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Historical syntax has been a neglected area of Russian historical grammar. Studies in this area are limited to the descriptive characterization of syntactic processes.

The present monography aims at breaking with the descriptive tradition and tries to provide an explanation to syntactic changes. The investigation of 14th century participle constructions in the text of the Suzdal Chronicle stand in the center of the present research. The use of participles differed both formally and functionally from their present state. Old Russian participles are investigated by employing a contemporary formal theory of linguistics, Chomsky's Government and Binding theory. This theoretical framework can give an explanation to the use of participles in predicative function, and to the nominative, dative and PRO subjects of these constructions.

The book also gives a survey of Russian diachronic syntactic research, the types of diachronic syntactic processes, and the development of participle constructions. In the course of investigation special attention is paid to a unique feature of the 14th century Russian, the so called dative absolute constructions.