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# Contents

Preface .....	vii
Miyu AKAO	
Internal and External Factors behind the Development of the Tocharian Secondary Cases .....	1
Milena ANFOSSO	
The Phrygians from Βρύγες to Φρύγες: Herodotus 7.73, or the Linguistic Problems of a Migration .....	17
Roberto BATISTI	
On Greek Αἰθίοψ ‘Ethiopian’ and Αἴσωπος ‘Aesop’ from a PIE Perspective .....	37
James CLACKSON	
The Latin and Oscan Imperfect Subjunctive in *-sē- .....	55
John CLAYTON	
Rhinoglottophilia in Avestan: *h > [h̃] and Its Orthographic and Phonological Consequences .....	79
Ashwini DEO	
Copular Contrasts in Indo-Aryan Diachrony .....	95
Petra M. GOEDEGEBUURE	
The Fat and the Furious: *w(o)rġ- ‘fat, furious, strong’ and Derivatives in Hittite and Luwian .....	121
Ian HOLLENBAUGH	
Inceptives in Ancient Greek .....	139
Ronald I. KIM	
PIE Verbal Roots of the Shape *C(C)eH- in Old Armenian .....	161
Jared S. KLEIN	
Old Church Slavic <i>obače</i> and <i>tŭk(ŭ)mo</i> .....	181
Laura MASSETTI	
“Hermes and Hestia” Revisited: Hermes ἀκάκητα and the Funerary Fire .....	197
Thomas MOTTER	
Hittite Correlative Resumption as Discourse Anaphora .....	215

Domenico Giuseppe MUSCIANISI	
Zeus Δέκτηρος ‘Benevolent, Welcoming’ from Thera and Proto-Indo-European ‘Right’ .....	229
Anthony D. YATES	
The Phonology and Morphology of Anatolian <i>*-mon-</i> stems .....	245
List of Contributors .....	265
Index Verborum .....	269

# Zeus Δέκτηρος ‘Benevolent, Welcoming’ from Thera and Proto-Indo-European ‘Right’\*

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This article aims at a new analysis and interpretation of Δεκτηρος (hapax legomenon) in Thera inscription *IG XII.3-Suppl. 358*, taking into account the available evidence from religious onomastics, the epigraphy and archaeology of Thera, and Greek and Indo-European linguistics and phraseology. It will be argued that the inscription reveals an epithet of Zeus adored as benevolent and welcoming, possibly connected to seafarers, foreigners, and suppliants. Linguistically, the form shows a *\*-tero-*formation based on a stem belonging to the Proto-Indo-European word for ‘right’. The stems for ‘right’ (PIE *\*deks(i)-*) are explained within the framework of PIE *s*-stems (PIE *\*deks-os*) and proterodynamic and static paradigms. The semantics of benevolence and hospitality points back to PIE *\*dek-* ‘to receive’ and ‘right’ both through linguistics and through the anthropology of right-left symbolism. Even Greek poetry reveals some phraseological matches between benevolence and hospitality in the purview of Zeus and his cult, not only in literature, but also attested in Aegean religious practice.

## 1. Introduction: topography and archaeological context

Ancient Thera’s ruins are located on the promontory of Mesa Vouno in the south-east of the present-day island of Santorini in the southern Aegean Sea. The town planning of Ancient Thera does not show a difference between the acropolis and the town, so that in modern scholarship the top of the promontory of Mesa Vouno is traditionally named the Agora of the Gods, where the sacred activities took place just like the secular ones (*Thera I*:185–308, Sperling 1974, and *Thera V*:17–46).

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\* This research originated during a 2019–20 Fellowship at Harvard University’s Center for Hellenic Studies. Prior to the 2019 UCLA Indo-European Conference, earlier versions were presented at the University of Cambridge (2016) and at Leiden University (2019); on all of these occasions, I benefited from the fruitful discussions and precious comments, criticisms, and suggestions of the audiences. Alex Roy (UCLA) was kind enough to polish my English. The responsibility for the paper is mine alone.

From the time of the archaic age the main building of the Agora of the Gods consisted of the Karneion, the temple of Apollo Karneios, whose cult was connected to the growth of youths and their military training.<sup>1</sup> In fact, the community rites of passage were celebrated in the main square in front of the Karneion. The second building from the archaic period is the Gymnasion of the Ephebes that occupies the eastern side of the square. In the western side there is the last archaic building, a small enclosed area, where there can be read many archaic graffiti consisting of anthroponyms and theonyms, edited in *IG XII.3* 350–63 and reviewed by autopsy by Inglese (2008:nos.1–14).

The specific function of the wall enclosure is still unclear. Hiller von Gaertringen (1937:54–5) hypothesized that the area was the first temple of Apollo; however, he more reasonably thought in *IG XII.3* (p.91) that the wall enclosure functioned as an altar or a temple treasure chamber. Guarducci (1967:350) highlighted the most copious presence of the name of Zeus among the inscriptions and described the enclosed area as an ancient sanctuary of Zeus.

## 2. Who's who in the wall enclosure

There are eighteen archaic inscriptions engraved on the wall enclosure, dated from the late 8th to the 6th century BCE. All of them present the traditional Thera alphabet, close to that in Crete and southern Doric islands.

