

## ETYMOLOGICAL MUSINGS

### 1. ὄσιος

The entry ὄσιος in *LSJ* is preceded by substantivized ὄσια, Ion. ὄση 'divine law', 'service, worship, rites, offerings, etc., owed to gods', and the verb ὀσιεύω = ὀσιόω 'make ὄσιος'. The word ὄσιος itself is described as contrasting with two other adjectives, δίκαιος and ἱερός. The first contrast concerns the relation with divine law (ὄσιος) as against human law (δίκαιος), the second contrast is one of 'profane' (human level, ὄσιος) as against 'sacred' (divine level, ἱερός). In Pape's dictionary, we find: "**ὄσιος** (wird von den Alten auf Ζεύς, Διός, dor. Σιός, zurückgeführt, schwerlich richtig), durch göttliches Gesetz bestimmt, erlaubt, dem Naturgesetz entsprechend; bes. ὄσια, ion. ὄση, substantivisch, wobei man βουλή, δίκη zu ergänzen pflegt, das göttliche, natürliche Recht, ...".<sup>1</sup> Essentially, then, and primarily, ὄσιος characterizes righteous human behaviour in respect of the gods and fellow human beings.

Derivation from Ζεύς, "schwerlich richtig", is in line with antique practice, beautifully described in Plato's *Cratylus*. For serious etymological attempts, we had rather turn to modern etymological dictionaries of Greek.

Hofmann:<sup>2</sup> "wohl Ableitung von \*sotos seiend, wirklich (Wz. \*es- sein, s. εἰμί)", Frisk:<sup>3</sup> "Keine überzeugende Etymologie. Seit Brugmann Grundr.<sup>2</sup> II: 1, 401 gewöhnlich als ιο-Ableitung eines Ptzs. \*s-o-to- (von es- 'sein') erklärt neben angeblichem \*s-e-to- in ἐτά: ἄληθῆ (s. ἐτάζω). Als unwahrscheinlichere Alternative erwägt B. Umbildung eines \*ἄτιος = aind. *satyá-* 'wahr' (aus idg. \*sṃt-ijō-) nach \*ὄντ-. ..." The main reason to *reject* this line of derivation, \*es- → \*sotos → \*sot-ios, is the apparent neglect of the root-initial laryngeal of Indo-European \*h<sub>1</sub>es- 'be' in the Greek word. The same holds good for Brugmann's alternative intermediate form \*ἄτιος; actually, we have feminine participle forms like Arcadian ἕασ(σ)α, Mycenaean *a-pe-a-sa* nom. pl. /ap-eha(s)sai/, with initial *e-* reflecting the inherited laryngeal. The absence of ἐ- in Attic ὄντ-ος, -ι, -α, etc. (with ὄντ- for \*ὀντ- < ἐοντ-), neuter ὄν, is due to innerdialectal (analogical)

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<sup>1</sup> W. Pape, *Griechisch-Deutsches Handwörterbuch* II (Braunschweig 21888) 394–395.

<sup>2</sup> J. B. Hofmann, *Etymologisches Wörterbuch des Griechischen* (Munich 1950) 241.

<sup>3</sup> H. Frisk, *Griechisches etymologisches Wörterbuch* II (Heidelberg 1972) 435.

development. Moreover, the suggested semantic link between ἔτεός (etc.) and ὄσιος is perhaps not all that straightforward.

Chantraine:<sup>4</sup> “Pas d’étymologie.” Chantraine follows Frisk’s rejection of Brugmann’s etymology; but in the *Supplément*, Charles de Lamberterie proposes another root for ὄσιος + ἑτάζω, ἔτεός, ἔτυμος: \*set- ‘être stable, établi’,<sup>5</sup> argued in Pinault.<sup>6</sup> For the ἐτ- forms, psilosis must then be assumed. This ‘new’ root \*set- certainly opens up new perspectives. However, the traditional etymology of Skt. *satyá-*, viz. (with laryngeal) \**h<sub>1</sub>sn̥t-yó-*, still seems to me the most attractive one, rather than the hypothetical *popular* etymology by which “*satyá-* < \**sotyó-*” is believed by the Old Indic language users to belong with *sa(n)t-* ‘being’. For \*‘being (the case)’ → ‘true’, cf. Swedish and Norwegian *sann*, Danish *sand* ‘true’, which derive from the IE participle of \**h<sub>1</sub>es-* ‘be’ – such a parallel should not be ignored.

