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The Slovene Neo-Circumflex

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In his classic monograph on Slavonic accentuation, C. S. Stang concludes that the so-called neo-circumflex intonation is not Common Slavonic. I think that this is correct and that we have to date the rise of the neo-circumflex after the dissolution of the Slavonic linguistic unity. Elsewhere I have put forward my views on the development of Slavonic accentuation from Indo-European times up to the end of the Proto-Slavonic period. In this article I intend to discuss the chronology of the subsequent accentual developments in Slovene and the conditions under which the new long falling vowels originated. Unlike H. Jaksche, I think that in the majority of cases the neo-circumflex arose phonetically. Indeed, I consider it a major source of information about post-tonic quantity in Slavonic.

TT

As I have pointed out in my study of Proto-Slavonic accentuation, the lengthening of short falling vowels in monosyllables, e.g. bôg, and the shortening of vowels under the old acute intonation, e.g. bràt, are Common Slavonic developments and must be dated before the dissolution of the Slavonic linguistic unity. The former development was evoked by the loss of distinctive pitch on short vowels in polysyllabic words as a result of Dybo's law, and the latter must be

^{1974.}
 ³ H. Jaksche, Slavische Akzentuation: II. Slovenisch, Wiesbaden, 1965.
 ⁴ Kortlandt, op. cit., sections 2.3, 3.5-3.6.

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¹ C. S. Stang, Slavonic Accentuation, Oslo, 1957.

² F. H. H. Kortlandt, Slavonic Accentuation: A Study in Relative Chronology, Amsterdam,

viewed in connection with the loss of the Indo-European laryngeals in Slavonic. The original situation has been obscured by the shortening of long falling vowels and the lengthening of short rising vowels in some of the Slavonic dialects. Another Proto-Slavonic development is the retraction of the stress from final *jers*, which must be dated before Dybo's law (*ibidem*). The retraction of the stress from non-initial long falling vowels which is known as Stang's law is the last Common Slavonic accentual development and must be dated to the ninth century.

The oldest specifically Slovene accentual development is the progressive shift of the stress from a falling vowel on to the next syllable. The newly accented vowel was lengthened and received falling pitch, e.g. okô. At this stage, weak jers in medial syllables had already lost their stressability, cf. the gen. sg. nohtâ of nohât. At the same time, an epenthetic vowel had already developed in such forms as vozâl, rebâr. Unless we admit the simultaneous existence of two phonemically distinct falling intonations on non-initial syllables, we have to assume that the progressive accent shift is posterior to Stang's law. Since the internal evidence is in accordance with what one would expect on the basis of the comparative evidence, this chronology is hardly open to doubt. The progressive shift can be dated to the tenth century.

The rise of the neo-circumflex must be dated after the progressive accent shift for two reasons. On the one hand, a new long falling vowel does not lose the stress to the following syllable: the converse chronology would therefore require the simultaneous existence of two phonemically distinct falling intonations on initial syllables. On the other hand, the neo-circumflex results from the lengthening of an originally short rising vowel. The fact that the lengthening yields a falling vowel suggests that there was no pitch opposition on short vowels at that time. This situation had been reached after the progressive shift.

III

The neo-circumflex originated from the lengthening of a stressed short vowel before either a non-final weak jer, which was lost, or a following long vowel, which was shortened. One is tempted to regard the development as compensatory lengthening in both cases. The same holds true for the past tense form sedal and for nouns like missl, kazən if we assume that a final jer after a cluster consisting of obstruent plus resonant was treated like a non-final weak jer. Other final jers had probably already been lost at this stage. The difficulty in this interpretation is that the progressive accent shift presupposes

the development of an epenthetic vowel at an earlier stage, cf. above. Perhaps we have to assume the existence of doublets with and without an epenthetic vowel during a certain period, cf. Dutch melk [melk] or [melək], but billijk only [bilək]. The neo-circumflex in trậsəl has arisen on the analogy of the one in sêdəl. The latter cannot be analogical because there was no model for it.

