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ON THE ETYMOLOGY OF LITHUANIAN *dangus*

Abstract. Traditionally the Baltic name of the 'sky' (Lith. *dangùs*, Old Pr. *dangus*) is explained as derived from the verb *deñgti* 'to cover', based on the assumption that the sky was conceived of as a kind of curved surface covering the world. However, this traditional approach has left two questions open until now: (1) how to explain the formation of the word *dangus*, which is more akin to that of an adjective than to that of a noun; (2) how to reconstruct the PIE prehistory of this Baltic lexical family. The aim of this paper is to discuss both the morphological and the semantic structure of the word *dangus* and to explain all its features, by proposing a new hypothesis on its origin and development.

Keywords: Lithuanian; etymology; historical linguistics.

> Da empöre sich der Mensch! Es schlage
> An des Himmels Wölbung seine Klage.
> (AP)

I. Introduction

The Baltic name of the 'sky' shared by Lithuanian (*dangùs*) and Old Prussian (*dangus*) is usually regarded as a Common Baltic innovation, even if it was replaced in Latvian by another word (*debess* < 'cloud'), and there seems to be broad agreement on its derivation from a verb 'to cover', directly reflected by Lithuanian *deñgti* and traced back to a PIE root $*d^heng^h$- 'to cover'. This view, which is repeatedly taught in most handbooks and etymological dictionaries, goes back at least to Johann Severin V a t e r (1821, 163), who derived Lithuanian *dangùs* and Old Prussian *dangus* from Lith. *deñgti*.[1] The motivation underlying this etymology is very often left implicit or taken for granted, as if the representation of the celestial vault as a kind of ceiling

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[1] V a t e r (1821, 163): 'das Wort *Dangus* komt her von *dangti* [sic], das iſt, decken, gleichſam der Himmel iſt eine Decke über der Erden'.

covering the earth or as a kind of sheet pulled over the world were so self-evident that it could be unnecessary to back it up with positive arguments. In this paper I certainly do not intend to challenge or disprove this traditional etymology, but to provide a more accurate assessment of its motivation on two points. First, the formation of the Baltic word *dang-u- must be clarified, especially the function of the suffix *-u- in what appears to be a deverbative formation. Second, the meaning conveyed by the root of Lithuanian deñgti should be specified more precisely, and parallels from other Indo-European languages should be sought to increase the plausibility of this etymology.

II. The formation of Baltic *dangus

The correspondence between Lithuanian dangùs and Old Prussian dangus 'sky' allows for the reconstruction of a Common Baltic masculine noun *dangus. In Modern Lithuanian, dangùs belongs to accentual paradigm 4 (AP 4, mobile-oxytone stress with circumflex root: acc.sg. dañgų, gen.sg. dangaũs), which is generally confirmed by the Old Lithuanian evidence, e.g. dągús (DP 7$_{14}$, etc. [1599]), gen.sg. dągaús (DK 7$_{17}$, etc. [1595]), dągngaús (DP 252$_{10}$, etc. [1599]), loc.sg. dąguiá (DK 60$_{15}$, etc. [1595]), dąguié (DP 7$_{39}$, etc. [1599]), etc. Traces of barytone stress (AP 1 or AP 2 with acute or circumflex root) are found in Daukša's works (DK 1595 and DP 1599) and in the Anonymous Catechism (AC 1605), e.g. nom. sg. dágus (DK 163$_{9}$ [1595]), dágus (DP 79$_{3}$, etc. [1599]), gen.sg. dágaus (DP 39$_{49}$, etc. [1599]), loc. sg. dáguie (DK 30$_{13}$, etc. [1595]), dáguie (DP 87$_{30}$, etc. [1599]), Dúnguy (AC 94$_{4}$ [1605]).[2] It its uncertain whether they can be regarded as sufficient proof for the existence of a barytone *dángus (AP 1) or *dañgus (AP 2), as sometimes argued in the secondary literature. The Old Prussian data are inconclusive, since the word is always spelled without a macron in the *Third Catechism* (1561): dangus (III 39$_{19}$, etc. [1561]), corresponding to dangus (EV 3), dangus (I 7$_{11}$ [1545]).

Lithuanian dangùs and Old Prussian dangus share the same meaning, both in its atmospheric ('sky') and religious application ('heaven'). In Old Lithuanian, dangùs sometimes occurs in the plural with a collective meaning, probably due to the influence of other languages, e.g. Old Lith. *Tewe Mufu kuris effi dangufu* 'Our Father who art in heaven' (MŽ 23$_{6}$ [1547], inessive plural dangufu), cf. Latin *Pater Noster qui es in caelis* and Greek Πάτερ ἡμῶν

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[2] Cf. S k a r d ž i u s (1935, 159–161), Z i n k e v i č i u s (1975, 25; 27), M i k u l ė n i e n ė (2005, 187).

ὁ ἐν τοῖς οὐρανοῖς. In addition to their basic meaning (corresponding to German *Himmel*, Polish *niebo* or Latin *caelum*), both the Old Prussian and the Lithuanian words have an anatomical meaning: 'palate, roof of the mouth'. In the Old Prussian *Elbing Vocabulary* (EV) the two meanings are separated as two different entries: the religious word *Hemel Dangus* 'heaven, sky' (EV 3) is placed between *Engel Rapa* 'angel' (EV 2) and *Geſtirne Lauxnos* 'stars' (EV 4), whereas the anatomical word *Gume Dangus* 'palate' (EV 95) is placed between *Cʒunge Jnſuwis* 'tongue' (EV 94) and *Kele coſy* 'throat' (EV 96). The anatomical meaning is also known in a few Lithuanian dialects for *dangùs* (Alytus, Prienai, Vilkaviškis, and between Kelmė and Priekulė).[3] It is tempting to regard the semantic duality of Baltic **dangus* as the reflex of a common basic meaning 'vault' from which one could derive the two special meanings 'sky, heaven' ('celestial vault') and 'palate' ('roof of the mouth'). But it is also possible to explain it, to a certain extent, by foreign influences: German dialects of East Prussia use *Himmel* both as 'sky, heaven' and as 'palate'; the same relationship exists in Polish between *niebo* 'sky, heaven' and *podniebienie* 'palate' as well as in Russian between небо 'sky, heaven' and нёбо 'palate'.

