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**FLECTIONS OF NOUNS IN  
A CONSTRUCTION “SPATIAL PREPOSITION + NOUN<sup>LOC. SING.</sup>”  
(BASED ON ANCIENT SAMPLES OF THE UKRAINIAN LANGUAGE  
FROM THE 16<sup>th</sup> and 17<sup>th</sup> CENTURIES)**

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**ABSTRACT:** The paper provides an overview of flections of nouns of three genders in a prepositional case-based compounds “*е + noun<sup>Loc.Sing.</sup>*” where the preposition indicates the location of objects and a noun carries a locative seme, i.e. is a spatial reference. **The aim** of the study is to analyze variant forms of nouns of all three genders in the locative case singular. In this research, morphological variation is understood as the existence of different case forms of the same linguistic unit while preserving the meaning of the same word. Variant noun forms, particularly in the locative case singular, were identified in sentences drawn from texts of various genres and styles dating from the Middle Ukrainian period of the 16th–17th centuries. Based on the analysis of a wide range of empirical material, the study records and traces the functioning of noun inflections in the analyzed grammatical form, demonstrating coexistence ranging from two to four variant endings in masculine, feminine, and neuter nouns. It has been established that the variability of noun endings could occur both within a single word and at the level of a single document. Overall, the study arrives at the following conclusions: variation in noun case forms is determined by a number of linguistic and extralinguistic factors, including the assimilation of certain grammatical forms to others through grammatical analogy, the dialect of the scribe and the place where the text was written, as well as the linguistic practices of the period. In conclusion, the article shows that efforts to standardize the system of inflections eventually led to the displacement of some endings and the stabilization of others, a process reflected in the modern standard Ukrainian literary language. Notably, some variant endings, although not codified as normative in the literary language, continued to function primarily in territorial dialects. Further research requires a more detailed examination of a larger corpus of texts written in different dialectal areas, which would make it possible to trace the development of the morphological system in general and noun inflection in particular in the Ukrainian language of the period under analysis.

**KEYWORDS:** Old Ukrainian Language, noun, flection, variant endings, grammatical analogy, locative case

**Introduction.** Currently, the grammatical structure of the Ukrainian literary language is a well-developed system of rules presenting linguistic tools that have been refined over a long period of time in the history of the development of the language.

If we consider the language norm at the morphological level, then, when studying Ukrainian texts of various genres and styles during the period of the formation of grammatical science, codification and prescription of linguistic material of the Old Ukrainian language<sup>1</sup> of the 16<sup>th</sup> and 17<sup>th</sup> centuries, we can see the system of inflections that either contrast or coincide with the modern ones. Therefore, it supports the instability of the grammatical structure in general. In the early modern period, the processes of unification of linguistic means and the codification of grammatical norms took place against the background of the coexistence of a considerable number of variant noun inflections, which is a sign not only of dynamism but, above all, of a tendency toward the search for “adequate means of linguistic expression” (Єрмоленко/Yermolenko, 2004, с. 420).

In Ukrainian linguistics, the problem of morphological variation in diachrony has been addressed in a considerable body of scholarly research, including works by S. Bevzenko (who traced the history of noun forms using data from written documents and dialects, from Old Ukrainian to the modern period) (Бевзенко/Bevzenko, 1960); D. Hrynchyshyn (who characterized the formation and development of the Ukrainian written literary language of the 16th–17th centuries, in particular its phonetic and lexical systems and grammatical structure, based on texts of various genres and styles) (Гринчишин/Hrynchyshyn, 1996); P. Zhytetskyi (who provided a description of the Old Ukrainian bookish language of the 17th century) (Житецький/Zhytetskyi, 1941); I. Kernytskyi (who surveyed the noun inflectional system on the basis of manuscript and printed texts of the 16th century of various genres and styles from across the entire territory of Ukraine) (Керницький/Kernytskyi, 1967); V. Moysiienko (who described the inflection of nominal parts of speech, among other features, on the material of 16th–17th-centuries monuments from the Zhytomyr region) (Мойсієнко/Moysiienko, 2004); V. Nimchuk, K. Symonova (who characterized the morphological features of Ukrainian documents of the 17th century from the regions of Volyn and the Dnipro area) (Німчук, Симонова /Nimchuk & Symonova, 1981); I. Ohienko (who, on the basis of the 16th-century confessional monument *The Krekhiv Apostle*, examined the grammatical system of the Ukrainian language of the time and drew attention to the use of variant noun inflections) (Огієнко/Ohienko, 1930); S. Samiilenko (who meticulously studied the history of the formation of the morphological structure of the Ukrainian language, particularly that of the noun) (Самійленко/Samiilenko, 1964); T. Syvokozova (who investigated locative and temporal complexes in the Ukrainian language of the 17th–18th centuries based on sources from Western Polissya) (Сивокозова/Syvokozova, 2017); H. Strelchuk (who thoroughly demonstrated and distinguished grammatical variants of masculine nouns in the locative case in Old Ukrainian texts of the first half of the 17th century) (Стрельчук/Strelchuk, 2009); and I. Tsaralunga (who drew attention to

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1 The names of glottonyms are used in accordance with the established periodization proposed in the work of V. Moysiienko (Мойсієнко/Moysiienko, 2016, с. 17–18).

morphological variation in Ukrainian texts of the 14th–15th centuries) (Царалунга/Tsaralunga, 2017), among others.

Despite the substantial scholarly contribution of historical linguists to the study of this issue, there remains a need for a comprehensive investigation of noun variation as an indicator of both the dynamism and the relative stability of language formation. Thus, the objective of our research is to analyze inflectional properties (variation of flections) of nouns in prepositional case-based compounds “spatial preposition (в/вз, во, ве, у, ув, у-во)<sup>2</sup> + noun<sup>Loc.Sing.</sup>” in texts of the late Middle Ukrainian period. The layering of variant endings, particularly in the locative case, is associated with various factors, including the decline of the old declensional system, the operation of analogical processes, the spread of vernacular morphological features, and, in some cases, the imitation of foreign models of inflection. Despite the fact that language is characterized by variability at its different levels, it is precisely the continuity of tradition, stability, and— as S.Samiylenko wrote—resistance to constant change that contribute to the formation of the structural elements of a language and ensure its further functioning (Самійленко/Samiylenko, 1978, c. 7). From a diachronic perspective, research into changes in word forms reveals the connection between different structural elements of language, paths to unification or simplification, while the cases with parallel usage of old and new grammatical forms at this point in time indicate the complex processes connected with the internal laws of language. The presence of several morphological forms within words with the same meaning should be regarded not as a negative but rather as a positive phenomenon: “it is a kind of compromise between the perpetual aiming at language renewal and a defensive reaction to everything new and unusual” (Котць/Kots, 2016, c. 88).

