Whence virility? The rise of a new gender distinction in the history of Slavic

LAURA A. JANDA

University of North Carolina-Chapel Hill

Introduction

Imagine for a moment that you are talking with someone in a foreign city, let's say somewhere in Europe, East or West. The person you are talking with says, oh, you're an American? I just met an American right here in this spot yesterday! Quick, fix an image in your mind of the person your interlocutor is talking about. Got it? OK, what does this American look like? I've tried this mental experiment with a number of audiences, always with the same result: a Caucasian male, usually blond, of average build, 25-35 years of age. When I get this response, I ask, wait a minute, you mean it's not a left-handed octogenarian paraplegic lesbian? Why not? Isn't her passport just as valid as the one that fresh-faced American boy has in his pocket? Everybody bursts out laughing at this point.

The object of this experiment is to demonstrate the special cognitive salience of the male human (virile) gender. When confronted with a genderless ethnonym like "an American," although we know that it includes a huge spectrum of varied instantiations, in the absence of any modifiers, we will immediately reach for a generic interpretation. It is the juxtaposition of the generic with the exceedingly non-generic that inspires the humorous response above.

It is surely no accident that the generic gender is virile, although the reasons why this is so go far beyond the scope of this article. As a linguist, what I find remarkable is the fact that the cognitive saliency of virility has the potential to become conventionalized in grammar, and as a Slavic linguist, I find the expression of virility in Slavic

languages particularly remarkable. To my knowledge there has never been an examination of the how the virility phenomenon developed in Slavic, and this article is an attempt to fill that gap. On another level, this article is also an attempt to explore the ways in which linguistic expression reflects human concepts of gender and self.

Virility is not a simple +/- feature in Slavic. It has some subtle complications that are very revealing about how society views human masculinity. In Polish, for example, nouns referring to male humans have three possible Npl endings: one that is "honorific" and involves virile syntax, one that is neutral and involves virile syntax, and one that is non-virile and involves non-virile syntax, referred to in the literature as "deprecatory". Table 1a,b gives a distribution of examples (these are all glosses—actual data and a detailed analysis are presented in 2.1):

Table 1a.

honorific virile	neutral virile	deprecatory non-virile
astronomer, Balt, nephew, grandfather, general, geographer, engineer, captain, king, officer, father, Sioux, uncle, son, Scot, grandson, plus all first and last names	actor, Englishman, bishop, peasant, boy, Canadian, merchant, pilot, gardener, Pole, lieutenant, employee, colonel, farmer, fisherman, butcher, clerk, singer	bastard, cad, black, midget, horsethief, dwarf, homosexual (vulg.),

Table 1b.

honorific or neutral virile	neutral or deprecatory virile
author, hero, doctor, director, professor, psychologist	*small boy, schoolboy, Jew*

As you can see, there is much more to this distinction than virility. After all, Jews, dwarves, homosexuals, blacks, young boys, and horsethieves are every bit as male and human as kings, bishops, doctors, and psychologists. Their credentials for the virile category are just as good as the American passport of the old southpaw

lesbian in the wheelchair mentioned above. However, these males do not make it into the virile category, but instead share the "deprecatory" morphology and syntax used for female humans, animals, and inanimates.

This is a brief preview of just one feature on the virility map of Slavic. The lines on that map have not appeared overnight. They are the result of a protracted, dynamic historical process of change that is very much still with us. The Polish deprecatory virile, for example, is a fairly recent innovation, and as far as we can tell, is still spreading. In order to bring sufficient rigor to this analysis, it will be necessary to wade through a considerable quantity of detail, tracing the origins of virility in Slavic. The present of a language is in many ways the sum total of its past, and it is hoped that readers will appreciate the contemporary significance of this historical view.

Preliminary concepts and facts

Perhaps the most basic distinction motivated by universal human experience is that of SELF vs. OTHER. All languages have some grammatical means for expressing this distinction, namely reflexive morphemes and/or constructions. Nearly as basic, and well-motivated by the functioning of our perceptual organs, is the distinction of FIGURE vs. GROUND.[1] The very structure of sentences, with grammatically defined roles for subject, object, and adverbial circumstances, guarantees that this distinction is also present in every language. The two distinctions can be conflated if the SELF is identified as the ultimate FIGURE, the highest point on the FIGURE-GROUND scale, and a variety of finer distinctions can also be made. The following is a sample of typical SELF-OTHER/FIGURE-GROUND distinctions that have been made in the past millennium in Slavic languages, arranged to form a continuum (although most languages have conventionalized only a subset of these distinctions):

self > humans like self > humans not like self > animals > small, discrete countable concrete objects > masses and collectives > landscape features > ambient intangibles.[2]

For a variety of historical reasons outlined below, the articulation of SELF-OTHER/FIGURE-GROUND distinctions has been especially intense

in the morphology of masculine nouns. This article will concentrate on the history of the first three types of distinction, all of which signal virility. Virility is a relatively new development in Slavic; prior to the events we will discuss, the only grammatical marker of virility was the use of the *a*-stem[3] nominal paradigm with male (and exclusively virile) referents (cf. Common Slavic *sluga* 'male servant'). The use of virile *a*-stem nouns persists as a pan-Slavic phenomenon, but in Czech, Slovak, and Belarusian (and to a lesser extent in Polish and Ukrainian), the declension of these nouns has been accommodated to the masculine/virile patterns of the *o*-stem paradigm. We will explore the synchronic distribution and diachronic development of virility markers in Slavic. In every case, we will see that the progress of morphemes in their spread is governed by the FIGURE-GROUND scale.

