

**HISTORICAL AND CRITICAL
REMARKS INTRODUCTORY
TO A COMPARATIVE
STUDY OF GREEK ACCENT**

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Historical and Critical Remarks Introductory to a Comparative Study of Greek Accent by
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*To Mr. B. S. Wheeler with the compliments of
the author.*

HISTORICAL AND CRITICAL REMARKS

INTRODUCTORY TO A

COMPARATIVE STUDY OF GREEK ACCENT

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HISTORICAL AND CRITICAL REMARKS INTRO-
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GREEK ACCENT.

I.

Accent is a universal phenomenon in language, and one which is in close union with what is treated by grammar under the head of sound or phonology.

The sounds of a word without accent are merely separate stones which accent cements into a linguistic entity, either a word or a sentence. W. v. Humboldt says: 'The unity of the word is produced by the accent. This, by itself, is of a more spiritual nature than the sounds, and it is therefore called the soul of speech, not only because it is really the element which carries intelligibility into speech, but because it is, more than other factors in speech, the immediate expression of feeling' (cited by Göttling, *Accent der griechischen Sprache*, p. 8).

The word accent in modern terminology is unfortunately compelled to do duty for more than one linguistic fact. First, in the case of the word, it signifies the *relative* stress and pitch characteristics of its various syllables, with no restriction to that syllable which has the strongest stress or the highest pitch. This is the most scientific function of the word. A closer study of the life of the word cannot be satisfied with a theoretical analysis of its sounds and syllables and a superficial recognition as to which of the syllables has the highest pitch or strongest stress, but it must be known also in *what way* or to *what extent* this syllable is elevated above those surrounding it. Furthermore, the relations of the remaining syllables to one another will always show that the same characteristics which distinguish the tone-syllable *κατ' ἄρχην* attach themselves in a lesser degree to some one or more of the remaining syllables; in short, I would define word-accent in this wider sense as the history of stress and pitch in the immediate practical subdivisions of the word, its syllables. This definition of accent has necessarily to be kept apart from that other more familiar one by which, in the current parlance of grammar, the pitch or stress of the most accented syllable is designated. This, of course, is not all. For just as the

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word has its history of pitch and stress, so has the sentence. The members of the sentence stand in a relation to the sentence as a whole which is not unlike that in which the syllables stand to the word. Here, of course, the word 'accent' has again to do double duty: first, it indicates the relative characteristics of the words which make up the sentence, and, secondly, the word is also employed to mark that favored member of the sentence which holds the most prominent position, *i. e.* the one which corresponds to the 'tone-syllable' in the word.

In the sentence 'he did it, not she,' we may speak of accent in its most pregnant sense and refer merely to the two summits 'he' and 'she,' or on the other hand we may call before our minds a picture of the exact relation of each of the words in pitch and stress, not giving our attention merely to the summits, but watching the undulation of the tone-line in which the sentence moves all along, from the beginning to the end. This is the study of accent in its scientific sense.

That the accent of a sentence is as much under the influence of an organic law of some kind as the accent of the word is seen as soon as one attempts to disturb the natural cadence of a sentence such as the one cited above. By transferring the summit pitch and ictus to the second word of the sentence we destroy the organic life of the sentence fully as much as though we change the summit pitch and stress in a single word. 'He *did* it, not she' is as much not an English sentence as '*dé*velopment' is not an English word. Frequently the change of relation in pitch and stress does not go so far as to destroy the sentence, it simply makes another sentence out of it, as for instance when the summit tone is shifted successively from one word to another in the group of words 'give me that book.' We obtain four different sentences corresponding to the four different positions of the summit tone.

With this last case may be compared the way in which, *e. g.* in Greek, the change of accent changes entirely the character of certain words otherwise the same, and in fact enters as a considerably fruitful factor into word-formation. For instance, *τροχός* is an agent-noun or participial formation meaning 'running,' 'a runner'; *τρέχος* is an action-noun or abstract, 'a running,' 'a course'; *φόρος* means 'bearing'; *φώρας* 'a bearing,' 'a tribute'; both couplets are formations identical in every respect but their accent; the accent makes the same phonetic groups into two words as distinctly differentiated in function as two primary noun-formations from the same root can

be. And, lest it be suspected that it was merely the superfine linguistic genius of the Greeks which brought in so delicate a factor as a power in word-formation, it may be stated at once that this difference is prehistoric, and Indo-European; the couplet *φορός* and *φόρος* makes a perfect proportion with Sanskrit *dhāras* 'bearing' and *dhāras* 'a bearing,' 'a burden.' In the same manner cf. in Greek *μητροκτόνος* 'killing his mother' as epithet of Orestes, and *μητρόκτονος* 'slain by a mother' as epithet of the children of Medea, the accent alone is the factor which has produced two distinct categories in noun-composition, also prehistoric and Indo-European, and up to date not understood by the familiar guides for the study of Greek.¹

