

OLD PRUSSIAN *poaris***Senosios prūsų *poaris***

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<https://doi.org/10.35321/all92-02>**ABSTRACT**

The article analyses the isolated Old Prussian word *poaris* ‘mole cricket’ from the point of view of word formation and etymology. For this reason, all published etymological attempts are collected and evaluated. Finally, a new solution is proposed, operating with the IE root **per-* ‘to step over, pass across; penetrate’, which allows us to derive from the same root the designation of ‘worm’ in Middle Iranian Sogdian, Khotanese and in several modern Iranian languages from Pamir. The common semantic denominator for the zoonyms ‘mole cricket’ and ‘worm’ is ‘penetrating one’.

KEYWORDS: mole cricket, worm, Old Prussian, Iranian, etymology.

ANOTACIJA

Straipsnyje žodžių darybos ir etimologijos požiūriu analizuojamas vienas senosios prūsų kalbos žodis *poaris* ‘kurklys’. Dėl šios priežasties surinkti ir įvertinti visi paskelbti etimologijos bandymai. Galiausiai, remiantis ide. šaknimi **per-* ‘peržengti, pereiti; prasiskverbti’, siūlomas naujas sprendimas, leidžiantis iš tos pačios šaknies išvesti vidurinių iranėnų sogdų, chotanų ir kelių dabartinių iranėnų kalbų iš Pamyro pavadinimą kirminas. Zoonimų *kurklys* ir *kirminas* bendras semantinis vardiklis yra ‘prasiskverbiantis’.

ESMINIAI ŽODŽIAI: kurklys, kirminas, senoji prūsų kalba, iranėnų kalbos, etimologija.

1. Old Prussian *poaris* is in Elbing Vocabulary 777 glossed by “Ostpreussisch” “werre”, in Modern German “Maulwurfsgrylle”, i.e. ‘mole cricket’ = Gryllotalpa gryllotalpa. Gryllotalpidae represent a family of grasshoppers (bush-cricket).

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2. Probably the first etymological attempt was proposed by Antonín Matzenauer in his ms. initiated in 1873, but published only in 2009 (!), p. 105 (Havlová, ed., 2009). He speculated about the conjecture ⁺*parpis*, to compare it with the Lithuanian counterpart *parplỹs*¹ “European mole cricket / *Gryllotalpa gryllotalpa*”, by Adalbert Bezzenberger *parplas* ‘scorpion’, the transparent derivative of the onomatopoetic verb *paĩpti*, *parpiũ*, *parpiaũ* ‘to emit a high monotonous sound, whirr, clatter; emit a repeated muffled sound (about birds); snort (about a horse); be hoarse, have a sore throat, speak in a hoarse voice; snore’ (Smoczyński 2018: 914–15); cf. also Latvian *parpala* ‘grouch, grumbler’ (Fraenkel 1962: 542).

Vytautas Mažiulis (2013 [1988–1997]: 725) reconstructed a *jo*-stem **pārīs* and derived it from the verb preserved e.g. in Old Church Slavonic *pariti* ‘to fly’. It is the iterative with the lengthened root-vowel from the verb *p̃rati* ‘to be rising’ (Vykytěl, ESJS X 627; XII 739). In East Baltic there are probable cognates in Lithuanian *spaĩnas* ‘wing of a bird or insect’, Latvian *spārns* ‘wing’, related to Vedic *parṇá-* ‘feather; leaf’, Avestan *parəna-* ‘feather; wing’, Sogdian *pārra-* ‘wing’, Middle Persian *parr* ‘feather’, Pašto *pāṇa* id., all from the IE root **(s)per-* ‘to fly’ (Mayrhofer, EWAI II 97; Kümmel, LIV 2001 [1998]: 579–580). The mole cricket belongs to the winged insects, and that is why this semantic motivation is undoubtedly thinkable. The problem is that the continuants of the IE *s*-mobile cluster **(s)p-* have usually been unique in Baltic, i.e. **sp-* or **p-*, always in both East Baltic and Old Prussian²:

(a) Lithuanian *spáinė* ‘foam on the surface of water, on a wave’; Old Prussian *spoayno* ‘Gest’ [EV 387] = ‘beer froth’, Latin *spūma* ‘foam’ vs. Old Church Slavonic *pěna* ‘foam’, Old High German *feim* ‘foam’ etc. (Pokorny 1959: 1001: **(s)poimno-*; Mažiulis 2013 [1988–1997]: 873; Smoczyński 2018: 1250);

