, quae rem proprie communiterve significant: proprie ut puta Roma Tiberis Diocletianae et cetera talia; communiter, ut puta urbs flumen thermae et cetera talia.*

‘There are nouns which signify things properly or commonly: properly, like Rome, Tiber and Diocletian and things like that; commonly, for example, city, river and baths.’

133 *Pace* Dionisotti (1984: 205) who contends that this treatise was written by Probus, the author of the *Instituta Artium*.

134 On its transmission, see Law (1982: 26) and Lindsay (1927: 231–234).
qualitas ‘kind or quality’, coniugatio ‘conjugation’, figura ‘shape’, species ‘form (of past tense)’ and accentus ‘accent’ (ibid., 155.34–160.5), and the second contains comprehensive lists of verbal paradigms (ibid., 160.6–192.18). Probus’ account of diathesis begins as follows:

Genus sive qualitas verborum octo his significationibus intellegitur, id est activa passiva neutrali deponenti communi inchoativa frequentativa defectiva (ibid., 156.10–13).

‘The kind or quality of verbs is understood in these eight significations, that is in the active, passive, neuter, deponent, common, inchoative, frequentative and defective.’

3.5.1 Probus’ use of terminology

Probus uses three terms essentially as synonyms, namely genus, significatio, and qualitas. As we have seen, the terms genus and significatio feature commonly in treatments of diathesis; however, qualitas is rarely applied in this way. In fact, the term is attested in only one other account of diathesis.

Qualitas participiorum sicut verborum: aut enim agentia sunt aut patentia aut communia aut neutra aut deponentia (Dos., 67.11–13).

‘The quality of participles is the same as that of verbs: namely, they can be actives, passives, common, neuters and deponents.’

The term qualitas is a calque of the Greek term ποιότης,136 which is first attested in the works of Plato (Theaet., 182a) and subsequently in the works of Aristotle (Cat., 8b), where it refers to an attribute relating to substance (e.g. whiteness) (Luhtala, 2005: 12–18). It is also used by the Stoics and

135 Species verborum sunt tres. imperfecta quae est et minus quam perfecta sive inchoativa, perfecta, quae est et absoluta, plusquamperfecta, quae est et recordativa sive exacta (Prob., 159.39–160.1). ‘There are three forms of verbs: the imperfect which is less than complete or less than beginning; perfect which is complete; more than perfect which is recordative or has been completed.’

136 Qualitates igitur appellavi, quas ποιότητας Graeci vocant, quod ipsum apud Graecos non est vulgi verbum, sed philosophorum, atque id in multis (Cic. Acad. Post., 1.7.25).

‘And therefore I named them qualities, which the Greeks call ποιότητας. The very word among the Greeks is not of the common people, but of the philosophers and, indeed, it occurs in many of their works.’
later by grammarians to refer to common and particular qualities signified by nouns (Luhtala, 2005: 20, 38–48).\textsuperscript{137}

In the Latin grammatical tradition, \textit{qualitas} is assigned a variety of different functions. The term is attested in accounts of the noun where it is used to distinguish between common and proper,\textsuperscript{138} and also in descriptions of the pronoun where it is divided into two subcategories, namely \textit{finita} ‘definite’ (e.g. \textit{ego} ‘I’) and \textit{infinita} ‘indefinite’ (e.g. \textit{quis} ‘who’).\textsuperscript{139} In accounts of the verb, it is applied to distinguish between \textit{finita} ‘finite verbal forms’ and \textit{infinita} ‘infinite verbal forms’\textsuperscript{140}, to represent mood\textsuperscript{141} and as an umbrella term incorporating two sub-terms \textit{modus} ‘mood’ and \textit{forma} ‘form’.\textsuperscript{142} Unfortunately, none of these applications appear to bring us any

\textsuperscript{137} Ἐστι δὲ προσηγορία μὲν κατὰ τὸν Διογένην μέρος λόγου σημαίνον κοινὴν ποιότητα, οἷον ἀνθρώπους, ἵππους. Ὄνομα δὲ ἐστὶ μέρος λόγου δηλοῦν ἰδίαν ποιότητα, οἷον Διογένης, Σωκράτης (DL. 7.58). ‘A common noun is defined by Diogenes as part of a speech signifying a common quality, e.g. man, horse ; whereas a [proper] noun is a part of speech expressing a quality particular to an individual, e.g. Diogenes, Socrates.’

ἀνομα ἐστὶ μέρος λόγου πτωτικὸν, ἑκάστῳ τῶν ὑποκειμένων σωμάτων ἡ πραγμάτων κοινῆν ἢ ἰδίαν ποιότητα ἀπονέμων. (Schol., 524, 9–10) ‘A noun is a part of speech which assigns each subjected body or thing a common or proper quality.’ (transl. by Luhtala, 2005: 40)

\textsuperscript{138} Qualitas nominum bipertia est. Aut enim propria sunt nomina aut apellativa (Mai., 614.6). ‘The quality of nouns is divided in two parts. There are either proper or common nouns.’ For a study on the use of \textit{qualitas} in accounts of the noun, see Luhtala (2005: 38–49).

\textsuperscript{139} Qualitas pronominum duplex est. Aut enim finita sunt pronomina aut infinita. Finita sunt, quae recipiunt personas, ut \textit{ego}, tu, ille; infinita sunt quae non recipiunt personas, ut \textit{quis} quae quod (Mai., 629.5–7). ‘The quality of pronouns is divided into two [subcategories]: for there are definite and indefinite pronouns. The definite are those which accept persons, such as \textit{ego} ‘I’, \textit{tu} ‘you’, \textit{ille} ‘he/she’. The indefinite are those which do not accept persons such as \textit{quis} ‘who’, \textit{quae} ‘who’, \textit{quod} ‘what/which.’ For a study on this application of \textit{qualitas}, see Holtz (1981: 127–131).

\textsuperscript{140} Qualitas verborum aut finita est aut infinita. Finita est quae notat certum personam, certum numerum, certum tempus, ut \textit{lego} scribo. Infinita est in qua haec universa confusa sunt, ut legere (Cons., 374. 1–3). ‘The quality of verbs is either finite or non-finite. Finite is that which recognises a particular person, number and a tense, such as \textit{scribo} ‘I write’ and \textit{lego} ‘I read’. Infinite is the [quality] in which all these [grammatical categories] are lacking, such as legere ‘to read’.’

\textsuperscript{141} […] subiunctiva quoque appellata est verbi qualitas (Diom., 388.22). ‘[…] the subjunctive was also called a quality of verb.’

\textsuperscript{142} Qualitas verborum in modis est et in formis. Modi autem sunt, ut multi existimant, septem: indicativus, qui et pronuntiativus, ut \textit{lego}; imperativus, ut \textit{lege}; promissivus, ut \textit{legam}; sed hunc nos modum no accipimus; optativus, ut utinam legerem; conjunctivus, ut cum \textit{legam}; infinitivus, ut \textit{legere}; impersonalis, ut legitur[…].] Qualitas verborum etiam in formis est constituta, quas formas alii verborum generibus vel significationibus admiscent. Formae igitur sunt quattuor: perfecta, meditativa, frequentativa, inchoativa (Mai., 632. 8–633.7).’Quality of verbs is in forms and moods. Many think that there are seven moods: the
closer to Probus’ understanding of the term in relation to diathesis. There is, however, an application of the term in the grammar of Diomedes which merits further attention.

Qualitates verborum sunt hae, absoluta sive perfecta, inchoativa, iterativa sive frequentativa, meditativa, transgressiva, defectiva, supina, ambigua (Diom., 342.29–31).

‘The qualities of verbs are these: absolute or perfect, inchoatives, iteratives or frequentatives, desideratives, transgressives, defectives, supines and ambiguous verbs.’

Here Diomedes applies the term qualitas to three verbal classes which are also mentioned in Probus’ account of diathesis, namely inchoatives, iteratives and defectives. A similar application of terminology is found in the grammar of Dositheus.

Qualitas verborum in quot est formis? IIII, absoluta, ut lego, meditativa, ut lecturio, frequentativa, ut lectito, inchoativa, ut fervesco, calesco (Dos., 63.1–6).

‘The quality of verbs exists in how many forms? Four. Absolutes, such as lego ‘I read’, desideratives, such as lecturio ‘I wish to read’, iteratives, such as lectito ‘I often read’, inchoatives, such as fervesco ‘I become hot’ and calesco ‘I become cold’.’

Although this account does not include the defective, it identifies the inchoative and iterative as qualitates. These two accounts suggest that Probus’ classification of diathesis is the amalgamation of two distinct groups of verbs combining the classes traditionally associated with diathesis, namely active, passive, neuter, common and deponent, which are typically called genera or significationes, with the inchoative, frequentative and defective which are occasionally named qualitates. The term qualitas

indictative, which is also [called] declarative, such as lego ‘I read’; imperative such as lege ‘read!’; promissive such as legam ‘I will read’: but we do not accept this mood; optative such as utinam legerem ‘if only I would read’, subjunctive such as cum legam ‘when I read’; the infinitive such as legere ‘to read’; impersonal such as legitur ‘one reads’. [...] Moreover, quality consists of forms which others combined with either kinds or significations of verbs. There are four forms: perfect, desiderative, frequentative and inchoative.’
may have become synonymous with genus and significatio after these two groups of verbs coalesced into one.

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### 3.5.2 Probus’ description of diathesis

Probus begins his account of diathesis with explanations of the active, passive and neuter.

*Generis sive qualitatis activae sunt verba, quae indicativo sive pronuntiativo modo temporis praesentis sive instantis ex prima persona numeri singularis o littera terminantur nec non in quocumque modo et ad genus sive qualitatem passivam declinantur, ut puta probor et probor, doceor et doceo, lego et legor, rapio et rapior, nutrio et nutrior. Sic et alia verba, quae indicativo sive pronuntiativo modo temporis praesentis sive instantis ex prima persona numeri singularis o littera terminantur nec non in quocumque modo et ad genus sive qualitatem passivam declinantur.*

*Generis sive qualitatis passivae sunt verba, quae indicativo sive pronuntiativo modo temporis praesentis sive instantis ex prima persona numeri singularis r littera terminantur nec non in quocumque modo et ad genus sive qualitatem activam declinantur, ut puta probor et probor, doceor et doceo, legor et lego, rapior et rapio, nutrior et nutrio. Sic et alia verba, quae indicativo sive pronuntiativo modo temporis praesentis sive instantis ex prima persona numeri singularis r littera terminantur nec non in quocumque modo et ad genus sive qualitatem activam declinari possunt, passivi generis vel qualitatis esse pronuntiantur.*

*Generis sive qualitatis neutralis sunt verba, quae indicativo sive pronuntiativo modo temporis praesentis sive instantis ex prima persona numeri singularis o littera terminantur nec in aliquo modo ad genus sive qualitatem passivam declinantur, ut puta vapulo non vapulor, careo non careor, curro non curror, pario non parior, venio non venior, exeo non exeor. Sic et alia verba, quae indicativo sive pronuntiativo modo temporis praesentis sive instantis ex prima persona numeri singularis o littera terminantur nec in aliquo modo ad genus sive qualitatem passivam declinari possunt.*
declinantur, neutri generis vel qualitatis esse pronuntiantur (Prob., 156.13–157.3).

‘There are verbs of active kind or quality, which end in the letter -o in the first person singular present indicative, and also are inflected in whatever mood and according to the passive kind or quality, e.g. probo ‘I test’ and probor ‘I am tested’, doceo ‘I teach’ and doceor ‘I am taught’, lego ‘I read’ and legor ‘I am read, rapio ‘I seize’ and rapior ‘I am seized’, nutrio ‘I rear’ and nutrior ‘I am reared’. In the same way other verbs, which end in the letter -o in the first person singular present indicative, and also can be inflected in whatever mood and according to the passive kind or quality, can be said of the active kind or quality. There are verbs of passive kind or quality which end in the letter -r in the first person singular present indicative and also are inflected according to the active kind or quality and in whatever mood, e.g. probor ‘I am tested’ and probo ‘I test’, doceor ‘I am taught’ and doceo ‘I teach’, legor ‘I am read’ and lego ‘I read’, ‘I am seized’ and ‘I seize’, nutrior ‘I am reared’ and nutrio ‘I rear’. In the same way other verbs, which end in the letter -r in the first person singular present indicative and can be inflected according to the active kind or quality, are called the passive kind or quality. There are verbs of neutral kind or quality which end in the letter -o in the first person singular present indicative and are not inflected according to the passive kind or quality in any mood, e.g. vapulo ‘I am whipped’ and never vapulor, careo ‘I lack’ but never careor, curro ‘I run’ but never curror, pario ‘I beget’ but never parior, venio ‘I come’ but never venior, exeo ‘I go out’ but never exeor. In the same way, other verbs, which end in the letter -o in the first person singular present indicative and cannot be inflected according to the passive kind or quality in any mood, can be said of neutral kind or quality.’

As we can see, Probus describes the verbs exclusively in terms of their form, identifying actives as verbs ending in -o, passive as those terminating in -r, and neuters as those ending in -o that do not have corresponding passive forms. The next two verbs mentioned are the common and deponent which are also explained on the basis of their form, but, on this occasion, the approach is problematic, because, as it turns out, they cannot be discriminated by means of formal features alone. The common differs from
the deponent exclusively in terms of semantics and syntax, the former signifying activity in conjunction with an accusative case and passivity along with an ablative, while the latter denotes either activity or passivity. Hence, by disregarding semantic and syntactic criteria, Probus was unable to adequately explain the actual differences between these verbs.

There are verbs of deponent kind or quality which end in the letter -r in the first person singular present indicative and cannot be inflected according to the active kind or quality in any mood, e.g. recordor ‘I remember’, but never recordo, confiteor ‘I reveal’, but never confiteo, reminisco ‘I recollect’ but never reminisco, congregidio ‘I approach’ but never congregio, blandio ‘I flatter’ but never blandio. In the same way, other verbs are said to be of the deponent kind or quality if they end in the letter -r in the first singular present indicative and cannot be inflected according to the active kind or quality in any mood. There are verbs of common kind or quality which end

Generis sive qualitatis deponentis sunt verba, quae indicativo sive pronuntiativo modo temporis praesentis sive instantis ex prima persona numeri singularis r littera terminantur nec in aliquo modo ad genus sive qualitatem activam declinantur, ut puta recordor non recordo, confiteor non confiteo, reminiscor non reminisco, congregidio non congregio, blandio non blandio. Sic et alia verba, quae indicativo sive pronuntiativo modo temporis praesentis sive instantis ex prima persona numeri singularis r littera terminantur nec in aliquo modo ad genus sive qualitatem activam declinantur, deponentis generis uel qualitatis esse pronuntiantur. Generis sive qualitatis communis sunt verba, quae indicativo sive pronuntiativo modo temporis praesentis sive instantis ex prima persona numeri singularis r littera terminantur nec in aliquo modo ad genus sive qualitatem activam declinantur, ut puta criminor non crimino, tueor non tueo, ulciscor non ulcisco, patior non patio, potior non potio. Sic et alia verba, quae indicativo sive pronuntiativo modo temporis praesentis sive instantis ex prima persona numeri singularis r littera terminantur nec in aliquo modo ad genus sive qualitatem activam declinantur, communis generis vel qualitatis esse pronuntiantur. Sane quaeritur, qua disciplina deponens verbum a communi discernatur. Quare hoc monemus, quod hoc in sonis competenter tractare debeamus (ibid., 157.4–24).
in the letter -r in the first person singular present indicative and cannot be inflected according to the active kind or quality in any mood, e.g. *criminor* but never *crimino*, *tueor* but never *tueo*, *ulciscor* but never *ulcisco*, *patior* but never *patio*, *potior* but never *potio*. In the same way, other verbs, which end in the letter -r in the first singular present indicative and cannot be inflected according to the active kind or quality in any mood, are said to be of the common kind or quality. It is rightfully asked by which method the deponent verb is distinguished from the common. Therefore, we advice this: that we must appropriately investigate this [distinction] in utterances.’

After the explanations of the common and the deponent, Probus provides descriptions of the inchoative and frequentative.

*Generis sive qualitatis inchoativae sunt verba, quae a propria verbi significacione derivantur et indicativo sive pronuntiativo modo temporis praesentis sive instantis ex prima persona numeri singularis sco litteris definiuntur, ut puta ab horreo horresco, a valeo valesco, a misereo miseresco. Sic et alia verba, quae a propria verbi significacione derivantur et indicativo sive pronuntiativo modo temporis praesentis sive instantis ex prima persona numeri singularis sco litteris definiuntur, inchoativi generis vel qualitatis verba esse pronuntiantur. At vero quaecumque verba indicativo sive pronuntiativo modo temporis praesentis sive instantis ex prima persona numeri singularis sco litteris definiuntur et a propriis verbis derivari non reperiuntur, haec non generis sive qualitatis inchoativae, sed sui cuiusque generis vel qualitatis sunt pronuntianda, ut puta abolesco cresco disco nosco esco. Sic et alia verba, quae indicativo sive pronuntiativo modo temporis praesentis sive instantis ex prima persona numeri singularis sco litteris definiuntur et ab aliis verbis originem trahere non reperiuntur, haec non inchoativa, sed sui cuiusque generis vel qualitatis pronuntiantur.*

[...] *Generis sive qualitatis frequentativae sunt verba, quae a propria verbi significacione derivantur et indicativo sive pronuntiatio modo temporis praesentis sive instantis ex prima persona numeri singularis non sco litteris, sed aliis quibuslibet definiuntur, ut puta ab iacto iactito, ab scribo scriptito, a curro cursito, a volo volito, a facio facesso et factito. Sic et alia verba, quae a propria verbi significacione derivantur et indicativo sive pronuntiatio modo temporis praesentis sive instantis ex prima persona numeri singularis...*
There are verbs of the inchoative kind or quality which are derived from a basic signification of the verb and are marked by the letters -sco in the first person singular present indicative, e.g. horresco ‘I become terrified’ from horreo ‘I fear’, valesco ‘I become powerful’ from valeo ‘I am strong’, miseresco ‘I begin to pity’ from misereo ‘I pity’. In the same way other verbs are said to belong to the inchoative kind or quality if they are derived from a basic signification of the verb and marked by the letters -sco in the first person singular present indicative. However, certain other verbs are marked by the letters -sco in the first person singular present indicative and are not considered to be derived from basic verbs: these should not be described as inchoative kind or quality, but as their own particular kind or quality, e.g. abolesco ‘I die’, cresco ‘I arise’, disco ‘I learn’, nosco ‘I know’, esco ‘I grow’. In the same way other verbs, which are marked by the letters -sco in the first person singular present indicative and do not derive their origin from other verbs, are not called inchoatives, but are called their own particular kind or quality. [...] There are verbs of the iterative kind or quality which are derived from a basic signification of the verb and are not marked by the letters -sco in the first person singular present indicative, but by other letters, e.g. iactito ‘toss about’ from iacto ‘I throw’, scriptito ‘I often write’ from scribo ‘I write’, cursito ‘I run about’ from curro ‘I run’, volito ‘I fly about’ from volo ‘I fly’, factito ‘I do eagerly’ and facesso ‘I do frequently’ from facio ‘I do’. In the same way other verbs, which are derived from a basic signification of the verb, and are not marked by the letters -sco, but by certain other letters in the first person singular present indicative, are called iterative verbs.’

As we can observe, Probus is once again entirely concerned with verbal morphology, characterising the inchoative and frequentative as secondary forms terminating in -sco and -so, -to or -ito respectively. He also makes a distinction between inchoatives and verbs like cresco ‘I grow’ and disco ‘I learn’, which certainly look like inchoatives, but cannot be labelled as such. They in fact constitute a special class inherited from Indo-European, displaying a tense marker -sc in the present (Sihler, 1995: 535). In contrast
with inchoatives, these are primary verbs that do not convey inceptive meaning. Probus, however, only acknowledges the formal differences between them, pointing out that verbs like *cresco* are primary forms whereas inchoatives are secondary.

The final class treated by Probus is the defective which consists of verbs like *odi*, *pudet* and *sum* that have incomplete conjugations.

*Generis sive qualitatis defectivae sunt verba, ut puta odi pudet sum; et cetera talia, quae in quocumque modo sive specie vel persona nec non in qualibet declinationis parte deficiunt, defectiva verba esse pronuntiantur* (ibid., 158.14–17).

‘There are verbs of the defective kind or quality, such as *odi* ‘I hate’, *pudet* ‘it shames’, *sum* ‘I am’ and several others. Verbs which are deficient in some mood, person or tense, and also in a certain part of their inflection, are said to be defective.’

### 3.6 Concluding remarks

In this chapter, we have investigated a series of grammatical treatises datable to the fourth century and have observed that the authors disagreed to a great extent as regards to the description of diathesis. For example, we have seen that some authors like Donatus and the author of *Significatio* classified five types of verbs, namely active, passive, neuter, deponent and common, while others such as the authors of *Genera A*, *Genera C* and Diomedes recognised six, specifically the five just mentioned plus the supine in the case of the author of *Genera C* or impersonal in the case of Diomedes and the author of *Genera A*. Others, however, such as the authors of *Genera D* and *B* listed less than fives types of verbs, the former mentioning only three, namely the active, passive and stative (*habitivum*), and the latter four, the active, passive, common and neuter. In addition, Probus referred to eight types of verbs, the active, passive, neuter, deponent, common, inchoative, frequentative and defective.

What is also clear is that the authors disagreed as to the arrangement of verbs. Certainly, they all agreed that active and passive should be placed in first and second position respectively, but beyond that there was much
dispute. For example, Donatus, Diomedes, Probus and the authors of Genera A and Significatio placed the neuter in third position after the active and passive, whereas the authors of Genera B and Genera C, by contrast, preferred to occupy the same position with the common. As for the fourth position, some like Donatus, Probus and the author of Significatio contended that it ought to be occupied by the deponent; others, such as the authors of Genera B and Genera C by the neuter; and others again such as Diomedes and author of Genera A by the common. The fifth position, according to Donatus and Probus, should be taken up by the common, while others like Diomedes and the authors of Genera A, Genera C and Significatio considered that it should be filled with the deponent. Beyond that, Diomedes and the author of Genera A ranked the impersonal in sixth position, whereas the author of Genera C assigned the supine to the same rank. According to Probus, however, the inchoative ought to be placed in sixth position followed by frequentative and defective in seventh and eighth position respectively.

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We have also seen that authors in this period deployed a broad repertoire of terms to characterise diathesis, although typically they employed the terminology in an ‘unscientific’ manner: by that I mean, they generally utilised a single term to refer to several grammatical features or several terms interchangeably to represent a single grammatical feature. For example, Diomedes used genus and significatio to refer to verbal classes, significatio and vis to signify the meanings of verbs, as well as three terms to refer to verbal forms, namely species, forma and declinatio. Similarly, Probus availed of three terms to stand for verbal classes, namely genus, significatio and qualitas; however, the author of Significatio was undoubtedly the most inconsistent when it came to using terminology,
employing species to refer to a verbal form, significatio to stand for the meaning of a verb, but also the same two terms interchangeably to represent verbal classes. This is not to imply that all authors applied terminology unsystematically, as Donatus exclusively availed of genus to represent a verbal class (although he was aware that other authors had used significatio as a synonym of genus) and forma to refer to a syntactic construction. Moreover, the authors of Genera B and C employed genus to mean a verbal class, forma to represent a verbal form and significatio or potestas to stand for the meaning of a verb.

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<th>morphology</th>
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<td>Don. Ars Min.</td>
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<td>Gen. A</td>
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<td>Gen. B and C</td>
<td>genus</td>
<td>forma</td>
<td>significatio/potestas</td>
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<td>Gen. D</td>
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<td>Diom.</td>
<td>genus</td>
<td>species/declinatio</td>
<td>significatio/vis/effectus</td>
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<td>Prob.</td>
<td>genus</td>
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Turning now to the descriptions of the verbs themselves, we have shown that they were explained in a variety of different ways. For example, most authors presented actives and passives as verbs ending in -o and -or respectively that have the facility to transform, meaning that actives gain an ending to turn into passives and passives drop an ending in order to become actives. Some authors also explained these verbs in terms of semantics, pointing out that actives express activity and passives passivity. The author of Genera D focussed entirely on verbal semantics; however, this approach to the description of verbs is attested rarely in the Latin grammatical tradition. Aside from semantics and morphology, Diomedes showed a concern for the degree of transitivity, noting that actives and passives govern two participants, an agent and a patient. We also argued that the author of Genera D divided actives and passives into four classes on the basis of degree of transitivity, discerning two active classes, one transitive (e.g. docet) and one intransitive (e.g. curro), and two passive classes, one transitive (e.g. uritur) and one intransitive (e.g. senescit). However, as we have already mentioned, he does not expressly state that he is classifying the
verbs on the basis of this verbal property; rather, I arrived at this conclusion by examining the verbs that he uses to exemplify each class. Thus it is still debatable whether he actually took degree of transitivity into account at all.\footnote{In the following table I have excluded Genera A, since the author does not describe the various classes in terms of any criteria, but merely exemplifies each one with a verbal form.}

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In addition to actives and passives, authors mentioned neuters which they classified as active verbs that lack passive inflection. Some authors like Diomedes also characterised them in terms of semantics noting that certain neuters express activity (e.g. curro), others passivity (e.g. vapulo), and others state (e.g. sedo). Certain authors even used specific terms to distinguish neuters on the basis of their meanings, applying supinum to stand for verbs conveying passive meaning (i.e. the author of C) and habitivum to refer to those signifying state (i.e. the author of Genera D). Aside from morphology and semantics, Diomedes described neuters in terms of degree of transitivity, arguing that certain ones convey verbal ideas involving a single participant who undergoes an action (e.g. ardeo). As far as I am aware, this is the earliest explicit description of the passive intransitive that comes down to us in Latin.

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<td>Gen. B and C</td>
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As for common, most authors presented them as passive verbal forms that express active and passive meaning (e.g. consolor). In addition, some authors characterised them in terms of syntax, highlighting that they convey active meaning when combined with an accusative case (e.g. consolor te) and passive meaning with an ablative prepositional phrase (e.g. consolor a
We have also seen that Probus explained these verbs by means of formal features alone. However, this was an inadequate way of describing these verbs, since common and deponents are similar as far as morphology is concerned.

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Regarding the deponents, authors defined them in a variety of different ways. Some authors like Donatus and Probus defined them as passive verbal forms lacking active inflection. Other authors such as the author of Genera C described deponents in a similar fashion, but added that they express active meaning. Aside from these two definitions, we also encountered the antiphrasis definition espoused by Diomedes and the author of Significatio, who claimed that the label deponens is ironic. Deponens is derived from the verb deponere ‘to put aside’ and, therefore, implies that the deponent verb should ‘put aside’ something – in their opinion its passive inflection – but it never does, as this would give rise to an ungrammatical form (e.g. loquor non loquo). Hence, they argued that the label deponens is ironic because it suggests that the deponent can lose its inflectional ending and become active when in reality it cannot. In addition to these definitions, which are mainly concerned with the morphology, we encountered two others in the grammar of Diomedes which deal with semantics. Diomedes asserts that deponents are so called because, in contrast with common which signify active and passive meaning, deponents ‘put aside’ active meaning and convey only passive or ‘put aside’ passive meaning and denote only active. Diomedes also tells us that deponents are so called because they ‘put aside’ ambiguity of speech’. This definition means that deponents are unambiguous as far as semantics is concerned, because unlike common verbs, which convey two meanings, deponents only ever express one.
To sum up, authors in this period categorised verbs on the basis of four distinct linguistic criteria, namely morphology, semantics, syntax and degree of transitivity. Regarding morphology, they recognised two sets of endings, one in ∼o and another in ∼or. As for semantics, they discerned three verbal significations, active, passive and stative. As for syntax, they pointed out that common verbs combine with accusatives to signify activity and with ablative prepositional phrases to convey passivity, and that impersonals combine with pronouns. Finally, these authors clearly knew something akin to the notions of transitive and intransitive; however, they did not possess a technical terminology to express this distinction and instead pointed out that verbs convey actions involving either one or two participants.

In conclusion, according to a traditional narrative best exemplified by Barwick (1922), one of the most innovative, industrious and creative phases in the history of ancient Latin grammar coincided with the period between the second century BC and the first century AD. During this period it was thought that all the main principles of grammatical theory were developed by important figures such as Aristophanes of Byzantium, Aristarchus, Crates of Mallos, Dionysius Thrax and Palaemon, and that the authors of the fourth century were simply passive inheritors of this established tradition, who transmitted the principles uncritically, without actively and rigorously engaging with them. Hence, the fourth century was perceived to be a rather unproductive phase in the history of grammar, but, in my view, what we have shown disproves much of this reconstruction. It is true that the authors of the fourth century inherited a body of grammatical learning from their predecessors, although it cannot be said that their treatment of this material was uncritical, especially as far as diathesis concerned. As we have seen, the
authors held diverse opinions concerning the ‘correct’ way of describing diathesis. For example, they had differing opinions about how many classes ought to be included in an account of diathesis and which linguistic criteria ought to be used to characterise them. What is more, they disagreed over which terms were most appropriate for labelling diathesis and how these terms ought to be applied. In reality, then, the fourth century was far from being a period of stagnation; quite to the contrary, it was a dynamic phase in the history of grammar, in which there was much debate about the ‘best’ way of approaching the description of Latin.
4. Servius and authors of artes between the fifth and sixth centuries

4.1 Introductory remarks

This chapter will deal with grammatical treatises composed roughly between the fifth and sixth centuries. Firstly, it will analyse several grammatical commentaries on the works of Donatus by Servius, Pompeius, Cledonius and the ‘Sergii’, and then will go on to examine a number of grammatical handbooks compiled by authors such as Phocas and Consentius.

