NASAL-INFIXED IMPERFECTS
AND THEIR COLLATERAL AORISTS IN HOMERIC GREEK: A DIACHRONIC APPROACH

S. I. Dmitrieva

In the present study, we analyze the uses of the Greek verbs derived from the IE present stems with the nasal infix and their collateral aoristic formations attested in the poems of Homer and compared with the later authors (Herodotus, Plato and Apollonius of Rhodes).

Indo-European nasal-infixed presents are known to be connected with transitivisation (Meiser 1993; Sihler 1995; Shatskov 2016). It

1 This research was supported by the Russian Foundation for Humanities (RFH) grant №17-04-00228.
2 Of the type R(C₁C₂)-né/n-R(C₃)- or R(C₁)-né/n-R(C₂)- (LIV²).
has also been noted that the Greek nasal verbs, along with higher
degree of transitivity, demonstrate higher degree of telicity in
comparison with the verbs of the same roots without the nasal infix.
This feature had been mentioned particularly concerning the nasal
presents in -ανω (Vendryes 1923; Chantraine 1961) and was
recently addressed with regard to other Greek nasal presents
(Dmitrieva 2017).

It should be considered that lexical aspect played a significant
role in the earlier periods of Ancient Greek (Moser 2017).
 Imperfects from telic verbs can often express perfective meaning;
the employment of imperfectives “pro perfective” has been
discussed in the studies dealing with Homeric aspect (Napoli 2006:
191). In this respect the nasal verbs provide a good opportunity to
study the employment of the telic imperfect forms, to investigate to
what extent they compete with the corresponding aorists and to
outline the patterns of correlation between the preterites.

The study is focused on the verbs with the old nasal present
stems listed in the lexicon of the Indo-European verbs that have both
aoristic forms and nasal imperfects in Homer\(^3\), making a set of 30
imperfects and 47 aorists\(^4\), which is then traced in the works of
Herodotus, Plato and Apollonius of Rhodes. The research is based
on more than 1400 instances, which had been retrieved with the help

\(^3\) ἐπιτελλω ‘enjoin, prescribe, command’, ἀνδάνω ‘please, delight, gratify’,
ἀννίμι ‘effect, accomplish’, ἀπειλεῖ ‘promise; threaten’, ἀρνεύμα ‘deny,
disown’, βάλλω ‘throw, hit’, δάμνημι ‘tame, break in’, δύναμε ‘be able’,
δύνω ‘cause to sink, sink’, καρπῖνω trans. ‘work’; intrans. ‘toil, labour’,
καρπημί ‘mix’, κλίνω ‘lean, rest’, κρίνω ‘choose; decide’, κυνεῖ ‘kiss’,
λαύσω ‘give light, shine’, μαραῖνω ‘die away, go slowly out’, ὠμόμι
‘export for sale’, πηγημί ‘stick or fix on; fasten’, πίλναιμι ‘draw near to,
approach’, πιττημί ‘spread out’, πυθανάμ ‘learn’, σκίναμε ‘to be
spread or scattered, disperse’, σαμνω ‘cut’, ύφαν ‘contrive, plan’, φαίνω
‘bring to light; reveal’, ἱππάνω ‘hold, include, contain’.

\(^4\) ἐπι, ἐπετελεῖ, εὐα, ἤπα, ἤπαστο, ἤπαστα, ἄρνησαθι, ἀπλῆ, ἐβάλλω,
ἐθάμασα, ἐκφάγα, ἐδάμασα, ἔδυν, ἐδυσα, ἐκαμον, κέρασε, ἐκλινε, ἐκλινθη, ἐκρινα,
ἐκυσε, ἐπέλαμψε, ἐμαράθη, ὀμίσε, ὀμορφία, ὀμοιορέζατο, ὁρίνα, ὤμονθη,
ὄμηρα, ὠποιπαιλον, πῆλ, ἐπέρασα, ἐπάγη, ἐπηξε, πλῆ, ἐπέλασα, πέλασθεν,
pέτασα, πετάσθησαν, ἐπενθύμην, πεπήθοιτο, ἐσκέδασα, ἐκεδαθεν, ἐταμον, ὤφη, ἐφή, ἐφάνη, ἐφάνη, ἐχάνον. Active and middle forms were counted as one instance. For some verbs
there were taken the aorists that synchronically belong to different presents,
but historically represent the old root aorist (this is the case of ἐπι), or the
ones that are semantically close (like ἤπα, which corresponds to the
present ἤδομαι).
of the TLG database. All contexts were examined in terms of lexical and grammatical semantics, pragmatical features and the distribution of usages.

I. Nasal imperfects in Homer

1. Imperfects and aorists displaying aspectual opposition

In a number of uses the difference between the preterites conforms to the generally held definition of the imperfect / aorist aspectual opposition. The nasal imperfects describe an ongoing or repeated action and the aorists are punctual or completed (cf. Rijksbaron 2006: 11).

1.1 Durative imperfects

The imperfects from δάμνημι refer to ongoing actions: Il. 14, 439 αὖτις δ’ ἐξοπίσω πλήτῳ χθονί, τῷ δὲ οἱ ὀσσε // νυξ ἐκάλυψε μέλαινα· βέλος δ’ ἔτι θυμὸν ἐδάμνα. ‘Then again he sank back upon the ground, and both his eyes were enfolded in black night; and the blow still overwhelmed his spirit’. The corresponding aorists refer to completed actions: Od. 22, 413 τούσδε δὲ μοῖρ’ ἐδάμασσε θεῶν καὶ σχέτλια ἔργα· ‘These men here has the fate of the gods destroyed and their own reckless deed’.

