Scrambling and Information Focus in Old and Contemporary Portuguese

Ana Maria Martins
University of Lisbon (FLUL/CLUL)
anamartins@clul.ul.pt

Abstract

This paper proposes that object scrambling both in Old and Contemporary Portuguese is a strategy to create appropriate information focus configurations. Essentially, it makes the rightmost constituent that would otherwise bear the neutral sentence nuclear stress escape it. In narrow information focus structures this amounts to defocusing of the scrambled constituent. In broad information focus sentences the scrambled constituent is prosodically and pragmatically demoted with respect to salience. Thus, leftward displacement of the scrambled constituent either allows another constituent to acquire discourse/informational prominence or creates a 'flat' structure in that respect. The informational import of the scrambling strategy is constant throughout the history of Portuguese. But while Old Portuguese allowed both short scrambling (i.e. adjunction to VP) and middle scrambling (i.e. raising to multiple Spec,TP), only short scrambling is a grammatical option in Contemporary European Portuguese. Hence, Old Portuguese scrambling could derive SOV sentences whereas Contemporary European Portuguese scrambling maintains the object in postverbal position. The view that scrambling may induce loss or downgrading of discourse/informational prominence as it removes constituents from the clause-final position to which such prominence is assigned is supported by cross-linguistic evidence (Taylor & Pintzuk 2010 for Old English, Pinkster 1990 and Devine & Stephens 2006 for Latin).

Keywords: Object scrambling; information structure; word order; Old Portuguese; European Portuguese.

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1. Introduction

This paper proposes that object scrambling both in Old and Contemporary Portuguese is a strategy to create appropriate information focus configurations. Essentially, it makes the rightmost constituent that would otherwise bear the sentence nuclear stress escape it. In narrow information focus structures, unfocused material is removed out of the focus domain (see Costa 1998, Zubizarreta 1998, 1999, Martins 2002). In broad information focus sentences, by losing the sentence final position, the scrambled constituent is prosodically and pragmatically demoted with respect to salience. In both cases, leftward displacement of the scrambled constituent allows another constituent to acquire discourse/informational prominence in turn or creates a 'flat' structure with respect to discourse prominence. This strategy to set up discourse-driven information focus configurations is constant throughout the history of Portuguese but while Old Portuguese allowed both short scrambling (i.e. VP-scrambling) and middle scrambling (i.e. IP-scrambling) of the verbal complements (in the broad sense of Larson 1988, 1990), only VP-scrambling is a grammatical option in Contemporary Portuguese. Hence, although Portuguese has always been an SVO language, Old Portuguese scrambling could derive SOV sentences whereas Contemporary European Portuguese scrambling maintains the object in post-verbal position.

Extending the analysis of Costa (1998, 2004) by incorporating the insights of Cardoso (2010), it will be shown that object scrambling is not necessarily defocusing since it may apply in broad information focus structures. Empirical evidence from European Portuguese will be adduced in order to demonstrate that discourse/informational prominence on a particular constituent is compatible with broad information focus (the unscrambled constituent in the rightmost position within a focus domain is emphasized or in some other way receives greater discourse prominence). Under this perspective, all the Old Portuguese data that will be reviewed fit into place.[1]

In section 2 the state of the art on scrambling in Contemporary European Portuguese (CEP) will be reviewed and further empirical evidence will be adduced to support the view that scrambling in CEP is not restricted to narrow information focus structures. In section 3 the syntax of middle scrambling in Old Portuguese (OP) will be described and its interpretative import considered. We will argue for the hypothesis that scrambling in OP and CEP has similar informational/pragmatic effects, in spite of the syntactic change that made middle scrambling unavailable in CEP. Middle scrambling in Old Portuguese will be analyzed as unselective movement to multiple Spec,TP (while short scrambling in both CEP and OP is adjunction to VP as proposed by Costa 1998).[2] Section 4 introduces the analysis of Old Italian middle scrambling put forth by Poletto (2005), who takes scrambled constituents to target «internal» topic/focus positions at the left-periphery of the

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1. This understanding of scrambling smoothly accommodates the facts about subject scrambling (of both unaccusative and unergative verbs) discussed by Cardoso (2010) in relation with relative clause extraposition. In this paper, we will restrict our attention to object scrambling.
2. See Chomsky (1995, 2005) on the issue of multiple specifiers: «Banning of multiple specifiers requires stipulation, hence empirical justification. The empirical evidence seem to me to leave the null hypothesis viable, maybe supported, though the issue is very much alive.» (Chomsky 2005:14)

vP phase. This analysis is not confirmed by the Old Portuguese data. So it will be maintained that scrambling targets non-dedicated positions with respect to semantic/pragmatic content, in spite of the fact that the resulting configurations carry a particular semantic/pragmatic import. Section 5 concludes the paper.

2. Scrambling and information focus in Contemporary European Portuguese

Costa (1998, 2004) discusses cases of linear rearrangement of postverbal constituents in European Portuguese and demonstrates that they are to be analyzed as instances of short scrambling, with the scrambled constituent adjoined to VP.[3] Leftward movement enables the displaced constituent to escape narrow focus assignment. Short scrambling is thus a strategy to establish appropriate information focus configurations.

The interpretative effects arising from word order alternation induced by scrambling are illustrated below, with examples taken from Costa (1998:178, 2004:68). The monosyllabic adverb *bem* 'well' marks the border of the VP. In example (1-B) the adverb is the focus of the sentence since it conveys the new information requested in the question. In this case then the object cannot be scrambled (contrast (1-B-a) with the unfelicitous (1-B-b)). In (2-B), on the other hand, the adverb represents old information; thus it must be scrambled, allowing the object to receive default stress and be interpreted as focus. Placing heavy prosodic stress on *bem* 'well' in (1-B-b) or on *francês* 'French' in (2-B-b) still does not make the sentences adequate answers to the intended questions. The scrambling strategy, creating a more transparent relation between syntactic structure and information structure, is preferred when available.[4]

(1) A: a.   Como é que o Paulo fala   francês?
            how   is that the Paulo speaks French
            'How does Paulo speak French?'

    B: a.   O Paulo fala   francês [$_F$ bem].   [scrambled object]
            the Paulo speaks French   well

       b. # O Paulo fala   bem [$_F$ francês].   [non-scrambled object]
            the Paulo speaks well   French
            'Paulo speaks French well.'

3. Takano (1998) admits that short scrambling, being movement to a lexical domain, is allowed universally, only the availability of medial and long-distance scrambling being subject to variation across languages. This is predicted by Takano's Functional Parametrization Hypothesis which states that «only functional elements in the lexicon are subject to parametric variation.» (cf. Takano1998:848ff)

4. Costa (1998, 2004) also shows that VP-scrambling derives the order VOS in CEP when the subject remains in VP-internal position and the object scrambles over it:
    (i) A: Quem comeu a   sopa?
           who   ate   the soup?
        B: Comeu a   sopa a   Maria.
           ate   the soup the Mary
           'Mary did.'