4.2 Servius

(Maurus/Marius) Servius Honoratus\textsuperscript{144} was a professional teacher\textsuperscript{145} who taught at Rome (Holtz, 1981: 223; Kaster, 1988: 357). He flourished later than Donatus (post AD 350), on whose grammars he commented, and before Priscian (Prisc. I.G. 1, 8.15) (i.e. prior to the beginning of the sixth century) who cites him directly. A more precise dating has been proposed by some on account of Macrobius’ Saturnalia – a treatise which contains a series of fictitious dialogues between prominent intellectuals purportedly taking place in Rome during the feast of the Saturnalia, possibly in December of the year AD 382 (Cameron, 2011: 243), 383 (Putnam and Ziolkowksi, 2008: 636; Kaster, 2011: vol.1, xxiv–xxv) or 384 (Brugisser, 1984: 173).\textsuperscript{146} In the dialogues Servius is labelled an adulescens, revealing that he is either in his late teens or twenties at the time when the dramatic events of the Saturnalia supposedly take place, bringing some to the conclusion that he was born in the 360s (Brugisser, 1984: 173; Cameron, 2011: 239–240; Kaster, 2011: vol.1, xxxi).

\textsuperscript{144} On Servius’ full title, see Kaster (1988: 356–357).
\textsuperscript{145} See Mac. Sat. (1.2.15): Hos Servius inter grammaticos doctorem recens professus, iuxta doctrina mirabilis et amabilis verecundia, terram intuens et velut latenti similis sequabatur. ‘Servius who had recently established himself as a teacher among the grammarians, both marvellously learned and likeably modest, with his eyes upon the ground and looking as though he were trying to hide.’ (transl. Kaster, 2011: vol.1, 21)
\textsuperscript{146} Cameron (1966: 28) originally concluded that the dramatic date for the events of the Saturnalia was AD 384 (1966: 28).
Others have rejected this hypothesis on the basis of *Saturnalia* 1.1.5\(^{147}\) which tells us that certain interlocutors referenced could not have partaken in the dialogues, as they had yet to reach full maturity by time of Praetextatus’ death in 384 (Cameron, 2011: 38; Kaster, 2011: vol.1, xxvii). If Servius’ appearance in the treatise is an anachronism and he was in fact only a child in the 380s, this means that he may have been born no earlier than the 370s (Holtz, 1981: 225; Flamant, 1977: 83; Marinone, 1970: 188).

Servius authored numerous treatises, including a commentary on the works of Virgil that takes up three volumes in a modern edition.\(^{148}\) It is difficult to determine when this commentary was compiled, but, according to H. Georgii (1912: 518–526) and C.E. Murgia (2003: 68), it was probably penned by the year AD 410; however, this conclusion has its critics such as Stock (2005: 418) and Uhl (1998: 590), who contend that it may have been composed later, possibly as late as 430. Aside from this commentary, Servius also wrote a number of other works such as *De centum metris* ‘On the hundred metres’\(^{149}\) dedicated to Albinus, \(^{150}\) *De finalibus* ‘On final syllables’ dedicated to Aquilinus, *De metris Horatii* ‘On the metres in Horace’ dedicated to Fortunatianus and a *Commentarius in artem Donati* ‘A commentary on the grammar of Donatus’. This commentary cannot be dated with any certainty. A. Cameron (1966: 30) insisted that it was composed sometime in the first decade of the fifth century on account of its supposed dedication to Basilius who was prefect of Rome in AD 395 and was still active in the city in the early years of the fifth century. This dating, however, must be dismissed on the grounds that the commentary bears no such dedication (Kaster, 1988: 358).\(^{151}\) The version that survives is an abridgement – possibly produced by Servius himself (Holtz, 1981: 228) – of

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\(^{147}\) *Nec mihi fraudi sit si uni aut alteri ex his quos coetus coegit matura aetas posterior saeculo Praetextati fuit* [...]. ‘And let no one fault me if one or two of those whom this gathering has brought together did not reach their maturity until after the age of Praetextatus […]’ (transl. Kaster, 2011: vol.1, 13)


\(^{149}\) This treatise has been dated to the first decade of the fifth century (Cameron, 1966: 30; 2011: 240).

\(^{150}\) On the identity of Albinus, see Cameron (2011: 240–241).

\(^{151}\) Cameron does not tell us how he came to this erroneous conclusion.
a longer commentary, traditionally designated *Servius Plenior*,\(^{152}\) which includes a short preface providing definitions of the term *ars* and a summary of the eight parts of speech (*Serv.*, 405.1–406.20) and meticulous explications of the *Ars Minor* (*Serv.*, 406.21–420.32) and *Ars Maior* (*ibid.*, 421.1–448.17).

### 4.2.1 Servius’ account of diathesis in the commentary on the *Ars Minor*.  

The verb is the third part of speech discussed by Servius. The account commences with a definition (*ibid.*, 411.14–25), followed by detailed accounts of accidents, namely *qualitas* ‘quality’, which is subdivided into *modus* ‘mood’ and *forma* ‘form’ (*ibid.*, 411.26–413.13), *coniugatio* ‘conjugation’ (*ibid.*, 413.14–34), *genus* ‘kind’ (*ibid.*, 413.35–414.6) and *tempus* ‘tense’ (*ibid.*, 414.7–415.5). The account of diathesis reads as follows:

> Verborum genera quinque sunt, activa, passiva, neutra, communia, deponentia. Quaecumque sint illis definitionibus, quae in arte lectae sunt varie, tamen, quantum ad significaciones pertinet, omnia ista quinque duas habent significaciones, id est aut agentis aut patientis. Hinc est quod in neutrali verbo et agentis invenimus significacionem, ut nato, et patientis, ut vapulo. Item in deponenti verbo, ubi sola utique debuit esse passiva significatio, et agentis non numquam inventur, ut est loquor. Confusio autem communis verbi casibus segregatur. Nam si accusativum casum iungas, agentis est, ut criminor illum; si ablativum, patienti s, ut criminor ab illo (*Serv.*, 413.35–414.6).

‘There are five kinds of verbs: actives, passives, neuters, common and deponents. Whatever about those definitions which can be read in various ways in grammars concerning signification, all those five have two significations, that is active and passive. Hence what we find in the neutral verb is the active like *nato* ‘I swim’ and the passive like *vapulo* ‘I am beaten’. Likewise in the deponent where certainly the signification should only be passive, yet the active is sometimes found, for example *loquor* ‘I speak’. The confusion in the case of common verbs is removed by the cases.

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\(^{152}\) On the reconstruction of the commentary, see in particular Jeep (1893: 28–56) but also Holtz (1982: 227–229). On its manuscript tradition, see GL.4 (xli–xliii).
For if you combine [the verb] with the accusative case, it has active
signification, as in criminor illum ‘I accuse him’; but if you combine it with
the ablative case, you have passive signification, as in criminor ab illo ‘I am
accused by him.’

Servius classifies five types of verbs which he names genera, and
characterizes them almost exclusively in terms of semantics (significatio).
He does not comment on the semantics of the active and passive genera,
assuming that the reader is aware that the former has active signification and
the latter passive. Hence he starts with a discussion of the neuter which
possesses either active (e.g. nato) or passive meaning (e.g. vapulo),
followed by a description of the deponent which exhibits activity in spite of
inflecting like a passive (e.g. loquor), and ends with an account of the
common which conveys both active and passive meaning, but not
simultaneously: it indicates the former whenever it is construed with an
accusative (e.g. criminor illum) and the latter if it is construed with an
ablative (e.g. criminor ab illo). Thus, Servius pinpoints only two
significations, active and passive, which sets him apart from a number of his
predecessors including Donatus, Diomedes and Charisius, who maintain
that there is a third signification, namely state (neutrum/ habitum):

> Verbum est pars orationis cum tempore et persona sine casu aut agere
> alicuid aut pati aut neutrum significans (Mai., 632.5–6).

> ‘The verb is a part of speech with tense and person but without case-
inflection that signifies that something performs or experiences an action or,
indeed, neither.’

### 4.2.2 Servius’ account of diathesis in the commentary on the Ars Maior.

Turning now to the commentary on the Ars Maior, Servius does not
present a comprehensive account of the verb, but rather treats a series of
anomalous verbal forms that have incomplete or irregular inflectional
paradigms (e.g. odi ‘I hate’, novi ‘I know’, memini ‘I remember’ and volo ‘I
wish’, see Serv., 437.1–438.5). He refers to neutropassiva ‘neuter-passives’,

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153 See also Char, (211.1–3, 212.1–4) and Diom. (337.10–14).
which are verbs like *gaudeo* ‘I am glad’ and *audeo* ‘I dare’ (which we call semi-deponent).

*Gaudeo et audeo a plerisque neutropassiva, ab aliis anomala, ab aliis supina verba dicuntur, quae in tempore perfecto et plusquamperfecto passivam habent declinationem, in reliquis activam* (Serv., 437. 13–15). ‘Most call *gaudeo* ‘I am glad’ and *audeo* ‘I dare’ neutropasses, but others call them anomalous or even supine; these have passive inflection in the perfect and pluperfect tense but active in all other forms.’

The term *neutropassivum* applies to verbs that arise in only active form (e.g. *audeo*), like a neuter verb, but with the exception that they exhibit passive-looking forms in the perfect tense (e.g. *ausus sum*). The term is attested rarely in the grammatical tradition prior to the fifth century. In fact, as far as I am aware, it manifests in a single fourth century *ars*, namely *Instituta Artium* by Probus:

*Audeo, gaudeo, soleo meto, fido, fio, haec neutropassiva esse nuncupantur hac de causa, quoniam res, quas regit indicativus modus ipsorum, neutrali forma declinantur; at vero res, quas regit species perfecta ipsorum, passiva forma declinantur, ut puta audeo ausus sum* (Prob.,187.16–20).

‘Verbs such as *audeo* ‘I dare’, *gaudeo* ‘I am glad’, *soleo* ‘I am accustomed’, *meto* ‘I measure’, *fido* ‘I trust’ and *fio* ‘I become’ are named neutropasses, because their forms in the indicative mood are inflected as though they are formally neuter, and because their forms in the perfect tense are inflected as though they are formally passive, for example *audeo* ‘I dare’ and *ausus sum* ‘I dared’.

4.3 ‘Sergii’

There are numerous extant grammatical works affiliated with the name Sergius, but it is doubtful that they were all written by the same

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154 What we now call semi-deponents are mentioned by other fourth century authors, although they are given different designations: they are called *inaequalia* ‘irregulars’ by Donatus (*Mai.*, 636.6–7) and *transgressiva* ‘transgressives’ (or *mixta* ‘mixed’) by Diomedes (346.5–10).

155 In some witnesses, the name Servius or even Seregius is attached to these treatises. See De Paolis (2000: 174), Hagen (*GL*.8, cxcii), Kaster (1988: 358, 429–430), Keil (*GL*.4, lxi–lv) and Law (1982: 17–19).
author. In order to differentiate them, I have assigned designations to each one, namely Serg.1, Serg.2, Serg.3 and Serg.4 (see abbreviations).

4.3.1 Serg.1

Serg.1 is a commentary on Donatus’ eight parts of speech which was first edited by J. Garet in 1679.\(^\text{156}\) He discovered the treatise in a manuscript (which now is lost) at the library of Mt. Saint-Michel, and ascribed it to Cassiodorus – an ascription that was questioned by Keil (GL.7, 140), but later accepted by M. Cappuyns (1949: 1349–1408), J. Fontaine (1959: vol.1, 106) and L. Holtz (1975: 136–137; 1981: 252–253), who identified an additional witness in Paris, Bibl. Nat., Lat. 7530.

The attribution to Cassiodorus, however, is no more than a conjecture based on Garet’s reconstruction of the corrupt *incipit* in the Mt. Saint-Michel witness: *incipit commentarium s…./cii. de oratione & de viii …./tibus orationis*.\(^\text{157}\) Garet reconstructed it accordingly: *incipit commentarium Senatoris Clarissimi de oratione & de octo partibus orationis*. Law (1982: 18) rejected this reconstruction in favour of the following: *incipit commentarium Sergii de oratione & de octo partibus orationis*. She defended the plausibility of her reading on the grounds that ‘uncial ‘G’ could easily have been misread as a ‘C’’, and provided corroboration by highlighting that the treatise was known to Early Medieval authors under the name Sergius (*cf*. Ambr., 6.17–21 and Serg.1: 4.6–10, Bern., 135.1–8 and Serg.1: 49. 5–15, and Mals., 181.29–30 and Serg.1: 42.7–10).

As regards to provenance, C. Stock (2005: 421) has detected place-names in the treatise which hint that the author may have resided somewhere in Campania (*e.g.* Puteoli and Baiae (Serg.1: 27.24–25)). He

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\(^{156}\) *Magni Aurelii Cassiodori Senatoris opera omnia*, ed. J. Garet, Rouen, 1679, 592–604. The text was reproduced in the Patrologia Latina: Cassiodorus Senator, *Commentarium de oratione et de octo partibus orationis*, ed. J.P. Migne, Patrologia Latina 70, 1219A–1240B. To date, I have been unable to consult Garet’s edition directly, and so my familiarity with the contents of his edition is only second hand through more recent scholarship.

\(^{157}\) The Paris manuscript contains the following *incipit* (183v): *incipit de partibus orationis artis secundae Donati.*
also pointed out that the manuscript tradition supports Italian provenance, as the only witness survives in a single eighth-century manuscript – Paris, Bibl. Nat., Lat. 7530 (Holtz, 1975: 97–152) – which was compiled at the monastery of Monte Cassino. As far as dating is concerned, the commentary includes a citation from Paulinus of Nola’s *Carmen* 26 providing a *terminus post quem* of the year AD 402, and was used by Isidore of Seville (Fontaine, 1959: vol.1, 106) yielding a *terminus ante quem* of the year AD 636 (Holtz, 1981: 252; Stock, 2005: 413). Stock (2005: 413) has proposed a more precise dating on account of the text’s language which, he maintains, has the hallmarks of late fourth and early fifth century Latinity. Hence, he concluded that Serg.1 may have been penned sometime in the first half of the fifth century.

Serg.1 begins with an introduction to the term *oratio* ‘speech’ (*Serg.1*, 1.6–3.24), followed by accounts of the eight parts of speech (*ibid.*, 4.1–69.11). The verb is the third part of speech, after the noun and the pronoun. The chapter opens with a definition (*ibid.*, 51.1–19), then presents descriptions of its verbal accidents, namely *qualitas* ‘quality’ (which is subdivided into *modus* ‘mood’ and *forma* ‘form’) (*ibid.*, 51.21–54.4), *coniugatio* ‘conjugation’ (*ibid.*, 54.6–19), *genera* ‘kinds’ (*ibid.*, 54.21–55.7), *numerus* ‘number’ (*ibid.*, 55.10–12) and *tempus* ‘tense’ (*ibid.*, 55.15–24), and ends with a brief discussion of defective verbs (*ibid.*, 56.1–13). The description of diathesis is as follows:

> Verbum aut agentis aut patientis habet significationem, ut scribo scribor: scribo agentis, scribor patientis; neutrale vero et deponens aut agentis aut patientis, ut curro vapulo, loquor luctor; commune agentis et patientis, ut osculor te et osculor a te (*ibid.*, 51.15–19).

‘The verb has either active or passive signification, like *scribo* ‘I write’ and *scribor* ‘I am written’: the active, like *scribo*; the passive, like *scribor*; the neutral and deponent have either active or passive, like *curro* ‘I run’, *vapulo*...
‘I am beaten’, *loquor* ‘I speak’ and *uctor* ‘I wrestle’; and the common has both active and passive, like *osculor te* ‘I kiss you’ and *osculor a te* ‘I am kissed by you’.

This account appears to be an abridgement of Servius’ description of diathesis. Like Servius, the commentator is exclusively concerned with semantics, identifying two significations, active and passive, suggesting that he does not adhere to the theory, espoused by Donatus and others, which posits that certain verbs may signify a state. Elsewhere, like Servius, he also uses the term *neutropassivum* to designate verbs like *gaudeo* ‘I am glad’, *audeo* ‘I dare’ and *fio* ‘I become’:

> Scire autem debes, quod ipsa recta verba sunt, quae in declinatione servant species suas, ut puta lego legebam legi et cetera, et sic in passivis. Gaudeo vero, fio, soleo, quia mutant praeteritum, non sunt recta verba, sed neutropassiva dicenda sunt, quae ideo Donatus ita appellavit, quod inaequalia dicantur (Serg.1, 54.23–55.2).

‘You must know that there are those regular verbs which maintain their forms throughout their inflection, like *lego* ‘I read’, *legebam* ‘I was reading’ and *legi* ‘I read’ etc., and similarly in the passive. However, *gaudeo* ‘I am glad’, *fio* ‘I become’ and *audeo* ‘I dare’ are not regular verbs, but must be called neuter-passives because they change their preterite. Thus, Donatus labelled these verbs so, because they are said to be irregular.’

In this passage, the commentator alleges that Donatus employs the term *neutropassivum*, although this assertion seems to be erroneous, as this label does not feature in the *Ars Minor* or the *Ars Maior*. There are at least three ways of accounting for this apparent blunder. The commentator may have unwittingly erred. He may not have been working from a copy of the *Artes Donati* but rather from memory and misremembered the passage in question. Alternatively, he may have been led astray by a treatise that he consulted, which wrongly attributed the term to Donatus. It is also conceivable that he knowingly made this error. In Medieval *Computi*, we find quotations that appear to be wrongly ascribed to famous scholars, like Isidore and Augustine, because they are not attested in extant works (Warntjes, 2010: cxxvi–cxxviii). These quotations may have been
deliberately misattributed to these important figures in order to increase their auctoritas. Hence, our commentator may have intentionally credited the usage of the term to Donatus, even though he was aware that Donatus did not apply it, in order to legitimise the use of the term by associating it with a famous scholar. On the other hand, it is possible that the attribution to Donatus is correct. The commentator may have possessed a now lost work of Donatus, such as his commentary on Virgil, which referred to verba neutropassiva\textsuperscript{161} or had access to a unique recension of the Artes Donati that bore witness to the term but is no longer extant. Admittedly, none of these hypotheses can be proven and so this issue remains unresolved.

4.3.2 Serg.2, Serg.3 and Serg.4: an introduction

Serg.2 and Serg.3 (typically named Explanatio in Donatum I and II respectively) are commentaries on the Artes Donati, the former being an explication of the Ars Minor and Ars Maior I, and the latter an explication of Ars Maior II and III. Serg.2 is divided into three sections: the first includes a short preamble\textsuperscript{162} explaining the terms ars ‘art’, grammatica ‘grammar’, vox ‘utterance’ and elementa ‘element’ (Serg.2, 486.4–487.21) and also an overview of the eight partes orationis ‘parts of speech’ (ibid., 487.23–489.19). The second provides a detailed description of the eight parts of speech (ibid., 489.21–518.29), and the third deals with littera ‘letter’, pes ‘foot’, accentus ‘accent’ and positura ‘punctuation’ (ibid., 518.31–534.12). Serg.3, by contrast, has only two sections: the first expounds on the eight parts of speech (Serg.3, 534.15–562.25) and the second discusses the vices and virtues of the Latin language (ibid., 563–565).

The commentaries cannot be dated with any degree of accuracy. They depend on Servius\textsuperscript{163} yielding a terminus post quem in the early fifth

\textsuperscript{161} Admittedly, I have yet to detect any evidence indicating that the author knew Donatus’ commentary on Virgil. This is simply speculation on my part.
\textsuperscript{162} The preamble may have originally prefaced Serg.3 and not Serg.2, see Law (1987b: 71, n.12).
\textsuperscript{163} Serg.2 cites Servius directly, see 496. 27. On the relationship between these commentaries and Servius’, see Holtz (1981: 227–229) and Jeep (1893: 29–40).
century, and were known to Isidore of Seville providing a *terminus ante quem* in AD 636 (Holtz, 1981: 227–228, 233). They are transmitted together in two manuscripts (i.e. St Paul im Lavanttal, Stiftsbibl. 2/1 and Oxford, Magdalene College 64 dated to the eighth and fifteenth centuries respectively, see De Paolis, 2000: 176–179), indicating that they may be the work of a single author, but Jeep (1893: 35) has shown that this conclusion is erroneous, recognising that they differ to a great extent in regard to style and substance. For example, he noticed that the narrative of Serg.2 is occasionally interrupted by Filocalus and Rusticus, perhaps two of the author’s students (Kaster, 1988: 406–407), who pose questions; however, this feature is conspicuously absent from Serg.3. What is more, he observed that Serg.2 and Serg.3 disagree on matters to do with grammatical doctrine incorporating, for example, different accounts of mood (cf. Serg.2, 503.25–505.1 and Serg.3, 549.1–9).

In addition to this, Jeep (1893: 37–38) has proposed that the author of Serg.3 may have composed Serg.4 – a commentary on the *Ars Minor* (that is to say an explanation of the eight parts of speech) conventionally entitled *Primae Expositiones Sergii de Prioribus Donati Grammatici*, which has come down to us in an eighth-century manuscript, Bern, Burgerbibl. 207 (Holtz, 1981: 161–164). He arrived at this conclusion on account of cross-references which he detected in Serg.4 that appear to be alerting the reader to corresponding passages in Serg.3 (cf. Serg.4, 146.2 and Serg.3, 540.6, Serg.4, 146.13 and Serg.3, 544.7, Serg.4, 147.32 and Serg.3, 537.3). Jeep’s hypothesis has been accepted by Holtz (1981: 234) and Kaster (1988: 429), although in recent years, as far as I am aware, has not been subjected to serious scrutiny. If the hypothesis is ever disproven and it turns out that Serg.4 is the work of a distinct author, we can nevertheless assign it a

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164 Serg.3 survives in fragmentary form in only one other manuscript – Angers, Bibl. Mun. 493 dated to the ninth century, while Serg.2 is attested in multiple manuscript witnesses. See De Paolis (2000: 180–221) and Law (1987b: 67–89).


166 Holtz (1981: 370) has identified another partial witness in a ninth century manuscript – Karlsruhe, Bad. Landesbibl. Aug. CXII.
terminus post quem of AD 350 on account of it being a commentary on Donatus and a terminus ante quem of the eighth century on account of its earliest manuscript witness.

4.3.3 Serg.2’s description of diathesis.

Serg.2’s account of the verb begins with a definition (Serg.2, 502.26–503.6) and then provides descriptions of verbal accidents including genera ‘kinds’ (ibid., 503.7–24), qualitas ‘quality’ (which is divided into modus ‘mood’ and forma ‘form’) (ibid., 503.25–506.18), coniugatio ‘conjugation’ (ibid., 506.19–507.2), genera ‘kinds’ yet again (ibid., 507.3–31), numerus ‘number’ (ibid., 507.32–36) and tempus ‘tense’ (ibid., 507.37–509.17). One of the accounts of diathesis reads as follows:

Diximus quod omnia verba, sive activa sint sive passiva sive neutralia sive communia sive deponentia, duas significationes habent, activam et passivam. Nam et si neutrum sit, activam habet significationem aut passivam; et si commune sit, utique utramque significationem habet; et si deponens sit, passivam habet declinationem, sed activae significationis est, ut loquor convicior (ibid., 507.3–8).

‘We said that all verbs may be either actives or passives or neuters or common or deponents and have two significations – active and passive. For if it is a neuter, it has active or passive signification; if is a common, it certainly has both; if it is a deponent, it has passive form, but is of active signification, like loquor ‘I speak’ and convicior ‘I revile’.’

The commentator identifies the five customary verbal classes which he characterises in terms of meaning, singling out only two significations (significationes) – active and passive – suggesting that he does not embrace the theory, endorsed by Donatus and others, which claims that certain verbs denote a state. In the remainder of the account, he contrasts the common and the deponent, arguing that since they are similar as far as morphology is concerned (i.e. they lack active inflection in their finite forms), they ought to be distinguished in terms of semantics: the common denotes both active and passive meaning whereas the deponent conveys only active, because it ‘puts aside’ (deponit) the expression of passive meaning.
Nam nihil difficilius quam discernere commune verbum a deponenti. Plerique enim κατὰ ἀντίφρασιν putant dictum esse deponens ab eo, quod ῥ litteram non deponat; sed falsum est. Nam et communia ῥ litteram non deponunt; ergo et ipsa deponentia dicitur debuerant. Ergo ita discernitur: ubi inveneris passivam declinationem et activam tantum significacionem, necesse est deponens verbum sit, ut est loquor luctor; quotiens autem passiva est declinatio, significatio autem et activa et passiva, commune verbum dicitur, ut criminor osculor. Quando dico luctor, declinatio sola passiva est, ceterum significatio activa: ego enim luctor. Quando dico osculor, vides quod et quando ago et quando patior osculor dico. Ideo ergo illa verba deponentia dicuntur, quod ex gemina significacione unam deponunt, id est passivam. Cauti ergo esse debemus ad ipsas significations, ut sciamus, quando commune sit, quando deponens (ibid., 507.8–21).

‘Nothing is more difficult than to discern a common verb from a deponent. Many think that the deponent gets its label by ἀντίφρασις, because it does not put aside the letter -r, but this is an error: for common verbs too do not put aside the letter -r. [According to this logic,] they should be called deponents. For this reason, we discern them in the following manner: when you find passive form and only active signification, the verb is likely to be a deponent, such as loquor ‘I speak’ and luctor ‘I wrestle’; but so long as there is passive form and both active and passive meaning, it is called a common verb, like criminor ‘I judge’ and osculor ‘I kiss’. When I say luctor, there is passive form but, in other respects, active signification, because I am wrestling. When I say osculor, you see that I do something and when I say osculor [you see that] I experience something. Accordingly, the former are called deponents because they put aside one of two significations, namely the passive. And so we should pay attention to the meanings themselves in order to know when a verb is common or deponent.’

As we already mentioned, this is not the only treatment of diathesis set out by the commentator, as there is another account which is as follows:

Scire debemus quod omne verbum cuiuscumque generis duas significations habet tantum, aut agentis aut patientis; aliter fieri per rerum naturam non potest: lego agentis est, legor patientis. In ipso neutro aut agentis invenies significacionem aut patientis, agentis, ut curro, patientis, ut vapulo. Atquin
neutrum est, et nec illud habere debuit nec illud. Et interrogavit Filocalus, ‘possimus tamen invenire neutralia, quae nullam habent significacionem, ut est dormio’. Et respondit ‘agentis habet significacionem. Vis scire? Possum et non dormire, quoniam in potestate nostra est. Sunt alia quae naturae danda sunt, non omnia; sed tamen ista quae per naturam veniunt nisi consentientibus nobis non conplentur. Sitio meum non est, sed accidit ut sitirem, et tamen possum non sitire’ (ibid., 503.6–16).

‘We must know that every verb of any kind has only two significations, namely active or passive. No other signification can occur on account of the nature of things: lego ‘I read’ is active and legor ‘I am read’ is passive. In the neuter you find both the active and the passive: the active like curro ‘I run’ and the passive like vapulo ‘I am beaten’. And yet there is a neuter which should have neither this meaning nor that. Filocalus inquired: ‘can we find neutral verbs which have neither signification, like dormio ‘I sleep’, for example?’ He answered: ‘this verb has active signification. How do we know? I can [decide] not to sleep, because that is under my control. Some [actions/conditions], but not all, must be attributed to nature; and yet those [actions/conditions] that come about by nature, are not fulfilled if we do not consent [to them]: [for example], being thirsty is not [an action] of my own [making], but it just happens that I may be thirsty, and yet I can [act in order] not to be’.

On this occasion, he discerns three types (genera) of verbs – active, passive and neuter – which signify either active or passive meaning (significatio). Before he proceeds any further with his discussion, the astute Filocalus interjects with a rhetorical question asking whether verbs, like dormio ‘I sleep’, indicate a third signification – nulla significatio (i.e. a state). He resolves that a third signification does not exist, and that dormio ‘I sleep’ bears active signification, because it exhibits an ‘action’ over which we exert control (potestas). What he means by ‘control’ is not entirely clear, but it may have something to with our innate ability as sentient, conscious beings to undertake actions ad libitum. For example, we can sleep whenever we desire rest or, alternatively, resist the onset of slumber even if we are in desperate need of it. Thus we can say that we possess a measure of ‘control’ over sleep.
Filocalus also refers to verbs which convey ‘actions’ that happen naturally (*naturam veniunt*), such as being thirsty (*sitio*). This ‘action’ (i.e. being thirsty) too is somewhat under our control because we can do something (i.e. take a drink) in order to stave off the effects of thirst. *Potestas* ‘control’ is undoubtedly the operative word in this account. A verb is considered to have active meaning if the action denoted is performed by an ‘agent’ who retains some degree of control over what is being carried out. This particular understanding of activity appears to be unique, as I have yet to encounter it anywhere else in the Late Antique and Early Medieval grammatical traditions.

In his closing statements, Filocalus rails against those who classify verbs on the basis of transitivity, in particular challenging theorists who relate transitive action to actives and passives and intransitive action to neuters. He argues that actives and passives do not necessarily express actions requiring two participants, nor do neuters only denote actions involving one, and substantiates his claims by drawing attention to the verbs *vapulo* ‘I am beaten’ and *sentio* ‘I feel’, which despite being neuters nevertheless are transitive.

*Qua ratione decepti sunt ut hoc putarent: nam multi dicunt id agentis esse, quod alio agente alius patitur, ut verbero. Secundum ipsorum definitiones si ea verba activa, quae ita exprimunt agentis officium, ut exprimant et patientis, et item ea passiva, quae ita exprimunt patientem, ut exprimant officium agentis, neutra autem tunc sunt, quando unum exprimunt, aut patientem aut agentem, quid dicent, si invenerimus neutra quae utrumque exprimant, ut vapulo sentio? Ergo vides quod ista non procedunt, quia prima vera non sunt* (Serg. 2, 503.17–24).

