

Mihi est from Brythonic to Breton I *

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Abstract: Middle Breton (MB) presents a singular anomaly of pronominal argument coding. Objects are accusative proclitics save in two constructions, where coding is split by person: 3rd unique enclitics ~ 1st/2nd accusative proclitics. The constructions are HAVE, from Insular Celtic *mihi est*, where the new coding replaces inflectional nominatives (cf. Latin *mihi est ~ sunt*); and imperatives, where it replaces accusative enclitics in V1 (cf. French *aide-moi ~ ne m'aide pas*). The evolution is traced in light of a crosslinguistic construction type that suggests its nature, noncanonical subject + 3rd nominative ~ 1st/2nd accusative object. Part I: (1) Decomposition of HAVE as dative clitic + BE from Brythonic throughout "conservative" varieties of Breton. (2) Breton-Cornish innovation of nonclitic datives for *mihi est* and their subjecthood. Part II: (3) Brythonic unavailability of mesoclis in V1 and Breton-Cornish nonagreement with nominative objects, resulting in independent > enclitic pronouns for accusative objects of imperatives and nominative objects of *mihi est*. (4) MB alignment of imperatives with *mihi est* in 3rd person restriction on nominative enclitics, and recruitment of 1st/2nd person accusative proclitics upon loss of mesoclis. (5) Transition to accusative objects in "innovative" varieties and subject-object case interactions.

Keywords: *mihi est*, oblique subjects, nominative objects, person restrictions, case theory, proclisis-enclisis alternations, Breton, Cornish, Brythonic

1 Introduction

This work traces the development of HAVE from its origin in the *mihi est* construction of Brythonic to its reanalysis as *habeo* in Modern Breton, along with that of imperatives insofar as they bear on it. It is organised around the singularly anomalous argument coding of these two constructions in Middle Breton (MB) and later "conservative" varieties:¹

(1) Pronominal subject and object coding in MB (using 1SG, 2PL, 3PL)

Regular: subject suffix + object proclitic

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¹ Sources are cited by text, date, and language or variety, given in the Appendix. Leipzig glossing is used, modified as follows: To indicate source orthography, the n-dash – represents source hyphens, alone or in conjunction with the affix juncture - and clisis juncture =, and the clisis juncture = is differentiated to = and =̃ according to whether it corresponds to source space or nothing. Not glossed are, with finite verbs, 3SG or default, present, indicative, and with pronominal proclitics, syncretic accusative-genitive (section 3). Abbreviations distinct from Leipzig are ! imperative (with 1st/2nd person) and jussive (with 3rd person), *ADES* adessive, *CNS* consuetudinal, *COND* conditional, *D* the *de*-prefix of HAVE (section 4), *HUM* human, *PT* preterit, *R* verbal particle (section 3). In examples, the object clitics of interest are set in italics for proclitics, bold for enclitics.

a. pa=e[~]m=reffus-it
 when=R=1SG=refuse-2PL
 when you refuse me

b. n[~]o=dispingn-et
 NEG=3PL=spend-FUT.2PL
 [that] you not spend them

Imperative: subject suffix – object 3rd enclitic ~ 1st/2nd proclitic

c. ha ma=golo-it
 and 1SG=cover-!2PL
 and cover me

d. na=dibr-it=y quet oll
 NEG=eat-!2PL=3PL not all
 do not eat them all

HAVE: subject proclitic – object 3rd enclitic ~ 1st/2nd proclitic

e. pere ó=deueus ma=dibilitet
 which 3PL=have 1SG=weakened
 which have weakened me

f. me m[~]eus=y gounezet
 1SG 1SG=have=3PL earned
 I have earned them

(Qu, e17C MB)

By and large, the coding of weak-pronoun arguments in Breton is familiar from its Brythonic cognates, only more categorical: subjects are nominative suffixes, objects are accusative proclitics, and both are in complementarity distribution with independent (pro)nominals. However, in MB, HAVE and imperative constructions are idiosyncratic. The coding of their objects is striking from the historical-comparative perspective: it is split by person, 1st/2nd accusative proclitics, 3rd enclitics that are otherwise only used to double clitics or affixes, and in later varieties acquire forms unique to these two constructions. This object coding goes hand-in-hand with a more familiar but likewise unique coding of subjects in these constructions. With HAVE, it is by what seem to be accusative clitics, but doubling rather than complementary with independent subjects. With imperatives, it is by verbal suffixes only, in close contrast to jussives, which allow independent subjects and code objects regularly. The typological-comparative perspective offers useful parallels built on below, but at first sight, the system is surprising as well: alternations in clisis directionality are usually conditioned by factors that do not figure here at all (finiteness, tense, mood, verb-initiality), or do so in an unexpected fashion (1st/2nd person pronouns in higher clausal positions than 3rd).²

Several aspects of these anomalies are fairly understood historically. One is use of accusative clitics to code the subjects of HAVE across Brythonic: the forms of HAVE go

² References for material in the introduction are given in subsequent sections where it is taken up in detail.

back the *mihi est* syntagm ‘Y (dative) is X (nominative)’, and dative clitics were syncretic with accusative ones in Brythonic – though it is usually thought that by MB, *mihi est* had become *habeo*, ‘Y (nominative) has X (accusative)’. Another is coding of pronominal objects as enclitics in positive imperatives, because these lacked a leftward host for the accusative mesoclitics of Brythonic – but this should also apply to jussives, not apply to negative imperatives, and change upon the shift from mesoclitisis to pure proclisis by MB.

Only partly described, and not yet traced in development, is the use of these selfsame object enclitics for the possessum of *mihi est* in Middle Breton and Cornish, rather than of inflected forms of BE as in Middle Welsh; their restriction to 3rd person with *mihi est*, and extension of this restriction to imperatives in Breton alone; and the Breton recruitment of accusative clitics to code 1st/2nd person objects of both constructions. Historically, we might expect for MB HAVE constructions like *=m=biont* ‘=1SG=be.PT.3PL’ ‘they were to me, I had them’, cf. Middle Welsh *=m=buant*, but find rather enclitic for suffix, *=m=boa=y* ‘=1SG=be.PT=3PL’; and imperative constructions like *goloit=ny/y* ‘cover!2PL=1PL/3PL’, as in Middle Cornish, but find the split-person clisis *hon=goloit* ‘1PL=cover!2PL’ ~ *goloit=y* ‘cover!2PL=3PL’.

The key to these developments lies in nominative objects of systems where nominative is the case not only of canonical subjects, but also of objects in constructions with noncanonical subjects, centrally oblique-subject unaccusatives like *mihi est*. These objects reveal the case-based nature of the split-person coding, as 3rd nominative ~ 1st/2nd accusative, and the factors in its rise, fall, and variation, such as loss of agreement with nominative objects and their extension to imperatives. Taking this parallelism as point of departure, this work traces the development of *mihi est* and imperative constructions.

It is organised into two parts. The first part, after the introduction, an overview of nominative objects in section 2, and a sketch of Breton in section 3, is a study of the dative subjects of *mihi est*. Section 4 traces the development of the remnant dative clitics of Brythonic, and establishes that old *mihi est* forms continue to be decomposed into clitic + BE throughout conservative varieties of Breton, and may have even remarked dative case through the *de*-prefix characteristic of Breton-Cornish. Section 5 follows the innovation of independent counterparts to dative clitics in Breton-Cornish from their origin as clause-external nominals linked to dative resumptives. Their grammaticalisation as oblique subjects derives the unique "agreement" of the subject of *mihi est* in both finite and nonfinite clauses as clitic doubling, and it in turn explains new forms of *mihi est*.

The second part turns to the nominative objects of *mihi est*. Section II.1 derives the Breton-Cornish replacement of inflected forms of BE by enclitics from nonagreement with nominative objects, "unblocking" independent pronouns that then encliticised, and converged with accusatives "unblocked" in imperatives due to the absence of a clitic host in V1. By Middle Breton, the two object types collapsed in nominative objects, characterised by a 3rd person restriction and new forms unique to them. They were complemented by accusative clitics for 1st/2nd person once means arose to realise them, through replacement of mesoclitics by pure proclitics, and grammaticalisation of the HAVE-perfect, studied in section II.2. The history of *mihi est* is completed in sections II.3–4 with its evolution to *habeo*. Most innovative varieties turn out only to transition from dative-nominative to dative-accusative and few continue to nominative-accusative. These latter stages shed light on the theory of case through the interaction of the changing cases of subject and object.

2 *Mihi est* and nominative objects

Breton HAVE descends from the *mihi est* construction, combining BE with an oblique possessor and nominative possessum (Benveniste 1966, Heine 1997, Bauer 2000, Stassen 2009, Myler 2016):³

(2) *Mihi est* in Latin

a. ut tu mihi es
 as 2SG.NOM 1SG.DAT be.2SG
 as you are mine

b. tibi sunt gemini
 2SG.DAT be.3PL twins.NOM.PL
 you have twins

(Plautus, early Latin; cf. Baldi and Nutti 2001)

In a subtype of *mihi est*, the oblique and nominative arguments of BE are the structural subject and object respectively.⁴ The result is an oblique-subject – nominative-object unaccusative. Such unaccusatives offer analogues to the Breton 3rd person restriction on object-coding enclitics, of their alternation with 1st/2nd person accusative proclitics, and of the extension of this coding to other anomalous-subject constructions, including the imperative (Rezac 2020).

Oblique-nominative unaccusatives may be introduced with Icelandic, where they have been most fully studied. Icelandic has a nominative-accusative system of case and agreement. The internal argument of a plain unaccusative is nominative and subject. It has no person restrictions, and controls agreement. It may combine with nonsubject obliques. Beside such plain unaccusatives, there are unaccusatives where the structural subject is an oblique argument. The nominative is then the structural object and shows person restrictions. 3rd person is licensed, but fails to control agreement in some varieties, (3)a. 1st/2nd person cannot control agreement, and is usually deviant even without agreement, (3)b. The same system characterises passives. That is the extent of nominative objects in Icelandic (Thráinsson 2007: 4.2.5.2; Taraldsen 1995, Sigurðsson 1996, Sigurðsson and Holmberg 2008).

(3) Dative-nominative constructions in Icelandic

Dative subject + 3rd person nominative object

a. Henni {leiddust, ?*leiddist} þeir
 3SGF.DAT bore.PST.3PL/3SG 3PL.NOM
 They bored her.

(Taraldsen 1995: 307–9; varieties with *leiddist*, Sigurðsson and Holmberg 2008)

³ The terms *possessor*, *possessum* cover uses of the subject, object of *have* or *avoir*, with considerable variation across both *mihi est* and *habeo* systems; see Myler 2016: esp. ch. 2, 4, with literature.

⁴ The notion of structural subject excludes the case and agreement diagnostics of grammatical subjects, but keeps syntactic ones, such as the restricted argument of infinitives, Zaenen, Maling and Thráinsson 1985.

Dative subject + 1st/2nd person nominative object

- b. Henni {*leiddumst, ?*leiddust, ??leiddist} við
3SGF.DAT bore.PST.1PL/3PL/3SG 1PL.NOM
We bored her.

