

Title: A Methodology for the Reconstruction of Proto-Slavic Dialects

Author: Matthew Feeney, University of Kansas

This paper offers an original approach to a methodology for linguistic reconstruction of Proto-Slavic dialects.

A dialectology of the Slavic language of the Proto-Slavic period (the pre-migration period, i.e. before 500AD, before Common Slavic) has not been developed with supporting evidence. After an examination of S. L. Nikolaev's and H. Andersen's existing methodologies for the historical reconstruction of dialects of the Proto-Slavic period, the author of this paper proposes in another approach that linguistic accentological data could form a basis for reconstruction.

As evidence, Vermeer (1984: 340) believes that the forward stress shift of Dybo's Law could explain the origin of the place of stress in verbs in Proto-Slavic of the *c* paradigm that are stressed on the stem when prefixed. The stress shift would have taken place from initial syllable in prefixed and unprefixed forms, including those of some *i*-stem verbs, for example in material from the Čakavian dialect of Susak: *čînî, učînî* (3d. Sg. Pres.) (Vermeer 1984: 340). In more recent work on Slavic accentology Dybo writes about a forward stress shift, providing forms in Carpatho-Ukrainian *nesé -prinése* (Dybo and Nikolaev 1998: 60).

The author of this paper believes that such a forward stress shift took place in Proto-Slavic. The author has not reconstructed any Proto-Slavic dialect, but evaluates the possibility of reconstructing a dialect based on the results of the forward stress shift, using only accentological data. He uses evidenced concepts of dialectology, including those indicating that dialects become distinguished by separation, e.g., the dialects of Slovene, separated by ranges of mountains and differentiated significantly by accentological features.

References:

- Dybo, V. A.; S. L. Nikolaev, and G. I. Zamjatina. 1990. *Osnovy slavjanskoj akcentologii*. Moskva: Nauka.
- Dybo, V. A. and S. L. Nikolaev. 1998. "Novye dannye i materialy po balto-slavjanskoj akcentologii." In *Problemy slavjanskogo jazykoznanija. Tri doklada k XII Meždunarodnomu s'ezdu slavistov*. Moskva: Institut slavjanovedenija Rossijskoj akademii nauk. 5-70.
- Vermeer, Willem R. 1984. "On Clarifying Some Points of Slavonic Accentology: The Quantity of the Thematic Vowel in the Present Tense and Related Issues." *Folia Linguistica Historica* 5.2: 331-395.