

## ON THE INDO-EUROPEAN NAMES FOR 'FIRE'

### Summary

The Indo-Europeans used 'fire' in two main meanings: a) 'hearth (→ camp) fire' ('I fire') and b) 'lightening-thunder (→ blaze) fire' ('II fire'). Both I.-E. fires are taboo, especially 'II fire'; this is why it was very open to euphemism and mythologisation. It seems, that both I.-E. fire names later experienced certain contaminations in dialects, in some places reflected by 'I fire', and elsewhere by 'II fire'.

The archaic Lith. *ugnìs* (= Latv. *\*ugnis*) most likely derives from I.-E. *\*ṅgni-*, which gave rise to b.-sl. *\*ungnis*, turning this into b.-sl. *\*ugnis* (> Lith. *ugnìs*, etc.) due to the loss of the root's nasality from alliteral dissimilation (AD). The AD rule influenced not only Baltic and Slavic words, but other Indo-European words with root alliteration.

The I.-E. *\*ṅgni-* ('I fire') is most likely linked with I.-E. *\*angli-* 'hearth (ember) fire' having the apophonic root I.-E. *\*ang-* (> Lith. *anglìs* 'coal', etc.). They can both presuppose the 'I fire' synonymous heteroclit forms *ṅg-i/n-* and *\*ang-i/l-*, which are derived from heteroclit I.-E. forms of non I.-E. verb. *\*ṅg-// \*ang-*.

The component *titi-* of the Lith. (dial.) compound *titi-nagas* and component *Tit-* of Lith. hydronyms quite clearly presupposes the I.-E. 'II fire' heteroclit *\*titi-*, which is a derivative of the I.-E. formant *\*-i/n-* from non I.-E. verb. *\*tit-*, meaning 'to gleam (to lighten)'.

It seems that the the above-mentioned I.-E. 'II fire' was older than I.-E. *r/n-* heteroclit 'II fire', which due to its strong taboo was euphemistically reworked from *\*peHur-* / *\*peHun-* to *\*peHnu-* (metathesis) > *\*penu-* > West Balt. *\*panu* 'fire'.