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A NOTE ON THE BALTO-SLAVIC AND INDO-EUROPEAN BACKGROUND OF THE PROTO-SLAVIC ADJECTIVE *svęťь ‘HOLY’

The linguistic, literary, cultural and religious significance of the Proto-Slavic¹ lexeme *svęťь (yielding Old Church Slavic² *svęťь*, Russian³ *svjatój*, Polish *święty* and other familiar cognates) is perfectly well-known to anyone even superficially interested in the Slavic world, be it in the sphere of *Slavia Orthodoxa* and the Mediterranean region or anywhere else where the influence of Slavic⁴ heritage is noticeable. There is, likewise, no lack of clarity as regards the etymological source of the word, primarily because – as described in more detail in the ensuing paragraph – it demonstrates exact cognates in other branches of Indo-European⁵, and can be segmented into an independently known root and a productive adjective-forming suffix. The objective of the present brief study is, however, to enhance the standard analysis by providing a more fine-grained insight into the word-formation patterns and general morphological context that shaped this important Sl. term.

It is universally recognized⁶ that PSl. *svęťь ‘holy, saint’ has a perfect etymological match in the sister branch, Baltic⁷, namely in Lithuanian⁸ *šveñtas* and Old Prussian⁹ *swints*, both ‘holy, saint’. As such, the word can be reconstructed as PBSl.

¹ Cetera: PSl.

² Cetera: OCS.

³ Cetera: Ru.

⁴ Cetera: Sl.

⁵ Cetera: IE.

⁶ Vide: I. JANÝŠKOVÁ et al., *Etymologický slovník jazyka staroslověnského*, vol. XV, Prague 2010, p. 910; R. DERKSEN, *Etymological Dictionary of the Slavic Inherited Lexicon*, Leiden–Boston 2008, p. 476; М. ФАСМЕР, *Этимологический словарь русского языка*, ed. О.Н. ТРУБАЧЕВ, Б.А. ЛАРИН, vol. III, Москва 1987, p. 585; similarly in other reference works.

⁷ Cetera: Balt. The existence of a Proto-Balto-Slavic (cetera: PBSl.) language as a common ancestor of Sl. and Balt. is taken for granted here.

⁸ Cetera: Lith.

⁹ Cetera: OPr. It is disputed whether OPr. *swints* a real cognate inherited from Baltic (with a development of *-enC- to -inC-; thus e.g. W. SMOCZYŃSKI, *Słownik etymologiczny języka litewskiego*,

**śwentas*¹⁰. Crucially, a precise cognate of this item is also found in Avestan¹¹ *spənta-* ‘life-giving, holy’¹²; together with the BSL term, this enables the reconstruction of (at least dialectal) Proto-Indo-European¹³ **k̑wento-*¹⁴.

Within Sl., the sequence **svēt-* presents itself as an indivisible unit (lexical morpheme); next to the adjective **svētъ* ‘holy, saint’, we find typical productive derivatives of the type **svētiti* **svēt’o* **svētiti*¹⁵ ‘celebrate’ or **svētyn’i* ‘holiness, temple’, all transparently obtained from the base **svēt-*. This is not so, however, in Av., where the cognate *spənta-* is clearly segmentable into a root *spən-* (itself still directly represented by the root noun *spān-* ‘life, vital power’) and an adjectival suffix *-ta-* (< PIE **-to-*). The underlying PIE root, **k̑wen-*, is reconstructible for the proto-language with the approximate range of meanings ‘swell (with life); live; be vital, sacred’¹⁶.

² (manuscript), p. 1474, <https://rromanes.org/pub/alii/Smoczyński> W. Słownik etymologiczny języka litewskiego.pdf [22 VI 2017]) or a later borrowing from Pol. *święty* (thus e.g. W. HOCK et al., *Alllitauisches etymologisches Wörterbuch*, vol. II, Hamburg 2015, p. 1060). See also the discussion: R. DERKSEN, *Etymological Dictionary of the Baltic Inherited Lexicon*, Leiden–Boston 2015, p. 456 (with further references). Cf. also the OPr. onomastic evidence showing the sequence *-en-*: *Swent* (hydronym), *Swente-garben* (toponym); at least this portion of the OPr. material is generally considered inherited. On the other hand, Latvian (cetera: Latv.) *svēts* ‘holy, saint’ is uncontroversially identifiable as a borrowing from East Slavic (cf. Ru. *svyatŏj*).