The corpus of texts of the study consists of Ukrainian texts of confessional nature (*Didactic Gospels*, *Triods*), publicistic texts (polemical literature), and official-business communication (collections of documents АЗР/АЗР, АЮЗР/АЮЗР, АхЮЗР/АрхЮЗР, which include complaints, inventory descriptions, letters, contracts, charters, oaths; as well as a number of official documents from the Bratslav, Zhytomyr, Kyiv, and Poltava regions) from the 16th–17th centuries.

In the course of the study, a set of general scientific and linguistic methods was applied: the descriptive method (for systematizing the material, inventorying linguistic units, and interpreting them); the method of generalization (for organizing and logically structuring the material under study); the comparative method (for comparing recorded variants of noun inflections with endings that are normative in the modern language, as well as those widespread in dialects); the complete sampling method (for identifying the most accurate occurrence of variation phenomena across a large corpus of sources, with the aim of confirming

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<sup>2</sup> We consider the prepositions presented in the paper to be variant. Moreover, the factual evidence shows they might be interchangeable.

or refuting particular locative singular noun endings); and the functional analysis method (for describing variant case noun forms).

**Background.** In Ukrainian language practice of the 16<sup>th</sup> and 17<sup>th</sup> century, one of the examples of expressing locative-spatial meaning is the combination of the spatial preposition “*в*” and inflections of nouns denoting space<sup>3</sup>. As evidenced by the empirical material, nouns of locative semantics are characterized by the active use of those inflections that are also reflected in the Old Ukrainian language. In the period under study L. Zyzanii, M. Smotrytsky described the grammatical system not of the contemporary Ukrainian language, but of the Church Slavonic Ukrainian recension with vernacular insertions (Гр. Л. Зиз./Гр. Л. Зыз., 1596; Гр. М. Смотри./Гр. М. Smotr., 1619), in contrast, I. Uzhevych presented the inflectional paradigm of Ukrainian nouns of the 17<sup>th</sup> century, but without particular attention to or documentation of parallel case forms (Ужевич/Uzhevych, 1643). We support the statement by V. Moysiienko on the development of noun declension rules in the Ukrainian language: “Certainly, at the time when these documents were written (at least before the 17<sup>th</sup> century), there were no regulatory spelling rules. Therefore, the texts contain numerous deviations from unwritten customary trends” (Мойсієнко/Moysiienko, 2016, с. 178).

In the texts under analysis, the nouns in locative case singular in the construct “*в+noun<sup>Loc.Sing</sup>*” have by far the most diverse set of inflectional affixes. They are flections that do not always depend on a preposition, unlike the contemporary Ukrainian language (especially with masculine nouns of the second declension) (Сучасн./Suchasn., 1969, с. 105). As illustrated by the sample, vernacular and partially foreign language forms had a significant impact on flexional disorder (Титаренко, Ящук/Tytarenko & Yashchuk, 2022, с. 119).

The papers on historical grammar of the Ukrainian language highlighting the functioning of parallel forms of nouns of three genders in the singular (Бевзенко/Bevzenko, 1960; Керницький/Kernytsky, 1967; Історія/Istoriya, 1978; Крижанівська/Kryzhanivska, 2010, etc.) have some lacunas primarily related to the large body of texts from the period in question, since not all texts could be included into analysis. Hence, it necessitated a review and search for new data in in the formation of the inflectional system of nouns, particularly in the locative case.

Documents of the Old Ukrainian language of the 16<sup>th</sup> and 17<sup>th</sup> centuries show variable flexions in **feminine nouns** in locative case singular mostly in

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<sup>3</sup> The study of linguistic means for expressing spatial relations (in particular, prepositional–case constructions such as “spatial preposition *в* + noun”) has been a subject of interest in Ukrainian linguistics for researchers such as Ye. Tymchenko (Тимченко/Tymchenko, 1925), I. Slynko (Слинько/Slynko, 1973), I. Vykhovanets (Вихованець & Городенська/Vykhovanets & Horodenska, 2004) and M. Stepanenko (Степаненко/Stepanenko, 2021), as described in more detail in the work “Prepositional-case constructions with spatial semantics in the Ukrainian language of the 16<sup>th</sup> and 17<sup>th</sup> centuries” (Висоцька/Vysotska, 2024).

former word bases \*-ā-, \*-jā-, \*-ū-. This poly-inflectionality is evidence of grammatical analogy and the tendency of the inflectional system to revert to old patterns of declension, or caused by the influence of the vernacular element or orthographic tradition.

Feminine nouns in the locative case singular with \*-ā-, the base is consistently ending with -ѣ: “**ТОЕ ВЪ БОЛОВИНОИ ШѢФЛАДѢ**” (АрхЮЗР/ArkhYuZR, Ч./Ch. 1, Т./Т. X, Львів/Lviv, 1637, с. 155); “**ВЪ ШКОЛѢ**” (АрхЮЗР/ArkhYuZR, Ч./Ch. 1, Т./Т. X, Львів/Lviv, 1637, с. 71); with \*-jā-, the base with — на —н: “**Ї СТАНИИ КОНИ И БЫДЛО РОГАТОЕ**” (Бр./Br., Луцьк/Lutsk 1582, с. 305); “**ВЪ ЗЕМЛИ**” (АЗР/AZR, Т./Т. 4. VIII, 1594, с. 79); “**И РОЗБЕЛЪ ЕЕ ВЪ КЪЗНИ**” (АрхЮЗР/ArkhYuZR Ч./Ch. 3, Т./Т. I, Луцьк/Lutsk, 1596, с. 116).

