

Remnants of the old Accent Paradigm B in Croatian *i*-type nouns as previously explored

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Abstract

In this article, the author deals with remnants of accent paradigm B among *i*-type nouns in the Croatian language, linking the existing data on short-root and long-root nouns. First, we briefly take into account the development of a. p. B among *i*-type nouns and comment on dialectal remnants in Knin and Ivoševci. Second, we deal with the disappearance of a. p. B and the origin of the cited dialectal forms. Third, we take a closer look at how the noun *stvār*, the sole though altered survivor of a. p. B, shifted to a. p. C (or sometimes a. p. A). All three parts discuss traces of the even rarer accent paradigm B among *i*-type nouns, of which only a few historical examples are attested in Croatian.

Key words: *i*-type noun, accent, long root, short root.

The a. p. B⁴ *i*-type nouns have vanished in Croatian, but not without a trace. In our earlier article, we identified possible traces in the declension of some nouns alongside a declensional shift (Velić, 2018/19). An additional explanation shall mostly be based on the related works by Mate Kapović, as it will be noted as we proceed with the examples. Thus, in the following paragraphs, we will discuss the overall development of accent behaviour amongst such nouns, and nouns to some extent influenced by them. Therefore, our approach in the next section will be more of a synthetic one, while in the later one, which is broader in scope, we will undertake a more analytic approach.

Both simple and compound a. p. B *i*-type nouns have effectively vanished in the standard language and dialects.⁵ As for the first group of nouns, it seems appropriate to say that they were quite unproductive,

⁴ Henceforth, I shall use capital letters to identify the accent paradigms, because the examples and description all pertain to the present state of the language – thus small letters will not be applied in any context. The text logically follows the division of accent paradigms as designed by Vladislav Illich-Svitych (1963) in that the accent can be traced back to an earlier form at any point in declension.

⁵ This is a generalisation of the premises written in Velić 2018/19.

while the other group of nouns according to Kapović (2007) seems to have adapted to the accent paradigm A very early. One noun, however – quoted here as *stvār*⁶ ‘thing’ – is considered to be a vestige of the broader system of similar nouns, although it synchronically declines as an a. p. A noun (Kapović, 2015). Since it, i.e., the noun, is quite prominent, we shall undertake a proper analysis of its current appearance.

The noun that we shall deal with later on bears a neo-acute accent, which can be seen as a mark of the accent paradigm B among nouns with a long root. Synchronically and diachronically, it belongs to a different context to compound nouns like **mūdrōst*⁷ ‘wisdom’, since there was no final accent in the latter example – modern nouns with a long root also have an innovative accent in some Slavonian dialects, cf. preserved *glūpōst* (Kapović, 2007: 74) ‘a foolish thing’ and innovative *sjajnōst*⁸ ‘glow, a (bright) light’ in the dialect of Siče. However, the latter example is of greater importance to us, as its accent has already moved forward and become neo-acute, as in the case of *stvār*, while both nouns (*sjajnōst* and *stvār*) are in a. p. A. The first example (*glūpōst*) can be seen as a demonstration of the loss of the original structure of the accent paradigm (and overall pattern), and it directly served as a comparative source (among many) for Kapović after he declared that such nouns already had a stable accent (see above). Both nouns can therefore be viewed diachronically as examples of the preservation of the accent paradigm – in the case of *stvār* and in the case of **mūdrōst* – the loss of it altogether by fixation of the placement of stress (as seen in similar modern examples like *sjajnōst*). When speaking broadly of the distribution of the accent paradigms in the present-state language, we can observe how the accent paradigm C has altered the first noun (*stvār*) in the majority of dialects, while accent paradigm A has stepped in for the second noun (**mūdrōst*).

The noun *stvār* is attested in Chakavian and Kajkavian dialects (Kapović, 2015: 769, n.2879.), but interestingly not in Shtokavian dialects. There

⁶ It is quoted as such in Kapović 2015: 769 n.2879. Quoting it as such is also economical, as the vowel *a* is, in most cases, present in that noun in various dialects, and the dialectal descriptions support it (the transition to *o* is evident in some dialects, as illustrated by the genitive singular form *stvōri*, Kapović 2015: 897).

