

Balto-Slavic personal pronouns and their accentuation

This is the topic of Mate Kapović's dissertation (2006). Since the author refers to my work at various places in his study, it seems appropriate to specify the main points of agreement and disagreement between us. I shall not go into all the details.

I am glad to see that Kapović has adopted my principal view that Indo-European lengthened grade vowels are circumflex, not acute, in Balto-Slavic, e.g. Lith. *akmuō* 'stone', *duktē* 'daughter', Latvian *ābuōls* 'apple', SCr. aorist *dōnijeh* 'I brought', *ūmrijeh* 'I died', *zàklēh* 'I swore', root nouns such as Czech *čár* and *čára* 'magic', *sám* 'alone', also Latvian *gūovs* 'cow'. He has also accepted my view that the Lith. acc.pl. ending of the *o*-stems *-us* has adopted the acute of stems in a laryngeal (2006: 165, fn. 499), though he does not mention the loss of **H* before final **-m* in the acc.sg. forms which provided the motivation for this analogical development (e.g. Kortlandt 2005b: 153f.). Other points where Kapović has accepted my views are the Balto-Slavic development of **eu* to **ou* before vowels (2006: 124, cf. Kortlandt 1979: 57) and the reconstruction of PIE 2nd sg. dative **tub^{hi}* (2006: 156, cf. Kortlandt 2005a: 7). It is remarkable that he does not accept the parallel 1st sg. dative **miġ^{hi}*, Latin *mihī*, cf. Oscan *sífeī* 'sibi', with an **i* which is directly reflected in Polish *mnie* and Czech *mně*.

The major difference between Kapović's reconstructions and mine is the huge number of doublets which he assumes for his proto-languages (2006: 91, 113, 158), e.g. 1st sg. PIE **eġ*, **eġHóm*, **eġóh₂*, BSl. **éž*, **éš*, **ēžān*, Slavic **jǎ*, **jǎzǝ*, dat. PIE **méġ^{hi}*, **mey*, **moy*, BSl. **mùni*, **mèni*, **mey*, acc. PIE **mé*, **mé*, **me*, **mē*, 2nd sg. PIE **tú*, **tú*, BSl. **tū*, **tū*, dat. PIE **túb^{hi}*, **téb^{hi}*, **tey*, **toy*, BSl. **tèbi*, **tùbi*, **tey*, Slavic **tebè*, **tobè*, **ti*, acc. PIE **twé*, **twé*, **te*, **tē*, 1st pl. PIE **wéy*, **més*, BSl. **mès*, **més*, gen. PIE **nos*, **nōs*, BSl. **nóson*, **nósōn*, **nōns*, dat. PIE **nos*, **nōs*, BSl. **nōmas*, **nōns*, acc. PIE **nsmé*, **nos*, **nōs*, 2nd pl. gen. PIE **wos*, **wōs*, BSl. **wóson*, **wósōn*, **wōns*, dat. PIE **wos*, **wōs*, BSl. **wōmas*, **wōns*, acc. PIE **uswé*, **usmé*, **wos*, **wōs*, 1st du. PIE **wé*, **wé*, 2nd du. PIE **yú*, **yú*. It is reasonable to assume that much of this variation is secondary and must not be dated back to the proto-language. When the analyst finds it difficult to choose between alternative reconstructions, this is no valid reason for assuming that both are ancient. The history of Indo-European pronouns is full of secondary lengthenings and shortenings in the separate languages, as Kapović admits himself (2006: 147ff.), so there is no reason to date such variation back to any specific prehistoric stage, least of all Proto-Indo-European.

Thus, I reject Kapović's reconstruction of Slavic 1st sg. **jǎ* beside **jǎzǝ* and analogical **jǎ* (for Štokavian, South Čakavian, Kajkavian, Slovak, Polish and Slovencian) and **jǎzǝ* (for Slovene, North Čakavian and Kajkavian) and reconstruct only **jǎzǝ*, as attested in Slovene and neighboring Croatian dialects, with loss of *-z* and secondary lengthening in Serbo-Croatian and West Slavic dialects. Note that the phonetic reflex of **jǎzǝ* is attested nowhere in Slavic and that the variants *jǎ*, *jǎ* are only attested beside *jǎz*, *jǎz* (Kapović 2006: 34). The form **jǎzǝ* evidently represents PIE **ǵeġHom* with initial stress (unlike Vedic *ahám*). For East Baltic I reconstruct **eš* and for Prussian *as* < **eš* (cf. 2000: 126), both with secondary shortening (as in Armenian *es*). My reconstruction of the 1st sg. pronoun is as follows:

