In this paper, we use comparative evidence from all three of the Slavic sub-families (especially Russian, Serbo-Croatian and Polish), to motivate a strongly derivational view of anaphoric binding, whereby anaphoric relations are determined in an on-line fashion, as has been often argued for non-Slavic languages (Belletti & Rizzi 1988 for English, Romance; Grewendorf & Sabel 1999, Saito 2003 for Japanese, etc). The derivational view of binding has various theoretical advantages over representational approaches, notably not requiring that the binding principles apply at different levels (DS, SS, LF) as in early Principles and Parameters theory (see Chomsky 1995, Epstein et al 1998). Empirically, only the derivational view can account for various binding paradigms, such as the successful binding with various psychological verbs classes, as in (1), and the ability to salvage a flawed binding configuration with local A-movement, as shown for Japanese in (2) (Saito 2003). The derivational approach to Principle A is presented and motivated in Section 1 of this paper.

In Section 2, we focus on the significance of two well-known aspects of anaphor binding in Slavic which raise particular problems for a derivational approach to Principle A: (i) the existence of a subject condition on reflexive binding in the Slavic languages (3a) and (ii) the availability of long-distance binding (LD) effects in (4). As is usually the case with monomorphemic reflexives (Cole & Sung 1992), (3a) shows that only a local subject can bind a simplex reflexive; the e-commenting local object, which easily binds in the English equivalent (3b), cannot serve as the binder in Slavic (although see Tomo 1991 for possible evidence against the Subject Condition holding for Czech). The generally accepted account for both the subject condition and the LD effects involves LF-movement of the (simplex) anaphor to T/INFL (Cole & Sung 1992) where it can be bound only by a subject. From there, further movement to the higher domain then allows Long Distance effects.

The LF-movement account raises two crucial questions, which we address in Section 3: (A) what exactly constitutes a ‘subject’ for purposes of the subject condition? (B) how can a derivational approach be maintained if the direct object in (3a) binds the anaphor in its base position (before LF raising)? Comparative examination of the various Slavic languages reveal an interesting, and previously unnoticed, element of variation: Russian allows derived (non-nominative) subjects to serve as anaphor binders (5a-d). (Successful binding in such cases requires movement into SpecT, without which binding is much worse (5e-f)). In contrast, Serbo-Croatian does not even allow preposed Dative experiencers to bind, as shown in (6a-b). (5a-b) vs (6a-b) constitute crucial minimal parametric pairs that cast doubt on logophoric or functional accounts. What accounts for this unexpected case of microvariation? We argue that the possibility of non-Nominitive binders in Russian correlates with the language’s ability to undergo what Bailyn (2004) calls ‘Generalized Inversion’ – a process whereby the TP-level EPP is satisfied by an inverted constituent. (Witkos 2000 reports similar effects for Polish). Such a process is absent in Serbo-Croatian, as shown by a variety of tests (Weak Crossover, Scope and Binding). We relate the lack of TP-level EPP to the existence of verbal clitics in the language, something that distinguishes South from East Slavic (although Polish patterns with Russian in this regard). This allows us to maintain a highly derivational view of the subject condition, whereby movement to SpecT feeds appropriate binding relations. Russian, which has been independently shown to allow a wide range of SpecT elements, shows the expected corresponding range of binders than Serbo-Croatian, which lacks Generalized Inversion.

Finally, in Section 4, we turn to question (B) – the most difficult challenge to any derivational approach. How can a derivational approach account for the impossibility of binding by the direct object in (3a), (which we find in all the Slavic languages in question), before LF movement occurs? After all, a healthy binding configuration exists in base position, as it does in English (3b). Here, we adopt an overt feature movement account of subject orientation, following Rudnitskaya 2000 and Kayne 1998, whereby the [R] feature of the anaphor moves overtly to T, where it is valued, and by Spec-Head agreement receives its reference from the local subject. On a derivational approach, the relevant piece of the derivation cannot be sent off for interpretation until after movement to T, whereas in English (1), early binding is available, since inherent phi-features preclude movement. If this account is correct, we do not expect examples like (1) to be available in (the relevant) Slavic languages, and (7) shows that this prediction is confirmed for both Russian and SC. The derivational model can now account for all of the data discussed, and avoids the issue of level of application of Principle A – it applies as the relevant elements have their feature requirements met, which allows pre-(overt) movement binding in the English cases but not in the Slavic (feature) movement cases.
1) a. Each other’s mother seems to please ____ the two boys.

2) a. *[Otgaɪ]-nom [sensei]-nom kareraɪ-o hihansita
   [each others-gen teacher]-nom them-acc criticized
   *“[Each other’s teachers] criticized them.”

   b. ? Kareraɪ-o [otgaɪ]-nom sensei]-nom hihansita
   them-acc [each others-gen teacher]-nom criticized
   “Them, [each other’s teachers] criticized.

3) a. Jovanɪ je pita[Dušanak o sebɪ]/k (Serbo-Croatian)
    Jovan aux asked Dushan about self
    “Jovan asked Dushan about himself.” (only Jovan)

   b. Johnɪ asked Billɪ about himselfɪ/k. (ambiguous)

4) Generalɪ poprosil [kommandirɪ] narisovat'sebjɪ/k. (Russian)
   general-Nom requested commander ACC to draw self
   “The general asked the commander to draw himself.”

5) a. Natašeɪ žal’ [sebjaɪ] (Russian)
    Natasha-Dat sorry self-ACC Ivan-Dat pleases [self’s work]-nom
    “Nataša feels sorry for herself.”
    “Ivan likes self’s job”

   b. ? Ivanuɪ nравится [ svojaɪ] rabota] (Russian)
    Ivan-Dat pleases [self’s work]-nom
    “Ivan likes self’s job”

6) a. * Draganaɪ je žao [sebeɪ] (Serbo-Croatian)
    Dragana-Dat aux sorry self-ACC Jovan-Dat pleases [self’s work]-nom
    “Dragana feels sorry for herself.”
    “Jovan likes self’s job”

   b. ? Jovanuɪ se svída [ svojɪ] posao (Serbo-Croatian)
    Jovan-Dat aux sorry self-ACC Ivan-Dat pleases [self’s work]-nom
    “Jovan feels sorry for herself.”
    “Ivan likes self’s job”

(NB: Micro-variation! SC 6a,b = ungrammatical [unless sebe is stressed in (6a)]; cf. Rus 5a,b = ok)

7) * [Sluxi o sebeɪ] volnju*t Ivanaɪ (Russian = *; cf Eng 1b = ok)
   * [Glasine o sebɪ] brinu Jovan (Serbo-Croatian = *; cf English 1b = ok)
   rumors about self worry Ivan/Jovan-acc
   “The rumors about himself worry Ivan”

References:
Saito, M. (2003) “A Derivational Approach to the Interpretation of Scrambling Chains” Lingua 113