

Against V2 as a general property of Old Romance languages*

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This paper revisits the hypothesis that the verb-second property was a shared feature of the Old Romance languages by investigating Old Portuguese. It demonstrates, on the basis of positive empirical evidence, that Old Portuguese allowed clausal configurations that could not have been derived by a verb-second system. It is shown that clitic placement offers the means to pinpoint items that are categorically excluded from left-peripheral topic positions (*non topic items* – NTIs). Once NTIs are identified, the distinction between verb-third orders that can be accommodated within a verb-second system and those that cannot becomes clear-cut. It is shown that the test devised to recognize ‘true’ verb-third orders in Old Portuguese produces similar results when applied to other Old Iberorromance languages.

Keywords: verb second, Old Portuguese, clitic placement, verb movement, middle object scrambling, non topic items, Old Spanish, Old Catalan

1. A test for verb-secondness: *non topic items* (NTIs)

Germanic languages (except English), Rhaetoromance varieties, Breton (Celtic), Sorbian (Slavic); Estonian (Finno-Ugric), Kashmiri and contiguous Himachali dialects (Indo-Aryan), and disputably Karitiana (Tupi)] have been identified as verb-second (V2) languages (Holmberg 2015). As observed by Holmberg (2015:343): “This is still a very small percentage of the languages of the world. In fact, one interesting question regarding V2 is why it appears

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to be so rare, globally”.¹ But, historically, all medieval Romance languages have been proposed to be V2 languages (Benincà 2005, 2006), a property that none of the main contemporary Romance languages displays. If the V2 hypothesis for Old Romance languages would prove to be right, the question would arise on how a number of different languages that emerged in different historical contexts from a non V2 language (i.e. Latin) converged upon a V2 syntax. Whereas the loss of V2 in particular languages is a well-covered subject in the literature, the diachronic development of a non-V2 into a V2 system is to the best of my knowledge an understudied topic.² In spite of its theoretical appeal, Benincà’s (2005, 2006) hypothesis that all medieval Romance languages shared the V2 property stands on limited empirical evidence and needs to be checked against the data and broader syntactic properties of particular Old Romance languages. The aim of this paper is to discuss the supposed verb-secondness of Old Portuguese.³ I will conclude on the basis of positive empirical evidence that it was not a V2 language, and suggest that the test for verb-secondness put forward in this paper can be applied to the other Old Iberorromance languages with a similar result, thus disproving the claim that the whole Romance family displayed the V2 property in former times.

Abstracting from the details of the varied analyses of V2 found in the literature, for different languages, I will assume that, by definition, a V2 language displays the following properties: (i) verb movement to C (or some position within the CP field, if a cartographic approach is assumed); (ii) merge of an XP in Spec,CP (or a specifier position in the CP field, which is

¹ Cf. WALS (*The World Atlas of Language Structures*, <http://wals.info/>), which registers 565 SOV languages (the larger group, followed by 488 SVO languages); German is classified as SOV/SVO as no more than 28 other languages.

² But see: Ledgeway (2012, 2016); Roberts (2012); Wolfe (2015a, 2015b, 2016).

³ Salvi (1990, 2000, 2001, 2004), and Ribeiro (1995a, 1995b), among others, analyze Old Portuguese as V2, whereas Kaiser (1999, 2002), Fiéis (2003), Eide (2006), and Rinke (2007, 2009, 2015), argue against the hypothesized V2 status of Old Portuguese. Here I will stay with the latter but I will adopt a different line of reasoning. Cf. Galves and Gibrail (2018) on Classical Portuguese. See also Varga (2017), Zaring (2017), and references therein, on Old French.

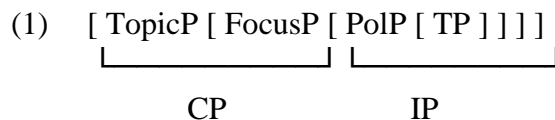
The present paper is innovative in focusing on the crucial identification of items that resist topicalization/left-dislocation, which are termed here NTIs (*non topic items*). The clear identification of such items in a particular language depends on the analysis of other related grammatical features of that language. Once we are able to reliably operate with the concept of NTI, ‘superficial’ V3 orders can be undoubtedly separated from ‘true’ V3 orders. The latter, but not the former, offer empirical evidence against a verb-second syntax. Because this issue has not been thoroughly addressed in previous literature, the very same empirical data could be given opposite structural analyses (regarding the V2/V3 distinction), even within the same theoretical framework.

not a topic position);⁴ (iii) Verb third or more orders (V>2) are possible only when the topic field is activated, which means that left dislocated constituents and topics in general are irrelevant for the computation of verb second.

I will limit my assumptions about the internal articulation of the IP and CP areas to (i) and (ii) below, in order to make the argument against the hypothesized verb-secondness of Old Portuguese as theory-neutral as possible:

- (i) Topics are higher than foci within the CP area, as argued for by Benincà and Poletto (2004), *pace* Rizzi (1997) – empirical support for this view will be given in section 2.1.
- (ii) The IP area includes the projection of the polarity-encoding head Pol(arity) (also designated Σ). PolP dominates TP (cf. Laka (1990), Zanuttini (1994, 1997), Martins (1994, 2013a), Holmberg (2001, 2003, 2007, 2013), Batllori and Hernanz (2013), among others).

A simplified representation of the functional structure assumed for root clauses is given in (1).



The structural representation in (1) does not imply that CP might not be further split. The central assumption is that the topic field is not discontinuous and is external to the V2 configuration.⁵ Against this background, I will show that Old Portuguese offers positive empirical evidence against the hypothesis of a V2 stage because it allows V>2 root clauses where none of the XPs preceding the verb is in the topic field. At the heart of the argument to be made is the identification of a set of structurally high items that are categorically

⁴ I am here relaxing the original characterization of V2, which requires a Spec-head configuration within CP (i.e. V-movement to a head position in the left periphery followed by movement of an XP to its specifier). In this way, analyses of V2 such as Walkden (2015) are allowed, with V and the moved XP sitting in different functional categories within the CP field.

