He forbead þæt hi ne weopon: A negative element in the *þæt*-clause introduced by a verb of prohibition

Michiko Ogura
Tokyo Woman's Christian University

In ICEHL 20 at the University of Edinburgh,[1] I made a report of my research on this theme. The present paper gives additional facts on the construction of a verb of negation followed by a *þæt*-clause with a negative element. What I try to exemplify is not a historical change from expletive negative to affirmative clause, but the facts that (i) the expletive negative was one of the correlative constructions based on Old English syntax and (ii) the affirmative clause was already found in early Old English together with the negative clause, even though the negative clause was frequent in late Old English to early Middle English and then decreased after late Middle English. The verb with negative import with a negated *þæt*-clause is, therefore, not an illogical expression but a stylistic device of combining the negation of the governing verb with the content of the governed, negated *þæt*-clause.[2]

Keywords: correlative expressions; early Middle English; *forbeodan*; Old English; verbs of negative import

---

[1] The 20th International Conference of English Historical Linguistics held at Edinburgh, August 2018. This paper is a revised version read at the Medieval Symposium at the International Association of University Professors of English (IAUPE) Conference held in 2019.

[2] Among previous studies, Ishiguro (1998) and van der Wurff (1999) use *Dictionary of Old English* (DOE) data, but Iyeiri (2010) starts from Middle English. Wallage (2017) seems more diachronic.

1. Old English *forbeodan* > Middle English *forbeden*

Table 1 shows the syntactic patterns of Old English *forbeodan* 'to forbid'. In the whole 327 examples, the proportion of the expletive negative construction is 14.7 per cent, which seems not so large. When the examples are restricted to those with a *þæt*-clause, however, the ratio of expletive negative goes up to 73.8 per cent. This is the reason why the Old English period is regarded as that of the expletive negative and criticised as ungrammatical by modern linguists.

Let us start looking at the examples as dialectically as possible. The first three examples below are quoted from *Cura Pastoralis* (MS Hatton 20, dated 890–897, that is, the earliest examples).[3] As Visser (1963–1973) had already stated, the *þæt*-clause introduced by *forbeodan* could take either negative or affirmative. The expletive negative is not at all idiomatic in *Cura Pastoralis*; the proportion of affirmative versus negative is five to two.

(1)   *CP* 32.213.24
       ða spræc he suelce he hit ðagiet nyste ðæt hie hit him ða io ondredon, ac **forbead** him ðæt hit **ne** scolde sua weorðan,
       'when he spoke as if he did not yet know that they had been afraid of it, but forbade them that it must be in such a way'

(2)   *CP* 59.451.5
       Ac ðær ðær us God **forbead** ðæt we ure ryhtwisnesse beforan monnum dyden, he us gecyðde forhwy hit **forbead**, ða he cwæð, ðylæs hi eow herigen.
       'But when God forbade us that we should perform our righteousness before men, he showed us why he forbade it, when he said, "lest they praise you".'

(3)   *CP* 11.73.15
       Sua hwelc ðonne sua ðissa uncysta hwelcre underðieded122 bið, him **bið forboden** ðæt he offrige [Gode] hlafe,
       'whomsoever, then, is subject to one of those vices, is forbidden that he should offer bread to God'

---

[3] Data on manuscripts are based on Ker (1957/1990).

Table 1. Old English *forbeodan* and its syntactic patterns

V + obj.	105
V + Ø	80
V + þæt + ne	48
V + to-inf.	21
V + þæt	17
V + inf.	5
V + d.s.	4
V + obj. + þæt + ne	1
V + ⁊ þus cwæð + d.s. + ne	2
V + þus cweðende + d.s. + ne	2
V + cweðende + d.s.	2
V + ⁊ cwæð + d.s.	2
V + ⁊ þus cwæð + d.s.	1
V + ⁊ cwæð + þæt	1
V + ⁊ sægde + þæt + ne	1
V + ⁊ segð + þæt + ne	1
V + ⁊ sæde + d.s.	1
V + d.s. + ne	1
ne/na + V	30
ne + V + þæt + ne	2
Total	327

