

ON THE VOCALIZATION OF JERS IN SLOVAK*

The rise of the modern reflexes of the historically "reduced" or centralized short vowels (jers) in the Central (C) dialects of Slovak (Slk) has remained a longstanding unresolved problem of the reconstruction of the Common Slavic dialects. As is well known, in some C Slk dialects a number of phonetic realizations occur as reflexes of strong jers, namely the phonemes *a*, *ä*, *o*, *e*, *u*, *i*, *uo*, *ie* and *ə*, several of which may cooccur in a given local dialect. Habovštiak's (1954, 1965) material from the C Slk dialect of Orava illustrates variation indicative of the complexity of this problem:

- ɔ > *a*, e.g. *max* (< **mǫxǫ*) 'moss' [Upper Orava];
- > *ä*, e.g. *rāsca* (< **rǫdǫca*) 'caraway' (see Habovštiak 1958);
- > *o*, e.g. *voš* (< **vǫšǫ*) 'flea';
- > *u*, e.g. *ku mñe* (*kǫ mñǫ*) 'towards me' [C and Upper Orava];
- > *i*, e.g. *l'iška* (< **lǫžǫka*, Standard Slk *lyžica*) 'spoon';
- ɔ > *ü/ʷ*, e.g. *l'an/l'an* (< **lǫnǫ*) 'flax';
- > *e*, e.g. *pes* (< **pǫsǫ*) 'dog';
- laket'* (< **olkǫtǫ*) 'elbow'.

No coherent set of phonological conditions has yet been set forth that would account for this heterogeneous set of correspondences. As a result, scholars have often attributed this variation to such diverse principles as morphologically motivated reshuffling or the influence of a substratum¹.

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Citation of forms in this paper follows that traditionally used in the scholarly linguistic literature of the individual languages, e.g., length is marked in Czech and Slovak by the acute <á>, but in South Slavic by <â>, <ǎ>, <ã> where length is concomitant with toneme and ictus and by <a: > where it is not. The grapheme <x> is used for the voiceless velar fricative in Czech and Slovak forms to avoid the traditional digraph <ch>.

¹ Though it will not serve our purpose to argue systematically against previous explanations of the Slk jer development, we shall list here some of the thoughts on the subject that have been presented in the literature. Suffice it to say that no scholar has yet arrived at an airtight solution. Hypotheses on the development of the jers in Slk number virtually as many as the scholars who have written about them. Diels (1914) connects the

There is, however, a fairly coherent isogloss pattern which suggests that there was some phonological regularity in Slk jer vocalization. In connection with this pattern we will suggest a possible explanation for the development as a relic of Common Slavic prosodic distinctions. While the discussion cannot aim to be definitive, we hope at least to have shed light on this complex problem of Slavic historical dialectology.

As with most aspects of the historical grammar of Slk, the jer reflexes are considered in the literature to be divided between the Western (W) and Eastern (E) dialects versus the C dialects (Vážný 1934: 219 ff.)². This is ge-

C Slk area with the South Slavic macrodialect, explaining the occurrence of the aberrant reflex *a* as an anaptyctic vowel generalized from forms where the jer should have been lost to the form where the jer would have been normally vocalized as *o*. Thus, e.g., **mǫxu* (Gsg) > **mxu* = > *maxu*, **mǫxǫ* (Nsg) > **mox* = > *max*. Conev lists the Slk jer reflexes as one of the phenomena showing the linguistic similarity of Slk and Bulgarian, a fact which to him indicates their contiguity at the time of a presumed common Slavic dialect continuum (1919: 40 ff.). Melich argues against the transitionalist theory that C Slk links the E and S Slavic jer developments (1928: 324–325). He claims that *ǫ* and *ǫ* retained their original identity in Proto-Slk and subsequently developed into two phonetic (?) variants of /e/ in Old Slk, i.e., *ǫ* > *e* “dunkel” (corresponding to Old Cz “*e široké, temné*” in Gebauer’s terminology 1894: 58) and *ǫ* > *e* “hell” (“*uzké, jasné*”). Then this *e* could develop along with etymological *e* and *ě* in two directions, either 1. > *o*, *io* or 2. > *a* > *á*, *’a*, *ia* (334). A similar explanation was given by Šmilauer, who claimed that *ǫ* and *ǫ* became one vowel which was reinterpreted as either *e* or *ǫ* (and subsequently *a* or *o*) depending on the consonantal environment (1930). Novák (1931, 1934, and his recent synthesis of earlier work 1980) sees the changes *ǫ* > *e*, *ǫ* > *o* as the regular development in C Slk, while instances of these reflexes in W and E dialects are due to migration of individual lexical items (1980: 155 ff.). According to Novák, the *a* reflex arose from the White Croatian substratum that presumably had the reflex *a* (in his opinion a 10 c. phenomenon) for the jers and remained alongside indigenous forms (174–177; see also note 3).