	BSl.	PIE	Vedic
nom.	*ʔeʔʒun	*ʔeǵ-	ahám
acc.	*mēn	*ʔme	mám
gen.	*mene	*ʔmene	mama
abl.	*me	*ʔmed	mád
dat.	*mini	*ʔmiǵ ^{hi}	máhya
loc.	*minoi	*ʔmoi	máyi

I assume an initial laryngeal on the basis of the Greek and Armenian evidence. In East Baltic we find gen. **mane* and dat. **muni* under the influence of the 2nd sg. and reflexive pronouns, which I reconstruct as follows (reflexive with **s-* instead of **t-* and without nominative):

	BSl.	PIE	Vedic
nom.	*tuʔ	*tu-	tvám
acc.	*tēn	*tue	tvám
gen.	*towe	*teue	táva
abl.	*te	*tued	tvád
dat.	*tubi	*tub ^{hi}	túbhyam
loc.	*tuboi	*toi	tvé

In East Baltic **-b-* was replaced by **-w-* and in Slavic **-w-* by **-b-*. The *u*-vocalism has been preserved in Prussian *subs* ‘self’. I agree with Kapović (2006: 114, 133) that we have to reconstruct initial accent throughout the Balto-Slavic paradigms.

The forms of the 1st pl. pronoun can be reconstructed as follows:

	BSl.	PIE	Vedic
nom.	*mes	*ue-	vayám
acc.	*noʔs	*nsme	asmán
gen.	*noʔsun	*nos	nas
loc.	*noʔsu	*nsmi	asmé

The reconstruction of the 2nd pl. pronoun is as follows:

	BSl.	PIE	Vedic
nom.	*juʔs	*iu-	yūyám
acc.	*woʔs	*usme	yuṣmán
gen.	*woʔsun	*uos	vas
loc.	*woʔsu	*usmi	yuṣmé

East Baltic generalized **muʔ-* and **juʔ-* in the oblique cases while Prussian preserved the full grade vowel in acc. *mans* and *wans*. For the endings I refer to my earlier work (2009 *passim*). Here again, we have to assume initial accent throughout the Balto-Slavic paradigms. The dual forms are the following:

	BSl.	PIE	Vedic
nom.	*weʔ	*ueʔ	vám
acc.	*noʔ	*nʔue	āvám
gen.	*noʔ(ous)	*noʔ	āváyos
loc.	*noʔi(ēu)	*nʔui	
	BSl.	PIE	Vedic
nom.	*juʔ	*iuʔ	yuvám
acc.	*woʔ	*uʔe	yuvám
gen.	*woʔ(ous)	*uoʔ	yuvós
loc.	*woʔi(ēu)	*uʔi	

Starting from the presupposition that *-we was an original second person marker which was generalized as a dual accusative marker, Kapović reconstructs PIE acc. *uswé beside *usmé and *uh₁wé instead of *uh₁é, in spite of the short vowel in Vedic yuvám (2006: 161f.). Elsewhere I have argued that *ue was an original particle meaning ‘self’ which was used to contrast a person with another (third) person (2005a: 9).

It has been established that initial *i-, *u- became acute under the stress in late Balto-Slavic, e.g. SCr. *în* ‘other’, *vīknuti* ‘get used’, Lith. *ýnas*, *inas* ‘true’, Vedic *úcyati* ‘is pleased’ (Kortlandt 1977, Derksen 2003, Pronk 2011). This evidently happened also in the case of *nsme, *usme, which became *iʔnsme, *uʔsme, after which the acute was adopted in the genitive (later accusative) *noʔs, *woʔs. These forms provided the basis for the new plural paradigms. The u-vocalism of Prussian gen. *noūson*, *iouson*, dat. *noūmans*, *ioūmans* points to the preservation of the original zero grade of *nsme, *usme in some of the oblique case forms (dative, ablative, instrumental), with 1st pl. *nuʔ- on the analogy of 2nd pl. *uʔ-, so that we can reconstruct dat. *nuʔmus, *uʔmus for Balto-Slavic, perhaps also dual *nuʔmoʔ, *uʔmoʔ. The instrumental case forms of the personal pronouns are innovations on the basis of the dative forms. Since the acute of *noʔs and *woʔs is not the result of “monosyllabic lengthening” (thus Kapović 2006: 149f.) but originated from the initial zero grade of *nsme and *usme while the acute of *tuʔ, *juʔs, dual *weʔ, *juʔ, *noʔ, *woʔ is of laryngeal origin and acc.sg. *mēn, *tēn do not have an acute, Kapović’s hypothesis of a PIE subphonemic lengthening yielding an acute in monosyllabic pronominal forms must be rejected.