Example (4) below is from interlinear glosses of the Psalter. *The Lambeth Psalter* (*PsGlI*, Lambeth Palace 427, dated in the first half of the eleventh century) has a triple gloss of the verb of negative import and the expletive negative. When the *Vespasian Psalter* (*PsGlA*, Cotton Vespasian A. i, ninth century) and the *Stowe Psalter* (*PsGlF*, Stowe 2, later than the *Lambeth Psalter*) are compared, *bewerian*, a synonym of *forbeodan*, is not followed by a *þæt*-clause but by *ðy læs* in *Vespasian*, the earliest, Mercian gloss, while late West Saxon *Stowe Psalter* has a *þæt*-clause with negation. (For the examples of the Psalter and the Gospels, I include the Wycliffite (Wy*EV*, Wy*LV*) and Authorized versions (*AV*) to show the historical change in syntax and renderings.)

(4)   *PsGlI* 33.14 [Prohibe linguam tuam a malo et labia tua ne loquantur dolum]
forbeod l. forhafa l. bewere tungan þine fram yfle weleras þine þæt hig **ne** sprecon faken
cf. *PsGlA*: **bewere** tungan ðine from yfle weolure **ðy læs** sprecen facen
cf. *PsGlF*: **bewere** tungan ðine fram yfele **⁊** welerum ðinum þæt **ne** sprecon facen
Wyc*EV*: **Forfende** thi tunge fro euel; and thi lippis that thei speke not treccherie.
Wyc*LV*: **Forbede** thi tunge fro yuel; and thi lippis speke not gile.
AV: Keepe thy tongue from euill, and thy lippes from speaking guile.

Examples (5) and (6) are from the Gospels. In (5), *Lindisfarne* (*Li*, Cotton Nero D. iv, latter half of the tenth century) and *Rushworth* (*Ru*, Auct.2.19, tenth century) use *bebeodan*, while *West Saxon Corpus Christi* (*WSCp*, CCCC140, eleventh to twelfth century) chooses *forbeodan*; the expletive negative appears, therefore, in the West Saxon version. In (6), *Li* uses the double gloss of *forbeodan* and *werian* with another double gloss of *to*-infinitive and *þæt*-clause, *Ru2* uses *forbeodan* with *to*-infinitive (or rather, follows the first gloss of *Li*), and *WSCp* chooses *forbeodan* with the expletive negative. These examples of the Psalter and of the Gospels show that the late West Saxon texts tend to use the expletive negative construction.

(5)   *Mk* 3.12 [et uehementer cominabatur eis né manifestarent illum]
Li: **⁊** swiðe **bebead** him þte hia **ne** æwades l mersades hine
Ru1: **⁊** swiðe **bibead** him þ hiæ **ne** eowde him
WSCp: **⁊** he hi*m* swyðe **forbead**. þ hi hine **ne** ge-swutelodon.
Wyc*EV*: And gretely he manasside hem, that thei shulden nat make hym opyn, *or knowen.*
AV: And he straitly charged them, that they should not make him knowen.

(6)   *Lk* 23.2 [hunc inuenimus sub-uertentem gentem nostram et prohibentem tributa dari caesari et dicentem sé christum regem esse]
Li: ðiosne woe gemitten under-cerrende l cynn userne **⁊** *forbeadende* l **woerdende** gæfelo l to seallanne l þte se gesald ðæm caseri **⁊** cuoeðende hine crist*um* cyni*ng* þte woere l þte sé
Ru2: ðiosne we gemitton under-cerrende cynn usera **⁊** *for*beodende æ æ **⁊** wigga [*sic*] **⁊ for-beodende** gæfel to sellanna ðæm casera **⁊** cweðende hine crist cynig þte were

> *WSCp*: Ðisne we gemétton for-hwyrfende ure þeode. ⁊ **for-beodende** þ
> man þa*m* casere gafol **ne** sealde. ⁊ segð þ he sí crist cyning;
> *WycEV*: We han founden this *man* turnynge vpsodoun oure folk, and
> forbedinge tributis to be ʒouun to Cesar, and seyinge him silf to be Crist
> king.
> *AV*: We found this fellow peruerting the nation, and forbidding to giue
> tribute to Cesar, saying, that he himselfe is Christ a king.

