GREEK GRAMMAR II
2nd Aorist Active & Middle Indicative Tense

I. 2nd Aorist Active Indicative

A. Basics: The aorist is used for past time and portrays perfective aspect (portraying the action as a bounded whole, or in summary fashion without reference to the way it unfolds in time). Mounce describes the semantics of the aorist as "undefined" aspect. The "stem" that is used for the 2nd Aorist is the Aorist Active stem. For the 2nd Aorist Active Indic., the subject is the agent of the verbal action: "he ate," "they killed."

B. The components of the form:

Augment: Since the 2nd Aorist is a past-time tense, it is a "secondary" tense and will use an augment at the beginning of the verb form. If the verb begins with a consonant, then prefix ἐ–; if the verb begins with a vowel, then lengthen the initial vowel.

Stem: The Greek 2nd Aorist tense uses the **Aorist Active Stem**.

Tense formative: **none** is used!

Connecting/Thematic Vowel: o/ε

Personal Endings: **Secondary Active Personal Endings**

$$ \overset{\Uparrow}{\underset{\text{Augment}}{\text{ἔ}}}-\overset{\Uparrow}{\underset{\substack{\text{Aorist Active}\\\text{Stem}}}{\text{βαλ}}} - \overset{\Uparrow}{\underset{\substack{\text{Conn.}\\\text{Vowel}}}{\text{ε}}} - \overset{\Uparrow}{\underset{\substack{\text{Sec. Act.}\\\text{Pers. Endings}}}{\text{ς}}} $$

(from the verb βάλλω, to throw; here, the 2nd Aor A 2s form means 'you threw'.)

Secondary Active Personal Endings:

	Augment + Aorist Act Stem	Connecting (Thematic) Vowel	*Real* Endings	*Modified* Endings (Mounce)	*Resultant* Endings (with thematic vowel o/ε)
1s	ἐβαλ	ο	μ	ν	ον
2s	ἐβαλ	ε	ς	ς	ες
3s	ἐβαλ	ε	τ	–	ε
1p	ἐβαλ	ο	μεν	μεν	ομεν
2p	ἐβαλ	ε	τε	τε	ετε
3p	ἐβαλ	ο	ντ	ν	ον

1s: ἐβαλ – ο – μ : Since the only consonants that can stand at the end of a word are ν,σ,ρ,[1] the final μ changes to ν: (ἔβαλον).

2s: ἐβαλ – ε – ς : No problems, no changes (ἔβαλες).

3s: ἐβαλ – ε – τ : A final τ cannot stand at the end of a word and will drop (ἔβαλε/ἔβαλεν).

1p: ἐβαλ – ο – μεν : No problems, no changes (ἐβάλομεν).

2p: ἐβαλ – ε – τε : No problems, no changes (ἐβάλετε).

3p: ἐβαλ – ο – ντ : A final τ cannot stand at the end of a word and will drop: (ἔβαλον).

Note, then, that the 1s and 3p forms will be identical, but for different reasons!

I will not require you to memorize the paradigm for the 2nd Aorist Act Indic; but you must understand how it's formed so that you can identify, parse, and understand the meaning of these forms when you see them. As you can see from above, being a secondary active tense, the 2nd Aorist is in *every way* identical to the Imperfect, *except for the choice of the STEM.* The Imperfect always uses the "present stem" and the 2nd Aorist always uses the "aorist stem"; whenever a verb has a 2nd Aorist, its aorist stem will always differ from its present stem so that you can tell the difference between the verb's Impf and 2nd Aor tense forms. See below:

Impf A I of βαλλω	English gloss	2nd Aor A I of βαλλω	English gloss
ἔβαλλον	I was throwing	ἔβαλον	I threw
ἔβαλλες	you were throwing	ἔβαλες	you threw
ἔβαλλε(ν)	he/she/it was throwing	ἔβαλε(ν)	he/she/it threw
ἐβάλλομεν	we were throwing	ἐβάλομεν	we threw

---

[1]Let's have some fun with this. Think of the word "sinner." It contains everything that can stand at the end of a real Greek word: the consonants *s*, *n*, and *r*, and *vowels*. Just remember that "sinners" have to go the back of the line.