At the time when Slavic was dissolving into separate dialects, several seemingly unrelated morphological events were taking place: (a) the rise of animacy, (b) the death throes of the old *ŭ*-stem paradigm, and (c) the foundering of the dual number in most of Slavic territory. As Klenin (1983) has amply demonstrated, animacy was motivated by a variety of factors, primarily NAsg syncretism and genitive-governing verbs. During the famous Slavic reshuffling of declension patterns, in which nominal declension went from a system based on theme vowels to one based on gender, two paradigms, the *o*-stem masculine/neuter paradigm and the *a*-stem feminine paradigm, emerged as dominant.[4] In one part of this system the distinction between subject and direct object, borne by the nominative and accusative cases, was severely compromised. The feminine *a*-stems had a clear opposition of Nsg -*a* vs. Asg -*ǫ*. Neuter *o*-stems had -*o* for both cases, but this was not problematic since neuter referents were far more likely to serve as objects than as subjects of transitive verbs. Only the masculine NAsg -*ŭ* was problematic, since masculine referents could easily serve either role. This distinction was intact with verbs of perception, where the object was marked with the Gsg -*a*, and this motivated the rise of animacy, expressed by GAsg. The GAsg syncretism which yielded the pan-Slavic masculine animate distinction[5] took root before our attestations of OCS, at a time when the exclusively masculine *ŭ*-stem declension lay in ruins, merely a collection of variant endings for masculine (*o*-stem) nouns.[6] Animacy had invoked the FIGURE-

GROUND scale, and the "extra" morphology of the former *u̯*-stem declension was plundered to further articulate that hierarchy of distinctions. Later, when the dual number lost its semantic moorings in most of Slavic, it provided more material for building FIGURE-GROUND distinctions. Some of these "extra" morphemes were used to distinguish male human beings from all other referents, bolstering the expression of a new gender, virility.

One might ask why there is no parallel development of "feminacy," a hypothetical gender referring to female human beings as opposed to all else. The answer is that feminine paradigms lacked both the spark to start up such a distinction (provided by the GAsg for masculine nouns) and the fuel to keep the fire going (provided by the *u̯*-stem endings, associated specifically with masculine nouns, and later by old dual endings as well). Nouns referring to women were never singled out morphologically in the first place, and appropriate "extra" morphemes that might be implemented for this purpose were lacking.[7] The spread of animacy to feminine nouns in the plural in East Slavic is a fairly recent development, motivated on the one hand by the *a*-stem viriles (which served as a cognitive bridge for spreading GApl from masculine nouns to feminines, since they had the semantics of the former, but the morphology of the latter) and on the other hand by the tendency toward unification of plural paradigms (removal of gender distinctions), and never awarded female human beings any special status.

1. Animacy sparks virility

Animacy, marked by the GAsg of *o*-stems, began as a specialized virility distinction, limited to "nouns indicating a healthy, free, male person" in Old Church Slavonic (Lunt 1959: 46). The GAsg gradually crept down the SELF-OTHER/FIGURE-GROUND scale to include all viriles and eventually all animates, a process completed at the time of the dissolution of Slavic unity. The further development of virility distinctions elsewhere in the masculine paradigm was achieved largely through the opportunistic exploitation of "extra" morphology pertaining to masculine nouns provided by old *u̯*-stem and dual endings. The superficially parallel development of a GApl (which variously marks virility and animacy in parts of North

Slavic) comes considerably later, and will be addressed in section 3.0 since it was initially motivated by dual morphology. Virility (and animacy) markers result either from the spread of a morpheme from the top of the SELF-OTHER/FIGURE-GROUND scale (most of the cases discussed below), or from the contraction of a morpheme in the face of incursion by another morpheme progressing up from the bottom of the scale (i.e., the spread of the masculine Apl -*y* to the Npl, which began with inanimates, causing the original Npl -*i* to retreat, yielding an animacy distinction in Czech, a virility distinction in Polish and Slovak, and no distinction in East Slavic, where -*i* was edged out altogether).

2. Former *ŭ* -stem endings fuel the virility fire

The *ŭ*-stem paradigm was lost, but it is by no means gone. Every singular and plural ending has survived in a new, productive role in at least one modern Slavic language.[8] Two original *ŭ*-stem endings, Npl -*ove* and Dsg -*ovi*, have been used to designate virility in parts of North Slavic. In order to explain why and how this came about, it is necessary to examine the historical distribution of the *ŭ*-stems and the environment they were in at the close of the Common Slavic period. Table 2 compares the *ŭ*-stem and *o*-stem endings of the time (cf. Schenker 1993):

Table 2

| | singular | | plural | |
	ŭ-stem	*o*-stem	*ŭ*-stem	*o*-stem
nominative	-*ŭ*	-*ŭ*	-*ove*	-*i*
genitive	-*u*	-*a*	-*ovŭ*	-*ŭ*
dative	-*ovi*	-*u*	-*ŭmŭ*	-*omŭ*
accusative	-*ŭ*	-*ŭ*	-*y*	-*y*
instrumental	-*ŭmĭ*	-*omĭ*	-*ŭmi*	-*y*
locative	-*u*	-*ě*	-*ŭxŭ*	-*ěxŭ*
vocative	-*u*	-*e*	= Npl	= Npl

Note that the two paradigms shared only three endings: Nsg -*ŭ* [9], Asg -*ŭ* and Apl -*y*. Elsewhere the *ŭ*-stem paradigm offered alternative masculine endings, distinct from those of the *o*-stem in

all cases, and also longer in four: Dsg, Npl, Gpl, and Ipl. Former *ǔ*-stem endings have spread in two ways:

a. early and completely either to all masculine hard stem nouns, or to a phonologically definable subset thereof:

Lsg -*u* (Slovene, Serbo-Croatian)
Gpl -*ovǔ* (North Slavic and Slovene)
Lpl -*ǔxǔ* (Czech and Slovak)

Isg -*ǔmǐ* (North Slavic)
Dpl -*ǔmǔ*, Ipl -*ǔmi* (Slovak)

Vsg -*u* (all Slavic where vocative is retained; subsequent distribution has changed in some languages)

b. to mark FIGUREs or GROUNDs (in some instances the endings was later extended to all masculine hard stem nouns, or to a phonologically definable subset thereof, masking the original semantic motive):