Examples (7) and (8) are from *Orosius* (*Or*, Additional 47967, first half of the tenth century), (7) with a negative (expletive) clause and (8) with an affirmative *þæt*-clause.

(7)   *Or* 6 11.140.11
he **forbead** ofer ealne his onwald þæt mon nanum cristenum men **ne**
abulge,
'he forbade over all his dominion that any Christian men should be
offended'

(8)   *Or* 6 1.133.31
þæt wæs þæt he fleah ⁊ **forbead** þæt hiene mon god hete, swa nan cyning
nolde þe ær him wæs,
'that was, that he declined and forbade that one should call him god, as
no king who had been before him wanted'

Example (9) is from *Bede* (Tanner 10, first half of the tenth century), which has a repetitive word pair of *bewereð* and *forbeodeð* (for 'prohibit') with an infinitive (following Latin). In the first half of the tenth century, therefore, it can be said that the construction 'a verb with negative import + *þæt*-clause with a negative element' is not yet idiomatic.

(9)   *Bede* 1 16.70.6 [et sacra lex prohibet cognationis turpitudinem reuelare]
ond seo halige ǽ bewereð ⁊ **forbeodeð** þa scondlicnesse onwreon
mægsibba
'and the holy law prohibits and forbids to uncover the shame of relatives'

From example (10) we see the choice in the works of Ælfric and late West Saxon. Example (10) is from Ælfric's *Catholic Homilies* (*ÆCHom*, Cambridge University Library Gg.3.28, tenth to eleventh century), which has the expletive negative construction. Example (11) from the same manuscript shows *forbeodan + þus cweðende* + direct speech containing a negative element; this is one of the

stylistic devices using a verb of saying (cf. Ogura 1988) with direct or indirect speech of negation, as seen in Table 1 above. Example (12) is from Ælfric's *Lives of Saints*, St Swithun (Cotton Julius E. vii, eleventh century) and (13) from Ælfric's *First Old English Letter to Wulfstan* (CCCC190, first half of the eleventh century), both of which illustrate the expletive negative.

(10)   *ÆCHom* II, 43 322.115
Se ælmihtiga god **forbead** þurh his witegan þæt nán ðæra manna þe rihtwis beon wile. **ne** sceal syllan his feoh to gafole;
'The Almighty God forbade through his wise man that anyone of those men who wish to be righteous must give his money as tribute'

(11)   *ÆCHom* 21 206
ac Moyses him **forbead** micclum þus cweðende: Ne fare ge, ic eow bidde, swa fuse to þam lande
'but Moses forbade them severely saying thus, "Do not go, I command you, so eagerly to the land"'

(12)   *ÆLS* (*Swithun*) 410
and god sylf **forbead** þæt we swefnum **ne** folgion. þe læs ðe se deofol us bedydrian mæge.
'and God himself forbade that we should follow vision, lest the devil could deceive us'

(13)   *ÆLet* 2 (*Wulfstan* 1) 10
and Moyses hy awrat and mancynne **forbead**, þæt hi nænne hæþenscype habban **ne** mostan
'and Moses wrote them and forbade to mankind that they should have any paganism'

Example (14) is from *Alexander's Letter to Aristotle* (Cotton Vitellius A. xv, tenth to eleventh century) and (15) from *Genesis* in the *Heptateuch* (Cotton Claudius B. iv, first half of the eleventh century), both of which show the expletive negative. In example (16), *First Sunday in Lent* (CCCC198, eleventh century), *forbeodan* is negated, and so is the content of the following *þæt*-clause, which means that *ne* in the *þæt*-clause is redundant. Examples (17) *Sermo bone paredicatio* (CCCC201), (18) *Prudentius Psychomachia Titles* (CCCC23), and (19) *Poenitentiale pseudo-Egberti* (Laud Misc. 482) all illustrate the expletive negative.

