


Udones Cilicii

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Abstract: This paper provides a new etymology for Greek οὐδών ‘a kind of felt-shoe’. It argues that the Proto-Indo-European verb **h₁audʰ(h₂)-* ‘to put on footwear’ provides a formally and semantically fitting origin, if it was a loanword from Luwian, thereby supporting the antique connection of this word with Cilicia.

Keywords: Albanian, Ancient Greek, Armenian, Cilician, Luwian, Martial, Proto-Indo-European.

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Resumen: Este artículo propone una nueva etimología para el griego antiguo οὐδών ‘tipo de zapato de fieltro’. Se argumenta que el verbo protoindoeuropeo **h₁audʰ(h₂)-* ‘ponerse el calzado’ ofrece un origen formal y semánticamente adecuado en caso de tratarse de un préstamo del luwita, lo que confirmaría la conexión antigua de esta palabra con Cilicia.

Palabras clave: albanés, griego antiguo, armenio, cilicio, luwita, Marcial, protoindoeuropeo.

Summary: 1. The problem. 2. Proto-Indo-European **h₁audʰ(h₂)-* ‘to put on footwear’. 3. οὐδών. 4. Conclusions.

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1. The problem

The origin of the Greek word οὐδών ‘a kind of felt-shoe’ is unclear. It is generally supposed to be a *Fremdwort* from Cilician (Neumann 1961: 33), for two reasons:

- a) the formulation of Pollux, *Onomast.* 10.50 (ἐπὶ τῶν ὀνομαζομένων οὐδώνων ‘on the so-called οὐδώνων’) points to a foreign word (LEW/II: 740);
- b) ‘*udones Cilicii*’ are the object of one of Martial’s epigrams (14.141 [140])²: *Udones Cilicii. Non hos lana dedit sed olentis barba mariti; Cinyphio poterit planta latere sinu*, «Wool did not supply these, but the beard of a smelly husband. The foot will be able to hide in a Cinyphian shelter» (transl. D.R. Shackleton Bailey).

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² GEW/II: 442 (translated into English in Beekes 2010: 1124); DELL: 1265; DELG: 836 (but only «éventuellement»).

Although the presence of Anatolian loans in Greek is well established³, Kölligan (2017: 39 n. 31) rightly pointed out that no apt word has been found until now in the Anatolian languages. That said, he also added that the early proposal, a connection to Proto-Germanic **ʷantuz* ‘glove’ (Pettersson 1922: 23–24 via **ʷodʷōn*; for his alternative proposal see below), is not possible; and that his own proposal, a connection of οὐδών to ὑδέω ‘nennen’ < *‘Gedichte weben’ < **Hyd-éje/o-* ‘weben’ via **Hoʷd-o-/ōn-* ‘gewebeartig’ ([‘f]ormal möglich ...?) is «sehr unsicher». In the following I will argue that recent progress in Indo-European linguistics can help us to make some steps forward.

2. Proto-Indo-European **h₂au̯dʰ(h₁-)* ‘to put on footwear’

Imberciadori (in Demiraj & Imberciadori 2023) convincingly argued that both the Albanian word *mbath* ‘(Schuhe) anziehen’, which is frequently explained from a morphologically unclear derivative of PIE **h₂eu̯(H)-* ‘(Fußbekleidung) anziehen’ (see there for references; cf. also LIV²: 275) and the Armenian word *awd* ‘footwear’, which is generally derived from **h₂eu̯dʰ-* (Martirosyan 2010: 150 with refs., add Martzloff 2016: 128) receive a straightforward and regular common explanation from a lexicalised light verb construction PIE **h₂eu̯dʰh₁-* ‘(Fußbekleidung) anziehen’⁴. However, as Melchert (2022: 198) now argues on the basis of Anatolian evidence that exclude initial **h₂-* and **h₃-* (Hitt. *unu-* <ú-nu-> ‘adorn’ < **h₁u-néu/nu-*), we must modify the underlying verb as **h₁au̯(H)-*, and, accordingly, the present root as **h₁au̯dʰh₁-* (Imberciadori in print)⁵. Nevertheless, Ittzés (2024) challenged the widely (though not unanimously) held view that pairs like **h₁au̯(H)-*: **h₁au̯(H)dʰh₁-* go back to lexicalised light verb constructions. Indeed, on formal grounds a reconstruction **h₁au̯(H)-*: **h₁au̯(H)dʰ-* is equally possible and there might be other explanations for the ‘enlargement’ with **-dʰ-* (for an alternative origin see, e.g., the discussion in Ittzés 2024: 14 n. 26, 23 with refs.). Since the connection of the two stems is obvious on semantic grounds, and the exact morphological nature of this connection has no relevance for the present paper, I leave this question open and work with the neutral reconstruction **h₁au̯dʰ(h₁-)*. Based on the formal and semantic closeness I propose that the origin of οὐδών is to be sought in this root.