FIGUREs
Npl -*ove* (West Slavic)
Dsg -*ovi* (West Slavic and Ukrainian)

GROUNDs
Gsg -*u* (North Slavic)
Lsg -*u* (North Slavic)

It seems odd to claim that the *ǔ*-stem endings have been mobilized for the cause of both figures and grounds, but if we examine the meanings of the original *ǔ*-stem nouns, we understand why this was the case. Although all scholars agree that *ǔ*-stem nouns were few, there is little agreement on the identity of individual lexemes. Only six words are universally recognized as original *ǔ*-stem nouns:

synǔ	'son'	*domǔ*	'house'
vǐrxǔ	'top'	*medǔ*	'honey'
volǔ	'ox'	*polǔ*	'half'

and most scholars would add the following six more items:[10]

činǔ	'rank'	*stanǔ*	'camp'
ledǔ	'ice'	*sadǔ*	'plant; tree; forest'
darǔ	'gift'	*ědǔ*	'poison'

The original *ŭ*-stem nouns fall neatly into two groups: clear FIGUREs and clear GROUNDs.

FIGUREs: *synŭ* 'son,' *volŭ* 'ox'
GROUNDs: substances and collectives --   *medŭ* 'honey,' *ledŭ* 'ice,' *ĕdŭ*
                                               'poison,' *sadŭ* 'plant; tree; forest'
                locations --   *vĭrxŭ* 'top,' *domŭ* 'house,' *stanŭ* 'camp'
                abstractions -- *polŭ* 'half,' *činŭ* 'rank,' *darŭ* 'gift'

No original *ŭ*-stem nouns have meanings intermediate between FIGURE and GROUND; discrete, countable concrete objects are missing. Given the clustering of the meanings of *ŭ*-stem nouns at the ends of the scale, the "extra" morphology they provided could be associated either with FIGURE or GROUND, and the specific association of each case ending was determined by the markedness values of FIGURE and GROUND in relation to the semantics of the given case. In North Slavic, *ŭ*-stem endings sought the least marked positions:

All other things being equal, FIGURE is marked, GROUND unmarked
Nominative is the case of the subject, therefore FIGURE is unmarked

      - Npl-*ove* marks FIGUREs
Dative is the case of the potential subject,[11] therefore FIGURE is unmarked
      -- Dsg -*ovi* marks FIGUREs
Locative is case of location/attendant circumstance, so GROUND is unmarked
      -- Lsg -*u* marks GROUNDs
Genitive case is indifferent to FIGURE-GROUND and GROUND has default unmarked value
      -- Gsg -*u* marks GROUNDs

The role of Npl -*ove* and Dsg -*ovi* will be examined in every language where those endings signal virility.

2.1 *Npl* -ove

Polish

The Npl endings *-owie*, *-i/(-y)*, and *-y/(-i)*[12] are used in Polish both to distinguish humans like the SELF from humans not like the SELF, and to make finer distinctions within the category of humans not like the SELF, pragmatically promoting some to higher (honorific) status and demoting others to the status of non-viriles. The neutral Npl ending for virile nouns is *-i/(-y)* (as in *studenci* 'students,' *autorzy* 'authors'). Npl *-owie* implies higher relative status; *-y/(-i)* is generally derogatory.

If we examine the groups of nouns for which Npl *-owie* is obligatory, we see a clear relationship of similarity to the (idealized) SELF. The SELF is the prototypical FIGURE: a specific, unique, namable being identified with the speaker/hearer's ego (ideally if not actually a human male). It follows that those who are most like the SELF are (male) blood relatives—literally the closest "copies" of the SELF. The fact that one of the most important male kinship terms is an original *ŭ*-stem, namely *synŭ* 'son,' was no doubt instrumental in motivating the extension of Npl *-owie*. Indeed, virtually all Polish masculine kinship terms require *-owie* (e.g., *ojcowie* 'fathers'). Family members are grouped according to family names, which also have obligatory Npl *-owie*, and this ending is further extended to given names. Families can be organized into larger groups, such as clans, tribes, and nations and nouns of this type may also have *-owie*, although other factors may come into play. For names of nations, for example, Npl *-owie* is more likely when the stem is monosyllabic, as in *Bałtowie* 'Balts.'

The other relevant parameter for the semantic segregation of viriles in Polish is relative salience, which is greatest for persons of high status and lowest for marginalized or maligned members of the population. For the most prestigious titles, Npl *-owie* is virtually required, as in *król* 'king,' Npl *królowie*; *generał* 'general,' Npl *generałowie*. Npl *-owie* is the expected ending for many professions, such as *geograf* 'geographer,' Npl *geografowie*. For many professions, both *-i/(-y)* and *-owie* are used, and the latter has an honorific connotation, as in *psycholog* 'psychologist,' Npl *psycholodzy/psychologowie*.

For many pejorative nouns with virile reference, the use of Npl -*owie* and even the otherwise neutral -*i*/(-*y*) are marked (ironic), and -*y*/(-*i*) is expected. This signals both a distancing of the SELF from such "undesirables" and a demotion of these referential viriles to the status of animals and females. Typical candidates for the use of the deprecatory form in -*y*/(-*i*) are nouns like *bękart* 'bastard,' Npl *bękarty; koniokrad* 'horsethief,' Npl *koniokrady*. Deprecatory Npl forms are expected or common for certain racial, ethnic, and other groups: *Murzyn* 'Negro,' Npl *Murzyny* (non-deprecatory: *Murzyni*); *Żyd* 'Jew,' Npl *Żydy* (non-deprecatory: *Żydzi* 'Jews'); *cygan* 'gypsy,' Npl *cygany* (non-deprecatory: *cyganie*); *karzeł* 'midget; dwarf,' Npl *karły; pedał* 'homosexual (vulg.),' Npl *pedały*.[13]

There are numerous syntactic ramifications to the choice of virile Npl -*owie* or -*i*/(-*y*) as opposed to non-virile -*y*/(-*i*) . The Npl endings of adjectives and the plural *l*-participle forms (used in both past and future tenses) also express virility. The Late Common Slavic masculine -*i* has retreated and is now used only with virile, as opposed to non-virile -*e* for adjectives and -*y* for *l*-participles. The 3pl pronoun likewise observes the distinction: virile *oni* vs. non-virile *one*. When the deprecatory Npl -*y*/(-*i*) is used on a virile noun, however, all other agreement is *non*-virile.