(2) A: a. O que é que o Paulo fala bem?
　　　　 the what is that the Paulo speaks well
　　　　 'What does Paulo speak well?'

　　 B: a. # O Paulo fala francês [$_F$ bem]. 　　　[scrambled object]
　　　　　 the Paulo speaks French well

　　　 b. O Paulo fala bem [$_F$ francês]. 　　　[non-scrambled object]
　　　　 the Paulo speaks well French
　　　　 'Paulo speaks French well.'

Cardoso (2010) discusses and confirms the relevance of Costa's insights on CEP short scrambling while dealing with relative clause extraposition. She then observes, though, that CEP scrambling is not restricted to narrow focus configurations, as illustrated by the broad information focus sentences in (3).[5] Note that the adverb *bem* 'well' clearly signals that the object DP *um quilo de batatas* ('1 kilo of potatoes') is not VP-internal in (3-b).

(3) Context: recipe

　　 a. Frite bem um quilo de batatas. 　　　[non-scrambled object]
　　　 fry well one kilo of potatoes
　　　 'Fry one kilo of potatoes thoroughly.'
　　　 (favored implication: the recipe includes no more potatoes)

　　 b. Frite um quilo de batatas bem. 　　　[scrambled object]
　　　 fry one kilo of potatoes well
　　　 'Fry one kilo of potatoes thoroughly.'
　　　 (favored implication: one kilo is part of the total amount of potatoes to be used in the recipe) [example taken from Cardoso (2010: 45)]

The scrambled/unscrambled DP 'one kilo of potatoes' displays the type of semantic contrast also described for German and Dutch (see Diesing 1992, Zwart 1994, among others). When indefinite noun phrases are involved, unscrambled indefinite objects tend to have a non-specific/cardinal reading, whereas scrambled indefinite objects have preferably a specific/partitive reading. Thus the sentence (3b), contrary to (3a), would sound bizarre if the recipe required only 1 quilo of potatoes.

In (4) to (6) I add some further examples confirming that CEP allows short scrambling in broad information focus sentences and additionally showing that scrambling is not free since it indirectly leads to emphasis on the unscrambled sentence-final constituent. The grammaticality contrasts between the (b) and (c) sentences in (4) to (6), which are similar in displaying scrambling of the direct object over the oblique complement, can be understood under the perspective that informational unpredictability easily goes hand in hand with prosodic/

5. Cf. Costa (2010) on the suggestion that scrambling may be optional in 'out-of-the-blue environments'.

discourse prominence (cf. Zimmermann 2007). What the speaker believes to be unknown or unexpected by the hearer is evaluated as informationally 'rich' and worth emphasizing. In examples (4) to (6), the expressions 'the jacket', 'water' and 'money', respectively, are informationally 'poor' because they are predictable/expected while '{the shoes/the glasses}', 'an aspirin' and 'a fortune' are informationally 'richer'. Making the latter, but not the former, prosody/discourse prominent is felicitous on pragmatic grounds.[6]

(4) a. Ele entrou e   pendurou o casaco no   bengaleiro.
         he entered and hanged   the coat   in-the coat-stand

     b. ??? Ele entrou e   pendurou no   bengaleiro o casaco.
             he entered and hanged   in-the coat-stand the coat
             'He entered and hanged his coat on the coat stand.'

     c. Ele entrou e   pendurou no   bengaleiro {os sapatos / os óculos}.
         he entered and hanged   in-the coat-stand {the shoes / the glasses}
         'He entered and hanged {his shoes/his glasses} on the coat stand.'

6. Example (4) makes clear that weight effects are not involved in the relevant contrasts. It is infor-
    mational richness, not prosody by itself, that matters. The examples in (i) below further strengthen
    this point. As prosodically heavier constituents are usually also informationally richer, the question
    arises on whether the phenomena that have been described as displacement induced by prosodic
    weight are after all independent of prosody. This issue will not be treated in this paper.

    (i) a. Ele ofereceu ao   filho de seis meses um computador.
             he offered   to-the son of six months a   computer
             'He offered a computer to his six months old son.'

         b. Ele ofereceu ao filho mais pequeno, que ainda não tem seis meses, um
             he offered   to-the son more smal   that yet   not have six months a
             computador.
             computer
             'He offered a computer to his younger son, who is less than six months old.'

    Examples (5) and (6) may suggest that bare nouns are not allowed in sentence-final position in
    scrambling configurations. Note however that in (iii) below the bare noun 'flowers' is not barred
    from the sentence-final position, in contrast with the indefinite 'nothing' in example (ii).

    (ii) a.   Ele nunca oferece nada   à   namorada.
               he never offers nothing to-the girlfriend

          b. * Ele nunca oferece à   namorada nada.
               he never offers to-the girlfriend nothing
               'He doesn't ever offer anything to his girlfriend.'

    (iii)   ? Ele nunca oferece à   namorada flores.
               he never offers to-the girlfriend flowers
               'He never gives flowers to his girlfriend.'

(5) A: Estas flores   estão lindas.
          this   flowers are   beautiful
          'This flowers look perfect.'

     B: a. Eu ponho todos os dias água na   jarra.
            I   put   all   the days water in-the vase

         b. *? Eu ponho (todos os dias) na   jarra (todos os dias) água.
               I   put   (all   the days) in-the vase (all   the days) water
               'I pour water into the vase every day.'

         c. Eu ponho (todos os dias) na   jarra (todos os dias) uma
            I   put   (all   the days) in-the vase (all   the days) an
            aspirina.
            aspirin
            'I add everyday an aspirin to the water in the vase.'

(6) a. Ele perdeu dinheiro ao   jogo.
        he lost   money   to-the game

     b. *? Ele perdeu ao   jogo dinheiro.
           he lost   to-the game money
           'He lost money gambling.'

     c. Ele perdeu ao   jogo uma fortuna.
        he lost   to-the game a   fortune
        'He lost a fortune gambling.'

Another significant piece of evidence is introduced in (7), where the sentences are to be interpreted as conveying broad information focus. As the marginality of (7c) and (7d) reveals, if an object DP includes (at its left edge) an exclusive focus marker (like *só* 'only') it strongly prefers the sentence-final placement, be it its original position or not (compare (7a-b) with (7c-d)). Examples (7c) and (7d) are to be read without extraposition of the final constituent.[7]

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7. When the exclusive focus marker *só* ('only') precedes the verb, different readings are associated with the sentences with and without object scrambling:

    (i) Ele só   dá   bife do lombo ao   cão.   [no scrambling]
         he only gives sirloin   to-the dog
         2 readings: 'He feeds the dog with sirloin only.'
                     'He feeds with sirloin only the dog.'