(Taraldsen 1995: 307–9)

Finnish can be seen as an elaboration of Icelandic, and is closest to the fullest development of the anomalous object coding in Breton. It too is nominative-accusative, (4)a. Plain unaccusatives include BE with the internal argument as nominative subject, combinable with various nonsubject obliques, among which is the adessive for ‘be with’, (4)b-c. As in Icelandic, there are oblique-subject – nominative object unaccusatives, including BE with the adessive as ‘have’. These restrict nominative object to 3rd person, without agreement, (4)d. However, 1st/2nd person is not ineffable but accusative, (4)e.⁵

(4) Nominative vs. oblique subject in Finnish (neutral word order)

Transitive with nominative subject and accusative object

- a. Minä näen {sen, ne, sinut}
1SG.NOM see.1SG 3SG.ACC/GEN 3PL.NOM/ACC 2SG.ACC
I see {it, them, you}. [cf. MB: ... {en, o, -z} *guelaff*]

BE with nominative subject and lower adessive (2nd person, agreeing)

- b. Sinä olet heillä
2SG.NOM be.2SG 3PL.HUM.ADES
You are with them. [cf. MB: ...*out gante*]

BE with nominative subject and lower adessive (3rd person, agreeing)

- c. Ne ovat heillä
3PL.NOM be.3PL 3PL.HUM.ADES
They are with them. [cf. MB: ...*int gante*]

BE with adessive subject and nominative object (3rd person, nonagreeing)

- d. Heillä on {se, ne}
3PL.HUM.ADES be.3SG 3SG.NOM 3PL.NOM/ACC
They have {it, them}. [cf. MB: ...*o deus* {eff, y}]

BE with adessive subject and accusative object (1st/2nd person)

- e. Heillä on sinut
3PL.HUM.ADES be.3SG 2SG.ACC
She has you. [cf. MB: ...*o deus da* + participle]

⁵ See Kiparsky 2001 for presentation of key data and generalisation, notably for object case, subjecthood, and the link of split-person object case with anomalous subject coding; Maling 1993 for identification of the oblique-subject – nominative object phenomenon across Finnish and Icelandic; Rezac 2011, 2020 for identification of their person restriction, discussing a.o. elements omitted here for relevance.

Unlike in Icelandic, nominative objects appear in a couple of other constructions. All have subjects in some way anomalous with respect to canonical nominatives. The constructions relevant to Breton are the imperative and jussive. The subject of the imperative is restricted in position and form, and the object is 3rd nominative ~ 1st/2nd accusative, (5)a. The subject of the jussive has regular morphosyntax, and the object is the canonical accusative for all persons, (5)b.

(5) Imperative versus jussive argument coding in Finnish

True imperative (NOM + 3.NOM~1/2.ACC, subject syntax special)

- a. (*Te) tuokaa {se, minut}
 (2PL.NOM) bring!2PL {3SG.NOM 1SG.ACC}
 (You) bring {it, me}. [cf. MB: {*digasit eff, ma digasit*}]

Jussive (NOM + ACC, subject syntax regular)

- b. (He) tuokoot {sen, minut}
 (3PL.NOM) bring!3PL 3SG.ACC/GEN 1SG.ACC
 Let them bring {it, me}. [cf. MB: {*he, ma*} *digasent*]

There are three points of crosslinguistic variation relevant to Breton (Rezac 2020):

Structure: A given argument structure may map to different case, agreement, and derived structure. In psych-unaccusatives like (3), the dative experiencer is the subject in Icelandic but not in German (Zaenen, Maling and Thráinsson 1985), while the theme is an accusative object in varieties of Icelandic (Árnadóttir and Sigurðsson 2013), and a nominative object or prepositional phrase with *lika* ‘like’ (Maling and Jónsson 1995). Person restrictions hold of nominative objects alone, suggesting how to approach variation on them across systems (Béjar and Rezac 2003).

Constructions: There is variation in constructions with nominative objects: imperatives join unaccusatives in Finnish but not Icelandic. At least some of this variation reduces to anomalous subjects, illustrated by extension of both subject- and object-coding anomalies from imperative to jussive in Estonian (Timberlake 1979: 219n3).

Alternatives: Persons unavailable as nominative objects are ineffable in systems like Icelandic, but accusative in systems like Finnish.

The theoretical element useful for the development of Breton will be the link between anomalous subjects and person-restricted nominative object. It is shared by and developed in a variety of approaches (for Icelandic and Finnish, see Kiparsky 2001; Sigurðsson and Holmberg 2008; Anagnostopoulou 2003, 2017b, Rezac 2011).

3 Relevant elements of Breton

3.1 History and dialects

The common ancestor of the Brythonic branch of Insular Celtic is Proto-British (-7C), branching into Old South-West British and Old Welsh (OSWB, OW, phrases and brief texts, 8–11C). These stages are grouped here under Brythonic. OW continues to Middle Welsh (MW, extensive prose and verse 12C-), OSWB to Middle Cornish (verse 14C-), and Middle Breton (MB, phrases and brief texts 14C-, extensive verse and prose 15/16C-). MB texts show limited dialectal differentiation. It surfaces upon transitions to early Modern Breton (eNB, mid-17C-, following an orthographic reform). Traditional classification of eNB varieties follows bishoprics: Kerne (K), Leon (L), Treger (T), often patterning together (KLT), against the distinctive varieties of Gwened (W; it is further convenient to use clW for the language of 18–19C texts and grammars based on south-eastern varieties, and prefix compass points otherwise, e.g. w(est)/c(entral)W). During 18–19C eNB-KLT, the anomalous object coding regularised, and regular object coding developed a new form; the completion of these changes by 20C gives a convenient starting point here for Modern Breton (NB, usually 19C-). Varieties with the anomalous object coding with *mihi est* are here called *conservative*, and these always have the old coding of regular objects as well; those that align objects of *mihi est* with regular objects are *innovative*; some are both.⁶

3.2 Clausal morphosyntax

The verbal complex of MB may be schematised as in (6). It varies little in conservative varieties of Breton, and is similar to that of MC, more broadly that of MW.⁷

(6) Verbal complex in MB

finite: (C=) (R=/OPT=/NEG=) ((=)pron_{ACC}^μ=) (RX^μ-) V_{FIN}-AGR (=pron_X | =pron_{DBL}^{*})
 infinitive: (INF=/OPT=[/NEG=]) ((=)pron_{GEN}=) (RX^μ-) V_{INF} (=pron_{DBL}^{*})

Categories: *C*: clitic conjunction; *R*, *OPT*, *NEG*, *INF*: clitic verbal, optative, negative, infinitival particle; *pron_{ACC/GEN}* clitic accusative/genitive pronoun, *pron_X* clitic of the anomalous object coding, *pron_{DBL}^{*}* one or more doubling clitics; *RX*: reflexive prefix *em-*; *AGR*: suffix indicating nominative subject pronoun.

Conventions: x/y mutual exclusion, x|y order varies, [] rare, = clitic, - affix; ^μ on nonfinite main verb rather than auxiliary in periphrastic constructions

Of clausal syntax, verb placement and the preverbal position are relevant, sketched here for prose. Verbal complexes with no conjunction or particle are called *VI*: positive imperatives, jussives, and responsives. The *preverbal position* is the unique preverbal position for fronted (gapped) arguments, predicates, or the nonfinite main verb of

⁶ Recent surveys: Celtic and Insular Celtic, Klein, Joseph and Fritz 2017: sec. 11; Brythonic, OSWB, OW, Fleuriot 1964, Falileyev 2008, Schrijver 2011b, including nomenclature and dialect-continuum construal; MW Borsley et al. 2007, Willis 2010, Schumacher 2011; MC, George 2010, Williams 2011; MB-eNB, Schrijver 2011a; cf. Le Berre 2001 on the making of MB; NB, Heinecke 2002, Press 2010, Ternes 2011. The domain of the empirical study of Breton is set out in the Appendix.

⁷ On case terminology, see below. The terms conjunction, particle follow *HMSB*; they are clearly identifiable as part of the complex by mesoclitics, mutations, and elisions, though these can perhaps never so identify a conjunction-particle sequence even they do each independently; see *HMSB*: §51, §175–§204.

periphrastic constructions. Adjuncts can occupy it or be preverbal independently of it. Its distribution is roughly: absent in responsives, essentially so in imperatives, limited in jussives; obligatory in positive root clauses; optional in negative and optative root clauses. A subset of nonroot clauses is root-like in this respect. The position differentiates particles, which follow it, and conjunctions, incompatible with it if in the verbal complex, preceding it if independent and heading root(-like) clauses.⁸ In nonfinite clauses, only the subject argument fronts, when licensed by certain complementisers.

3.3 Morphosyntax of (pro)nominal arguments

The relevant elements of (pro)nominal morphosyntax are case-distinctions among bound or *dependent* pronouns, their *blocking* of free or *independent* pronouns, and their *complementarity* with independent (pro)nominals.

Table 1 illustrates independent and clitic pronouns in several conservative varieties:⁹

Table 1: Pronouns in conservative varieties of Breton

	MB (Schrijver 2011a)			eNB-clW (Le Bayon 1878)			NB-wW (Cheveau 2007)		
<i>Independent and clitic</i>	Ind	ACC	GEN	Indep.	ACC	GEN	Indep.	ACC	GEN
1SG	<i>me</i>	= <i>m</i> ^{=Sk} , <i>ma/va</i> ^{=S}		<i>mé</i>	<i>em</i> ^{=S} , <i>meN</i> ^{=S}	<i>em</i> ^{=S} , <i>meN</i> ^{=S} , = <i>m</i> ^S	/mɛ̃p/, ≠/mə/		/mə/ ^{=S}
2SG	<i>te</i> , = <i>de</i>	= <i>z</i> ^{=LP} , <i>da</i> ^{=L}		<i>té</i>		<i>ha(s)</i> ^{=P/L} , <i>te</i> ^{=LP}		→ 2PL	
1PL	<i>ny</i>	(<i>h</i>) <i>on</i> ⁼		<i>ni</i>		<i>huR</i> ^{=Sk}	/ni/	/ɔ̃/ ^{=Sk}	/əR/ ^{=Sk} ... =/ni/
2PL	<i>huy</i> , = <i>hu</i>	(<i>h</i>) <i>o(z)</i> ^{=P}		<i>hui</i> , ^{SU} = <i>hu</i>		<i>hou(s)</i> ^{=P}	/huj/		/u(h)/ ^{=P}
3SGM	<i>eff</i>	<i>en</i> ⁼	<i>e</i> ^{=L}	<i>eañ</i>	<i>eR</i> ^{=Sk}	<i>e</i> ^{=L}	/Hɔ̃/	/əR/ ^{=Sk}	/i/ ^{=L}
3SGF	<i>hy</i>	<i>he</i> ^{=hS}		<i>hi</i>		<i>hé</i> ^{=hS}	/hi/		/i(h)/ ^{=SP}
3PL	<i>y</i>	(<i>h</i>) <i>o</i> ^{=S}		<i>ind</i> , ^{SU} = <i>i</i>		<i>hou</i> ^{=S}	/Hɛ̃/		/u/ ^{=S}

Note: Doubling enclitics have the same form as independent save when indicated by ≠ (independent only), = (doubling only), ^{SU}= (subject doubling only).

Only dependent pronouns make case distinctions. In finite clauses the core arguments have a nominative-accusative alignment: A/S pronouns are indicated by suffixes to the finite verb that may be called *nominative suffixes*, O by a series of proclitics that may be called *accusative proclitics*. In infinitival clauses there is absolutive alignment: S/O are indicated by the *genitive proclitics* to the infinitive, same as the possessor of nominals, including nominalisations or verbal nouns realised with the same form as infinitives. In eNB, nonfinite clauses replace genitive with accusative proclitics and these indicate O only. Remaining dependent pronouns are several series of suffixes to prepositions. Independent pronouns and (pro)nominal phrases are invariant for case, but it is convenient to identify them by the case of the corresponding dependent pronouns, and so speak of nominative and

⁸ The preverbal position can be overtly absent with particle *ez* + certain forms of 'be', 'come', 'go', *HMSB*: §176.4; *ez* can or must be absent with "positional" forms of 'be', possibly analysed as including it, Guillevic and Le Goff 1902: 40; cf. Jouitteau 2009–: *emañ*. Arguments preceding the preverbal position are extraclassical for control of particles and complementarity with clitics/affixes, cf. *HMSB*: §176n1.

⁹ Throughout, =*x*= is a mesoclitic proclitic, *x*= pure proclitic, =*x* enclitic, with shifting distribution and syncretisms discussed later (sections 4.3 and II.2). Proclitics can trigger mutations of the initial consonant of the host, superscripted as: *L*: lenition; *P* provection; *S*: spirantisation, *Stk* of *t*, *k* only, *Sk* of *k* only; *M*: mixed mutation; *h*: prefixation of *h*. They are rarely noted in MB orthography and here indicated as needed. Other symbols: *N* homorganic nasal before voiced stops and \emptyset elsewhere; *R* allomorphic *r*, *l*, *n*; *H* allomorphic *h*, ζ , *j*, \emptyset .

accusative (pro)nominals. Dependent pronouns may be doubled by *doubling enclitics* for reasons such as focus.¹⁰

The dependent pronoun systems of MB differs from MC or MW in several ways taken up in sections II.1–2: MB marginality and eventual loss of the mesoclitic or "infixed" forms of the proclitics of used in MC-MW; MB accusative-genitive syncretism apart from 3SGM in MB, limited in MC-MW; and MB-MC use of accusative proclitics for weak pronoun objects, not independent pronouns or enclitics, against the greater freedom of MW – save in the anomalous object coding and underscoring its oddity.