(14) *Alex* 40.13
Ac þa **forbead** hit se bisceop þæt hi **ne** weopon.
'But then the bishop forbade it that they should weep'

(15) *Gen* 3.1 [Cur præcepit uobis Deus, ut non comederetis de omni ligno Paradisi?]
Hwi **forbead** God eow ðæt ge **ne** æton of ælcon treowe binnan Paradisum?
Wyc*EV*: Whi comaundide God to 30w, that 3e shulden not ete of ech tree of paradis?
AV: Yea, hath God said, Ye shall not eat of euery tree of the garden?

(16) *HomS* 16(*Ass* 12) 81
Men ða leofestan, we mynegiað eac ælcne getreowfulne man, þæt he gelomlice lufige cumliðnysse *and* nanum cuman **ne forbeode**, þæt he **ne** mote on his huse gerestan,
'Beloved men, we remember each faithful man, that he should frequently love hospitality, and forbid no guests that he should be allowed to rest in his house'

(17) *HomU* 47 (*Nap* 58) 103
hit **is forboden** on halgum bocum swyþe deope, þæt nan cristen man **ne** mote his ælmessan ahwæþer behatan oððe to bringan ne his wæccan ne his broces bote secean ahwider, buton to Criste sylfum and to his halgum and to cyrcean.
'It is forbidden in holy books very deeply that any Christian is allowed either to promise the alms or to bring wakefulness or to seek remedy for his misery, except for Christ himself and for his saints and for church.'

(18) *Conf* 3.1.1 (*RaithY*) 146
Ælcum geleaffullum men **is forboden**, þæt he his feoh ne his æhta to nanum unrihtum gafol **ne** læne,
'It is forbidden for each faithful man that he should give his cattle or his goods as any false debt'

(19) *PrudT* 1 1
Her godes swyðra **forbead** Abrahame, þæt he his sunu **ne** ofsloge,
'Here God's power forbade Abraham that he should kill his son'

Peterborough Chronicle (Laud Misc. 636, dated *a*. 1121) shows the expletive negative in examples (20), (21), and (22), and this construction keeps appearing in the texts of the transitional period like *Bodley 343 Homilies* (*c*. 1175), as in examples (23) and (24).

(20)   *ChronE* 656.91
        ⁊ ic **forbede** þet ne kyning ne nan man **ne** haue nan onsting buton þon abbot ane,
        'and I forbid that either a king or any man should have any authority except the abbot alone'

(21)   *ChronE* 675.31 (MED *forbēden* (v.) 1a (a))
        Alswa ic beode þe Saxulf biscop þet swa swa þu hit geornest þet seo mynstre beo freo, swa ic **forbeode** þe ⁊ ealle þe biscopas þe æfter ðe cumon of Criste ⁊ of ealle his halgan þet ge nan onsting **ne** hauen of þet mynstre buton swa micel swa þone abbot wile.
        'Likewise I command you, bishop Seaxwulf, that just as you wish the monastery to be free, so I forbid you and all those bishops that succeed you, by Christ and by all his saints, to have any authority over the monastery except in so far as the abbot shall permit' (tr. Garmonsway)

(22)   *ChronE* 1012.5 (= *ChronF* 1012.4, *ChronC* 1012.6, *ChronD* 1012.6)
        forþan þe he nolde heom nan feoh behaten ⁊ **forbead** þet man nan þing wið him syllan **ne** moste
        'because he did not wish to promise them any money and forbade that anything should be given for him'

(23)   *LS* 5 (*InventCrossNap*) 101 (= *HRood* (*Bod343*) 8.12)
        þonne wolde ic ðe sceawian gyt sum ðare ðingæ ðe he me swiðlice **forbead** þ ic ðe sceawian **ne** sceolde
        'then I would like to show you something which he strongly forbade me that I must show you'

(24)   *BodHom* 122.2 (MED)
        For hwón **forbeat** C*r*ist his þeiȝnu*m* þ heo **ne** sceolden cuþæn ne sæcgæn náne men þ brihtlice sihðe, buto*n* for twa*m* þingu*m*?
        'Why did Christ forbid his disciples to make known or tell anyone of that bright vision except for two reasons?'