In feminine singular nouns of the hard declension pattern, the traditional ending -ѣ could be rendered as —н (ОУ ВѢРН) or more frequently as—є (В ОПЕЦЕ; В ЗАПТАВЕ; В ТОРБЕ, В НАЦЕ): “**В КОТОРОМЪ, ДЕНЬ, ДВОРѢ БИИ МАЕТНОСТ МОЮ И ЖОНЫ МОЕИ РЕЧИ РѢХОМЕ Ї НЗЕ**” (Бр./Br., Луцьк/Lutsk 1582, с. 305); “**КОТОРЮ В ТОРБЕ ПРИ СОБЕ МѢЛЪ**” (Бр./Br., Краків/Krakiv 1583, с. 333). A similar use of endings is attested already in documents of the Old Ukrainian period (Самійленко/Samiylenko, 1964, с. 74). The interchange of endings —є for —ѣ can be traced in charters originating from the Kholm and Ovruch regions (В ЖАЛОБЕ або ВЪ ЖАЛОБѢ): “**В ЖАЛОБЕ ОГ ВЪ ЖАЛОБѢ: В ЖАЛОБЕ АНДРЕА ГЛИКО(ГО), ПИЛАРА ЗЕМЛИ ХОЛМЗКОЕ**” (Бр./Br., Городня/Horodnia 1585, с. 426); “**ВЪ ЖАЛОБѢ МОЕЙ О НАСЛАНЬЕ НА КГРѢНТЪ**” (АЮЗР/AYuZR, Т./Т. 2, Овруч/Ovruch, 1608, с. 19).

I. Kernytsky notes that the inflection —є does not function as an accentual feature of the word form, but rather as a “graphical feature,” and is used in those texts that were influenced by the orthography of the state chancery (Керницький/Kernytsky, 1967, с. 91–92).

I. Ohiyenko traces the mixing of endings —ѣ, —н, and —є in singular feminine nouns in the locative case in the *Krekhiv Apostle* (Орієнко/Ohiyenko, 1930, с. 241). Studying the language of this 16th-century confessional document, the scholar asserts that the unstressed—and sometimes even stressed—grapheme ѣ was often replaced with є, which “was conceived as the Ukrainian і” (Орієнко/Ohiyenko, 1930, с. 238, 240–241). Such “confusions” were recorded by the linguist not only in the analyzed text, and he considered this phenomenon rather a “spelling habit” of translators and scribes (Орієнко/Ohiyenko, 1930, с. 236, 238).

In the last decades of the 21st century, scholars have concluded that the ending —є in feminine nouns of the former \*-ā-, \*-jā- stems reflects the influence

of the vernacular element, specifically features of northern Ukrainian dialects (Мойсієнко/Moysiienko, 2016, с. 178).

Regarding morphophonological phenomena in inflection, in feminine nouns of the former \*-ā- declension type, the final velar consonants *к/х* alternate with sibilants *ц/с* as a result of palatalization before the ending -ѣ: “**вх наѣцѣ**” (АЗР/AZR, Т./Т. 4. VIII, Вільно/Vilno 1589, с. 24); “**в’ крѣѣ**” (УЄ/UYe 1616, с. н); “**в калитцѣ ддмашковой**” (АрхЮЗР/ArkhYuZR, Ч./Ch. 1, Т./Т. X, Львів/Lviv 1637, с. 158); “**в корѣцѣ три камычкн**” (АрхЮЗР/ArkhYuZR, Ч./Ch. 1, Т./Т. X, Львів/Lviv 1637, с. 163). Such alternations are also observed before the endings -н or -є in nouns with a final stem consonant *к*, which changes to *ц*: “**А кды бже в наѣце тои добрые печатки в себе мети бѣдѣт**” (Згор./Zahor., 1577); “**в пасицн**” (АрхЮЗР/ArkhYuZR, Ч./Ch. 3, Т. I, Житомир/Zhytomyr 1587, с. 21). Notably, in the prepositional–case construction with the noun *пасека*, we observe three variant endings -ѣ, -ы, and -н, while the consonant alternation *к* → *ц* is preserved: “**в(з) пасецѣ на(а) пчолоу сеѣѣлз**” (АППС/APPS 1691, с. 304); “**о на(с)лнѣ на до(м) его н прехован(н)е в пасецы себен впрн(ш)ко(в)**” (АГЖУ/АНЗхU 1635, с. 109).

For feminine nouns (with \*-jā-) in the locative case, the traditional ending -н may be replaced by -ы: “**вх Троецкой ѣлнцн**” (АрхЮЗР/ArkhYuZR, Ч./Ch. 3, Т./Т. I, Луцьк/Lutsk 1596, с. 108); “**за(с)тѣпн(в)ши на дорозе в ме(с)те Житомирѣ в ѣлнцы стрела(т) до не(го) н малжонзкн его началн**” (АГЖУ/АНЗхU 1635, с. 96); “**в се(т)лнцы е(го) за(с)та(в)ши о(а) рѣ... пилны(н)**” (АГЖУ/ АНЗхU 1635, с. 108). Even within a single document, variant endings are attested: **в Тронцн** або **в Тронцы** (АрхЮЗР/ ArkhYuZR, Ч./Ch. 1, Т./Т. X, Львів/Lviv 1609, с. 135–136).

Hence, the empirical material attests to heterogeneous spelling of the endings -н and -ы in singular locative feminine nouns of the soft type after a suffixal stem in -нц/-нц-. The depalatalization of the consonant *ц* before the grapheme -ы may be an example of vernacular practice, as confirmed in the studies of I. Kernytskyu (Керницький/Kernytskyu, 1967, с. 92) and V. Moysiienko (Мойсієнко/ Moysiienko, 2016, с. 48, 59). The analyzed texts exhibiting parallel inflections originate from the Volyni and Zhytomyr regions. The hardness of the consonant *ц* is later recorded in the dialects of the northern Ukrainian linguistic area (АУМ/AUM, I, map 204).

