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Latin *Tetrica* in etymological perspective

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Abstract

This article analyzes the oronym *Tetrica*, located by Roman authors in the country of the Sabines. After the documentation and possible relatives in Latin, five hypothetical Indo-European etymologies are discussed, with a special stress on both word-formation and semantic typology. Taking in account these circumstances, a derivation from the root **ter-* “to cut, break” seems to be the most promising solution.

Keywords

Indo-European, Latin, oronym, word-formation, semantic motivation, etymology

1. Documentation of the oronym

The mountain or rock called *Tetrica* was situated by the Roman authors in the Sabine territory. Let us compare the witnesses of three authors in chronological order:

1.1. Varro (116–27 BCE), *De re rustica* 2.1.5.

*tertio denique gradu a vita pastoralis ad agri culturam descenderunt, in qua ex duobus gradibus superioribus retinuerunt multa, et quo descenderant, ibi processerunt longe, dum ad nos perveniret. etiam nunc in locis multis genera pecudum ferarum sunt aliquot, ab ovibus, ut in Phrygia, ubi greges videntur complures, in Samothrace caprarum, quas latine rotas appellant. sunt enim in Italia circum Fiscellum et **Tetricam montes** multae.*

(Ed. Goetz 1912)

“Finally, with the third stage, they reached, from the pastoral mode of life, the agricultural, retaining in it much of the two former stages, and went on long in the stage which they had reached before they could attain’ our present civilization. Even now in many places there are several kinds of wild animals; there are sheep, for instance, in Phrygia, where many flocks are to be seen, and in Samothrace there are wild she-goats of the kind called in Latin *rotae*. For many exist in the neighbourhood of Mount Fiscellum and Mount Tetrica.”

(Transl. Storr-Best 1912)

1.2. Vergilius (70–19 BCE), *Aeneid* 7.706–717

⁷⁰⁶*Ecce Sabinorum prisco de sanguine magnum*
⁷⁰⁷*agmen agens Clausus magnique ipse agminis instar,*
⁷⁰⁸*Claudia nunc a quo diffunditur et tribus et gens*
⁷⁰⁹*per Latium, postquam in partem data Roma Sabinis.*
⁷¹⁰*Una ingens Amiterna cohors priscique Quirites,*
⁷¹¹*Ereti manus omnis oliviferaeque Mutuscae;*
⁷¹²*qui Nomentum urbem, qui Rosea rura Velini,*
⁷¹³*qui **Tetricae** horrentis **rupes** montemque Severum*
⁷¹⁴*Casperiamque colunt Forulosque et flumen Himellae,*
⁷¹⁵*qui Tiberim Fabarimque bibunt, quos frigida misit*
⁷¹⁶*Nursia, et Hortinae classes populique Latini,*
⁷¹⁷*quosque secans infaustum interluit Allia nomen.*

(Ed. Greenough 1900)

„Then, one of far-descended Sabine name,
 Clausus advanced, the captain of a host,
 and in himself an equal host he seemed;
 from his proud loins the high-born Claudian stem
 through Latium multiplies, since Roman power
 with Sabine first was wed. A cohort came
 from Amiternum and the olden wall
 of Cures, called Quirites even then;
 Eretum answered and Mutusca’s hill

with olives clad, Velinus' flowery field,
 nomentum's fortress, the grim **precipice**
 of **Tetrica**, Severus' upland fair,
 Casperia, Foruli, Himella's waves,
 Tiber and Fabaris, and wintry streams
 of Nursia; to the same proud muster sped
 Tuscan with Latin tribes, and loyal towns
 beside whose walls ill-omened Allia flows."

(Transl. Williams 1910)

1.3. Silius Italicus (26–101 CE), *Punica* 8.414–423

⁴¹⁴*hunc Amiterna cohors et Bactris nomina ducens*

⁴¹⁵*Casperia, hunc Foruli magnaëque Reate dicatum*

⁴¹⁶*Caelicolum Matri necnon habitata pruinis*

⁴¹⁷*Nursia et a **Tetrica** comitantur **rupe** cohortes.*

⁴¹⁸*cunctis hasta decus, clipeusque refertur in orbem,*

⁴¹⁹*conique implumes et laeuo tegmina crure.*

⁴²⁰*ibant et laeti pars Sancum uoce canebant*

⁴²¹*auctorem gentis, pars laudes ore ferebat,*

⁴²²*Sabe, tuas, qui de proprio cognomine primus*

⁴²³*dixisti populos magna dicione Sabinos.*

(Ed. Summers & Postgate 1905)

"With him come the soldiers of Amiterna, and Casperia that takes its name from Bactra (= East), and Foruli, and Reate sacred to the great Mother of the Gods, and Nursia the abode of snow, and warriors from **rocky Tetricus**. All these carry spears and rounded shields; their helmets have no plume, and they wear greaves on the left leg. As they marched, some of them raised a song in honour of Sancus, the founder of their race, while others praised Sabus, who first gave his name to the wide dominion of the Sabines."

(Transl. Duff 1861)

2. In Latin there is the closest form the adjective *tetricus* "forbidding, harsh, crabbed, gloomy, sour, stern, severe" = "mürrisch, finster, ernsthaft":

2.1. Livius (59 BCE–17 CE), *Ab urbe condita* 1.18.4

*suapte igitur ingenio temperatum animum virtutibus fuisse opinor magis instructumque non tam peregrinis artibus quam disciplina **tetrica** ac tristi veterum Sabinorum, quo genere nullum quondam incorruptius fuit.*

"It was his (= Numa's) native disposition, then, as I incline to believe, that tempered his soul with noble qualities, and his training was not in foreign studies, but in the **stern** and austere discipline of the ancient Sabines, a race incorruptible as any race of the olden time."

(Transl. Foster 1919)

2.2. Ovidius (43 BCE–17/18 CE)

2.2.1. *Amores* 3.8.61–62⁶¹*At nunc, exaequet tetricas licet illa Sabinas,*⁶²*Imperat ut captae qui dare multa potest*

(Ed. Ehwald 1907)

“Now, though she may be as **sour** as a Sabine,
he, who can give much, rules her like a slave.”

