On clarifying some points of Slavonic accentology: the quantity of the thematic vowel in the present tense and related issues

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[Note on the 2009 version. This article was written in the winter of 1980-1981 and appeared in Folia Linguistica Historica 5/2, 1984, 331-395. The present version is identical to the printed text with the following minor exceptions:
– A handful of obvious typos and insignificant infelicities have been tacitly corrected.
– On the original p. 363 under points C and (b) a few confusing typos involving accent marks have been put right.
– In quotations from D.J.L. Johnson’s articles his way of accenting examples has been reproduced more consistently than in the printed text; in that connection footnote 7 has been modified.
– The page numbers of the original edition have been added, as in the following example: “regular development”, meaning that “regular” is the last word on p. 333 and “development” the first on p. 334. However, where words were originally printed partly on one and partly on another page, page numbers have been put after them rather than in the middle, as in “syllables syllables les.”]

1. Introduction

In 1957 Stang published his unorthodox thoughts on the accentuation of Proto-Slavonic. He argued that several traditional views cannot be correct and pointed out the existence of some hitherto unsuspected regularities. Stang’s book caused a split between traditionalists, who went on developing the time-honoured approach, and revolutionaries, for whom much of the existing literature on the subject had overnight become irrelevant. As is normal in such cases, there has been little or no serious discussion between adherents of the two competing views. It is all the more gratifying that part of the theory that has sprung from Stang’s book has recently been subjected to fairly detailed criticism by D.J.L. Johnson (1980, 1981), who can be regarded as a traditionalist in most respects. Since Johnson’s criticism involves not only the major part of the new theory, but also a large array of facts. it requires a detailed answer, in the course of which it will sometimes be necessary to fill in details the representatives of the theory have left implicit.

2. The theory

2.1. Stang.

Before discussing Johnson’s objections I would like to summarize briefly Stang’s results and indicate in a few words what has been accomplished by those who have
tried to solve the problems Stang’s theory left open or created, in particular V.A. Dybo, V.M. Illič-Svityč, C.L. Ebeling, and F.H.H. Kortlandt. My main purpose is to give some idea of what is involved in rejecting the theory which has been developed on the basis of Stang’s ideas. For a more detailed introduction to the new theory I refer to Kortlandt (1978a).

Stang presented (among other things) a new reconstruction of the accentual system of the final stage of Proto-Slavonic. He produced evidence to show that at that moment nouns, adjectives and verbs could belong to one of three “accent types”, in which a certain movement (or lack of it) of the stress is found combined with certain tonal and quantitative properties of the stem. The three types are the following:

(a) Fixed stress on the stem. If the stem is monosyllabic, the stem-vowel is almost invariably “acute”: it is a short vowel which carriers a rising tone and does not continue a PIE “short vowel” (which implies that it is not a Proto-Slavonic e, o or jer). The only exception is a group of ā-stem nouns which contain a stem-final palatal consonant; these words have a “neo-acute” intonation, i.e. a short rising tone on “PIE short vowels” (e etc.) and a long rising tone in all other cases, e.g. čakavian (Novi) vōla ‘will’, strāža ‘guard’ (Belić 1909: 223, 225).

(b) Stress alternating between the last syllable of the stem and the first syllable of the ending. Stem-stressed forms have the “neo-acute” intonation, cf. under (a). Nominal ā-stems have no stem-stressed forms, apart from the gen. pl., which ends in an un-stressable jer. All end-stressed forms have a short (rising) accent.

(c) Stress alternating between the first syllable of the stem and the last syllable of the ending (“lateral mobility”). Stem-stressed forms have a falling tone. A clitic which is added to a stem-stressed form attracts the stress (Stang 1957: 156-154, 179). Certain polysyllabic endings with an acute vowel in the penultimate syllable are never end-stressed even in type (c).

In order to account for the rise of the neoacute Stang (1957: 157-173) revived an old idea which attributed the neoacute to a stress retraction (rather than to “metatony”) even in those cases in which it is not due to a retraction from a weak jer; Stang assumed that at some moment long non-acute vowels in internal syllables lost the stress to the preceding syllable, which as a result received the neoacute intonation. This retraction has been retained in later versions of the theory and has become known as “Stang’s law”. An older formulation of Stang’s law is given by Ivšić (1911: 163-182).

1 Johnson’s criticism is directed mainly against Stang (1957) and a small number of publications by Stang’s followers, namely Dybo (1962), Illič-Svityč (1963 = 1979), Ebeling (1967), Kortlandt (1975a, 1976).

2 The (b)-stressed ā-stem instr. sg. has stem stress in kajkavian forms like Bednja storešĩnu ‘leader (of the wedding guests)’ (Jedvaj 1956: 300). Rather than being Proto-Slavonic this is probably due to a specifically kajkavian stress retraction onto pretonic long vowels which was established by Stj. Ivšić (1937: 188). Within kajkavian this retraction is widespread and possibly even general; it also explains the accentuation of such forms as Bednja vyrëbo ‘entrails, bowels’, Virje vūtrȍba (Fancev 1907: 355) < *vūtrȍba, cf. also Vermeer (1979: 375-377).
If Stang’s law is correct, then one has to suppose that prior to its operation all (b)-stressed paradigms (and also the (a)-stressed neoacute ā-stems) had fixed stress on the first syllable of the ending. According to Stang this pattern was old and he tried to find parallels in Old Prussian and Sanskrit (1957: 66ff., 116).

2.2. After Stang

Illič-Svityč refuted Stang’s suggestion by showing that – generally speaking – (b)-stressed nouns correspond to non-acute stem-stressed nouns in Baltic. Since the Baltic place of the stress is supported by correspondences with other Indo-European languages, Illič-Svityč concluded that in Slavonic a progressive stress shift must have taken place to produce the fixed end-stress of the (b)-stressed nouns in the period which preceded Stang’s law (Illič-Svityč 1963: 157-161 = 1979: 140-144). The matter was taken up by Dybo, who argued that there is nothing against assuming a phonetically regular shift: it can be assumed that at a certain moment all stressed vowels that were not acute and did not stand in the initial syllable of a mobile word-form lost the stress to the following syllable. At a later moment Stang’s law retracted the stress in those forms in which the vowel that had received the stress as a consequence of the progressive shift was long. The progressive shift proposed by Dybo and Stang’s law together explained the accentual properties of all (b)-stressed paradigms and expressed the correspondences with Baltic which Illič-Svityč had pointed out. Dybo accepted the consequences of his view that the progressive shift was a phonetically regular development: it had to be assumed that at the moment when the shift took place, there existed two different non-acute tones: one in mobile word-forms with initial stress and another in all other cases (1962: 8). It is the progressive shift, nowadays often called “Dybo’s law”, that Johnson objects to in particular.

Illič-Svityč and Dybo went on to investigate the properties of the accent types. Illič-Svityč showed that at some moment prior to the disappearance in Slavonic of the stem-stressed neuter nouns, all (b)-stressed masculine o-stems became mobile, in other words, became (c)-stressed (1963: 118ff. = 1979: 103). This development, which has become known as “Illič-Svityč’s law”, is also objected to by Johnson. Dybo demonstrated that the properties of Stang’s accent types can be observed not only in flexion but in derivation as well (1968, 1970, 1971, 1973, 1974a, 1974b, 1981). A number of other matters were clarified, too. Illič-Svityč, for instance, proposed a more accurate formulation of the Balto-Slavonic stress retraction known as “Hirt’s law” (1963: 81, 156 = 1979: 63, 138f.). It follows from the new formulation that the retraction must have taken place at a point in the history of Balto-Slavonic when the reflex of the PIE laryngeals was still a fully-fledged segmental phoneme (Kortlandt

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3 The progressive stress shift here called “Dybo’s law” is also sometimes referred to as “Illič-Svityč’s law”, in particular by Dybo himself and by Garde (1976: 16). (Since Johnson does not mention Garde’s work I shall have nothing to say about it here. For a discussion of the main differences between the Ebeling/Kortlandt approach and Garde’s theory see Kortlandt 1978b.).
The fact that certain endings are never end-stressed even in type (c) is also to be attributed to Hirt’s law (Kortlandt 1975a: 50f., Dybo 1979: 92-100).

Ten years after the appearance of Stang’s book Ebeling worked the various accentual laws established until then into a chronology which connects the Proto-Indo-European system with the final stage of Proto-Slavonic. In order to be able to do so he had to solve numerous problems. Among other things he reconstructed the sequence of events that gave rise to the “lateral mobility” of Stang’s accent type (c) and showed in passing why Hirt’s law cannot be observed in nominal u-stems in Slavonic. He also revived an idea introduced by van Wijk, according to which the simplification of consonant clusters which took place during the period of the “law of open syllables” influenced the prosodic properties of syllables adjacent to the cluster (1916: 346-348, 368-374). In Ebeling’s formulation this development (“van Wijk’s law”) resulted in lengthening of the vowel following the cluster; Ebeling put it at some moment prior to Dybo’s law (1967: 587, 589). The relationship between van Wijk’s original formulation of the law (in terms of tone) and the one it has received within the new theory (in terms of quantity) is made explicit by Kortlandt (1978a: 275n.).

Ebeling’s chronology was subjected to close scrutiny by his student Kortlandt, who as a result proposed a number of modifications. Kortlandt tried on the one hand to incorporate as many facts as possible, and on the other to attain natural formulations of the individual developments. He revived in a somewhat modified form an idea that had been part of the old theory (at least in a number of variants) but had been rejected by Stang (1957: 14, 168, cf. also Ebeling 1967: 583): the assumption that the old acute survived into Slavonic in both stressed and unstressed syllables. In Kortlandt’s view the acute – the reflex of the PIE laryngeals – was lost in three stages: first in pre-tonic and post-post-tonic syllables, then in the first post-tonic syllables and only at a very late Proto-Slavonic stage in stressed syllables (Kortlandt 1957a: 20, 27-34). Johnson strongly objects to this part of Kortlandt’s theory.

In 1976 W. Winter showed that the difference in stress reflected in Russian est’ ‘eat’ and vest’ ‘lead’ has something to do with the final consonant of the stem: the stem-vowel is non-acute if followed by PIE dh, but acute if followed by d. At some moment in the development of Balto-Slavonic the reflexes of the PIE “voiced unaspirated” stops must have caused preceding vowels to become acute. Thereupon Kortlandt argued that this development (“Winter’s law”) receives a simple explanation if interpreted in connection with the other accentual laws of Baltic and Slavonic, provided it is assumed that the voiced unaspirated stops of Proto-Indo-European were in reality glottalic (1978c, cf. also Kortlandt 1977, 1979a). As is well-known, a glottalic articulation of the PIE “mediae” had earlier been surmised by T. Gamkrelidze and V. Ivanov (1973) on the basis of the typologically anomalous character of the PIE consonant system as traditionally reconstructed. Winter’s law as interpreted by Kortlandt corroborates Gamkrelidze and Ivanov’s hypothesis by providing comparative evidence (cf. also Kortlandt 1978d, 1978e, 1981, 1983a, and Lubotsky 1981 for evidence from other branches of Indo-European).
In the chronology as established by Kortlandt the developments that have been mentioned in this section (plus a few others) are assumed to have taken place in the following order:

1. Balto-Slavonic innovations:
   a. establishment of “lateral mobility” in originally mobile and oxytone paradigms;
   b. Hirt’s law;
   c. Winter’s law.\(^4\)

2. Loss of the acute intonation in pretonic and post-posttonic syllables.


4. Illič-Svityč’s law.

5. Stem-stressed forms of mobile paradigms develop a falling intonation and lose the stress to clitics (if any). The rise of the tone distinction creates the conditions for the operation of Dybo’s law. The attraction of the stress by clitics is referred to as “Pedersen’s law” in the case of proclitics and “Dolobko’s law” (or “zakon Vasil’eva/Dolobko”) in the case of enclitics (see further, e.g., Dybo 1977, Kortlandt 1975a: 8-10, 39, Hinrichs 1983).

6. Metathesis of liquids in Czecho-Slovak and South Slavonic (Kortlandt 1975a: 31f.).

7. Loss of the acute intonation in posttonic syllables; rise of the new timbre distinctions (o, vs. a, e vs. ě etc.),

8. Van Wijk’s law.

9. Dybo’s law.

10. Loss of the acute intonation in stressed syllables.

11. Stang’s law.\(^5\)

Any criticism of the new theory has to be taken seriously. The theory has produced a coherent and unprecedentedly detailed picture of the development of Baltic and Slavonic and has had consequences for the reconstruction of Proto-Indo-European. It must not be abandoned without compelling reasons.

2.3. Johnson’s criticism

Johnson’s objections to Dybo’s law relate to six different aspects of the problem:

a. The reasons for assuming a progressive stress shift.

b. The explanation of the stress shift in terms of an earlier tonal distinction.

c. The chronology of the shift in relation to the other developments that took place in late Proto-Slavonic.

d. The interpretation of the difference between the stress patterns of Russian mogú/móžeš’ ‘can’ and nesú/nesésť ‘carry’.

\(^4\) In Kortlandt’s version of the theory the earliest Slavonic developments coincide both in substance and in chronology with those that have to be reconstructed for Baltic, which supports the hypothesis that there was a period of “Balto-Slavonic unity” (Kortlandt 1975a: 41, 1977: 320-323, 1979b: 262f.).

\(^5\) Ebeling’s theory differs in a number of ways, most of which are not relevant to Johnson’s criticism. In the case of clashes between different versions of the theory I shall in general limit my discussion to Kortlandt’s version, which is at present the one that shows the highest degree of elaboration.
e. The distribution of the stress types in the ā-stem nouns.

f. The accentuation of the suffix -ina in some of the čakavian dialects of Serbo-Croat.

In the course of the discussion Johnson further criticizes Illič-Svityč’s law, Illič-Svityč’s observation that some čakavian dialects still reflect a stage in which the law has not operated, and, finally, van Wijk’s law. In his article on the neocircumflex (1981) Johnson formulates objections against Kortlandt’s assumption that the loss of the acute intonation yielded length in post-posttonic syllables and against the idea that the “neocircumflex” of Slovene and the kajkavian dialects of Serbo-Croat reflects posttonic length.

I shall try to discuss all objections in turn. As we shall see, Johnson is frequently the victim of misunderstandings about the content of the theory he is criticizing. In order to avoid a further build-up of such misunderstandings I shall try on the one hand to leave out no single aspect of Johnson’s criticism and on the other to give full quotations, so that the reader will be in a position to judge for himself.