⁷ See Kapović 2007: 72 on the behaviour and creation of that noun. We have altered the Proto-Slavic sound pattern in our writing to reflect the Croatian sound changes that later occurred.

⁸ See Menac-Mihalić & Celinić 2012: 193. The noun’s spelling is somewhat different to the original one recorded in that source.

is potentially continuation in some Chakavian and Shtokavian dialects in Dalmatia. It is unclear whether the Chakavian dialects around Zadar have inherited the noun, but some mainland Shtokavian dialects to the south exhibit a changeable accent in Nsg. – Gsg. in the declension of some nouns which originally declined according to the accent paradigm C. We speak of the dialects of Ivoševci⁹ and Knin. We have not explored the dialect of Ivoševci thoroughly (we only listened to one of its speakers and casually noticed some examples), while the dialect of Knin has been more closely investigated. We will therefore present examples from the latter dialect first in the manner in which we previously dealt with it (Velić, 2018/19).

In the dialect of Knin we have directly or indirectly observed the following examples in three words:

nôć ‘night’: Gsg. (*tê*) *noći* ‘that night’ (Velić, 2018/19);

vlâst ‘government, rule’: Gsg. (*od*) *vlâsti* ‘from the (city) government’ (Velić, 2018/19);

mâst ‘fat’: Gsg. in (*pũno*) *mâsti* ‘much fat’.

In the dialect of Ivoševci, we have encountered the following two examples in two nouns:

nôć ‘night’: Gsg. (*tê*) *noći* ‘that night’ (the example formally matches the previously enlisted one, although the author has also encountered another use of the nominal form in the former dialect);

pêć ‘fire’: Gsg. (*kraj*) *pêći* ‘in front of the fireplace’.

It is possible that there was a continuum of forms among the various dialects in addition to the two already analysed. All the examples are genitive singular, which was sometimes used with locative meaning, in which case it can cause analogy in Gsg., where such an accent is expected by phonetic evolution. For arguments in favour of continuation we may wish to look where it is dialectologically expected but not attested – i.e. in dialects similar to that of Zadar (which are Chakavian and generally preserve the older placement of stress better than Shtokavian dialects), which have not been fully investigated in this respect – and compare them to dialects where it is certainly no longer present, e.g. in the dialects near Šibenik, which are almost completely Shtokavised in a broad sense.

⁹ Velić 2018/19: 3. The village is located near Kistanje and falls within its administrative area.

In both dialects the noun *stvâr* has a long-falling tone everywhere like *vlâst*, but in the municipality of Kukljica on the island of Ugljan it falls into a group of *i*-type nouns of a. p. A (and no accent jump to the proclitic) (Benić, 2014). It is better adapted into a. p. C in Kali again on the island of Ugljan, although not entirely due to lack of the outer mobility (“*vanjska pomičnost*”) typical of that accent paradigm (Benić, 2014). Although the noun *stvâr* has retained something of the older a. p. B in Kukljica (the accent is still root-bound though long-falling, which is atypical of a. p. A) and Kali (the accent has no outer mobility), it is still unclear how it is linked to the forms with a visibly a. p. B accent in Knin and Ivoševci as quoted above. Both types of analysis will provide a framework for the next section.