While the phonetic character of the neo-circumflex in such words as bîtka is hardly ever questioned, the phonetic origin of the neocircumflex before an originally long vowel in the following syllable is not generally accepted. Jaksche, who does not recognise the latter rule, presents a morphological explanation of the majority of relevant cases, leaving the isolated instances unexplained.⁵ His reasoning, which reminds one of Kurylowicz's, is often questionable. In particular the principle according to which an opposition in one paradigm can arise on the analogy of a different opposition in another paradigm, on which Jaksche's explanation of the neo-circumflex in such forms as stâri, lệta, mâžeš, sệdəl, lîpo, brâtu, pisâla is based, is unacceptable to me. The alleged generalisation of the accusative singular accentuation in trisyllabic feminine nouns like zabâva also raises more problems than it solves, especially because such words do not display accentual mobility in other languages and because it does not account for the timbre of the stressed vowel in words like osnova. Besides, this type is also found in the kajkavian dialect of Serbo-Croat, where the progressive accent shift did not operate. As long as nobody has managed to refute Dolobko's forceful argument that no source for an analogical development of the neo-circumflex in the isolated form letos can be produced, I think that we have to stick to the old phonetic rule of Baudouin de Courtenay and Valjavec. The same argument applies to the adverbial forms jûtri and drêvi, for which Bulachovskij has drawn attention to the long ending attested in Slovincian lonjí, draví.7

As I have pointed out elsewhere, the metatony cannot result from an analogical development in the feminine singular form of the *l*-participle either. It is essential that *ĕ*-verbs do not, as a rule, show metatony in Slovene. This peculiarity can only be explained by the assumption of a deep-rooted phonetic difference. I think that we must look for a single origin of the neo-circumflex in trisyllabic words like *ĕenâmi*, *pisâla*, *zabâva*, *osnŷva*, *telŷta* (nom. pl.). It is remarkable that all of these words betray the stress shift referred to as Dybo's

Jaksche, op. cit., pp. 23-9.
 M. Dolobko, 'Noč'-nočes', osen'-osenes', zima-zimus', leto-letos' (Slavia, 5, Prague, 1927, p. 692).

^{1927,} p. 692).

7 L. Bulachovskij, 'Akcentologičeskije etjudy' (*Južnoslovenski filolog*, 4, Belgrade, 1924, p. 137).

8 Kortlandt, op. cit., section 1.7.

law. In my study of Proto-Slavonic accentuation I put forward the thesis that the Indo-European laryngeals were lost earlier in pretonic and post-post-tonic syllables than under the stress and in the first post-tonic syllable (*ibid.*). This chronological difference led to a quantitative difference between the endings of polysyllabic nouns with fixed initial stress and the endings of other nouns. The difference is reflected in Slovene as metatony in trisyllabic word-forms where Dybo's law operated. Wherever we find metatony in the *l*-participle of *ĕ*-verbs or in the root syllable of an *l*-participle, this must be attributed to analogical extension of the model, e.g. *želėla*, mislila, videla next to *želėla*, mislila, videla (on the dialectal distribution of these variants see the recent work by J. Rigler⁹). The neo-circumflex in the trisyllabic forms of the imperative must of course be explained differently.¹⁰

The hypothesis that stressed short vowels were lengthened before an originally long vowel in the following syllable yields a straightforward explanation of the neo-circumflex in such cases as lipo, māžeš, mīsliš, gîneš, stâri. It also accounts for the neo-circumflex in the loc. sg. brātu and in the inst. and loc. pl. brāti, brātih, where the long vowel is reflected in the retraction of the stress in kộnju, kónji, kónjih and attested in Slovincian břegů, Slovene bogí, možéh. The extension to the dative singular after a preposition is analogical and results from the homophony of the dative and locative endings after the loss of post-tonic quantity. In the paradigm of the word nit the neo-circumflex is phonetic in the instrumental and locative singular and in the genitive, instrumental and locative plural forms and analogical in the genitive-dative singular and dative plural forms. The neo-circumflex was analogically introduced in the instrumental singular and oblique plural forms of the word lůč.