Some of the dedications are personal names (henceforth PN<sup>m</sup> for men and PN<sup>f</sup> for women).<sup>2</sup> Thus, some godheads' names (henceforth GN<sup>m</sup> for gods and GN<sup>f</sup> for goddesses) can be recognized, such as Zeus, Apollo, Chiron (doubtfully) and the Dioskouroi. Finally, connected to the divine names there are some cultic invocations as divine epithets (henceforth DE). All of them are hapax legomena. There is a dedication to Βορραῖος, which I consider an epithet of Zeus as the 'favorable north wind', and one to Λοχαία Δᾶμία, which I argue are epithets of Artemis 'who ambushes' and 'who tames/kills' the wild beasts (Muscianisi 2017a:55–6, 59–60, 86–7).

Table 1 shows the inscriptions in the wall enclosure. Numeration follows *IG XII.3* 350–63 and Inglese 2008:nos.1–14, texts and dates follow Inglese's review by autopsy; the interpretations are mine:

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- 1 Thera was a Spartan colony since probably the 9th c. BCE (Hiller von Gaertringen 1940:70). Cults both at Sparta and Thera are generally conservative, and they show much the same features. For Apollo Karneios, see Hiller von Gaertringen 1897:22–4 and Pettersson 1992:67.
  - 2 The personal names are analyzed and discussed with partially different considerations and conclusions in Inglese 2008:99–122, Inglese 2009, and Muscianisi 2017a:126–7.

Table 1

	Text	Date	Interpretation
350 ~ 1a	Ζευς το ρα-	early 7th c. BCE	GN <sup>m</sup> :: Zeus
350 ~ 1b	Πηδῶξ	early 7th c. BCE	PN <sup>m</sup> (Muscianisi 2017a:127)
350 ~ 1c	Ευελθῶν	6th c. BCE	PN <sup>m</sup> (Muscianisi 2017a:127)
350 ~ 1d	Φῶρης	mid 7th c. BCE	PN <sup>m</sup> (Muscianisi 2017a:126–7)
350 ~ 1e	[Αγ]αθος	6th c. BCE	PN <sup>m</sup> (Muscianisi 2017a:127)
351 ~ 2	Ζευς	end 8th–early 7th c. BCE	GN <sup>m</sup> :: Zeus
352 ~ 3	Ζευ[ς]	archaic	GN <sup>m</sup> :: Zeus
353 ~ 4	Ζευ[ς]	end 8th–early 7th c. BCE	GN <sup>m</sup> :: Zeus
354 ~ 5	Φῶρῆς	end 8th–early 7th c. BCE	PN <sup>m</sup> (Muscianisi 2017a:126–7)
355 ~ 6	Φῶρῆς	end 8th–early 7th c. BCE	PN <sup>m</sup> (Muscianisi 2017a:126–7)
356 ~ 7	Ἀπολῶν	early 7th c. BCE	GN <sup>m</sup> :: Apollo
357 ~ 8	Βορρατος	first half 7th c. BCE	DE :: Zeus (Muscianisi 2017a: 55–6)
358 ~ 9	Δεφτερος	end 7th–early 6th c. BCE	DE :: Zeus (Muscianisi 2017a: 61–3)
359 ~ 10	Διος[ρ]οροι	end 8th–early 7th c. BCE	GN <sup>m</sup> :: Zeus’ twins
360 ~ 11	Κηρῶν	archaic	GN <sup>m</sup> ? :: Chiron?
361 ~ 12	Λοκ(η)αια Δαμια	6th c. BCE	DE :: Artemis (Muscianisi 2017a:59–60, 86–7)
362 ~ 13	(-)δας	archaic	PN <sup>m</sup> ?
363 ~ 14	Πολ(ι[ε]υς)	archaic	PN <sup>m</sup> ?

### 2.1. IG XII.3-Suppl. 358 ~ Inglese 2008:no.9 Δεφτερος

There is, finally, a dedication attesting the hapax legomenon Δεφτερος that until recently has been totally unknown. In 1898 Hiller von Gaertringen read Δεύτερος (IG XII.3 358); in the 1904 revision he admitted the presence of qoppa instead of hupsilon, but he still considered the form a mistake, making the conjecture Δε[ύ]τερος (IG XII.3-Suppl. 358). The latter reading is the one still generally accepted, despite Inglese’s review by autopsy. In her 2008 revision of all the inscriptions of the Agora of the Gods, Inglese suggested an interpretation of the form as Δεφτῆρος = Δεκτῆρος, genitive of Δεκτήρ, probably an epithet or hypostasis of Hades as the ‘Receiver’ on the basis of Hsch. δ 578 δεκτῆρες· ὑποδοχεῖς (Inglese 2008:156).

There is no basis for supposing either Hades Δεκτήρ or his hypostatic deity Δεκτήρ ‘the Receiver’ (Dobias-Lalou 2011:455), especially because there are no attested cults of Hades, except in Elis (Farnell 1907:281). In fact, no epithet with the same meaning is attested for Hades in either epigraphic or literary Greek texts.