³ No exhaustive and up-to-date compilation of these loans exists; the most detailed treatment can be found in Simon 2018, who, however, did not take into account this word (cf. Simon 2018: 379).

⁴ If the primary verb had been **h₂eu̯H-*, whence **h₂eu̯Hdʰh₁-*, **H* would already have been lost in PIE according to the Lex Schmidt–Hackstein, i.e., *CH.CC > *C.CC in non-initial position (Hackstein 2002: 14–15). This was challenged by Byrd (2015: 88–134), who restricted the rule to *PC.CC > *P.CC (P = plosives) and claimed that «there are no reconstructable exceptions» to his rule (Byrd 2015: 113, emphasis in the original). However, in doing so, Byrd did not even discuss **keu̯h₂-* > **keu̯h₂dʰh₁o-* ‘schlagen’ (Hackstein 2002: 14–15; De Vaan’s criticism [EDL: 149] is not formally justified) which provides an analogical case to **h₂eu̯Hdʰh₁-*. Note furthermore that the univibration itself may lead to irregular phonological reduction, which can also explain the loss of the laryngeal (Ittzés 2024: 15, 18 with ref.), and that the presence of the laryngeal in this specific root is not required (contrary to the claim of LIV²: 275, the assumption of a laryngeal does not explain the forms in the daughter languages better [although adding that «ist aber nicht sicher»), as it requires a series of partly unmotivated analogical changes in Baltic and Armenian [cf. also EDBIL: 73: «clearly in conflict with the Balto-Slavic evidence»), while a PIE form without laryngeal requires only a single Slavic analogical change, see the analysis of Klingenschmitt 1982: 176–177).

⁵ An anonymous reviewer claimed that «the reconstruction of a phoneme **a* (...) is problematic for most scholars in the field» (referring to Pronk 2019). This is a seriously misleading characterisation. The absence of **a* in the Proto-Indo-European phoneme system is only one of the unproven dogmas of the Leiden school (cf. Weiss 2020: 45: ‘untenable’), mainstream Indo-European linguistics does reconstruct **a* (see, e.g., Byrd 2018: 2057–2058; Weiss 2020: 45–46; Fritz & Meier-Brügger 2021: 94–95, all with examples and refs.). In fact, Pronk himself provides a list of dozen examples (2019: 153), in which he was not able to exclude **a* and could not provide evidence for his laryngealistic substitutions (unless someone wants to follow Pronk in explaining **ǵʰans-* ‘goose’ from **ǵʰeh₂-* ‘to yawn, to open the mouth’ (!)). Moreover, to explain this specific case, Pronk opted for **h₂eu̯(H)-* (2019: 127), but **h₂* is excluded by the Hittite form (Kloekhorst 2008: 919). Therefore, Kloekhorst 2008: 919–920 argued for **h₃eu-* (which does not lead to the Armenian form, admitted by him), and he claimed that the loss of **h₃* before **u* was regular in Hittite, for which, however, he does not have assured evidence (2006: 90; 2008: 75–76, 933–934). In other words, a reconstruction PIE **h_{2/3}eu̯(H)-* is currently not possible. Accordingly, the reviewer’s claim that the root should appear as ***kuT-* in Luwian and Cilicia is false.