‘For this reason, some were deceived into thinking the following: many say that an active signification involves someone experiencing an action as a result of the agency of another, like *verbero* ‘I strike’. According to their definitions, if actives are those that express the agent as well as expressing the patient and, likewise, passives are those that express a patient as well as

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167 *Char.* (211.3) and *Diom.* (337.12) categorise *dormio* and *sitio* as neuters that denote neither active nor passive meaning.
expressing an agent, then these verbs are neuters when they express only one [of these], that is either the agent or patient; but what will they say if we find neuters that express both, such as vapulo ‘I am beaten’ and sentio ‘I feel’? Then you see that these [definitions] are not useful because the first premises are not true.’

4.3.4 Serg.3’s description of diathesis

As for Serg.3, we find that its account of the verb has a different structure to that of Serg.2. It opens with a brief definition (Serg.3, 548.16–17), then describes verbal accidents, namely qualitas ‘quality’ (ibid., 548.18–25), genus sive significatio ‘kind or signification’ (ibid., 548.25–34), species sive modus ‘species or mood’ (ibid., 548.25–551.8) and tempus ‘tense’ (ibid., 551.9–17), and ends with an account of rules pertaining to conjugation, idiomata and descriptions of the morphology of irregular and impersonal verbs (ibid., 551.18–557.26). Its account of diathesis is as follows:

Significatio verborum est quam genus nominant: ea aut activa est, ut lego, aut passiva, ut legor, aut neutralis, ut sto, aut deponens, ut nascor. Hanc quidam itidem ut superiorem neutralem vocant. Tam haec activam non habet declinationem, quam illa passivam. Tam haec interdum in declinatione passiva actum significat, ut est loquor, quam illa in activa declinatione pati significat, ut est vapulo. Communis significatio specie tantum passivae declinationis eadem activa atque passiva est: tunc activa dinoscitur, cum ei in sermone casus accusativus adiungitur, ut consolor fratr; passiva autem, cum ablativus adiunctus est, ut consolor a fratre (ibid., 548.25–34).

‘The ‘signification’ of verbs is what [some] call ‘kind’: there is the active one, like lego ‘I read’, the passive, like legor ‘I am read’, the neutral, like sto ‘I stand’ and the deponent, like nascor ‘I am born’. Some call this one [i.e. deponent] neutral, like the previous one, [because] the former [i.e. deponent] does not have active form in the same way as the latter does not have passive form [i.e. neuter]. [Furthermore], the former occasionally signifies performance [despite inflecting] in the passive form, for example loquor ‘I speak’, in the same way as the latter signifies experience [despite inflecting] in the active form, for example vapulo ‘I am beaten’. Common signification
is simultaneously active and passive [in spite of] looking formally like a passive. The active is discerned whenever the accusative case is joined to it, for example *consolor fratem* ‘I console my brother’, and the passive is discerned whenever it is joined to an ablative, for example *consolor a fratre* ‘I am consoled by my brother’.

Whereas authors of Serg.1 and Serg.2 are primarily preoccupied with verbal semantics, the author of Serg.3 is far more concerned with the morphology of verbs. He devotes much of his attention to the discussion of the neutral and deponent in particular, which, he points out, are similar insofar as the former cannot inflect in the passive form and the latter in the active. For this reason, he tells us that some designated both (i.e. deponent and neutral) *neutrales*, which is striking, considering that the term is usually reserved to refer to active verbal forms lacking passive inflection. The passage concludes with an account of the common verb which he explains in the conventional way, that is, in terms of semantics and syntax: the common verb possesses active meaning whenever it is associated with an accusative and passive meaning with an ablative.

**4.3.5 Serg.4’s description of diathesis**

The description of the verb in Serg.4 commences with a rather detailed definition (Serg.4, 150.1–30), followed by accounts of verbal accidents, namely *qualitas* ‘quality’ (which is divided into *modus* ‘mood’ and *forma* ‘form’) (ibid., 150.31–152.17), *coniugatio* ‘conjugation’ (ibid., 152.18–153.33), *genera* ‘kinds’ (ibid., 153.34–154.11), *numerus* ‘number’ (ibid., 154.12), *figura* ‘shape’ (ibid., 154.13), *tempus* ‘tense’ (ibid., 154.14–18) and *persona* ‘person’ (ibid., 154.19). It preserves the following account of diathesis:

*Genera verborum V: aut activa aut passiva aut neutra aut communia aut deponentia. Activa addita r faciunt ex se passiva, ut lego legor; at contra sublata r redeunt in activa. Ab agendo dicta sunt activa, a patiendo passiva. Nam neque activa esse possunt, quae passiva non faciunt, neque passiva, quae in activa non redeunt. Quod si aliqua ex ipsis non fecerint, iam neutra dicuntur, ut puta nato, quod non facit nator, neutrum est. Loquor autem,*

‘There are five kinds of verbs: actives, passives, neuters, common and deponents. Actives become passives by adding an -r, like lego ‘I read’ and legor ‘I am read’; and [passives], in contrast, revert into actives by losing the -r. Actives are so called on account of performing and passives on account of experiencing: for those verbs that do not become passives cannot be actives, and those that do not revert into actives cannot be passives. What if some verbs will not generate other verbs out of themselves? In that case they are labelled neutrals, such as the neuter nato ‘I swim’, which does not generate nator. Moreover, loquor ‘I speak’ is called a deponent because it does not make loquo. Therefore, neutral verbs follow active form and deponents follow passive form. There is also a verb that is called common, which only has passive form but signifies both performing and experiencing: osculor ‘I kiss’ and criminor ‘I judge’; when I say osculor ‘I kiss’, I signify performing and experiencing: osculor te ‘I kiss you’ and osculor a te ‘I am kissed by you’. How can we discern them? By means of cases: for if you join the accusative, it will be active, and if you join the ablative, it will be passive.’

Like the author of Serg.3, the author of Serg.4 is mainly concerned with the morphology of verbs, discerning the active, passive, neuter and deponent in terms of their form. However, he recognises that the common cannot be distinguished in terms of morphology alone and, as a consequence, resorts to using criteria of syntax and semantics so that it can be adequately explained.

4.3.6 Concluding remarks

In the preceding sections, we have discussed a series of grammatical treatises associated with the name ‘Sergius’ and observed that they agree, to
a great extent, as far as the theory of diathesis is concerned. This is not altogether surprising when we consider that they appear to depend on a common source – *Servius Plenior*. Generally, the compilers of the ‘Sergian’ commentaries list five types of verbs – active, passive, neuter, deponent and common – which they call *genera* (and, on one occasion, *significationes* (see Serg.4)), and mainly categorise them on the basis of morphology and semantics, syntax and degree of transitivity, discounting the compiler of Serg.1, who is entirely preoccupied by semantics. Regarding morphology (*declinatio/forma*), they differentiate the active and the neuter from the passive, deponent and common on the basis that the former two inflect in the active form and the latter three in the passive. What is more, the active and the passive are set apart from the deponent, neuter and common on the grounds that the former two can transform: by that I mean, the active may gain an ending in order to become a passive (e.g. *lego* → *legor*), and the passive may drop an ending in order to revert into an active (e.g. *legor* → *lego*), whereas the neuter, deponent and common, by contrast, manifest in only a single form, either active (e.g. *nato non nator*) or passive (e.g. *loquor non loquo/criminor non crimino*) (see, in particular, Serg.3 and Serg.4). Regarding syntax, the ‘Sergii’ acknowledge that the common verb joins with the accusative and ablative cases, combining with the former to signify activity and with the latter to exhibit passivity (see Serg.1, Serg.2, Serg.3 and Serg.4). As for semantics (*significatio*), they recognise only two significations – active and passive – flouting the opinions of Donatus and others who opine that some verbs convey a third, i.e. a state (see Serg.1). The compiler of Serg.2 was particularly explicit in this regard advocating that even *dormio* and *sito*, which were often deemed by ancient theorists to be stative, were in fact active, because the actions/conditions expressed by these verbs are executed by agents who enjoy a measure of ‘control’ (*potestas*) over the situation involved. Finally, as for degree of transitivity, Serg.2 points out that actives and passives are typically transitives whereas neuters can be either transitive (e.g. *vapulo*) or intransitive (e.g. *dormio*).
4.4 Cledonius

Cledonius is an author of a commentary on the *Artes Donati* which has come down to us in a single, highly corrupt manuscript – Bern, Burgerbibl. 380 – dated either to the late sixth or early seventh century (De Nonno, 2000: 165–172; Holtz, 1981: 429). He probably lived in Constantinople (Jeep, 1893: 40)

168 and may have even taught there, although the evidence supporting the latter possibility is minimal. In truth, it is mainly derived from a single passage in the commentary that associates Cledonius with the *Capitolium (Cled., 14.3–7; Kaster, 1988: 255)*, the prestigious teaching institution founded in Constantinople in AD 425 (Marrou, 1956: 307–308). However, given the corrupt nature of the copy of the treatise, Kaster (1988: 255) has warned against placing too much weight on this passage, pointing out that it may not be authentic, but rather an interpolation introduced at some stage during its transmission. If this passage is indeed an interpolation, we cannot assume that Cledonius was a teacher. As far as dating is concerned, Cledonius lived later than the early fifth century on the grounds that he knows Servius (Holtz, 1981: 429) and before the seventh century on account of the date of Bern, Burgerbibl. 380. A narrower date range, however, has been suggested by Kaster (1988: 255) on the basis of two pieces of evidence. He argued that if the reference to the *Capitolium* is reliable, this entails that the commentary was compiled no earlier than AD 425. Moreover, he contended that ‘since Cledonius styles himself *senator* (see footnote above), and since the title *senator* had come to be reserved for *illustres* by 530 at the very latest, and possibly as early as the reign of Zeno or even Leo (Jones, 1964: 529), we should conclude either that Cledonius was an *illustris*, or far more likely, that he cannot be dated later than the second half of the fifth century.’

Cledonius’ commentary deals with the *Ars Minor (Cled., 10.1–26.24)* and *Ars Maior (ibid., 26.25–79.22)*. The text that has come down to us, however, is defective, most conspicuously at the beginning where a large

168 The incipit in the manuscript reads: *Ars Cledonii Romani Senatoris Constantinopolitan Grammatici (Cled., 10.1–4).*
portion of the preface is missing\textsuperscript{169} (\textit{ibid.}, 9.2–16), and also at end where almost the entirety of the commentary on \textit{Ars Maior} III is lost (\textit{ibid.}, 79.20–22). The commentary, as it is, preserves two basically complete accounts of the parts of speech (\textit{ibid.}, 10.1–26.24, 34.12–79.18) and descriptions of \textit{littera} ‘letter’, \textit{syllaba} ‘syllable’, \textit{pes} ‘foot’, \textit{accentus} ‘accent’ and \textit{positura} ‘punctuation’ (\textit{ibid.}, 26.26–34.9).

4.4.1 Cledonius’ account of diathesis in the commentary on the \textit{Ars Minor}

The account of the verb surviving in the commentary on the \textit{ Ars Minor} has an extremely irregular structure. It begins with a definition (which is corrupt), and then provides brief explanations of verbal accidents, specifically \textit{qualitas} ‘quality’, \textit{coniugatio} ‘conjugation’, \textit{genus} ‘kind’, \textit{numerus} ‘number’ and \textit{tempus} ‘tense’ (\textit{ibid.}, 16.1–13). Thereafter, it treats a variety of verbal forms, including the \textit{coniunctivum} ‘subjunctive’, \textit{promissivum} ‘promissive’, \textit{infinitivum} ‘infinitive, \textit{inpersonalis} ‘impersonal’, \textit{meditativum} ‘desiderative’, \textit{inchoativum} ‘inchoative’ and \textit{frequentativum} ‘frequentative’ (\textit{ibid.}, 16.14–29). Next it provides a description of the fourth conjugation, a definition of the verb, an additional account of the inchoative and descriptions of the four conjugations (\textit{ibid.}, 16.29–17.18).

Subsequently, there are discussions of \textit{modus} ‘mood’, \textit{forma} ‘form’, the differences between the third and the fourth conjugations, \textit{genus} ‘kind’, \textit{figura} ‘shape’ and \textit{tempus} ‘tense’ (\textit{ibid.}, 17.19–19.12). The account comes to a close with accounts of conjugation and mood (\textit{ibid.}, 19.13–20.27). It preserves the following treatment of diathesis:

\textit{Genera verborum quae et significationes: Activa sunt quae se aliquid agere demonstrant, passiva quae pati, neutra quae nihil horum: deponentia per catantifrasin, hoc est contrarietatem, sicut parcae, quod nulli parcant; aut certe ideo dictum est deponens, quod deponat significationem activam: communia quae et agentis et patientis sibi vindicant significationem; et de activo passivum fit, et de passivo activum. Osculor tunc activum significat,}

\textsuperscript{169} The preface dedicates the \textit{ars} to an individual whose name is lost.
quando accusativum casum regit, ut osculor illum; tunc passivum quando ablavitum, ut osculor ab illo (Cled., 18.34–19.4).

‘The kinds of verbs which [others call] significations: There are actives which indicate that something performs an action, passives which indicate that something experiences an action, neuters which indicate none of these. The deponent [is so called] on account of antiphrasis, that is [signifying something] that is contrary to its meaning, for example, the Parcae, [who are so called] because they do not spare anyone. For this reason, the deponent surely is so called because it puts aside active signification. There are the common verbs which embrace active and passive signification. And the passive is derived from the active and the active from the passive. Thus osculor signifies the active when it governs an accusative, like osculor illum ‘I kiss him’, and the passive when it governs an ablative, like osculor ab illo ‘I am kissed by him’.

In this passage, Cledonius shows a profound concern for semantics, identifying two types of verbs that express activity (i.e. active and common), two that denote passivity (i.e. passive and common) and one that conveys neither (i.e. the neuter). He also discusses the deponent, which he tells us is so called on account of antiphrasis, that is to say, its designation is paradoxical. He clarifies what he means by way of the example, Parcae (i.e. Fate Goddesses), whose name, according to a pseudo-etymology, derives from the verb parcere ‘to spare’, in spite of their proclivity to spare no one. Similarly, the term deponens derives from deponere indicating that the deponent verb ought to ‘put aside’ something – in this case activa significatio ‘active signification’ – but it never does, since the deponent typically expresses active meaning.

4.4.2 Cledonius’ account of diathesis in the commentary on the Ars Maior

Cledonius provides a second account of diathesis in his commentary on the Ars Maior. The account opens with a definition (Cled., 53.29–54.6), then gives detailed accounts of verbal accidents, namely modus ‘mood’, forma ‘form’, coniugatio ‘conjugation’, genus ‘kind’ and tempus ‘tense’
(ibid., 54.6–61.3), and concludes with treatments of impersonal and
defective verbal forms (ibid., 61.4–62.13). The account of diathesis is as
follows:

_Activum verbum est, quod o habet et addito r passivum facit. Nam non potest
esse activum, quod non faciat passivum, neque passivum, quod non faciat
activum. Neutrum est, si non faciat passivum. Commune, quod castibus
discernitur, quod et ab activo et a passivo in or venit. Sed activam
significationem accusativus regit, passivam ablativus, ut criminor te et
criminor a te. Neutra […] habent activum tantum. Sed quia illud alter non
patitur, activum non est, ut nato (ibid., 58.5–12).

‘The active is a verb that has an -o and becomes a passive by adding an -r:
for the verb that does not become passive cannot be an active, and likewise
the one that does not become active cannot be a passive. If it does not
become a passive, it is a neuter. The common is the one that is discerned by
cases, and that ends in -or whether it is active or passive. The accusative
case is appropriate for active meaning and the ablative for passive meaning,
for example criminor te ‘I judge you’ and criminor a te ‘I am judged by
you’. Neuters have active form alone. However, it is not active because
nobody experiences anything, for example nato ‘I swim’.’

Whereas the previous account dealt exclusively with verbal semantics, this
one focusses almost entirely on the morphology of verbs, characterising the
active, passive and neuter in terms of their form. However, the concluding
section, by contrast, deals, to some extent, with the meanings of verbs,
describing the common as a verb signifying both activity and passivity, and
the neuter as a verb denoting an action, which only involves an agent (e.g.:
nato ‘I swim’).

4.5 Pompeius

Pompeius is the author of a commentary on the _Ars Maior_ which
survives in multiple manuscript witnesses.\(^{170}\) He probably hailed from North
Africa on the basis of a passage in the commentary in which he refers to

\(^{170}\) On the transmission of the commentary, see Holtz (1971: 48–83). For an up-to-date
catalogue of Pompeian manuscripts, see Holtz (2006: 118–119).
himself as a *Maurus* (Kaster, 1988: 343), and was possibly a Christian since he discussed the word *Pascha* ‘Easter’ (*Pomp.*, 177.4). He was almost certainly a teacher (Kaster, 1988: 158–163, 343) considering the concern he shows for students, frequently advising the reader to take care whenever explaining difficult grammatical or metrical theory to young boys (*pueri*) (*Pomp.*, 130.31, 132.8, 137.18; Kaster, 1988: 160). He lived no earlier than the fifth century on the grounds that his commentary depends on Servius (Holtz, 1981: 227–229, 236–237; Kaster, 1988: 140–150, 344) and certainly no later than AD 636 since he is known by Isidore (Fontaine, 1959: vol.1, 97; Holtz, 1971: 83). Schindel (1975: 30–32) has proposed a narrower date range on the basis of a corrupt phrase in the commentary that appears to be inspired by a verse of Ennius. The verse in question is transmitted in a single treatise, namely in the *Expositio Sermonum Antiquorum* ‘the explanation of ancient sayings’ by Fulgentius, also a North African who flourished, according to Schindel, in the second half of the fifth century. If Pompeius was inspired to compose the phrase after consulting the verse in Fulgentius as Schindel assumes, he can be dated no earlier than the second half of the fifth century; however, as Holtz (1977: 525) has pointed out, if both authors became aware of the verse consulting a common source that is no longer extant, we cannot necessarily conclude that Fulgentius antedated Pompeius. In any case, I would add that it is ill-advised to date the *floruit* of any individual on the basis of Fulgentius, as he has proved to be notoriously difficult to pin down as far as dating is concerned and, in reality, may have lived anytime between the fifth and eighth centuries AD (Hays, 2003: 167–180).

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171 Si interroges verbi causa de Mauro, aut si qua me interroget, iste homo quis est? Notras est, id est Maurus (*Pomp.*, 205. 4–6). ‘If you ask, for example, about a *Maurus* or if someone asks me where the man is from? [I answer], he is one of us, that is a *Maurus*.’

172 The phrase appears as follows: *ignoscente calciavi me* (*Pomp.*, 311.20). Schindel (1975:30–31) proposed the following emendation: *ignoscente te sauciavi me*.

173 *Haec anus admodum friguit; nimirum sauciavit se flore liberi* (*Fulg.*, 117.11).

174 Fulgentius postdates AD 439 on the basis that he cites Martianus Capella, and antedates AD 800 on the grounds that there are borrowings from the *Mitologiae* in the *Libri Carolini* (Hays, 2003: 167).
Pompeius’ commentary is essentially made up of four parts. The first part constitutes a preface that comes down to us in two distinct recensions: a shorter version printed by Keil (Pomp., 95.3–96.18) and a longer version, which is transmitted in only two manuscripts dated to the ninth century subsequently edited by Holtz (1971: 58–64). The second part defines *littera* ‘letter’, *syllaba* ‘syllable’, *pes* ‘foot’, *accentus* ‘accent’ and *positura* ‘punctuation’ (*ibid.*, 98.10–134.2), the third tackles the eight parts of speech (*ibid.*, 134.4–282.35) and the fourth offers an exhaustive treatment of the vices and virtues of Latin (*ibid.*, 283.1–312.16).

### 4.5.1 Pompeius’ description of diathesis

The verb is the third part of speech examined by Pompeius. He begins with a definition (*ibid.*, 212.4–213.36), followed by a discussion of verbal accidents, namely *genus* ‘kind’, *qualitas* ‘quality’ (which is divided into *modus* ‘mood’ and *forma* ‘form’), *coniugatio* ‘conjugation’, *genus* (again), *numerus* ‘number’, *figura* ‘shape’, *tempus* ‘tense’ and *persona* ‘person’ (*ibid.*, 213.36–237.23), and closes with discussions of impersonals, syntactic features of verbs, orthography and defectives (*ibid.*, 237.23–241.9). The treatment of diathesis begins as follows:

> Genera verborum ista sunt, activa, passiva, neutra, communia, deponentia. Diximus etiam in principio quod voluerunt grammatici ista differentiae causa introducere. Ceterum omne verbum duas res significat, aut agentis aut patientis, nec potest alia inveniri significatio. Quicquid est in significatione verborum, aut agentis est aut patientis. Si dicas lego, agentis est; si dicas legor, patientis est. Quid si neutrale fuerit? Necesse est aut patientis sit aut agentis. Ecce nato et vapulo utrumque significat, sed nato ego agentis est; vapulo autem quando dico, ego patior, ecce neutrum verbum est, et tamen servit illis duabus significationibus. Item loquor quis nesciat quoniam deponens verbum est? Et nihilo minus, quando dico loquor ego, facio ego: et deponens est et habet agentis significationem. Ergo non potest fieri ut

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invenias verbum ut aliud significet, quam aut agentis aut patientis (ibid., 227.3–14).

‘These are the kinds of verbs: actives, passives, neuters, common and deponents. Indeed, we have already said in the introduction that grammarians decided to use these [classes] in order to differentiate [verbs]. After all, every verb signifies two states, either the state of performing or experiencing, and no other signification can be found. As far as the signification of verbs is concerned, there is either active or passive: for if you say lego ‘I read’, there is active [signification]; if you say legor ‘I am read’, there is passive. What if there could be a neutral? It is inevitable that it would be either of active or passive. For example, nato ‘I swim’ and vapulo ‘I am beaten’ signify both, but [the phrase] nato ego has active [signification]; however, when I say vapulo ego, I experience an action. Therefore, here we see a neuter verb and yet it accommodates two significations. Similarly, who does not know that loquor ‘I speak’ is a deponent verb? Nevertheless, when I say loquor ego, I do something: it is a deponent and has active signification. Hence it is not possible to find a verb that may signify something other than active or passive.’

In this passage Pompeius categorises five types (genera) of verbs, active, passive, neuter common and deponent, which he characterises in terms of semantics. He identifies two significations (significationes), active and passive. He also treats verbal morphology, describing the active and passive as verbs terminating in -o and -r respectively. He tells us that teachers (grammatici) explain verbs on the basis of their form for the benefit of beginners (inchoantes), which is a striking remark as it sheds light on Late Antique didactic practice.

Tamen causa differentiae propter inchoantes ista grammatici docuerunt et voluerunt activum verbum esse quod in o exit et accepta r littera facit ex se passivum. Pute lego: tempta, utrum latine possimus dicere lego, nisi

176 See also Pomp., 213.21–25: Omne verbum aut agere aliquid aut pati significat. Quid sit hoc, postea dico. Interpositum est, ut dicetur activum passivum neutrum commune et deponens. Quare? Hoc dico postea. Interim scire debes quod omne verbum quod est in rerum natura aut agere aut pati nos ostendit. ‘Every verb signifies that something performs or experiences an action. Why this is, I will tell you later. It was [also] proposed that a verb was said to be active, passive, neuter, common and deponent. Why? I will tell you later. In the meantime, you should know that every verb that is consistent with the nature of things indicates that we either perform or experience an action.’
possumus dicere legor. Ergo apparat quoniam illud activum est, quia non potest aliter esse activum, nisi accepta r littera faciat passivum. Item non potest esse passivum, nisi redeat in activum. Legor, tolle inde r, facit lego; apparat ergo quoniam passivum est. Neque ante activum potest esse, nisi faciat passivum, neque ante passivum potest esse, nisi faciat activum (ibid., 227.14–23).

‘However, in order to differentiate these [verbs] for the sake of beginners, grammarians taught and preferred [to say] that the active is a verb that ends in -o and makes a passive by accepting an -r. Consider lego ‘I read’: test whether we can say lego in Latin without being able to say legor. Therefore, it appears that this is an active because it cannot be an active unless it makes a passive by accepting an -r. Likewise, it cannot be a passive unless it turns back into an active. [Consider also] legor, remove the -r, it makes lego; therefore, it appears that it is a passive: for a verb cannot be active unless it makes a passive and a verb cannot be a passive unless it makes an active.’

In addition to morphology and semantics, Pompeius characterises verbs on the basis of degree of transitivity, recognising two types, transitive and intransitive, although, as we shall see, he does not use a specialised technical terminology to make this distinction.

Vide definitionem Plinii Secundi, quem ad modum definivit fortiter, et definivit, quid est activum, quid passivum. Et si quaeras secundum rationem, hoc est quod dixit Plinius Secundus: dicit activum est quod alio patiente nos facimus, passivum est quod alio faciente nos patimur. Ut puta, si dicas verbero verberor, ecce proprie activum et passivum est. Quando enim dicimus verbero, ego facio, alter patitur; quando dicimus verberor, alter facit, ego patior. Ista sunt proprie activa et passiva, quae versantur inter duas personas. […] illa vero, ubi una persona utrumque agit, non videntur proprie dicta esse, sed abusive. Nam quando dico nato, ego quidem ago, sed alter non patitur, id est quando dico nato, ego quidem, quantum ad me pertinet, ago, quantum ad aliam rem, non tamen patitur. Et idcirco verba activa specialiter haec dicuntur; illa vero neutra dicuntur, non quoniam neutrum significant, sed quoniam non utrumque significant, id est alium facere, alium pati (Pomp., 227.23–36).
‘Look at Pliny the Elder’s definition, as he provided robust definitions, and also defined what an active is and what a passive is. And if you require a rational explanation, this is what Pliny the Elder said: he says that an active is an action which we perform on someone else who can experience, and the passive is an action which we experience through the agency of another. Think, for example, if you say *verbero* ‘I beat’, *verberor* ‘I am beaten’, these forms here are respectively active and passive in the proper sense. For when I say *verbero*, I perform an action [and] another experiences it; when I say *verberor*, someone performs an action [and] I experience it. These verbs are actives and passives in the proper sense, as they involve two persons. [...] Those verbs where only one person performs either one of the two roles, do not appear to be called [actives and passives] properly, but improperly. For when I say *nato* ‘I swim’, I indeed perform an action, but nobody else experiences it; that means that, when I say *nato*, I indeed perform the part of the action that pertains to me, but the part of the action that pertains to the other participant is not actually experienced as such. For this reason, these active verbs are given a special name: they are called neuters, not because they signify neither [active nor passive], but because they do not signify both [at the same time], that is to say they signify that either someone does something or experiences something.’

Here Pompeius divides actives and passives into two classes, ‘proper’ and an ‘improper’. Verbs that are active and passive in the proper sense (*proprie*) are transitive, that is to say, they signify a verbal idea requiring two participants (e.g. *verberor/verbero*), an agent and patient, while those that are active and passive in an improper sense (*abusive*) are intransitive insofar as they denote an action involving only one participant, who either performs or experiences it (e.g. *nato*). Following the discussion of transitivity, Pompeius turns his attention to the explanation of the deponent and poses the question: why is it so called?

*Quaesitum est, quare dicantur deponentia. Invenimus in artibus istis vulgaribus ideo dicta esse verba deponentia, quoniam r litteram non deponunt, κατὰ ἀντίφασιν quod dicitur, id est e contrario, quem ad modum dicimus lucum ab eo, quod non luceat, quem ad modum Parcas dicimus ab eo, quod non parcant; ideo dicimus et deponens verbum quia r*
litteram non deponat. Falsissimum est. Qua ratione? Si enim ideo dicitur
deponens verbum, quia r litteram non deponit, incipit et commune deponens
esse. Nam communia verba r numquam deponunt. Vador, quando dico vador
ad iudicium, id est vadimonium promitto, numquid possum dicere vado illum
ad iudicium? Osculor, numquid possum dicere osculo? Ergo falsum est.
Quare ergo dicitur verbum deponens? Quoniam deponit participium futuri
temporis, quod in dus exit. Puta loquor, fac participium prae sens loquens,
praeteritum locutus, futurum locuturus; loquendus non facit. Puta siqui dicat
posteritati loquendi, dico solecismus est, sed debemus dicere posteritati
locuturi. Ergo verbum deponens non ideo dicitur, quod non deponat r
litteram, sed quod unum participium deponat de duobus futuris; deponit
autem illud quod in dus exit (ibid., 228.18–34).

‘It ought to be asked why are the deponents so called? We find in
unsophisticated handbooks that deponents are so called on the grounds that
they do not put aside the letter -r, that is to say, so called on account of
antiphrasis, by that I mean called in a manner that is contrary to [what is
anticipated], for example, when we say lucus ‘grove’ from lucere ‘to be
bright’ although it is not bright, or when we say Parcae ‘Fate Goddesses’
from parcere ‘to spare’, although they do not spare [anyone]. Therefore, we
say that it is a deponent because it does not put aside the letter -r. But this is
a gross error. Why? If we say that the deponent is so called because it does
not put aside the letter -r, this means that the common verb is the same as the
deponent. Indeed, common verbs never put aside the letter -r. [Take] the
verb vador: when I say vador ad iudicium, by that I mean I dispatch him to
court, can I also say vado illum ad iudicium? [What about] osculor ‘I kiss’,
can I also say osculo? Therefore, this [definition] is wrong. Why then is the
deponent so called? Because it puts aside a future participle that ends in-
dus. Consider loquor ‘I speak’, make a present participle like loquens
‘speaking’, a past like locutus ‘spoken’, and a future like locuturus ‘about to
speak’; however, it does not make loquendus. How about if someone says
posteritati loquendi, I say that this is a solecism and we should say
posteritati locuturi ‘those who are going to speak for posterity’. Therefore,
the deponent is not so called because it puts aside the letter -r, but because it
puts aside one of the two future participles; it puts aside the one that ends in
-dus.’
In this passage, Pompeius challenges those who believe that the deponent is so called by *antiphrasis*. According to these authors, the label *deponens* is ironic because it implies that the deponent verb should ‘put aside’ (*deponere*) its passive inflection; however it never does. Pompeius rejects this definition for one reason in particular: this definition not only applies to the deponent but to the common verb as well which is also unable to ‘put aside’ its passive termination. For this reason, Pompeius proposes an alternative definition. He tells us that the deponent is so called because it does not have (‘puts aside’) the gerundive form. Furthermore, he distinguishes the common in terms of semantics and syntax pointing out that it has active meaning in conjunction with an accusative case and passive meaning with an ablative.