² The diacritic features of the C Slk dialects that have received the most attention in scholarly research are the so-called “Yugoslavisms,” i.e., S Slavic features found in these and no other W Slavic dialects. The following S Slavic features in C Slk dialects are generally cited: 1. AP *c* **ort*, **olt* > *rat*, *lat*- (cf., C Slk *rast’iem* ‘I grow’, *laket* ‘elbow’; W Slk *rostem*, *loket*; SCr *rāsti*, *rāste:m*, Sn *lāket*); 2. **dl*, **tl* > *l* (cf., C Slk *šilo* ‘awl’, *křilo* ‘wing’; W/E Slk *šidlo*, *křidlo*; SCr *šřlo*, *křřlo*); 3. *x* > *s* as a result of the second velar palatalization (cf. C Slk *mňix*, *mnísi* ‘monk, monks’; Cz *mnix*, *mníši*; SCr *mònah*, *monásí*); 4. the 1pl ending *-mo* (cf., S-C Slk *kosímo* ‘we mow’; Cz *kosíme*; Sn *kosímo*). While it will not be our place here to argue for or against the concept of Yugoslavisms in C Slk, we shall agree that there is at least some evidence that S Slavic exerted an influence on the early development of the pre-Slk dialects. It should be left to a more detailed study to reconstruct the processes (substratum, contact etc.) involved in this influence, as well as those W Slavic features in S Slavic (e.g., lenition of *g* [Sn Primorsko dial. *hriem* < **gred*- ‘I go’], retention of dental + liquid clusters [Sn *privedla je* ‘she brought’]). For further discussion, see also Conev 1919; Polívka 1922/3; Małecki 1931; Ramovš 1933; Stieber 1933; Vážný 1934; Kniezsa 1948; Stanislav 1958; Pauliny 1963; Krajčovič 1968, 1974, 1975; and Novák 1980.

nerally true, though the W border of the C reflexes has moved westward for some etyma (e.g., the forms *max/mox* are found alongside the expected *mex* in the W dialects). It appears that part of the process of vocalization characteristic of the C dialects operated in the E area as well. Because the fall of the jers is a crucial early phenomenon of the Late Common Slavic (LCS) period of dialectal differentiation, an understanding of the conditions which created the modern day picture will shed light on the prehistory of Slk. In turn, the Slk picture is important for the overall reconstruction of Slavic jer loss and vocalization, a process generally recognized as the *terminus ad quem* in the disintegration of LCS dialect continuity (Birnbaum 1975).

There exist no one-to-one correspondences between reconstructed jers and their C Slk reflexes. No clear set of conditions (e.g., prosody, consonantal environment) thoroughly states the process of jer vocalization in C Slk. This is not to suggest, however, that such conditions did not play a role in its development, but rather that they are not immediately evident from the surface data. Since the application of the comparative method has failed to turn up an adequate description of Slk jer vocalization, our study will attempt to arrive at a hypothesis about the conditions indirectly, taking as a starting point an analysis of the linguistic geography of the modern reflexes.

We analyze the isogloss patterns of the jer reflexes presented in the maps in the Slovak dialect atlas, *Atlas slovenského jazyka* (1968). This source gives a maximum amount of information for the geography of certain words. Because the number of words is small and only isolated forms are given, it is impossible to investigate all of the conditions (i.e., consonantal environment, accent, word position, and paradigmatic alternation, among others) that might be relevant to the problem. For this reason, the conditions giving rise to the diverse reflexes cannot yet be stated exhaustively. Rather, our tentative inferences must rely upon an analysis of the data on linguistic geography that is available. This analysis will yield some clues about the reconstruction, though not the entire picture of the process of jer vocalization.

As mentioned above, Slk has more than two vowel phonemes as modern reflexes for the two jers traditionally reconstructed for Common Slavic and attested in early Slavic texts. For both *ъ and *ь the reflexes *e*, *a* (both their long and short variants), *o*, and occasionally *i* and *u* are represented in the dialects (i.e., *ližica*, *ku*). We shall be concerned only

with the *a*, *o* and *e* reflexes, since the *i* and *u* reflexes are limited to a small number of lexical items. A difference between front and back jer existed in Early Slk, as palatalization (and later assibilation in some dialects) took place before **ʃ* in all three major dialect zones. Typically in C Slk the reflexes of vocalized *ʃ* is *e* with preceding palatalization or assibilation, e.g., *t'ejki* (< **tʃnʃkʃjʃ*) 'thin (m. sg.)' (Orava). But also the reflex *a* is sometimes found as a reflex for *ʃ*, e.g., *lan* (< *lʃnʃ*) 'flax' (Orava). Back *ʃ* may be vocalized as either *o* or *a* and sometimes *e* (without preceding palatalization or assibilation). It is the *a/o* bifurcation that will receive most of our attention. All vowel reflexes are found to a greater or lesser extent over the entire Slk territory.

