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## MILLET (*Panicum L.*) IN LITHUANIAN AND OTHER INDO-EUROPEAN LANGUAGES

**Abstract:** It is a well-known fact that Lithuanian demonstrates numerous archaic features. They are not only of the phonological or grammatical nature, but also of the lexical character. After discussing all the Indo-European terminology for 'millet' (genus '*Panicum*'), the author concludes that Lithuanian as the only one Indo-European language preserved the ancient distinction of two main species of 'millet' in a generally unchanged form, i.e. Lith. *sóros* 'common millet' versus *málnos* 'Italian millet'. A possible trace of the third species seems to be present in Lith. *dirvą* 'sown-field, corn-field', thus showing a semantic generalization.

**Contents:** 1. Introduction; 2. General characteristics of the genus *Panicum L.*; 3. The oldest centres of cultivation; 4. Lexical evidence: 4.1. \**melHi* 'Italian millet, *Setaria italica* Beauv.'; 4.2. \**swaH<sub>2</sub>raH<sub>2</sub>* (f.) 'common millet, *Panicum miliaceum L.*'; 4.3. ? \**prokom* (n.) 'common millet, *Panicum miliaceum L.*'; 4.4. \**kers-* 'millet'; 4.5. \**H<sub>2</sub>órg<sup>w</sup>heno-* 'a kind of millet, perhaps Italian millet, *Setaria italica* Beauv.'; 4.6. \**dřwaH<sub>2</sub>* (f.) 'a kind of millet, *Panicum dactylon L.*', in the West Indo-European dialects also 'rye-grass, *Lolium temulentum L.*'; 5. Conclusions. 6. References.

### 1. Introduction.

In the present paper I would like to present a comprehensive study of Indo-European terminology concerning the designation of millet (*Panicum L.*).

My description is not limited to a mere enumeration of relevant lexical material, but it is an attempt at reviewing the hitherto existing etymologies, as well as drawing possible lexical parallels from outside Indo-European languages, especially those belonging to the Nostratic superfamily. The designations of cereal plants have not only the value of a lexical unit in the Indo-European protolanguage, but they also constitute irrefutable evidence for the origins of human civilization, man's primaeval relationship with nature, the contacts of various developed agricultures as well as the cultural and ecological changes in human environment. Agriculture played an important or even dominant role in the life of Proto-Indo-European people. According

to the views expressed by historians of material culture, archeologists, ethnologists and as evidenced in the earliest written texts, agriculture among the various Proto-Indo-European peoples was at a relatively high level.

Some students of Indo-European problems, however, subscribe to the conviction about the typically 'pastoral' character of the Proto-Indo-Europeans. As a consequence, the results of the multilevel research into the history of agriculture will, to a great extent, be useful in further studies of the ethnogenesis and topogenesis of the Indo-European people.

Such a comprehensively viewed goal necessitates an interdisciplinary approach. With respect to methodology, I try to follow the tradition of cultural palaeolinguistics and the 'Wörter und Sachen' school. The present study is, as a result, an attempt at a systematic synthesis of all available data: linguistic, historical, archeological, botanical and ecological. Its bulk was created by analogy to dictionary entries which offer the following information according to a unified structure, assumed in advance:

- (a) basic, botanical and ecological data concerning millet;
- (b) evidence of millet cultivation, beginning with the first neolithic agricultures of the Middle East and Europe;
- (c) protolinguistic reconstruction with respect to relevant terminology, comprising a detailed enumeration of forms in various branches of the Indo-European family arranged in the following order: Indo-Aryan (IA.), Kafir (K.), Dardic (D.), Iranian (Ir.), Tocharian (T.), Anatolian (An.), Greek (Gk.), Armenian (Arm.), Albanian (Alb.), Palaeo-Balkan languages (PB.), Italic (It.), Celtic (C.), Germanic (G.), Baltic (B.) and Slavic (S.). This lexical set is completed by basic bibliographical references;
- (d) commentary concerning, as a rule, semantic and phonological problems. The morphological structure of plant names is analysed in cases where it is of special value in the reconstruction of the original meaning, etc.;
- (e) the etymology of names, solved within the historical-comparative approach first and foremost (if not exclusively) on the basis of Indo-European linguistics;
- (f) external lexical parallels taken from non-Indo-European languages together with a discussion as to whether we deal with a possible common Nostratic ancestry, as opposed to general-cultural terms adopted or borrowed, or with accidental correspondences;
- (g) a short presentation of conclusions derived from the lexical material.

