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THE *VŌLĀ-TYPE ACCENT IN SLAVIC

In this paper, Slavic nouns with the suffix *-ja and fixed neo-acute on the root (like *vŏlā “will” or *sŭšā “drought”) are closely examined. None of the previous explanations, which are here considered, have proven entirely satisfactory. In the paper, it is concluded that the *vŏlā-type nouns are mostly young derivatives with the *-ja suffix, which thus belong to the default accentual paradigm *b*. There is no retraction in *-ja nouns in a. p. *a* (*tŏčā “hail, storm etc.”) or in a. p. *c* (*dŭšā, *dŭšŏ). Some problematic words (like *svĕtā, *svĕtŏ “candle”) are also discussed.

1. Introduction¹

In Slavic, besides regular a. p. *a* *ā*-stem nouns like *rŭba “fish”, a. p. *b* nouns like *trāvā “grass” and a. p. *c* nouns like *golvá “head”, exists a class of feminine *ā*-stem nouns which have the fixed neo-acute on the root in all cases and a long final *-ā. I shall refer to this class of nouns as the *vŏlā-type nouns (or *sŭšā-type for the nouns with the long root syllable). If the root vowel of these nouns is short, it has the short neo-acute *` (*vŏlā “will”, *kŏžā “skin” etc.); if the root vowel is long, it has the long neo-acute * (*sŭšā “drought”, *žĕdā “thirst” etc.). Evidently, we can detect some kind of stress retraction in such examples (cf. normal nouns with unacuted roots like *ženā “woman”, *trāvā “grass”, *rŏkā “arm” which have an end-stress) and assume that it has something to do with the suffix *-ja which was, as already said, long in *vŏlā-type nouns. Many words ending in *-ja however do not show *vŏlā or *sŭšā-

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type accentuation (nor the long final *-ā): *dūšá “soul”, *zeml’á “land”, *meďá “border”, *sěča “cutting”, *měrža “net”, *kráďa “theft” etc. This phenomenon, that is, the difference of *sūšā and *dūšá, was never really explained in a satisfactory manner. Although many linguists tried to explain how the *vòlā-type accentuation emerged, it seems that the focus was nearly always on the very process of the retraction and the lengthening of *-jā in this type of nouns. Very few authors have ever, at least to my knowledge, tried to develop a scheme why the supposed retraction is attested in some words but not in others. That is the problem we shall try to solve here.

2. Material (*vòlā-type nouns)

We shall list some of the examples of the *vòlā-type nouns in Slavic languages:

Croatian (Štokavian, Čakavian, Kajkavian)

Examples with long vowel: *grāda* “building material”, *sūša*, *strāža* “guard, watch”, *žēda*², *plāca* “pay”, *tēža* “weight”, *kūplja* “buying, trade”, *jāža* “gap”, *tvřđa* “fortress”, *vrāža* “magic, sorcery” with the preserved long neo-acute in Old Štokavian, Čakavian and Kajkavian (dial.). In Neo-Štokavian dialects (as well as in Standard Croatian), where $\tilde{> \hat{}}$, there is *grāda*, *sūša* etc. Examples with short vowel: *kòžja*, *vòlja*, *stělja* “bed”, *tāšta* “mother-in-law”, *večera* (Neo-Štokavian) < *večëra* (< *večëřā) “supper”, *nòzdra* “nostril”³, *mòčja* “moist, rainy weather”, *vòđja* “leader” (a younger word).

Differences can sometimes be found in the accentuation of these words in Croatian dialects. Furthermore, different Slavic languages differ in their accentuation of certain words. Thus, besides the accent *plāca* > *plāca* in Croatian, there is also the accent *plāca*. The latter is analogical to the accent of all other a. p. *b* and a. p. *c* nouns (like *trāva* “grass”, *glāva* “head” etc.). Croatian also has a secondary accent in examples *vònja* “smell”, *hòđja* “walk” (cf. Czech *vůně*, Sln. *hója* which point to *vòlā-type accent) and *rāđja* “work” (a younger derivative).

² Here we cite the Štokavian form, for instance *žēda* and not *žěja* which would be the Čakavian form.

³ Cf. Polish *nozdrza*. Russian *ноздрыя* is probably secondary (cf. Zaliznjak 1985: 135).

In Kajkavian, the short root vowel words have the neo-circumflex instead of short neo-acute. It is found in examples such as *kòža*, *vòlja* which disagree with both Štokavian/Čakavian *kòža*, *vòlja* and Slovene *kóža*, *vólja*. Kajkavian examples could be explained as neo-circumflexes: *vòlā > vòlja. Thus, Kajkavian would also point to the length of the suffix. However, this development in Kajkavian is very uncertain since *nòsišb > nòsiš (not **nòsiš).

