The accent of Slavic *ja(žb) ‘I’

Mate Kapović

Introduction

The aim of this article is to deal with the accentuation of the Slavic first person nominative singular personal pronoun *ja(žb). Before examining the accentuation itself, we will analyze the material and try to resolve the question of the two forms in Slavic, which is related to the problem of the accentuation.

Material

First we shall adduce the forms for ‘I’ in the Slavic literary languages: OCS azъ, Bulgarian aз, Macedonian jac, Croatian jȃ, Slovene jȃz, Czech já, Slovak ja, Lusatian ja, Polabian jo, joz, Polish ja, Kashubian i̯ω, Slovincian jǻu, Russian/Ukrainian/Byelorussian я́.

Old Church Slavic

OCS shows a form without the initial j- (azъ), unlike all the other Slavic languages except Bulgarian. This is usually the only form mentioned in OCS grammars; however, jazъ is a hapax in Codex Marianus, which could be due to the influence of the dialect area in which the text was written.

1 This article was originally a part of my PhD dissertation (Kapović 2006).
3 SP, Diels 1932–4: 77, Słoński 1950: 84, Nandriş 1959: 104. According to Đorđić (1975: 105), jazъ occurs a number of times after the conjunction i – i ězъ (in Glagolitic script), i jazъ (in Cyrillic script). In fact, even the occurrence of jazъ (i.e. ězъ) in Codex Marianus is in this position: všprošǫ i ězъ (Mar. 162, 6–7). Weingart (1937–8: 200) considers this to be a sandhi variant of azъ in a hiatus.
4 The origin of Codex Marianus is disputed. According to Jagić (1883), judging by the sporadic changes φ > u, y > i, νν > u, ĵ > e, the manuscript could have been written in Croatian or Serbian speaking area (i.e. Štokavian, judging by νν > u). Hamm thinks that the vocalization of the jers
In Croatian and Russian Church Slavonic, there is the same form as in OCS (CCS azъ/azь, RCS azъ). In Psalterium Sinaiticum (Ps. 38, 13), the OCS form a is found. Diels (1932–4: 214) and Nandriş (1959: 105) take this form to be a mistake, but it probably represents the OCS j-less pendant of the form ja in other Slavic languages.

Bulgarian

The Bulgarian form is also j-less, in accord with OCS. Dialectally, besides аз, one also finds the forms азека, азекана, азкана, я, язе, язка, язекана (ESSJ), ас, йа,7 яз (Vasmer 1950–8), язека, яска, ази, азе8 etc. The Bulgarian j-less form аз must be of the same dialectal origin as OCS azъ. For the attestation of яз, я and аз in Bulgarian dialects, cf. БДА 1: 160. The form аз is attested in southeastern Bulgaria, the form я is attested not only in the west of Bulgaria, but also in the southeast.9 The form я could be attributed to the Serbian influence in some cases.10

Macedonian

The Macedonian literary form jac shows an initial j-, thus differing from OCS and literary Bulgarian. In dialects, one also finds ja (SP) – for instance in North-West Macedonia, jáska (Małecki 1934), ac, acка, jазека (ESSJ) etc.

Croatian

The Croatian literary form is jȃ (ni jȃ, i jȃ with a Neo-Štokavian retraction of accent). Most dialects have a z-less form, except for some of the North-West Čakavian and a few Kajkavian dialects (in Štokavian, there are no forms with the final -z anywhere). Two types of accentuation exist – the most common variant with the neo-acute (˘), or with ˘ < ˘ in the dialects that do not preserve ˘, and the rarer variant with the short falling accent (‘). Again, the latter is non-existent in Štokavian dialects; it occurs marginally in Kajkavian and regularly in North-

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5 According to Mihaljević (in press), in Croatian Glagolitic fragments from 12th and 13th century only the forms azъ/azь/az appear. There is no attestation of native ja or even jaz in these texts.

7 Стойков 1993: 90, 250.
8 Мирчев 1963: 163.
9 SP, Харалампиев 2001: 108.
10 Бернщейн 1948: 325–326.
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West Čakavian. In Štokavian for instance: Posavina jã, Neo-Štokavian jå (everywhere).

In Čakavian, as already said – there is a neo-acute in the South and Central Čakavian: cf. Vrgada jôã, Hvar jã (Jurišić 1973), Blato (Korčula) jå (personal data), Pag jå (no neo-acute, Kustić 2002), Rivanj jå (no neo-acute, Radulić 2002), Murter jã (personal data), Senj jå (Moguš 1966: 78) etc. In the North, there is a short falling accent here: Novi jå (Bezivrh 1909: 199), Istra jã (but also jås, jã) (Jurišić 1973), Cresa (town) jã (Tentor 1909: 172, 1950: 75), Bejša Tramuntana (Cres) jã (Velčić 2003), Orlec (Cres) jã (Houtzagers 1985), Tometići (near Kastav) jås (but only when by itself, Skok 1971–4), Kastav jãz, Silba jåz (Bezlaj), but Orbanići jã(s) (Kalsbeek 1998) etc. In Istra, the form jaz was attested already in 1454 (Bezlaj).