Nevertheless, according to what I have observed (Muscianisi 2017b:783), dedications in Thera are mostly made with the nominative either of the recipient or the dedicatee. If dedications present both the recipient and the dedicatee, the first is with the nominative, while the second appears with the genitive. The only exception in archaic Thera is *IG XII.3 551* ~ Inglese 2008:no.44 *Επιλυρ[οc] | Λυκειῶι τε(ι)δε* (mid-7th–early 6th c. BCE), which represents the oldest sample of a dedication in the dative (Inglese 2008:260 and Muscianisi 2017a:88). Thus, even though the inscription *IG XII.3-Suppl. 358* ~ Inglese 2008:no.9 might represent the name of the recipient or the offerer, the archaic wall enclosure inscriptions cannot present isolated dedications in the genitive case: the form *Δεστεροc* must be nominative.

## 2.2. ϧ (*qoppa*) versus κ (*kappa*)?

In the form *Δεστεροc* the spelling ⟨ρτε⟩ is not what scholars expect (Méndez Dosuna 1993:97–107). The general orthographic tendency shows the letter ϧ(h) as a graphic variant of the velars κ and χ before back vowels (ο ω υ), including interposed liquids (λ ρ), sibilant (σ) to make ξ, or dentals (τ θ).

I intend here to develop a statement by Méndez Dosuna (1993:111), who has said that kappa and qoppa were two allographs for the phoneme /k/ after the adoption of Phoenician *kāp̄* /k/ and *qōp̄* /q/—letters representing a phonemic distinction in Semitic languages, but not Greek.

Except for a single footnote, Méndez Dosuna (1993:101 n.6) has overlooked the data for non-orthographic environments for qoppa (i.e., instances not appearing before back vowels) in Greek epigraphy. As far as I could search in the main epigraphic corpora, I have found the following exceptions to the general tendency to occur before back vowels. The data belong to the archaic period and to onomastics: (1) *Qοραρc* = *Κόραξ* (PN<sup>m</sup>) Thera, 7th c. BCE, *IG XII.3 545* ~ Inglese 2008:no.38; (2) *Qρατητοc* = *Κράτητοc* (PN<sup>m</sup>) Rhodes, 550–500 BCE, *SEG 26:868*; (3) *Αρανθρōποc* = *Ακάνθρωποc* (PN<sup>m</sup>) Kroton (Calabria), early 5th c. BCE, *IGASMG 4.43*; (4) *Ιλοξινō* = *Ίλξιίνου* (PN<sup>m</sup>) Krannon (Thessaly), ca. 450–400 BCE, McDevitt 1970:no.318; (5) *Qλιδα* = *Κλιδā* (PN<sup>m</sup>) Thebes (Boeotia), archaic period, *IG VIII 4124*; (6) *Bōqāc* = *Βώκāc* (PN<sup>m</sup>) Tanagra (Boeotia), archaic period, *IG VII 620*; (7) *TOQCI*: no interpretation (PN?) Sicily, archaic period, *SEG 52:931*. To these examples (8) *Δεστεροc* = *Δέκτηροc* must be added.

There is neither a valid epigraphic nor a linguistic (dialectal) argument to explain the distribution of these so-called “exceptions” to the normal distribution of qoppa. In fact, these data belong to different dialectal areas (Insular Doric,

Thessalian, Boeotian, Achaean), and they appear in nearly all the epichoric alphabets. It might be deduced that both letters ρ (qoppa) and κ (kappa) are simply uneconomic allographs for the phoneme /k/ after the adoption of the Tyrian Phoenician alphabet. In fact, qoppa undergoes a progressive loss during the classical age.

### 3. Δέκ-τερος (\**dék-tero-*) ‘the Receiver’

Given the fact that ρ (qoppa) is an allograph of κ/χ and can also occur in contexts without back vowels, the reading Δέκτηρος (nom.) must be considered the most reasonable interpretation of the form Δεσπτερος. This does not belong to Greek anthroponymy or to divine proper names as they are known from our sources. Thus an interpretation as a divine epithet is preferred, given the context of the wall enclosure.

What comes to mind initially is a \*-tero- formation to the PIE root \**dék-* ‘to receive, hold, keep’. In fact, the Proto-Indo-European root attests many reflexes of root formations in verbal morphology, such as 3SG.AOR.IND.MID Myc. *de-ko-to /dektol* = δέκτο, ἔδεκτο (Hom.), 3SG.AOR.IND.ACT Arm. *etes* ‘to see’ (\**h<sub>1</sub>ie-dék-t*); 2SG.AOR.IMPV.MID δέξο (Hom.) < \**dék-so*; 3PL.PRES.IND.MID-PSV δέχεται (Hom.) ← \**dék-ntoi*, 1SG.IMPV.IND.MID-PSV ἐδέγμην (Hom.), PRES.INF.MID-PSV δέχθαι (Hom.) < \**dék-st<sup>h</sup>ai*, 3SG.PRES.IND.ACT Ved. *dāṣṭi* ‘to offer up, honor’; VB.ADJ δεκτέος (A.+), YAv. *dāšta*° ‘(to be) offered up’.<sup>3</sup>

Even in nominal morphology PIE \**dék-* shows in Greek different reflexes of root formations, such as δέκτης ‘receiver, beggar’ (Hom.+), δέκτηρια (Archil. *IEG* 1.331.2) ‘woman who receives’, δέκτωρ (A. *Eu.* 204) ‘responsible, promoter’ (literally ‘who shoulders [the crime]’, see *Schol.vet.* ad loc. ὥστε δέξασθαι τὸν φονέα), δεκτήρ ‘receiver’ (see *IG V.2 274.I.3 δεκτῆρος* [public office in Mantinea, Arcadia, end of 2nd c. BCE–1st c. CE], *Cyranides* 1.7.40 δεκτῆρι γαστέρι θεία = γαία, and Hsch. δ 578 δεκτῆρες: ὑποδοχεῖς). Thus Δέκτηρος might be ‘the one who receives = receiver’, with a root formation like Gk. φέρτερος (Hom.+) ‘brave, excellent’ and Lat. *Ferter* (PN<sup>m</sup>), king of the Aequicoli, both reconstructed as PIE \**b<sup>h</sup>ér-tero-* (cf. García Ramón 2013:113–5).

