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## The emergence of a strict V2 system

**Introduction** Early Old Swedish – a Verb Second (V2 language) – exhibit clauses where more than one element can precede the finite verb. In (1), a free relative precedes an adverbial clause, which in turn is followed by a resumptive element, *þa* ‘then’. Counting the surface constituents, the sentence must be considered to be a V4 clause.

- (1) [hwar sum spillir not fore andrum manni]. [huggær swa sundær at hun  
who REL destroys something for other man chops so in.pieces that she  
ær ængu nyt]. þa böte atær skapæn . ok mæþ þre markær .  
is no use þA pay after damage and with three marks  
‘If somebody destroys something that belongs to another man and to such an extent that  
it may no more be used, he should pay for the damage and in addition three marks.’

*Upplandslagen*, 1300–1350

**Fronted free relative clauses** In order to account for these violations of the V2 structure, we need to take a closer look at fronted free relative clauses in Old Swedish. There are two different types: one headed by a WH word, the other headed by a pronoun. Both clauses may immediately precede the finite verb, but they may also be followed by a resumptive element: either the resumptive adverbial *tha* (2) or a pronoun (3).

- (2) Nu [hwar swm wil annan til swar stemnæ]<sub>i</sub> . þa stemni han<sub>i</sub> aa þingi [...]  
NU who REL will other to answer convene þA convene he on thing  
‘One who wants to sue somebody else should convene him to the thing’

*Yngre Västgötalagen* 1280–1399

- (3) þy at [hwar sum æruir mopur ælla fapur]<sub>i</sub> , han<sub>i</sub> ma egh frænda arf  
for that who REL inherits mother or father he must NEG friends inheritance  
foruærka.  
destroy  
‘for the one who inherits his mother or father should not destroy the inheritance of his  
friends’

*Östgötalagen*, 1300–1399

**A rich left periphery** There are six different possible combinations depending on the kind of free relative (introduced by a WH word or a pronoun) and the kind of resumption in the clause proper (resumptive adverbial, pronoun or nothing). The distribution is far from random; rather it is indicative of a rich left periphery in Old Swedish. In the earliest texts, the language permits stacking of elements in the left periphery, something which permits us to evaluate the hierarchical relationship between the different constituents. In (4), the free relative co-occurs with an adverbial clause.

- (4) Nu [uarþær kona dighær i hore ællas ætsku spiælle]. [þæn sum þy ualt]<sub>i</sub> .  
NU becomes woman big in whore or incest the.one REL it caused  
han<sub>i</sub> ær sakær uip biskup at þrim markum .  
he is guilty by bishop at three marks  
‘If a woman gets pregnant from infidelity or incest, the one who caused it owns the  
bishop three marks.’

*Östgötalagen*, 1300–1399

By using stacking as a method to map the left periphery of the Old Swedish main declarative clauses, we find that their internal order is as in (5).