⁵ Contrast the representation in (1) above to Rizzi's (1997) in (i) below, which displays a discontinuous topic field (the asterisk indicates that topic is a recursive category):

(i) [ForceP [**TopP*** [**FocP** [**TopP*** [FinP [IP]]]]]]

excluded from the topic field, which I will christen NTIs (for *Non Topic Items*).

The paper is organized in five sections besides this introduction. Section 2 describes the relevant features of Portuguese word order syntax that will support the argument to be made in this article. In section 2.1. it will be shown that (13th–15th century) Old Portuguese and contemporary European Portuguese are similar in being SVO, having verb movement to T, displaying enclisis and proclisis in finite clauses (with no change through time regarding the contexts of obligatory proclisis), and clearly marking left-peripheral objects as topics in Clitic Left Dislocation structures. In section 2.2. two particular features of Old Portuguese are described, namely the availability of middle object scrambling, which derives SOV orders in specific syntactic contexts, and the availability of word order discontinuity between a preverbal clitic and the verb (so-called *interpolation*). These two aspects of Old Portuguese syntax interact with the availability of true verb third or more (V>2) clauses, as will be clarified subsequently. Section 3 focuses on discussing how NTIs signal the existence of structures that cannot be derived by a V2 grammar. Sections 4. reassesses Benincà's (2005, 2006) proposal that V2 was a general property of Old Romance languages. Section 5 briefly shows that the analysis of Old Portuguese word order developed in the present investigation can be extended to Old Spanish and Old Catalan. Section 6 concludes the paper.

2. Word order: verb movement, object movement, clitic placement

This section is articulated in two parts, dealing first with diachronic stability (section 2.1.), then with change through time (section 2.2.). The relevance of diachronic stability is that to a certain extent it allows the use of intuitive knowledge in handling historical data.

2.1 Common features of Old Portuguese and contemporary European Portuguese: V-to-T; proclisis and enclisis in finite clauses; Clitic Left Dislocation; topic precedes focus

The basic constituent order of Old Portuguese is SVO (an undisputed fact about Old Romance languages and an unchanged feature across time). Also,(?) like contemporary European Portuguese, Old Portuguese displays verb movement to T (V-to-T). Hence, syntactic constituents that surface to the left of the verb cannot be lower than T, which entails that Belletti's (2004) 'vP left periphery' will play no role in our discussion.

The Old Portuguese sentences in (2) below demonstrate that ‘lower adverbs’, like the temporal *sempre* ‘always’ and the manner adverb *bem* ‘well’, which mark the *vP* border, follow the verb in Old Portuguese. The fact that they surface postverbally signals therefore that the verb has moved to T (cf. Belletti 1990, Costa 1998, Cinque 1999, among others). The same result is obtained by observing floating quantifiers. As the examples in (3) show, the quantifier *todos* associated with the subject may surface after the verb.⁶ Relevantly, all the examples (i.e. (2a-d) and (3a-b)) display subordinate clauses, which confirms that the verb-adverb order arises as the outcome of V-to-T, not as an effect of the verb moving to C in a V2 configuration.

- (2) a. *E rogo que cada uno destes aniuersarios facan*
 and request that each one of-these anniversaries do-3PL
sempre en dia de mia morte
 always in day of my death
 ‘And I request that a religious ceremony be always performed in celebration of the anniversary of my death’
 (Legal text, year 1214. Castro 1991:199)
- b. *Ca eu vos amey senpre sobre todaslas cousas*
 because I you-ACC loved always above all-the things
 ‘Because I have always loved you above everything else.’
 (Arthurian novel. DSG684,1.18)
- c. *que adubedes bem a dita vjnha*
 that manure-SUBJ-2PL well the said vineyard
 ‘You shall manure the vineyard well.’
 (Legal text, year 1394. Martins 2001:469)
- d. *que ã outra guisa nã compririamos bem o*
 because in other manner not would-comply-1PL well the
que nos el mandou
 what us-DAT he asked
 ‘because otherwise we would not totally fulfil his last will.’
 (Arthurian novel. DSG353,1.13)
- (3) a. *mandou dizer a esses melhores do logar que*
 sent-3SG say-INF to these better of-the town that

⁶ I adopt a *vP* shell approach to unaccusative verbs (see Radford 1997; Mensching and Weingardt 2016). Thus I take the quantifier *todos* to be in Spec,*vP* in both (3a), with the inergative verb *cavalgar* ‘ride’, and (3b), with the unaccusative verb *morrer* ‘die’, while the verb has moved to T.

cavallgassem todos

ride-SUBJ-3PL all

‘he appealed to the best people in town for riding all together.’

(Chronicle, Fernão Lopes. Macchi 1975:605)

- b. *se nos morresemos todos ã esta demanda, mayor*
if we would-die all in this search greater
honrra nos sera ca de morrermos alhur
honor us-DAT will-be than of die-INF elsewhere
‘If we were all to die in this search, we would be more honored than if we will die some other way’
(Arthurian novel. DSG28,1.13)

Object clitics can be enclitic or proclitic in finite clauses in Portuguese, from the earlier texts to nowadays, and the contextual distribution of enclisis and proclisis is, in what matters for the ensuing discussion, very stable across time. Since clitic placement itself is not the issue here (cf. Martins 1994, 2013b, 2016), I will limit my observations to those aspects that are useful to determine whether a left peripheral constituent sits in a topic position or not.⁷

When the verb is only preceded by a constituent belonging to the topic field, object clitics are normally enclitic in contemporary European Portuguese and Old Portuguese.⁸ Clitic Left Dislocation (CLLD), a construction

⁷ In Martins’ (1994) account of clitic placement, the functional head Σ (= Pol) requires visibility at PF. Hence, it must be lexicalized under external or internal merge. Negation and negative words are merged in Σ or its Spec, thus license it. In affirmative root clauses where no item is merged in Σ P and the Focus field is not activated the verb moves to Σ and gives it phonological visibility. Σ merges with lexicalized C in subordinate clauses and in matrix clauses where the Focus field is activated (whereas the Topic field plays no role in licensing Σ). Clitics left adjoin to the edge of T⁰ or TP (as they are minimal/maximal categories). Hence, if the verb stays in T, proclisis is derived, if the verb moves to Σ leaving the clitic behind, enclisis arises.