Among the enumerated entries, the first and foremost place is held by those names of cereal plants which show correspondences in at least two independent Indo-European language branches. In some cases, isolated terms are also considered, which are characterized by a limited territorial range and uncertain archaic nature. Special emphasis has been placed on those lexical data which are traditionally omitted

in etymological dictionaries (this concerns modern Indo-Aryan, Kafir, Dardic, Iranian languages, Albanian or Armenian, and among „dead“ languages – Tocharian, Anatolian and Palaeo-Balkan languages), as well as on analogies from the non-Indo-European area which are either entirely excluded from consideration or are frequently incorrectly or imprecisely cited.

## 2. General characteristics of the genus *Panicum* L.

The systematization and nomenclature of millet is characterized by a considerable confusion which is evidenced in the great number of synonyms concerning the various varieties of millet. On the whole, cereal grasses designated as millet belong to different genera of the grass family (*Gramineae*).

In the European system of cultivation we meet with two basic types of millet: common millet (*Panicum miliaceum* L.) and Italian millet (*Panicum italicum* L. vel *Setaria italica* Beauv.). Both these types are processed into groats and are also used as food for poultry or, less often, for cattle. The common millet is sometimes used for beer production and spirits distillation. Italian millet, similarly to its wild species (*Setaria viridis* L.), is also employed as fodder grass.

The wild ancestor of the common millet (*Panicum miliaceum* L.) is apparently represented by its Abyssinian relative *Panicum callosum*. Italian millet (*Setaria italica* Beauv.) is, on the other hand, derived from its wild green type *Setaria viridis* L., which is a common weed widespread on a vast area of middle and southern Europe, northern Africa and almost the whole Asia (M o w s z o w i c z, 1948, 57). The Berlin ethnologist E. H a h n (1894, 603–608; 1896, 410–416) regarded millet as the first cultivated corn. Such a conclusion is all the more probable that millet (as opposed to all other types of corn) can be cultivated in a way similar to garden plants through digging, which is a technique evolutionarily older than ploughing (G a n s i n i e c, 1958, 6 and 10; N o w i ń s k i, 1970, 185).

## 3. The oldest centres of cultivation.

The common millet, as cultivated corn, finds its way to Europe already in early Neolithic Age via Anatolia and the Balkans as well as through Central Asia and northern coastal regions of the Black Sea (G a m k r e l i d z e - I v a n o v, 1984, 658). The first archeologically retrievable traces come from Argissa (central Thessaly), see R e n f r e w (1969, 160). Further palaeontological findings of millet come from numerous neolithic settlements in central and eastern Europe (e.g. in what is today Hungary, Romania, Thuringia, Switzerland and Poland). In the Bronze Age millet also spreads over to the Appenine Peninsula (R e n f r e w, 1973, 99). The common millet is not known from prehistoric contexts in India but is known in China and



Egypt (G a n s i n i e c, 1958, 11). The earliest findings in Mesopotamia date back to around 3000 B.C.

The Italian millet was created, according to some researchers (e.g. B e r t s c h, 1949), as a mutation of *Setaria viridis*. It was used in Switzerland as early as the Neolithic Age and was also present in numerous finds south of Danube, whereas its cultivated type *Setaria italica* known as Italian millet appeared in Alpine palafittes as late as the Bronze Age, and for a long time coexisted with the native type.

Caesar, Pliny and Strabo describe Italian millet as the main corn of the Iberians, well known and valued in Rome, cultivated in Italy. In the north, the cultivation of Italian millet basically reached as far as the Danube. It is only fair to agree with N o w i ń s k i (1970, 190) that, similarly to the common millet, *Setaria italica* „is one of the oldest plants cultivated by Aryan peoples, widely used for mash, caudle, pies and bread“ („ber jest to jedna z najstarszych roślin uprawnych ludów aryjskich, użytkowana na bryje, polewki, placki i chleb“).

In the times of Aristophanes, millet, with olive poured over it, was the normal food in the Athenian Prytaneion, for prytans and regular guests (G a n s i n i e c, 1958, 12–13). Similarly P l i n y (Nat. H. 18, 24–25) informs us that millet was used to make porridge in Campania and that Sarmatian tribes' staple food was mainly based on millet. He also mentions millet being used for mash and nonfermented wine making. In Bulgaria, fermented alcohol is still produced from millet, called *boza*. R e n f r e w (1973, 101) goes as far as to suggest that a similar beverage could have been made even in remote antiquity.

