Lexemes are inextricably linked with frames and differ from one another semantically when they evoke different frames. They consequently have the ability to frame situations in different ways. This chapter is a qualitative study focusing on one specific theme: the ways in which ὅσιος & cognates and δίκαιος & cognates contrastively frame interactions with suppliants. In literary discussions, we get an image of supplication as a complex matter in which various types of considerations (legal, religious, social, political) are involved in evaluating what to do with a suppliant. ὅσιος and δίκαιος could be selected by a speaker to support different types of such claims, and we will explore precisely how this is done. In the final part of the chapter, we shall return to our question regarding the diachronic attestation of ὅσιος & cognates. I will present a tentative explanation for the strongly increasing frequency of usage of ὅσιος and ἀνόσιος in the course of the fifth century.

1 Pleasing Gods and Pleasing Humans

Both ὅσιος and δίκαιος are evaluations of the morality of attitudes and actions. Moreover, as Rudhardt already pointed out: ‘les mots ὅσιος et δίκαιος sont très fréquemment associés, ou employés dans différents contextes de telle manière que leur étroite correspondance ne peut être mise en doute.’ From Hesiod onwards, δίκαιος is presented as a personification or goddess or as originating from Zeus. Thus, the moral judgment expressed by δίκαιος & cognates frequently has a religious element. Like ὅσιος & cognates, δίκαιος & cognates often expressed what is right from the imagined point of view of the gods, or Justice is presented as a divine principle itself. Here, the semantic networks of the two sets of lexemes overlap. But δίκαιος & cognates also have a number of other applications. To compare the semantic fields of ὅσιος, δίκαιος and their cognates, we will establish the prototypical usages of δίκαιος & cognates in the fifth century first. Studying the distribution of δίκαιος and derived adjectives, nouns and verbs (δίκαιος, ἄδικος, ἔκδικος, δικαιόω, etc.) by examining all individual
cases in the corpus is feasible here, due to the high frequency of occurrence of these lexemes. Since the general distribution of δίκαιος is well described, it will not be necessary to attempt such a comprehensive chart of its distribution either. The main spheres of meaning in the authoritative dictionaries (LSJ, Bailly, Montanari) identified for δίκαιος and δίκη in the classical period are:

- what is characteristic, customary;
- what is ‘right’ or ‘just’ from the assumed perspective of other humans or gods, who ‘point out’ the right direction;
- what is ‘right’ or ‘just’ because it shows a fair division, a proper balance;
- what is ‘right’ or ‘just’ because it conforms with what humans have legally committed to.3

The first three spheres of meaning may have been prototypical from the earliest attestations of δίκη. In chapter 2 we have seen that δίκη was used in the sense of ‘what is characteristic, what is customary’ from Homer onwards.4 Furthermore, δίκη and δίκαιος were used in a moral sense in Homer and Hesiod already, and this moral judgment was often linked to the divine perspective on events in these sources.5 The distributive idea of δίκη, prominent in the fifth century, seems to have been present from the earliest literature onwards, too. Consider, for example, the Homeric promise of two talents to the one who speaks δίκη in the ‘straightest way’ (ἰθύντατα). Palmer pointed out that ‘the underlying notion [is] … the drawing of a line’.6 By contrast, deciding for a ‘crooked’ δίκη results in an unbalanced and therefore unfair situation.7 The term δίκη also surfaces in those situations in which characters discuss divisions in privileges

3 What is characteristic, customary: LSJ s.v. δίκαιος A1, δίκη I 1, 2; Bailly s.v. δίκη I; Montanari s.v. δίκη a. What is just (in the eyes of gods and men): LSJ s.v. δίκαιος A2, δίκη II, III; Bailly s.v. δίκαιος A δίκη II; Montanari s.v. δίκαιος a, δίκη b. What is just, showing a proper division, balance or order: LSJ s.v. δίκαιος B I 1a, δίκη II. What is just because humans have legally committed to it: LSJ s.v. δίκαιος B I 1b, 2, δίκη III, IV; Bailly s.v. δίκαιος A II, δίκη: II, III; Montanari s.v. δίκαιος b, δίκη b, c. The dictionaries give some other senses of these lexemes, which seem less central: e.g. LSJ s.v. δίκη v: Pyth. name for three or five; Bailly s.v. δίκαιος A 2 humain, civilisé, A3, euph. of sacred snake; B II 2 real, genuine; Montanari s.v. δίκαιος c esatto, preciso (of numbers).

4 As was argued in Chapter 2, section 5, this sense of δίκη is found in the Odyssey (e.g. Od. 14.59–60, 24.254–255) and later in the construction genitive + δίκην ‘in the way of’ (e.g. Pi. p. 2.84, s. f 659.4 TGF).

5 Chapter 2, section 5. As I discussed, it is a matter of debate whether δίκη is a moral term in its earliest attestations.


7 Robbiano 2005:189.