Two interactions involving pronouns will be relevant (esp. in section II.1, with further details). One is *blocking* of independent by dependent pronouns when available. The other is *complementarity* between dependent pronouns and independent (pro)nominals, save that subjects combine with nominative suffixes across the negative particles *ne*, sometimes *na(c)*. Both are shared, up to difference of detail, by MC-MW. Complementarity reflects two types of development: nominative suffixes go back to agreement, lost with independent nominatives, while clitics and prepositional suffixes go back to pronouns that were complementary with other (pro)nominals. Two common analytical approaches align with these origins (Anderson 1982, Stump 1983, Jouitteau and Rezac 2006 for NB; see a.o. Willis 2007 for MW, McCloskey and Hale 1983 for Modern Irish, Griffith 2015 for Old Irish). On the *Agreement Hypothesis*, some or all clitics/affixes are agreement with silent controllers (perhaps overt in doubling enclitics). On the *Incorporation Hypothesis*, they realise bound pronouns (doublable by enclitics). Either choice could be made here, but it is simpler to speak of them as dependent pronouns, with *nominative suffixes*, *accusative clitics* standing for "suffixes (clitics) indicating nominative (accusative) pronouns".

4 *Mihi est* from Celtic to Breton: dative clitics + BE

4.1 Dative clitics

In Brythonic, earlier dative nominals were mostly replaced by PPs, but there is a residue: clitics syncretic with accusatives but continuing the uses and syntax of datives. They survive chiefly yet only sporadically in MW, with a variety of verbs, including BE in *mihi est* (on MW, Morris-Jones 1913: §160, Lloyd-Jones 1928: sec. 2, *GMW*: §61, §162, cf. §138b, Fleuriot 2002: 23–4, Borsley et al. 2007: 323; on the similar situation in Old Irish, Thurneyson 1946: §409, §427, Matasović 2004; across Insular Celtic, *CG*: §467, cf. §279, §340).

(7) MW transitive, unaccusative + dative

- a. y=gwr a[~]m=rodes y=gwin
 the=man R=1SG=give.PT the=wine

¹⁰ On infinitives and alignment, see below (section 5.4). Terminology for clitics includes accusative and genitive, Lewis and Piette 1990: §26–§27, Borsley et al. 2007: ch. 9 for MW, *CG*: §349n, beside others, *HMSB*: §53–5, Schrijver 2011a: 5.6.1, cf. *GMW*: §56–§61 for MW. The clitic-affix distinction is traditional, *HMSB*, Schrijver 2011a, but can be drawn differently, Ternes 1970, Widmer 2017; cf. fixed attachment of reflexive *em-* but not pronominal clitics to the main verb in certain periphrastic constructions, *HMSB*: §54n1, *LVB*: 202.

the man who gave me the wine [cf. French: *l'homme qui m'a donné le vin*]
(BT[†], e14C MW)

- b. ny[~]m=tawr
NEG=ISG=matter
It does not matter to me [cf. French: *ça ne m'importe pas*]
(WM, 14C MW)

- c. a[~]n[~]bwyr gwar
R=IPL=be.SUBJ.2SG gentle
may you be gentle to us [cf. French: *que tu nous sois agréable*]
(BT[†], e14C MW; cf. CG: §467, GMW: §138b)

Although accusative and dative clitics are syncretic, their syntax motivates an underlying case distinction. Paradigmatically, accusative clitics alternate with independent (pro)nominals, but dative clitics do not; they are mostly rephrasable by *y* ‘to’ prepositional phrases, but these have their own dependent-pronoun forms. Syntagmatically, dative clitics combine with accusative and nominative internal arguments, as above with ‘give’, ‘be’, while accusatives do not either as clitic or as independent. The diagnostics single out clitics that encode goals, experiencers, benefactives, and possessors, and may be called dative, in line with traditional terminology.¹¹

Both types of evidence have contributed to motivating dative despite syncretism with accusative, total as in Dutch, or partial as in French (see e.g. Kayne 1975: ch. 2 Anagnostopoulou 2003: 4.4, Pesetsky 1995: 5.1). This may be illustrated with French, where only 3rd person clitics make the dative-accusative distinction in form:

(8) Structural accusative -- inherent dative (or accusative) in French

- a. On te renseignera/dira “One will inform/tell you”
→ Tu seras renseigné/*dit “You will be informed/told”
- b. On te dira/*renseignera les résultats “One will tell/*inform you the results”
- c. On ne renseignera que toi “One will inform only you”
- d. On ne dira qu'à toi “One will tell only you”
- e. On te tirera dessus “One will shoot at you”

In (8), the accusative but not the dative clitic *te* switches to nominative *tu* in the passive (8)a (untestable in MW); the dative but not the accusative can occur with another accusative, (8)b (as in MW): and the accusative alternates with independent nominals (8)d, but the dative with oblique phrases marked with *à*₂ (8)c, with nothing, (8)e (close to MW). One theoretical approach to these patterns groups the typical nominative and accusative as *structural* cases, determined by structures such as active vs. passive, against the typical dative as *inherent* case, determined by interpretation or selection, along with for instance

¹¹ Cf. Ernault's (1883: 22) identification of *ma* as dative, attributed to French influence, in a 19C eNB-W text, *Ma=laret quer=splan=-ze er=uirionne* ‘1SG=say.INF so=clear=this the=truth’; cf. early *hor=pardonit, hon=offançou* 1PL=pardon our=trespasses (Maunoir 1659, I: 67, nonnative speaker), unique in versions of the Lord’s Prayer (Nedeleg 1978). In MB prose, exceptions to the cooccurrence restriction involve the adverbial accusative (*é=paea an=heuelep soum* ‘3SGM.GEN=pay.INF the=like=sum’ ‘to pay such a sum’, Qu, e17C MB); see Jónsson 2000, Anagnostopoulou 2001, Maling 2001. Cf. perhaps clitics with ‘come’ in MW, Lloyd-Jones 1928: sec. 2.

the adverbial accusative, and often with prepositional phrases (overviews include Butt 2006, Baker 2015, Anagnostopoulou and Sevdali 2015). The distinction between structural nominative-accusative and inherent dative is supported in section 5.3 for the remnants of dative clitics in Breton, but it is compatible with separating case-terminology for forms from the structural-inherent distinction, and calling the inherent dative rather inherent accusative. This inherent dative or accusative will play a central role in accounting for the rise and fall of anomalous object coding in sections II.1–3, insofar as the subject of *mihi est* does not have the morphosyntax of a canonical nominative subject in the same way that dative subjects do not in Icelandic. Nevertheless, some evidence for dative case forms is brought forward later in this section.

4.2 *Mihi est* in Insular Celtic and Brythonic

One of the few verbs found with dative clitics across MB-MC-MW is BE in *mihi est*, and a closely similar combination is found in Old Irish. In MW, the combination is transparent: BE + dative clitic possessor + nominative possessum (MW exemplaries in Loth 1910: 496–501, Lloyd-Jones 1928: sec. 2):

(9) *Mihi est* in MW and Old Irish

- a. Gueisson a[~]m=buyint.
servants R=1SG=be.CNS.PST.3PL
Servants were to me, i.e. I had servants. (BBC[†], m13C MW)
- b. ró[~]t=biat limm áinige
PV=2SG=be.FUT.3PL with.1SG guarantees
Thou shalt have honours with me. (Stokes 1887: 234, Ernault 1888b: 258, Old Irish)

The possessor is coded by a dative clitic, syncretic with accusatives, but without an independent counterpart. The possessum is nominative, since it controls a phi-matching suffix on the verb, as otherwise do only nominatives in MW (that is, roles S and A). In MB-MC, the possessor will prove the subject and the possessum the object, and this is also consistent with the limited evidence of MW.¹²

In all the Brythonic languages, the *mihi est* construction stands beside the BE + PP construction, i.e. BE + ‘to’, ‘with’, ‘on’ prepositional phrase, for various uses of *have*, and was replaced by it in Welsh; likewise in Irish. The BE + PP construction has a nominative subject with a regular morphosyntax in all the Brythonic languages (for MW, see Jones 2003: 3.3, 3.6.3–4, 4.1.1 for an exemplary, and section 5.4 here for Breton).

(10) MW BE + PP on *have* uses

- a. Esid ym arglwyt

¹² Unless more can be concluded from nonagreement of most plural possessa (chiefly CLhH[†], 14C MW); but cf. variation in agreement in MW, Plein and Poppe 2014; or limitation to 3rd person possessa, independently typical of the possessive HAVE uses of *mihi est* in MW and only testable in Breton (section II.2).

be to.1SG lord
I have a lord.

(CLhH[†], t14C MW)

- b. Yssydynt genhyf
be.3PL with.1SG
[Hast thou news from the gate?] I have them.

(WM, 14C MW)

4.3 HAVE as *mihi est* clitic + BE in conservative varieties

In MB, two verbs continue to use descendants of dative clitics. Our chief concern is with *mihi est*. In conservative varieties of Breton, it proves to remain *mihi est*, that is, dative clitic + BE, and only becomes opaque in innovative varieties. The other verb is *deur-* ‘want’, with a dative experiencer and a clausal argument; it is common but restricted, and the experiencer is early recoded as nominative (*HMSB*: §151; ditto the MW cognate *tawr-* ‘matter’, Morris Jones 1913: §196, *GMW*: §162). In MC it is also these two verbs that continue dative clitics (Lewis and Zimmer 1990: §56, Toorians 2014: 8.14).¹³

The earliest MB examples of *mihi est* are morphologically transparent as clitic + BE:

(11) Early MB *mihi est* vs. transitive

- a. Panesen ha suruguen ha[~]m[~]bezou da[~]meren
parsnip and ashbread R=1SG=be.FUT to=lunch
I will have parsnip and ashbread for lunch.

- b. An=guen heguen a[~]m[~]louenas
the=white smiling R=1SG=gladden.PT
The smiling white (i.e. white-cheeked, blond, blessed) one gladdened me.

(Io[†], m14C MB)

Not all MB forms of *mihi est* are this transparent, but they are close, apart from a *de-* element after 3rd person clitics. Instances of opacity reflect changes in consonant clusters at the clitic-BE boundary, chiefly in the 2nd person (*HMSB*: §140n4, Schrijver 2011a: 394). These are well within the scope of allomorphy, and have analogues elsewhere in clitic-host combination in Breton (*HMSB*: §11–§17). The degree of opacity in later conservative varieties differs, from a subset of the present in eNB-clW in Table 2, to a considerably larger set in NB-W varieties (Ternes 1970: 16.3, Cheveau 2007: 6.6, Crahé 2014: 5.1, see further section 5.5). Clitic + *deur-* ‘want’ combinations are transparent.¹⁴

¹³ These two verbs develop independent subjects with obligatory clitic doubling, and this will be diagnostic of inherent dative-accusative (section 5). Other possible descendants of dative clitics are found in isolated phrases, e.g. MB *a[~]m=haual* ‘R=1SG=seem’, ‘meseems’ (Pm[†], e16C MB); see *DEVRI*: *hañvalout*, Ernault 1888a: s.v.; others in Ernault 1890: §74, *LVB*: 265; MC *nu[~]m[~]darfa* ‘NEG=1SG=happen.IMPF’ (BK[†], e16C MC), cognates *HMSB*: §147, *GMW*: §154. A BE + oblique + construction is opaque in MB *piaou-* ‘belong to’, *HMSB*: §153, Le Bayon 1878: 34, then transitive ‘own’, Guillevic and Le Goff 1902: 54, Châtelier 2016b: 180-194; cognates *GMW*: §88–§89, Lewis and Zimmer 1990: §55, Zimmer 1999, Fleuriot 2002: 28, Schrijver 2011b: 4.7.3. It is found remarkably extended with dative clitic in an expletive, Ernault 1890: §74.

