

Slavic *i*-verbs, imperfect, and *jā*-stem nouns

In an earlier study (2015a) I discussed the development of Proto-Slavic **j*, Van Wijk's law, and nouns of the *volja* type. The same topics have been taken up by Henning Andersen in a recent article (2014). Since Andersen consistently disregards my work, it may be useful to specify the differences between the two approaches here.

The Slavic *i*-verbs fall into two categories. On the one hand, verbs with an infinitive in *-ěti* represent earlier perfects (*gorěti, polěti, bolěti, stojati, bojati se*), statives (*ležati, sěděti*), optatives (*xotěti, velěti* beside *xotěti, vblěti*), duratives (*letěti, běžati* beside iteratives *lětati, běgati*), and athematic *i*-presents (*mьněti, bьděti, lьpěti, vьrěti, kypěti*), corresponding to Lithuanian verbs in *-ėti* and Latvian verbs in *-ēt* with an *i*-present (cf. Kortlandt 2011: 207-209 and 2010: 43). These verbs regularly belong to accent class (c) in Slavic, reflecting original accentual mobility. On the other hand, verbs with an infinitive in *-iti* represent original causatives, iteratives and denominatives and correspond to Lithuanian causatives and iteratives in *-yti*, present *-o*, and *-inti*, present *-ina*, Latvian *-īt* and *-ināt*, and to *eie*-presents in other Indo-European languages. As a rule, the Slavic causatives and iteratives belong to accent classes (a) or (b) and the denominatives to the accent class of the noun from which they are derived (cf. Kapović 2011 for a comprehensive survey of *i*-verbs in Croatian dialects). There are three major factors which disturbed the original distribution of the accent classes. First, Stang's law did not operate before a clitic because it was limited to final syllables not counting final jers (cf. Kortlandt 2011: 271f.). This resulted in such alternations as Russian (*Petr*) *kúrit* vs. (*vulkan*) *kurítsja* 'smokes' and *sádit* vs. (*solnce*) *sadítsja* 'sets', which led to a redistribution opposing transitive (b) to intransitive (c) verbs. Second, the accent was retracted onto restored long root vowels in paradigm (c), which could then join paradigm (b), as happened later in Štokavian *trēsēmo* beside *pečēmo*, where the original stress is preserved in Čakavian *tresemō*, *pečemō*. These two developments were already established by Carl Ebeling (1967: 593). Third, the distinction between simplex verbs with mobile stress (c) and compounds where Dybo's law shifted the stress from the prefix to the root so as to yield e.g. *Kukljica ugāsín* (a) and *prebūdin* (b) was mostly lost.

In Baltic, denominative verbs have presents in Lith. *-ėja, -oja, -uoja, -auja*, Latvian *-ē, -ā, -uo*, not Lith. *-i, -o*. It follows that the Slavic denominatives must be separated from the other *i*-verbs, the corresponding Baltic types of which have an athematic origin. The Slavic duratives (*letěti, běžati*) and iteratives (*lětati, běgati*) correspond to the Lithuanian *i*- and *o*-presents, respectively, whereas the denominatives in *-iti, -ěti, -ati* and *-ovati* correspond to the Lith. derived thematic *ja*-presents. Elsewhere I have argued that the Baltic *ā*-presents are built on an original paradigm 3rd sg. **stastāti*, 3rd pl. **stastinti* underlying Lith. *statýti* 'to put', reflecting PIE **stisteH₂ti, *stestH₂nti*, Vedic *tíṣṭhati* (cf. Kortlandt 2009: 175). The reduplicating syllable adopted the root vowel, as in Lith. *dedù* 'I put' < **dʰedʰ-* and *dúodu* 'I give' < **dod-* (with an acute from Winter's law). The reduplicated syllable lost its initial **s-*, as in Latin *steti* 'I stood', *spopondī* 'I pledged'. The causatives and iteratives now adopted the paradigm with 3rd sg. **-āti* and 3rd pl. **-inti*. This was a Balto-Slavic development in view of Serbian/Croatian *hódati, nósati, vódati, vózati* (cf. Vaillant 1966: 359,