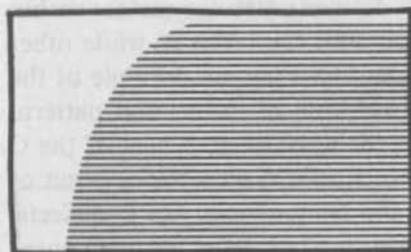
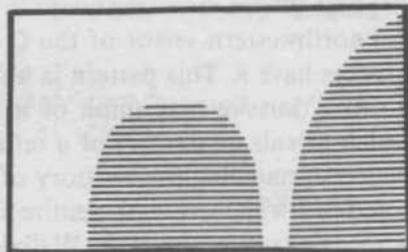
GEOGRAPHY

As a preliminary to our proposal of conditions relevant to the reconstruction of jer vocalization in Slk we shall examine the geography of modern day jer reflexes in the Slk territory in order to determine whether patterns of isoglosses occur. We shall assume that the patterning of isoglosses represents a dynamic picture of the development of the various reflexes. Moreover, we shall operate with the widely held view that linguistic innovation tends to move in waves from a center to a periphery. Moreover, as a means of dealing with further complexity in the patterning of linguistic geography, we shall refer to Andersen's typology of isoglosses (1978: 3): 1. *simplex*, where the isogloss line delineates an innovation in one dialect area from the absence of the innovation in the neighboring dialect area; 2. *duplex*, where the isogloss represents the division between two logically alternative innovations; and 3. *complex*, where the same innovation has different consequences due to underlying structural differences between the two areas.

1. *o* || *e* ISOGLOSSES

Certain etyma show only two reflexes, *o* and *e*, without the third reflex *a*. Such words include *von* || *ven* 'away', 'outside', *voš* || *veš* 'louse', which separate the W (*e*) from the C and E (*o*) areas (see schematic map A). This isogloss cuts cleanly along the W-C isogloss bundle. However, the

picture is somewhat obscured in the south C area by non-vocalic variants that appear to have leveled with the oblique cases and reidentified with the a-stem noun declension: *fša*, *wša*, *pša*. Nevertheless, the northern development is shaped identically with that of *ven* || *von*, such that we can reconstruct a nearly identical distribution for these two etyma.

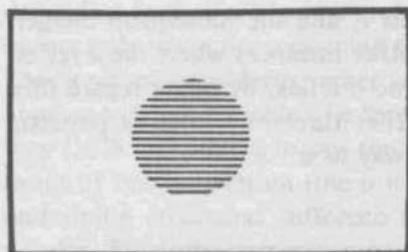
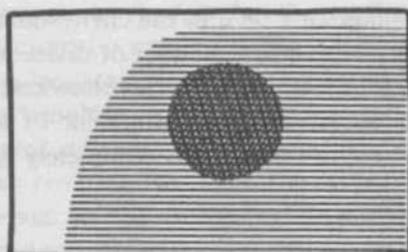
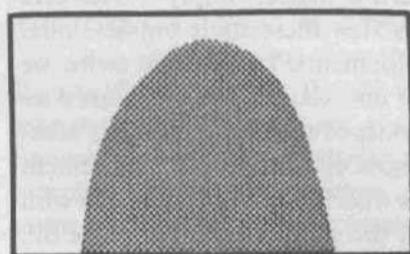
A. *von* X *ven*B. *xlapčok* X *xlapček*

The clearest picture of the situation is presented by the patterning of words derived with the suffixal formants **-okč*/**-okč* and **-iččokč*. *o* against *e* as a reflex of both front and back strong jers in these suffixes has the shape of an innovation moving in two parallel waves from south to north in the south C and the easternmost extent of the E dialects. The most restricted instance of this isogloss is defined by the etymon *xlapčok* || *xlapček* 'boy', which defines *o* areas in the southern part of the C and the eastern half of the E dialects (see map B).

A further development is represented by the etyma *piesok* || *piesek* 'sand (N. sg.)' and *kuoročka* || *kuorečka* 'tree bark (dim.)', where the *o* innovation covers the entire C Sĭk dialect area and the eastern half of the E dialects. At its fullest realization, e.g., *sviečok* || *svieček* 'candle (Gpl)'; the *o* area covers almost the entire C and E dialects with the exception of the northern periphery of both areas, while the W dialects have uniform *e* reflexes. Tripartite reflexes with this suffix occur in the north-western part of the C dialects where the *o* innovation has reached this area: *stovak* || *stovok* || *stovek* 'a hundred' (see also below).

