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Ne + infinitive constructions in Old English[1]

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The occurrence of the Old English negative particle *ne* 'not' preceding a bare infinitive rather than a finite verb is a largely neglected or overlooked phenomenon. It is attested in constructions with *uton* 'let's' and in conjoined clauses with omission of the finite verb (Mitchell 1985). This article discusses evidence gathered mainly from the *York–Toronto–Helsinki Parsed Corpus of Old English Prose*, showing that it is a phenomenon that needs to be taken seriously in descriptions and analyses of Old English. It is argued that the factor shared by the two constructions is the lack of an available finite verb for *ne* to attach to. It is also found that the use of *ne* for the purpose of negative concord appears to be more variable with infinitives than it is with finite verbs. Whether attachment of *ne* to a non-finite verb in the absence of a finite one is restricted to bare infinitives is difficult to determine because of the limited evidence relating to other non-finite forms, but there are some indications that use of *ne* may have been possible with present participles. Finally, some implications that the *ne* + infinitive pattern has for the formal analysis of Old English are discussed.

1 Introduction

A common generalisation about the placement of the negative particle *ne* 'not' in Old English (OE) is that it always occurs immediately before the finite verb (e.g. van Kemenade 1999: 152; Fischer *et al.* 2000: 54, 140; Ingham 2007: 390). It has mostly been taken for granted that this generalisation is correct and admittedly the data would appear to give good grounds for accepting it. The position of *ne* depends on that of the finite verb; finite verb placement varies in OE, but regardless of where in the clause the finite verb occurs, *ne* immediately precedes it, as illustrated in (1).

(1) (a) **Ne mæg** se deofol mannum derian butan Godes ðafunge
not may the devil men harm without God's permission
'The devil cannot harm people without God's permission' (*ÆLS* (*Auguries*) 196)[2]
(b) þæt se wælhreowa deofol **ne mæg** mannum derian mid nanre
that the cruel devil not may men harm with no

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[2] The system of reference for the location of examples adopted throughout this article is based on the one used in Cameron *et al.* (1981). For details, see Healey & Venezky (1980 [1985]).

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untrumnysse . . . butan Drihtnes geþafunge
illness without Lord's permission
'that the cruel devil cannot harm men with any illness . . . without the Lord's permission' (*ÆLS* (*Auguries*) 174)

(c) þæt he us derian **ne mæg**
that he us harm not may
'so that he cannot harm us' (*ÆLS* (*Auguries*) 205)

It is also true that instances where the negative particle is not adjacent to a finite verb are extremely rare in OE. However, Mitchell (1985) mentions two contexts where *ne* may occur before an infinitive rather than a finite verb. If this is the case, the commonly accepted generalisation about the placement of *ne* would not be completely accurate, which would have consequences for both descriptions and analyses of OE. It is important, then, to establish whether *ne* can indeed attach to infinitives in specific contexts, and if so, to what extent and under which conditions. This article focuses on answering those questions.

To begin, let us briefly review what is stated about these cases in the literature. The first context where *ne* + infinitive occurs according to Mitchell involves *uton*, which combines with bare infinitives to form a first-person plural adhortative construction comparable to present-day English *let's*. An example, with *ne* before the infinitive, is given in (2).

(2) Uton la **ne toslitan** þa tunecan
let-us lo not asunder-tear the tunic
'Let's not tear asunder the tunic' (*HomS* 24 (*ScraggVerc* 1) 218 [Mitchell 1985: §916a])

The second environment identified by Mitchell concerns coordination, specifically when the finite verb is not repeated in the conjunct with the relevant infinitive, as illustrated in (3).

(3) Wa bið þæm ðe sceal
woe is to-him who must
þurh sliðne nið sawle bescufan
through cruel affliction soul thrust
in fyres fæþm, frofre **ne wenan**,
in fire's embrace comfort not hope
wihte gewendan
at-all change
'Woe shall be to him who, through cruel affliction, must thrust his soul into the embrace of fire, not hope for comfort, not change at all' (*Beo* 183 [Mitchell 1985: §1602])

The two contexts where the construction is said to occur are likely to be rare and very low frequency is probably part of the reason why the phenomenon has largely been ignored or overlooked so far.[3] Moreover, those who are aware of the existence of

[3] A partial exception is Wallage (2005: 78), who identifies the construction with *uton* (without mention of Mitchell (1985) or the coordination context). I will come back briefly to Wallage (2005) in section 4.

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examples like (2) and (3) might with some degree of justification have written them off as anomalous. In the case of *uton*, Mitchell (1985: §916a) gives three examples with *ne* before the infinitive, but he draws attention to 'the scarcity of examples with an intervening negative adverb', which he thinks might suggest 'that the use of *uton* to express prohibitions was not a natural one'. He raises the possibility of some degree of Latin influence – the instance in (2), for example, corresponds to Latin *Non scindamus eam*, with the negative adverb *non* before the (subjunctive) main verb – although he is quick to point out that they cannot be regarded as mechanical glosses.[4] Commenting on an example with *na* instead of *ne*, given in (4), he states that here 'we have the more natural *na*' (Mitchell 1985: §916a), referring to a paragraph where he says that 'In the prose, words (other than finite verbs) and phrases are regularly negated by *na*/*no*' (Mitchell 1985: §1614).

(4) And uton **na forgytan** þæt we symle sceolon gewilnian þa heofonlican
and let-us not forget that we always must desire the heavenly
'And let us not forget that we must always desire the heavenly (places)'
(*HomS* 45, 149 [Mitchell 1985: §916a])

Mitchell, then, clearly regards *na* rather than *ne* as the expected form of negation in this construction. He further suggests that analogy with *ne* + infinitive found in the coordination environment may have been involved in the appearance of *uton ne* + infinitive.

As for the coordination context, Mitchell states that '*ne* or *na* precedes the (first) negated infinitive' (1985: §1602). However, he gives just one example with *ne*: the one from *Beowulf* given in (3) above. He adds a reference to two further examples, but both involve *na* and neither is directly comparable to the instance with *ne*.[5] Mitchell then points to Einenkel (1912) for more information.

Einenkel clearly regards the use of *ne* (rather than *na*/*no*) with the infinitive as both rare and erroneous (Einenkel 1912: 208). He describes the *Beowulf* example as generally marked by the awkwardness of its phrasing. In any case, of course, examples from poetry should be treated with caution if there is no good evidence from prose to support the grammaticality of the construction, given that influence from metre is difficult to rule out. Einenkel does provide two examples from prose texts, given in (5) below, but they are problematic because they involve manuscript variation; not all

[4] Compare Jäger's (2008: 70ff.) observations on the cognate Old High German particle *ni* 'not'. This particle is also normally restricted to a position immediately before the finite verb, but it occasionally occurs before non-finite forms in one particular translation from Latin, normally in the absence of a finite verb such as in absolute constructions that mirror the corresponding Latin. She concludes that these examples are 'probably ungrammatical loan constructions' (2008: 71). The only non-translated instance she found in another text appears to involve scribal error (accidental repetition over a page turn; the phrase is deleted in the manuscript, as noted in Piper's (1883) edition of the text concerned). In the absence of examples without probable Latin influence or scribal error, Jäger's conclusion seems justified.

[5] The first example does not involve coordination of clauses (*na* is coordinated with another adverb phrase) and the second occurs before an inflected infinitive rather than a bare infinitive.

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extant witnesses have *ne* + infinitive.[6] Einenkel implies that we are dealing with scribal error in both cases.

(5) (a) ne dear ic naht þristelice be þissere wisan reccan ne **ne scrifan**.
not dare I not rashly about this matter instruct nor not prescribe
'I dare not instruct or prescribe rashly about this matter'
(*GDPref* and 4 (C) 44.332.12 [Einenkel 1912: 208])

(b) Ne sceal mon yfel mid yfele gyldan, ne nanum men nænne teonan **ne** **don**
not must one evil with evil pay nor no man no wrong not do
'One must not repay evil with evil, nor do anyone any wrong'
(*BenR* 4.17.10 [Einenkel 1912: 208])

Scribal corruption is certainly a possibility for (5a); unintentional repetition (dittography) is a plausible error, and the other manuscript has *ne scyran* 'nor decree' instead of *ne ne scrifan*. For (5b), two of the five manuscripts omit *ne*, which could indicate that the construction was not natural for OE and that it was altered by one or more subsequent scribes for that reason. In addition, Latin influence is a possible factor in (5b), given the parallel *non* 'not' + infinitive found in the source text.[7] Of course, the translator could have chosen to use *na* as a translation for *non* if *ne* was ungrammatical here, so it is not clear that Latin influence can easily be held fully responsible for the use of *ne* in (5b). On the other hand, it is also difficult to rule out the possibility of Latin influence in cases of this type; a translator might occasionally use the most common translation for a particular word in a context where it is not appropriate, even if that seems less likely in a reasonably free translation than in a word-by-word gloss or very close translation.

Unlike Einenkel, Mitchell does not appear to think *ne* is erroneous in the coordination context. However, the information he provides still seems to imply that *na*/*no* is the normal form. Consequently, the evidence and discussion found in Mitchell (1985) and Einenkel (1912) might well lead a reader to conclude that, at least as far as prose is concerned, there is little that would justify a revision of the rule on the placement of OE *ne*.

In addition, it might be possible to explain away a few apparent examples of *ne* preceding something other than a finite verb by treating it as a rare scribal variant of *na*. The spelling <ne> can very occasionally be found in cases that clearly involve constituent negation and/or where there is another instance of *ne* immediately before the finite verb, as illustrated in (6).

[6] In addition, Einenkel (1912: 209) gives an example which he describes as having an infinitive used as a subjunctive (the use of *ne* is still seen as erroneous): *Dæræfter* ***ne slean*** *man; ne unriht hæme; ne stele;* 'after that, do not kill anyone; do not commit adultery; do not steal' (*BenRW* 23.14). There is no mention of such use of infinitives in Mitchell (1985), and the example occurs in an early thirteenth-century manuscript, so it is not reliable evidence for OE. Latin influence is also possible (it corresponds to *non occidere*).

[7] Lat. *Malum pro malo non reddere. Iniuriam non facere* (D'Aronco 1983: 121–2).