3. οὐδών

The obvious problem is that we do not know the language from which οὐδών actually comes, *i.e.*, from Greek or from something else. As Petersson (1922: 23) pointed out, Pollux's formulation can also mean that it was a Greek dialectal word. Moreover, it has to be added that the formulation does not necessarily imply that it is a loanword at all. Neumann's claim that Martial's formulation is to be understood as a gloss (1961: 33) is simply mistaken. The repeated conclusion, based on Martial's formulation, that οὐδών is Cilician is not necessarily correct: while it is well known that a product can carry and keep a geographical reference in its name during the borrowing process, it is also possible that the term refers only to a style, and thus the word itself has nothing to do with the geographical reference. That is, *udones Cilicii* could also mean *udones* made in Cilician style without *udones* necessarily being a Cilician word (consider, *e.g.*, the term «Greek yoghurt»: the word 'yoghurt' has nothing to do with the Greek language, since it is an etymologically Turkish word). Referring to Latte (1915: 387 n. 1), Neumann (1961: 33 n. 1) and Kölligan (2017: 39 n. 31) also point out that the term 'Cilician' could have been used in a derogatory sense for 'Asian' (and not Hellenistic, *contra* Neumann and Kölligan), without implying a real Cilician origin (in fact, *OLD*: 2018 talks about a «prob[ably] Asian origin»). Furthermore, it is entirely possible that the term 'Cilician' was not as precise as we would wish to be. Considering all these problems, the only viable solution is to take into account and evaluate all possible origins. Although due to its late attestation and supposed geographical origin this may include several languages, based on its obvious closeness to the Indo-European terms mentioned above, I restrict the possibilities to the realm of the Indo-European languages.

The obvious first possibility is that we are dealing with a genuine Greek word. However, it cannot be an inherited Greek word from **h₂ad^h(h₂)-* since PIE **a_u* and **d^h* do not lead to Greek οὐ and δ, and the latter problem remains even if we assume an *o*-grade form.

If οὐδών is not Greek, but a borrowing, this does not necessarily mean that it was Cilician since, as mentioned above, 'Cilician' could have been used here in a derogatory sense or to refer to a style, without any etymological implications in either case. Still, the label 'Cilician' requires an explanation; it is probably at least a rough geographic indication. Accordingly, we should look for a (geographically) Anatolian origin (the remaining Indo-European languages are anyway unlikely due to the time gap between οὐδών and the alleged borrowing). In this case, among the (linguistically) non-Anatolian Indo-European languages we find Phrygian and Proto-Armenian (*i.e.*, the precursor of the attested *awd* or a cognate of it). In fact, Petersson (1922: 23-24) already suggested that the word could be «Thracο-Phrygian» (he reconstructed **μoδμoδn*). However, both a Proto-Armenian and a Phrygian etymology face phonological and historical-geographical problems. Both languages preserved PIE **a_u* (*cf.*, *e.g.*, Obrador-Cursach 2020: 70-71 and Macak 2017: 1068-1069; thus, the attested Armenian word or its precursor cannot be the source of οὐδών), and this would exclude both derivations. In order to save these connections, one might assume a τόμοϝ-type *o*-grade form, **h₂o_ud^h(h₂)-o-* (that would have eventually received a Greek suffix, *cf.* below). This is not unproblematic in either case but there is no conclusive argument against it: the Phrygian reflex of PIE **a_u* is in fact unknown (Obrador-Cursach 2020: 65-66 with discussion) and the Proto-Armenian change **o_u* > **qi* is to be dated after the Parthian loans (Ravnæs 2005: 201), and thus, a loan (with sound substitution for **o_u*, perhaps in both cases) is chronologically feasible (on the chronology of the Greek vowel see below). As for PIE **d^h*, both Phrygian and Armenian have a fitting *d* (Obrador-Cursach 2020: 70-71; Macak 2017: 1051, resp.). As for the path of the borrowing, a borrowing via Cilicia (to explain the label Cilician) is not very probable since neither the Phrygian nor the Proto-Armenian speaking territories bordered Cilicia (although Hiyawa, the political precursor of Cilicia, bordered both Phrygian-speaking and Armenian territories at one point in its history in the 6th c. BC, Simon 2021b: 682 with refs.). It would be more justifiable to attribute this borrowing to the general Phrygian-Greek contacts, and, somewhat vaguely, to the growing presence of Greek speakers in Anatolia in general in the case of Proto-Armenian.

