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αἷος/αὖς, αἷο/αὖ and εὔο

Etymological dictionaries usually give three different etymologies for αἷος/αὖς, αἷο/αὖ and εὔο. The first term would derive from *sauos "dry" in Lith. sūsis, O.Sl. suchi, O.I. šeja, etc. (cf. forms with *sui- as O.I. šuyai); the second is compared with Lat. haudio, O.Nor. anu "to draw water"; and the verb εὔο is universally acknowledged as derived from *euiō "to burn", just like O.I. ἐχαί, Lat. ēro.

As against this general thesis, I believe it highly plausible that all these words really have a common etymology related to the idea of "fire", "to pick up fire". In fact, I believe that the root witnessed in εὔο that derives from IE *euiō is the same as that to be found in the other two words.

Really, the two etymologies of the first two words are phonetically possible in themselves, although that of αἷος/αὖς still poses certain problems. Yet as the semantics of all these words is originally the same and as one may always start with the root of εὔο, phonetically speaking, I believe that the simplest explanation should prevail over the more complex one: one and the same root corresponds to one and the same semantics.

As I said above, there are a few phonetic problems for the first etymology as it is commonly given (for example, in the etymological dictionaries of Frisk and Chantraine). They are not the chief difficulty, but should nevertheless be pointed out.

It is, as I said before, a question of αἷος/αὖς. The truth is that an Indo-European *sauos is not to be witnessed and is only established through comparison with the Greek word, that is, by means of a vicious circle: *sauos or *sousos is more plausible. Above all, it is difficult to explain the alternation between forms with and without spiritus asper, these being more frequent. What LSJ says and, along with him the etymological dictionaries, is not true: that there is a spiritus asper in Attic. I find it in the ms, in Ar. Εq 534; elsewhere as Alex. 158 and Call. SHell 288.52, it is a question of editorial corrections. But there are traces of the spiritus asper in compound verbs such as ἀφραίανε, χαθαίανε, not to mention αἷο (which Frisk relates to this adjective, whilst he separates αἷο).

Obviously, it may be thought² that the form with psilosis is ἅλωtic, widespread as from Homer; Kiparisky attributes the accent specifically to Lesbian. It may also be thought to be Ionic, for the word is in Hdt. and Hp., although in this case nothing could be said about the accent (which is not at all anomalous, on the other hand). Yet the word has a more general usage, it is found, for example, in the Comic dramatists with and without the spiritus asper. In fact, a vacillation was introduced with regard to the spiritus, no more nor less than in αἷο/αὖ, which we shall discuss later.

And this is not usual in words that come from roots with an initial s-. On the other hand, in a series of words that etymologically begin with au- or u- (as is acknowledged the case for αἷο) this fluctuation is indeed frequent.³ This is just one more reason for doubts to arise as to the lack of a relationship between αἷος/αὖς and αἷο/αὖ (I have already said that Frisk gives a different etymology to these last two forms).

But let us return to the main point. This is that the semantics of the three words we are concerned with is the same.

If εὔο is "to burn", the oldest use of αἷος/α всег means, within the concept of "dry", that it is a question of inflammable material that burns easily: it is something like "easy to set fire to, that burns easily" (cf. in O.I. ἐχαί alongside ἐχαί, in Lat. uti alongside ēro). This is the first entry in our DGE: I 1 secq ref. easy-burning ξύλον ll. 23.327, δέντρον Od 5.240, ἔλαιον Pl. Lg 761b, δευγόν Call. SHell 288.52, Paus. 7.18.11. Of course, in Homer himself the meaning "dry" already appears when speaking of well-tanned hides; this is an obviously secondary use. The most frequent references are still to wood and vegetables in general.