¹⁰ Cf. R. TRAUTMANN, *Baltisch-slavisches Wörterbuch*, Göttingen 1923, p. 311 (*šūenta-* ‘heilig’).

¹¹ Cetera: Av.

¹² The exact denotation – and translation – of this pivotal term depends heavily on the analysis of the religious system encoded in the Avesta; for the background of the gloss provided here, cf. P.O. SKJÆRVO, *The Spirit of Zoroastrianism*, New Haven–London 2011, p. 578 (*life-giving*, Av. *spənta-*, *epithet of good entities in the world of thought implying fertility and growth*; Pahl. *abzōnīg* ‘making (things) increase’) and *passim*. The word is also commonly translated simply as ‘holy’ *vel sim.*, cf. ‘heilig, sanctus’ – Ch. BARTHOLOMAE, *Altiranisches Wörterbuch*, Strassburg 1904, p. 1619–1621.

¹³ Cetera: PIE.

¹⁴ Actually, PSl. **svētъ* could, in accordance with regular sound laws, go back to both PIE **k̑wen-to-* and PIE **k̑wŋ-to-*. However, since Lith., OPr. and Av. all point towards the former, it is natural to assume that the PSl. formation is historically identical. (On OPr. *swints* *vide* fn. 9) The geographically and cladistically closest reflex of **k̑wŋ-C-* is Gothic *hunsl* ‘offering’ < **k̑wŋ-slo-* (assuming this etymological analysis is correct). Incidentally, in the word **k̑wen-to-* the presence of the apophonic full-grade (i.e. the vowel **-e-* in the root) is somewhat unexpected, since in PIE adjectives built by means of the suffix **-to-* usually selected the zero-grade (i.e. vocally reduced) form of the root; hence, a pre-form like **k̑wŋ-to-* would in fact have been easier to motivate than the actually reconstructible **k̑wen-to-*. Some parallels for **-to-* adjectives taking the full-grade in the root (and likewise associated with the so-called ‘Caland System’, *vide* below) can be pointed out, however. Compare, for example, Proto-Germanic (cetera: PGmc.) **blauþa-* ‘weak, timid’ – Old English *blēað* ‘id.’, Old High German (cetera: OHG) *blōdi* ‘id.’, etc. – pointing to a pre-form like **b^hleh₂u-to-* or **b^hlaw-to-*, likewise with a full vowel in the root in spite of suffixation with **-to-* (contrast Gr. φλαῦρος ‘petty, bad’ < **b^hleh₂u-ro-* or **b^hlaw-ro-*, where the same root occurs with a different Caland suffix).

¹⁵ Sl. verbs are cited in the infinitive, 1st and 3rd singular present.

¹⁶ Cf. the (nowadays partially obsolete) presentation of the key material: J. POKORNY, *Indogermanisches etymologisches Wörterbuch*, vol. II, Bern 1969, p. 630.

It should be noted, however, that the Av. adjective *spən-ta-* demonstrates certain further interesting properties beyond the mere possibility of a historical analysis along the lines described above. Namely, even at the synchronic level the word forms certain derivatives not from the actual stem of the adjective (*spənta-* < **kwentō-*), but rather directly from the root (*spən-* < **kwen-*), as though “bypassing” the adjective-forming suffix (*-ta-* < **-to-*). Thus, the abstract noun¹⁷ in *-ah-* (< PIE **-es-*) has the shape *spān-ah-* ‘life-giving knowledge’¹⁸ rather than making use of the adjective stem *spənta-*¹⁹. Even the (essentially inflectional and not derivational) forms of the comparative²⁰ and superlative²¹ of the adjective are built in this same fashion, i.e. directly from the root: cpv. *span-iiāh-* ‘more life-giving, holier’, superl. *spən-išta-* ‘most life-giving, holiest’ (using the regular cpv. and superl. suffixes *-iiāh-* < PIE **-yos-* and *-išta-* < PIE **-isth₂o-*, respectively)²².

The situation described above is, however, nothing particularly unusual in Av. or other archaic Indo-European²³ languages such as Vedic Sanskrit²⁴ or Ancient Greek²⁵. The practice of reaching for the root directly and omitting adjective-forming suffixes in the formation of derivatives and some inflectional forms (such as the cpv. and superl.) – in particular in quality adjectives denoting property-concepts²⁶ and states – is part of the so-called ‘Caland System’²⁷, a set of synchronically anomalous morphological peculiarities reconstructible for PIE and still observed in the most conservative daughter languages (especially in Greek

¹⁷ Cetera: abstr.