Beekes:<sup>7</sup> “There is no convincing etymology.” Connection with the participle of \**h<sub>1</sub>es-* ‘be’ is duly rejected. Pinault’s \*set- is mentioned, but apparently without much conviction.

Unimpeded by the etymological dictionaries, one might think that ὄσιος characterizes a person who knows τὸ ὄσον, the proper measure, the limits and limitations of a human being. Thus, a ὄσιος person contrasts with one fallen victim to ὕβρις. The meaning of ὄσιος can then have broadened to apply to ‘things’, e. g. behaviour, this semantic development culminating in ‘τὸ ὄσιον’.

A new and daring etymology, as may have become clear, could be: ὄσιος ← (τὸ) ὄσον. This etymology implies that ὄσιος, with its single -σ-, is of Attic-Ionic provenance (more likely than Arcadian, for instance), which is not contradicted by its attestations.

## 2. Hospitality

The IE root \**g<sup>h</sup>es-* lies at the basis of \**g<sup>h</sup>es-(ǵ)r*, Greek nom. sing. χεῖρ ‘hand’ (for \**χέωρ*, \**χέωρ*, or \**χέωρ*, with εἰ after gen. χεῖρός < \**g<sup>h</sup>esr-os*, etc.), and \**g<sup>h</sup>es-to-s* or \**g<sup>h</sup>os-to-s*, Sanskrit *hastah* ‘hand’. The meaning of \**g<sup>h</sup>es-* may well be ‘eat’,<sup>8</sup> the hand being the instrument par excellence

<sup>4</sup> P. Chantraine, *Dictionnaire étymologique de la langue grecque. Histoire des mots*. Avec un *Supplément* sous la direction de: A. Blanc, Ch. de Lamberterie, J.-L. Perpillou (Paris 1999) 832.

<sup>5</sup> Chantraine 1423.

<sup>6</sup> G.-J. Pinault, *Langue, style et structure dans le monde indien* (Paris 1996) 43 f.

<sup>7</sup> R. S. P. Beekes, *Etymological Dictionary of Greek* (Leiden – Boston 2010) 1118.

<sup>8</sup> H. Rix, M. J. Kümmel (eds.), *Lexicon der indogermanischen Verben. Die Wurzeln und ihre Primärstambildungen* (Wiesbaden 2001) 198 “?1. \**g<sup>(w)h</sup>es-* ‘essen, fressen, verzehren’.”

for putting food in one's mouth without the help of a spoon or a fork. The derivation of the word for 'hand' from the root *\*g<sup>h</sup>es-* 'eat' is not found in the etymological dictionaries of Frisk, Chantraine, or Beekes. Following this line of thought, a *\*g<sup>h</sup>os-ti-s* is an 'eater', a stranger to whom hospitality is shown in a fundamental way, that is, by offering him food. In Dutch, the word *eter* 'eater' may be used to mean *gast* 'guest' (one who is invited to dinner). Unfortunately for 'eaters' in Rome, as strangers they became enemies (*hostes*); but the 'guest-lord', *\*hosti-pot(i)-s* > *hospes*, remained a host. In Germanic regions, a *\*gast-* (English *guest*, German *Gast*, etc.) is still a visitor welcome to a meal (or at least a cup of tea and a cookie).

I wonder whether, with two extensions, the Greek word ξέν(ε)ος may be connected, too: *\*g<sup>h</sup>s-en-u(o)-*; this idea is not new, however, but neither has it been embraced wholeheartedly so far. The problem is how to explain the extensions.

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Автор предлагает новую этимологию греч. ἕστος и слов, родственных лат. hospes.