Traditionally, Lithuanian *dangùs* and Old Prussian *dangus* 'sky, heaven' are derived from a verb 'to cover' reflected by Lithuanian *deñgti*. Even if this derivation has met with broad acceptance since the 19th century, it must be recognized that the derivational pathway [R(e)-VERB] → [R(a)-u-NOUN] (R = root) is not supported by other parallels in Baltic. In Baltic, **-u*-stem nouns can be of various origins.[4] Some of them go back to neuter nouns (e.g. Lith. *medùs* 'honey' < PIE **medʰu*, still neuter in Old Prussian *meddo*, cf. Sanskrit *mádhu*), others are inherited from PIE as masculines (e.g. Lith. *sūnùs* 'son' < PIE **suH-nu-*, cf. Sanskrit *sūnú-*), others are likely to be secondary (e.g. loanwords like Lith. *tur̃gus* 'market' ← Slavic **tŭrgŭ*, Russian торг, of unknown origin, or Lith. *midùs* 'mead' ← Gothic **midu*). The origin of Lithuanian *žmogùs* 'man' is controversial. Special mention should be made of the class of masculine **-tu*-derivatives, which has left a few traces in Baltic (e.g. Lith. *lietùs* 'rain' < PIE **lei̯H-tu-*, cf. the Latin type *gustus* 'taste'). The suffix **-iu-* has a different structure: it is frequently used

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[3] Cf. ALEW (I 174).
[4] See S k a r d ž i u s (1943, 54–55) for Lithuanian and E n d z e l ī n s (1923, 325) for the few relics of **-u*-stems in Latvian.

in nouns denoting professions (e.g. Lith. *puõdžius* 'potter') or elsewhere (e.g. Lith. *vaĩsius* 'fruit', secondary forms like Lith. *ámžius* 'age', or loanwords like Lith. *karãlius* 'king'). None of these models can be applied to *dangùs*, which is characterized by two main features: it displays *o*-grade in its root (*$\check{o}$ > $\check{a}$*) and it is derived from a verb (*deñgti*). These features do not occur in any of the other *-*u*-stem nouns, which invites us to look for a different origin.

There is in Baltic a productive formation of *-*u*-adjectives. From an Indo-European point of view, *-*u*-adjectives originally displayed zero grade (e.g. PIE *$pl\!th_2$-ú-* 'broad, wide' > Sanskrit *pṛthú-*) and were integrated within the Caland system, in which they were linked, inter alia, to sigmatic abstract nouns (e.g. PIE *$pléth_2$-e/os-* 'breadth, width'> Sanskrit *práthas-*).[5] In some cases, already at an early stage, they were secondarily connected with simple thematic verbs and could eventually imitate their vocalism, as in Sanskrit *svādú-* 'sweet' (< PIE *$su̯eh_2d$-ú-*) with irregular full grade probably due to the influence of *svádati* 'to taste, to relish, to enjoy' (< PIE*$su̯éh_2d$-e/o-*). This innovation is likely to be fairly ancient in Indo-European, as suggested by the fact that PIE *$su̯eh_2d$-ú-* is also reflected with the same vocalism in other Indo-European languages (Greek ἡδύς, Latin *suāuis*, Old Saxon *swôti*, Old High German *suozi*, Old English *swēte*); the verb PIE*$su̯éh_2d$-e/o-* itself also appears in Greek ἥδομαι 'to enjoy oneself'. In the prehistory of Baltic, the Caland system ceased to be active (apart from a few relics) and *-*u*-adjectives modified their formation rule, adopting *o-grade and deverbative meaning. As a result, for example, PIE *$pl\!th_2$-ú-* was replaced in Lithuanian by *platùs* (as if from PIE *$ploth_2$-ú-*), connected with the secondary verb *plė̃sti, plečiù* 'to broaden, to expand' (< PIE *$pleth_2$-*, only indirectly corresponding to Sanskrit *práthati*). In Lithuanian, the new derivational pattern [R(e)-VERB] → [R(a)-u-ADJECTIVE] enjoyed an outstanding productivity, as shown by the following examples:[6]

Lithuanian *brandùs* 'ripe, mature, robust' (← *brę̃sti* 'to ripen'); *našùs* 'fruitful, productive' (← *nèšti* 'to bring'); *rambùs* 'slow, tardy, indolent' (← *rémbėti* 'to be lazy'); *smarkùs* 'violent' (← *smer̃kti* 'to submerge, to plunge'); *staigùs* 'sudden' (← *steĩgti* 'to

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[5]   On *-*u*-adjectives in PIE, see especially d e L a m b e r t e r i e (1990).

[6]   See V a n a g s (1994) for a thorough discussion of the ablaut relationships. Vanags shows that, if there is a variation between *a*- and zero-grade in Baltic adjectives of this type (like Lith. *smardùs / smirdùs* 'stinking'), the former is ancient, the latter innovative (after *smirdḗti* 'to stink').

hurry'); *stalgùs* 'greedy, avidious' (← *steĩgti* 'to watch eagerly'); *stambùs* 'large, thick, fat' (← *steñbti* 'to shoot out, to sprout')

The type must have existed in other Baltic languages as well. Old Prussian has a few possible instances[7] such as *āūgus* 'stingy, greedy' (III 87_6 [1561]), probably for *angus (cf. Lith. *éngti* 'to torment, to tease'), maybe also *kārtai* 'bitter' (III 93_{10} [1561]), obviously an *a*-stem nominative plural secondarily built on *kartus (= Lith. *kartùs* 'bitter'), and *preitlāngus* 'sweet' (III 87_5), based on *langus (cf. Lith. *leñgvas* 'easy'). Two other **-u*-stem adjectives are likely to be attested in Old Prussian, *gillin* 'deep' (III 101_{12}, acc.sg.fem. of *gilus = Lith. *gilùs* 'deep') and *polīgu* 'similarly' (adverb in III 53_{18}, 115_2, 119_{21}, cf. I 13_{12}, II 13_{12}, or acc.sg. masc. *pollīgun* in III 69_4, *pollīgon* in III $105_{22\text{-}23}$ = Lith. *lygùs*), but they do not exhibit *o-grade in their root. In Latvian, **-u*-adjectives disappeared and, as a rule, were replaced by **-ja-* adjectives, e.g. Latv. *dziļš* 'deep' (from *giljas) compared with Lith. *gilùs*. Some of these adjectives have preserved their characteristic *o-grade, like Latv. *plašs* 'broad, wide' (from *platjas) compared with Lith. *platùs*, Latv. *bruôžs* 'ripe, mature, robust' (from *brandjas) compared with Lith. *brandùs*, or Latv. *drùošs* 'bold, audacious' (from *dransjas) compared with Lith. *drąsùs*. The existence of the [R(a)-u-] derivational model for **-u*-adjectives in Baltic is indisputable.

There may be various reasons why **-u*-adjectives have generally adopted *o-grade in Baltic. It is not necessary to claim for Indo-European antiquity (e.g. by assuming secondary connection with the perfect stem). The reshuffling of the derivational model is likely to be purely Baltic (or Balto-Slavic). An influence of *o-grade iterative verbs on *u-adjectives might be envisaged in some cases, e.g. Lith. *badùs* 'prickly' (cf. *badýti* 'to prick'), *grasùs* 'threatful' (cf. *grasýti* 'to threaten'), *kratùs* 'jolting, rough' (cf. *kratýti* 'to jolt'), *taikùs* 'peaceful' (cf. *táikyti* 'to mediate, to reconcile'), *valgùs* 'hungry, having an appetite for eating' (cf. *válgyti* 'to eat'). It is undeniable that this secondary connection may have played a certain role in the productivity of this class of adjectives in Lithuanian, but this can hardly have been its original nucleus. One may assume that the connection with iteratives results from the characteristic *o-vocalism, not the reverse.