The Polish situation can be summarized as follows:

Npl -*owie*	association with SELF/FIGURE	kin, names, tribes, high status	syntactically virile
Npl -*i*/(-*y*)	(neutral)	most other viriles	syntactically virile
Npl -*y*/(-*i*)	distanced from SELF/FIGURE	deprecatory terms, males who are small, young, or marginalized	syntactically non-virile

Slovak

Virility is expressed by three Npl morphemes in Slovak: -*ove* > -*ovia*, -*i*, and -*e* > -*ia* (limited to nouns in -*tel'* and -*an*). However, there are phonological factors at work, and empirical studies (Bosák 1992, Sabol 1980) show that use of -*ovia* is declining. Like Polish -

owie, Slovak *-ovia* tends to be used with first and last names (*Jánovia, Pasteurovia*), male kinship terms (*otcovia* 'fathers'), some (mainly monosyllabic) ethnic names (*Kurdovia* 'Kurds'), and some titles (*princovia* 'princes'). However, much of the distribution of *-ovia* can be described in terms of morphology or phonology rather than semantics, and *-ovia* cannot be used to promote referents to honorific status in Slovak (the complementary demotion of viriles to non-virile status is also lacking). All virile stems ending in *g, h* and most viriles in other velars are likely to use Npl *-ovia*: *bohovia* 'gods,' *chirurgovia* 'surgeons,' *chlapčekovia* 'boys,' *duchovia* 'spirits'. Virile stems with Nsg in *-a, -o, -i, -us* (*hrdina, hrdinovia* 'hero, heroes'; *šuhajko, šuhajkovia* 'fellow, fellows'; *kuli, kuliovia* 'coolie, coolies'; *génius, géniovia* 'genius, geniuses') all admit *-ovia*, although for many of these words, the use of *-i* is gaining ground.

Thus Slovak clearly distinguishes virile nouns (Npl *-ovia, -ia, -i*) from non-virile, though it does not make the finer distinctions made in Polish.[14] Virile vs. non-virile plural forms are present in adjectives, where the virile Npl is *-í/-i* and the non-virile is *-e*. The 3pl pronoun has two forms: virile *oni* vs. non-virile *ony*. The *l*-participle does not distinguish virility.

Czech

In Czech the primary distinction is animacy (not virility) in the Npl, with inanimates having *-y/-ě* and animates having *-i, -é*, and *-ové*. The neutral Npl form for the vast majority of animate stems is *-i*, and indications are (Sgall & Hronek 1992: 39, Komárek *et al.* 1986: 293; Kořenský 1972: 18-19) that both *-é* and *-ové* are receding in favor of *-i*. However, *-é* and *-ové* are used almost exclusively with nouns having virile referents; the only common exception to this rule being the use of *-ové* as a variant of *-i* with nouns referring to animals that share some morphological characteristic with virile nouns (usually a diminutive *-ek* or a stem in *-l*: *ptáček* 'bird (dim.),' Npl *ptáčci/ptáčkové; mýval* 'raccoon,' Npl *mývali/mývalové*). The distribution of *-ové* in Czech is in some ways similar to that observed in Polish; it is found in the following types of virile nouns:

(1) first and last names (*Václavové, Havlové)*
(2) kinship terms (*otcové* 'fathers,' *vnukové/vnuci* 'grandsons')
(3) some ethnic names (*Arabové* 'Arabs,' *Rusové* 'Russians')
(4) professions (*pedagogové* 'pedagogues,' *ekonomové* 'economists')
(5) monosyllabic stems (*mimové* 'mimes,' *rekové/reci* 'heroes')
(6) stems ending in -*l*, especially if derived from verbal *l*-participles (*patolízalové* 'boot-lickers').

Czech does not, however, attribute any honorific meaning to the use of -*ové*, as the last example above attests. If conditions are met, any virile noun can use -*ové*, even a noun that is strongly pejorative.

2.2 *Dsg* -ovi

Dsg -*ovi* has enjoyed productivity only in West Slavic and Ukrainian. Although this ending was initially extended to mark viriles in the Dsg (a trend already present in Old Church Slavonic and continued in East Slavic until the fourteenth to fifteenth centuries; cf. Grappin 1956: 41 and Gorškova & Xaburgaev 1981: 182), further developments have taken place since the fourteenth century in the territory where we now observe -*ovi*:

-- extension of -*ovi* to non-virile animate and inanimate nouns (Polish and Ukrainian)

-- extension of -*ovi* to non-virile animate nouns (Slovak)

-- extension of -*ovi* to virile nouns in the Lsg (Czech, Slovak, and Ukrainian; probably motivated by DLsg syncretism in *a*-stem and *i*-stem paradigms).

Since the spread of Dsg -*ovi* went "too far" in Polish and Ukrainian (where -*ovi* vs. -*u* distinguish masculine vs. neuter for the vast majority of *o*-stems) and in Slovak (where the distribution has crystallized into an animacy distinction, with -*ovi* for animates and -*u* for inanimates), the use of this ending to mark viriles is limited to Czech, where it is only weakly realized. The further extension of -*ovi* to Lsg yielded a parallel distinction for that case in both Czech and Ukrainian.