Pronominal paradigms were stressed on the initial syllable in Balto-Slavic (cf. Kapović 2006: 133). However, prepositional groups were also stressed on the initial syllable, e.g. Prussian *ēnmien* ‘in me’, *prēimans* ‘to us’, *pērwans* ‘for you’, also Russian *tudá*, *ottúda* ‘from there’, *nel’zjá*, *donél’zja* ‘as can be’, Ukr. *mené*, *do méne* ‘to me’, SCr. *vráta*, *nà vráta* ‘on the door’, all of which became stressed on the second syllable as a result of Dybo’s law. Traces of this distribution can be found in Serbo-Croatian, Slovene, Old Russian, Middle Bulgarian and Polabian (cf. Kapović 2006: 41-45, 51-54, 80-84). In Serbo-Croatian we usually find gen. *mène*, *tèbe* and dat. *mèni*, *tèbi* in the eastern dialects and *měne*, *těbe*, *měni*, *těbi* in the western dialects. The latter accentuation was evidently regular after a preposition, cf. *zà mene*, *òd tebe*, *ò tebi*, etc., also *mni* beside *mani* < *m̃nĕ with full vocalism under the stress, similarly acc. *ná me*, *zá te*, but *pòdā te*, *ùzā me* with retraction of the stress from the weak jer which had become stressed as a result of Dybo’s law, e.g. **podĕ me*, and later insertion of an analogical vocalized jer. In the instrumental we find e.g. *mānōm* with strong vocalism beside *mnōm* and *tōbōm*, *sā mnōm* with retraction of the stress from the weak jer and

zà tobōm, similarly Slovene *z māno* < **sv̄ m̄nojo* with neo-circumflex before the contracted long vowel. The forms without a preposition have been preserved in Slovene *méne, tébe, méni, tébi* (with an open vowel pointing to final stress) and Middle Bulgarian *mené, tebé, mnójo, tobójo*, with a preposition acc. *vb mǫ, za mǫ*, modern Bulgarian *na méne, na tébe*, all with the stress on the second syllable. The same original distribution can be assumed for Old Russian and Polabian.

Since the Slavic pronouns belong to accent patterns (a) and (b), not (c), they never have an original falling tone (except for the neo-circumflex in Slovene *z māno*). Kapović mistakenly assumes an original circumflex in Proto-Slavic **ty, *my, *vy* (2006: 38, 56). Lengthening of the short reflex of the acute in **tỳ, *mỳ, *vỳ* yielded a falling tone in Slovene and neighboring Čakavian dialects (where we also find a falling neo-circumflex on a lengthened short vowel) and a rising tone elsewhere in Serbo-Croatian (where we usually find a rising tone on lengthened short vowels, e.g. Vrgada *kōnj* ‘horse’, *stār* ‘old’, Jurišić 1973: 93, 197). The short reflex of the acute has been preserved in West Slavic, including Czech. Kapović still sticks to the outdated view that the acute is reflected as a long vowel in Czech, in spite of such obvious counter-examples as *čas, had, hněv, jih, kraj, pluh, rak*. There are four reasons why his view is mistaken. First, we find a quantitative alternation in the paradigm of Czech *kráva* ‘cow’, which has a short root vowel in inst.sg. *kravou*, gen.pl. *krav*, dat.pl. *kravám*, inst.pl. *kravami*, loc.pl. *kravách*, similarly *kámen* ‘stone’, gen.sg. *kamene*. This points to lengthening of a Proto-Slavic short rising **à* in an open first syllable of disyllabic word forms which was blocked by a long vowel in the following syllable. Second, the same lengthening is found in *kůže* ‘skin’, *koží, koží, kožím, kožemi, kožích*, also *můžeš* ‘you can’, which never had an acute root vowel. Third, the same lengthening is found in trisyllabic word forms where a jer was lost in the initial syllable, e.g. *lžíce* ‘spoon’, *lžící, lžic, lžícím, lžicemi, lžících*, also *psáti* ‘to write’, *psal* ‘wrote’, *psaní* ‘writing’, *spáti* ‘to sleep’, supine *jdi spat* ‘go to sleep’. This puts the lengthening after the loss of pretonic jers. Fourth, the Czech lengthening cannot be separated from the one in Upper Sorbian *kruwa* < *krówa* ‘cow’, which shows that it was more recent than the metathesis of liquids. The short reflex of the acute may also have been preserved in Kajkavian (Bednja) *mivo, vvo*, which Kapović cannot explain (2006: 63, fn. 195).

