

On the syntax of possession in Old Church Slavonic
(on the basis of historical corpora)
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0. Introduction

The talk discusses the properties and the diachrony of the *external possessor* construction in Old Bulgarian/Old Church Slavonic¹, involving a dative pronominal clitic and ambiguous possessive and “affected” reading. (cf. König & Haspelmath 1997; Haspelmath 1999; Payne & Barshi 1999 in typology). EP has parallels in the New Testament Greek *extraposed genitives* (cf. Manolissou 2000; Horrocks 2007, 2010; Gianollo 2010).

1. External Possessor vs. Possessor Raising in contemporary Bulgarian

- (1) a. Dade *mi* knigata. '(He) gave me the book.'
Gave *me.DAT* book.DEF
- b. Dade mu knigata *mi*. '(He) gave him my book.'
Gave him.DAT book.DEF *my.POSS*

- Possessive dative clitics (as substitute for possessive genitive pronouns) are among the markers of the evolution of Bulgarian as an analytic (Balkan Slavic) language.
- First signs of the genitive-dative syncretism: around the 10th-11thc., further developments in Middle Bulgarian (12th-14thc.); around the 16th c. (Mirčev 1978) the possessive genitive is already obsolete.

1.1. Two possessive constructions in Modern Bulgarian (cf. Cinque & Krapova 2009):

Possessor Raising, cf. (2) & (4a):

- (2) a. Polučih *ti.POSS* pismoto. = a'. Polučih pismoto *ti.POSS*.
Received.1SG *your.POSS* letter.DEF received.1SG letter.DEF *your.POSS*
'I received *your* letter.'
- b. Zabravila sām *mu.POSS* adresa. = b'Zabravila sām adresa *mu.POSS*
forgotten be *his.POSS* address.DEF forgotten be address.DEF *his.POSS*
'I have forgotten *his* address.'
- c. Pročetoh *ti.POSS* novata kniga. = c'. Pročetoh novata *ti.POSS* kniga.
read.1SG *your.POSS* new.DEF book read.1SG new.DEF *your.POSS* book
'I read *your* new book.'

External Possessor, cf. (3) & (4b):

- (3) a. Nameriha *mu* kolata. ≠ a'. Nameriha kolata *mu*.
found.3PL *he.DAT/POSS* car.DEF Found.3PL car.DEF *his.POSS*
'They found the (=his) car *for him*.' ≠ 'They found *his* car.'
- b. Šte *ti* nareža dārvata. ≠ b'. Šte nareža dārvata *ti*.
will *you.DAT/POSS* cut wood.DEF Will cut wood.DEF *your.POSS*
'I will cut the (=your) wood *for/instead of you*.' ≠ 'I will cut *your* wood.'

¹ In the present work, we mainly employ the term Old Bulgarian (abbreviated as OB). The term Old Church Slavonic (OCS), also used in the literature, reflects the status of the language as being used by Slavic orthodox community (cf. Duridanov et al. 1993).

c. Otkradnaxa *mi* portmoneto ≠ Otkradnaxa portmoneto *mi*.
 stole.3PL *me.DAT/POSS* purse.DEF stole.3PL purse.DEF *my.POSS*
 'They stole *my* purse *on me*. ≠ They stole *my* purse.'

(4) a. V POSS CL [NP N+ Def POSS CL] *Possessor Raising (PR)*


b. V_{benefactive/malefactive} POSS CL [NP N+/-Def] *External Possessor (EP)*

1.2. Typological properties of *External Possessors* (König & Haspelmath 1998; Haspelmath 1999; Fried 1999; Saric 2002, Mitkovska 2007, 2009, Tomić 2009, Krapova 2012 for the Balkan languages):

- a) “affected” benefactive/malefactive predicates;
- b) relational nouns of ‘inalienable possession’ (body parts, kinship terms, items of possession, etc., cf. Vergnaud & Zubizarreta 1993, a.o.);
- c) “possessor” dative clitics

Main argument of the talk: EP was present in OB/OCS in the special function of the dative referred to as *doubly bound dative* by Minčeva (1964) = Dative of interest (Dativus commodi et incommodi) + an implied possessive relation.