#### 4. Lexical evidence.

The following lexical material has been gathered during our work connected with compilation of a new etymological and comparative Indo-European dictionary at the Indo-European Lexicon Project <sup>1</sup>:

4.1. \**melH-i* (originally a heteroclitic *i/n*-stem) 'Italian millet, *Setaria italica* Beauv.' (Gk., ?Alb., ?C., It., G., B.).

Gk. (Ionic-Attic) *μελίνη* (f.), rarely *μέλινος* (m.) 'Italian millet / Kolbenhirse' | ? Alb. *mel* (m.) 'common millet, *Panicum miliaceum* L.', also '*Panicum crus-galli* L.' | ? OBret., Bret. *mell* (m.) 'millet' | Lat. *milium* (n.) 'common millet / Hirse, Rispenhirse'; Ital. *miglio*, OFr. *mil*, Fr. *millet*, Sp. *mijo*, Port. *milho*, Roum. *meiŭ* (M e y e r-L ü b k e

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RomEW 456–457), hence OE. *mīl* n., OHG. *milli* ‘Italian millet, *Setaria italica* Beauv.’ | ON. *melr*, Icel. *melur* (m.) ‘lyme-grass, *Elymus sabulosus* L.’ (M a n n IECD 751; differently V r i e s AnEW 383) | lit. *málna* (f.) ‘Schwaden, Süßgrass, Kolbenhirse’, *málnos* (f. pl.) ‘corn of Italian millet’ || SN I 504; WP II 287; IEW 718; IECD 751; Trautmann BSW 167; WH II 87–88; Fraenkel LEW I 402; Frisk GEW II 202; Chantraine DELG III 682; Sabaliauskas, 1958, 9.

Commentary: The adduced lexical material seems to indicate the original heteroclitic *i/n*-stem (cf. Pokorny IEW 718: „ursprüngl. Flexion \**mél-i-*, *-n-és-*“). The semantic and morphological correspondence of Greek and Lithuanian data is significant. What we have here are feminines which are derived by means of the same suffix (IE. \*-*naH*<sub>2</sub>) and which denote the same type of millet (*Setaria italica*). These common features are not reflected in the Latin term (neuter of *yo*-stem, referring to ‘*Panicum millaceum*’ or ‘*Sorghum vulgare*’, see André, 1985, 161–162). The status of the Albanian equivalent is not clear (if it was not a Latin or Romance borrowing, then the single *-l-* could possibly document the consonantal group *-ln-*, which would reflect some correspondence with the Greco-Baltic direction of derivation). The Breton word seems to be rather a Latin or Romance loan-word (as opposed to M a n n, 1968, 246; IECD 751), whereas the Icelandic words constitute an essential completing element here, which cannot be interpreted – because of their untypical meaning – as Latin loans. M a u r i z i o states that lyme-grass (*Elymus sabulosus* L.), as an exponent of the grass family, was not only gathered but sometimes also cultivated. „In some areas it served, for centuries, for bread making, or as surrogate corn. Plentiful, must have been the crops if, according to documents from the year 1343, a single household had the obligation to supply the Kirkjubaer cloister with 120 pounds of flour a year, made from lyme-grass“ (M a u r i z i o, 1926, 38)<sup>2</sup>. It seems that in the severe climate of Iceland lyme-grass was cultivated for grain and bread. At any rate, M a u r i z i o (1926:38) cites a Leunius, who „in his well-known book tells us that bread is backed from lyme-grass in Iceland“ („w swej znanej książce mówi, że z *Elymus* wypiekają w Islandii chleb“).

Etymology: No generally accepted etymology. The divergent explanations of the Indo-European term appear in the literature:

(1<sup>o</sup>) S c h r a d e r (1901, 374; SN I 504) derives the designation of millet as ‘Mahlfrucht’, from the Indo-European root \**mel(H)-* ‘to mill, break up, grind’ (cf. Lat. *molere*, Lith. *málti*), which seems to be a particularly popular solution, accepted by such researchers as Pokorny (IEW 718), M a n n (1968, 246) or G a m k r e l i -

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<sup>2</sup> „W niektórych okolicach służyła ona przez stulecia do wyrobu chleba, lub jako surogat zboża. Niemale musiały być zbiory, skoro według wiadomości z r. 1343-ego j e d n o gospodarstwo miało obowiązek dostarczania klasztorowi Kirkjubaer 120 funtów mąki z wydmuchrzy cy rocznie“.

d z e-I v a n o v (1984, 658). Objections arise mainly from the fact that „grinding of millet is rather exceptional, especially in prehistoric times“ („mielenie prosa jest raczej wyjątkowe, zwłaszcza w epoce archaicznej“), and it is, thus, difficult to agree with the advanced supposition that „millet should be called grist“ („proso miało się nazywać przemiałem“) (so G a n s i n i e c 1958, 12).