Kortlandt 2009: 177), cf. Latvian *vadāt* ‘to lead about’ beside *vadīt* ‘to lead’, Lith. *vadžióti*, also Prussian *laikūt* ‘to hold’ < **-āti*, *maysotan* ‘mixed’ < **-āton*, Lith. *laikýti*, *maišýti*. They provided the model for the Slavic secondary imperfectives in *-(j)ati* of verbs in *-iti*, which subsequently adopted the *je*-inflexion of the more numerous denominatives in the same way as Latvian *vadāt* and Lith. *vadžióti*. The derivation of the *ā*-presents from a paradigm 3rd sg. **stastāti*, 3rd pl. **stastinti* explains the fact that the Slavic causatives and iteratives belong to accent classes (a) and (b), not (c), e.g. Russian *bégat’*, *letát’*, S/Cr. *lijètati* with a pretonic long root vowel as a result of Dybo’s law (as opposed to *lètjeti* with mobile stress).

The Slavic duratives like *běžati* and *letěti* correspond to the Lithuanian type of *tekėti* ‘to flow’, present *tēka*, Prussian *giwīt* ‘to live’, *giwa*, Russian *bežát’*, 1st sg. *begú*, Čakavian (Novi) *živīt*, *živén* (also Vrgada, Mostar, Posavian, cf. Jurišić 1973: 247), where the infinitive is based on an original imperfect in **-ē* (cf. Kortlandt 2009: 185-187). These intransitive verbs denoting non-terminative dynamic processes adopted the *ē*-preterit of the Indo-European verbs with an *i*-present denoting a state of being, e.g. Lith. *budėti* ‘to be awake’, *judėti* ‘to be in movement’, Slavic *mьněti* ‘to be in thought’, *dьržati* ‘to be in control’, Vedic *budhya-*, *yudhya-*, *manya-*, *dṛhya-*, which were semantically close enough to supply a new imperfect to present stems of non-terminative intransitive verbs when the earlier imperfect developed into an aorist. At a more recent stage, most of the verbs adopted the athematic *i*-present as well, e.g. Russian 3rd sg. *bežít*, S/Cr. *bjěži*, *živī*, but perfective *pòbjeći*, *pòbjegnuti*. The difference between duratives *běžati*, *letěti* and iteratives *běgati*, *lětati* developed into a distinction between determinate and indeterminate movement (cf. Schuyt 1990: 317-394). The athematic *ā/i*-paradigm of the causatives and iteratives split into two types, yielding Lithuanian verbs in *-yti*, present *-o* < **-ā(ti)*, and *-inti*, present *-ina* < **-in(tī)-*, Latvian *-īt* and *-ināt*, Slavic *-ati* and *-iti*, e.g. S/Cr. *hódati*, *nósati* (with secondary length) beside *hòditi*, *nòsiti*. The latter type joined the inflexion of the athematic *i*-presents with 3rd sg. **-eiti* beside 3rd pl. **-inti*. Finally, the thematic inflexion of the denominatives with 3rd sg. **-eie* and 3rd pl. **-eio* (cf. Kortlandt 2009: 162 and 2015b) was abandoned, probably after the merger of these two endings into **-eie* as a result of the umlaut at stage 6.1 of my chronology (Kortlandt 2011: 164), yielding a paradigm with 3rd sg. **-eiti* and 3rd pl. **-enti* at stage 7.8 (ibidem: 167).