The imperfects from λάμπω are durative: Hector’s armour is shining during the attack at the gates in Il. 12, 463 λάμπε δὲ χαλκῷ // σμερδαλέῳ, τὸν ἕεστο περὶ χροΐ, δοιὰ δὲ χερσὶ // δοῦρ᾽ ἔχεν ‘and he shone in terrible bronze wherewith his body was clothed about, and in his hands he held two spears’. Sigmatic aorist ἐπέλαμψε is attested only once (with a prefix) and has a perfective meaning: the sun appeared and the entire battle field became visible. Il. 17, 650 ἰέλιος δ’ ἐπέλαμψε, μάχη δ’ ἐπὶ πᾶσα φαάνθη ‘and the sun shone forth upon them and all the battle was made plain to view’.

1.2 Iterative, distributive, habitual imperfects

More nasal imperfects are attested in the contexts where the action is repeated or a verb has distributed objects or subjects.

The verb βάλλω is polysemous (s. Cunliffe 1963 s. v.), and the grammatical semantics of the imperfect seems to differ according to the lexical value. This is especially remarkable for the meaning ‘to

---

5 The English translations of the passages are taken from (Murray 1919 and 1924) for Homer, (Godley 1921–24) for Herodotus, (Fowler, Lamb 1914) for Plato and (Seaton 1912) for Apollonius of Rhodes.
strike, wound’, where the imperfect is always different from the aorists and has either distributive or iterative value. The distributive action is marked with the pronoun ἀλλήλους ‘one another’: II. 18, 534 στησάμενοι δ’ ἐμάχοντο μάχην ποταμοῖο παρ’ ὁχθας, // βάλλον δ’ ἀλλήλους χαλκήρεσιν ἐγχείησιν. ‘Then set they their battle in array and fought beside the river banks, and were ever smiting one another with bronze-tipped spears’. The aoristic contexts with (ἔ)βάλλον and (ἔ)βλῆτο have perfective semantics: II. 4, 518 Ὄνθ’ Ἀμαρυγκείδην Διώρεα μοῖρα πέδησε· // χερμαδίῳ βλῆτο παρὰ σφυρὸν ὀκριόεντι // κνήμην δὲ ἄλφες ἄγος ἀνδρῶν ‘Then was Amaryncean’s son, Diores, caught in the snare of fate; for with a jagged stone was he smitten on the right leg by the ankle, and it was the leader of the Thracians that made the cast’.

Imperfect middle πίλνατο is iterative and marked with ἀλλοτε μὲν... ἀλλοτε δ’: II. 23, 368 ἀρματα δ’ ἀλλοτε μὲν χθονὶ πίλνατο πουλυβοτείρῃ, // ἀλλοτε δ’ ἀφέοσκε μετήορα: ‘And the chariots would now course over the bounteous earth, and now again would bound on high’. The corresponding aorists are perfective: II. 14, 438 αὐτις δ’ ἔξοπίσσω πλήτο χθονὶ, τῷ δ’ οἱ ὀσσε // νὺς ἐκάλυψε μέλαινα: ‘Then again he sank back upon the ground, and both his eyes were enfolded in black night’; II. 12, 420 οὐτε πότε αἰχηταὶ Δαναοὶ Λυκίους ἐδύναντο // τεῖχεο ς ἂψ ὠσασθαί, ἐπεί τὰ πρῶτα πέλασθαν ‘nor ever could the Danaan spearmen thrust back the Lycians from the wall, when once they had drawn nigh thereto’.

Imperfect middle ἐσκίδναντο is distributive: II. 1, 487 αὐτοῖ δ’ ἐσκίδναντο κατὰ κλίσιας τε νέας τε ‘and themselves scattered among the tents and ships’. Passive sigmatic aorist ἐκέδασθεν does not convey this semantical nuance, though it is used in the sense that could possibly be interpreted as conative – the Argives did not attempt to scatter because of shame and fear: II. 15, 657 Ἀργείοι δὲ... οὐδ’ ἐκέδασθεν ἀνὰ στρατὸν. ἵσχε γὰρ αἰδὸς // καὶ δέος ‘And the Argives... scattered not throughout the camp; for shame withheld them and fear’.

2. Imperfects applied “pro perfective”: avoiding the competition

2.1 Different distribution and valency

Complementary distribution of forms is one of the ways to eliminate the competition between the telic imperfects and their collateral aorists.

6 Aor. ind. med. πλήτο; sigmatic aorist ἐπέλασα is built on the root aorist (LIV2: 470); aor. pass. πελάσθη.
The imperfect \( \text{ἀπομόργνυ} \) in the active voice is attested with the prefix (II. 5, 416; II. 5, 798; II. 18, 414). The aorist with the prefix \( \text{ἀπο} \) is only attested in the middle voice (\( \text{ἀπομόρξατο} \)). Middle imperfect \( \text{ὁμόργνυντο} \) (Od. 11, 527) is attested in a personal form, sigmatic aorist without prefixes is restricted to the participle \( \text{ὁμορξάμενος} \) (II. 18, 124; Od. 8, 88; Od. 11, 530).

