

## WACKERNAGEL'S LAW IN OLD SPANISH

0.1. It was as early as in 1892 when the principles which rule the position of the inflected verbal clitics (not longer than two syllables) within a sentence were formulated for the Indo-European languages by the Swiss scholar, Jacob Wackernagel (Wackernagel 1892). According to him, an inflected verbal clitic tends to occupy the second place of the sentence, immediately after the first stressed unit. This rule was discovered basing on the material from Greek, Vedic and archaic Latin, and seemed to be valid only for an ancient period in the development of Indo-European, though the traces of such an ordering of the phrase are still visible in the imperative.

0.2. A few years later the validity of Wackernagel's law for Slavonic was proved by Nilsson (Nilsson 1904) and the problem attained a meticulous examination throughout the history of Bulgarian with Sławski's lucid work, where the path from the conservation of the rule in Old Church Slavonic to the point in which it was no longer observed was described and explained (Sławski 1946).

At the 3<sup>rd</sup> International Congress of Linguists in Rome R. Jakobson outlined the dependence of the clitic-order rules in a given language upon its prosodic system and traced out a border-line dividing the Slavonic linguistic area in accordance with the maintenance in force or with the expiration of Wackernagel's law (Jakobson 1935). Just in the discussion following professor Jakobson's communication J. Kuryłowicz pointed out that «die Beobachtungen an altspanischen Texten Gesetze formulieren liessen, die an das Wackernagelsche

Gesetz erinnern» (pág. 390). The issue has been slightly touched by some Balkanists in terms of a vague «similarity between the development of the inflected clitics in the Balkan and Romance languages», however no one has rendered an account of the nature and exceptional character of the phenomenon in question in Old Spanish. In my judgement, the matter is worthy of a careful consideration.

1.1. Given the dependence of the clitic-order on the nature and place of accents, in a text like the *Cantar de Mio Cid* which reflects the oral tradition of *cantares de gesta*, a sentence must be examined in the framework of its poetical arrangement, not only in that of the grammatical one, whence the word following the caesura is to be treated as being at the onset position, no matter whether such a division agrees with the grammatical dismemberment of the utterance, or not.

1.2. Unlike the contemporary standard, the inflected unstressed pronouns referring to a finite verb do not have a fixed place in relation to it, and not always form a prosodic oneness with it. If they do so, it may be the enclisis as well as the proclisis, as opposed to modern Spanish, where except some archaizing literary uses, and predominantly in the 3<sup>rd</sup> person of the Indefinite, only the proclitic position is admissible:

- 1) Amos *las* reçiben || d'amór e de grado (2234)
- 2) Mucho *vos lo* gradesco, || como a rey e a señor (2109)
- 3) Quomo *lo* mandó mio Cid || assí *lo* an todos a far (322)
- 4) Bien *lo* veedes || que yo no trayo nada (82)
- 5) Trezientos marcos de plata || en ayuda *les* do yo (2103)

but:

- 6) e *dólas* por veladas || a ifantes de Carrión (2098)
- 7) Besáron*le* las manos || y entraron a posar (1877)
- 8) *prísolo* al comde, || pora su tienda *lo* levaba (1012)
- 9) Gradéscolo, rey, || e prendo vuestro don (2125)
- 10) e *tiénengelo* delant || e diérongelo privado (1050).

It results from the examples 1-10 that the clitic occupies an absolute, not relative position within the utterance. A tendency towards the

proclisis is realized only when an orthotonic word precedes the verb, i. e. when it is not at variance with Wackernagel's rule.

The same is true for the Infinitive which in contemporary language always precedes the clitic. In the *Cantar de Mio Cid* the pronoun may precede or follow the Infinitive, so that there would not be a discrepancy with Wackernagel's law:

- 11) Enbiar vos quiero || a Castiella con mandado (813)
- 12) Sobre aquesto todo || dezir vos quiero Albar Fáñez (890)
- 13) dar le quiero çient cavallos || e vos ídgelos levar (1274)

but:

- 14) quiérol enbiar || en don treínta cavallos (816)
- 15) Quiérovos dezir || del que en buena çinxo espada (899)
- 16) çercar quiere a Valençia || pora cristianos la dar (1191).

As concerns the Gerund, the modern usage requires the enclitic arrangement of the pronouns, though some dialectal or/and vulgar variants show hesitations, especially in periphrastic constructions. In Old Spanish the pronoun is set either before or after the Gerund and may be separated from the latter by an auxiliary verb in the constructions *ir* + Gerund or similar, nevertheless the principle of the second place after the first orthotonic word is always observed:

- 17) mas Babieca el de mio Çid || alcançándolo va (2419)
- 18) a la puerta de la eclegia || sediellos sperando (2239)
- 19) maguer los están llamando || ninguno non responde (2305)
- 20) Por todas sus tierras || assí lo ivan penssando (2983).