Czech

Dsg -*ovi* has been used with viriles, and particularly proper names, since the earliest attestations of Old Czech, and has gradually extended its admissible range to nearly all animate masculine nouns. Dsg -*ovi* continues, however, to compete with the reflexes of the *o*-stem (-*u*) and *jo*-stem/*i*-stem/consonant-stem (-*i*) desinences, and has succeeded in establishing itself as the only admissible variant in only one paradigm, that of the *a*-stem viriles (cf. *hrdina* 'hero,' Dsg *hrdinovi*; but note that viriles in -*ce*, which descend from the *ja*-stem paradigm permit both -*i* and -*ovi*, thus *soudce* 'judge,' Dsg *soudci/soudcovi*). It is tempting to suggest that Npl -*ové* and Dsg -*ovi* might be coextant, but this is not the case. While the use of Npl -*ové* is currently declining, the use of Dsg -*ovi* is on the rise in the spoken language, and in both the literary and spoken languages the coexistence of variant forms is vastly more widespread in the Dsg than in the Npl. Further, the range of Npl -*ové* is limited primarily to virile nouns; whereas Dsg -*ovi* is clearly used more frequently with viriles than with other animates, it can appear on most animate nouns as well: *psovi* 'dog (Dsg),' *koňovi* 'horse (Dsg).' Czech does not extend the use of Dsg -*ovi* to facultative animates (inanimate masculine nouns that have GAsg -*a* and, in some cases, an expressive Npl in -*i*), a fact likely motivated by the basic association of -*ovi* with virility rather than animacy.

Secondary phenomena in Lsg

In Czech the distribution of Dsg -*ovi* and Lsg -*ovi* is virtually identical and limited to animate, and particularly virile, nouns. Ukrainian extended -*ovi* to animate nouns in the Lsg; producing an animacy distinction with traces of former association with virility, as in Czech (but without the parallel distinction in the Dsg).

In the recent history of Belarusian, Lsg -*u* has begun to mark virility. Although Lsg -*u* was initially spread to inanimates in Old East Slavic, in Belarusian it became specialized for stems ending in consonants not paired for palatalization—velars, palatals, *c*, and *r* —and spread to all such stems, regardless of their meanings. Since agentive (mainly virile) suffixes tend to end in a palatal, *k*, *c*, or *r*, Lsg -*u* has been associated with virility, and Mayo (1976: 21) notes an

increasing tendency for this ending to replace -*e* in *all* nouns denoting men, as in *ab bratu* 'about brother.'

3. Former dual morphemes add more fuel to virility

Formerly dual morphology has played a role in the development both of the virile/animate GApl, and of virile numerals in both West and South Slavic. In languages where the dual category was lost, but dual morphology became productive, the "extra" morphology is usually used to signal plural. This is the case in the Russian Npl -*á*, Serbo-Croatian DILpl -*ima*, -*ama*, and in the Spoken Czech Ipl -*ama/-ěma*, as well as the paucal and counted plurals of East and South Slavic. Whereas in becoming plural the dual has only to relinquish its special status as a non-singular number, it is harder to imagine how a number could become a gender. One must consider, however, the fact that grammatical categories such as number, gender, and case do not operate autonomously; in Slavic they share inflectional morphemes. Since every nominal desinence must signal a combination of values for these categories, it stands to reason that changes in the value of one category could affect the others. The relevant relations between number and gender can be expressed in terms of markedness alignment. In the plural there is a tendency to reduce gender distinctions, retaining only the most marked among them. Virility is a highly marked gender and is aligned with the marked number, plural. Here the reduction in individuation occasioned by the plural (as opposed to the singular) can motivate a FIGURE-GROUND distinction at the highest end of the scale (i.e., higher than animacy, which is distinguished in the singular), yielding grammaticalization of virility. It is logical that marked morphemes within the plural (such as former dual desinences) be used with plurals of the marked virile gender. This usage is frequently accompanied by a marked construction as well. The alignment of marked morphology with marked number and marked gender to produce special virile numerals is not uniquely expressed by former dual morphemes. It is also seen with morphemes of different origin, such as the virile numerals in -*ica* in Serbo-Croatian (available only for numbers 2-9 and in the indefinite *nekolcina* 'few'), and the *dvoe, troe, četvoro* series in Russian (with

parallels in Ukrainian and Belarusian) which mark *pluralia tantum* and baby animal (*nt*-stem) nouns in addition to viriles—both derive from original collectives.

3.1 *Virile/Animate GApl*

All of North Slavic except Czech has genitive-accusative syncretism in the plural. In Polish and Slovak the GApl is associated with virile nouns, whereas in Russian, Belarusian, and Ukrainian it may be used with animate nouns of any gender and is not restricted to human reference. As we shall see, dual morphology served as an essential bridge between the GAsg already tangible in OCS and the later creation of a GApl in the fourteenth to sixteenth centuries in most of North Slavic.

It may seem that the development of a GApl was just a natural extension of the syncretism already observed in the singular, but there are several important factors that must be taken into consideration, among them:

a.   the development and implementation of GApl is far from uniform in Slavic
b.   the conditions under which the GApl developed were vastly different than those that spawned the GAsg: there was no "problematic" syncretism between the Npl and Apl that the Gpl could purportedly "correct"
c.   there is ample attestation of dual forms playing a transitional role in the development of the GApl.

In Late Common Slavic masculine nouns did not exhibit nominative-accusative syncretism in the plural, and there is predictably no evidence of GApl in OCS, aside from the replacement of the accusative pronominal forms *ny* 'us,' *vy* 'you' with the corresponding genitives *nasŭ, vasŭ*. Indeed, when the Apl -*y* begins to spread to the Npl in North Slavic, it appears first on inanimate stems, thus avoiding the very syncretism that might have been instrumental in motivating GApl. However, the fact that the Apl -*y* *never* spread to the Npl of viriles in Polish (except as a marker of negative affect in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries), and the Apl -*y* spread to the Npl of animates in East Slavic only *after* the

appearance of the GApl (Šaxmatov 1957: 226-9) should be sufficient evidence to prove that the impetus for developing a GApl must be found elsewhere. Grappin (1950) and Šaxmatov (1957) have both suggested that the dual was decisive in bringing about the GApl in Polish and East Slavic. The chronology of events suggests that whereas there was no nominative-accusative syncretism in the plural, there was such syncretism in the dual, and there is evidence that for viriles the Adu was supplanted first by the Gdu and then by the Gpl, and that both of these changes predate the introduction of the GApl.