From a strictly linguistic point of view, this explanation seems the simplest and the most correct; however, it leaves more questions than answers. First, the athematic nominal examples for PIE \**dék-* do not help with the meaning of the epithet

3 For the meaning shift in Indo-Iranian, Greek, and Armenian, see García Ramón 2004:506, Harðarson 1993:65, and Klingenschmitt 1982:228, respectively.



and the identification of the godhead; in fact, they are mainly either poetic words created by the authors (δέκτωρ, δέκτρια) or technical and late words (δεκτήρ).

In particular, δέκτωρ in Aeschylus is used by the chorus to address Apollo as the supporter of Orestes' murder of his own mother (*Eu.* 204 κάπειθ' ὑπέστης αἵματος δέκτωρ νέου "and then you [Apollo] agreed to be responsible for a new blood"). Although Apollo is the main god of Thera and even present in the wall enclosure, he cannot be a candidate for Δέκτηρος. Indeed, Gk. δέκτωρ is not a cultic epithet: there is no real religious intent in the poet. It is just an Aeschylean neologism and a hapax legomenon never used in other authors.

Finally, there are no clues to identify what or whom the Theran deity Δέκτηρος should receive or hold. The epithet Δέκτηρος 'receiver' does not fit phraseologically into any of the Greek godheads known from our sources. The linguistic interpretation Δέκ-τερος < \**dék-tero-* (like Gk. φέρ-τερος 'brave, excellent' and Lat. *Fer-ter* from PIE \**b'ér-tero-*) is formally acceptable: that is why it should not be abandoned. However, for a more accurate interpretation that connects linguistics to the archaeological and religious contexts in Thera, another approach has to be considered.

#### 4. Proto-Indo-European 'Right'

Theran Δέκτηρος and Gk. δεξιτερός 'right (vs. left)'<sup>4</sup> show a formal similarity: both of them present a \*-tero- suffix. The following interpretation is strictly connected with the morphology of PIE 'right', which (besides the \*-tero- formation) mostly attests the suffixes \*-mó- and \*-no-, both to a stem \**déksi-* and a stem \**déks-*. Some Indo-European daughter languages use the words in onomastics, such as for divine

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4 The oxytone accent on δεξιτερός is secondary. Scholars generally explain it through analogy with its regularly oxytone antonym ἀριστερός 'left' (Probert 2006:264, Stüber 2006:70). However, cultural anthropology reveals that polarities are generally created on the basis of the "most commonly accepted," identifying the "exception" as a "non-majority" term (Turner 1968:80–2, Hertz 1960:91), as in the Late Latin folk-etymological interpretation of *sinistra* 'left hand' as *sine dextrā* 'without/non-right hand' (see §4.1 below). Thus it is difficult to imagine that what is less proper and honorable ('left') could have influenced its counterpart ('right'), especially when Greek has many different words for 'left', mostly euphemistic (see Buck 1949:865–7). Although a more in-depth study is called for, I believe that the original \*δεξιτερος (cf. the crux \*δεξιότερον· δεξιόν at Hsch. δ 640, which could point to the original proparoxytone \*δεξιτερος) could be influenced by δεξιός (cf. Lubotsky 1988:138 on σκαιός and λαιός, both 'left', and Vendryes 1945:175 on ἀριστερός).

or personal names or ethnic names (henceforth EN). Table 2 shows the distribution in Proto-Indo-European:<sup>5</sup>

Table 2

	<i>*deksi-</i>	<i>*deks-</i>
* <i>-uó-</i>	Gk. δεξιός ‘propitious, right’	Goth. <i>taihswa</i> “δεξιός” (Bible)
	Myc. <i>de-ki-si-wo</i> / <i>Deksiwo-</i> / PN <sup>m</sup>	OHG <i>zesu</i> ‘right, favorable’
	Pamph. Δεξιφρυς PN <sup>m</sup>	Old Ir. <i>dess</i> ‘right, southern’
	Gaul. <i>Dex(s)iuua</i> GN <sup>f</sup> , <i>Dex(s)iuates</i> EN ‘Southerners’	Gaul. <i>Dessus</i> PN <sup>m</sup> Celtib. <i>Dessuaeona</i> PN <sup>f</sup>
U. <b>tesvam</b> , <i>desua</i> ‘on the right’ < either <i>*deksi-</i> or <i>*deks-</i> , given the historical phonology of Proto-Italic		
* <i>-no-</i>	Ved. <i>dákṣiṇa-</i> ‘right, southern, (Skt.) favorable, pleasing’	OCS <i>desnъ</i> “δεξιός” (Bible)
	YAv. <i>dašina-</i> ‘right, southern’	
	Lith. <i>dėšinas</i> ‘right’	
* <i>-tero-</i>	Gk. δεξιτερός ‘right (vs. left)’	
	Lat. <i>dexter</i> ‘right, propitious’	
	U. <b>testru</b> ‘at the right side’, <i>destram-e</i> ‘to the right side’	

4.1. PIE *\*deksi-* versus *\*deks-*

The status of the *\*-i-* in *\*deksi-* and *\*deks-* has been explained in different ways. The most recent treatments are those by Beekes (1994) and Stüber (2006), both of whom refer to previous interpretations of PIE ‘right’.