Orthotonic pronouns can easily become clitics in certain syntactic environments, e.g. Russian *Vyxožú odín ja na dorógu* (Lermontov) ‘Alone I come out on to the road’, where *ja* ‘I’ is unstressed after *odín* ‘alone’. This is what evidently happened in Old Russian and Middle Bulgarian, where we find *í ty, í my, í vy, ty žé, my žé, vy žé, ty bó, vy bó*, also acc. *ná ny* beside original *na ný*, similarly Serbo-Croatian *nâ me, zâ te* beside original *ná me, zá te* (cf. Kapović 2006: 81). It is clear from Slovene *nâme, zâte* (without accent shift) beside *na mê, za tê* that the initial stress is not ancient. Accentual mobility spread even further in some western dialects of Serbo-Croatian, where we find e.g. *òd mene, ù tebe, zà tobōm* beside original *òd mene, zà tobōm*, etc. The final stress of Slovene inst. *menój, tebój* and Old Russian *mnojú, tobojú* beside original *mnóju, tobóju* was taken from the demonstrative pronoun. In order to explain the alleged circumflex in Proto-Slavic **ty, *my, *vy*, acc. **mę, *tę, *ny, *vy* and the corresponding dual forms, Kapović proposes an adaptation of Meillet’s law which allegedly affected **ty* at a recent stage (after Dybo’s law and after the spread of accentual mobility in the oblique cases) and was subsequently extended analogically to the other personal pronouns (2006: 87ff.). This multitude of unlikely and unnecessary hypotheses should have been a warning about the

correctness of his basic assumption that **ty*, **my*, **vy* had a falling tone in Proto-Slavic.¹

References

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Summary

The major difference between Kapović’s reconstructions and mine is the huge number of doublets which he assumes for his proto-languages. It is reasonable to assume that much of this variation is secondary and must not be dated back to the proto-language.

The acute of 1st pl. **noʔs* and 2nd pl. **woʔs* is not the result of “monosyllabic lengthening” but originated from the initial zero grade of PIE acc. **nsme* and **usme*. Kapović’s hypothesis of a PIE subphonemic lengthening yielding an acute in monosyllabic pronominal forms must be rejected.

Pronominal paradigms were stressed on the initial syllable in Balto-Slavic. However, prepositional groups were also stressed on the initial syllable, e.g. Prussian *ēnmien* ‘in me’, *prēimans* ‘to us’, *pērwans* ‘for you’, also Russian *tudá*, *ottúda* ‘from there’, *nel’zjá*, *donél’zja* ‘as can be’, Ukr. *mené*, *do méne* ‘to me’, SCr. *vráta*, *nà vrāta* ‘on the door’, all of which became stressed on the second syllable as a result of Dybo’s law. Traces of this distribution can be found in Serbo-Croatian, Slovene, Old Russian, Middle Bulgarian and Polabian.

Since the Slavic pronouns belong to accent patterns (a) and (b), not (c), they never have an original falling tone. Kapović mistakenly assumes an original circumflex in Proto-Slavic **ty*, **my*, **vy*.

¹ Let me add a footnote to object to Kapović’s offensive use of the term “Croatian” for traditional “Serbo-Croatian”, as if the Serbs have been annihilated in the Yugoslav civil war.