1.3. Among the vestiges of the ancient ordering of the inflected clitics the most noticeable one is found in imperative phrases, since in the major part of the I. E. languages the unstressed pronominal objects come after imperative verbal forms, even if a language does not observe this order in other constructions. Notwithstanding, if it is so, the enclitic position of the pronouns is not connected with the place of the verb itself, i. e. the latter may either stay at the onset of an imperative sentence, or be preceded by another unit, without affecting the arrangement of the pronouns. In Old Spanish, contrary to the modern exceptionless enclisis, the pronoun appears in the

second place of the utterance, regardless the position of the verb on which it depends:

- 21) *Levaldas*, Raquel e Vidas, || *ponedlas* en vuestro salvo (167)
- 22) *prendémelo* a vida, || *aduzídmelo* deland (641)
- 23) *cojámoslos* de dentro, || *ca el señorío* tenemos (621)

but:

- 24) *aparejados me seed* || *a cavallos e armas* (1123)
- 25) Raquel e Vidas, || *amos me dat las manos* (106)
- 26) *de noche lo lieven* || *que non lo vean cristianos* (93).

1.4. An analysis of sentences with the compound temporal forms is particularly instructive, because the drift of the pronouns towards Wackernagel's place seems to be prior to and stronger than the tendency to a synthetical junction of the auxiliary and the main verb. The phenomenon becomes apparent first of all in the future tenses (now: *Futuro Simple* and *Futuro Hipotético*), both of which are at present entirely grammaticalized, requiring the same arrangement of the clitics as the other finite forms of the verb, i. e. proclisis.

In the *Cid*, the pronoun occurs regularly in tmesis, should Wackernagel's principle claim so:

- 27) *por que se me* entró en mi tierra || *derecho me* avrá a dar (642)
- 28) *el aver me* avrá a tornar || *âquestos myos* vassallos (1261)
- 29) e bien *gelas* guardaríen || *fasta cabo del año* (162)
- 30) tal cosa *vos* faría || *que por el mundo* sonás (2678)
- 31) *tornós a Carrión*, || *i lo* podrie fallar (1313)  
(with *i* from *ibī*, not from *št*)

but:

- 32) *Rogar gelo* emos || *lo que dezides vos* (1908)
- 33) *la paría qu'él* a presa || *tornar nos la* ha doblada (586)
- 34) *que sobre arcas* || *dar le ien seysçientos* marcos (161)
- 35) *ondrástesvos*, *Mínaya*, || *ca aver vos lo* iedes de far (678)
- 36) *hir los* hemos fferir, || *non passará por al* (1690).

*Mutatis mutandis*, the same is true for the compound past tenses which nowadays are highly grammaticalized and repudiate the tmesis,

even with adverbial determinants, demanding the proclitic order of pronouns. The Old Spanish forms ignored such a limitation:

- 37) quando *las* han dexadas || a grant desonor (2909)
- 38) quando en vuestra venida || tal ganancia *nos* an dado (1751)
- 39) Por mano del rey Alfons, || que a mí *lo* ovo mandado (2231)

but:

- 40) a Saragoça || metuda *lá* en paria (914)
- 41) ¡ya don Raquel e Vidas, || avédesme olvidado! (155)
- 42) Otorgado *gelo* avie || el abbat de grado (261).

2.1. At times, we observe in the *Cantar de Mio Cid* a seeming deviation from the second-place-principle, what, however, does not constitute an Old Spanish peculiarity, since this language shares it with the others observing Wackernagel's law (cf. Wackernagel, *op. cit.*). The matter is that in some attributive constructions placed in the initial position of a sentence the *determinans* cannot be torn away from its *determinatum*. It applies chiefly to the numerals, possessive adjectives and qualitative adjectives marked additionally in Spanish by the order *determinans* + *determinatum*. Then, the clitic takes the third place in the utterance, immediately after the attributive group:

- 43) ciento omnes *le* dio || mio Cid a Albar Fáñez (1283)
- 44) tres días *le* speraré || en Canal de Çelfa (1194)
- 45) Vuestra virtud *me* vala, || Gloriosa, en mi exida (221)
- 46) grandes yentes *sele* acojen || essa noch de todas partes (395)
- 47) Grand yantar *le* fazen | al buen Canpeador (285).