¹⁸ On the meanings/glosses of the Av. items presented in this paragraph cf. the comments and references in fn. 12.

¹⁹ Contrast the situation in Sl., as described in the preceding paragraph.

²⁰ Cetera: cpv.

²¹ Cetera: superl.

²² This is, again, at variance with the situation in Sl., where the cpv. and superl. are of course formed fully regularly from the stem **svet-*; cf. OCS cpv. *svetĭ*.

²³ Cetera: IE.

²⁴ Cetera: Ved.

²⁵ Cetera: Gr.

²⁶ I.e. qualities such as dimensions, physical properties, colors, speed, age, value, “human propensities” (‘friendly’, ‘hungry’, ‘ambitious’, etc.) and similar domains. For more discussion of this term and related issues, cf. R.M.W. DIXON, *Adjective classes in typological perspective*, [in:] *Adjective Classes. A Cross-linguistic Typology*, ed. R.M.W. DIXON, A.Y. AIKHENVALD, Oxford–New York 2004, p. 1–49; J. RAU, *Indo-European Nominal Morphology. The Decads and the Caland System*, Innsbruck 2009, p. 78–79; IDEM, *Notes on state-oriented verbal roots, the Caland System, and primary verb morphology in Indo-Iranian and Indo-European*, [in:] *Multi Nominis Grammaticus. A Festschrift for Alan J. Nussbaum*, ed. A.I. COOPER, J. RAU, M. WEISS, Ann Arbor–New York 2013, p. 255–273; I. BALLES, *Die altindische Cvi-Konstruktion. Form – Funktion – Ursprung*, Bremen 2006, p. 269ff. (all with further literature).

²⁷ Cetera: CS. The term derives from the surname of Dutch Iranist Willem Caland, who pointed out certain elements of the pattern toward the end of the 19th century; however, the modern term has a significantly broader meaning and scope than what Caland described. For further details see the references in fn. 28.

as well as the Indo-Iranian branch). The essence of the phenomenon involves suffix alternations precisely of the type described above for Av. *spəŋ-ta-* vs. *spān-ah-*, *span-iaah-*, *span-išta-*, where the positive adjective suffix *-ta-* (< PIE **-to-*) is omitted from the derived/inflected forms; other adjective suffixes frequently found to be circumvented in a similar fashion in CS-driven alternations include **-ro-*, **-u-*, **-mo-*, **-no-*, **-e/ont-* and a number of others²⁸ (cf. e.g. Gr. κῦδ-ρό-ς ‘wonderful, glorious’ vs. cpv. κῦδ-ίων ‘more wonderful, more glorious’, not making use of the stem κῦδ-ρο-). In some cases, the effect of the CS can even be described synchronically as suffix substitution rather than deletion; in particular, an element **-i-*²⁹ steps in for adjective-forming suffixes in first members of compounds³⁰ (cf. Av. *dərəz-ra-* ‘firm’, compound *dərəz-i-raθa-* ‘having a firm chariot’; Gr. κῦδ-ρό-ς ‘wonderful’, derivative κῦδ-ι-άπειρα ‘making men wonderful’). Two representative examples illustrating CS-related alternations are provided below in Table 1 (spanning several Indo-European languages) and Table 2 (within a single language, here Gr.). In both instances, it is evident how the suffix used to form the positive of the adjective (**-ro-*, **-u-*, **-o/ent-* etc.) is absent, i.e. “deleted” respectively “substituted” in the derived/inflected forms, even though the latter could be expected to be synchronic derivatives from the positive adjective:

Table 1

CS reflexes of **b^herǵh-* ‘great, tall’ in IE languages³¹

Form	PIE transposition	Reflex	Gloss of reflex
adj. <i>*-ro-</i>	<i>*b^herǵh-ro-</i>	Toch. B <i>pärkare</i>	‘long’
adj. <i>*-u-</i>	<i>*b^herǵh-u-</i>	Hitt. <i>parkuš</i>	‘tall’
adj. <i>*-o/ent-</i>	<i>*b^herǵh-o/ent-</i>	Ved. <i>brhánt-</i>	‘tall, great’
cpv. <i>*-yos-</i>	<i>*b^herǵh-yos-</i>	Av. <i>barəziiah-</i>	‘taller’

²⁸ For a detailed description of the workings of the CS, vide: J. RAU, *Indo-European Nominal Morphology...*; F. DELL’ORO, *Leggi, leghe suffissali e sistemi “Di Caland”: storia della questione “Caland” come problema teorico della linguistica indoeuropea*, Innsbruck 2015; T. MEISSNER, *Das “Calandsche Gesetz” und das Griechische – nach 100 Jahren*, [in:] *Sprache und Kultur der Indogermanen: Akten der X. Fachtagung der Indogermanischen Gesellschaft*, Innsbruck, 22–28. September 1996, ed. W. MEID, Innsbruck 1998, p. 237–253 (all with further literature).