(Transl. Kline 2001)

2.2.2. *Ars Amatoria* 1.721⁷¹⁹*Nec semper veneris spes est profitenda roganti:*⁷²⁰*Intret amicitiae nomine tectus amor.*⁷²¹*Hoc aditu vidi tetricae data verba puellae:*⁷²²*Qui fuerat cultor, factus amator erat.*⁷²³*Candidus in nauta turpis color, aequoris unda*⁷²⁴*Debet et a radiis sideris esse niger*

(Ed. Ehwald 1907)

“The hoped-for love should not always be declared:
introduce desire hidden in the name of friendship.
I’ve seen the most **severe** of women fooled this way:
he who once was a worshipper, became a lover.
A pale colour would shame a sailor on the ocean wave,
who’s blackened by the rays of the sun”

(Transl. Kline 2001)

“Nor must the hope of possession be always proclaimed in your entreaties;
let love find entrance veiled in friendship’s name.
I have seen an **unwilling** mistress deluded by this approach;
he who had been an admirer became a lover.
White is a shameful colour in a sailor;
swarthy should he be, both from the sea-waves and from heaven’s beams.”

(Transl. Mozley 1957)

2.3. Seneca (4 BCE–65 CE), *Epistulae* 36.3

Felicem vocabant; quid ergo? Erat? Ne illud quidem curo, quod quibusdam nimis horridi animi videtur et tetrici. Ariston aiebat malle se adolescentem tristem quam hilarem et amabilem turbae. Vinum enim bonum fieri, quod recens durum et asperum visum est; non pati aetatem, quod in dolio placuit. Sine eum tristem appellent et inimicum processibus suis; bene se dabit in vetustate ipsa tristitia, perseveret modo colere virtutem, perbibere liberalia studia, non illa, quibus perfundi satis est, sed haec, quibus tingendus est animus.

“They called him happy: what of it? Was he happy? Even the fact that certain persons he seems a man of a very rough and **gloomy** cast of mind, does not trouble me. Aristo used to say that he preferred a youth of stern disposition to one who was a jolly fellow and agreeable to the crowd. ‘For,’ he added, ‘wine which, when new, seemed harsh and sour,

becomes good wine; but that which tasted well at the vintage cannot stand age.’ So let them call him stern and a foe to his own advancement. It is just this sternness that will go well when it is aged, provided only that he continues to cherish virtue and to absorb thoroughly the studies which make for culture, – not those with which it is sufficient for a man to sprinkle himself, but those in which the mind should be steeped.”

(Ed. & Transl. Gummere 1917–1925)

2.4. Martialis (40/43–101/102 CE), *Epigrammata*

(4.73.6) *Moverunt tetricas tam pia vota deas.*

“such affectionate prayers moved the **stern** goddesses”

(6.70.8) *Et quantum tetricae tulere febres*

“and if the amount subtracted from them by **cruel** fevers”

(7.96.4) *Ruperunt tetricae cum male pensa deae.*

“when the **stern** goddesses broke my fatal thread”

(11.2.7) *Lectores tetrici salebrosum ediscite Santram*

“**Fastidious** readers may con over the rugged verses of Santra”

(12.70.4) *Udorum tetricus censor et asper erat*

“he used to be a **severe** and unsparing censor of drunkards”

(Ed. Heraeus & Borovskij 1925/1976; Transl. Bohn 1897)

3. Semantic relation between *Tetrica mons* or *rupes* and *tetricus*

In Latin there are several adjectives which can be applied to both the mountains or rocks and to negative features of persons or various other phenomena:

3.1. *acūtus*

3.1.1. Vergilius, *Aeneid* 8.233

²³⁰*Ter totum fervidus ira*

²³¹*lustrat Aventini montem, ter saxea temptat*

²³²*limina nequiquam, ter fessus valle resedit.*

²³³*Stabat acuta silex, praecisis undique saxis*

²³⁴*speluncae dorso insurgens, altissima visu,*

²³⁵*dirarum nidis domus opportuna volucrum.*

(Ed. Greenough 1900)

“... and thrice he compass’d round

With winged speed the circuit of the ground.

Thrice at the cavern’s mouth he pull’d in vain,

And, panting, thrice desisted from his pain.

A **pointed flinty rock**, all bare and black,
 Grew gibbous from behind the mountain's back;
 Owls, ravens, all ill omens of the night,
 Here built their nests, and hither wing'd their flight."
 (Transl. Dryden 1697)

"Three times his ire surveyed
 the slope of Aventine; three times he stormed
 the rock-built gate in vain; and thrice withdrew
 to rest him in the vale. But high above
 a **pointed peak** arose, sheer face of rock
 on every side, which towered into view
 from the long ridge above the vaulted cave,
 fit haunt for birds of evil-boding wing."
 (Transl. Williams 1910)

3.1.2. Horace, *Carmina* 4.4.76

per acuta belli

"of violent, severe misfortunes of the war"
 (Ed. Shorey & Laing 1919)

3.2. *arduus*

3.2.1. Ovid, *Metamorphoses* 1.316

³¹⁶*Mons ibi verticibus petit arduus astra duobus,*
³¹⁷*nomine Parnasus, superantque cacumina nubes.*

(Ed. Magnus 1892)

"where through the clouds Parnassus' **summits** twain
point upward to the stars, unmeasured **height**"
 (Transl. More 1922)

3.2.2. Titus Livius, *Ab urbe condita* 8.16.8

Corvus, quia id arduum factu erat, labore militum potius quam periculo peragere inceptum voluit.

(Ed. Weissenborn & Müller 1898)

"Corvus perceived the **difficulty** of the task and preferred to gain his object by submitting his men to the labours of a regular siege rather than by exposing them to unnecessary risks."

(Transl. Roberts 1912)

3.3. *asper*

3.3.1. Ennius, *Thyestes*

ipse summis saxis fixus asperis, evisceratus
latere pendens, saxa spargens tabo sanie et sanguine atro

(Ed. Jocelyn 1967)

“He, set disbowelled on sharp steep **rugged rocks**.

Hanging by his own flank and spattering

The rocks with gore, with mess of black-hued blood”

(Ed. & Transl. Warmington 1935: pp. 354–355)

3.3.2. Vergilius, *Aeneid* 7.647

⁶⁴⁷*Primus init bellum Tyrrhenis **asper** ab oris*

⁶⁴⁸*contemptor divom Mezentius agminaque armat.*

“Foremost in fight, from shores Etrurian came

Mezentius, **scornful** rebel against Heaven”

(Transl. Williams 1910)

3.4. *dūrus*

3.4.1. Vergilius, *Aeneid* 6.471

⁴⁶⁹*Illa solo fixos oculos aversa tenebat,*

⁴⁷⁰*nec magis incepto voltum sermone movetur,*

⁴⁷¹*quam si **dura silex** aut stet Marpesia cautes.*

⁴⁷²*tandem corripuit sese, atque inimica refugit*

⁴⁷³*in nemus umbriferum, coniunx ubi pristinus illi*

⁴⁷⁴*respondet curis aequatque Sychaeus amorem.*

“But on the ground she fixed averted eyes.