¹⁴ Since eNB-clW will be the main variety examined here, other clitic=host opacities may be illustrated from

Table 2: *mihi est* in 19C eNB-clW (partial; Le Bayon 1878)

	Present		Future	Imperfect	Infinitive	ACC + V _{fin/inf} in <i>b-</i>
1SG	<i>e m̃=ès</i> ~	<i>em=bès</i>	<i>em=bou</i>	<i>em=boé</i>	<i>em=bout</i>	<i>mem=b-</i> , <i>CV=em=b-</i>
2SG	<i>e h̃=ès</i> ~	<i>ha=pès</i>	<i>ha=pou</i>	<i>ha=poé</i>	<i>ha=pout</i>	<i>ha=p-</i>
3SGM	<i>eñ=dès</i>		<i>en=d(ev)ou</i>	<i>en=d(ev)oé</i>	<i>en=d(ev)out</i>	<i>er=b-</i>
3SGF	<i>hĩ=dès</i>		<i>hi=d(ev)ou</i>	<i>hi=d(ev)oé</i>	<i>hi=d(ev)out</i>	<i>hé=b-</i> [hib]
1PL	<i>huñ=nès</i> ~	<i>hur=bès</i>	<i>hur=bou</i>	<i>hur=boé</i>	<i>hur=bout</i>	<i>hur=b-</i>
2PL	<i>e hũ=ès</i> ~	<i>hou=pès</i>	<i>hou=pou</i>	<i>hou=poé</i>	<i>hou=pout</i>	<i>hou=p-</i>
3PL	<i>oũ=dès</i>		<i>ou=d(ev)ou</i>	<i>ou=d(ev)oé</i>	<i>ou=d(ev)out</i>	<i>ou=b-</i>
cf.						
BE	<i>ès</i>		<i>bou</i>	<i>boé</i>	<i>bout</i>	

shading: forms are not transparent as accusative clitic + BE.3SG/DFLT/INF

There is, on the other hand, a great deal of evidence from morphosyntactic change in conservative but not innovative varieties that descendants of *mihi est* forms continued to be analysed by speakers as comprised of clitics and BE (cf. Ernault 1888b: 253–4). It comes from innovations in accusative clitics and BE that spread to *mihi est* forms as if constituted of these elements. These extensions are here illustrated for eNB-clW and MB.¹⁵

Clitic forms (cf. Table 1): In the development of eNB-clW, the forms of the accusative clitics changed, and the dative clitics in *mihi est* mostly changed with them:

- 1PL: Older *hon=* along with several other *n*-final proclitics split into clW *hun=* before *t, d, n, h* and vowels, *hul=* before *l*, *hur=* elsewhere; this is reflected in *mihi est*.
- 2SG: MB mesoclitic $=z=^{P/LP} / \theta / \sim$ pure proclitic *da=L* gave various pure proclitics in eNB-W. Early with finite verbs is *ha(s)=^P*, and this was integrated into *mihi est* forms, replacing expected $*=h=V\dots$, $*=\emptyset=f\dots$, retained only in the present beside newer forms (Table 2). There is a similar extension of the changing form of 2PL.¹⁶
- 1SG: MB 1SG mesoclitic $=m=^S \sim$ pure proclitic *ma=^S* also gave various pure proclitic outcomes in eNB-W, but a distinctive feature of W is the originally genitive allomorph *meN=* (*N* homorganic before voiced stops, absent elsewhere). It specialised as genitive-accusative to when no clitic preceded. In the variety in Table 2 it is absent with the

it: *en=* ‘the’ + *dor* ‘door’ to *en=or*, exceptional nasal mutation, and *ne=L* ‘not’ + *talv* ‘is worth’ to *ne=talv*, exceptional absence of lenition, Le Bayon 1878: 38, 70, 8n3.

¹⁵ *Mihi est* is defended as a synchronic analysis for Breton in the works of Ernault cited here, and given out as accusative clitic + BE in Guillevic and Le Goff 1902: 42, genitive clitic + BE in Le Bayon 1878: 30, 72–3, close to it in Ternes 1970: 16.3. All of these would do for the uses made of the dative subsequently (section 5 and part II). However, a reanalysis to *habeo* as early as MB is often assumed (see citations and discussion section 5) and opacity has played a role, Stassen 2009: 234; cf. Ernault 1888b: 253–4 against.

¹⁶ See *HMSB*: §54, Schrijver 2011b: 394, on 2SG, 2PL development, Le Goff 1927 on the intricate outcomes in W. None are mesoclitics, which would continue MB $e=z=$ ‘R=2SG’ and ‘in=2SG’ as $*é=s/h=$, cf. 1SG below. The accusatives can differ for finite and nonfinite forms, accusatives and genitives can have special forms after *CV=* proclitics whose final vowel they elide, and across these there are various syncretisms, e.g. finite+nonfinite accusative $he=L$, genitive $t'he=L$, and no information for after *CV=*, but $he=P$ in *mihi est* (MG, 18C eNB-clW). Elsewhere forms like $he=L$ instead of $he=P$ are taken up by *mihi est*, Le Goff 1927.

expected form of *mihi est*, the infinitive, but does appear there elsewhere (so e.g. MG, ISmar, but not EOV, same author t18C-e19C eNB-clW). A similar extension with a different history occurs with 2SG (Le Goff 1927: 203).¹⁷

The same type of evidence is to be found in the prehistory and history of MB. At some point prior to 16C, all but 1SG/2SG proclitics replaced mesoclitic forms by pure proclitics (section II.2), for instance probably residual 3SGF/PL.ACC =z= by 3SGF *hi*=, 3PL *ho*= (MC-MW, OSWB-OW =s=, cf. Schrijver 2011ab, Buchman 2011). This change systematically affected the clitics of *mihi est* as well. Also prior to 16C, in 1SG/2SG pure proclitic *ma*=, *da*= became available when mesoclitic =m=, =z= had no host, as in V1 (section II.2). This too spread to *mihi est* (V1 jussive *da=vezet* ‘2SG=be!3SG’ beside nonV1 *ha=z=uez*, section II.4). Finally, a 16C MB text optionally changes 3SGM *en*= to *an*= as accusative, and again also in *mihi est* (Gk, late 16C MB).¹⁸

Clitic syntax: In MB, the verbal particle *e(z)*= is usually \emptyset before pure proclitics, but in certain contexts *en* appears (HMSB: §177). In later varieties, *en*= remains chiefly in W (Châtelier 2016b: 367–388). There it extends to the new pure proclitics that replace the 1SG, 2SG mesoclitics, *em*=, *ha(s)*= in Table 1 (but not to *h/vowel*-initial verbs). The initial portions of *mihi est* forms are treated like clitics by *en*= (Le Bayon 1878: 3, 28n2, 29, 51). Thus we get a noninherited parallelism between accusative clitics and clitics in *mihi est*:

(12) *en* particle in eNB-clW before innovated 1SG

- a. ...*en=em=lausquou*
R=1SG=let.FUT
...that he will let me
- b. ...*en=em=boai*
R=1SG=BE.IMPF
...that I had

(MG, e18C eNB-W)

Particles offer evidence for MB as well, but only in their stable rather than changing distribution. The particles *a/∅*, *ez/en/∅* have the same conditions before *mihi est* as elsewhere including before accusative clitics, roughly *a/∅* after fronted or relativised nominal arguments, *ez/en/∅* elsewhere. This includes examples of some subtlety like (13), illustrating *oll* ‘all’ as an adverbial or “floating” quantifier controlling *e*, unlike *a* in its more

¹⁷ On *meN*, see Schrijver 2011b: 34–5, 50. Again, the detailed history of 1SG is intricate and in part parallel to 2SG, see esp. Le Goff 1927: 201–203, Châtelier 2016b: 429–436, though the analysis here differs. The patterns of syncretism can differ from 2SG, e.g. *em*=^S for accusative on finite forms and genitive-accusative after *CV*=, *meN*=^S for genitive-accusative elsewhere (MG, t18C eNB-clW). Unlike in 2SG, the genitive retains a mesoclitic form, while the accusative forms are pure proclitics, suppressing the vowel of a preceding particle: thus MB =*e=m* ‘=R=1SG.ACC/DAT’ and ‘=in=1SG’ becomes *em*= vs. =*é=m* in eNB-clW (MG), typical of eNB-clW, cf. Le Bayon 1878: 3, 28n2, 57.

¹⁸ *en/an* distribution does not follow that of particles, Hemon 1954: 232n2; cf. rather Ernault 1928: 220n6.

frequent (pro)nominal derivative *an oll* ‘the=all’ “all” (cf. *HMSB*: §176.6). The particles have not yet become opaque parts of *mihi est*, as they do later in innovative varieties.¹⁹

(13) Example of particle choice with *mihi est* in MB

oll e= \tilde{m} =eux= \tilde{y} dispriset palamour da iesus-christ pehiny a= \tilde{m} =eux choaset
 all R=*ISG*=be=**3PL** scorned because of J.C. who R=*ISG*=be chosen
 [despite this] I scorned them all because of J.C. who I chose [as spouse].
 (Cath, t16C MB)

BE, forms: The forms of BE in *mihi est* reflect the full range of tense-mood distinctions of plain BE, even the consuetudinal tenses specific to BE, and by MB lost in older derivatives of BE (*HMSB*: §139ff., §167). However, *mihi est* was restricted to finite forms until 18C eNB-clW and certain later W varieties (section 5.4). There its infinitives were not formed as for other new verbs, by tacking a productive infinitive ending onto the 3SG/default form taken as stem, e.g. **en-dev-eign*. Rather, they were built using the infinitive of BE, *bout*, itself idiosyncratic, and thereby revealing the BE in *mihi est* (essentially Ernault 1888b: 265, Le Bayon 1878: 72–3, Guillevic and Le Goff 1902: 41–2).²⁰

BE, syntax: Responsives contradictorily answer a negative question by repeating its bare verb, inflected but without clitics (*LVB*: 451–2, *HMSB*: §180; Stephens 1982: 42–3). Ernault (1888b: 253–4) highlights that responsives to *mihi est* forms are the corresponding plain BE-form, as in (14). Noting that this is so even for surface-opaque *mihi est* forms, he concludes, “Cette décomposition exacte de syllabes aussi usées que *mou = em bou* « mihi erit », témoigne que la langue n'a pas perdu conscience de leur formation.” The argument goes through early on, but loses force with fossilisation of responsives (for eNB-clW, Guillevic and Le Goff 1902: 101) and lexicalisation of opaque responsive forms for particular verbs (for NB-KLT, including *mihi est* descendants, Humphreys 1995: 363–5), or leads to the inverse conclusion (responsive opaque *mihi est* descendants in NB-KLT, cf. Favereau 1997: §436). However, for (e)NB-W a similar argument may be made if, as it seems, only varieties that allow the ‘do’ periphrasis with plain BE allow it with *mihi est* (so eNB-clW, Le Bayon 1878: 35 beside Ernault 1888b: 265, 1890: 474; NB-wW of Groix, Ternes 1970: 16.3.3 beside 16.2.3; cf. Favereau 1997: §408).

¹⁹ The (*h*)oll *e* : *an* (*h*)oll *a* contrast is richly witnessed in the long texts of eNB (EKG, t18C eNB-L, ISmar, t18C eNB-W), but only rarely in MB, e.g. *oll ez=vion sauetet* “all R=were saved” vs. *an=oll a=ioa apæset* “all R=was calmed” (Be, e17C MB). A similar argument can be made from rare *a* after *mar* ‘if’, cf. *HMSB*: §198n1, citing a *mihi est* form from M[†], t16C MB, and the text treats accusative clitics the same. By m18C eNB, de Rostrenen 1738: 89 indicates dialectal vowel reduction specific to *mihi est*, but *mihi est* already allows innovative object coding, de Rostrenen 1738: 11–14 (see section II.3). Cf. perhaps earlier Maunoir 1659: III: 23, 25, harder to evaluate.