We support the view that the assertion of the affricate *ц* could also have been caused by other factors. This concerns nouns of the modern III declension:

In the feminine nouns consisting of the stems with \*-ū-, in the locative case, the flection -ѣ or -н similarly replaced the previous -ѣ (Бевзенко/Bevzenko, 1960, с. 62). The texts under analysis frequently illustrate the noun with \*-ū- as a substantive *цѣрква*, which assumes flections -ѣ or -н (*в цѣрквѣ/цѣрквѣн*) (“*вх Цѣрквѣн*” (АрхЮЗР/ArkhYuZR, Ч./Ch. 3, Т./Т. I, Житомир/Zhytomyr, 1587, с. 14); “*вх свѣтлой Божей Восточноѣ цѣрквѣ мощѣ столичѣ*” (АЗР/AZR, Т./Т. 4, VIII, Новогрудок/Novohrudok, 1595, с. 116); “*єсть Х҃с в мѣстѣхъ своихъ ... то єсть в Цѣрквѣ*” (УЄ/UYe 1616, л. 3 зв.); and later eventually assumes the word change type of the nouns with the \*-ā-stem. In the modern Ukrainian literary language, the reflection of the flection -ѣ is -і (*у церкві*). However, Lemkian subdialects document the «*у церкви*» (Верхратський/Verkhratskyy, 1902, с. 122).

On the other hand, the nouns *любов*, *кров* (that are classified in the modern-day declination III) have variant endings *-н* or *-ѣ* in the locative case: “*Въ любви до бляжнн(х)* (УЄ/УУѣ 1637, нѣ); *въ любвѣ бѣры Христоуы*” (АЗР/АЗР, 1593, Т./Т. 4, VIII, с. 65). The texts from the South-East macro-dialect show the noun *любов* with the flection *-ѣ*: “*хтѣи в пѣ(р)шо(н) люб(в)ѣ сдѣ(д)ико(н) жити*” (АППС/АППС 1688, с. 253) – in this case, the prepositional noun structures are used to signify the mode of action: “*кохлайя ... въ крѣви родзлю*” (Лѣкк./Лѣк., 1607, с. 135).

The locative case singular of feminine nouns with the ancient \*ī-stem assumed the ending -и: “*Ѣ́ ПО́БѢДѢ; Ѣ ПОУЧѢНЮ́И*” (Лѣк./Lѣк., 1607, c. 169). According to our observations, among the few attested examples for this group of nouns, the use of variant endings is not typical. In the *Krekhiv Apostle*, I. Ohiyenko identifies parallel usages of inflections of the analyzed grammatical form for nouns with \*-ī- stems and notes that a definitive answer regarding the pronunciation of the ending -и — whether as the modern Ukrainian *i* or as the historical *u* — is lacking due to insufficient data (Ориєнко/Ohiyenko, 1930, c. 328).

In the modern Ukrainian literary language, feminine nouns of declinations I and III have the ending *-i* in the locative case singular but the case form with *-u* has been preserved (mostly in substantives of the prior *\*-i-* stem and several stems with *\*-ū-*) and had been documented in the south-west macro-dialect, specifically in the Halychyna-Bukovyna and Carpathian group of sub-dialect (Панькевич/Panjkevych, 1938, с. 221–222).

In fact, parallel forms of usage in the locative case singular for **masculine nouns** have remained valid until this day. It must be noted that in the modern Ukrainian literary language, variance for the words of this gender group still depends on grammar-semantic features, and also on the prepositional component of the prepositional-case combination (Сучасн./Suchasn., 1969, с. 105). О. Syniavskyi commented on this polyfunctionality of noun flection in locative case singular as follows: “When taking a closer look at when and which noun category assume certain flections in the locative case singular, we could see that it is the most complicated case as the same noun may assume two or three flections” (Синявський/Syniavskyi, 2018, с. 56).

In the constructions signifying spatial semantics, the texts of the 16<sup>th</sup> – 17<sup>th</sup> centuries of Ukrainian language show “*в+locative case*” for masculine nouns that have been assuming different flections, according to Ukrainian scholars (І. Panjkevych claims that masculine nouns in the locative case form used to have two or more flections) (Панькевич/Panjkevych, 1938, с. 188). Flections of these substantives have mostly been inherited by the pattern of old paradigms or influenced by the analogy or the living language environment: *Ѹ, ю, ꙗ, е, и, ы*.

For nouns of the former *\*-ǫ-* stem, the characteristic ending is *-ѣ*: “*в гербѣ крпц, ... лигѣры*” (АрхЮЗР/ArkhYuZR, Ч./Ch. 1, Т./T. X, Львів/Lviv, 1637, с. 156); “*в лѣтѣ белѣли белѣхъ бѣѣ(м) прочитати*” (АППС/APPS, 1689, с. 263).

The empirical material shows that masculine nouns of the hard declension pattern may take the ending *-е* instead of *-ѣ*: “*в которомъ, деѣ, дворянъ бѣю млетностъ мою...*” (Бр./Br., Луцьк/Lutsk 1582, с. 305); *вѣ дворянъ пререкоюного его м(л) пна ...* (АГЖУ/АНZhU, 1635, с. 97) чи “*и вѣ ко(л)тѣе, где бы ено колябѣкѣ его мо(л)зъ здыбл(т) ...*” (АГЖУ/АНZhU, 1635, с. 96). The spread of the ending *-е* in place of *-ѣ* in masculine nouns in the singular locative case in unstressed positions is attributed to the vernacular element, in particular the influence of Polissia dialects: “The Polissia reflex of the old *\*-ǫ-* is clearly manifested in the formation of nouns of the locative case *\*-ǫ-* stems—under stress the ending *-ѣ* predominates, while in unstressed positions *-е* occurs” (Мойсієнко/Моусієнко, 2016, с. 178; Царалунга/Tsaralunga, 2017, с. 291).

This kind of inconsistency in flections is typical not only for one territory of the period in question and indicates their same-type pronunciation, as a modern Ukrainian *i* (Керницький/Kernytsky, 1967, с. 51). The documented flections -



ѣ, -ѣ, -н have been found in the old texts from Zhytomyr region, Lutsk, and Halychyna. According to our findings, in the masculine nouns of the hard group, this kind of flexion “mixture” does not depend on the use of a preposition or the stressed position. The texts from Zhytomyr region show the use of the locative structure with the word *хребет* combined with the preposition *в*, *на* or *по*, where a noun ends in -ѣ or -н: “*вѣ хрѣбтѣ*” (АрхІОЗР/АрkhYuZR, Ч./Ch. 3, Т./Т. І, Житомир/Zhytomyr, 1617, с. 205); “*по хрѣбтѣ*” (АрхІОЗР/АрkhYuZR, Ч./Ch. 3, Т./Т. І, Житомир/Zhytomyr, 1611, с. 165). Such variation can also be attested in the same text – the mixing of endings -ѣ and -н: “*на плечѣ(х) и на хрѣбзѣти рѣ(н) дѣбѣ(т)*” (АГЖУ/АНZhU 1635, с. 185–186) або “*на хрѣбзѣтѣ рѣ(н) шѣ(ст)*” (АГЖУ/АНZhU 1635, с. 186).