²⁹ This element may quite likely be identified with an abstract noun in **-i-*, replacing the corresponding positive adjective stem due to certain independently motivated morphological rules of PIE. For details see the references in fn. 28, as well as: TH. LINDNER, *Indogermanische Grammatik*, vol. IV, *Wortbildungslehre (Derivationsmorphologie)*, pars 1.1, *Komposition*, Heidelberg 2011, p. 68–70.

³⁰ Cetera FCM (= First Compound Member).

³¹ Hitt. = Hittite; Toch. = Tocharian; SCM = Second Compound Member; stat. = stative verb.

Table 1 (cont.)

Form	PIE transposition	Reflex	Gloss of reflex
superl. *-isth ₂ o-	*b ^h erǵ ^h -isth ₂ o-	Av. <i>barəzišta-</i>	'tallest'
abstr. *-es-	*b ^h erǵ ^h -es-	Av. <i>barəzah-</i>	'height'
FCM *-i-	*b ^h ǵ ^h -i-	Av. <i>bərəzi-caxra-</i>	'having tall wheels'
SCM *-es-	*-b ^h erǵ ^h -es-	Ved. <i>dvi-bārhas-</i>	lit. 'double-great'
stat. *-eh ₁ -(ye-)	*b ^h ǵ ^h -eh ₁ -(ye-)	⇒ Hittite <i>parkēšš-zi</i>	'become great'

Table 2

CS reflexes of *kewhd- 'wonderful, glorious' in Gr.

Form	Reflex	Gloss of reflex
adj. *-ro-	κῦδ-ρό-ς	'glorious'
adj. *-no-	κῦδ-νό-ς	'glorious'
cpv. *-yos-	κῦδ-ίων	'more glorious'
superl. *-isth ₂ o-	κῦδ̄-ιστος	'most glorious'
abstr. *-es-	κῦδ-ος -εος	'glory'
FCM *-i-	κῦδ-ι-άνειρα	'making men glorious'
FCM *-es-	ἐπι-κῦδ-ής	'distinguished in glory'

Accordingly, the Av. forms discussed above, when transposed into PIE phonological shape, can be analyzed as a Caland adjective in *-to- (**kwen-to-*) with a set of suffix-omitting offshoots (cpv. **kwen-yos-*, derived abstr. **kwen-es-* as well as – in a sense – the root noun abstr. **kwen-*)³².

³² Although surfacing in clearly attested Caland sets relatively rarely, root nouns are probably what diachronically underlies most CS-related phenomena (that is to say, the synchronically unmotivated, arbitrary alternations observed in early IE languages likely reflect the morphologization of erstwhile productive suffixation applied to root nouns; the ensuing loss of most of such root nouns led to the creation of the CS as a peculiar, synchronically unobvious pattern). For details – ultimately, however, amounting to a story more complicated than the one presented in the previous sentence – cf. especially J. RAU, *Indo-European Nominal Morphology...*, p. 127–131.

It is now time to return to the point of departure, i.e. the prehistory of PSl. **svętb*, and to verify if the above contextualization of its Av. cognate – in particular its crystal-clear participation in the inherited set of morphological alternations known as the Caland System – helps achieve a more insightful analysis. It must be emphasized that, traditionally, the CS has not been considered overly relevant for the study of the late-attested and largely innovative BSl. branch. However, recent research³³, expanding on earlier scholars' studies and excursions dispersed in the existing literature, suggests a quite significant survival of various kinds of CS-related phenomena in BSl., both as lexicalized archaisms and as living morphological processes³⁴. In principle, therefore, it would not be unreasonable to surmise that BSl. might have inherited some CS-related behavior in the family of words under discussion, given that its Caland status is directly visible in another branch.