⁸ Examples of proclisis in this configuration are very rare. See (i) below and Martins (2003: 215). The quantifier *todos* ‘all’ usually triggers proclisis, like *poucos* ‘few’ (which categorically does), but differently from *poucos* allows movement to a topic position. Hence, *todos* is more similar to the quantifier *muitos* ‘many’, which allows both focus-movement and topic movement. Old Portuguese displayed variation between enclisis and proclisis in the type of finite contexts where enclisis is nowadays obligatory, but proclisis was generally excluded from V1 configurations, hence, the rarity of (ia-b).

- (i) a. E todos_i os_i matarõ se quiseram. (DSG436,1.4)
and all them-ACC would-have-killed-3PL if wanted-3PL
‘And they would have killed all of them if they had wanted.’
b. todo_i o_i fez fazer
all it made-1SG do-INFIN
‘He ordered that it be all done.’

that can be found at all stages of the diachrony of Portuguese, clearly identifies left peripheral constituents as topics, which makes it very useful when we are dealing with written historical sources. The Old Portuguese sentences in (4) illustrate enclisis in Clitic Left Dislocation structures. The clitic doubles the topic constituent.⁹

- (4) a. *E [a donzella]_i leixarõ-na_i ca a nom poderom leuar*
 and the damsel left-3PL-her since her not could-3PL take
 ‘They left the damsel behind, since they could not take her
 with them.’
 (Arthurian novel. DSG69,1.17)
- b. *[aquella oliueira]_i chamauã-lhe_i uermelha porque as*
 that olive-tree called-3PL-it red because the
folhas eram uermelhas
 leaves were red
 ‘That olive tree was called the red olive tree because it had
 red leaves.’
 (Arthurian novel. DSG204,1.2)

Proclisis arises in root clauses when certain items, such as *wh*- phrases, negative words, quantifiers and certain adverbs precede the verb. The set of items that make proclisis obligatory rests essentially unchanged from Old Portuguese to contemporary European Portuguese, which allows us to use present-day intuitive knowledge to better understand the earlier stages of the language. Since the relevant items behave the opposite of topics regarding clitic placement, crucially disallowing enclisis, we may conclude that they cannot be externally merged or moved into topic positions. I will henceforth refer to them as *non topic items* (NTIs). The Old Portuguese examples given in (5) display as NTIs the negative word *nunca* ‘never’ (5a), the quantifying words *pouco*, *poucas* ‘few’ (5b-c), *muito* ‘much’ (5d), the *wh*- word *quem* ‘who’ (5e), and the adverbs *já* ‘already’ (5f), *ainda* ‘still’ (5g), *sempre* ‘always’ (5h). In contemporary European Portuguese, similar sentences also display proclisis and disallow enclisis.¹⁰

⁹ Contemporary European Portuguese allows both Clitic Left Dislocation and English-type Topicalization, where the topic constituent is not doubled by a clitic (cf. Duarte 1987, Costa and Martins 2011, among others). But English-type topicalization seems to be a 18th-19th century innovation that sets Portuguese apart from most Romance languages. Thus, CLLD provides a clear way to identify topics in Old Portuguese.

¹⁰ Other adverbs and quantifiers may undergo either topic- or focus-movement and so license either enclisis or proclisis, as exemplified in (i) below with the locative *aqui* (cf. footnote 8).

- (5) a. *mas nũca lhe poderõ dar cima*
 but never it-DAT could-3PL give end
 ‘but they could never finish that adventure’
 (Arthurian novel. DSG463,1.11)
- b. *deitou-se-lhe aos pees, mas pouco lhe aproveitou*
 laid-REFL-him to-the feet but few him benefited
 ‘he laid himself at his feet, but that was of little help.’
 (Arthurian novel. JAR50,5.129)
- c. *muy poucas cousas lhes preguntou*
 very few-FEM-PL things them-DAT asked
 ‘He asked them very few things.’
 (Arthurian novel. JAR99,1.10)
- d. *se uos matey, muito me pesa*
 if you-ACC killed much me weights
 ‘If I killed you, I am very sorrow.’
 (Arthurian novel. DSG269,1.6)
- e. *Quẽ uos chagou asy?*
 who you-ACC wounded so
 ‘Who did wound you like this?’
 (Arthurian novel. DSG533,1.10)
- f. *E ia o fezera buscar a seus homẽs*
 and already him-ACC had-made search to his men
per todo o reyno de Logres
 for all the kingdom of Logres
 ‘And he had already made his men look for him all over the
 kingdom of Logres’
 (Arthurian novel. DSG483,1.4)
- g. *e ainda o podedes ueer*
 and still it-ACC can-2PL see-INF
 ‘and you can still see it’
 (Arthurian novel. DSG660,1.4)
- h. *senpre o desamaria*
 always him-DAT would-dislike-3SG
 ‘He would always dislike him.’

-
- (i) *Aqui, aborreço-me.*
 here bore-1SG-me-REFL
 ‘Here, I get bored.’
- (ii) *Aqui me tens.*
 here me-ACC have-2SG
 ‘Here I am!’