(b) Lithuanian *pántis*, *-čio* ‘hobble, rope for tying the legs of a horse to prevent it from straying’, pl. *pánčiai* ‘tethers, fetters’; Old Prussian *panto* ‘Vesser (= Fessel)’ [EV 542] = ‘tether’; Old Church Slavonic *pqto* ‘tether’, all derived from the verb attested in Lithuanian *pĩnti*, *pinũ* ‘to weave, twine, plait, wreath (a garland); (en)tangle’, Latvian *pīt*, *pinu* ‘to plait, interweave’; Old Church Slavonic *p̃nq* ‘I stretch’, inf. *p̃eti* ‘to plait, clasp’, with prefixes *sṽp̃eti*

¹ The analogical word formation and semantic motivation is characteristic for the synonym in Lithuanian *kurklỹs*, gen. *-io* ‘European mole cricket / *Gryllotalpa gryllotalpa*, an insect living in damp soil and gnawing at plant roots; scorpion’. It represents an agent noun in *-lys* from the verb *kuĩkti* ‘to croak, quack (about a frog); cluck (about a hen); spawn (about a frog)’, Latvian *kũrkt* ‘to croak, quack’; further Old Church Slavonic *kr̃knqti* ‘to whine, squawk’, Russian *kerkat̃* ‘to whistle, whine’ (Smoczyński 2018: 639–40).

² One counter example was proposed by Mažiulis (2013 [1988–1997]: 667), assuming for Old Prussian *paycoran* ‘seibengestirne’ [EV 6], i.e. „Siebengestirn“ = English ‘Seven Sister’ or ‘the Pleiades’, the conjecture **pait̃^o*, plus the suffix **-āra-*, to compare the root with Lithuanian *spiẽčius* ‘swarm of bees, separate colony of bees’, from the verb *spiẽstis*, *spiẽčiasi*, *spiẽt̃esi* ‘to swarm, leave an old hive in order to build a new one; assemble, swarm, gather, associate’ etc. (Smoczyński 2018: 1258). But already Brückner (1898: 513) offered the solution without any conjecture and *s*-mobile, analyzing *paycoran* as the compound, where he identified the first member with Lithuanian *paĩkas* ‘silly, stupid, dull; unwise’ and second one with *óras* ‘air; weather’. He saw an analogy in the designation of another ‘Siebengestirn’, namely ‘Regensieibengestirn’ „Hyades“, in Polish *dżdżownice* (vs. *dżdżowy* ‘rainy’), where the meaning ‘rain’ should represent ‘bad weather’.

‘to bind, hobble’, *zapēti* ‘to knock down; tie up’; further Greek πένομαι ‘I toil, work, am busy’; Armenian *hanowm* ‘I weave’; Tocharian A *pānw-*, B *pānn-* ‘to stretch’ vs. Gothic *spinnan* ‘to spin’ (Pokorny 1959: 988; Mažiulis 2013 [1988–1997]: 665–666; Smoczyński 2018: 909, 966); Middle Breton (1499) *queffnid* coll. ‘spiders’, sgl. *queffnidenn* > Welsh *cyffniden* id. (GPC), Breton *kevnid* id. < **kom-spen*^o (Pedersen 1909: 185; Deshayes 2003: 389), all from the root **(s)penh₁-* (Kümmel, LIV 2001 [1998]: 578–79).

4. Wojciech Smoczyński (2000: 195) saw in *poaris* an adaptation of German *Werre*³ ‘mole cricket’ (cf. also Schmalstieg 2015: 247), although in Old Prussian there was no direct analogy for the substitution of German *w-* by Old Prussian *p-*. But there are examples from East Baltic, documenting this substitution: Lithuanian *péršas* ‘verse of the Holy Scripture, of a song’ < Prussian Germanic *verš* ‘verse’; Latvian *peřša*, *pērša*, *pērša* ‘verse’ < (Middle) Low German *versch(e)* id. (Smoczyński 2018: 949).

5. The solutions (2) and (3) are possible, but, certainly, encompass some flaws. For this reason the following new proposal is offered.

In Iranian languages there are promising cognates in designation of ‘worm’ or similar insects:

Khotanese voc.sg. *pira* ‘worm’, nom. pl. *pāra*, acc. pl. *pāra*, abl.-instr. pl. *pīryau jsa* ‘with worms’ (Bailey {= B} 1979, 239). These forms are derivable from Proto-Iranian **pṛia-* ~ **paria-*, cf. parallel cases such as Khotanese *bira* ‘dress’ < **bṛia-* (B 287), *pira-* ‘house’ < **pṛia-* (B 239), *mir-/mār-* < **mṛia-* = present from *mar-* ‘to die’ (B 324); besides *dīra-* ‘low’ < **adaria-* (B 159), *gīrai-* ‘objector’ < **garīaka-* (B 84), *kīra-* ‘work, deed’ < **karīa-* (B 60), *pīr-* ‘to believe’ < **parīa-* (B 239). Let us mention that *ā* and *i* are allophons of the same vowel, cf. *mir-/mār-* < **mṛia-* quoted above or *māsta-* ~ *mišta-* ‘great’, corresponding to Avestan *masita-* id. (B 333).