For all he spoke moved her no more than if her frowning brow
were **changeless flint** or carved in Parian stone.

Then, after pause, away in wrath she fled,

And refuge took within the cool, dark grove, where her first spouse,

Sichaeus, with her tears mingled his own in mutual love and true.”

3.4.2. Cicero, *Pro Archia* 8

*Quis nostrum tam animo agresti ac **duro** fuit ut Rosci morte nuper non commoveretur?*

(Ed. Clark 1909)

“Who of us was of so ignorant and **brutal** a disposition as not lately to be grieved at the death of Roscius?”

(Transl. Yonge 1856)

3.5. It is possible to conclude that the Latin adjective *tetricus* could originally also had the meaning “sharp” or “steep” or “rough, hard”, which was applicable to description of mountains or rocks.

4. From the point of view of internal etymology there are two directions of research:

4.1. If the root was **trej(k̑)*, primary attested in Latin *trīcae* “complications, tricks; trifles”, *intrīcāre* “to entangle, embarrass, perplex” [both from Plautus], the Latin forms *Tetrica* & *tetricus* should be interpreted as the partial reduplication **tetrī(k̑)°*.

4.1.1. The closest external cognate may be identified in Tocharian AB *trik-* “to go astray, be confused”, B preterit II *trāikā-*, preterit III *treikā(sā)-*, preterit participle *tetriku* ~ A *tatriku* “false”, further B *trikšo* “error, mistake”, *traike* “confusion, delusion” etc. (Pokorny 1959: p. 1071; Kümmel *LIV*: p. 648; Malzahn 2010: pp. 668–670; Adams 2013: pp. 334–335, 340).

4.2. If **-iko-* can be identified as a suffix and separated, the base **tetr(H)°* remains. The suffix **-iko-* forms denominative adjectives (not only) in the Italic branch: Latin *tenebricus* “dark, gloomy” vs. *tenebrae* “darkness”, *civicus* “of a citizen” vs. *civis* “citizen”, *modicus* “having a proper measure” vs. *modus* “measure” etc.; Oscan *túvtíks* ‘publicus’ vs. *toutam* ‘civitatem’ etc. (Brugmann 1906: pp. 488–489; Weiss 2009: p. 294).

4.2.1. The base **tetr(H)°* can be interpreted in two ways.

4.2.1.1. It may be an *r*-derivative of the root **ted-*, since the root of the type **tet-* was excluded in the Indo-European protolanguage (e.g. Szemerényi 1996: p. 99) and in Latin the rule **dr > tr* operated, cf. *uter*, *utris* “leather bag” < **udri-* vs. Greek *ὕδρια* “water-vessel” (de Vaan 2008: pp. 618, 647). But for the hypothetical root **ted-* there are no adequate continuants in Latin or Italic, nor Indo-European. A more promising situation is in the case of Latin *taeda* “resinous fir” or “pine wood, pitch-pine” [Caesar, *BG* 2.11; 3.101], although the first use of this word in the sense “a pitch pine torch” has been ascribed already to Ennius by Cicero [*Academicae Quaestiones* 2.28.89]. The tree “fir” as a semantic base to designate a mountain is quite natural, cf. the Austrian *Tennengebirge* (a part of the Northern Limestone Alps) or *Fir Mountain* (in New York state, USA). The hypothetical derivative **taidro-* would regularly change into **taitro-* in Latin. The traces of monophthongisation **ai > ae > e* are attested already around 200 BCE, e.g. in *Lex Spoletina*, where such forms as *cedere* & *cedito* appear instead of **caed°*; cf. also *pretod* ‘praetor’ [CIL I² 365: Falerii]¹ etc. (Leumann 1928: p. 75). The same change is known from the northern neighbors of Latin, namely Faliscan (**efiles** vs. Latin *aedilis*) and Umbrian (**pre** vs. Oscan **prai**, Latin *prae*). This solution also allows us to explain the existence of probable derivatives with negative semantics: Latin *taedet* “it disgusts, offends, wearies”, besides *taetro* “to render foul”, *taeter* “offensive, foul, noisome, shocking, hideous, loathsome”. The common semantic denominator may be found in “resin”, which has frequently been synonym for “bad luck, misfortune”. E.g. German *Pech* or Czech *smůla* mean both “pitch, resin” and secondarily “bad luck, misfortune”. The weakest side of this ‘fir’-solution is the etymology proper of Latin *taeda*. It seems that there is no better explanation than the adaptation of the accusative *δαδά* of Attic *δάς*, gen. *δαδός*, Homeric

1 EDCS [ID: EDCS-19700173; retrieved 23.9.2021 from http://db.edcs.eu/epigr/epi_einzel.php?s_sprache=en&p_belegstelle=CIL+01,+00365].

δαῖς, -ῖδος “torch”, derived from the Greek verb δαίω (*δαῖω) “to kindle” (Beekes 2010: pp. 298–299; Walde & Hofmann II: p. 642; Ernout & Meillet 1932: p. 970). The Latin variant with the voiced initial *d-* is known from glosses (CGL II: pp. 265, 58; 496, 53) and there are real Romance continuants: Romanian *zadă*, Sicilian, Calabrian, Corse *deda* etc. “torch”, besides the voiceless initial in Dalmatian *teda* “Fichtenharz”, Engadine *taya* “Kienholz”, Provençal *teza* “harziges Fichtenholz, Fackel”, Catalanian *teya*, Portuguese *tia* “Fackel”, Spanish *teia* “Fackel, Weihrauchkiefer” (Meyer-Lübke 1935: n. 8520).