Further research on the remnants of rarer nouns

The examples from Knin and Ivoševci are few and mostly facultative; it seems that only *nôći* from the dialect of Ivoševci is relatively stable in the adduced phrase.¹⁰ In such examples we may presuppose the influence of the locative singular and genitive plural, which both bearing the same accent, respectively. It will become clear from a brief analysis of accent variation within the declension, however, that the space for a possible conservation is limited

The accent paradigm B typically presupposes an accent on word endings, which has shifted backwards in standard Croatian, most commonly towards the root.¹¹ The accent paradigm C, on the other hand, is typified by a mixture of an accent tied to the beginning and an ending-bound accent (also shifted back in standard Croatian). Both accent paradigms are given space, for example, in ‘Povijest hrvatske akcentuacije’, which shows how some forms in a. p. C, i.e. those of the instrumental singular, have undergone major changes (Kapović, 2015), and raises the question as to when the shift occurred. While this question is impossible to answer, we shall provide some reliable data on the contemporary distribution, taking into consideration other, apparently more widespread accent shifts as well. We shall, of course, apply some existing knowledge on the reflexes in dialects.

The instrumental singular of simple *i*-type nouns generally shows forms

¹⁰ Velić 2018/19: 3 – for the speakers’ ethnicity. The village of Ivoševci is almost exclusively populated by the Serbs.

¹¹ The accent is still phonetically bound to the original syllable, as shown by marking in Kapović 2007: 72.

with one of the two falling accents, regardless of the accent paradigm. The examples that we adduce are from the dialect of Knin. *Smřću/smřti* (a. p. A),¹² ‘with/by death’, *nõću* (a. p. C) ‘by night’ and *vlâšću/vlâsti* (a. p. C) ‘by rule’ are the commonest ones. Forms with retracted rising accents are present to an extent in neo-Shtokavian dialects, as noted elsewhere, and may be well-preserved in isolated areas such as where the dialects of Sunger and Mrkopalj (and Perušić on the other side) are spoken (Kapović, 2015). Since the majority of dialects typically do not exhibit this trait, it is present in some dialect areas. If we seek a valid explanation to this view, we might reach far into Slavonian, old Shtokavian dialects, where the original placement of stress is preserved, and furthermore phonologically advanced, if we take into consideration examples such as *maščũ* ‘with fat’ (< *maščũ) (see Kapović, 2007: 75 for other forms). For as far as we know such examples do not exist in the dialects of Dalmatia (see above) – the analysed form would have yielded **mášću*, a form of a rather common noun, which leads us to conclude that the western Croatian dialects have, for the most part, long lost the distinct final accent in the instrumental singular, the dialects of Sunger and Mrkopalj and Perušić being exceptions to a degree. We are instead dealing with a non-phonetical shift in the placement of stress, that is, of a much wider scope than the adduced examples show.

Since there is no apparent trace of the accent paradigm B among *i-stems, apart from the accent in the declension of the noun *stvâr* – which is linked to the dialectal verb *stvorît* ‘to create, to make’ – we see in the declension a generally systematised use of root-bound falling accents in a. p. A and (mostly) a. p. C when the noun is used without a preposition. The following examples are cited with reference to the standard language and the dialect of Knin, which serves as a secondary source due to the uniformity of the corpus of the standard language, as far as grammars are concerned.¹³

(Standard Croatian) *smřt* (on the meaning and the accent paradigm see above): Gsg. *smřti*, Dsg. *smřti*... Lsg. (u) *smřti* ‘in death’ – (Knin) *smřt*: Gsg. *smřti*, Dsg. *smřti*... Lsg. (u) *smřti*;

(Standard Croatian) *stvâr** (a. p. C): Gsg. *stvâri*, Dsg. *stvâri*... Lsg. (o)

¹² It is the sole noun of its sort (i.e. not a derivative) that declines in this way – in Kapović 2007: 75. Three nouns are given under the same moniker: *smřt* ‘death’, *nît* ‘a thread’ and *mjěd* ‘brass’.

¹³ This is disputable since grammars often employ different approaches to language. The accent on monosyllables remains constant, however.

stvári ‘about a topic’ – (Knin) *stvář** (a. p. C): Gsg. *stváři*, Dsg. *stváři*... Lsg. (o) *stváři*;

(Standard Croatian) *nôć* (a. p. C): Gsg. *nôći*, Dsg. *nôći*... Lsg. (po) *noći* ‘by night’ – (Knin) *nôć* (a. p. C): Gsg. *nôći*, Dsg. *nôći*... Lsg. (po) *noći*;

(Standard Croatian) *bôl* (a. p. C) ‘pain’: Gsg. *bôli*, Dsg. *bôli*... Lsg. (o) *bôli* ‘about pain’ – (Knin) *bôl* (a. p. C): Gsg. *bôli*, Dsg. *bôli*... Lsg. (o) *bôli*.