²⁰ Weaker evidence for BE in *mihi est* comes from *b*-contamination, Ernault 1888b: 254, since it could arise within plain and *mihi est* BE independently. The forms of BE are built on two roots: **es-* in pres. and impf., and **bheu-* elsewhere. In MB, the impf. of plain and *mihi est* BE was contaminated with *b-*, *HMSB*: §139n2, §140n4, Schrijver 2011a: 405, 407. In eNB-clW, the pres. and impf. of plain BE have *b-* after a *VC*-final clitic: impf. *oe*, pres. *ès*, but after ‘if=’ impf. *mar=boe*, though pres. *mar=ès* fossilises an older consonant, Le Bayon 1878: 27, 35, 73. So they do with *mihi est*, Table 2: all 1st/2nd person clitics end in *VC*, including 2SG *ha=^p* if provection is included, cf. Iosad 2017.

(14) BE as responsives to *mihi est*

Ha n̄=ō=heus=—huy dorn e=n=bet? — Eus sur.
Q NEG=2PL=be=2PL hand in=the=world BE sure
Do you not have hands? — I do.

(Qu, e17C MB)

There are two features of the forms of *mihi est* that have not been addressed. One is the *de*-element after 3rd person clitics, illustrated in Table 2. It is taken up next. The other is the choice of *ès* among the forms of the copula in the present, i.e. *ès*, *é*, *zou*, and *é ma* for cIW in Table 2. It is derived chiefly from nonagreement with nominative objects in section II.1.

MC presents evidence of having passed through developments of its own similar to those in conservative varieties of Breton, notably from innovations to clitics extended to *mihi est* forms (the element *aga-* added to 1/2PL, see section II.2). However, already in MC there appear suffixes doubling clitics. This has played a key role in supposing an early reanalysis of *mihi est* to *habeo* (CG: §352–6, Heine 1997: 2.4–5, Stassen 2009: 6.4). The same development is reserved to innovative varieties in Breton (section II.3), apart from the jussive, where it reflects an independent development due to the unique properties of the jussive suffix (section II.4).

4.4 The *de*-prefixed 3rd person forms

Forms with 3rd person clitics are the most significant island of opacity relative to clitic + BE in Table 2. In Breton and Cornish, these and only these forms contain what seems to be BE prefixed with *de-*. This prefix can be analysed as an applicative marker originally, but may have become a dative marker in MB-MC.

The most widespread etymology of the *de*-forms is as reflexes of BE with the preverb **do-* (OSWB, OW *de-*, MW *dy-*, *di-*, MB-MC *de-*), related to the preposition **do-* ‘to’ (OW *di*, MW *(d)i*, *(d)o*, MB *da*, MC *the*) (Fleuriot 1964: §148, 2002: 27–9, cf. Ernault 1890: 458–460, Loth 1886a: 320n, followed by *HMSB*: §140n1; on MW *di-*, *dy-* + BE = MB *de-* + BE, Loth 1900: 508–9, CG: Suppl. to 213 l. 20). On this view, both BE and **do*-BE were used to build *mihi est* in Brythonic. In MW, bare BE is usual, but continuations of **do*-BE are found with both 1st/2nd and 3rd person clitics. In MC and MB, bare BE combines with 1st/2nd-person clitics, **do*-BE with 3rd person (as in Table 2).²¹

(15) **do*-BE in MW

a. Kanweis ā=m̄=di-oed

²¹ Fleuriot's 1964, 2002 form **do-* of the preverb and preposition is given here for convenience; cf. CG: §431.27, and for current views, Schrijver 1995: 17n2, 2011b: 51, Eska 2007, Matasovic 2009: s.v. **do*, **to-*, Stifter 2014. OSWB and OW candidates for **do*-BE have the meanings ‘be at, come’, Fleuriot 1964: §148, Falileyev 2000, 2008, *GMW*: §143, and some MW forms attributed to *dyuot* ‘come’ may reflect **do*-BE rather than **do-ag-* ‘come’ + BE, Ernault 1890: 458–460, Loth 1886a: 320n, as may the archaic type *dī=m̄=bi* ‘*do=1SG=be.CNS’, Lloyd-Jones 1928: 93, also cf. Loth 1910: 479–480. The extinct eNB variety of Batz has 3rd person forms with and without the *de*-prefix, likely through leveling of a phi-less form as with other verbs, Ernault 1883: 26–30. Other views: Ernault 1883: 28–29, *LVB*: 185–6, and recently esp. Schrijver 1997: ch. 7, 2011b: 69–70, compatible with the dative-case analysis (section II.1).

hundred.men R=ISGM=D-be.IMPF
I had a hundred men

- b. ny[~]s=di-oes eluyd
NEG=3PL.ACC=D-be country
They do not have a country

(BT[†], e14C MW)

Preverbs like **do-* ‘to’ have been analysed as adposition-like elements that introduce an argument and incorporate into the verb, often alternating with adpositions on related meanings (Baker 1988, Peterson 2007 crosslinguistically, Miller 1993, Acedo-Matellán 2016 in Indo-European; cf. Adger 2006, Newton 2006 on Old Irish). The reflexes of **do-* BE and BE + **do* ‘to’ do stand in such an alternation in all the Brythonic languages: thus MW PRS =s=di-oes ‘they have’ in (15b) (MB o=d(ev)-eux, MC *=s=tef-es) beside MW oes udunt ‘is to them’ (MB eux deze, MC vs thethe).

In MB-MC unlike in MW, the distribution of BE and **do*-BE depends on the person of the dative clitic in the complex. This appears to be rare for preverbs or applicatives (Comrie 2003). However, if MB *de-*, MC *ge-* has become reanalysed as exponent of dative case, the restriction to 3rd person would fit a widespread pattern whereby only 3rd person clitics are distinctively dative (Adger and Harbour 2007, as in French). This reanalysis would then reify in form the dative case argued for on syntactic grounds. It is extended in at least one later variety by the elaboration of *-d-* < *-de-* to *-nd-*, exadapting *n* of 3SGM to other 3rd person forms (Ternes 1970: 16.3).

4.5 The HAVE-perfect

In Breton, *mihi est* serves as a lexical verb with a typical range of core and extended HAVE-uses (q.v. Myler 2016: ch. 2, 4). Alone of the Celtic languages, Breton recruited *mihi est* as the perfect auxiliary with the resultative participle of the lexical verb, as in (13). It is fully formed by the earliest extensive texts of early 16C. The close similarity with the Romance-Germanic HAVE-perfect have suggested a calque (HMSB: §155, cf. §169), building on the plain BE perfect of intransitives shared by both MB-MC (LVB: 120–6).

When a new perfect formation recruits lexical HAVE as auxiliary, it can adopt the latter's argument coding. In a nominative-accusative system with a *mihi est* HAVE, the roles A and often S are then coded in the same way as the oblique possessor, while O is coded like the nominative possessum (Latin, Heine 1997: 4.3; Karelian, close to Finnish, Seržant 2012: 358; Georgian, B.G. Hewitt 1995: 501–2 on the new perfect, 369–373 on *mihi est*; compared to Breton in S. Hewitt 2016). This is so also in Breton, and so one may speak of the possessor- and possessum- coded arguments of the HAVE-perfect.

5 Rise, development, and implications of independent datives

5.1 Independent datives

It is usually supposed that by MB-MC, dative-nominative *mihi est* had become nominative-accusative *habeo*, in large measure because of the innovation of independent counterparts

to dative clitics (Pedersen 1913: §496; Schrijver 2011a: 407). However, the singular morphosyntax of the innovated elements points not to a reanalysis to *habeo*, which should align them with transitive subjects, but to a continuation of *mihi est*, which accounts for their uniqueness (Jouitteau and Rezac 2008). This is the matter of this section.²²

In MW as in Old Irish, the vestigial datives are limited to clitics with finite verbs. In MB-MC, independent counterparts developed to the surviving dative clitics of *mihi est*, and in MB also of *deur-* (OSWB and OW seem to afford no relevant evidence). They appear earliest in the preverbal position. It will be seen to be a plausible point of origin both for them, and for their unique doubling by dative clitics in "agreement" rather than "complementarity" otherwise characteristic of MB-MC.²³

(16) Independent datives in MB-MC

- a. ...me $a\tilde{m}\tilde{=bezo}$ auantur mat ha quarzr
 1SG R=1SG=be.FUT adventure good and fair
 [Henri Bossec says: if God wants] I will have a good and fair adventure.
 (Bo, e14C MB)
- b. ha ty $a=vy\tilde{=hy}$
 and 2SG R.2SG=be.CNS=3SGF
 and you will have her
 (CE[†], t14C MC)
- c. A huy $ou\tilde{z}=deu[r]$ quet he=guelet=hy
 Q 2PL 2PL=want not 3SGF=see.INF=3SGF
 Do you not want to see her?
 (B[†], m16C MB)

They also appear early in the postverbal position, and it afford the clearest window on their syntax. They are still doubled by dative clitics, and in this position it will not follow from their preverbal origin alone. They precede the possessum, like subjects do objects with transitives, suggesting that they are structural subjects:²⁴

²² Pedersen 1913: §496 is followed in historical-comparative work on MB-MC, CG: §352–6, Lewis 1946: §56, Lewis and Pedersen 1990: §56, and through CG by work on HAVE, Orr 1992: 252ff., Heine 1997: 2.4–5, Stassen 2009: 6.4. The grounds are, CG: §352: (i) “The combination dat. pron. + verb ‘to be’ came to be felt as a transitive form ‘I have’ etc., and was preceded by the corresponding indep. pron.”, illustrated by MC *why a \tilde{s} =byth ancaw* ‘2SG R=2SG=be.CNS death’ “for the more correct: *ancow as byth*”. This is a reasonable conclusion before work on oblique subjects (section 2) and on the preverbal position in Brythonic (next subsection). (ii) “Further, the combination used as a transitive form assumed personal endings (corresponding to the infixed pron.)” This innovation, early in MC but not MB, does reveal a first step on the reanalysis to *habeo* (taken up sections II.3–4). Literature on conservative varieties of on Breton does often analyse the forms of *mihi est* as here, clitic + BE (section 4.3).

²³ MB examples of syntax keep to prose. Still, two verse examples may be given: for early preverbal position, *Me a $\tilde{m}\tilde{=ous}$ vn $\tilde{=amoric}$ ioliuic* ‘1SG R=1SG=be a=lover pretty’ “I have a pretty lover” (Io[†], m14C MB); and for early postverbal position to compare with MC (18)a, *n $\tilde{=en}$ deuezo den dieznes* lit. ‘NEG=3SGM=D.be.FUT person need’ “none will have need” (N[†] 15/16C MB).

²⁴ See HMSB: §215 on postverbal subject > object in Breton. The generalisation is borne out, modulo heaviness or emphasis, by MB prose, e.g. *pan disclaer an Impalazr an auther* lit. ‘when reveals the Emperor the author’ (Gk, t16C MB). Likewise for synthetic lexical *mihi est*, apart from fixed bare noun locutions like ‘have memory’, cf. note 38, e.g. *n $\tilde{=en}$ deouequet an pænitant deliberation* lit. ‘not had the penitent deliberation’ vs. *endeues couff an pænitant* lit. “[of which] has memory the penitent” (Cn[†], m17C MB). All

(17) Postverbal independent datives in MB, lexical *mihi est* and *deur-*

- a. pa=n[~]en[~]deues an=dut argant
 when=NEG=3SGM=D.be.CNS the=people money
 when people have money
 (Qu, e17C MB)
- b. quentse ho=deues an=bellegyen brassoch gallout eguit an AEles
 since 3PL=D.be the=priests greater power than the=angels
 since priests have greater power than Angles
 (Cnf², m17C MB)
- c. pe en=hini n[~]en=deua medecin e[~]r=bet aznaudeguez
 which in=one NEG=3SGM=D.be.IMPF doctor in=the=world knowledge
 [disease] about which no doctor in the world had knowledge
 (Veach, m17C MB)
- d. ma=en=deues bet Sant Euzen an=guir fæiz
 that=3SGM=D.be had St. Euzen the true faith
 that St. Euzen had the true faith
 (Be, m17C MB)
- e. Breman ma=hon=deuzrffé ny bellegyen consideriff en mat an=fardell
 now that=1PL=want.COND 1PL priests consider well the=burden
 Now if we priests wanted to consider well the burden ...
 (Cnf², m17C MB)

(18) Postverbal independent datives in MC, lexical *mihi est*

- a. ny[~]n=gyfye den gallos
 NEG=3SGM.ACC=D.be.COND person power
 Man could not have power
 (RD[†], e15C MC)
- b. ny[~]s=teve tus vyth hep mar roow mar tha
 NEG=3PL/3SGF.ACC=D.be.PT people any without doubt gifts so good
 Never did any people have, without doubt, gifts so good
 (OM[†], e15C MC)

Clitic doubling and subjecthood are both confirmed in MB by its HAVE-perfect, where possessor-coded argument is clitic doubled, and it but not the possessum-coded argument can precede the participle, as subjects alone can in other participle-based periphrases.²⁵

(19) Postverbal independent datives in MB, HAVE-perfect

these are uncommon. Partitive *a*-marking groups the possessum but not possessor with internal arguments, but does not appear to be a structural objecthood test, cf. Schapansky 1996: 3.2 on NB, Widmer and Starke 2016 on MB.