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(6) (a) He nolde næfre lyffettan ne mid olecunge spræcan **ne** furðon to þam
he not-would never flatter nor with charm speak not even to the
casere
emperor
'He would never flatter or speak with charm, not even to the emperor'
(*ÆLS (Martin)* 626)

(b) þæt hi **ne** leng ut of mynstre ne beon þonne . . .
that they not longer out of monastery not are than
'that they are not out of the monastery any longer than . . . ' (*WHom* 10a, 36)

It must be stressed that this is rare. Even so, it does happen, so it might be possible to argue that an occasional example of <ne> before an infinitive is actually a spelling variant of *na*. However, such an interpretation would only be plausible if <na> or <no> is indeed found in the vast majority of instances.

The question, then, is whether the apparent occurrence of *ne* before an infinitive following *uton* or in the coordination context needs to be taken seriously. And if so, how common is it? Is *na* the norm and *ne* a possible but less frequent alternative, or is *ne* the rule rather than the exception? This study seeks to answer those questions on the basis of a collection of data on both constructions from the *York–Toronto–Helsinki Parsed Corpus of Old English Prose* (YCOE; Taylor *et al.* 2003).[8] In the case of *uton*, the unparsed *Dictionary of Old English Corpus* (DOE Corpus; Cameron *et al.* 1981) has also been used. Sections 2 and 3 discuss the data for *uton* and the coordination context, respectively. On the basis of those data, I will show that the occurrence of *ne* before bare infinitives is indeed a phenomenon that needs be taken seriously in descriptions and analyses of OE, particularly in the case of the coordination context. Section 4 focuses on identifying the precise conditions under which *ne* may combine with a non-finite verb. I will suggest that the crucial property linking the *uton* and coordination contexts is the lack of an available finite verb. I will also explore whether there are any further constraints on attachment of *ne* to bare infinitives, especially in relation to contexts containing other negative elements, and I will discuss the very limited evidence relating to non-finite forms other than bare infinitives. While the primary concern of this article is with the more descriptive aspects of the *ne* + infinitive phenomenon, implications for the formal analysis of OE are touched on briefly in section 5. This is followed by the conclusion in section 6.

[8] The YCOE was searched using CorpusSearch, written by Beth Randall. All cited examples were checked against a printed edition, and information on manuscript variants usually derives from that source. (In a few cases, facsimile material was checked.) The editions consulted were normally those used in the YCOE; for details, see www-users.york.ac.uk/~lang22/YCOE/info/YcoeTextInfo.htm Alternative/additional editions used are Bazire & Cross (1982), Cubbin (1996), D'Aronco (1983), Irvine (2004), Liuzza (1994, 2000), O'Brien O'Keefe (2001) and Schröer (1888). Where the possibility of Latin influence needed to be checked for, *Fontes Anglo-Saxonici* was consulted to locate the source when not provided in the edition of the OE text.

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2 Data on *ne* + infinitive after *uton*

As seen in the previous section, the information given in Mitchell (1985) would lead us to believe that *ne* is a possible but less common alternative to *na* in the construction with *uton* plus negated infinitive. This section discusses the findings from the OE corpora to see whether that is borne out by the data.

Just five examples of *uton ne* + infinitive were found in the YCOE, all given in (7) below. No additional examples were found in the DOE Corpus.

(7) (a) uton **ne forlætan** gyet ðas boc
let-us not abandon yet this book
'let us not yet abandon this book' (*Solil* 1, 50.14 [Mitchell 1985: §916a])

(b) (= (2)) Þa cwædon hie: Uton, la, **ne toslitan** þa tunecan
(*HomS* 24 (*ScraggVerc* 1) 218 [Mitchell 1985: §916a])

(c) Uton **ne agildan** yfel ongean his god
let-us not repay evil against his goodness
'Let us not repay his goodness with evil' (*HomM* 13 (*ScraggVerc* 21) 98)

(d) & uto **ne georwenan** us
and let-us not despair us
'and let us not despair' (*HomM* 13 (*ScraggVerc* 21) 231)

(e) & uton **ne lætan** hie diofol þurh his searwa us fram animan
and let-us not let them devil through his cunning us from away-take
'and we should not allow the devil to take them away from us through his cunning'
(*HomU* 7 (*ScraggVerc* 22) 206 [Mitchell 1985: §916a])

The number of instances with *ne* + infinitive in the *uton* context is very small, then. However, a search for instances with *na*/*no* found no examples at all in the YCOE, and only one in the DOE Corpus: the example already cited from Mitchell in (4) above.[9] So while, with Mitchell (1985: §916a), we might have expected *na* to be the more obvious choice in this construction, that is not in fact supported by the data.

As Mitchell acknowledges, the construction with *ne* cannot be treated as a straightforward calque (notwithstanding his suggestion of a possible degree of Latin influence): none of the examples in (7) with a known Latin source involve a negated infinitive in the Latin. Two, (7b) and (7c), do correspond to negated subjunctive verbs in the Latin, so that 'the *sense* . . . of the negated Latin verb is conveyed by the OE infinitive' (Mitchell 1985: §916a), but they could have been translated with negated subjunctives. The translation in (7a) appears to be quite free,[10] and (7d) may be an original addition (Scragg 1992: 364). Since Latin influence could at best provide a partial explanation for only a subset of the examples, it does not look like it really helps to account for the use of *ne* + infinitive with *uton*.

[9] There are also no instances of *uton* constructions with other negative phrases such as *næfre* 'never' in the YCOE, and I did not find any instances with placement of the negative particle *ne* before *uton* rather than the infinitive in either the YCOE or the DOE Corpus.

[10] Latin *Non sinam omnino concludi hunc libellum* 'I will not let this book be ended at all'.

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The very low numbers do mean that caution is required. Moreover, it will be clear from (7) that all but one of the examples with *ne* are found in the *Vercelli Homilies*. In addition, those four examples are all from homilies for which the Vercelli manuscript is the only surviving witness. The sole example from a different text, (7a), is from *Soliloquies*, which only survives in a twelfth-century manuscript and might therefore not be representative of OE. In addition, the spelling <ne> for *na*/*no* may be becoming more frequent by that time; it is attested elsewhere in *Soliloquies*, so a single example of pre-infinitival *ne* could potentially be ascribed to that factor.[11] In short, just one manuscript (the Vercelli Book) gives apparently solid evidence for the existence of *uton* + *ne* + infinitive.

To complicate matters somewhat further, the YCOE data might suggest that the frequency of the spelling <ne> in the Vercelli Book for what we would expect to be <na> or <no> (in contexts other than with *uton*) is higher than usual. In the YCOE as a whole, the frequency of <ne> spellings for *na* is no more than 2 per cent,[12] but for the *Vercelli Homilies* specifically it could have been as high as 12.5 per cent, according to the YCOE: four instances of <ne> are parsed as the negative adverb *na* in that text file, against 28 instances of <na> or <no>. However, this would still not be high enough to justify explaining the four <ne> forms before the infinitive in *uton* constructions as spelling variants of *na*, especially given that the form <na>/<no> is not found at all with *uton* in the *Vercelli Homilies*. Moreover, at least three of the four apparent examples of <ne> for *na* have an alternative interpretation and/or are problematic for other reasons, so there is no good basis for believing that this manuscript really has an unusually high frequency of <ne> spellings of *na*.[13,14]

To sum up, then, there are no good grounds for treating the examples with *uton* as anything other than genuine cases of *ne* + infinitive, at least in the case of those from

[11] There are four potential instances in the YCOE files of this text against 23 of <na> or <no>. At least two of those (*SolilPref* 1.8 and *Solil* 1, 16.5) look like straightforward cases. *Solil* 2, 61.16 may be an instance too. *Solil* 3, 69.9 *and ne magon heom þeah na nane gode* ***ne*** *beon* 'and can nevertheless not be any good to them' is probably another case since a second instance of <ne> is present before the finite verb, but the additional presence of <na> in the clause makes the example hard to interpret, plus *beon* is an abbreviated form in the manuscript (expanded to the finite form *beoþ* instead by one editor).

[12] Thirty-seven instances of <ne> are parsed as the negative adverb *na* in the YCOE compared to 1,941 instances of <na>/<no>; at least five of the 37 should be excluded (apparent errors in the corpus or edition) but there are also five instances of <ne> parsed as the negative particle *ne* which are probably <ne> spellings of *na* (they involve reasonably clear cases of constituent negation and/or *ne* is also found before the finite verb).

[13] Two examples found in a single passage (*HomS* 40.3 [*ScraggVerc* 10] 45) can easily be reinterpreted as involving the coordinator *ne* 'nor' if we assume a slightly different clause division than the one suggested by the editorial punctuation. On the evidence of the other witnesses, *HomS* 40.3 [*ScraggVerc* 10] 246 is probably a case of scribal corruption that also involves 'nor' (accidental omission of the word preceding *ne*). That leaves *HomU* 6 [*ScraggVerc* 15] 49 *þæt nænig man ne wat to secganne* ***ne*** *nænigum eorðcyninge be ðam scipliðendum* 'that no one knows how to tell any king of land about the seamen'. Here the placement of <ne> following an inflected infinitive looks unusual even for *na*; there are no other witnesses to confirm, but there might be scribal corruption of some sort.

[14] According to the YCOE data there is also one potential instance of *ne* separated from the finite verb in the *Vercelli Homilies* (*HomS* 40.3 [*ScraggVerc* 10] 181), but this example is more plausibly interpreted as involving a *ne* . . . *ne* 'neither . . . nor' construction. That is in fact the only possible interpretation in the other four witnesses, where another instance of *ne* is found in its expected position before the finite verb.

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Vercelli. The existence of just one example with *na* in the DOE Corpus also suggests that <ne> really is *ne* in this context. Even so, the data on *uton* do not allow very confident or sweeping conclusions. Specifically, we cannot conclude on the basis of these examples that the construction was generally available in OE. Mitchell appears to be right in his assessment that *uton* was not normally used to express prohibitions. What little evidence there is for the construction is largely confined to a single manuscript. So the data suggest that *ne* + infinitive may have been normal with *uton* to the extent that *uton* was used in combination with negation, and it almost certainly was normal in at least one variety of OE, but they are insufficient for anything stronger than that.

3 Data on *ne* + infinitive in the coordination context

In section 1 we saw that, on the basis of the information found in the available literature, the evidence for *ne* + infinitive in the coordination context appeared to be weak. The only relatively unproblematic example cited so far, i.e. (3), was from verse rather than prose. However, the data discussed in this section will show that the evidence for this construction is actually much stronger than the information in Mitchell (1985) or Einenkel (1912) suggests.[15]

There are 19 instances of *ne* + infinitive in the coordination context in the YCOE (plus three duplicates, which are excluded from the counts). Clearly we are dealing with an infrequent construction, as expected, but there are in fact significantly more examples of *ne* + infinitive in the coordination context than was the case for *uton*. Five of these conjuncts are introduced by the negative coordinator *ne* 'nor'; they will be discussed separately for reasons that will become clear. I will first focus on the 14 instances where the coordinator is not negative (normally the conjunction *and*, but omitted in one instance involving a sequence of conjoined clauses). A few examples are given in (8). The instances not given in (8) or elsewhere in this section can be found in the Appendix.