3. Dybo’s law

3.1. The evidence for Dybo’s law

Johnson starts from Dybo’s 1962 article about the accentuation of the verb, the main argument of which he summarizes as follows: 338

Drawing parallels with the nominal paradigm [Dybo] distinguishes two original contrasting verbal paradigms, (1) barytone-immobile; (2) oxytone-mobile. Barytone verbs with circumflex or short stem are supposed to have undergone in late Common Slavonic a general shift of stress by one syllable towards the end of the word. This development also affected the nominal paradigm and is held to explain the genesis of the fixed end stress type 6. The newly stressed syllable if long, had a falling intonation. This new accent was subsequently retracted to give the new acute (e.g. možēšь > možēšь > mòžēšь) (Johnson 1980: 481f.) 7.

This is all Johnson has to say about the evidence in favour of Dybo’s law. From it the uninitiated reader will get the impression (1) that Dybo bases his assumption of a progressive shift exclusively on internal reconstruction and (2) that Dybo’s argument as reported by Johnson exhausts the evidence. Neither impression is correct.

To begin with, Dybo’s reasoning is much less primitive than Johnson makes it appear. True, it starts from the fact that in the nouns accent types (a) and (b) are in complementary distribution with respect to the intonation of the stem, but Dybo adds immediately that this fact could in principle be due to either phonological or morphological causes. However, he goes on to say that as far as the noun is concerned there

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6 Here Johnson has type (b) in mind, to which he keeps referring as “the fixed end stress type”, “the end-stressed paradigm”, “the fixed final-stress nominal paradigm”, etc., although it had fixed end stress in the nominal ā-stems only. Johnson’s confusing terminology exemplifies an important characteristic of his criticism: a tendency to perceive the new theory in terms of the traditional view.

7 In Johnson’s transcription stressed short vowels are underlined. For practical reasons the accent marks of the last two examples have been somewhat modified.
is no choice, because Illič-Svityč has shown that Slavonic (b)-stressed nouns correspond to stem-stressed nouns in Baltic and elsewhere in Indo-European. Thus, in order to explain the Slavonic nominal (b)-paradigm it is necessary on comparative grounds to assume some kind of progressive stress shift, and in view of this it is not at all unnatural to wonder:

Byl li etot process fonetičeskim? Esli on oхватil ne toliko imena, no i drugie chastsi sistemy praslavjanskogo jazyka, možno bylo by predpolожat’ ego fonetičeskij karakter, v protivnom slučае přišlos’ by iskat’ ob’jasnenija v kakix-libo morfoLOGiчесkiх processax [Was this process phonetically regular? If it affected not only nominals, but also other parts of the system of Proto-Slavonic, one could suppose it to have been phonetically regular; in the opposite case the explanation would have to be sought in morphological processes.] (ibid.).

Dybo then reviews the properties of the verbal accent types and reaches the conclusion that they are so similar to their nominal counterparts that one is almost forced to assume a similar origin. This, he feels, entitles him to suppose that the progressive shift that has to account for Illič-Svityč’s correspondences was phonetically regular.

Even if one is not convinced by Dybo’s reasoning, one cannot reject the progressive shift he proposed without taking account of the fact that it has been incorporated into the chronologies devised by Ebeling and Kortlandt. Since they put the shift at a fairly late point in the history of Proto-Slavonic, quite a few other developments must have operated on forms with pre-Dybo stress and the surprising fact is that this simplifies the formulation of some developments and makes it possible to find explanations for others. Each such case should be regarded as providing support for Dybo’s law. Since we shall come across several examples below, I shall illustrate the principle on a single problem here.

In pretonic syllables Proto-Indo-European “long vowels and diphthongs” have long and short reflexes, depending on the stress paradigm and other properties of the word in which they occur. They are long in (b)-stressed words and in disyllabic (a)-stressed stems with a non-acute vowel in the initial syllable, cf. Polish trąba ‘trumpet’, wątroba ‘liver’, Czech trouba ‘pipe’, útroby ‘innards’; they are short in disyllabic (a)-stressed stems with an acute in the stressed syllable, e.g. język/jazyk ‘tongue’; in (c)-stressed forms they are also short in West Slavonic (e.g. rúka ‘hand’), whereas in Serbo-Croat long and short vowels occur side by side, and often in alternation, e.g. nom. sg. rúka vs. dat./instr./loc. pl. rúka ‘hand’, čák. (Vrgada) loc. sg. vrágů vs. gen. pl. vrágův ‘devil’ (Jurišić 1966: 73f., cf. the rules given by Stang 1957: 40-42). Dybo’s law permits an extremely simple and natural formulation of the rules because it presupposes a period when trąba/trouba and wątroba/útroby were stressed on the first syllable: in that way one can assume that all pretonic “long vowels and diphthongs” were shortened at a moment prior to the operation of Dybo’s law. The progressive shift created new pretonic lengths and the long vowels of rúka and vrágů can receive a simple analogical explanation because in Serbo-Croat long vowels in disyllab-

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8 Some further evidence supporting Dybo’s law will be touched upon below (e.g. sections 3.4, 4.1, 5.3). Further support for Dybo’s law can be added almost at will cf., e.g. Dybo (1958: 57n., 1961, 1972), Kortlandt (1982a: 99).
ic stem-stressed forms of mobile paradigms remained long, e.g. acc. sg. rūku, gen. sg. vrāga (Kortlandt 1975a: 30).

Dybo’s law also contributes to an explanation of the accentuation of those (c)-stressed verbs that are stem-stressed when prefixed, e.g. čak. (Susak) čini/učini ‘do’ (3d. sg. pres.) (my material). Johnson regards such forms as providing counterevidence:

“Other features of the present tense accent are made more difficult of understanding by Dybo’s scheme, e.g. the štokavic relationship – lōmīmo, pōlomīmo. According to Dybo this would be derived from an earlier lōmīmo, polomīmo where the unprefixed form belonged to the mobile paradigm and the prefixed form to a fixed-stress barytone paradigm. Such a relationship would seem unlikely” (1980: 492).

This objection rests on a curious misunderstanding. The pre-Dybo relationship *lōmīmō/*pōlomīmō (not of course **polomīmō) has been retained to this day in Russian and čakavian (and, indirectly, in Slovincian) in verbs compounded with the prefix *vy-, which was acute and therefore kept the stress when Dybo’s law operated, e.g. R. płyvet/plylä vs. vępłyvet/vęplyla ‘swim, float’, čak. (Omišalj) perē/prēlā vs. zęperɛ/zęptrēla ‘wash’. Dybo’s law shows that perē/zęperɛ and čini/učini reflect two different aspects of the same thing. The Balto-Slavonic character of the relationship is confirmed by the Lithuanian facts, cf. the fixed stress of pęrsukti vs. the mobile accentuation of the simplex sūkti ‘turn’ evidenced in the active present participle sukās (nom. sg.) vs. sūkantį (acc. sg.).

3.2 The rise of a tonal contrast on non-acute vowels

Dybo’s law presupposes that at the time prior to its operation there was a phonetic difference between those non-acute vowels that stood in the first syllable of stem-stressed forms of mobile words and all remaining stressed non-acute vowels. The former, like the acute vowels, remained stressed, whereas the latter lost the stress to the following syllable. On the basis of the comparative evidence the former are assumed to have been falling and the latter rising. Since stem-stressed forms of mobile paradigms were always stressed on the first syllable, the falling tone did not occur in interior or final syllables.

The rise of the tone distinction (which cannot be chronologically separated from the incorporation of clitics into the stress pattern of the mobile paradigm) resulted in a rigorous separation between the two accentual paradigms. cf. Kortlandt (1975a: 28f., 39, 1978b: 73-76)\textsuperscript{10}. Later, however, when the progressive stress shift took place, the distinction became much less clear-cut: the stem-stressed paradigm was split in two and end stress ceased to be an exclusive characteristic of mobile words. At first sight there seems to exist a somewhat paradoxical difference between, on the one hand, the outcome of the rise of the tone distinction which has to be assumed in order to explain the progressive stress shift and, on the other, the outcome of the


\textsuperscript{10} Caucasian parallels to the Proto-Slavonic rules of stress assignment are adduced by Dybo et al. (1978).
stress shift itself. Johnson is inclined to see a counterargument in this: “Doubts are cast on the motivation of the shift in stress and therefore upon the change itself by the fact that though aiming to differentiate more clearly the two accent types the end result was to produce a range of forms with identical accentuation” (1980: 484).

However, Johnson correctly points out that the paradox disappears as soon as it is realized that in different periods quite different tendencies may be at work: “Ebeling’s suggestion of a two-stage development, first, an intonational change in the old stressed syllable, and then, after some lapse of time, the stress shift, could eliminate this objection if the final stage is seen as independent of the motivation of the first” (ib.). It has to be realized that the progressive shift is assumed to have taken place at the very end of the period of the “law of open syllables”, a time of radical change, during which several other tendencies were reversed.

3.3. The chronology of Dybo’s law

Johnson then adduces a number of objections that have to do with the position Dybo’s law occupies in the chronology devised by Ebeling and Kortlandt. As we have seen, they assume that Dybo’s law operated fairly late in the development of Proto-Slavonic. According to Johnson this is motivated by the following argument: “As Dybo and others seek to explain by their supposed progressive shift not only the genesis of the end-stressed paradigms but also the development of the new acute in forms where it did not arise from a retraction from a weakening jer, they necessarily put it very late” (1980: 488). This is incorrect. The late dating of Dybo’s law in Ebeling’s and Kortlandt’s chronologies is based on quite different considerations: Dybo’s law presupposes the presence of the new long vowels produced by van Wijk’s law; the rise of these long vowels must have been posterior to the rise of the new timbre distinctions (o vs. ā, e vs. ė etc.) because an e lengthened as a consequence of van Wijk’s law is not reflected as ě but as ė. The rise of the neo-acute has nothing to do with the dating of Dybo’s law. True, the progressive shift produces the input for Stang’s law, which is one of the sources of the neo-acute, but there is nothing in this relationship itself that prevents Dybo’s law from having operated long before Stang’s law.

Johnson then objects that the assumption of Dybo’s law results in a typologically unlikely reconstruction of events in late Proto-Slavonic: “It requires the acceptance of the existence for a period of an accent system closely similar to that generated later by the retraction of stress from weakening jers and by retrogressive shifts from new circumflexes, the subsequent loss of this system and then shortly afterwards its recreation” (1980: 484). This argument is of dubious value on general grounds because it is not difficult to find counterexamples: in neo-štokavian a system closely similar to that of Proto-Slavonic was recreated as a consequence of radical changes involving the loss of several important properties of the system. Moreover, in particu-

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11 Why the plural? The theory Johnson is criticizing assumes Stang’s law to have been a single (phonetic) stress shift. This slip once again illustrates that Johnson looks at the new theory through the distorting prism of the traditional conceptions.
lar in Kortlandt’s chronology the discontinuity is much less pronounced than Johnson makes it appear, even apart from the fact that the properties of the prosodic system in the period between Dybo’s law and Stang’s law contribute to explanations of the development of the old acute in stressed syllables into a short rising tone and of the lengthening in mobile monosyllables like Serbo-Croat bōg ‘god’, dān ‘day’ (Kortlandt 1975a: 32f.).

Johnson’s next objection concerns the prosodic system of Proto-Slavonic in the period just before Dybo’s law operated: “Kortlandt in his chronology places Dybo’s law after the retraction of stress from weak jers. This would seem to imply the coexistence for a period of three phonologically contrasted varieties of rising pitch and the acceptance of a progressive stress shift in a period characterized by a series of retrogressive shifts” (1980: 484). This objection rests on the combined effect of two misunderstandings about the content of the theory. It is only the retraction from final jers that Kortlandt puts before Dybo’s law (internal jers lost their stressability much later). The stress retraction from final jers produced a long rising tone which was identical to the long rising tone that had been in existence ever since the rise of a tone distinction on non-acute vowels (Kortlandt 1975a: 15). Since the rise of the new timbre distinctions (a vs. o etc.) the old short vowels (o, e and the jers) had differed from the other vowels in lacking long counterparts. Symmetry was restored by van Wijk’s law and by the stress retraction from final jers. The new thing about the long rising o in gen. pl. *gōrb (< *gōr’b) was not its rising intonation but the fact of its being a long ō.

Johnson furthermore disregards another crucial aspect of Kortlandt’s reconstruction: the hypothesis that the difference between acute and non-acute vowels was one of timbre (“laryngealized” vs. “plain”) rather than tone. In the period preceding Dybo’s law Proto-Slavonic knew only a single rising pitch: “Before Dybo’s law there existed a pitch opposition on short and long vowels in stressed initial syllables, apart from the laryngealized vowels, which were neutral with respect to quantity and intonation” (Kortlandt 1975a: 16).

It goes without saying that when final jers lost the ability of being stressed a progressive stress shift was out of the question. It is somewhat misleading to state, as Johnson does, that Dybo’s law operated “in a period characterized by a series of retrogressive shifts”, but even if this is a correct observation it would not provide a counterargument: the progressive stress shift that took place later in Slovene was both preceded and followed by stress retractions.

Johnson’s next objection also concerns Kortlandt’s chronology: “I cannot accept his assertion of the neutrality with regard to pitch of the old acute. Its rising nature is abundantly attested by its reflexes when lengthened in čakavic and Slovene and by the pleophonic forms of East Slavonic” (1980: 484f.). This objection betrays careless reading. Although Kortlandt does assume that the old acute was neutral with regard to pitch during part of the Proto-Slavonic period, he also assumes that at some moment between Dybo’s law and Stang’s law (well within the Proto-Slavonic period) “the old laryngealized vowels fell together with the short rising vowels” (1975a: 33). The rising tone of examples like Slovene brāta ‘brother’ (gen. sg.) and čak. (Novi) krđj ‘end’ tells us something about the realization of the reflex of the old acute at the time
when the short stressed vowels in *bràta resp. *krâj were lengthened. Both developments took place considerable time after Stang’s law had operated, as is suggested by their geographically limited occurrence and by the position they occupy within the relative chronology of post-Proto-Slavonic changes in north-west čakavian and Slovene respectively (Kortlandt 1976: 6f., Rigler 1963: 34 and passim, Vermeer 1982b: passim).

The case of the East Slavonic pleophony is different because the merger of the old acute with the short rising accent can hardly have taken place before the pleophony had arisen. At the time of the rise of pleophony there existed a three-way accent system: falling vs. rising vs. acute (laryngealized). As far as the place of the stress was concerned these three possibilities had to be distributed among two possible reflexes: -òro- and -oró-. Therefore the accentuation of examples like Russian moróz tells us no more than that at the time of the rise of the East Slavonic pleophony the reflex of the old acute was not falling, which is hardly surprising considering the fact that it was soon to merge with the rising tone (cf. Kortlandt 1978f: 284).

Anybody reconstructing the development of Proto-Slavonic must necessarily reckon with a period during which the old acute was tonally neutral because the old acute is the reflex of the PIE laryngeals, which had nothing to do with tone. Therefore any theory has to specify when the reflexes of the PIE laryngeals became distinctively rising. The only difference between the traditional view and Kortlandt’s theory is a matter of chronology.