²⁵ In MB prose, both orders of subject and participle are well attested with the HAVE-perfect, including in the same texts like Be, but the subject before participle is rare in the BE-perfect or BE-passive, e.g. *Na deux tra prophan graet enn-hé*, lit. “lest be prophane thing done in them” (Gk, t16C MB).

- a. pan=*ho*=deffoe lauaret an=oratoret ez=oa ...
 when=*3PL*=D.be.PT said the=*speakers* R=*be*.IMPF
 when the speakers had said that it was ...
 (Cath, t16C MB)
- b. goudé ma=*en*=deueux an=*beleg* legitim consacret an=*bara*
 after as=*3SGM*=D.be the=*priest* legitimate consecrated the=*bread*
 after the legitimate priest has consecrated the bread
 (Gk, t16C MB)

In form, the new independent counterparts of dative clitics are invariant for case, just as are the independent counterparts of other dependent pronouns like accusative clitics. It is convenient to extend the case-based terminology adopted for the latter, and call them independent datives, on par with independent accusatives. However, the term here commits to no more than "independent nominals doubled by dative clitics", where dative clitics are understood as inherent dative or accusative, as in section 4. Their invariant form is expected both diachronically and synchronically, whether they are analysed as dative or not (subsection 2). However, their unique clitic doubling favours an inherent dative or accusative (subsection 3). In post-MB varieties, the synchronic validity of their subjecthood and doubling are confirmed in the innovated infinitives of *mihi est* of eNB (subsection 4), and explain their fusions with *mihi est* forms in NB (subsection 5). The combination of subjecthood and doubling by inherent dative or accusative clitics makes them oblique or nonnominative subjects, central to explaining the rise and fall of anomalous object coding (sections II.1–2).

5.2 Origin of independent datives in the preverbal position

Independent datives have been argued to originate in the preverbal position (Mac Cana 1973: 118, 1991: 57). From this innovation and its consequences follow those properties of independent datives that have suggested a *mihi est* to *habeo* reanalysis, form and position (CG: §352) and particle control (Schrijver 2011a: 407), but without such a reanalysis.

The preverbal position of MB-MC-MW appears to derive from two Brythonic constructions, illustrated in (20) (see esp. Schrijver 1997: ch. 7, 2011b: 5.1; cf. Borsley et al. 2007: 299, Willis 1998: 1.3, 3.7, 2010: 146–8, Meelen 2020).

(20) OW preverbal nominals (texts, analysis Falileyev 2008, Schrijver 2011b)

Hanging topic

- a. ir pimphet eterin diguormechís Lucas hegit hunnoid
 the fifth bird which.added Lucas go.3SG.ABS that.one
 the fifth bird that Lucas added, that one goes...
 (MP, e9C OW; cf. Mac Cana 1973: 96)

Copular cleft (accusative gap in direct relative)

- b. is did ciman ha ci
 be day whole REL get.FUT.2SG
 it is the whole day that you will get

(Comp, e10C OW)

Copular cleft (adverbial gap in root-like indirect relative)

- c. is cihun argant agit eterin
be so.much money go.3SG.ABS bird
it is for so much money that [that] bird goes

(MP, e9C OW)

Hanging topic or nominativus pendens: XP + root clause. If XP was nominal, it was nominative, later was case-invariant, and linked to nothing or overt resumptive, (20)a.

Copular cleft: copula + XP predicate + direct or indirect relative clause. If XP was a nominal, it was nominative, later case-invariant, and linked to (i) nominative and accusative gaps in the direct relatives, marked a.o. by relativisers and conjunct morphology, (20)b; (ii) overt resumptive or nothing in root-like indirect relatives, marked a.o. by absolute morphology, (20)c (cf. *CG*: ch. 29, *GMW*: §64ff. for overviews of subtypes).

The interaction of these two constructions yielded two new constructions, described here in the form that they took in Breton.

XP + gap ("movement"): XP in the preverbal position links to a gap. If XP is nominal argument, it is restricted to nominative and accusative gaps, and controls the particle *a*, as in (11). These formal properties derive from the copular cleft + direct relative, but interpretations are not restricted to cleft-focus (see section 5.5).

Nominal + resumptive ("double (false, broad) subject construction"): a nominal argument in the preverbal position links to a resumptive dependent pronoun (on NB, Urien 1987, 1989, Rezac 2010, 2013), and tends to control the particle *a* (on NB-L, op.cit.; cf. Guillevic and Le Goff 1902: 138, Le Bayon 1878: 62–3 on eNB-clW), as in (21). These formal properties allow origin in copular cleft + indirect relative, and partly hanging topic.

(21) Preverbal nominal + *a* + dependent-pronoun resumptive in MB

- a. an=tirant cesar a=falle dezaff laquat d̃an=marou cals a=chistenyen
the=tyrant Caesar R=like.IMPF to.3SGM put.INF to=the=death lots of=Christians
the tyrant Caesar wanted to put to death lots of Christians

(Cath, t16C MB)

- b. darn ãuez ho=spered euel en=vr=balanç
part R=be.CNS 3PL=spirit as in=a=scale
some are such that their spirit is as on scales

(Veach, m17C MB)

In Breton, the gap-resumptive distinction cannot be made for the possessor of *mihi est* (and the possessor-coded argument of the HAVE-perfect). The resumptive construction links the possessor to a dative clitic as resumptive, but the gap construction also has a dative clitic because it doubles any possessor of *mihi est* (see (16)-(18)). The gap construction has the particle *a*, but *a* is also the rule in the resumptive construction in some

This origin of independent datives derives their case-invariant (pro)nominal form and their control of the particle *a*. The outcome also matches the evolving synchronic properties of the systems where we encounter them, since dependent pronouns alternate with case-invariant independent (pro)nominals, not with prepositional phrases, and nominals in the preverbal position typically control the particle *a*, not *ez*, in both the gap and resumptive constructions. The unusual aspect of the innovation is the unique and obligatory extension of clitic doubling when the independent dative was generalised from the preverbal to the postverbal position. There is neither loss of doubling with datives to yield complementarity in line with other arguments ((23)c right-hand vs. *...*(de-)vezo doueou galloud*); nor generalisation of doubling from datives to other arguments ((23)b right-hand side vs. *...*vezo deze doueou galloud*).²⁸ There is also no extension of the gap construction to datives, despite their syncretism with accusatives (**doueou a (de-)vezo galloud*).²⁹ This persistence of dative clitic doubling is the next topic.

5.3 Clitic doubling of inherent datives

The new independent (pro)nominals of *mihi est* and *deur-* in both preverbal and postverbal positions are doubled by phi-matching dative clitics in MB-MC. The doubling is an exceptional instance of anticomplementarity in the system. It speaks against a *mihi est* to *habeo* reanalysis, since a nominative subject is expected to obey complementarity – and its descendants do so upon reanalysis to *habeo* (section II.3).

This exceptional clitic doubling fits a well-known pattern (Jouitteau and Rezac 2008). It may be illustrated with Modern Greek, studied in Anagnostopoulou 1999, 2003:

(24) Clitic doubling in Modern Greek

a. *Optional doubling of accusative theme and dative goal*

(tu=) (ta=)edhose tu Petru ta vivlia
 3SGM.DAT=3PLN.ACC=gave the.DAT Peter.DAT the.NOM books.NOM
 She gave the books to Peter.

b. *Obligatory doubling of dative goal with an unaccusative*

(to grama) (?*tis=) irthe tis Marias (to gramma)
 the.NOM letter.NOM 3SGF.DAT came the.DAT Maria.DAT the.NOM letter.NOM
 The letter came to Mary.

c. *No doubling of prepositional goal with an unaccusative*

to grama (*tis=) irthe stin Maria
 the.NOM letter.NOM 3SGF.DAT came to.the.ACC Maria.ACC
 The letter came to Mary.

²⁸ Likewise for accusative clitics syncretic with dative ones, no (*doueou ho=gwelo (doueou)* ‘(gods) 3PL=he.sees (gods)’, apart from rare verse examples, Lewis and Piette 1990: §25, more extensive in MW, *GMW*: §56n4, 60, 198, Fleuriot 2002: 23 point 3.

²⁹ It may be left open why there was earlier no gap construction for datives, i.e. no direct relative: because the dative clitics had no gap counterpart just as they had no independent counterpart; or because the system was of the common type where datives group with obliques in linking to resumptives against nominative-accusative that link to gaps, Keenan and Comrie 1977, Joseph 1983, Salzmann 2009.

- d. *Obligatory doubling of accusative experiencer with an unaccusative*
 ta epipla (*ton=) enohlun ton Petro
 the.NOM furnitures.NOM 3SGM.ACC bother.3PL the.ACC Peter.ACC
 The furniture bothers Peter.

(Anagnostopoulou 1999: 79, 2003: 2.3–4, slightly adapted)

Clitic doubling is available for accusatives and datives, and usually optional, (24)a. However, it becomes obligatory under certain conditions, characterisable using the distinction between structural and inherent case in section 4.1. Doubling is obligatory for arguments with inherent case, usually dative but also accusative, structurally higher than the internal argument. The latter is the configuration of interest here. It may be illustrated with unaccusative *erhome* ‘come’, whose optional added goal may be coded as a structurally high dative (24)b or a structurally low prepositional phrase (24)c; unaccusative *areso* ‘please’, ditto, save that the added argument is an experiencer and obligatory; and unaccusative *enohlo* ‘bother’, where the experiencer must be accusative (24)d. Just the added high arguments require clitic doubling.³⁰

This exceptional doubling requirement for high inherent-case arguments has been argued to be widespread or universal in systems with clitic-doubling (Anagnostopoulou 2003, Landau 2010). It is easily diagnosed with unaccusatives whenever a system does not require structural subjects to be nominative, since the high inherent-case argument then becomes the structural subject. In Finnish, subjecthood falls to the high adessive possessor but not the low adessive of accompaniment with BE, but Finnish has no clitic doubling (section 2). In Breton, subjecthood similarly differentiates the dative possessor of *mihi est* from the prepositional possessor of the BE + PP construction, and clitic doubling entered the system through reanalysis of the resumptive construction. It then generalised precisely as expected: to the high inherent dative or accusatives of unaccusatives whatever its position, surviving with BE in *mihi est*, and with *deur-* ‘want’.³¹

5.4 Subjecthood and doubling in infinitives

In MB-MC-MW, the *mihi est* construction is only attested in finite clauses, and so are dative clitics: the MB type *hé=bezaf unan* ‘3SGF=be.INF one’ only expresses “[believe] her to be one”, not *mihi est* “her to have one” (Gk, t16C MB). In MB-MC-MW, possession in infinitives is expressed by the BE + PP construction, and in MB-MC, by the infinitive of ‘find, get’, *caffout-cafos*, recruited to supplete with finite *mihi est* (including for locutions where only *mihi est* is used in finite clauses, ‘have memory, fear, need, hunger, ...’: *DEVRI*: s.v. *koun, aon, ezhomm, naon*).