Polish
Grappin (1950: 94-101) gives the following chronology of events, based on attestations of Old Polish. By the fourteenth century, the accusative dual of Old Polish, originally syncretic with the nominative dual, had been replaced by the genitive dual for virile nouns only (all the following changes are likewise relevant only to virile nouns). In the fifteenth century, the GAdu form *dwu* 'two' could be accompanied by Gpl morphology on the noun and/or adjective, and by the end of the fifteenth century, the use of Gpl with the adjective was standard. In the sixteenth century the Gpl eclipsed the Gdu for nouns. The following example illustrates this chain of events:

miał dwa młoda syny/brata (Adu) '(he) had two young sons/brothers'	13th C
> *miał dwu młodu synu/bratu* (Gdu)	14th C
> *miał dwu młodych synu/bratu* (Gpl adj & Gdu noun)	15th C
> *miał dwu młodych synów/braci* (Gpl)	16th C

At this point the Gpl began to infiltrate new territory, for it became generalized as a plural quantifier for viriles in a variety of situations. Early in the sixteenth century, the numerals '3' and '4' began to appear in their genitive forms *trzech, czterech*[15] accompanied by Gpl forms of adjectives and virile nouns, and these numerals occasion the creation of a variant of *dwu*, namely *dwóch*. In the late sixteenth century the higher numerals ('5' through '10') and the indefinite numerals acquire *-u* (motivated by Gdu) when quantifying viriles. In the late sixteenth to early seventeenth centuries, the Gpl expands rapidly to collocations not modified by

numerals, and also begins to replace nominative forms in collocations modified by numerals. The adjectival status of '2,' '3,' and '4' was instrumental in facilitating both the spread of the Gpl to '3' and '4' and the spread of this construction to adjectives, first in the presence of numerals and then in their absence. Whereas the spread to nominative constructions with numerals led to the evolution of virile numerals (as in *pięciu panów* 'five men,' cf. 3.2), the spread to accusative constructions without numerals marked the creation of a new GApl. The virile GApl became fully established in Polish in the seventeenth century. The relevant changes in the sixteenth to seventeenth centuries can be summarized as follows:

> GApl used with *dwu*
> > GApl used with *dwu/dwóch, trzech, czterech*
> > GApl used with '5' and above, these numerals have *-u* ending
> > GApl used with indefinite numerals with *-u* ending
> > GApl used in the absence of numerals.

Slovak

Although the historical evidence for this development in Slovak has been obscured by the use of Czech as a literary language, it appears that the virile GApl took hold in that language at about the same time, approximately the sixteenth century (Stanislav 1967: 19), and in the modern spoken language there is a tendency to extend it to animal names as well.

East Slavic

In Old East Slavic the course of developments was similar (minus the special forms for the numerals) and went farther, eventually yielding an animacy distinction for all three genders. Ukrainian, however, retains some association of GApl with virility: non-virile masculines can use the NApl as an alternate ending.

3.2 Virile numerals

Polish

The history and modern usage of numerals in Polish is complex enough to fill entire monographs (cf. Grappin 1950 and Schabowska 1967), and many of the details are beyond the scope of the present

study. We shall focus only on the most important events relevant to the creation of virile numerals in Polish.

In 3.1 we outlined a sequence of events which yielded the following special construction for quantified virile noun phrases in the accusative: *dwu/dwóch, trzech, czterech,* '5' and above and indefinites with *-u* + GApl of noun phrase. Contemporary to the expansion of the scope of numerals involved was an expansion of the scope of syntactic environments: the genitive construction started replacing the nominative in the late sixteenth century, became established in the eighteenth, and in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries neuter singular verbal agreement ultimately eclipsed (virile) plural. For example, for '10 men came':

(1) *przyszli dziesięciu panów*

disappeared in favor of

(2) *przyszło dziesięciu panów.*[16]

'Three' had two nominative forms in Common Slavic: masculine *trĭje,* which contracted to yield *trzē* in Old Polish, and further developed the variant *trzej* via diphthongization in the fifteenth century; and feminine/neuter *tri > trzy.* In a fashion parallel to that described above for *dwu,* markedness alignment motivated the use of the most marked morpheme, *trzē > trzej,* with the most marked number, plural, and the most marked gender, virile. By the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries, *trzē* (> *trzej*) marked only viriles, and *trzy* was used for non-viriles. In the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries, the analogical creations *czterej* '4,' *dwaj* '2,' *obaj* 'both,' *obajdwaj* 'both 2' appear. Like the genitive-nominative construction discussed above, *dwaj, obaj, obajdwaj, trzej, czterej* went through a period when they could be constructed both with virile plural and with neuter singular verbal agreement. By the end of the seventeenth century, however, the neuter singular construction yielded to the virile plural. Furthermore, the semantics of the virile numerals and their constructions has narrowed to refer only to referents that are exclusively virile; in other words, mixed groups of virile and non-virile referents cannot be quantified this way, even though it is otherwise customary to use virile agreement

for mixed groups. Thus both *trzech studentów* and *trzej studenci* 'three students' specify that all three are male.[17]

Slovak

Historical grammars (Pauliny 1990: 198 and Stanislav 1967: 378-391) offer little explanation of the origin of virile numerals in Slovak, which are first attested in the late eighteenth century. It is likely that the historical record just does not provide enough data to allow us to reconstruct the stages of this development. There are obligatory special numerals *dvaja, obaja, obidvaja, traja, štyria* for '2,' 'both,' 'both 2,' '3,' '4,' which are associated with the use of the corresponding genitive forms in the accusative. These numerals are used primarily with virile referents, but can appear with animals. They are constructed like adjectives, and the noun phrases they quantify are Npl if nominative or GApl if accusative. For '5' and above, the numeral has an *-i* desinence in the nominative and an *-ich* desinence in the accusative, but the use of a special virile numeral is optional. Thus it is possible to say both

(3) *piati žiaci sa hlásia*

and

(4) *pät' žiakov sa hlási*

'five students raised their hands.'