Beekes (1994:90–1) reconstructed both a form with *i*-ending and an endingless adverb, thus PIE *\*deksi-* ‘at the right side’ (cf. Lat. *heri* < *\*-es-i* ‘yesterday’) and

5 Table 2 recapitulates the most relevant words following the main etymological dictionaries for each language; cf. also Beekes 1994:87 and Stüber 2006:61–2. The absence of the Albanian form in Table 2 deserves a brief explanation. Kortlandt (1987:221) takes into account only the modern Albanian form *djathë* ‘right’ and reconstructs an old *\*djathnë* (*\*deks-no-*), influenced by its antonym *mjatë* ‘left’. However, Orel (1998:67–8) has pointed out the Old Albanian form *djathë* ‘right side’, which would come from PALb. *\*detsa-* (*\*deks-o-*). Kortlandt’s reconstruction has the advantage of fitting the Albanian form into a pattern of word formation shared with other IE languages in the central Balkans; however, it does not explain the Old Albanian form, found in the oldest Albanian text, Buzuku’s Missal (16th c. CE). Orel’s possible reconstruction fits better into Albanian phonology (but not entirely, see Stüber 2006:61 n.2), but it creates a new and isolated formation among Indo-European daughter languages. Given the specialized nature of this problem and the non-crucial role played by Albanian in my argumentation, I have excluded OAlb. *djathë* (and Alb. *djathë*) from the presentation in Table 2.

\**deks*-Ø ‘id.’ (cf. Gk. χθές < \*-*es*-Ø ‘yesterday’). Both \**deksi*- and \**deks*- are distributed individually in each branch of Indo-European.

Stüber (2006:67–71) reconstructed an additional suffix for PIE ‘right’ on the basis of OAlb. *djathë* < \**deks*-Ø (see above, n.5) and explained the \*-*i-uo-* formations as analogical innovations based on its PIE opposite ‘left’, reconstructed as \**ŝkahzi-uo-* and \**lahzi-uo-*. In Proto-Indo-Iranian and Proto-Baltic, secondary formations in \*-*i-no-* developed morphologically into \*-*ino-* adjectives, where the history of the formation has become opaque. In Greek and Proto-Italic, the \*-*tero-* formations resulted from analogy with their respective antonyms ‘left’, as in Gk. ἀριστερός,<sup>6</sup> Lat. *sinister*, and U. *nertru*.

A glance at Buck (1949:865–7), however, gives the impression of a profusion of coinages for ‘left’, because of its taboo character and its status as an inauspicious omen. Etymological connections appear in (1) Gk. σκαίος and Lat. *scaeuus*, and (2) Gk. λαίος, Lat. *laeuus* and OCS *lěvъ*. Other branches use different words, sharing different euphemistic meanings. Anthropological research (Hertz 1960:99–103, McManus 2003:22–35) reveals that in right-left symbolism ‘left’ is universally considered as ‘non-right’ or a reversed right, i.e., ‘left’ is marked and culturally defined through its counterpart.

Thus influence of ‘left’—the weaker and less favorable member of the polarity—on the stronger and more favorable ‘right’ is hard to consider valid both in anthropological and linguistic terms, as already seen (n.4 above). As far as I could find based on linguistic data, clear analogical processes go from ‘right’ to ‘left’, as in Late Lat. *sinixtra* (Isid.), *senextra*, *senester* (both epigraphic), which are the basis of Proto-Romance \**sinestra(m)* (REW no.7947) as reconstructed through Old Italian *sinestra* > It. *sinistra*, Old Spanish *sinistra* (replaced in modern Spanish by *izquierda*) and Old French *senestre* (replaced in the modern language by *gauche*). The folk etymology of Late Lat. *sinixtra* as *sine dextrā* “without the right hand” (cf. n.4 above), as attested in the 6th century CE by Isidore of Seville (*Orig.* 11.1.68), strengthens the anthropological claim mentioned above and explains the

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6 This analogy cannot be considered valid, because Gk. ἀριστερός was created after ἄριστος ‘the best’ (pace Stüber 2006:70–1), and there are no clear examples supporting the idea that the suffix -ερός would have had the same contrastive function as the suffix -τερός (pace Risch 1974:69, 92). It could be assumed that the word seems to attest an *e*-ablaut of the \*-*ró*-suffix with no clear distribution of the root grade, as shown by examples like ἐλεύθερος ‘free’, πενθερός ‘in-law, e.g., father-in-law, brother-in-law, son-in-law’, κρατερός ‘strong, mighty’, and θαλασσερός (Galen, ointment for the eye, based on θάλασσα ‘sea’); hence the formation of ἀριστερός ‘the best (hand), i.e., left’ based on ἄριστος ‘the best’. For further discussion and data on \*-*ero*-formations, cf. Vine 2002:331 and García Ramón 1992:197–200 (within the Caland system).

direction of analogy from Lat. *dexter(a)* and Late Lat. *dextra, destra* to Late Lat. *sinixtra* and P.Rom. *\*sinestra(m)*.