(Arthurian novel. DSG236,1.17)

When a NTI (such as those exemplified in (5) above) precedes the verb there is proclisis even if a left dislocated constituent occurs in the same sentence. This is illustrated by the Old Portuguese CLLD sentences (6a-b), whose left-periphery includes a topic constituent and a *wh*- word.

- (6) a. *E [aquella donzela]_i quẽ na_i matou? Disse Gallaaz*
and that damsel who her killed said Galahad
'That damsel, who killed her? Said Galahad.'
(Arthurian novel. DSG68,1.10)
- b. *o meu dormir ou vela [a ti]_i que te_i faz?*
the my sleeping or wakefulness to you what you-DAT does
'Why do you bother about my sleeping or staying awake?'
(Arthurian novel. JAR89,2.65)

When a topic and a NTI cooccur in the same clause, the relative order of the left-peripheral constituents is without exceptions as shown in (6) above, i.e. the CLLD constituent precedes the NTI, as further exemplified in (7) below, with the quantifier *muito* 'much' and the adverbs *já* 'already', *ainda* 'still', *bem* (as emphatic marker). The reverse order is not attested, although negative words, quantifiers and adverbs like *sempre*, for example, can undergo focus-movement, and some of the relevant adverbs are focus markers (e.g. *só/apenas* 'only', *também* 'also'). I take this to indicate that there is no topic position below FocP in the clausal left periphery. Besides NTIs, focus-moved constituents in general regularly follow left-dislocated topics, as illustrated in (8).

- (7) a. *[o que hij fiz]_i muyto o_i fiz sem meu graado*
the what there did much it did without my will
'What I did, I did it much against my will.'
(Arthurian novel. DSG331,1.5)
- b. *E [o conselho]_i ja o_i eu filhei.*
and the advice already it I took
'And his advice, I have already taken it.'
(Poetry, Joam Perez de Aboim. Brea 1996:490)
- c. *e [este nome]_i aynda oge o_i auera*
and this name still today it will-have
'and still today it keeps this name'

- (Arthurian novel. DSG329,1.1)
- d. *mas [a voz]_i bem a_i ouviam*
 but the voice EMPH it heard-3PL
 ‘but the voice, they did hear it.’
 (Arthurian novel. JAR59,1.26)

- (8) *[Uos caualeiros de pouca ffe e de pouca creença]_i*
 you knights of little faith and of small belief
[estas tres cousas que aquj uistes]_{Foc} vos_i fallecem!
 these three things that here saw-2PL you-DAT lack-3PL
 ‘You knights of little faith and small belief, you are lacking THE
 THREE THINGS THAT YOU SAW HERE!’ [and, therefore, you may
 not attain the great adventures of the Holy Grail]
 (Arthurian novel. DSG155,1.6)

Contemporary European Portuguese is like Old Portuguese in this respect. It is consensual in the literature on word order in Portuguese that topics precede foci in the left periphery (Ambar 1992; Duarte 1987; Barbosa 1995; Costa 2004; among others). The Portuguese correlates of the Italian sentences in (9) below, used by Rizzi (1997: 295-296) as evidence to propose a discontinuous topic field, are sharply ungrammatical in Portuguese, as shown in (10). Putting together the contemporary and Old Portuguese facts, it will be assumed with Benincà and Poletto’s (2004) that each field in the left-periphery is a set of contiguous categories and the topic field is higher than the focus field.¹¹

- (9) Italian (*apud* Rizzi 1997, but disputed by Benincà and Poletto 2004)
- a. *Credo che [a Gianni]_i QUESTO, domani, gli_i dovremmo dire.*
 I-believe that to Gianni THIS tomorrow him we-should say
 C Top Foc Top
- b. *Credo che domani, QUESTO, [a Gianni]_i, gli_i dovremmo dire.*
 I-believe that tomorrow THIS to Gianni him we-should say
 C Top Foc Top
- c. *Credo che QUESTO, [a Gianni]_i, domani, gli_i dovremmo dire.*
 I-believe that THIS to Gianni tomorrow him we-should say
 C Foc Top Top

¹¹ On the observation that, contrary to topics, only one focus position can be activated per clause, see Rizzi (1997, 2016), Belletti (2004); Collins/Essizewa (2007); Bocci (2008), among others.

(10) *European Portuguese*

- a. **Acho que [ao João]_i ISTO amanhã lhe_i devemos dizer.*
 I-believe that to João THIS tomorrow him we-should say
- b. **Acho que amanhã ISTO [ao João]_i lhe_i devemos dizer.*
 I-believe that tomorrow THIS to João him we-should say
- c. **Acho que ISTO [ao João]_i amanhã lhe_i devemos dizer.*
 I-believe that THIS to João tomorrow him we-should say

2.2 *Particular features of Old Portuguese: middle object scrambling (SOV); discontinuity between clitic and verb (CL-XP-V)*

Old Portuguese allowed short object scrambling, like contemporary European Portuguese (Costa 1998), but also movement of the object (in a broad Larsonian sense) to the middle field. Whereas short object scrambling maintains the basic SVO order, Old Portuguese middle scrambling derived SOV sentences like (11b), which coexisted with SVO sentences like (11a). Martins (2002, 2011) analyzes Old Portuguese middle scrambling as movement to Spec,TP (under the assumption that T could license multiple specifiers). Verb movement to T would therefore derive OV orders. Although OV is more frequently found in subordinate clauses, like (11b), the split is not between root and subordinate clauses. In fact, the (S)OV order resulting from middle scrambling is also visible in root clauses with NTIs, as exemplified in (12).¹²

- (11) a. *sse pela uêtujra uos alguẽ enbargar [a dita vĩa]*
 if by chance you-DAT someone blocks the said vineyard
- b. *sse pela uêtujra uos alguẽ [a dita vĩa] enbargar*
 if by chance you-DAT someone the said vineyard blocks
 ‘If by chance someone blocks the vineyard from you’
 (Legal texts, year 1296. Martins 2001:376-377)

- (12) a. *E ja m’ el [tanto mal] fez*
 and already me-DAT he much harm did
 NTI S O V
 ‘And he has already done me so much harm’
 (Poetry, Dom Pedro, Conde de Barcelos. Brea 1996:759)
- b. *[XP ja [TP me [T’ el [T’ tanto mal [T’ fez [VP el fez me*
~~*tanto mal*~~]]]]]] XP = PolP or CP

¹² In root clauses displaying verb movement to Σ (= Pol) (see footnote 7), middle object scrambling would still result in SVO order.