With the rise of the category of definiteness (Mladenova 2007: 348-357), and as a result of a functional reanalysis of the clause (Dimitrova-Vulchanova, Vulchanov 2006, 2008a, 2008b), and the tendency of pronouns/clitics to appear in 2P, the clausal dative pronoun came to occupy an additional position inside the NP (esp. with inalienable nouns referring to body parts) leading to the emerging of postnominal possessive clitics.

1.3. Data collected from: TOROT corpus (texts annotated also into the PROIEL database, cf. Haug, Eckhoff 2011a, 2011b); TITUS database; Historical Corpus of Bulgarian Language (HCBL) for further sketching of the process in later stages.

2. The *doubly bound dative* in Old Bulgarian: examples and preliminary observations

(5) a. da pokryjotъ se *emou* dѣla *ego* (Euch.Sin., 194, 68b, Minčeva 1964: 25)
 to cover REFL *him.DAT* deeds.NOM *his.GEN*
 'To cover for him his deeds'

b. i otvrѣste se *ima* oči (Mt. 9:30, Cod. Mar.)
 and opened REFL *them.DAT* eyes.NOM
 καὶ ἠνεώχθησαν *αὐτῶν.GEN* οἱ ὀφθαλμοί
 'And their sight was restored.'

(6) a. pomaza *emou* oči bгънѣмъ. (Jo. 9:6 Cod. Mar., Zogr., Assem.)
 annointed *him.DAT* eyes mud.INST

αὶ ἐπέχρισεν *αὐτοῦ.GEN* τὸν πηλὸν ἐπὶ τοὺς ὀφθαλμοὺς. *eyes*
 (Scriv.1894: καὶ ἐπέχρισε τὸν πηλὸν ἐπὶ τοὺς ὀφθαλμοὺς *τοῦ τυφλοῦ.GEN*)
 '(He) annointed his eyes with mud'

b. ourѣza *emou* ouho desnoe. (Jo. 18:10 Cod. Mar., Zogr., Assem., Sab.)
 cut off *him.DAT* ear.ACC right.ACC
 καὶ πέκοψεν *αὐτοῦ.GEN* τὸ ὠτάριον. *eye* τὸ δεξιόν. *right*
 '(He) cut off his right ear.'

Two theoretical options for the pronominal dative argument: a) θ-role accumulation; <Benefactive/Malefactive> and <Possession>; b) the possessive interpretation is not

grammaticalised but is inferred or implied (Tomić 2009; Topolińska & Bužarovska 2011), cf. Chomsky's (1981: 35) θ -criterion:

(7) *Each argument bears one and only one θ -role, and each θ -role is assigned to one and only one argument.*

Cf. also Lehman (2004: 11): "in most languages, the 'possessive dative' is not really a function of the dative, since the possessive relation itself is not expressed. Instead, it is inferred, [...] on semantic grounds, since [eye, ear, etc. are] relational concept[s] so there must be a possessor in the situation."²

→ "True" possessor datives in OB: predicative possessors and NP-internal datives:

(8) i ne bě *ima* čęda (Lk. 1:7, Cod. Zogr., Assem.)
and not be *their.DAT* child
καὶ οὐκ ἦν *αὐτοῖς.DAT* τέκνον
'And they had no child'

(9) a. Ioанъ estъ ime *emou.* (Lk. 1:63 Cod. Mar, Zogr., Assem)
John is name.NOM *his.DAT*
Ἰωάννης ἐστὶν ὄνομα.name *αὐτοῦ.GEN.*
(Scriv. 1894: Ἰωάννης ἐστὶ τὸ ὄνομα *αὐτοῦ.GEN*)
'John is his name'

b. vъprašaahъ že jęgo droužina *jemou* (Cod.Supr., 18, 109b, 25)
asked DISC he.ACC/GEN group *his.DAT*
Οἱ δὲ συνελθόντες αὐτῶ.DAT εἶπον πρὸς αὐτὸν.ACC
'his fellows asked him'

2.1. Properties of the OB doubly bound dative construction

- A dative pronoun referring to a human individual acting as an *indirectly affected* argument: 1st and 2nd SG *mi* and *ti* -- 23 occurrences, mostly in Cod. Supr; 'weak' anaphoric pronouns *emou* '(to/of) him.SG.M', *ei* '(to/of) her.SG.F', *imъ* '(to/of) them.PL', *ima* '(to/of) them.DU' -- 86 occurrences.