Commune ergo verbum est, quod et agentis et patientis significationem similiter profert, ut si dicas criminor: nam et criminor illum possum dicere et criminor ab illo. Haec autem confusio discernitur casibus. Nam si iungas accusativum, agentis est, criminor illum; si iungas ablativum, patientis est, criminor ab illo (ibid., 229.16–20).

‘Therefore, the common is a verb that has active and passive signification, for example, if you say *criminor* ‘I judge’: I can say *criminor illum* ‘I judge him’ and *criminor ab illo* ‘I am judged by him’. The confusion is dispelled by cases: for if you join an accusative, it is active; if you join an ablative, it is passive.’

4.6 Phocas

Phocas is the author of two extant works: a *Vita Vergilii* and a grammar entitled *Ars de nomine et verbo*. The former is preserved in a single ninth century manuscript, Paris, Bibl. Nat., Lat. 8093, fols 37–38v, bearing the titulus: *Vita Vergilli incipit a Foca grammatico Urbis Romae versibus edita*. It is composed in hexametres and prefaced by a prologue in sapphic strophes (Kaster, 1988: 340; Vidal, 1991: 801–812). It probably depends on the *Vita Vergilli* by Donatus, which ultimately is based on

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177 Two works have been wrongly ascribed to him, *De Aspiratione* (GL.5, 439.10–441.8; Jeudy, 1976: 197–215) and *De Orthographia* (Sabbadini, 1900: 529–544).

Phocas probably lived in Rome (see titulus above) and, according to Kaster (1988: 339), may have even taught there, considering the references in the *ars* to *discipuli* ‘students’ (*ibid.*, 411.13) and to *notra professio* ‘our profession’ (*ibid.*, 411.15) which may allude to his occupation as a teacher. In addition, Mazzarino (1973/1974: 526) suggested that he may have been a Christian, considering his use of the noun *Petrus* ‘Peter’ as an example (*ibid.*, 423.20), but no further evidence, as far as I am aware, has been detected to corroborate this claim.

When he lived has been a matter of serious debate among scholars. Mazhuga (2003b: 67–77) argues that he flourished in the third or early fourth century on the basis of Cassiodorus, who thought that Phocas lived before Donatus (*Cass. Orth.*, 214.23–215.1), and also on account of Vatican, Reg. Lat., 1560 f. 35 dated to the tenth century (Jeudy, 1974: 65), which alleges that Phocas was active prior to both Donatus and Priscian. Others, however, rightly point out that Phocas appears to have known Donatus’ *Vita Vergilii* (see above for references) and the letter to Munatius (Holtz, 1981: 231–232), indicating that he postdated the second half of the fourth century. Moreover, Phocas is cited by Priscian (*I.G.1*, 515.16), which provides us a *terminus ante quem* of the early sixth century. On the basis of

179 *Focas iste antiquissimus grammaticus fuit ante Priscianum et Donatum*. ‘Phocas, this most ancient *Grammaticus*, was [active] before Priscian and Donatus’.
these two pieces of evidence, it is likely that Phocas lived sometime in the fifth century.

### 4.6.1 Phocas’ description of diathesis

Phocas’ account of the verb opens with discussions of accidents, namely *coniugatio* ‘conjugation’, *forma* ‘form’ and *genus* ‘kind’ (Phoc., 430.16–431.10), followed by extensive treatments of the four conjugations (*ibid.*, 431.11–435.14), and climaxes with lists of verbs that have irregular or defective conjugations (*ibid.*, 435.14–439.7). The description of diathesis is as follows:

*Genera verborum facili ratione cognoscuntur. Aut enim activa sunt et o littera terminantur et adsumpta r littera transeunt in passiva; aut passiva et adempta novisima littera redeunt in activa; aut neutra, quae actum significant et activam habent declinationem et in passiva minime transeunt; aut supina, quae ut activa quidem declinantur, sed significationem habent passivam, ut vapulo pendo veneo; aut deponentia superioribus contraria, quae passivorum declinantur exemplo et significationem habent activam neque r litteram possunt amittere; aut communia similia deponentibus et passivis, sed agentis et patientis formam amplectuntur. Unde constat universa verba duobus modis declinari. Nam neutra et supina activorum, deponentia et communia passivorum regulam secuntur. Sunt praeterea neutropassiva, quae in praeterito perfecto et plusquamperfecto passivi declinationem habent, in aliis neutri; et sunt haec sola, secundae quidem coniugationis audeo gaudeo soleo, tertiae autem fido et fio, et siqua ex his componuntur. Praeter haec nulla sunt huius modi declinationis verba. Sunt alia passivoneutra superioribus contraria, haec sola, comperior me reor: nam in praeterito comperi merui deverti, sicut activa vel neutra, proferuntur (Phoc., 430.26–431.10)."

‘The kinds of verbs are discerned in this straightforward account: there are actives and they end in *-o*, and turn into passives by accepting the letter *-r*; there are passives and they revert into actives by losing the aforementioned letter; there are neuters which signify the performance of an action and which have active inflection, and never turn into passives; there are also supines which are certainly inflected like actives, but have passive
signification, like *vapulo* ‘I am beaten’, *pendeo* ‘I am hanged’ and *veneo* ‘I am sold’. There are deponents that are contrary to the aforementioned verbs, which are inflected as though they are passives and have active signification, and cannot lose the letter -r. There are also common verbs that are similar to passives and deponents, but adopt an active and passive construction.

Accordingly, this establishes that all verbs are inflected in two ways: the neuters and supines follow the rule of actives and the common and deponent follow the rule of passives. In addition, there are neutropassives which have passive form in the perfect and pluperfect, but have neuter form in the other [tenses]. These are the only verbs [of this kind], specifically *audeo* ‘I dare’, *gaudeo* ‘I am glad’ and *soleo* ‘I am accustomed’ in the second conjugation, and *fio* ‘I happen’ in the third, plus any compound formed from these.

Besides these there are no other verbs of this kind of form. There are, however, passivoneuters that are the opposite of the aforementioned verbs, like *comperior* ‘I learn’, *mereor* ‘I am entitled’ and *devertor* ‘I divert’: they are expressed in the manner of actives or neuters in the perfect, for example *comperi* ‘I learned’, *merui* ‘I am entitled’ and *deverti* ‘I diverted’.

As we can see, Phocas enumerates eight classes (*genera*) of verbs which he explains in terms of form (*declinatio*) and meaning (*significatio*). The eight classes appear to be divided into four groups of two, the first comprising of active and passive, the second of neuter and supine, the third of deponent and common, and the fourth of neutropassive and passivoneuter. Each group contains verbs that have formal similarities but semantic differences. For example, the first group incorporates active and passive, which signify activity and passivity respectively; however, both display the capacity to transform, that is to say, the active changes into a passive by gaining an ending, and the passive turns into an active by dropping an ending. The second group is composed of neuter and supine, which convey active and passive meaning respectively; however, both have active form and typically lack passive inflection. By contrast, the third group embraces the deponent and common, which denote active and both active and passive meaning respectively, although both are similar in the sense that they possess passive form and lack active inflection. And, finally, the last group is made up of
neutropassive and passivoneuter, which certainly have formal similarities, insofar as the former inflects in the active in all forms, except in the perfect when it has passive form, and the latter manifests in the passive in all forms, except in the perfect when it acquires active form. The term *passivoneutrum* is not attested anywhere else in the Late Antique grammatical tradition. It may have been invented by Phocas in order to stand in opposition to the term *neutropassivum*, although admittedly this is very speculative.

4.7 Consentius

Consentius is the author of two grammars entitled *De duabus partibus orationis nomine et verbo* and *De barbarismis et metaplasmis*. Most scholars argue that he hailed from Gaul on the basis of his extensive knowledge of Gaulish place-names (Con., 348.35; e.g. *Narbo* ‘Narbonne’, *Treviri* ‘Trier’, and *Arverni* ‘Clermont-Ferrand’) and his preoccupation with the spoken Latin of the *Galli* ‘Gauls’ of his day (Cons. De Bar., 15.1–3). However, this conclusion has been challenged by Abbott (1909: 247) and Fögen (1997/1998: 170), who have highlighted Consentius’ propensity to cite *Galli* in third person plural instead of in the first (e.g. *nos Galli*) which, in their view, might be an indication that Consentius did not count himself among the Gauls. However, it should be pointed out that many authors invoke ethnic and linguistic groups in the third person even when they identify with the groups to which they are referring. For example, Macrobius often (but not always, see Mac. Comm., 1.14.21) refers to *Latini* ‘Latins’ in the third person instead of in the first (e.g. *nos Latini*), even though he was a native speaker of Latin (see p.174). Moreover, in the

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180 On the transmission of these *Artes*, see *GL*. 5 (329–33) and Law (1982: 17).
182 For a full list of all the Gaulish place-names mentioned, see Holtz (1981: 83, n.44).
183 *Galli hac pinguius utuntur, ut cum dicunt ite, non expresse ipsum preferentes, sed inter e et i pinguiorem sonum nescio quem ponentes*. ‘Gauls employ the letter more richly, as for example when they say *ite*: they do not pronounce the letter precisely, but utter some richer sound between *e* and *i*.’ (transl. by Adams, 2007: 244) For a discussion of the Latin of the *Galli* according to Consentius, see Adams (2007: 244–250), Galdi (2011: 568–570) and Maltby (2012: 727–737).
184 Consentius also refers to *Itali* ‘Italians’ in the third person. *Ecce ut Itali ita pingue nescio quid sonant, ut cum dicunt etiam, nihil de media syllaba infringant* (Cons. De Bar., 15.1–3).
Chapter Four

*Computus Einsidlensis*, which survives in Einsiedeln, Stiftsbibl. 321, fols. 82–125 (Warntjes, 2005: 61–64; 2010: liv–lv), we find *ut Scoti dicunt* (fol.93), despite the fact that the author is very likely to be Irish (Bisagni and Warntjes, 2008: 94).

When Consentius flourished cannot be established with any certainty, but he undoubtedly lived later than the second century on the grounds that he mentions Valerius Probus (*Cons.*, 366.19) and possibly in the fifth century or later on the basis that he quotes authors of the ‘Silver Latin age’ like Lucan (*ibid.*, 341.16, 345.22, 355.17), although, as we have already stated, the validity of this dating criterion has recently been called into question (see p.99). A *terminus ante quem* of the eighth century is provided by multiple medieval authors who cite his *artes* (Law, 1982: 17). According to Kaster (1988: 396), he is unlikely to have been a professional teacher (*grammaticus*) considering that he is never labelled as such, and because ‘his style\(^\)\(^{185}\), his readiness to quote from the spoken Latin of his day, and his independence in organisation and judgment all combine to distinguish his work from that of professional *grammatici*.’ Since the nineteenth century, scholars have associated him with the Consentii of Narbo (Holtz, 1981:83–84; Kaster, 1988: 397; Lachman, 1836: xiii), a learned, aristocratic family known to us through the writings of Sidonius Apollonaris. Sidonius mentions two Consentii, a father and son, both of whom were active in the fifth century (*Sid. Ap. Carm.*, 23; *Sid. Ap. Ep.*, 8.4, 9.15). If Consentius (the author of the *artes*) can be equated with one of these figures, as some scholars have contended (Loyen, 1943: 80–81), he certainly was a Christian, at least nominally (see *Sid. Ap. Ep.*, 8.4.4); however, if he was a distinct historical figure (as I am inclined to believe), are there any passages in the *Artes* that might shed light on his religious allegiances? There is one which, in my view, implies that he was a Christian. In the introduction to the verb,


\(^{185}\) For a study on his style, see Fögen (1997/1998: 181–192).
Consentius discusses the impersonal verbs *tonat* ‘it thunders’ and *pluit* ‘it rains’ and tells us that the subject of these actions is *Deus*, in the singular, which may be a reference to the Christian deity.\textsuperscript{186}

### 4.7.1 Consentius’ description of diathesis

Consentius’ account of the verb opens with a definition (*Cons.*, 365.29–367.13), which is followed by descriptions of verbal accidents, specifically *genus sive significatio* ‘kind or signification’ (*ibid.*, 367.14–373.31), *qualitas* ‘quality’ (*ibid.*, 374.1–377.16), *tempus* ‘tense’ (*ibid.*, 377.17–379.2), *numerus* ‘number’ (*ibid.*, 379.3–13), *figura* ‘shape’ (*ibid.*, 379.14–28), *persona* ‘person’ (*ibid.*, 379.29–380.28) and *coniugatio* ‘conjugation’ (*ibid.*, 380.29–384.30), and ends with a discussion of verbs and the cases that they govern (*ibid.*, 384.31–385.16). The treatment of the *genera sive significationes* begins as follows:

*Genera sive significationes quinque sunt, activum, ut lego scribo, passivum, ut legor scribor, neutrale, ut sto curro, deponens, ut loquor luctor, commune, ut consolor criminor. Horum omnium proprietates sic intellegimus. Activa sunt quae o littera terminantur et, si accipiant r litteram, faciunt ex se passiva, ut lego legor, scribo scribor. Passiva sunt quae r littera terminantur et, si eam amittant, redeunt in activa, ut legor lego, scribor scribo (ibid., 367.14–20).*

‘There are five kinds or significations of verbs: the active, like *lego* ‘I read’ and *scribo* ‘I write’, the passive, like *legor* ‘I am read’ and *scribor* ‘I am written’, the neutral, like *sto* ‘I stand’ and *curro* ‘I run’, the deponent, like *loquor* ‘I speak’ and *luctor* ‘I wrestle’, and the common, like *consolor* ‘I console’ and *criminor* ‘I judge’. Accordingly, we must know the characteristics associated with all these. The actives are those that end with the letter -o and generate a passive if they accept an -r, like *lego* and *legor*, and *scribo* and *scribor*. Passives are those end with the letter -r and

\textsuperscript{186} *Quaedam vero e contrario eius modi sunt, ut ad plenitudinem intellectus, a quo scilicet administratur, opus non sit adiectione personae, ut pluit tonat: sine dubio enim intellegitur deus* (*Cons.*, 366.24–26). ‘On the contrary, there are verbs of another sort that do not require the addition of a person, by whom [actions] are clearly executed, [to express] a complete idea, for example *pluit* ‘it rains’ and *tonat* ‘it thunders’, since God is without doubt understood in such cases.’
revert to actives if they lose the letter -r, like *legor* and *lego*, and *scribor* and *scribo*.’

As we can see, Consentius lists five types of verbs, namely active, passive, neuter, deponent and common, which he designates *genera* or *significationes* interchangeably. He treats the active and passive first, which he distinguishes in terms of form and then provides a discussion of verbal semantics.

*Sed haec plerumque significationes suas mutant, ut ecce [intellectu passivo]*

*fugio timeo. Nam qui dicit fugio timeo quasi patitur, cum declinatio activa sit. Et contra qui dicit fugior timeor quasi actionis nescio quid significat: actus enim est quidam eius qui fugitur vel qui timetur. Haec consideranda sunt diligenter et per omnes modos declinationum suarum animadvertenda, utrum scilicet omnia conversa significatione procedant* (ibid., 367.20–26).

‘However, sometimes these verbs change their significations, for example *fugio* ‘I flee’ and *timeo* ‘I fear’: for he who says *fugio* and *timeo* is almost experiencing an action, in spite of the fact that their inflection is active. By contrast, he who says *fugior* ‘I am fled away from’ or *timeor* ‘I am feared’ almost signifies some kind of action: for activity is assigned to the one who is fled away from or the one who is feared. These verbs ought to be carefully inspected and examined in all modes of inflection [to see] whether they truly function with a changed signification.’

Here Consentius draws attention to the verbs *timeo* and *timeor* that appear to be active and passive respectively, because they follow the morphological rules associated with these classes, but in actual fact are not, as they exhibit meanings that are contrary to what is anticipated: *timeo* has passive meaning instead of active and *timeor* has active meaning instead of passive. For this reason, he concludes that it is insufficient to characterise verbs solely in term of their form; their meaning must also be taken into account, since verbs may look like one class but adopt the meaning of another.

Following the discussion of the active and passive, Consentius gives accounts of the neuter, deponent and common which he describes accordingly.

‘Neuters are those that end with the letter -o and are not grammatical if they accept the letter -r, like sto ‘I stand’ and curro ‘I run’: for stor and curror are not grammatical. Deponents are those that end with the letter -r and are not grammatical if they lose [the letter -r], like loquor ‘I speak’ conluctor ‘I struggle’: for loquo and conlucto are not grammatical. 

Common are those verbs ending in the letter -r which occur in two constructions (i.e. the active and passive construction), such as consolor ‘I console’ and criminor ‘I accuse’. These verbs only inflect in passive form, but the active signification requires the accusative case, for we say consolor fratem ‘I console the brother’, criminor inimicum ‘I accuse the enemy’. In contrast, the passive signification requires the ablative case, such as consolor a fratre ‘I am consoled by the brother’, criminor ab inimico ‘I am accused by the enemy’.’

In this passage, Consentius makes a distinction between the neuter and deponent purely in terms of morphology, the former being presented as an active form lacking passive inflection and the latter as a passive form bereft of active inflection. The common, on the other hand, is discriminated on account of its form, semantics and syntax: although it manifests in passive form, it acquires active meaning when it is construed with an accusative, and passive meaning with an ablative. After the explanation of the common, he mentions neutropassiva which are exemplified by verbs such as gaudeo ‘I am glad’ and audeo ‘I dare’, and then goes on to discuss verba

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187 Item sunt anomala quaedam, quae cum formam neutralem habeant, non per omnia neutralem tamen speciem servant, ut est soleo audeo. Nam soleo solebam, audeo audebam activa ratione declinantur; at vero solitus eram, ausus eram passiva declinatio est. Ita
ambigua (or incerta) ‘indefinite verbs’ such as lavollavor ‘I wash (myself)’ and tondeol/tondeor ‘I shave (myself)’ which he characterises in the following way:

Inspiciendum est diligentius, num possit aliquod horum verborum ambigui esse generis, vel num interdum in alio atque alio intellectu et activum et passivum esse possit. Ut ecce lavo et lavor dicimus sub incerta significatione, si de nobis dicamus. At vero omnes in fonte lavabo aliter dicitur: non enim potest dici omnes in fonte lavabor. Item tondeo vel tondeor siquis de se dicat, sub ambiguo scilicet genere, recte dicitur. Aliter ne tondere quidem currant vellera: non enim potest dici ne tonderi quidem currant vellera. Item pascit iuvenca et pascitur iuvenca recte dicitur absolute sub incerto genere; at si latine dici potest pasco te ad prandium et pascor a te ad prandium, erit activum et passivum, sicut est pascite boves pueri (ibid., 368.21–369.2).

‘One should carefully consider whether some of these verbs may belong to an ambiguous kind, or whether sometimes they may be active as far as semantics are concerned, and sometimes passive. For example, we say that lavo and lavor ‘I wash (myself)’ belong to indefinite signification if we say [something] about ourselves. Otherwise, omnes in fonte lavabo ‘I will wash everything in the spring’ is said, and omnes in fonte lavabor cannot be said. Similarly, tondeo or tondeor ‘I shave (myself)’ is rightly said to belong to an ambiguous kind, if someone says something about themselves. Otherwise, [you should say] ne tondere quidem currant vellera ‘sheep may run in order not to be shaved’, and ne tonderi quidem currant vellera cannot be said. Similarly, pascit iuvenca or pascitur iuvenca ‘the young bull feeds [himself]’ is rightly said to belong exclusively to the indefinite kind. However, if pasco te ad prandium ‘I feed you at meal-time’ and pascor a te ad prandium ‘I am

ergo, quia utraque ratione declinantur, inaequalia sunt et a quibusdam quasi novo nomine et numero adiecto neutropassiva dicitur (Cons. 368.14–19). ‘Besides these, there are certain anomalous verbs that despite having neutral form, do not retain the neutral form through all verbs, like soleo ‘I am accustomed’ and audeo ‘I dare’: for soleo solebam, audeo audebam are inflected in the active mode; however, solitus eram and ausus eram are morphologically passive. Since they are inflected in either mode, they are therefore irregular and are called by some by a somewhat peculiar name, the neutro-passive.’
fed by you at meal-time’ can be said in Latin, they are active and passive [respectively], just like *pascite boves pueri* ‘boys, feed the cows’ is [active].’

As we can observe, Consentius applies the terms *ambigua* (or *incertum*) ‘ambiguous/indefinite’ to verbs that convey reflexive actions. For example, the verbs *lavo* and *lavor* ‘I wash myself’ are indefinite when they denote reflexive actions, but *lavo* ‘I wash’ is active if it is used in a transitive construction (e.g. *omnes in fonte lavabo* ‘I will wash everything in the spring’). Similarly, the verbs *pasco* and *pascor* ‘I feed myself’ are indefinite whenever they signify reflexive actions, but are active and passive respectively when they manifest in transitive constructions (e.g. *pasco te ad prandium* ‘I feed you at meal-time’ and *pascor a te ad prandium* ‘I am fed by you at meal-time’). Consentius is certainly not the only author to deal with these verbs; Servius too treats them, although he does not label them *ambigua* or *incerta*. He states:

*Verba quorum declinatio in nostra potestate est sunt haec, tondeo lavo fabrico punio et reliqua. Verum tamen debemus secundum naturam actuum vel activum vel passivum praesumere in declinatione, ut ego lavor, balneum lavat; quando ego capillos depono, ut dicam tondeor, quando alteri capillos detraho, ut tondeo (Serv., 437.25–30).*

‘There are those verbs whose form is under our control, like *tondeo* ‘I shave’, *lavo* ‘I wash’, *fabrico* ‘I make’, *punio* ‘I punish’ and others. In truth, however, we should anticipate [whether it will be] active or passive as far as morphology is concerned, in accordance with the nature of the actions, for example *ego lavor* ‘I wash (myself)’, *balneum lavat* ‘he washes the bath’. When I say *tondeo*, I mean I cut my hair; however, when I say *tondeo*, I mean I cut the hair of another.’

Like Consentius, Servius identifies verbs that can be used as either transitives or reflexives (e.g. *tondeo/tondeor* and *lavolavor*). According to Servius, the active forms of these verbs are used in transitive sentences, and thus the verb *tondeo*, for example, is almost the same as saying *alteri capillos detraho* ‘I cut the hair of another’. By contrast, the passive forms of these verbs are often deployed in reflexive constructions. Hence, *tondeor* is basically the same as saying *ego capillos depono* ‘I cut my hair’. As we can
clearly see, Consentius and Servius propose two different ways of using these verbs. Whereas Consentius contends that both the active and passive forms can be used as reflexives, Servius concludes that only the passive forms can be applied in reflexive constructions.

The last class mentioned by Consentius is the impersonal, which rarely features in accounts of diathesis. In fact, Consentius explicitly tells us that many theorists discuss it in the context of mood rather than in the context of diathesis (Cons., 370.23–28). In any event, Consentius decides to count it among the other genera (or significationes) and divides it into four subclasses, those that end in -et, for example libet ‘it pleases’, in -tur, for example statur ‘one stands’, in -at, for example iuvat ‘it delights’, and in -it, for example accidit ‘it happens’.

Verba inpersonalia consensu plurimorum duas habent species: aut enim e et t litteris finiuntur, ut libet taedet paenitet decet, aut in tur exeunt, ut statur venitur curritur legitur scribitur dicitur geritur. Sed haec definitio plerisque non satisfecit. Denique addiderunt quidam verba inpersonalia etiam in it et in at exire, in it, ut contingit evenit accidit, in at, ut iuvat stat (ibid., 370.34–371.2).

‘Most agree that impersonal verbs have two forms: either they end with the letters -et, like libet ‘it pleases’, taedet ‘it offends’, paenitet ‘it repents’ and decet ‘it is fitting’, or in -tur, like statur ‘one stands’, venitur ‘one comes’, curitur ‘one runs’, legitur ‘one reads’, scribitur ‘one writes’ and geritur ‘one bears’. But this definition did not satisfy everyone. As a result, certain ones added that impersonal verbs also end in -it and -at: in -it, like contingit, evenit and accidit ‘it happens’ and in -at, like iuvat ‘it delights’ and stat ‘it remains’.

188 Et quoniam de confessis quinque generibus satis dictum est, de inpersonali genere verbi subiungere necessarium est. Etenim de istius modi verbis inter veteres praeceptores non nulla dissensio est. Alii enim hoc genus verbi modis adplicant, alii generibus potius et significationibus viungant et aliant modum esse non posse, quoniam per omnes modos sollemni figuratione decurrat. ‘Since enough has been said about the five customary kinds, it is necessary to add something about the impersonal kind. There is some disagreement among ancient teachers about the verbs of this sort. For some associate this kind of verb with moods, [while] others rather add it to the kinds and significations and say that it cannot be a mood, since it has a well-established form in all moods.’
He also recognises that the impersonal has its own particular meaning, which sets it apart from other verbs.

*Et re vera, siquidem inpersonale hoc est, cum singula verba enuntiantur ita, ut omnem personam confuse trahant neque ullam certam personam certa significatione distinguant, omnia quae posuimus recte inpersonalia esse dicuntur. Denique nec declinari possunt nec ullam discretionem facere personarum, nisi adiectis pronominum casibus et numeris separentur* (ibid., 371.3–7).

‘In truth, all the verbs that we have mentioned are rightly called impersonals, if the following is what we mean by impersonal, when particular verbs are expressed in such a way that they govern every person without specification, but do not discern any specific person by their own meaning. Therefore, they cannot be inflected nor can they distinguish persons unless they do so by adding cases and numbers of pronouns.’

Unlike other verbs, Consentius points out that the impersonal is not marked by the category of person. For example, although the first person verb *sto* indicates that I am standing, the corresponding impersonal form *statur* is indefinite as far as the category of person is concerned, as we do not know who is standing. However, Consentius is aware that the impersonal has the potential to convey all three persons, although it requires the assistance of pronouns to do so.

### 4.8 Concluding remarks

In this chapter, we have examined several accounts of diathesis dated between the fifth and sixth centuries and have observed that they share many features. We have noticed that authors typically document five classes of verbs, namely active, passive, neuter, deponent and common; however, this is not to imply that all authors adhered to this classification, as Servius and the author of Serg, I abided by a system of six classes adding descriptions of the neutropassive and Phocas subscribed to a system of eight classes incorporating treatments of the supine, neutropassive and passivoneuter. Consentius too distinguished eight classes categorising the impersonal, neutropassive, indefinite (*incertum/ambiguum*) in addition to
the active, passive, neuter, common and deponent. Nevertheless, it is evident that the fivefold classification of verbs was by far the most popular in this period which the following table clearly illustrates. Of course, this is in stark contrast to the situation that we found in the fourth century when authors adhered to a great variety of different verbal classifications (see table on p.118)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>author</th>
<th>class</th>
<th>morphology</th>
<th>semantics</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Serv.</td>
<td>genus</td>
<td>declinatio</td>
<td>significatio</td>
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<tr>
<td>Serg.1</td>
<td>genus</td>
<td>declinatio</td>
<td>significatio</td>
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<td>Serg.2</td>
<td>genus</td>
<td>declinatio</td>
<td>significatio</td>
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<tr>
<td>Serg.3</td>
<td>genus/significatio</td>
<td>declinatio</td>
<td>–</td>
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<tr>
<td>Serg.4</td>
<td>genus</td>
<td>declinatio/forma</td>
<td>–</td>
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<tr>
<td>Pomp.</td>
<td>genus</td>
<td>–</td>
<td>significatio</td>
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<tr>
<td>Cled.</td>
<td>genus/significatio</td>
<td>declinatio</td>
<td>significatio</td>
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<tr>
<td>Phoc.</td>
<td>genus</td>
<td>declinatio</td>
<td>significatio</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cons.</td>
<td>genus/significatio</td>
<td>declinatio/forma/species</td>
<td>significatio/vis</td>
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We have also seen that authors in this period used numerous terms and generally deployed them in a scientific manner: that is to say, they typically utilised an individual term to represent a single grammatical feature instead of employing a single grammatical term to refer to multiple grammatical features at once. For instance, they often used genus to refer to classes of verbs and only a minority, namely Consentius, the author of Serg.3 and Cledonius, employed significatio as a synonym. In fact, significatio as well as vis were mainly reserved in order to express the meanings of verbs. As for morphology, the term declinatio was frequently applied to stand for a verbal form, though on occasion we also found the terms forma and species being utilised as synonyms of declinatio. Hence, it is evident that fifth century authors were extremely meticulous when it came to using technical language, far more meticulous in fact than most of their predecessors (for comparison, see p.120).
Turning now to the discussion of the verbal classes, we have observed that authors characterised them using a variety of different criteria. The active and passive were commonly distinguished on the basis of their morphology being identified as verbs terminating in -o and -r respectively with the capacity to transform: the active turns into the passive by adding an inflectional ending (lego → legor) and the passive reverts into the active by losing an inflectional ending (legor → lego). Moreover, they were differentiated on account of their semantics, since the former denotes activity and the latter passivity. Some authors concentrated entirely on verbal semantics, although this way of explaining verbs is rarely found in the extant Artes. In fact, there are only four authors who approached the description of verbs in this way, specifically Servius, the authors of Serg.1 and Serg.2 and Cledonius (in his commentary on the Ars Minor), who, as it happens, all compiled commentaries on Donatus’ works. Why did these authors focus on semantics to the detriment of other criteria? These commentaries were probably intended to be read in conjunction with Donatus’ Artes. We will recall that in the Ars Minor and Ars Maior Donatus described verbs primarily in terms of their form, except the common verb, which he distinguished in terms of its meaning and syntax. Hence, these commentators may have decided to concentrate on the meanings of verbs in particular, since Donatus had already dealt with morphology in detail.