Another distinctive feature of Old Portuguese syntax regards clitic placement. Preverbal clitics could be separated from the verb by scrambled objects (see (11b) and (12)), the subject (see (11b), (12) and (13)) and other constituents (see section (3)) under the condition that a NTI precedes the clitic.

- (13) a. *Çertas nũa se homẽ trabalhou que...*
 certainly never REFL man tried that...
 ‘No man ever tried that...’
 (Arthurian novel. DSG128,1.14)
- b. *Asi me Deos ajude, disse Galuam*
 so me God help said Galvan
 ‘So help me God, said Galvan.’
 (Arthurian novel. DSG19,1.15)

Since left dislocated constituents and topics in general surface to the left of NTIs, as shown above, the constituents occurring after the clitic in (12)-(13) belong to the middle field.¹³ It is thus expected that preverbal objects that surface between a clitic and the verb are never doubled by a clitic, as it actually happens. This is confirming evidence that they are not topics.

3. NTIs identify V>2 root clauses that cannot be derived by a V2 grammar

We are now in a position to demonstrate that non-V2 root clauses were a grammatical option in Old Portuguese. Root clauses displaying more than one constituent preceding the verb may offer clear evidence against V2 if a typical NTI is present in the structure. A preverbal NTI signals that the constituents following it and preceding the verb are not part of the topic field, hence, cannot be abstracted from the V2 computation. Scrambled objects and clitics in interpolation configurations simply make this fact more salient.

Non-V2 root clauses are attested in Old Portuguese texts of all genres throughout the middle ages (poetry and prose, legal and literary, profane and

¹³ The NTI is either in the focus field or in PolP, as these are the positions associated with obligatory proclisis. If in FocP, no other constituent is allowed in the focus field due to the ‘uniqueness of left-peripheral focus’ (Rizzi 2016). If in PolP, a left-peripheral constituent would occur to its left, not to its right. Therefore, we conclude that the constituents *el* and *tanto mal*, in (12), and *homem*, in (13), are in the IP area. The same reasoning applies when a clitic is not present in the structure.

religious, narrative and didactic). The data offered by the 13th century Portuguese translation of the Old French Arthurian Post-Vulgate Cycle are particularly relevant in order to dismiss the possibility that root verb-third or more (in particular root SOV) might arise as a marginal borrowing from Latin word order.¹⁴ Some examples of non-V2 root clauses, extracted from the Arthurian novels *Demanda do Santo Graal/Queste del Saint Graal* (DSG) and *Livro de José de Arimateia/Joseph of Arimathea* (JAR), are given in (14). In bold are marked the NTIs *já* ‘already’, *ainda* ‘still’, and *nunca* ‘never’. The constituents that occur to their right before the verb belong to the middle field (see footnote (13)). Therefore, the verb must be in T, not in C.

- (14) a. *Par Deus, disserõ os outros, **ja** nos este ceruo*
 by God said the others already we this deer
outra uez uimos!
 other time saw-1PL
 ‘By god, said the others, we have seen this deer before!’
 (Arthurian novel. DSG433,1.10)
- b. *mas **ajnda** a alma ã elle jaz*
 but still the soul in he stays
 ‘but his soul hasn’t left him yet’
 (Arthurian novel. DSG65,1.11)
- c. *E sem falha **nũca** homẽ alla foy*
 and without break never man there went
 ‘And for certain, never anybody went there’
 (Arthurian novel. DSG151,1.21)
- d. *Senhor, **nunca** cousa tanto dezejey saber.*
 Lord never thing so-much desired-1SG know-INFIN
 ‘My Lord, never before have I wished so much to know something.’
 (Arthurian novel. JAR89,2.54)

It could still be argued that the rationale of the argument strictly depends on the assumption that topic positions are not scattered through the functional

¹⁴ The Post-Vulgate Cycle is one of the major Old French prose cycles of Arthurian literature. Written probably between 1230 and 1240, it is a rehandling of the earlier Vulgate Cycle (also known as the Lancelot-Grail Cycle). The Post-Vulgate Cycle does not survive complete, but has been reconstructed from French, Spanish and Portuguese fragments (Bogdanow 1966, 1991-2001). The Portuguese translation dates from the thirteenth century. It was preserved by a fifteenth century manuscript of the *Queste del Saint Graal* and a sixteenth century manuscript of the *Joseph of Arimathea* (see Castro 1983, 1988).

structure of the clause, which is a matter of debate. But, independently of such debate, some Old Portuguese root clauses are clear instances of non-V2 syntax because they display a sequence of two NTIs, as illustrated in (15). Since no more than one left-peripheral focus position can be activated per clause (Rizzi 1997, 2016), the two NTIs in sentences (15a-d) are possibly distributed between FocP and PolP. It cannot be the case that the two NTIs of each clause form one constituent and occupy one single specifier position because: (i) in (15a) the adverb *já* and the emphatic marker *bem* are separated by the DP subject;¹⁵ in (15b-d) one of the NTIs, differently from the other, is a verbal argument moved from inside the verbal projection (i.e. the internal argument in (15b-c) and the external argument in (15d)).