(2°) C h a n t r a i n e (DELG III 682) prefers a connection with the adjective μέλας, -ανος ‘black’ (PIE. \*melH<sub>2</sub>n-), cf. Fr. *millet noir* ‘common buckwheat / sarrasin’, G. *Mohrenhirse* ‘sorgo, *Sorghum vulgare*’ (N i e d e r m a n n 1927, 113). It would be a case of semantic inversion with respect to the Gk. ἄλφι, Alb. *elb* ‘barley, *Hordeum L.*’ vs. Gk. ἄλφός, Lat. *albus* adj. ‘white’.

(3°) Z. Gansiniec (1958, 12) repeats the old solution of Hahn for the designation of honey (Gk. μέλι, -ιτος n. < IE. \*melit-), thus recognizing millet as ‘honey grain’. The basis for such a derivation would be the supposed association in the minds of primitive people, who were able to observe that „bees collected honey from millet during the time of floescence“ („pszczoły zbierały miód z prosa podczas kwitnięcia“). The etymology is, however, the least certain, although it might be supported from the morphological point of view<sup>3</sup>.

Nostratics: No Nostratic solutions, which should not amaze, since the Italian millet is supposed to be a typically European achievement. This fact requires, then, the acceptance of some purely Indo-European etymology.

#### 4.2. \*swaH<sub>2</sub>r-aH<sub>2</sub> (f.) ‘common millet, *Panicum miliaceum L.*’ (Ir., ?PB., B.)

Alanic *huvar* ‘millet’ (glossed as *kovules*, i.e. Hung. *köles* ‘millet’, see N é m e t h 1959:16); Ossetic (Digoron) *xwar* ‘corn; grain; millet’, (Iron) *xor* ‘corn, barley, *Hordeum vulgare*’, also ‘rye’ in the dialects of the Anatolian Ossetians; Tadjik (dial.) *xūr* ‘grain’, NPers. *xwāra*, *xurak*, Pahl. *xwār* ‘food, nourishment’; Sogd. *γwr-* ‘barley’, attested in the compound form *γwrst’n-* [\**xwarastāna-*] ‘barley-field’, all from Ir. \**hwārā* (f.) ‘common millet’ | Lith. *sóra*, *sorà* f., usually in plural *sóros*, dial. also *sórės* ‘common millet’, Latv. *sāre*, dial. *sūra* f. ‘common millet / Rispenhirse’ || F r a e n k e l LEW II 857; A b a e v IESOJ IV 215–216.

It is not impossible to suggest a derivative of the above-mentioned item, namely IE. \**swr̥-no-* ‘a collection of Italian millet’ > ‘storage for millet grain’ > ‘barn, granary’<sup>4</sup>, cf. Lith. *svìrna* (f.), *svìrnas* (m.) ‘Speicher, Vorratskammer’ (F r a e n k e l LEW II 958) > Pol. dial. *świren*, *świreń*, Yidish (in Lithuania) *svirne*, Russ. *sviren*,

<sup>3</sup> For the designation of ‘honey’, J. P o k o r n y IEW 723 assumes a similar inflection: „*méli-t*, Gen. *mel-nés* ‘Honig’ n.“.

<sup>4</sup> An analogical development is seen in Lith. *jáuja* (f.) and *jáujas* (m.) ‘barn, granary’ < ‘storage for grain’ < Lith. *jāvas* ‘Getreide’ (I l l i c h - S v i t y c h, 1979, 54).

*sviron*, etc. (L a u č j u t e, 1982, 22) | Thrac. σῆρος (*sīrus*) m. ‘unterirdische Getreidekammer’ (D e t s c h e w, 1957, 449) | Avest. *xʷarəna-* ‘Nahrung’ < Ir. *\*hʷarəna-* ‘food, nourishment’, also borrowed in Slavic *\*chorna* ‘meal, food’, also ‘defence, protection’ (R e c z e k, 1968, 85–94) |

Commentary: The Indo-European term is reconstructed here for the first time. The semantic dispersion of the Iranian appellative is evidently secondary. A b a e v (IESOJ IV 215), being unaware of the existence of Baltic counterparts, observes: „The meaning ‘millet’ is very archaic. In his description of cereal plants, cultivated by Scythians – Ploughmen, Herodot (IV, 7) mentions millet“ [„Značenie ‘proso’ predstavljajetsja ves’ma drevnim. V perečne rastenij, vozdelyvaemyx skifami-paxarjami, Gerodot (IV, 7) nazывaet proso“]. The opinion of a specialist in Iranian languages must be respected, especially that the meaning of ‘millet’ was registered not only with the Ossetians, but also in the archaic dialect of the Hungarian Alans. The set of ancient derivatives of the *\*swaH<sub>2</sub>r-aH<sub>2</sub>* appellative contains, most probably, the Lithuanian designation of a granary, created regularly on the zero-grade of the root<sup>5</sup>, as well as its Thracian and Iranian equivalents. This appears to indicate that the area of spread of the relevant cereal term also included, at least in part, the Ancient Balkans (Thracian area).