On a related note, the old texts show the mutual influence of the old declination types, for, according to language historians (Орієнко/Ohienko, 1930, с. 313), the interaction of nouns with the old \*-ѡ- and \*-ѣ- stems was documented the earliest. Thus, the nouns with \*-ѡ- can be used with the flexions typical for the \*-ѣ-: “*сѣтѣ вѣ великомѣ крѣстѣ запечатобаныѣ*” (АрхІОЗР/АрkhYuZR, Ч./Ch. 1, Т./Т. X, Львів/Lviv, 1637, с. 158).

In nouns with \*-ѣ- stems, the regular ending -ѣ is preserved: “*в домѣ того пана семѣна ... вѣномѣ*” (Бр./Br., Брацлав/Bratslav, 1585, с. 365); “*в садѣ в бѣудобанію*” (Акти Одр./Akty Odr., 1603, с. 97). However, we observe the use of the graphemes -ѣ and -н, which spread in these nouns by analogy with nouns of the former \*-ѡ- or \*-ѣѡ- stems: “*в садѣ*” (Акти Одр./Akty Odr., 1637, с. 190); “*єсть хѣ бѣ мѣстѣ вѣомѣхъ капѣрѣнѣмѣ, вѣ домѣ*” (УЄ/UYe, 1616, с. лѣ, зв.); “*в до(м)нѣ в вѣомѣ(м) перѣхѣвѣмѣ(т)*” (АГЖУ/АНZhU, 1590, с. 48).

In the prepositional-noun forms “*в+locative case*”, there are used the nouns with the \*-ѣ- stem, such as *вѣрхѣ* and *долѣ* that keep the etymological meaning -ѣ (the documented examples with these nouns indicate the lower or upper location of an object): “*вѣ вѣрхѣ того столѣ окѣвѣлѣ*” (АрхІОЗР/АрkhYuZR, Ч./Ch. 1, Т./Т. X, Львів/Lviv, 1637, с. 147); “*ѣ вѣрхѣ для забѣшенѣ*” (АрхІОЗР/АрkhYuZR, Ч./Ch. 1, Т./Т. X, Львів/Lviv, 1637, с. 147); “*з напѣомѣ ѣ вѣрхѣ и ѣ долѣ*” (АрхІОЗР/АрkhYuZR, Ч./Ch. 1, Т./Т. X, Львів/Lviv, 1637, с. 149) (may be also a variant flexion -ѣ in a collocation “*на + locative case*”: “*на долѣ в ѣкѣпѣ*” (АрхІОЗР/АрkhYuZR, Ч./Ch. 1, Т./Т. X, Львів/Lviv, 1637, с. 149). Ye. Tymchenko presents some examples of using prepositional-noun forms to signify a place, such as the lower part of an object, with the following variant

endings of nouns “*в долн/в долѣ*” (IC/IS, Т./Т. 1, Зош./Zosh. 2, с. 774). The samples of texts from the scholar’s glossary are worthy of attention. There, a noun *верхъ* combined with a preposition *на* in the meaning of “being located on the upper part of something” assumes a flection *-ѣ*, which has evolved by analogy to nouns with \**ǫ*-stems but also preserved the alternation of the guttural consonants before *-ѣ*: “*на верѣѣ*” (IC/IS, Т./Т. 1, Зош./Zosh. 1, с. 220). The same usage of the word form has been documented in the Dniestrian Ukrainian sub-dialect “*на версі*” (Верхратський/Verkh ratskyi, 1912, с. 42).

In the nouns of the hard group commonly within a single word, three variant endings may occur *-н/-є/-ѣ* or *-є/-ѣ/-ѣ*: “*лежалуѣю в повѣтѣи боебодѣи Брѣславского*” (Бр./Br., Брацлав/Bratslav 1583, с. 249) // “*и имени мон въ повѣтѣ Пинкомъ*” (АрхЮЗР/ArkhYuZR, Ч./Ch. 3, Т./Т. I, Луцьк/Lutsk, 1596, с. 80); “*въ Пинкомъ повѣтѣ*” (АрхЮЗР/ArkhYuZR, Ч./Ch. 3, Т./Т. I, Луцьк/Lutsk, 1596, с. 77); “*его постановени в земѣи листѣи написаного*” (Бр., Володимир, 1570, с. 175) // “*ѣ томъ ннѣшнемъ листѣ*” (АЮЗР/AYuZR, Т./Т. 2, Київ/Kyiv, 1605, с. 18) // “*абы о то(м) быбо(а) дала въ орѣжѣ въ ли(с)тѣ*” (АППС/APPS, 1677, с. 81), or “*Пан Іѣн Жѣрѣвницкнн, бѣдѣи в ѣдѣ*” (КЗК/KZK 1578, с. 81) // “*в ѣдѣ*” (Полев. л-ра/Polem. l-ra, с. 45); “*въ ѣдѣи належнѣи з ннѣи*” (АрхЮЗР/ArkhYuZR, Ч./Ch. 3, Т./Т. 1, Житомир/Zhytomyr, 1617, с. 212) // “*прѣидѣ до вѣ(с) в ѣдѣ*” (Полев. л-ра/Polem. l-ra, с. 45).

In masculine nouns of the old \**-jǫ*- stem, in the analyzed grammatical form, the ending *-ѣ* (*-ю*) is used instead of the regular ending *-н*: “*а набоѣи въ календарѣи н въ отправоѣи бѣи бѣи бѣи розноѣи*” (АЗР/AZR, Т./Т. 4, VIII, Краків/Krakiv, 1595, с. 109); “*Нѣ под Лѣцькомъ в манастирѣи бѣи*” (Перест./Perest., 1605–1606); “*в Пѣтенѣкомъ манастирѣи*” (Зах. Коп./Zakh. Kop., 1621–1622). For the noun *монастирь*, even a fourfold variation of endings is possible: *-н*, *-є*, *-ѣ*, *-ѣ* in the locative case singular: “*въ томъ же манастирѣи, листѣи записнѣи*” (АрхЮЗР/ArkhYuZR, Ч./Ch. 1, Т./Т. I, Клевань/Klevan 1571, с. 34); “*въ манастирѣи*” (АЗР/AZR, Т./Т. 4. VIII, Львів/Lviv, 1592, с. 43); “*дѣи бѣи в мона(с)тирѣи По(л)тавѣи*” (АППС/APPS 1674, с. 32); “*въ томъ манастирѣи*” (АрхЮЗР/ArkhYuZR, Ч./Ch. 1, Т./Т. I, 1690, с. 367). Data from the Dictionary of Old Ukrainian Language of the 14th–15th centuries also attest to variant endings in the locative case in texts of official and business language, as in the word *монастирь* *-н*, *-ѣ*, *-ю* (ССУМ/SSUM, I, с. 612).