The locative forms partially differ between the two sources in the accent paradigm C, but there is a historical reason for this. Namely, it seems that, next to the innovative locative singular forms with a final accent in the system of *a*-type nouns of the accent paradigm C in many (or most) Croatian dialects, there survived archaic forms with an initial accent – today widely recognised amongst nouns denoting the animate (Kapović, 2010). The distribution of these forms seems to have influenced that of the semantically corresponding forms within the system of *i*-type nouns, at least at some point in a dialect’s past, e.g., *(o) bóli (: (o) *mûžu* ‘about the husband’) > (o) *bôli*. Later, in conjunction with the established view and other examples of *i*-type nouns (such as *stvář* and other simple nouns), the forms of the instrumental singular may be said to be quite rare within the latter system. To draw a simple comparison, the form *mašćũ* of the Slavonian group of dialects would almost never appear in the dialect of Knin – and if it does appear, it is always pronounced by means of the long-falling accent, and even in the comparable Slavonian form there seems to have been foreign influence upon the accent (Kapović, 2007) for the morphological rarity (so that the ending is *-ũ* and not **-ũ*). Such might explain why the natural reflex of the former ending-bound accent does not appear in the word or the other examples, and why these forms partially disappeared alongside those of the locative singular in the dialect of Knin. We may also speak of the influence of instrumental singular forms of *a*-type nouns in the same context, but that is, in our observation, a more distant one.

The most interesting question remains unresolved – how did the accent paradigm B almost vanish altogether? Mate Kapović has discussed this in an article where a methodologically precise number of a. p. A nouns (alongside some a. p. B nouns and adjectives) is analysed under the assumption of a widespread rise of accent mobility, i.e. of the accent paradigm C, which later altered them (Kapović, 2009). Such a development will have occurred for various reasons and the rising mobility is just a common moniker for all of them (Kapović, 2009), but

it could have been partially motivated by prosodic changes later on in Croatian for a. p. B nouns (as in Lsg. (a. p. B > A) *stvãri > *stvâri*, effectively a. p. C like Lsg. *bôli* in Knin), or by a frequent use of certain nouns and thus a larger exposure to the influence of a. p. C (as in the case of *stvâr*), which is clearly not a phonological (prosodic) reason.

Kapović's article also deals with some nouns whose etymological cognates do not belong to accent paradigm C (Kapović, 2009). Of nouns originally stemming from a. p. B, in the Croatian language proper – in the analysis that Kapović is dealing with there are examples from other Slavic languages as well, though never in the first place – the *i*-type nouns declined according to it only offered one example (*lûč*, which has preserved a. p. B in the alternatin declension as an *a*-type noun), and Kapović (2009) states in a footnote that there are no a. p. B *i*-type nouns in Croatian.¹⁴ Historically there are probably four frequent nouns (the examples are from the corpus of the standard language): *òganj* 'fire, a flame', *pût* 'way', [vî:l]¹⁵ 'fairy' and, of course, *stvâr*. The frequency varied historically; the first noun has been mostly supplanted by the *e*-type noun *vãtra* (a. p. A) 'fire' in the standard language, and [vî:l] fell into disuse in favour of the more common *e*-type noun, *vîla* (a. p. B), which has the same meaning. The first two nouns changed in type and became *a*-type nouns, and as to why *pût* did so may be attributed to its phonological peculiarity, as noted in the earlier article.¹⁶ While *pût* has apparently basically preserved the accent paradigm everywhere, the first noun shows vestiges of the same system in the dialect of Orubica (Kapović, 2007). In regard to the last noun, we have pointed out that its accent in various dialects is well-preserved and has indeed remained distinct. The process of leveling the accent paradigm is striking, since the accent here is also root-bound and stable.