- Predicates of the benefactive/malefactive type

- Cod. Mar. 26 occurrences of NP-external dative pronominals which 21 with affected predicates;
- Cod. Supr. 67 occurrences of NP-external dative pronominals of which 39 with affected predicates.

(10) a. mečęmъ otъsęčeši *mi* glavę (Cod. Supr., 22, 127b, 2)
sword.INST cut off *me.DAT* head.ACC
ζίφει *με ACC* ὑποβάλλειν
'(you) beheaded my with a sword'

b. i sъkrouši *jemou* vъse lice. (Cod. Supr., 5, 37b, 15)
and broke *him.DAT* whole.ACC face.ACC
καὶ συνέτριψεν *αὐτοῦ.GEN* τήν.ART ὄψιν
'And broke his whole face'

² From this point of view, the term 'external possessor' is a misnomer. We will however continue to use it for consistency with the terminological practice.

- *Affected* arguments are typically inanimate Themes or at most animate Patients (cf. the animacy hierarchy, e.g., Nichols 1999: 160-162):
body parts > kinship terms > extended kinship > abstract properties
- Cod. Mar.: the *doubly bound dative* is used predominantly with body parts (83% of all occurrences)
- Cod. Supr.: frequent ‘extended’ inalienables (Guéron 2005: 594), i.e., personal belongings; as well as abstract nouns. Increase in the functional load of the construction.

Table 1. Affected predicates and semantic NP types

	Overall in Cod. Supr.	<i>Doubly bound datives</i> in Cod. Supr.	Overall in Cod.Mar.	<i>Doubly bound datives</i> in Cod.Mar.
Body part (<i>body, eyes, flesh, face, mind, head... </i>)	59	24	23	20
Extended inalienables (<i>shirt, bread, horse ...</i>)	14	6	-	-
Kinship (<i>brother, daughter</i>)	5	4	-	-
Extended kinship (<i>disciple, master, friend</i>)	3	2	-	-
Abstract terms (<i>thought, word, life, discourse ...</i>)	4	3	1	1

Arguments in favor of EP status of the *doubly bound dative*:

- rare occurrences of non-pronominal dative NPs: 6 in Cod. Mar. (6,4 %).
- rare occurrences of pronominal genitives in prenominal position: 8 in Cod. Mar. (out of overall 445 pronominal genitives, 1,5 %); 26 in Cod. Supr. (out of overall 417 pronominal genitives, ca. 6 %).

(11) i vьzлѣ na glavѹ **ego** vьzležešta (Mt. 26:7, Cod. Mar., Zogr.)
and poured on head.ACC **his.GEN** reclining (on the table)
καὶ κατέχεεν ἐπὶ τῆς κεφαλῆς **αὐτοῦ.GEN** ἀνακειμένου.
'And poured on his head reclining on the table'

(12) a. онъ же вѣду **ihъ** pomyšleniě. reče imъ (Mt. 9:4, Cod.Mar.)
he DISC knowing **their.GEN** thoughts said them
'He, knowing their thoughts, told them'
b. I viděvъ isъ pomyšleniě **ihъ** reče (Mt. 9:4, Cod. Assem.)
and knowing Jesus thoughts **their.GEN** said
καὶ ἰδὼν ὁ Ἰησοῦς τὰς ἐνθυμήσεις **αὐτῶν.GEN** εἶπεν (or εἰδὼς instead of ἰδὼν)
'And Jesus knowing their thoughts said.'

- the dative pronoun can bind an affected NP across a PP, (13a) from Cod. Sab. Cf. Cinque & Krapova (2009) for arguments in favour of this test.

(13) a. něsmъ dostoinъ da **mi** [PP rodъ [NP krovъ] vьnideši (Mt. 8:8, Cod. Sab.)
am-not worthy to **me/DAT** under roof enter
οὐκ εἰμι ἰκανὸς ἵνα **μου.GEN** [υπο τὴν στέγην] εἰσέλθης

- 'I do not deserve to have you come under my roof'
 b. verigy *jemou* naloživъše [PP na [NP vyjǫ] (Cod.Supr. 1, 19, 112a, 23)
 chains *him.DAT* putting on neck.ACC
 δεθῆναι *αὐτὸν.ACC* ἀλύσει σιδηρᾶ
 'Putting chains around his neck'

NB! Binding is also available across PPs in contemporary Bg:

- (14) a. Ne sam dostoen da *ti* vljaza [PP v kaštata].
 not am worthy to *you.DAT/POSS* enter.1SG in house.DEF
 Cf. a' Ne sam dostoen da vljaza [v kaštata *ti*]
 not am worthy to enter.1SG in house.DEF *you.POSS*
 'I do not deserve to enter your house'
 b. *Ne sam mu čul [PP za uspexa]
 not am *him.POSS* heard for success.DEF
 Cf. b' Ne sam čul za uspexa *mu*
 Not am heard for success *him.POSS*
 'I have not heard about his success'

2.2. Extraposed genitive in New Testament Greek

OB *doubly bound dative* usually translates as an *extraposed genitive* in NT Greek:

- (15) a. τότε διήνοιξεν *αὐτῶν* τὸν νοῦν.ACC (Lk. 24:45)
 then unbound *them.GEN* the.MASC.ACC mind.ACC
 τῆγδα οἰνῆζε *ἰμῶ* οὐμῶ (Lk. 24:45, Cod. Mar., Zogr., Assem.)
 then unbind *them.DAT* mind.ACC
 'Then he opened their mind'
 b. θεραπευσον *μου.GEN* τὴν θυγατέρα
 heal.IMP *me.GEN* the.FEM.ACC daughter.ACC
 icěli *mi* dǔštere· (Cod.Supr., 26, 154b, 4-5)
 heal.IMP *me.DAT* daughter.ACC
 'Heal my daughter'

- Extraposed genitives in NT Greek are derived through the mechanism of *possessor raising* of the genitive clitic Gianollo (2010: 109);
- Genitive-dative syncretism in NT Greek is explained with reanalysis of the raised gen. clitic to a clausal position where it could be interpreted as structurally equivalent to a sentential dative (Horrocks 2007: 628f; Gianollo 2010:112, cf. also Havers (1911), König, Haspelmath (1998: 584-86) for connection with *dativus sympatheticus* of Classical Greek.

3. Factors for the genitive-dative syncretism in OB

- In 44 instances (Cod. Supr.), the construction appears as a single translation choice irrespectively of the Greek original (extraposed or NP-internal genitive).
- In a number of cases, the *doubly bound dative* translates a completely different source structure (cf. e.g. (10a) above).
- Significantly low rate of perfect matches in translating the Greek *extraposed genitive*: 1,5% in Cod. Mar. and 6% in Cod. Supr (Minčeva 1964)

The rise of the postnominal possessive pattern in OB: 111 occurrences in Cod. Supr (as opposed to the 16 found in Cod.Mar., 3 of which ambiguous). Cf. (16) with (17):

- (16) a. priemy *emou* sьvĕdĕtel'stvo (Jo. 3:33, Cod. Assemani)
receiving *him.DAT* testimony
'(He) who has received his testimony has set his seal (to this that God is true)'
- (17) a. i tako že ne bĕ ravno sьvĕdĕtel'stvo *imĕ.* (Mk. 14:59, Cod.Mar.)
and thus DISC not was same testimony *them.DAT*
b. καὶ οὐδὲ οὕτως ἴση ἦν ἡ μαρτυρία *αὐτῶν.GEN.*
'Yet even then their testimony did not agree.'
- (18) a. a ne přestopiti *slovese jemou.* (Cod.Supr., 9, 64b, 23)
but not overstep word *him.DAT*
ἢ παραβαίνειν τοὺς.ART λόγους *αὐτοῦ.GEN*
'But to not violate his words'
b. vojevoda že povelĕ *tĕlo jemou* vьvrgĕšti vь' rĕkŕ. (Cod.Supr., 2, 12a, 17-18)
chieftain DISC ordered body *him.DAT* throw into river
'Ο δὲ ἡγεμῶν ἐκέλευσε τὸ σῶμα *αὐτοῦ.GEN* ῥιφῆναι εἰς τὸν ποταμὸν.
'The chieftain order his body to be thrown into the river'

3.1. Emerging clitics in OB

- Personal pronouns *mi* and *ti* are clitics in OB (Večerka 1989: 42).