Another instance of phonetic neo-circumflex is the root vowel in krāja, prēja, grīža, kēča, where the post-tonic long vowel originated from the simplification of a consonant cluster (Van Wijk's law). These words correlate with vēlja, kēža, tēža, žēja, Polish ciąża, żądza, as māžeš, gîneš with pišeš, tēneš. The neo-circumflex in the passive participle māzan is also phonetic, cf. brān, česān. Finally, we have to consider the neuter plural paradigm. I think that the long ending in the nominative-accusative plural arose phonetically in polysyllabic barytone forms as a result of the same development which gave rise to the neo-circumflex in zabāva, pisāla, ženāmi, and was then generalized to disyllabic barytone forms. It must be remembered that the nominative-accusative plural of consonant stems was never disyllabic

J. Rigler, 'Akcentske variante' (Slavistična revija, 18, Ljubljana, 1970, pp. 5–15).
 See P. S. Škrabec, Jezikoslovni spisi I, Ljubljana, 1916, p. 95 ff.
 See Kortlandt, op. cit., section 3.5.

and that neuters were particularly frequent among the nouns belonging to this flexion type. The analogical extension, which took place in the period between Van Wijk's law and Dybo's law, did not reach stressed endings because acute vowels were indifferent with respect to quantity at that time, 12 so that the short ending in drva is regular. The long ending betrays the same original distribution in Posavian and appears under various conditions in čakavian and Slovak. Thus, I conclude that the neo-circumflex arose phonetically in the nominative-accusative, instrumental and locative plural forms of the neuter paradigm. The neo-circumflex in vina is analogical and dates from the fourteenth or fifteenth century (see below).

In contradistinction to the large majority of cases discussed so far, the neo-circumflex cannot be phonetic in the genitive plural, e.g. krâv, lîp, lệt. As I pointed out in my study on Proto-Slavonic accentuation, I assume that length arose phonetically in mobile paradigms, e.g. gór, čakavian gláv, Polish rak, and spread analogically to other paradigms which did not have an acute vowel in the last syllable, e.g. kónj, čakavian žén. Acute vowels could not be affected by the lengthening because they were neutral with respect to quantity at that time. After the dissolution of the Slavonic linguistic unity, when the old acute had become a short rising intonation, the analogical extension operated again in Slovak, Slovene, and Serbo-Croat, including čakavian, but generally not elsewhere, cf. Czech krav, děl, Polish pet, blot, Slovincian làt, cielat. The matter has been obscured by the lengthening of short vowels before word-final voiced consonants in the latter languages. The Slovenian lengthening can be dated to the same period as the rise of the phonetic neocircumflex.

The main argument against phonetic lengthening before an originally long vowel at this stage is the absence of the neo-circumflex in such words as pámet, kládivo, jáblan, lábod, sýmrak, genitive singular kráve, where post-tonic length is attested in Serbo-Croat pämēt, klädīvo, jäblān, läbūd, sūmrāk, krävē. I think that the Serbo-Croatian evidence is deceptive in these instances and that the development of post-tonic length is secondary here. Indeed, the West Slavonic evidence points to a short vowel, e.g. Czech pamět', kladivo, jabloň, labut', soumrak, Polish pamięć, labędź. When the latter languages show a long vowel, we find the expected neo-circumflex in Slovene, e.g. mêsec, pênez, jāstreb, pâjek, Czech měsíc, peníz, jestřáb, pavouk, Polish miesiąc, pieniądze, jastrząb, pająk. Elsewhere I have explained the difference between long and short post-tonic vowels by an earlier

¹² Ibid.

¹³ Kortlandt, op. cit., section 2.3.
14 Jaksche, op. cit., p. 28.

difference between fixed and mobile stress, 15 cf. Czech holub, žalud, ablast. Polish genitive singular golebia, żoledzi, Russian genitive plural golubéj, želudéj, oblastéj, and Serbo-Croat nominative plural siečíva. The short post-tonic vowel reflected in pámet is also found in čakavian¹⁶ and Posavian.¹⁷ The absence of metatony in the genitive singular kráve is regular because unstressed final nasal vowels were phonetically short. The long vowel in Serbo-Croat krävē has been taken from the mobile type, cf. glávē, accusative plural gláve. Nasal vowels were neutral with respect to quantity before the accent shift referred to as Dybo's law. When length had become phonemic, Serbo-Croat generalised the long vowel in all cases of paradigmatic quantitative

It will be clear from the preceding discussion that I regard Slovene as our main source of knowledge about post-tonic quantity in Proto-Slavonic. This opinion is not challenged by the metatony in bâbin. rîbić, where Serbo-Croat băbin, ribić point to a short vowel, because the required length is attested in Czech kravín, Serbo-Croat mlàdić, genitive singular mladića. The coexistence of the two types is apparently Common Slavonic.