    (ii) Ele só   dá   ao   cão bife do lombo.   [scrambling of the indirect object]
         he only gives to-the dog sirloin
         1 reading: 'He feeds the dog with sirloin only'; the reading 'He feeds with sirloin only the dog' is not available unless the constituent *ao cão* 'to the dog' bears marked heavy stress.

(7) a. Ele dá   (todos os dias) bife do lombo só   ao   cão.
        he gives (all   the days) sirloin   only to-the dog
        'He feeds (everyday) with sirloin only the dog.'

     b. Ele dá   (todos os dias) ao   cão só   bife do lombo.
        he gives (all   the days) to-the dog only sirloin
        'He feeds the dog everyday with sirloin only.'

     c. ??? Ele dá   (todos os dias) só   bife do lombo ao   cão.
        he gives (all   the days) only sirloin   to-the dog
        'He feeds the dog (everyday) with sirloin only.'

     d. *? Ele dá   (todos os dias) só   ao   cão bife do lombo.
        he gives (all   the days) only to-the dog sirloin
        'He feeds everyday with sirloin only the dog.'

Differently from Old Portuguese, Contemporary European Portuguese does not allow middle scrambling (whose availability was lost after the 16th century).[8] Hopefully we will show that CEP short scrambling and OP middle scrambling, though syntactically diverse, interact with information structure in a similar and constant manner.

3. Middle scrambling in Old Portuguese

Old Portuguese is a pro-drop SVO language like Contemporary European Portuguese. The order OV can be derived in Old Portuguese by left-dislocating or focusing the object (see (8) and (9) respectively). OP and CEP do not essentially differ from each other in this respect.

(8) O   conselho já   o   eu filhei
     the advice   already it-ACC I   took
     'I have already taken his advice.'

                                          [example taken from Huber (1933:284)]

(9) Estas pallavras e   outras muitas lhe   disse dom egas moniz
     these words   and other   many him-DAT said Dom Egas Moniz
     'Dom Egas Moniz said to him THOSE WORDS AND MUCH MORE.'

                                          [example taken from Pádua (1960:144)]

In Old Portuguese, however, the OV order may be the effect of object scrambling as well, which Contemporary European Portuguese does not allow (but see footnote 8). Because middle scrambling is a grammatical option in OP, word order variation between SVO and SOV is well attested. Example (10) illustrates the SVO/ SOV alternation.

8. Only deictic locatives may undergo middle scrambling in Contemporary European Portuguese. See Costa & Martins (2009, 2010).

(10) a. E sse pela ueẽtujra uos alguẽ enbargar a dita
       and if by chance you-DAT someone blocks the mentioned
       vỹa
       vineyard

   b. E sse pela uẽtujra uos alguẽ a dita vỹa
      and if by chance you-DAT someone the mentioned vineyard
      enbargar
      blocks
      'And if by chance someone blocks the vineyard from you.'
                        [Legal documents, year 1296. Cf. Martins (2001: 376, 377)]

In view of the fact that preverbal objects may be left-dislocated or focused, we will have to ask how to unambiguously distinguish those from scrambled objects. In general, sentences displaying left-dislocation or focusing have the object in first position but SOV can be derived in two situations where scrambling is not involved: when the subject, in addition to the object, is left dislocated (see (11) below) and when a left-dislocated subject co-occurs with a focused object (see (12) below).[9]

(11) E Messála, a cada lêtera do ABC fez um livro que
     and Messala to each letter of-the alphabet made a book which
     trata déla
     treats of-it
     'And Messala wrote a book on each letter of the alphabet.'
                                          [example taken from Morais (1997:208)]

(12) E os muitos comeres nõ tam solamente as almas mais ajnda os
     and the many eatings not just only the souls but also the
     corpos destruuem
     bodies destroy
     'And too much eating ruins BOTH THE SOUL AND THE BODY.'
                                          [example taken from Pádua (1960:67)]

In Old Portuguese preverbal clitics did not necessarily occur adjacent to the verb. The phenomenon of non-adjacency between clitic and verb is known as interpolation in the Romance philological literature. Interpolation structures, which are mainly attested in subordinate clauses, give us the means to clearly identify OV sentences displaying object scrambling. This is so because the clitic signals the border between left-dislocated and focused constituents on one side and scrambled constituents on the other. While the former surface to the left of the clitic, the latter occur to its

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9. It is important to notice that English-type Topicalization is not found in OP whereas it is a grammatical option in CEP. Clitic Left Dislocation generally occurs in Old Portuguese where CEP would have the option to go with CLD or English-type Topicalization (see Martins 1994). This gives us the means to clearly distinguish topics from preposed foci (when accusative/dative objects are at stake) since topics, in contrast to foci, will always be doubled by a resumptive pronoun.

right. The word order found in subordinate clauses with interpolation is indicated under (13) and exemplified by sentences (14) to (16) below (for further details, see Martins 1994). The pre-clitic constituents are respectively a left-dislocated object, in (14), a focused adverbial, in (15), a left-dislocated object followed by a focused object in (16). Scrambled verbal complements in the relevant kind of structure are concomitantly interpolated constituents but interpolation is not restricted to them.[10]

(13) «Comp - topic - focus - clitic - scrambled/interpolated XPs - verb»

(14) E   com todas as pertenças que aos   ditos casaes   lhes
     and with all   the belongings that to-the said properties them-DAT
     dereitamẽte pertẽçe
     rightly   belongs
     'And with everything which according to the terms of the contract is a part of
     the said properties.' [Legal document, year 1522. Cf. Martins (2001: 306)]

(15) que sempre a   os Moesteyros de Anssedj e   de Arnoya usarõ
     that always it-ACC the monasteries of Ansede and of Arnoia used
     e   possoyrõ
     and possessed
     'that the monasteries of Ansede and Arnoia have always owned and cultivated it.'
                            [Legal document, year 1285. Cf. Martins (2001: 144)]

(16) E   aos   outros tres, suas moradas lhes   avyam ja   dadas
     and to-the other three their lodgings them-DAT had   already given
     'And they had already given a place to stay to the other three of them.'
                            [example taken from Ogando (1980: 259)]

    We have thus established how to unambiguously distinguish OV as a result of scrambling from other instances of OV. Clitics in clauses with interpolation are reliable indicators, as they set the border between left-dislocated plus focused constituents and scrambled constituents. In the next subsection we will introduce some further basic facts on OP word order. We will deal in particular with verb movement, and will then be ready to describe and account for Old Portuguese middle scrambling.