4.2.1.2. Another possibility is to assume a partial reduplication **tetr(H)°*. It can be compared with Latin *feber*² “beaver” [Varro, *Lingua Latina* 5.79], derivable from the *o*-stem **b^heb^hro-* in the same way as e.g. *sacer* “sacred” from **sakro-*, really attested in Old Latin SAKROS [*Lapis niger*; 570–550 BCE] (Weiss 2009: p. 123). The form **b^heb^hro-* has usually been explained as the partial reduplication from the *aniṭ*-root **b^her-*, attested e.g. as the *vṛddhi*-formation in Lithuanian *bėras* “(of a horse) bay, chestnut-coloured, light brown”, Latvian *bērs* “bay (of a horse)” (Pokorny 1959: pp. 136–137; Smoczyński 2018: pp. 105, 110). The partial reduplication of the *seṭ*-root can be illustrated by the word **k^uek^ul{H_{1/2}}o-* “wheel”: Vedic *cakrá-*, Young Avestan *caxra-*; Germanic **hwehla-/ *hweula-* > Old Norse *hjól*, Old English *hweohhol*, *hwēol*, *hweowol*, *hweogol* “wheel” etc., all from the verb **k^uelH_{1/2}-* “to go round” (Weiss 2009: p. 267; Lipp, *LIV*: pp. 386–388: **k^uelH₁-*; Pokorny 1959: pp. 639–640). This means that both variants, the *aniṭ*-root **ter-* and *seṭ*-root **terH_x-*, are acceptable.

4.2.1.2.1. The corresponding *aniṭ*-root **ter-* may be identified in Hittite *tatrant-* adj. “sharp-edged (stone); agitated, aggressive”, *tatrahḫ-* “to incite, stir up” (Kloekhorst 2008: p. 857; IE **der-* “to tear”; Neumann apud Tischler 1993: p. 276 already connected Hittite *tatrant-* and Latin *tetricus* “duster”). It is tempting to add Greek τέρορον “top end, summit, highest point” [*h. Merc.* 322; Euripides, *Fr.* 371] and τέρυμα “end, highest point, supreme power” [*Il.*] & τέρυων “end, boundary, edge” [Aeschylus; Euripides] with no traces of any laryngeal after ρ,³ which would be expected in the case of derivation from the *seṭ*-root, in the same way as τέρετρον “borer, auger” [*Od.*] < **terH_f-* “to bore, rub” (Beekes 2010: pp. 1468–1470; see the discussion by Olsen 1988: pp. 9, 34). Its *o*-grade, probably with the sigmatic extension, may be identified in Brittonic languages: Welsh *tor* “a breaking, snip, cut, wound; gap, breach, break, interruption, cessation; break (of day); broken”, Middle Welsh (1300) *torr* ‘fractio’ (*GPC*), besides Old Welsh *torr* gl. ‘palma’ (cf. Matasović 2009: p. 385); Cornish *tor* “cassure, rupture, fracture”; Breton *torr* “casse, cassure, rupture; labour” (Deshayes 2003: p. 731); plus the verb: Welsh *torri* “to break, shatter, smash, fracture, crack, tear, rupture, damage, ruin”, Middle Welsh *torri* / *tori* “frangere, rumpere” (*GPC*); Cornish *terry*, *tyrry*, *torraf* “casser; couper”; Middle Breton (1499) *terriff*, Breton *torriñ* “(se)casser, (se) rompre; (s’)interrompre; éclore” (Deshayes 2003: p. 731).

2 *Fiber, ab extrema ora fluminis dextra et sinistra maxime quod solet videri, et antiqui februm dicebant extremum, ...* “The beaver was called *fiber* because it is usually seen very far off on the bank of the river to right or to left, and the ancients called a thing that was very far off a *februm* ...” (Transl. Kent 1938). Besides *feber* was the more frequent form *fiber* [beginning from Plautus].

3 In agreement with the rule formulated by Byrd (2012: p. 44), in the sequence *RHCC*, where *R* is a resonant in the non-first position, continuants of the laryngeal should be preserved.

A hypothetical continental Celtic counterpart could have been related to (or adopted in) Latin *torus* “knot, bulge” [Cato, *RR* 135.4], “fleshy part, muscle” [Cic., *Tusc.* 2.9.22], “bulge, thickness of trees” [Plin. 17.23.35, 19.8.42], “bolster, cushion” [Verg., *A.* 5.388], “elevation, bank of earth” [Verg., *A.* 6.674], “large, round moulding at the base of a column” [Vitr. 3.3.8] (de Vaan 2008: p. 625 thinks about a derivation from the root **terH₂* “to cross, go through”), and numerous Romance forms: Italian *toro* “Säulenwulst”, Old Neapolitan *torus* “Hügel, Abhang”, Lombardic *tör* “Baumstrunk”, Monferrinish (Piedmont) *tore* “die dicksten Äste eines Baumes”, Spanish *tuero* “Scheit Holz”, Portuguese *toro* “Stamm ohne Zweige”, besides Old French *toron*, Provençal *torada* “Hügel”, Alava (North Spain) *torillo*, *toral* “runder, glatter Kieselstein”, besides Provençal, Portuguese *torar* “in Blöcke zersägen”, South French *tura* “Säge” etc. (Meyer-Lübke 1935: n. 8811; *FEW* 13/2: pp. 115–117). Related can be Albanian *tarr* “to cut (vine)” (Orel 1998: p. 449 connected it with Albanian *tjerr* “to spin”).