2. *o* || *a* || *e* ISOGLOSSES

b) The patterns of the three-way isoglosses are the most revealing for the direction of the *a* reflex, which is found as both an enclave within the C Slk area for some words and covering virtually all of this area for others. Three patterns provide transitions between these two realizations. First, the *o* || *e* isogloss of *bubon* || *buben* (< **boьonъ*) 'drum' (map C) indicates a transition to the *a* || *o* || *e* isoglosses. This pattern differs from the *o* || *e* isoglosses discussed above in that it defines a circular enclave within the northwestern sector of the C dialects with the reflex *o*, while other dialects have *e*. This pattern is not, strictly speaking, an example of the *a* reflex, but we may think of it as a transition to the second pattern, which reveals an enclave of *a* reflexes in the northwestern part of the C dialects (matching the territory of *bubon* || *buben*) on a background of *o* reflexes which cover the entire E and the remainder of the C dialects, while the *e* reflex covers the W dialects. This second pattern is represented by the etyma *daska* || *doska* || *deska* 'board', *kotal* || *kotol* || *kotel* 'cauldron', and *hrušak* || *hrušok* || *hrušek* 'pear' (G. pl.) (see map D). The third is a fuller realization of the previous pattern, with the *a* reflex reaching the entire northwestern sector of the C dialects, e.g., (NW-C) *dášt'* || (SE-C) *dyošt'* || (W) *dešt'* / (E) *dišč* 'rain', probably *baza* || *biez/bez* 'elderberry' (the contemporary distribution is somewhat misleading, since the original SE-C Slk reflex *byoza*, retained in a few local dialects, has been replaced by *biez/bez* and part of the C and E dialects is obscured by the lexeme *xabzda*), *max* || *mox* || *mex* 'moss', *raž* || *rož* || *rež* (the E has primarily *žito* 'rye', *stovak* || *stovok* (the southern part of the C dialects have *stoukou*), *česnak* || *česnok* || *česnek* 'garlic'. The isoglosses for *rasca* || *rosca* || *resca* 'caraway seed' match this last pattern with the exception of the Ě dialects, which have the unexpected *a* reflex. Since this word has only a Slk etymology (derived from **rad-*, see Habovštiak 1958), its spread through the dialects is probably a result of comparatively recent lexical diffusion, where the form *rasca* replaced the older *kmín*, a form attested in the W and easternmost E dialects.

C. *bubon X buben*D. *daska X doska X deska**Jer reflexes*E. *l'an/l'an X l'en*

o-reflex

e-reflex

a-reflex

3. *o/a* || *e* ISOGLOSSES

Another two-way isogloss pattern is discernable separating the western two-thirds of the C dialects (*a* or *o*) from the remaining Slk dialects (*e*). This pattern is reflected in the isoglosses of the words (C) *l'an/l'an* || (W, E) *l'en* (see map E), (C) *xrbat* || (W, E) *xrbet* 'back' (two SE-C dialects surveyed in the *Atlas* have the reflex *xrbyot*; this is may be a relic of the *a* || *o* || *e* pattern described in the preceding section), *zdoxla* || *zdexla* 'she kicked the bucket', and *ovos* || *oves* 'oats'. It is difficult to reconcile this pattern with the other isogloss patterns, since they differ from the shapes we have already described in two respects: 1. the *a* reflex appears without *o* in other areas, and 2. the *a* reflex runs uniformly from north to south within the C dialect. The reflexes *l'an/l'an* || *l'en* may be explained by the

change of $e > \ddot{a}$ in the environment after l' , and the subsequent merger of \ddot{a} with a in a number of dialects. In other instances where the a reflex is found with the e reflex elsewhere and no o reflex, we might regard this as an advanced development of an earlier three-way isogloss pattern, where the o area has completely given way to a .

OBSERVATIONS ON ISOGLOSS PATTERNS

From the review of the geographical distribution of jer reflexes in Slk some coherent isogloss patterns emerge. This complex of jer reflexes may be arranged in terms of implications: 1. e in all of the C dialects implies e elsewhere; 2. the o enclave in the northwestern C dialects implies e elsewhere; 3. a reflexes in the northwestern C dialects imply o elsewhere in the C and E dialects³. It is possible to view these static implicational relations as reflections of dynamic developments. In dynamic terms we may posit at least three different areas of innovation. The o against e reflexes originate in two distinct southern zones of the C and E dialect areas and move from south to north. The strongest evidence for this movement is in the shape of the isoglosses for words with the suffix $*-zkb/*-kbz$ with isoglosses moving wave-like beginning at the southern border of the Slk linguistic territory. At their fullest extent, the two waves merge and cover nearly the entire C and E dialects except their northern peripheries. The third area of innovation, defined by a against o reflexes, lies in the northern zone of the C Slk dialects. The shape of these isoglosses also suggests a wave-form innovation, with the most restricted instances (primarily non-suffixed one- and two-syllable words of the *daska* type) as enclaves and advanced instances reaching to the northern border of the C area and to various degrees into the E dialects and the southeastern zone of the C dialects. Most importantly, this isogloss originates in a different area and moves in the opposite direction of the o || e isogloss. The

³ To be sure, Novák has already stated the chronological primacy of o against the innovating a : "Tam, kde sa toto jerové a vyskytuje, je to vždy len v slove, ktoré ináč má zastúpenú normálnu formu o -ovú" (1980: 156). He cites further evidence in lexical doublets in the C dialects: o is preserved in the fixed expression "*on je chudí ako doska*" 'he is as thin as a board', but a otherwise, e.g., "*daska pet' metrov dlhá*" 'a board five meters long' (Nemci v Honte).