#### 4.2. PIE *\*dék-s(-i)*, *\*dék-os* and the *s*-stems

I would like to reconsider a proposal by Persson (1893:244 n.2), who interpreted PIE *\*deksi* ‘on the right (side)’ as a locative of the *s*-stem noun *\*dék-os*. PIE *\*dék-os* is not widely distributed in the daughter languages: NOM.SG *\*dék-os-Ø* in Lat. *decus*, GEN *decōris* (neuter) ‘honor’ and secondary *decor*, GEN *decōris* (masculine) ‘ornament’, OIr. *dech* ‘the best’ and Ved. *\*dásas-* (as in the denominative *dásas-yāti* ‘to worship’); and LOC.SG *\*dék-s-i* in Gr. *\*δεξι-* and *\*dék-s-Ø* in Goth. *\*taihs-*, together with their cognate forms for ‘right’, as in Table 2. This paradigm NOM.SG *\*CéC-oC-Ø* / LOC.SG *\*CéC-C(-i)* does not correspond to the original PIE static paradigm (NOM.SG *\*CéC-C-Ø*, GEN.SG *\*CéC-C-s*, LOC.SG *\*CéC-C(-i)*), because of the *o*-grade suffix in the nominative; nor to the secondary PIE static paradigm of the type NOM.SG *\*mén-os-Ø*, GEN.SG *\*mén-es-os*, LOC.SG *\*mén-es-i*, because of the zero-grade suffix. Thus it might be assumed that PIE *\*dék-os* is a later formation, just like the concept of ‘right’; following the lead of PIE *\*mén-s-Ø*, *\*mn-és-s* → *\*mén-os-Ø*, *\*mén-es-os*, the original inflection could hypothetically have been the proterodynamic paradigm, later replaced by a static pattern (Schindler 1975:266, cf. Kloekhorst 2013:120–1).

There are some clear semantic differences in the attested forms, which could be a clue to the late formation and use of this word. Lat. *decus* means ‘prestige, honor, glory’ (and *decor* ‘ornament, decency’), OIr. *dech* ‘the best’, the Vedic denominative verb *dásas-yāti* means ‘to worship, favor + ACC, to do a favor to + DAT’; thus Vedic *\*dásas-* might have meant ‘favor, worship’, and the locatives *\*dék-s(-i)* might suppose a meaning of *\*dék-os* as ‘what people receive, consider acceptable or favorable’ from PIE *\*dék-* ‘to accept, receive’ (cf. Beekes 1994:90 and Stüber 2006:63, 71).

The new static LOC.SG *\*dék-s(-i)* developed as a new stem with the suffixes *\*-uó-*, *\*-no-* and *\*-tero-* so as to create PIE ‘right’ after an original meaning ‘what is at the favorable side → right, propitious, benevolent’. Similar decasuative formations are attested in Proto-Indo-European, such as delocative Gk. ὄνειρος ‘vision’ (*\*h<sub>3</sub>n-er-jo-* ‘what is in a dream’) from LOC.SG *\*h<sub>3</sub>n-er(-i)* :: *\*h<sub>3</sub>en-r̥* (ὄναρ) ‘dream’ (cf. Pinault 2014, who reconstructs a static NOM *\*(h<sub>2</sub>)h<sub>3</sub>ón-r̥* :: LOC *\*(h<sub>2</sub>)h<sub>3</sub>én-er(-i)*); for further examples and bibliography, see Nikolaev 2009:465–70). Moreover, deinstrumental forms can be found in Latin, as in the adjectives *astūtus* ‘the one with cleverness → clever’ from ABL.SG *astū* (PIE INSTR.SG

\*-u-h<sub>1</sub>) :: *astus*, -*ūs* ‘cleverness’, and *aegrōtus* ‘the one with sickness → sick’ from INSTR.SG \**aigrō* (\*-o-h<sub>1</sub>) :: \**aigro-* ‘sickness’ (cf. Lat. *aegrum* ‘distress, grief’, Pl.); and also in nouns with \*-no- suffix, such as *colōnus* ‘the one with land → farmer’ from PIE INSTR.SG \**k<sup>u</sup>Vlh<sub>1/2</sub>-o-h<sub>1</sub>* (Weiss 2020:310, 313).

### 5. Zeus Δέκτηρος (\**déks-tero-*) ‘the Benevolent One’

Through the reconstruction in §4, the shaded cell of Table 2 might be filled in by the Thera hapax Δέκτηρος, according to the proportion within PIE ‘right’ morphology, \**déksi-uo-*, \**déksi-no-* : \**déksi-tero-* :: \**deks-uo-*, \**déks-no-* : *X*, in which *X* = \**déks-tero-* (see Table 2). Formations with \*-tero- suffix appear in a later stage of Proto-Indo-European, where it can be seen that there is no clear distribution of the root-grade (Oettinger 2012:208–9). Thus PIE \**déksi-tero-* and \**déks-tero-* must be considered inherited but chronologically later than the forms with suffixes \*-uo- and \*-no-.