The behavior of '2,' '3,' and '4' is similar to that observed in Polish, but overall, virility is more weakly expressed by numerals in Slovak than in Polish.

Bulgarian

By the thirteenth century, the old DIdu form *dŭvama* (later *dvama*) '2' was generalized in Old Bulgarian as an indeclinable numeral, and in the fourteenth century its use was specialized for counting male humans (Mirčev 1978: 193-194). The historical record does not provide much more information, except to tell us that later on forms with a similar function were created, yielding an array of modern numerals, among them: (Table 3)

Table 3.

'2'	dvama	dvamina	dvamka	dvamca	dvoica
'3'	trima		trimka	trimca	troica
'4'	četirima		četirimka		četvorica
'5'	petima				
'6'	šestima				
'7'		sedmina			
'8'		osmina			
'9'		devetmina			
'10'	desetima	desetmina			
'100'		stotina			
'how many'		kolcina			
'several'		nekolcina			
'a few'		malcina			

The only virile numerals that are widely used in the standard language, however, are the forms for '2'-'6' in -*ma* in the first column, and they act as adjectives, combining with the normal plural rather than the counted plural form, as is the norm for non-virile referents. The use of these numerals is preferred for '2'-'6', but not obligatory, and with other numerals virile nouns tend to use the counted plural. In the first column, virile numerals are clearly derived from the old dual form *dvama*; most of the others contain an *m* which may be at least partly motivated by the same form. It appears likely that the same alignment of marked form with marked number and gender that we saw in Polish stimulated the development of virile numerals in Bulgarian.

Macedonian

The use of virile numerals in Macedonian is less consistent than in Bulgarian (cf. Friedman 1993: 267-268, 294), and the role of the dual in their development, if any, is uncertain. Examples are:

'2'	dvajca	'3'	trojca	'4'	četvorica
'5'	petmina	'6'	šestmina	'7'	sedummina
'8'	osummina	'9'	devetmina	'10'	desetmina
'100'	stomina				
'1000'	iljadamina				

4. Virility in Slavic: An overview

The following schematic map summarizes the morphological realizations of virility in Slavic (where a marker is non-obligatory, its use is limited to only a few items, or its virile meaning is diluted by use with non-virile referents, it is labeled "weak") (Figure 1).

Russian

(numerals very weak)

Polish Npl *-owie, -i* Npl adjectives *-i* 3pl pronoun *oni* *l*-participle *-i* GApl numerals (2 sets)	*Belarusian* (Lsg *-u* very weak) (numerals very weak)

		Ukrainian GApl weak Lsg *-ovi* weak
Czech Npl *-ové,* *(-é)* weak DLsg *-ovi* weak	*Slovak* Npl *-ovia, -i, (-ia)* Npl adjectives *-i* 3pl pronoun *oni* GApl numerals weak	

Slovene

Serbo-Croatian numerals weak		*Bulgarian* numerals weak

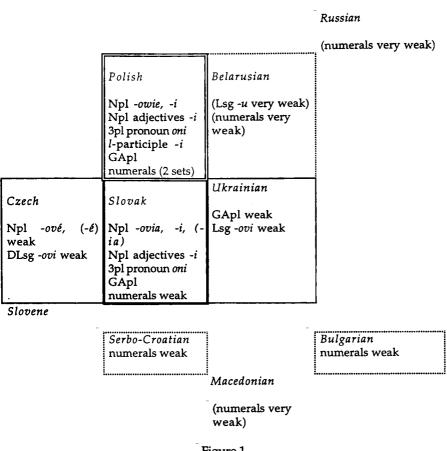*Macedonian*

(numerals very weak)

Figure 1

The fact that virility is most pronounced in Polish is, of course, no surprise to Slavists. But the systematic geographic distribution of

virility markers has not been examined in detail before. There is a clear cline in the dialect geography. Next to Polish, the strongest implementation of virility is seen in neighboring Slovak. Somewhat less virility is observable in Czech and Ukrainian, and even less in Belarusian, Serbo-Croatian, and Bulgarian. Other Slavic languages show only traces or no virility at all. The variety of virility markers is also instructive. Most virility markers result from the opportunistic spread of "extra" morphemes from defunct paradigms, operating in concert with other semantic and grammatical trends in each given language: articulation of FIGURE-GROUND distinctions, and case, number and gender distinctions. The vast majority of virility markers operate in the plural, where virility functions as a specialized plural gender.

Endnote

Last semester a graduate student who is writing a dissertation on ethnic minorities in Germany asked me to read through some texts and a grammar of Upper Sorbian, a language spoken in a Slavic enclave north of the Czech Republic and west of Poland. A distinguishing feature of Upper Sorbian is the fact that it has retained the old Slavic dual, and this motivated me to examine the phenomenon of virility in this language, since it might confirm or disconfirm some of the history I have suggested for Polish and East Slavic. Overall, the picture is very much in harmony with both the history and the virility map above: Upper Sorbian expresses virility by means of: a) Npl endings (including *-ove > -ojo and *-i > -i/-y), b) a genitive-accusative in both the dual and plural (here plural morphology has replaced some dual morphology, just as we would expect), and c) virile numeral forms. Although it is perhaps a gross simplification to say so, virile expression in Upper Sorbian today looks much like it probably did in Polish in the fifteenth-sixteenth centuries. The graduate student was predictably amused by my interest in this issue, and reported being pleasantly surprised by my use of the term "virility". At the summer language school where she had begun her study of Upper Sorbian, both handbooks and instructors referred to this distinction as one of "rational" as opposed to "irrational", and she did not take very kindly to being classed as

the latter. Which brings us back to the concepts of gender and self addressed at the outset. Language provides a window into how human beings understand and associate these concepts, one that we have only begun to look through.