In Kajkavian, the form with the neo-acute (or long falling if ̃ < ˘ in the final syllable or in general) and with no -z is the most frequent by far: Samobor jã, jå sem (no neo-acute in the final syllable, Šojat 1973c: 53), Ozalj jã (no neo-acute there, Težak 1981), Turopolje jã (no neo-acute in the final syllable, Šojat 1982), Repušnica, Varaždin jã (no neo-acute in the final syllable, Brlobaš 1999, Lipljin 2002), Cerje jã (no neo-acute in the final syllable, Šojat 1973b), Brdovec (today Kajkavian, but genetically Čakavian) jã/jã (Šojat 1973a: 42). However, in Bednja (Jedvaj 1956), we find jȅz (older and more frequent), jô (younger), Štuparje jås (older people), jã (younger people) (personal data). A similar thing is found in Gregurovec Veternički: jås and jã (Jembrih & Lončarić 1982–3: 41).12

Until the beginning of the 17th century, jaz was common in Kajkavian texts – for instance in Pergošić’s language. In his Decretum from 1574, jaz occurs only four times (pages 5, 6, 147, 187), due to the legal nature of the text. Out of these four times, jaz was written 1× as <iaz>, 2× as <iaaz> and 1× as <iâz> which strongly suggests that it was indeed jâz (or jãz). According to Šojat (1970: 89), the form ja became the main one from the beginning of the 17th century under the influence of the spoken dialects. However, already in Vramec’s Postilla from 1586, apparently only ja appears (for instance, on pages 8, 9, 12 – 3×, 13 – 3×, 14 – 3×, 180 etc.). It is interesting that Vramec always writes <ia> for ja, which might point to jã rather than jâl/jâ, considering that Vramec often indicates the length by doubling the vowel.13 Since, due to the doubling of the vowel is inconsistent, one cannot be certain. According to Šojat (1970: 89) and Junković (1972: 125), in the 16th century

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11 Ivšić 1913, II: 34 or 1971: [373].
12 The authors dub the form jås older and the variant jã younger. The form jã is more frequent, especially if before a word beginning with a consonant, while jås is used before words beginning with a vowel (e.g. jås ţõnda veļĩm, jås ţådęm). It is interesting to note the long falling accent in jã, in spite of the fact that this dialect preserves the neo-acute in all positions, cf. bik, pôt, stõp, strĩc etc. (Jembrih & Lončarić 1982–3: 32). That could perhaps indicate there we are dealing with a loanword from another Kajkavian dialect here.
13 For instance: znaam ‘I know’, kluucz ‘key’, kraal ‘king’, daal ‘gave’, deen ‘day’, deel ‘part’, zaam ‘alone’ etc. However, this is not consistent, cf. glaz ‘voice’.
works of Antun Vramec one finds both ja and jaz. I was not able to verify that on the material of Postilla, as already said. The form jaz is also found, for instance, in Pavlinski zbornik from the year 1644 (Šojat 1992: 26).

In Štokavian, the form ja is attested from the earliest times, for instance in Povelja Kulina bana from the year 1189 (ARj IV: 378) and elsewhere. Petar Budmani in ARj claims that the form jaz (jazь), as well as az/azь, is not native but taken from OCS. He provides two Štokavian examples of jazь from 1186 and 1198–9. However, it is not clear if these examples are undoubtedly OCS loanwords (as azь certainly is).14 Budmani also considers the Kajkavian example jas (or jaz?) from the year 1587 a Slovene loanword, but that seems an unnecessary assumption.

Slovene

The Slovene literary form is jazь. Snoj also adduces the younger variant jazь.15 Cf. iaz already in the Freising Monuments and the forms jas, ya, ye in the 16th century texts of the protestant writer Krejl (Bezlaj). In Središče, both jaz and ja exist.16 Pletersnik adduces jà for Eastern Styria and Bela krajina,17 cf. also jà for Bela Krajina (and elsewhere) in Bezlj. In the dialects one also finds jést (< *jast) in Cerkno (FO 1981: 70), jëst in Hrušica (FO 1981: 114) etc. Forms with a final -st appear already from the 15th century (Bezlaj).

According to de Courtenay (1929: 228), the Slovene dialect of Rezija distinguished forms jaz, used by males, and ja, used by females. However, Steenwijk (1992: 119) claims that the forms are just free variants and not gender-related, the form jas being more “authoritative”.18

Czech

The literary form in Czech is jà. In Old Czech, there was also jázь. The form jà occurs from the beginning of the 14th century.19 Since there are no earlier attestations of this pronoun at all, this means that both forms were used from the very

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14 For ja/jaz in Croatian and Serbian old texts, cf. also Даничић 1874: 215.
15 This accent is found in Snoj only. The change jáz > jazь is due to the very recent sporadic lengthening of the final short vowels in Slovene. This change is the part of a tendency to eliminate the quantitative oppositions in Slovene. Cf. also bat > bát, mák > mák, kràs > krás etc. (Šekli 2003: 33).
17 The attestation of jà in Bela krajina is not so important since that dialect is in fact genetically Croatian, not Slovene.
18 In Bezlj, the forms jás, jàs and jà are adduced for Rezija.
19 It occurs, for instance, already in Alexandreis, which could in fact stem not from the beginning of the 14th, but from the end of the 13th century (each form, jázь and jà, occurs seven times in the text).
beginning of Old Czech literary tradition. The form *já* was used in Czech as up until the end of the 15th century.²⁰

As for some other attestations of Old Czech *já* and *já*, cf. for instance *Dalimila*, which dates from sometime between 1308/1310 and 1314, where *já* is found only eight times (each time at the beginning of the sentence) and *já* 27 times; in the Old Czech text *Katonova dvojverší* (found in 6 manuscripts – one from the second half of 14th century and 5 from 15th century), we find both *já* (“já pomyslí”) and *já* (“naučím já tě”) (58b); in *Závišova píseň* (*Jižť mne vše radost ostává*) from the end of 14th century one finds only *já* five times; *já* is found also in the 14th century Czech translation of the Bible (*SBDO*, e. g. page 293) and in the 14th century epic *Věvoda Arnošt* etc.