One of the reasons for the extension of *o-grade in the class of **-u*-adjectives can be that **-u*-adjectives often replaced *o-grade simple
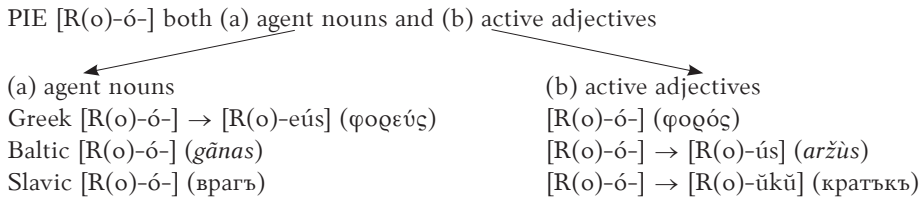
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[7] Cf. T r a u t m a n n (1910, 246).

thematic adjectives of the type PIE [R(o)-ó-] (cf. Greek φορός 'bearing, carrying'). This hypothesis is not new and the shift of *-o-adjectives to *-u-adjectives is a process that has been well described in the secondary literature, by S k a r d ž i u s (1943, 33), Z i n k e v i č i u s (1981, 20), H a m p (1984), V a n a g s (1989) and A m b r a z a s (2011, 159), to mention just a few names. Originally, the PIE oxytone type [R(o)-ó-] was used to build agent nouns and adjectives with an active meaning beside barytone nouns of the type [R(ó)-o-], which had an abstract or passive meaning: this can be illustrated, inter alia, by Greek φόρος 'the act of bringing, what is brought, tribute' / φορός 'carrying'. In PIE, the oxytone formation produced both agent nouns and adjectives with an active meaning. The Baltic languages seem to have split the two types. On the one hand, agent nouns were sometimes preserved as *-o-stems, e.g. Lith. gãnas 'sheperd' (< PIE *g^{uh}on-ó- 'the one hitting sheep to make them move forward', cf. the verb giñti 'to drive'), Lith. vãdas 'leader' (< PIE *$u̯od^h$-ó- 'the leading one', cf. the verb vèsti 'to lead'), Lith. sárgas 'watchman, guard' (< PIE *sorg-ó- 'the protecting one', cf. the verb sérgėti 'to protect') or even Lith. úodas 'mosquito' (< PIE *$h_1$od-ó- 'the eating one', cf. the verb ésti 'to eat'). On the other hand, the corresponding adjectives massively adopted the productive *-u-inflection: a clear example is PIE *$h_1$orĝ^h-ó- 'rutting, in rut, excited' (cf. Armenian որձ orj 'male', o-stem) > Baltic *aržás → Lithuanian aržùs 'violent, lustful, libidinous'.[8] The same split seems to have existed in Slavic, where [R(o)-ó-] agent nouns were sometimes preserved without substantial change (e.g. Old Church Slavic врагъ 'foe' < PIE *$u̯org^h$-ó-, compared with the Lithuanian abstract noun var̃gas 'hardship, misery'), whereas [R(o)-ó-] adjectives were usually reshuffled as *-ŭ-adjectives, themselves enlarged as *-ŭ-(kŭ)- (e.g. Old Church Slavic кратъкъ 'short' compared with Lith. kartùs 'bitter', both from PIE *kert- 'to cut').[9] A striking parallel for this split between nouns and adjectives, although in the reverse direction, is provided by Ancient Greek, where the oxytone [R(o)-ó-] type was usually preserved in adjectives with an active meaning, but replaced in agent nouns by the productive formation in -εύς, compare Greek φορός 'bearing, carrying' (adjective) and *φορός → φορεύς 'bearer, carrier' (noun), τομός 'cutting' (adjective) and

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[8] Cf. P e t i t (2006, 356).
[9] M a t a s o v i ć (2011, 68) for Common Slavic *vôrgъ 'foe' and M e i l l e t (1905, 324–328) for the Common Slavic adjectival suffix *-ŭkŭ.

*τομός → τομεύς 'carver' (noun). The parallelism in the evolution of this class of words is a textbook instance of morphological split:

PIE [R(o)-ó-] both (a) agent nouns and (b) active adjectives

(a) agent nouns	(b) active adjectives
Greek [R(o)-ó-] → [R(o)-eús] (φορεύς)	[R(o)-ó-] (φορός)
Baltic [R(o)-ó-] (*gānas*)	[R(o)-ó-] → [R(o)-ús] (*aržùs*)
Slavic [R(o)-ó-] (врагъ)	[R(o)-ó-] → [R(o)-ŭkŭ] (кратъкъ)

In Greek, the innovation lies on the side of the agent nouns, in Baltic and Slavic on the side of the adjectives. The convergence between Baltic and Slavic is particularly remarkable and indicates that the change was already achieved, or at least was being developed, in Balto–Slavic. It is doubtless not without interest to observe that the distinction between nouns and adjectives, which was rather fluid in Indo-European, progressively came to form an organic boundary in this class of words both in Greek and in Balto–Slavic.[10]

The position of the Lithuanian noun *dangùs* in this system is intriguing. Taken at face value, the noun *dangùs* can be described as an agent noun ('the one covering the world' from *deñgti*), but formally it is much more akin to an adjectival form (*dangas* replaced by *dangus* 'covering'). The contradiction we are facing here is only apparent and can be removed by taking into account the chronology of the morphological analysis. As already said, on the PIE level, the distinction between nouns and adjectives in this class of words was fluid (and probably more regulated by syntactic than by morphological parameters); this duality was certainly shared by the PIE form underlying the Baltic noun *dangus*, whatever its shape. But, at the Baltic stage, this form was certainly analyzed as an adjective: this is supposed by the fact that it was eventually reshuffled as *dangus*, which occurred only for adjectives. If it had been perceived as a noun, it would not have joined the *-u-class. If this analysis is correct, there is no alternative option than to assume that *dangus (replacing *dangas) was an adjective in Common Baltic and that this adjective, in a manner yet to be determined, was eventually used as a noun 'sky, heaven'.

The most common way to change an adjective into a noun by morphological conversion (i.e. without additional morpheme) is ellipsis. Ellipsis can be

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[10] See the discussion in Va n a g s (1989, 116–117).

roughly defined as 'the omission of a substantive that an adjective was originally paired with, so that the adjective alone remains in substantivized meaning', as Höfler (2020, 182) puts it in a recent article. Globally speaking, two types of ellipsis can be distinguished, contextual and conventional ellipsis. Contextual ellipsis represents the omission of a substantive due to its previous mention in the immediate context. An English example provided by Höfler (2020, 184) can illustrate this type of ellipsis: *he gave me a glass of **white wine**, but I'd have preferred **red***. The substantivized adjective *red* stands for *red wine* and the reason why the noun is omitted is that it was already mentioned before; it is easily recoverable from the context. On the other hand, conventional ellipsis represents the omission of a substantive that was not necessarily mentioned in the context, but whose semantic content can be recovered by means of a conventional knowledge shared by the speaker and the hearer. When I say in English *the dead never come back*, I suppose that everyone will understand it as *the dead men never come back*. Without any explicit specification, the adjective *dead* will be understood as referring to *men*. Over time, contextual ellipsis can become conventional and eventually result in lexicalization of the adjective as a fully–fledged substantive; at that stage the process of ellipsis is not perceived any longer. The French noun *l'automobile* 'the car' derives from *la voiture automobile* 'the self–moving car, the car that moves by itself', but I am not sure that every French speaker is aware of the ellipsis process underwent by the noun *voiture* 'car'. Two points are particularly important for us here.