2.2. A distinct status must be granted to the reflexive pronoun *se*. It is a well-known fact that in all the I. E. languages this one trends to a major connexion with the verb than the remaining pronouns do. In the *Cid*, *se* fluctuates from Wackernagel's place to a next-to-verb position, not repudiating the absolute initial one. This fact is related to its function of marking analytically the medium diatesis, whose exponent is hardly separable from the verb (cf. Sławski, págs. 6-7):

- 48) Otro día movió || mio Cid el de Bivar (550)
- 49) si *nos* muriéremos en campo, || en castiello nos entrarán (687)

50) con tal cum esto || *se* vençen moros del campo (1753)

51) I *se* echava mio Çid || después que fo de noch (404).

2.3. With the negative *no(n)* the clitics change necessarily their position from the second to the third place, unless the negative stays at the onset. If it is so, *no(n)* performs the rôle of an orthotonic word, taking over the following pronouns:

52) Aquí non *lo* puede vender || ni dar en presentaja (561)

53) Quando vido mio Çid || que Alcoçer non *se* le dava (574)

54) aquellos que gelos dieron || non *gelo* avien logrado (2452)

55) non *te* juntarás conmigo || fata dentro en la mar (2416).

Similarly, the adverb *ya* always precedes the clitics, either shifting the pronouns to the third place, or, if it stays at the onset, incepting them in enclisis:

56) Los de Alcoçer || a mio Çid *ya* dan parias (570)

57) *Ya* creçe la barba || e vale allongando (1238)

58) A los de mio Çid || *ya* les tuellen el agua (661)

59) *Ya* *lo* vede el Çid || que del rey non avie graçia (50).

3.1. There are some exceptions to the rule which may be partly ranged into several groups and explained in terms of an accentual differentiation within the same form, according to the meaning and/or stylistic purposes (emphasis). Nevertheless, it will remain a series of uses explicable only as infringements of Wackernagel's law being the first step on the path towards connecting the clitics with the verb, i. e. replacing their absolute position within the spoken chain by a relative one.

3.2. The personal pronoun *yo* either operates as an orthotonic word, absorbing the clitics, or does not do it, although its occurrence in the absolute initial position precludes its numbering among the unstressed units:

60) De quanto él fiziere || *yo*l daré por ello buen galardón (2641)

61) *Hyollo* lidiaré, || non passará por al (3367)

but:

62) *hyo* quiérolas dar axuvar || tres mill marcos de valor (2571)

63) *hyo* sirviéndovos sin art, || e vos consejastes mie muort (2676).

3.3. The second place of the inflected pronouns after the conditional *si* is so frequent that it might be regarded as a principle. It is possible that in the 12-th century Spanish, *si* was distinguished by a special stress, or the modal verbal forms held up the clitics earlier than the others did (see: next paragraph):

- 64) A la tornada || *si nos* falláredes aquí (832)
- 65) Si *vos* viesse el Çid || sanas e sin mal (1402)
- 66) merçed vos pide el Çid || *si vos* cadiesse en sabor (1351)
- 67) Si *vos* ploquiere, mio Çid, || de ir somos guisados (1060).

3.4. In optative or exhortative phrases the conjunction of purpose *que*, as well as the same form when it functions as particle, and contrary to *que* in direct object clauses, must have been accented, or already then, the subjunctive form of the verb claimed the proclitic order of the pronouns:

- 68) Que *lo* sepan en Gallizia || e en Castiella e en León (2579)
- 69) así estando, || dédesme vuestra amor,  
que *lo* oyan todos || quantos aquí son (2032-2032 b)
- 70) que! ayades merçed, || *sí* vos vala el Criador (1324)
- 71) soltariemos la ganancia, || que *nos* diesse el cabdal (1434).

3.5. The relative pronoun *que* bore the stress, as it is testified by the fact that the clitics follow it immediately:

- 72) e otras dueñas || que *las* sirven a su sabor (2005)
- 73) reçibo estos cavallos || quem enbía de don (1344)
- 74) Reçibiendo las dueñas || que *lo* están esperando (1746).

3.6. The most frequent and clashing offences against the second-place-rule are encountered in the compound tenses. The phenomenon can be explained in terms of a struggle of the tendency towards the grammaticalization of the latter with the ancient word-order, although, beside the infringements resulting from a synthetical univerbation of the auxiliary and the main verb (ex. 75), there are many in which both constituents are separated by a pronoun. Notwithstanding, the common feature of such cases, at least as concerns the past tense, is the arrangement of the pronoun in the place immediately preceding the auxiliary verb:

- 75) Dexarévos las posadas || non las quiero contar (1310)  
 76) que su mugier e su fijas || el rey sueltas *me las* ha (1408)  
 77) arriba alço Colada, || un grant golpe dádol ha (2421)  
 78) Estas apreçiaduras || mío Çid presas *las* ha (3250).