**Slovak**

The Slovak literary form is *ja*. Since the real beginnings of the Slovak literary language are not older than the end of the 18th century, it is hardly surprising that there is no attestation of final -z in Slovak.²¹ The fact that the modern Slovak dialects do not show the final -z anywhere is in accord with the same fact in modern Czech. If Slovak were attested earlier (not just in traces in Czech texts), we would probably also find the final -z there, as in Old Czech (cf. however Old Polish with only one doubtful attestation of the z-form). The Slovak literary form *ja* differs from the Czech form *já* in length only on the surface. The length was originally there in Slovak as well (as it still is in dialects), but one cannot see it in Central Slovak because there *já* > *ja* regularly (cf. Czech *voják*, Croatian *vòjāk* but Slovak *vojak*). Thus, Slovak *ja* stems from an earlier form *já* still attested in dialects. Older form still, also attested in dialects, is *já*.²² The form *já* is attested in Central and Eastern Gomér (North-West Slovakia) and Lower Orava (South-East Slovakia), in Central Slovak dialects which had no diphthongization *ā* > *ja*, and in Western Liptova. The form *já* is attested in the South-West of Slovakia and in Central Orava (where *ā* > *á*), cf. also SSN, Orlovský 1982 (Gomér), HSSJ. In Central Slovak, in North West Slovak and in East Slovak, the form *ja* occurs.²³ In Central Slovak, this form is explained via the diphthongization of *ā* > *ja* according to which the old *já* yields *jía*, which then results with a form *ja*, due to the change of *jj* > *j*. In East Slovak, the form *ja* is due to shortening (*jå* > *já* > *ja*). In East Novohrad, *ā* > *ej* (thus the forms *jej* and *ej*).²⁴

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²² In Slovak, *ā* after soft consonant yields *ā* which then yields *iá* > *ia*.
²⁴ Pauliny 1990, *ibid.*
Lusatian
In Lusatian, only the form *ja* is attested, including older texts and dialects.

Polabian
In Polabian, one finds *jo* and *joz* when accented, and *ja* and *jaz* when unaccented.\(^{25}\) According to Schleicher (1871: 259), the forms *joz*, *jo* are more frequent. The form *jo* occurs in front of verbs, for instance in *jo jis* < *"ja jisme".*

Polish
The modern Polish literary form is *ja*. However, in Polish dialects which preserve ā < *ā*, one finds the form *jâ* with the attested length, as in Czech. Cf. also Kashubian *jô* (*ω* < *ā*) and Slovincian *jâu* (*SP*). In Old Polish, the form *jaz* is attested only as a hapax in 15th century in *Psalterz floriański* 108, 3.\(^{26}\) However, according to some authors,\(^{27}\) this is in fact a Czech loanword. The shorter form *ja* is attested in Polish already in 13th century.

East Slavic
Modern East Slavic languages all have the form *я*. This form appears already in Old Russian, as early as the year 1130 in *Мстиславова грамота*, together with the longer form *язъ* and the OCS form *азъ*, without any noticeable difference between these three forms – “съ азъ Мстиславъ”, “а язъ далъ”, “а съ я Всеволод”.\(^{28}\) Kiparsky (1967: 130-131) says that this only supports the conclusion that the forms *я* and *яз* were used in Russian for a long period without any significant stylistic difference. This is confirmed by Гадолина (1963) who gives clear examples of how both *я* and *яз* in Russian occurred in the emphasized and in the non-emphasized position. According to Черных (1962: 218), *яз* was still a very usual form in the first half of the 16th century in Moscow (although it was not the only existing form). According to Черных, both forms co-existed in Russian until the 17th century. However, Cocron (1962: 133) and Гадолина (1963: 26) claim that the form *я* was the only possible form already in the 17th century. Interestingly, the forms *яз* and *яз-to* were found in *былина* songs up to the 19th century (Черных, *ibid.*).

In Ukrainian, the form *я* is attested from 1322 and *яз* from 1341 (*CCM*).