Notes

1. For detailed discussion of the role of bodily human experience in the shaping of cognition in general and linguistic categories in particular, the reader is referred to Johnson 1987 and Lakoff 1987.
2. "Ambient intangibles" include items such as weather phenomena, sounds, social institutions, and abstractions. The following sources were consulted in the preparation of the data and historical commentary. These and other sources will be referred to in the text only where direct quotes or specific controversy are involved.
   Polish: Buttler et al. 1971, Grappin 1956, Klemensiewicz et al. 1981, Rothstein 1993, Urbańczyk et al. 1984.
   Czech: Gebauer 1960, Komárek et al. 1986, Short 1993a, Šmilauer 1972, Townsend 1981 & 1990, Trávníček 1935 & 1949, Vážný 1970.
   Slovak: Dvonč 1984, Dvonč et al. 1966, Mistrík 1988, Pauliny 1990, Sabol 1980, Short 1993b, Stanislav 1967.
   Sorbian: Schuster-Šewc 1996, Stone 1993.
   Ukrainian: Bilodid et al. 1969, Carlton 1971, Kernyc'kyj 1967, Matvijas 1974, Medvedev 1964, Shevelov 1993.
   Belarusian: Birala et al. 1957, Biryla et al. 1985, Bulyka et al. 1979, Jankoŭski 1989, Mayo 1976 & 1993.
   Russian: Gorškova & Xaburgaev 1981, Panov 1968, Šaxmatov 1957, Švedova et al. 1982, Timberlake 1993, Unbegaun 1935.
   Slovene: Derbyshire 1993, Priestly 1993, Toporišič 1976.
   Serbo-Croatian: Belić 1965, Browne 1993, Leskien 1914, Stevanović 1962.
   Macedonian: Friedman 1993, Koneski 1986, Lunt 1952.
   Bulgarian: Gribble 1987, Mirčev 1978, Rusinov 1987, Scatton 1993, Stojanov 1980, Tilkov et al. 1983.
3. Throughout this article, "a-stem" refers to both a-stems and ja-stems, and "o-stem" refers to both o-stems and jo-stems, and only the "hard" variants of declensional endings are cited.
4. This is of course a gross simplification. Consonant-stem nouns migrate to one of these two paradigms, usually on the basis of gender, the masculine ŭ-stem nouns are absorbed by the o-stem paradigm, and ū-stem nouns become for the most part a-stem and i-stem feminines. Traces of these paradigms persist as variants to the two dominant paradigms, but not as independent declensional patterns. The only significant remnant is the feminine i-stems, which persist in all of Slavic.

5. Present everywhere but in Macedonian and Bulgarian, where declension has since been lost. As noted below, however, GAsg began as a marker of virility, not animacy in Common Slavic.

6. Note that both Lunt (1959: 46-47) and Diels (1932: 157) treat the former *ŭ*-stem endings as variants for certain masculine nouns in OCS, rather than presenting them as an independent paradigm.

7. The only feminine paradigms to collapse were the *r*-stems and the *ŭ*-stems, but neither yielded much in the way of "extra" distinctive morphemes. The *r*-stem paradigm had only two exponents, *mati* 'mother' and *dŭkti* 'daughter,' and had been at least partially assimilated to the *i*-stem paradigm by Late Common Slavic. The *ŭ*-stem paradigm was also assimilated to the *i*-stem paradigm in the singular, and to the *a*-stem paradigm in the plural. There is, however, evidence that these two paradigms enjoyed a brief flirtation with virility/animacy (marked by a GAsg) in the Common Slavic period, later subverted due to the overturning of a formerly matriarchal society (Abernathy 1978).

8. Dual *ŭ*-stem endings will be excluded from discussion, since they have not been productive. For a comprehensive treatment of the role of *ŭ*- stem endings in Slavic, see Janda 1996.

9. In the *o*-stem paradigm the Nsg *-ŭ* probably results from a combination of factors (cf. Feinberg 1978), one of which might be analogical borrowing from the *ŭ*-stem ending, where Nsg *-ŭ* is etymologically "correct."

10. These claims are based upon a sample of nine works on Common Slavic, OCS, and the historical grammars of various modern Slavic languages: Meillet 1965, Van Wijk 1931, Lunt 1959, Diels 1932, Vážný 1970, Šaxmatov 1957, Gorškova & Xaburgaev 1981, Unbegaun 1935, and Kernyc'kyj 1967. All nine sources list the first six lexemes; six out of nine list the second six items.

11. The case for identifying the dative as the case of the potential subject is argued in Janda 1993 (cf. also Bachman 1980).

12. Unfortunately Polish orthography obscures the etymological origins of the high front vowel. In this article *-i/(-y)* indicates original *-i* which conditions morphophonemic stem alternations, whereas *-y/(-i)* indicates original *-y* which does not.

13. Where virility is not in question, the deprecatory *-y/(-i)* can be used ironically for positive affect: *te Warszawiaki* 'those (good old) Warsaw guys' (cited in Rothstein 1993: 697).

14. There are four nouns referring to animals that can use the virile *-i* as a variant of *-y* (*vlk* 'wolf,' *býk* 'bull,' *vták* 'bird,' and *pes* 'dog') in the literary language and the use of Npl *-i* with animal names is widespread in spoken Slovak.

15. Etymologically *trzech, czterech* are locative forms, but by the fifteenth century they had replaced the original genitives, partly because of syncretism with the nominative and partly due to the influence of GLpl syncretism in adjectives (recall here that numerals '3' and '4' have the status of adjectives); cf. Klemensiewicz et al. 1981: 340-341.

16. The semantic and syntactic motives for favoring neuter singular agreement are complex and not well agreed on. For a good discussion, see Grappin 1950: 108-113.

17. In order to express mixed groups, the collective numerals are used, as in *troje studentów* 'three students.' Some handbooks state that *trzech studentów* can also be used for mixed groups.

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