

The Sources of Greek Compounds in -εσι-: A Work in Progress

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Where does -εσι- come from? How do we establish a data-driven base for analogy? What is the role of neuter s-stem?

PROGRAM IN
INDO-EUROPEAN STUDIES

1.1. THE TERPSIMBROTOS TYPE

- Synchronically, a **verb-initial** compound type based on the **sigmatic aorist** stem: *é-terp-s-a* → *terp-s-í-mbrotos*
- σι-**: characterizing morpheme of the class with several **allomorphs**: -σε-, -σο-, and **-εσι-**
- εσι-** corresponds to aorist formations in **-εσ-α-** from:
 - radical stems ending in **-h₁**: *όλε-* (<*h₃elh₁-) → *ώλε-σ-α*
 - denominatives from **neuter s-stems**: *τελεσ-* (<*telh₂-es/os-) → *έτελεσ-(σ)-α*

1.2. THE PROBLEM

- εσι-** is extended to verbs without an aorist formation in **-εσ-α-**
πηγεσι- vs. *έπηξα* Why?
- εσι-** is “**exported**” from verbs with aorists in **-εσ-α-**, and used as compound marker for **asigmatic aorists** and/or for **metrical purposes** (Tribulato 2015:171)
- What triggers this analogical extension?**

2. DATA

Verb	1M	1 st Attest.	IE Stem	Aorist	N s-stem	2M	Other 1Ms	Transl.
ἀρκέω	ἀρκεσι-	Hom. (PN)	*h ₂ er _k -es/os-	ἤρκεσα	ἄρκος	-αρκής	n/a	assist
τελέω	τελεσι-	Pind. (PN)	*telh ₂ -es/os-	έτέλεσα	τέλος	-τελής	n/a	fulfil
φάω	φασ(ι)-	Hom.	*b ^h eh ₂ -	n/a	φάος	-φαής	n/a	shine
ὄλλυμι	ώλεσι-	Hom.	*h ₃ elh ₁ -	ώλεσα	n/a	-ωλής	n/a	destroy
ἀλφάνω	άλφεσι-	Hom.	*h ₂ elg ^{wh} -	ἤλφον	n/a	-αλφής	n/a	bring in
πήγνυμι	πηγεσι-	Hom.	*reh ₂ ǵ-	έπηξα	n/a	-πηγος, -πηγής	n/a	fix
χαίρω	χαιρεσι-	Hes. (PN)	*ǵ ^h er(h _x)-	έχάρην ^{Hom} έχαίρησα	n/a	-χαρής	χαιρε-	rejoyce
ἀρχω	ἀρχεσι-	Stes.	*h ₂ r-ske/o-?	ἤρξα	n/a	-αρχος	ἀρχε-, ἀρχι-	begin
έλκω	έλκεσι-	Hom.	*selk-	έλκησα ^{Hom} είλκύσα	n/a	-ουλκος	έλκε-	drag
λείπω	λιπεσ-	Stesich.	*leyk ^w -	έλιπον	n/a	-λοιπος	λιπο-	leave
τέμνω	ταμεσι-	Hom.	*temh ₁ -	έταμον	n/a	-τομος	n/a	cut
φέρω	φερεσ-	Hom.	*b ^h er-	n/a	n/a	-φορος, -φερής	φερε-	carry
άάω	άεσι-	Hom.	*h ₂ ewh ₂ -?	άασα ^{Hom}	n/a	n/a	n/a	hurt

- Tribulato (2015:361–424) lists 26 verbs with a 1M in **-εσι-**, many attested **only late**
- The table shows all the instances of **-εσι-** 1Ms attested in **Homeric and Classical Greek** (13)
 - Group 1: **Etymological**
 - neuter **s-stems**
 - stems in **-h₁**
 - Group 2: **Analogy I**
 - 2M: **-ής**
 - Group 3: **Analogy II**
 - 2M: **-ος**
 - Group 4: **Uncertain**

3.1. ANALOGICAL PATTERNS

- Analogy I**: trigger = **2M in -ής** (shared by s-stems and intransitive stems)
-αρκής : ἀρκεσι- = **-πηγής** : πηγεσι-
- Analogy II**: trigger = **2M in -ος** (esp. couplets -ος / -ής)
-πηγος : πηγεσι- = **-ουλκος** : έλκεσι-
- Metrical convenience** is the aim, not the explanation:
πηγεσίμαλλος *πηξίμαλλος ‘thick-fleeced’
— ◡ ◡ — — x — ◡ — —
έλκεσίπεπλος *έλκεπεπλος ‘trailing the robe’
— ◡ ◡ — — x — ◡ — —

3.2. NEXT QUESTIONS

- How do **N s-stems** behave in composition in Homer? Do all the **1M shapes** (-ι-, -εσ-, -εσι-) fit in the picture?
- Is this coherent with the **backformation of s-stems** from 2M in -ής as in Meissner 2006 (86–94)?
- What weight should **chronology** be given?
- Can we dismiss **άεσι-** as “wrong for άασι-” (EDG)?
- Does this analogical process **under-/over-generate**? What are the exact conditions of its application?

ESSENTIAL BIBLIOGRAPHY

- EDG = Robert S. P. Beekes. 2010. *Etymological Dictionary of Greek*. Leiden: Brill.
 Meissner, Torsten. 2006. *S-stem Nouns and Adjectives in Greek and Proto-Indo-European: A Diachronic Study in Word Formation*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.
 Tribulato, Olga. 2015. *Ancient Greek verb-Initial compounds. Their diachronic development within the Greek compound system*. Berlin: de Gruyter.