As is evident from the discussion of the available material at the outset of this study, the CS status of the root in question in BSl. is not demonstrable in any direct fashion in the nominal domain. However, it is possible that it can be established on the basis of data from the verbal sphere, coming from Balt.³⁵ The key formation is the Latv. verb *svinēt svin svinēja*³⁶ 'celebrate, venerate'. Though obviously cognate with the family of Lith. *šveĩtas* and PSl. **svętb* (this inherited adjective itself is lost in Latv.³⁷), from a formal point of view the item is rather curious, since it appears to be lacking the (originally suffixal) element *-t-*. This recalls the overall situation in Av., and would conform to a Caland pattern. The verb belongs to the Balt. conjugation in short **-i-* with an infinitive stem in **-ē-* (type Lith. *minėti mini minėjo* 'mention'). This verbal type, at least under the most persuasive of the many existing interpretations, ultimately goes back to PIE zero-grade root athematic middles (3. sg. **-or*)³⁸, a verbal formation closely associated with the CS³⁹. It can be pro-

³³ M. MAJER, *The Caland System in the North: Archaism and Innovation in Property-Concept / State Morphology in Balto-Slavic* [PhD thesis, Harvard University, 2017]. For a basic bibliography and the presentation of certain preliminary results, cf. M. MAJER, *Pozostałości praindoeuropejskiego 'Systemu Calanda' w języku prasłowiańskim – wybrane przykłady*, [in:] *Symposium Etymologicum – Śladami myśli etymologicznej. W stulecie urodzin wybitnego slawisty i etymologa Profesora Franciszka Sławskiego* (in press).

³⁴ Beyond the references provided in fn. 33, cf. the examples provided in Table 4 and Table 5 towards the end of this paper.

³⁵ The Baltic aspect of the present topic (treated below in a rather condensed way) will be dealt with in greater depth in a forthcoming study.

³⁶ Latv. and Lith. verbs are cited in the infinitive, 3rd present and 3rd preterite form.

³⁷ Cf. fn. 9.

³⁸ On the development from PIE root athematic middles (in 3rd singular **-or*, e.g. **m̥n-or* 'have in mind, think' from the root **men-* 'think') to BSl. verbs in **-ī-* with an infinitive stem in **-ē-* (cf. Lith. *minėti mini minėjo* 'mention', PSl. **m̥nēti *m̥n'ŋ *m̥nīb* 'think'), vide: J. JASANOFF, *Hittite and the Indo-European Verb*, Oxford–New York 2003, p. 155–159, with further literature (including references to alternative theories; the issue remains contested in Indo-European studies).

³⁹ Cf. J. RAU, *Notes on state-oriented verbal roots...*; J. JASANOFF, *Hittite...*, p. 157 (especially fn. 350). Numerous adjectives participating in Caland alternations display a root athematic middle (sometimes reflected as a BSl. verb in **-ī-*).

visionally concluded that a trace of a Caland relationship is preserved in the BSL languages between the adj. seen in PSŁ. **svęŗŗ*, Lith. *švęŗŗtas* ‘holy, saint’ on the one hand and Latv. *svinēt svin svinēja* ‘celebrate’ on the other hand. Put differently, for the PBSŁ. period one could reconstruct not only the adjective **šwenta-* ‘holy, saint’, but the inherited root **šwen-* as a whole, with the aforementioned adjective still being perceived as a morphologically transparent formation (**šwen-ta-*) and with other derivatives being formed directly from the root.

However, the shape of the root as it appears in the Latv. form under discussion is somewhat peculiar, displaying the shape *svin-* (as though from PIE **k̑w̑n̑-*) in antevocalic position (infinitive *svin-ēt*, 3rd singular present *svin* < **svin-i*, etc.). The apophonic zero-grade, i.e. the reduction of the vowel in the root, is fully expected in an athematic middle in PIE (cf. **b^hud^h-or* from the root **b^hewd^h-* ‘be vigilant, observe’, **lip-or* from the root **leyp-* ‘stick’ etc.⁴⁰). However, the zero-grade from the root **k̑wen-* would have been **k̑un-* in antevocalic position (**k̑un-V-*, expected to yield BSL. **šun-V-*) and **k̑w̑n-* in anteconsonantal position (**k̑w̑n-C-*, expected to yield BSL. **švin-C-*). Since the original paradigm of a root athematic middle would have involved both vowel-initial and consonant-initial morphemes added to the stem, the latter would have alternated between the allomorphs **k̑un-* and **k̑w̑n-* (e.g. 3rd singular **k̑un-or* vs. 1st plural **k̑w̑n-med^hh₂*). Evidently, the latter shape (**k̑w̑n-*) got generalized in BSL. in this paradigm, ultimately leading to Latv. *svin-*, which now looks deceptively “out of place” in view of the fact that all morphemes appearing to the right are vowel-initial in the modern language⁴¹.