First, the meaning of the substantivized adjective may diverge more or less considerably from that of the underlying adjectival form, which results from the fact that it had to retrieve, or to assimilate if one prefers, the semantic content of the deleted noun. Sometimes, it has simply adopted the meaning of the noun it was originally paired with, as in Latin *dextra* 'the right [hand]' (e.g. Caesar, *De Bello Gallico* 1, 20, 5: *dextram prendit*) from *dextra manus* 'the right hand' (e.g. Caesar, *De Bello Gallico* 5, 44, 8: *dextram…manum*): *dextra* describes a kind of hand (*manus*), i.e. the meaning of the noun was transferred to the adjective, combined with the denotative meaning of the adjective which restricts its scope. It may happen that a substantivized adjective displays different meanings, depending on the noun it replaces. In Ancient Greek, for example, ἡ ξένη 'the foreign one' can easily be interpreted as 'the foreign country' (e.g. Xenophon, *Constitution of the Lacedemonians*, 14, 4) or as 'the foreign woman' (e.g. Aeschylus, *Agamemnon*, 950), reflecting two different collocations (with γῆ 'earth, country' resp. γυνή

'woman'). Sometimes, the meaning is less predictable and the substantivized adjective may acquire a specific meaning which does not reflect directly that of its components. H ö f l e r (2020, 184) mentions Sanskrit *mahiṣá-* 'buffalo' (masc.) from the adjective *mahiṣá-* 'tremendous' (+ *mr̥gá-* 'animal', cf. *mahiṣám mr̥gám* in the RV 8, 69, 15): the meaning of the substantivized adjective is not compositional, which means that it cannot be predicted from the meaning of the adjective *mahiṣá-* 'tremendous' or from that of the noun *mr̥gá-* 'animal'.

The second point that should be pointed out here is that some of the morphological properties of the omitted noun may survive in the substantivized adjective, especially its gender. In French, for example, *l'automobile* owes its feminine gender to the noun *la voiture* (in *la voiture automobile*). In several Indo-European languagues, the 'right hand' is a substantivized adjective, and, as a rule, it preserves the gender of the noun suppressed by ellipsis, feminine in Ancient Greek δεξιά 'the right hand' (< χείρ 'hand', fem.), Latin *dextra* 'the right hand' (< *manus* 'hand', fem.), Gothic *taihswa* 'the right hand' (< *handus* 'hand', fem.) and Lithuanian *dešinẽ* 'the right hand' (< *rankà* 'hand', fem.), but masculine in Sanskrit *dákṣinas* 'the right hand' (< *hástas* 'hand', masc.) and neuter in Hittite *kunnan* 'the right hand' (< *kiššar* 'hand', neut.). To put if differently, the gender of the substantivized adjective can give us a clue on the gender of the noun it was originally paired with. It goes without saying that the gender of the new noun may sometimes be modified by analogy, as in German *das Auto* (neut.), which, despite the feminine gender of its source, has joined the class of neuter nouns ending in *-o* (like *das Büro* 'the office', but *die Metro* owes its feminine gender to *die Untergrundbahn*).

These considerations can be applied to Baltic **dangus* 'sky, heaven', assuming that it goes back to a substantivized adjective. The structure we have to reconstruct is [COVERING + SKY], i.e. [**dangas*$_{MASC}$ + NOUN$_{MASC}$] or [**dangus*$_{MASC}$ + NOUN$_{MASC}$], and finally, via ellipsis of the noun, [**dangus*$_{MASC}$]. This idea is not entirely new and was already suggested, in less precise terms, by M a ž i u l i s (PKEŽ ²2013, 104–105). Already at first glance, the best candidate for the deleted noun could be **debesis* 'cloud, cloudy sky' (masc.), reflected by Lithuanian *debesìs* 'cloud' and Latvian *debess* 'sky, heaven', dialectal also 'cloud', but the details of this option are yet to be determined. In a first approximation, one could hypothesize that a collocation [COVERING + SKY], concretely **dangus debesis*, was reduced via ellipsis to **dangus* 'the covering one, the sky'. Several points, however, remain to be determined.

To begin with, the Baltic masculine noun *debesis 'cloud' is usually traced back to the PIE sigmatic neuter *nébʰos, gen.sg. *nébʰeses 'cloud',[11] securely reconstructed with the meaning 'cloud' on the basis of Sanskrit nábhas 'humidity, cloud', Greek νέφος 'cloud', and with the meaning 'sky' on the basis of Hittite nepiš-, Cuneiform Luwian tappaš-, Hieroglyphic Luwian tipaš- 'sky', Old Church Slavic небо, Russian небо, Polish niebo 'sky'. In Classical Sanskrit nábhas 'cloud' is sometimes used with the meaning 'sky' and already in Vedic Sanskrit the elliptic dual nábhasī means 'sky and earth' (e.g. Atharvaveda AVŚ 5, 20, 7 and 12, 3, 6). In Old Avestan, the plural nabå̄s means 'sky' in a very archaic-looking passage (Y 44, 4):[12]

> kasnā dərətā # zą̇mcā adā̄ nabå̄scā
> auuapastōiš # kā̄ apō uruuarå̄scā
> kā̄ vātāi # duuą̇nmaibiiascā yaogəṯ āsū?
> 'Who holds the earth down below, and the heavens (above) (to prevent them) from falling, who (holds) the waters and plants? Who yokes the swift teams to the wind and the clouds?'

There is thus evidence for the use of PIE *nébʰos both as 'cloud' and as '(cloudy) sky'; the metonymic link is relatively trivial and can be supported by a number of parallels (e.g. English sky ← Old Norse ský 'cloud', cf. Old English scēo 'cloud'). It can be assumed that *nébʰos in PIE had both meanings and was opposed, as the 'cloudy sky', to PIE *di̯éu̯- 'bright sky, daylight, sky god' (Sanskrit dyáu-, Greek Ζεύς, Latin Iūpiter 'sky god' and diēs 'day') and to its vr̥ddhi derivative *dei̯u̯ós 'god' (Sanskrit devá-, Lithuanian diẽvas 'god', cf. the Finnish loanword taivas 'sky'). This semantic duality (cloud / sky), which is likely to be rather ancient in PIE, was probably inherited in Common Baltic and is still reflected nowadays by its disjecta membra, 'cloud' in Lithuanian debesìs and 'sky' in Latvian debess. It is uncessary to argue that Latvian debess owes its meaning 'sky' to the contact-induced influence of East Slavic небо, because the organic ties between the two notions are too strong and too well established in the Indo-European languages to make this assumption an absolute necessity.