3.1. Verb movement in Old Portuguese

Adverb placement, vis-à-vis the verb, offers a classical diagnostic test to determine whether the verb moves out of the VP. When using this type of test to trace verb

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10. As for sentence (14), note that the adverb *dereitamẽte* occurs in post-verbal position when it is not scrambled:

    (i) fara   leis per que   todos   vivam dereitamente e   em paz
        he-will-make laws by which everybody live   rightly   and in peace
        'He will make laws so as to allow everybody to live justly and peacefully.'
                            [sentence taken from Lorenzo (1977:440)]

movement in Old Portuguese, though, the distinction between main and subordinate clauses has to be taken into account, because in main clauses the verb moves to a higher functional position than in subordinate clauses. The relevant higher functional position has been identified as a typical verb second position (namely, C) by authors such as Salvi (1990), Benincà (1995) and Ribeiro (1995), among others. Martins (1994), on the other hand, takes the relevant structural position to be the topmost functional head in the IP complex, a Σ head encoding polarity values (cf. Laka 1990). Although I believe that empirical evidence undermines the verb second hypothesis with respect to OP, space considerations preclude me from going into such discussion here.[11] The important fact to retain is that in order to know whether Old Portuguese generally displayed V-to-T movement we will have to scrutinize where the verb surfaces in subordinate clauses. Crucially, scrambling derives the OV order in subordinate clauses but not in «unmarked» main clauses,[12] because the verb moves higher in main clauses. Identifying the final position targeted by scrambled constituents depends on determining whether in subordinate clauses the verb moves to T or not.

Old Portuguese sentences (17) and (18) below show that «lower adverbs» – the temporal *sempre* 'always' and the monosyllabic manner adverb *bem* 'well' – follow the verb in Old Portuguese. These adverbs have been consensually taken in the literature as VP peripheral (see Belletti 1990, Costa 1998, Cinque 1999, among others). The fact that they surface postverbally signals therefore that the verb has moved to T. The same result is obtained by observing floating quantifiers. As the examples in (19) demonstrate, floating quantifiers associated with the subject of unaccusative, unergative and transitive verbs may surface after the verb, which constitutes evidence for V-to-T movement. Note that the majority of the chosen examples show the order [verb-adverb/verb-floating quantifier] in subordinate clauses. So an hypothetic verb second effect cannot be at stake. With respect to example (18b), notice that the relative ordering of the direct object and the adverb

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11. See also Rivero (1993), Kaiser (1999), Fiéis (2003) and Rinke (2009) for arguments against the verb second analysis of Old Romance and Old Portuguese.

12. For details on what counts as an «(un)marked» main clause with respect to middle scrambling (as well as clitic placement), see Martins (1994, 2002). Middle scrambling is available in the kind of main clauses that, like subordinate clauses, make proclisis obligatory. Those are sentences introduced by wh- phrases, focused constituents, quantifiers and certain adverbs, as illustrated below.

    (i)   E   ja   m'   el tanto   mal fez
          and already me-DAT he so-much harm did
          'He has done me a lot of harm.'   [example taken from Ogando (1980:256)]

    (ii) E   sempre m'   eu mal acharei
          and always myself I   bad will-feel
          'And I will always feel myself bad.'   [example taken from Ogando (1980:278)]

    (iii) Dom Froyaz amaua-a muyto e   numca lhe   tantas   cousas pode fazer que
         Dom Froyaz loved-her much and never her-DAT enough things could do   that
         a   podesse fazer fallar
         her-ACC could   make speak
         '*Dom Froyaz* loved her heartily but he wasn't ever able to do enough to get her to speak.'
                                [example taken from Pádua (1960:53)]

bem 'well' indicates that short scrambling (as it is found in CEP) was also available in OP.[13]

(17) E   rogo   que cada uno destes   añiuersarios   facan   sempre   en dia
     and I-request that each one of-these anniversaries do   always   in day
     de mia morte
     of my death
     'And I request that a religious ceremony be always performed in celebration of the anniversary of my death.'

                                   [Legal document, year 1214. Cf. Castro (1991:199)]

(18) a. que adubedes   bem a   dita vjnha
         that manure-SUBJ-2PL   well the said vineyard
         'You shall manure the vineyard well.'
                                   [Legal document, year 1394. Cf. Martins (2001:469)]

     b. auedes   a laurar   esta vinha   bẽ
         have-2PL to plough-INFIN this vineyard well
         'You shall plough that vineyard well.'
                                   [Legal document, year 1305. Cf. Martins (2001:395)]

(19) a. e elles se   juntarom todos no   mosteiro de Sam Domingos
         and they themselves joined   all   in-the monastery of Sam Domingos
         'And they gathered together in the monastery of Sam Domingos.'

     b. e   esto porque muitas das   mais rricas gentes moravom todos fora
         and this because many of-the more rich   people lived   all   outside
         'And this was because many of the richer families lived outside the city walls.'

     d. aos   quaes escrevia   que se   juntassem
         to-the whom wrote-IMPERFECT   that themselves joined-SUBJ-3PL
         todos com elle
         all   with him
         'to whom he appealed that they all ought to join him.'

     e. mandou dizer   a esses melhores do   logar que cavallgassem
         sent-3SG say-INFIN to those better of-the town that ride-SUBJ-3PL
         todos
         all
         'he appealed to the best people in town for riding all together.'

     f. os da   parte d'el-rrei   dom Pedro e   do   principe traziam
         the of-the part of the king D. Pedro and of-the prince   bore-3PL
         todos cruzes vermelhas
         all   crosses red
         'Those in the army of the king D. Pedro and the prince all bore red crosses.'
                                   [Crónica de D. Fernando, Fernão Lopes. Cf. Macchi (1975)]

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13. With respect to Old Portuguese, in the current paper we will concentrate on middle scrambling.

An additional argument for V-to-T movement in OP can be constructed taking into consideration the subject position. Postverbal subjects occur both in main clauses and in subordinate clauses. Such clauses display presumably in most cases VP-internal subjects (see Costa 1998, 2004, Fiéis 2003). Therefore, subordinate clauses with postverbal subjects constitute a further indicator of verb movement. This is exemplified with the sentence in (20), which also displays object scrambling.

(20) diuidas (...) que as   ao   dicto monsteiro deuiã algũas pessoas
     debts   that them to-the said monastery owed some people
     'debts that some people owed to the monastery.'

                              [Legal document, year 1357. Cf. Martins (2001:438)]

Having established that V-to-T movement is a property of Old Portuguese, we are led to the conclusion that Old Portuguese scrambling deriving the order SOV must be IP-scrambling, not VP-scrambling. If scrambled objects were VP adjuncts in OP (like in CEP), the OV order would not be derived.

