A BIG CHANGE STARTS SMALL:
PRONOMINAL CLITICS IN 12–15TH CENTURY OLD RUSSIAN CHRONICLES

0. Introduction

The aim of the paper is the investigation of clitics in Old Russian (OR), more specifically, in the texts of OR chronicles. It is well known that these little elements were extensively used in Old Russian but only certain types have been preserved in contemporary East Slavic languages. At the same time they still „prosper” in contemporary South Slavic. In Old Russian texts they seem to be quite „annoying”, as at first glance they do not seem to obey the rules of syntax when appearing in different positions in clauses. Moreover, they can be easily confused with other homonymous forms which further hinders their examination.

The investigation of clitics in Slavic centers around contemporary South Slavic languages, as they provide a vast material for research. As for diachrony, research on OR clitics focuses on the use of clitics in the „Old Russian vernacular”, that is, in the Birchbark Letters [ZALIZNIAK 2008] or in legal documents [DOYKINA 2018]. The present study, however, aims at the study of clitics – more precisely, pronominal clitics – in the texts of chronicles. Interestingly, although diachronic processes have been frequently studied relying on the language of chronicles, not much research has been done in the field of clitics on the basis of these texts.
The exploration of Old Russian data has been carried out relying on the corpus of Old and Middle Russian texts. The corpus contains the machine-readable versions of the texts of chronicles with annotations and search possibilities [MITRENINA 2014]. The corpus contains four subcorpora: Church-Slavonic, Middle-Russian, Old-Russian and the Birchbark corpora. The Old Russian corpus (http://www.ruscorpora.ru/new/search-old_rus.html) comprises 17 original documents: all of the OR chronicles and a number of translated texts. The corpus does not contain information about which edition of the text is used. For the present research I created a subcorpus of the texts of chronicles.

The loss of pronominal clitics – similarly to other types of diachronic changes – was not an independent process, but rather constitutes a sequence of a bigger chain reaction invoked by the disintegration of the tense - aspect system. I suggest that the exclusion of these elements went hand-in-hand with the alternation of the pro-drop parameter and the proliferation of subject pronouns.

The paper is structured as follows. In the first section I summarize the theoretical preliminaries necessary for the discussion of the topic: the definition of clitics and the characteristics of pronominal clitics. The second section focuses on the properties of clitics in contemporary Slavic languages. The third part discusses the OR system of clitics, more specifically on OR pronominal clitics. The fourth part is devoted to the analysis of the texts of chronicles relying on the Russian National Corpus looking at the distribution of clitic pronominals, their placement, clusterizing properties and specifics of their hosts. The last section is devoted to the placement of the investigated phenomenon in the complex of parametric variation evoked by the disintegration of the tense - aspect system.

1. Theoretical preliminaries

1.1. On clitics

A clitic by definition is a word that lacks word-level prosodic structure, hence it must attach to a prosodic word in order to be pronounced. These little elements have attracted much attention, as they participate in almost all levels of grammar: phonology, morphology, syntax, semantics, pragmatics, and the lexicon. 

Clitics are phonologically deficient elements, as – according to the above definition – they fail to meet the prosodic minimality conditions. They are unstressed and unstressable. Therefore, they require a host to attach to.

Morphologically, they often overlap in function with affixes since they express nominal properties (case, possession, definiteness) or verbal categories (tense, aspect, mood).

As for their syntax, one of the cornerstones of research concerning clitics is their placement.

Traditionally, two clitic positions can be distinguished: 2P/Wackernagel (1), (2) and V2 (3).

(1) Comp/X – CL
(2) Comp/XP – CL
(3) (XP) V – CL
According to Wackernagel’s Law [1892] clitics belong to the first tactic unit of the clause. However, second position may be defined in various ways: after the first full stressed word (1) or after the first phase (2). V2 designates the verb-adjacent position (3), where no other element can intervene between the clitic and its verbal host. And, of course, there are languages where both alternatives are possible.

Clitics are often grouped together to form clitic clusters. A cluster by definition is a string of clitics that neither allows insertion of non-clitic elements nor permutation of clitics when they are contiguous [KOSTA – ZIMMERLING 2013: 181]. Clitics templates show variation across languages [KOSTA – ZIMMERLING 2013: 179].

Semantically, clitics can be of two kinds: local (that belong to a given word and specify the meaning of this item, they immediately follow their host) or phrasal (that relate to a whole phrase and have a more general meaning).