ἐβάλλετε	you were throwing	ἐβάλετε	you threw
ἔβαλλον	they were throwing	ἔβαλον	they threw

II. 2ⁿᵈ Aorist Middle Indicative

      A. The aorist is used for past time and portrays perfective aspect (portraying the action as a bounded whole, or in summary fashion without reference to the way it unfolds in time). Mounce describes the semantics of the aorist as "undefined" aspect. The "stem" that is used for the 2ⁿᵈ Aorist Middle is the same one you've already seen for the Aorist Active Ind: the Aorist Act stem. We will learn the Aorist Passive forms later (since they use a different stem than the Aorist Act and Middle forms). For now, any 2ⁿᵈ Aorist Middle forms that you learn will be Middle-only forms (what Mounce calls deponent), so you'll render them with an active voice sense with a simple past: ἐγενόμην 2ⁿᵈAorMid(Dep)I,1s of γίνομαι, "I became"

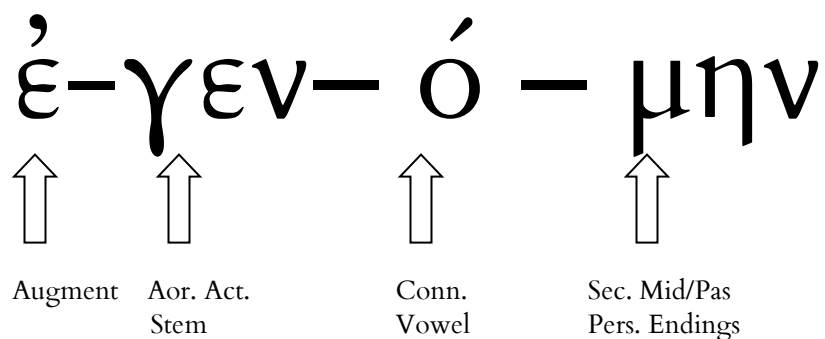   B. The components of the form:

<u>Augment</u>: Since the 2ⁿᵈ Aorist is a past-time tense, it is a "secondary" tense and will use an augment at the beginning of the verb form. If the verb begins with a consonant, then prefix ἐ-; if the verb begins with a vowel, then lengthen the initial vowel.

<u>Stem</u>: The Greek 2ⁿᵈ Aorist Middle tense uses the **Aorist Active Stem**.

<u>Tense formative</u>: **none** is used!

<u>Connecting/Thematic Vowel</u>: o/ε

<u>Personal Endings</u>: **Secondary Middle/Passive Personal Endings**

$$\overset{\text{'}}{\epsilon} - \gamma\epsilon\nu - \overset{\text{'}}{o} - \mu\eta\nu$$

⇧   ⇧   ⇧   ⇧

Augment   Aor. Act.   Conn.   Sec. Mid/Pas
            Stem   Vowel   Pers. Endings

Secondary Middle–Passive Personal Endings:

	Augment + Aorist Act Stem	Connecting (Thematic) Vowel	*Real* Endings	*Resultant* Endings (with thematic vowel o/ε)
1s	ἐγεν	ο	μην	ομην
2s	ἐγεν	ε	σο	ου
3s	ἐγεν	ε	το	ετο
1p	ἐγεν	ο	μεθα	ομεθα
2p	ἐγεν	ε	σθε	εσθε
3p	ἐγεν	ο	ντο	οντο

1s: ἐγεν – ο – μην : No problems, no changes: (ἐγενόμην).

2s: ἐγεν – ε – σο : Intervocalic σ drops, leaving εο (ἐγεν – ε – ο). The combination of εο contracts to ου: (ἐγένου).

3s: ἐγεν – ε – το : No problems, no changes: (ἐγένετο).

1p: ἐγεν – ο – μεθα : No problems, no changes: (ἐγενόμεθα).

2p: ἐγεν – ε – σθε : No problems, no changes: (ἐγένεσθε).

3p: ἐγεν – ο – ντο : No problems, no changes: (ἐγένοντο).

Compare the difference in forms:

Impf M I of γίνομαι	English gloss	2nd Aor M I of γίνομαι	English gloss
ἐγινόμην	I was becoming	ἐγενόμην	I became
ἐγίνου	you were becoming	ἐγένου	you became
ἐγίνετο	he/she/it was becoming	ἐγένετο	he/she/it became
ἐγινόμεθα	we were becoming	ἐγενόμεθα	we became
ἐγίνεσθε	you were becoming	ἐγένεσθε	you became
ἐγίνοντο	they were becoming	ἐγένοντο	they became