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\(^{26}\) Łoś 1927/III: 159, SS, *SP*.
\(^{27}\) Klemensiewicz, Lehr-Splawiński & Urbaniczky 1955: 321.
\(^{28}\) For attestations of these forms in Old Russian, cf. Срезневский 1893–1903, *СДЯ* and *СДЯ* 2.
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Overview

1 Standard languages

**Only z-forms:** Bulgarian, Macedonian, Slovene  
**Only z-less forms:** Croatian, Serbian, Slovak, Czech, Polish, Upper Lusatian, Lower Lusatian, Russian, Ukrainian, Byelorussian

2 Modern dialects

**Only z-forms:** –  
**Only z-less forms:** Štokavian, Czech, Slovak, Polish, Kashubian, Slovincian, Upper Lusatian, Lower Lusatian, Russian, Ukrainian, Byelorussian  
**Z- and z-less forms both:** Bulgarian, Macedonian, Čakavian, Kajkavian, Slovak, Polish

3 Historical attestations

**Only z-forms:** –  
**Only z-less forms:** Štokavian (?), Slovak, Lusatian  
**Z-less and z-forms in the past:** Bulgarian, Čakavian, Kajkavian, Slovene, Czech, Polish (?), Polabian, Russian

The final *-zъ in Slavic

Traditionally, it has been taken as obvious by most linguists that the form *(j)azъ with final -z(ъ) is the original one. The form *ja was always considered somehow secondary, as a result of some sort of secondary dropping of the final -z(ъ). This supposed dropping of the final -z(ъ) in Slavic has been explained in many ways. Here, we shall mention a few of those and discuss them briefly.

One of the explanations is that the -z(ъ) was dropped because of the sandhi positions like jaz sam or jaz znam (Solmsen as quoted in ARj for instance). As already noted very sharply by Budmani in ARj, the case of jaz sam can hardly prove anything, since the only two modern Slavic languages that have only the shortened s-initial forms of the 1st person singular present tense of the verb ‘to be’ are exactly the only two modern Slavic languages which have preserved the final -z (Slovene and Bulgarian). The collocation jaz znam is more convincing, but it is hard to imagine that this would be so frequent that it would cause the -z to be dropped completely.

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29 For some of the languages, like Kashubian and Slovincian, there is almost no historical data. In the case of East Slavic languages, the histories of Russian, Byelorussian and Ukrainian are not easily discernable. The same is true of Bulgarian and Macedonian and Czech and Slovak.

30 Although it is difficult to speak of tradition when so many different theories exist.

31 We shall take the Croatian form as an example here.
An explanation similar to this is one which states that the supposed shortening of jaz(ъ) to ja is simply an allegro process.\textsuperscript{32} This is possible but still ad hoc.

Another explanation is that jaz(ъ) is shortened by analogy to ty (and my and vy)\textsuperscript{33} because in this way all the nominatives of the personal pronouns are monosyllabic and end in a vowel. This explanation seems perfectly possible.

Yet another explanation, similar to the previous one, is that ja was created as an unaccented monosyllabic variant of bisyllabic jazъ so that ja – jazъ would function in the same way as mi – mъně, me – mene etc. (Jakobson, cited from Трудачев 1974 – accepted by Gluhak 1993 for instance).

Vaillant (1958: 443),\textsuperscript{34} for instance, believed that both *ja and *jazъ originate from an older *jaz in the same way that the original *ot produced the form otъ (with an unetymological final ər) besides the expected ot- and o-. Thus, according to this explanation, ja would be a regular, expected form and jazъ would have an unetymological ər which has risen to stop the dropping of the final -z, while being in accord with the law of the open syllables. However, since Slavic *-a can be derived directly from the attested IE *-om,\textsuperscript{35} there is no need to assume that it is a secondary development. Also, the case of otъ (and izъ) is not quite same as the case of jazъ. In the first case, we have a preposition (used also as a verbal prefix) and in the second one we have a pronoun form. In the case of ot > otъ and iz > izъ (cf. Lithuanian at-, dial. and older iž), the reason for the introduction of the unetymological -ə was to prevent the making of the variants ot- and o-, which would lead to semantic confusion (cf. the preposition/prefix ob-/o-). Thus, -ə was introduced to prevent verbs like *ot-nesti `take away’ becoming *o-nesti, while having *ot-iti 'go away' in the same time. There is also a possibility that the final -ə here was introduced by analogy to the prepositions kr, v, sb (Gluhak 1993). In the case of *jaz, there is no reason whatsoever to introduce an unetymological -ə. The proto-form *jaz would simply yield *ja and the final *-z would be gone forever, just like the final *-s that disappeared in the o-stem nominative singular ending *-us > -ə. Moreover, if *ja were the only original form, one would expect the acute here as the result of Winter’s Law – *jǎ < PIE *ég. However, in that case it would be impossible to explain the neo-acute accentuation that also appears in

\textsuperscript{32} Cf. for instance Meillet 1934: 452, SP, Boryś 2005.
\textsuperscript{33} Cf. for instance Гадолина 1963: 14, Иванов 1983: 295.
\textsuperscript{34} Accepted for instance in Aitzetmüller 1991: 107–108, Bańkowski 2000 etc.
\textsuperscript{35} The evidence for the reconstruction of PIE *eǵHóm with final *-óm is not as firm as is usually presumed. The attestation of *-om in Indo-Iranian is not very relevant since this *-om is practically omnipresent in personal pronouns. However, the agreement of the accent of Vedic ahām and Slavic *jazъ (see § 13) points to the PIE *-óm and is highly indicative. It is possible that the proliferation of *-óm in Indo-Iranian started from this form. Greek ἐγώ almost certainly reflects this *-óm indirectly and at least some of the Germanic forms can probably be derived from *eǵHóm. The strongest case for the reconstruction of PIE *-óm comes from Slavic -ə, since this cannot be explained as secondary as Vaillant wants to. Thus, in spite of the difficulties, it seems that the reconstruction of PIE *eǵHóm is founded.
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this form (see § 13). Thus, Vaillant’s idea has to be rejected, since the cases of otъ and jazъ are not comparable and since the accentual data cannot be explained by his hypothesis.