According to Johnson the details of Dybo’s law make it impossible to account for the rising tone reflected in Russian ogoród ’vegetable garden’ and similar examples:

Since the theories under discussion require the admission of interior falling pitch on both longs and shorts until a very late period the explanation of metatony in noun compounds of the type R. ogoród is obscure. If polozh > polozù then why not uroka (gen. sg.) > uroka if the root vowel had not earlier developed the rising pitch indicated by the Leka dialect form urók? Why should such compounds have developed rising pitch if falling pitch was regularly tolerated in interior syllables? (1980: 485).

This objection, too, rests on serious misunderstandings about the content of the theory. The theory admits the existence of falling pitch in internal syllables only on long vowels and only in the period between Dybo’s law and Stang’s law, cf. Ebeling (1967: 59f.) and the following quotation from Kortlandt: “Dybo’s law introduced phonemic pitch on long vowels in non-initial syllables. On the other hand, the pitch opposition on short vowels was lost, except in monosyllables” (1975a: 32). If one keeps this in mind, it is easy to see that the theory correctly predicts the rising pitch of Russian urók and similar examples because the stem vowel was short at the moment when Dybo’s law operated (*úroks > *uřóks), so that the stress was not retracted in accordance with Stang’s law.

The case of compounds with a long root vowel is different. It was Ebeling (1967: 59f.) who first suggested that the operation of Stang’s law might have been limited to final syllables. This assumption explains the stress alternation found in (b)-stressed
presents like Russian *kúrit/kurátsja* ‘smoke’ (act./refl). In non-final syllables the stress was not retracted and the long falling vowel was shortened. This explains the accentuation of examples like Serbo-Croat *rážlika* ‘difference’ (*rážlika* (prior to the neo-štokavian stress retraction)) < *rážlika* (prior to the shortening of long falling vowels in internal syllables which took place around the time of Stang’s law) < *rážlika* (prior to Dybo’s law). It has to be assumed that in masc. nouns like Russian *ogoród* the accentuation of the nom./acc.sg., in which Stang’s law had retracted the stress, was replaced analogically with that of all other case forms. This analogy has a parallel in examples like Slovene *brȃtec* ‘brother’ (dim.) (instead of expected *brátec*) with the falling vowel that is regular in the other case forms.

### 3.4. Mobility in the present tense

Johnson does not follow Stang and Dybo in identifying the accent types of the noun with their verbal counterparts:

[... ] the identification of the fixed final-stress nominal paradigm with the verbal accent type *mogù*, *môžeš* and more particularly of the mobile nominal paradigm with the verbal accent type *nesù*, *nesëš* is highly dubious.

The ascription of mobility to the latter rests primarily on the second and third person singular aorist forms. (The first person singular forms such as *ži*, *po* are cited but unexplained.) (1980: 483).

Again a misunderstanding seems to be involved. The identification is based not so much on the aorist as on the accentual properties of the paradigms in question. The paradigm reflected in R. *mogú*/*môžeš’, pišú*/pišëš’* behaves in every respect exactly like a nominal (b)-paradigm: it has a stress alternation between the ending and the final stem-syllable and carries a neo-acute intonation in stem-stressed forms. On the other hand the mobile character of the paradigm of *nesú*/*nesëš’, rožú*/roðîš’* is quite beyond doubt, cf. the end-stressed endings in many dialects (e.g. Omišalj *peremȍ*, *peretȅ* ‘wash’, *mrzìmȍ*, *mrzìtȅ* ‘hate’) and the stem-stressed first person singular of Old Russian *stóju*, *réku*, a form that loses its stress to clitics exactly in the way stem-
stressed forms of mobile paradigms are wont to do, e.g. pógoublju, prívleku, népoščažju, postyžjusjá. The aorist has nothing to do with it. Johnson is simply wrong when he states that “the second and third person aorist forms are crucial to Dybo’s formulations [...]” and “[...] it is on the originality of the opposition položi/polomi that the whole edifice of Dybo’s scheme rests” (1980: 484).

Establishing the mobility of the “end-stressed” present and explaining its origin are two different things. Although several explanations have been put forward, Johnson limits his discussion to the one proposed by Stang, who regards the Proto-Slavonic mobility as a remnant of PIE mobility of the usual type (stem-stress in the singular vs. end-stress elsewhere) which in his view must have existed in the thematic verbs but was largely eliminated by the other IE languages; as in the thematic verbs, Proto-Slavonic tended to replace mobility with fixed marginal end-stress; Stang supposed that the first person singular escaped the tendency because it had a deviating accentuation in the (b)-stressed presents, too (Stang 1957: 112, 129f., 178f.). Johnson rejects Stang’s view that the mobility of the thematic present was inherited:

Verbal mobility applied originally only to athematic verbs and was characterized by an alternation of weak and strong personal forms with a play of accent between stem and ending (originally only between contiguous syllables if one excludes reduplicated forms or forms with augment). It is not immediately apparent that a difference in stress position of aorist and present must be a development of this (1980: 483).

As we have seen, this rests on a misunderstanding. It is not “a difference in stress position of aorist and present” that has to be explained, but a stress alternation within both present and aorist. Johnson later returns to the problem in a different context:

As has been noted, mobility was only characteristic of athematic verbs. In Slavonic these verbs were reduced almost to the point of extinction. (...) It would be improbable without strong supporting evidence to assume the acceptance by thematics of the accentual characteristics of athematics (1980: 496).

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15 Present tense paradigms in which initial stress in the first person singular is opposed to non-initial stress in all other forms are attested in all those Slavonic languages that have retained both free stress and the ending “-o. It is common in Old Russian (Vasil’ev 1929: 47f., Stang 1957: 109f., Dybo 1969a) and may have persisted in a few East Slavonic dialects up to the present day. It has been generalized in Slovincian. It is common in Middle Bulgarian and in modern Bulgarian dialects (e.g. Dybo 1969b: 87 and passim). The pattern is unmistakable in the Proto-Slovene dialect of the Freising Fragments (Kortlandt 1975b: 409). In SCr. it turns up wherever the ending -u has not been replaced with -em. Three types of cases can be distinguished. A. Many štokavian dialects have the pattern in vȅlju, vȅli, vȅlmo ‘I/he/we say(s)’ (Borač and Biograd in “East Herzegovina”, Peco 1964: 149, 176, 189). This phenomenon is particularly widespread in the dialects of Montenegro, cf. Vušović (1927) on the area around Nikšić, Vuković (1938: 39-67, 1940: 324) on Piva/Drobnjak, Stanić (1974: 236, 238) on Uskoci, Ćupić (1977: 89f., 93) on Bjelopavlići. In Piva/Drobnjak we find vȍlju ‘I prefer’ alongside vòlīm ‘I love’, cf. vòlīmo/vòlīmo (Vuković 1938-39: 67, 1940: 325). B. In Kašić’s language the form gorovu ‘I speak’ has initial stress (Neweklowsky 1979: 59). C. The Torlak dialect of Trgovište and surrounding villages, which has retained the ending -u in many verbs, has extended the initial stress originally characteristic of (c)-stressed verbs to (a)-stressed (and possibly also (b)-stressed) presents, cf. dónesu/donésemo ‘bring’, támetu/meté ‘sweep’, držu (alongside držím)/držite ‘hold, keep’, záboravu/zaboráviš ‘forget’, etc. (Alexander 1975: 307f.).
The argument is invalid, cf. the spread of the athematic first person singular ending \(^*\text{-}mь\) in many Slavonic languages, to mention no other examples\(^{16}\). Johnson goes on: “if the singular in general was originally marked by stem stress it is surprising that traces of that stress should have survived only in the first person” (1980: 496). Now, as we have seen, Stang offers an argument to support his assumption that stem stress was retained only in the first person singular, viz. the fact that in the (b)-stressed presents, too, the first person singular stood apart from the other forms. It may perhaps not be a very strong argument, but Johnson’s counterargument (“it is surprising”) is considerably weaker and, besides, somewhat dangerous because it bestows normative status on private feelings which could also be explained otherwise.

Ebeling rejects Stang’s theory because mobility is absent from the athematic verbs, i.e. precisely those verbs where one would expect mobility if Slavonic really continued the PIE state of affairs in some way\(^{17}\). Ebeling accounts for the stem-stressed first person singular by assuming a stress retraction that affected certain endings and that also caused the stem stress of, for instance, the o-stem gen. sg., e.g. Russian голоса ‘voice’ (1967: 580). Kortlandt (1975a: 6) adopted Ebeling’s explanation in a modified form, cf. also the important later modifications implicit in Kortlandt (1979b: 264n., 1979d: 56f.). Incidentally, Johnson, too, attributes the accentuation of the first person singular to the shape of the ending (1980: 496). The view that the mobile paradigm of Russian нёс/-нёс’ somehow contradicts Dybo’s law would require a discussion of Ebeling’s and Kortlandt’s explanations, too.

A further objection concerns the conditions for the rise of mobility in verbs of a certain type. Johnson argues that in the verbal type нёс/-нёс’ the falling tone characteristic of the mobile paradigm and necessary to avoid the operation of Dybo’s law in the first person singular could not arise because there were no non-acute stem-stressed verbs of similar structure:

(The only ‘e’ verb of the latter accent type that was otherwise of identical structure with the type нёс’ was the verb мог.Constants, but it is clearly a late adherent to the type and the original two classes of ‘i’ verb are nowhere rigidly distinguished. The mixing between them cannot all be post-Common Slavonic.) It is also not clear why the forms could have existed without such interference for a very long period anterior to the changes. What was the new development in structure that made impossible the continued coexistence of the old variations? No suggestion is offered in answer (1980: 483f.).

The beginning of the passage contains two assertions that fail to prove Johnson’s point. First, the thematic present мог,* may be “late”, but so is the rise of the tone dis-
tinction. It is only by showing that mogǫ is later than the rise of the tone distinction that Johnson could begin to prove his point, although no adherent of the new theory has ever claimed that the simultaneous presence of mobile and non-acute stem-stressed words “of identical structure” is a necessary condition for the rise of the falling tone in a given form. The falling tone is assumed to have arisen in any stem-stressed form that was a member of a paradigm that contained end-stressed forms, too. The additional condition Johnson reads into the law (the obligatory simultaneous presence of non-alternating paradigms “of identical structure”) is typical of the “metatonies” which play so prominent a part in many versions of the traditional theory. It is one of the advantages of the new theory that it manages without “metatonies” of this kind.

Second, although it cannot be denied that there exists considerable variation with respect to the distribution of the ĭ-verbs among the accent types, it is also true that some dialects are more archaic than others. It is the task of Slavonic accentology to explain the archaic systems. In the case of the ĭ-verbs the agreement between Old Russian, Slovene, and Czech (to mention only three of the most archaic dialects) is so close that one is forced to look for an explanation. The assumption that these languages reflect the Proto-Slavonic distribution is such an explanation. This assumption is one of the foundation stones of the theory Johnson is criticizing. In order to prove that it is wrong he would have to discuss the material. It will not do merely to assert that “the original two classes of ‘i’ verb are nowhere rigidly distinguished” or: “The origin of the two types and the principles governing the distribution of verbs between them are obscure on account of the subsequent mixing” (1980: 497). Such statements brush aside more than eighty years of research into the subject. The principles governing the accentuation of denominatives were formulated by Leskien (1902: 121 and passim) and van Wijk (1920: 12). The fact that the agreement between Czech and Slovene is so striking as to require an explanation was pointed out by Diels (1910: 78f.). Etcetera.

The end of the quotation reveals a misunderstanding with regard to the implications of Ebeling’s chronology and in particular the place of Dybo’s law in it. In the period between the rise of the tone distinctions and Dybo’s law the two accent types had nothing in common. Mobile paradigms differed from barytone paradigms in the place of the stress (in end-stressed forms) or in the tone (in stem-stressed forms). There was no basis for “mixing”. The matter changed when the progressive shift took place. The number of accent types increased from two to three. End-stress was no longer an exclusive characteristic of words belonging to the mobile paradigm. Dybo’s law was “the new development in structure” that threatened the independence of the accent types18.

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18 Even before Dybo’s law operated, the loss of the stressability of final jers must have diminished somewhat the transparency of the system.
3.5. The nominal ā-stems

Johnson bases a further objection to Dybo’s law on the degree of analogical transfer between the accent types in the ā-stem nouns. As he sees it the confusion is so great that considerable analogical “mixing” must have been going on for quite a while in Proto-Slavonic:

The ‘a’ declension would also appear to provide no firm evidence for the thesis that the final-stress paradigm arose only in late Common Slavonic as the result of a progressive shift of stress from circumflex and short barytones. It is extraordinarily difficult to reconstruct anything like a reliable inventory of nouns which at that period constituted this type because of mixing with the mobile paradigm. All the mixing is clearly not of late date. Nor is there any general tendency discernable towards the diminution of mobility in favour of fixed stress. Eight of the nouns for which Ilič-Svityč is able to demonstrate the originality of final stress occur with mobile paradigm and a ninth (zemlja) almost exclusively so. Loss of mobility is not infrequently by means of generalization of the accusative form, e.g. ovea (Hvar, Lepetane, Prćan), brada (Ozriniči, Kosovo, Žumberak), sūja (Posavina), žma (R. dial.), sržota, bōsota (Novi). This generalization of the accusative form can also affect old final stress nouns, e.g. bōha (Dalmatia, Hercegovina, Montenegro); zvīžda (Oštarije). The form čerta of the Serbo-Croat literary language may reflect such a generalization with subsequent shortening of the stem vowel cf. R. čertá (Johnson 1980: 485, cf. also Ilič-Svityč’s discussion of the material, 1963: 96-109 = 1979: 82-94; the Novi forms are given by Belić 1909: 227).

Johnson clearly has failed to come to grips with the complexity of the situation. Even if one approaches the material in a very conservative way, one has to take account of the following things:

(I) In the case of “long stem” nouns there is considerable agreement between Old Russian and West Slavonic: some nouns have consistent end stress in OR and length in WSl. (type (b)), others have mobile stress in OR and brevity in WSl. (type (c)).

(II) The mere existence of agreement between Old Russian and West Slavonic constitutes a fact to be explained. It can be explained by assuming (a) that the two types existed already in Proto-Slavonic, and (b) that the distribution we find in Old Russian and West Slavonic reflects the Proto-Slavonic state of affairs.

(III) In the case of “short stem” nouns the West Slavonic evidence is of no value (for obvious reasons). However, OR shows a clear distribution in the case of “short stem” nouns, too, and it is not too daring to assume at least as a working hypothesis that this distribution reflects the Proto-Slavonic state of affairs.

The correctness of this approach is confirmed by the following considerations:

(IV) The prosodic characteristics of the reconstructed types (“(b)-type” accentuation in OR correlating with length in WSl. vs. “(c)-type” accentuation in OR correlating with brevity in WSl.) return elsewhere in the system, so that the reconstruction fits the overall pattern.