4.2.1.2.2. The most promising candidates for the *seř*-root can be identified in **terH₁* “to rub, bore” (Beekes 2010: p. 1468; Kümmel, *LIV*: p. 632; Pokorny 1959: pp. 1071–1072) > Greek τείρω “to oppress, distress, weaken”, τρητός “bored through”; Albanian *tjerr* “spinne”; Latin *terere* “to rub”, *terebra* “drill”; Celtic **taratro-* “auger, borer” > Old Irish *tarathar* m.; Old Welsh *tarater*, Welsh *taradr* m., Cornish *tardar*, Middle Breton *tarazr*, *talazr*, Modern Breton *tarar* m.; (Latinized) Gaulish *taratrum*, glossed as ‘quasi teratrum; scopina dicta, quod haerendo scopim facit’ by Isidore, *Or.* 19.19.15 (Holder 1904: c. 1729; Matasović 2009: p. 370; Delamarre 2018: pp. 290–291); Old Church Slavonic *trъq* : *trěti* “to rub” etc., and in **terH₂* “to cross” > Vedic *tárati* & *tiráti* “crosses over, passes through, overcomes, surpasses”, *tirás* “across, over, apart”, Young Avestan *tar-* “to cross over”, *tarō* “über – hin, seitwärts” (Cheung 2007: pp. 380–382); Hittite *tarhu-* “to prevail, be powerful, be able, defeat”, Cuneiform Luwian *tatarh-* “to break”, Hieroglyphic Luwian *tatarh-* id. (Kloekhorst 2008: pp. 835–839); Greek τρᾶνής “clear, distinct, definite, sure” [trag.] < **trH₂n^o*, cf. English *seeing through* (Beekes 2010: pp. 1498–1499); Albanian *shtir/shtyr* “to cross (a river); push”; Latin *trāns* “across, through”, Umbrian *tra*, *trah^o* < **trānts* < **trH₂nt-s* (de Vaan 2008: p. 627); similarly Old Welsh *tra*, Breton *treuz* “across”, besides Old Irish *tar* & *dar* “across” < Celtic **taras* < **trH₂es*, further Old Irish *tre*, Old Welsh *trui*, Middle Welsh *trwy*, *drwy*, Cornish *dre*, Old Breton *tre*, Middle Breton *dre* “through”, Gaulish [Lezoux; Marcellus of Bordeaux] *tri* < Celtic **trē* < loc. **treH₂i* (Schrijver 1995: pp. 246–247; Matasović 2009: pp. 370, 388; Delamarre 2018: pp. 300–301); Gothic *pairh*, Old English *perh* “through”, besides Old English *purh*, Old Saxon *thurh*, *thuru*, Old High German *duruh* id. (see Pokorny 1959: pp. 1074–1075). Schrijver (1995: pp. 144–145) added still the following Brittonic material: Welsh *tardd* m. “eruption, issue”, *tarddu* “to sprout, derive from, issue”, Middle Cornish *tardha* “to explode”, Breton *tarzh* m. “explosion, break, eruption”, *tarzhañ* “to explode, break”, Old Breton *tard* < Common Brittonic **tarδ^o* < **tar-jo-* n. & **tar-je-* v. (cf. also Schumacher 2004: p. 620).

4.2.1.3. In the Indo-European languages there are several appellatives and oronyms, which could be derived from one of these roots. Let us analyze them.

4.2.1.3.1. Old French (Roland), French *tertre* ‘monticule, éminence isolée’, Old Provençal *tertre*, Poitevinish *terdre*, Saintonge *tartre*, *tertre*, Morvand of Viteaux *tartre*, Ardennes

teltre, Sancey *tatre* etc., Fribourg *tyerdu* “Hügel”. It has been connected with Latin *termen* “boundary-stone”⁴ [Accius], via the derivative **termite* attested in Neapolitanish *térmete* and Friaulish *tiármít* (Meyer-Lübke 1935: n. 865.3; *FEW* 13/1: p. 242), but it is rather problematic with regard to the presence of the second *-r-*. More promising seems to be an adaptation of the hypothetical Gaulish form **tertroN* or **tertrā*, corresponding to Greek τέρορον “top end, summit, highest point”. The assumed Gaulish form **tertro-* or **tertrā* can be analyzed as the derivative in **tro-* from the *ani-*root **ter-*, since the *set-*root **terH_x-* implies the vocalisation of the laryngeal, which can be illustrated by Celtic **taratro-* “auger, borer” (Matasović 2009: p. 370; Delamarre 2018: pp. 290–291; see §4.2.1.2.2.). The laryngeal vocalized as *-a-* is even preserved in the Gaulish borrowings in the Romance languages: Obwaldish *tarader*, Old French *tarere*, Provençal *taraire*, Lyonese *taroro*, Spanish *taladro* (> Catalanian *taladre*), Portuguese *trado* “borer” (Meyer-Lübke 1935: n. 8570; *FEW* 13/1: pp. 112–114). The Celtic origin is also probable for Basque *tarateilu*, var. *taratellu*, *taratuli* “grosser Stangebohrer” (Löpelmann 1968: p. 1251). Common Celtic **taratro-* has usually been explained via Lex Joseph from **teratro-*, which should exactly correspond to Greek τέτρορον < **terH₁tro-* (cf. e.g. Cowgill 1965: p. 150, fn. 14; *LEIA* T-30; Schrijver 1995: pp. 73, 87, 142; Zimmer 2000: p. 442; Zair 2012: p. 167; Byrd 2012: p. 44),⁵ all from **terH₁-* “to rub, bore” (see §4.2.1.2.2.). But already Kuryłowicz (1956: pp. 199–201), followed by Zimmer (p.c., June 30, 2021), speculated about the zero-grade **tr_hH₁tro-* and Hamp (1983: p. 91) even **tr_hH₁etro-*; see the detailed discussion by de Bernardo Stempel (1987: pp. 44–45, 144) and Schrijver (1995: p. 87).

4.2.1.3.1.1. Let us mention that Muller (1926: pp. 482–483) derived both the Latin adj. *tetricus* and the oronym *Tetrica mons* from **tetro-* + suffix **-ico-*, further via dissimilation from **tertro-*, and finally from the root now reconstructed as **terH₁-* “to rub, bore”, with the laconic notice to semantics: “durchdringen” ~ “spitz, scharf” (cf. also Walde & Hofmann II: p. 678, although they expressed doubts concerning **tertro-*). But in this case one would expect the development **terH₁tro-* > Common Celtic **taratro-* discussed in §4.2.1.3.1.

4.2.1.3.2. Middle Irish *tethra*, gen. *tethrach* is known from O’Davoren’s Glossary, n. 1562: *tethrach .i. traigh*, i.e. “strand” (Stokes 1904: p. 476; *DIL* T-162). It is derivable from Proto-Celtic **tetrāk^o*, perhaps in the same way as Old Irish *cauru*, levelled *caíra* f., gen. *caéarach* “sheep” < Proto-Celtic **kaφerūχs*, gen. **kaφerākos* < **k₂φero-H₃k^hs*, **-H₃k^hos* “looking as a goat” (Stifter 2020: pp. 32–34; cf. further Thurneysen 1946: p. 203; *LEIA* T-56; Delamarre 2018: p. 97; Brugmann 1906: p. 500). If it is the case, Proto-Celtic **tetrāk^o* would mean “having a shape of **tetro-*”. Let us mention that a homonym was recorded, glossed as *muir*, i.e. “sea”, and *badb*, i.e. “scaldcrow”. It was also used in an adjectival use in the

4 Perhaps only Old Walloon *ter* m. ‘montagne, colline’ (end of the 12th cent.), Wallon *tiêr* id. (*FEW* 13/1: p. 242) can represent the continuants of Latin *termen* with respect to the semantics of Dordogne *terme* “Hochebene” or Romanian *tărm* “shore” (Meyer-Lübke 1935: n. 8665).