I. Tsaralunga notes that in 14th–15th-century official and business texts, the example *у монастири* is attested in a text that geographically belongs to the southwestern dialectal area (Царалунга/Tsaralunga, 2017, Table 3.1). Regarding the hard final stem [p] in nouns of the soft declension pattern, it can be assumed that such depalatalization is connected with the influence of the vernacular. According to V. Moysiienko, the hardening of [p] was characteristic of texts written in the Polissya region (Мойсієнко/Moysiienko, 2010; Мойсієнко/Moysiienko, 2016, с. 42–43).

In his interpretation of different flections in the history of the noun change in the Ukrainian language, I. Ohienko highlights that the ancient noun stem \*-ŭ- used to be more active and spread to other declination types, especially to nouns with the \*-ŏ- stem since the proto-Slavic period (Огієнко/ Ohienko, 1930, с. 312–313). H. Strelchuk extends the explanation about the use of the flection -ŷ claiming that the accentuation was a critical factor as in nouns (the monosyllabic words) of the former \*ŏ-stem, the stress shifted to the ending, thus facilitating the consolidation of this flection rather than others. Moreover, the scholar suggests that in the nouns (with the inflection type of \*-ŏ-) with the stem in gutturals, the scribes preferred the flection -ŷ instead of the grapheme -ѣ, in order to avoid their palatalization and the “unusual pronunciation” (Стрельчук/Strelchuk, 2009). In our study, in the construction “*во+locative case*”, a monosyllabic noun *грьѣхъ* assumes both the old flection -ѣ, according to the preservation of morphonological changes (“*вѣ грѣѣѣ*” (АЗР/AZR, Т./Т. 3, 1562, с. 117); “*Н кгда когò вѣ грѣѣѣ обачимо, не оѣжжѣймо его*” (УЄ/UYe, 1616, з)), and also -ŷ, by analogy with nouns in \*-ŭ-: “*Вто-кольбекъ вѣ яко(м) кольбекъ грѣху наидоуоуѣиѣ, читѣи*” (Лѣк./Lѣк., с. VI). It is notable that most monosyllabic nouns in the modern-day Ukrainian language have variant endings -у or -і. However, in the Ukrainian language old texts from the period under analysis, the scribes relied on the old alternation of the guttural consonants presented in the word changing noun stem: “*Во страѣѣ и трепетѣ предѣтои*” (here, the prepositional noun form “*во+locative case*” means the mode of action) (АЗР/AZR Т./Т. 3, 1562, с. 117); “*истоиникъ водѣ не ѣѣиѣ во истоиниѣѣ*” (АЗР/AZR, Т./Т. 3, 1562, с. 118).

The impact of the hard group nouns on the soft group and vice versa can be seen in the previous development period of the Ukrainian language. V. Demyanchuk says that masculine nouns singular (\*-ŏ-) could assume the -ŷ ending or variant endings -ѣ, -ѣ, -и - (Дем’янчук/Demyanchuk, 1928, с. 8). However, the scholar claims that soft group nouns did not end in -ѣ or -и, but always presented the old flection -и. In our research, we documented a case of

using the noun *огнь* (former stem in \*-ї-) with the old ending -н: “*во огни не згаре(т) зра(з)*” (Подем. л-ра/Polem. l-ra, с.51); “*бѣчными члвкы в огни неугаслюмомъ мѣстѣхъ*” (УЄ/UYe 1616, с. кз зв.). Transcarpathian sub-dialects have a commonly used inflection form “*в огни*” (Верхратський/Verkhratsky, 1899, с. 64).

Masculine nouns with suffixal stems in -нк-/-ок- predominantly end with -ѣ: (в) *опрѣснокъ*; в *замочкъ*; в *дѣннѣ*; в *замкъ*; в *рынкѣ*. In the texts representing official style, we can also find the use of the old flection -ѣ in suffix-formed nouns, with or without the alternation of the gutturals and the sibilants: “*в одномъ дѣлицѣ перелз дробнѣйшыхъ*” (АрхЮЗР/ArkhYuZR, Ч./Ch.1, Т./Т. X, 1637, с. 156); “*в замкѣ дѣлкомъ*” (АрхЮЗР/ArkhYuZR, Ч./Ch. 3, Т./Т. I, с. 14); “*не было тогда в замкѣ Мнжнцкомъ*” (АрхЮЗР/ArkhYuZR, Ч./Ch. 3, Т./Т. I, с. 101). Overall, we can confirm an idea that the suffix-formed masculine nouns with the guttural-ending stems had the -ѣ flection in the texts of various locations.

According to I. Panjkevych, substantives have the flection -ѣ in inflectional forms when their word changing stem ends in *г*, *к*, *х* (Панькевич/ Panjkevych, 1938, с. 188).

Thus, in contemporary Ukrainian literary language, masculine nouns in the singular locative case are characterized by variant endings -і (-ї) and -у (-ю), which were already in use in the Middle Ukrainian period. In contrast, the normative endings -ові and -еві (-єві) (Сучасн./Suchasn., 1969, с. 104) were not attested in the material analyzed in this study.

As for the **neuter nouns**, the language of the 16<sup>th</sup> – 17<sup>th</sup> century old texts commonly reveals the endings -ѣ, -є, -и, -ы, -у.