This is far clearer as far as the verb αἷο is concerned, it is unrealistic to separate it from αἷο (in Hdt. Gr. 2.133 αἷον ἔμφασιν cf. also ἄφρα Λάρ. Eq. 394 but ψαβόν Alcm. 31 PMG.). Here, both Frisk and Chantraine note that the reference to fire is normal: the verb means "to start burning", "to light up" as from its first appearance in Od. 5.490. A series of words such as ἐξωσκίνει, ποῦρανος and πυροπότης (cf. Myc. παρατατομ), in the dual mean tongs for "picking up fire". The πυροπότης, a kind of butterfly, has been interpreted as the "one who picks up fire",⁴ and the verbs ἐκαίο, ἐλεύο habitually mean "to pick up fire". It is clear that "to pick up fire" from a brand or torch that were kept for this purpose is a usage

² With Burges, REJE 1, 1939, p.451 and Kiparisky, l.c.
derived from "to set fire to", a meaning that on the other hand is at times preserved: really, the translation is often ambiguous (thus in Arat. 1036) and Hsch. and the Scholists habitually translate the forms of αἰβό as "to burn".

Why, then, should one separate αἴβος/αἴβος from αἴβο/αἴβο if one also adds that both words took an -s after the - in exactly the same way as εἶβο; Αἴβης/Αἴβης is quoted in relation to αἴβος; Αἴβηστή, πυρηνήστη, in relation to αἴβο, etc. I would stress that this is a case of one and the same root. Cf. also in Hsch. αἴβόν/ἐγρόν, with preservation of the -s which is certainly analogous.

The reason for saying that "wahrscheinlich, die Beziehung auf das Feuer sekundär ist" (Friske), that "l'emploi de αἴβο à propos du feu que l'on prend est ancien en grec, mais accidentel!" (Chantaine), is the desire to maintain the relationship with Lat. haurio, O.Nor. ausa which is "to take out" (water, etc.). An article by E.K. Borthwick on αἴβο that I have quoted before (l.c., pp.306-313) meticulously scrutinises the use of this verb in an attempt to deduce the meaning "to take out fire" from an older one "to take out". Yet, apart from an ξάδεινι ξειίναν by Hsch. that shows nothing, all that he finds are a few derived or figurative uses, such as when in Ptolemy. Cim. 10 there is mention of πότισιν το ψάντω αυ και πυρὸς ἐνυδαίων, or when an epigramme by Nossis (A.P. 7.718.2) mentions τῶν Σωτηρίων χοριτῶν ἄνθους ἐνυδατομενός.

Borthwick is at least explicit. He accepts the possibility that all the passages that he quotes could be translated as "draw fire" (his above-mentioned exception from Aratus is not an exception). He moreover begins his article by giving his starting-point: West's interpretation of αἴβο as "to take by scooping, to draw" on the explicit basis of its common etymology with Lat. haurire. Time and again, an etymological prejudice is the cause of the facts being ignored.

The truth is that, if one wishes to maintain this connection, one has to start backwards: one has to accept that, as from "pick up fire", the verb then passed into Latin and Norse to mean "to take", as in certain secondary examples from Greek. After all, a few examples are preserved in which haurio is used in Latin when speaking of fire.5

It is therefore impossible to separate αἴβο/αἴβο from αἴβος/αἴβος. Both meaning and form coincide. On the other hand, the meaning is indeed close to that of εἶβο and one should research whether the etymology is also connected with the well known and by no means doubtful etymology of this verb. This is the subject we shall discuss below.

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We have, therefore, on the one hand εἶβο- and εἶβο- on the other, with the same meaning of "to burn, to pick up fire". The relationship seems clear: εἶβο- is a full degree, αἴβο- a zero degree with a prothetic vowel. Quite probably, we are faced with one and the same root.

The long series of roots with similar treatments, beginning with the group ἄδος may be compared: I refer to my Estudios... mentioned above, p.110ff. In these roots, both in the full degree (P) and in the θ degree, we occasionally find a prothetic a-, derived from the development of *H (laryngeal with implosive pronunciation that closes the syllable). Alongside Hitt. ḫūz "to live", there is P.Gr. ἄδως, ὧς (laws, etc., but also Gr. ἄδος, and ὧs Gr. ἄδως (with reduplication). Or we could quote from other roots, Gr. ἄδαλα (P) together with aἴβο (θ); Hitt. ḫubā "grandfather", Lat. avus (both θ with and without prothesis); Hitt. ḫaw- "to dress", Gr. ἀργυρα, Lat. vestis (P), alongside Lith. āumė "to put one's shoes on". In our book and in the relevant bibliography, many more examples may be found.