Etymology: Not having noticed the Iranian equivalents, F r a e n k e l (LEW II 857) claims that „Die Etymologie ist umstritten“. S c h r a d e r (1901, 374; SN I 504) derives Lith. *sóra* as ‘Saatfrucht’ from the Lithuanian verb *sėti* ‘to sow’, which is impossible for phonetic reasons<sup>6</sup>. S m o c z y ŋ s k i (1989, 32) repeats the old etymology offered by Nieminen, according to which the Baltic words for ‘common millet’ are continuations of the primitive archetype *\*psārā* ‘grain for grinding’, cf. OInd. *psāti* ‘grinds in the teeth, chews’, Gk. ψάχω ‘I grind, crumble’. The above etymology is doubtful both from the point of view of phonetics<sup>7</sup> and semantics. On the other hand, the presence of the exact semantic and structural equivalents in Iranian allows, incontrovertibly, for reconstructing the Proto-Indo-European appellative *\*swaH<sub>2</sub>rāH<sub>2</sub>* ‘common millet’. Thus, the origin of the Baltic terms must be considered in conjunction with the Iranian designations. They might be possibly associated with the Indo-European root *\*swer-*, preserved on the Iranian ground in the form *\*xʷar-* ‘to eat, to protect’, which would enable explaining *\*swaH<sub>2</sub>rāH<sub>2</sub>* as *vṛddhi* with the meaning

<sup>5</sup> Let us add here, for the sake of precision, that the Indo-European cluster *\*sw-* is simplified in Baltic to *s-* in the position before a vowel (compare e. g. the Lithuanian and Indo-European terms for ‘sister’), but not before a sonant.

<sup>6</sup> The oscillation of IE. *\*ā* versus *\*ē* is highly irregular.

<sup>7</sup> All Baltic languages preserve the original *\*ps*, as indicated by S m o c z y ŋ s k i in his discussion on the Baltic word for ‘fist’ (1989, 71–73).



of ‘that which is suitable for eating’. However, this type of derivation, although quite popular in Indo-Iranian languages, has a weak position in the Baltic languages, which is why I would be more inclined to seek the explanation on the Nostratic ground.

Nostratics: On the ground of Semito-Hamitic languages, we can find the following lexical parallels: Ugarite *š'r* ‘barley’, Aram. *s<sup>e</sup>artā, sartā* (collectivum), Hebr. *še’ōrāh*, Arab. *sa’ir* (all from Proto-Semitic \**šu’ār-(at-)* ‘barley’ (Fronzaroli, 1969, 296–297), ? Linear A *sa-ru* ‘a type of corn’ (Stieglitz, 1975, 109), Egyptian *šrt* ‘barley’, Hausa *cararriya* ‘a kind of bean’ (< Chadic \**caHVr[a]*, see Orel-Stolbova, 1988, 76). Semantically closer terms also appear in Uralic languages: Mordv. E *šuro*, M *šorā* ‘corn, grain’, Cherem. *šüräš* ‘cereals, porridge’, Fin. *suurima, suurimo* (usually in the plural) ‘hulled, pearled grain; groats; grits’ (Collinder FUV 76), Yurak Samoyed *soora* ‘the seed of a coniferous tree’ (< Ur. \**šōra*). The phonetic correspondences between AA. \**ša’r[a]* ‘corn, barley’, Ur. \**šōra* ‘corn’ and IE. \**swaH<sub>2</sub>r-aH<sub>2</sub>* ‘common millet’ seem regular and allow the reconstruction of the Nostratic protoform (Nos. \**sāira*). The similarity of Lith. *sóra* to Mordv. *šuro* is, in Joki’s opinion (1973:60), quite accidental, which should be understood in the sense that both terms are not mutual borrowings but represent independent continuants of the Nostratic archetype.