3.2. The syntax of OP middle scrambling

Slightly accommodating to current syntactic theory the analysis put forth in Martins (2002) , I propose that Old Portuguese middle scrambling is unselective movement to (multiple) Spec,TP driven by an EPP feature optionally associated with T. The relevant formal feature has an 'attract-all-F' property in the sense of Bošković (1999).[14] Merging of the scrambled object(s) satisfies the EPP feature of T (feature meaning linguistic property). Scrambled objects bear an uninterpretable feature (say a 'move/get-out-of-the-way feature') which renders them active for movement and permits raising to Spec,TP without feature matching.[15]

This is in tune with Chomsky (2000 and ensuing work), who suggests that while displacement operations may affect the interpretation of the outcome, they are not themselves *driven* by semantic/pragmatic features: «a 'dumb' computational system shouldn't have access to considerations of that kind, typically involving discourse considerations and the like. These are best understood as properties of the resulting configuration.» (Chomsky 2001:27).

The proposed analysis thoroughly derives the OP data, namely: (i) the OV order obtained by moving the verb to T and the scrambled constituents to Spec,TP; (ii) the subordinate clause/main clause asymmetry, which is a consequence of the

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14. Bošković elaborates on Chomsky (1995), who discusses Icelandic multiple subject constructions and proposes that one and the same head can attract a particular F more than once.
15. Under Martins' (2002) analysis, the loss of IP-scrambling in Portuguese, and thus of the order (S) OV it derived, is the effect of a change in clausal architecture, namely with respect to the selectional properties of the T head. To be more specific, T ceased to allow multiple specifiers, that is, it lost the option for being associated to an Attract-all-F EPP feature. Hence a structural position for scrambled objects is no more available in the IP space.

different landing sites of the verb in subordinate and main clauses, respectively T and Σ (which immediately dominates TP); (iii) the unrestricted number of scrambled constituents and their unfixed ordering, which is an effect of the availability of multiple specifiers within the T projection; (iv) the fact that when preverbal the subject shows a preferred but not obligatory linear ordering, as it may be higher than Spec,TP (targeting, for example, Spec,ΣP) or be an element of Spec,TP in tandem with the scrambled object(s); (v) the availability of the order SOVO where not all verbal complements are scrambled[16]; (vi) the unselective nature of scrambled objects, allowing all syntactic types of constituents to undergo scrambling (DPs, PPs, APs, AdvPs and reduced clauses).

3.2.1. Main clause/subordinate clause asymmetry
The fact that (S)OV order – where the object is not a clitic – is frequently attested in Old Portuguese texts in subordinate clauses but is rare in main clauses was noted from the earlier works on OP constituent order (see Pádua 1960:62ff., Martins 1994, 2002). In this respect OP clearly diverges from Latin, which easily allowed verb final sentences both in main and subordinate clauses (see Pinkster 1990, Devine & Stephens 2006). In Old Portuguese like in Contemporary European Portuguese the SOV order is only possible in main clauses if either both the subject and the object are topicalized/left dislocated or if the object is (contrastively/emphatically) focalized and the subject topicalized/left dislocated.

3.2.2. Ordering of (preverbal) scrambled objects
Old Portuguese object scrambling is not restricted to one constituent per clause, as example (21) illustrates. Moreover, word order variation is found when we consider instances of multiple object scrambling. The pairs of sentences in (22) and (23) show that when a direct object (OD) and an oblique object (OO) are scrambled together in preverbal position both the orders [OD – OO] and [OO – OD] are admitted. The fact that there is not a rigid linear ordering imposed on scrambled objects is consistent with the proposed account of Old Portuguese scrambling. Regardless of which XP moves first to satisfy the Attract-all-F property of the T head, all the derivations will be equally valued from the point of view of economy (cf. Bošković 1999: 170).

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16. As for the availability of partial object scrambling, see Cardoso (2010:81ff.) and the example below.

(i) Boscadas as rrazões dos   que livros fezerom desta estoria
    searched the reasons of-the-ones that books made of-this story
    'Once understood the reasons why some wrote books about these events.'

                                    [Fernão Lopes, Crónica de D. João I, Parte I, cap. VIII]

(21) a. [*attested SOV order*]
        as   sobreditas vinha   e   oliual   e   cãpo   e
        the said   vineyard and olive-fields and cultivated-land and
        mato   que lhys   assy os sobreditos Prior e
        uncultivated-land that them-DAT so   the said   abbot and
        Raçoeiros ẽ nome da   dita Eigreia de Sam Bertholameu
        stewards in name of-the said church of *Sam Bertholameu*
        escambhadas e   pela guisa que suso dito he e   declarado ẽ
        interchanged and in-the way that above said is and declared in
        escambho dadas e   outorgadas auyã
        interchange given and conceded   had-3PL
        'the vineyard and olive-fields and cultivated-land and uncultivated-land
        that the abbot and monastery stewards had agreed to interchange with
        them in the way established in the contract on behalf of the monastery of
        Sam Bertholameu.'
                     [Legal document, year 1385. Cf. Martins (2001: 462)]

    b. [*reconstituted SVO order*]
        as   sobreditas vinha   e   oliual   e   cãpo   e
        the said   vineyard and olive-fields and cultivated-land and
        mato   que os sobreditos Prior e   Raçoeyro lhys
        uncultivated-land that the said   abbot and steward   them-DAT
        auyã assy escambhadas ẽ nome da   dita Eigreia de Sam
        had so   interchanged in name of-the said Church of *Sam*
        Bertholameu e   (auyã) dadas ẽ escambho e   (auyã) outorgadas
        Betholameu and (had) given in interchange and (had) conceded
        pela guisa que suso he dito e   declarado.
        in-the way that above is said and declared

(22) a. de   quem.quer que uos algũu enbargo   sobrel quiser põer
        from whoever   that you some obstruction over-it wants put-INFIN
        '[protecting you] from whoever tries to block it [the land] from you.'
                    [Legal document, year 1381. Cf. Martins (2001: 459)]

    b. de   qualquer pessoa ou pessoas que lhe   sobre ello algũu
        from any   person or people that him-DAT over it   some
        enbarguo   poser
        obstruction puts
        '[protecting him] from whoever tries to block it [the land] from him.'
                    [Legal document, year 1476. Cf. Martins (2001: 518)]

(23) a. Nem os   que esta estoria desta guisa   contam
         nor those who this story   in-this manner tell
         'nor those who tell the story in this manner.'

<div align="right">[example taken from Pádua (1960: 72)]</div>

  b. mas ainda a algũus outros, que ella por tall   rrazon maa vontade tiinha
      but also to some   others that she for such reason ill   will   had
      'but also to other people to whom she bore ill will for that reason.'