There also are four cases, where the aorists are only attested in non-finite forms and outside indicative: ipf. \( \text{ἤρνεῖτο} \) (Il. 19, 304 ff.) – inf. aor. \( \text{ἀρνήσασθαι} \) (II. 14, 212; Od. 8, 358; Od. 21, 345), opt. aor. \( \text{ἀρνήσατο} \) (Il. 14, 191); ipf. \( \text{πάλλον} \) (Il. 3, 316 ff.) – part. aor. \( \text{ἀμπεπαλών} \) (Od. 24, 519 ff.); ipf. \( \text{πυνθανόμην} \) (Od. 13, 386). Their corresponding imperfects can be used “pro perfective”: II. 23, 42 αὐτῷ ὁ γ’ \( \text{ήρνεῖτο} \) στερεός, ἐπὶ δ’ ὅρκον ὅμοσσεν: ‘But he steadfastly denied them, and swore an oath thereto’;

II. 6, 187 τῷ δ’ ἀρ’ ἀνεχμομένῳ πυκινὸν δόλον ἄλλον \( \text{ὑφήνε} \): // κρίνας ἐκ Λυκίης εὐρείης φῶτας ἀρίστους // εἷσε λόχον ‘And against him, as he journeyed back therefrom, the king wove another cunning wile; he chose out of wide Lycia the bravest men and set an ambush’.

The preterites \( \text{ἐδύναντο} \) and \( \text{δυνήσατο} \) appear in similar contexts, both are used in negations and have aoristic participles beside them. The aorist indicative is attested less frequently, and it seems that these forms could have been introduced metri gratia, providing 4-syllabic (\( \text{δυνήσατο} \)) and 5-syllabic (\( \text{ἐδυνήσατο} \)) metrical options for the 3rd person singular (having 2-syllabic \( \text{δύνατ’} \) and 3-syllabic \( \text{δύνατο} \)). It is interesting that the 4-syllabic augmented imperfect \( \text{ἐδύνατο} \) is not attested in Homer ⁸ yet it is well-attested in Herodotus, cf. Hdt. 1, 10, 1; 1, 26, 10; 1, 185, 7; 2, 2, 6 etc.).

II. 13, 436 τὸν τόθ’ ὑπ’ Ἰδομενὴν Ποσειδάων \( \text{ἐδάμασσε} // \text{θέλξας ὁσσε φαεινά, πέδησε δὲ φαίδιμο γυνά: // οὔτε γὰρ ἐξοπίσω φυγέειν δύνατ’ οὔτ’ ἁλέασθαι} ‘this Alcathous did Poseidon subdue beneath Idomeneus, for he cast a spell upon his bright eyes and ensnared his glorious limbs that he might nowise flee backwards nor avoid the spear’;

⁷ And with perfective value, while the active imperfect \( \text{ἀπομόργνυ} \) has progressive (II. 5, 798) or distributive (II. 18, 414) values.

⁸ There are also no attestations with a final -ε before \( \text{δύνατο} \) where the re-interpreted word border could have implied the presence of the augment (cf. II. 3, 451 οὖ τις \( \text{δύνατο} \) etc.).
Il. 3, 451 ἀλλ’ οὖ τις δύνατο Τρώων κλειτὼν τ’ ἐπικούρον // δεῖξαι Ἀλέξανδρον τότ’ ἀρηφίλῳ Μενελάῳ· ‘But none of the Trojans or their famed allies could then discover Alexander to Menelaus, dear to Ares’;

Od. 17, 303 δὴ τότε γ’, ὡς ἑνόησεν Ὅδυσσέα ἐγγύς εόντα, // οὐρῆ μὲν ῥ’ ὃ γ’ ἐσηνε καὶ οὐσα κάββαλεν ἄμφω, // ἄσσον δ’ οὐκέτ’ ἐπεῖτα διάνησατο οὖο ἁνακτος // ἐλθέμεν: ‘when he marked Odysseus standing near, he wagged his tail and dropped both his ears, but nearer to his master he had no longer strength to move’.

2.2 Pragmatical difference: temporal reference

For the verbs ἀνύω, κάμνω and μαραινω, while the imperfects might have perfective value, the aorists denote a preceding event (especially when used with the adverbs ἐπεί and πρίν).

The work of Odysseus was quickly finished: Od. 5, 243 θοῶς δέ οἱ ἠνύτο ἐργον.

In the aoristic passage Agamemnon in Hades tells Achilleus about his funeral: Od. 24, 71 αὐτάρ ἐπεὶ δὴ σε φλόξ ἠνυσσεν Ἡραίστοιο, // ἠῶθεν δὴ τοι λέγομεν λεύκ’ ὀστέ’, Ἀχιλλεῦ, // οἴνῳ ἐν ἀκρήτῳ καὶ ἀλείφατι. ‘But when the flame of Hephaestus had made an end of thee, in the morning we gathered thy white bones, Achilles, and laid them in unmixed wine and unguents’.