The chapter on sentence-accent is one of the most difficult and obscure in the study of grammar, and has been brought within the range of scientific discussion only very lately. Of course certain obtrusive phenomena which belong under this head had been noticed and discussed long ago; as for instance the fact that certain words lose their independent accent in the sentence, namely, the

¹ *Μητρο-κτόνος* means literally 'mother-slaying'; it is the kind of compound which is called *tatparyas* by the Hindu grammarians, that is, a simple compound in which the first member stands to the second in the relation of a case dependent upon it. *Μητρό-κτονος* is a secondary adjective compound, what is called in Hindu grammar a *dhātuvāñī* compound, one upon which the idea of possession and the like is secondarily engrafted; the meaning is strictly speaking 'possessing,' *é, e*, being affected by a mother-slaying. The stem *κτονο-* in the two compounds is not the same; in the first instance it is the nomen agentis *κτονώς* 'slaying,' in the second it is the nomen actionis *κτόνος* 'a slaying.' The difference of tone in the two compounds represents one of the most noteworthy archaisms in Greek nominal accentuation. Simple dependent compounds like *μητρο-κτόνος* were originally accented on the second member of the entire compound; this law is so strongly alive in the Greek compounds of this class, whose second member is a noun of agency in *-ός*, that the law for recessive accentuation is observed only so far as it does not annul the older law according to which the tone must be on the second member, therefore *μητρο-κτόνος* is against the recessive tendency. On the other hand, possessive compounds were originally accented on the first member, and in accordance with that, such compounds follow freely the laws of recessive accentuation, as *μητρό-κτονος*. The same law reveals itself in such accentual difference as is contained in Sk. *yajñakāmd* 'desire of sacrifice,' and *yajñā-kāmar* 'having desire of sacrifice'; the former is a simple dependent, the latter a secondary possessive compound. The Sanskrit regularly differentiates such compounds by varying accentuation, while in Greek the archaic differentiation of accent is preserved only sporadically. See L. v. Schroeder in Kuhn's *Zeitschrift*, 101 fg., esp. pp. 106, 110 and 116; Whitney, *Sanskrit Grammar*, §§1247, 1264 fg. and 1293 fg.

enclitics and proclitics;¹ certain words change their accent according to their position in the sentence: the so-called *anastrophe*² of

¹ That the proclitics do not lack an etymological accent (cf. below, p. 36), but that they lose their accent from syntactical causes, *i. e.* from their relation to other words in the sentence, can often be shown easily, either by pursuing their history within the language itself, or by comparison with corresponding words in other languages. For instance, *ὄν* proclitic appears at the end of a sentence and in some other cases as *ὄν*; *ὄς* and *ἐξ* when they follow the governed word appear as *ὄς* and *ἐξ* (*θεός ὄς, κακῶν ἐξ*). That the proclisis of *ὄ, ῥ, ῖ* is not due to some etymological peculiarity of these words is shown by the Sanskrit correspondents *ad, id; ol, al* the special Greek new formations for older *roi, rai* (Sk. masc. *l = rai*) are made analogically after *ὄ, ῥ, ῖ*, and borrow from them their proclisis. In the same manner no doubt all proclitics lose their accent owing to syntactical relations, *i. e.* their lack of accent is due to Greek laws of sentence accentuation. About enclisis we will have much more to say below.

[It is almost needless to add that the word 'proclitic' is a modern invention brought into currency by G. Hermann (Götting, p. 387). That does not militate against the existence of the thing; only there seems to have been no recognition of it in antiquity, and the omission of the accent in the cursive MSS was due to differentiation, to the desire of distinguishing not only between *ὄ* and *δ*, *ῥ* and *ῑ*, *ὀ* and *ὀ*, *αἰ* and *αἰ*, but also between *ὄν* and *ὄν*, *εἰς* and *εἰς*, *ἐν* and *ἐν*, *ἐξ* and *ἐξ*, the *spiritus asper* not being heard at that time. See G. Uhlig, Zur Wiederherstellung des Ältesten Compendiums der Grammatik, Festschrift zur Begrüssung der XXXVI Philologenversammlung, p. 80.—R. L. G.]