Slovene

In Slovene, the nouns of the *vòlā-type show the expected long rising accent ´ as the reflex of both *~ and *´ (if in a root, the vowels /e/ and /o/ are closed: /e/, /o/). In Slovene, the reflexes of *~ and *´ are identical to that of a. p. *b* nouns with pretonic length and to the a. p. *a* nouns (*rěka* “river” < *rěkà and *věra* “faith” < *věra like *žéja* < *žēđa, *trōba* “trumpet” < *trōbà like *kóža* etc.). Thus, in Slovene for instance, we have: *žéja*, *stráža*, *súša*, *hója* “walk”, *pláča*, *kóža*, *vólja*⁴, *vónja* “scent, stink”, *stělja*, *téža*, *grája*, *gòšča*, *lólja* “hunt”, *tásča*, *vráža* etc. The length of the old *-ja is seen in a. p. *a* words: *gāca*, *grīža*, *krāja*, *prēja*, *vēja* (Pleteršnik), cf. also secondary *lōvlja*, *tōnja*, *strāža*, *hōja*. The normal reflex in a. p. *a* is ´, cf. *búnja*, *čáša*, *dínja*, *gráblje*, *káplja*, *káša* (Pleteršnik) etc. (Croat. *gāce*, *grīža*, *krāda*, *prěda*, *vjěda*, *būra*, *čāša*, *dínja*, *grāblje*, *kāplja*, *kāša*). Cf. also Slovene variants *krája*, *prēja* (Snoj).

Slovene *hója* < *xòdā agrees with Czech *chůze* and Slovak *chódza* (Croatian *hòda* is secondary). In Slovene, the example *večērja* has the expected neo-circumflex in trisyllabic *ā*-stem (like Slovene *zabāva* “fun, party” and *dobrāva* “oak wood”, cf. Croatian *zábava*, *dùbrava*).

Bulgarian

Bulgarian reveals only the accent position. Cf. examples like: *вòля*, *вечèря*, *сúша*, *стрáжа*, *жáжда*, *кòжа*.

Czech

In Czech, the length found in *sũšā-type words is a regular outcome of *~. However, this proves to be ambiguous given the fact that the old

⁴ In Prekmurje, one finds interesting accentuation in this example – N. sg. *vòla*, A. sg. *volòu* (a. p. c), but an unexpected length in L. sg. *po vòuli* (Greenberg 2002: 141).

acute and pretonic length in a. p. *b* in Czech also yield length, cf. *kráva* < *kǫrva, *brázda* < *borzdá). The reflex of short neo-acute in Czech *vǫl̥a-type nouns is mostly long (either regularly or analogically), cf. Czech *vůle* (also attested in Slovak but not consistently, cf. Slovak *vôľa*)⁵.

Thus, in Czech we have: *příze* “yarn”, (Old Czech) *žieze*, *vůle*, *chůze*, *vůně* (Croatian secondary *võnja*), *kůže*, *nůše*, *hráze* (Slovak *hrádza*), *tíže*, *souš(e)*, *stráž(e)*, *houšť(e)*, *koupě*, *práce* “work”, *večeře*, *tůně*.

Czech *příze* corresponds to Slovak *priadza* < *prĕdā, but not to Croatian *prĕda* and Polish *przędza* < *prĕdā. Czech/Slovak accent is secondary as is confirmed by Croatian verb *prĕsti*, Slovene *prĕsti*, Czech *přisti* < *prĕsti (present tense: *prĕdešb, Croatian *prĕdeš*, Slovene *prĕdeš* etc.). Slovak does not have the length in *koža* and *noša* whereas Czech does - *kůže*, *nůše*.

Slovak

In Slovak, we also find length in *sũšā-type words. This type has also analogically spread on to some original *vǫl̥ā-type words (words with short root vowel).

Thus, in Slovak, there is: *priadza* (secondarily in this type), *vôľa*, *chôdza*, *võňa*, *koža*, *noša*, *práca*, *hrádza* “dam”, *húšť* “bush”, *kúpa* “shopping”, *mládza* “young grass (after first mowing)”, *pláca*⁶, *stráž*, *sús* “dry land”, *tiaž* (in the phrase *zemská tiaž* “gravity”), *tôňa* “shadow”, *tvrdza* “trouble” (*tvrdza* “fort”), *žiadza* “wish, crave”. Here we may notice that Slovak examples *koža* and *noša* do not have the length unlike Czech *kůže*, *nůše*.