The restriction of *mihi est* to finite clauses may reflect the origin of infinitives as nominalisations or verbal nouns (*LVB*: 127–146), since in these the uncodability of high

³⁰ The syncretic dative-genitive of Modern Greek is here glossed dative here.

³¹ Clitic doubling is often restricted by hierarchies like pronoun > nonpronoun, Anagnostopoulou 2017a. This may account for a W restriction of doubling by phi-matching clitics to pronouns, and by the 3SGM clitic otherwise, cf. *HMSB*: §174.2, already in the one MB prose text with W characteristics, Loth 1905; variably with the silent subject of infinitives, Ernault 1887: 43, Châtelier 2016a: 262; more widely, Ernault 1888b: 261. MB texts occasionally fail to phi-match as well, under different conditions, e.g. 3SGM for 3SGF but not 3PL in Be, and perhaps Qu (17)a as a group noun, cf. *DEVRI*: *tud*, Schrijver 2011a: 389.

datives is a familiar property (Anagnostopoulou 2005).³² This obstacle vanished as soon as verbal nouns, while remaining as nominalisations, were also reanalysed as infinitives, participating in fully clausal structures (see Stephens 1982: 4.2, 1990, Timm 1990 on NB-KLT). These are likely available already in MB: the clearest examples are the perfect and passive periphrases, formed with the erstwhile verbal noun of BE + participle, betraying nominal origin by the genitive form of clitics and their attachment to BE, but using the clitics to code S and O and not A. (*LVB*: 127–146, 350–384; *HMSB*: §54n1; cf. Manning 1995). They are certainly available by eNB: they share the object coding of finite clauses, accusative rather than genitive clitics, for O and not S or A, attached to the participle in the periphrases (accusative clearest and systematic in eNB-clW, cf. *HMSB*: §54). At this point infinitives of *mihi est* were formed by attaching accusative-syncretic clitics and *de* to the infinitive of BE. They are available by 18C eNB-clW (cf. Table 2) and remain in some varieties NB-W (Ernault 1888b: 265–6, *LVB*: 198–9, *HMSB*: §140.10, Châtelier 2016a, Favereau 1997: §418; Guillôme 1836, Le Bayon 1878, Guillevic and Le Goff 1902, Ternes 1970).

(25) Infinitives of lexical and auxiliary *mihi est*, dative proclitic, anomalous objects

Controlled complement

- a. ne=garehoh quet *hou*=pout=**ind**
 NEG=like.COND.2PL not 2PL=be.INF=**3PL**
 would you not like ___ to have them

Arbitrary

- b. ret- é *en*=devout=**ind** leinet
 necessary be 3SGM=D.be.INF=**3PL** read
 it is necessary to have read them

(EOV e19C, eNB-clW)

- c. *Overt and licensed by prepositional complementiser*

goudé d'emb *hor*=bout=**hay** gualt karget a=fank
 after to.1PL 1PL=be.INF=**3PL** seen loaded of=mud

[it is a pleasure to walk in dry trenches] after us having seen them filled with mud

(Le Besco 1995: 240, e20C NB-wW)

The new infinitives of *mihi est* have the same external and internal syntax as infinitives of other verbs. The object is coded in the same way as in finite clauses, namely by anomalous object coding (section II.1–2). The infinitive is found in the same constructions as infinitives of other verbs, such as complements of ‘like’ (closely similar to English or French). One argument is grammatically restricted, anaphoric to the matrix subject in (25)a, interpreted arbitrarily in (25)b, licensed by an inflected prepositional complementiser in (25)c (cf. Stephens 1990 on NB-KLT). This element is the most stringent of structural subjecthood diagnostics (Zaenen, Maling and Thráinsson 1985). It confirms the subject to

³² The generalisation of interest is unavailability of any coding for “high” datives in nominalisations. Thus French unaccusative *Elle nous est née* “She is born to us”, with a high-dative, clitic-only ‘us’, has no nominalisation keeping ‘us’, *sa/la (*nous) naissance (*à nous)* “her/the (*us) birth (*to us)”, *notre naissance* “our birth”, not “birth to us”.

be the possessor of lexical *mihi est* and the possessor-coded argument of the HAVE-perfect in (25) (Jouitteau and Rezac 2008). This subject argument is clitic-doubled, in (25)c as the pronoun indicated by the prepositional complementiser, in (25)a-(25)b as the silent element controlled or arbitrary element (PRO). The emergence of doubling in the new infinitives of *mihi est* reiterates its earlier emergence for independent datives in the postverbal position. This earlier emergence is predicted by the theory of doubling. The later emergence is only consonant with it, since infinitives have silent counterparts of elements overt in finite clauses (agreement, Schütze 1997: ch. 4, modality/tense Wurmbrand 2014). In creating infinitival forms of *mihi est*, certain W varieties used the doubling clitic and the *de*-element on finite forms, (25), others kept them silent, (26) (rare for lexical *mihi est* where *kaout* is usual, common for the perfect auxiliary where there is no alternative, Guillevic and Le Goff 1902: 42; Le Goff 1927: 203; Le Besco 1992: 111: s.v. *avoir*; Favereau 1997: §418).³³

(26) Infinitive of auxiliary *mihi est*, anomalous object coding

coutant bout=ind guilet
 happy be.INF=3PL seen
 [the old one was joyous and] happy to have seen them
 (Le Diberder and Guillaume 2000: 209, e20C NB-wW)

In contrast, the prepositional phrase of the BE + PP construction used for HAVE meanings across Brythonic does not pass the subjecthood test in infinitives; rather, the possessum, nominative in finite clauses, does. The same is true of other prepositional phrases, for instance the goal of ditransitives like ‘give’ in the passive (Rezac 2020).³⁴

(27) Subjecthood of infinitival BE + PP

eit __ bout d'oh hou=ç'hunan
 for be.INF to.2PL 2PL=self
 [you should withdraw ...] in order __ to be to yourself, to be your own
 (ISmar, t18C eNB-clW)

5.5 Neutral preverbal subjects, pronoun fusion, and root-initial *mihi est*

Oblique subjects of systems like Icelandic and Finnish not only appear in the same structural positions as nominative subjects, but also have the same interpretations in them. In Breton, interpretation has been studied in the preverbal position, and does show a subject-nonsubject argument asymmetry. Nonsubjects are typically interpretively marked, usually new or contrastive focus, but subjects can also be neutral, compatible with idiom chunks and suitable tothetic or all-new sentences, continuing topics, or unemphatic switch

³³ This is also a W development: In MB lexical *mihi est* seems to have no infinitive, *HMSB*: §140.10, and infinitives of perfects use plain BE + genitive S/O, cf. *LVB*: 356–7, *HMSB*: §155n1, Hemon 1981: §138n.

³⁴ For MC, clear examples have not been found; relevant might be *a ny wozas ow mestry / bos zymmo may fes lezys* lit. ‘Do you not know my power / to be to me so that you should be killed’ (PA[†], e15C MC). For MW, the results of a cursory search of WM are consistent with nominative subject, e.g. *pw y adylyo bot yn wyr ymi* lit. ‘who ought be vassals to me’ (WM, 14C MW).

topics from accessible referents (a.o. Timm 1989, 1991, Hewitt 2002, Favereau 1997: §505, 2000, Jouitteau 2005, 2007, Kennard 2014, 2018, on NB-KLT; Schapansky 1996 on NB-W; similar finding for MW, Meelen 2016: ch. 5, 2017).³⁵

With independent pronouns, the neutral reading lent itself to destressing and attachment that can be traced in orthography already in MB. It petered out outside W, but in W appears to have led to their reanalysis as dependent pronouns. To this reanalysis can be attributed several distinctive features of W: their alternation with nominative suffixes, their doubling by enclitics, and root-initial uses of *mihi est* forms.

Independent pronouns are usually blocked when dependent ones are available. In MB and eNB-KLT, this bars neutral independent pronouns in 3rd person, apart from constructions that prefer or require subjects in the preverbal position. However, 1st/2nd pronouns do often appear without focus, notably inthetic sentences where no other element is emphasised, as in (28)a, and in fact prefer clefts or doubling enclitics for focus. By contrast, preverbal object pronouns are always focused or otherwise emphatic, (28)b (*LVB*: 459–461).³⁶

(28) 1st/2nd neutral pronominal subjects vs focused objects in MB

Subject, neutral inthetic sentences

- a. Na=graff quet sur, me a=careff en=mat ez=graen
 NEG=do.1SG not sure 1SG R=love well R=do.1SG
 [What are you saying? You speak (*sc. French*) as well as I, yeah, and better. --] I surely do not, I would like to do so [though it cost me twenty *ecus*.]
 (Qu, e17C MB)

Object, focused

- b. hantercant orateur a=z=eux assamblet [...] ha me a=contraignez [...]
 fifty orators R=2SG=be assembled and 1SG R=constrain.2SG
 fifty orators you have assembled [against a maiden: and promised them great goods ...
]: and me you constrain [without any hope to go forth to combat against them]
 (Cath, t16C MB)

The NB-W varieties of Breton are distinctive in allowing preverbal independent pronouns as neutral subjects when not possible in KLT (*LVB*: §460; Ternes 1970: 253n1, Favereau 1997: §505, 2000). This is evident even in the first extensive eNB-W prose and may be illustrated through parallel translations. 3rd person, the most superficially striking, is

³⁵ There are hints of information-structural neutrality for nonsubject arguments under limited conditions, as when the usual wide-focus structure is unavailable, see note 38 below; see also Jouitteau 2007 on NB, and on MW Watkins 1993: 126–7, Meelen 2017: 159, 183, Harlos et al. 2014: 136. The preverbal position of negative sentences is always marked in *HMSB*: §51.6n, and such a positive-negative asymmetry seems borne out by MB texts like Qu; contrast NB-KLT in Kennard 2014, and for W the fusion discussed below in Ternes 1970: 16.2.6, 16.6.5.

³⁶ The *LVB* generalisations match discussion and examples in *HMSB*: §51.5 vs. §51.7c, Widmer 2017: 222 vs. 228, and are borne out by at least Cath, Gk, Qu for MB. Neutral 3rd person in subject-preferring clauses is not noted in *LVB*, see on interrogative *ha(c), pe* *HMSB*: §51.5n, 85, 192, Guillevic and Le Goff 1902: 102, 115; clear examples of neutral pronouns here go back at least as far as Qu, e17C MB.

illustrated in (29). 1st/2nd person, even with its greater leeway, is still remarkable when repeating the shared subject of cohesive coordinate clauses, (30).³⁷

(29) 3rd person in eNB-KLT vs. W (translations of *The Introduction to Devout Life*)

- a. *proposi a=reont ne=bec'hint mui, mæs n'=er=greont*
 propose R=do.3PL NEG=sin.FUT.3PL more but NEG=3SGM.ACC=do.3PL
 [In this manner also there are penitents who do leave the state of sin, but ... : that is to say,] they propose that they will not sin any more, but do not do it [except against their will ...]
 (IN, e18C eNB-L)
- b. *ind e=guemére er=résolution ne=béheint quet mui, mæs ind hé=hemére*
 3PL R=take.IMPF the=resolution NEG=sin.FUT.3PL not more but 3PL 3SGF=take.IMPF
 [In this manner also there is lots of people who leave the state of sin; but ...; that is to say,] they took the resolution that they will not sin anymore, but they took it [with a certain regret ...]
 (EOV, e19C eNB-clW)

(30) 1st/2nd person in eNB-KLT vs. W (translations of *The Prodigal Child*)

- a. [...] *e=laraz: [...] Zeuel e=rīngn hag e=hīngn tréma me=zād, hag e=lārīngn [...]*
 R=say.PT rise.INF R=do.FUT.1SG and R=go.FUT.1SG to 1SG=father and R=say.FUT.1SG
 [But after having come back to himself,] he said: [...] I will rise and I will go to my father, and I will say [to him]
 (CHB, 19C eNB-wW Guéméné-sur-Scorff)
- b. [...] *yōn e=laras: [...] Sewéal e=hrīgn, ha me yei dad me=zād, ha me larō [...]*
 3SGM R=say.PT rise.INF R=do.FUT.1SG and 1SG go.FUT to 1SG=father and 1SG say.FUT
 [But when it came to him to return to himself,] he said: [...] I will rise and I will go to my father, and I will say [to him]
 (CHB, 19C eNB-wW Groix)

The *mihi est* constructions of conservative varieties shares the neutrality of preverbal subjects: 1st/2nd generally in (31)a, 3rd in W, (31)b.³⁸

(31) Overt pronoun subjects with lexical *mihi est*

- a. *Antreit, me m̃=eus aman mezer mat, [...] me ã=m̃=eus ivez [...]*
 enter 1SG 1SG=be here cloth good 1SG R=1SG=be also
 Enter, I have here good cloth, [good canvas of all sorts, ...]. I also have [...]
 (Qu, e17C MB)
- b. *er=vlas e=ra vad dehai, hag ind ou=dès évi [...]*
 the=taste R=do good to.3PL and 3PL 3PL=D.be envy
 “they like the taste, and they are envious [of those who can eat it].”
 (EOV, e19C eNB-W)

³⁷ The illustrated differences are systematic for the texts. For *The Prodigal Child* in CHB, a KLT-boundary W variety has been chosen for minimal contrast with the rest of W, and other varieties can be compared. For IN, EOV, a typical but striking illustration is the entire first paragraph of ch. 7 containing the excerpted passages in (29) and (31)b.