² The true explanation of *anastrophe* is as follows: Originally 'prepositions' were oftener or as often 'postpositions,' *i. e.* the position of these small words in the sentence was a free one. This is clear, especially from the Vedic Sanskrit, where some of the most common ones occur oftener after their nouns than before them (*e. g.* *to* occurs in the Rig-Veda 186 times after its case and only 13 times before it). The mere fact that in later periods of language (*e. g.* Greek and classical Sanskrit) the tendency is to place them before their cases in itself proves nothing against this natural assumption. The case of a monosyllabic preposition like *ἐξ*, which receives its natural accent after the word it governs, but is proclitic when it precedes it, points to the probability that the true accent of these Greek particles must be looked for in their postpositive position. Indeed, just as *ἐξ* (orthotone), so do all bisyllabic prepositions appear with their true accent when they follow their cases, and just like *ἐξ* (proclitic) do all bisyllabic prepositions exhibit a *substitute for proclisis* when they accent their ultimate. The grammars which regard the oxytonesis as the original accentuation, of course explain it as due to a desire on the part of the language to point to the word governed by means of the accent, but such an explanation needs hardly to be refuted.

The originality of the tone of bisyllabic prepositions in *anastrophe* is proved in addition by the fact that this accent is demanded by the corresponding Sanskrit words whenever the etymology is clear. So Sanskrit *apa* is not to be compared with Greek *ἀπό* but with *ἀπο*; Sk. *api* not with *ἐπί* but with *ἐπι*; in the same manner the archaic character of the accentuation in *πέρι, πάρα* and

oxytone bisyllabic prepositions, which, as is now generally believed, preserves the original accentuation of these prepositions. The change of an acute to a grave on an oxytone before another word, though a phenomenon totally unexplained,¹ contains no doubt a

ἔνο is warranted by Vedic *padri*, *padra* and *apa*; the etymology of *meta* and *kara* is obscure, but they probably, like those preceding, have preserved their original form in paroxytonesis; *enep* is not to be directly compared with Sk. *upadri*, which is reflected exactly in the oxytone *enep*; *enep* may have preserved an originally different accentuation, or it may have followed secondarily the accent of the other prepositions which suffer anastrophe, aided perhaps by the accent of *enepros* = Sk. *apara*. On the other hand *hugi*, which does not suffer anastrophe, is borne out in its oxytonesis by Sk. *abhi*; *avri* to be sure is oxytone after the case which it governs, against the accent of Sanskrit *anti*; but it may have left the company of the prepositions with anastrophe, because it differs from all of them in having its first syllable long (by position). In fact it appears to be a law, unnoticed even by Bensey, the author of this explanation of anastrophe, that only prepositions of two short syllables are affected by it (*enep* always oxytone, but *enep*-*enep* with anastrophe). The etymology of *anti* and *di* is obscure, but there is again no reason to doubt that their oxytonesis is based on good etymological grounds. The fact that these prepositions were originally paroxytone is proved also by the fact that they are so accented in adverbial function. Prepositions were originally adverbs, which have become attached to certain cases secondarily and in relatively later periods of language. Many common prepositions in Greek are still adverbs in Vedic Sanskrit: *apa*, *pra*, *padra* (*ἄπο, πρό, παρά*), while *padri* (*πρὶ*) does function for both; conversely the Vedic *di* (*ἐτι*) is both adverb and preposition, while in Greek it has remained adverb only.