dependency relationship of *a* to *o* is borne out by the fact that the *a* reflex occurs only when the remaining C dialect area is covered by the *o* reflex. This *a* reflex, considering what we have just stated about its geography, appears to be an example of a "complex" isogloss, in Andersen's terminology (1978: 3). That is to say, the divergent reflexes may be viewed as the result of one innovation (the *o* isogloss) covering two dialect areas with underlying structural differences relevant to the oncoming linguistic novelty. Thus, the same innovation produces different outcomes in the two areas. We shall discuss this underlying difference in greater detail below. The modern isogloss pattern almost certainly obscures the original picture in that individual lexical items may have spread faster than others simply by the process of diffusion through dialects in contact (see Alexander 1984/85). Last, the W dialects (with $e < *z$, $e < *b$), behave independently of these innovations, though reflexes of individual etyma have spread into this area, probably as a result of more recent contact.

In sum, these patterns show that the standard classification of the Slk dialects that equates the W with the E dialects against the aberrant C dialects is not wholly adequate, since the C and E dialects either shared a common development or underwent parallel innovations. The picture is complicated by the independent *a* innovation, which is limited to the NW sector of the C Slk dialects (except when it has spread as result of more recent lexical diffusion) and moves in the opposite direction of the *o* isogloss. This latter innovation is the only purely C Slk phenomenon as concerns the jer reflexes.

CONDITIONS

In the above discussion of linguistic geography, we attempted to discern the areas of innovation and directionality of the Slk jer reflexes. However, the conditions under which the present-day correspondences of jer reflexes arose are less than clear from either the foregoing discussion or the scholarly literature. In contrast, the conditions giving rise to modern correspondences for jers in most other Slavic languages can usually be stated concisely in terms of relatively few factors. In E Slavic the front and back jers developed into front and back mid vowels, respectively, e.g., R $*dъnъ > d'en'$, $*mъxъ > mox$; in western S Slavic, Slovene (Sn) and Serbocroatian (SC), the distinction between front and back jers was presumably

lost, and the modern reflexes arose under relatively well-understood accentual conditions, e.g., in the C and SW Sn dialects the reflexes were quantitatively and qualitatively differentiated: (accentual paradigm [AP] c) **dǫnb* > Sn *dān*, (AP b) **pǫsǫ* > Sn *pās*⁴. Since Slk stood in a position central to the Slavic languages as they developed from the Common Slavic dialect complex and presumably remained contiguous with the S Slavic dialects at least up to the Magyar invasion in the 9th c. (see Sós 1973), it does not seem unreasonable to search for similar processes in the vocalization of the jers in both areas.

Previous explanations of the jer reflexes in C Slk have shunned phonetic explanations, relying primarily on analogical processes and migration of individual lexical items (see footnote 1). These factors no doubt have played a role in determining the eventual distribution of reflexes in C Slk, but there may be historically earlier phonetic conditions as well. As we have shown above, the isoglosses in Slk may be reduced to some regular patterns, suggesting that jer development must have been a regular phonological process in Slk. It seems plausible that, like the Sn and SC developments, C Slk may be explained by the application of accentual and other environmental conditions on an original jer reflex of [ǝ], a vowel which is maximally subject to reinterpretation.

One condition that seems to have applied over the entire Slk territory to a greater or lesser degree is the correlation of front and back jer and its consequent palatalization: nonpalatalization of the preceding consonant, a feature which unites the entire Slk territory with E and the rest of W Slavic. Thus it is necessary to posit that at an early stage of pre-Slk, before the loss of jers in weak position, the jers were realized as centralized vowel phonemes, one acute and one grave. This set corresponds to that traditionally reconstructed for Common Slavic and attested in Old Church Slavic texts by the graphemes <ǫ> and <ǭ>.

⁴ In many SC dialects, including much of Kajkavian, the reflexes are differentiated only by accent. Štokavian dialects usually have long and short *a*. W and C Sn dialects reflect long jers (under circumflex accent) as *ǭ* and short jers (originally pretonic) as *ǫ*. The Kajkavian evidence is not clear-cut. Vermeer argues convincingly that in Kajkavian the jers merged and lowered to [ǎ] or [a]. Where it lowered to the former, the jer reflex merged with / ě / (= [ǎ]) and then raised to e-type vowels, e.g., *dǫnb* > **dān* > *dīēn*, *sněgǫ* > **snāg* > *snīēg* 'snow'. Strong jers in post tonic position remain as [ǝ] in some dialects, e.g., *otcǫ* > *ōtǝc* 'father' (Virje). Accepting this reconstruction, Kajkavian occupies a pivotal position between the Sn and SC innovations. For further details see Vermeer 1983.

1/a
Tǫschmann

The other conditions that further diversified these phonemes were clearly not uniform for the entire Slk area. Following from the observations on linguistic geography made above, we must posit separate conditions for the innovating areas. At least a partial explanation for the most varied correspondences in the Slk territory, those of the northwest C dialects, is found in prosody, as might well be expected⁵.