The Khotanese word is not isolated within Iranian. There are attractive cognates in the so-called Pamir languages (cf. Bailey 1979: 239):

Wakhi *p(ə)rič* ‘insect, worm, wood-worm, wood-borer’ (Paxalina 1975: 243) ~ *prič* ‘worm, caterpillar’ (Steblin-Kamenskij 1999: 267) ~ *porič* ‘worm’ (Badakhshi 2004 [1960]: 96); perhaps < **pariči-* (?) with a similar development of vowels as Wakhi *strin* ‘sterile’ < **starīni-* with regard to Vedic *starī-* (Steblin-Kamenskij 1999: 317);

Iškašimi *pṛčūk* (Paxalina 1959: 226) ~ ‘caterpillar’ (Steblin-Kamenskij 1999: 267) ~ *putsuk* ‘worm, grub’ (Grierson 1920: 92) ~ *pōčūk* ‘worm’ (Badakhshi 2004 [1960]: 96);

³ The East Prussian dialectism *Werre* was first attested in the 16th cent. (Kluge 2011 [1883]: 983, 991 presented the etymology based on German adj. *wirr* ‘tangled, snarled’, Old High German *wirran* ‘to mat, snarl, (en)tangle’, but it is not convincing for semantic reasons). Kroonen (2013: 580–581) identified promising cognates in Dutch *weern* ‘stye’, Danish *verne* ‘warble, warble fly larva’, Swedish dial. *verna*, Norwegian *vere* ‘larva of the gad-fly; hole in the skin resulting from gad-fly infestation’, which should reflect the pair **wer(r)ōn-* & **wernōn-* in Germanic, reconstructing the Pre-Germanic paradigm **uérH-ōn*, gen. **uérH-n-ós*. Kroonen (l.c.) added that the meaning of the probable cognate in Lithuanian *vīras* ‘tapeworm, larva; pimple’ opens a space for comparison with Latin *varus* ‘pimple, inflamed spot on the skin’; Tocharian B *weru* ‘blister’, since they have been caused by various insects.

Sangleči *p'čuk* (Morgenstierne 1938: 406: **p'rčuk*) ~ *pōčuk* 'worm' (Badakhshi 2004 [1960]: 96);

?Yazghulami *pək/g* 'damaging worm living in apricots' (Edeman 1971: 192; Paxalina 1975: 243). The forms of Iškašimi, Sangleči and maybe Yazghulami are perhaps derivable from **pariči-* + **-aka-*?

There is still one possible cognate in the Middle Iranian languages, but with a different derivational suffix, namely **-ān-*: Sogdian Buddhist *pr'n'k*, pl. *pr'nyt* 'insect, worm' /*parānē*/, Manichean *pr'ny*, pl. *pr'nyt* 'small animal, insect' /*parānē*/ (Gharib 1995: 6979, 6982; Gershevitch 1961: 144, § 966) < **parānaka-*⁴.

Let us mention that Harold W. Bailey (1979: 239) also thought about an Iranian origin of the Permic and Ugric designation of 'worm': Komi *perk* (I) 'Filz-, Schamlaus; Phthirius pubis'; Mansi (P LU LO) *pēr* 'Bauchwurm; (LU LO) Wurm (im Fleisch); (LU) Angelwurm', Hungarian *férég*, acc. *férget* 'Wurm, Insekt' (first 1152); (dial.) 'allerlei schädliche Tiere: Maus, Ratte, Iltis, Wolf, Bär' < **perkz* (**perkkz*) 'worm' (UEW I 373; EWU 1994: 381).

6. The various representatives of the class *Insecta* introduced here should be characterised by some common feature, to be related in a linguistic sense. A common semantic denominator of 'mole cricket', 'caterpillar' and various kinds of 'worms' is 'penetration', namely through clay, wood, fruit, etc. This idea implies the etymology based on the IE root **per-* 'to step over, pass across; penetrate' (Pokorny 1959: 816–817; Schirmer & Kümmel, LIV 2001 [1998]: 472–73) > Vedic *par-* 'to bring across, over' (EWAI II 85–86); Avestan *pār-/fr-* 'to go over, cross over' (Cheung 2007: 293–94); Greek *πείρω* 'I perforate, pierce, pervade' (Beekes 2010: 1163–1164), Church Slavonic (of Russian redaction) *naperjō*, *naperiti* 'натыкать' = 'to spike, pin' (Sreznevskij 1902: 307) etc.