After the rise of the neo-circumflex, various other accentual developments took place in Slovene. The oldest of these is the retraction of the stress from a short vowel to a preceding long vowel, e.g. dúša. zvézda. The retraction is posterior to the loss of weak jers in medial syllables because it also operated in cases where the long vowel did not immediately precede the stressed syllable, e.g. genitive singular slepca. Consequently, it is posterior to the rise of the neo-circumflex in bîtka. This retraction, which is the last Common Slovene accentual development, can be dated to the twelfth century.18

At a later stage stressed short vowels in non-final syllables were lengthened, e.g. bráta, vólja, cf. Serbo-Croat bräta, völja. The new long vowels received a rising intonation. This development did not reach the dialects of Prekmurje and Prlekija. 19 The Northern dialects display an opposition between the original long vowel in zvézda and the new long vowel in bréza, which again proves that these date from different periods.20 The lengthening in bréza cannot have

<sup>Kortlandt, op. cit., section 3.5.
See A. Belić, 'Zametki po čakavskim govoram' (Izvestija Otdelenija russkogo jazyka i slovesnosti, XIV, 2, St Petersburg, 1909, p. 230).
See S. Ivšić, 'Današnji posavski govor' (Rad, 197, Zagreb, 1913, p. 27).
Ramovš, 'Relativna kronologija slovenskih akcentskih pojavov' (Slavistična revija,</sup>

^{3, 1950,} p. 20).

19 F. Ramovš, Kratka zgodovina slovenskega jezika I, Ljubljana, 1936, p. 190.

20 T. Logar, 'O dialektizaciji slovenskega jezika' (Prace filologiczne, 18, 2, Warsaw, 1964, p. 404f.).

preceded the retraction in $zv\not\in zda$ because the latter word shows the regular reflex of long \check{e} under the stress. Moreover, we would otherwise have to assume that quantity was neutralized in non-final stressed syllables at a time when pretonic length was still phonemic. The lengthening in $br\not\in za$ can be dated to the thirteenth or fourteenth century.

As pointed out above, the neo-circumflex in the nominative-accusative plural form of the neuter paradigm arose phonetically in lêta, but not in vîna. The metatony in the latter word was obviously introduced on the analogy of the former. This analogical development requires the identity of the two paradigms in the singular at the time when the neo-circumflex was generalised in the plural. Since the identity was a consequence of the lengthening in lêto after the retraction of the stress in vîno, the analogical introduction of the neo-circumflex must have been posterior to these two developments. The same holds true for the metatony in trêsol, which presupposes the phonetic neo-circumflex in sêdol, the retracted stress in trêsla, and the long vowel in sédla.

The accentuation of the nominative-accusative plural p lija has a different origin. Since the singular of this word is not characterized by a rising accent, we cannot simply attribute the long falling vowel in the plural to the same analogical development. It seems more appropriate to derive the accentuation from the singular, where the early Slovene progressive accent shift had yielded doublets with initial stress after a preposition and final stress elsewhere, e.g. nominative singular $polj\hat{e}$, locative singular plija. The stressed vowel was long and falling in both sets of forms. The rise of root-stressed plural forms in this type may have taken place relatively early because it is also found in the čakavian dialect of Novi. The timbre of the a can be derived either from the singular or from the genitive plural form, where it was regular. It is unnecessary to assume any influence from other paradigms in this case.

After the introduction of the neo-circumflex in vîna and trêsəl the stress was retracted from a final short vowel to a preceding e or o in the majority of dialects, e.g. ¿éna, góra. This retraction cannot have preceded the analogical spread of the neo-circumflex because it would otherwise remain unclear why the latter did not affect paradigms with a short root vowel, cf. séla, ékna, plétəl. The absence of metatony in these forms requires the preservation of final stress in sélo, ókno, plétla at the time when the neo-circumflex was introduced in vîna and trêsəl. The retraction, which can be dated to the 15th or 16th century, was later extended in most dialects under various conditions.