- (19) a. otъdadętĕ *ti* sę grĕsi (Mt. 9:2, Cod. Sab.)
forgive *you.DAT* REFL sins.NOM
ἀφίενταί *σου.GEN* αἱ ἁμαρτίαι
(Scriv. 1894: ἀφένονται σοί.DAT αἱ ἁμαρτίαι *σου.GEN*)
'Your sins will be forgiven./ Sins will be forgiven to you.'
b. prinesĕte *mi* ję sĕmo (Mt. 14:18, Cod. Mar., Zogr.)
bring *me.DAT* them.ACC here
Φέρετέ *μοι.DAT* ὧδε αὐτούς.ACC
'Bring them to me here.'
- (20) a. kako *ti* sę otvrĕste oči. (Jo. 9:10, Cod. Mar)
how *you.DAT* REFL opened eyes
πῶς [οὖν] ἠνεῴχθησάν *σου.GEN* οἱ ὀφθαλμοί
'How were your eyes opened?'
b. hošteši li [CP i rebro *mi* ispytati] (Cod.Supr., 44, 252a, 24)
θέλεις καὶ τὴν πλευράν *μου.GEN* καταμαθεῖν
wanted Qu also rib *me.DAT* test

- Dative anaphoric pronouns are emerging 2P clitics in OB:

- (21) a. *emouže* njasmĕ dostoenĕ sapoga ponesti (Mt 3:11, Cod. Assem.)
to him/whose.DAT am-not worthy shoes carry
oŭ.of.whom.GEN οὐκ εἰμι ἰκανὸς τὰ ὑποδήματα βαστάσαι
'... whose sandals I am not worthy to carry'
b. ourĕza *emou* ouho desnoe. (Jo. 18:10 Cod. Zogr., Assem., Sab.)
cut off *him.DAT* ear.ACC right.ACC
καὶ ἀπέκοψεν *αὐτοῦ.GEN* τὸ ὠτόριον τὸ δεξιόν.
'He cut his right ear'

- (22) otvrěste se *ima* oči (Mt. 9:30, Cod. Mar.)
 opened REFL *their.DAT* eyes.NOM
 και ήνεώχθησαν *αὐτῶν.GEN* οἱ ὀφθαλμοί
 'Their eyes were opened'

3.2. Ordering shift: competing clitic orders (cf. Willis 2000, Migdalski 2006: 167ff).

- (23) a. mečemъ otъsěčeši *mi* glavъ (Cod. Supr., 22, 127b, 2)
 sword.INST cut off *me.DAT* head
 ζίφει *με.ACC* ὑποβάλλειν'
 'You will cut off my head with a sword'
- (24) a. ne by oumrъlъ *mi* bratъ (Cod. Supr. 26, 153b, 19-20)
 not be.COND died *me.DAT* brother.NOM
 οὐκ ἄν ἀπέθανέ *μου.GEN* ὁ ἀδελφός.brother
- b. ne by *mi* oumrъlъ bratъ· (Cod. Supr. 26, 154a, 22)
 not be.COND *me.DAT* died brother.NOM
 οὐκ ἄν ἀπέθανέ *μου.GEN* ὁ ἀδελφός
 'My brother would not have died'

3.3. The rise of definiteness

- Postnominal possessives occur in 2P within the NP if the head N is a body part, an 'extended' inalienable (*κοπή μου* 'his horse'), kinship, 'extended' kinship (e.g. *droužina* 'team, group'), or an abstract N (*slovese mou* 'his words', *ime mou* 'his name').
- In the slot of the article-on-the-rise (Dimitrova-Vulchanova & Vulchanov 2011), as well as after long-form adjectives.

- (25) a. sverěpyi *tb* běsъ (Cod. Supr. 14, 87b, 24-25)
 ferocious.ADJ *this/the.DET* fury.NOM
 ὁ.ART ἀνήμερος δαίμων
 'this/the ferocious fury'
- b. съ мрачьныиъ *emou* oumotъ. (Cod. Supr. 4, 33b, 3)
 with darkened.INST *his.DAT* mind.INST
αὐτοῦ.GEN ἐσκοτισμένον.darkened.GEN λογισμοῦ.mind.GEN
 'with hus dark mind'
- c. i v prvoe *ti* vprašanie ... (Cod. Supr. 15, 89a, 26-27)
 and in first *your.DAT* questioning ...
 και ἐκ τῶν προτέρων *σου.GEN* ἐπερωτήσεων [ἔγνως]
 'And we told you many times, in your first questioning, that [we are Christians]'
- d. povelě čestъnoјо *jego* glavъ otъsěšti (Cod. Supr. 4, 31a, 25-26)
 order righteous *his.GEN* head cut off
 ... τήν τιμίαν *αὐτοῦ.GEN* κεφαλήν.head.ACC
 '(...) ordered to cut off his righteous head'