#### 4.3. ? \**prokom* (n.) ‘common millet, *Panicum miliaceum* L.’ (B., S.)

OPrus. *prassan* (n.) ‘millet’ | OChSl. *proso*, SC. *pròso*, Bulg. *prosó*, Slovene *prosô*, Czech, Slovak, Polish, LSorb. *proso*, HSorb. *pšoso*, Polabian *prüsü*, Russ., Ukr., BRuss. *proso*, all from Slavic \**proso* (n.) ‘common millet’ || IEW 820; Vasmer REW III 378–379; Gluhak HER 506.

Commentary: The Old Prussian term for ‘millet’, *prassan*, is usually treated as an ancient loan from Slavic languages but the only (and quite insufficient) ground for this conclusion is the absence of the relevant term in the other Baltic languages. Even Levin, while mentioning the Old Prussian word in question among Slavic loans (1974, 98), puts a careful emphasis, in another part of his study, on the fact that „*prassan* could as readily be a cognate of Slavic \**proso* as a borrowing. Millet was known to Prussian and their ancestors independently of any Slavic influence“ (Levin, 1974, 55). What we witness here, rather, is some ancient lexical isogloss which should be included among other similar types of correspondences occurring between Old Prussian and Proto-Slavic, it is enough to compare the term for ‘broad bean’: OPrus. *babo*, Slavic \**bobъ* versus Lith. *pupà*, Latv. *pupa*.

Etymology: Schrader (1901, 374) gives a short but pointed comment: „Dunkel ist slav. *proso*, altpr. *prassan*“. He is quite right in saying so. The derivation from the Indo-European archetype \**prokom* (n.), suggested by Vasmer (REW III 378–379), Pokorny (IEW 820), Gluhak (1982, 128) and Gluhak (HER 506), is one of

a few possible solutions. A much better impression is created by the connection suggested in a different article (S t a l m a s z c z y k - W i t c z a k, 1992) with the Indo-European term for 'oats', \**kópr* (n.), although it also seems to be semantically uncertain, and the possible metathesis \**koprom* > \**prokom* remains in the sphere of unverifiable hypotheses. There have also been attempts at a common Slavic derivation of the word for 'millet' from the Indo-European root \**per-* 'to hit, strike' (PSl. \**perǵ*, *prati*) alternating supposedly with \**pro-* and expanded by means of the *s*-determinant. Millet would, thus, mean 'something pounded, hulled' > 'the hulling of millet grain' > 'millet grain' > 'millet' (S ę d z i k, 1977, 11; S p ó l n i k, 1990, 78). Unfortunately, the variant with \**pro-* is not evidenced and remains in contradiction with our present views on the variability of the Indo-European root. It is, thus, just another (although not very likely) eventuality. Highly hypothetical, and uncertain from the point of view of phonetics and semantics, is H o l z e r ' s suggestion (1989, 54–55), in which the Slavic word for 'millet' is derived as an alleged „Temamatisch“ (Kimmerian) loan originated from IE. \**bhrso-* 'barley'.

Nostratics: No references.

#### 4.4. \**kers-* 'millet' (An., ??Alb., It., G.)

Hitt. *karas̄-* 'a kind of wheat' | ?? Alb. *thjer* (m.) 'acorn', primarily perhaps 'food' < \**kerso-* | Sabine *ceres* (n.) 'bread' (C o n v a y, 1967, 362); Lat. *Ceres*, *-eris*, the Roman goddess of fertility and crops; Oscan *caria* 'bread' (C o n v a y, 1967, 231) | OHG. *hirsi*, *hirso* (m.) 'common millet, *Panicum miliaceum* L.', MHG. *hirs*, *hirse* (m.), German *Hirse* (f.), dial. *der Hirs* (m.) || SN I 504; WP I 408; IEW 577; WH I 204;

Commentary: The semantics of the German words – understood earlier as secondary ('millet' as 'Brotkorn') with respect to Italic data – is close to the chronologically earliest Hittite counterpart. Thus, the following semantic shift must be assumed, in this case, for common Italic: 'a kind of corn' > 'bread', which results perhaps from the fact that within Italy, according to reports by Columella and Pliny the Older, bread was popularly made from millet itself. In Albanian, there exists a different meaning 'acorn' which is commonly explained through the fact that acorns constitute, in times of poor crops and famine, an easily available source of food, substituting cereal meals. In ancient times, they were eaten with pleasure, and even ground to obtain flour. The semantic divergence is, in this case, considerable and besides that, the correspondence of the Albanian word *thjer* to Lat. *cerrus* (f.) '*Quercus cerris* L.'<sup>8</sup> seems phonologically and semantically better grounded. On the other hand, the Indo-European word \**kerso-* 'a variety of oak (and its acorn)' could

<sup>8</sup> Latin *cerrus* is a source form of It. *cerro*, Roum. *cer* 'oak'. Also Alb. *k'ar* can be treated as a loan from Balkan Latin (M e y e r - L ü b k e RomEW 177 No. 1838).

be derived from the same Indo-European root \**ker-* ‘to grow, feed’ (P o k o r n y IEW 577).