(8) (a) we willað eac þæt andgit eow geopenian. and ða dygelnysse
we want also that understanding to-you open and the mysteries
eow **ne bedyrnan**;
to-you not conceal
'we also want to open up that understanding to you and not conceal the mysteries from you' (*ÆCHom* II, 12.2, 122.414)

(b) Hi sculon Godes ege habban on gemynde and **ne eargian** for worldege
they must God's fear have in mind and not fear for world-fear

[15] The data collection was restricted to examples involving bare infinitives. Definite cases of constituent negation were excluded automatically by the searches used. It is unlikely that any potentially relevant instances were missed as a result; the policy adopted by Taylor *et al.* (2003) was to parse *na* and other negative elements as sentential negators whenever such an interpretation was possible (even if unlikely).

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ealles to swiðe.
entirely too much
'They must keep fear of God in mind and not be afraid of earthly fear at all.'
(*WPol* 2.1.2, 45 [also *WPol* 2.1.1, 62])

A slight complication arises with the data, in that three of the examples are also dependent on *uton* – not present in the conjunct concerned itself – as exemplified in (9).

(9) utan nu efstan & ealle ure lifwegas geornlice rihtan, & **ne latian**
let-us now hasten and all our life-ways diligently correct and not delay
na to lange ne ealles to swyðe
not too long nor all too greatly
'let us hasten now and correct the ways of our lives diligently and not delay too long or at all' (*WHom* 10c, 196)

The possibility of influence from *uton* means that it is not entirely clear that such examples are necessarily evidence for the construction with coordination. Nevertheless, I think it is probably safe to include them here (certainly safer than assuming that *uton* is the crucial factor, with firm evidence for that construction being all but limited to the Vercelli Book).[16] In any case, the evidence for the existence of the construction in the coordination context would remain strong even if these three were excluded, although admittedly it would be even more highly concentrated on the language of one particular author than it already is.

While the examples come from a wider range of texts than was the case for *uton*, no fewer than seven are found in the works of Ælfric, and one further instance comes from a section of the translation of *Numbers* that has also been attributed to Ælfric.[17] One of these examples is similar to (9), i.e. it involves dependency on *uton*, but the remainder are straightforward cases. Several are from Ælfric's *Catholic Homilies*, for which we have very good contemporary evidence as well as multiple additional copies confirming the form <ne>, e.g. (8a).[18]

The number of examples alone is enough to suggest that this construction was genuine, at least in the case of Ælfric's language. Moreover, the spelling <ne> for *na* in the works of Ælfric is vanishingly rare. There are just two instances of <ne> parsed as a negative adverb in the relevant YCOE files against more than 600 instances of <na>/<no>. The first case was already given in (6a) above. The two extant witnesses both have <ne>, but *ne furðon* frequently means 'nor even' (i.e. with the coordinator *ne*), so the spelling <ne> would have been comparatively easy to escape notice to a

[16] If Mitchell's suggestion that analogy with the coordination context could be a factor in the occurrence of *ne* + infinitive with *uton* is on the right track, they do show how its use in the coordination context might have led to its appearance in clauses with *uton*.

[17] See Pope (1967: 143) and Clemoes (1959) for information on which parts of the OE *Heptateuch* can be attributed to Ælfric.

[18] The apparatus in Clemoes (1997) and Godden (1979) does not note spelling variants but variation between <ne> and <na> has apparently been treated as lexical variation, so it is noted.

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copying scribe in this context. In the second case, *ne læs* 'no less' (*ÆCHom* I, 30, 435.182), only the base manuscript has <ne>, while the other manuscripts have *na* or *na ðe*. This is in sharp contrast with what we find for the examples of *ne* with infinitives found in Ælfric's writings, where there is very little manuscript variation involved. In most cases, all surviving copies agree on *ne*. Even in the two cases where there is some disagreement between witnesses, the form <na> is found in just one of these two instances and it involves a single twelfth-century manuscript at that; the other case involves omission of the negation, which looks like a scribal error (examples (A1) and (A3), respectively, in the Appendix). Thus, the examples of *ne* + infinitive from Ælfric can definitely not be treated as occasional <ne> spellings for *na*. The near-absence of manuscript variation in addition suggests that the copying scribes were generally at least willing to accept the construction.

The evidence for the grammaticality of the construction in Ælfric's prose can be strengthened still further. The YCOE contains an additional instance of *ne* + infinitive from Ælfric found in a very similar construction, given in (10). The only difference is that the infinitival clause is appositional rather than coordinated – it explains the meaning of the preceding infinitive *don* 'do'.[19]

(10) Swa we sceolon eac don, gif we snotere beoð, **ne lætan**[20] us nan þing
so we must also do if we wise are not regard us no thing
swa leof swa urne Hælend, þe is ure heafod
as dear as our lord who is our head
'Thus we must do as well if we are wise, i.e. not consider anything as dear to us as our Lord, who is our head' (*ÆHom* 17, 243)

Aside from the potential problem of classification with examples that involve *uton* as well as coordination, most examples in this context look straightforward and convincing. I have also seen little that could be attributed to possible influence from a Latin original. One example that does look unusual, though, is (11a). The use of the coordinator *and* is unexpected here, given that the coordinated clauses are both negative. By contrast, the reading in the *Peterborough Chronicle* in (11b) has the expected coordinator *ne* 'nor' instead and omits the negative particle. The possibility of error in the case of (11a) cannot be excluded. But on the strength of the other examples, the use of *ne* + infinitive in this context is plausible in principle, and the fact that it occurs in two versions of the *Anglo-Saxon Chronicle* suggests it was probably not an error.

(11) (a) þæt man ne mihte geþencan and **ne asmeagan** hu . . .
that one not could imagine and not devise how
'that one could not imagine or devise a way how . . .'
(*ChronC* 1006.30; also *ChronD* 1006.33)

[19] In Ælfrician material not included in the YCOE I found another example of this type, as well as two addional instances of *ne* + infinitive in the coordination context: *ÆCHom* I, 17 (*App*) 537.80 *don . . . ne geefenlæcan* 'do . . ., i.e. not match' (two manuscripts have a finite form instead); *ÆAbusMor* 247 *ne abitan* 'not consume' and *ÆAbusMor* 240 *ne gyman* 'not take heed' (paralleled in *ÆAbusWarn*).

[20] The YCOE codes *ne* as a coordinating conjunction here, but that does not fit the meaning. The other surviving manuscript has *læton*, and *ne* is a conjectural reading for that manuscript.

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(b) þet man ne mihte geþeoncean ne asmægian hu . . . (*ChronE* 1006.32)

There is also one example, (12), which may look peculiar at first, but it should probably be accepted and might even give us another indication that *ne* rather than *na* really was acceptable in this construction: *ne* might look out of place – one manuscript in fact omits it and negation is also absent from the corresponding Latin – but pleonastic negation is attested in complements of verbs like *tweogan* 'doubt' when negated (see e.g. Mitchell 1985: §2039), so this is the probable explanation for the use of *ne* here. If so, this particular instance of <ne> is unlikely to be a spelling variant of *na*, since use of a negator other than *ne* would be not be expected in this context.[21]

(12) Ne twygeo ic þonne mec noht æfter þæs lichoman deaðe hræðe gelæd beon
not doubt I then me not after the body's death quickly led be
to þam ecan deaðe minre sawle & helle tintregu underðeoded **ne beon**.
to the eternal death of-my soul and hell's torments subjected NE be
'I do not doubt, then, that after the death of the body I will quickly be led to the eternal death of my soul and will be subjected to hell's torments.' (*Bede* 3, 11.190.21)

So far we have been concentrating on examples where the coordinator was either *and* or unexpressed, and we have seen that the evidence for *ne* + infinitive in this context looks robust. The instances which involve coordination with *ne* 'nor', on the other hand, are fewer in number and look much less convincing. Two were already given in (5) above, and as said there, both involve manuscript variation. In one of the remaining three examples, (13a), *ne ecan* is coordinated with *na wanian*, strongly suggesting that it is a <ne> spelling of *na*. The same interpretation seems not impossible for the example in (13b), given that it is also from the *Blickling Homilies*. However, <ne> spellings for the negative adverb *na*/*no* are not common in these homilies – there is just one probable further case against 38 instances of *na*/*no* – so this is by no means certain. The final example, (13c) from *Bede*, does not survive in the most authoritative witness, and at least one manuscript does not have the construction. We may question, then, whether *ne* + infinitive occurred in 'nor' conjuncts, since some doubt can be cast on at least four out of five instances found in the YCOE.

(13) (a) þæt þas lareowas ne sceolan Godes domas nawþer ne na
that these teachers not must god's judgements neither not
wanian ne **ne ecan**
lessen nor not increase
'that these teachers must not increase or lessen God's judgements at all'
(*HomS* 21 (*BlHom* 6) 81.258)

(b) þæt nænig mon ne sceal lufian ne **ne geman** his gesibbes
that no one not must love nor not care-for his kinsman
'that no one must love or care for his kinsman' (*HomS* 8 (*BlHom* 2) 23.155)

[21] Warner (1982: 210–1) and Wallage (2005: 178ff.) both observe that, even when *not* has become the normal form of negation in Middle English, pleonastic negation still takes the form of unsupported *ne* in this context; *not* is used for pleonastic negation in complements of 'negative meaning' verbs in Late Middle English, but not when the higher verb is negated. According to Wallage, pleonastic negation disappears from this particular context with the loss of *ne*.

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(c) se weolocreada tælgh, þone ne mæg sunne blæcan ne **ne wyrdan**
the scarlet colour which not can sun bleach nor not destroy
'the scarlet colour, which the sun cannot bleach nor destroy' (*Bede* 1, 0.26.9) [22]

In the case of conjuncts into which negation is first introduced, however, we have already seen that there are no grounds for doubting the grammaticality of the *ne* + infinitive construction, especially for Ælfric's variety of OE. And when we look at the frequency of *na*/*no* in this particular environment, that conclusion becomes even stronger. Among the YCOE data, only the two examples in (14) are comparatively convincing cases of *na* as clausal negator in the coordination context when the coordinator is either *and* or not overtly stated. (15) gives a potential additional example, but here constituent negation seems plausible too.[23] So we find two or three instances of *na* in the context where we found 14 instances of *ne* in the YCOE. It also does not appear to be the case that alternative negative elements are normally used instead in this context to avoid both *ne* and *na*, certainly in the case of Ælfric; the number of conjuncts of this type with other negative words/phrases is limited (see section 4.3 for data).