The formal details cannot be discussed here in their entirety⁴², but it can be concluded that Latv. *svinēt svin svinēja* may continue a root athematic middle **k̑un-or* (stem alternating with **k̑w̑n-C-*, cf. 1st plural **k̑w̑n-med^hh₂*), with a meaning approximating ‘be in a state of celebration’ or similar. The development of **k̑un-or* (plural **k̑w̑n-med^hh₂*) to Latv. *svinēt svin svinēja* is roughly parallel to that of PIE

⁴⁰ Vide: J. JASANOFF, *Hittite...*, *passim*.

⁴¹ The presence of the anteconsonantal type of reflex in this verb is noted by other authors as well, though the motivation for it is hardly addressed. W. SMOCZYŃSKI (*Słownik etymologiczny...*, p. 1338) writes: Latv. *svinēt, svinu* ‘celebrate a holiday’ shows the introduction of **švin-C* into the antevocalic position (Łot. *svinēt, svinu* ‘święcić święto’ pokazuje wprowadzenie **švin-C* w pozycję antewokaliczną), citing cases like Lith. *ištviróti* ‘endure’ alongside *tvirtas* ‘hard, durable’ as a purported parallel (showing the allomorph *tvir-* both before a vowel and before a consonant). However, this correlation is less than perfect. Lith. *tvirtas* is built on the zero-grade **tw̑rh-* of the PIE root **twerh-* ‘hold’. The root ends in a laryngeal, i.e. it is consonant-final; accordingly, the shape **tw̑rh-* phonologically yields Lith. *tvir-* in both anteconsonantal and antevocalic position. Besides, if the derivative *ištviróti* *ištvirója* *ištvirójo* ‘endure’ is not overly ancient (as is very likely), its root shape has ample support in the *tvir-* of *tvirtas* and other derivatives. On the other hand, Latv. *svinēt* stands isolated, with no detectable cases of **k̑w̑n-C-* anywhere in all of BSL. (Such formations from the root in question are found elsewhere in IE, however; vide fn. 13). No morphological explanation is offered in: R. DERKSEN, *Etymological Dictionary of the Baltic...*, p. 456; except for the mere statement that [i]nterestingly, the zero grade of the root may be present in Latv. *svinēt* ‘celebrate’.

⁴² Vide: fn. 35.

**m̥n-or* ‘think, have in mind’ to Latv. *minēt min minēja* ‘mention’ (= Lith. *minėti m̥ni minėjo*, ≈ PSl. **m̥nēti* **m̥n’o* **m̥niti*)⁴³. This indicates the survival of the root **kwen-* in BSl. outside of the lexicalized adjective **kwen-to-* ‘vital, holy’, and together with the Av. evidence it makes it possible to claim an important Caland configuration for this root, as presented in Table 3 below⁴⁴:

Table 3

CS-like reflexes of **kwen-* ‘vital, prosperous, holy’ in Av. and BSl.⁴⁵

Form	PIE transposition	Reflex	Gloss of reflex
adj. *-to-	* <i>kwen-to-</i>	Av. <i>spənta-</i> , Lith. <i>šveñtas</i> , PSl. * <i>svęť</i>	‘life-giving’, ‘holy’
cpv. *-yos-	* <i>kwen-yos-</i>	Av. <i>spaniiah-</i>	‘more life-giving’
abstr. *-es-	* <i>kwen-es-</i>	Av. <i>spānah-</i>	‘life-giving knowledge’
mid. *-or	* <i>kun-or</i> (~ * <i>kwn-med^h</i>)	Latv. <i>svinēt svin svinēja</i>	‘celebrate, venerate’

This strongly recalls other reconstructible Caland sets including BSl. material, as exemplified below Table 4 and Table 5⁴⁶:

Table 4

CS-like reflexes of **d^heb^(h)*- ‘heavy, thick’⁴⁷

Form	PIE transposition	Reflex	Gloss of reflex
adj. *-elo-	* <i>d^heb^(h)-elo-</i>	PSl. * <i>debelь</i>	‘thick’
adj. *-ro-	* <i>d^hob^(h)-ro-</i>	PGmc. * <i>dapraz</i>	‘heavy’ ⁴⁸

⁴³ Again, cf. fn. 38 for references on the formal details.