The assumption that such accentuation as *anti*, *para*, etc., contains a substitute for proclisis is easily vindicated. As a matter of fact only monosyllables are toneless in proclisis; the treatment of bisyllabic words in the same position is in perfect accord with the treatment of enclitics when these contain a too great number of morae. Just as enclisis is restricted to three morae and two syllables (therefore *λόγος τις*, but *λόγος τὰς*, cf. below, p. 22), so proclisis is restricted to one syllable and two morae (therefore *ἐκ πάντων*, but *πρὶ πάντων*). The author of this ingenious explanation of anastrophe is Bensey ('Die eigentliche Accentuation des Indicativ Praesentis von *ἐς* sein und *πα* sprechen sowie einiger griechischen Praepositionen,' Göttinger Gelehrte Nachrichten, Febr. 27, 1878, p. 165 fg., reprinted in *Vedica and Linguistica*, p. 90 fg.); he closes his article with the following remark: "... es ist nicht besonders rühmlich für die griechische Philologie, dass, nachdem sie mehr als zwei Jahrtausende mit verhältnissmässig geringer Unterbrechung geübt ist, noch in ihren jüngsten Lexicis und Grammatiken, die Formen *anti*, *ἐπι*, *παρά*, *πρὶ*, *ἐπί*, *κατά*, *μετά* aufgestellt werden, welche in der Sprache weder je vorkommen noch vorkommen konnten.'

¹An elaborate discussion of this difficult question, which space forbids us to reproduce even in a condensed form, is contained in the essay of Leonhard Masing: Die Hauptformen des Serbisch-Chorwatischen Accents, nebst einleit-

difficulty whose solution will depend upon further investigation in sentence-accent. The difference between interrogative and indefinite pronouns (interrogatives, orthotone; indefinites, enclitics) is a case where *sentence-accent*, apparently, has given the language a method for differentiating an originally single category into two; this also is not understood, but the archaic character of this phenomenon is warranted by similar methods in other languages.¹ And it has been urged lately that two different word-forms which perform the same function, may owe their difference in form to different intonation in sentence nexus.²

enden Bemerkungen zur Accentlehre des Griechischen und des Sanskrit, St. Petersburg, 1876, p. 19 fg.

¹ The relation of *τίς*, orthotone and interrogative, to *τις*, enclitic and indefinite, is evidently the same as that of the German interrogative 'wer' to the indefinite 'wer' in such sentences as the following: 'Wer ist gekommen?' and 'Es ist wer gekommen.' We recognize at once that the enclisis of the indefinite is due to its peculiarly subordinate position in the sentence and not to any etymological deficiency, it is therefore a feature of sentence-accent. Cf. the still less clear method of the Sanskrit for differentiating interrogatives from indefinites. By various particles (some enclitic and others orthotone: *ca*, *caṅd*, *cit*, etc.) the interrogative without losing its own tone becomes indefinite, thus *kāś* 'who?' *kāś ca* 'any one'; cf. Lat. *quis* and *quisque*, identical in form and meaning. Whitney, *Sk. Gram.* §507; Dehnbek, *Die Grundlagen der griechischen Syntax*, pp. 138, 145.

² The most striking instance of this kind is an attempt to account for the different forms of the third person plural of the copula. It is true that the various forms of it, Doric *ἐντι*, Attic *εἰσι*, Ionic *ἔσσι*, cannot be carried back to any one origin by any phonetic jugglery. Accordingly complicated processes of analogy have been resorted to generally in order to harmonize these forms. Gustav Meyer's view, *e. g.* is that *ε-εἰσι* is the Greek 'ground-form.' From this form he derives *ἔσσι* by assuming that the *ε* was added secondarily from the strong forms of the root (*e. g.* *ἐσσι*) to **εἰσι* for **ἔσσι*, *i. e.* **ε-εἰσι*; while Doric *ἐντι*, Attic *εἰσι*, are also to be derived from **ἔσσι* by assuming that the initial vowel was assimilated to the *ε* of the strong forms. Others employ other processes of analogy in order to harmonize these forms with one another. But Joh. Schmidt has taught for some years past that Doric-Attic *ἐντι-εἰσι* is to be referred to a form **ε-εἰσι* (= Germ. *s-ind*, Zend. *h-ēiti*), while *ἔσσι* is to be referred to **ε-εἰσι* in the manner exhibited above. The two forms **ε-εἰσι* and **ε-εἰσι* are explained as, originally, respectively the orthotone and the enclitic forms of the word in accordance with the ideas of Wackernagel as laid down in Kuhn's *Zeitschrift*, XXIV, p. 457 fg., cf. below, p. 36 fg. Of these two forms **ε-εἰσι*, the orthotone form, crowded out **ε-εἰσι* in Doric and Attic, while *vice versa* **ε-εἰσι*, the enclitic form, gained the supremacy among the Ionians. This explanation is laid down with a very slight modification in the doctor-dissertation of his pupil, Felix Hartmann: 'De Aoristo Secundo,' p. 68, while