(14) (a) þæt hi woldon gode anum gecweman. and **na cepan** dysegra manna
that they wanted god alone please and not seek foolish men's
herunge
praise
'that they wanted to please only God and not to seek the praise of foolish men'
(*ÆCHom* II, 44, 329.64)

(b) On ælcum þingum hie sceolon habban þone regol to lareowe, and **no**
in all things they must have the rule for teacher and not
of þæm **abugan** þurh ænige gedyrstignesse;
from it deviate through any presumptuousness
'in all things they must have the rule as teacher and not deviate from it through any presumptuousness' (*BenR* 15.20)

(15) ðonne sceole we þa lafe betæcan þæs halgan gastes mihte mid soðre
then must we the remainder entrust the holy ghost's power with true
eadmodnysse. and **na to dyrstelice** embe ða deopan digelnyssa ofer
humility and not too presumptuously about the deep mysteries over

[22] The YCOE has . . . *se weolocreada tælgh, þone ne mæg sunne blæcan ne ne regn wyrdan*, deriving from the printed edition, which amalgamates versions found in different manuscripts and may not reflect what was found in any of them. The text given in (13c) is the version found in the alternative base manuscript normally used in the edition in the absence of the most authoritative witness. The other surviving Anglo-Saxon manuscript of the text has *ðone nu sune blæcan ne mæg ne ren* 'which sun cannot bleach now, nor rain' (reflecting the corresponding Latin text more closely than the version in (13c)). The form *regn* was taken from collated forms in an edition of the text made before Cotton Otho B. xi. was largely destroyed by fire, and it is not clear to me from that edition what this manuscript had precisely.

[23] Two near-certain cases of constituent negation were excluded (*ChronE* 1087.65 and *Nic (C)* 95, both involving the phrase *na mare* 'no more'), as was one instance involving a strongly contrastive construction where *ne* would probably not have been an alternative (. . . *þæt we sceoldon ða hwilwendlican ðing to urum bricum habban.* ***na*** *on ure heortan lufe healdan* '. . . that we should have the transitory things to our use, not hold them in our heart's love' (*ÆCHom* II, 36.1, 268.24)).

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ures andgites mæðe **smeagan**;
our understanding's measure reflect
'then we must entrust the remainder to the power of the holy spirit with true humility and not reflect too deeply on the deep mysteries beyond the measure of our understanding' (*ÆCHom* II, 15, 159.298)

In 'nor' conjuncts, on the other hand, we find four examples with *na*, which all look straightforward; they are given in (16).[24] Given that there were just five instances with *ne* in this type of conjunct, most of which were doubtful or problematic, it looks as if *na* was probably the more normal form in this context, to the extent that the very limited data allow any conclusions.

(16) (a) ða menn ðe suingellan ne magon forwiernan ne **na** **gelettan** hiera
the men who whips not can prevent nor not hinder their
unryhtwisnesse.
unrighteousness
'the men who whips cannot prevent or restrain from their unrighteousness.'
(*CP* 37.265.14)

(b) ðonne ne leten hie no hie eallinga on ælce healfe gebigean, ne
then not let they not them at-all on each side bend nor
furðum **no** **awecggan**
even not move
'then they would not let themselves bend on every side at all, nor even move'
(*CP* 42.306.2)

(c) & onfon noldon ne **na** **gehrinan** þam unalyfdan &
and receive not-wanted nor not touch the unallowed and
[godwræclican] mete.
sacrilegious food
'and did not want to receive or touch the disallowed and sacrilegious food.'
(*GDPref* and 3 (C) 27.232.12)

(d) Ne meaht ðu nu giet þinre wyrde nauht oðwitan ne þin lif **no**
not can you now yet your fate not blame nor your life not
getælan
reproach
'You cannot blame your fate as yet nor speak ill of your life' (*Bo* 10.23.2)

Alternatively, it might be not so much the context as the set of texts that is responsible for the difference. We have no relevant data from Ælfric on 'nor' conjuncts (regardless of whether the negator is *ne* or *na*), whereas three of the examples in (16) come from translations by Alfred, who is not represented at all in the data set on *ne* + infinitive in the coordination context. In addition, all examples in (16) involve early rather than late OE texts, even if not all survive in manuscripts from that period. By contrast, most examples with *ne* + infinitive are found in late West Saxon material. The only three

[24] The instance of *na* and the infinitive *wanian* found in (13a) could be regarded as a fifth case, and was in fact retrieved by the search of the YCOE data, but it has been excluded on the grounds that it is part of the first conjunct and straightforwardly dependent on the negated finite verb *ne sceolan* 'must not', even if it does start with a coordinating conjunction (*nawþer ne* 'neither').

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from early OE texts – (12), plus the problematic (5a) and (13c) in 'nor' conjuncts – are from *Bede* and *Gregory's Dialogues*, which derive from an Anglian source, so straightforwardly early West Saxon examples are not found at all. The use of *na* rather than *ne* in the examples in (16), then, could reflect diachronic factors and/or differences between dialects. As for the mostly problematic examples of *ne* + infinitive in 'nor' conjuncts, only (5b) from the *Benedictine Rule* is clearly (late) West Saxon; the other four all derive from Anglian sources. The near-complete lack of evidence for the use of either *ne* or *na* with infinitives in 'nor' conjuncts in straightforwardly late West Saxon material could indicate that late West Saxon simply avoided using either of these negators here.

To sum up, the data leave no doubt that in the cases where the coordinator is not 'nor', i.e. when negation is normally first introduced in the conjunct, the norm is *ne* rather than *na*. This certainly holds for Ælfric's writing and may well have been true more generally, at least for late West Saxon. We cannot rule out the possibility that *na* was more common or even the norm in early texts, but since the data concerned are found in 'nor' conjuncts, it is equally possible that the syntactic context is responsible for the observed difference; late West Saxon seems to have avoided using either *ne* or *na* in that particular context.

4 Identifying the conditions for attachment of *ne* to a non-finite verb form

The data given in the previous two sections have shown that the phenomenon of *ne* preceding bare infinitives cannot be ignored. Under specific conditions it is clearly a grammatical option. This holds especially for the coordination context, where it is the normal option, at least in the case of Ælfric and quite possibly late West Saxon in general. The evidence for *uton* was more limited, but we have seen that *ne* + infinitive can also occur in that environment. The next question is precisely what it is about these two environments that allows *ne* to combine with a non-finite form.

Wallage (2005: 78) suggests in relation to the construction with *uton* that *ne* occurs before the infinitive for scope reasons, i.e. that it is a biclausal structure and the higher verb (*uton*) is outside the scope of negation. While this account could be extended to cover the straightforward instances in the coordination context (though not all of the potentially more problematic ones, e.g. (11a), (12)), it seems an unsatisfactory approach. Even ignoring the question whether *uton* constructions really are biclausal, constructions with (pre-)modals are frequently treated as such (e.g. Roberts & Roussou (2003: 39), whose analysis in this respect Wallage adopts). Yet when the finite modal is not included in the scope of negation, *ne* is still found before the finite verb rather than the infinitive. This can, for example, be seen when *sceal* 'must' is used in commands not to do something (e.g. *ÆCHom* I, 19, 326.46 *Ne sceal se rica . . . þone earman forseon* 'The rich man must not despise the poor man'). Given that ascribing the use of *ne* with infinitives to scope makes the wrong predictions for a far bigger set of data than it could potentially explain, we need to look in a different direction.

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In this section, I will suggest that the property enabling *ne* to combine with infinitives is the absence of an available finite verb. I will argue in section 4.1 that this property is shared by both contexts where *ne* + infinitive is found by showing that *uton* cannot straightforwardly be analysed as a finite verb. In section 4.2, I will discuss one potential counterexample where *ne* appears to attach to an infinitive in spite of the presence of a finite verb. Section 4.3 explores whether the lack of a finite verb is a sufficient condition for *ne* to attach to infinitives, or whether the option is constrained further in the context of other negative expressions. Finally, section 4.4 discusses the limited data available on other non-finite forms, to see whether there is any evidence enabling us to determine whether or not attachment of *ne* in the absence of a finite verb is specific to bare infinitives.

4.1 The common factor: absence of a finite verb?

One property of the coordination context that might help to explain the *ne* + infinitive phenomenon is the absence of a finite verb for *ne* to attach to in the conjunct. If that is the relevant factor, though, we would expect *ne* + infinitive not to occur when a finite verb is clearly available. The fact that it is also found with *uton*, then, might at first sight seem to argue against this approach. However, the status of *uton* is by no means clear-cut. Mitchell (1985: §916a) mentions that it has been labelled an interjection, even if he himself still regards it as a verb. In this section I will discuss peculiarities in the behaviour of *uton* that are hard to explain if it were indeed a finite verb, indicating that unavailability of a finite verb is arguably a characteristic that the two environments share.

A well-known property that makes *uton* peculiar is its isolation. Historically it derives from the verb *witan* 'depart', but any connection with this verb has been thoroughly obscured by the time of OE records. Indeed, according to Ogura (2000) *witan* is no longer found as a verb of motion at all in OE – the prefixed verb *gewitan* is used instead. So if *uton* were a verb, it would have just a single inflectional form, found exclusively in a specific type of adhortative construction.

Furthermore, there are indications that *uton* should not be regarded as inflected from a synchronic perspective. If *-on* were an inflectional ending, we would expect *uton* to sometimes occur in the form <ute> when it is followed by the subject pronoun *we*, since the first- and second-person plural verb endings (regardless of tense or mood) frequently reduce to *-e* in that context. Yet this type of reduction does not happen at all in the YCOE with *uton we*.[25] The non-occurrence of *ute we* could be accidental in the OE *Bede*, the *Blickling Homilies* and the *Vercelli Homilies*, since they are of Anglian origin and this reduction of the plural ending is less frequent in Anglian than in West

[25] There are occurrences of *ute*/*uto*/*uta we* in the DOE Corpus in texts not included in the YCOE, but not many, and usually in texts/manuscripts which also contain one or more instances of such 'reduced' forms of *uton* without a following subject pronoun (*HomS* 6, *HomS* 42, *BenRW* and *Fates*), so these reduced forms probably have nothing to do with the following pronoun. Only in the case of *Lit* 5.11.6 *ute we* is there no reduced form of *uton* in a different context, but no other instance of *uton* is found in that text at all, nor (as far as I can determine) in the manuscript.