In some languages, clitics have a discourse function, like interrogative clitics in Finnish or the enclitic particle то in Russian, which carries a contrastive interpretation, [LÚIS – SPENCER 2012: 19, 34].

All in all, we can conclude that clitics primarily supply grammatical information, therefore they represent closed lexical classes, that is, they appear as determiners, auxiliaries, prepositions, complementsizers, conjunctions or pronouns [FRANKS ET AL.: 2004].

There are several classifications of clitics. Probably the most widespread is the differentiation between simple clitics that are simply phonologically deficient elements and special clitics (clitic auxiliaries and clitic pronouns), which, beside their phonological deficiency, appear in special syntactic positions.

The focus of this paper is on pronominal clitics, so in the following section I am going to take a closer look at this subtype.

1.2. Pronominal Clitics

It has become apparent from the previous section, that clitics constitute a heterogeneous class as regards their function and grammatical features. Languages employ cliticized auxiliaries, pronominals or discourse markers. Undoubtedly, the most widely studied class is that of pronominal clitics.

Pronominal clitics – just like pronouns – bear nominal features (number, person, gender, case, definiteness), and enter into agreement relation with the verb. A wide variety of languages use pronominal clitics as direct or indirect objects, Romance languages employ subject clitics as well. Syntactically, pronominal clitics are treated as arguments and as such they are generated within the VP. Chomsky [1995: 249] claims that clitics share properties of heads and phrases. As such, they are subject to movement: they can take higher positions in the structure and adjoin to other head categories.

There are two syntactic phenomena that are associated with pronominal clitics: clitic doubling and clitic climbing.

In some languages, pronominal clitics are freely permitted or even required as doubles to overt arguments, thus doubling an argument. For example, in Albanian the direct object when definite, is doubled.
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Agimi po e vështron hënën
Agim is watching the moon. [LUÍS – SPENCER 2012: 155].
The phenomenon when the clitic appears in a higher clause (matrix clause) than the verb whose argument it realizes is called clitic climbing. In the following French example the direct and indirect object clitic arguments belong to the non-finite lexical verb (montré), however, they have been raised to a position next to the finite auxiliary (ai).

(2) Je le lui ai déjà montré.
I it to him have already shown.
I have already shown it to him. [LUÍS – SPENCER 2012: 163].

2. Clitics in Slavic

Slavic languages inherited clitics from their Proto-Indo-European and Common Slavic ancestors. Some remnants of this system have been preserved in the contemporary languages as well, but in the course of linguistic evolution the system of clitics has undergone substantial changes.

On the basis of the interaction of word order and clitic systems, Zimmerling [2006], Kosta and Zimmerling [2013] worked out a typology of Slavic languages, where they are classified into four types.

Languages belong to the „W-system“ (where W stands for Wackernagel) if they have grammaticalized constraints on the placement of clusterizing clitics to clausal 2P. Languages of this type are Slovak, Czech and Old North Russian.

In „W+ systems“ (i. e. modified W-systems) clusterizing clitics are put into a fixed position and verbal forms are placed adjacent to them. Languages with verb adjacent clitics belong to this type, such as Bulgarian and Macedonian.

„W*-systems“ (degraded W-systems) do not impose absolute restrictions on the placement of clitic clusters in 2P, but employ alternative linearization strategies as well. As a result, different types of clitics are placed according to different principles. For instance, clitic particles take 2P, clitic auxiliaries adjoin to V or VP, while clitic pronouns may both pattern with particles and with auxiliaries. Typical Slavic W*-systems are OCS and Old South Russian.

Languages that lack grammaticalized constraints on the placement of clitics are referred to as „C-systems“ (where C stands for communicative). East Slavic languages belong to this group.

Besides the syntactic position of clitics, Slavic languages differ in the type of clitics (discourse, pronominal, auxiliary) they retained from the Common Slavic system and in the inventory of operations clitics are involved in. In the table below I present data concerning these aspects.
Most clitics have been preserved in South Slavic languages and consequently these clitics participate in most syntactic processes.

3. Clitics in Old Russian

Old Russian employed only clause level enclitics, which originally conformed to Wackernagel's Law, that is, they took second position after the first phonetic word.

(3) а́зъ же т́рину и не имамъ т́ помиловати пакы [PC]

The repertory of Early Old Russian clitics was reconstructed by Zalizniak [2008].