One of the wooers had exhausted his hands before he could draw up the string: Od. 21, 150 στῆ δ’ ἀρ’ ἐπ’ οὐδὸν ἱων καὶ τόξου πειρήτιζεν // οὐδέ μιν ἐντάνυσε· πρὶν γὰρ κάμε χεῖρας ἀνέλκω // ἀτρίπτους ἁπαλὰς. ‘he went and stood upon the threshold, and began to try the bow; but he could not string it. Ere that might be his hands grew weary, as he sought to draw up the string, his unworn delicate hands’.

The Patroclus’ pyre died out at the hour of dawn: Il. 23, 228 Ἡμος δ’ ἑωσφόρος ἐσ’οι φώος ἑρέων ἐπὶ γαῖαν..., τίμος πυρκαίη ἐμαράνετο, παύσατο δὲ φλόξ, ‘But at the hour when the star of morning goeth forth to herald light over the face of the earth... – even then grew the burning faint, and the flame thereof died down’.

The preceding event expressed by the aorist ἐμαράνθη is emphasized with ἐπεῖ: Il. 9, 212 αὐτάρ ἐπεὶ κατὰ πῦρ ἐκῆ καὶ φλόξ ἐμαράνθη, // ἀνθρακίην στορέσας ὀβελοὺς ἐφύπερθε τάνυσσε: ‘But when the fire had burned down and the flame was abated, he scattered the embers and laid thereover the spits’.
2.3 Preterites demonstrating differences in lexical semantics

Lexical differences between the preterites, including a tendency of one form to be involved in a certain formula, can be observed in general for polysemous and frequently attested verbs like βάλλω, δόνω and φαίνω. However, there are two verbs that carry this difference as the only criterion for distinction between the imperfects and the aorists.

The imperfect ἐπέτελλε ‘prescribed, commanded’ and the root aorist ἔτλην ‘suffered, underwent; dared’ are inherited from the same IE root *tél̥h₂-*/*tl̥h₂-, but have different lexical meanings.

The imperfect χάνδανεν denotes a possibility to physically contain a certain volume or amount (Il. 23, 742; Od. 17, 344): Il. 23, 742 κρητῆρα… ἓξ δ' ἄρα μέτρα χάνδανεν ‘mixing bowl… six measures it held’.

The aorist ἔχαδον has the meaning ‘to sustain’: II. 11, 462 τρὶς μὲν ἐπειτ’ ἧμισεν ὅσον κεφαλὴ χάδε φωτός ‘thrice shouted he then loud as a man’s head can shout’. The metaphorical semantics of the aorist ἔχαδον could support the idea that it had been built on the nasal stem, which is suggested to be a possible development (LIV²: 194).

3. Competition between the preterites⁹

ἀνδάνω – εὔαδε

The imperfect ἐνδάνε is intensified with the adverb πάμπαν which makes the passage even more deliberate than the aoristic context with the negation in Od. 24, 465.

Od. 3, 143 ἔνθ’ ἦ τοι Μενέλαος ἰνόρει πάντας Ἀχαιοὺς // νόστου μιμνῄσκεσθαι ἐπ’ εὐρέα νῶτα θαλάσσης; // οὐδ’ Ἀγαμέμνον πάμπαν ἐνδάνε· ‘Then in truth Menelaus bade all the Achaeans think of their return over the broad back of the sea, but in no wise did he please Agamemnon’.

Od. 24, 465 ὃς ἐφαθ’, οἱ δ’ ἀρ’ ἀνήξαν μεγάλῳ ἀλαλητῷ // ἡμίσεων πλείους· – τοῖ δ’ ἀθρόδοι αὐτόθι μεῖναν· – // οὐ γὰρ σφιν ἀδε μῦθος ἐνὶ φρεσίν, ἄλλ’ Ἐυπείθει // πείθοντ’ ‘So he spoke, but they sprang up with loud cries, more than half of them, but the rest

⁹ Semantical and functional equivalence in Homer is not restricted to “perfective” imperfects: some of the examined aorists take the “imperfective” semantics, although such examples are much less common (iteratives ἔβαλον II. 7, 176 and πάγεν II. 11, 572).
remained together in their seats; for his speech was not to their mind, but they hearkened to Eupeithes’.

ἀπείλεον – ἀπείλησαν
Some imperfects from ἀπειλέω are retrospective (II. 13, 143; II. 16, 201; II. 13, 220) and some aorists have different lexical meaning ‘to vow’ (II. 23, 863; II. 23, 872), but there are contexts where the aorists and imperfects are used in the same situation, starting the reported speech:

II. 15, 179 εἰ δέ οἱ οὐκ ἐπέεσσ’ ἐπιπείσεαι, ἄλλ’ ἀλογήσεις, // ἡπείλει καὶ κείνος ἐναντίβιον πολεμίζων // ἐνθά’ ἐλεύσεσθαι·  ‘And if so be thou wilt not obey his words, but shalt set them at naught, he threateneth that he will himself come hither to set his might against thine in battle’;

II. 9, 682 αὐτὸς δ’ ἡπείλησεν ἣμ’ ἠοῖ φαινομένηφι // νῆας ἐὑσσέλμους ἅλα’ ἑλκέμεν ἀμφιελίσσας. ‘But himself he threateneth that at break of day he will launch upon the sea his well-benched curved ships’.

ἔβαλλον – ἔβαλον
In certain lexical meanings the imperfects from βάλλω are used “pro perfective” and are equivalent to the thematic aorist (which is almost always perfective).