As we have seen, some of these explanations are indeed possible. However, there is another possibility – to presume that both of these forms, both *ja and *jazъ, are original and thus derived directly from Indo-European forms *ēǵ and *ēgHóm. This idea is not new, in spite of the fact that it was never very popular. This may strike us as a little bit odd, since it was clear for quite some time that there were at least two forms of this pronoun in IE, which would in Slavic yield exactly the forms we have attested – ja and jazъ. Thus, it is strange that so many linguists have gone at such trouble to explain the mysterious supposed disappearance of the final -z(ъ), when there was no need to assume any disappearance in the first place. One can imagine that one of the, probably unconscious, reasons for this is the fact that in OCS only the form with the final -zъ is attested. Thus, because of the false unconscious prejudice that OCS is for all practical purposes identical to Proto-Slavic, many linguists were probably prone to reject any possibility of ja to be old, since it did not appear in OCS.

There is more than one explanation as to why there is only one example of the short form in OCS. The simplest explanation would perhaps be that this alternative form was lost in the dialect that was the basis of OCS. That can hardly be considered impossible since there are quite a number of such cases – it is not always true that OCS forms are the oldest, in spite of the fact that OCS is the first attested Slavic language. Thus, for instance, OCS has the ending -tъ in the 3rd person singular of the present tense, which is, according to the comparative IE evidence, apparently secondary to the ending -tь, attested in Old Russian and Old Polish. To name another example, in OCS, the ending of the n-stem dative plural is the obviously secondary -amъ, with the final -tъ taken from the i-stems, while in Old Croatian (in Povelja Kulina bana from 1189) one finds the ending -am which represents the original ending. The same goes for the OCS ending of the instrumental singular of i-stems where we find the ending -bь (taken from ā-stems and there from the pronouns), while in modern Croatian we find a variant -i which is the reflex of the original IE ending *-ih₁. One can think of other reasons why there was no short form in OCS texts – for instance, the longer form *jazъ (i.e. azъ in OCS) could have been regarded as a solemn form in opposition to ja, which could have been regarded as a colloquial or intimate variant. This is of course speculation, but it is nonetheless possible.

36 Cf. for instance Kluge 2002, Якубинский 1953: 200, Schmidt 1978: 27. Others have also accepted the two forms already in Proto-Slavic, even if they did not attribute them directly to IE heritage, cf. for instance Lehr-Splawiński & Bartula 1954: 51 and Arumaa 1985: 159.

37 Although this is also not completely true, since, as we have seen, the form a is also attested in OCS, if only as a hapax in Psalterium Sinaiticum.

38 Or none, if one does not accept the form a of Psalterium Sinaiticum as relevant.
The question to be asked is – why should we presume the existence of two forms, \( *ja \) and \( *jazъ \), at all? What are the reasons to consider this theory at all? There are a couple of good answers to this question, some of which have already been mentioned:

Firstly, the simple fact is that both \( *ja \) and \( *jazъ \) can be derived very easily from Indo-European and Balto-Slavic. In fact, no one really doubts that the form with the final \( -*zъ \) is old,\(^{39}\) and this form is very well attested outside Balto-Slavic (Vedic \( ahám \)), while the form \( ja \) (from \( *jaz \) in pre-law-of-the-open-syllables Slavic) has a direct correspondence in Baltic.\(^{40}\) If there is a short form attested in Baltic, why should we assume that this short form had disappeared in Slavic just to be resurrected again via some irregular \textit{allegro} process or analogy? Thus, if one can explain both forms easily by deriving them regularly from IE, there is no point in struggling to explain \( ja \) in a different fashion.

Second reason for the assumption of the two original forms is the fact that, as was already seen (cf. the section Material), in many Slavic languages, the \( z \)-less forms occur rather early. For instance:

- in Štokavian only \( ja \) occurs already from the 12th century
- in Kajkavian texts, \( ja \) and \( jaz \) seem to occur at the same time
- in Old Czech, the \( z \)-less form occurs together with the longer one from the very beginnings of the literary tradition
- in Polish, the \( z \)-less forms is practically the only one since the first texts
- in Russian both forms occur together from the earliest times

Thus one has to take into consideration the option that Proto-Slavic had both the form \( *ja \) and \( *jazъ \), and that only later one of these forms was generalized in various Slavic languages – the form \( *ja \) was usually more successful.

The third reason is that, like the two variants of the same pronoun that exist in Slavic, two types of accent can also be found. This has up until now, to my knowledge, never been taken as an archaism. These two types of accentuation must be related to these two different forms – it can hardly be a coincidence that there is evidence not only for two different forms, but for two different accents of the same pronoun. The existence of the two types of accentuation provides an independent indication that there were two different forms for ‘I’ in Slavic. If there had been only one form, there would be no reason for it to have two different accents.