5 Byrd (2012: p. 44) explains, why the rule **CHCC* > **CCC* formulated by Hackstein (2002) is valid only for the sequence **THCC*, where *T* = obstruent, while in the sequence **RHCC*, where *R* = resonant in the non-first position, continuants of the laryngeal are preserved just as in the case of Greek τέτρορον, Celtic **taratro-*, Latin *terebra* < **terH₁d^hrā*.

sense “deadly”: *cia teidm tethra dothait forsna sluagu* “what deadly plague has fallen on the hosts” (Weiss, p.c.; Stokes 1893: pp. 418–419). The same name *Tethra* was borne by one of the Fomorian kings, ruling over the sea, whose wife was *Badb* (*LEIA* T-56; *DIL* T-161-62; Stokes 1891: p. 130). If the word *tethra* “strand” is not only an artificial construction, it can be related to Latin *tetricus*, but it is impossible to differentiate between its source in the root **ter-* or **terH₂-*.

4.2.1.3.3. Iranian **tāra-/tara-* > Khotanese *tāra-* ‘forehead, top of head’ (Bailey 1979: pp. 125–126); Sogdian Buddhist *t̄r* ‘summit, forehead’ /*tār*/ (Gharib 1995: n. 9487), Yaghnobi *tōr* ‘top, summit’, *tōrk* ‘top of the mountain’ (Novák 2010: p. 173); Šughni *tīr*, Khufi *tor*, Bartangi *tōr*, Rošani, Orošori *tūr*, Sarikoli *ter* ‘top’, postp. ‘up, above, on the top of’, Yazghulami *tūr* ‘above’ < **tara-*, while Šughni *tōr* ‘top, summit’ < Persian *tār* ‘top, summit’ (Morgenstierne 1974: p. 81); Ormuri *tâlâk* ‘crown of the head’ (Morgenstierne 1929: p. 410); Ossetic Iron *tar*, Digor *itaræ* ‘breast’ < **(yi-)tāra-* (Abaev III: p. 231), Ossetic Digor *tær-nix*, Iron *tær-nyx* ‘forehead’ (Abaev III: pp. 270–271) < **tara-* & **anika-* (cf. Abaev II: pp. 218–219); New Persian *tār* ‘top, summit, vertex, pinnacle, head or higher part of anything’, *tārak* ‘the top, the crown of the head; a helmet; the head of a lance or spear; a little hill, a heap; giddiness’ (Steingass 1892: p. 274).

The Iranian form **tara-* can reflect IE **tero-*, **terHo-* and **torHo-*, but not **toro-*, which should lead to the lengthening of the root vowel in the Indo-Iranian level with respect to the Lex Brugmann, i.e. **tāra-*. So, Iranian **tara-* is explainable from both the roots **ter-* & **terH₂-*.

The Iranian form **tāra-* can reflect the protoform **toro-* lengthened thanks to the Lex Brugmann or some *vṛddhi*-formation of the root **terH₂-* (cf. Avestan *hama-/hāma-* discussed by Darms 1978: p. 172).

4.2.1.3.4. The High Tatra mountains on the border between Slovakia and Poland with its Gerlachovský štít (2655 m) represent the highest part of the Carpathian mountain range. The oronym was firstly recorded by Cosmas of Prague in his *Chronica Boemorum*, finished to AD 1125 (Bretholz 1923: pp. 60, 138):

(1.33) to AD 999: *usque ad montes, qui sunt ultra Krakov nomine Tritri* (var. *Trytri, Triti, Tryti*)

(2.37) to AD 1086: *inde Ungarorum limitibus additis quibus nomen Tritri* (var. *Tirtri, Triti, Tatri*).

In Hungarian chronicles from the 12th–14th cent. the mountains were called *Turtur*,⁶ *Turtul*, *Tortol*. Two liquids are still preserved in the Ukrainian oronym *Tóltry* (& *Tóvtry*), alternatively *Medubory*, designating the low mountain ridge parallel with the Carpathians, situated in Podolye (West Ukraine) and North Moldova. Remarkable is the existence of the mountain called *Trtra* or *Trtla* (*Planina*) in Herzegovina (height 681 m; situated in west from Mostar), i.e. in the West-Central Balkan, outside the Carpathian range (Asbóth 1912: pp. 203–204). In the North Carpathian area the oronym has also been used in the appellative function: Slovak dial. (Spiš) pl. *tatry* “mountain peaks”, Ukrainian dial. (Boikos) *tatra* “rock on the highest mountains, where only modest plants grow”, besides

6 Anonymus, §18 (to AD 1150): *usque ad montem Turtur, per montes Turtur*, ibid. § 57: *ad montem Turtur* (cf. Melich 1913: p. 172), later (AD 1273) *Turtul* (cf. Pražák 1988: p. 241).