- (15) a. *Ia uos bẽ sabẽdes que amo meu irmão*
 already you-NOM EMPH know that love-1SG my brother
 ‘You do know that I love my brother.’
 (Arthurian novel. DSG608,1.22)
- b. *Bem [asi]_i aueo t_i a mj*
 also so happened to me
 ‘It so happened to me as well.’
 (Arthurian novel. DSG154,1.18)
- c. *des entõ ouue nomẽ a marauilha de Galaaz e*
 since then had name the Wonder of Galahad and
ainda [asy]_i e chamada t_i
 still so is called
 ‘It was then called the Wonder of Galahad and it still is’
 (Arthurian novel. DSG487,1.9)
- d. *nũca [nenhũ omẽ]_i o oria_j [v_P t_i [v_P t_j a fallar...*
 never no man him would-hear to speak
 ‘No one would ever hear him speak’
 (Arthurian novel. DSG236,1.16)

¹⁵ Different hypotheses might be considered to analyze (15a), which I will not be able to pursue here: (a) the emphatic marker *bem* might have been merged in Spec,TP, which in Portuguese is typically not a subject position (Martins 2012), while the subject would occupy Spec,PolP; (b) the emphatic marker *bem* might be a head merged in Pol⁰, whose specifier would host the subject; (c) under the hypothesis that Cardinaletti’s (2004) Subject-of-Predication projection (SubjP) might be the higher projection of the IP space, directly above PolP, *bem* would be in Spec,PolP and the subject in Spec,SubjP. All the three analyses have in common that the adverb *ja* belongs to the CP space. See also (14d) above, where both *nunca* and *tanto* are NTIs. The latter appears to be scrambled into the middle field, whereas the former is either focused or in Spec,PolP. The scrambled object *cousa* intervenes between the two NTIs.

As it is well known, non V2 languages may allow particular V2 structures (so called, *residual V2*). In case a non V2 language displays verb movement to C in *wh*- questions, for example, we expect to find clear contrasts in word order between these *wh*- V2 sentences and declarative sentences. This is exactly what Old Portuguese shows and would be unexpected if it were a V2 language. In the Parsed versions of *Demanda do Santo Graal/Quest for the Holy Grail* and *Livro de José de Arimateia/Book of Joseph of Arimathea* (amounting to c. 350,000 words), the orders WH-S-V and WH-V-X-S are not found in *wh*-interrogatives, which are consistently WH-V-S (see (16) below). In contrast, the unattested orders in *wh*- interrogatives are both attested in declaratives, as exemplified in (17a-b) and (18a-b) respectively for the orders NTI-S-V and NTI-V-X-S.

(16) *Wh*- questions in the Arthurian novels

WH-S-V	0
WH-V-X-S	0
WH-V-S	458

- (17) a. *Sēpre eu dise ca nũa seeryamos liures* NTI-S-V
 always I said that never would-be-1PL free
da prisõ senõ per uos NTI-S-V
 of-the prison if-not by you-NOM
 ‘I always said that only you would be able to set us free from prison.’
 (Arthurian novel. DSG578,1.26)
- b. *nunca se i homem assentou* NTI-S-V
 never REFL there man sat
 ‘and never anybody sat there’.
 (Arthurian novel. JAR41,2.41)
- (18) a. *Ētam veeo a el hũũ scudeiro* NTI-V-X-S
 then came to him a squire
 ‘Then a squire came to him.’
 (Arthurian novel. DSG131,1.7)
- b. *Entom filharom seu caminho todos iij* NTI-V-X-S
 then took-3PL their way all three
 ‘Then all three were on their way.’
 (Arthurian novel. DSG281,1.2)

If we compare *wh*- questions and *wh*- exclamatives, a clear contrast in word order also emerges. Old Portuguese allows SV order in *wh*- exclamatives, as illustrated in (19), whereas in *wh*- questions subject-verb inversion is obligatory. Other constituents besides the subject may intervene between the *wh*-phrase and the verb in exclamatives, as illustrated in (20).¹⁶

- (19) a. *Ay Deos, como esto foy maa uentura!*
 alas God how this was bad venture
 ‘Alas, God, how unfortunate this was!’
 (Arthurian novel. DSG120,1.21)
- b. *Aa Deus! – deziam eles – Quamto as cousas tristes*
 alas God – said they – how-much the things sad
sam menores d’ ouvir que de semtyr!
 are minor of hear-INF than of feel-INF
 ‘Alas, God! – they said – how much worse it is to feel than
 to hear bad news!’
 (Chronicle, Conde Dom Pedro. Brocardo 1997:211)
- c. *Ay, Cordova, como tu es boa e muyto prazenteira*
 ah Cordoba how you are good and very joyful
e de quãto bem te Deus abastou!
 and of how-much good you-ACC God filled
 ‘Ah, Cordoba! How good and joyful you are! And so much
 good that God has given to you!’
 (Chronicle. *Cr. Geral de Espanha de 1344*. Cintra 1954:348)
- (20) c. *Quanto eu hanrricado venho!*
 how-much I Henrique-ed-PP come-1SG
 ‘How I am feeling like one of King Henrique’s men!’
 (Chronicle, Fernão Lopes. Macchi 1975:291)
- b. *Ay Deos, disse Galuam, como [fremosas marauilhas]i*
 alas God said Galvan WH beautiful wonders
aqui a ti!
 here there-is
 ‘Alas, God, the beautiful wonders there is here!’
 (Arthurian novel. DSG150,1.10)

¹⁶ These data need to be further explored and must be considered cautiously because *wh*-exclamatives may not display verb-second syntax in V2 languages like German (Nouwen and Chernilovskaya 2015)

- c. *Ay hirmãão, que perda oje perco ã uos!*
 alas brother what loss today lose-1SG in you
 ‘Alas, brother, how I will miss you!’
 (Arthurian novel. DSG258,1.6)

The contrast in subject position between *wh*- questions and *wh*- exclamatives that is found in Old Portuguese is replicated in contemporary European Portuguese. In both periods verb movement to C is restricted to particular types of grammatical structures.