<div align="right">[example taken from Pádua (1960: 72)]</div>

3.2.3. Subject position with respect to scrambled object

Being in the IP domain in tandem with the scrambled objects, the subject usually precedes the scrambled objects. But this pre-object placement is not obligatory. Sentences (24a) and (25a) exemplify the more common SO order; sentences (24b) and (25b) exemplify the OS order. Presumably the subject either occupies a specifier position above TP (for example, Spec, ΣP) or undergoes scrambling as well. This would account for the relevant word order facts. That is: the subject has a preferential position (before the object); this order is derived when the subject and the object(s) undergo independent displacement operations triggered by different features; if both the subject and the object(s) undergo scrambling either order – SO or OS – may arise.

(24) a. nẽ por tanto   que nos   outrẽ   por ela de
         not for as-much that us-DAT someone-else for it   gives

  b. nẽ por tanto   que nos   por ela outrem   de
      not for as-much that us-DAT for it   someone-else gives
      '[We will not sell it] for the same price to anybody else.'

<div align="right">[Legal documents, year 1305. Cf. Martins (2001: 395, 396)]</div>

(25) a. Os quaaes dinheiros que uos   eu assy hey de dar
         the which money   that you-DAT I so   have to give
         'the amount of money that I will give you in the stated way.'

<div align="right">[Legal document, year 1436. Cf. Martins (2001: 492)]</div>

  b. a   quall terça parte lhe   asy os ditos senhores
      the which third part him-DAT so the said   honorable
      compradores ou seus herdeiros pagaram
      purchasers or their heirs   will-pay
      'which third part [of the debt] the purchasers will pay him in the stated way.'

<div align="right">[Legal document, year 1544. Cf. Martins (2001: 560)]</div>

3.2.4. Non generalized object scrambling (the order SOVO)

Sentences with the order (S)OVO are found in Old Portuguese texts, showing that not all potential goals for scrambling actually have to be scrambled. The sentences (26) to (30) below exemplify the relevant configuration. Under our analysis, this

is in fact expected as far as we take OP to be like CEP in that default prosodic/ information focus would be assigned to the rightmost constituent of the sentence[17]. It does not seem to be a too risky step to take since in Latin the clause-final position appears to be also associated with narrow information focus (see Pinkster 1990:178ff. and Devine & Stephens 2006: 13ff., 119ff.).

(26) Hũu homẽ mãçebo que se   per nome chamava   pedrairas
     a   man young who SE_{CL} by name was-called Pedrairas
     'A young man who was {called/known by the name of} Pedr'Airas.'
                                   [Legal document, year 1426. Cf. Martins (2001: 486)]

(27) todo homẽ que uise   os cavaleiros castellaãos bem poderia dizer
     all man that would-see the knights   Castillian well could   say
     que melhores cavaleiros nõ auia   no   mũdo.
     that better   knights   not existed in-the world
     'Everybody who watched the Castillian knights could undoubtedly say that
     they were the best knights in the world.'
                                                     [example taken from Pádua (1960: 55)]

(28) por.que o   entender   partem os leterados em quatro ramos
     because the knowledge divide the literates in four   branches
     'because scholars divide knowledge in four branches'
                                                     [example taken from Pádua (1960: 57)]

(29) qualquer pessoa ou pessoas que lhjs   sobre ella posser Enbargo
     any   person or people that them-DAT over it   puts   obstruction
     '[keeping them free from] whoever tries to block it [the land] from them.'
                                   [Legal document, year 1385. Cf. Martins (2001: 465)]

(30) em especial lhe   pera ysso obrigou   e   ypothecou ha sua
     in particular him-DAT for   that he-bound and mortgaged the his
     terra de pão
     land of wheat
     'In particular, he gave him as guarantee for the contract his good wheat land.'
                                   [Legal document, year 1532. Cf. Martins (2001: 553)]

     Incidentally, note that sentences (26) to (30) make it clear that OV in Old Portuguese cannot be just the reflex of a sociolinguistically marginal grammar with obligatory OV order in subordinate clauses. Such Dutch-type grammar would not derive most of the OVO sentences that we find in the Old Portuguese texts (cf. Zwart 1994). Scrambling, and the OV order it derived, would rather fall under the kind of optional movement which, according to Chomsky (2000, 2001), does

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17. A DP in a scrambled position would be defocused, therefore unable to be the focus of the sentence
    unless bearing heavy prosodic stress (i. e. «marked» stress in opposition to normal/default stress).

not fatally collide with minimalist assumptions. Optional operations can apply only if they have an (interpretive) effect on outcome. As an example of optional movement, Chomsky quotes Object Shift (OS). With due adaptation, the terms of the proposed analysis of OS readily extend to the IP-scrambling case:

> EPP-features are uninterpretable (non-semantic, hence the name), though the configuration they establish has effects for interpretation (2000:102). [This] approach seems sensible in the case of OS. The computational system presumably treats it as an option – if the M[inimalist] I[nquiries] approach is on the right track, feature-driven by properties of *v*, with the option expressed as optional choice of an EPP-feature. The resulting configuration has particular properties (…) But the internal semantic properties of O[bject] are not part of the mechanism of the rule (…) And while there may be semantic consequences to displacement, there are surely not properties of an interpretable feature of the head.
>
> [from Chomsky (2001: 33, 35, 41)]

3.2.5. Syntactic types of scrambled constituents

A striking trait of Old Portuguese scrambling is the diversity of syntactic constituents that can undergo this type of displacement. In fact, scrambling affects DPs, PPs, APs, AdvPs, non-finite clauses (infinitival or participial) and small clauses, as examples (31) to (43) below show.

(31) quem   vos   *tall   cousa* disse, mentivos   mui grande mentira
     whoever you-DAT such thing told   lied you-DAT very big   lie
     'whoever told you that, lied to you.'

<div align="right">[example taken from Pádua (1960: 73)]</div>

(32) se algẽ   *a eles* veer   que diga   que llj   eu
     if someone to them comes-FUT.SUBJ who says-SUBJ that him-DAT I
     alguna cousa diuia
     something   owed
     'if anybody comes and claims that I owed him something (i.e. any one thing)'

<div align="right">[Legal document [will], year 1275. Cf. Martins (1994 [vol. 2]: 12)]</div>

(33) Nunca leemos   que *meestre* nẽhũũ ouvesse
     never read-PAST-1PL that master   none   had-3SG
     'We never read that there was any master.'