Andersen subscribes to the old-fashioned view that **-eie-* was contracted to **-ī-* in Slavic causatives, iteratives and denominatives, e.g. **nosītb* (2014: 61). The obvious objection is that we find *-bje* in OCS *trьbje* ‘three’ and *gostьbje* ‘guests’ < **-eies*, but Andersen wants to have his cake and eat it, deriving both **-ī-* and *-bje* from **-eie-* by positing **-i(j)e-* as an intermediate stage between **-eje-* and **-ī-* (2014: 62). Moreover, he posits an accent retraction from **-ie-* to the root in iteratives but not from **-iè-* in denominatives, yielding a neo-acute tone on the root and a “secondary acute” on the suffix, respectively. He rejects Stang’s law (“ictus retraction from an inner circumflex”, 2014: 64) and identifies his retraction from **-ie-* with the retraction from weak jers, ignoring the different timbre reflexes of these retractions in Slovene (cf. Kortlandt 2011: 17-22). He also ignores Dybo’s law and the resulting vowel quantities in the Slavic languages (cf. Kortlandt 2011: 170-173). He quotes Stang’s view (1957: 116, not the page indicated by Andersen) that in the *e*-presents accent paradigm (b) originated under the influence of the *i*-presents, ignoring what has been written about the problem in the course of the last fifty years (cf. especially Vermeer 1984). In his discussion of the 1st sg. ending *-jǫ* (2014: 63), e.g. *nošǫ*, not ***nosьjǫ*, Andersen

once again tries to have his cake and eat it, deriving both radical and desinential stress from $*-ěj\varrho$ by positing an intermediate stage $*-i(j)\varrho$ followed by “monosyllabication” and a progressive accent shift from $*-i\varrho$ to the nasal vowel $*-j\varrho$. All this is quite arbitrary.

The Slavic imperfect, e.g. OCS *veděaxъ*, *veděaše*, represents a nominal \bar{e} -stem followed by the perfect of the verb ‘to be’, e.g. Vedic 1st and 3rd sg. *āsa* ‘was’ < $*\bar{o}sa$, $*\bar{o}se$ (cf. Kortlandt 1986). The \bar{e} -stem is also found in the Baltic preterit, e.g. Lith. *vėdė* (with a circumflex ending), Prussian *weddē*. This conclusion was essentially reached by Christian Stang already (1942: 82-84). Deverbal nouns in $-\bar{e}$ - are found in Latin, e.g. *caedēs* ‘killing’, *sēdēs* ‘seat’, *clādēs* ‘destruction’, *vātēs* ‘prophet’. Though the absence of intervocalic $*-j-$ in the sequence $-\bar{e}a-$ clearly shows that the Slavic imperfect is a compound formation, Andersen still maintains that we are dealing with an “interfix” $-\bar{e}-$ < $*-\bar{e}-$ which “has no apparent meaning” followed by a “progressive” suffix $-a-$ < $*-j\bar{a}-$ which lost its $*j$ in prehistoric times (2014: 71). He evidently did not see the problem of how the thematic endings could have arisen in the sigmatic paradigm of the imperfect (cf. Vaillant 1966: 67). His claim (2014: 77) that Serbian *pěcijāh* (with a long $-\bar{a}-$ from contraction) beside older *pěčāh* has preserved uncontracted $*-ějja-$ which is not found elsewhere in Slavic, in spite of the fact that the sequence was actually contracted in *zelenjāh* (*zeleněti* ‘to turn green’) and *željāh* (*želěti* ‘to desire’), does not inspire confidence in his methodological principles. In fact, the form *pěcijāh* is built on the imperative *pěci*, as is clear from the second palatalization (cf. Kortlandt 2009: 151f. on the present stem *id-* ‘go’). It is remarkable that Andersen does not mention Stang’s name at all in his discussion of the Slavic imperfect.