PROSODY

Before we discuss the effect of prosody on the jers in Slk per se, let us review some of the accentological premises with which we shall operate. We shall assume a standard reconstruction of Slavic prosody, which, according to Stang, posits three paradigms, each with its characteristic accentual pattern. These are: accentual paradigm (AP) *a* (barytone), with acute stress on the same root syllable of all forms in the paradigm; AP *b* (oxytone), with end stress in some forms and neo-acute (derived from original end stress) in others; and AP *c* (mobile), with marginal end stress in some forms and recessive (circumflex) in others. Length is preserved in Slk under the neo-acute intonation or in pretonic position (e.g., **xva:là* > Slk *xvála*, R *xvalá* 'praise'). Along with the preservation of length under the neo-acute intonation, inherently short vowels (*e*, *o*) are lengthened in syllables preceding original weak jers, and this regardless of the intervening consonant (Nonnenmacher-Pribić 1961: 93–5; Timberlake 1983: 211–12). Moreover, the "rhythmical law", whereby a long vowel may not be followed by another long vowel applies in the C Slk dialects. According to Krajčovič this phenomenon arose in the 10 c. (1975: 63).

By extension, these facts about Slk prosody suggest that any vowel, including a strong jer, might have been phonetically longer under certain accentual conditions (e.g., the neo-acute) than a corresponding vowel under other conditions (e.g., the circumflex). Let us assume that the dif-

⁵ Stanislav must be credited as the first to suggest that the C Slk jers may be explained by the influence of prosody (see 1932: 128–130). His suggestion refers to similar developments in Sn and SC dialects, but stops short of an explanation of the process in Slk, giving a statement of his reservations about going further: "[v]šetko toto vyslovuje sa len s veľkou rezervou, ako len azda možda cesta, ktorá by nás mohla priviesť k cieľu." The issue of prosody in connection with the jers is absent from the author's later general work on the history of Slk (1967: 381–400).

ferentiation of the reflexes *a* and *o* from the jers may be traced to a phonetic difference in quantity that was then reinterpreted as a distinction of vowel quality. It is beyond the scope of this paper to discuss exactly how this process took place. (For one possible approach to phonetic reconstruction with several conditioning variables see Timberlake 1983 a.) It is generally assumed that [a] is longer than [ə], thus we may assume that *a* reflects lengthening while *o* is the unlengthened reflex (cf. the similar development in Sn with the converse reinterpretation of pitch as quantity and, subsequently, quality, e.g., AP *c* **dǎnъ* > Sn *dân*, AP *b* **pǎsъ* > Sn *pàs*). The process may have been something like this, given two environments: (Environment 1: neo-acute, pretonic) [ə] > [ə:] > [ʌ] > [a]; (Environment 2: circumflex, post-tonic) [ə] > [ə°] > [o]. In addition to being longer than schwa, [a] is, of course, a lower vowel. Thus, this innovation has two dimensions, one lengthening, the other lowering. Correspondingly, the *o* reflex reflects both a retention of relative shortness as well as backing and rounding. The final result of this split is, we should note, a merger with already existing phonemes in Slk. In the following paragraphs we shall discuss some of the factors that may have conditioned this differentiation.

Perhaps the most obvious place to test our hypothesis is in the monosyllabic (disyllabic before the fall of the jers) nonderived words under the relevant accentual conditions: the neo-acute (AP *b*), where we would expect lengthened (*a*) reflexes more often, and circumflex (AP *c*, in Nsg M and A sg F), where we would expect shortened ones (*o*). Before proceeding it should be stated that this hypothesis must be put forward with one reservation. Namely, the claim that Slk jer reflexes are linked with pitch distinctions is based on circular reasoning. Circular, since there is no direct evidence of the original pitch distinctions in terms of true quantity in jer reflexes in Slk. Moreover, the S Slavic evidence does not always agree – but rather sometimes points to a more recent redistribution of accentual paradigms in jer stems (e.g., Sn *lân*, *lanû*, indicating AP *c*, and Sn dial. [Cankova] *lân*, SC *lân*, *lâna*, indicating AP *b*, but SC dial. *lân*, *lâna* and Upper Sorbian (USb) *len*, *lenu* corroborate the circumflex accent; see Dybo 1963: 80–1). In order to differentiate later developments of the short root paradigms in S Slavic we shall also compare where possible USb data as cited in Dybo 1963.

AP *b*.

1. C Slk *dášt'* || *d_uošt'*; (< **d_uzdj_o*) cf. Sn *d_ož*, *d_ožj_a*; SC *d_ožd*, *d_ožda*.
2. C Slk *max* || *mox*; (< **max_o*) cf. Sn *m_eh*, *m_eha* (Pleteršnik), but modern standard Sn *m_ah*, *m_ah_u*; SC dial. *m_ah*, *m_aha*, standard SC *m_ah*, *m_aha* ~ *m_aha* (the correspondences from the standard languages reflect the reidentification of this original AP *b* word as belonging to AP *c* in S Slavic, a process described in detail by Illič-Svityč 1963: 125–6; the USb reflex supports the reconstruction as original AP *b*); USb *m_och*, *m_ocha*.
3. C Slk *baza* || *b_uoza* (*b_ieza*); (< **b_uz_o/b_uz_a*) cf. R *b_oz*, *b_z_a*; Sn *b_oz_og*, *b_oz_g_a*; SC *b_aza*, *b_azag*.
4. C Slk *rasca* || *rosca* || (< **rd_uca*); no correspondences, since the word is attested only in Slk (see Habovštiak 1958). AP *b* may be posited only on the basis of the geographical evidence.

