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V-final root clauses in Early New High German?

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The structural asymmetry between V2 main clauses and V-final subclauses is well attested for all historical stages of German. The rise and loss of V-final root clauses throughout the period of Early New High German (1350 – 1650) is hence unexpected from a diachronic point of view. Maurer (1926) was the first to point out the word order pattern in question, followed by Behaghel (1932), Lötscher (2000) and others. They agree that the emergence of V-final root clauses in Early New High German is due to Latin influence. Demske-Neumann (1990) and Senyuk (2014) on the other hand argue that examples like (1) are instances of subclauses, considering the position of the finite verb as an unambiguous marker for the syntactic dependency of the clauses at issue.

- (1) Unnd do sy also bey ein ander in allermengkluchs abwesens warend, empfieng herczog Wilhalmen Agleyen. **Darauff** sy czû im sprach:

In the present talk, I will consider V-final clauses introduced by a demonstrative, either by a pronominal adverb as in (1) or by a demonstrative DP as in (2), suggesting that they are syntactically dependent but pragmatically independent of their matrix clause. The variation between V2 and V-final clauses introduced by a demonstrative is accounted for in terms of different discourse functions (foreground vs. background).

- (2) Do sprachen die freydigen zû der klaren junckfrawen, das sy sich mit kurczen worten erklagte, wie sy wolt, und den tod darnach lytte. **Des selben urlaubs** die magt auß der maßen fro ward.

Contrary to the widely held view of the alleged Latin influence, it will be argued that word order patterns as (1) and (2) are motivated language-internally, focussing on the distribution of the pronominal adverb *darauf* 'then'.

The loss V-final patterns during the 18th century was presumably triggered by further sharpening the structural asymmetry between V2 main clauses and V-final subclauses, including the rise of *w*-adverbs.