The neuter nouns of the hard declension pattern with \*-ѣ- naturally end in -ѣ: “*в писмѣ*” (АЗР/AZR, Варшава/Varshava 1595, Т./Т. 4, VIII, с. 63); “*в селѣ Комазовѣ*” (Бр./Br., Варшава/Varshava, 1580, с. 249); “*в мѣстѣ*” (АЗР/AZR, Ч./Ch. 4, VIII, Краків/Krakiv, 1588, с. 7); “*в тѣстѣ*” (Подем. л-ра/Polem. l-ra, с.106); “*в цр(ѣ)твѣ не(ѣ)ном*” (УЄ/UYe 1637, фд), or may have variant endings -є: “*д мѣстѣ Володимиркомъ*” (АрхЮЗР/ArkhYuZR, Ч./Ch. 1, Т./Т. I, Луцьк/Lutsk, 1574, с. 44); “*д воеводствѣ*” (Бр./Br., Брацлав/Bratslav 1583, с. 249) or -и: “*д мѣстѣ Володимиркомъ*” (АрхЮЗР/ArkhYuZR, Ч./Ch. 1, Т./Т. I, Луцьк/Lutsk, 1574, с. 41); “*в селѣ Комаши*” (Бр./Br., Вінниця/Vinnitsia, 1584, с. 261). I. Ohienko, tracing variant forms of endings of neuter nouns in the locative case on the material of the *Krekhiv Apostle*, notes

that under stress the grapheme  $-ѣ$  predominates, while in unstressed positions  $-е$  or  $-и$  occurs (Огієнко/Ohiyenko, 1930, p. 326), although in our examples such a sequence is not observed. V. Moysiienko also discusses the occurrence of different endings within a single word in the singular locative form. The scholar suggests that such variation may have resulted from the layering of two vernacular elements—the northern and southern Ukrainian dialects (Мойсієнко/Moysiienko, 2010). In contemporary Ukrainian, the ending  $-і$  for neuter nouns in the analyzed grammatical form has become established as normative (Сучасн./Suchasn., 1969, c. 105).

The neuter nouns of the soft group assume the untypical flections for this declension type:  $-ѣ$ ,  $-юу$ ,  $-ю$  (originally, they belonged to nouns with  $*\ddot{u}$ -stem): “**В ПОЛЮ ... ГДЕ БЫ ЕНО КОЛѢБЕКЪ ЕГО МО(Г)ЛЪ ЗДЫБЛ(Т) ...**” (АГЖУ/АНZhU, 1635, c. 96); “**А ... В ПОЛЮ ІТЛ(Р)ШОМЪ БРАТОВИ ХВЕДОРОВИ ЧЛ(ІТ) О(Т) ГО(Н)ЧЛРЕБО(Н) ЛЕБЛАДЫ**” (АППС/APPS, 1689, c. 272); “**КОТОРІІ В МОРИ**” (Гал./Hal., 1665). To express the spatial semantics, such as the placement on a surface, the preposition *на* is used: “**НА БѢЛОМЪ ПОЛѢ ДРОБНЫЕ КВѢТН**” (АрхЮЗР/ArkhYuZR, Ч./Ch. 1, Т./Т. X, 1637, c. 171) or “**А НА ДРУГОМЪ ПОЛЮ НА ГРОУШЕВѢ**” (Акти Одр./Aktu Odr., 1596, c. 87). The Dniestrian Ukrainian sub-dialect and also the Upper Sannian dialect have kept the old flection  $-и$  typical for the  $*-j\ddot{o}$ -stem nouns: “**В ПОЛИ**” (Верхратський/Verkh ratsky, 1912, c. 78), while in the modern-day Ukrainian language, the soft group nouns commonly have the  $-і$  (Сучасн./Suchasn., 1969, c. 105).

The suffix-formed nouns with the stem ending in the guttural, we can see a similar situation as in the cases with masculine nouns: the use of the etymological ending  $-ѣ$  in the inflectional form after the guttural: “**В МѢСТЕЧКѢ**” (АрхЮЗР/ArkhYuZR, Ч./Ch. 3, Т./Т. I, Луцьк/Lutsk 1595, c. 86).

On the other hand, the nouns with the word changing stem in  $у$  can have the flection  $ы$ , which, evidently, implies the preservation of the non-palatalized pronunciation of the consonant: “**В ТО(М) МѢ(ІТ)ЦЫ И ТО ЕЩЕ ТО(Ж) ЗЕМАН І(ІТ) ДЪ ГО(Р)ЛОБЦИННѢ**” (ККПС/ККPS, 1595, c. 63). Within a single charter, it is also possible for the same word to take the analogous ending  $-ѣ$ , characteristic of nouns of the former  $*-й$ - stems: “**В МѢСТЦѢ**” (ККПС/ККPS 1595, c. 63). I. Tsaralunga notes such variable spelling and the variation in marking the hardness of  $у$  in the language of Ukrainian written documents of the 14th–15th centuries. The linguist suggests that the depalatalization of  $у$  reflects features of northern Ukrainian dialects (Царалунга/Tsaralunga, 2017, c. 345). Notably, the analyzed examples originate from the Kyiv region.

The neuter nouns (former stems ending in a consonant – *слово, міло*) show the influence of the stems with \*-ǫ-, which explains the use of the -ѣ ending: “*НЕ ХОТѢИ ЛЮДЕ(М) В СЛОВѢ ЗОРѢТИ*” (Кл./Кл., с. 213); “*И МЫ В ТѢЛѢ СМЕРТЕЛНОМЪ БѢДѢИ*” (УС/УYe, 1637, ѿв).

In the locative structures, the neuter \*-jǫ-stem noun *серце* is one of the most polyflectional. The evidence material (such as the ancient texts of the confessional, official, and polemic styles) indicates the lack of consistency in the choice of the endings of this word. It is characterized by the four variant set of flections: -н, -ы, -ѣ, -ѣ. It is typical to have the ending -н, the same as for the soft group nouns: “*во серци божьей*” (АЗР/AZR, Т./Т. 4, VIII, Варшава/Varshava, 1593, с. 62); “*во бже(м) срд(а)ци божьей*” (УЄ/UYe 1637, ф51). Language historians highlight that the flection may be replaced by another flection -ы, common to the ancient texts from the northern Ukrainian territories (Керницький/ Kernytskyu, 1967, с. 74): “*и не маетъ бгъ в срд(а)цы божьей*” (УЄ/UYe, 1637, ф51) – is a sample of the Teaching Gospel published in Kyiv by the publishing house of the Kyiv Pechersk Lavra. The flection -и in the noun *серце* has been preserved in the Transcarpathian dialect (Панькевич/Panjkevych, 1938, с. 241), and it is also known in the Halychyna old texts (Керницький/ Kernytskyu, 1967, с. 74). I. Kernytskyu says that the nouns with the palatalized ending stems mostly preserve their old flection -н. In few cases, though, we still have -ы, and the alternation of flections -н and -ы “offers ground to believe that the locative case flection was pronounced in speech varieties as the modern-day *i* or as the modern-day *u*” (Керницький/ Kernytskyu, 1967, с. 51).