Ukrainian *tóvtry* “(Felsen) Steine am Boden eines Flusses” (Żelechowski & Niedzielski 1886: p. 971), *toltry* “rocky hill” (Rozwadowski 1914: p. 13). These appellative forms are apparently transferred from propria and not *vice versa* (Melich 1913: p. 174). As a textbook example can serve the same functional shift from a hydronym to an appellative in Slavic, namely Old Church Slavonic *Dunavъ*, Bulgarian *Dúnav*, Serbo-Croatian *Dùnáj* & *Dùnav*, Czech, Slovak, Polish *Dunaj*, Old Russian *Dunai* “Danube” vs. Polish *dunaj* “remote, unknown river; sea”, Ukrainian *dunáj* “flood”, Russian dial. *dunáj* “rivulet flowing under the earth” (*ESSJ* 5: p. 156). That is why the oronym *Tatra* with its older forms has been taken as an adaptation of some substrate mountain-name. The old records imply two earliest forms, which may be projected into Proto-Slavic, namely **Tǫrtry* (Asbóth 1912: p. 204; Melich 1913: p. 174; Vasmer 4: pp. 27–28) on the basis of the Hungarian chronicles, Polish *Tatry*⁷ < **Tartry* and perhaps Ukrainian *Tóltry* & *Tóvtry*, and the parallel variant **Tǫrtry* or **Trǫtry*, with regard to Cosmas’ variants *Tritri* & *Tirtri*. Serbo-Croatian *Trtra* or *Trtla* can reflex both **Tǫrtra* or **Tǫrtra*. Melich (1913: p. 174) and Rozwadowski (1914: p. 12) projected **Tǫrtra* in the more archaic starting-point **tǫtr^o*, but it is applicable to **Tǫrtry* too. Rozwadowski (1914: p. 14) offered various external comparanda: Latin *termen*, Greek τέρμα, τέρμων; τέρθρον (see §4.2.1.2.); French *tertre*⁸ (see §4.2.1.3.1.); Greek Τάρταρος, originally perhaps “abyss, gulf”. Later he speculated about its ‘Pannonian-Illyrian’ origin (Rozwadowski 1916: p. 18), but without any material support from Palaeo-Balkan languages. If Albanian is the only living descendant of some Palaeo-Balkan language (Illyrian?, Dacian?), there is probably at our disposal only one doubtful Albanian comparandum from the same semantic field, namely *toritsë* “Klippe” (Meyer 1891: p. 433). But it stands too far from the oronym **Tǫrtry* or **Tǫrtry*. More promising seems to be the projection of Melich’s & Rozwadowski’s protoform **tǫtr^o* into Common Celtic and Common Germanic, namely **tritr^o* and **turtr^o* respectively. The Slavic projections **Tǫrtry*/**Trǫtry* and **Tǫrtry* look like their adaptations. To judge these attractive speculations, we have at our disposal the historical description of the ethnological situation in the territory of present-day Slovakia according to Tacitus⁹ (*Germania* 43)

- 7 First by Długosz (1415–1480), I.12: *in Alpibus altissimis Hungariae, quorum nivalis sem per verte, qui Thatri a vulgo appellantur ... Item Poprod cuius fons ex monte Pannonico Thatri ...*; II.438: *tanto nivium congeries descendit, Alpibus Sarmaticis, qui Poloniam et Hungariam dividunt, et aliis, quos Thatri appellamus, ad Keszmark sitis* (see Melich 1913: pp. 173–174). The Slovak form *Tatry* (first 1783) was adopted from Polish (Melich 1913: p. 174). The enigmatic form *Tatry* appearing in the ms. *Beschreibung des wundervollen Karpathischen Schneegebirges* by Jakob Buchholz (1752) was probably created artificially according to the form *Tartarey* used in the same sentence: ‘Diese Karpatischen Schneegebirge nehmen ihren Anfang aus der **Tartarey** (i.e. Moldova); daher in der slowakischen oder wendischen Sprache **Tatry** genennet werden ...’ (Melich 1913: pp. 174–175).
- 8 Rozwadowski consulted about the origin of French *tertre* with Wilhelm Meyer-Lübke, the leading Romanist of his time, who had admitted its adaptation of the hypothetical Gaulish source reconstructible as **tertaro-* or **tertero-*.
- 9 *Retro Marsigni, Cotini, Osi, Buri terga Marcomanorum Quadorumque claudunt. e quibus Marsigni et Buri sermone cultuque Suebos referunt: Cotinos Gallica, Osos Pannonica lingua coarguit non esse Germanos, et quod tributa patiuntur. partem tributorum Sarmatae, partem Quadi ut alienigenis imponunt: Cotini, quo magis pudeat, et ferrum effodiunt. omnesque hi populi pauca campestrium, ceterum saltus et vertices montium insederunt. dirimit enim scinditque Suebiam continuum montium iugum, ultra quod plurimae gentes agunt, ex quibus latissime patet Lugiorum nomen in plures civitates diffusum.* (Ed. Furneaux 1900).

from the end of the 1st cent. AD. From this witness it is possible to conclude that Tacitus ascribed the Celtic origin to *Cotini* and Pannonian origin to *Osi*. Both tribes were subjugated by the Germanic tribe *Quadi*. This means that the *Cotini* & *Osi* probably preceded the *Quadi* as inhabitants of contemporary Slovakia. The last mention of *Cotini*¹⁰ appears in “Roman History” by Dio Cassius (c. 155–c. 235 AD) in his description of ‘Marcomannic wars’ (166–180 AD), led by Marcus Aurelius (121–180 AD). In any case, it is probable that *Continuum montium iugum* “continuous mountain-range”, separating these tribes from the *Lugii* in contemporary South Poland, represented the {High} Tatra mountains. And it is legitimate to expect that at least the highest part of this mountain-range had both Celtic and Germanic names, used in parallel fashion in the first half of the 1st mill. AD. If the first Slavs settled Slovakia during the 6th cent. AD and adopted the rich net of pre-Slavic hydronyms, it is probable that they also borrowed the names of the highest or most striking mountains, serving for orientation. The reconstruction **tytro-*, pl./coll. **tytrā-*, proposed more or less already by Rozwadowski (1914: p. 12), can be interpreted as a tool-name in **tro-/trā-* from the *aniṭ*-root **ter-* “to cut, break”, similarly as Celtic **taratro-* < **terH₁-tro-* or **tyH₁-tro-* from the *seṭ*-root **terH₁-* “to rub, bore” (see above). Tool-names may have really been used for semantic motivation of orographic terms through

“Behind them the Marsigni, Cotini, Osi, and Buri, close in the rear of the Marcomanni and Quadi. Of these, the Marsigni and Buri, in their language and manner of life, resemble the Suevi. The **Cotini** and **Osi** are proved by their respective **Gallic** and Pannonian **tongues**, as well as by the fact of their enduring tribute, not to be Germans. Tribute is imposed on them as aliens, partly by the Sarmatæ, partly by the Quadi. The Cotini, to complete their degradation, actually work iron mines. All these nations occupy but little of the plain country, dwelling in forests and on mountain-tops. For Suevia is divided and cut in half by a continuous mountain-range, beyond which live a multitude of tribes. The name of Lugii, spread as it is among many states, is the most widely extended.” (Transl. Church & Brodribb 1942).