1) же
2) ли;
3) бо;
4) ти;
5) бы;
6) dative clitic pronouns – ми, ти, си, ны, вы, на, ва;
7) accusative clitic pronouns – мь, ть, сь, ны, вы, на, ва, и, ю, е, ъ, я;
8) auxiliaries, especially 1st and 2nd person есмь (есми), еси, есмъ (есме, есмо, есмы), есте, есвѣ, еста; есть, суть, еста

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1 See DANYLENKO 2012.
Zalizniak set up a ranking of clitics on the basis of the position they take in clitic clusters. The first five members of the clitic template are represented by discourse particles: же has an intensifying or adversative function, ли expresses an alternative, бо conveys casual, та affirmative, and бы an optative meaning. The 6th and 7th ranks contain short form pronouns in the dative and accusative cases. Clitic auxiliaries occupy the lowest rank on this scale.

Through the evolution of language, the placement of OR clitics was submitted to barrier rules. A barrier is a syntactic category that takes effect on the position of clitics. The presence of such barriers signifies that the first word or phrase is emphasized. The Barrier Theory introduced by Zalizniak [1993: 287] and refined by Zimmerling [2002: 88, 2009] explains the late placement of clusters and the phenomenon of split clusters by one and the same underlying mechanism. The main hypothesis is that the sentence-initial group/lexical head hosting the clitics may have properties of a barrier and move all or some clusterizing clitics to the right of clausal 2P [FRANKS ET AL. 2004, KOSTA – ZIMMERLING 2013 ZALIZNJAK 2008, ZIMMERLING 2009].

(4) с ними шенагын ю бидае кык бо часкъэт из Рахана. Литка жи изъгнаша

Focalized elements are placed on the left edge of the clause, consequently, the clitic takes a lower position.

3.1. Old Russian pronominal clitics

In Old Russian, the Accusative reflexive pronoun and the Dative and Accusative personal pronouns had two variants: full forms or stressed pronouns and short forms, i.e. clitic pronouns.

The reflexive pronoun had a long form себя and a short form се in the Accusative. As both the function and the course of development of this pronoun differs from that of the personal pronouns, the investigation of these forms goes beyond the scope of the present paper.
The following tables present the paradigm of the Dative and Accusative full and short forms [ZALIZNIAK 2008: 129].

### Dative case

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>singular</th>
<th>plural</th>
<th>dual</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1st person – clitic</td>
<td>ми</td>
<td>ны</td>
<td>на</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Full form</td>
<td>мынъ, мнъ</td>
<td>намъ</td>
<td>нама</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2nd person – clitic</td>
<td>ти</td>
<td>вы</td>
<td>ва</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Full form</td>
<td>тобъ/тебъ</td>
<td>вамъ</td>
<td>вама</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Accusative case

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>singular</th>
<th>plural</th>
<th>dual</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1st. person – clitic</td>
<td>ма</td>
<td>ны</td>
<td>на</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Full form</td>
<td>мене/мень/меня</td>
<td>насъ</td>
<td>наю</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2nd person – clitic</td>
<td>та</td>
<td>вы</td>
<td>ва</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Full form</td>
<td>тебе/тебъ</td>
<td>васъ</td>
<td>ваю</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3rd person – clitic</td>
<td>и, ю, е</td>
<td>ъ, ыа</td>
<td>и, ыа</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Full form</td>
<td>его, еъ, его</td>
<td>ихъ</td>
<td>ею</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

As Zalizniak points out [ZALIZNIAK 2008: 130–131], in unmarked contexts enclitic forms were used, stressed pronouns were applied only with restrictions, regulated by syntactic, semantic or pragmatic factors. Stressed forms were obligatorily used in the following cases [ZALIZNIAK 2008: 131, DOYKINA 2018]³:

1) In the beginning of clauses or immediately after vocatives:
(5) Тебе же подобает, великому князю (Tale)

2) the pronoun is after a preposition:
(6) цълковала ко имъ цркъ. Давъ эдовичи. и Стославъ Всеволодичь. (SC)

3) the pronoun is co-ordinated with another word:
(7) и се нъелъ вь любиши мене и съ младенце эль. (SC)

4) the pronoun has an attribute or adjunct:
(8) г’да съглад, к тых единою присягахъ, нашьемь спасителю и благо дать ему (Tale)

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³ Examples are taken from the Suzdal Chronicle (SC) and The Tale of Mamai's Battle (Tale).
5) the use of the enclitic resulted in the appearance of clitics of the same rank (our corpus did not contain such examples)
6) the pronoun bears emphasis, e.g. in juxtapositions:
(9) мнэ втýнна бëйкне кой д н тоб (SC)

In other words, clitics were excluded from contexts involving contrast, emphasis and coordination [KOSTA – ZIMMERLING 2014].