Exception:

- C Slk *zdoxla* || *zdexla*; (< **s_udaxl_a*) cf. Sn *d_ohn_it_i*, *d_ohnem* (Pleteršnik); SC *d_ohn_ut_i*, *d_ohne:m*. Comparative evidence points to the reconstruction of this verb as AP *b* (see Bulatova 1975: 215 ff.), and so we expect the *a* reflex in the root. The 1-participle might well have been leveled on other forms, cf. inf. *zdoxn_ut'* (standard and dialects; see Ondrus 1956: 68) with length in the *-n_o- suffix. This would then correlate with our explanation of complementary distribution in connection with the Slk rhythmical law (see below).

AP *c*

- C Slk *voš* || *veš*; (< **v_oš_o*) cf. Sn *u_oš* ~ *u_iš*, *u_oš_i*; SC *v_oš*, *v_oš_i*; USb *w_oš*, *w_oš_e*; see also below on consonantal environments.

Exception:

- C Slk *raž* || *rož*; (< **r_ož_o*) cf. Sn *r_ož*, *r_ož_i*; SC *r_ož*, *r_ož_i*; USb *rož*, *r_ož_e*. Here we expect no *a* reflex. At least two possible explanations for this come to mind: 1. the development parallels the C Slk treatment of the sequence **ort₃*, which has the reflex *rat*- regardless of prosodic conditions, or 2. the n. sg. is analogized with the neo-acute forms.

We find a fairly neat distribution also with disyllabic words under the relevant accent conditions. Under the neo-acute, or perhaps more properly, in pre-tonic position the *a* reflex is widespread in the C Slk area:

1. C Slk *bačka* || *bočka*; (< *bǎčkà) cf. Sn *bǎčkǎ*, *bǎčvǎ*; SC *bǎčva*.
2. C Slk *xrbat* || *xrbuot*; (< *xrbǎtǎ) cf. Sn *hǎrbǎt/hǎrbǎt*, *-bǎtǎ*; SC *hǎrbat* 'back'.
3. C Slk *kotal* || *kotol*; (< *kotǎlǎ) cf. Sn *kǎtǎu*, *-tǎlǎ*; SC *kǎtǎo*, *-tǎlǎ* 'pot'.
4. C Slk *daska* || *doska*; (< *dǎskǎ) cf. R *doskǎ*, *dǎsku*; Sn *dǎskǎ*, *dǎskǎ* (arch. *dǎskǎ*); SC *dǎska*, *dǎsku*. Here the oxytone form occurs in the n. sg. and the C Slk dialects display the expected bifurcation.

In post-tonic position (AP *c*) we contrast *bubon* (< *bǎ:bǎnǎ; cf. Sn *bǎbǎn*; SC *bǎbanj*) 'drum' which has no corresponding *a* reflex in the dialects.

Finally, let us examine the effect of prosody on jers in suffixes of derived words. It is less certain whether these jers ever fell under the ictus. Proceeding from our assumption about the underlying quantity of the alternative jer reflexes *a*, *o* we find a correlation with the Slk rhythmical law. It appears that as concerns the jer reflexes a more general variant of this law operated. That is, the quantitative constraint applied not only sequentially (from left to right, as the law is traditionally stated), but as a rule of quantitative complementarity between syllables. Long-vowel roots followed by jer suffixes have predominantly *o* and no *a* reflexes for the *-ǎkǎ suffix, while short-vowel roots admit the *a* reflex in this position. Precisely this distribution of *o/a* reflexes is found for "inserted vowels" (*vkladné hlásky*) of a-stem Genitive plurals in the Lower and Central Orava dialect, e.g., long roots *dǎjevok* 'girls, daughters', *hlǎvok* 'heads (dim.)', *jǎdiǎrok* 'grains (dim.)', *prǎčok* 'laundresses', *hrabǎčok* 'threshers'; short roots *sestǎr* 'sisters', *karǎt* 'cards', *humǎn* 'hay barns', *vedǎr* 'buckets'. The reflexes in these G. pl. forms are not, strictly speaking, direct phonetic reflexes of etymological strong jers. The morphophonemic rules assigning the two reflexes based on the quantity of the preceding root syllable do, however, point to the original phonetic development of this distribution. That this was a phonetic development is supported by those forms with etymological jers. We observe the same distribution in words found in the *Atlas*. Thus, the *o* reflex appears following long

roots, e.g., *piesok* (< *pě:sǫkǫ; cf. SC *pésak*), *sviečok* (< *svě:čskǫ; cf. SC *svéca* [n. sg.]), *bubon* (< *bŏ:bŏnǫ). Words with short roots admit the *a* reflex, e.g., *česnak* (< *česnǫkǫ; cf. SC *česan*), *stovak* (< *stovǫkǫ).