(V) Reflexes of the two types are abundantly attested in South Slavonic, which supports the assumption that they are of Proto-Slavonic date. (I am referring here to the existence of the types, not to the actual distribution of nouns among the types.)

Now the above account has been excessively (and unrealistically) conservative. Most investigators would probably hold that the Slovene and Middle Bulgarian evidence cannot be simply brushed aside even if it is not always easy to evaluate. Johnson virtually limits his discussion to the evidence of modern Serbo-Croat dialects. However, I fail to see how quoting isolated and uninterpreted examples from modern
Serbo-Croat dialects can be of immediate relevance to Proto-Slavonic. It is well-known that in Russian the accentuation of the ā-stem nouns has strongly innovated in the course of the last three or four centuries. It would be naive to expect that all modern Serbo-Croat dialects have faithfully held on to the Proto-Slavonic distribution. Unfortunately Serbo-Croat dialectology has not yet reached the point where a completely satisfactory discussion of the problem is possible. This does not mean that nothing is known. A few examples:

(1) The non-neoštokavian “Zeta-Lovćen” dialects of the Boka Kotorska area (e.g. Johnson’s Lepetane, Ozninići, and Prćanj) have tended to introduce and generalize stem stress in originally (b)-stressed and (c)-stressed nouns. There is no reason whatever for not regarding this as a (relatively) recent local innovation without serious implications for Proto-Slavonic (cf. Rešetar 1900: 91-95).

(2) In the dialect of Gruža, south-east of Belgrade, the difference between the (b)-stressed and the (c)-stressed plural has acquired a meaning: (c)-stressed plurals are “collective”, whereas (b)-stressed plurals express a “real plural”. As a consequence both patterns have become productive, so that we find, e.g. nom./acc. pl. óvce, dat./instr. pl. óvcama, ‘sheep’ with collective meaning, opposed to the “real plural” óve, óvcama, similarly trâve, trâvama vs. tráve, trávama, ‘grass, herb’ (Stevović 1969: 511). In the singular the mobile pattern has virtually disappeared (o.c.: 510). It should be obvious that the evidence of an innovative dialect like Gruža can only be of limited value for the reconstruction of Proto-Slavonic (Johnson adduces a Gruža form on p. 486). By the way, Gruža is a relatively straightforward neoštokavian dialect, and since neo-štokavian is fairly homogeneous chances are that similar systems occur elsewhere but happen to have escaped detection. This would explain a number of puzzling forms (in particular doublets) that have been reported in the literature on neo-štokavian. The point requires a separate investigation.

(3) Some dialects have fixed stress and so have only a very limited value for the reconstruction of Proto-Slavonic. A form like Oštarije zvȋzda ‘star’ which Johnson quotes (following Illič-Svityč 1963: 106 = 1979: 91, whose source has zvîzda, Strohal 1910: 19) proves nothing at all because the dialect has developed a system of predictable stress (without tonal distinctions) rather reminiscent of Latin: the stress falls on the penultimate or the antepenultimate syllable, depending on quantity (the dialect differs from Latin only in that the quantity of the final syllable plays a role, too), cf. Strohal (o.c.: 16f. and passim), cf. also Ivić (1959a: 397, 1961: 200-202) on dialects closely related to Oštarije.

(4) Not all dialect descriptions are reliable, a point to which I shall return below (section 4.2).

Johnson’s remark about zemlja is not quite fair because he omits to mention the explanation Illič-Svityč gives to account for the fact that zemlja has changed from (b) to (c) in most dialects: the existence of a synonymous i-stem *zemь. The texts and dialects in which (b)-stressed forms of zemlja are attested strongly suggest that (b)-stress is archaic (Illič-Svityč 1963: 107f. = 1979: 93). Attestations of (b)-stress in the acc. sg. of zemlja are particularly frequent in Old Slovene, from the Freising Fragments onwards (Kortlandt 1975b: 410, Diels 1910: 23).
Furthermore, it should be kept in mind that Dybo’s law, which created the conditions for “mixing” between the accent types, must have operated several centuries before the appearance of the earliest accented texts and more than a millennium before the rise of Slavonic dialectology. There is surely enough time to account for any conceivable degree of mixing. It is in fact remarkable that a pattern can still be distinguished and it is the task of Slavonic accentology to explain the pattern.

3.6 The suffix -ina in čakavian

Johnson bases a very complicated objection on the accentual behaviour of the suffix -ina in north-west čakavian. In these dialects the suffix has a fixed long rising accent on the penultimate syllable, which is odd, e.g. Novi daljina ‘distance’. Johnson starts from the assumption that the suffix was consistently (b)-stressed in Proto-Slavonic: “[...] the assumption of fixed end stress for feminine abstract nouns in -ina derived from adjectives would seem reliable” (1980: 486). Nevertheless both (a)-stressed and mobile examples occur and Johnson proposes to account for them by assuming secondary spread of mobility (Old Russian sediná/sedinu), followed by generalization of the accentuation of the stem-stressed acc. sg. (Old Russian býstrinam). He seeks to explain the case of Novi daljina in a similar way: “It would seem that the most plausible explanation of this accentuation is that it arose as the result of the development of a secondary mobility – daljínā, daljínu – with subsequent generalization of the retracted stress forms” (1980: 487). It goes without saying that the rising tone can be explained only on the assumption that the development took place in a period when long falling vowels could not occur in interior syllables: |355|

The relative chronology of the development of the mobility can be established as occurring between the first appearance of the new acute and the toleration of interior falling pitch as in kopámo, novóga, kúpám, studění and in loans like butíga. Since the retraction of stress in the new mobility was not phonetic but a morphological adaptation to already existing patterns with initial falling pitch, the acute must be due to the structural impossibility at the time of falling pitch on an inner syllable (1980: 488).

Johnson assumes that only a short time elapsed between the rise of the neo-acute (Stang’s law) and the reintroduction of falling vowels in interior syllables and that therefore the analogical rise of the reconstructed pattern *daljínā/daljínu must have been prepared by a relatively long period of confusion between (b) and (c), a period too long to be fitted into the time between Dybo’s law and Stang’s law:

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19 The assumption can hardly be correct, because it conflicts both with the general properties of the Slavonic system of accent types and with the accentuation of the suffix in the oldest material, cf. Dybo (1968: 172-174). (The theory as formulated by Kortlandt predicts the accentuation *-ina – or rather *-iňa, cf. below, section 4.5 – in derivations from (b)-stressed stems, as a consequence of Dybo’s law and the shortening of internal long falling vowels around the time Stang’s law operated; in Novi-like dialects the -i was analogically lengthened under the influence of (a)-stressed examples like *ístina, cf. Slovene ístina).
To put the rise of the end-stressed nominal paradigm in such close chronological proximity to the new intonational changes allows no room for the morphological development required for the creation of the čakavic type *daljina*. The secondary mobility represented by it could not have been created swiftly upon the rise of final stress since the only pattern of mobility that then existed was the alternation between final and initial syllable. The development of this new kind of mobility could only have been based on some considerable period of mixing between the mobile and fixed accent paradigms of bisyllables which formed the preponderant mass of nouns. The conclusion must be drawn that end-stressed 'a' declension nouns had existed for some considerable time prior to the late Common Slavonic developments associated with the new acute (1980: 488f.).

If I understand Johnson correctly he reconstructs the following chain of events:

1. Dybo's law (“the rise of the end-stressed nominal paradigm”);
2. Wholesale confusion between (b) and (c);
3. Stang's law (“the first appearance of the new acute”);
4. Rise of secondary mobility of the type **daljina**;
5. Introduction of new interior falling accents in cases like *kopamo*; further developments.

Johnson argues that the periods between (1) and (3) resp. (3) and (5) were too short for (2) and (4) to happen. But were they? Several other things happened between (1) and (2), e.g. lengthening of short falling vowels in monosyllabic mobile forms like SCr. *bog* 'god', merger of the old acute with the short rising tone (Kortlandt 1975a: 33), certain cases of analogical lengthening of the stem vowel in the gen. pl. in certain dialect areas (Kortlandt 1978f: 284f.). Ebeling, too, assumes that several developments took place in the period between Dybo's law and Stang's law (1967: 590f.). There is no reason whatever for assuming a priori that Johnson's (2) cannot be fitted into the period between (1) and (3). As regards the period between (3) and (5), Johnson's assumption that it was short is based on the following argument:

It is unlikely that there was more than a relatively small lapse of time between the first appearance of the new acute and the tolerance of new interior falling pitch. Certain kinds of new acute were directly associated with new interior circumflexes. Thus čakavic *pítamo* alongside *kopamo*; Slovene *mladi* beside *bogdi*...

This passage betrays an intrusion of traditional elements into Johnson's version of the new theory. In the traditional theory the rise of the neoacute is often assumed to constitute the motivation for the rise of new circumflexes in internal syllables. Johnson's own version of the traditional theory may serve as an illustration: “The stress shift involved in the creation of the new acute eliminated old positional distinctions. Faced with the new acute on structurally identical syllables the old acute was forced to acquire a pitch -contrast if functionally important distinctions were not to be lost. This provoked the metatony of interior rising pitch into falling” (1980: 493). The theory of Stang and his followers, on the other hand, does not presuppose any direct link between the neoacute, which was the outcome of a Proto-Slavonic development, and the

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20 The term suggests that Johnson has the old theory in mind. I assume that it refers to Stang's law. The new theory denies the necessity of supposing a complete restructuring of the prosodic system towards the end of the Proto-Slavonic period (which is what “the new intonational changes” amount to).
rise of interior circumflexes, which has nothing to do with either Stang’s law or the presence in the system of the neoacute intonation and is very much of a local affair. There is nothing against assuming a development to have taken place in the period between Stang’s law and the rise of new circumflexes in internal syllables. We have to conclude that Johnson’s objection is unfounded.

I must confess that I do not understand how Johnson expects this objection to be effective: it consists in showing that a reconstruction which is not at all in the spirit of the new theory cannot be made to fit, provided that the new theory is interpreted in a way that is maximally close to the traditional view.

4. Illič-Svityč’s law

4.1. The properties of Illič-Svityč’s law

As noted above it was Illič-Svityč who on the basis of comparisons with other IE languages pointed out that originally stem-stressed masculine o-stems have mobile stress in Slavonic (1963: 118f. = 1979: 103f). Neuter nouns (which have since become masc.) did not take part in the development and are now, of course, (b)-stressed as a consequence of Dybo’s law etc. Johnson comments: “That only old neuters of this type, having taken masculine gender, shifted the stress onto the ending [i.e. underwent Dybo’s law, W. V.], cannot be irrelevant, nor, it would seem, could such a shift be capable of phonetic explanation” (1980: 482).

If I understand this objection correctly it rests on a misunderstanding. Nobody has ever dismissed as irrelevant the fact that Illič-Svityč’s law distinguishes neatly between masculine and neuter o-stems, nor has the analogical (non-phonetic) character of the law ever been denied. The law holds that mobility spread (analogically) to stem-stressed masculine nouns, which therefore escaped Dybo’s law. Neuter nouns, on the other hand, remained stem-stressed throughout and therefore became (b)-stressed when Dybo’s law operated.

In fact Dybo’s law makes a necessary contribution to an explanation of Illič-Svityč’s law. In the final phase of Proto-Slavonic (c)-stressed and (b)-stressed masculine o-stems had radically different stress patterns. Russian koról’ (b) ‘king’ and vōlos (c) ‘hair’ have the same stress only in the oblique cases of the plural. In more archaic dialects the two types differ even more because as a consequence of Stang’s law, type (b) nouns tend to have stem stress in a number of case forms in which type (c) nouns stress the ending, cf. čák. (Omišalj) vōli (gen. pl.), vōlī (instr. pl.), vōlīh (loc. pl.) ‘ox’ (b) vs. mūžȋ (gen. pl.), mūžȋ (instr. pl.), mūžȉh (loc. pl.) ‘husband’ (c). This would seem to preclude wholesale analogical transfer of members of one type to the other. However, in the period preceding the rise of the distinction between rising and falling non-acute vowels (and therefore before Dybo’s law), barytone and mobile o-stems differed in the oblique cases of the plural only, which provides an adequate basis for an analogical transfer of mobility to stem-stressed nouns (Ebeling 1967: 585).

Johnson adds a few remarks on the accentuation of the neuter o-stems:

It is highly doubtful that such nouns could be characterized as having had a fixed stress paradigm (a prerequisite for the postulated shift), since as neuters it is likely that they had end stress at least in the no-
minative and accusative plural if not in the whole plural paradigm. Moreover neuters of type *polje*, *meso*, retain stem stress in the singular, yet it is difficult to envisage these nouns having had a different accent paradigm to that of door, namely stem-stressed singular, end-stressed plural (1980: 482).

Again Johnson fails to discuss (or even mention) the existing explanations of the matter, e.g. Ebeling’s (1967: 581). I do not understand why the difference in accentuation reflected in the opposition of *meso* (neuter) and *dvor* (masc.) is difficult to envisage, seeing that it is directly attested in Sanskrit: *māṃsām* vs. *dvāram*.

### 4.2. is Illič-Svityč’s law reflected in all čakavian dialects?

Illič-Svityč conjectures that there may exist to this day some čakavian dialects (the island of Susak and unspecified points in Istria) which continue a stage prior to the law he proposed. In these dialects a few masculine *o*-stems which are elsewhere (c)-stressed as a consequence of the law (e.g. *zub*, *grad*, *rog*) are (b)-stressed as if the law never operated (1963: 118f. = 1979: 103f.). Johnson is sceptical about this for two reasons:

1. The short-stem noun *rogъ* ‘horn’, which belongs to the class under discussion and in Susak has a (b)-stressed paradigm (gen. sg. *rogȃ*), has the reflex of a long vowel in the nom./acc. sg. (*ru̯oḥ*) which is only conceivable in a (c)-stressed noun.

2. The relevant Istrian forms, which Illič-Svityč found in Nemanić’s collection (1883: 371, 374), “form part of a far-reaching mixing of accent paradigms, greater than in other dialects”, which constitutes “a reflection of the mixed dialect origin of the people of the area whose speech Nemanić describes” (Johnson 1980: 482f., cf. Nemanić’s remarks, o.c.: 363-365).

I am inclined to agree with this. However, Johnson does not give the whole story and we are not yet in a position to reject Illič-Svityč’s idea altogether.

Johnson’s scepticism with respect to the Susak forms is amply justified. Our knowledge of the dialect is based on a description which has been shown to be unreliable in a number of respects and should be used with care: “Govor otoka Suska” by Hamm, Hraste and Guberina (1956, henceforth: “HHG”). This dialect grammar abounds in contradictory statements, so that the reader often does not know what to believe. Moreover, Hamm, Hraste and Guberina fail to make explicit the relationship (if any) between their very unorthodox transcription and the phonemic system of the dialect. On the basis of this description it is impossible to be sure whether or not the dialect has quantity and tone contrasts, and, if it has, in which positions (Ivić 1959b: 171, 173, 177 and passim, cf. also Steinhauer’s analysis of the transcription, 1975: 17ff. and Vermeer 1975: 140-142).