This construction is still found in *Ormulum* (*a.* 1200, *Orm*) as in (25), and more examples in Laȝamon's *Brut* (*c.* 1275, *Laȝ*), as in (26) to (30), all in expletive negative, except (28).

(25)   *Orm* 9833 (MED)
7 all forrþi **forrbæd** Johan,
Þatt teȝȝ **ne** sholldenn ȝellpenn
Þurrh modiȝnesse off þeȝȝre kinn,
'and therefore John forbade all, that they should yelp through the pride of their people'

(26)   *Laȝ (C)* 781
& ich **for-beode** [*O:* ...**beode**]   heolde mine þeinē.
vppe þere muchele lufe   þe us bi-tueiȝen lið.
þat **nan ne** beo so wilde   **nan** swa unwitti.
'and I forbade my faithful thanes, by the great love that lies between us, that none should be so wild, none so void of wit'

(27)   *Laȝ* 13180
C: Vortiger þe hæȝ   **for-bad** his hired-monnen.
þet heo nane manne **ne** tælden   whæt heo hæfden on anwolde.
O: Vortiger anon rihtes   **for-bead** alle his cnihtes.
þat non of ȝam **ne** tolde   wat he hadde on anwolde.
'Vortiger the high (immediately) forbade his followers (knights) that they should tell anyone (of them) what they (he) had in power'

(28)   *Laȝ* 20579
C: & Arður **for-bæd** his cnihtes   dæies & nihtes.
þat heo liðen stille   swulc heo stelen woldē.
O: Arthur **for-bed** his cnihtes   daiȝes and nihtes.
þat hii ȝeoden ase stille   so hii stele wolde.
'Arthur forbade his knights, by day and night, that they should proceed still, as if they would steal'

(29)   *Laȝ* 25799
C: þenne **for-beode** ich þe   bi þine bare life.
þat þu **nauere** wið þene scucke   feht **no** biginne.
O: þanne **for-bed** ich þe   bi þine bare liue.
þat þou **neuere** wiþ þan   fiht **ne** bi-gynne.
'then I forbid thee, by thy bare life, that thou shouldest ever begin fight with the monster'

(30) *Laȝ* 26013
 C: **for-bad** heom bi heore leomen   & bi heore bare liuen.
 þat **nan neoren** swa kene   þat heom neh comen.
 buten he iseȝen   þat hit ned weoren.
 O: **for-bed** ȝam bi hire leomes   and hire bare lifue.
 þat **non neore** so kene   þat heom neh come.
 b..e hii ..eȝen   þat hit neod weore.
 '(Arthur) forbade them, by their limbs and their bare lives, that anyone
 who were so keen should come near, unless they saw that it were need'

From the *Middle English Dictionary*, I add examples (31) from *Ayenbit of Inwit* (1340), and (32) from Chaucer's *Tale of Melibee* (*c*. 1390).

(31) *Ayenb* 10.6 (MED)
 Ine þise heste ous **ys uorbode** þet we **ne** lyeȝe **ne** ous uorzuerie;
 'In this behest it is forbidden for us to lie or forswear (lit. that we should
 neither lie nor forswear)'

(32) *Chaucer CT.B.Mel.* 2770–2775 (MED)
 This is to seyn, that nature **deffendeth and forbedeth** by right that **no**
 man make hymself riche unto the harm of another persone.