Even though authors in this period continued to be primarily motivated by morphology and verbal semantics, this is not to say that they disregarded all other criteria. We have observed that authors like Pompeius and the author of Serg.2 characterised actives and passives on the basis of degree of transitivity, identifying them as transitives, by that I mean, verbs expressing actions requiring two participants, an agent and a patient.

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<th>author</th>
<th>morphology</th>
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<th>transitivity</th>
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Besides actives and passives, authors classified neuters presenting them as active verbs lacking passive inflection that signify either activity (e.g. *curro*) or passivity (e.g. *vapulo*). Pompeius also described them on the basis of degree of transitivity, identifying them all as intransitives, that is to say, verbs which govern a single participant (e.g. *nato*); however, the author of Serg.2 rightly pointed out that some neuters can be transitive as well (e.g. *sentio*).

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<th>author</th>
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<th>transitivity</th>
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<td>Serv.</td>
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Turning now to the common, authors frequently described the verb in terms of its form, meaning and syntax, portraying it as a passive verbal form that conveys active meaning when construed with an accusative case and passive meaning with an ablative case (e.g. *criminor tel criminor a te*). This, however, was not the only way of approaching the description of this verbal class. Some authors discounted its morphology and preoccupied themselves entirely with semantics and syntax, others ignored the criterion of syntax and focussed on morphology and semantics and others neglected the criteria of both morphology and syntax and exclusively concerned themselves with semantics. All authors, however, characterised the common verb in terms of semantics, which is perfectly understandable, since indicating two meanings is clearly the verb’s most distinctive feature. Furthermore, most authors described the common in terms of syntax, since its precise meaning can only be determined by examining the case inflection of its complement.
Regarding the deponent, some portrayed it as a passive verbal form bereft of active inflection. Others endorsed this definition, but added a semantic component noting that it signifies active meaning. Other authors, by contrast, preoccupied themselves entirely with semantics, characterising the deponent (*deponens*) either as a verb that has active meaning or that puts aside (*deponere*) passive meaning in order to signify active meaning. Others, however, said that the deponent is so called by *antiphrasis*, that is to say, its label is paradoxical. Since the term deponent (*deponens*) is derived from the verb (*deponere*), it should ‘put aside’ something – in this case active meaning (*activa significatio*) – but in fact it never does. Finally, some authors differentiated the deponent on the grounds that it lacks the gerundive form. In total, then, we have identified six different definitions of the deponent and what this diversity illustrates is that authors are far from having reached a consensus as to the most appropriate way of defining it.

Why theorists might have proposed so many definitions of the deponent will be discussed later in chapter six.

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<tr>
<th>author</th>
<th>act.mean.</th>
<th>passive form lacks active inflection.</th>
<th>passive form lacks active inflection plus active meaning.</th>
<th>‘put aside’ gerund form.</th>
<th>‘put aside’ pass. mean.</th>
<th>antiphrasis i.e. does not ‘put aside’ active meaning.</th>
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In sum, authors described verbs by means of four criteria, namely morphology, syntax, transitivity and semantics. Regarding morphology, they isolated two distinct sets of endings, specifically an active (i.e. -o) and
passive (i.e. -or). As for syntax, they recognised that some verbs govern (pro)nominals marked with oblique cases (e.g. genitive, dative, accusative) or ablative prepositional phrases. Regarding transitivity, they were aware that verbs may be transitive or intransitive, although they did not deploy an overt technical metalanguage to convey this distinction and merely pointed out that certain verbs express actions that require either one or two participants. Furthermore, some authors distinguished reflexives verbs (e.g. *tondeo* / *tondeor* ‘I shave myself’) but, as in the case of transitives and intransitives, did not use a technical terminology to describe them. As we shall see, the notions of transitivity and reflexivity were only properly developed for the first time in Latin by Priscian in the sixth century (see chapter five). Finally, as for semantics, we will recall that there was disagreement over how many significations a verb may potentially convey, some considering that there were only two significations, active and passive, while others contending that there were three, the latter two as well as state. Why theorists might have disagreed over this particular point of grammar will be addressed later in thesis, but for the moment it is sufficient to mention that such a dispute existed.

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>author</th>
<th>active</th>
<th>passive</th>
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<td>Serv.</td>
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Before we draw this chapter to a close, it is important to ask one final question: why do many of the accounts of diathesis composed in this period share similarities? For instance, why do multiple authors classify five types of verbs, namely active, passive, neuter, common and deponent, and employ two main terms, specifically *genus* and *significatio*? The main reason is that most of the treatises that I have discussed are commentaries on Donatus, who (as we have seen) mentioned these five types of verbs and also used this terminology. Besides Donatus, Servius too was clearly an influential grammatical authority during this period. In fact, all the commentaries on
the *Artes Donati* composed in this period appear to rely on a longer version of Servius’ commentary, traditionally designated *Servius Plenior*, which is no longer extant. In my opinion, it is even possible to discern what I designate ‘Servian features’ in all these commentaries. One such feature is a consistent application of terminology: what I mean is that Servius utilised one term to designate a single concept. Thus, he deployed the term *genus* to mean ‘class’, *significatio* to mean ‘signification’ and *declinatio* to refer to ‘form’. This unambiguous application of terminology is found in Pompeius’ commentary and indeed the commentaries labelled Serg.1, Serg.2 and Serg.4 (see table above), and we can be confident that this is a ‘Servian feature’ and not ‘Donatian’ one, since Donatus is inclined to be much more inconsistent as far as the application of terminology is concerned (e.g. *Genera verborum quae ab aliis significationes dicuntur* (*Mai.*, 635.5)).

Another ‘Servian feature’ that can be identified in several of the commentaries is the recognition of two verbal significations, namely active and passive (see table above). This too is undoubtedly a ‘Servian feature’ and not a ‘Donatian’ one, since Donatus distinguishes three, the aforementioned two as well as state (*Min.* 591.6–7; *Mai.*, 632.5–6).

This is not to imply however that all the treatises that we discussed are identical. In fact, we have seen that there are many subtle differences between the various accounts of diathesis. For example, authors adhered to diverse definitions of the deponent, some believing that it is so called because it lacks active inflection and others claiming that it is so called because it lacks passive meaning. We also observed that there was dispute over the characterisation of the neuter, some affirming that all neuters are intransitive and others contending that they can be both transitive and intransitive. Finally, we highlighted that some argued that verbs have the capacity to express two significations, active and passive, while others proposed that they can signify three, namely, active, passive and state. This diversity of opinion clearly demonstrates that these authors were not simply passive transmitters of authoritative dogma, but active participants in the
grammatical tradition, who critically engaged with the received grammatical doctrine of their day.
5. Macrobius and Priscian: the incorporation of Greek grammatical thought into Latin grammar.

5.1 Introductory remarks

In this chapter we will treat the works of two authors, namely Macrobius and Priscian. These authors are unique in the Latin grammatical tradition insofar as they make extensive use of Greek sources, especially the works of Apollonius Dyscolus. The aim of this chapter will be to determine if their direct reliance on Greek sources had an affect on the way that they approached the description of diathesis.

5.2 Macrobius

Macrobius Ambrosius Theodosius was the author of three works, including a commentary on Cicero’s *Somnium Scipionis*\(^\text{189}\), a text that provides a Neo-Platonic explanation of cosmology, the soul and afterlife (Courcelle, 1943: 22–33; Flamant, 1977: 148–171; Stahl, 1952: vol.1, 9–23)\(^\text{190}\), the *Saturnalia*\(^\text{191}\), an encyclopaedic compilation, as Kaster (2011: vol.1, xii) puts it, ‘quarried from mostly unnamed sources and cast as a dialogue that gathers together members of the Roman aristocracy prominent in the late fourth century, along with their learned entourage, to discuss matters ridiculous and sublime, and above all the poetry of Virgil’; and a grammar entitled *De verborum Graeci et Latini differentiis vel societatibus* ‘On the differences and similarities of verbs in Greek and Latin’ (De Paolis, 1990; see also Courcelle, 1943: 33–36; Flamant, 1977: 237–252) which we

\(^{189}\) The *Somnium Scipionis* is the sixth book Cicero’s *De re publica* that describes a fictional dream vision experienced by Scipio Aemilianus. It is based on the Myth of Er which forms part of Plato’s *Republic*.


will talk about in detail shortly.\footnote{The former two works are dedicated to Macrobius’ son Eustathius, who may be identified with Macrobius Plotinus Eustathius, city prefect from 461 to 465 (Cameron 1966: 37; 2011: 238; Panciera, 1982: 658–660).} He may have been from North Africa (Cameron, 2011: 232; Jan, 1848: 6; Flamant, 1977: 121–122; Kaster, 2011: vol.1, xi), although the evidence in support of this claim is limited. Firstly, it is believed that he was from the Latin West because he occasionally associates himself with Latin speakers (e.g. *nos Latini*, see *Mac. Comm.*, 1.14.21). Secondly, in *Saturnalia* 1.1.11, he tells us that he was ‘born under a different sky’\footnote{*Alio ortos caelo* ‘born under an alien sky’ (transl. Kaster, 2011: vol.1, 9).} which suggests that he was not a Roman of Rome. And, thirdly, since he had a keen grasp of Greek, it is thought that he was from North Africa, a Roman province which is well-known to have been an important centre of Greek learning in the West. He may have also been a Christian considering that *Saturnalia* 2.4.11 appears to depend on Matthew’s Gospel 2:16–18 or on a source that drew on the Gospel (Kaster, 2011: vol.1, xxiii). At one point, it was customary to identify him as the Macrobius (or possibly the Macrobiii) who, according to the Theodosian code, was vicar of Spain in AD 399–400, proconsul of Africa in 410 and praepositus sacri cubicula in 422 (*Theod. Cod.*, xvi.10.15, xi.28.6, vi.8.1). Scholars in favour of this identification typically placed his literary activity towards the end of fourth century AD and the beginning of the fifth century making him a contemporary of the interlocutors mentioned in the *Saturnalia* (Georgi, 1912: 526; Stahl, 1952: vol.1, 5; Thomas, 1880: 135). Cameron (1966: 25–38; 2011: 233–239), however, building on a thesis proposed by Mazzarino (1938: 236–263), argued that, according to Late Antique naming practices, the author now referred to as Macrobius was probably not known to his contemporaries by this designation, but more plausibly by the name Theodosius. Cameron (1966: 27; 2011: 238) concluded that we should not forage ancient sources looking for the name Macrobius, but Theodosius, and when we do, we discover only one suitable candidate, the praetorian prefect of Italy in AD 430 (*Theod. Cod.*, xii.6.33). As a result of Cameron’s
identification,\textsuperscript{194} most scholars now date Macrobius’ (or more accurately Theodosius’) literary activity to the first half of the fifth century (Cameron, 1966: 36–37; 2011: 238; Kaster, 2011: vol.1, xi).

5.2.1 De verborum Graeci et Latini differentiis vel societatibus

Now that preliminary matters have been dealt with, let us discuss Macrobius’ grammar. \textit{De verborum Graeci et Latini differentiis vel societatibus} is a treatise that compares the Latin and Greek verbal systems. The two best witnesses to the treatise are preserved in Naples, Bibl. Naz. Lat. 2 dated to the seventh or eighth century (De Paolis, 1990: xxxi–xxxvi; Flamant, 1977: 238) and Paris, Bibl. Nat., Lat. 7186 dated to the ninth century (De Paolis, 1990: xli–xlvi; Flamant, 1977: 237). Both however are very different in nature. The Naples \textit{testimonium} consists of a series of short extracts derived from the beginning and end of Macrobius’ ‘original’ text. By contrast, the Paris \textit{testimonium} is a longer and more comprehensive compilation and the medieval redactor, who compiled it, appears to have modified the ‘original’ macrobian content in order to suit his particular didactic needs.\textsuperscript{195} A less important witness is the treatise entitled \textit{De verbo} which is preserved in Naples, Bibl. Naz. Lat. 1 and written in an Italian miniscule dated to the seventh century (Passalacqua, 1984: xvii) (abbreviated \textit{Anon. Verbo}).\textsuperscript{196} The compiler certainly used a version of \textit{De differentiis} as a source but, in the process of using it, completely reworked it. As a result, it is difficult to determine what parts of \textit{De verbo} ought to be attributed to Macrobius and what parts ought to be ascribed to the compiler, or indeed to other authors that the compiler used as sources. On the basis of these \textit{testimonia}, De Paolis has reconstructed what he believes to be

\textsuperscript{194} Cameron’s identification has been accepted by most scholars; however, there is at least one notable exception, see Flamant (1977: 91–123) who contends that the author of the \textit{Saturnalia} can be identified with the proconsul of Africa in AD 410 (see above).

\textsuperscript{195} Some scholars contend that the redactor was none other than Eriugena (De Paolis, 1990: xlv–xlvi; Dionisotti, 1988: 40; Flamant, 1977: 237); others, however, are more sceptical about this hypothesis (Berschin, 1988: 290; Cappuyns 1933: 69; Traube, 1891: 355).

\textsuperscript{196} The manuscript is a palimpsest. The \textit{scriptio inferior} is written in an uncial dated to the fifth century. Folios 8r–10v also contain Irish script dated to the eighth century (Passalacqua, 1984: xvii).
Macrobius’ ‘original’ text. He based his edition principally on the Paris manuscript, but also accepted readings from Naples, Bibl. Naz. Lat. 2. Undoubtedly, his edition is a fundamental work of scholarship, but it is important to remember that his reconstruction is purely theoretical and probably never existed in the form that he suggests. Thus, in my opinion, it is more appropriate to treat each testimonium separately. In what follows, however, I will only be concerned with the Paris witness, as Naples, Bibl. Naz. Lat. 2 does not transmit an account of diathesis. The account of diathesis in the Paris witness begins as follows:

Quod Graeci διάθεσεις ὑμάτων vocant, hoc Latini appellant genera verborum: affectus enim Graeco nomine διάθεσις nuncupatur. Graeci igitur διάθεσεις hac distinctione definiunt. Quae in ω exeunt activam vim significatia et iunguntur casibus genitivo vel dativo vel accusativo et accepta μαί syllaba transeunt in passiva, haec activa dixerunt, ut ἀρχω σοι, κελεύω σοι, τιμῶ σε: haec assumpta μαί passiva fiunt. Contra παθητικά dixerunt quae in μαί desinentia significant passionem et necesse habent iungi genitivo cum praepositione ὑπὸ ac possunt amissa μαί syllaba in activum redire, ἀρχομαι ὑπὸ σοῦ, κελεύομαι ὑπὸ σοῦ, τιμῶμαι ὑπὸ σοῦ (Mac., 159.5–161.10).

‘What the Greeks call ‘disposition’ of the verb, the Latins name ‘kinds’ of verbs: but affectus ‘disposition’ is named ‘διάθεσις’ in Greek. The Greeks distinguish disposition in this way: they called actives those verbs that end in -ω, that signify active meaning, that are joined with the genitive, dative or accusative cases, and that change into passives when they receive the syllable -μαί, like ἀρχω σοι ‘I govern you’, κελεύω σοι ‘I urge you’, τιμῶ σε ‘I honour you’. These verbs become passives when they assume [the syllable] -μαί. By contrast, they called παθητικά ‘passives’ those verbs that end in -μαί, that signify passivity, that require a genitive and the preposition ὑπὸ, and that can revert into an active by losing the syllable -μαί, like ἀρχομαι ὑπὸ σοῦ ‘I am governed by you’, κελεύομαι ὑπὸ σοῦ ‘I am urged by you’, τιμῶμαι ὑπὸ σοῦ ‘I am honoured by you’.’
In this passage, the medieval compiler starts by comparing the terminology that represents diathesis in Greek and Latin, observing that Latin authors deploy the label genus despite it being an inaccurate translation of the term used by the Greeks, namely διάθεσις. He recognises that affectus is a far more suitable translation. He then goes to explain the active and passive distinguishing them in terms of morphology, semantics and syntax (Stoppie et al., 2007: 211): the active inflects with the letter -o, denotes active meaning and combines with (pro)nominals marked with a genitive, dative and accusative, whereas the passive terminates with the letters -μαι, conveys passive meaning and is typically accompanied by the preposition ὅποιο which requires a (pro)nominal element marked with the genitive.\(^\text{197}\)

Following the account of the active and passive, the compiler treats the neuter, assigning it the designation οὐδέτερον ‘neuter’ and ἀπολελυμένον ‘absolute’.

197 Similarly, see Anon. Verbo (52.15–22): Activum dicitur quod in o desinit et necesse habet aut dativo, aut accusativo iungi potestque r littera recepta in passivam transire declinationem, ut dico tibi, caedo te, dicor a te, caedor a te. […] Passivum dicitur quod, cum in r litteram desinit, amissa ea potest in activum redire et necesse habet ablativo casui sociari, ut caedor a te, caedo, dicor a te, dico. ‘The active is said to be a verb that ends in -o, that requires a dative or an accusative, and that can turn into a passive form by receiving the letter -r, for example dico tibi ‘I say to you’, caedo te ‘I strike you’, dicor a te ‘I am spoken to by you’, caedor a te ‘I am struck by you’. […] The passive is said to be a verb that although it ends in -r, can revert into an active by losing the aforementioned letter, and that requires the combination of an ablative case, for example caedor a te, caedo, dicor a te, dico.’
When one of the above-mentioned characteristics is absent, the verb is labelled neither active nor passive; however, if it ends in -ω it is called neuter or absolute e.g. ξῶ ‘I live’, πλοῦτῶ ‘I am rich’, ὑπάρχω ‘I am’, ἐορτάζω ‘I celebrate’. In these verbs you find some that plainly and absolutely indicate an action and others an experience: for τρέχω ‘I run’ ἀριστῶ ‘I breakfast’, περίπατῶ ‘I walk’ involve performing, while νοσῶ ‘I am ill’ and ὀφθαλμῶ ‘I have eye-trouble’ without a doubt express an experience. The former are not characterised as actives, because none of them can join with the above-mentioned cases, nor do they receive [an ending in] -μαί: τρέχω σε ‘I run you’, ἀριστῶ σε ‘I breakfast you’ and περίπατῶ σε ‘I walk you’ cannot be said, nor can these verbs change into τρέχομαι ὑπὸ σοῦ ‘I am run by you’, ἀριστῶμαι ὑπὸ σοῦ ‘I am breakfasted by you’ and περίπατομαι ὑπὸ σοῦ ‘I am walked by you’.

Likewise, even though νοσῶ ‘I am ill’ and ὀφθαλμῶ ‘I have eye-trouble’ represent passivity, they cannot be labelled as passives, because they do not end in -μαί, because whoever caused the undergoing is not indicated, and because ὑπὸ σοῦ is not joined to them, which is characteristic of passives.

For in the active and passive, two persons must always be present, that is say an agent and a patient. Therefore, they are called neuter and absolute by the [Greeks] (and likewise by Latins e.g. volo ‘I wish’, vivo ‘I live’, valeo ‘I am well’) because they lack one of these arguments (nomen).

Like the active and passive, he characterises the neuter (or absolute) in terms of form, meaning and syntax, discerning it on the grounds that: (1) it arises in active form and often lacks passive inflection; (2) it expresses either activity or passivity; (3) it often does not combine with cases or the phrase ὑπὸ σοῦ. Besides the three criteria mentioned, he also sets it apart in
terms of an ancient understanding of transitivity, highlighting that active and passive are transitive insofar as they signify an action involving two participants, namely an agent (*administrans*) and a patient (*sustinens*), whereas the neuter, on the contrary, is sometimes intransitive as it indicates a verbal idea governing only one of these, either an agent or a patient (Stoppie et al., 2007: 212–213).

After the discussion of the neuter, the compiler turns his attention to the common which he defines accordingly:

*Sunt apud Graecos communia, quae ab illis μέσα vocantur, quae, dum in μαι desinant, et actum et passionem una eademque forma designat, ut βιάζομαι καὶ βιάζομαι ύπο σοῦ, ἀνδραποδίζομαι καὶ καὶ ἀνδραποδίζομαι ύπο σοῦ* (Mac., 163.20–24).

‘There are common verbs among the Greeks which they call middle. Although they end in -μαι, they signify performance and experience by means of a single form such as βιαζομαι καὶ ‘I force you’ and βιαζομαι ύπο σοῦ ‘I am forced by you’ and ἀνδραποδιζομαι καὶ ‘I enslave you’ and ἀνδραποδιζομαι ύπο σοῦ ‘I am enslaved by you’.

Here he describes the verb on account of its morphology and semantics, pointing out that it inflects like a passive, but nevertheless embraces both active and passive meaning (Stoppie et al., 2007: 218). He also likens it to the Greek middle, but this is not the only class in Latin that draws such a

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198 Likewise, see Anon. *Verbo* (52.18–19): *Neutrum dicitur quod, cum in o desinit, aliquo ex his deficitur et r accipere non potest, ut volo, vivo, valeo.* ‘The neuter is so called because, although it ends in -o, it lacks one of these [features] and cannot receive [the letter] -r, for example *volo* ‘I wish’, *vivo* ‘I live’ and *valeo* ‘I am well’.’

199 The author of *De Verbo* made use of syntactic as well as morphological and semantic criteria in his definition of the common, see Anon. *Verbo* (53.10–14): *Commune dicitur quod in or quidem desinit, ut deponent, nec r littera carere potest, sed utramque recipit significationem, tam agentis quam patientis. Denique etiam his casibus iungitur, quibus activum et passivum, ut criminor te criminor a te, osculor te, osculor a te.* ‘The common is said to be a verb that certainly ends in -or, like the deponent, and cannot lose the letter -r, but embraces both meanings, that is performing as much as experiencing. Thus it is also joined with the cases that the active and passive are joined with, for example *criminor te* ‘I judge you’, *criminor a te* ‘I am judged by you’, *osculor te* ‘I kiss you’, *osculor a te* ‘I am kissed by you’.’
comparison. The deponent, which inflects like a passive and has active meaning, also bears resemblance to the middle.\textsuperscript{200}

\textit{Ergo et illa quae superius diximus, φείδομαι σου, κηδομαι σου,}
\textit{ιππάζομαι, μάχομαι, διαλέγομαι, περιβλέπομαι, δωρούμαι, χαρίζομαι,
εὔχομαι, ἀναγμα, cum actum solam significet, μέσα tamen apellantur;
licet his similia Latini non communia, sed deponentia nominent (Mac.,
165.4–9).

‘Thus those verbs which we have discussed above, such as φείδομαι σου ‘I spare you’, κηδομαι σου ‘I distress you’, ιππάζομαι ‘I drive a horse’,
δωρούμαι ‘I give’, χαρίζομαι ‘I say’, εὔχομαι ‘I pray’, ἀγαμαί ‘I wonder’, although they signify only performance, nevertheless are called middle. The Latins, however, do not designate the corresponding forms [in Latin] common, but deponent.’

In addition to passive verbal forms, the compiler tells us that the term μέσων applies to active forms that possess passive meaning, thereby acknowledging that it is a far more inclusive class than the common and the deponent which exclusively incorporate morphologically passive verbal forms (Stoppie \textit{et al.}, 2007: 220).

\textit{Est et haec Graecorum a Latinitate dissensio, quod, cum Latini numquam
verbum commune dicant, nisi quod sit simile passivo, Graeci tamen
quaedam et activis similia μέσα, dixerunt, ut πέπηγα, quod μέσων dicitur
et sub activo sono solam significat passionem (Mac., 165.9–13).

‘There is also the following difference between Greeks and Latins, that is
Latins never call a verb common unless it is similar to a passive, whereas the

\textsuperscript{200} The author of \textit{De Verbo} provides a more detailed definition of the deponent pointing out that some denote passive intransitive meaning. See Anon. \textit{Verbo} (53.4–10): \textit{Deponens dictur quod in or quidem desinit, sed amissa r littera Latinum esse minime potest, habetque interdum aliquam actionem, quamvis passiva sit declinatio, ut sequor, luctor, loquor, intueor, demolor, et itidem passionem tantummodo, uti nascor patior; sed non est passivum, quomiam neque in activum redit ablata r littera, neque patiante altero alterius est administratio. ‘The deponent is said to be a verb that certainly ends in -or, but cannot be grammatical Latin if it loses the letter -r. It sometimes represents activity although it is formally passive, for example \textit{sequor} ‘I follow’, \textit{luctor} ‘I wrestle’, \textit{loquor} ‘I speak’, \textit{intueor} ‘I gaze’ and \textit{demolor} ‘I destroy’ and sometimes only passivity, for example \textit{nascor} ‘I am born’ and \textit{patior} ‘I suffer’; but the deponent is not a passive, because it does not revert into an active by losing the letter -r, and although someone experiences something, agency (\textit{administratio}) is not assigned to anyone else.’
Greeks have called certain verbs middle even when they are similar to actives, for example πέπηγα ‘I am fixed’, which is called middle and signifies only passivity despite being formally active.’

Apart from these verbs, the compiler draws attention to verbal forms in Latin and Greek that behave as actives in some instances and passives/middles in others.201

Similiter apud Latinos quaedam modo neutra, modo fiunt deponentia, ut labo, labor, fabricor, fabrico, ructo et ructor; quod enim etiam Graeci non ignorant, βουλεύομαι βουλεύω, πολιτεύομαι πολιτεύω (Mac., 165.23–26).

‘Similarly, certain verbs among the Latins sometimes appear as neuter and sometimes as deponent, for example labo, labor ‘I slip’, fabricor, fabrico ‘I make’, ructo et ructor ‘I belch’. These verbs are also known to the Greeks, for example βουλεύομαι βουλεύω ‘I plan’, πολιτεύομαι πολιτεύω ‘I am a citizen’.

And, finally, he discusses middle aorists like ἐγραψάμην ‘I wrote (for myself)’, ἔφαμην ‘I said (to myself)’, ἔδόμην ‘I gave (to myself)’, ἥλειψάμην ‘I anointed myself’, ἠσάμην ‘I enjoyed myself’ and ἐλουσάμην ‘I washed myself’, which he labels μέσα and describes accordingly.

Sola quoque passiva hoc nomine, id est μέσα, vocantur, ut ἥλειψάμην ἠσάμην ἐλουσάμην. Haec enim licet τής μέσης διαθέσεως dicant, nihil tamen aliud significant nisi πάθος: nam hoc est ἥλειψάμην quod ἥλειψθην: hoc est ἠσάμην quod ἠσθην. Item ἐγραψάμην ἔφαμην ἔδόμην μέσα appellant, cum nihil significant praeter actum. Hoc est enim ἐγραψάμην quod ἐγραψα, nec unquam dicitur ὑπὸ σοῦ ἐγραψάμην, et hoc ἔφαμην quod ἔφην, hoc est ἔδόμην quod ἔδων (Mac., 163.24–165.4).

‘Exclusively passive forms, like ἥλειψάμην ‘I anointed myself’, ἠσάμην ‘I enjoyed myself’ and ἐλουσάμην ‘I washed myself’, are also called by this name, that is middle. However, although they say that they belong to the middle διάθεσις, nevertheless they signify nothing other than an experience:

201 See Anon. Verbo (54.10–12) for an almost identical passage.
for ἥλειψάμην is the same as ἥλειψθην ‘I was anointed’ and ἥσάμην is the same as ἥσθην ‘I was enjoyed’. Likewise, ἔγραψάμην ‘I wrote (for myself)’, ἔφάμην ‘I said (to myself)’ and ἔδόμην ‘I gave (to myself)’ are named middles, despite signifying nothing else besides an action: for ἔγραψάμην is the same as ἔγραψα ‘I wrote’ and [the phrase] ὑπὸ σοῦ ἔγραψάμην is never uttered. Furthermore, ἔφάμην is the same as ἔφην ‘I said’ and ἔδόμην is the same as ἔδων ‘I gave’.

In this passage, he informs us that the middle aorist form ἥλειψάμην is equivalent to the passive form ἥλειψθην, though in actuality the former signifies that the subject is affected by its own action and the latter is a transitive verb expressing that the subject experiences the action of another. Moreover, he tells us that the middle aorist form ἔγραψάμην is same as using the active form ἔγραψα, even though the former, in reality, indicates that the subject is the beneficiary of its own action, whereas the latter is a transitive verb conveying that the subject performs an action on a patient.

This way of explaining the aorist was very common in the Greek grammatical tradition (Signes-Codoñer, 2005: 19–23). In fact, the following passage derived from the Scholia on Dionysius Thrax is very similar indeed.

ʼ'H πάλιν μέση ἐστὶ διάθεσις, ὅταν τῷ αὐτῷ ῥήματι τυπῶ μόνον πάθος καὶ τῷ αὐτῷ ῥήματι τυπῶ μόνον ἐνέργειαν, ὡς ὁ εἰς μὴν τόπος. μέσος γὰρ ἔστι μόνων παθητικῶν καὶ πάλιν μόνων ἐνεργητικῶν. καὶ ἐνεργητικῶν μὲν μόνων ἔγραψάμην ἔφαμην, παθητικῶν δὲ μόνων ἐτριψάμην ἥλειψάμην. ἰσην γὰρ ἔχουσι δύναμιν κατὰ σημασίαν τῷ ἐτριψθην καὶ ἥλειψθην παθητικῷ τύπῳ (Schol., 401.23–28).