The nouns in question are also attested with (c)-stress, e.g. gen. sg. *grāda*, *žūba* (HHG: 90; the form *grāda* should be read with ă instead of a in the stem syllable). Consequently, forms like *zūbȃ* are at best optional. What is worse, the (b)-stressed forms, though given in the chapter on morphology, which was written by Hraste, are nowhere attested in the extensive vocabulary and the other chapters written by Hamm. Now this is not the only discrepancy between Hraste’s and Hamm’s parts of the description. I shall give three examples:
A. According to Hraste (HHG: 117, 118) the formative of the superlative degree is nȃj-, whereas according to Hamm (132-183 passim) it is naj-. (The difference between ȃ and a is contrastive. I simplify the transcription of examples taken from HHG.)

B. In the gen. sg. of ā-stems with end stress in the nom. sg. Hraste indicates free variation of āː (< *-e血脉) and ē (< *-e血脉) (HHG: 110f.), whereas Hamm's examples strongly suggest that the choice between āː and ē is lexically conditioned: the former only occurs in vodē ‘water’ (162, 168, 178), alongside some examples of vodȅ (164, 168), whereas the latter is found in all other examples, e.g. mūkȅ (159, 168, 174) ‘flour’, trȃvȅ (155, 168, 185) ‘grass, herb’, sestrȅ (169) ‘sister’.

C. For the third person singular the thematic presents Hraste gives alternating kradȅ/krȃdȅ (119) ‘steal’, whereas in Hamm’s chapters of the description we only find forms in ē, e.g. klad ē ‘put’, pred ē ‘spin’, oplet ē ‘wind (about)’, griz ē ‘gnaw’, rec ē ‘say’, rest ē ‘grow’, parnes ē ‘bring’ etc. (150-176 passim).

While working on the island for a few weeks in the summer of 1979, I found that in each case of a discrepancy between Hraste and Hamm I give the correct account:

A’. The superlative degree is formed by means of nȃj-.

B’. The gen. sg. ending of the ā-stems is lexically conditioned: one only hears on the one hand vodē, dicē ‘children’, and on the other sestrē, kozē ‘goat’, trȃvē, mūkē (I strongly doubt whether Hamm’s vodȅ exists).


One must conclude that Susak material which is only attested in Hraste’s morphology without being supported by forms in Hamm’s part of the description cannot be used for accentological purposes. This includes the forms on which Iliič-Svityč bases the assumption that the dialect escaped his law.

As regards Istria, on the other hand, the situation is somewhat better than Johnson thinks, because Nemanić’s pre-Iliič-Svityč data are to some extent confirmed by another dialect description, which enables us at the same time to pin-point their probable origin.

In Istria proper (west of the Učka mountain) three fundamentally different groups of čakavian dialects are spoken (cf. Małecki 1930; on the terminology cf. Vermeer 1982a):

1. Autochthonous “north-west čakavian” dialects, which either have retained PSl. ĕ as a separate phoneme in at least some positions, or have merger of ĕ with the reflex of e and ĕ. They represent an organic continuation of the autochthonous dialects of the Hrvatsko Primorje and the Quarnero islands (e.g. Novi, Omišalj, Cres, Kastav).

21 I have not yet come across (b)-stressed forms like sūbā, but my material is still too limited to justify the conclusion that such forms do not in fact exist. By the way, the description of the vowel system in Vermeer (1975: 140-143) has to be corrected in one respect: quantity distinctions exist not only in stressed syllables, but also (perhaps optionally) in the first pretonic syllable. (The unreliability of Hraste’s later work was first publicly mentioned by Stj. Ivšić (1951: 363); among dialectologists it is a fact of common knowledge, cf. also Ivić 1972: 264).
2. Imported “central čakavian” dialects with an i/e-kavian reflex of the ě, e.g. mera vs. mirit ‘measure’. They are related to dialects still spoken in Lika (e.g. around Otočac) and to other dialects that must have originated in the area and are now spoken elsewhere, e.g. in Žumberak or the Burgenland (Austria). Susak is closely related to this group.

3. Imported “south-east čakavian” dialects with an i-kavian reflex of ě. They can be regarded as fragments of an interesting transitional area between čakavian and (neo-)štokavian.

Nemanić’s collection probably contains material from all three groups and, in addition, from several non-Istrian dialects. (Nemanić 1883: 364f.). However, it is not unlikely that the pre-Iliić-Svityč forms he gives are based on facts from the second group (“central čakavian”) because Zgrablić in his description of his native dialect of “Sveti Ivan i Pavao” (which belongs to the second group) gives a (b)-stressed paradigm of the noun grad, which elsewhere is almost invariably (c)-stressed and which occurs on Iliić-Svityč’s list (Zgrablić 1907: III). Unfortunately Zgrablić gives no further examples. There is no reason to doubt the reliability of the description. (Belić’s reservations about the reliability of Zgrablić’s work concern only the part that is devoted to the dialect of the town of Žminj, which belongs to a different group and which was not Zgrablić’s native dialect, Belić 1914: 239n., cf. also 242n.)

The čakavian evidence for the claim that Iliić-Svityč’s law did not affect all of Slavonic is for the time being inconclusive. Iliić-Svityč’s suggestion should not however be dismissed without a thorough investigation of (in particular) the central čakavian dialect area.

It goes without saying that nothing in the theory depends on the present existence of pre-Iliić-Svityč dialects.

5. The quantity of the thematic vowel in the present tense

5.1. The predictions of the theory

Johnson devotes a complicated section of his first article to the quantity of the thematic vowel in the present tense. He poses the problem as follows: |362|

The use of Dybo’s law to explain the generation of new circumflex length from which by Stang’s Law the retraction of the ictus produced new acute on the preceding syllable, requires in the case of the present tense the necessity of assuming Common Slavonic length of the theme vowel of the first conjugation. This length, subsequently shortened in various languages in the post-Common Slavonic period, is also held to be the origin of the new circumflex on a preceding vowel (1980: 491).22

As far as this suggests that the theory assumes consistent length of the thematic vowel it is misleading: the thematic e is assumed to have been lengthened in certain definable cases only. Since the proponents of the theory have not been perfectly explicit

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22 The odd accentually mixed paradigm of Susak r̥ōh/rogā (in my material p̥ōt, nom. pl. ploti, dual plotā ‘fence’) and “Istrian” nōs/nosā (Nemanić 1883: 370-371) has a parallel in Burgenland ikavian (Stegersbach) mūos/mostā ‘bridge’ (Neweklowsky 1978: 139, 144).

23 Cf. also p. 488: “the thematic vowel of the first conjugation is held to have developed length”.

about this point and since Johnson is very much concerned with it I shall begin by showing what predictions the theory makes about the quantity of the thematic vowel during the final phase of Proto-Slavonic.

Two independently motivated developments are assumed to have caused certain instances of the thematic vowel to be lengthened in the period between the rise of the new timbre distinctions and Dybo’s law:

1. Van Wijk’s law: simplification of a consonant cluster causes lengthening of the vowel following the cluster: *plàčješь > *plàčěšь, *plàčjete > *plàčěte, *glòdješь > *glòděšь, *glòdjete > *glòděte24. The law also accounts for the curious group of neo-acute (a)-stressed ā-stem nouns mentioned above (section 2.1). The neo-acute of R. vòlja, Slovene vòlja and Serbo-Croat vòljà presupposes that in the period preceding Stang’s law the vowel of the second syllable was stressed and long falling: *vòlā. Stang, who pointed out that the accentuation of these nouns cannot be secondary, explained the long ā by assuming an ad hoc contraction involving an unattested jer, which is clearly unsatisfactory (Stang 1957: 57-59). Van Wijk’s law renders Stang’s explanation unnecessary because now one can assume that in an originally stem-stressed form *vòlja the ā was lengthened in accordance with the law (> *vòlā), after which Dybo’s law shifted the stress to the second syllable: > *vòlā.

2. Retraction of the stress from final jers, e.g. *nesešь > *neséšь, *neseťь > *neséťь. The vowel that became stressed received a long rising accent identical to the long rising accent that had existed since the rise of the tone distinctions. In forms not ending in a jer the e remained short. The assumption that the retraction resulted in length makes it possible to explain the long vowel in the gen. pl. of mobile nouns (e.g. Slovene gòr ‘mountain’), which can be regarded as the starting-point of the generalization of length in the gen. pl. in Serbo-Croat and elsewhere (Kortlandt 1978f: 282-285).

Van Wijk’s law and the loss of the stressability of final jers resulted in the rise of three different sets of thematic endings:

A. -ēšь/-ēte (retention of the original system) in stem-stressed verbs in which van Wijk’s law did not operate,

B. -ēšь/-ēte in stem-stressed verbs in which van Wijk’s law operated,

C. -ēšь/-ētè in all mobile verbs.

Dybo’s law increased the number of sets from three to five because A. and B. received end-stressed alternants:

A’. -ēšь/-ēte, e.g. *moţěšь/*moţète,

B’. -ēšь/-ēte, e.g. *glòděšь/*glòděte.

In order to account for the (b)-stressed paradigm of R. mogú/moţěs’ it has to be assumed that A’ was analogically replaced with B’; *moţěšь became *moţěšь. Since the number of verbs with pattern A’ was probably small, this is not a very surprising development. When Stang’s law eliminated B’ the system that had existed just before the

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24 On the properties of the PSl. consonant system in the period when van Wijk’s law operated see Kortlandt (19820: 184-186).
operation of Dybo’s law was restored. However, the distribution of the types had changed in one important respect: non-acute verbs which prior to Dybo’s law had B (long e) now had A (short e), because “a long circumflexed vowel was shortened when it lost the ictus in accordance with Stang’s law” (Kortlandt 1975a: 18). Thus, at the end of the Proto-Slavonic period short and long e were distributed as follows among the three accent types:

(a) Short or long, in accordance with van Wijk’s law, e.g. bòdešь/bòdetе, dènešь/dènete, šìješь/šìjete vs. plàčěšь/plàčète, gỳnèšь/gỳnète.

(b) Always short: mòžešь/mòžete, glòd’ešь/glò’dete, pìšešь/pìšete, tònešь/tònete.

(c) Short when unstressed and long rising when stressed: neséšь (nesèšì)/nesètъ/nesémъ/(nesemò)/nesètè.

Johnson’s objections to the assumption of a long thematic e touch on two problems: the evidence for length in the modern dialects and the chronology of van Wijk’s law, The former point requires a lengthy discussion.

5.2. Serbo-Croat dialects without neocircumflex

According to Johnson “the evidence for length of the theme vowel rests on the štokavician dialect. The secondary nature of this length, though, is clear” (1980: 491).

The first of these two statements is false. Even if one rejects, as Johnson does, the evidence of Old Polish and Old Czech and the indications provided by the neocircumflex in Slovene, kajkavian and north-west čakavian (a point to which I shall return in the next section), one cannot ignore the fact that long instances of the thematic e are attested not only in much of štokavian, but also in many čakavian dialects, the Prekmurski dialects of Slovene, as well as in Central Slovak.

The second statement is at best questionable. Numerous dialects have a long e in some verbs and a short one in others. Such cases should preferably be explained in a way that accounts for the distribution of the two alternants; characterizing the long vowel as “secondary” in each such case, though possible, is unilluminating and a theory that predicts at least some aspects of the distribution is to be preferred. All systems known to me become understandable on the basis of the Proto-Slavonic distribution reconstructed just now. Examples:

(a) Although štokavian dialects tend to have length in (a)-stressed presents one type of exceptions to this is extremely wide-spread: shortness in verbs with a stem ending in vowel + j, e.g. Plevlje bîjèš ‘beat’, kàjèm se ‘repent’, kùpujèm ‘buy’ (Ružičić 1927: 149). These are verbs in which van Wijk’s law did not operate (there was no cluster) and in which we expect a short e. Other presents in which the theory predicts a short e must have taken over the length characteristic of verbs in which van Wijk’s law operated, e.g. Plevlje lèžèm ‘lie down’. This is not surprising. All of these presents either end in -ne or have more frequent doublets in -ne like Plevlje lègnèm. In view of the numerical preponderance of van Wijk presents among verbs with a ne-present it is natural that first length was generalized in the ne-presents, after which it spread to those verbs not in -ne which had doublets in -ne.

(b) In most štokavian dialects most (b)-stressed verbs have length, which must have been introduced analogically under the influence of those (a)-stressed verbs in
which van Wijk’s law operated, e.g. píšěš and tôneš replacing *píšeš and *tôneš under the influence of pláčěš and giněš. This is a very natural development because after the original first person singular ending -u had been replaced with -em there was no longer any difference between (a)-stressed and (b)-stressed presents apart from the quantity of the thematic vowel. Two verbs have almost everywhere retained a short e: môžeš ‘can’ and ôćeš ‘want, will’ (Plevlje). These two verbs, besides being extremely frequent, stand apart because they have retained the old first person singular ending -u and, with it, the stress alternation that originally was characteristic of all (b)-stressed presents.

(c) In order to understand the accentuation of the (c)-stressed presents it has to be recalled that in many dialects (štokavian and čakavian) the type has yielded two distinct sub-types, depending on the quantity of the stem vowel. The split must have arisen because verbs with a long stem vowel retracted the stress in the first and second person plural: tresemô/tresetȅ was replaced with trēsȅmo/trēsȅte whereas nothing changed in pečemô/pečetȅ. The advantage of the retraction was that it enabled the stem vowel to be long in all forms of the present tense. Evidence of the existence of the two sub-types is wide-spread both in štokavian and in central and southern čakavian dialects25. The central čakavian dialect of Jurkovo Selo (Žumberak) has retained the Proto-Slavonic distribution in the long-stem sub-type (e.g. plijěš/plijě/ plijěmo/plijěte ‘weed’), whereas it has generalized length in presents with a short stem-vowel: berěš/berě/berěmo/berěte ‘gather’ (< *berěmô/*berětȅ) (Skok 1912: 345, 347)26. The late Jovan Vuković seems to have found the same distribution in Njegovađa and elsewhere in the Piva/Drobnjak area (neo-štokavian Montenegro, Vuković 1940: 319). The alternation -émô/-ěmo |366| (long unstressed vowel alternating with short vowel under the stress) is of a type very common in Serbo-Croat and has probably been productive, cf. such (very frequent) examples as Omišalj dvôři (nom. pl.) vs. dvôři (gen. pl.), dvignút vs. potěgnút, Prćanj/Ozrinici půškáma vs. ženáma (Rešeter 1900: 87, 90), normative štokavian (Daničić) höće vs. höćemo, Posavian (Crni Potok, Gradiste) prôdâli vs. prodâla (Ivić 1913b: 97). The Žumberak-Njegovađa system is a natural starting-point for the generalization of shortness in long-stem verbs which is so wide-spread in štokavian and which has never been satisfactorily explained, cf. Piperi (East Montenegro) krâđěš, krâđe, krâđémo, krâđête ‘steal’ vs. pečěš, peče, pečémô, pečětȅ ‘bake’ (Stevanović 1940: 149, 152). This does not exhaust the possibilities. Several čakavian dialects have retained the Proto-Slavonic alternation in a slightly modified form: shortness has been introduced in the second person singular, cf. Vrgada (an island near Zadar in North Dalmatia) rěstë ‘grow’, donesë ‘bring’ vs. rěstȅš, donesȅš, cf. also the short vowel in rěstȅmo, rěstète, zovémô ‘call’, donesetȅ (Jurišić

25 The original accentuation has been retained in many western dialects, e.g. Omišalj mězôm, mězěš, měže, mesemô, mesetȅ, městȗ ‘milk’.
26 The present position of the dialect (near the Slovene border) is the result of a migration. Originally it must have been one of the most easterly of the i/e-kavian dialects, judging by the fact that it is the only such dialect known at present to have been located to the east of the stârca/stârca isogloss (Ivić 1981: 71n.).