⁴⁴ An alternative hypothesis could also be proposed, namely that Latv. *svinēt svin svinēja* is a later creation, roughly from PBSl. or later times (though hardly Latv.-internal), formed at a stage when the descendant of the root **kwen-* still participated in CS alternations like the ones seen at work in Av. Thus, a new verbal creation built to **kwen-to-*, **kwen-yos-* and possible other derivatives would have been able to “reach” for the root directly, bypassing the Caland suffixes. Still, in order for the stem **švin-* to be inferred, one would expect at least some members of that hypothetical CS set to be of the structure **kwn-C-*.

⁴⁵ Mid. = middle verb.

⁴⁶ For more details on the facts and analyses presented briefly in the tables below, *vide* fn. 33.

⁴⁷ Interestingly, the root illustrated in this table is of “North Indo-European” (= Balto-Slavic and Germanic) scope only, which would confirm the prolonged robustness of Caland processes in these branches.

⁴⁸ OHG *tapfer* ‘strong’, Old Norse *dapr* ‘sad’.

Table 4 (cont.)

Form	PIE transposition	Reflex	Gloss of reflex
adj. *-lo-	*d ^h ob ^(h) -lo- ⁴⁹	Latv. <i>dabls</i>	‘strong’
cpv. *-yos-	*d ^h eb ^(h) -yos-	PSl. * <i>deb</i> ’-bš-	‘thicker’
abstr. *-es-	*d ^h eb ^(h) -es-	→ Latv. <i>depsis</i>	‘fat child’
mid. *-or	?*d ^h eb ^(h) -or	PSl. * <i>debēti</i> * <i>debitb</i> ⁵⁰	‘sit, remain’

Table 5

CS-like reflexes of *delh₁- ‘long’⁵¹

Form	PIE transposition	Reflex	Gloss of reflex
adj. *-g ^h o-	*d ^h h ₁ -g ^h o-	Ved. <i>dīrghá-</i> , PSl. * <i>db</i> lg ^h	‘long’
adj. *-to-	*d ^h h ₁ -to-	OAlb. <i>glatë</i>	‘long’
cpv. *-yos-	*dl(e)h ₁ -yos-	PSl. * <i>dbl</i> ’-bš-	‘longer’
abstr. *-i-	*dolh ₁ -i-	→ Gr. <i>δολιχός</i>	‘long’
abstr. *-u-	*dolh ₁ -u-	→ Hitt. <i>daluki-</i>	‘long’
caus. *-eye-	*d(o)lh ₁ -eye-	⇒ PSl. * <i>-deliti</i>	‘lengthen’

This, in turn, would imply that at least in BSl. times, the item **šwenta-* (ultimately to become the familiar PSl. **svętъ*) was not yet “frozen” or independently lexicalized as an indivisible lexeme meaning ‘holy’, but rather was couched in a Caland system of alternations centered around the root inherited from PIE **kwen-*.

The match with the usually cited exact cognate – Av. *spənta-* – of course still stands, but both BSl. **šwenta-* and Av. *spənta-* first of all need to be analyzed in their own, language- or branch-internal contexts, as well as against the general background of Caland System morphology.

⁴⁹ Aslo → PSl. **dobl’ъ*, Latv. *dabš* ‘id.’

⁵⁰ Formal match, uncertain in view of the semantic gap.

⁵¹ Caus. = causative verb; OAlb. = Old Albanian.

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Abstract. The standard etymological explanation of the Proto-Slavic adjective *svęrb 'holy, saint' – a word of extreme literary, cultural and religious importance in the Slavic world – concentrates on the formal match with Lithuanian šveit̃as 'id.' and Avestan spənta- 'life-giving, holy' (PIE *kwen-to-, from the root *kwen-). This article highlights the verbal formation seen in Latvian svinēt

svin svinějo 'celebrate, venerate', generally recognized as another reflex of the root **kwen-* in Balto-Slavic, but without due attention to the formal implications. It is argued that both in Av. and in BSL the adjective *spənta-/svętb* behaves as an item participating in the so-called 'Caland System' (a set of arbitrary morphological alternations reconstructible for Proto-Indo-European).

Keywords: saint, etymology, Proto-Slavic, Proto-Indo-European, Caland System

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