Penelope greets Odysseus and Telemachus in the passages that are nearly identical: Od. 23, 208 δακρύσασα δ’ ἔπειτ’ ἰθὺς κίεν, ἀμφὶ δὲ χεῖρας // βάλ’ Ὀδυσῆϊ, κάρη δ’ ἔκυσ’ ἠδὲ προσηύδα·  ‘Then with a burst of tears she ran straight toward him, and flung her arms about the neck of Odysseus, and kissed his head, and spoke, saying’;

Od. 17, 38 ἀμφὶ δὲ παιδὶ φίλῳ βάλε πήχεε δακρύσασα, // κύσσε δέ μιν κεφαλῆν τε καὶ ἄμφῳ φάεα καλὰ ‘and bursting into tears she flung her arms about her dear son, and kissed his head and both his beautiful eyes’.

In the middle voice with the value ‘to put on clothes / armour’ both forms appear in the same passage: II. 2, 43-45 ἔξετο δ’ ὀρθωθείς, μαλακὸν δ’ ἐνδόν χιτῶν // καλὰ νηγάτεον, περὶ δὲ μέγα βάλετο φᾶρος; // ποσσί δ’ ὑπὸ λιπαροίσιν ἐδήσσατο καλὰ πέδιλα, // ἀμφὶ δ’ ἀρ’ ὤμοισιν βάλετο χήμας ἀργυρόηλον. ‘He sat upright and did on his soft tunic, fair and glistening, and about him

10 ‘To throw, cast’; ‘to put’; ‘to let fall’, ‘to fling (the arms)’ and, in the middle voice, ‘to put on (clothes or armour)’.
cast his great cloak, and beneath his shining feet he bound his fair sandals, and about his shoulders flung his silver-studded sword’.

ἔδυνον – ἔδυν

For the verb δύνω the uses of all preterital forms (imperfects, root aorists and sigmatic middle aorists) overlap in the meanings ‘to enter, go into’, ‘to put on clothes, armour’ and ‘to come upon, befall (of feelings, physical and mental states)’, for example:

Il. 15, 219 Ὡς εἰπὼν λίπε λαὸν Ἀχαϊκὸν ἐννοσίγαιος, // δῦνε δὲ πόντον ἱών, πόθεσαν δ’ ἣρωες Ἀχαιοί. ‘So saying, the Shaker of Earth left the host of the Achaeans, and fared to the sea and plunged therein; and the Achaeans warriors missed him sore’;

Il. 6, 19 ...αὐτὸν καὶ θεράποντα Καλήσιον, ὡς ἡτά τοῦ ἱπποῦ // ἔσκεν ὑφηνίοχος· τὸ δ’ ἄμφω γαῖαν ἔδύτην. ‘...himself and his squire Calesius, that was then the driver of his car; so they two passed beneath the earth’;

Od. 7, 336 ἀγχίμολον δὲ μετ’ αὐτὸν ἔδύσετο δόματ’ Ὀδυσσεύς, // πτωχῷ λευγαλέῳ ἐναλίγκιος ἠδ ἱπτερ ς, // σκῆπτομενος: ‘Night after him Odysseus entered the palace in the likeness of a woeful and aged beggar, leaning on a staff’.

Il. 11, 19 δεύτερον αὖ θώρηκα περὶ στήθεσσιν ἔδυνε, // τὸν ποτὲ οἱ Κινύρης δῶκε ξεινήϊον εἶναι. ‘Next he did on about his chest the corselet that on a time Cinyras had given him for a guest-gift’;

Il. 18, 416 σπόγγῳ δ’ ἀμφὶ πρόσωπα καὶ ἄμφω χεῖρ᾽ ἀπομόρνυ // αὐχένα τε στιβαρὸν καὶ στήθεα λαχνήεντα, // δῦ δὲ χιτῶν’, ἔλε δὲ σκῆπτρον παχῦ, βῆ δὲ θύραζε // χωλεύων· ‘And with a sponge wiped he his face and his two hands withal, and his mighty neck and shaggy breast, and put upon him a tunic, and grasped a stout staff, and went forth halting’;

Il. 13, 241 Ἰδομενεὺς δ’ ὅτε δὴ κλίσην εὔτυκτον ἴκανε // δύσετο τεύχεα καλὰ περὶ χρο’ ἤρως Ἰδομενεὺς, as soon as he was come to his well-built hut, did on his fair armour about his body’.

It looks like the better attested verbs, like βάλλω and δύνω show competition between the forms in order to provide the variety of lexemes and overcome tautology.

The imperfect contains long ū, so the form 3 sg. ἔδυνε / δῦνε could formally be a sigmatic aorist. However, unlike the other three examples with ambiguous 3 sg. (κλίνω, κρίνω, ὀρίνω), the verb δύνω does have the 1sg imperfect form δῦνον. The long vowel is considered to be inherited from the root aorist (LIV²: 130).
There are also cases where one of the preterites is attested occasionally, whereas the other is used more frequently.

ὀμνυε–ὀμοσε

The imperfects from ὀμνυμι appear only twice, and one instance is identical to the aoristic passage. Odysseus, pretending to be a Cretan beggar, tells Eumaeus that the king Pheidon had promised to send Odysseus home.