From the 15th century on, clitic forms started to disappear and were gradually replaced by stressed forms.

The intensity of this change varied depending on the following factors [ZALIZNIAK 2008: 167–168]:

1. The literary nature of the document. Texts under the influence of the vernacular take in new forms earlier.
2. Difference in number, as universally the singular tends to be more conservative and stable than the plural or dual.
3. Difference in case, as the loss of clitic pronouns starts earliest in the Dative plural. As regards person, the change affected third person forms the earliest.

The loss of enclitic forms and the parallel spread of full pronouns was thoroughly investigated by Zalizniak [2008], who studies this process in 11–16th century documents with literary, religious character and in documents reflecting the vernacular (the Birchbark Letters). Doykina [2018] examined the same process in 14th–15th century legal documents, testaments and treaties of princes.

**4. What we can find in the text of chronicles**

The language of chronicles is referred to as a „mixed language”, which is characterized by the intermingling of Old Church Slavonic and Old Russian elements. The reason for the diversity is the chronicles contain a wide variety of genres and styles, and therefore a mixture of several norms (that of sermons, hagiography, legal documents or folk epic) [WORTH 1977: 261, 264].

The peculiarity of the language of chronicles in a linguistic sense is that owing to their „bookish nature” they preserve otherwise disappearing forms and structures longer than texts reflecting the vernacular (i. e. the Birchbark Letters).

The investigation of clitics in OR chronicles is carried out by using the Russian National Corpus. Research in the corpus facilitates the quantitative and the distributional analyses of clitic pronouns, which facilitates the monitoring of diachronic changes.

The Old Russian corpus contains six chronicles from the 12th to the 15th centuries: the Primary Chronicle (PC) (12th c.), the Kievan Chronicle (KC) and the Galician Chronicle (GC) (early 13th c.), the Volhynian Chronicle (VC) (late 13th c.), the Suzdal Chronicle (SC) (14th c.) and the Novgorod 1st Chronicle, or Synod Scroll (NC) (15th c.).
In the course of the investigation I will look at: the quantitative analysis of the distribution of pronominal clitics in 12th–15th century texts, the position of clitics within the clause, the peculiarities of clitic clusters and hosts.

4.1. The quantitative analysis of pronominal clitics

The disintegration of the OR clitic system started in the 11th–12th centuries, and pronominal clitics were out of use by the 16th century [ZALIZNIAK 2008]. The change affected pronominal clitic forms differently, depending on their person and number features.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Accusative</th>
<th>Dative</th>
<th>Reflexive -ся</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>sg.</td>
<td>du.</td>
<td>pl.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PC</td>
<td>363</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>172</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>KC</td>
<td>500</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>19</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>GC</td>
<td>124</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>106</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>VC</td>
<td>109</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>27</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SC</td>
<td>329</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>93</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>N I. C</td>
<td>164</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>78</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The data presented in this table conforms to the tendencies suggested by Zalizniak [2008: 167–168]. The loss of clitic pronouns starts in the Dative. Singular forms are more conservative than dual or plural forms and by the 15th century 3rd person clitics were rarely present. In the text of the Novgorod I. Chronicle only one 3rd person form can be found.

(10) а гръкъмъ повеле пѣти Ѳна корале и на етъмъ же и не погорѣша флагнѣ н тако еъе еъзатне [N I. C]

4.2. Clitic placement

In the light of typological variation even within the Slavic languages with respect to clitic placement, I start with this problem.

As it has been already referred to in 3, the canonical position for clitics in Common Slavic was 2P, however, it has two variants, depending on whether the clitic is attached to the first phonetic word or to the first phase.

Our data shows that in the majority of examples clitics take second position after the first phonetic word of the clause regardless of the time of creation of the manuscript:

(11) яко приходили сѣтъ колагъ. Успи тапримати вѣры свого [PC]

(12) и створи вѣры на иродослави дѣворъ и рѣв новгороцыци вѣ сѣтъ ли фроуна вѣ рѣсци а вѣ кольны кѣ кѣзѣ [N I. C]
(13) посолъ за Володимеръ приехавъ Кондратовъ, почехъ ему молвить при всѣхъ его боярѣхъ. тако ти молвить братъ твои Володимеръ. радъ ти къ нем полюбъ. за твои сородичи [VC]

In numerous cases pronominal clitics take the 3rd position in clauses introduced by conjunctions.