‘Or it is again middle diathesis when with one verb I express only passivity and with one and the same verb I express only activity, as in the form with μὴν-endings, for the middle belongs only to the active and again only to the passive, and ἔγραψάμην I wrote (for myself)’ and ἔφάμην ‘I said (to myself)’ belong only to the active, but ἔτριψάμην ‘I used for myself’ and ἥλειψάμην ‘I anointed myself’ only to the passive, because according to
their meaning they have the same value as ἐτρίψθην ‘I am used’ and ἠλείψθην ‘I am annointed’ in the passive form.’ (transl. Signes-Codoñer, 2005: 22)

In sum, the compiler of the Paris testimonium recognises five Latin verbal classes (i.e. active, passive, neuter, common and deponent) and one Greek (i.e. the middle), which he characterises primarily in terms of form, meaning, degree of transitivity and syntax. The use of syntax is especially striking, since most Latin authors never use this criterion in order to classify verbs.

5.3 Priscian

Priscian was the author of several works including a panegyric in praise of Emperor Anastasius, which has been assigned a composition date of 503 by Cameron (1974, 313–316), 512 by Endlicher (1828: 75) and Stein (1949: 132), 513 by Chauvot (1977: 549–550; 1986: 106–107), and Coyne (1991:12), and 514 by Ballaira (2009: 3–17)202; the Institutiones Grammaticae, which we will discuss in detail below203; the Institutio de nomine et verbo, which gives accounts of nominal and verbal morphology (Taylor, 2007: 80–88)204; the Partitiones Duodecim Versuum Aeneidos Principaliulm, a didactic text concerned with teaching students how to parse the Aeneid;205 a metrical treatise entitled De Metris Terentii; a rhetorical treatise called the Praeexercitamina, which is a set of compositional exercises designed for the classroom (Martinho, 2009: 395–410); and a treatise on numbers named De Figuris Numerorum (Dragotto, 2008: 93–97; Garcea, 2013: 769–779).206 The latter three works are dedicated to Q. Aurelius Memmius Symmachus, who died in 525 (Kaster, 1988: 347) providing a terminus ante quem for their composition. Beyond that Priscian

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204 On its transmission, see Passalacqua (1999: xv–xxxix).
205 On its transmission, see Passalacqua (1999: xxxix –xlvi).
206 On the transmission of the latter three texts, see Passalacqua (1987: xiii–xlvii).
authored a versified, geographical tract called the *Periegesis* predicated on an original Greek text by the second century AD author Dionysius of Alexandria (Bowie, 2004: 177–185), and has been attributed a treatise entitled *De Accentibus*, which is almost certainly spurious (Giammona and Passalacqua, 2009: 411–423; Holtz, 1981: 243), although recently this conclusion has been contested by Schönberger (2010: 147–155).

As far as dating is concerned, Priscian was certainly writing in the first three decades of the sixth century. He composed *De Laude Anastasii* in the first or second decade of the sixth century (see above) and the *Institutiones Grammaticae* by the third decade of the sixth century on the basis of subscriptions preserved in some manuscript witnesses, revealing that it was copied by a certain Theodorus between 526 and 527 (Kaster, 1988: 347). A number of his minor works clearly postdate the *Institutiones*, as they contain cross references to the latter work. The *Institutio de Nomine et Verbo* refers to the *Institutiones* and the *Partitiones* mentions the *Institutiones* as well as the *Institutio de nomine et verbo*, entailing that the *Institutiones* was written first followed by the *Institutio de nomine et verbo* and, finally, the *Partitiones* (Glück, 1967: 161–166).

According to manuscripts incipits, Priscian hailed from Caesarea, although precisely which one is subject to debate. Most agree that he was from Caesarea in Mauretania (Ballaira, 1989: 29–33; Bonnet, 2009: 19–28; Groupe Ars Grammatica, 2010: 9; Kaster, 1988: 346; Luhtala, 2005: 79; Robins, 1988: 50) on the grounds that he wrote eloquently in Latin, associated himself with Latin speakers (*Prisc. I. G.* 1, 1.12) and displayed intimate familiarity with African place-names. However, others contend that he was a native of Caesarea in Palestine on the basis of impressive knowledge of Greek and Greek sources (Geiger, 1999: 606–610; 2014: 148–

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208 *Priscianus Caesariensis Grammaticus Iuliano Consuli ac Patricio.* ‘Priscian, the grammaticus, of Caesarea [dedicates this] to Julian, the Consul and Patrician.’ (*Prisc. I. G.* 1, 1)

209 The author of a medieval life of Priscian also concludes that he was from Mauretania (*GL*.8, clxviii. 6–12).
150). Although we cannot be sure which of these hypotheses are true, on the balance of the evidence I am inclined to believe that the former is more plausible. In any case, it is generally agreed that he relocated to Constantinople (possibly in the wake of the Vandal occupation of North Africa if indeed he was from Mauretania) where he worked as a teacher of Latin,\textsuperscript{210} perhaps in the school established by Theodosius II in AD 425 (Groupe Ars Grammatica, 2010: 9). He appears to have taught Eutyches (Kaster, 1988: 282–283), the author of a grammatical treatise in two books entitled \textit{Ars de Verbo} (Eut., 456.28–32), and was taught by a certain Theoctistus,\textsuperscript{211} who wrote a treatise called \textit{Institutio artis grammaticae} (Prisc. I.G. 2, 231.24; Kaster, 1988: 364–365). It is also probable that he was a Christian given the reference to Deus ‘God’ in the \textit{Institutiones} (Kaster, 1988: 348).\textsuperscript{212}

Priscian is best known for his monumental grammatical work, the \textit{Institutiones Grammaticae}, which provides explanations and justifications for the rules and the forms of Latin. It comprises of eighteen books beginning with a preface, stating that it was written for the benefit of Latin speakers who were led astray by the erroneous teachings of certain unnamed Greeks. Priscian claims that his grammar will show them the error of their ways by imparting correct teachings derived from the works of Apollonius Dyscolus and his son Herodian\textsuperscript{213}, who are true authorities worthy of praise and emulation (Prisc. I.G. 1, 1.1–2.11). The preface also includes a table of contents which can summarised as follows (\textit{ibid.}, 3.5–4.10): book one consists of accounts of vox ‘utterance’ and littera ‘letter’ and book two incorporates descriptions of syllaba ‘syllable’, dictio ‘word’, oratio ‘speech’ and also the opening sections of an extensive discussion of the noun. Books three to seven are also concerned with the noun and its accidents and books

\textsuperscript{210} Cass. Orth., 207.13: \ldots ex Prisciano, qui nostro tempore Constantinopoli doctor fuit. ‘by Priscian, who was a teacher in Constantinople in our time.’

\textsuperscript{211} \ldots noster praecceptor, Theoctistus, omnis eloquentiae decus, cui quidquid in me sit doctrinae post Deum imputo (Prisc. I.G. 2, 238.5–7). ‘\ldots my teacher, Theoctistus, the ornament of all eloquence, who, besides God, must also be thanked for instilling in me everything I know.’

\textsuperscript{212} See note above.

eight to ten cover all aspects of the verb. The participle is dealt with in book eleven, followed by the pronoun in books twelve and thirteen, preposition in book fourteen, the adverb and interjection in book fifteen and the conjunction in book sixteen. Books seventeen and eighteen offer the first systematic treatment of syntax (*constructio*) in Latin.\textsuperscript{214} Priscian tells us that his account is based predominantly on the Περὶ συντάξεως (*Prisc. I.G. 2*, 107.22–108.4), although it is important to emphasise that he did not simply make a Latin translation of Apollonius’ seminal work; what he achieved, in fact, was far more impressive. He modified Apollonian syntactic theory so that it could be used to explain Latin (Baratin, 1989: 371). His willingness to rework certain aspects of Apollonian doctrine is clear from the outset. As we will recall, Apollonius ordered the parts as follows: noun, verb, participle, article, pronoun, preposition, adverb, conjunction. Latin authors, however, were aware that Latin did not have the article and so they introduced the interjection in its place in order to parallel the Greek system of eight parts of speech. This idiosyncratic feature forced Priscian to adjust the order of the parts. In his hierarchy the noun and the verb continue to be regarded as the most fundamental, seeing that they combine to form a complete sentence (*perfecta oratio*), the noun being assigned first position because it signifies substance (*substantia*) and the verb second position because it conveys action and undergoing of action which is a characteristic property of substance. The participle comes next, as it acquires its characteristics from the noun and the verb, and is immediately followed by the pronoun (and not the article), as it replaces the noun in a sentence. The preposition and adverb\textsuperscript{215} occupy the subsequent two positions, though the former is ranked first, because it is associated with the noun, whereas the latter is ranked second given that it modifies the verb. The final position is assumed by the conjunction since it possesses no meaning of its own and simply joins parts of speech in a sentence (*Prisc. I.G. 2*, 116.13–121.12). If


\textsuperscript{215} The interjection is subsumed under the category of adverb (*Prisc. I.G. 2*, 90.5 –91.27).
we compare Priscian’s hierarchy to that of Apollonius, we can see that there is only one difference between the two, specifically Priscian does not mention the article. This subtle difference, however, is important, because it signals that Priscian was prepared to tweak and refine certain aspects of Apollonian syntactic theory so that it could be applied to describe Latin.

As well as treating syntax, Priscian provided the first detailed characterisations of transitivity (transitio/transitus/transgressio) and reflexivity (often labelled reciprocatio/sui passio) in Latin. He derived his understanding of these notions primarily from Apollonius who, as we have already mentioned, made a distinction between μετάβασις/διάβασις and ἀντανάκλασις/αὐτόπαθεια. Priscian distinguished the transitive verb (transitivum), signifying that a participant (persona/homo) carries out an action which transitions (transit) onto another who experiences it; the intransitive (intransitivum), denoting an action carried out by one participant, which however does not transition onto another participant (e.g. curro ‘I run’); and the reflexive (reciprocum/refractivum/sui passivum), indicating that a participant performs an action that does not affect another participant, but rather the performer itself (reciprocat/refringit).²¹⁶ In addition, we should mention retransitio ‘retransivity’ which does not have a Greek equivalent and so it may have been developed by Priscian himself.

²¹⁶ For Priscian’s understanding of transitivity and reflexivity, see Prisc. I.G. 2, 15. 9–16: Evenit enim, ut a nominativis actus proficiscentur ad obliquos sive in transitione personarum intellegantur sive in una eademque persona. In transitione, ut Aristophanes Aristarchum docuit, ego te honoravi, tu mihi dixisti; et per sola quoque verba nominativus intellegitur et transit rursus ad obliquos, dedi tibi, honoraui te. In una quoque eademque persona hoc idem fit, ut Phemius se docuit, docendi enim transitio non ad alteram fit personam, sed ad ipsum Phemium reciprocatur […]. ‘It happens that actions proceeding from nominatives to oblique cases are observed either in the event of a transference of persons or in the case of one and the same person. In the transference of persons, like Aristophanes Aristarchus taught Aristarchus’, ego te honoravi ‘I honoured you’ and tu mihi dixisti ‘you told me’, and also [when] the nominative is inherently understood in verbs and [the action], once again, transitions onto oblique cases, as in the case of dedi tibi ‘I gave you’ and honorauit te ‘I honoured you’. In one and the same person, like Phemius se docuit ‘Phemius taught himself’, [that is to say] when the transference [of the action] of teaching does not affect another person but rather ‘turns back’ on Phemius himself […].’ For studies dealing with the notions of transitivity and reflexivity according to Priscian, see Baratin (1998: 15–18), Colombat (2003: 151–159; 2009: 285–318), Luhtala (1990: 33–55; 1992: 39–48; 1993: 168–171), Groupe Ars Grammatica (2010: 29–31, 41–42) and Kneepkens (1990: 161–164).
although this conclusion is disputed (Luhtala, 1990: 39–40). According to Kneepkens (1990: 163), \textit{retransitio} only manifests ‘in a compound sentence [e.g.: \textit{rogat me seruus ut miserear sui} ‘the slave asks me to have pity on him’ (\textit{Prisc. I.G.} 2, 175.15–20)] consisting of a main clause and a subordinate clause, if the person who had the role of the \textit{agens} in the main clause, appeared in the subordinate clause as the direct or indirect object or even as the possessor of the direct or indirect object, whereas the \textit{pateins} (or the indirect object) of the main clause or his possession should reappear in the subordinate clause in the \textit{agens} position.’ This notion is attested numerous times in the \textit{Institutiones} (\textit{Prisc. I.G.} 2, 165.27, 168.22, 168.26, 171.14, 175.17, 176.4, 177.8, 177.12), but never in his accounts of diathesis, probably because Priscian explains the verbal category using only main clauses lacking subordination as examples.

Now that we have dispensed with preliminary matters, we will turn our attention to the accounts of diathesis. Priscian treats the category in book eight as well as book eighteen. Book eight begins with a very detailed definition and description of the verb (\textit{Prisc. I.G.} 1, 369.1–373.8) followed by explanations of its accidents, namely \textit{significatio sive genus} ‘kind or signification’ (\textit{ibid.}, 373.9–404.20), \textit{tempus} ‘tense’ (\textit{ibid.}, 404.21–421.15), \textit{modus} ‘mood’ (\textit{ibid.}, 421.16–427.9), \textit{species} ‘form’ (\textit{ibid.}, 427.10–434.19), \textit{figura} ‘figure’ (\textit{ibid.}, 434.20–442.16), \textit{coniugatio} ‘conjugation’ (\textit{ibid.}, 442.17–448.9), \textit{persona} ‘person’ (\textit{ibid.}, 448.10–450.23) and \textit{numerus} ‘number’ (\textit{ibid.}, 451.1–13). Book eighteen opens with a discussion of the syntax of cases (\textit{Prisc. I.G.} 2, 210.1–224.21), then goes on to explain the infinitive (\textit{infinitivum}) (\textit{ibid.}, 224.22–229.19), impersonal (\textit{impersonalis}) (\textit{ibid.}, 229.20–235.14), various moods (\textit{ibid.}, 235.15–267.5) and diathesis (i.e. \textit{genera vel significationes}) (\textit{ibid.}, 267.6–278.6), and climaxes with an extensive account of the various ways that Latin differs from Greek (\textit{ibid.}, 278.7–377.18). The account of diathesis in book eight begins as follows:

\begin{quote}
\textit{Significatio vel genus, quod Graeci affectum vocant verbi, in actu est proprie, ut dictum est, vel in passione, et omnia verba perfectam habentia declinationem et aequalem vel in o desinunt vel in or. Et in o quidem}
\end{quote}
terminantia duas species habent, activam et neutralem. Et activa quidem semper actum significat et facit ex se passivam [...] Neutra vero appellaverunt, quae in o desinentia sicut activa non faciunt ex se passiva, quamvis varias habeant significationes, de quibus post docebimus. In or vero terminantia tres species habent: passivam, quae ex activis nascitur et semper passionem significat exceptis supra dictis, communem, quae una terminatione tam actionem quam passionem significat, deponentem, quae cum similem habeat communibus positionem in or desinendi, tamen deponens vocatur, quasi simplex et absoluta, quod per se ponitur, vel quae deponit alteram significationem et unam per se tenet, quomodo positivus gradus dicitur, qui absolutus per se ponitur non egens alterius coniunctione. Haec quoque tamen species quomodo neutralis diversas habet significationes, de quibus latius in sequentibus tractabimus. Activa igitur et passiva et communia certam et praefinitam habent significationem, neutra vero et deponentia varia

The signification (significatio) or kind (genus) of a verb, which the Greeks call the disposition (affectus), strictly speaking is concerned with the performance or experience of an action, as we have already stated, and all verbs which have complete and regular inflection (declinatio) end in either -o or -or. Those ending in -o have two classes (species), the active and neutral. The active always signifies an action and makes a passive out of itself [...]. Neuters designated those verbs which, in spite of having diverse significations, which we will treat later on, [nevertheless] end in -o, like actives, and do not make passives out of themselves. Verbs ending in -or have three classes (species): passives, which derive from actives and always signify experience of an action, except for those mentioned above; common, which signify both performance and experience despite ending in a single form; deponent, which has similar morphology as common verbs ending in -or, but nevertheless is called deponent, as though it is simple and absolute, because it is used autonomously, or because it puts aside (deponit) one meaning (significatio) and embraces another. For the same reason, the positive grade is called ‘absolute’, which is used autonomously not requiring the attachment of another [word]. This class, just like neuters, has diverse significations (significationes), which we will treat more comprehensively in what follows. Therefore, actives, passives and common have certain and
predetermined significations (significatio), whereas neuter and deponent vary in this regard.’

As we can observe, Priscian discerns two main groups, one incorporating verbs that end in -o, which can be split into two subgroups (species), namely active and neuter, and one encompassing verbs that terminate in -or, which can be divided into three subgroups (species), namely passive, common and deponent. The active differs from the neuter insofar as the former acquires passive inflection in order to become active, whereas the latter is defective because it does not have passive form. Moreover, both are distinct as far as semantics is concerned, seeing that the former signifies active meaning and the latter a variety of meanings. As for those ending in -or, the passive is discerned from the common and deponent insofar as the former loses an ending in order to become active, while the latter two lack corresponding active forms. Furthermore, all three differ in regard to their meanings, since the passive conveys passivity, the common activity as well as passivity, and the deponent either activity or passivity. Thus, in many respects, this account appears to closely resemble other descriptions of diathesis that we have encountered thus far, which mainly explained the category in terms of form and meaning. However, as we shall see, Priscian’s approach is far more sophisticated than that of his predecessors. Before we demonstrate this, we will first examine the terminology used in relation to diathesis.

5.3.1 Priscian’s use of terminology

In the passage above Priscian singles out significatio ‘signification’, genus ‘kind’ and affectus ‘disposition’ as the principal terms relating to diathesis. However, the latter two do not figure prominently in his treatments of diathesis. In fact, affectus is attested only on one other occasion217 and genus218, as far as I can tell, four times in total. Priscian initially tells us that significatio and genus are synonyms (see above), although the following passage suggests otherwise.

217 He also mentions its Greek equivalent, διάθεσις, once at Prisc. I.G. 2, 267.10.
218 Prisc. I.G.1, 373.10 and Prisc. I.G. 2, 267.9, 272.28.
Sunt alia, quae et conjiugationem mutant cum genere in eadem manentia significacione, ut labo labas neutrum, ὡλίσθαι, et labor laberis deponens (Prisc. I.G. 1, 402.26–28).

‘There are other [verbs], which change their conjugation as well as their kind while maintaining the same signification, like the neuter, labo ‘I slip’ and labas ‘you slip’, [the Greek] ὡλίσθαι ‘I slip’, and the deponent, labor ‘I slip’ and laberis ‘you slip’.

Here Priscian uses genus to refer to a verbal class, while significatio stands for ‘meaning of the verb’. Hence, genus is actually a synonym of species which, as we have already pointed out, applied to five different verbal classes, namely active, passive, neuter, common and deponent. As for the term significatio, it is typically placed in opposition to the term vox, which is used to represent a verbal form.

Latius igitur tractemus de iis, quae videntur contra vocis formam significare, quod non solum in verbis, sed in aliis etiam partibus orationis inventur, ut si dicamus Athenae, Thebae voce pluralia sunt, significacione singularia, et contra populus, plebs voce singularia sunt, significacione pluralia, vel Philotium, Sophronium, Glycerium, Dorcium voce neutra, significacione feminina (Prisc. I.G. 1, 376.14–19).

‘For this reason, let us investigate in a more detailed way those [words] which appear to signify something that is contrary to their form, a situation that is not only found in verbs, but in other parts of speech, like if we say Athenae ‘Athens’ and Thebae ‘Thebes’: they have plural form but singular signification. By contrast, populus ‘people’ and plebs ‘people’ have singular form and plural signification and Philotium, Sophronium, Glycerium, Dorcium have neuter form but feminine signification.’

The words forma and vis are also employed for ‘form’ and ‘meaning’ (or ‘force’) respectively, although these terms are utilised somewhat more sparingly.219

In verbis etiam sunt quaedam voce activa, quae ex se passiva non faciunt, quae generali nomine neutralia vocamus, quamvis diversas habent significaciones: ex his enim quaedam vim habent activam, ut est facio te

219 He also applies the term declinatio to mean a verbal form, see Prisc. I.G.1, 373.12.
[...]. Sunt alia in hac forma, quae in o desinentia non faciunt ex se passiva, quae quamvis activam habeant significationem, tamen vel ad muta animalia vel ad carentia anima coniunguntur, sicut supra dictum est, ut est percurro forum, prandeo piscem, ceno ovum [...]. (Prisc. I.G. I, 376.21–378.6).

‘As far as verbs are concerned, there are some in active form that do not make passives out of themselves, which we generally call neutral, although they have diverse significations: for some of these have active force (vis), for example, facio te ‘I do something to you’ [...]. There are other verbs with this form (forma), which, despite ending in -o, do not make passives out of themselves, and which, despite having active signification, nevertheless are either used in combination with animals bereft of speech, or with things lacking soul, as we have mentioned above, for example, percurro forum ‘I run across the forum’, prandeo piscem ‘I eat a fish’, and ceno ovum ‘I eat an egg’ [...].’

5.3.2 Priscian on diathesis

The first type of verb treated by Priscian is the active, which he defines in the following manner:

Haec autem verba proprie activa vel recta vocantur, quae in o desinentia et assumpta r facientia ex se passiva, confessim cum dicuntur, possunt transire in quem fit actus et coniunguntur vel genetivo vel dativo vel accusativo casui, ut abstineo irarum [...] impero tibi, maledico tibi, invideo tibi, oro te, amo te, accuso te (Prisc. I.G. I, 374.13–21).

‘These verbs are properly called active or straight, that is the ones which end in -o and make passives out of themselves by taking on an -r. As soon as they are expressed, [the actions signified by] these verbs transition onto a [person], whom an action affects, and [therefore] are joined with the genitive, dative or accusative case, like abstineo irarum ‘I abstain from rage’ [...] impero tibi ‘I command you’, maledico tibi ‘I curse you’, invideo tibi I envy you’, oro te ‘I beseech you’, amo te ‘I love you’, accuso te ‘I accuse you’.’

220 Rectus is the Latin rendering of the Greek ὁμόθονον which represents a type of predicate in Stoic logic (Flobert, 2009: 334).
Here Priscian characterises the verb in terms of form, meaning, syntax and transitivity, identifying it as a transitive ending in -o, capable of gaining an -r in order to turn into a passive. It indicates that an action is performed by an agent and experienced by a patient, who is represented morpho-syntactically by an accusative, genitive or dative case. This, however, is not the only definition of active provided by Priscian, as he sets out an alternative version in book eighteen:

_Sciendum itaque, quod omnia activa apud Latinos, quae faciunt a se passiva, quae et transitiva sunt in homines, sine dubio accusativo adiunguntur, ut oro te, quia habet etiam passivum oror a te (Prisc. I.G. 2, 267.12–14)._221

‘Therefore, one must know that, according to the Latins, all actives which make a passive out of themselves, and which are transitives [involving] human participants, are without doubt joined to an accusative, as in _oror a te_ ‘I beseech you’, which also has a passive, like _oror a te_ ‘I am beseeched by you’.’

There is one notable difference that sets the former definition apart from the latter. Whereas the former advocates that the patient in an active construction can be expressed by an accusative, genitive or dative case, the latter supplies a narrower interpretation, restricting the expression of the patient to the accusative, which is empirically incorrect, since certain actives govern complements marked with cases other than the accusative (e.g. _invideo tibi_). This raises a question: why might Priscian have endorsed the second definition when it clearly gave an inaccurate portrayal of Latin syntax? One way of explaining the second definition may be Priscian’s reliance on Apollonius. In one passage of the Περὶ συντάξεως Apollonius defines a transitive action as follows:

221 See also: _Cetera vero omnia, nisi sint acquisitiva vel aequiperantia vel supereminentia vel subiecta, a nominativo actum transitive ad homines facientia, ut praediximus, ad accusativos construuntur, cum utraque supponatur persona tam agentis quam patientis, ut doceo te, doceor a te (Prisc. I.G. 2, 271.29–272.2)._ ‘All the rest, except for those indicating acquisition, reciprocity, possession or subservience, as we have already stated, are constructed with accusatives, the action transitively passing from the nominative onto human participants, when both persons, namely the agent and patient, are expressed [syntactically in a sentence], for example _doceo te_ ‘I teach you’ and _doceor a te_ ‘I am taught by you’.’
In general actions which proceed from a nominative affect an accusative, so that the sentence presents both an active agent and an entity which receives the effect, as in δέρω σέ 'I skin you', τύπτω σέ 'I beat you'; or else the recipients are transformed, in the passive construction, [from accusative] to a nominative, while agents are changed to the genitive with ὑπό 'by' e.g. ἐγώ δέρομαι ὑπὸ σοῦ 'I am skinned by you'. (transl. Householder, 1987: 212)

In this passage, Apollonius proposes a principle positing that a transitive action involves two participants, an agent and patient, which ἀκροβατίαν 'in general' are represented by the nominative and accusative cases respectively. The adverb ἀκροβατία is the operative word here. Apollonius is arguing that an accusative nominal often, but not always, expresses the patient in an active construction. In fact, elsewhere he cites examples of transitive verbs that do not comply with this principle, such as μάχομαι 'I fight', which governs a complement marked with a dative (Apol. Dysc., 427.9–428.5). Priscian’s second definition appears to rely on this passage, although he seems to have misinterpreted it, wrongly concluding that all transitive verbs, instead of merely the majority, require a complement marked with an accusative.

Following the discussion of the active, Priscian turns his attention to the passive, which he defines as follows:

_Haec enim faciunt ex se passiva, quae ablative casui cum praepositione ab vel a solent iungi, ut abstineor a te, imperor a te, maledicor a te, invideor a te, oror a te, accusor a te. Possunt tamen passiva dativo etiam adiungi, ut servor tibi. Et est quaerendum, cur activa ablative per se non adiunguntur, et puto, quod ille casus proprius est passivorum. Ideo autem dixi per se, quia cum alio caso sociata adiunguntur, ut video solem oculis, prohibeo filium_
turpitudine. Accusativo quoque inveniuntur passiva coniungi, sed figurate, ut absciditur manum, frangitur pedem, sanatur oculum, rumpitur aurem (Prisc., I.G. 1, 374.22–375.3). 222

‘The active verbs which make passives out of themselves are the ones which are usually joined to the preposition ab and the ablative case, like abstineor a te ‘I abstain from you’, imperor a te ‘I am commanded by you’, maledicor a te ‘I am cursed by you’, invadeor a te ‘I am envied by you’, oror a te ‘I am beseeched by you’, accusor a te ‘I am accused by you’. They can also be joined to the dative, like servor tibi ‘I am protected for your benefit’. It also ought to be asked why actives are not joined to the ablative by themselves (per se) and I think it is because [the ablative] is the case most closely associated with the passive. However, I said ‘by themselves’ [intentionally], because actives are joined [to the ablative] whenever they are associated with another case, for example, video solem oculis ‘I see the sun with [my] eyes’, prohibeo filium turpitudine ‘I protect my son from disgrace’.

Furthermore, passives are attested in conjunction with the accusative, but only in figurative expressions, like absciditur manum ‘the hand gets cut off’, frangitur pedem ‘the foot gets broken’, sanatur oculum ‘the eye was healed’, rumpitur aurem ‘the ear was broken’.

In this passage, Priscian describes the passive in terms of morphology, syntax and transitivity, portraying it as a class made of originally transitive verbs terminating in r, capable of losing the ending in order to become active. Typically, passives combine with the preposition alab, which governs an ablative, or with the dative or accusative without an accompanying preposition, though he recognises that the latter two constructions occur less frequently. Beyond these, he later on draws attention to certain verbs that appear to be both active and passive, but cannot be classified as such, like trepido and timeo/timeor, which obey the morphological and syntactical rules associated with active and passive, insofar as trepido and timeo inflect as actives and govern an accusative, while timeor manifests in passive form and joins with an ablative

222 See also Prisc. I.G. 2, 269.25–26: Passiva ablativo vel dativo transitive adiunguntur, ut doceor a te et tibi, videor ab illo et illi. ‘Passives are transitively joined with the dative and ablative, like doceor a te et tibi ‘I am taught by you and I am taught for your benefit’, videor ab illo et illi ‘I am seen by him and I seem to him.’
prepositional phrase. However, *trepido* and *timeo* do not convey the characteristic meaning associated with true actives, since they denote passivity and likewise *timeor* does not express the characteristic meaning indicative of a true passive, as it conveys activity. Hence, these verbs are considered to be anomalies that cannot be assigned to any particular class:

*Illa quoque notanda, quae cum nullum significent actum, sed magis sui passionem demonstrent, tamen, quia activam habent vocem, accusativo coniunguntur, ut trepido, horreo, formido, vito, fugio, recuso, excuso; similiter metuo et timeo: haec autem, cum passive dicuntur, magis actum significant; et e contrario, cum active dicuntur, magis passionem significant, ut timeor: timorem facio; timeo vero timorem patior* (Prisc. *I.G.* 2, 276.3–9).

‘It ought to be recognised that some verbs which do not signify an action, but rather an internal condition of suffering, nevertheless are joined with an accusative, because they have active form, like *trepido* ‘I am afraid’, *horreo* ‘I am frightened’, *formido* ‘I am terrified’, *vito* ‘I shun’, *fugio* ‘I flee’, *recuso* ‘I reject’ and *excuso* ‘I excuse’. The verbs *metuo* ‘I fear’ and *timeo* ‘I fear’ are similar: when they are expressed passively, they actually signify an action; by contrast, when they are expressed actively, they actually signify the experience of an action, for example, *timeor* ‘I am feared’ [meaning] ‘I cause fear’ and *timeo* ‘I fear’ [meaning] I experience ‘fear’.

In addition to actives and passives, Priscian refers to neuters (or absolute verbs), which he divides into a series of subclasses based on semantics and degree of transitivity. He mentions intransitive neuters expressing a state.

*Quaedam neutra, id est quae nec nos in alium extrinsecus nec alium in nos aliquid agere significant, ut est spiro, vivo, ambulo*, pergo, quae non egent aliqua coniunctione casus, cum absolutam et plenam per se prolata sententiam monstrent, quae et propriis neutra vocantur, sicut supra dictum est (Prisc. *I.G.* 1, 377.19–378.2).