The three-consonant cluster [kst] in standard Greek (based on Attic and East Ionic) should have an outcome [k<sup>(h)</sup>t<sup>h</sup>], as in PGk. \**eks-tró-* > ἐχθρός ‘enemy (noun), hateful, hated (adj.)’. During the Bronze Age, three-consonant clusters are generally preserved, as in Myc. *a<sub>3</sub>-ka-sa-ma* /*aiksmāns*/ ‘(tips of) spears (acc. pl.)’, vs. first-millennium Greek αἰχμή (Hom.+). Nevertheless, a writing mistake in the wall enclosure must be excluded, because after her review by autopsy, Inglese (2008:155) observed that orthography is generally accurate in Archaic Thera: within the religious materials there are no mistakes. Among nearly one hundred inscriptions, spelling mistakes occur in only a few personal names.

The complete loss of interconsonantal [s] is attested in Greek dialects as a result of simplification between two stops. In anlaut, note Gk. πᾶρνυμαι ‘to sneeze’ (Hom.+), cf. Lat. *sternuō* (PIE \**pster-*), and Gk. βδέω ‘to fart’, cf. Slov. *pəzděti* (both \**psd-ěje-*) and Lat. *pēdō* (\**pēsd-e-*); in composition, note Att. ἑκπoδε(ς) ‘(two) hexapods’ (Eleusis, *IG I<sup>3</sup>* 386.93–4, 408/7 BCE) < transposition \**sueks-pod-*, Gk. ἕκπεδος ‘six-footed’ (Lebadeia, Boeotia, *IG VII* 3073, 2nd c. BCE) < transposition \**sueks-ped-*, and Myc. *we-pe-za* /*wepped-al*/ ‘six-footed’ < PGk. \**sueks-ped-ia-*, vs. Att. ἕξπους ‘six-footed’ (hapax, Pl.Com. *PCG* 7.270) and ἑξάπους ‘id.’ (Arist.+).<sup>7</sup> The complete loss of interconsonantal sibilant as a result of simplifi-

7 Myc. *we-pe-za* could also be read /*wesped-al*. However, according to Linear B spelling rules and alphabetic Greek data, an explanation through simplification of interconsonantal [s] with subsequent regressive assimilation ([ksp] > [kp] > [pp]) has to be preferred. The first step follows the outcome of Att. ἑκπoδε(ς), the second step follows Myc. *po-pi* /*popp<sup>hi</sup>*/ ‘with the feet’ < \**pod-p<sup>hi</sup>*. For the Attic treatment of the numeral ‘six’, see Thraette 1980:587–8.

cation in compounds seems to be due to a wish to keep the members recognizable: an Attic outcome *\*sueks-pod-* > *+ἔχφοδ-* would have completely distorted the numeral ‘six’ and the element ‘foot’. A similar situation can be supposed in Inlout, too, where the expected *+Δέχθερος* shows complete *s*-loss in order to remain, as Δέκτηρος, more clearly connected to the verb δέκομαι ‘to accept’ and its athematic noun formations (cf. §3 above; the form δέχομαι is a purely Attic feature, not attested in other dialects). Complete *s*-loss is also not unknown in Doric dialects. In Laconian, from which Thera dialect derives, sibilants were phonetically weak, whence relatively early changes such as aspiration and loss (cf. Morpurgo Davies 2012:118). This may provide an argument in support of the simplification of [kst] in *\*dek̑stero-* > Δέκτηρος.

The epithet Δέκτηρος (*\*déks-tero-*) might mean ‘the benevolent, favorable, propitious one’ (see Table 2 above). This value belongs to the purview of Zeus by comparison with δεξιός ‘propitious’ referring to his propitious eagle (Hom.) and his favorable thunder (X. *Cyr.* 7.1.3 βροντή δεξιά, when Cyrus prays to Zeus before the conquest of Sardis).

ὡς φάτο Τηλέμαχος, τῷ δ’ αἰετῷ εὐρύοπα Ζεὺς  
 ὑπόθεν ἐκ κορυφῆς ὄρεος προέηκε πέτεσθαι.  
 [...]
   
 δρυσαμένω δ’ ὀνύχεσσι παρειὰς ἀμφί τε δειράς  
 δεξιῷ ἤϊξαν διὰ τ’ οἰκία καὶ πόλιν αὐτῶν. (*Od.* 2.146–7, 153–4)

So spoke Telemakhos, and to him wide-sighted Zeus sent forth two eagles, flying down from above, from the top of a mountain. [...] And tearing each other’s cheeks and necks with their talons, they [= the two eagles] disappeared propitiously above their [= the Ithakans’] houses and their city. (my translation)

In this passage the suitor Antinoos laughs scornfully at Telemakhos, because of his project to sail abroad in search of Odysseus. Telemakhos prays to Zeus for good sailing, and the god sends him a propitious bird sign. The same will happen in *Od.* 15.160–1 (δεξιὸς ὄρνις/ αἰετός) when Telemakhos, after having sailed to Nestor’s palace and to Sparta, bids farewell to King Menelaos and expresses a wish to find Odysseus in Ithaca. A similar context and the same formula appear in the *Iliad* (13.821–2 δεξιὸς ὄρνις/ αἰετός), when Aias incites the Akhaeans and prays to Zeus: the god sends them a favorable eagle. In *Il.* 24.290–321, Hekabe suggests that Priam make an offering to Zeus before going to Akhilleus to beg for Hektor’s corpse; Priam does so and Zeus sends him a propitious eagle: the verses present the expressions οἰωνός ... δεξιός ‘propitious bird’ and αἰετός ... δεξιός ‘propitious

eagle' several times. In all these passages the intervention of Zeus assures the audience that the god brings these situations to successful conclusions.