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[11] See NIL (p. 499–504). It is possible that Old Irish nem and Middle Welsh nef 'sky' also belong here (with assimilation *nebʰos > *nemos?), as suggested by Matasović (2009, 288), but a different PIE reconstruction *nem-os is also possible.

[12] Text and translation from Humbach (1991, 157). Cf. Bartholomae (AIW, 1040), who translates nabå̄s as 'Luftraum, Himmel'.

Formally, PIE *$néb^hos$, gen.sg. *$néb^heses$ was a sigmatic neuter. In Baltic, this archaic class of words was eliminated and its vestiges either joined the class of *o-stems, e.g. maybe Lith. *véidas* 'face' (if from PIE *$ųei̯d-os-$, Greek εἶδος 'form, figure, shape', but PIE *$ųei̯d-o-$ is also possible, cf. Old Church Slavic видъ 'appearance'),[13] or were reshuffled as masculine *-i-stems, like precisely gen.sg. *$néb^h-es-es$, on which a new masculine accusative *$néb^h-es-m̥$ > *dẽbesį* was created, reanalyzed as an *-i-stem (hence the new nominative *debesìs*). The case of *ménuo* 'month', acc.sg. *ménesį*, is partly parallel, but more complicated and needs not be specifically discussed here. The question that remains unanswered at this stage is when the shift to the masculine gender took place. This question is not completely irrelevant, because the masculine gender of *debesìs* can be regarded as the source of the masculine gender of *dangùs* through the ellipsis process described above. If one concentrates on East Baltic alone, the masculine gender of Lithuanian *debesìs* (Latvian *debess* is secondarily feminine) is not problematic; it can simply illustrate the loss of the neuter gender in that sub-branch of Baltic. But, if Old Prussian is also taken into account, the problem becomes much more difficult, since Old Prussian preserved the neuter gender, especially in the *Elbing Vocabulary*. The difficulty is obvious: if the masculine gender of Old Prussian *dangus* is explained as transferred from the noun it was paired with and if this noun was the reflex of PIE *$néb^hos$, this means that *$néb^hos$, or whatever form it may have taken in West Baltic, was already of masculine gender in Old Prussian. It follows that the shift of the Baltic reflex of PIE *$néb^hos$ to the masculine gender was already implemented in Old Prussian, since it is supposed to explain the masculine gender of *dangus*, and cannot be routinely explained by the loss of the neuter gender, as in East Baltic. By necessity, any answer to this question can only be purely hypothetical, since we do not know how PIE *$néb^hos$ may have looked in Old Prussian: it is not attested at all and the meaning 'cloud' is conveyed by another word (Old Prussian *wupyan*). Of course, in Old Prussian, the masculine gender of *dangus* 'sky' could simply be due to the influence of German *der Himmel*, but it would probably be better to find a common explanation for West and East Baltic. Alternatively, one could assume that, at the Common Baltic stage, 'the cloudy sky' acquired

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[13] The reconstruction of a thematic noun PIE *$ųei̯d-o-$ was suggested to me by an anonymous reviewer.

the masculine gender by analogy with 'the bright sky' (Baltic *deivas), both opposed to the feminine gender of the 'earth' (Baltic *źemē).

The reconstruction of a collocation [COVERING + SKY], realized as *dangus$_\text{MASC}$ + debesis$_\text{MASC}$ in the prehistory of Baltic, has an additional benefit. It may explain why the initial consonant of PIE *neb^h- was changed to *deb- in Baltic. Traditionally, the phonetic change *n- → *d- is described as sporadic, or irregular, and paralleled by the case of Balto–Slavic *devīni 'nine' instead of *nevini (from PIE *(h₁)neu-n̥-). In the latter instance, the same process occurred both in Baltic (Lithuanian devynì, Latvian deviņi) and in Slavic (Old Church Slavic девать) and is thus likely to be of Balto–Slavic date, despite Old Prussian newīnts 'ninth' (III 35₅, cf. newints I 7₁, newyntz II 7₁), which could have 'restored' the initial nasal by analogy with German neun. Here, the initial consonant can be explained by internal analogy within the numeral system with the following number *desim(t)- 'ten' (Lith. dẽšimt, Latvian desmit, Old Prussian dessimpts, Old Church Slavic десать < PIE *dek̂m̥-). This explanation cannot apply to Baltic *debesis. The comparison with the Anatolian forms (Hittite nepiš-, but Cuneiform Luwian tappaš-, Hieroglyphic Luwian tipaš-) boils down to explaining obscurum per obscurius. It may be the case that the collocation [COVERING + SKY] was precisely the source of this change, if one assumes that the epithet–noun structure [*dangus + nebesis$_\text{MASC}$] was modified to [*dangus + debesis$_\text{MASC}$] through distant (progressive) assimilation. This is unverifiable, of course, but does not sound impossible.

A last point to discuss here concerns the accent of the Baltic form *dangus. Assuming that it was originally based on a simple thematic oxytone adjective ([R(o)-ó-], we expect it to have inherited oxytone stress (*dangás), which could appear to be faithfully reflected, in spite of the morphological reshuffling, in Lith. dangùs, acc.sg. dañgų (AP 4). As already mentioned, the barytone variant *dángus or *dañgus is far from philologically secure. If real, it could be explained as secondary. S k a r d ž i u s (1935, 140–144) has shown that in Daukša's works *-u-adjectives included both barytone and oxytone forms, e.g. on the one hand áifȝkus 'clear' (e.g. DP 254₄ [1599]), brágus 'dear' (e.g. DP 81₃₀ [1599]), méiłus 'beloved' (e.g. DP 345₆ [1599]), wéikus 'ready, willing' (e.g. DP 30₃₂ [1599]) and on the other hand baisús 'awful, dreadful' (e.g. DP 4₁₉ [1599]), laimús 'happy' (e.g. DP 383₆ [1599]), sałdús 'sweet' (e.g. DP 281₄₂ [1599]), tamsús 'dark' (e.g. DP 556₃₇ [1599]). There is a clear tendency for barytone *-u-adjectives to adopt the productive oxytone stress pattern which is predominant in this class of words. This explains internal variations in the

language of Daukša, with doublets like *áifʒkus / aifʒkús* 'clear' (e.g. DP 254₄ resp. DP 2₁₇ [1599]) or *brágus / brągús* 'dear' (e.g. DP 81₃₀ resp. DP 541₄₇ [1599]); double stress is another indicator of this variation, e.g. *áifʒkús* (DP 2₂₀ [1599]). The deep-set trend towards oxytone stress can be simply due to analogical extension or may have transited through the abstract noun in *-ùmas,* as supposed by L a z a u s k a i t ė (1998). It could then be assumed that, even if *dangùs* was already lexicalized as a noun at that time, it could have been influenced by this variation and have received secondary barytone stress (e.g. *dágus* DP 79₃, etc. [1599]) by analogy with the variation observed, e.g., in the adjective *brágus / brągús* 'dear'. All this scenario, however, remains fragile, due to the uncertainty of the Old Lithuanian evidence.