(14) поклонился влады вѣкъ и пришлъ Володимеръ. [KC]

(15) и Игорь князь молвить ко Всеволоду и молебно испросилъ реча не хощши ли-досра пре веле ли вырасть иви Князевъ а приятелемъ ли не взласти и по-сыла его Всеволодъ [SC]

This phenomenon is probably due to the alternation of the narrat ive strategy. In earlier chronicles, clauses in the narrative chain discourse particles marked the boundary of clauses. They took 2P and attached to the first, topicalized element of the clause. In the passage below, the clause boundaries can be defined relying on the placement of the clitic же:

(16) Изъславъ сѣлъ король пошла отъ не Коляко на Володимера приехавши же полы ивы встали вездѣ въ Коляко Окаялиъ въ Коналъ Володимера же поставилъ варшину въ не подъ речъ подъ Кычъ преятельъ иида вини а надъ коннисъ король же князь сталъ противъ иида вонъ полы на речъ [SC]

By the 15th–16th centuries, discourse particles were gradually displaced by conjunctions resulting in the lower placement of pronominal clitics.

Already in the 12th century text of the PVL, deviations in clitic placement can be detected, as numerous examples containing clitics moved rightward in the structure can be found. These deviations are due to the emergence of barriers (see 3.). Sentence initial words had properties of a communicative or grammaticalized barrier. Communicative barriers are phrases that acquire special communicative status in the clause. For example, initial NPs and PPs could be topics. Grammaticalized barriers are particular lexical heads or formal parameters of phrases. For example, in ONR initial multi-word groups consisting of two or more stressed word forms were obligatory grammaticalized barriers [KOSTA – ZIMMERLING 2014: 465–466]. Barriers prevented clitics or clitic clusters from taking their canonical 2P position:

(17) #[Topic [XP]} – CL…V ⇒ #[BARRIER {Topic [XP]} [V– CL]…

Barriers, at the same time, affected word order as they attracted verbs to 2P, resulting in clitics adjoining verbs. Before the appearance of barrier rules verbs did not have a fixed position in the clause [KOSTA – ZIMMERLING 2013, 2014]. In (18) below the
NP, in (19) the adverb has properties of barriers, in (20) the negative particle features as a grammaticalized barrier.

(18) нынё жы гэйн урка к толоу в мохалк тине щлэтэ, урка ко славе наши жандэ ны.
и ку мэнэк кебэ щ устэлхэлъ, и тако пылкамиш энд нымлъ, вули множество. [VC]

(19) и послэдэ прынчэ та ку сее гэрги и жыны кэла кэ номагорода и оу се тэ ён дэйркэшн [N I, C]

(20) рика ци салык гэлэ мьшылык кипэлк, посадзэ лыя кинан д ён стырчи ли пьыкэшн.
д ён тэо кинэлк. [KC]

4.3. Clitic clusters

In the language of chronicles, clitics often cluster. However, we can find less clusters in the language of chronicles than in ONR (in the Birchbank Letters) and the clusters are shorter as they contain maximum 3 elements. The cluster in (21) contains a clitic particle, a dative plural clitic, and a reflexive clitic. However, examples with linearised clitics are very rare. Split clusters as in (22) are more typical.

(21) д ён кэшэ пожьолкэйт ны стырчилишь лыпкь ву цылэлкъ. Он кэ ны са пы ньыллъ, н
то кэшэ дэйнэ нымлъ [PC]

(22) сестра тэо саугырлэшн, кэлгэл мь та пылэш цу са. тао рика. [VC]

As data shows, the ordering of clitics within the clusters is: clitic particle (же, бо, ли), followed by dative, and then accusative clitics. The reflexive clitic is located always at the end of the cluster.

Most clusters contain two elements, either a clitic particle and a pronominal clitic (23), (24) or two pronominal clitics (25) (26).

(23) Всеволодъ жы с пэсыо буриэ ё кэстъкътэ и ку ншэлпэшэлъ расэлэшэлъ расэю и н
дся Володыншн Всеволодъ пэсыо кэстъкътэ ёнъд шэлъ ко и кэшэ
офэлэшн ённырэшн елш Всеволодъ [SC]

(24) нымэ мьлооаахъ ёнъ дэй кэсэо амэрэ рэдэлшэн. Вкэ бо не даа мы сэошъш рэдэшн
ца лым кэлэлкъ. [VC]

(25) рика имэо алм ти мья сэлэшн ёшу на сёмлъ аркеткъ. д оукэн [KC]

(26) не тэо ёсдълъ, ко тэоо полн. д ён дэй та ёкъ. Илэшкт энъ моэ дэшк. н
элэшкэшт тэлкъ со япо правдоо. до менэ жэшэто. [VC]
4.4. Clitic hosts

The previous examples (25), (26) lead us to another question, that of clitic hosts. Universally, clitics are claimed to be indifferent to their hosts. In the case of clitic pronominals this statement does not really hold.