Od. 14, 331 ὀμοσε δὲ πρός ἐμ’ αὐτόν, ἀποσπένδων ἐνὶ οἶκῳ, // νῆα κατειρύσθαι καὶ ἐπαρτέας ἔμμεν ἑταίρους, // οἳ δὴ μιν πέμψουσι φίλην ἐς πατρίδα γαίαν. ‘He swore in my own presence, as he poured libations in his halls, that the ship was launched and the men ready who were to convey him to his dear native land’.

Later in the poem Odysseys tells the same story to Penelope, but in this passage the verb is in the imperfect form: Od. 19, 288 ὀμνυε δὲ πρός ἐμ’ αὐτόν, ἀποσπένδων ἐνὶ οἶκῳ, // νῆα κατειρύσθαι καὶ ἐπαρτέας ἔμμεν ἑταίρους, // οἳ δὴ μιν πέμψουσι φίλην ἐς πατρίδα γαίαν. ‘He swore in my own presence, as he poured libations in his halls, that the ship was launched and the men ready who were to convey him to his dear native land’

ἐπέτελλε – ἐπέτειλα

Sigmatic aorist ἐπέτειλα (Il. 5, 818; Od. 1, 327) is in competition with the imperfects.

Il. 5, 818 οὔτε τί με δέος ἴσχει ἀκήριον οὔτε τις ὄκνος, // ἀλλ’ ἐτι σέων μέμνημαι ἐφετμέων ἃς ἐπέτειλας· ‘In no wise doth spiritless terror possess me nor any slackness, but I am still mindful of thy behest which thou didst lay upon me’;

Il. 5, 320 οὐδ’ ὁις Καπανῆος ἐλήθετο συνθεσιάων // τάων ἃς ἐπέτειλε βοήν ἀγαθὸς Διομήδης ‘but the son of Capaneus forgat not the commands that Diomedes good at the war-cry laid upon him’.

πίτνα–πέτασα

For πίτνημι the grammatical equivalence with the aorist is only present in the active voice:

---

12 Outside the active voice there is a difference between the perfective passive aorist and the progressive imperfect middle: Il. 22, 402 τοῦ δ’ ἦν ἐλκομένου κονίσαλος, ἀμφὶ δὲ χαῖται // κυάνεαι πίτναντο, κάρη δ’ ἅπαν ἐν κονίῃσι // κεῖτο πάρο ς χαρίεν· ‘And from Hector as he was dragged the dust rose up, and on either side his dark hair flowed outspread, and all in the dust lay the head that was before so fair’.
Il. 21, 7 ἡέρα δ’ Ἡρη // πίνα πρόσθε βαθείαν ἐρυκέμεν· ‘and Hera spread before them a thick mist to hinder them’;

Il. 1, 480 οἳ δ’ ἱστὸν στήσαντ’ ἀνὰ θ’ ἱστία λευκὰ πέτασσαν ‘and they set up the mast and spread the white sail’.

πυνθανόμην – ἐπυθόμην

The imperfect middle πυνθανόμην is attested once and has a perfective value: Od. 13, 256 πυνθανόμην Ἰθάκης γε καὶ ἐν Κρήτῃ εὐφρείη, // τηλοῦ ὑπὲρ πόντου· νῦν δ’ εἰληλουθα καὶ αὐτός // χρήμασι σὺν τοίσδεσσι· ‘I heard of Ithaca, even in broad Crete, far over the sea; and now have I myself come hither with these my goods’. The Greek nasal present could have been derived from the root aorist as well (LIV\(^2\): 83).

The aorist is attested in a similar passage in Od. 14, 321 ἔνθ’ Ὀδυσῆος ἐγὼ πυθόμην· κεῖνος γὰρ ἔφασκε // ξεινίσαι ἠδὲ φιλῆσαι ἔνθ’ ἐπαίνα γαῖαι· ‘There I learned of Odysseus, for the king said that he had entertained him, and given him welcome on his way to his native land’.

ἔφαινον, med. φαίνετο – ἔφηνα, pass. ἐφάνην

The active imperfect ἔφαινον appears in one context similar to the active aorist with the meaning ‘bring to light or notice, display’:

Od. 18, 67 ὡς ἔφαθ’, οἵ δ’ ἄρα πάντες ἐπήνεον. αὐτάρ Ὀδυσσεὺς // θάνατο μὲν ἄκεσιν περὶ μήδεα, φαίνε δὲ μηροὺς // καλόν τε μεγάλους τε, φάνεν δὲ οἱ εὐρεῖς ώμοι // στῆθεα τε στήματι τε βραχίονες· ‘So he spok e, and they all praised his words. But Odysseus girded his rags about his loins and showed his thighs, comely and great, and his broad shoulders came to view, and his chest and mighty arms’;

Il. 2, 324 τίπτ’ ἄνεῳ ἐγένεσθε κάρη κομόωντες Ἀχαιοί; // ἡμῖν μὲν τόδ’ ἔφηνε τέρας μέγα μητίετα Ζεὺς // ὄψις τε ὡμοί οὐρανὸν εὑρίη «Why are ye thus silent, ye long-haired Achaeans? To us hath Zeus the counsellor shewed this great sign, late in coming, late in fulfillment ’.