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Saxon (see Campbell 1959: §730); most finite verb forms in these texts retain a full ending before *we*. For Ælfric, however, reduced endings are very clearly the norm when a finite verb is followed by *we*: 110 out of 113 instances in the *Catholic Homilies*, 44 out of 47 in *Lives of Saints* and 24 out of 29 in the *Supplementary Homilies*.[26] Yet none of the 10 forms of *uton* followed by *we* in these texts change the ending to *-e*.[27] In Wulfstan's *Homilies*, reduced endings predominate too in this context – 16 out of 19 – whereas neither of the two instances of *uton we* has such an ending. So the ending remains the same regardless of whether it is followed by a subject pronoun or not, indicating that it is not behaving like the inflectional ending of a plural finite verb form, but rather as a part of a fixed, uninflected lexical unit.

It is of course unfortunate that this particular argument against treating *uton* as a finite verb form is strongest for West Saxon, whereas the instances of *ne* + infinitive with *uton* are nearly all found in the *Vercelli Homilies*, most or all of which go back to an Anglian original (see Scragg 1973; Wenisch 1979). *Soliloquies*, the only other text with that construction, simply does not have any instances of *uton* followed by a subject pronoun, nor do the other translations attributed to Alfred. So we cannot prove that the same type of fossilisation of form is found specifically in those varieties of OE in which *uton ne* + infinitive is attested. However, it still adds to the overall impression that the behaviour of *uton* is not characteristic of a finite verb form.

Moreover, for the *Vercelli Homilies* there is a different aspect of the form of *uton* that does not quite fit 'normal' behaviour of a finite verb. In this text, it is rare for a plural indicative verb form to have the ending <-an> instead of <-on>: just 12 out of more than 600 plural past tense indicatives (i.e. 2 per cent) of the YCOE file 'coverhom' have this ending, and the proportion of <-an> forms is slightly lower still for plural present tense indicative forms normally ending in <-on> (*sindon* 'are' and preterite-present verbs). Yet the form <utan> is common for *uton* in this file: 36 out of 96 instances (38 per cent).[28] If we exclude the three most West-Saxonised of these homilies, i.e. homilies 19–21 (Scragg 1973: 203–5), that goes up to 30 out of 49 (61 per cent). Such a high proportion of <utan> spellings is difficult to account for if *uton* is to be treated as a finite plural verb form.[29]

From a syntactic perspective too, the behaviour of *uton* would at the very least be peculiar if it were a verb. Notably, it is extremely restricted in its distribution. Ignoring

[26] As can be seen, the degree of consistency of this phenomenon is extremely high in the *Catholic Homilies*, for which (as said earlier) we have very reliable contemporary manuscript evidence. In addition, one of the three unreduced forms in this text is found in a passage that is omitted from the most authoritative manuscripts.

[27] Six in *Catholic Homilies*, 1 in *Lives of Saints* and 3 in *Supplementary Homilies*.

[28] Two instances of <uton> supplied from a different manuscript have been excluded.

[29] Wulfstan's *Homilies* show something similar: whereas the form <-an> is found about as often as the form <-on> for the past indicative plural ending and about two-thirds of the time for the relevant present indicative plural forms, *uton* has the form <utan> in 47 out of 54 instances, and five out of the seven instances of <uton> are found in one short passage, taken from a manuscript which is not the usual base manuscript and which nearly always uses the form <uton> rather than <utan>. So <utan> is more frequent than would be expected if *uton* were a finite verb form with the inflectional ending *-on*. This is not a pattern that is found in all texts in the YCOE, however; in most, the regular form is <uton>.

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vocatives, interjections and coordinating conjunctions, it consistently occurs clause-initially in main clauses in the YCOE data, except that it may occasionally be preceded by a subclause, left-dislocated constituent, or a constituent such as an adverb that could be treated as being in a 'topic' position. It is never found clause-finally, and the subject pronoun (if present) always immediately follows it.[30] To state things in terms of analyses employing a CP/IP structure, there is no evidence that *uton* ever occurs anywhere other than in C. This opens up the possibility that it might be base-generated in C rather than having moved there, the more so since we have seen there is reason to believe that it is not an inflected form. If so, it would be difficult to regard it as a verb.

If *uton* is indeed no longer a verb form, that would mean that OE would have one non-finite construction that licenses a nominative subject, whereas nominative subjects are otherwise restricted to finite contexts in OE. This could be regarded as an argument against reanalysis of *uton*, but constructions may have properties reflecting their origin. Moreover, it would not be an unprecedented situation. In (formal varieties of) present-day English, nominative subjects are also permitted in one specific non-finite construction, i.e. 'gerund-participials functioning as a supplement to a clause' as in *They appointed Max,* ***he*** *being the only one who spoke Greek* (Huddleston & Pullum *et al.* 2002: 1191–2). It is not a short-lived phenomenon either: the occurrence of nominative subjects in this type of absolute construction goes back at least to Middle English (see Visser 1966: §§1078–82). Given that it is possible for a language to tolerate such a situation for an extended period of time, the continued use of nominative subjects does not block the possibility that *uton* may have been reanalysed.

To sum up, there are indications that *uton* should probably not be analysed as a verb form synchronically. The ending may superficially look like a finite plural ending, but unlike such an inflectional ending, it does not reduce when followed by the subject pronoun *we*. It also shows spelling variation in the *Vercelli Homilies* that is again uncharacteristic of the relevant inflectional ending. In addition, there is no evidence that it ever occurs anywhere other than in one fixed syntactic position in main clauses, making it unlike any other OE verb or verb form, and it is only used in one specific type of adhortative construction. So *uton* has become fixed in both form and syntax.[31]

If *uton* is not a finite verb, or at the very least not one that functions normally, the two constructions where *ne* + infinitive occurs would both lack a (suitable) finite verb for *ne* to attach to. In that case, the generalisation about the behaviour of *ne* in OE could essentially be left intact, with the added proviso that *ne* can attach to bare infinitives in the absence of an available finite verb.

[30] The placement of *uton* resembles the typical placement of imperatives in OE, but unlike *uton*, imperatives can also occur elsewhere (especially in conjunct clauses), including clause-finally and/or following a subject pronoun, e.g. *ÆCHom* I, 34, 468.88 & *þu ðær tomerigen mæssan* ***gesing*** 'and sing mass there tomorrow'.

[31] A similar development can be seen in PDE adhortative *let's*, as discussed e.g. in Huddleston & Pullum *et al.* (2002: 935).

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4.2 A counterexample?

There is one example of *ne* + infinitive in the YCOE which would seem to be a counterexample to the generalisation that *ne* only attaches to bare infinitives if no finite verb is available.[32,33] It is given in (17).

(17) Ne eft ða gelæredan, ðe sua nyllað libban sua hie on bocum
nor again the learned who thus not-want live as they in books
leornedon, ðæt hie sceoldon ˆ**ne**ˆ underfon ða are ðæs lariowdomes.
learned that they should not receive the honour of-the teachership
'Nor again the learned who do not want to live as they learned in books, that they should not receive the honour of the function of teacher.' (*CPHead* 9.2; see also *CP* 2.29.18)

If this truly is a counterexample, that would obviously be problematic. It does not look like scribal error, even though the version in the Cotton transcript has *ne* before *sceoldon* instead; *ne* occurs before *underfon* both in the list of headings and in the corresponding heading in the main text. However, I suspect it involves a different interpretation of the text by the scribe. There is an erasure before *sceoldon* and *ne* is inserted above the line in *CPHead* 9.2, so the scribe appears to have deliberately moved *ne* away from the position before the modal. There is also a punctuation mark after *sceoldon* in the manuscript, suggesting that there might be a syntactic break at that point. If *underfon* is not dependent on *sceoldon*, it could be a finite form, making the sentence the equivalent of 'Nor again should the learned who do not want to live as they learned in books that they should (i.e. live), receive the honour of the function of teacher', i.e. *underfon* would be a subjunctive form in the main clause and *ðæt hie sceoldon* part of the relative clause (with postverbal ellipsis after a form of **sculan*, which is attested in OE; see Warner 1993: 116). In that case, the placement of *ne* is exactly where it should be, i.e. before the finite verb. So this apparent counterexample may well not be a counterexample at all.

4.3 Further restrictions on the use of ne *with infinitives in the context of other negative elements?*

So far I have suggested that the crucial shared characteristic of the two environments where *ne* + infinitive occurs is the absence of a finite verb that *ne* can attach to. But does *ne* in other respects follow the normal distributional pattern in this environment or are there additional restrictions on its use with infinitives? We saw in section 3 that

[32] There is also one instance that involves negative contraction (*GD* 1 (C) 9.61.17 *oððe hwæt hi sceolan* ***nyllan*** 'or what they must not want'), but the few verbs allowing negative contraction in OE may well have lexicalised into negative verbs to some degree (in the case of *willan* and *witan* potentially encouraged by the existence of corresponding negative verbs in Latin, i.e. *nolle* 'not want' and *nescire* 'not know'), in which case *nyllan* may not be subject to exactly the same constraints as forms with 'normal' attachment of the negative particle. Present participles with negative contraction are attested as well in the YCOE for both *willan* and *witan*; see fn. 45.

[33] Mitchell (1985: §1602) mentions an apparent counterexample from poetry rather than prose. He comments that 'it is presumably to be attributed to the demands of metre', which seems plausible.

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there is relatively little evidence for *ne* + infinitive in 'nor' conjuncts – examples were rare and usually problematic. I will show that this is not just a data gap, so why is attachment of *ne* to infinitives apparently avoided in this context? Could it be the result of a general avoidance of *ne* + infinitive in contexts where negation is already marked in some other way? In that case, we would expect that, unlike finite verbs, infinitives do not combine with *ne* for the purposes of negative concord. So can *ne* + infinitive be used in negative concord patterns, and if so, to what extent? This section will address those issues.[34]

First, then, let us look more closely at 'nor' clauses. I will concentrate on the language of Ælfric, which is where most instances of *ne* + infinitive in conjunct clauses were found. In the works of Ælfric included in the YCOE, there are over a hundred 'nor' clauses with a bare infinitive and omission of the finite verb, but none have the negative particle before the infinitive. This strongly indicates that *ne* + infinitive is not an available option in that context. Compare 'nor' clauses that have a finite verb: 267 out of 268 instances in the works of Ælfric have *ne* before the finite verb.[35] So whereas the use of the negative particle in 'nor' clauses is very close to 100 per cent in Ælfric's writings when they contain a finite verb, it is avoided when the finite verb is absent and only a bare infinitive is available.