4. A disconfirmed generalization (Benincà 2006)

Benincà (2006) puts forward the generalization in (21) and claims that it has no exceptions in the Old Romance languages. That seems to be true whenever V2 structures (e.g. *wh*- questions) are at play. But the generalization does not hold for Old Portuguese root clauses such as the ones in (22), which display the order O-(cl)-S/X-V, although the accusative object lacks a clitic copy, which shows that it is not a topic. The availability of this type of data, which contradict Benincà’s (2006) generalization, is predicted by an analysis of Old Portuguese syntax as non V2. In (22) the moved object and the verb are marked in bold, and the constituents intervening between them are underlined, excluding clitics, the negative marker and parentheticals. The interveners are the subject in (22a-c), the subject and the adverbial expression in (22d), and the oblique complements in (22e).

- (21) *In a main clause, an object can precede the verb and lack a clitic copy only if no lexical material intervenes between the object and the verb (except for clitics and the negative marker).* (Benincà 2006: 67)

- (22) a. *E Nascião lhes contou o feito todo, que nom
 and Nascião them told the occurrence all that not
 ficou nada do que ele sabia, e assi **o sonho**
 was-left nothing of-the what he knew and so the dream
 lhe el-rei Mordão **contara**, que em nada lhe mentio.
 him the-king Mordão told that in nothing him lied
 ‘Nascião told them all that had happened without hiding anything, and, in the same truthful way, the king Mordão told him his dream.’
 (Arthurian novel. JAR60,.14)*

- b. *esto nenhũu nõ demãde*
 this nobody not challenges
 ‘Nobody will challenge this.’
 (Arthurian novel. DSG517,1.1)
- c. *E todo esto ella fazia por ordyr morte de Galuã*
 and all this she did to plot-INF death of Galvan
 ‘And she did all this to arrange the death of Galvan.’
 (Arthurian novel. DSG145,1.6)
- d. *Tudo isso, disse el-rei, eu sem falta quero*
 all that, said the-king, I without fail want-1SG
escutar, se mo tu podes
 listen-INFIN, if me-DAT-it-ACC you-NOM can
fazer entender
 make hear-INFIN
 ‘All that, said the king, I am absolutely prepared to listen,
 if you can let me hear it’.
 (Arthurian novel. JAR33,1.5)
- e. *E eu vicẽte anes publico Tabelliõ de Lixbõa [...]*
 and I Vicẽte Anes public notary of Lisbon
esta carta cõ mha mão escreuy e meu sinal ẽ ela
 this letter with my hand wrote and my sign in it
pugi en testemoyo de verdade
 put in testimony of truth
 ‘And I, Vicẽte Anes, notary public of Lisbon, wrote this
 document with my own hand and made this my sign here,
 in testimony of truth.’
 (Legal text, year 1311. Martins 2001:399)

Non-topic preverbal constituents are distributed between CP, PolP and Spec,TP, with the verb in T. The simplified structural representations of (22b) and (22a) above, for example, are respectively (23) and (24).

(23) [_{FocP} *esto* [_{PolP} *nenhũu* [_{Pol'} *non* [_{TP} *demande* [_{vP} ~~*nenhũu*~~ [_{VP} ~~*demande*~~ ~~*esto*~~]]]]]]

(24) [_{XP} *assi* [_{FocP} *o sonho* [_{PolP} [aff] [_{TP} *lhe* [_{T'} *el-rei Mordão* [_{T'} *contara ...*

5. Beyond Old Portuguese

At this point we might think that Old Portuguese could have been the exception within a general setting of widespread verb second in Medieval Romania. Although the object of scrutiny in this paper is Old Portuguese, the diagnostic test for verb-secondness that came out of the investigation can be easily applied to the other Iberorromance languages, because in medieval times they all share similar systems of clitic placement in the relevant aspects (see Batllori, Iglésias and Martins 2005). So, even if Catalan does not have interpolation (Fischer 2002), differently from Portuguese, Galician, Asturian and Spanish, it displays a similar distribution of enclisis and proclisis in finite clauses as the other Iberorromance languages. Once the system of clitic placement allows a clear identification of NTIs, the test consists in determining whether in root clauses an NTI can be separated from the verb by other constituents. The rationale behind the test is after all the same that supports Benincà's generalization in (21), but it has a broader scope of application because it is not restricted to non-topic (focused) objects.

The data from Old Spanish in (25) and from Old Catalan in (26) belong to the same chronological period as the Old Portuguese data discussed above (i.e. late medieval 13th–15th century; see below *Sources of the data*). The NTIs marked in bold in (25a-b) and (26b-d) show that Old Spanish and Old Catalan do not pass the test for a verb-second classification, because both permit 'true' verb third or more structures. In all the examples, the subject intervenes between the NTI and the verb, which demonstrates that the subject does not occupy a left-peripheral topic position. Moreover, in (25a) two NTIs cooccur (see section 3 above). In (26a) the textual context and the proclitic placement of the object clitic show that the locative *aquí* 'here' is in a focus position, i.e. the left-peripheral position of contrastive foci (cf. footnote 10 above, and Costa and Martins 2011). These brief observations can be matched with other arguments discussed in the literature against a classification of Old Spanish (Sitaridou 2016) and Old Catalan (Pujol i Campeny ? 2017) as V2 systems.

Old Spanish

- (25) a. **Ya** **nunca** vos yo mas veré!
already never you-DAT I-NOM more will-see
'Never again I will see you.'
[Poema de Alfonso Onceno. Chenery 1905:123]
- b. **Así** les Dios aluengue los días de las vidas
so them Dios extends the days of the lives
'May God so extend their lives.'