Polish (and Slovincian)

Polish has lost quantity so that the only trace of *sũšā-type in modern Polish can be seen in examples with nasals and TorT sylla-

⁵ We find length from *ǫ also in Czech *můžes* “you can”, Slovak *môžes* etc. In Polish, there is a similar phenomenon in the ordinal numbers *szósty* “6th”, *siódmy* “7th”, *ósmy* “8th” by analogy to *piąty* “5th”, *dziewiąty* “9th”, *dziesiąty* “10th”. Cf. also secondary Croatian *šesti*, *sĕdmī*, *ōsmī* besides older *šĕsti*, *sĕdmī*, *ōsmī* and the spread of ˘ in *je*-nouns – original *grǫžde* “grapes”, *grǫblje* “graveyard” and *brijĕšće* “elms”, *hrāšće* “oaks” in some dialects, but generalized length (*grōžde*, *grōblje*, *brijĕšće*, *hrāšće*) in other dialects. Since the length in *vǫl̥ā-type words is present in almost all short-vowel examples in Czech, one could also presume that it is original there and not analogical. In that case one should probably operate with more than one Ivšić’s Law.

⁶ Only in phrases *Aká práca, taká pláca* and *Vĕla práce, málo pláce*.

bles, e. g. *žadza*, *ciaża* “pregnancy”, *stróza* and dial. *gródza*. However, in Old Polish (which still had distinctive length) and in Polish dialects (which preserve the separate phoneme as the result of the old long *ā), the *vòlā-type nouns have the long final –a (written –*ǎ* or –*á*) cf. Old and Middle Polish: *wolǎ*, *kupiǎ*, *žadzǎ*, *glębiǎ* “depth”, *karmiǎ* “fodder”, *pieczǎ*, *stróżǎ*, *woniǎ*, *dolǎ* “share”, *groblǎ* “grave”, *puszczǎ* “forest” (OCS *pušta*), *twierdzǎ*, *wladzǎ* “reign” etc. (Łoś 1908), “małopolski” *żǎzǎ*, *v* etc. The length of the final –a is preserved in some dialects as –*ǎ*. In standard Polish, as we said, the length is lost.

In Polish, long –*ǎ* is attested in some a. p. a words as well, cf. *sukniǎ* (not *vòlā-type originally, cf. Croatian *sũknja*, Slovene *sũknja*), *burzǎ* “storm” (cf. Croatian *bũra*, Russian *буря*), *thuszczǎ* “fat” (cf. Russian *толщина* “thickness”).

The length of final –a is also found in Slovincian⁷: *ʷolā* (but also younger *ʷola*), *ceč'ā* “liquid”, *mloz'ā* “youth”, *ceń'ā* “darkness”, *roł'ā*, *toń'ā* “depth”, *'mjezā* “boundary”, *pr'acā* “work”. It is important to note that Slovincian also has desinential stress in some words ending in –*ā* (which could be an archaism). Slovincian *z'q̄za* with short –a is secondary.

In Polish, the length in final –*ǎ* is also found in old *-ja stems but this has nothing to do with length in old *-ja stems. The length in *lodziǎ* “boat”, *sędziǎ* “judge”, *braciǎ* “brothers”, *gosciǎ* “guest” is due to the compensatory lengthening (because of the dropped *-j-) like in *weselé* < *veseljē “happiness” etc.

Russian

Standard Russian, as Bulgarian, only shows the accent position. We can also detect the old rising intonation in the cases of the TorT syllable, cf. *кó* ⁸, *сү́* “thick, sediment”, *до́* (< *k'ǫrmlā, cf. Old Polish *karmiǎ*), *кү́* “fishing-place”, *ча́щя* “dense wood” etc. However, the old neo-acute is clearly attested in Russian Leka dialects which have /ǝ/ (written also as /ω/, diphthong [uo]) for the old *ǝ, for instance *кǝнѧ*, *вǝлѧ*, *дǝлѧ*, *лǝвѧ* etc.

⁷ Slovincian is here quoted after Stankiewicz's transcription (1993).

⁸ The a. p. c forms *ѡлѧ* in Čudovskij NZ and Merilo Pravednoe are secondary.

3. Some previous explanations of the *vòlā-type

Here we shall take a look at some of the former explanations for the phenomenon of *vòlā-type accent in Slavic.

Ivšić (1911: 163, 1971: [111]) correctly assumes that the accent~ in examples like Croatian *strāž̃a*, *sūš̃a* etc. is due to the accent retraction and he derives, for instance, *strāž̃a* from *storž̃â/strāž̃â. He is aware that the final -ā was long, as evidenced in Old Polish, but does not try to explain it explicitly other than saying that the ending *-jā could have been elongated like Lithuanian -ė. He just noted, without getting into the matter too deeply, that the difference of *sūš̃a*, *strāž̃a* and *med̃ā*, *zemlj̃ā* could be the result of the different original stems (*-jā and *-jē) which is not satisfactory⁹.