All in all, a Phrygian or Proto-Armenian explanation of οὐδών is not impossible, although not free from problems. Therefore, it is worth investigating whether the remaining possibility, if

οὐδῶν is indeed Cilician, *i.e.*, Anatolian, and more precisely Luwian⁶, leads to a more economical solution. It must be emphasized that due to the fragmentary transmission of Luwian and the Anatolian languages in general it is no surprise that οὐδῶν is not yet attested⁷. From a historical and phonological point of view, a Luwian derivation from **h₁ayd^h(h₁)-* is completely regular: **h₁* is lost (certainly by this time), **-d^h-* lost its aspiration (while intervocalic /d/ may undergo rhotacism in Luwian, non-rhotacised forms are kept until the end of the inscripational period), and PIE **ay* became *ū* in Luwian (Melchert 1994: 265), οὐ is its perfect transcription from the 5th c. BC (but at the latest from the mid of the 4th c. BC) onwards (*e.g.*, Allen 1968: 73-75).

What remains is the morphology. Since -ῶν is a productive Greek suffix (Schwyzer 1939: 488) and no fitting Luwian suffix is known, most probably we are dealing with either the Greek suffixation of the borrowed Luwian word or its Hellenisation (implying that οὐδῶν is no longer a *Fremdwort* but an integrated loanword). Therefore, the stem of the Luwian word is unclear, but the simplest explanation is a deverbal thematic stem (not all *a*-stems became *i*-mutating stems in Luwian; some of them were kept as *a*-stems, such as *huha-* ‘grandfather’, for its paradigm, see Bauer 2020). This is the simplest explanation from the Greek point of view, too, since Greek words could be productively derived from thematic bases (in this case, from a Luwian loanword) via the suffix -ῶν.⁸

To sum up, the proposal of a Cilician (Luwian) etymology of οὐδῶν is more straightforward than a Phrygian / Proto-Armenian one, since it does not include unclear phonological rules or require entangled paths of borrowing.

4. Conclusions

The PIE verb **h₁ayd^h(h₁)-* ‘to put on footwear’ (perhaps a lexicalised light verb construction **h₁ayd^hh₁-*) established by Imberciadori explains not only Albanian *mbath* ‘put on (shoe)’ and Armenian *awd* ‘footwear’, but also Greek οὐδῶν ‘a kind of felt-shoe’. On formal and historical-geographical grounds the most probable explanation of Greek οὐδῶν is that it is a loanword from Cilician, *i.e.*, a late variety of Luwian; adding one more case for the growing corpus of Anatolian loanwords in Greek.

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⁶ Since we do not know what happened to the Luwian language after the last inscriptions commissioned in this language roughly in the early 7th c. BC, one may cautiously label Cilician only as Luwic. However, the likelihood that speakers of a new language immigrated to Cilicia after this period *and* went completely unnoticed is extremely remote.

⁷ Despite the formal similarity, Carian *wdwn* (E.Th 13), of unknown meaning, should be dismissed: if the graffito E.Th 13 indeed reads ¹*dbiks kbjom^s wdwn sb asbst* ²*ewm* «Dbiks, (son) of Kbjom, *wdwn* and *asbst ewm*» (it has never been published in a scholarly way), *wdwn* seems to refer to the subject, Dbiks, and thus it seems to be a title or profession. For other possible comparanda (including an alleged Pisidian form), see the critical discussion in Simon 2021a.

⁸ An association with semantically close words such as χιτών ‘chiton’ or ποδῆων ‘foot-end of an animal skin, strip, or sheet’, may have had a catalyzing role in this process, especially because also χιτών is a loanword from the “East”, and thus the ending ῶν could have been perceived also as a sign of “oriental” loans for clothing. I am very thankful for an anonymous reviewer for his/her remarks on the Greek derivation.

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