The fact that the new theory predicts a Proto-Slavonic starting-point that makes the attested distributions understandable provides strong support for it. In this respect it is to be preferred to a theory that assumes the length of the thematic vowel in Serbo-Croat in all cases to be “clearly secondary”.

5.3. Neocircumflex 1; the soft ā-stem gen. sg.

The problem of the quantity of the thematic vowel further requires a discussion of the so-called “neocircumflex” of Slovene, kajkavian, and north-west čakavian.

Slovene and kajkavian often have a long falling accent in positions in which one expects the reflex of a PSl. short rising accent. Such instances of the long falling accent are traditionally called “neocircumflex”. In many cases of neocircumflex evidence of related languages indicates the former presence of a posttonic long vowel (in both Slovene and kajkavian all posttonic long vowels have been shortened), e.g. Slovene vîdeti/vîdim ‘see’, kajkavian (Bednja) vȉdeti/vȅdim < *vîděti/*vìdi- (Jedvaj 1956: 314).

One can roughly distinguish between two ways of approaching this fact. Some hold that there is a causal link between the appearance of neocircumflex and the original presence of a posttonic long vowel; they assume, for instance, that a short stressed vowel received compensatory lengthening when posttonic lengths were shortened. According to others the connection between neocircumflex and posttonic length is fortuitous and/or secondary and the main source of the neocircumflex must be sought in morphological processes usually called “metatonies”. Stang (1957: 28-34) and his followers take the former view.

Those who agree with Stang have to explain a number of cases in which there seems to be a discrepancy within Slovene/kajkavian or between Slovene/kajkavian and related dialects. The search for explanations of such discrepancies has often turned out to yield interesting information about the quantity of vowels in endings. I shall illustrate the principle on one example.

The “soft” ā-stem gen. sg. ending -ęż is always long in Serbo-Croat (kůćē ‘house’, cf. also čak. (Novi) krâvē ‘cow’) and under the stress in Slovene: gorē ‘mountain’. Yet neither Slovene nor kajkavian has neocircumflex in the gen. sg. of (a)-stressed nouns, e.g. lîpe ‘lime-tree’, Bednja žōba ‘frog’ (a is the regular reflex of e in this position: the example is given by Jedvaj 1956: 300). Opponents of the view that neocircumflex reflects posttonic length tend to regard such forms as decisive counterexamples, cf. Johnson’s comment: “The prime weakness of this view is that it necessitates the assumption of retained or new vowel length in situations where it would otherwise not be expected for the period in question, or conversely the assumption of brevity where there are indications of length” (1981: 481). This is, however, somewhat rash, as can be seen if one takes a closer look at the facts pertaining to the ending *-ęż. It should be
noted first that the ending is short not only in West Slavonic, but also here and there in čakavian and Slovene, cf. Omišalj kćće ‘house’, zemjȅ ‘land’, Rožanski horè ‘mountain’ (Scheinigg 1882: 428 as quoted by Grafenauer 1905: 203). In the case of this ending at least there are indications of both length and brevity. Moreover, at least two western Serbo-Croat dialects have a long ending in some words and a short one in others. As we saw a moment ago (section 4.2) this is true of Susak: vodě vs. sestrȅ. It is perhaps not accidental that the only words in which I have so far found -ě have a mobile accent, whereas -ē seems to be limited to (b)-stressed nouns. The only exception is zemlȅ ‘land’, which is mobile (acc. sg. zěmlu); however, we have seen that it was (b)-stressed in the past (section 3.5). In Bednja length is normal, e.g. rukâ ‘hand’, ženâ ‘wife’; short -ã occurs in a number of long-stem (b)-stressed nouns, e.g. storešěînȁ ‘leader (of the wedding-guests)’ (Jedvaj 1956: 300). The distribution of the two alternants in Bednja and Susak betrays a connection between the short ending and the (b)-stressed paradigm. This can be tied up with the fact that the ending *-q is always short in the nom./acc. pl.: it turns out that the nasal is short in those cases in which it was unstressed in the period preceding Dybo’s law. One can explain this by assuming that in unstressed syllables the nasal vowel became distinctively short at some moment before Dybo’s law operated, cf. also the fact that *-q is always short in the acc. sg. of the ā-stems and the first person singular of the present tense (Kortlandt 1975a: 32, 1976: 6).

Before going on to other matters it is perhaps instructive to take a closer look at this explanation because its structure is characteristic of the explanations the new theory has come to consist of:

A. It accounts for a large array of disparate facts: (1) the opposition of shortness in West Slavonic, Omišalj and Rožanski vs. length in most of Serbo-Croat and Slovene, (2) the fact that the ending of the nom./acc. pl. is always short, (3) the distribution of length and shortness in those dialects (Slovene, Bednja, Susak) where two alternants are attested.

B. It assumes a few phonetical processes of not too sensational a nature: shortening of a nasal vowel in unstressed syllables; compensatory lengthening of stressed short vowels when posttonic lengths are shortened.

C. It assumes a few trivial morphological processes, e.g. analogical loss of one of two alternants in West Slavonic, Omišalj and Rožanski on the one hand and Serbo-Croat on the other; slight changes in the distribution of two alternants in Slovene and Bednja. One only has to look at the complicated morphological mechanisms typically proposed by adherents of the traditional view (e.g. Kuryłowicz 1960) to see how profound the differences are in this respect.

D. In order to account for the quantity of the nasal vowel it presumes the place of the stress that obtained in the period before Dybo’s law operated.

E. Although incorporating the assumption that the Slovene/kajkavian neocircumflex is due to compensatory lengthening, the theory does not crucially depend on this: even if Slovene and kajkavian had never existed the facts of the other dialects would still have to be accounted for.

In Johnson’s opinion the assumption of a causal connection between posttonic length and neocircumflex “embodies a dangerous methodological principle. Because the Slovene neo-circumflex occurs frequently in front of a syllable containing a late Common Slavonic length, it is concluded not only that it is consequent upon that length, but that length can be concluded to have existed also in those post-neo-circumflex syllables which no other evidence indicates to have been long at the period in question” (1981: 48 ff.).

To begin with, it is doubtful whether there is much point in shifting the focus of one’s criticism from the theory one is concerned with to the heuristic principles that helped to shape the theory. After all, it is the theory that is at stake. Moreover, the principle Johnson objects to is utterly commonplace. It is perfectly normal to adopt a critical attitude not only towards one’s hypotheses but also towards the counterexamples to one’s hypotheses. Discarding promising hypotheses because of the mere presence of what at first sight looks like counterevidence is wasteful because on closer inspection counterexamples have often turned out to be only apparent\textsuperscript{27}. This also holds for the case under discussion. The hypothesis that the neocircumflex is due to compensatory lengthening is embedded in a theory which predicts posttonic length in certain cases and brevity in others. All counterexamples to the hypothesis of a phonetical origin of the neocircumflex have turned out to be only apparent and therefore to constitute corroborating instances of both the hypothesis and the theory in which it is embedded. We have seen an example of this in the case of the soft ā-stem gen. sg.

Johnson concentrates his treatment of the material on the ā-stem nom. sg., in particular in the l-participle. He starts his discussion with the following passage:

\textsuperscript{27} Counterevidence deserves to get as much critical attention as theories get because it, too, may turn out to be incorrect. Some linguists are very radical in dismissing the value of counter-evidence. N. Chomsky advocates (as part of what he calls “the Galilean style”) “readiness to tolerate unexplained phenomena or even as yet unexplained counterevidence to theoretical constructions that have achieved a certain degree of explanatory depth in some limited domain”, and further writes: “[…] substantial coverage of data is not a particularly significant result; it can be attained in many ways, and the result is not very informative as to the correctness of the principles employed” (1980: 9-11). I suspect that the “Galilean style” may be more fruitful in some areas than in others. If historical linguists would have allowed themselves not to be bothered by counterevidence, the hypothesis that all languages have descended from Hebrew would probably still be generally accepted. And one wonders how laryngeal theory would ever have come off the ground if counterexamples had not been regarded as requiring an explanation. On the other hand there is more than a hint of the “Galilean style” in historical linguists’ almost universal practice of adhering to some form of the principle of “Ausnahmslosigkeit”. Cf. also Kortlandt (1983b) for a case study of misguided adherence to the “Galilean style” in an area where its application produces obscurantist results. (Chomsky’s appeal to the “Galilean style” all too clearly serves the purpose of immunizing his approach to criticism by non-believers. And whatever the actual value of Chomsky’s interpretation of Galileo, I cannot help feeling that his annexation of Galileo’s name is in rather poor taste, considering the fact that in several countries Chomsky’s disciples have cast themselves in the role of the cardinals that tried Galileo, actively obstructing the progress of linguistics by trying to enforce a monolithic ideology based on authority and revelation.)
Kortlandt considers the final vowel of the feminine form of the ‘l’ participle in those classes of verb that show metatony to have been long. None of the Slavonic languages however give an indication of length here. Serbo-Croat together with its dialects, which best preserves those final lengths that survived the general shortening of final long vowels, which shows even an uncontracted length in dialect forms such as vremenâ, gives no such indication. Slovincian, which shows such marked similarity with Slovene in the ‘l’ participle forms, indicates old length neither in the final vowel nor in the preceding vowel which is supposed to have undergone compensatory lengthening as part of the process of metatony. The length assumed by Kortlandt is therefore a totally unsupported hypothesis. It is based on the assumption, itself highly dubious, that lengths caused by the loss of a laryngeal in post-post-tonic position did not undergo Common Slavonic shortening (1981: 483f.).

As we have seen earlier (section 2.2), Kortlandt assumes that the reflex of the PIE laryngeals (or the old acute, which amounts to the same thing) was eliminated in three stages, depending on its position in the word. In pretonic and post-posttonic syllables, where loss was early, acute vowels became distinctively long, whereas in the remaining positions, where it was considerably later, brevity resulted. Though Johnson characterizes this part of the theory as “highly dubious”, he fails to consider the evidence it explains. It is plain that he himself adheres to the assumption of a “general shortening of final long vowels”. The trouble with this view is that it does not explain the facts: how did čakavian and Posavian (and, one might add, Slovak) get a long ā in the nom./acc. pl. of neuter nouns if all final vowels were shortened? Johnson’s statement that the -ā of vremend “survived” the shortening boils down to the admission that shortening, though nominally general, was not really so. It is the task of Slavonic accentology to determine in which cases shortening took place and in which it did not. Kortlandt’s theory of a step-wise loss of the old acute is a contribution to the solution of the problem.

Those who attribute the Slovene/kajkavian neocircumflex to compensatory lengthening not unnaturally regard it as a source for the reconstruction of posttonic quantity, to be used on a par with the other sources the accentologist has at his or her disposal. Now of those Slavonic dialects that have retained quantitative distinctions in posttonic syllables, no two have exactly the same distribution of length and brevity. Even two čakavian dialects as closely related as Novi and Omišalj differ in a number of respects, cf. the short vowels in Novi rȁtuju (3d pl.), Om. klûće (gen. sg.) contrasting with length in Om. žâlûju, Novi krâvē. In both cases it is the short vowel that is archaic. It is only reasonable to expect that pre-neocircumflex Slovene/kajkavian was also different in at least some ways. Moreover, it would not even be surprising if it would turn out that in a few cases the neocircumflex presupposes a quantity that is unattested elsewhere, because neocircumflex dialects continue posttonic length in a way that renders it subject to analogical pressures very different from those obtaining in dialects that have retained posttonic quantity as such. It is therefore fundamentally wrong to require (as Johnson seems to do, at least implicitly) that any

28 From this passage the uninitiated reader might get the impression that the new theory assumes Slovincian to have carried through compensatory lengthening just like Slovene. The impression would of course be wrong, cf. Stang’s treatment of the material (loc. cit.) and Kortlandt’s chronologies (1975a: 34-37, 1978b: 76-79).
length reconstructed on the basis of the evidence of the neocircumflex be paralleled by the presence of real length elsewhere. That such a requirement is misguided becomes clear as soon as one transposes it to other areas of Slavonic accentology. I shall give two examples.

The Proto-Slavonic place of the stress is reflected directly (as stress) in most of East Slavonic and in a few marginal dialects of Serbo-Croat; it is reflected indirectly (as tone and/or vowel timbre) in Slovene and most of Serbo-Croat. Yet no accentologist requires that the stress reconstructed on the basis of the indirect indications provided by Slovene and Serbo-Croat be in every single case supported by the more direct evidence of dialects in which no stress shifts have taken place. Cases of conflict between the two types of evidence have to be discussed on their own merits, without prior advantage being given to dialects that have retained the Proto-Slavonic place of the stress.

The second example concerns the distinction between Stang’s types (b) and (c) in the ī-verbs. While reflected directly in Russian (which has retained stress alternations) and somewhat less directly in Serbo-Croat (which has partly replaced stress with tone), the distinction is continued in a very indirect way in Czech, which has eliminated all alternations and betrays the difference only in the quantity of the stem vowel: kouřit (b) vs. platit (c). Nevertheless Czech has retained the old distribution more faithfully than either modern Russian or Serbo-Croat. Consistency with respect to Johnson’s implicit requirement would force the investigator to give priority to the Russian facts in cases of conflict between Russian and Czech and in so doing it would force him or her to take the wrong decision.

Johnson returns to the problem of the acute later on in his article on the neocircumflex:

If post-accent length was preserved in bráth’, why not in lípáh’, lípám’? To be rejected is any suggestion that the different Proto-Slavonic origins of ě/i and a could have effected a different quantitative treatment. The implication of a retained ah [i.e. a sequence of vowel + laryngeal, W.V.] in Kortlandt’s theory is tantamount to the resurrection of the defunct notion of the persistence of intonational distinctions in unstressed syllables. The assumption of length runs counter to the general shortening of desinential syllables except where there was a contraction of two syllables (1981: 496).