Stang (1957: 57-9) explains the *vòlā-type accentuation beginning with *vol̃ja¹⁰ which then develops to *vol̃jā and finally *vòlā. However, this explanation is not likely for many reasons. There is no trace of *b̃ in *vòlā anywhere and it is clear that suffix here is really *-ja, not *-bja. Stang tries to explain this by assuming “a late Proto-Slavonic contraction -bja > -jā” (Stang 1957: 37) which is clearly an *ad hoc* assumption. Slavic had both the suffix *-ja and the suffix *-bja which are clearly distinguished in Old Church Slavic, Russian, Bulgarian, Slovene, older Croatian etc. Cf. older Croat. *grāda/grāja*, Russ. *зр̃о́* Sln. *gr̃ája* < *gōrdā but older Croat. *lādja*, Bulg. *л̃а̀дѝя*, Old Russ. *л̃о̀дѝя*, Sln. *lādja* < *ōldbja < *oldbja (a younger nom. sg. analogical to gen. sg. *oldbje). Stang rejects Vaillant’s explanation of *vòlā, *sūš̃ā and *gōrdā as analogical to present tense forms like Croatian *vòlīm*, (dial.) *grādīm* and adjective *sūhī* claiming it does not take the Lekhitic length of the final -ā into account. Nevertheless, they both failed to notice that the words like Croatian *grādīm* and *sūhī* could not have been the cause for this kind of accentual pattern simply because the oldest forms of these examples are really *gradīm* and *suhī*. Both belong originally to the accentual paradigm *c*, not *b*, and are very well attested as such in Croatian dialects.

⁹ Unlike Ivšić, one could note Slavic *vòlā ~ Lith. *valià* but Slavic *zemlā, *medā ~ Lith. *žēmė*, *mėdė*. However, there are only three examples of this kind which is not enough to draw serious conclusions.

¹⁰ Stang gets this pre-form *per exclusionem* (Stang 1957: 38), because examples like Russian *во́ля* have the root-accent while the examples like Russian *се́мьѧ* have the final accent (so *vòlja* has to be from *vol̃ja, according to him). He does notice the difficulty with this supposed disappearance of *b̃ – it is preserved in OCS *bratr̃bja* etc.

Stankiewicz (1993: 6-7) says that “a derivational process similar to the metatonies can also explain the formation of the neo-acute in such forms as CSL. *sūša, *kòža, *pīšešb or *kòlešb whose accent can, contrary to earlier attempts, be ascribed neither to phonological factors (such as the effect of *j*) nor to analogical levelling. The interpretation of these forms requires, moreover, a chronological perspective, for they must have arisen later than similar formations with the suffix *-j-* which can be treated either as circumflex or acute, as was the case on the one hand of *dūs'a, *zeml'a, and on the other hand of the comparatives *dórže, *súše”. Stankiewicz is, as usual, vague and it is not clear what “a derivational process similar to the metatonies” really means. It most certainly is true that most of the *vòlā-type nouns are not very old formations (which is an important observation). However, this explanation does not suffice if one bears in mind that the word *vòlā itself is old, cf. Lithuanian *valià* (2).

Carlton (1991: 202-5), who gives a rather lengthy discussion on the *vòlā-type nouns while talking about the sources of the neo-acute, is content with saying that “*Jotation*, especially in the *jā*-stems, often produces neo-acute lengthening of the syllable immediately preceding the *jotated* consonant”.

Kortlandt (1994) explains the lengthening of the final *-a* with what he calls van Wijk's Law: *wàlja?* > *wòlla* and then *wòlā* when the long consonants were shortened with the compensatory lengthening of the following syllable¹¹. The newly stressed long *-ā* receives a falling accent which is then retracted to the root syllable yielding *vòlā¹². Kortlandt (1997) explains the difference of the accentuation of *vòlā, *zeml'a etc. by different original stems. We cannot get into that explanation here.

4. Origin Of The *vòlā-type nouns

So far we have seen the following Slavic examples of the *vòlā-type (we shall not mention all of them and not all examples are attested in

¹¹ We will not get into the problem of the van Wijk's Law in verbs, like in supposed *kòlēšb “you slay”, because the length in verbs like Croatian *kòljēs* is probably not original (cf. *mòžeš* “you can”, *hòčeš* “you will”).