Etymology: Probably derivative from the Indo-European root \**ker-* ‘to grow’, cf. Lith. *šerti* ‘to feed’ (P o k o r n y IEW 577).

Nostratics: No obvious Nostratic counterparts. The given word must, apparently, be considered as a neologism on the Indo-European ground.

4.5. \**H<sub>2</sub>órg<sup>h</sup>eno-* ‘a kind of millet, perhaps Italian millet, *Setaria italica Beauv.*’ (K., D., Ir., Gk., ?C.)

Ashkun *azū* ‘millet’, Waigali *anjū, anjū, anzú*, Prasun *ūjū*, Kati *awfi*, all from Kafir \**arjana-* (Turner CDIAL 28, No. 636) | Dameli *ārin* ‘millet’; Pashai *arīn*; Gawarbatī *ērin*; Kalasha *arin*; Khowar *olīn*; Dumaki *ārīn* < Dardic \**arīn-* (Turner CDIAL 11, No. 195) | NPers. *arzan*, Ormuri *ažan*, Pashto *ždan*, Khotan Saka *əysä* ‘millet’ < Ir. \**arjana-* (Morgenstierne EVP 106) | Gk. ὀρφίνη f. ‘straw of Italian millet’ (Cf. a gloss by Hesychios: ὀρφίνη· καλάμη μελίνης) | ? OIr. *orbaind* (nom. pl.) ‘corn’ || WP I 145; IEW 63 and 335 (in another way); Vendryes LEIA IA–85 and II O–28; Turner CDIAL 11 and 28; Morgenstierne EVP 106.

Commentary: The word \**arjana-* appears in contradistinction to the Iranian name \**x<sup>h</sup>ārā-* ‘*Panicum miliaceum L.*’ and at the same time is complementary of the latter, which suggests that it had, originally, designated a different variety of millet, most probably ‘Italian millet’. This suggestion finds ultimate support in the Greek term. The observed semantic divergence of ‘(Italian) millet’ (K., D., Ir.) versus ‘corn’ (C.) has perfect parallels and can be reconciled with the previously raised fact of early cultivation of millet with use of digging methods.

Etymology: The origin of the term in question remains unclear. The Old Irish word contains Celtic \**b* (derived from IE. \**g<sup>h</sup>* rather than \**gh<sup>h</sup>*) and, thus, the reference to the Indo-European \**ereg<sup>h</sup>-* ‘eine Hülsenfrucht’ (WP I 145; Pokorny IEW 335; Witczak, 1986, 78) cannot be excluded.

Nostratics: No obvious reflections.

4.6. \**dǰwaH<sub>2</sub>* (f.) ‘a kind of millet, *Panicum dactylon L.* vel *Cynodon dactylon Pers.*’, in the West Indo-European dialects also ‘rye-grass, *Lolium temulentum L.*’ (IA., C., G., B., S.)

OInd. *dūrvā-* f. ‘a kind of millet, *Panicum dactylon*’, also *dhūrvā-* f. ‘ts.’; Prakr. *duvvā-*, *duruvvā-* f. ‘*Panicum dactylon*’; Panjabi *dubb* f., dial. (Kangra) *dūb* m., West Pahari (Sodoci) *jub*; Kumaoni *dūb*, *dubo*; Nepal. *dubo*; Assam. *dūb*, *dubari*; Oriya *dūba*; Bihari *dūb* ‘*Panicum dactylon*’, *dūbh*, *dubbhī* ‘the grass *Cynodon dactylon*’; Maithili *dūbi* ‘*Panicum dactylon*’; Bhojpuri *dūb<sup>i</sup>*; Hindi *dūb* f. ‘*Panicum dactylon*’, *dubra* m. ‘a kind of fodder grass’; Gujarati *dharə*, *daro*, *daroi* f. ‘sacred grass’ (> Marathi