This might suggest that we could be dealing with some kind of 'last resort' strategy where *ne* only attaches to infinitives to mark clausal negation if (a) no finite verb is available and (b) negation is not already signalled in some other way. In 'nor' conjuncts, omission of the negative particle would be an alternative, since the context already clearly marks the negation. However, negative phrases are actually found in some of the conjunct clauses with *ne* + infinitive. A particularly clear instance of this is (18) – given with context as (A5) in the Appendix – but example (9) above and (A1), (A7) and (A9) in the Appendix also contain negative elements in addition to *ne*. So a strict 'last resort' account cannot be right.

[34] Another question that could be asked in relation to further possible constraints is whether *ne* + infinitive is restricted to the two contexts discussed, or whether *ne* can also be used to negate infinitival complement clauses of uncontroversial main verbs such as e.g. *hatan* 'command'. Unfortunately, this question cannot be answered. There are no cases in the YCOE where negation is introduced in such a complement clause, as all complement clauses headed by a bare infinitive that contain a negative word or phrase involve negation of the higher verb (except for some in the coordination context, e.g. (A4) in the Appendix) – the only apparent exception (*Bede* 4, 28.364.1) involves editorial emendation. We can only say that *ne* does not appear to be repeated before the infinitive in such clauses for the purposes of negative concord (e.g. *ÆCHom* II, 12.2, 125.520 *ðam men ne lyst nan ðing to gode gedon* 'that person does not desire to do anything for a good purpose'), but even for that, data are limited.

[35] For practical reasons, I am ignoring any instances in the parts of the *Heptateuch* attributed to Ælfric: these parts have not been separated out in the relevant YCOE file from the remainder of the text. Cases with negative contraction have been included. The YCOE has four apparent instances without the negative particle, but two of these actually do have *ne* (*ÆCHom* II, 22, 194.125 involves an error in the corpus text, and *ÆLet* 3 (Wulfstan 2) 186 has a <næ> spelling of *ne*, as confirmed by the other witnesses). The third one was excluded – *ÆLS* (*Martin*) 63 probably has a negative particle rather than a negative conjunction before the verb – leaving just one clear case where the negative particle has been omitted (*ÆCHom* II, 21, 184.125), and even here three of the manuscripts supply *ne* before the finite verb.

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(18) and **næfre** þam deofle **ne** **abugan** to forwyrde.
and never the devil not submit to destruction
'and never submit to the devil to its own destruction.' (*ÆLS* (*Christmas*) 164)

A different explanation is needed for the systematic avoidance of *ne* + infinitive in 'nor' conjuncts by Ælfric, then. In all likelihood it reflects the bond between *ne* and the finite verb; it is a characteristic property of clitics and affixes that they must be deleted under identity if the host/stem is (Zwicky 1985: 288). So just as *ne* is repeated when the finite verb is not omitted in a conjunct clause, it is understood together with the finite verb when a (negated) finite verb has been omitted under identity with that in the previous clause. Of course, that interpretation would rely on discarding the small number of potential instances of *ne* + infinitive in non-Ælfrician material that do involve conjunction with a clause containing a negated finite verb.

This does not necessarily mean that a last resort approach is completely on the wrong track, however. Even if we treat clauses with omission of a negated finite verb as a separate case, it is not clear that negative concord functions completely normally with infinitives. While we have seen that it can occur, there are comparable cases where *ne* is left out. Taking Ælfric as a test case again, we find three instances where *ne* is not used (two clear ones, and one potentially ambiguous case). One of them is given in (19).[36]

(19) Nu sceal gehwa hine micclum ondrædan . . . and **nateshwon** be him
now must everyone him greatly fear and not-at-all about him
sylfum gedyrstlæcan
self presume
'Now everyone must fear him greatly . . . and by no means presume anything about himself' (*ÆCHom* I, 35, 483.214)

Two or three examples might not seem much, but we need to compare this to just three instances with negative concord in this context in work attributed to Ælfric ((A1), (A5) and (A9) in the Appendix). In addition, there are three examples with *na* from Ælfric (whether or not as constituent negation), given in section 3: (14a), (15) and the instance mentioned in fn. 23. Since *ne* can definitely be used with infinitives, we might have expected negative concord here too, in which case the number of instances without negative concord in Ælfric would go up to five or six.

The admittedly limited data suggest, then, that lack of negative concord was probably not unusual with infinitives in Ælfric's language. That contrasts with the near-obligatoriness of negative concord with finite verbs: according to Wallage (2005: 239), the use of *ne* in clauses with negative phrases ranges from 95 per cent in main clauses to 99 per cent in subclauses in Ælfric. So it looks as if there may be some reluctance to combine *ne* with infinitives when not absolutely necessary. On the other

[36] The other two are *ÆCHom* I, 38, 511.122 *nanum gebeodan* 'to command no one' and *ÆLet* 6, 280 *and nænne hatian* 'and to hate none'. The context of the latter is complicated and it might involve omission of *nelle* rather than *wylle*.

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hand, Ælfric does not appear to use alternative negative phrases such as *næfre* (or indeed *na*) as a strategy to avoid the *ne* + infinitive construction. If we take into account all conjuncts of the relevant type containing any negative word or phrase (including *ne* on its own), *ne* + infinitive is still used in a majority of instances in Ælfric's work (8 out of at most 14). And as said, he can combine the construction with other negative phrases. So if there was any such reluctance, it clearly was not an overriding factor.

It is difficult to say to what extent we can generalise from Ælfric to OE more widely because of the limitations of the data. Something similar may hold for Wulfstan, whose work provides one example with negative concord, (9), and one without,[37] but that is too little evidence to make anything much of. The *Benedictine Rule*, on the other hand, may avoid negative concord in this context – there are three relevant instances if we include (14b) with *no*[38] – but that is again very little, plus we have no unproblematic evidence to show that the *ne* + infinitive construction was available in this variety. And the absence of *ne* in two infinitival conjuncts with a negative phrase in *Bede* does not tell us anything, because the rate of negative concord is low in this text even with finite verbs (Wallage 2005: 238; Ingham 2006).[39]

To sum up, *ne* + infinitive is avoided in 'nor' conjuncts, probably because *ne* is omitted together with the finite verb under identity with the negated verb in the preceding clause. In other conjuncts, *ne* can be combined with bare infinitives in a negative concord pattern, but on the basis of the evidence from Ælfric, negative concord looks more variable here than it is in clauses containing a finite verb. This could indicate some reluctance to use *ne* with infinitives when the context is already clearly negative, but if so, it is not strong enough to lead to consistent avoidance of the construction in such a context.

4.4 Other non-finite forms

If *ne* can be used with bare infinitives when the clause concerned does not contain a finite verb, an obvious question is whether this phenomenon is restricted to bare infinitives (with *na* being consistently found with other non-finite forms), or whether *ne* can also attach to other non-finite verb forms under comparable circumstances. This section looks at the available evidence. We will see, though, that it is unfortunately too limited to settle the issue with any degree of confidence.

[37] *WHom* 10c, 44 & ***næfre*** *hyre* ***derian*** *wordes ne weorces* 'and never harm her in word or deed'.

[38] The other two are *BenR* 4.17.5 with *nan þing* 'nothing' and 7.25.20 with *to nahte* 'to nothing'.

[39] *Bede* 3, 19.242.32 with *næfre* 'never' and *Bede* 5, 1.386.2 *nænig hyht haelo* 'no hope of safety'. The remaining instances in the YCOE of infinitival conjuncts with a negative phrase other than *na*, without use of *ne* and not introduced by a negative conjunction, are the two instances with *na mare* already mentioned in fn. 23, *ChronE* 1093.3 with *næfre ma* 'never more', *CP* 63.461.5 *nane wuht* 'nothing', *Med* 3 (Grattan-Singer) 31.14 *næs* 'not at all' and *HomU* 9 (*ScraggVerc* 4) 235 *næfre* 'never'.

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Inflected infinitives are not attested with *ne* in the YCOE, but there are just four examples with *na*, and only one of those is a reasonably clear case of *na* in a context where it looks equivalent to *ne*.[40] This example is given in (20).[41]

(20) Þas þing gedafenode soðlice to donne, and eac þa oðre **na to forlætene**.
these things was-befitting truly to do and also the others not to abandon
'Truly, it was befitting to do these things, and also not to abandon the other ones.'
(*ÆHom* 3, 104 [Mitchell 1985: §1614])

It is of course difficult to draw any conclusions on the basis of one example, but it is worth noting that it occurs in precisely the type of coordination context where *ne* + infinitive is found and that it comes from Ælfric, whose preference for *ne* over *na* is clear for bare infinitives. It also forms a near-minimal pair with example (A8) in the Appendix (not from Ælfric). (A8) translates the same Latin sentence as (20), but a bare infinitive (*forlætan*) is used in the second conjunct rather than another inflected infinitive (a common phenomenon in OE; see Mitchell 1985: §§924, 925), and this bare infinitive is preceded by *ne* rather than *na*. The example in (20), then, suggests that *na* is likely to have been the more usual form of negation with inflected infinitives, but however suggestive, one instance certainly cannot prove that *ne* would have been ungrammatical.

There is also no good evidence that *ne* can combine with past participles. The only apparent instance is more plausibly interpreted as a <ne> spelling of *na*, given that the finite verb (which is present) is already negated.[42] On the other hand, it is difficult to judge precisely where this construction would have been expected to surface if available. There are 11 instances of *na* and a past participle in constituents coded as participial phrases in the YCOE, plus four in clauses coded as incomplete, but often the participle could be regarded as an adjective rather than a verb form. If we exclude cases where *na* is the only other constituent in the phrase (as being less clearly clause-like) and instances where *na* forms part of a contrastive/emphatic construction so that *ne* would probably not have been an alternative,[43] we are left with just two examples.

[40] In two instances (*ÆCHom* II, 38, 283.129 and *GD* 1 (H) 4.37.9) *na* looks heavily contrastive. In the case of *Ch* 1533, 7, parallel phrases with *næfre* instead of *na* are found twice in the same charter, suggesting the meaning 'never' rather than just 'not'.