(34) quem.quer que lhe   sobre elle e   parte delle e   sobre as
     whoever   that him-DAT over it   and part of-it and over the
     ditas   casas e   qualquer cousa delas   *algũu enbarguo ou*
     mentioned houses and any   thing of-them some obstruction or
     empedymento puser
     constraint   puts
     '[protecting him from] whoever tries to block it [the land], or any portion of
     it, from him.'   [Legal document, year 1540. Cf. Martins (2001: 556)]

(35) pero *vos*   ledo   semelho
     but you-DAT happy I-seem
     'but I seem happy to you.'   [example taken from Ogando (1980: 281)]

(36) todollos adubyos   que lhes   *compridoiros e   neçessareos* forem
     all-the fertilizers that them-DAT due   and necessary   are
     '[the renters will put on the land] all sorts of fertilizers that the lands may
     need.'
                                         [Legal document, year 1476. Cf. Martins (2001: 518)]

(37) A   terra daqueles que   nũca te   *mal* fezerom
     the land of those who never you-DAT.CL bad   did
     'the land of those who never treated you badly.'
                                              [example taken from van der Eijk (1992: 59)]

(38) ssegundo as   *elle sempre* trouxera
     as   them he   always cultivated
     'in the way that he always cultivated them.'
                                         [Legal document, year 1472. Cf. Martins (2001: 277)]

(39) E   ainda vos   *end' eu* mais direi
     and still you-DAT of-it I   more will-say
     'And I will even tell you more about that.'
                                              [example taken from Ogando (1980: 278)]

(40) como lhe   entregou as terras que lhe   *de dar*   avia
     how him-DAT returned the lands that him-DAT of give-INFIN had
     'How he returned him the lands that he ought to give him.'
                                              [example taken from Costa (2001: 184)]

(41) E   sse as   *nos comprar*   não quisermos
     and if them-ACC we buy-INFIN not want
     'And if we do not want to buy them [the lands].'
                                         [Legal document, year 1329. Cf. Martins (2001: 414)]

(42) com os lauradores que as   *ssemeadas* teuerẽ
     with the farmers   who them-ACC [the lands] cultivated will-have
     'with the farmers who keep the lands cultivated.'
                                         [Legal document, year 1472. Cf. Martins (2001: 516)]

(43) os sobredictos autos   que se *pressente mj   tabaljam* pasarã
     the said   statements which SE_{CL} present   me-DAT notary   took-place
     'the said statements which were written while I, the notary, was myself present.'
                                         [Legal document, year 1472. Cf. Martins (2001: 201)]

3.3. Middle scrambling and information focus in CEP and OP

Middle scrambling in OP indistinctly displaces all types of verbal complements (in the broad sense of Larson 1988, 1990), no matter what their syntactic category or semantic type. Thus DPs, PPs, adverbs, adjectives, reduced clauses, definite and indefinite, specific and non-specific DPs all may undergo scrambling and so become preverbal (cf. the data in the previous subsection). This unrestricted nature of Old Portuguese middle scrambling makes it unaccountable under both Case-driven approaches (see Costa 1998 for an informed outline) and semantically-driven approaches (cf. Diesing & Jelinek 1995, Diesing 1997) to scrambling (insofar as we take scrambling in Old Portuguese as a unitary phenomenon). A third perspective on scrambling describes it as a strategy to create appropriate focus configurations (cf. Reinhardt 1995, Costa 1998, 2004, Zubizarreta 1998, 1999, among others). This type of approach seems more rewarding with respect to Old Portuguese scrambling, since it can smoothly accommodate all the range of data under consideration. In fact, if we see scrambling as a strategy to make the object escape the default focus stress and concomitantly lose informational prominence, we expect no restrictions with respect to the type of syntactic constituents that may be scrambled.

If we were to strictly adhere to the view that scrambling is defocusing (in the sense that it extracts a constituent from the domain of focus), we would have to deal with severe textual counter-evidence. As a matter of fact, a majority of the relevant SOV sentences found in Old Portuguese texts undoubtedly convey broad information focus. We showed in section 2, however, by observing Contemporary European Portuguese, that scrambling is not strictly tied to narrow information focus configurations. Under the hypothesis that OP and CEP do not diverge with respect to the informational/pragmatic import of scrambling, the textual data cease to be a problem and generally fit into place. Risky as it might be judging OP sentences with contemporary eyes, broad information focus sentences like (44) and (45) seem to be good empirical evidence to strengthen our point. In fact, these sentences make clear the unequal pragmatic salience of the two verbal complements, with discourse prominence falling on the unscrambled object (cf. also exs. (28)-(30) above). In notarial documents, proper names are central information, so it is unsurprising that the unscrambled object in example (44) is the name *Pedr(o) Airas*, while the informationally 'poor' oblique complement *per nome* ('by the name') undergoes middle scrambling. Example (45) is extracted from *Crónica Geral de Espanha de 1344*, a Portuguese version of *Cronica General y Cronica de Castilla* and other historiography texts. Within the context of the chronicle, it is expected that the Castillian are considered the best among the knights whose deeds are narrated. What is underlined is the extension of the universe of comparison beyond the geographic universe covered by the historical narration, as the Castillian knights are said to be not only the best in their own world but the best in the world.[18]

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18. Other examples could be added but that would not change the gist of the argument.

(44) entregou   a   hũu homẽ mãçebo que se   *per nome*
     handed-over-3SG to a   man young   who SE_{CL} by name
     chamava   *Pedrairas*
     was-called Pedrairas
     'he handed it over to a young man who was called Pedr'Airas.'

                             [Legal document, year 1426. Cf. Martins (2001: 486)]

(45) todo homẽ que uise   os cavaleiros castellaãos bem poderia dizer
     all   man that would-see the knights   Castillian well could   say
     que *melhores cavaleiros* nõ auia   *no   mũdo.*
     that better   knights   not existed in-the world
     'Everybody who watched the Castillian knights could undoubtedly say that
     they were the best knights in the world.'

                                 [example taken from Pádua (1960: 55)]

Two issues are open for future research. Since OP had both middle scrambling and short scrambling, was the choice free between adjunction to VP and adjunction to TP as a strategy to displace a constituent from the clause-final position? Answering this question depends on a thorough investigation of short scrambling in OP, which is well beyond the scope of this paper. On the other hand, middle scrambling often derives verb final sentences (conveying broad information focus). How are these sentences to be described as for informational structure? Does SOV in this case create a totally flat structure with respect to informational «contour», by demoting the scrambled object? This is the second question that will be left unanswered in this paper.[19]

In the next section, I will try to show that the proposed analysis of OP middle scrambling is superior on syntactic grounds to an alternative analysis that treats scrambling as focus or topic movement to the left periphery of the vP phase.