¹² This retraction is usually referred to as Stang's Law because this is the explanation given in his book (Stang 1957). But Stang and most later scholars have disregarded the fact that the very same explanation of the phenomenon, allegedly explained first by Stang in 1957, was given 46 years before by Stjepan Ivšić (1911: 169-77, the same in Ivšić 1971: [119-27]). Thus, Stang's Law is in fact Ivšić's Law and we shall refer to it as Ivšić's Law in this article.

all languages¹³, see section 1.): *vòlā “will”, *kòžā “skin”, *tēžā “weight”, *žēdā “thirst”, *sūšā “drought”, *gōrdā “buliding material”, *stōržā “guard”, *gōstā “thick”, *vōnā “smell”, *dòlā “share”, *stēlā “bed”, *kīrmlā “fodder”, *kūplā “buying, trade”, *lòvlā “hunt”, *pòltā “pay”, *vòdā “leader”, *večēra “supper”, *xòdā “walk”, *nòšā “burden”, *tīstā “mother-in-law”, *tvīrdā “fortress”, *gròblā “grave”, *pūstā “forest”, *nòzdrā “nostril”, *ōrstā “grove”, *tònā “fishing place”, *čēštā “dense wood”, *mòčā “moist, rainy weather”, *vōržā “magic, sorcery” etc. In some languages, several of these words have left the group secondarily (cf. Croatian *vònja* and *hòda*) while others have joined it secondarily (cf. Czech *příze*, Slovak *priadza*).

As we have already mentioned, all of these examples are rather new derivatives in Slavic, with the exception of the word *vòlā which is probably Balto-Slavic (cf. Lithuanian *valià*, 2, Latvian *vaļa* “government”).

Obviously, it is not enough just to point to the suffix *-ja in these examples since it does not guarantee this kind of accentuation, cf. Croatian *dúša* - *dūšu* “soul”, *měda* - *mědu* “border” with the mobile accent (a. p. c) or *vjěda* “eyebrow”, *kùca* “house” with the acute (a. p. a). There seem to be only few *-ja nouns with a fixed end-stress, a. p. b, cf. Croatian *svijěca*, *svijěcu* “candle” (others are clearly secondary like Croat. *hòda* or younger derivatives like *ráda*).

Clearly, there has to be another criterion. The solution is simple – one has to look at the accentual paradigm of the word. In Slavic, *-ja nouns have either mobile stress (*dūšā, a. p. c) or fixed acute stress (*kŏta, a. p. a). Since a. p. b nouns with a fixed end-stress seem to be very rare, we shall assume that *vòlā-type nouns are the original a. p. b nouns which have retracted the stress to the root. Thus all the words of *vòlā-type belong originally to the accentual paradigm b in Slavic – being younger derivatives (without an acute in the root vowel) with the *-ja suffix they obviously become a. p. b by default¹⁴ and therefore have the non-mobile circumflex accent on the first syllable (before Dybo’s Law): *k’ozja, *v’onja, *s’ūxja, *st’elja etc. The only older word belonging to this stem, *v’olja, expectedly belongs to a. p. b as well (cf. Lithuanian *valià* which belongs to a. p. 2).

¹³ Some of the examples are probably not even reconstructible for Common Slavic and their reconstruction here is just formal.

¹⁴ This is due to the fact that *-ja mobile stems were not productive anymore, cf. *sūxъ “dry” (a. p. c) ~ *sūšā (and not **sūšā, **sūšō). A. p. a *-ja stems remained productive.

Before Dybo's Law, these words have had fixed non-acute accent on the root as mentioned earlier. Then the final *-a got lengthened (as seen from Lekhitic where this length has been preserved). By Dybo's Law this *-ā becomes accented and the accent is falling - *volā which is then retracted by Ivšić's Law to *vòlā¹⁵. The length of the final syllable is preserved in Slovincian, Old Polish and some Polish dialects but is analogically changed to regular -a elsewhere.

One can posit different models for the lengthening of the final -a. Kortlandt assumes *-Cja > *-CCa > *-Cā (compensatory lengthening) which is possible but involves a two-phase change. Another way to explain the lengthening of the *-ja suffix is to presume it was treated as some kind of (quasi)diphthong *-ja which was, by a definition of a diphthong, (phonetically) long, thus *-jā. This would demand only a one-phase-change. But we would then also have to assume that the neo-acute on the first syllable was spread analogically from the nominative singular to other cases. Otherwise, it would not be clear how for instance *-ję in gen. sg., *-ji in dat. sg. or *-jq in acc. sg. came to be interpreted as diphthongs. The change *-Cja > *-CCa > *-Cā (with compensatory lengthening) would prove to be more suitable because it would produce lengthened syllable in all cases (cf. Old Polish *wolá*, *wolą*). Accordingly, the retraction of the accent (see below) would be regular in all cases and no leveling would have to be involved. The gemination with subsequent progressive lengthening may seem phonetically somewhat unpalatable, but no matter how the process was carried out exactly, it is a plain fact that unaccented *-ja is somehow lengthened in pre-Dybo a. p. b and in a. p. a stems (cf. Slovene *grîža* etc. and Old Polish *sukniâ* etc. – the reflexes of the long *-jā in a. p. a are sporadic).

As we have seen, the long *-jā is attested in a. p. b and (sporadically) in a. p. a. A question arises – why was there no lengthening in a. p. c? A couple of solutions are possible, the easiest being that the lengthening operated only in posttonic syllables.