[41] It survives in just one manuscript, but it is a near-contemporary witness: Ker (1957: 51) dates it to the beginning of the eleventh century. While it is a fairly close translation from a Bible passage – Matthew 23.23 *Haec oportuit facere, et illa non omittere* (Pope 1967: 252) – it is difficult to see how Latin influence could have resulted in the choice of *na* rather than *ne* here. Note that (20) also shows that 'independent' negation of the type found in constructions like 'They told him not to do this' is attested with *to*-infinitives in OE, not just in purpose adjuncts as pointed out by Los (2005: 21, fn. 3), but also in a complement.

[42] *Mk* (*WSCp*) 2.26 *þe him* ***ne*** *alyfede* ***n****æron to etanne* 'which were not allowed to him to eat'. While an interpretation of <ne> as the negative particle is implausible here, it is striking that this spelling is found in four out of five manuscripts (even if two are from the twelfth century or later); the fifth omits it.

[43] Sole other constituent: *ÆLS* (*Christmas*) 35, 63 and 76, *ÆLS* (*Auguries*) 17, *ÆCHom* I, 2, 196.196, *ÆCHom* I, 38, 513.190, *ÆCHom* II, 11, 97.185, and *GDPref* and 4(C), 41.328.21; *na . . . ac* 'not . . . but (rather)':

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The first of these involves an absolute construction mirroring the Latin.[44] Absolute constructions are mostly found in close translations of Latin and it has been claimed that they are not native to OE (see e.g. Mitchell 1985: §§3814, 3825–31 for discussion). In Old High German, an apparently non-native negation pattern is attested in absolute constructions translated from Latin (Jäger 2008: 71; see fn. 4 above). The possibility of foreign influence must be taken seriously, then. On the other hand, Latin influence might have been expected to encourage use of *ne* rather than *na*, so the choice of *na* here is still of interest.

The second remaining instance of *na* and past participle, (21), involves a coordinated construction parallel to the one in which Ælfric normally uses *ne* rather than *na* with bare infinitives. However, it is coordinated with a phrase headed by *fæste*, which is more likely to be an adjective than a participle, again highlighting the problem of deciding whether we are dealing with a non-finite verb or an adjective in the case of participles. Arguably, the construction is also strongly contrastive.

(21) þæt heora forwel fela on eowerum gemynde fæste beoð. and **na** mid
that of-them very many on your memory fixed are and not with
gymeleaste **adylegode**
neglect destroyed
'so that very many of them are fixed in your memory and not blotted out by neglect'
(*ÆCHom* II, 2, 12.5)

For past participles, then, the data suggest that they may at least have preferred *na*, but there is little evidence to go on, and even less that is unproblematic and unambiguous.

The situation looks somewhat different for present participles. There are five instances where *ne* 'not' is found immediately preceding a present participle in constructions parsed as a participial phrase in the YCOE.[45] Latin influence is a distinct possibility for three of them, especially given that the two texts involved show signs of Latin-influenced syntax generally.[46] However, the remaining two look more persuasive. The first of these is given in (22).

ÆCHom I, 12, 277.62; *næs na* 'not at all (not)' (likely to be a fixed combination): *ApT* 12.14, *HomS 10* (*BlHom 3*) 29.45; heavily contrastive constructions of the type illustrated in fn. 23: *ÆCHom* II, 41, 306.63, *ÆLS* (*Book of Kings*) 325. The example in *ÆLet* 2 (*Wulfstan 1*) 164 was excluded from the data altogether; it involves an abbreviation in the base manuscript.

[44] *Mk (WSCp)* 12.20 *na læfedum sæde* 'not having left any offspring' (Latin: *non relicto semine* [Weber 1975]). There is a second absolute construction containing *na*, also mirroring a Latin absolute (*GDPref* and 3 (C) 13.197.26 *na þa gyt eallunga geendedum* 'not having completely ended yet'), but *na þa gyt* is probably a phrase here – it corresponds to *necdum* in the Latin [De Vogüé 1979: 3.13.9]).

[45] In addition there are some forms of *nellende* 'not wanting, unwilling' and *nytende* 'not knowing, ignorant, ignorantly' in various contexts/uses in the YCOE, but as said in fn. 32, forms with negative contraction may well be a separate case, so these have been left out of consideration.

[46] *Bede* 1, 16.86.10 *ne weotende* 'not knowing, without knowing' (Latin *nesciens* [Colgrave & Mynors 1969: 98.35]); *Bede* 4, 3.270.35 ***ne weotendum*** *oððo* ***ne gemændum*** *þæm heordum þære stowe* 'without the guardians of that place knowing or telling' (Latin ***nescientibus*** *siue* ***non curantibus*** *loci custodibus* [Colgrave & Mynors 1969: 344.36]; treated as a single example); *LS* 23 (*MaryofEgypt*) 185 *þæt geswinc his syð-fætes* ***ne understandende*** 'not perceiving the toil of his journey' (Latin *laborem* ***non reputans*** *itineris* [Migne 1844–55, 1862–5: 73, 677B]). For the examples from *Bede*, the other extant witnesses diverge from the base manuscript,

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(22) Feorða stæpe eaðmodnesse is, gif he . . . geþyld lufige and ne awacige
fourth step of-humility is if he patience love and not weaken
na,[47] ne his staþel **ne lætende** fram Gode ne buge.
not nor his base not leaving from God not bend
'The fourth step of humility is if he . . . cherishes patience and does not weaken, nor bends away from God, not abandoning his foundation.' (*BenR* 7.26.17)

The *Benedictine Rule* is a translation, but the construction does not appear to correspond to a similar construction in the Latin; caution is needed since we do not know precisely which version of the Latin text was used, but the translation appears to be very free at the crucial point.[48]

The second example, (23a), is another interesting case. Being a verse from the *Gospels*, it is obviously a close translation of Latin. Yet the Latin version, given in (23b), is not mirrored exactly; if it had been, we should have got a 'neither . . . nor' construction with *ne* (or *nawðer ne*) introducing the whole non-finite clause. Instead *ne* is placed in the middle of the clause. So even though *neque* and *ne* are adjacent to the following present participle in Latin and OE respectively, the resulting construction in (23a) looks different from the one found in the Latin. The translator could have preserved the Latin word order, with the object following the participle. Or if he wished to alter the position of the object relative to the verb, there is no reason why it had to be placed before *ne*, ruling out the 'neither . . . nor' interpretation, yet the translator did just that. This would be hard to explain if using *ne* 'not' to negate present participles was ungrammatical.

(23) (a) Soþlice iohannes com se fulluhtere hlaf **ne**[49] **ęte**nde, ne win
truly John came the Baptist bread not eating nor wine
drincende
drinking
'Truly, John the Baptist came, not eating bread, nor drinking wine'
(*Lk* (*WSCp*) 7.33)

(b) venit enim Iohannes Baptista neque manducans panem neque bibens
came indeed John Baptist neither eating bread nor drinking
vinum
wine
(*Lk* 7.33 [Weber 1975])

The number of examples is very limited, and as said, Latin influence is a definite possibility in at least three out of five, but given just how rare it is for something that looks like the negative particle to be found anywhere other than immediately before a

which at least in the case of the second example means that *ne* is not combined with a present participle in those manuscripts.

[47] The edition and corpus have the comma before *na*, but that makes little sense to me.

[48] Latin *Quartus humilitatis gradus est si . . . patientiam amplectatur et sustinens non lassescat vel discedat* (Hanslik 1960: 46.35) 'The fourth step of humility is if . . . he should embrace patience and, enduring, not weaken or give up'.

[49] One manuscript, Cambridge University Library ms. Ii.2.11, has *na*, but *ne* is found in five out of six manuscripts. (Two are very late, but if excluded, that still leaves three witnesses with <ne>.)

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finite verb,[50] and taking into account that <ne> spellings of *na* are very infrequent, examples (22) and (23a) suggest that the use of *ne* with present participles may have been an option.

However, the very limited evidence also indicates that Ælfric at least normally used *na* rather than *ne* with present participles. Excluding instances of *na* . . . *ac*, there are four instances of *na* in participle phrases headed by a present participle in the YCOE, three of which are from Ælfric's *Catholic Homilies*. One (*ÆCHom* II, 11, 103.392) contains only *na* and the participle so that it could easily be regarded as involving an adjective. The example in (24), on the other hand, involves a close parallel of the type of context where Ælfric normally uses *ne* with bare infinitives.[51] A single example cannot prove that *ne* was unusual or ungrammatical in this context for Ælfric, of course, but it suggests that *na* was more likely than not the more usual choice at least, which would contrast with bare infinitives.

(24) þære dohtra ge sind wel donde. & **na ondrædende** ænige
of-the daughters you are well doing and not fearing any
gedrefednysse;
trouble
'you do well towards your daughters and do not fear any trouble'
(*ÆCHom* I, 6, 228.118)

We have seen, then, that *ne* is not found in the YCOE in combination with either inflected infinitives or past participles, whereas *na* is attested in the corpus with both of these forms. However, examples are very limited, and clear ones even more so, so we are not in a position to conclude safely that *ne* could not be used with either of these verb forms, even if the one clear example we have for inflected infinitives suggests that they probably did not have the same preference for *ne* as bare infinitives in the coordination context in Ælfric's language. A similar example with *na* may suggest the same for present participles, but we also have limited evidence indicating that use of *ne* with present participles may have been possible in at least some other varieties of OE, even if *na* is found too.

[50] Instances in the YCOE where the negative particle is not left-adjacent to a finite verb outside the contexts and examples discussed in this article are very few and far between, and most involve probable or definite misparses in the corpus, plus a few misprints and likely editorial or scribal errors. Excluding those, just three remain (against ca. 12,000 that are adjacent to a finite verb): *Alex* 21.11 *we hie* ***ne*** *onweg* ***flegdon*** *ne him lað dydon* 'we did not chase them away nor did them harm', which may be a case of an awkwardly constructed translation of the 'neither . . . nor' construction in the Latin source; *Bo* 8.20.19 ***ne*** *on* ***become*** 'not come upon', which is not easily accounted for as involving an inseparable prefix (Mitchell 1985: §1073), but the crucial bit only survives in a twelfth-century manuscript; and *Lch* II (1) 38.1.4 *fersc* ***ne*** *nyt* ***biþ*** 'fresh is not beneficial', which is hard to explain; treating it as a rare <ne> spelling of *na* would mean failure of negative concord as well (not unattested in this text, but infrequent).

[51] The remaining two examples are *ÆCHom* II, 2, 15.134 ***na*** *swa ðeah* ***cwacigende*** 'however not trembling' and *Med* 1.1 (de Vriend) 14.1.476 ***na*** *þonne gyt* ***geseondne*** 'not yet seeing'. *LS* 23 (*Mary of Egypt*) 199 was excluded, as it probably involves *nahwider* 'nowhere'.