III. The PIE prehistory of Baltic *dangus*

In view of the above, we can reconstruct a regular derivational pathway [R(e)-VERB] (*deñgti* 'to cover') → [R(a)-u-ADJECTIVE] (**dangùs* 'covering'), lexicalized via ellipsis as [R(a)-u-NOUN] (*dangùs* 'sky'). The point I would like to address now is the PIE prehistory of the verb *deñgti* 'to cover'. For this purpose, it is necessary to begin with a brief overview of the Baltic family itself.

The Lithuanian verb *deñgti* (pres. *-ia*, pret. *-ė*) conveys the general meaning 'to cover' which can be applied to various situations: covering objects with a lid or another object, covering a table with a tablecloth, covering a space with a roof, covering a body with clothes, covering an expense with a sum of money, etc. The verb can be used about blankets of clouds covering the sky, which sometimes gives the impression that the connection between the noun *dangùs* and the verb *deñgti* is not entirely blurred, cf. Lith. *dangùs deñgiasi debesimìs* 'the sky is covered with clouds' (LKŽ II 404, Bartninkai), cf. also *dangum̃ deñgtas* 'covered by the sky' about leaky roofs (LKŽ II 262, Dusetos, Joniškis, Kupiškis, Notėnai, Salos, Vilkaviškis). From the verb *deñgti* are derived a handful of nouns which reproduce its semantic spectrum, e.g. Lith. *dangà* 'dress, clothes' (e.g. *storà dangà* 'solid garment') or 'cover' (e.g. *sniẽgo dangà* 'blanket of snow'), *dañgalas* 'cover, curtain', *dañgtis* 'cover, lip, roof'. Beside the transitive verb *deñgti* there is also an intransitive verb *diñgti* (pres. *-sta*, pret. *-o*) with a strong divergence of meaning 'to disappear' (probably from a basic meaning 'to be covered'). The connection with Old Lithuanian *dingti* 'to think' (usually impersonal *man dinga* 'it seems to me') is unclear. The ALEW (I 212) supposes that the original meaning of this verb was 'to look out' (Germ. *hervorlugen*), then 'to appear', but, in comparison with *diñgti*

'to disappear', this sounds very much like a *lucus a non lucendo* etymology. Admittedly it still needs to be motivated more precisely than it has been up to now in the secondary literature.[14]

There is no verb corresponding to Lith. *deñgti* 'to cover' in Latvian. The Latvian nouns *danga* 'curve, corner' and *dañdzis* 'crown; wheel rim' (ME I 437) are likely to go back, because of the preserved nasal, to Curonian forms **dangā* resp. **dangīs* 'curved objects'. If they derive from the verb 'to cover', it must be recognized that their meaning is slightly different and implies the notion of 'curvature', which is possible in Lithuanian, but not overriding. In Old Prussian, there is no verb **deng-*, but its vocalism could have influenced the noun *dangus* 'sky', sometimes spelled *deng-* (e.g. acc.sg. *dengan* III 133_8 [1561] beside the more common *dangon*, cf. also *dengenennis* 'celestial' III 49_{20}, etc.). The noun *dongo* attested once in the *Elbing Vocabulary* (EV 403) reflects **dangā*. Its meaning is difficult to establish, since it renders German *refe*, which has been interpreted either as *Reif* 'circle' or as *Refe* 'stand for dishes, glasses'. The second solution is preferred since N e s s e l m a n n (1873, 31–32); more recently, S c h m a l s t i e g (2015, 282) proposed 'part of a barrel or vat, the hoop of a barrel'.[15] The bulk of evidence suggests that the original meaning of the Baltic root **deng-* was not 'to cover' defined in very broad terms, but more specifically 'to cover a curved surface'. This precise meaning could be congruent with the specialization of **dangus* in reference to the sky dome (cf. German *Himmelswölbung*).

The Slavic languages furnish a noun **dǫgà* 'arc, arch', often specialized as 'rainbow': Old Russian дѫга 'rainbow', Russian дугá 'arc, arch', Bulgarian дъгá 'arc, arch, rainbow', Serbo-Croatian дýга *dúga* 'rainbow', Slovene *dóga* 'stave, lag, rainbow', Czech *duha* 'arc, arch, stave, lag, rainbow', Polish dial. *dęga* 'scratch, rainbow, stave, lag'.[16] From a formal point of view, Slavic **dǫgà* is identical with Baltic **dangā*. No verb **deng-* 'to cover' has been

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[14] See also LEW (p. 88–89), SEJL (p. 114) without much detail. The meaning 'to seem' is ancient and also appears in Old Prussian *podingai* 'it pleases' (Germ. *gefalle*, III 79_{17} [1561]), *podīngan* 'pleasure' (Germ. *lust*, III 85_5 and 85_7 [1561]), *podingausnan* 'id.' (Germ. *gefallen*, III 85_6 [1561]).

[15] On Old Prussian *dongo*, see PJ (I 361–362).

[16] D e r k s e n (EDSIL, 114). See also P o k o r n y (IEW, 250), T r a u t m a n n (BSW, 44–45), as well as V a s m e r (ÈSRJa, 549–550) for Russian, M a c h e k (1971, 133), R e j z e k (2001, 148) for Czech, and S n o j (2003, 115–116) for Slovene.

preserved in Slavic and the noun *dǫgà is completely isolated.[17] There was probably a secondary link with the Slavic root *tęg- 'to pull, to stretch', which is suggested by the fact that Pol. dial. dęga is sometimes replaced by tęga in the same meaning.[18] From a semantic point of view, the Slavic data confirm the original meaning of the family ('to cover a curved surface') and the specific application to atmospheric realities connected with the sky dome (cf. 'rainbow').

Traditionally, the Baltic family is traced back to a PIE root *d^heng^h- 'to cover'. The reconstruction of two aspirated stops is based mainly on Germanic material: Old Norse dyngia 'heap', also 'separate room in a house for ladies to weave', Old English dung 'manure, muck, dung', Middle High German tunc 'room used for weaving activities', Modern German Dung or Dünger 'manure, muck, dung', and different verbs reflected by Old English dyngan 'to dung, to manure', Old High German tungen, Modern German düngen 'to fertilize with manure', and, with a different meaning, Danish dynge 'to heap up'.[19]

As we see, there is a great semantic diversity in the Germanic forms. Two different meanings can be distinguished: (1) 'manure' < 'heap', (2) 'a kind of room used for weaving activities' < 'shelter, bower' (?). Formally, it is possible to reconstruct two Common Germanic nouns, a masculine *dungaz and a feminine *dungā, which can be routinely traced back to PIE *$d^hn̥g^h$-o- or *$d^hn̥g^h$-ā respectively, both with barytone stress. The specialization 'heap' > 'manure' could be accounted for by assuming a semantic evolution 'to cover' > 'what covers the soil, heap', later specialized as 'manure', 'dung used for fertilizing land', but this remains uncertain. The specialization 'room used for weaving activities' could derive from 'shelter, place covered by a roof, bower', but there is little evidence to support this idea. In both cases, it is possible to cope with the divergent meanings by reconstructing a notion 'to cover', comparable to Lith. deñgti, but more general than the Balto–Slavic specialized meaning 'to cover a curved surface'. Strikingly enough, among the different meanings of Latv. danga mentioned by the ME (I 437), we find: 'a little room' ('ein Zimmerchen'), 'a corridor in a building and also in a

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[17] This reminds us the case of Slavic *rǫkà 'hand', where, in a similar manner, Slavic has retained the noun, but lost the underlying verb, which, in turn, is preserved in Baltic (Lith. rankà 'hand' ← riñkti 'to gather').