‘There are certain neuters – that is, verbs which neither signify that I do something to an external person nor that an external person does something to me, like *spiro* ‘I breathe’, *vivo* ‘I live’, *ambulo* ‘I walk’ and *pergo* ‘I...”

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223 It is striking that Priscian uses the verb *ambulo* to exemplify stative neuters and neuters that express activity (see below). Why he may have categorised these verbs in two different semantic classes will be addressed in the concluding section.
proceed’ – which do not require any case-inflected complement, since they convey a complete and absolute thought when expressed by themselves.

These verbs are properly called neuter, as we have said above.’

He also refers to neuters signifying activity such as curro ‘I run’. The actions denoted by such verbs, however, do not affect human participants and instead apply to non-human participants that are unable to experience anything. Since these verbs convey actions involving a single human participant, they are considered to be intransitive and do not have corresponding passive forms, except when they are used as impersonals in the third person singular.

Inveniuntur tamen etiam quaedam verba, quae quamvis activam habeant significationem, passiva tamen non habent, quia nec in homines eorum actus transit, nec semper supra dictis egent necessario casibus, ut prandeo, ceno, curro, ambulo. Eorum enim prolatione transgressionem fieri non est necesse ad aliquod rationabile animal, quae est sola causa, ob quam nascentur verba passiva in prima et secunda persona; hae enim de se et ad se loquuntur, quod est suum animantium, quibus natura sermonem dedit. In tertia vero persona saepe passivum solet inveniri etiam ex huiuscemodi verbis, sed ad muta et carentia anima pertinens. dicimus enim conditur holus, aratur terra, inseritur arbos, curritur spatium […] cum eorum primas personas natura prohibeat proprie dicere. Quis enim dicit aror, inseror, curror, nisi poetica conformatio, id est προσωποποιία, inducatur? (Prisc. I.G. 1, 375.12–376.10)

‘Certain verbs are also found which, despite having active signification, do not have corresponding passive form, because their action does not transition onto human participants, nor do they necessarily require the aforementioned cases, like prandeo ‘I eat’, ceno ‘I dine’, curro ‘I run’ and ambulo ‘I walk’.

Indeed, in the expression of their action no transition onto a rational animal is necessary, which is the only reason why passive verbs are generated in the first and second person. For these persons speak to each other and about each other, which is a characteristic of living beings to whom nature has given speech. However, the passive is usually found in the third person of these sorts of verbs, but only when it pertains to speechless or soulless things. For we say conditur holus ‘the plant is planted’, aratur terra ‘the
land is plowed’, *insertitur arbor* ‘the tree is planted’ and *curritur spatium* ‘times elapses’ [...] even when the nature of these things prevents them from speaking properly in the first person. For who says *aror, inseror* and *curror*, unless a poetic usage, that is προσωποποιía, is being introduced?’

In addition to these, Priscian draws attention to other neuters also called *reciproca* or *sui passiva*, exemplified by intransitive verbs like *rubeo*, *caleo* and *tepeo*, which convey a verbal idea, designated αὐτόπαθεια ‘self-suffering’ in Greek, indicating that the verbal process involves a single participant who experiences something:

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Sunt quaedam ex eade forma, quae passivam videntur habere significationem, sed quae non extrinsecus fit, quam Graeci αὐτόπαθεια vocant, id est quae ex se in se ipsa fit intrinsecus passio, ut rubeo, ferveo, caleo, tepeo, marceo, aegroto, titubo, vacillo. Itaque huiuscemodi verba non egent casu, quamvis auctores haec quoque inveniantur more activo vel passivo diversis casibus adiungentes, sed figurate, ut Virgilius in Bucolico: ‘ardebat Alexín’, pro amabat. (Prisc. I.G. 1, 378.10–18)

‘There are certain verbs of the same form that seem to have passive meaning, which the Greeks call αὐτόπαθεια ‘self-suffering’, that is passivity which happens internally in and of itself, but which does not happen as a result of an external [agent], like *rubeo* ‘I am red’, *ferveo* ‘I am scorching’, *caleo* ‘I am hot’, *tepeo* ‘I am warm’, *marceo* ‘I faint’, *aegroto* ‘I am sick’, *titubo* ‘I waver’ and *vacillo* ‘I vacillate’. Therefore, verbs of this sort do not require a case, although authors are found [to use] these verbs in active and passive ways joining them to diverse cases, but [only] in a figurative manner, like in Virgil’s Eclogues: *ardebat Alexín* ‘he burned for Alexis’ instead of *amabat* ‘he loved [Alexis]’.

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Et reciproca vero sive sui passiva, quae ἰδιοπάθη vocant Graeci, licet et absolute proferre, ut rubeo, horreo, tepeo, ferveo, et coniungere his ablativos, ut rubeo pudore, horreo frigore, tepeo austro, ferveo aestate (Prisc. I.G. 2, 270.14–16). ‘It is permitted to express reciprocals or self-passives, which the Greeks call self-suffering, absolutely, like *rubeo* ‘I am red’, *horreo* ‘I tremble’, *tepeo* ‘I am warm’ and *ferveo* ‘I boil’, but also to join them with ablatives, like rubeo pudore ‘I am red because of shame’, horreo frigore ‘I tremble because of the cold’, tepeo austro ‘I am warm because of the south wind’ and ferveo aestate ‘I am scorching from the summer heat’.

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Finally, we should mention two further neuter subclasses, one incorporating transitive verbs signifying active meaning like *facio*, and another encompassing transitive verbs expressing passive meaning like *vapulo*. Those affiliated with the first subclass typically govern a complement marked with an accusative or dative, while those pertaining to the latter generally combine with an ablative prepositional phrase:

*In verbis etiam sunt quaedam voce activa, quae ex se passiva non faciunt, quae generali nomine neutralia vocamus, quamvis diversas habent significationes: ex his enim quaedam vim habent activam, ut est facio te [...]. Similiter activam significationem habent officio tibi noceo tibi, quaedam vero ex eisdem neutralibus passivam, ut vapulo a te, fio a te, exulo a te, veneo a te, nubo tibi, quamvis antiquissimi etiam activa significatione nubo te dicebant* (Prisc. I.G. 1, 376.21–377.16).  

As far as verbs are concerned, there are some in active form that do not make passives out of themselves, which we generally call neutral, although they have diverse significations: for some of these have active meaning, for example, *facio te* ‘I make you [something / do something]’ [...]. Similarly, *officio tibi* ‘I oppose you’ and *noceo tibi* ‘I harm you’ have active signification, while some of these neutrals have passive signification, like *vapulo a te* ‘I am beaten by you’, *fio a te* ‘I am affected by you’, *exulo a te* ‘I am exiled by you’, *veneo a te* ‘I am sold by you’ and *nubo tibi* ‘I am married to you’, although the ancients used to say *nubo te* ‘I marry you’ with active signification.’

The next two classes highlighted by Priscian are the common and deponent. He dispenses with the treatment of the former rather swiftly, simply describing it as a passive verbal form denoting activity and passivity.  

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225 See also: *Similiter etiam neutra vel deponentia actum significantia cum transitione in quocumque accusativum sequuntur, ut facio domum [...] (Prisc. I.G. 2, 267.19–20). ‘Similarly, neutrals and deponents, which signify an action involving transitivity onto another, govern an accusative, like *facio domum* ‘I build the house.’ Pauca sunt, quae activa voce transitive soli dativo adiunguntur, ut noceo tibi [...] (ibid., 268.20–21). ‘There are some which are transitively joined to only the dative in active form, for example *noceo tibi* ‘I harm you’ [...]’. Inveniuntur tamen paucarum quamvis quocum actu transeat in aliam personam, non habent passiva, ut facio [...]) (ibid., 269.3–4). ‘Some verbs nevertheless are found which although the action transitions onto another person, they do not have corresponding passive forms, *facio* ‘I do’ [...]’.*

226 *Sunt alia verba, quae quamvis non ab activis proficiscencia tamen passivam semper habent formam. Et ex his quaedam eadem voce utrumque significant, id est actionem et
latter, by contrast, is treated in a much more detailed manner, being divided like the neuter into a number of subclasses based on semantics, syntax and degree of transitivity. The first subclass consists of transitive verbs that have active meaning:

> Alia vero, quae similiter eandem terminationem habentia nec ab activis nata
> unam dumtaxat habent significationem, sed non omnia eandem, haec
deponentia vocamus, cum quaedam activam vim possident, ut conspicor te,
> sequor te [...] (Prisc. I.G. 1, 378.22–25).

‘Similarly, some verbs which have the same ending [as common verbs],
which are not derived from actives, and which possess only one signification
(although not all possess the same meaning), we call these deponents,
although some [of these] do have active force, like conspicor te ‘I observe
you’, sequor te ‘I follow you’ [...]’

As we have already pointed out, Priscian defines a transitive action in the
same way as Apollonius, that is as an action governing two human
participants, an agent and a patient, although in book eighteen he seems to
present a somewhat different interpretation of the notion of transitivity:

> Sic etiam deponentia transitiva actum significantia sequor hominem, loquor
> fabulam, expiscor socium, experior rem, arbitror iustitiam, reor veritatem,
> suspicor inimicum (Prisc. I.G. 2, 268.8–11).

‘Similarly, there are transitive deponents signifying an action, like sequor
hominem ‘I follow the man’, loquor fabulam ‘I tell a story’, expiscor socium
‘I seek an ally’, experior rem ‘I test something’, arbitror iustitiam ‘I
arbitrate justice’, reor veritatem ‘I think about truth’ and suspicor inimicum
‘I distrust the enemy’.

In this passage Priscian once again discusses transitive deponents
(deponentia transitiva) that have active meaning and exemplifies them with

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> passionem, ut est oscular te et oscular a te, criminor te et criminor a te. Haec communia
> nominamus (Prisc. I.G. 1, 378.18–21). ‘There some verbs, which despite not arising from
> actives, nevertheless always have passive form. Some of these signify two meanings, that is
> activity and passivity, under the same inflection, like oscular te ‘I kiss you’ and oscular a te
> ‘I am kissed by you’, criminor te ‘I judge you’ and criminor a te ‘I am judged by you’. We
> name these common.’ See also: Communia, quando actum significant, activorum
> constructionem, quando passionem, passivorum sequuntur, ut criminor te et criminor a te,
> veneror te et veneror a te (Prisc. I.G. 2, 270.7–9). ‘Common verbs govern active
> construction, when they signify an action, and passive construction, when they signify the
> experience of an action.’
sentences such as *loquor fabulam* ‘I tell a story’ and *arbitror iustitiam* ‘I arbitrate justice’, even though these sentences cannot be characterised as ‘transitive’ in the Apollonian sense of term, as they involve one human participant and one non-human participant (respectively *fabula* and *iustitia*). They are, however, transitive according to modern grammatical theory, given that transitive action can apply to both human and non-human participants. I will explain later on why this observation may prove to be significant for our understanding of how the notion of transitivity developed in Antiquity.

The next subclass mentioned by Priscian incorporates transitive deponents conveying passive meaning.

*Sunt vero alia ex supra dicta forma (id est deponentium), quae passivam solam habent significacionem: nascor a te, orior a te, patior a te, mereor a te, idque ostendit coniunctio casuum. Nam quae vim activam habent, genetivum vel dativum, pleraque autem accusativum casum assumunt, ut misereor tui, medeor et medicor tibi - dicitur tamen et medico et medicor et medeor te […] loquor verbum, precor deum; quae vero passivam, ablativum cum a vel ab praepositionibus vel dativum, ut nascor a te et tibi (Prisc. I.G. 1, 388.13–389.8).

‘There are certain other forms like the ones mentioned above (by that I mean deponents), which have only passive signification, for example, *nascor a te* ‘I am born from you’, *orior a te* ‘I arise from you’, *patior a te* ‘I suffer because of you’ and *mereor a te* ‘I deserve merit from you’, and the accompanying cases demonstrate this. For those which have active meaning take the genitive, the dative, and in many cases the accusative case, like *misereor tui* ‘I pity you’, *medeor* and *medicor tibi* ‘I heal you’ (nevertheless *medico, medicor* and *medeor te* are also said) […] *loquor verbum* ‘I speak the word’ and *precor deum* ‘I pray to God’; those which have passive meaning take the ablative as well as the preposition *a* or *ab*, or the dative, like *nascor a te* and *tibi* ‘I am born from you’.

Priscian tells us that deponents signifying passivity differ from those denoting activity by way of syntax, given that the former combine with an ablative prepositional phrase or a dative complement, while the latter typically take nominals marked with accusative, genitive or dative.
Following the descriptions of these verbs, Priscian goes on to document another group of deponents, which he also distinguishes on the basis of syntax. The verbs in question are ‘absolute’ (absoluta) because they do not govern a case inflected complement.

Sunt etiam ex his quaedam, quae absolute dicta non egent supra dictis casibus, ut est labor, morior, laetor, glorior, tumultuor, vagor, vaticinor (Prisc. I.G. 1, 389.8–11).

‘Moreover, there certain verbs belonging to this class which are expressed absolutely and not need the above-mentioned cases, like labor ‘I slip’, morior ‘I die’, laetor ‘I rejoice’, glorior ‘I boast’, tumultuor ‘I am confused’, vagor ‘I wander’ and vaticinor ‘I predict’.’

The final subclass treated by Priscian is composed of verbs that denote a form of passivity, which we have already discussed above, namely αὐτοπάθεια. Unlike neuter verbs indicating αὐτοπάθεια, which take a single participant who is affected, the deponents, by contrast, govern two participants, one who experiences something and another who partakes in the verbal process, but cannot be characterised as doing or undergoing anything. Thus, in contrast with the neuters which are often absolute, the deponents typically govern genitive, dative, or accusative complements:

[Sunt] alia vero, quae, cum videantur activam habere constructionem
[id est σύνταξιν] (nam genetivo vel dativo vel accusativo casui iunguntur), tamen passivam vim intrinsecus, id est non alio agente, videntur habere, ut obliviscor tui et te, misereor tui et misereor te (Prisc. I.G. 1, 389.11–14).

‘[There are] other [deponents] which, although they appear to have active construction (because they are joined to the genitive, dative or accusative case), nevertheless appear to have inherent passive force, that is to say the [passivity] is not [caused] by some agent, like obliviscor tui and te ‘I forget you’, misereor tui and misereor te ‘I feel pity for you’.’

5.3.3 An alternative classification of verbs

One of the more striking aspects of Priscian’s treatment of diathesis is the division of verbs into classes based on the type of action expressed.
Priscian is not the first author to do this however, as he derives the approach from Apollonius Dyscolus. This particular mode of classifying verbs is found in book eighteen, following accounts of active, passive, common and absolute (which is made up of neuter and deponent verbs) and begins with discussions of three verbal classes, specifically those signifying physical actions, those conveying psychological actions and those indicating both simultaneously.


Similar classes are attested in the Περὶ συντάξεως and are labelled διάθεσις σωματική ‘physical disposition’ and διάθεσις ψυχική ‘mental disposition’ (Apol. Dysc., 397.6). Priscian also alludes to a fourth class, namely verbs pertaining to extrinsecus accidentia ‘external circumstances’, exemplified by dito ‘I enrich’, impero ‘I command’, subigo ‘I conquer’ and domo ‘I master (272.13), which corresponds to the Apollonian class of verbs relating to περίκτησις ἐτι ἐπὶ τῶν ἕξωθεν προσγινομένων κατ’ οὐσίας ‘excessive ownership of externals’ (e.g. πλουτεῖν) (Apol. Dysc., 397.3–4). The next two classes distinguished by Priscian are composed of verbs denoting praise (laudativa) like celebro ‘I celebrate and laudo ‘I praise’ (ἔγκωμιον in Greek, Apol. Dysc., 406.5–7), and abuse (vituperativa) like accuso ‘I accuse’ and culpa ‘I blame’ (272.19–20) which, as far as I can tell, does not have an equivalent in Apollonius’ works. After that he mentions verbs associated with articia ‘arts’ such as philosophor ‘I
do philosophy’ and poëtor ‘I practise poetry’ (272.21–22), those expressing deception (deceptiva) such as fallo ‘I trick’ and decipio ‘I cheat’ (272.26), which Apollonius designates διακρωυστικά (Apol. Dysc., 406.7), followed by a series of verbal classes that take complements marked with the dative such as acquisitiva (273.1–5) which convey the idea of acquisition like dono ‘I give’ (πέριποιήσις in Greek, Apol. Dysc., 422.7), supereminentia (273.26) which Apollonius designates διακρωυστικά (Apol. Dysc., 406.7), followed by a series of verbal classes that take complements marked with the dative such as acquisitiva (273.1–5) which convey the idea of acquisition like dono ‘I give’ (πέριποιήσις in Greek, Apol. Dysc., 422.7), supereminentia (273.26) which signify the idea of domination like ἐπικράτεια (ἐπικράτεια in Greek, Apol. Dysc., 419.13), subiecta (274.2) which indicate the idea of subservience like servio tibi ‘I serve you’, and aequiperantia (274.3) which denote that two participants are partaking in the same action like luctor tibi ‘I wrestle with you’ (ἀντιπεριποιουμένη in Greek, Apol. Dysc., 429.4). Subsequently, he draws attention to verbs expressing desire (desiderativa) like desidero ‘I desire’ (ἐρώτησις in Greek, Apol. Dysc., 411.13), followed by examples of verbs denoting possession (obtinentia) like habeo ‘I have’ (ἐπικράτεια in Greek, see Apol. Dysc., 407.3) and will (voluntas) like volo ‘I wish’ (274.13–24), which typically are construed with an infinitive (274.13–275.7) (προσαρετικὰ in Greek, see Apol. Dysc., 408.4). In the concluding passages, he highlights verbs that express encouragement (hortativa) like excito ‘I rouse’ (παρορμητικά in Greek Apol. Dysc., 415.3), supplication (prercativa) like quaeso ‘I ask’ (276.15–17) (ἰκετεία in Greek Apol. Dysc., 415.4) and those pertaining to sense perception, which often combine with a genitive in Greek, like ἀκούω σοῦ ‘I hear you’, but routinely govern an accusative in Latin, like audio te ‘I hear you’ (276.23–277.3).

227 Elsewhere Priscian tells us that these verbs are called ἐπαναβεβηκότα in Greek (Prisc. I.G.2, 219.20), but, as far as I am aware, this term is not attested in the works of Apollonius. Apollonius, however, certainly discusses similar verbs at Apol. Dysc., 427.1–8 (e.g. ὑπηρέτα σοι ‘I serve you’).

228 Elsewhere, Priscian states that aequiperantia are called ἰσοπαλή in Greek (Prisc. I.G.2, 219.19). This term, however, does not occur in the works of Apollonius Dyscolus.

229 For the corresponding passage in Apollonius, see Apol. Dysc., 418.8–419.8.

230 For the equivalent section in Apollonius, see Apol. Dysc., 417.3–418.7.
5.3.4 Concluding remarks

As we have seen, Priscian documents five types of verbs which he characterises in terms of form (vox/formaldeclinatio), meaning (significatio/vis), syntax (constructio) and degree of transitivity (transitio).

The active is presented as a verb ending in -o capable of acquiring an -r so as to become passive; it conveys a transitive action involving two participants, an agent and a patient, the former being overtly expressed by a (pro)nominal element marked with a nominative case, and the latter being represented by an accusative, genitive or dative complement.

The passive, by contrast, is a verb terminating in -r that loses its ending in order to become an active. It too denotes an action requiring two participants, although, in this instance, the agent typically amounts to an ablative prepositional phrase and the patient is expressed overtly by a (pro)nominal element in the nominative, or covertly by the passive verb itself.

The neuter ends in -o like an active, although it is typically bereft of passive inflection. Priscian recognises five distinct subclasses of the neuter group, which he discriminates on the basis of semantics and degree of transitivity. He identifies two transitive subclasses, one signifying activity (e.g. facio) and another passivity (e.g. vapulo), and three intransitive classes, one that conveys activity (e.g. curro), another denoting a type of passivity referred to as self-suffering (sui passio) (e.g. rubeo), and another indicating neither activity or passivity, but rather a state (e.g. sedeo). Hence, it is evident that he provides the most comprehensive description of the neuter that has come down us from Late Antiquity, given that most authors simply identify only two semantic subclasses, active and passive, or sometimes three, the former two as well as state.

Moreover, one of the most striking aspects of Priscian’s account of the neuter is the use of the verb ambulo ‘I walk’ to exemplify two distinct subtypes, specifically the intransitive signifying activity and the intransitive conveying state. There are several ways of accounting for these uses of the
verb *ambulo*. It may be the case that the description of the neuter depends on two contradictory sources, one that classifies *ambulo* as a verb signifying activity and another that categorises it as a stative. Priscian may have relied on the *Περί συντάξεως* when he described the verb as expressing active meaning, considering that Apollonius states the following:

"Εστιν ἃ καὶ διάθεσιν σημαίνει ἐνεργητικὴν, οὐ μὴν ἔχει ἀντιπαρακειμένην παθητικὴν ἐκφοράν, καθὸ τὰ διατιθέμενα ἄψυχα καθεστῶτα σώκ ἡδύνατο ὀμολογήσαι τὸ παθεῖν, εἰ μὴ τὸν αὐτῶν τὶς λόγον διαθεῖτο, ὡς ἔχει τὸ περιπατῶ (Apol. Dysc., 398.15–399.2).

'Some other verbs signify an activity, yet have no corresponding passive form because the non-human participants affected by these verbs cannot be considered to experience or to feel anything, unless someone makes up a speech as if spoken by them; so περιπατῶ ‘I walk’” (transl. Householder, 1981: 209).

However, reliance on a source like Charisius may have led Priscian to categorise this verb elsewhere as a stative. Of course, in the following passage, Charisius does not cite *ambulo* as an example; however, he does mention similar verbs that express motion, like *venio* and *curro*:

*Ideo autem neutralia dicuntur, quod neque adficiunt neque patiuntur, ut sto iaceo algeo sitio esurio curro venio* (Char., 211.1–2).

‘Moreover, neutrals are so called because [their subjects] neither affect something nor are they affected, such as sto ‘I stand’, *iaceo* ‘I am sick’, *algeo* ‘I am cold’, *sitio* ‘I am thirsty’, *esurio* ‘I am hungry’, *curro* ‘I run’, *venio* ‘I come’.

It is also possible that the inclusion of the verb in two different semantic classes may have been an unconscious inconsistency on the part of Priscian, who may have unwittingly used the same verb as an example of two distinct classes. Alternatively, if indeed this is an error, the fault may not lie with Priscian; rather, the use of the verb *ambulo* to epitomise two classes may have been a mistake that crept into the treatise during its medieval transmission, as a result of scribal alteration of the original text.

Apart from the neuter, Priscian also provides accounts of the common and deponent. The former is described as a passive verb that denotes activity.
and passivity, whereas the latter is given a much more comprehensive treatment, being portrayed as a passive verb that is divided into a series of subclasses based on semantics, syntax and degree of transitivity. Priscian identified four subclasses: two transitive – one active (e.g. *loquor*) and one passive (e.g. *patior*) –, an intransitive that does not take a case-inflected complement (e.g. *labor, laetor*), and another subclass that denotes self-suffering (e.g. *misereor*). This is by far the most detailed account of the deponent that survives from Late Antiquity, considering that almost all authors before Priscian only recognised semantically active deponents.

In addition to this classification, Priscian provides an alternative one, derived from Apollonius’ *Περὶ συντάξεως*, which classifies verbs on the basis of the type of action signified. However, whereas Priscian’s classification merely groups together similar types of verbs (like those expressing desire or possession, for example) and documents the cases that they govern, Apollonius’ classification is far more ambitious, aiming, as Luhtala (1990: 44) has pointed out, to ‘provide a coherent semantic basis for the syntactic behaviour of different verbs’. For example, in the case of verbs signifying sense perception, Apollonius proposes a rationale as to why they often take a complement marked with a genitive: he argues that when an individual performs an act of sense perception, he/she often undergoes an action as well. For instance, when people hear something, they not only carry out the act of hearing, but are also affected by an incoming sound. Likewise, when someone touches a hot surface, he/she not only performs the act of touching, but also experiences a warm sensation. Since the genitive, according to Apollonius, has a close affinity with the expression of passivity (because it often represents the agent in a passive construction), it is perfectly natural that it should combine with verbs of sense perception, given that the verbal ideas signified by them often involve a participant who not only performs an action but undergoes one as well (*Apol. Dysc.*, 417.3–418.2; see also p.29 of this thesis). That said, he is aware that not all verbs of sense perception govern a genitive; some take an accusative instead, because the verbal ideas expressed by them involve a participant who
exclusively performs an action. One example is the verb δράω ‘I see’ given
that when someone sees, he/she certainly does an action, but cannot be said
to experience anything, because eyes can close in order to avoid being
affected (Ibid., 418.2–7). 231

Priscian’s description of these verbs is far more basic by comparison.
As we have already mentioned, he merely notes that verbs denoting sensual
perception regularly govern a genitive in Greek and an accusative in Latin
(see above), and does not propose rational explanations to account for the
syntax of these verbs, as Apollonius had done. His account of verbs
conveying reciprocity (aequiperantia) is just as basic: he simply describes
them as verbal forms that govern a dative (e.g. luctor tibi). Apollonius, by
contrast, provides a comprehensive account of these verbs arguing that since
they convey a verbal idea (designated ἀντιπεριποιομένη ‘reciprocity’) involving two participants, who do the same action to each other (e.g.
παλαίω σοι), they cannot take the accusative (given that this case refers to
the patient in an active construction), nor can it take the genitive (as this case often stands for the agent in a passive construction). Hence, by process
of elimination, he comes to the realisation that the verbs must govern the
dative, as this is the only case remaining (Apol. Dysc., 427.9–429.9; see also
p.30 of this thesis). If we contrast Priscian’s treatment of these verbs with
that of Apollonius, we arrive at an important conclusion: Priscian exhibits a
level of theoretical elaboration of the underlying rationale behind syntactic
rules which looks less sophisticated and somewhat more superficial than
Apollonius’.

To sum up, Priscian uses four distinct criteria to differentiate types of
verbs, namely morphology, syntax, semantics and degree of transitivity. In
regard to morphology, he discerns two sets of endings, one in -o and another

231 Ἡ γε μὴν ἐκ τοῦ ὑδάτος ἐνεργεστάτη ἔστίν καὶ ἐπὶ πλέον
dιαβιβαζόμενη […] οὗδε γὰρ εἰς τὸ ἄντιπαιδεῖν ὑπὸ τῶν ἐξωθεὶν εὐδιάθετος, ἐπεὶ
τὸ προσδιατιθέν εἶργεται ὑπὸ τῆς καταμάφωσις τῶν ὀφθαλμῶν. ‘But seeing is the
most active of sense-effects, and the most transitive […] and it is not easily affected
by counter-sensations from outside, since the incoming influence may be shut out by the
As for syntax, he points out that while some verbs combine with accusative, genitive or dative complements and with ablative prepositional phrases, others are absolute (absoluta), namely they do not need to be joined to case-inflected complements or prepositional phrases. Regarding semantics, he recognises three significations: active, passive and neuter (i.e. stative). The passive is divided into two subclasses, specifically passio ‘passivity’ entailing that a participant undergoes an action as a result of the agency of another, and sui passio ‘self-suffering’ (also labelled ἵδιοπάθεια or αὐτόπάθεια), which applies to a number of somewhat related verbal ideas. The category of sui passio refers to what we nowadays call the reflexive, that is to say, a verbal idea such as Phemius se docuit ‘Phemius taught himself’ denoting that a participant does an action to himself and, hence, is both the agent and patient of the action expressed. However, this same category also represents a verbal idea such as tepeo ‘I am warm’, involving a single participant who simply experiences something. Finally, sui passio stands for a verbal idea such as misereor te ‘I feel pity for you’, which incorporates two distinct participants, one who is affected by something (i.e. by pity) and another who participates in the verbal process but cannot be characterised as doing or undergoing anything. In a nutshell, the collocation sui passio is used whenever a participant experiences something without being acted on by an external agent. We should also mention the term reciprocatio, which Priscian uses exclusively (as far as I am aware) to denote the notion of reflexivity (Prisc. I.G. 2, 164.1–4). For this reason, it is odd that he applies the related term reciprocum not only to reflexive verbs (Prisc. I.G. 2, 14.18,), but also to verbs such as rubeo ‘I am red’, horreo ‘I tremble’, tepeo ‘I am warm’ and ferveo ‘I boil’ which cannot be defined as reflexives (Prisc. I.G. 2, 270.14–15). This suggests that

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232 Et in reciprocationibus personarum, hoc est quando eadem persona et agit et patitur, utimur eisdem constructionibus, ut misereor mei, invides tibi, orat se ille et simila. ‘As for the reflexivity of persons, i.e. when the same person does and experiences something, we use the same constructions such as misereor mei ‘I pity myself’, invides tibi ‘you hate yourself’, orat se ille ‘he talks to himself’ etc.’ See also Prisc. I.G. 2, 166.29–167.7 and 167.11–13.
Priscian could be somewhat inconsistent in regard to the application of terminology.