- 10 72.12. ὅτι Ἀστιγγοί, ὧν Ῥαῦος τε καὶ Ῥάπτους ἡγοῦντο, ἦλθον μὲν ἐς τὴν Δακίαν οἰκῆσαι ἐλπίδι τοῦ καὶ χρήματα καὶ χώραν ἐπὶ συμμαχίᾳ λήψεσθαι, μὴ τυχόντες δὲ αὐτῶν παρακατέθεντο τὰς γυναῖκας καὶ τοὺς παῖδας τῷ Κλήμεντι ὡς καὶ τὴν τῶν Κοστούβωκων χώραν τοῖς ὄπλοις κτησόμενοι, νικήσαντες δὲ ἐκείνους καὶ τὴν Δακίαν οὐδὲν ἦρτον ἐλύπουν. δεισαντες δὲ οἱ Λάκριγγοι μὴ καὶ ὁ Κλήμης φοβηθεὶς σφας ἐς τὴν γῆν ἦν αὐτοὶ ἐνφύκουν ἐσαγάγῃ, ἐπέθεντο αὐτοῖς μὴ προσδεχομένοις καὶ πολὺ ἐκράτησαν, ὥστε μὴδὲν ἔτι πολέμιον τοὺς Ἀστιγγοὺς πρὸς τοὺς Ῥωμαίους πρᾶξαι, πολλὰ δὲ δὴ τὸν Μάρκον ἰκετεύσαντας χρήματά τε παρ’ αὐτοῦ λαβεῖν καὶ χώραν γε ἀπαιτῆσαι, ἄν γέ τι κακὸν τοὺς τότε πολεμοῦντάς οἱ δράσωσι. καὶ οὗτοι μὲν ἔπραξαν τὶ ὡς ὑπέσχοντο, Κοτινοὶ δὲ ἐπηγγεῖλαντο μὲν αὐτοῖς ὅμοια, Ταρρουτήνιον δὲ Πάτερνον τὸν τὰς ἐπιστολάς αὐτοῦ τὰς Λατίνας διὰ χειρὸς ἔχοντα παραλαβόντες ὡς καὶ ἐπὶ τοὺς Μαρκομάνους αὐτῷ συστρατεύσοντες οὐ μόνον οὐκ ἐποίησαν τοῦτο, ἀλλὰ καὶ αὐτὸν ἐκείνῳ δεινῶς ἐκάκωσαν, καὶ μετὰ ταῦτα ἀπώλοντο.

72.12. “The Astingi, led by their chieftains Raüs and Raptus, came into Dacia with their entire households, hoping to secure both money and land in return for their alliance. But failing of their purpose, they left their wives and children under the protection of Clemens, until they should acquire the land of the Costoboci by their arms; but upon conquering that people, they proceeded to injure Dacia no less than before. The Lacingi, fearing that Clemens in his dread of them might lead these newcomers into the land which they themselves were inhabiting, attacked them while off their guard and won a decisive victory. As a result, the Astingi committed no further acts of hostility against the Romans, but in response to urgent supplications addressed to Marcus they received from him both money and the privilege of asking for land in case they should inflict some injury upon those who were then fighting against him. Now this tribe really did fulfill some of its promises; whereas the **Cotini**, though they made similar offers, nevertheless, upon receiving Tarrutenius Paternus, the secretary in charge of the emperor’s Latin correspondence, on the pretext that they wished to make a campaign with him against the Marcomani, not only failed to do so, but even treated Paternus himself shamefully, thereby bringing about their own destruction later.” (Ed. & Transl. Cary & Foster 1914–1927).

their visual or functional analogy, e.g. Slavic **brdo* “weaving comb” and hence “hill” or “mountain ridge consisting of low hills”, or Slavic **xribъ* “hill”, Moravian *Chřiby* mountains, explainable as adaptation of West Germanic **xribōn* “rake” (see Blažek 2020), or Old Italian, Provençal, Portuguese *serra*, Spanish *sierra* “mountain ridge”, besides original “saw” < Latin *serra* “saw” (Meyer-Lübke 1935: n. 7861). The hypothetical tool, which had to serve as a motivation for the naming the High Tatra mountains, besides the lower *Tóltry / Tóvtry* in Podolye and *Trtra / Trtla (Planina)* in Herzegovina, could be something like “pickaxe” or “saw”. Although continuants of **t̥tro-*, pl./coll. **trtrā-*, are not directly attested, this formation is a regular derivative of the root **ter-* (see §4.2.1.2.1.).

5. Conclusion

The preceding arguments allow us to formulate the following conclusions:

5.1. The Latin oronym *Tetrica* is compatible with the adj. *tetricus* “forbidding, harsh, crabbed, gloomy, sour, stern, severe”, if the primary meaning of the oronym was “sharp, steep, rough, hard” *vel sim.* (see §3).

5.2. In the etymological perspective there are several candidates:

5.2.1. **trej(k̑)* “to complicate” (§4.1.1.).

5.2.2. The *r*-derivative of Latin *taeda* “a pitch pine torch; resinous fir, pine wood, pitch-pine” < Greek (§4.1.2.1.).

5.2.3. **ter-* “to cut, break” (cf. §§4.2.1.2.1.; 4.2.1.3.1.; 4.2.1.3.3.; 4.2.1.3.4.).

5.2.4. **terH₁-* “to bore, rub” (cf. §§4.2.1.2.2.; 4.2.1.3.1.1.).

5.2.5. **terH₂-* “to cross” (cf. §4.2.1.2.2.).

5.3. From these five possibilities the most promising one seems to be the derivation of the oronyms *Tetrica* and Pre-Slavic **T̥trā* (perhaps of Celtic origin), and appellatives represented by Greek τέθρον “top end, summit, highest point”, Gaulish > French *tertre* “hill” etc., from the root **ter-* “to cut, break” (§5.2.3.) for both the phonological reasons (*aniŋ*-root) and semantic typology – cf. e.g. Latin *rūpēs* “cliff, crag” from *rumpere*, perf. *rūpī* “to break open”, or *saxum* “rock, boulder” from *secāre* “to cut” (cf. Schrijver 1991: p. 422 about the ablaut *TeT*: *TT* > *TēT*: *TaT*). The same semantic pattern can be applied to Middle Irish *tethra*, gen. *tethrach* “strand” (§4.2.1.3.2.); cf. English *shore* vs. *to shear*, Old English *sceran* “to cut, shear”, or Latin *rīpa* “riverbank” vs. Old Norse *rifa* “to tear to pieces”, or Old Norse *bakki* “riverbank” vs. Sanskrit *bañj-* “to break” etc. (Buck 1949: §§1.27; 1.44).

5.4. The roots **ter-* “to cut, break” and **terH₁-* “to bore, rub” can be related – the latter may represent a laryngeal extension of the former one, naturally with a slight semantic shift.

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