[18] B r ü c k n e r (1927, 570).

[19] See especially B o s w o r t h (1848, 218, 221) and C l e a s b y, V i g f u s s o n (1874, 111).

forest, also the narrow place between the kitchen and the exterior wall, where twigs, brushwood and wood stock are stored for cooking stove' ('ein Gang (Korridor) in einem Gebäude und auch im Walde, desgleichen der engre Raum zwischen dem Küchenraum und der Aussenwand, wo man Reisig und Holz für die Küche hält'), which seems to be not too far from that of Germanic 'room to weave, shelter, bower', although probably independently.

It is difficult to reconstruct for all these forms a common source deriving from a root 'to cover' and Seebold, in Kluge ([24]2002, 221), might be right in suggesting that we are facing homonymy of different lexical families. One could, for example, come up with the idea that two separate meanings were originally distinguished, 'to cover, to pile up, to heap' and 'to bend', and that these two meanings have mingled at some point. Taken at face value, it seems to be the case that (1°) the meaning 'to bend' is predominant in Balto-Slavic, (2°) the meaning 'to cover, to pile up, to heap' is predominant in Germanic and (3°) the Lithuanian verb *deñgti* lies at the crossroads between the two meanings. Of course, this idea remains pure speculation as long as we have not supported it by positive evidence.

In his usual way, Pokorny (IEW, 250) reconstructs the meaning of the PIE root $*d^h eng^h$- as a mere accumulation of the semantic features of its historical descendants: 'to press, to bend, to cover, to lie on' (*drücken, krümmen, bedecken, worauf liegen*), without attempting to classify this diversity of meanings in a reasonable manner. To the forms already mentioned he adds Old Irish *dingid* 'to knead, to form, to press', but it is now commonly recognized that Old Irish *dingid* belongs to PIE $*d^h ei\hat{g}^h$- 'to knead, to form' and is parallel to Latin *fingō* 'to form, to shape'.[20]

Another set of forms, however, could be more directly compared to the Balto-Slavic family **deng-* 'to cover a curved surface, to bend' and to its application to atmospheric realities. In some Ancient Germanic languages there is a poetic name for the 'celestial body', which can be reconstructed as Common Germanic **tungla^n* (neut.): it is reflected by Gothic *tuggl* 'celestial body, star', Old Norse *tungl* 'celestial body, moon', Old English *tungol* 'star', Old Saxon *tungal* 'celestial body, star'. There is also an archaic compound reflected by Old Norse *himin-tungl*, Old English *heofon-tungol*, Old Saxon *himil-tungal, heƀen-tungal, heƀan-tungal* and Old High German *himil-zungal* 'celestial body'. The correspondence is so precise that it is possible to

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[20] Matasović (2009, 99).

reconstruct in Common Germanic not only the noun *$tungla^n$, but also the compound *$hemen\text{-}tungla^n$, *$hemel\text{-}tungla^n$ 'celestial body'.

The meaning of Gothic *tuggl* is not entirely certain; it occurs only once in a marginal gloss *uf tugglam* 'under the celestial bodies' (Galatians 4, 3), explaining the text *uf stabim þis fairƕaus* 'under the elements of the world' = Greek ὑπὸ τὰ στοιχεῖα τοῦ οὐρανοῦ 'under the elements of the sky' (cf. Lat. *sub elementis mundi*).

In Old English, *tungol* means 'star, celestial body' and is used either in the singular, as in the following instance (*Cotton Maxims* II 48-49):

> *Tungol sceal on heofenum beorhte scīnan, swā him bebēad meotud.*
> 'A star must shine brightly in the heavens as the Redeemer commanded.'

or more frequently in the plural, with a collective meaning, as in the following instance (Alfred's translation of Boetius' *De Consolatione Philosophiae* IV 39, 144–147):

> *Ða wyrd hē þonne wyrcð, oððe þurh ðā goodan englas, oððe þurh monna sāwla, oððe þurh ōðerra gesceafta līf, oððe þurh heofones tungal, oððe þurh þāra scuccena mislice lotwrencas.*
> 'Then he (God) works his providence either through the good angels, or through men's souls or through the life of other creatures or through the stars of heaven or through the various tricks of the devils'

In Old Saxon, *tungal* is used twice in the *Heliand*, once in the singular in reference to the 'moon' (*Heliand* 3627):

> *Thiu is aftar themu mânen ginemnid / aftar themu torhten tungle.*
> 'It (= Jericho) has received its name from the moon, from this bright star'

once in the plural (*Heliand* 600):

> *Uui gisâhun is bôcan skînan / hêdro fon himiles tunglun.*
> 'We have seen His sign shining brightly from the stars of heaven'

In Old Norse, *tungl* is used once in the *Poetic Edda* (*Vǫlospá* 40, 4) in reference to the 'moon':

> *Verðr af þeim ǫllom eina nøkkorr / tungls tiúgarií trollz hami.*
> 'From all these one will come, destroyer of the moon, in troll–like shape'

In that meaning 'moon' it survives in Modern Icelandic *tungl* beside *máni*.

As far as I know, the simple noun *zungal* is not attested in Old High German and we only find the compound *himil-zungal* in the same meaning 'celestial body', as in the following instance (*Muspilli* 5):

> *Sô quimit ein heri fona himilzungalon, das andar fona pehhe.*
> 'Then comes one army from the stars of heaven, the other one from hell'

To sum up, the Germanic word $*tungla^n$ often did not specifically refer to the 'stars' or to the 'moon', but more generally to any 'heavenly body' that can be seen in the firmament. In Ancient Germanic it had a markedly poetic connotation and went out of use in most modern languages, with the notable exception of Modern Icelandic, where it is still used nowadays in reference to the 'moon'. From a formal point of view, $*tungla^n$ can be projected back to a PIE prototype $*d\d{n}g^h\text{-}lom$, i.e. a $*\text{-}lo$-derivative of a PIE verbal root $*deng^h\text{-}$. The comparison with Lith. *deñgti* 'to cover' and especially *dangùs* 'sky' was proposed long ago by G r i e n b e r g e r (1900, 210–211), but was almost unanimously rejected since then and fell quickly into oblivion. It is still condemned explicitly by F e i s t (1939, 482) and L e h m a n n (1986, 348), but is not even mentioned by D e V r i e s (1962, 601), and it appears to have been completely ignored by Balticists of all times. A connection with Germanic *tungo* 'tongue' ($< $ PIE $*d\d{n}\hat{g}^h\b{u}\bar{a}$, cf. Tocharian A *käntu*, B *käntwo*, Old Latin *dingua*) was supposed by G r i m m (1844 II, 663), who claimed that stars owe their name to their resemblance with scythes or tongues, but this view can be rejected as ill-founded. It is equally unreasonable to derive Germanic $*tungla^n$ from a PIE root $*deng^h\text{-}$ 'to shine', which is found nowhere except perhaps in Old Lith. *dingti* 'to think' (impersonal *man dinga* 'it seems to me'). This idea, suggested by D e V r i e s (1962, 601), sounds possible on paper, but remains based on shaky ground, as the evidence for the original meaning 'to shine' is limited precisely to our Germanic word.