Of our examples, *òganj* comes from Proto-Slavic *ògnъ (cf. Latin *ignis* 'fire' and Sanskrit *Agni*- 'Agni – personal name'), which in Croatian yielded *òganj*. A shift may have occurred very early in the oblique cases – e.g. (Gsg.) *ognà > *ògnja – if we are dealing with most of the contemporary dialects – virtually all but that of Orubica. For all other dialects there was analogy at play after Nsg., but the resulting accent is a common feature. Nouns for which the root is long behaved rather

¹⁴ Kapović, 2009: 241, cf. n.18 above.

¹⁵ The noun appears in the poetry of the Renaissance, and is written as *vil*.

¹⁶ It has a reflex of one of the Proto-Slavic nasals, which are a more typical feature of the larger system of *a*-type nouns (see Velić, 2018/19: 3, thereon).

differently. While the influence of ablaut in some capacity was surely manifested upon them (Velić, 2018/19),¹⁷ minor shifts in frequency (i.e. without lexical substitution, or with it being a primary cause) resulted in a declensional shift for the noun *pût* – which has long been attested as an *a*-type noun¹⁸ – while *stvâr* was more drastically altered by such nouns as *nôc*, or the similar *môc* ‘power’, since even the dialectal *stvâr* has developed a root-bound accent throughout its paradigm as a result, which can indeed be taken as a genuinely archaic feature, whereas its counterpart in the standard language (*stvâr*) has developed into a. p. C in its entirety. Some forms of short and long-root nouns may be distant relics in the dialects of Ivoševci and Knin (e.g. *nôc* – *nôci*), although it is unclear which noun is the true predecessor of the forms described at the beginning of this article. The latter attitude loses further ground as a mere hypothesis if we seriously take into consideration the relation *ògānj* – *ògnja* (Kapović, 2007) in the otherwise geographically distant dialect of Orubica. There the short-falling accent in the nominative, on one side, and the short-rising accent, on the other side, are preserved. The noun is also exceptional in that it is disyllabic in the nominative, on account of an unstable vowel in its structure. If the forms analysed here from the dialects of Knin and Ivoševci (i.e. *nôc* – *nôci*) are in any way archaic, we can say that they have parallels in examples from Orubica (*ògānj* – *ògnja*).

From the recent analysis it is clear that the analogy was strong in the accent paradigm shift, but it is still unclear whether it occurred from the nominative use or from the use of the oblique cases. If we base our understanding upon the dialectal noun *stvâr*, it would appear that the first option is correct, although it was indirectly suggested that the oblique cases of nouns of the accent paradigm C influenced that noun. If indeed the nominative case, as a symbol of lexical units, altered the declension, then its influence was not complete in the analysed nouns from the dialects of Ivoševci and Knin. We have not yet exhausted what is possibly the clearest remnant of a once wider paradigm – *stvâr* – which is preserved in some nearby dialects (optionally with $\sim >$, e.g. in the dialect of Burnji and Južni Primošten) (Perkov, 2020). We have not investigated anything other than the previously mentioned dialects (and, briefly, those of Kukljica and Kali), but we shall include here some more

¹⁷ There the sound law is incorrectly labeled *umlaut*, which is another phenomenon (present, for example, in Germanic languages).

¹⁸ We have no insights into the exact time of the shift at this point.

observations on the nature of its form, however broad our view might seem in the end.

