

**ELEMENTS OF GREEK
ACCENTUATION:
MEMBER OF THE
UNIVERSITY OF OXFORD**

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Elements of Greek Accentuation: Member of the University of Oxford by Various

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**ELEMENTS OF GREEK
ACCENTUATION:
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UNIVERSITY OF OXFORD**

Σ. S. H. 1831

ELEMENTS
OF
GREEK ACCENTUATION.

TRANSLATED FROM THE GERMAN

OF

DR. KARL GOETTLING,

BY A

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GREEK ACCENTUATION.

OF THE NATURE OF ACCENT.

§. 1.

LANGUAGE consists of words, a word of syllables, a syllable of two things: 1. the *idea* of that which is to be designated (form), 2. the *tone* or *sound* of the voice, with which the idea is to be made audible to the ear (matter). Sound is produced by motion, which can be considered in a three-fold relation, 1. in *strength* or *weakness*, 2. *height* or *depth*, 3. *greater* or *less* duration. Sound is dependent upon and subordinate to idea. But in polysyllabic words ideas are of two kinds, either *principal* or *subordinate*; e. g. $\lambda\epsilon\gamma\omega$ (I speak). The syllable $\lambda\epsilon\gamma$ indicates the idea of speaking, the syllable ω is a mere designation of the person, &c.; therefore $\lambda\epsilon\gamma$ is the principal and ω the subordinate idea. Both ought to be distinguished by the sound according to their degree of internal worth. But this can only be effected by one or more of the three accidents of sound, by strength, height, or duration. Height and depth, however, in a rhetorical proposition, constitute its melody. The duration of syllables is independent of their relative worth; for no one e. g. has yet explained the internal reason why a syllable in Greek is long by nature. The duration is determined by the *quantity*. To distinguish the principal above the subordinate idea, therefore, nothing remains but the intension of the voice. Hence in every *independent* or *primitive* language the principal idea of each word is distinguished by an intension of the voice, by a strengthening or invigoration of the sound. This is called the accent: consequently in $\lambda\epsilon\gamma\omega$ the principal idea $\lambda\epsilon\gamma$ must be

distinguished above the subordinate idea *ω* by the accent. Every intension of the voice, however, is involuntarily combined with an elevation of the tone. In pronouncing the accent, therefore, the voice must at the same time be elevated. This coincides with the express precept of Aristophanes of Byzantium in *Arcad.* p. 187. *τοὺς τόνοις τοῖς τόνους τῆς μουσικῆς ἰσikasiv.* That intension, however, is the main point, is shewn by the passage in Phavorin. v. ἀπήχουσι from the old Grammarians, p. 237.

§. 2.

A strengthening and elevation of tone in certain syllables containing the principal idea of a word, cannot be conceived without the existence of a less strong and deeper tone in reference to the other syllables, which designate merely subordinate ideas. Strength and weakness, height and depth, are simply relative terms: hence we take a certain fundamental tone of discourse, which depends upon the organs of the individual persons. This common tone the speaker strengthens and elevates when the principal idea of the word requires it. The fundamental tone of discourse is the *προσῳδία βαρεία* (*accentus gravis*); the strengthening and elevation of it *προσῳδία ὀξεῖα*, called also *κρίσιος τόνοσ* (*accentus acutus*). As the written characters of European nations incline from the top towards the right side of the writer, the fundamental tone, *accentus gravis*, is designated by a straight stroke (`) inclining to the left of the writer, and the strengthened or elevated tone, *accentus acutus*, as the natural opposite, by a straight stroke (´) inclining to the right of the writer. But it is evident that the actual designation of all syllables by the proper accent would be superfluous. If the syllable which receives the strengthened accent be ascertained, we know that all the rest must have the weaker or fundamental tone. Consequently it would be superfluous to write *Θεόδωφοσ*, *Θεόδωφοσ* being sufficient.

Note.—The signs of the accent (` ´, &c.) were invented or first used by the Grammarian Aristophanes of Byzantium, about 200 years before Christ; conf. Arcadius (properly Herodianus) *Περὶ τόνων* p. 186. Vilcōis. *Prolegom. ad Schol. Venet.* p. XI. But the accent itself is as old as the language. Hence

the signs by which Aristophanes preserved the old living accent are of the highest importance. After him the Grammarian Ælius Herodianus chiefly cultivated the doctrine of the accent (about 200 years after Christ, under the Emperor Marcus Antoninus, to whom he dedicated his *προσφῆδία καθολική*), and has been followed by all subsequent Grammarians. To us, therefore, the extract of Arcadius from Herodian's *καθολική*, combined with an extract of Porphyry from the same (V. Villoison *Anecd. Gr.* II. p. 103. *Conf. præf. ad Theodos. Gramm.* p. XV.), is of the greatest consequence as historical material for a doctrine of accents. But for such a doctrine, founded upon principles, nothing considerable is afforded by any of the Greek Grammarians. Hence we owe many rules to Herodian, which merely pertain to it without being given by the nature of the thing; among these probably may be classed a great many distinctions which the accent indicates in the signification of individual words.

§. 3.

FIRST PRINCIPAL LAW.—*In the Greek language only one of the three last syllables of a word is capable of the strengthened tone—accentus acutus, προσφῆδία ὀξεῖα.*

Primitive languages of intellectual nations, like the Greeks, are formed from roots, or, as they are more properly termed, primitive words. These are monosyllabic. But in the simple idea which they designated they were capable of nearer definition. Such definitions could be attached locally either to the beginning or end of the word, or to both at the same time. A word therefore which had its principal idea in the middle, and the definition of subordinate ideas at the beginning and end, would be one formed from its root with the utmost possible perfection. In the Greek language, when such a word becomes longer than trisyllabic by composition with new ideas, the old law remains in reference to the accent. If this were to recede beyond the third syllable the whole word would to the hearing be necessarily divided into two or more. Hence *Εὐώνημος*, *Ἀλιμούσιος*. Add, moreover, that an equilibrium must exist between the accented syllable and the unaccented ones which follow. This equilibrium