\(^{39}\) Except Vaillant, see above.
\(^{40}\) Except for the fact that the final consonant is devoiced there, which also solves the disagreement in the vocalism.
The accent of *`ja(z)` 'I'

As we have already seen in the chapter Material, two types of accentuation are attested in the 1st person nominative singular pronoun in Slavic. Most languages point to the neo-acute (`*`jãzъ): Old Štokavian jã, Neo-Štokavian jâ (i jâ), South and Central Čakavian jã, Kajkavian (most dialects) jâ. Czech já (Old Czech já(z)), Slovak dial. já, Polish dial. jà, Kashubian jów and Slovincian jûu. On the other hand, Slovene jâz (dialect also jâ), North Čakavian jâ(z) and Kajkavian jâ(z) (in some dialects) point to the old acute (`*`jâzъ). In Old Russian, язъ is an «энклиномен» (which points to the old circumflex), but this must be due to the analogical influence of the other personal pronouns мы, мы́, вы in which this is expected. Here is an overview of the reflexes in Slavic:

- **Neo-acute**
  - Štokavian, South/Central Čakavian, Kajkavian (most dialects), Czech/Slovak, (Old and dial.) Polish, Kashubian, Slovincian
- **Acute**
  - Slovene, North Čakavian, Kajkavian (marginally)
- **Circumflex**
  - Old Russian

The problem of two kinds of accents is obviously very interesting. It is a stunning fact that it was, to my knowledge, never treated in the literature in more than a couple of sentences.

Three solutions are possible here – the first one is to assume that the acute is the original accent; the second one is that the neo-acute is original; and the third one is that both accents are original, i.e. that neither is secondary.

The first possibility is taken up by Kortlandt who claims, very shortly, that the acute, preserved in Slovene jâz (as well as in the neighboring Čakavian dialects), is the original (Balto-)Slavic accent. Kortlandt believes that Old Štokavian jã and South Čakavian jã are the result of the later secondary lengthening. A similar claim is made by Vaillant (1958: 443) who says that the Štokavian jà is the result of a compensatory lengthening and that (North) Čakavian jà(z) represents the

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41 Czech já(z) could theoretically be derived from *`jâzъ` as well but in the light of Slovak dial. já, this seems highly unlikely, and the Czech form should also be derived from *`jâzъ`.  
42 Зализняк 1985: 143.  
43 Cf. a typological parallel in Štokavian, where tì, mì and vì have the neo-acute by analogy to the form jà where this is expected.  
44 The innovative Slovene form jâz (cf. § 5f) has no connection to this form.  
46 It must be noted, however, that Kortlandt bases his theory on the subject on his own doctrine of Slavic accentuation, many postulates of which I do not accept. Thus, his views on the subject are hardly explainable in the non-Kortlandt doctrine – for instance, in Kortlandt 2007, he says that Czech and Slovak have preserved the original short reflex of the acute in ty, my, vy. However, according to my view, and to the view of the most Slavic accentologists, the original reflex of the acute is long in Czech and short in Slovak. This is one of the reasons why Kortlandt's theory cannot really be accepted by accentologists who are not working within the framework of the Leiden doctrine.
original Proto-Slavic form. Kortlandt and Vaillant aside, there are several reasons why the theory of the original acute cannot be correct. First of all, the proposed lengthening is completely ad hoc and there is no real explanation for it (except, of course, the ever present allegro change, which is not impossible, but still not very convincing). Secondly, if we were to suppose that the acute is the original accent here, we would have to assume a secondary ad hoc lengthening not only in Štokavian and South/Central Čakavian, but also in Kajkavian, Czech, Slovak, Polish and Slovincian. Somehow, this possibility does not strike me as very economical.

The second possibility is to assume that the neo-acute is the original accent here, and that the short reflexes in Slovene, North Čakavian, and marginally in Kajkavian are secondary and due to an allegro shortening. However, this view, in spite of the fact that it is more economical than the former, because it supposes allegro shortening only in three neighboring dialects (and not in seven or so widely spread ones), is again troubled by the fact that yet again one must subside to the help of the mysterious allegro changes and ad hoc developments. It is unclear why jâ(z) would be shortened to jȁ(z), while there was no shortening of tî, mî, vî anywhere.

Thus, as already said, the deficiency of both of these approaches, in spite of the fact that these kinds of irregular secondary lengthening and shortening in short forms like these ones are theoretically possible, is that they presume ad hoc lengthening and shortening, not attested elsewhere in these languages. For instance, there is no parallel for the change of jâ > jȁ elsewhere in Štokavian. Kortlandt’s theory is even more unbelievable since it includes, among other things, lengthening in Slovene tî, but the absence of it in jâz.

The third approach, however, seems more reasonable. If we have established that there were probably two forms of the pronoun in question already in Common Slavic, *ja and *jaz, and since we already know for sure that there were at least two different forms of this pronoun in PIE, why not assume that there were two types of accent in Slavic, if this is what the material points to? Why not assume that somehow both the old acute and the neo-acute are original in Slavic? Since we already have two forms – *ja and *jaz, why should we not relate these two forms to the two different kinds of accentuation that the material seems to point at? The logical thing to do would be to assume that the old acute is the original accent of the shorter form *jâ, and that the neo-acute is the original accent of the longer form *jâz. In this way, Common Slavic *jâ could be derived from

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47 This is the view of Bulcsú László (personal communication).
48 Kortlandt (1997: 29) believes that the falling tone in Slovene ti, mî, vî, but the rising one in Posavina southern Čakavian points to the secondary lengthening of an originally short vowel (i.e. the reflex of the old acute). However, he provides no reason for this supposed “secondary lengthening”.
49 *éǵ as attested in Old Lithuanian eš, and *égh₃óm as attested in Slavic jaz or in Vedic ahām.
The accent of Slavic *ja(zъ) ‘I’