¹⁵ In Slovincian, as we have seen, this final long syllable is still mostly stressed (-^lā) which is probably the reflex of the non-retracted final long falling accent (it seems that Ivšić's Law did not operate in this case in Slovincian or that it was somehow analogically suppressed). The Čakavian and Slovene gen. pl. like *lopât* however, with non-retracted neo-circumflex (cf. Čakavian *lopâta*, Slovene *lopâta*) are probably secondary, due to analogical levelling with the examples like Čakavian *krâva*, gen. pl. *krâv* and Slovene *kráva*, gen. pl. *krâv*. This is confirmed by the Čakavian gen. pl. *lõpât* (cf. Štokavian *lõpâtā*) which is also very common.

Another question is why do we have this lengthening only in *ja*-stems and not for instance in masculine *jo*-stems of a. p. *b* like *końb, *końá “horse”? The answer is simple: *-b in the nom. and acc. sg. could not be lengthened in any way (being a reduced vowel) and consequently, there was no lengthening in *końá either¹⁶. An early levelling with the usual type like *bobъ, *bobá “bean” should also be considered.

In feminine form of adjectives, there is also no evidence of *vòlā-type accentuation, cf. Croat. *tàšt, tàšta, tàšto*, Sln. *təšč, təščà*, ORuss. *тѣщѣ*, a. p. *b* (Zaliznjak 1985: 136). This is not surprising, since we could hardly expect *vòlā-type accent in feminine form besides a desinential stress in nearly all masculine and neuter forms. The influence of masculine and neuter forms, as well as other a. p. *b* adjectives like *golb, *golá, *goló “naked”, must have provided an early source of analogy (which was not present in *vòlā-type nouns).

Because of this, and because of the inconclusive state of the possible results of van Wijk’s law in verbs, the only real attestation of the law is what we have in *vòlā-type nouns, i. e. in *ā*-stems.

5. Material (a. p. *a* and a. p. *c* *-ja nouns)

Here, we shall take a look at a. p. *a* and a. p. *c* *-ja nouns. In accentual paradigm *a* (for instance *prěđa, *súkъńá), the final *-ja originally probably long - as attested in Old Polish examples like *sukniá, thuszczá, burzá* (but not in *niedziela, przedza, tęcza*) and Slovene *gríža, vêja, gâca* (but *búrja, čáša, káplja* etc.). In a. p. *c*, there was no lengthening (Old Polish *dusza, ziemia, miedza, zorza*).

Here we can adduce more evidence for a. p. *a* and a. p. *c* nouns with the suffix *-ja (the list is not exhaustive):

a. p. *a* *-ja nouns

*sěča “cutting” > Croatian *sjěča*, Russian *cé*

*tǫča “storm, hail etc.” > Croatian *tùča* “hail”, Slovene *tǫča*, Polish *łęcza* “rainbow”, Russian *my’* “storm, black cloud” etc.

¹⁶ One might object that *-b was also the ending in gen. pl. in the feminine *ja*-stems but that these forms did not present any obstacle in the lengthening of the other endings. However, gen. pl. is hardly of the same importance as nom./acc. sg. and besides, the “normal” a. p. *b* and a. p. *c* *a*-nouns also have a neo-acute in gen. pl. (cf. Čakavian *trāv, glāv, sūš*) due to Ivšić’s Rule (the retraction of the stress from a weak *jer*).

*neděľa “Sunday” > Croatian *nèdjelja*, Slovene *nedělja*, Czech *neděle*, Old Polish *niedziela*

*krāđa “theft” > Croatian *krāđa*, Slovene *krāja/krāja*, Russian *кра́*

*sъvāđa “dispute” > Croatian *svāđa*, Slovene *svāja* (cf. also Czech *váda*) etc.

*věđa “eyebrow” > Croatian *vjěđa*, Slovene *vēja* (secondary ˘), Bulgarian *вѣжда*

*mērža “net” > Croatian *mřěža*, Slovene *mřēja*, Bulgarian *мрѣжа*, Czech *mříže*, Russian *мерѣжа*

*kǫta “house” > Croatian *kũca*, Slovene *kóca*, Bulgarian *къща*, Ukrainian/Russian (dial.) *кү*

*véřta “bag” > Croatian *vřěca*, Slovene *vřéca*

*kāša “porridge” > Croatian *kāša*, Slovene *kāša*, Czech *kaše*, Russian *ка́ша*

*būra “storm” > Croatian *būra*, Bulgarian *буря*, Old Czech *búře* (Czech *bouře*), Old Polish *burzã* (with secondary length), Russian/Ukrainian *бү*

*čāša “glass” > Croatian *čāša*, Slovene *čāša*, Bulgarian *ча́ша*, Old Czech *čiešě* (Czech *číše*), Russian *ча́ша*