There are several things about this passage that make it ineffective as criticism. First, the point is not whether or not a given notion is “defunct” but whether or not it explains the facts. The assumption of a “general shortening of desinential syllables” fails to explain the facts unless one supposes that some lengths could miraculously “survive” it, in other words, that it was not general. Second, Johnson’s suggestion that Kortlandt’s reconstruction of the development of the old acute has something to do with “intonational distinctions in unstressed syllables” is misleading because Kortlandt goes out of his way to argue that the reflex of the old acute was a matter not of intonation but of (glottalic) timbre (1975a: 24), cf. also the implications of Winter’s law (section 2.2) and the following quotation: “There is no reason to assume the existence of a tonal opposition in unstressed syllables for the later stages of Proto-Slavic” (Kortlandt 1978a: 271). There is nothing objectionable about glottalized vowels in...
unstressed syllables: they are common-place in Baltic, particularly as reflexes of the old acute.

And now for the facts of the theory. As a consequence of the step-wise loss of the old acute (the reflex of the PIE laryngeals) endings which originally contained a laryngeal developed alternants depending on the accentuation of the forms in which they occurred. In order to illustrate this important aspect of Kortlandt’s version of the new theory and at the same time in order to counter Johnson’s objections I shall deal with three endings:

1. The ā-stem instr. pl. *-aHmiHs.
2. The neuter nom./acc.pl. *-aH.
3. The ā-stem nom. sg. *-aH.

The theory predicts two important reflexes of the ā-stem instr.pl. ending *-aHmiHs:
A. -amī (with a long ĭ) in most (a)-stressed and all (b)-stressed nouns (*bābami, *ženāmī) and B. -ami (with a short ĭ) in cases of (c)-stress: *nogāmī. (In addition the theory predicts -āmī in certain disyllabic (a)-stressed nouns to which I shall return below.)

This explains the fact that both -amī and -ami are attested: some dialects must have generalized the one and others the other alter­nant. If one accepts the hypothesis that the neocircumflex is due to compensatory lengthening, one does not need a separate explanation to account for the contrast between, on the one hand, kajkavian (Zlatarski Martinci) -âmī (Sviben 1974: 138, 145) or (Bednja) -ūmī (Jedvaj 1956: 300), dialectal Slovene (Prleški) -amī (with a short ĭ, Logar 1975: 79) and on the other hand Standard Slovene -âmī; the contrast in all respects parallels that between čakavian (Omišalj, Novi) -ami and Posavian (Siče) -amī (Ivšić 1913b: 18, 28) or between the Standard Slovak ending -ami and the ending -amī which has been found in numerous dialects (e.g. Gemen). It should be noted that as in the case of the soft ā-stem gen. sg. the phonetical interpretation of the neocircumflex does not give rise to problems that are not already inherent in the facts of dialects without neocircumflex.

As for the neuter nom./acc.pl. ending *-aH, the theory predicts a long reflex in cases like *sēmenā, *telētā and a short one in *selā, *drvā, *polā, *imenā, *prasētā etc. This explains why we find a consistently long ending in some dialects (Slovak, Babina Greda Posavian) and a short one in others (e.g. neoštokavian, Omišalj čakavian). It also explains the existence of dialects with a long ending in some words and a short one elsewhere, e.g. most Posavian dialects, which tend to have a long ending in all cases with the single exception of drvā, or Novi čakavian, where the short ending is normal, but which has the long ending in stems in -en- and -es- and in the isolated expression na mestā ‘to the fields’: imenā ‘name’, ramanē ‘shoulder’ (alongside ūmena, rāmena), telesā ‘body’ vs. drvā ‘wood’, pēra ‘feather’ etc. (Belić 1909: 221f.). It furthermore explains the retracted stress of Russian sēla and similar Serbo-Croat forms if one is willing to suppose that the long ending was extended to stem-stressed forms.

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29 Besides, there is at least one Slavonic dialect with genuine tonal distinctions in unstressed syllables: part of the “Poljanski” dialect area of Slovene (Stanonik 1977: 299).
with a monosyllabic stem in the period preceding the operation of Dybo’s law (Kortlandt 1975a: 32). If one accepts the hypothesis that neocircumflex is due to compensatory lengthening one does not need a separate explanation to account for alternations like Slovene lě́to/lě́ta or Bednja mě́ste (nom./acc.sg./mě́esto (nom./acc.pl.) because they presuppose the desinential quantities directly attested in Posavian (Varoš) žȉto/žȉtā (Ivšić 1913a: 250). In this case, too, the assumption that the neocircumflex is due to compensatory lengthening gives a perfectly natural explanation of the Slovene/kajkavian facts without being in any way based on them.

The attested distributions are accounted for if one assumes the following chain of events:

a. Loss of the acute in posttonic syllables (= stage 7 of the chronology given in section 2.2).

b. Extension of the long ending of nouns like *sĕ̀mẽnā to monosyllabic stems: *sĕ̀la, *lĕ̀ta are replaced with *sĕ̀lā, *lĕ̀tā. Mobile nouns, which have the laryngealized alternate of the ending, remain unaffected (Kortlandt 1975a: 32, 1976: 4f.; note that in the period involved ě differed from ě not only with respect to vocalic timbre, but also in being laryngealized and neutral with respect to tone and quantity).

c. Dybo’s law (= stage 9): *sĕ̀lā > *selā, whereas *lĕ̀tā retains the stress because of the acute in the stem.

d. Loss of the old acute in stressed syllables (= stage 10).

e. In part of proto-čakavian the long ending -ã is extended to mobile nouns: *jājā is replaced with *jājā. This assumption is necessary to account for the stem stress and the rising tone of examples like Novi jája ‘egg’, jelīta ‘innards’, cf. also põla ‘field’ (Belić 1909: 220). Such examples can hardly be due to later analogical influence of the (b)-stressed nouns because in Omišalj, which, like Novi, has stem-stress in the nom./acc.pl. of mobile nouns (jāja; the dialect lacks a tonal contrast), the stress pattern of the mobile paradigm has been retained, cf. the end-stress of loc. pl. jājȋh which contrasts with the stem-stress regular in (b)-stressed nouns, e.g. sȅlīh ‘village’.

f. Stang’s law (= stage 11); *selā, *jājā > *sèlā, *jāja. In nouns where the stress had been retracted the ending was short again; elsewhere it remained long: *lĕ̀tā.

g. Levelling of quantity in disyllabic forms in Serbo-Croat: north-west čakavian and neo-štokavian generalized the short ending, whereas in Posavian and Vrgada čakavian the long ending won out.

The rise of forms like Novi vrimonā, simenā is a consequence of the loss of the accent types in the -en-stems, which is wide-spread in Serbo-Croat. The rising tone is due to the example of other stressed endings containing a long vowel, cf. loc. pl. imenh. In Novi the ending -ã remained characteristic of trisyllabic forms. In dialects which generalized the long ending at stage g stressed -ã has tended to spread (Ivšić 1913a: 249-251, Jurišić 1966: 76, cf. also Steinhauer 1973: 345).

As regards the ā-stem nom. sg. *-aH, the theory predicts a long ending in two types of cases:

(1) Forms with a disyllabic stem originally stressed on the first syllable, e.g. zāбавā, nosilā, poznlā, potršlā.

(2) Monosyllabic acute stems in which van Wijk’s law operated, e.g. krād’ā.
Elsewhere the ending was always short, e.g. bàba, znàla, vòla, ženà, nogà, dàlà.

Since within the nouns the long ending had a very limited distribution it is not surprising that it is no longer anywhere directly reflected. However, it is worthy of note that the accentuation of the ā-stems in Bulgarian seems to presuppose that length was extended to all nouns in the period preceding the Bulgarian stress retraction (Kortlandt 1982b: 95).

The theory predicts length precisely in those groups of nouns in which Slovene has neocircumflex: zabàva, krȃja. It is not strange that the predicted distribution is reflected only in dialects that continue length as neocircumflex: until the rise of the neocircumflex nouns like *zàbàva and *kràd’ā were irregular because of their long endings; analogical levelling of quantity was sooner or later to be expected. When posttonic long vowels were shortened (yielding *zàbàva, *kràd’a) such nouns became completely regular and henceforth were no longer subject to analogical pressure having to do with the endings: the rise of the neocircumflex had converted a flexional irregularity into a derivational pattern and in that way Slovene could retain information about posttonic quantity that was lost in dialects in which posttonic quantity remained a living thing.

In the l-participle the long alternant must have been more frequent than in the noun. Evidence of it is not hard to find. In the majority of central and southern čakavian dialects the fem. sg. of mobile l-participles, rather than being end-stressed, has a long rising tone on the stem, e.g. Brusje (Hvar, Central Dalmatia) prȏ(l), próla, prôlo ‘wash’, dêro(l), déróla, dêrolo ‘skin’ (Hraste 1926-27: 204, 206), Vrgada (North Dalmatia) bî, bîla, bîlo, bîli ‘be’, dôbi, dobîla, dóbilo ‘get’ (Jurišić 1966: 92, 94), Lešče (Lika) spâla ‘sleep’ (Ivić 1964: 131) etc. The same pattern has been found in kajkavian dialects, e.g. Bednjà pêil, pîlo, pêile ‘drink’, plotêil/plȃotil, platîlo (printer’s error instead of *plotîlo), plȃotile/plotêile (Jedvaj 1956: 313, 315), Domaslovec pîli vs. pîla (Šojat 1973: 52, 54)31. This phenomenon has never been explained. The new theory enables one to explain it by assuming that at some moment prior to the operation of Stang’s law the long ending was extended to (c)-stressed forms (*pîlà was replaced with *pîłâ), after which the stress was regularly retracted, yielding pîla, cf. the case of sèla, jája mentioned earlier. Influence of the accentuation of the compounds on that of the simple verb is common in the dialects of the area, cf. the unexpected short stem-vowel in short-stem (b)-stressed presents in kajkavian (Vermeer 1979: 360) or the stem stress coupled with shortening of the stem-vowel in long-stem l-participles in some central čakavian dialects, e.g. Lešče vûkla, ‘drag’ (Ivić 1964: 133), Senj trêsla, trêslol, trêsti ‘shake’ (Moguš 1966: 87).

30 In the Lešče dialect the accentuation of the fem. sg. has spread to the other forms, e.g. bîlo, dâli, as in most of neoštokavian (ibid.). The rising tone of forms like spâla cannot be due to the stress retraction that eliminated short end stress because, as in Mune (Ivić 1982: 134f.) and most i/e-kavian Burgenland dialects, the retraction caused the newly stressed vowel to become distinctively falling, e.g. glȃva ‘head’, rȃdit ‘work’ (Ivić 1964: 127).

31 Note that in much of kajkavian and (probably) all of Slovene there is no difference between *pîlà and *pîla, so that the evidence is ambiguous.
Extension of either the long ending or the alternation resulting from the rise of the neocircumflex explains the accentuation of Slovene zmâla, and similar forms. Johnson objects to the analogy: “[The theory] fails to account for zmâla without attributing the circumflex to the analogy of bisyllabic stems, yet I find the supposition that the simple verb was characterized by an acute stem but the prefixed forms by a fixed prefixal circumflex that was subject to Dybo’s law impossible to accept” (1981: 484). As we have seen (section 3.1), this rests on a misunderstanding.

The assumption that the â-stem nom. sg. ending was long in certain cases explains several phenomena outside the area where we find neocircumflex, viz. in Bulgarian and čakavian. It is therefore factually incorrect to characterize it, as Johnson does, as “a totally unsupported hypothesis”.

The theory correctly explains the absence of neocircumflex in the fem. sg. of the l-participle of verbs in *-ěti (Slovene gorêla ‘burn’), which had a fixed stress on the ě prior to Dybo’s law, so that the ending was short. Johnson objects: “It is clear that these verbs were characterized originally by end stress in the present and that they therefore, according to Dybo’s analysis which Kortlandt accepts, should belong to the mobile type (...)” (1981: 484). Again a serious misunderstanding about the content of the theory seems to lie at the root of Johnson’s criticism. It is quite possible for the different paradigms making up the conjugation of a given verb to belong to different accent types because it is not only the stem, but also the accentual characteristics of the suffix that play a role in determining the accentuation of a given form. To give an example, there is a well-known group of thematic verbs which combine a (c)-stressed present with an (a)-stressed l-participle, e.g. Russian gryzû/gryzëš’ vs. grýzla, grýzli ‘gnaw’, čak. (Omišalj) prêdȅ vs. prêla ‘spin’. The accentuation of the l-participle of these verbs can be attributed to Hirt’s law (Kortlandt 1975a: 6, Dybo 1979: 138-140). We find the same pattern in the -ěti verbs.

After the loss of the old acute in post-tonic syllables there existed a contrast of *nòsilā (long ending) vs. *bolêla (short ending). When Dybo’s law had operated the quantity of the ending could no longer be predicted on the basis of the place of the stress: *nòsilā/*bolêla. Johnson comments: “It would also seem surprising that the morpheme -la could have preserved for any length of time two phonetically unmotivated and functionally irrelevant variations (-la/-la(H)) without levelling. Yet the theory necessitates some lapse of time at the stage *nosilā ~ bolêla, since this neocircumflex was not subjected to the retrogressive shift which Kortlandt terms ‘Stang’s law’” (1981: 484). Surprise does not constitute very solid evidence. In order to make his point Johnson would have to show that the period between Dybo’s law (which robbed the contrast of -la vs. -lā of its predictable character) and the rise of the neocircumflex (which transposed it into a more durable medium) was too long in an absolute sense for the difference between -lāl and -lâ to be maintained”32. There are at least three reasons why such a proof is not likely to be forthcoming:

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32 Kortlandt puts Stang’s law in the ninth century and assumes “that the period between Dybo’s law and Stang’s law was relatively short” (1975a: 34); as regards the rise of the neocircumflex, it must have taken place after the Slovene progressive shift, which “can be dated to the tenth century” (Kortlandt 1976: 2)
1. In the period involved, the quantitative contrast between -lā and -ēla was far from being the only difference between the verbs in -iti and those in -ěti. The close similarity between the two types that is characteristic of the modern Slavonic languages had not yet arisen. The chances of mutual influence were correspondingly small.

2. Numerous endings must have had similar quantitatively different alternants, so that the opposition -la/-lā was of a very common type.