4. Evidence for further development: evidence from *the Legend of Troy* (LT)

- 1 & 2 p. clitics *mi*, *ti* continue to appear as possessors of relational Ns:
- (26) Vъshrani *mi* otroka sego
 Keep *me.DAT* child this
 'Keep this child of mine'

- Dative *emou* ‘to him.DAT’ specializes for IO functions; *mou* ‘him.DAT’ dominates with *doubly bound* interpretation with head Ns like *name*, kinship term, quality, etc. and benefactive, emotional and cognitive predicates:

- (27) i rekošq *emou* proroci ego *Recipient*
and told *him.DAT* prophets.NOM his.GEN
'and his prophets told him'
- (28) a. da *mou* bōdetъ imę Пiонъ градъ. *Predicative Possessor*
to *him/his.DAT* be name.NOM Пiон.NOM town.NOM
'(Let) its name be Пiон town'
- b. I ouhyti *mou* s(y)na *Doubly bound dative*
and kidnapped *him/his.DAT* son
'And kidnapped his son.'

- Re-analysis of the genitive/genitive-accusative form of the anaphoric pronoun *ego* ‘him.ACC’ as a DO pronominal:

- (28) a. i ne može *ego* pogoubitъ,
and not can *him.GEN* kill
'And (they) can't kill him'
- b. i iska *ego* въ мнозѣхъ мѣстѣхъ, i otocѣh, i gradѣhъ,
and search for *him* in many places, and small rivers, and towns,
i ne može *go* naiti
and not can *him.ACC-GEN* find
'And searched for him in many places and rivers, and towns and can't find him'
- c. My esvě stvorila Troq grad, my hoštēvě i oumysliti
we be create Troy city we want also think
kako go i rasypati
how it also destroy
'We have created the city of Troy, we shall consider how to destroy it'

- Rise of possessive adjectives of the *egovъ* ‘his’ type (*ego* ‘he.GEN’ + poss. suffix *-ovъ*):

- (29) a. i žena *egova* Androfia g(opso)žda, i sestry *ego* Kašranda i Polikšena
'and wife *his* Androfia Mrs. and sisters *his* Cassandra and Polyxena'
- b. na *egově* širočei plešti,
on *his* broad shoulders

- Possession mainly expressed by possessive pronouns and adjectives and genitive (and dative) NPs with a noun head (not a pronoun).

5. *Damascenus Troianensis* (DT), 17th c.): a system close to that of contemporary Bulgarian: *go* ‘him’ as a DO, *negovъ* ‘his’ as possessive adjective. and *mu* ‘to him’ as IO & POSS.

- (30) a. i popita *go* ta *mu* kaže
and ask *him.ACC-GEN* and *him.DAT* say
'And ask him to tell him (...)'
- b. A roditelje *negovy* (...) bašta *mu* i mayka *mu* (...)
And parents *his* father *his.DAT* and mother *his.DAT*
'And his parents (i.e.) his father and his mother (...)'
- c. dogde *mu* se naide stopaninъ.
Until *his.DAT* REFL found owner.DEF

'Until his owner was found'
d. i prilepila **mu** se rizata
and stuck **him/his.DAT** REFL shirt.DEF
'And his shirt stuck (on him)'

5. Conclusions

- The *doubly bound dative* played the role of a “bridging context” facilitating the reanalysis of the clausal dative pronoun as a noun-dependent possessive clitic/marker.
- The signs of the genitive-dative syncretism reveal a complex process evolving in a number of directions: prosodic changes regarding 2P cliticization & formation of a clitic cluster; linear ordering of the informationally salient elements; rise of definiteness.
- The genitive-dative syncretism was contemporaneous to other major morphosyntactic changes operative in Old Bulgarian: a) the retreat of the genitive in negative sentences and its replacement by the nominative; b) the reanalysis of the accusative-genitive distinction as a kind of definiteness marker; c) the regrouping of the declension system and its gradual replacement by prepositional constructions.

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