*čāđa “soot” > Croatian *čāđa*, Slk. (dial.) *čadzã*

*sāđa “soot” > Croatian *sāđa* (Čakavian *sāja*), Czech *sáze*, Russian *са́жа*

*lūža “mud” > Croatian *lūža*, Slovene *lúža*, Czech *louže*, Russian *лү́жа*

*kǫpl’a “drop” > Croatian *kǫplja*, Slovene *kǫplja*, Bulgarian *ка̀пя*, Russian *ка́пля*

*nūđa “necessity” > Slovene *núja*, Czech *nouze*, Russian *нү́жа*

*dūpl’a “hole” > Croatian *dūplja*, Slovene *dūplja*, Ukrainian (dial.) *дү́пля*

*pīta “food” > Croatian *pīca*, Slovene *pīca*, Czech *píce*

*kǫš’a “rain, wet weather” > Croatian *kǫša*, Bulgarian *кү́ша*, Czech *kyše* (secondarily short), Russian (dial.) *кү́*

*tǫlšt’a “fat, thick” > Russian *тóлща*, Old Polish *thuszczã* “fat” (cf. the length)

*súkǫňa “skirt” > Croatian *sũknja*, Slovene *sũknja*, Russian *сү́*, Old Polish *sukniã* (cf. the length)

*prēđa “yarn” > Croatian *prěđa*, Slovene *prēja*, Old Polish *przędza*; Czech *příze* and Slovak *priadza* are secondary

*konòpŕa “hemp” > Croat. *kònopŕlja*, Old Russian *конòпля* (Kolesov 1972: 26), Russ. dial. *конòпля*, Ukrainian N. pl. *конòпли*, Belorussian N. pl. *канòпли*; Russian *конопля* and Slovene *konòpŕlja* are secondary

*skrińna “chest”¹⁷ > Croatian *skrińja*, Slovene *skrińja*, Russian *скри* Czech *skřĩň(e)*, Old Polish *skrzynia*

a. p. c *-ja nouns

*dūša, *dūšq “soul” > Croatian *dūša* (older *dūšā*), *dūšu*, Slovene *dūša*, Czech *dūše*, Slovak *duša*, Old Polish *dusza*, Russian *душа*

*zemŕa, *zēmŕq “earth, soil” > Croatian *zēmŕja* (older *zemŕjā*), *zēmŕju*, Russian *земля*, Slovincian *ʼzemja*, Old Polish *ziemia*, not in accord with Lithuanian *žēmė* (2) (cf. Illič-Svityč 1963: 108)

*međa, *mēđq “border” > Croatian *mēđa*, *mēđu* (Čakavian Vrgada *mejā*, *mēju*/*mējū*, Božava/Hvar/Senj/Pag *mēja*, *mēju* < **mejā*, *mēju*, Rivani *mēđa*, *mēđu*, Rab secondary *mejā*, *mejū*), Old Russian *межа* (Zaliznjak 1985: 135), Russian *межа* Ukrainian *межа* Illič-Svityč 1963: 106), Slovincian *ʼmjezā* (like *ʼvolā*), Old Polish *miedzā*; Lithuanian (dial.) *mėdė* (2) would point to Slavic a. p. *b* though¹⁸

*želā, *žēŕq “wish” > Croatian *žēlja* (Čakavian *željā*), *žēlju*, Slovene *žēlja*

*gospodā, *gōspodq “lady” > Croatian (Dubrovnik) *gospōda*, *gōspodu*, Slovene *gospā*, Russian *госпожа* (secondary), Bulgarian *госпожа*

*zoŕā/zarā, *zōŕq/zārq “dawn” > Croatian *zōra* (older *zorā*), *zōru*, Slovene *zōrja/zārja*, Czech *zoŕe/zāře*, Old Polish *zorza/zarza*, Russian *зоря/заря* /*зарю*

*rŕđā, *rŕđq “rust” > Croatian *rŕda*, *rŕdu* (Čakavian *rjā*, *rju*), Old Russian *рѣка* (a. p. *b*) is secondary (Russian *рѣка*)

¹⁷ This example is perhaps not very reliable since it is a loanword from Old High German *scrīni* (German *Schrein*), which is from Latin *scrīnium*, and in OCS, the word is attested as *skrińija*, which is not a *-ja word (it represents old *skrińi, *skrińje actually, like *oldi, *oldbje), and also as *skrina* (Snoj 2003: 664).