Thus, we arrive at the following relative chronology of accentual

²¹ See Belić, op. cit., p. 220f.

developments in Slovene after the dissolution of the Slavonic linguistic unity. The lengthening in $b\delta g$, the shortening of the old acute intonation, and the retraction of the stress from final iers are not included because they belong to the Proto-Slavonic period.

- Progressive accent shift in okô.
- 2a. Rise of the neo-circumflex in bîtka.
- 2b. Rise of the neo-circumflex in lêta.
- Retraction of the stress in dúša. 3.
- Lengthening of the stressed vowel in léto. 4.
- Introduction of the neo-circumflex in vîna. 5.
- Retraction of the stress in žéna. 6.

V

In the preceding sections I have confined myself to the data of literary Slovene, as codified by Breznik, Pleteršnik, and Valjavec. A similar analysis can be applied to any single dialect, provided that sufficient information is available. Not all developments spread over the same area. While the progressive accent shift was specifically Slovenian and marked the language off from the other Slavonic dialects, the rise of the neo-circumflex affected the kajkavian and north čakavian dialects of Serbo-Croat as well. Other developments took place more or less independently in a number of languages. West Slavonic shared the retraction of the stress on to a preceding long yowel, as the Slovincian evidence shows.²² Czech and Upper Sorbian shared the lengthening of short rising vowels. The stokavian dialect of Serbo-Croat shared both retractions mentioned above. It goes without saving that these developments did not evolve everywhere at the same time. I shall now discuss the neo-circumflex outside Slovene.

There is no evidence for a neo-circumflex in Czech²³ or Slovincian.²⁴ The alleged neo-circumflex in štokavian stârī is an analogical neo-acute, as the Posavian evidence shows.25 Since the situation in the kajkavian dialect of Serbo-Croat does not differ significantly from the one in Slovene, 26 we can restrict ourselves to the čakavian material. In the Novi dialect we find a neo-circumflex in gînën, brîšēn, as opposed to bùdēn, bàvīn, pìvān. I think that the absence of metatony in bùdēn is very important because it supports the hypo-

²² Kortlandt, op. cit., section 3.7.

²³ Ibid., section 2.5.

²⁴ Stang, op. cit., p. 31ff.
25 Ivšić, 'Današnji posavski govor', p. 50.
26 S. Ivšić, 'Jezik Hrvata kajkavaca' (*Ljetopis JAZU*, 48, Zagreb, 1936, p. 70f.).

thesis of phonetic lengthening before an originally long vowel. Indeed, the opposition between $g\hat{\imath}n\bar{e}n$ and $b\hat{\imath}d\bar{e}n$ can hardly be explained otherwise. The original situation has been obscured by the characteristic generalization of short vowels under the stress and long vowels outside the stressed syllable in this dialect, cf. $g\hat{\imath}n\bar{u}la$, $rod\hat{\imath}la$ vs. $odahn\hat{\imath}la$, $p\bar{a}l\hat{\imath}la$. The neo-circumflex has been preserved only in verbs with a distinct predesinential vowel in the present tense and in a few definite adjectives, e.g. $st\hat{a}r\hat{\imath}.^{27}$ If we assume for this dialectal area that the phonetic rise of the neo-circumflex was limited to the first syllable of disyllabic words, these are precisely the categories where we would expect traces of metatony. In the Kastav dialect the neo-circumflex has been generalized in the definite form of the adjective.

Slovene is more archaic than the Novi dialect in the preservation of accentual alternations within the paradigm. Though the latter dialect has preserved the place of the stress quite well, intonational differences in the root have been eliminated outside the genitive plural, where we find a long stem vowel in all paradigms, and the cases just mentioned. The original regularity was blurred by the phonetic lengthening of short vowels before a tautosyllabic resonant, which must have been posterior to the lengthening in the genitive plural, cf. prōgón, genitive plural prōgôn.28 While the earlier lengthening yielded a falling vowel, as in Slovene, the later one resulted in a rising intonation if the vowel was stressed. Wherever we find a rising vowel in the genitive plural, as in *žén*, it must be older than the spread of the neo-circumflex and cannot be due to the later lengthening. I conclude that there is no reason to separate the rise of the neo-circumflex in the north čakavian dialects from the same development in Slovene and that the discrepancies can be explained in terms of analogical levelling. The details differ from one dialect to another. In Cres the neo-circumflex spread to bûden, 29 whereas vidin and biùvan agree with the Novi material. On the other hand we find kâmik and kâvran here, as in Slovene.

