

# FLAT TONE IN DELLA BELLA'S DICTIONARY

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Della Bella's *Dizionario* was first published in Venice 1728. Alongside was published a short grammar entitled *Istruzioni grammaticali della lingua illirica*. It contained a passage entitled *Dell' Accento*. Upon examination, C. A van den Berk stated: "Nous pouvons donc conclure [...] que le dialecte ragusain actuel a un substrat d'un dialecte plutôt čakavien ancien qu'on a *parlé* jadis à Dubrovnik."<sup>1</sup> The statement was due to a number of instances with *l'acut čakavien* such as *krāl̃j, vojñik, orũžje* etc. Same conclusion was iterated in Friedrichs 1973. Although a generally held view, this fault is due to lack of chronological and comparative insight. On the contrary, I maintain that in Dubrovnik there has never been any kind of čakavian substrate. This view was first promulgated by M. Rešetar. Accordingly it follows: *l'acut čakavien n'est pas čakavien*. A fact easily proved by means of relative chronology.

For *Dizionario* I draw up a system with following traits: 1. Falling tone occurs on all syllables except for the final opened ones; 2. *L'acut čakavien* has identical distribution; 3. Rising tone occurs on the middle syllables and initial syllables of the disyllabic words; 4. Stressed, pretonic and posttonic vowels can be either short or long. The system is implicitly seen in a book of poetry by Ignazio Giorgi published the same year as *Dizionario*.

Let us now consider the system from a chronological point of view.<sup>2</sup> Starting from a palaeoštokavian system with three tones and a pretonic length, the first to retract was short falling tone on opened final syllable. Since the accent is easier retracted to a long than to a short syllable, it follows that long rising tone is older than short rising. As a result, pretonic length was eliminated from disyllabic words yielding a symmetric system with two rising (or one rising, one flat) and two falling tones. The next to retract was the same old short falling tone on opened final syllable, but now to a short pretonic syllable. Instead of a short rising it resulted in a long rising tone. This was due to preservation of symmetry. In polysyllables it resulted in a short falling allotone since long rising tone wasn't yet distributed on middle syllables. It follows that disyllabic shifting is older than polysyllabic. Polysyllabics were therefore next to shift. After the shift, length (now confined to paenultimate syllable) was almost completely lost and the system – with two rising (or one rising, one flat) and two falling tones – was steady. Not for long. Long tones, shifting from final opened syllables to either middle or initial syllable, resulted in a new posttonic length and surprisingly a perserving short rising tone. At this point the system had two rising tones (or one rising, one flat), three falling tones, a pretonic and a posttonic length – an unsteady system. The remaining distribution of flat tone can only be explained by a regular shift, as explained above.

A step-by-step illustration: 1.  $\cdot\bar{v}\bar{v} > \cdot\acute{v}v$  cf. /grjéha, nóža/; 2.  $\cdot\bar{v}\bar{v} > \cdot\acute{v}v$  cf. /jéčam, kúkol/; 3.  $\cdot\bar{v}\bar{v} > \cdot\acute{v}v >> \cdot\acute{v}v$  cf. /bóba, kóna/; 4.  $\cdot\bar{v}\bar{v}\bar{v} > \cdot\bar{v}\bar{v}\bar{v} >> \cdot\bar{v}\bar{v}\bar{v}$  cf. /svjedóka, živóta/; 5.  $\cdot\bar{v}\bar{v}\bar{v} > \cdot\bar{v}\bar{v}\bar{v}$  cf. /junáka, rukáva/; 6.  $\cdot\bar{v}\bar{v}\bar{v} > \cdot\bar{v}\bar{v}\bar{v}$  cf. /jedínac, počétak/; 7.  $\cdot\bar{v}\bar{v}, \cdot\bar{v}\bar{v} > \cdot\acute{v}\bar{v}, \cdot\bar{v}\bar{v}$  cf. /sèstrè, slúžbě/; 8.  $\cdot\bar{v}\bar{v}, \cdot\bar{v}\bar{v} > \cdot\acute{v}\bar{v}, \cdot\bar{v}\bar{v}$  cf. /glávè, vòdè/; 9.  $\cdot\bar{v}\bar{v}\bar{v}, \cdot\bar{v}\bar{v}\bar{v} > \cdot\bar{v}\bar{v}\bar{v}, \cdot\bar{v}\bar{v}\bar{v}$  cf. /budálè, tetívè/; 10.  $\cdot\bar{v}\bar{v}\bar{v} > \cdot\bar{v}\bar{v}\bar{v}$  cf. /dubìnè, ljepòtè/.

Hence it is clear that Della Bella's *acut* is a palaeoštokavian remanent.

## ABSTRACT

The paper deals with origin of flat tone in Ardelio Della Bella's *Dizionario*. So far (van den Berk 1959, Friedrichs 1973, Lukežić 1991) it has been thought of as of a substrate influence – an unlikely fact. It is argued that flat intonation in question is a regular reflex of Proto-Slavic long neoacute.

1 Berk 1959:257.

2 For the relative chronology of the entire neoštokavian accent shift cf. Ligorio *forthc.*

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