OTHER FACTORS

Not all of the forms in our corpus may be explained by the prosodic variables alone. At least one consonantal environment appears to condition the *o* reflex regardless of accent conditions, that is, a preceding *v* segment: *von* (here we would otherwise expect the *a* reflex under the neo-acute, cf. Sn *vǝn*), *voš* (AP *c*-under the circumflex accent we expect no *a* reflex; see above), *ovos* (cf. Sn *óvǝs*, *óvsa*; SC *òvas*, *óvsa*). This development is not surprising if we imagine that during the gradual vocalization of jers the labialization of / \underline{u} / was interpreted as a feature of both the consonant and the vowel such that in the process of reevaluating the phonemic value of the jer the factor of labialization was considered as primary and phonetic quantity as secondary. Another potentially disturbing reflex is in *orol* (AP *b*, cf. SC *òrao*, *órla*), a word which appears to satisfy the conditions for the lengthened reflex *a*, namely, it occurs in a disyllable with a preceding short vowel under the neo-acute accent. However, the jer in this position before a liquid appears to have been treated as part of a syllabic liquid in word final position, where a secondary vowel *o* is regularly inserted. This is the characteristic treatment of the m. sg. of l-participles of the type *niesol*, *viedol* (< *nesl̥, *vedl̥ < *nesl̥b, *vedl̥b).

CONCLUSION

It must be admitted that the dearth of examples of Slk jer reflexes given with their geographical distribution makes it impossible to say anything conclusive about them. Later developments in morphology, a realm that we have chosen not to explore in this study, have further obscured the present day picture. However, in the course of our examination of the available material some tendencies have been discerned that point to a phonological explanation for the development of jers in the Common Slavic dialects underlying Slk. To review our findings let us state the generaliza-

tions we have been able to make: 1. the *a* reflex represents a separate innovation, probably due to an underlying difference in the phonological structure of the dialects in question (NW-C Slk); 2. the *a* reflex in NW-C Slk is connected with: the neo-acute accent and complementary distribution of quantity (the Slk rhythmical law); 3. the reflexes are constrained by certain consonantal environments.

In light of these tendencies we may posit a dialect area in NW-C Slk that during the emergence of the Slk dialects as a separate entity within the Common Slavic dialect complex (i.e., at the time of the fall and vocalization of the jers) subtly differed in structure from the remaining Slk dialects. In our opinion we are dealing with a *complex* isogloss, where the results of an innovation in one area differ due to structural differences brought to bear upon the innovation in question. The character of this complex isogloss is manifested in the tendency to lower jers to [a] under conditions of phonetic length in the NW-C Slk dialects, where we find *o* reflexes elsewhere in C Slk. Such a conclusion is consistent with the theory of heterogeneous settlement of the early Slk territory, posited by a number of scholars (cf. Krajčovič 1974 with references). This complexity is, of course, in addition to the structural differences between the C dialects in the larger sense versus the W and E dialects, which are well established based on other phenomena (see footnote 2). The underlying structural difference of the NW-C sector of Slk concerns the reevaluation of jer reflexes under distinct prosodic conditions as a difference of vowel quality. This process of reinterpretation of centralized vowels parallels the S Slavic state of affairs (i.e., the lowered *a* reflex), particularly that of Sn and Kajkavian SC, as we have pointed out above. If we isolate the *a* reflex of the jers as a general tendency, we obtain the following distribution among the dialects in question:

| dialects | Prosodic conditions | | |
|--------------|---------------------|------------|------------|
| | neo-acute | circumflex | post-tonic |
| C Slk | × | — | — |
| Sn/Kajkavian | — | × | — |
| other SC | × | × | × |

C Slk shares with Sn and Kajkavian the tendency to lower the jer only under conditions of length, i.e., under the neo-acute (pretonically) in Slk and under the circumflex in Sn and Kajkavian. Standard SC and its dialects (with the exception of more peripheral dialects, e.g., Torlak, Kajkavian) have tended to lower the jer reflex to [a] regardless of prosodic conditions. The outcome of this innovation in C Slk, which is by all indications related to the S Slavic jer development, is nevertheless distinctly a W Slavic and, more precisely, a Slk innovation, since its domain is the accentual phenomena specific to Slk, namely, lengthening under the neo-acute accent and a rule of complementary quantity between adjacent syllables (i.e., the Slk rhythmical law).

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Abbreviations

- AfslPh* = Archiv für slavische Philologie
JC = Jazykovedný časopis
JS = Jazykovedné štúdie
LS = Lud słowiański
WSJ = Wiener slavistisches Jahrbuch
Zfs/Ph = Zeitschrift für slavische Philologie

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