4. Object scrambling does not target «internal» topic/focus positions

Elaborating on work by Benincà (1995) and Belletti (2004), Poletto (2005) takes

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19. Holmberg (1998:594) reports that some varieties of Northern Saami appear to be «semi-SOV» (in contrast to both the SVO Germanic languages and the Germanic languages traditionally quoted as SOV). These varieties display «short NP movement leftwards in nonfinite VPs, where the movement is sensitive to focus». Thus in the relevant configurations, the order SOV, as in (i) below, is the unmarked order if the object is non-focus, but the order SVO, as in (ii) below, is preferred if the object is focus. While sentence (i) may arise as an answer to the question «what did you do?», sentence (ii) will be a felicitous answer to the question «what did you read?». This bear some resemblance with OP. But in OP an SVO sentence would be adequate as an answer to both questions.

    (i)   Mun lean   girjji   lohkan.
        I   have   book   read

   (ii)   Mun lean   lohkan girjji
        I   have   read   book

the CP and vP phases to display architecturally and featurally parallel left peripheries. From the assumption that Old Romance languages were verb second languages, follows the proposal that the V2 property could be satisfied at the higher or the lower phase level. With these essential ingredients in mind, Poletto (2005) puts forth an analysis of Old Italian middle scrambling as movement targetting topic/focus specifiers in the vP left periphery, while the verb would raise to the corresponding functional heads in order to satisfy the V2 requirement. In this way the order SOV and the unrestricted nature of Old Italian scrambling is thoroughly derived. (cf. Grewendorf 2005 and Jayaseelan 2008, 2010 for a similar approach to scrambling applied to different contemporary languages).

This type of analysis faces some difficulties when tested against the Old Portuguese data, as will be shown in the remainder of this section. Whether the problems extend to other Romance domains rests to be investigated.

A. The analysis does not predict the asymmetry between main and embedded clauses with respect to the frequency of SOV because it makes scrambling indistinguishable from focus-movement and topic-movement. As far as «verb second» is taken to be a property of both the high left periphery and the low left periphery, V2 will always be satisfied at the level where the verb stays and topicalized/focused objects (which are non distinct from scrambled objects) will surface to its left under similar semantic/pragmatic conditions.

B. Old Portuguese does not allow English-type Topicalization (in contrast to Contemporary European Portuguese). Thus if a direct or indirect object is a topic, it must be doubled by a pronoun, usually the clitic pronoun of a Clitic Left Dislocation structure. If medial scrambling could be reduced to movement to a topic (or focus) position we would expect pronominal resumption to emerge, which is not confirmed.

C. If we accept the previous argument against allowing scrambling to be topic-movement, only the focus-movement part of Poletto's analysis survives. In turn we would expect that scrambling like focus-movement would be limited to a single constituent per clause. This expectation is not borne out.

D. It is a well known fact that focus-movement makes subject-verb inversion necessary (cf. Hernanz & Brucart 1987, Ambar 1992, Zubizarreta 1999, among others). SOV sentences where the object is a contrastive/emphatic focus are infrequent because they can only be derived if the subject is externalized to a topic position. Typically object focalization leads to OVS order. To the contrary, in middle scrambling structures the subject in general precedes the object, giving rise to SOV. Postverbal subjects are possible but rare in middle scrambling configurations.

E. Under Poletto's analysis, in sentence (46) below either the subject or the adverb *sempre* ('always') would satisfy the V2 property at the level of the low left periphery. In any case, there seems to be no room for the other constituents, including the 'sandwiched' clitic which cannot be a topic nor a focus.

(46) que sempre a   os Moesteyros de Anssedj e   de Arnoya usarõ
     that always it-ACC the monasteries of Ansede and of Arnoia used
     e   possoyrõ
     and possessed
     'that the monasteries of Ansede and Arnoia have always owned and
     cultivated it.'

                           [Legal document, year 1285. Cf. Martins (2001: 144)]

F. European Portuguese futures and conditionals are the only verbal forms that
allow mesoclisis, which indicates that futures and conditionals have a particular
morphological structure among verbal forms. As illustrated in (47) clitics are
in general enclitics in matrix clauses in EP, surfacing adjacent to the right edge
of the verbal form, that is, right-adjacent to the agreement morphemes. When
a future or conditional form of the verb occurs in a matrix clause, however, the
clitic surfaces preceding the sequence formed by the tense morpheme (present
or past) plus the agreement morpheme:

(47) a. Ele ataca-o   se puder.
       he   attack-PRESENT-INDICATIVE-him if can
       'He will attack him if he can.'

     b. Ele atacá -lo -á   se puder.
       he   attack-him-will if can
       'He will attack him if he can.'

    Considering the availability of mesoclisis in EP, Roberts (1992) and Roberts
& Roussou (2002, 2003) analyse the EP futures and conditionals as verbal strings
made of the infinitival form of a main verb plus a present or past form of the
auxiliary *haver* 'have'. The unusual order displayed by the verbal string, with the
main verb preceding the auxiliary, is attributed to the clitic nature of the auxiliary
(which induces verb movement in order to allow the clitic-auxiliary to encliticize).
An analysis in the same vein is proposed by Duarte & Matos (2000), who take
the finite form of *have* to be an affix-auxiliary instead of a clitic-auxiliary. The
relevant point here is that both analyses take the *have*-element to be generated
under the T head. These analyses are incompatible with Poletto's approach to Old
Romance middle scrambling because if put together the order SOV with futures
and conditionals would be disallowed, against the facts (see 48). Recall that under
Poletto's analysis, the scrambled object targets the left periphery of the vP phase,
staying therefore below T.

(48) E   ainda vos   end' eu mais direi
    and still   you-DAT of-it I   more say-will
    'And I will even tell you more about that.'
                         [example taken from Ogando (1980: 278)]

5. Conclusion

This paper proposes that object scrambling both in Old and Contemporary Portuguese is a strategy to create appropriate information focus configurations. Essentially, it makes the rightmost constituent that would otherwise bear the neutral sentence nuclear stress escape it. In narrow information focus structures this amounts to defocusing of the scrambled constituent. In broad information focus sentences the scrambled constituent is prosodically and pragmatically demoted with respect to salience. In both cases, leftward displacement of the scrambled constituent allows another constituent to acquire discourse/informational prominence or creates a 'flat' structure in that respect. The informational import of the scrambling strategy is constant throughout the history of Portuguese. But while Old Portuguese allowed both short scrambling (i.e. adjunction to VP) and middle scrambling (i.e. raising to multiple Spec,TP), only short scrambling is a grammatical option in Contemporary European Portuguese. Hence, Old Portuguese scrambling could derive SOV sentences whereas Contemporary European Portuguese scrambling maintains the object in postverbal position.

Cross-linguistic evidence supports the view that scrambling may induce loss or downgrading of discourse/informational prominence as it removes constituents from the clause-final position to which such prominence is assigned (cf. Taylor & Pintzuk 2010 for Old English, Pinkster 1990 and Devine & Stephens 2006 for Latin).

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