3.7. Unexplicable exceptions are extremely rare. I have found one example in the main clause, where the pronoun stays in the third position (ex. 79), and two further ones in subordinate clauses, in which the pronouns, being in the second place, follow the normally unstressed units (ex. 80, 81):

- 79) agora córrem las tierras || que en mi enpara están (964)  
 80) Alegravas el Çid || e todos sos varones,  
     que *les* creçe la ganancia || grado al Criador (2315-2316)  
 81) Si Dios me llegare al Çid || e *lo* vea con el alma (1529).

4. A comparison of the Old Spanish text with the French *Chanson de Roland* indicates that the rules of ordering the inflected clitics which apply to the former do not stand good in the latter, where the unstressed pronouns take a place in the immediate environment of the verb they pertain to:

- 82) Pois, *li* livrat le bastun et le brief (*Ch. d. R.* 341)  
 83) Dient paien: 'Issi poet-*il* bien estre' (*Ch. d. R.* 61)  
 84) Males nuvels *li* aportet e *li* dit (*Ch. d. R.* 3496)  
 85) Il *les* ad prises, en sa hoese *les* butet (*Ch. d. R.* 643).

It is logical that in a language in which the decline of the personal verbal endings makes obligatory the use of the pronominal subjects, sentences will frequently begin with an unaccented proclitic, so that the limitation imposed by Wackernagel's law will be no more possible. The grammatical, functional, requirements at a certain stage of the development of language become incompatible with the absolute place of the clitics within the utterance. The phenomena opened by the subject pronouns then extend to the remaining ones.

In Spanish, inversely, no functional needs conditioned the posterior changes, but they were accomplished owing to a reinterpretation of prosodic relations within a sentence — from the enclisis in the strictly determined place of the spoken chain, to the proclisis bound up with a determinate class of words.



5.1. *Conclusions.* As we have seen above, the 12-th century Spanish observes the so-called Wackernagel's law with an astonishing rigour. The *Cantar de Mio Cid* is a testimony of the stage of language, in which the changes that subsequently led to the hold-up of the clitics close by the verb, were still *in statu nascendi*. This being so, a number of questions must arise. Given the relations between the attitude of a language towards the second-place-principle and the character of its accent, namely that 'the immobilization of the clitics next to the verb is characteristic for the languages with a strong expiratory stress, without intonational and quantitative distinctions' (Sławski, *op. cit.*, pág. 79), Old Spanish with its arrangement of pronouns must be suspected to possess a kind of weak or/and musical accent. The supposed weakness of its accent might be corroborated in a certain degree by the fact that the elimination of the syncope was a short-lived and not very consequent phenomenon in the development of Spanish.

5.2. The following question is whether the Old Spanish status quo is an innovation from the diachronic viewpoint, or an inherited trait. It is a well-known fact that in Latin the ancient I. E. clitic-order is testified (not too well) only in the oldest texts (cf. Wackernagel, *op. cit.*, pág. 407 *et passim*), what, nevertheless, does not exclude the subsistence of some archaic traits in the extremes of the Latin linguistic area. It is just so with a part of the Spanish lexical heritage, whose origins are to be searched for in Plautus' or Ennius' Latin, not in that of Virgil's. On the other hand, an individual Spanish ontogenesis repeating in this matter the Indo-European phylogenesis is also probable. For the time being, the problem remains unsolved.

5.3. Among the syntactic traits that single out Spanish (as well as Romanian) from the rest of the Romance languages the «reduplication of objects» (redoublement des compléments) is the most remarkable one. We should give special attention to those constructions, where the pronominal reprise of objects occurs in preposition with regard to the latter, i. e. the sentence follows the SVO word-order, since the repetition of objects by pronouns within an inversed sentence is a common feature of many a Romance language.

As concerns the so-called «objective conjugation», Spanish shares it with the languages of the Balkan league, being the unique West-European language, in which this phenomenon has reached such an extension. Being far from attempting to elucidate the origins of the phenomenon, I would like to point out only that, as well in Bulgarian (cf. Sławski, *op. cit.*) as in Spanish, Wackernagel's clitic-order was similarly longlived and resistant. On the other hand, Jacob Wackernagel noticed an interdependence between the repetition of German pronouns and the vestiges of the ancient word-ordering, stating that 'oft entschlüpft uns in mündlicher Rede doppeltes sich, eines am traditionellen Platze zu Anfang, und eines beim Verbum: ganz analog dem doppelten  $\xi\nu$  der Griechen. — Auch bei den andern persönlichen Pronomina kann man solche Tendenz beobachten' (*op. cit.*, pág. 405).

This subject, however, calls for further investigations.

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