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5 Implications

The existence of the *ne* + infinitive construction in OE is obviously important from a descriptive point of view and the main purpose of this article has been to cover the more descriptive aspects of the phenomenon. However, it also has consequences for the analysis of OE. A full discussion of these is beyond the scope of this article, but this section highlights the main issues.

The most obvious area where the findings would seem to have implications is in the formal analysis of OE negation. One proposed analysis of OE *ne* is to treat it as the head of a functional projection (NegP) which attaches to the finite verb as it moves through this position (e.g. Frisch 1997: 31; van Kemenade 1999: 152; Fischer *et al.* 2000: 126; van Gelderen 2004: 81). Non-finite verbs are not subject to the same movement as finite verbs, so such an analysis would appear to predict that *ne* cannot attach to non-finite verbs. That was of course a desirable prediction while attachment of *ne* was believed to be restricted to finite verbs, but the data presented here show that it is actually possible for *ne* to be used with bare infinitives. Notice also that *ne* is consistently adjacent to the infinitive in the *ne* + infinitive construction, indicating that it attaches to the infinitive. The data are limited, but this pattern does not strike me as coincidental; compare the even more limited number of cases with *na*, where we do get non-adjacency (example (14b), plus (15) if regarded as relevant). The *ne* + infinitive construction appears to pose serious problems for the NegP plus movement analysis, then, as it simply cannot account for attachment of *ne* to infinitives, at least under current assumptions of OE verb movement.

Others regard OE *ne* as a prefix on the verb in V rather than as the head of NegP (e.g. van Kemenade 2000: 65–6; Ingham 2007). At first sight, the *ne* + infinitive construction would seem to provide evidence in favour of such an approach, since it makes no direct prediction that attachment of *ne* must be restricted to finite verbs. However, that does not mean that it automatically solves all problems. A satisfactory analysis of OE negation should not predict free attachment of *ne* to non-finite forms; it must account both for the normal restriction to finite verbs and for the possibility of attachment to bare infinitives in the absence of an available finite verb. Finding a good mechanism to achieve both things at the same time could be a challenge.

Moreover, it is not certain that it has to be *ne* which is behaving abnormally in the absence of a finite verb. In principle, it could be the infinitive, and work by Koopman (2005) on postverbal pronouns and particles suggests that this possibility needs to be considered. Koopman finds that placement of personal pronoun objects and/or particles after non-finite verbs is especially frequent in coordinate contexts (specifically those involving coordinated non-finite verbs), as well as in *uton* constructions and accusative-cum-infinitive (ACI) constructions. He likewise points to the 'lack of a finite verb' as a common factor in these contexts (Koopman 2005: 61). If we assume that pronouns and particles are not subject to rightward movement through extraposition (see Pintzuk 1991: 87, 95), then postverbal placement of these pronouns and particles should be the result of leftward movement of the non-finite verb, arguably of the kind normally

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restricted to finite verbs.[52] And if they can behave like finite verbs in terms of placement, it would not be too surprising if their syntactic behaviour were to show other traits normally associated with finite verbs, such as negation through attachment of *ne*. However, Koopman's data also suggest that the situation is complicated. Notably, there may be variation between contexts and texts/authors,[53] so that a satisfactory account of how movement of the infinitive in the absence of a finite verb would work in principle might not be sufficient to account for the data (at least not in full). More work is needed before we can decide how these data are best analysed.

Before a full analysis of the *ne* + infinitive phenomenon can be offered, then, it should first be established whether the construction is to do primarily with the behaviour of *ne* or that of the infinitive. In the former case, the analysis of OE negation would need revising (and an analysis of *ne* as head of NegP plus attachment through verb movement would probably be ruled out), whereas in the latter case, the implications would probably concern the analysis of OE verb movement (and the analysis of negation might remain essentially unaffected).

Finally, a full analysis of *ne* + infinitive constructions would also need to account for the apparently more frequent failure of negative concord in this environment as compared to contexts involving finite verbs. A possible way of dealing with this in a formal analysis might be to treat it as variation between two structures for infinitival conjuncts, one including functional projections such as NegP, triggering negative concord, and another conjoining at the VP level.

6 Conclusion

The data show that the OE negative particle *ne* can indeed be used with bare infinitives in both the *uton* construction and the coordination context. For *uton*, the evidence is all but limited to a single manuscript, but it looks robust for that variety of OE at least. There are more data for the coordination context. They show not only that the construction exists but also that *ne* is the norm in this context when negation is introduced in the conjunct clause concerned, certainly in the language of Ælfric, and possibly late West Saxon in general. To the extent that the requisite contexts occur, then, we are not dealing with a marginal option of using *ne* instead of *na*, so the pattern needs to be accounted for in analyses of OE. At present, it clearly is not.

I have suggested that the crucial property shared by the two constructions in which *ne* + infinitive occurs is the absence of an available finite verb, as there is both morphological and syntactic evidence that *uton* does not behave like a (normal) finite

[52] In a double-base analysis in which both underlying OV and VO structures are available as proposed by Pintzuk (1991), the alternative is a higher frequency of underlying VO, but it seems harder to connect that with the absence of a finite verb in any way.

[53] According to Koopman (2005: 55–7), postverbal pronouns are frequently found in the coordination context, whereas postverbal particles are particularly common in ACI constructions. He also states that, in the *uton* construction, Wulfstan 'always puts a personal pronoun after the infinitive . . ., whereas Ælfric prefers the position before the infinitive' (2005: 55).

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verb. It is less clear whether this context enables exceptional behaviour of the negative particle or of the infinitive; evidence from Koopman (2005) on the placement of object pronouns and particles indicates that the latter possibility should be explored. This issue needs to be resolved before a full analysis of the phenomenon can be offered.

It has also been shown that negative concord appears to be less consistent in the context where *ne* + infinitive can be found than it is with finite verbs, suggesting that, although attaching *ne* to bare infinitives is certainly an option, there may be some reluctance to use it.

It has not been possible to provide a reliable answer to the question whether *ne* could attach to other non-finite verb forms under comparable circumstances or whether the phenomenon is restricted to bare infinitives. The limited data suggest that *ne* may to some extent be found with present participles at least, but if so, it is not clear that they follow exactly the same pattern as bare infinitives. Should the *ne* + infinitive construction be the result of infinitives behaving in ways more characteristic of finite verbs when the finite verb is absent, it might be possible to extract some additional relevant data by looking, for example, at pronoun placement in relation to various non-finite verb forms. Even in that case, however, the data may well be too limited again to settle the issue for all types of non-finite forms; some questions simply cannot be answered fully on the basis of the surviving OE material. On the other hand, sometimes even small data sets can provide convincing and important evidence, as this article has illustrated.

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Appendix: Instances of *ne* + infinitive in the YCOE not given in the main text

Examples (A3) and (A7), like (9), involve dependency on *uton*. Examples (A1)–(A6) are from Ælfric, and (A9) has also been attributed to him.

(A1) ac we sculon hit onscunian. & **ne**[54] **genyman** nane lustfullunge to ðære
but we must it shun and not take no desire to the
tyhtinge
incitement
'but we must shun it and not take any desire towards the incitement'
(*ÆCHom* I, 11, 271.139)

(A2) God ælmihtig bebytt mannum þæt hi sceolon heofonan rices
god almighty commands men that they must heavens' kingdom's
eðel symle gewilnian. and þyssere worulde ydelnysse forseon. oðres
country always desire and this world's vanities reject other
mannes æhta **ne gewilnian**.[55] his agen cystelice dælan.
man's possessions not desire his own generously share
'God almighty commands men that they must always long for the kingdom of heaven and reject the vanities of this world, not desire another man's possessions, share his own generously.' (*ÆCHom* II, 13, 130.82)

(A3) Uton we herian. urne drihten symle. on his micclum wundrum. and us
let-us we praise our lord always in his great wonders and us
miltsunge biddan. and yfel forlætan. and eft **ne**[56] **geedlæcan**
mercy bid and evil abandon and again not renew
'Let us always praise our Lord in his great marvels and ask mercy for ourselves and abandon evil and not renew it again'
(*ÆCHom* II, 27 (XXIII) 219.194; see also *ÆHom* 18, 272)

(A4) Crist het hine gan . . . and **ne** **standan** idel.
Christ ordered him go and not stand idle
'Christ ordered him to walk . . . and not to stand idle.' (*ÆHom* 2, 209)

(A5) þurh þa sceal seo sawul forbæran earfoðnysse mid anrædum mode for
through that must the soul endure hardship with resolute mind for
Godes lufan, and næfre þam deofle **ne** **abugan** to forwyrde.
God's love and never the devil not submit to destruction
'through that [i.e. fortitude] the soul must endure hardship with a resolute mind and never submit to the devil to its own destruction' (*ÆLS* (*Christmas*) 164)

(A6) Man sceal healdan þæt halige husl mid mycelre gyminge and **ne**
one must hold the holy Eucharist with great care and not
forhealdan hit.
defile it
'One must hold the holy Eucharist with great care and not defile it.'
(*ÆLet* 1 (*Wulfsige* Xa) 135)

(A7) Vton him faran on & ofslean hi, & **ne** **lætan** nænne libban on
let-us them travel on and kill them and not let none live in

[54] One witness has <na>, but it involves a twelfth-century manuscript and the other ten witnesses have <ne>.
[55] Corresponds to Latin *aliena non appetere* (Godden 2000: 469, quoting the Latin text from Migne 1844–55, 1862–5: 76, 1150 BC]), so Latin influence is possible.
[56] One of the seven witnesses (a mid-eleventh-century manuscript) omits *ne*.

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eallum heora cynne.
all their kind
'Let us now march against them and destroy them and not let anyone live from all their people.' (*Exod* 14.5)

(A8) þas þing eow gebyrede to donne. and þa þing **ne forlætan**;[57]
these things to-you befitted to do and those things not neglect
'It befitted you to do these things and not to neglect those things' (*Lk* (*WSCp*) 11.42)

(A9) Bæd þæt he moste faran forð ofer his land be rihtum wege & **ne reppan**
bade that he might travel forth over his land by right way and not touch
his nan þingc.
of-it no thing
'(He) asked to be allowed to travel through his land using the right way and not touch anything of it.' (*Num* 20.17)

[57] Influence from Latin is possible: *haec autem oportuit facere et illa* ***non omittere*** (*Lk* 11.42 [Weber 1975]).

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