## 6. Zeus Δέκτηρος 'Benevolent' and 'Welcoming'

The first invocations of the Danaids in Aeschylus' *Suppliants* show Zeus as the benevolent god who receives the suppliant women:

Ζεὺς μὲν ἀφίκτωρ ἐπίδοι προφρόνως στόλον ἡμέτερον  
 νάιον ἀρθέντ' ἀπὸ προστομίῳν λεπτο(ψα)μάθων  
 Νείλου. [...]

τίν' ἄν οὖν χώραν εὐφρονα μᾶλλον τῆσδ' ἀφικόμεθα  
 σὺν τοῖσδ' ἱκετῶν ἐγχειρίδιοις,  
 ἐριοστέπτοισι κλάδοισιν;

[...]

καὶ Ζεὺς σωτήρ τρίτος, οἰκοφύλαξ ὀσίων ἀνδρῶν,  
 δέξασθ' ἱκέτην τὸν θηλυγενῆ  
 στόλον αἰδοίῳ πνεύματι χώρας. (A. *Supp.* 1–4, 20–3, 26–9)<sup>8</sup>

May Zeus, god of those who come, look benevolently upon our band, which travelled by ship from the fine sands at the mouth of the Nile. [...] what more friendly land than this could we reach with these marks of suppliants on our hands, these branches wreathed in wool? [invocations to several deities] and thirdly O Zeus the Savior, protector of the houses of upright men, receive as suppliant this band of women, together with a spirit of respect from the land. (my translation)

In this passage, the Danaids' prayer shows that the women are foreigners, asking for protection and hospitality, because they present themselves with the ritual clothes that traditionally mark suppliants (Bakewell 2013:20–2, 40–2). The inherited meanings of the roots PIE \**seik-* 'to come' (ἀφίκτωρ,<sup>9</sup> ἱκέτης), \**dek-* 'to receive' (δέχομαι), and PGk. \**saio-* 'to save' (σωτήρ) are still attested in Aeschylus and used to emphasize the liminal status and the need of the newcomers (Muscianisi 2017b:780–4). The same roots also describe the cultic purview of Zeus in Thera and the Cyclades. The semantics of "benevolence" and "hospitality" is evident in some cultic epithets of Zeus from Archaic Thera, such as Βορραῖος 'of Boreas (the benevolent north wind, cf. Hsch. β 812 below)' (*IG* XII.3 357 ~ Inglese 2008:no.8, early 7th c. BCE: see Muscianisi 2017a:55–6), ἠκεκτιος 'of foreigners' (*IG* XII.3 402, 6th c. BCE), and [Kc]ἔνιῳ 'of guests (gen.)' (*IG* XII.3 428, 5th c.

8 Text and colometry after West 1992.

9 Cf. Cassella D'Amore 2005:123–4.

BCE) (for the latter two, see Muscianisi 2017b:776–8), as well as from Delos, such as Οὔριος ‘of the favorable wind’ (*ID* 1561, 2nd c. BCE: see Muscianisi 2017a: 116–9).

For people who inhabit small islands and base their entire economy on maritime trade, it might be common to have many godheads who support sailing and protect foreigners, because the sea determines their wealth and the condition of being a foreigner is after all their own condition during their journeys. From an anthropological point of view, therefore, protecting foreigners in their own land might be prophetically propitious with regard to occasions when the islanders would sail to other countries. Even the exegetic sources suggest a similar concept: see Hsch. β 812 βορρᾶς· ἄνεμος ψυχρός (‘cold wind’). ὁ παρὰ τὸ ὀράσθαι ἐπιδέξιος (‘because it looks benevolent’), δ 637 δεξιός· συνετός. ἀγαθός. καλός. ἐπιδέξιος. εὐθετος (‘wise, good, beautiful, benevolent, suitable’), and π 333 πανδοχεύς· ἐπιδέξιος (‘benevolent’), ὁ πάντας δεχόμενος (‘the one who receives everybody’).

## 7. Conclusions

Theran epigraphic Δεσπερος (hapax legomenon) is interpreted as a cult epithet of Zeus. The god in Thera is invoked as Δέκτηρος, both ‘the benevolent one’ and ‘the welcoming one’, referring to the activities of sailing and receiving foreigners. The epithet Δέκτηρος shows a \*-tero- formation on a stem connected to PIE \*deḱ- ‘to receive’, through the word for ‘right’. In Proto-Indo-European the word for ‘right’ comes from a Late-PIE static *s*-stem \*deḱ-os- ‘what is favorable, acceptable’, whose locatives \*deḱ-s-Ø and \*deḱ-s-i ‘at the favorable, acceptable (side)’, combined with the suffixes \*-uó-, \*-no-, and \*-tero-, creates the word for ‘right’. According to the proportion \*deḱsi-uó-, \*deḱsi-no- : \*deḱsi-tero- :: \*deḱs-uó-, \*deḱs-no- : *X*, in which *X* = \*deḱs-tero- (Δέκτηρος), the epithet for archaic Thera is linguistically and phraseologically explained within the concepts of benevolence and hospitality, and fits into the religious and anthropological cultic context of the Aegean Sea.

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