In the middle voice there are more examples of similar uses, particularly with the meanings ‘to appear, be seen’ and ‘to be so and so (with adjectives)’:

Ares appeared to Diomedes τοῖος ‘in such wise’: II. 5, 867 τοῖος Τυδείδῃ Διομήδεϊ χάλκεος Ἄρης // φαίνεθ’ ὁμοί νεφέσσιν ἵνν εἰς οὐρανόν εὐρίν ‘even in such wise unto Diomedes, son of Tydeus, did brazen Ares appear, as he fared amid the clouds unto broad heaven’;
Odysseus with his friends were dear to see on their safe return from the cave of Cyclops: Od. 9, 466 ἀσπάσιοι δὲ φίλοισ’ ἑτάροισι φάνημεν, // οἳ φύγομεν θάνατον. ‘And welcome to our dear comrades was the sight of us who had escaped death’.

Aorists homonymic to imperfects: ἔκλινε, ἔκρινε, ὄρινε

When the nasal infix spread to the entire verbal paradigm, the -s- in sigmatic aorists was lost after it with the subsequent compensatory lengthening: ἔκλινα < *ἔκλινσα, ἔκρινα < *ἔκρινσα, ὄρινα < *ὅρινσα (Chantraine 1961: 412; Sihler 1995: 517-518, Beekes 2010: 781).

As a result, in the active voice 3rd person singular (with the ending -ε(ν)), the imperfect forms became indiscernible from the aorists, as can be observed for the preterites ἔκλινε, ἔκρινε, ὄρινε.

In the 3rd person plural, in the passive voice and in the non-finite forms the aorists can be identified: 3 pl. ἔκριναν (Od. 18, 264), med. ἔκρινατ’ (Od. 4, 778), 2 sg. ὄρινας (Od. 8, 178), ὄρινας (Od. 14, 361; Od. 15, 486), 1 sg. ὄρινα (Od. 4, 366), med. ὀρίνετο (Od. 18, 75), pass. ὀρίνθη (Il. 5, 29).

As seen in the examples below, the preterites ἔκλινε, ἔκρινεν are similar to the aorists ἔκλιναν, ἔκρινατο.

Od. 22, 121 αὐτὰρ ἐπεὶ λίπον ὀϊστεύοντα ἄνακτα, // τόξον μὲν πρὸς σταθμὸν ἐὐσταθέος μεγάροι // ἔκλιν’ ἑστάμεναι, πρὸς ἐνώπια παμφανόωντα ‘But when the arrows failed the prince, as he shot, he leaned the bow against the door-post of the well-built hall, and let it stand against the bright entrance wall’;

Il. 8, 435 καὶ τοὺς μὲν κατέδη σαν ἐπ’ ἀμβροσίῃσι κάπῃσιν, // ἅρματα δ’ ἔκλιναν πρὸς ἐνώπια παμφανόωντα· ‘and tethered them at their ambrosial mangers, and leaned the chariot against the bright entrance wall’;

Il. 1, 309 Ἀτρείδης δ’ ἄρα νῆα θοὴν ἅλα δὲ προέρυσσεν, // ἐν δ’ ἔρέτας ἔκρινεν ἐείκοσιν ‘Atreus launched a swift ship on the sea, and chose for it twenty rowers’;

Od. 4, 778 ὡς εἰπὼν ἔκρινατ’ ἐείκοσι φωτάς ἄρίστους, // βὰν δ’ ἵναι ἐπὶ νῆα θοὴν καὶ θῶνα θαλάσσης. ‘So he spoke, and chose twenty men that were best, and they went their way to the swift ship and the shore of the sea’.

The coincidence in 3sg. is not exclusively formal, since the clearly imperfect forms also have perfective values. For example, the middle form ὀρίνετο which is an imperfect, is semantically similar to the passive aorist ὀρίνθη:
Od. 18, 75 ὡς ἄρ’ ἔφαν, Ἰρω δὲ κακῶς ὀπίνετο θυμός. 'So they spoke, and the mind of Irus was miserably shaken';

l. 5, 29 Τρώες δὲ μεγάθυμοι ἐπεὶ ἴδον ὑὲ Δάρητος... πᾶσιν ὀπίνθηθι θυμός; ‘But when the great souled Trojans beheld the two sons of Dares... the hearts of all were dismayed’.

II. A diachronic overview

The Homeric set of preterite pairs was addressed in the works of three later authors. Unsurprisingly, some of the verbs from that list were not attested; moreover, some verbs show no uses of preterital forms at all. These cases excluded, the initial Homeric list is represented by 13 verbs in Herodotus, 11 in Plato and 20 in Apollonius of Rhodes that have at least one preterite attested (imperfect or aorist indicative).

As seen in the Table 1, most of the examined imperfects are able to express perfective value, although the percentage tends to lower from 70% in Homer to 40% in Apollonius of Rhodes. Frequently attested and polysemous verbs provide greater semantical variety.