³⁸ The HAVE-perfect behaves like other constructions. Lexical *mihi est* might have freer conditions on preverbal objects, examined here for MB, esp. Cath, Gk, Qu, Be: not only narrow focus on the object, cf. Timm 1989, but also wide focus on the predicate, common for bare-noun of locutions like ‘have memory, fear, regret, hunger’, less so for richer indefinite objects, unclear for the rare definite objects. It may be due to the semantic poverty of HAVE, cf. wide-focus with destressing in *She'd a nap*; or the lack of an infinitive of *mihi est* for the usual wide-focus periphrasis of fronted infinitive + ‘do’, and so should change where the periphrasis is available to *mihi est*, Ernault 1888b: 265, 1890: 473, *HMSB*: §140.10, Châtelier 2016a: 147–166, or loses its wide focus use, Ternes 1970: 16.2.1–3, Guillevic and Le Goff 1902: 147.

phenomenon: independent pronouns as unmarked subjects are prefixed to the verbal complex, undergoing vowel reduction or elision (e.g. 1SG independent *maj*, prefixed *m(a)*, Ternes 1970: 16.2.1, 16.3.1, m20C wW; cf. Crahé 2014: 5.3.1, 3.3, e21C c/wW).

In W then, preverbal independent pronouns have given rise to bound pronouns when unmarked subjects. This explains the earlier anomaly of W: the reanalysed pronouns are no longer blocked by nominative suffixes because both are dependent pronouns. It also explains another anomaly of W: enclitics only double dependent pronouns, in MB and KLT clitics/affixes, but also the attached subject pronouns in W (*LVB*: 460; cf. Stump 1983, 1989 on NB-KLT, Châtelier 2016b: 413 on eNB-clW, Widmer 2017: sec. 4 on MB):⁴¹

(33) Doubling enclitic with preverbal subject pronoun

ha me zou=–mé caus?
and 1SG be=1SG cause
Am I responsible?

(MG, t18C eNB-clW)

Nevertheless, even the reanalysed pronouns continue to count as occupying the preverbal position, and there is no further development to allow *object-subject_{pron}=V* syntax (as in MC, George 1990, 1991, save perhaps in the isolated extinct variety in Ernault 1883). A similar dual character of a head fused to the verbal complex but satisfying the preverbal position may be instantiated by "long head movement" (Borsley, Rivero and Stephens 1996, Jouitteau 2007, 2011, in press, and on fusion Urien 1999).

With *mihi est*, the attachment of subject pronouns has further consequences. They are illustrated here with 1SG/PL in two well-described varieties: *W-Grx*, m20C wW, Ternes 1970: esp. 14.1, 16.2.1, 16.3; *W-Lan*, e21C c/wW, Crahé 2014: esp. 5.1.8, 5.3.1, 3.3:

(34) Attached subject pronouns + *mihi est* forms for 1SG/PL in NB-W

Surface-transparent fusion.

- a. 1SG: W-Grx *mə* + pres. *əmbes* → *məmbes*
1SG: W-Lan *mə* + pres. *mɛ(s)* → *məməɛ(s)*

Surface-opaque fusion

- b. 1PL: W-Grx *ni* + pres. *xurbes* → *nibes*
1PL: W-Lan *ni* + pres. *nibe(s)* → *nibe(s)*

- c. *Reanalysis of mihi est form to pronoun + mihi est form*

1SG: W-Lan 1SG *mɛ(s)* but not W-Grx 1SG *əmbes*
1PL: W-Grx 1PL *xurbes*

⁴¹ In NB, such doubling is occasionally found outside W in idiomatic expressions, esp. *me oar=–me* '1SG know=1SG' "what do I know", "and so on", but it is unclear how far pronoun affixation and doubling actually extend esp. in parts of K and T, cf. Kennard 2018. Preverbal nominals of the resumptive construction are perhaps not doubled in W, i.e. in the type *Me faut d'eign* '1SG need to.1SG' (EOV, e19C eNB-clW), yet do reduce to prefixes at least in the high-frequency collocation *jā=fote daxoŋ* '3SGM=need.IMPF to.3SGM' "he wanted", Ternes 1970: 260n1, 301. For a similar puzzle, cf. nondoubling of agreeing subjects of the abnormal sentence in MW, Willis 2007: 2.2, Meelen 2016: 218.

Some fusions are transparent, e.g. 1SG in (34)a. Others are opaque, e.g. 1PL in (34)b. In the opaque type, ambiguity could arise: W-Lan 1PL *nibe(s)* realises pronoun + *mihi est*, filling the preverbal position, and *mihi est* alone, when the position is filled otherwise or unavailable, while only the former is realised by W-Grx 1PL *nibes*. However, certain forms originally unambiguous as *mihi est* were reanalysed as ambiguous with pronoun + *mihi est*, (34)c. The choice may reflect a preference for consonantal onsets (cf. the development of V1 bare responses, e.g. *on* ‘be.1SG’ > *bon*, *gon*, Favereau 1997: §436, Humphreys 1995: 363–5, cf. *HMSB*: §180).

The ambiguous forms of *mihi est* seem to explain a last anomaly of NB-W: certain 1st/2nd person *mihi est* forms apparently satisfy the preverbal position and appear initially in root clauses (*LVB*: 186–7, Favereau 1997: §440, §539). This is the historically expected behavior of forms like *nibes* as fusions of pronoun + *mihi est*, and the result of reanalysis for forms like *xurbes* on the model of *nibes*. Only *mihi est* underwent this development, because only with *mihi est* are preverbal pronouns doubled by phi-matching proclitics. A reanalysis of *zou* ‘be’ would leave it ambiguous between ‘I am’, ‘you are’, etc.⁴²

6 Interim summary

The focus in the first part has been on the anomalous subject of *mihi est* in conservative varieties of Breton. Descendants of Brythonic finite *mihi est* forms retain an accusative-syncretic clitic combining with BE across a morpheme that may have become reanalysed as dative case, and innovate infinitival forms. Descendants of *mihi est* structures innovate independent and infinitival counterparts to the clitic. Their properties are expected from their origins and the evolving systems of which they are part, up to two. One, they are subjects, as may or may not have been the clitic in Brythonic. Two, they require doubling by the accusative-syncretic clitic, uniquely in the system, but consonant with the crosslinguistic behavior of inherent accusative or dative subjects of unaccusatives. The outcome is subjects morphosyntactically anomalous with respect to the nominative subjects of the system, and specifically subjects with inherent case, which correlate with 3rd person nominative ~ 1st/2nd person accusative object coding elsewhere. The rise, change, and fall of this coding in *mihi est* and its transient extension to the imperative are taken up in the second part.

7 Appendix: Sources

Breton: The relevant morphosyntax of MB is most fully described in *HMSB* and *LVB*, more selectively in Lewis and Piette 1990, Pennaod 1966. These have been supplemented here by studies of MB prose in general and verse for object coding. Of MB prose, included are most texts of 14–17C (repertoried in *DEVRI*: corpus). The longer texts are, in 1st ed., Cath;

⁴² In MB, root-initial *mihi est*, outside the jussive, is exceptional, an instance being *Ho=bezo* ‘2SG=be.FUT’ in “[Do you want to have my money? -- Not like this.] -- Then you will have [two and a half *gwennegs* more]” (Qu, e17C MB). It is however also expected as a realisation of root-initial particle *ez* + forms of ‘be’, ‘come’, ‘go’ (*HMSB*: §176.4), since the particle is \emptyset before *ho=*. These are restricted to discourse environments such as the one indicated here by *then*, Dressler 1972; cf. Stephens 1982: 42n7, Jouitteau 2009–: *VI*. This is not a restriction on the W forms.

Gk; Do, Mc, Be; Qu; Prôn; Veach; in 2nd ed., Cnf²; overviewed in Courouau 2008, Le Berre 2001, Schrijver 2001a. Though the longer texts are mostly translations, heavily influenced by their sources in sentence structure and vocabulary, but strikingly idiomatic in the morphosyntax of the clause, to go by the briefer contemporary and later prose, and by contrasts with their sources.

By eNB, also described in *HMSB*, the first grammars appear, overviewed in Lambert 1976, 1979: Maunoir 1659, De Rostrenen 1738*, Le Brigant 1779, Anon. 1792–1820, Dumoulin 1800, Le Gonidec 1807, Guillôme 1836*, Troude 1842, Hingant 1868, Le Bayon 1878, Guillevic and Le Goff 1902*, Le Clerc 1908^(*), with * signalling those describing anomalous object coding; here may also be classed a didactic text illustrating coding through near-minimal pairs, COL* (see Le Goaziou 1950). These have been supplemented here chiefly by the prose of Le Bris for L, esp. IN, and Purchase and Marion for W, esp. ISpour, ISmar, MG, EOV, overviewed in Châtelier 2016b, and the early T verse EN. Excluded is the extinct divergent variety of Batz-sur-Mer, Ernault 1883, Mathélier 2017.

For the conservative varieties of NB-W, there are extensive studies, esp. Ternes 1970, Cheveau 2007, Crahé 2014, and the sourced compendia Favereau 1997, Jouitteau 2009–; partial descriptions often with spoken-language corpora, e.g. Ernault 1876–8, Loth 1886b, 1895, 1897–8, Le Diberder 1912, McKenna 1988, Le Besco 1992, Le Pipec 2008, Le Bozec 2018; spoken-language corpora, Corne 1991, *Banque Sonore des Dialectes Bretons* (banque.sonore.breton.free.fr), *Dictionnaires Bretons Parlants* (dico.parlant.breton.free.fr), *Chansons de tradition orale en langue bretonne* (to.kan.bzh); supplemented here by the early 20C oral tales in Le Diberder and Guillaume 2000 and war letters in Le Besco 1995. Standard Breton is analysed in Press 1986; its grammars draw on diverse literary traditions, often with prescriptive aims, with anomalous object recruited esp. in Vallée 1926, Kervella 1947 (but not native to the authors).

Cornish: MC is described in Lewis and Zimmer 1990, Toorians 2014. They are supplemented here by a survey of the MC verse for forms of *mihi est* up to early 16C: CF, PA, OM, PC, RD, BM, BK.

Textual citations: Texts are cited by title, approximate ms. date as *e(arly)*, *m(id)*, *(la)t(e)* + century C, language, period, and variety, and † for verse. Titles for MW follow *GMW*, for MC Toorians 2014, for Breton *DEVRI*: corpus, largely matching *HMSB* and Jouitteau 2000: s.v. *Abréviations*, with the following addition and modification, and otherwise fully.

Veach: =*VEach* of 1687 but an edition of 1656. Available at gallica.bnf.fr.

COL: =*COL* in *HMSB*, Jouitteau 2009–: *Abréviations*; eds. of 1774, 1810 used. Available at books.google.com.

8 References

Abbreviations:

CG: Lewis and Pedersen 1961

DEVRI: Menard and Le Bihan 2020

GMW: Evans 1964

GPC: Thomas et al. 2020

HMSB: Hemon 1975

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