*durav*, *durū* f. ‘the grass *Agrostis linearis* which is sacred to Gaṇapati’) | Gallo-Latin *dravoca* f. ‘*personacia*, *lappa*’ (gloss), Welsh *drewg*, Bret. *draoch*, *draok*, *dreok* ‘*Lolium temulentum* L.’, Fr. *droue* ‘id.’ | MDu. *tar(e)we*, Du. *tarwe*, dial. *terwe* ‘wheat’; ME. *tāre* ‘Lolch, Wicke’, E. *tare* | Lith. *dirvā* f. ‘sown-field, corn-field / Saatfeld, Getreidefeld’; Latv. *dirva*, *druva* f. ‘field, crops’, rarely ‘fallow’ | Russ. dial. *derevki* ‘clearing in a forest’ < Sl. \**dьrva* f. ‘clearing in a forest, ploughland, untilled land’; Russ. *derévnya* ‘village’ and other East Slavic equivalents go back to Sl. \**dьrvъn(j)a* f. ‘clearing in the forest’, hence ‘farm on the clearing’ > ‘village’ (Sławski SP V 56, 57–58) || WP I 803; IEW 209; IECD 1611; Mayrhofer KEWAi II 57; Turner CDIAL 370–371 No. 6501; WHI 374; EM 184; Klein CEDEL 745; Fraenkel LEW I 97; Sławski SP V 56.

Commentary: The original semantics is highly uncertain. The Indic, Balto-Slavic and Germanic data prove that we are dealing with an archaic agricultural term which underwent depreciation on the Celtic, and partly Germanic ground, where it was adopted as the designation of a fodder grass called rye-grass (*Lolium temulentum* L.). In Baltic and Slavic languages, we apparently deal with a semantic generalization. It, thus appears that it was only in Sanskrit that a meaning approximating the original could have been preserved in this case. It must be added that *Lolium temulentum* is a typical corn weed growing, in our parts, in oats and barley, whereas in Egypt and Asia Minor mainly in barley. It contains tasty seeds and this is why it used to be collected and consumed by prehistoric communities. Maurizio (1926, 96) establishes the presence of the seeds of *Lolium temulentum* in the Alpine pallafitte settlements of the Neolithic Age, as well as in the oldest Egyptian graves, in a similar form as they are found nowadays. However, Maurizio quotes a sentence from the work by E. Neuweiler, from which it appears that in the neolithic relics of Western Europe, the seeds of *Lolium temulentum* occur „in such strikingly huge quantities as to make the conclusion inevitable that they were a staple food“ („w tak uderzająco wielkich ilościach, że narzuca się wniosek, że były one stale spożywane“), see Maurizio (1926, 96).

Etymology: A name derived from the Indo-European root \**der(H<sub>2</sub>)*-, also preserved in Greek (Thessal. δάρατος m. ‘bread’, Delph. δαράτα) and other Palaeo-Balkan languages (Maced. δράμις ‘bread’, Epir. δράμιξ), see Pokorny IEW 206–211.

Nostratics: No obvious parallels.

## 5. Conclusions.

Indo-European tribes came to know millet rather early and could, most probably, differentiate between both cultivated varieties. At any rate, this possibility seems to be supported by the fact of the preservation, in the archaic Lithuanian language, of two ancient Indo-European designations for millet in distinct meanings (Lith. *sóros*

‘common millet / Rispenhirse’ versus *málnos* ‘Italian millet / Kolbenhirse’). The same opposition must be postulated for Proto-Indo-European (*\*swaH<sub>2</sub>raH<sub>2</sub>* ‘*Panicum miliaceum* L.’ vs. *\*melHi* ‘*Setaria italica* Beauv.’). Among some dialects (mostly Indo-Iranian) the name *\*melHi* was replaced by the alternative term for ‘Italian millet’, namely *\*H<sub>2</sub>orgh<sup>u</sup>eno-*.

The distinction between ‘common millet [1] and ‘Italian millet’ [2] is preserved in most Indo-European languages, which had often lost or replaced one of the original terms or both of them, compare, e.g., Iranian *\*x<sup>u</sup>ārā-* [1] vs. *\*arjana-* [2]; Gk. κέγγρος [1] vs. μέλινη [2]; Slavic *\*proso* [1] vs. *\*bъrъ* [2]; OInd. *aṇu-* [1] vs. *priyāngu-* [2]; also with semantic inversion Lat. *pānīcum* [2] vs. *milium* [1], and so on. Modern languages differentiate between the two varieties by means of, most often, adjectival qualification (e.g. German *Kolbenhirse* [1] vs. *Rispenhirse* [2]; Pol. *proso zwyczajne* [1] vs. *proso włoskie* [2]), although even here there are collateral names (e.g. German *Fench*, *Fennich* [2], Pol. *ber* [2]).

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