The semantic motivation is comparable with Greek *τερηδών* 'wood-worm' [Ar. *Eq.* 1308] = 'boring one'; cf. *τετραίνω* 'I pierce, perforate', *τέρετρον* 'auger, borer', Old Irish *tarathar*, Old Welsh *tarater* id. etc. (Buck 1949: n. 3.84; Beekes 2010: 1468) < IE **terh₁-* 'to rub, bore' (Pokorny 1959: 1071–1072; Kümmel, LIV 2001 [1998]: 632–633).

7. Old Prussian *poaris* 'mole cricket' can, thus, reflect Proto-Baltic lengthened grade **pārīa-*, the result of an inner Baltic development. It would stand isolated within the Baltic, and, for this reason, it might be useful to illustrate its place in a process of word-formation on analogical examples:

Old Prussian *poaris* resembles in its word-formation *soalis* 'Krewtecht' [EV 293], i.e. 'herb', which represents the lengthened grade **zālīa-* from the *o*-grade *saligan* 'grune' [EV 468], i.e. 'green' (Mažiulis 2013 [1988–1997]: 870, 801–802). It is derivable from **zālīja-*, similarly as Lithuanian *žolė* 'grass, herb', Latvian *zāle* 'herb' < **zālīā-* vs. Lithuanian *žalias* 'green, unripe, raw', Latvian *zaļš* id. < **zālīja-*, all from the verb attested in Lithuanian *žēlti*, *žēlia* 'to grow, producing greenery (of grass, bushes); rise from the ground, grow, sprout; show

⁴ Sogdian *S*, *B β'r'k*, *M β'ryh* *C b'ry* /*βārē*/ 'rider; riding animal', Yaghnobi *vōra* 'rider' < **βāra'i* < **bāraka-*; cf. Yazghulami *varāg*, Iškašimi *vrūk* 'horse'; Ossetic *baræg* 'rider', Pahlavi *b'rg* /*bārag*/ (Novák 2013: 107).

green, Latvian *zēlts, zēlu, zēlu* ‘to turn green’ < IE **ǵ^helh₃*- (Smoczyński 2018: 1714, 1724–1725, 1757; Bichlmeier 2019: 84).

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Senosios prūsų *poaris*

SANTRAUKA

Senosios prūsų kalbos žodis *poaris* iki šiol etimologizuotas trimis skirtingais atžvilgiais: Adalbertas Bezzenbergeris, siekdamas jį palyginti su lietuvišku atitikmeniu *parplys*⁵ ‘kurklys’, įvedė sąvoką ⁺*parpis*; Wojciechas Smoczyński pritaikė vokiečių žodį *Werre* ‘kurklys’; V. Mažiulis jį kildino iš veiksmazodžio, išlikusio, pavyzdžiui, senojoje bažnytinėje slavų kalboje, *pariti* ‘skristi’, kuris turėtų būti siejamas su liet. *spažnas* ‘paukščio ar vabzdžio sparnas’ ir kt. Šiame straipsnyje pateikiamas naujas sprendimas, lyginant senosios prūsų kalbos *poaris* su rytų iranėnų kalbos pavadinimu *kirminas*, išlikusiu chotanų nom. pl. *pāra*, acc. pl. *pīra*, vachių *p(ə)rič* ‘vabzdys, sliekas, kirminas, medgraužis’, budistų sogdų *pr’n’k*, pl. *pr’nyt*

⁵ Tokia pat žodžių daryba ir semantinė motyvacija būdinga lietuvių kalbos sinonimui *kurklỹs*, gen. *-io* ‘paprastasis kurklys (*Gryllotalpa gryllotalpa*), drėgnoje dirvoje gyvenantis ir augalų šaknis graužiantis vabzdys; skorpionas’. Jis žymi veikėjo pavadinimą su galūne *-lys*, padarytą iš lietuvių veiksmazodžio *kuřkti* ‘kvaksėti, krykšti (apie varlę); kudakuoti (apie vištą); kvarkti (apie varlę)’, latvių *kūrkt* ‘kvaksėti, krykšti’; toliau senosios bažnytinės slavų kalbos *krъknъti* ‘inkšti, klykti’, rusų *kerkatъ* ‘švilpti, inkšti’ (Smoczyński 2018: 639–640).

‘vabzdys, kirmėlė’ ir kt., visi jie yra kilę iš šaknies **per-* ‘peržengti, pereiti; prasiskverbti’, o tai reiškia tiek senosios prūsų, tiek rytų iranėnų kalbų vabzdžių pavadinimų bendrą semantinę vardiklį ‘prasiskverbiantis’.