GLOSSARY

SLOVENE. babin old woman (adj.), bitka battle, bog god, brat brother, brati to read, breza birch, česati to comb, drevi this evening, drva firewood, duša soul, giniti to languish, gora mountain, griža dysentery, jablan appletree, jastreb hawk, jutri tomorrow, kamik stone, kavran raven, kazen punishment, kladivo hammer, koča cottage, konj horse, koža skin, kraja theft, krava cow, labod swan, leto year, letos this year, lipa lime-tree, luč light,

²⁷ Belić, op. cit., p. 233.

²⁸ Belić, op. cit., p. 213.
²⁹ M. Tentor, 'Der čakavische Dialekt der Stadt Cres(Cherso)' (Archiv für slavische Philologie, 30, Berlin, 1909, p. 185).

mazati to smear, mesec month, misel thought, misliti to think, mož man, nit thread, noh(a)t nail, okno window, oko eye, osnova base, pajek spider, pamet intellect, penez coin, pisati to write, plesti to braid, polje field, preja yarn, rebro rib, ribič fisherman, selo settlement, sesti to sit down, slepec blind man, somrak twilight, star old, tele calf, teža weight, toniti to sink, tresti to shake, videti to see, vino wine, volja will, vozal knot, zabava amusement, zvezda star, žeja, thirst želeti to wish, žena woman.

Serbo-Croat. babin old woman (adj.), baviti se to stay, biti to be, bljuvati to vomit, brat brother, brisati to wipe, ginuti to perish, glava head, jablan poplar, kladvio hammer, krava cow, labud swan, mladić young man, odahnuti to recover one's breath, paliti to burn, pamet intellect, piti to drink, progon path for cattle, ribić small fish, roditi to give birth, sječivo blade, star old, sumrak twilight, vidjeti to see, volja will, žena woman.

CZECH. dílo work, holub pigeon, jabloň apple-tree, jestřáb hawk, kladivo hammer, kráva cow, kravín cow-shed, labut' swan, měsíc month, oblast region, pamět' memory, pavouk spider, peníz coin, soumrak twilight, žalud acorn.

Polish. bloto mud, ciąża pregnancy, goląb pigeon, jastrząb hawk, labędź swan, miesiąc month, pająk spider, pamięć memory, pęta fetters, pieniądze money, ręka hand, żądza desire, żołądź acorn.

Slovingian. $b\check{r}\acute{e}g$ shore, $c\grave{i}elq$ calf, dravi at a trot, $l\grave{a}to$ summer, lonji last year.

Russian. golub' pigeon, oblast' region, želud' acorn.

Dutch. billijk fair, melk milk.

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SLOVINCIAN. břég shore, cielq calf, draví at a trot, làto summer, lonjí last year.

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Serbo-Croat. babin old woman (adj.), baviti se to stay, biti to be, bljuvati to vomit, brat brother, brisati to wipe, ginuti to perish, glava head, jablan poplar, kladvio hammer, krava cow, labud swan, mladić young man, odahnuti to recover one's breath, paliti to burn, pamet intellect, piti to drink, progon path for cattle, ribić small fish, roditi to give birth, sječivo blade, star old, sumrak twilight, vidjeti to see, volja will, žena woman.

CZECH. dílo work, holub pigeon, jabloň apple-tree, jestřáb hawk, kladivo hammer, kráva cow, kravín cow-shed, labut' swan, měsíc month, oblast region, pamět' memory, pavouk spider, peníz coin, soumrak twilight, žalud acorn.

Polish. błoto mud, ciąża pregnancy, gołąb pigeon, jastrząb hawk, łabędź swan, miesiąc month, pająk spider, pamięć memory, pęta fetters, pieniądze money, ręka hand, żądza desire, żołądź acorn.

Slovincian. břég shore, cielq calf, draví at a trot, làto summer, lonjí last year.

Russian. golub' pigeon, oblast' region, želud' acorn.

Dutch. billijk fair, melk milk.