The noun *серце* presents the –ŷ ending inherited from the \*-ŷ- stems: “*Н рдо(ст) в ср(д)цѹ кож(д)ого з на(с) проквѣтает*” (KIC/KIS, Львів/Lviv, 1616, ЧИОНЛ/ChIONL XXIII/3 67); “*смакъ цѣлѣнбогѣи ..., ѿ голодѣи рокошеи бѣчныхъ в срдцѣ своемъ почудеть*” (KIC/KIS, Київ/Kyiv, 1631 Триод. (Передм.)/Triod (Peredm.)); “*и мѣмо нхъ носити збѣды в срдцѣ своемъ*” (KIC/KIS, б. м. н./b.m.n., к. XVI ст., УЄ/UYe №31, с. 43).

We also find the flection –*ŝ* in the prepositional-noun collocation with other prepositions, such as *по*, нл: “*Оу́мысли(л) на ср(д)цоу́ свое(м) речѣ́ добрѣ́ю*” (Полем. л-ра/Polem.l-ra, с. 215.); with the preposition *по* the construction assumes attributive-adverbial semantics and characterizes a person or an object (Історія/Istoriia, 1978, с. 147–148): “*Знашолемѣзъ Абд(л) моужа ... по ср(д)цоу́ моему́ то єсть по ср(д)цоу́ н мысли́ Бжой*” (Полем. л-ра/Polem.l-ra, с. 214).

In general, it is not typical for the neuter gender nouns of the soft group to have the inflectional grapheme *-ѣ*. Few such examples have been found. Thus, a noun *серце* assumes the ending *-ѣ*, by analogy with neuter gender nouns of the hard group: “*НЕО ДѢХЪ БЛАГОМЪ ГНЕЗДА СМЕРЕННАГО НА ВЪ ТВОЕМЪ СЕРАЦѢ... НЕ ИМѢЕТ...*” (KIC/KIS, 1608–1609, Виш./Vysh., Зач./Zach., с. 221).

The flection *-у(-ю)* “*в серцю*” is common in speech varieties from Transcarpathia. I. Panjkevych claims that the neuter nouns mostly have this form in Hutsul region, and in the Maramures (Панькевич/Panjkevych, 1938, с. 241). In the modern-day Ukrainian language, has two normative flections for this word: *-і* and *-у(-ю)*.

In the old texts of the 16<sup>th</sup> – 17<sup>th</sup> century Ukrainian language, the neuter nouns with the former *-і(j)*-stems (Мойсієнко/Моysiienko, 2016, с.178) having the flection *-не(-ѣ)* in the nominative, the prepositional case-related forms mostly have the *-ѣ(-ю)* flection by the analogy to the singular dative form of nouns of the soft declension pattern (Мойсієнко/Моysiienko, 2016, с. 178–179): “*БѢДОКАНЮ*” (Акти Одр./Akty Odr., 1637, с. 190). The *-ю* form is found in the south-west dialects (Бевзенко/Bevzenko, 1960, с. 73; Панькевич/Panjkevych, 1938, с. 241–242), while the literary language keeps the *-і* under the influence of the declension type of the non-palatalized nouns with *\*-ѡ*.

**Conclusions and Prospects.** In the Ukrainian language of the 16th–17th centuries, the prepositional–case construction “*Б + noun Loc.Sing.*” exhibits the use of variant endings for masculine, feminine, and neuter nouns in the singular locative case. In feminine nouns of the hard declension group, the old ending *-ѣ* is typical in the singular, but it could be replaced by the inflections *-и* or *-ѣ*. Overall, the ending *-ѣ* also spreads to other declension patterns of nouns of the former *\*jā*- and *\*ū*- stems. The use of the ending *-ѣ* is mostly attested in texts written in the territories of Zhytomyr and Volyn, i.e., regions belonging to the northern Ukrainian dialect area. Masculine nouns, in contrast, exhibit a considerable number of variant endings in the singular locative. In the analyzed texts, nouns of the former *\*ѡ*- and *\*ū*- stems most often display interactions between these declension types, indicating that the system of inflection had not yet been fully stabilized. Masculine nouns with the regular ending *-ѣ* could also take *-ѡ*, or vice versa, and could adopt the ending *-ѣ*, which reflected the Polissya reflex of the old *\*ě* in unstressed positions. Neuter nouns are characterized, depending on the hard or soft declension pattern, primarily by the use of old endings, although they could also adopt the declension patterns of nouns of former *\*ѡ*- or *\*ū*- stems. For nouns with a *-і(j)* stem, the singular locative ending followed by analogy the dative case pattern of nouns of *\*jō*- stems.

Variant forms in the declension of nouns depend on many factors, as the study confirms. On the one hand, we can see no fixed and robust word change system in the Ukrainian language of the 16th–17th centuries, the urge to search for the enhancement of the grammar structure in the language, and for its codification in the future. On the other hand, the choice of noun flections might have also depended on the accentuation causes, derivational features, such as suffixes used to form, in particular, the masculine nouns, analogy-based influences, orthographic traditions, local speech varieties maintained by scribes (mostly in the official style texts). Most of the found flections entered the normative usage of the modern-day Ukrainian language in the locative singular: in the feminine, the flection *–i*, in the masculine *–y* (*–ю*), *–i* (*–ї*), in neuter *–i* (*–ї*), *–y* (*–ю*). It is notable that the remains of the old declension type for nouns established themselves in the dialect space: for the feminine, it is the flections *–и*, *–е*, for the masculine, *–и*, *–е*, *–y*, for the neuter, *–y* (*–ю*), *–и*. Some of the documented forms are still in use in a sub-dialectal paradigm, such as the north and south-west Ukrainian territories. We see a **prospect for further research** in expanding the corpus of texts in order to observe and elucidate the processes of formation of noun case endings and, where possible, to document their development throughout the historical evolution of the Ukrainian language.

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