PIE *éǵ with the acute as the result of Winter’s law. The absence of the acute in Lithuanian ės is easily explained if we derive Lithuanian ės and Old Lithuanian ėš from a PIE *čk, a sandhi variant with the devoiced ending, which was generalized in Baltic and in front of which, logically, there was no Winter’s law and hence no acute. Common Slavic *jāzъ is to be derived from the older *jāz̄, with the neo-acute as the result of Ivšić’s Rule. It is only natural to relate a neo-acute to a form that has two syllables, because the neo-acute demands an extra syllable (i.e. a weak jer) in order to be explained convincingly. Slavic *jāzъ can also be directly derived from the PIE form *eǵHóm (Vedic ahám) with the final accent. The lengthening in Slavic can be explained here also via Winter’s law. Here, Winter’s Law has produced the acute pretonic length. In Slavic, the acute has been lost in unaccented positions, and when the stress was finally retracted via Ivšić’s Rule, the syllable received the usual neo-acute intonation.

PIE *éǵ > Slavic *jā
PIE *eǵHóm (Vedic ahám) > Slavic *jāzъ > *jāzь

Thus, as we have concluded, there were two forms originally in Slavic – *jā and *jāzъ < *jāz̄. What has happened after Common Slavic period? These two forms must have mixed, probably from an early age. Thus, the forms *jā and *jāzъ (cf. Slovene dial. jā and standard jāz) have emerged, as well as *jāz̄ and *jā (cf. Old Czech jáz and jā). Various languages/dialects have generalized one of the two accents in both forms, and that is what we see now in modern Slavic forms. First, there were two forms and two accents, then two forms and one accent, and finally one form and one accent. The generalization of the accent had finished before the disappearance of the two different forms. In the small area consisting of Slovene, part of Kajkavian and North Čakavian, the acute was generalized in both forms.

50 For this reconstruction, cf. also Bańkowski 2000, who takes it as a dialectal IE form.
51 In the Slavic nominal system, *-b in the nominative-accusative (< IE *-os, *-om) could not be accented before Diakó’s Law. Slavic had an initial accent in the nominative-accusative of the a. p. c., having thus lost the *-ós of the IE a-stem oxytones (which were the source of Slavic a. p. c.)
In *jāz̄, however, the original place of the accent was preserved. This is not surprising, since the pronominal system often behaves differently from the nominal one – cf. Lithuanian forms like anās (the nominative -as cannot be accented in the nominal declension).
52 The retraction of the accent from a weak jer.
53 Ivšić (1911: 194) first proposed this explanation.
54 Cf. the closed syllable, which is necessary according to Matasović’s interpretation of Winter’s Law (see for instance Matasović 1995). For the development *ē > *jā-, cf. Kapović 2006.
55 This is the only logical assumption. That is clear from the fact that the old mobile acute paradigm has remained mobile, which points to the conclusion that the accent was not retracted to the acute pretonic vowel, as could be presumed, or the old mobile acute nouns would all get a fixed old acute on the root (thus, Lithuanian a. p. 3 would be related not to Slavic a. p. c, but to Slavic a. p. a). The old acute pretonic long vowels behave just like the old non-acute pretonic long vowels, which must mean that the acute has just disappeared if it was not accented.
(cf. North Čakavian jȃ and jȃz). In the rest of the Slavic languages (excluding the unclear East Slavic), the neo-acute was generalized in both forms (Old Czech jȃ and jȃz). Thus, the generalizing of the accent, as already said, occurred earlier than the generalization of one of the two forms and is therefore independent of it.

**Slavic *jȃ and Meillet’s Law**

The paradigms of Slavic personal pronouns, including the 1st person singular personal pronoun, are clearly mobile (cf. Зализняк 1985: 143 who puts all the personal pronouns into Old Russian a. p. c). We find the familiar traits of a. p. c here: absolute initial accent – *mȅne, *mę̑ (like *gȍrdъ ‘town, *gòlvǫ ‘head’) and final accent – *mъnȩ, *mьnojǫ̍ (like L. *golvȩ, *golvojǫ̍, *gordomъ). Of course, the mobile paradigm of the personal pronouns has its own special peculiarities, just like the verbs have theirs, adjectives theirs, just like the i-stems are different from the o- and u-stems etc.

In the nominative-accusative of the personal pronouns, we find the forms with the circumflex in Slavic57, i.e. unaccented words or the words with the absolute initial accent: *mȅ, *tȗ, *tłę, *mȗ, *nȗ, *nȗ, *vȗ, *nȃ, *vȃ. Forms like Old Prussian toū, ioūs or Latvian jûs point to the Balto-Slavic acute in these forms. The discrepancy of Baltic and Slavic is easily explained – since the paradigm is mobile in Slavic, Meillet’s Law58 operates and the forms with an initial acute get a circumflex instead of it.59

A question appears – if the new circumflex forms came into existence via Meillet’s Law in the nominative and accusative forms of the personal pronouns, how are we then to explain the preserved acute in one of the nominative 1st person singular forms – *ja̋? Here the explanation as in *nȃsъ etc. certainly cannot be correct. But there is also a simple answer to this question. Meillet’s Law is not really a mechanical, strictly phonetic sound change. It is rather a complex morphophonological process – in the mobile paradigms, the tendency appears to stretch the accent either to the absolute last syllable, or the absolute initial syllable of the word. How can we then explain the absence of the Law in *jȃ, when it has clearly worked in *tȗ, *mȗ and *vȗ? The answer is rather banal. In order for Meillet’s Law to work, one has to have a paradigm – a mobile paradigm. Now, the 1st person singular is a clear case of mobility, cf. *mȅne, *mę̑. Yes, the mobility is

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56 The instrumental accentual variants *mьnojǫ and *tobоjǫ can be regarded as a special trait of the pronominal mobile paradigm, cf. Kapović 2006.