¹⁸ The example *međa is problematic because comparison with Lithuanian demands a. p. *b* (Illič-Svityč, *ibid.*) and no *vōŕā-type retraction demands a. p. *c*. Slovincian *ʼmjezā* could point to the original a. p. *b* stem with a lengthened *-ā* and a retracted accent (in accord with Lith. *mėdė*, a. p. 2) although it could also be secondary. In other Slavic languages, a. p. *c* is widely attested and thus there is no *vōŕā-type retraction. Modern Russian a. p. *b* is secondary, cf. Old Russian and Ukrainian vacillation between a. p. *b* and a. p. *c*, and so is Čakavian a. p. *b*. One must also note here that inner-Slavic comparison must always have a primary place. Attestations of the a. p. of Slavic dialects and of its place in Slavic accentual system is more important than comparison with Lithuanian (not to mention comparison with other IE languages).

The smaller number of a. p. *c* *-ja nouns shows that this type was not productive in Common Slavic¹⁹, while more numerous a. p. *a* and a. p. *b* (= *vòlā-type nouns) were. The *vòlā-type was productive at the expense of a. p. *c* *-ja nouns. All *-ja nouns without an acute in the root became a. p. *b*, i. e. *vòlā-type nouns, by default.

6. A. p. *b* *-ja nouns with end-stress?

According to what has been said on the subject, that *vòlā-type nouns are originally a. p. *b* nouns with end-stress which has been retracted because of the lengthened final *-ā, we would expect a. p. *b* *-ja nouns with desinential stress to be non-existent. They should all have *vòlā-type retracted accent.

Nevertheless, there are some exceptions. We have already seen some examples, like Croat. *ráda* which is, as we said, a younger derivative (and the accent is in accord with secondary *pláca* which is widely attested with the old accent *plāca* as well). Cf. also *svěrà, *svěřò “candle” > Croatian *svijéca*, *svijécu* (Čakavian *svičā*, *svičū*), Slovene *svéca*, Czech *svíce*, Slovak *svieca*, Russian *свеча* (also a. p. *b* in Old Russian, Zaliznjak 1985: 135). Since all languages unanimously point to a. p. *b*, it is hard to imagine at first that it would be secondary. However, it is not clear why this word does not belong to *sūšā-type as it would be expected. One could speculate that the *-ja suffix is here younger and that the original form was *svěrá.

Zaliznjak (1985: 135) lists a couple of Old Russian words with the suffix *-ja which have a. p. *b* desinence stress (like *свѣча*): *брьня* “whetstone, hone”, *луча* “ray”, *лѣжа* “lie”, *рѣжа* “rust” (also *стьзя* which are, as OCS loans, irrelevant). These counterexamples do not have the same strength the example of *свѣча* has. As was already said, taking Croatian *řda*, *řdu* into account, Old Russian *рѣжа*, *рѣжу* is clearly secondary. In the example *брьня* Zaliznjak (1985, *ibid.*) notes “откл. к *c*” (other languages are not very helpful, cf. Czech *brně*, Old Polish *brnia*), but Kolesov 1972 (: 19-20) has also the stem stress attested. The example *луча* is at least dubious if compared it with Croatian *lūča* which may be confirmed by Czech *louč* if the former is to be derived from *lūč²⁰.

¹⁹ A. p. *c* type in *-ota like *suxotā “dryness” or *težьkotā is not included here.

²⁰ Croatian *lūč*, *lūči* demonstrates the secondary spread of mobility in *i*-stems (cf. Kapović forthcoming).

The example *лѡжá* is confirmed by Croatian *lòža* – which is attested as a. p. *b* in ARj (V: 936-7). Bulgarian shows end-stress in *лѡжà*, and so does Belorussian *лѡжá*. However, this word is not reliable because it has a *jer* in the root and the oxytonesis could easily be secondary²¹.

7. Conclusion

In the end we can conclude the all *-ja stems are either a. p. *a* nouns (*kǫra), a. p. *c* nouns (*zeml'a) or *vòlā/sūšā-type nouns. Thus we can conclude that *vòlā-type nouns represent the a. p. *b* pattern in *-ja nouns in which the accent was retracted due to the lengthening of final *-ja. The *vòlā-type nouns class represents mostly younger Common Slavic derivatives which are quite numerous since only a. p. *b* (=vòlā-type) and a. p. *a* *-ja nouns were productive. A. p. *c* *-ja nouns were not productive, and all the younger derivatives with the suffix *-ja which did not have an acute in the root became a. p. *b* nouns (i. e. *vòlā-type nouns) by default. The only reliable counterexample, i. e. *-ja noun with a. p. *b* fixed end-stress, is *svěťà, *svěťò in which it is not clear why it escaped *vòlā-type retraction of the accent. However this example can hardly annul the whole thesis laid down here. Even if one does not accept our analysis, it must be admitted that it is highly indicative that all *-ja stems in Slavic are either a. p. *a* nouns, a. p. *c* nouns or *vòlā-type nouns with only one reliable example against this general picture - *svěťà with a fixed end-stress.

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²¹ Cf. Illič-Svityč 1963 for various examples of this kind.

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