Table 1

Imperfects applied “pro perfective”

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Homer</th>
<th>Herodotus</th>
<th>Plato</th>
<th>Apoll. Rhod.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>0</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>50</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>20</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>40</td>
<td>60</td>
<td>80</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>40</td>
<td>50</td>
<td>60</td>
<td>70</td>
<td>80</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>60</td>
<td>70</td>
<td>80</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

13 ἀνδάνω, ἄνω, ἀπειλέω, ἀρνέομαι, βάλλω, δύναμαι, κάμνω, κρίνω, ὀμνυμι, πάλλω, πυθανομαι, τάμνω, φαίνω.
14 ἄνω, ἀπειλέω, βάλλω, δύναμαι, δύνω, κρίνω, ὀμνυμι, πήγνυμι, πυθανομαι, τάμνω, φαίνω.
15 ἐπιτέλλω, ἀνδάνω, ἄνω, ἀπειλέω, βάλλω, δύναμαι, δύνω, κάμνω, κλίνω, κρίνω, κυνεο, λάμπω, ὀμνυμι, ὀρίνω, πάλλω, πηγνυμι, πλναμαι, σκιδναμαι, τάμνω, φαίνω.
The greater frequency of the perfective contexts leads to a higher competition between the forms, which is decreased in Herodotus, raises slightly in Plato and then drops in Apoll. Rhod. (Table 2).

**Table 2**

**Competition**

![Competition Chart]

Table 3 describes the ways of handling the competition between the preterites.

**Table 3**

**Avoiding the competition**

![Avoiding the competition Chart]

- Grammatical semantics
- Pragmatics, lexical semantics, distribution
- Only one type of preterites attested (ao./ipf.)
Nasal-infixed imperfects and their collateral aorists in Homeric Greek

In Herodotus, the correlation between the forms is similar to those in Homer: the percent of grammatically different forms is almost the same, but the set of verbs is different. For example, the preterites from ἄνδανε in Herodotus have different valency: the aorists are used with infinitives: Λακεδαιμονίοισι δὲ ἔαδε δέκεσθαι τούς Μινύας ἔπ’ οίσι θέλουσι αυτοί. ‘The Lacedaemonians were happy to receive the Minyae on the terms which their guests desired’ (4, 145, 18); the imperfects are accompanied exclusively by pronouns ταῦτα, τά, ἕκεινα: οἱ λοιποὶ Πελοποννήσιοι τοῖσι τὰ ἁμείνω ἐάνδανε ‘the rest of the Peloponnesians who chose the better cause’ (9, 19, 3).

The process of setting the forms apart could be related to lexical semantics. In Homer the verb πυνθανομαι means ‘to learn’, in Herodotus it acquires the value ‘to ask’, in Plato that lexical difference forms the base for the distribution between the preterites: the imperfects always mean ‘to ask, inquire’ whereas the aorists have the value ‘to learn’: Μετὰ ταύτην δὴ τὴν ἀπόκρισιν ἐγὼ προθυμούμενος σαφῶς εἰδέναι ὅτι λέγοι, ἐπυνθανόμην αὐτοῦ τοὺς ἁγαθοὺς πότερον χρήσιμους ἢ ἁχρήστους εἶναι ὑπολαμβάνοι. ‘Well, after this answer I was eager to know clearly what he meant, so I inquired of him whether he conceived of good men as useful or useless.’ (Amatores, 136b 4); Οὐδὲ τὰ περὶ τῆς δίκης ἄρα ἐπύθεσθε ὃν τρόπον ἐγένετο; ‘Did you not even hear about the trial and how it was conducted?’ (Phaed. 58a, 1).

The initial set of pairs attested in Homeric Greek has significantly depleted throughout history, which is especially remarkable for Apollonius of Rhodes. On the one hand, he tends to use the Homeric formulas and lexemes, on the other hand, he deals with the preterital pairs differently: in the ‘Argonautica’ 11 verbs out of 20 have only one preterite attested (9 imperfects and 2 aorists are lost): ἄνυμι, καμνω, κλίνω, κρινω, κνεω, ὄμνυμι, πηγνυμι, πιλναμι, σκιδναμι have no imperfects, no aorists are attested for ἀπειλεω and δυναμι.

Conclusion

Nasal infixed presents, like all other presents, demonstrate in the past tense aspectual opposition with the aorists. However, a significant number of the imperfects with the infix does happen to be applied “pro perfective”.

Cases of functional equivalence are inevitable, especially for frequently attested verbs, but the competition between the perfective
forms is in most cases avoided by different means: distribution of the uses, temporal reference and lexical semantics and, later, – by eliminating one of the preterites (usually the nasal imperfect is the one that is lost).

Keeping only one telic preterite along with the functional distribution between the stems point to a tendency of the paradigm leveling over the time.

The higher competition of the preterites in Homeric poems illustrates closer interrelation of Aktionsart and aspect in the Greek verbal paradigm of the earlier periods.

References

Nasal-infixed imperfects and their collateral aorists in Homeric Greek


S. I. Dmitrieva. Nasal-infixed presents and their collateral aorists in Homeric Greek: a diachronic approach

The paper is focused on the verbs with the old nasal present stems that have both aoristic forms and nasal imperfects attested in Homer. All contexts were examined in terms of lexical and grammatical semantics, pragmatical features and distribution of usages. The study investigates the extent to which the nasal imperfects compete with the corresponding aorists and outlines the patterns of correlation between the preterites. The Homeric data is compared to the attestations in the works of Herodotus, Plato and Apollonius of Rhodes. It is observed that the competition between the forms tends to lower over time and the verbal paradigm is leveled by employing only one type of telic preterite.

Key words: aspect, Aktionstart, nasal infix, telicité, imperfect, aorist, perfective.