57 Kortlandt’s doctrine that all the personal pronouns in Slavic had an unchanged original acute (cf. for instance Kortlandt 1997: 29) is unsubstantiated in the material. All the forms point to the original circumflex in *tȗ, *mȗ, *vȗ – Kortlandt’s hypothesis is thus completely ad hoc.

58 For Meillet’s Law, cf. for instance Kapović forthc.

indeed there, but where is the paradigm? That the forms *nȃgъ ‘naked’, G. *nȃga or *golȕva, A. *golvȗ belong to the same paradigm is quite clear. That the forms *tȕ, *tȅbȅ, *te/obȅ, *tȅ, *tobojȗ belong to the same paradigm is not quite so clear because this paradigm is irregular, but still, all these forms are similar enough to be considered a paradigm, although a far less prototypical one than the first two mentioned. Thus, the operation of Meillet’s Law in *tȕ and *tȅ is not surprising, since these two forms belong to a mobile paradigm. It is the same with *vȕ, *vȃsȕ, *vȃmȕ, *vȃmi, which also make an “irregular” paradigm, but a paradigm still. The case of *mȕ, *nȕ, *nȃsȕ, *nȃmȕ, *nȃmȕ is not such an obvious paradigm. Here, the nominative form stands out because of its initial *m-. However, one could hardly expect Meillet’s Law not to work in the form *mȕ, when it operated in the accusative *nȃ, which is similar enough to the rest of the forms to be making a paradigm with them, and when it also operated in *tȕ and *vȕ which rhyme with *mȕ. The same reason is behind the operation of Meillet’s Law in the 1st person dual – *vȅ. This form clearly stands out from the other forms: *nȃ, *nȃju, *nȃma, but since Meillet’s Law operated in the accusative *nȃ, in the 2nd person dual nominative and accusative (where both *vȕ and *vȃ are similar to *vȅ in the fact that all the forms have an initial *v-) and in the nominative forms of the plural *mȕ, *vȕ, the influence was simply far too great for it not to work in *vȅ. But in the case of the 1st person singular, it was not so. In this case, we had a form which was completely isolated in a number of ways. Firstly, its nominative forms (*jȁ and *jȃzȗ < *jāzȗ) were completely different than the rest of its “paradigm”. Secondly, the 1st person nominative singular forms are also special because there are two of them – which is not the case anywhere else. Thirdly, the form *jȁ was not similar to any of the other nominative or accusative forms in any visible way (neither in the initial consonant, nor in the final vowel, unlike for instance *vȅ). Thus this form was simply not a part of the same paradigm as the forms *mène, *mǿnȅ, *mȅ, *mǿnȕjȕ. The form *jȃ was an isolated form (*jȃzȗ as well), not a part of a mobile paradigm, and thus, logically, Meillet’s Law did not operate in it and the form managed to preserve its acute.61

60 A suppletivity of completely unrelated (or very different) forms is thus not regarded as the same paradigm, but as two (or more) different forms. One can set a provisional hierarchy of the prototypical paradigms – the most prototypical ones would be those that make a clear paradigm, the so-called regular words like Croatian kȁnj, kȁnji or English horse, horses. The less prototypical paradigm would be that of the irregular words, like Croatian tȋ, tȅbȅ or English man, men. The least prototypical, i.e. not really a paradigm, is a case of synchronic suppletivity like Croatian cȕvjȅk – ljȗdì, dȕbȗr – bȕlȕ or English good – better. Traditional grammars may teach us that the form better is a comparative of good, but one should know better – especially when talking about what really is in a native speaker’s mind and not in grammar-books.

61 In the form *jȃzȗ, the acute was, as already said, eliminated in the pretonic (unaccented) syllable.
Conclusion

In this article, I have tried to show that the two forms of the Slavic first person nominative singular personal pronoun, *ja* and *jazъ*, are related to the two different accents attested in Slavic – the neo-acute (for instance in Štokavian dial. jà, Czech jà) and the old acute (for instance in Slovene jã, North Čakavian jã(z)). Originally there were two forms in Slavic – *jâ* and *jâzъ* < *jāzъ*. One of the accentual variants was generalized in specific Slavic dialects, thus leading to the present situation. The form *jâ* is to be derived directly from PIE *éǵ* (Lithuanian âš, Avestan azə) with the acute as the result of Winter’s Law. The form *jâzъ* is to be derived from PIE *eǵHóm* (Vedic ahám) with the final accent, and the length is to be explained as the result of Winter’s Law with the subsequent elimination of the pretonic acute in Slavic. The form *jâ* did not undergo the operation of Meillet’s Law, in spite of the mobile paradigm (*mène*, *mb/ṃnē*, *mē*), because the stems in question were obviously suppletive (*ja- : *m-*).

University of Zagreb

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