3. Most Slavonic dialects teem with “phonetically unmotivated and functionally irrelevant variations” which can persist for centuries apparently without bothering anybody.33

5.5. Neocircumflex III; the i-stem loc. sg.

Johnson deals with one further type of cases: the neocircumflex in the loc. sg. of the i-stems, e.g. Bednja pegībeli (< *pogībeli) ‘mortal danger’ (Jedvaj 1956: 302):

The neo-circumflex cannot be accounted for here either by the supposition of length in the ending. There is no evidence for it nor is it easy to devise any justification for assuming it. The accented forms in Slovenc unambiguously point to brevity. The length in Slovincian is merely an attribute of the sharp accent, itself here a consequence of the morphologically retained stress on a final vowel (1981: 488).

Once again Johnson fails to discuss how the problem has been treated in the context of the theory he is criticizing. Moreover, his assertion that there is no evidence for a long ending (apart from Slovincian, which he does not consider evidence) ignores the fact that length is common in the southern dialects of kajkavian and not unknown elsewhere in western Serbo-Croat:


3. Prodindol (Prigorje): po nićȋ ‘at night’ (Rožić 1907: 58, 66, 72; Rožić was a native speaker of the dialect).


and before the retraction in Slovenc zvēzda, which Ramovš assigns to the twelfth century (1950: 20, cf. also Kortlandt o.c.: 6).

33 As far as the role of quantity in endings is concerned the i/e-kavian dialects of the Burgenland (with the exception of Chorvátsky Grob, Weingraben and Zuberbach/Miedlingsdorf) are similar to Proto-Slavonic in the period around Dybo’s law and Stang’s law. After all Proto-Slavonic posttonic lengths had been shortened in these dialects reintroduction of posttonic quantity took place as a consequence of stress retraction. As a result numerous endings have alternants depending on the original accent type of the stem they are attached to, cf. Baumgarten rȇbu(-m)/žȅnū(-m) (instr. sg.), rȇba/Žȅnȗ (loc. pl.), mȋšȋ/sȗnȋ (loc. pl.), njơstȋ/zbȗdȗm (Koschat 1978: 86f., 90, 120, 123) or Devínska Nová Ves slȗmu/žȅnȗ (instr. sg.), čȗju/bȇrà (3d pl.), vidȗm/drȗm (1st sg.), etc. (Vážný 1927: 191, 201, 203). The stability of the system is proved by the fact that it has persisted for several centuries in more than forty villages.

6. Šaptinovci (Slavonian štokavian): kostić ‘bone’, bolestić ‘illness’ (Ivšić 1907: 136f.).

The fact that in Slovene the ending is short when stressed is not decisive, cf. examples like Prčanj/Ozrinići ženāma (stressed brevity) vs. pūškāma (unstressed length) etc., cf. above, section 5.2. As regards Slovincian, Stang’s assumption (adopted in some form by Johnson, if I understand him correctly) that stressed -i and -u were lengthened “as a reaction against shortening (...) in positions where these vowels played a grammatical role” (Stang 1957: 40) is not satisfactory, if only because there is no evidence of a tendency towards shortening that would have endangered the identity of those endings that contained -i and -u.

5.6. The thematic vowel in Slovene and kajkavian

Let us now see how the quantity of the thematic e in the present tense is reflected in Slovene and kajkavian.

In (a)-stressed presents neocircumflex is next to universal. As in many štokavian dialects length must have been analogically extended to those verbs that had not been subject to van Wijk’s law. There are, however, several telling exceptions:

A. In Bednja kajkavian and Zgornji Senik Prekmurski the present tense of verbs in *-ovati lacks neocircumflex, e.g. Bednja kypŷjam (Jedvaj 1956: 285, cf. also 319), Zgornji Senik kipùjem ‘buy’ (Logar 1974: 56). These verbs, which were not subject to van Wijk’s law, must have escaped the analogical extension of length to non-van Wijk verbs. We have seen that the same verbs escaped the same analogical development in much of neo-štokavian: the Slovene/kajkavian contrast between (standard Slovene, Prodindol kajkavian) -ȗjem and (Bednja, Zg. Senik) *-ȕjem constitutes an exact parallel of the štokavian contrast between Plevlje kùpujem and Bjelopavlići darȕi̯ēm or between Vuk’s and Daničić’s accentuation of such forms.

B. In much (perhaps all) of kajkavian and in some Prieški dialects of Slovene neocircumflex is absent from the present *-děne ‘put’, which was not subject to van Wijk’s law, cf. Bednja dënem (Jedvaj 1956: 313), Ozalj dodënē ‘touch’ (Težak 1981: 350, cf. also 287), Prodindol zdēnem etc. (Rožić 1894: 68), Trebarjevo zadēne, nadēne, nadēneju (Janjčerova 1898: 217, 221-223); Gajševci pri Križevcih ‘denemo, ’denjo, Videm ob Ščavnici ‘denejo (Logar 1975: 78f., 81; cf. the expected neocircumflex length in ’re:žemo, ’re:žejo ‘cut’, ib.).

C. Ozalj also lacks neocircumflex in būdem, būdeš, būdu ‘be’ (Težak 1981: 214, 336f., 344).

As regards the other accent types, (b)-stressed presents consistently lack neocircumflex, whereas (c)-stressed verbs have generalized brevity in the majority of Slovene and kajkavian dialects, e.g. Bednja prâdâš, prâdâ ‘spin’ (Jedvaj 1956: 310, 312), cf. also the retraction in Slovene plēteš, plēte, which presupposes a short e. Prekmurski, the eastern-most dialect group of Slovene, has generalized length, e.g. Cankova vličén, vličé ‘drag’, živēmo ‘live’ (Pavel 1909: 26, 38, 53, 69).
5.7. The thematic vowel in north-west čakavian

A different distribution of neocircumflex is found in the north-western dialects of čakavian. Here neocircumflex occurs only in the present tense of (a)-stressed verbs with an e-present (gȋne) and in the long form of a number of (a)-stressed adjectives (stȃrī). In some of these dialects (e.g. Kastav, Novi, Omišalj) no general shortening of posttonic long vowels has taken place. To Johnson this is sufficient to reject the idea that there could be a connection between neocircumflex and posttonic length: “The regular phonological length in the third person plural confirms that there is no question here of any subsequent loss of length, gȋnū̆, as does the retained length of dȅlāš, mȋšliš” (1980: 491f.).

Johnson fails to discuss Kortlandt’s idea that the north-west čakavian neocircumflex may have been the regular outcome of shortening of posttonic long vowels in a limited environment (“the first syllable of disyllabic words”, 1976: 9), followed by analogical reintroduction of length in most cases, a trivial development (especially when compared with most metatonical analogies), models for which were available in plenty. This would explain why there is no neocircumflex in Novi bȕde ‘be’ and Boljun (Istria) nadene, nadeno ‘stuff’ (Lovljanov 1949: 126): these are verbs in which van Wijk’s law did not operate and which escaped the tendency towards extension of length to non-van Wijk presents, cf. the case of Ozalj bȕdem and kajkavian/Prleški dȅnem dealt with in the preceding section.

In (c)-stressed presents brevity was generalized, as happened in Slovene (with the exception of Prekmurski), kajkavian, and the štokavian west, e.g. the western-most Posavian dialects (Ivšić 1913b: 74-77) and the dialects of East Bosnia (Brozović 1966: 150), Mostar (Vuković 1940: 320, Matijašić 1963-66: 339), the surroundings of Mostar (Peco 1957: 179), and the Central Dalmatian Hinterland (Šimundić 1971: 149).

5.8. The thematic vowel in Slovak

Reflexes of length have been retained not only in South Slavonic, but also elsewhere. Johnson evaluates the evidence as follows: “Western Slavonic also gives no support to the supposition of Common Slavonic length of e, e.g. Cz. neseš, fežeš vs. nesou, trpiš, čistš, despite some traces of length in old Czech and Polish” (1980: 492). Johnson conveniently leaves out the facts of Slovak: as has been known for quite some time, Standard Slovak has length in verbs that originally were (c)-stressed, e.g. pasieš, tečieš, vedieš, pletieš, whereas all (a)-stressed and (b)-stressed presents have a short e:

34 Although Lovljanov’s text is not accented it can serve as a basis for drawing conclusions about quantity because in the dialect long ē (< *e/*ě/*ě*) and ď (< *o/*ǫ*) have been diphthongized and are written ie and uo. The absence of neocircumflex in nadene (2x)/nadeno (p. 126, the number of occurrences excludes a printer’s error) contrasts with its presence in razriežo, riežo, odrviežo (ibid.), obrieže, obriežo (p. 127), raziřeče (p. 130), cf. also the inf. uresat (p. 127). The tendency of the neocircumflex to spread is illustrated by the fact that in Omišalj it is found even in unstressed syllables, e.g. věříče ‘believe’, prědi- kat/prědičiče ‘preach’.

35 On the shape of the isogloss (which is at first sight somewhat unusual) see Vermeer (1983: 453 and note 30).
budeš, ideš, meleš, češeš: “Abgesehen von Analogien, stimmt die sslk. Dehnung des -e-
im grossen Ganzen mit der russischen Endungsbetonung” (Boutelje 1928: 97, cf. also
Stang 1952). Again we are faced with a remarkable distribution for which an explana-
tion will have to be found. Given the Proto-Slavonic facts predicted by the new
theory, the Central Slovak distribution can be understood as the outcome of two sim-
ple developments; (a)-stressed van Wijk verbs lost length analogically under the in-
fluence of the (a)-stressed non-van Wijk verbs on the one hand and the (b)-stressed
presents on the other, whereas in the (c)-stressed verbs the length characteristic of the
monosyllabic endings was generalized.

The geography of the generalization of length in Czecho-Slovak and Slovene is
striking: length is found on the one hand in Central Slovak and on the other in Prek-
murski, the eastern-most dialect group of Slovene. It is worth-while to consider the
possibility that generalization of length in (c)-stressed presents is a common innova-
tion of Central Slovak and Prekmurski, which would fit in with the position of Central
Slovak within the Czecho-Slovak block.

5.9. The relative chronology of van Wijk’s law

Johnson’s second objection to van Wijk’s law concerns its relative chronology. As we
have seen the law is assumed to be connected with the simplification of consonant
clusters that took place during the period of the “law of open syllables”. Johnson ob-
jects:

Such simplification and in particular the jotovanie in ‘je’ verbs must have preceded the substitution of
length by height as a distinctive feature in the vowel system. Length was still distinctive at the time of
the changes in the tort groups. One would therefore expect length of the theme vowel to be reflected as
jat or after a palatal as a (1980: 491).

Again Johnson fails to mention that the point has been treated at some length by ad-
criticism to be effective he would have to show that their treatment is deficient. There
is no point in ignoring it. One cannot refute a chronology by apodictically stating that
something “must have” preceded something else.

6. Conclusions

Johnson’s criticism is not convincing. Most of his objections are based on incorrect
notions about the content of the theory. It is perhaps useful to list here some of those
incorrect notions:

1. Dybo’s law is supported by no more than an argument based on internal recon-
struction (3.1).

2. If one accepts Dybo’s law, it becomes difficult to account for štok. lomīmo vs.
podomīmo (3.1 end).

3. The assumption that Dybo’s law is a late development is based on its connection
with the neoacute (3.3 beginning).
4. For the period immediately preceding the operation of Dybo’s law Kortlandt reconstructs a system consisting of three phonologically distinct rising tones (3.3 middle).

5. In assuming a laryngealized value of the acute Kortlandt disregards the comparative evidence (3.3 middle).

6. The new theory cannot explain the rising tone reflected in R. urók and similar examples (3.3 end).

7. The identification of the paradigm of nesú/neseš’ with the nominal accent type (c) is “highly dubious” and based on the accentuation of the aorist (3.4).

8. The new theory fails to explain how the distinction between the accent types could survive for a very long time, only to become blurred in the final phase of Proto-Slavonic (3.4 end).

9. The theory fails to account for the attested degree of analogical “mixing” of accent types in the ī-verbs and ā-stem nouns (3.4 middle, 3.5).

10. The theory cannot accommodate Johnson’s reconstruction of the history of the suffix -ina (3.6).

11. Within the framework of the theory Illič-Svityč’s law makes no sense (4.1).

12. The theory incorrectly predicts length in the thematic vowel of the present tense (5.1-2, 5.6-8).

13. The assumption that the Slovene/kajkavian neocircumflex is due to compensatory lengthening fails to account for the facts (5.3-5).

14. Since the present tense of verbs in -ěti is (c)-stressed, one would expect the l-participle to be (c)-stressed, too (5.4 end).

It goes without saying that the objections constructed on the basis of these and other incorrect notions are invalid. One wonders how long linguists will go on seriously believing that they can refute a theory by criticizing a parody of it.

Johnson’s remaining objections are of three different types:

A. Once or twice Johnson objects to a reconstruction on the basis that it presupposes a typologically unlikely chain of events, e.g. the discontinuity introduced by Dybo’s law into the development of Proto-Slavonic (3.3). These objections are invalid because one does not have to look far to find parallels.

B. A few times Johnson merely states his disagreement without giving arguments, apparently because he considers the point obvious. It is possible that these objections can be made into genuine counterarguments if they are properly elaborated.

C. In some cases Johnson disagrees with the way the material is evaluated by the adherents of the theory. As regards the thematic vowel of the present tense he is at least partly wrong, as we have seen. However, his discussion of the nominal ā-stems suggests that something else may be at stake, too: whereas the adherents of the new

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36 The classical example of this approach is of course Chomsky’s “refutation” of the phoneme (e.g. 1964: 75-110), on which see Kortlandt (1972: 132-135), Derwing (1973: 169-188), Coseriu (1975: 96-112). The success of Chomsky’s onslaught dramatically illustrates that the community of linguists somehow does not manage to maintain the critical standards necessary for them to function properly.
theory approach the attested distribution as a fact to be explained by the theory, Johnson regards it as a shaky foundation to build on because many dialects exhibit the results of analogical “mixing”. This seems to betray a deep-seated theoretical difference: whereas the adherents of the new theory are at pains to reconstruct processes that account for the attested distributions, Johnson seems reluctant to do so and clearly prefers explanations that regard the attested distributions as the outcome of analogical levelling caught mid-way.

Since the new theory makes more accurate predictions than any existing version of its predecessor, while at the same time avoiding the assumption of “metatonical” analogies, I think it is to be regarded as superior until it is shown to be seriously defective in some respect.

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Abbreviations

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Abbreviation</th>
<th>Description</th>
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<tr>
<td>AfSlPh</td>
<td>Archiv für slavische Philologie</td>
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<tr>
<td>HDZb</td>
<td>Hrvatski dijalektološki zbornik</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>JAZU</td>
<td>Jugoslovenska akademija znanosti i umjetnosti</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SDZb</td>
<td>Srpski dijalektološki zbornik</td>
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<tr>
<td>SEER</td>
<td>The Slavonic and East European Review</td>
</tr>
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<td>SSGL</td>
<td>Studies in Slavic and General Linguistics</td>
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<tr>
<td>VJa</td>
<td>Voprosy jazykoznaniya</td>
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