The Noun *stvār*

The circumstances of this noun's accent development have already been explored to some degree. At this point, we may presume with some certainty that the accent shift in *stvār* was not as old as the declensional shift in *pūt*. These nouns are by far the most used examples of the formerly adduced four words, which originally belonged to the same noun type and accent paradigm. Since the change in the placement of stress in the first noun by now appears older (as noted in the earlier discussion – *pūt* is still an a. p. B *a*-type noun), and the declensional shift of the latter noun is probably prehistoric, it seems probable that both nouns were initially influenced by nouns of the accent paradigm C (and those that decline or still declined according to the accent paradigm A).¹⁹ While *stvār* may have had a fixed accent as early as that time, *pūt* had switched declensions, probably on account of it previously being a masculine *i*-type noun (something similar must have happened to the noun *öganj*, which is also treated as dialectal here). The latter noun thus avoided what was likely a widespread accent fixation, as it has retained the ending-bound accent in oblique cases in many dialects to the present day as part of the system of *a*-type nouns where that is obviously the case.²⁰ The noun *stvār* suffered the change, its nominative form being the sole survivor of the once wider group of nouns of the accent paradigm B.²¹

The accent and syntactic peculiarities of the use of *stvār*

After all, there might be a simpler reason for the change in the accent paradigm, and we shall seek it in the frequent use of the nominative

¹⁹ The view on the existence of a larger group of such nouns is based on the analysis of some nouns as conducted in Kapović (2009). See above n.28.

²⁰ There are some dialects where *pūt* also has a root-bound accent as part of the *a*-type nouns. Namely, the two monosyllabic words *pūt* and *dvōr* have *pūta* and *dvōra* in Gsg., whereas all other nouns have forms like *Běčā*, as in the dialect of Vrgada (Jurišić, 1966: 71, 72). It is no coincidence, as Kapović rightfully observes, putting the shift in *dvōra* (which has lengthened the Nsg. from **dvōr*, whereafter the new accent from Nsg. changed the rest of the declension) after that of *pūta* (Kapović, 2005: 54).

²¹ Perhaps the adjective *stvāran* 'real' of the standard tongue points to the accent paradigm B as well, but this is less probable or controversial, cf. *mrāčan* (a. p. B) 'dark' from *mrāk* (a. p. C) 'dark (noun)' and similar examples.

phrase *stvar ina* ‘something else’ in older Croatian literature. It may have happened in this position, among others, that the noun started to change in some dialects: since it remained in the language longer than **vīl* and probably remained the sole noun of this kind, it may have undergone slow changes that were instigated by this position and other similar ones.

It remains unclear why this happened, but it seems that the noun was relatively devoid of prepositional phrases. The latter judgment remains largely hypothetical, since similarly to the aforementioned dialect of Kukljica in the modern dialect of Knin we observe no accent jump in an otherwise rare accusative phrase *prīci na stvār* ‘to begin with the topic’, which in turn suggests that the noun has still retained something of the former accent paradigm. By now it seems both relatively frequent and nominative-friendly. Judging by these data and the data collected by Benić from the dialect of Kali, the declensional shift to a. p. C (and to a. p. A in Kukljica) was gradual, as the noun has not developed the outer mobility (“*vanjska pomičnost*”) otherwise typical of the accent paradigm C. The noun is slightly less adapted in that paradigm in the dialect of Knin, where it has Lsg. (*o*) *stvāri*, but Gpl. *stvārī* and DLlpl. *stvārīma*. Therefore, the noun may have also shifted gradually into a. p. C in the aforementioned nominative phrase.

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Sažetak

Ostatci negdanjega naglasnoga obrasca B u imenica *i*-vrste odvojivi su prema naravi osnove, ovisno o tome je li kratka ili duga. U potonjih se je imenica do dana današnjega očuvao trag u obliku neoakuta u primjeru *stvār* dočim je s povijesnoga stajališta vidljiv utjecaj naglasnoga obrasca C. Isto su tako imenice kratke i duge osnove očuvale traga u dvama mjesnim govorima, koji se, doduše ne s potpunom točnošću, mogu povezati s naglasnim odnosom u riječi za vatru u orubičkome govoru glede kratkih osnova odnosno s imenicom *stvār* glede dugih osnova. Podrobnije istraživanje pokazuje kako je riječ za stvar pretrpjela različite utjecaje, među ostalima i sintakse, tijekom naglasne mijene.