All in all, the comparison between Germanic $*tungla^n$ and Baltic $*dangus$ might be worth getting out of purgatory. Common to both of them is the connection to the celestial sphere covered by heavenly bodies. Whereas Baltic $*dangus$ can go back to a simple thematic adjective $*dangas < $ PIE $*dong^h\text{-}\acute{o}\text{-}$ with an active meaning ('the covering [sky]'), Germanic $*tungla^n$ reflects a concrete neuter noun $*d\d{n}\hat{g}^h\text{-}lom$ 'cover'. The neuter suffix $*\text{-}la^n$ ($< $ PIE $*\text{-}lom$) occurs in a few Germanic nouns referring to concrete realities, e.g.

Gothic *tagl* 'hair' (< PIE *$dok\text{-}lóm$, cf. Old Irish *dúal* 'braid'), maybe also *mail* 'spot, blot' (< Germanic *$mai\text{-}la^n$), sometimes with an instrumental meaning, e.g. Gothic *þwahl* 'bath' (< Germanic *$þwah\text{-}la^n$, from the verb *þwahan* 'to wash'), Old High German *bîhal*, Modern German *Beil* 'ax' (< PIE *$b^hiH\text{-}lom$, cf. Old Church Slavic би́ти 'to hit'), Old High German *seil*, Modern German *Seil* 'rope' (< PIE *$soh_2i\text{-}lom$, cf. Sanskrit *syáti* 'to bind'), maybe also Old Norse *kjóll* 'ship' (< Germanic *$keu\text{-}la^n$). Particularly interesting is Old Norse *skjól* 'barn' (Germanic *$skeu\text{-}la^n$) derived from a PIE root *$skeu$- 'to cover' (cf. Sanskrit *skunắti* 'to cover'). The same meanings are found in other Indo-European languages as well, e.g. Old Church Slavic дѣло 'action', гребло 'paddle', облѣкло 'garment', Greek ὅπλον 'weapon', ξύλον 'wood', σκῦλον 'arms stripped off a slain enemy, spoils', Lat. *pīlum* 'heavy javelin, pilum', *fīlum* 'thread'. In some cases, a collective meaning is perceptible and suggested by the variation with secondary feminines, e.g. Greek φῦλον / φυλή 'tribe', Latin *fīlum* / Lith. *gýsla* 'thread'; this collective meaning could also be present in Germanic *$tungla^n$.

It should be noted that, in this perspective, the meaning of Germanic *$tungla^n$ and Baltic *$dangus$ would not be exactly identical, the former referring to celestial bodies covering the sky dome, the latter to the sky dome itself covering the world, but the denotation of the underlying root would be the same 'to cover a curved surface' and its application to the celestial sphere would be strikingly similar. From a formal point of view, this hypothesis would imply reconstructing the root of Baltic *$dangus$, if cognate with Germanic *$tungla^n$, as PIE *$deng^h$-, with initial voiced unaspirated stop, not as *d^heng^h-, as is usually done. It must be recognized that the reconstruction of an initial aspirated stop *d^h- is based exclusively on a handful of Germanic forms whose denotation is rather compatible with a basic meaning 'to press, to pile up, to heap' (e.g. English *dung*) than with 'to cover a curved surface'. Even Old Norse *dyngia* 'separate room in a house used for weaving activities' can derive from a basic meaning 'storage room' and is not necessarily based on a meaning 'room covered by a roof'.

At this point, the assumption that we are dealing with two different roots resurfaces and becomes more plausible. We have two different meanings ('to press, to pile up, to heap' / 'to cover a curved surface') and two different root structures (*d^heng^h- / *$deng^h$-), and there seems to be a clear correlation between the two levels of differentiation: *d^heng^h- means 'to press, to pile up, to heap' (with initial *d^h-, proved by Germanic *$dung$- 'heap, manure') and

*deng^h- means 'to bend, to cover a curved surface' (with initial *d-, proved by Germanic *tung- 'celestial body'). For semantic reasons, it can be assumed that the Balto-Slavic family belongs to *deng^h-, but it cannot be ruled out that a conflation with the other root *d^{h}eng^h- took place, which might explain some marginal meanings of Latvian *danga* and part of the semantic spectrum of the Lithuanian verb *deñgti*. Of course, we have in this matter to cope with a high degree of uncertainty: all this remains an etymological speculation which is exclusively based on Germanic material and could find in Balto-Slavic only a semantic justification.

DĖL LIE. *dangus* ETIMOLOGIJOS

Santrauka

Tradiciškai baltų kalbų 'dangaus' pavadinimas (lie. *dangùs*, pr. *dangus*) aiškinamas kaip veiksmažodžio *deñgti* derivatas, remiantis prielaida, kad dangus buvo suvokiamas kaip tam tikras išlenktas paviršius, dengiantis pasaulį. Tačiau šis tradicinis požiūris iki šiol palieka du klausimus atvirus: (1) kaip paaiškinti žodžio *dangus* darybą, panašesnę į būdvardžio negu į daiktavardžio; (2) kaip rekonstruoti praindoeuropietišką šios baltų kalbų leksinės šeimos priešistorę. Šio straipsnio tikslas – aptarti tiek morfologinę, tiek semantinę 'dangaus' pavadinimo struktūrą ir paaiškinti visas jo ypatybes, siūlant naują žodžio kilmės ir raidos hipotezę.

ABBREVIATIONS

AC – *Anonymous Catechism*, 1605 (Sittig 1929)
AIW – Bartholomae 1904
ALEW – Hock et al. 2015
AP – accentual paradigm
AVŚ – *Atharva-Veda*
BSW – Trautmann 1923
DK – Daukša 1595
DP – Daukša 1599
EDSIL – Derksen 2008
EV – *Elbing Vocabulary* (Mažiulis 1966–1981)
ĖSRJa – Vasmer 1964–1973
I – *First Old Prussian Catechism*, 1545 (Mažiulis 1966–1981)
II – *Second Old Prussian Catechism*, 1545 (Mažiulis 1966–1981)
III – *Third Old Prussian Catechism, Enchiridion*, 1561 (Mažiulis 1966–1981)
IEW – Pokorny 1959
LEW – Fraenkel 1962–1965

LKŽ – *Lietuvių kalbos žodynas*, 1941–2002

ME – Mühlenbach, Endzelīns 1923–1925

MŽ – Mažvydas 1547–1570

NIL – Wodtko, Irslinger, Schneider 2008

PIE – Proto-Indo-European

PJ – Toporov 1975–1990

PKEŽ – Mažiulis 1988–1997 [²2013]

RV – *Rig-Veda*

SEJL – Smoczyński 2007

Y – *Yasna*

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