This explanation may be useful to understand the difference between the regular spiritus asper in εἶβο and the vacillating one in αἴβο/αἴβο/αἴβο. It is well known that the spiritus of εἶβο comes from the aspiration derived from the intervocalic -s, which is taken to the beginning of the word: *Hessu > *eisu > εἶβο. On the other hand, the forms with au- in θ degrees of diverse languages (derived from *Hes- ) only very irregularly take an aspiration derived from the laryngeal: there is one in Arm. haw "grandfather", Lat. haurio (it comes from our root) and one should also recall sporadic aspirations in the full degree (Gr. κατία quoted above).

Really, αἴβο- is habitual in Greek and not αἴβο-. Of course in our case one could postulate that *aus-V should give *auh-V > *haw-V. But it occurs that even in parallel roots with intervocalic -s we have au- without the spiritus asper. Thus in asu quoted above, from *Hesăh in ās < ās (cf. άσθεάνως). It is not easy to explain the phenomenon why the intervocalic -h- aspiration is regularly transferred before initial e- and not before a-; it is however thus. It is so to the point that I suspect that the rare and anomalous aspiration of αἴβος, αἴβο, αἴβον may be analogical precisely with εἶβο.

The only small problem lies in the fact that the forms of the θ degree with au- usually come from roots that begin with ἄδος, whilst here we have Ηes. Yet obviously, *Hes- "to live" and *Hes- "to burn" are two different roots that nevertheless coincide in the θ degree, and of course, in the form of same with prothetic vowel (aus-). Roots with a similar organization, that is, ending in resonant plus another phoneme and able to take a
De Pollux à Deukalion: la racine *deu-k- "briller, voir"

1. Deuk- "voir, briller" en mycéien et dans gr. δεικνύω, (ἐν)δεικνύω
2. Exemples d’autres racines de sens "voir, briller"
3. Étymologie de gr. δεικνύω: hitt. dig:get-, alb. dukem
4. Absence de rapport entre δεικνύω et δεικνύω
5. Problèmes sémantiques au premier millénaire: δεικνύως
6. Emplois et explications anciennes de δεικνύως
7. Polysemie et le vocabulaire de la coloration ornementale
8. Polysemie, δεικνύως (φωνή) et l’interférence entre son et lumière
9. Hom. δεικνύως: μήμως, thème et kenning
10. δείκτης kenning
11. Identifiaction de la vie (survie) et de la vision-brillance
12. Pollux
13. Deukalion

1. D’un radical deuk-, le mycéien a un nom de mois (de-u-ki-jo-jo me-ros, gén., KN Fp 1.1), et des anthroponymes: de-u-ki-jo, nomin., MY Au 102.7; de-u-ke-ro, KN U 0478.7; de-u-ka-ri-jo, PY An 654.12. Le même radical apparaît, au premier millénaire, dans des formes à vocalisme identique: présent δεικνύω; noms propres mythiques Deukalión, Πολυδείκτης; appellatifs composés signifiants poluo-, peri-, ἀ-, ἐν-δεικτής (d’où peut être tiré le simple δεικτής); ont le degré zéro ενδεικτικός et ενδεικτικόν.

Les plus vivantes de ces formes (δεικτής, ενδεικτικός) sont réputées de sens incertain, et ont, par conséquent, reçu des étymologies diverses (§ 5). Mais l’on peut en préciser la valeur sémantique et l’origine à partir du verbe: δείκνυο φλέστω, Et. M. 260, 5; δείκτης φροντίζει, Hsch. Comme le passage à "prendre soin" (φροντίζει) d’un verbe de sens "regarder, voir" est banal, on attribuera à δείκνυο le sens "voir" de φλέστω. Et l’on mettra en rapport avec ce sens l’exception "briller", d’où "paraître", et "être semblable" des gloses d’Hésychius 1.

1 Gloses inexplicées, selon P. Chantraine, D.E.L.G., s. v. δεικτής.