Before we conclude, we should address the notion of transitivity. As we have seen, Priscian initially follows Apollonius and draws a distinction between transitive and intransitive verbs, the former corresponding to those that govern two human participants and the latter corresponding to those that govern just one. However, on one occasion, as we have already highlighted, Priscian exemplifies transitive deponents (transitiva) by means of sentences such as *loquor fabulam* ‘I tell a story’ and *arbitror iustitiam* ‘I arbitrate for justice’, which consist of one human and one non-human participant. It is very likely that Apollonius would have considered these sentences to be intransitives, given that they only contain one human participant. This raises a number of questions: was the designation of these sentences as transitives simply an unwitting error on the part of Priscian (or possibly on the part of a medieval re-elaborator or interpolator), or can we interpret this as evidence indicating that Priscian was aware of an alternative definition of transitivity that defined transitive action in terms of human and non-human participants? If the latter is true (which I am inclined to think), did Priscian formulate the definition himself or did he have access to a treatise (which is perhaps no longer extant) that transmitted this novel interpretation of transitivity? There is, I believe, terminological evidence that suggests that Priscian may have consulted a treatise which was not composed by Apollonius and which dealt with transitivity and other related matters.\(^{233}\) For example, Priscian often uses the term *ἰδιοπάθεια* instead of *αὐτοπάθεια*; however, the former is not attested in the extant works of Apollonius Dyscolus. Moreover, Priscian identifies *reciprocum* (*Prisc. I.G.2, 14.18*) and *refractivum* (*ibid., 176.17*) as translations of the Greek

\(^{233}\) Luhtala (1990: 37) has already suggested this, although it seems to me that the evidence she cites does not support her argument. She points out that Priscian equates *transitivum* and *intransitivum* with the terms *μεταβατικόν* and *ἀμεταβατόν* respectively (*Prisc. I.G. 1, 552.25–26*) which, she argues, ‘are not typically Apollonian’ and may have been derived from the work of another author. However, these terms are attested in Apollonius’ treatise on the pronoun (*Apol. Dysc. Pron.*, 44.9–18).
term ἀντανάκλαστον, although ἀντανάκλαστον is not found in Apollonius’ extant corpus (Apollonius uses the term ἀντανακλώμενον instead). In my view, all this taken together suggests that Priscian may have derived his understanding of the notions of transitivity and reflexivity from the works of two authors, certainly from Apollonius and also from another source. Can we identify the author of the latter? The short answer is no, but it is interesting to point out that Priscian frequently lauds his teacher Theoctistus, who composed a grammar entitled Institutio artis grammaticae (see above). Could Theoctistus be our unknown author? Such a view is not inconceivable, but it is certainly very speculative. Another option is Herodian, Apollonius’ son, whom Priscian praises in the introduction to the Institutiones; however, we cannot be sure if Herodian treated the notions of transitivity and reflexivity at all, as his works are either lost or come down to us in a fragmentary state (Dickey, 2014: 325–425).

5.4 Conclusion

This chapter has dealt with Latin authors who made extensive use of Greek sources. We have observed that the medieval redactor of Macrobius’ De differentiis and Priscian produced grammatical works that differed from the grammars of other Latin authors in one critical way: whereas most Latin authors primarily classified verbs in terms of form and meaning, the medieval redactor and Priscian also displayed considerable concern for the criterion of syntax and the notion of transitivity. We will recall, for example, that both Priscian and the redactor identified actives as transitive verbs that generally join to complements marked with the accusative (and sometimes to complements marked with the genitive or dative). This way of describing verbs clearly has its origins in the works of Apollonius Dyscolus who, as we have seen, was particularly concerned with matters to do with syntax and transitivity.
6. Conclusion

In a passage entitled *De extremitatibus nominum et diversis quaecstionibus* ‘On the endings of nouns and a series of other topics’, preserved in Charisius’ grammar, the following is stated:

Ne ipsa quidem rerum natura tam finita est ut nobis ... novissimum sui adsignet, ne dum artes, quorum consummationibus inbecillitas humana non sufficit, vel propter extremum difficultatis laborem vel sola earum inventione satiate. Et sane quid potest absolutum esse, quod adsidue adstruitur? Non ideo tamen nullae sunt quia illas subinde adstritionibus totas esse non patimur. Quare contenti simus eo quod repertum est, cum in omni rerum ratione partes quoque mensuram sui habeant nec aliter perfectum esse videatur quod interim est (Char., 61.16–62.2).

‘Not even nature is complete in such a way that it assigns to us the last ...; still less is this true of the arts. For human frailty is not strong enough to comprehend them fully, either on account of the extreme difficulty of the task, or because it is satisfied by the mere fact of discovering them. And in fact what can be completed that continuously gets further additions in accordance with the acuteness of each individual mind? Nonetheless, the arts are not worthless just because by these successive additions we do not allow them be whole. Let us therefore content ourselves with what has been found, since in the whole system of things parts can be measured in themselves and there is no other way in which something that is only provisional can be regarded as complete.’ (transl. adapted from Schenkeveld, 1998: 445)

As Schenkeveld (1996: 17–35; 1998: 443–459) has pointed out, this is the only extant passage preserved in a Late Antique grammatical text that on the one hand refers to the idea of progress and on the other relates it to the *artes* ‘arts’. In essence, the author of the passage argues that generation after generation contribute to the development of the *artes*, and claims that this is an ongoing process that will never be completed. Although he does not mention grammatical theory explicitly, it is interesting to note that the kind of incremental progress that the author is alluding to is also evident when

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234 There is a lacuna here in the manuscript.
235 On the idea of progress in Classical Antiquity, see Dodds (1973) and Edelstein (1967).
we examine how successive authors approached the explanation of diathesis between the second century BC and the sixth century AD. For example, we have seen that authors like Aristarchus and Comanus of Naucratis in the second century BC, and Dionysius of Halicarnassus and Varro in the first century BC, distinguished only two verbal classes, an active (ἐνεργητικόν/ species faciendi) and a passive (παθητικόν/ species patiendi), the former encompassing verbs terminating in -ω or -o (in the 1sg. present indicative) that signify active meaning and the latter corresponding to those ending in -μαί or -or which convey passive meaning. However, authors soon realised that certain verbs have forms that appear to contradict their meaning and so, by outset of the first century AD, new classes were conceived of to categorise these anomalies. Thus, the Greek middle (μέσον) (first attested in P. Rain 1.19 dated to the first century AD) not only incorporated verbs like μάχομαι ‘I fight’, with active meaning in spite of the ending -μαί, but also middle aorists, which convey active meaning like ἐποιησάμην or passive meaning like ἐλούσάμην ‘I washed myself’, and perfect actives which denote passive meaning like δισφόρα ‘I am ruined’. Between the second and third centuries AD Latin authors too introduced new classes, including the neuter, which they probably derived from Stoic logic: this consisted of active verbs that were bereft of passive inflection (e.g. sedeō ‘I sit’). Moreover, they introduced the deponent, which applied to morphologically passive verbal forms that lacked active inflection (e.g. luctor ‘I wrestle’), and the common (first attested in the works of Aulus Gellius), which, although similar to the deponent as to morphology, differed from it with respect to semantics, as this class could convey both active and passive meaning (e.g. osculor te ‘I kiss you’ and osculor a te ‘I am kissed by you’). Aside from these, Latin authors during this period also discerned secondary verbal forms such as the inchoative, the frequentative, the defective and the impersonal.

By the beginning of the fourth century there were several different ways of classifying verbs. Some writers, like the author of Genera D,
subscribed to a system of three classes, made up of active, passive and stative (habitivum), while others, like the author of Genera B, espoused a system of four classes, composed of active, passive, common and neuter. Other authors favoured a system of five classes, which included the aforementioned four plus the deponent, as outlined by Donatus and by the author of Significatio, whereas Diomedes and the authors of Genera A and C presented a system of six classes, consisting of the aforementioned five plus either the supine (in the case of the author of Genera C) or the impersonal (in the case of Diomedes and the author of Genera A). There were also systems of eight and nine classes, presented by Probus and Sacerdos respectively: the former was constituted by active, passive, neuter, common, deponent, defective, frequentative and inchoative, while the latter incorporated the eight classes just mentioned plus the impersonal. By the start of the fifth century, however, most authors (with some exceptions, namely Consentius, Phocas, Servius and the author of Serg. 1) abided by the system of five classes consisting of active, passive, neuter, common and deponent. This approach cannot be characterised as being objectively more sophisticated than, nor superior to, any of the other ones referenced above; instead, this configuration appears to have acquired legitimacy simply because it was favoured by Donatus, who at that time was regarded as the undisputed authority on all matters grammatical. Thereafter, Donatus’ classification was adopted by Priscian in the sixth century, Isidore of Seville (Isid., 1.9), Virgilius Maro Grammaticus (Virg. Gramm., 193.145–158).

236 *Genera verborum ideo dicta, quia gignant. Nam activo adicis r et gignit passivum; rursum passivo adimis r et parit activum. Ipsa autem activa dicuntur quia agunt, ut verbero, [et] passiva, quia patiuntur, ut verberor; neutralia, quia nec agunt nec patiuntur, ut iaceo, sedeo. His si r litteram adicis, non sonant Latina. Communia dicuntur quia et agunt et patiuntur, ut amplector. Haec similiter, deposita r littera, Latina non sunt. Deponentia vero dicuntur, quia deponunt futuri temporis participium a significatione passiva, quod exit in das ut gloriandus. 'The voices (genus) of verbs are so named because they ‘bring forth’ (gignere, ppl. genus). Thus you add r to the active and it brings forth the passive; conversely, you remove r from the passive and it brings forth the active. These are called active (actius) verbs because they act (agere, ppl. actus), as ‘I whip’ (verbero), and passive (passivus) verbs because they ‘undergo action’ (pati, ppl. passus), as ‘I am whipped’ (verberor); neutral (neutralis) verbs, because they neither act nor undergo action, as ‘I am lying down’ (iaceo), ‘I am sitting’ (sedeo)—for if you add the letter r to these, they do not sound Latin. Common (communis) verbs are so called because they both act and undergo action, as amplector (‘I embrace, I am embraced’). Similarly, these, if the letter r is
and Asper (Asp., 49.29–30)\textsuperscript{238} in the seventh century; by Malsachanus (Mal., 204.9–10)\textsuperscript{239} and Boniface (Bon., 38.64–65)\textsuperscript{240} in the eighth century.\textsuperscript{241} The evolution of the verb-class system can be expressed in a

removed, are not Latin. Deponent (deponentes) verbs are so called because they ‘set aside’ (deponere) the passive meaning of their future participles; this form ends in -\textit{dus}, as gloriandus (‘worthy of boasting’).\textsuperscript{237} Significationes ergo verborum quinque sunt. Quaedam enim ex eis activa vocantur, quae agunt, ut Turnum colo; quaedam neutra, quae nec agere in natura habent nec pati, licet quaedam eorum subreptive agere vidantur. […] Passiva sunt, quae pati semper habent; dicimus enim mittor a Romulo. Deponentia sunt quae cum passivi similitudinem in declinatione habeant, passionem tamen ipsa qualitate deponunt, ut for faris. Communia vero dicuntur, quae et agere et pati sub eadem declinatione habent, ut veneror regem, veneror a rege.’ Therefore, there are five significations of verbs. Some of these are called actives because they act, like Turnum colo ‘I worship Turnus’. Some are neutrals: these do not have to act or experience in nature, although some of them appear to act covertly. […] Passives are those which always have to experience; for we say \textit{mittor a Romulo} ‘I am dispatched by Romulus’. Deponents are those which are similar to the passive as far as their conjugation is concerned, but nevertheless they put aside the expression of passivity by their very quality, like \textit{faris} ‘you speak’. Common are so called because they have to act and experience although they inflect in a single form, like \textit{veneror regem} ‘I worship the king’, \textit{veneror a rege} ‘I am worshipped by the king.’. On this author, see Herren (1979: 27–71), Holtz (1981: 315–318), Law (1982: 42–52; 1995) and Ó Cróinín (1989: 13–22).

\textsuperscript{238} Genera verborum, quae et significationes dicuntur, sunt quinque, activa, passiva, neutra, deponentia communia. ‘There are five kinds of verbs which are also called significations; actives, passives, neutrals, deponents and common.’ On this author, see Holtz (1981: 272–283) and Law (1981: 35–41).


\textsuperscript{240} Genera verborum quinque esse quis peritorum ignorat? \textit{Activum passivum neutrum commune deponens.} ‘Who among the learned is unacquainted with the five kinds of verbs? Active, passive, neutral, common and deponent.’ On this author, see Holtz (1981: 319) and Law (1982: 77–80; 1983: 43–72).

\textsuperscript{241} On the reliance of Priscian, Isidore, Virgilius Maro Grammaticus, Asper, Boniface and Malsachanus on the works of Donatus, see Holtz (1981: 238–300) and Law (1982).
table as follows (Donatus and the authors who depend on the works of Donatus are highlighted in yellow):\textsuperscript{242}

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Before we conclude this summary of the historical development of the verb-class system, we should take a moment to discuss the emergence of one of the most enigmatic verbal classes, namely the deponent. As we have already mentioned, the deponent is first attested in the *ars* of Sacerdos in the third century, and between third and sixth centuries authors proposed multiple definitions of it, which are as follows:

1. The deponent is a passive verbal form that does not have a corresponding active form (e.g. *nascor non nasco*) (Consentius, Donatus, Probus, Sacerdos, Serg. 4).

2. The deponent is a passive verbal form that does not have a corresponding active form and yet signifies active meaning (*Genera C*, Phocas, Serg. 3).

3. The deponent is a verb that does not have a gerundive form (Pompeius, Sacerdos).

4. The deponent is so called by antiphrasis (i.e. its designation is ironic). There are two ‘antiphrasis’ definitions. The most commonly attested one is concerned with morphology and states that the deponent is so called because it should put aside (*deponit*) its passive inflection in order to become active; however, it actually never does so, as this would lead to an ungrammatical form (e.g. *loquor non loquo*) (Diomedes, Sacerdos, *Significatio*). The second definition is only attested once and is concerned with semantics: it asserts that the deponent is so called because it should put aside its active meaning, although it never does so (Cledonius).

5. The deponent is a verb that ought to denote passive meaning (because it manifests in passive form), but in actuality indicates active meaning (Servius).

6. The deponent is so called because it ‘puts aside ambiguity of speech’ (*deponit ambiguitatem sermonis*) (Diomedes). Ambiguity is signified by any word or sentence that conveys two or more meanings. Therefore, the common verb expresses ambiguity since it
denotes two meanings: active meaning in conjunction with an accusative (e.g. *consolor te*) and passive meaning with an ablative (e.g. *consolor a te*). The deponent, by contrast, ‘puts aside ambiguity of speech’, i.e. it is unambiguous as far as semantics is concerned, because it only ever conveys a single meaning (e.g. *loquor*).

7. The deponent is so called because it puts aside passive meaning. This definition aims to differentiate the deponent and the common on the basis of their semantics. Whereas the common indicates two meanings, active and passive, the deponent is so called because it puts aside passive meaning and exclusively conveys active (Serg. 2, Sacerdos).

8. The deponent is so called because, in contrast with the common, which denotes two meanings, it puts aside one of these meanings and exclusively signifies the other. Thus, the deponent conveys either active or passive meaning but never both (Diomedes, Prisican).

As we can see, authors provided a variety of different reasons to explain why deponents are so called. However, is it possible to determine how authors originally defined the deponent when it was first conceived? Flobert (1975: 30) suggested that the deponent may have been established in order to stand in opposition to the common. Both referred to *passiva tantum* verbs; however, *communia* applied to those verbs that expressed active as well as passive meaning, whereas *deponentia* labelled those that put aside (*deponunt*) passive meaning and only conveyed the active. The other definitions were almost certainly later developments. Definitions 1–4 were clearly formulated by authors who were more preoccupied with morphology than semantics. Of the definitions that pertain to morphology, definition 4 is by far the most striking (Flobert, 1975: 27; Hovdhaugen, 1987: 143–144). It tells us that the deponent was so called by antiphrasis, that is to say, this class does not ‘put aside’ its passive inflection and, therefore, does not have a corresponding active form. This definition was probably devised to order
to explain the morphological differences between the deponent and the passive: while the passive certainly looks like a deponent, unlike the deponent it can lose its inflectional ending and become active.

Turning now to the subject of terminology, we have shown that terms relating to diathesis began to emerge in the first century AD. They are first attested in the works of Quintilian, who deployed the terms genus and modus to indicate a verbal class and a verbal form respectively.

By the third century, two additional terms were introduced, namely affectus (i.e. the Latin translation of the διάθεσις) and significatio. The terms are first attested in the ars of Sacerdos and were used to refer to verbal classes. By the start of the fourth century the term modus was rarely used in relation to diathesis, because by that time it was reserved solely for the purposes of expressing the category of mood.

In the same period we also see the rise of the term qualitas, which was employed by Probus to designate a verbal class. Thus, by the beginning of the fourth century, there was a well-established set of technical terms to describe diathesis that authors could avail of, although generally what we find is that they did not implement it in a consistent or ‘scientific’ manner: in other words, typically they did not utilise an individual grammatical term to represent a single grammatical feature; rather, they deployed several terms to refer to a single grammatical feature (polymorphism), or, in some cases, employed a single term to stand for multiple grammatical features at the same time (polysemy). For example, Probus utilised qualitas to signify a verbal class, but also applied genus and significatio as synonyms of qualitas.

Donatus and the authors of Genera A and D, by contrast, implemented terminology with greater precision, exclusively using the term genus to style a verbal class – although Donatus was aware that some authors had deployed significatio as a synonym of genus.

In general, Diomedes too was fairly consistent when it came to using technical language: he employed several terms systematically, including genus to refer to a verbal class, species, forma and declinatio to denote a
verbal form, and *vis* (literally ‘force’) to indicate meaning. However, he did apply *significatio* in an inconsistent way, using it not only to designate a verbal class but meaning as well.

However, it was undoubtedly the author of *Significatio* who deployed technical terminology in the most ambiguous way, utilising the terms *species* and *significatio* to express the form and the meaning of a verb respectively, but he also used the same two terms interchangeably to denote verbal classes.

By contrast, the authors of *Genera B* and *C* were by far the most meticulous as regards to applying terminology in this period: they availed of the terms *genus*, *forma* and *significatio* or *potestas* to represent verbal class, verbal form and meaning respectively.

Moving on to the fifth century, we have found that authors appear to have made a concerted effort to implement terminology in a more unambiguous and consistent manner. We have observed that several of them, including Pompeius and the authors of Serg. 1, Serg. 2 and Serg. 4, availed of the term *genus* to designate a verbal class, *declinatio* to designate a verbal form, and *significatio* to refer to the meaning of a verb. These authors appear to have derived their application of terminology from a common source, namely Servius, who utilised precisely the same set of terms in exactly the same way.

Phocas too was meticulous in the way that he used terminology, applying it in the same way as Servius.

Of course, this is not to imply that all authors in this period used terminology with precision. Cledonius and the author of Serg. 3 utilised *genus* as well as *significatio* to style verbal classes, as did Consentius, who in fact exploited an extremely broad repertoire of terms including *species*, *forma* and *declinatio* to indicate a verbal form, and *vis* and *significatio* to refer to meaning. In any case, it is evident that these three authors were in

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243 It should be pointed out that the author of Serg. 4 was not as consistent as the other authors listed here, as he applied *forma* as well as *declinatio* to refer to a verbal form – although admittedly this is a minor difference (see table below).
the minority, as most authors in this period used technical terminology in a clear and coherent manner.

We should also address Priscian’s application of technical language. He deployed a variety of terms including species and genus in order to designate verbal classes, forma, vox and declinatio to represent verbal forms, and significatio and vis to denote the meaning of verbs. The use of vox, ‘verbal form’, is especially striking as it does not feature in any other account of diathesis and appears to be the ancient antecedent of the modern technical term ‘voice’ (Boehm, 2001: 103–106)

These differences can be tabulated as follows:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Century</th>
<th>Author</th>
<th>Class</th>
<th>Morphology</th>
<th>Meaning</th>
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<tbody>
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<td>1st cent.</td>
<td>Quintilian</td>
<td>genus</td>
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<td>modus</td>
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<td>3rd cent. AD</td>
<td>Sacerdos</td>
<td>genus/affectus/species/significatio</td>
<td>declinatio</td>
<td>intellectus</td>
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<td>4th cent. AD</td>
<td>Probus</td>
<td>genus/significatio/qualitas</td>
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<td>Genera A</td>
<td>genus</td>
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<td>Genera B</td>
<td>genus</td>
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<td>Genera C</td>
<td>genus</td>
<td>forma</td>
<td>significatio/potestas</td>
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<td>Genera D</td>
<td>genus</td>
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<td>Significatio</td>
<td>significatio/species</td>
<td>species</td>
<td>significatio</td>
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<td>Donatus</td>
<td>genus(significatio)</td>
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<td>Diomedes</td>
<td>genus/significatio</td>
<td>species/forma/declinatio</td>
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<td>5th–6th cent. AD</td>
<td>Servius</td>
<td>genus</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Pompeius</td>
<td>genus</td>
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<td>Cledonius</td>
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<td>Phocas</td>
<td>genus</td>
<td>declinatio</td>
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<td>Consentius</td>
<td>genus/significatio</td>
<td>declinatio/species/forma</td>
<td>significatio/vis</td>
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<tr>
<td>6th cent. AD</td>
<td>Priscian²⁴⁵</td>
<td>genus/species</td>
<td>declinatio/vox/forma</td>
<td>significatio/vis</td>
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As well as discussing technical terminology, we have also treated the notions of transitivity (μετάβασις/διάβασις) and reflexivity (ἀντανακλασμός/αὐτοπάθεια), which were first characterised by Apollonius Dyscolus in the second century AD. He made a distinction

²⁴⁴ In the table I have highlighted in yellow Servius and authors who depend on his works.
²⁴⁵ On Priscian’s use of Servius, see *Prisc. I.G.* 1. (8.15).
between a transitive action requiring two human participants, an intransitive governing only one, and a reflexive involving a single human participant who is simultaneously the agent and patient.

In Latin, the earliest description of something akin to the notion of transitivity can be found in a fragment of Pliny’s *De dubio sermone*: Pliny characterised the active and passive as verbs expressing actions incorporating two participants, an agent (*faciens*) and a patient (*p genetically*).

By the fourth century, something akin to the concept of intransitivity had also been introduced; for example, authors such as Diomedes in the fourth century, and Pompeius in the fifth, argued that neuter verbs convey actions requiring a single participant. This interpretation of the neuter, however, was rejected by author of Serg. 2, who rightly pointed out that the label ‘neuter’ applies not only to verbs that govern one participant (e.g. *dormio* ‘I sleep’) but also to those that govern two (e.g. *sentio* ‘I feel’).

In the works of fifth century authors, we have also encountered rudimentary descriptions of the reflexive. For example, Consentius stated that verbs like *tondeo* / *tondeor* ‘I shave myself’ and *lavo* / *lavor* ‘I wash myself’ signify actions that express something about the subject (*dicunt se*). Servius too treated these verbs, although he concluded that only the passive forms (i.e. *lavor* and *tondeor*) should be used to convey reflexive actions, indicating that there was disagreement among authors as to the ‘correct’ way of utilising these verbs.

In reality, it was Priscian who provided the first systematic treatment of the notions of transitivity (*transitio*) and reflexivity (*reciprocatio / sui passio*) in Latin. He derived his understanding of these notions primarily from the works of Apollonius Dyscolus. He distinguished between (1) transitive (*transitivum*), denoting an action involving two participants, (2) intransitive (*intransitivum*), signifying an action requiring only one participant, and (3) reflexive (*reciprocum/refractivum*), indicating that a participant does something to himself or herself. The way that Priscian approached the description of these notions is certainly similar to the way in which Apollonius had dealt with them. However, there are some subtle
differences. For instance, Priscian implemented terminology with greater precision than Apollonius: whereas Apollonius used μετάβασις and διάβασις indiscriminately to refer to the concept of transitivity, Priscian exclusively employed the term transitio. Moreover, whereas Apollonius availed of numerous adjectives to mean ‘transitive’ (i.e. διαβατικός, διαβιβαζόμενος, διαβιβαστικός, μεταβατικός) and ‘intransitive’ (i.e. ἀμετάβατος, ἀδιαβαστατος), Priscian only used transitivus and intransitivus. Finally, whereas Priscian applied reciprocum and refractivum to refer to reflexives, Apollonius did not use terms to distinguish such verbs.

In addition to terminological differences, Priscian and Apollonius occasionally presented somewhat different interpretations of transitivity. In general, Apollonius and Priscian conceived of transitive action in terms of human participants (e.g. Dionύσιος ἔτυψεν Θέωνα / Aristophanes Aristarchum docuit). As Luhtala (2000: 188) has pointed out, this understanding of transitivity had its origins in Stoic philosophy, which only ascribed action to human participants. However, on one occasion, Priscian described transitivity in terms of both human and non-human participants (e.g. loquor fabulam). I have suggested that Priscian may have acquired this understanding of the notion from a now lost source that was not composed by Apollonius Dyscolus. Evidently, the author of this source was not as influenced by Stoic philosophy as Apollonius was, since he related transitive action not only to human participants, but to non-human participants as well.

Turning now to the domain of semantics, we will recall that authors initially characterised verbs in terms of a dichotomy between performance and experience. We have seen that Aristarchus in the second century BC (Matthaios, 1999: 78. frag. 20), Dionysius of Halicarnassus (Dion. Hal. Comp., 5) in the first century BC, Quintilian (Inst. Orat., 9.3.7) and Pliny the Elder (Pomp., 227.25–27) in the first century AD, Apollonius Dyscolus in the second century (Apol. Dysc., 18.5–8) and Sacerdos (Sac., 430.2–5) in the third century, all contended that verbs signify either performance or
experience. By the fourth century AD, however, a new semantic class was introduced, namely *neutrum* or *habitum*, which consisted of verbs that indicate a state. For instance, Diomedes singled out certain verbs such as *sedeo* ‘I sit’, *dormio* ‘I sleep’ and *algeo* ‘I am cold’, which express neither performance nor experience (*Diom.*, 337.11–12). Moreover, Charisius documented *verba habitiva* ‘stative verbs’ such as *nascitur* ‘he is born’ and *crescit* ‘he rises’, which indicate ‘something that becomes or is inherently’ (*per se quid fieri aut esse*) (*Char.*, 212.1). In the fifth century, however, the notion of state was rejected by a number of notable figures including Servius (*Serv.*, 413.36–38), Pompeius (*Pomp.*, 213.21–25), Phocas (*Phoc.*, 430.29–32) and Serg. 2 (507.3–4). Why several authors rejected the notion of state is not altogether clear. In chapter three we have mentioned that there were verbs that were considered to be consistent with two semantic classes, rather than just one: for instance, Charisius asserted that verbs of sense perception such as *video* ‘I see’ and *aspicio* ‘I gaze’ appear to be actives (*activa*), but in actual fact are statives (*habitiva*) (*Char.*, 213.16–24). In the same chapter, we also highlighted that authors debated as to whether verbs which express bodily dispositions, such as *caleo* ‘I am hot’ and *tepeo* ‘I am warm’, should be regarded as passives or statives. The fact that there were verbs that could be assigned to two different semantic classes was a major concern for ancient authors. How could an author ever be certain that he was classifying these verbs accurately? Several fifth century authors including Servius and Pompeius took drastic action in an attempt to address this particular issue. They resolved to eliminate the stative class and categorise all verbs as actives and passives. They hoped that by eliminating the stative there would no longer be disputes over the classifications of verbs.

In contrast with many fifth century authors, Priscian recognised three semantic classes, namely active (*actus*), passive (*passio*) and neuter (*neutrum*, indicating a state). Moreover, he divided the passive into two subclasses, namely *passio* ‘passivity’ and *sui passio* ‘self-passivity’. This subdivision of the passive was inspired by Apollonius Dyscolus, who also
distinguished two semantically passive classes, namely πάθος and ἀὐτοπάθεια. According to Priscian, passio is signified whenever a participant undergoes an action as a result of the agency of another participant (e.g. verberor a te ‘I am beaten by you’), whereas sui passio is denoted if a participant experiences something without having been acted on by an external agent (e.g. tepeo ‘I am warm’).

In the introduction, I posed a number of questions that I intended to address in this thesis. I asked: did the understanding of diathesis gradually improve during the course of antiquity, and if it did, in what particular ways did it improve? We can now conclude that it certainly did improve. The most productive phase was undoubtedly between the second century BC and the third century AD, when all the most fundamental terms, verbal classes and grammatical notions associated with diathesis were developed. For example, we have observed that between the first and third centuries AD four of the most important terms were introduced, namely genus, significatio, affectus and διάθεσις, while between the second century BC and third century AD all the fundamental verbal classes were established (active, passive, neuter, common and deponent). We should also emphasise the importance of Apollonius Dyscolus’ contributions to the development of grammatical theory during this period, especially in the domains of syntax, transitivity and reflexivity, although it ought to be pointed out that his contributions did not have an overt influence on the Latin grammatical tradition until the beginning of the sixth century, when Priscian integrated Apollonian doctrine into the Institutiones Grammaticae.

Of course, this is not to diminish the impact that the later fourth century authors such as Donatus, Diomedes, Probus and Charisius had on the development of the description of verbal diathesis. As we have seen, the fourth century was a dynamic phase in the history of grammar, characterised by much debate among authors as to the best way of approaching the analysis of diathesis: authors argued over how many classes ought to be included, as well as how those classes should be described. Moreover, they debated as to which terms ought to be used to describe diathesis and how
these terms ought to be implemented. Clearly, these authors were sophisticated grammatical theorists, who were not only eager to advance their views about grammar, but were also ready to defend their views against the views of others.

In regard to the fifth century, we have observed that most authors who worked in this period presented strikingly similar descriptions of diathesis. They typically listed five types of verbs, namely active, passive, neuter, common and deponent, and deployed a terminological set which had three specific terms at its core: (1) genus to refer to a verbal class, (2) declinatio to refer to verbal forms, (3) significatio to refer to meaning. This approach gained favour because it was utilised by Donatus and subsequently by Servius, who were recognised as the foremost grammatical authorities in this period. Thus, the fifth century appears to have been a seminal moment in the history of grammar, when many authors reached a consensus regarding how the category of diathesis should be explained. However, this is not to imply that the study of grammar stagnated in this period. Arguably, the most important moment in the history of Late Antique grammatical thought was still to come, when Priscian in the sixth century introduced the study of syntax and the notions of transitivity and reflexivity into Latin.
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253


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