The Slavic $j\bar{a}$ -stems represent original $j\bar{a}$ -stems as well as PIE proterodynamic $i/j\bar{a}$ - and $i/j\bar{e}$ -stems while PIE hysterodynamic $i/j\bar{a}$ - and $i/j\bar{e}$ -stems are reflected as Slavic $bj\bar{a}$ -stems (cf. Kortlandt 2009: 135 and 2015a: 72-75), e.g. Russian *kóža* ‘skin’ < $*-j\bar{a}$, *bogínja* ‘goddess’ < $*-i/j\bar{a}$, *vólja* ‘will’ < $*-i/j\bar{e}$, *sem’já* ‘family’ < $*-i/bj\bar{a}$, *sud’já* ‘judge’ < $*-i/bj\bar{e}$. The first three types were stressed on the stem before Dybo’s law while the last two were stressed on the suffix $*-bj-$. As a result of Dybo’s law, the accent shifted to the ending, which had a long vowel as a result of Van Wijk’s law in the first three types (cf. Kortlandt 2015a: 66-68) but a short vowel in the last two types. The long vowel received a falling tone, as a result of which the accent was retracted according to Stang’s law, yielding a neo-acute tone on the stem and a short vowel in the ending (cf. Kortlandt 2011: 171f.). In Polish and Slovincian, this development was interrupted by the contraction of $*-bj\bar{a}$ to $*-\bar{a}$, e.g. Slc. *roláu* ‘plowland’ < $*rol\bar{a}$ < $*rolbj\bar{a}$ < $*orl\bar{b}ja$, Old Polish *sędzią* ‘judge’ < $*s\varrho dbj\bar{a}$ < $*s\varrho db\bar{e}ja$. Most of the *volja* type nouns then joined the *rolbja* type, e.g. Old Polish *wolą*, Slc. *vùolà* beside *vùola* (cf. Kortlandt 2015a: 72). The combination of Van Wijk’s lengthening, Dybo’s accent shift and Stang’s retraction is also found in the comparative in $*-je$, e.g. Czech *hůře* ‘worse’ < $*g\varrho r\bar{e}$ (Stang) < $*g\varrho r\bar{e}$ (Dybo) < $*g\varrho rje$ (Van Wijk), *méně* ‘less’ < $*men\bar{e}$ < $*mèn\bar{e}$ < $*mènje$, Russian dial. *bòle* ‘more’, *molóže* ‘younger’.

Andersen again wants to have his cake and eat it by deriving both proterodynamic $j\bar{a}$ - and hysterodynamic $bj\bar{a}$ -paradigms from a single formation in $*-ěj-$ which was reduced by “neo-apophony” to $*-j-$ after polysyllabic stems (2014: 89), additionally including simple $j\bar{a}$ -stems such as *koža* and *suša* in the same formation (uncritically followed by Olander 2015: 75). He notes that “almost all the *vólja/sūša* nouns are derived from monosyllabic bases” but suggests that “despite appearances, they should be compared first of all to the CS $-\bar{e}j-$ (LCS $-\bar{i}j-$) adjectives” (ibidem). He

then posits a development **walējā* > **woli(j)ā* > **wòliā* > **wòljā* for most Slavic languages (2014: 92) but with final shortening > **wolia* > **woljā* for Polish and Slovincian (2014: 93). Interestingly, he evidently accepts Van Wijk’s law, which he renames “Intensity Shift with mora preservation ...ia > ...jā” (similarly 2014: 62f.), in spite of the fact that he explicitly rejects the law as a “hopeless theory” (2014: 98). He does not explain Slovincian doublets such as *vùolā* and *vùola* or *roláu* and *rùola*. He posits the same suffix **-ej-* as the source of adjectival *-bj-* but cannot explain the desinential stress of the suffix (2014: 87f., cf. the treatment by Dybo 1968: 174-192, 1981: 146-172). In fact, the desinential stress can be explained by the identification of the suffix *-bj-* with the Italo-Celtic gen.sg. ending *-ī* < **-iH* (cf. Kortlandt 2009: 106, 122), which is particularly attractive because the possessive adjective replaces the genitive in the oldest Slavic texts (cf. Vaillant 1977: 52), e.g. *synъ božii* for *θεοῦ υἱός* ‘son of God’, *česarъstvije božije* for *ἡ βασιλεία τοῦ θεοῦ* ‘the kingdom of God’. I conclude that Andersen’s article is entirely misguided and does not contribute to our understanding of the issues involved.

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