Old Catalan

- (26) a. *Lo ric hom anà a la dona e amenà-la ab una donzela solament e ab II cavalers, e mès-la en la cambra del rey. E aquí él la lexà*
the rich man went to the woman and brought-her with one damsel only and with two knights and put-her in the chamber of-the king and here he her left
'The rich man took the woman with only one damsel and two knights and brought her into the king's bedroom. And (it was) there (that) he left her.'
(Bernat Desclot, *Crònica*. CICA)
- b. *E jamés les portes no s deven obrir per nenguns*
and never the doors not REFL should open for no-one
'And the doors are not to be opened for anyone.'
(*Costums*: 256. CICA)
- c. *nunqua ne nul temps lo marit no n' és tengut a la muller ne a sos hereus*
never nor no time the husband not of-it is had to the wife nor to his heirs
'Never, in any time, is the husband allowed, to his wife nor heirs, ...'
(*Costums*: 28. CICA)
- d. *Nunqua Ytàlia ho creeguera.*
never Ytàlia it will-believe
(*Epistolari* IIa: carta 34. CICA)

Although I cannot replicate here for Old Catalan and Old Spanish the type of detailed investigation pursued for Old Portuguese, I hope to have shown that the diagnostic test devised to separate 'true' verb third orders from 'superficial' verb third orders can be applied across Old Iberorromance, and produces a similar result for different languages, viz. their allowing of non V2 syntax.

6. Conclusion

This paper brings up and offers for discussion positive empirical evidence against the hypothesis endorsed by different authors that Old Portuguese (like other Romance languages in medieval times) would have been a V2 language.

By articulating generally accepted state-of-the-art descriptions of clitic placement and constituent order in Old Portuguese, it was possible to demonstrate that root clauses with *non topic items* (NTIs) offer inescapable evidence that Old Portuguese grammar derived non-V2 structures. Although no quantitative analysis was undertaken, the frequency of the proper non-V2 root clauses in texts is possibly low. The frequency issue does not affect the gist of the argument, though, which is that a V2 grammar does not derive structures that unmistakably violate V2. But what if cases can be found where non-V2 sentences in contemporary European Portuguese appear to show a V2-like syntax in Old Portuguese? This would only mean that circumscribed V-to-C as observed in contemporary European Portuguese in *wh*- questions, for example, would be less restricted in former times and would thus appear in a wider range of constructions (cf. Biberauer and Roberts 2014). That is to say: the fact that some V2 structures exist in a particular language does not make it a V2 language. But the fact that some unequivocal non-V2 structures are a grammatical option in a particular language constitutes sufficient evidence against a V2 classification, under generally accepted terminology. Otherwise, most of the world's languages would be V2 and the label would be quite empty of descriptive and typological value.

Once the V2 classification is discarded as a general label for a certain historical stage of a language, a more promising investigation can start into particular types of V2 structures displaying (in)stability across time.

The research reported in this paper proceeded in two steps. First, the issue of how to clearly pinpoint non-topic(?) items (NTIs) in a particular language (viz. Old Portuguese) was discussed. Then, NTIs were used as key indicators to diagnose which verb third or more orders are actually incompatible with a verb second syntax. This two-step methodology can be extended to the analysis of other languages beyond Old Portuguese (with due regard to language-particular properties), and maybe contribute to reach some consensus on a set of common ground, reliable indicators for classifying an earlier stage of a language as being/not being verb second.

Sources of the data

Portuguese

Arthurian Novel [13th century]¹⁷

DSG – Martins, Ana Maria, Sandra Pereira and Adriana Cardoso. 2014-2015. *POS-tagged Demanda do Santo Graal / Parsed Demanda do Santo Graal*. CC licensed WOChWEL by Centro de Linguística da Universidade de Lisboa.
<http://alfclul.clul.ul.pt/wochwel/oldtexts.html>

JAR – Martins, Ana Maria, Sandra Pereira and Adriana Cardoso. 2012-2015. *POS-tagged José de Arimateia / Parsed José de Arimateia*. CC licensed WOChWEL by Centro de Linguística da Universidade de Lisboa.
<http://alfclul.clul.ul.pt/wochwel/oldtexts.html>

NB: The identification number (ID) of the example sentences extracted from these texts is the ID of the POS-tagged version. The first part of the ID (before the comma) is common to both versions and allows you to easily retrieve the same sentence in the Parsed version.

Chronicle [14th-15th century]

Brocardo, Teresa, ed. 1997. *Crónica do Conde D. Pedro de Meneses*. Lisboa: Fundação Calouste Gulbenkian/JNICT.

Cintra, Luís Filipe Lindley, ed. 1954. *Crónica Geral de Espanha de 1344 (Edição crítica do texto português)*. Volume 2. Lisboa: Imprensa Nacional – Casa da Moeda.

Macchi, Giuliano, ed. 1975. *Fernão Lopes, Crónica de D. Fernando*. Lisboa: Imprensa Nacional – Casa da Moeda.

Legal Texts [13th-15th century]

Castro, Ivo. 1991. *Curso de História da Língua Portuguesa*. Lisboa: Universidade Aberta.

Martins, Ana Maria. 2001. *Documentos Portugueses do Noroeste e da Região de Lisboa. Da Produção Primitiva ao Século XVI*. Lisboa: Imprensa Nacional – Casa da Moeda.

Poetry [13th-15th century]

Brea, Mercedes, coord. 1996. *Lírica Profana Galego-Portuguesa*. 2 volumes. Santiago de Compostela: Ramón Piñeiro/Xunta de Galicia.

¹⁷ The dates indicated here are the dates of the original texts, much of which were transmitted by later copies. See footnote 14.

Spanish and Catalan [Spanish texts:14th century; Catalan texts:13th-15th century]

Chenery, Winthrop Holt. 1905. Object-pronouns in dependent clauses: a study in Old Spanish word order. *Publications of the Modern Language Association of America* 20:1-151.

CICA – *Corpus Informatitzat del Català Antic*. <http://www.cica.cat/>

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