(27) и пакъ олговичин. Наваша просити. оу кириолка — уто ны вишь держалъ при вашимъ узи [KC]

(28) Шварнуже са запрь гмор / тако рика. / ни венедалъ. ныкъ тигъ. / но Антъа та венедал / посеалъ жи ры Шварнови / тако ти молитвъ киадь Болеславъ. [VL]

In the vast majority of cases, pronominal clitics are attached to verbal hosts, and they also adjoin nouns, adverbs and sporadically adjectives. The dominance of verbal hosts is probably due to the fact that pronouns are arguments, therefore they are located within the VP.

(29) кса боаръ ненгородъкъна кънебос / и хакоди и къ ветъколомъ хъоу / и поети /а домъ къ себе остад [N I. C]

Dative clitics in numerous cases are attached to nominal hosts and are placed on a lower position in the clause. In these cases, they function as possessive markers. This phenomenon is attested in Bulgarian, Macedonian, OCS and OR [ZALIZNIK 2008: 35].

(30) Тоъ жи узнахъ пошалъ къ орла Гюрги въ Ресъ / сгъвашъ смиръ Нзаславъо / и къ притъ Годонежъ забъ късть / кратъ ти ошуръ Болеславъ / а Ростиславъ повъжнъ [SC]

In certain cases, for example in names, the dative possessive clitic splits the phrase (31).

(31) мнеи жи повъдемоциль — пошалъ. / а кратъ ли Дигъ. и Мстиславъ. / и сиовецъ ли. / кздаровецъ ли. / жами жи повъдемоциль гоме. [VC]

Zimmerling [2013: 55], analysing the above phenomenon, notes that OR had both clause level and NP level dative clitics attached to nominal heads. Clause level dative clitics are normally merged at 2P, while NP-level possessive clitics did not have a fixed position.

5. Conclusions

The analysis of the texts of OR chronicles pointed out that although the language of chronicles preserves forms longer, nevertheless, we can detect a decrease in their number. The language of chronicles contains less and shorter clusters of clitics than the text of the Birchbark Letters. In the majority of cases, clitics took 2P and adjoined a verbal host. Numerous examples reflect the effect of barrier rules (especially with adverbs and NPs), dative possessive pronominal clitics are also represented. The above anomalies from the language of chronicles led to the transformation of the clausal structure and to the loss of pronominal clitics in OR. The reduction of the clitic system, however, was only the side effect of a more substantial syntactic change.
6. Loss of the clitic system
The loss of pronominal clitics, on the basis of OR chronicles was not an isolated process but indirectly accompanied a more substantial change, the disintegration of the tense-aspect system.

Jung and Migdalski [2014], studying the degrammaticalization of clitics into weak pronouns, point to the fact that a couple of dynamic changes containing clitic typology correlate with the typology of tense distinction: Slavic languages with independent morphological exponents of tense (Bulgarian or Macedonian) have V2 clitics.

OR was also claimed to be a pro-drop language [JUNG 2018, JUNG – MIGDALSKI 2014, MADARIAGA 2011] but by the 13th century it started to lose its pro-drop character owing to the disintegration of the tense - aspect system, that is by the weakening of TP. In pro-drop languages the D-feature of T is checked by a V-to-T movement, in non-pro-drop languages the overt subject raises to SpecTP.

With OR having this pro-drop nature, verbs took the 1st position in clauses, so pronominal clitics adjoining them were located in 2P and were at the same time V2 clitics, as well. With the weakening of T, the number of overt subjects checking the D-feature on T rose. Consequently, pronominal clitics together with their verbal hosts moved rightwards, became gradually split from their verbal hosts and were gradually replaced by full pronouns.

Parallel with the spread of overt subjects went the proliferation of full subject pronouns. In OR 1st and 2nd person pronominal subjects were employed only in specific contexts where the logical stress fell on them [IVANOV 1964: 374]. 3rd person pronominal subjects appeared in the 13–14th centuries: the pronoun онъ evolved from the demonstrative pronoun and originally referred to the subject of a remote clause [BORKOVSKII – KUZNECOV 1963: 321]. 3rd person pronominal subjects in their present function – referring to the subject of the preceding clause – appeared in the 15–16th centuries [GYÖRFI 2016].

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