2. Other verbs and verb phrases of negative import

Most verbs of negative import have the same feature of showing the expletive negative construction. Examples (33) and (34) are those of *oðsacan* and *ætsacan*. As seen in manuscript variants, *ansacan*, *ætsacan*, *ondsacan*, *oðsacan*, and *wiðsacan* share this feature. In example (35), in addition to the different choice of prefixes to the verb, the use of *þæt* as an indicator of both direct and indirect speech is illustrated. *Li* and *Ru1* have *þæt* + direct speech, while *WSCp* has an indirect speech after *þæt*, with the expletive negative. Example (36) has two examples of *wiðsacan*, one with a *þæt*-clause with a negative element and the other *ne* + *wiðsacan* with a *þæt*-clause with a negative element; both illustrate the expletive negative.

(33)   *Or* 6 4.136.28
Oðsace [C: **ætsace**] nu, cwæð Orosius, se se þe wille oþþe se þe dyrre, þæt
þæt angin **nære** gestilled for þæs cristendomes Gode,
'Deny now, said Orosius, he who wish or dare, that the beginning were
stable before the Christian God'

(34)   *Laȝ (C)* 6100
bute þat þa Densce men   dunriht **at-soken** [*O*: **asoken**].
þet heo to Brut-londe   **nolden** moren senden.
gold ne garsume   ne gauel of þon lōde.
'except that the Danish men denied downright, that they would send
anymore gold or treasure or tribute of the land'

(35)   *Mt* 26.72 [et iterum negauit cum iuramento quia non noui homine*m*]
Li: ⁊ eft-sona **onsóc** mid aað þ ic **ne** conn ðone monno
Ru1: ⁊ æft ⁊**soc** mid haþe þ ic **ne** conn þone monn
WSCp: ⁊ he **wiðsóc** eft mid áþe þ he hys nan þing **ne** cuðe
Wyc*EV*: And eftsone he denyede with an ooth, for he knewe nat the
man.
Wyc*LV*: And eftsoone he denyede with an ooth, For I knewe not the
man.
AV: And againe hee denied with an oath, I doe not know the man.

(36)   *ÆCHom* II,13 130.101
Þa **wiðsóc** crist swiðe rihtlice. þæt he deofol on him **næfde**. ac he **ne**
wiðsoc þæt he **nære** samaritanisc.
'Then Christ denied very rightly that he had a devil in him, but he did
not deny that he was a Samaritan'

Examples of *forsacan* are given from (37) to (40). Example (37), from *Cura
Pastoralis*, has an affirmative *þæt*-clause. Examples (38) and (39) are from
Gregory's *Dialogues* (CCCC178 first half of the eleventh century); (38) has a
manuscript variant of *wiðsacan* and the following *þæt*-clause is in the affirmative;
(39) is the only example of the expletive negative among the four examples of
the verb in this text. Example (40), though from Ælfric, has the *þæt*-clause in
the affirmative.

(37)   *CP* 36.247.19
⁊ he **forsæcð** ðæt he him to cume
'and he refuses that he should come to him (= Wisdom)'

(38)   *GD1 (C)* 10.82.2
       he ȝelædde þa cnihtas toforan him, þe he eallinȝa ær **forsoc** [*H*: **wiðsoc**],
       þæt he hi æfre aȝyfan wolde
       'he led the servants before him, whom he had entirely refused that he
       ever wanted to give it'

(39)   *GDPref* and *3(C)* 37.255.17
       Ac se drihtnes wer **forsoc**, *þæt* he swylcu*m* lace onfon **nolde**,
       'But the man of the Lord refused, that he would receive such offering'

(40)   *ÆCHom* II,1 9.227
       gif hwá hit **forsoce** þæt he sceolde beon forbærned on hatum ofne
       'if anyone should refuse it, that he must be burned on the hot oven'

Example (41) has *wandian* 'to hesitate', and (42) and (43) show *forwyrnan* 'to
deny', all of which illustrate the expletive negative. Example (44) has *belean* 'to
prevent' from a homily of the transitional period; this verb does not seem to
have an example of the expletive negative in Old English.

(41)   *CP* 23.177.11
       ond on oðre wisan sint to manianne ða ðe ða word ðære halgan æ ryhte
       ne ongietað, on oðre ða ðe hi ryhtlice ongietað, ⁊ ðeah for eaðmodnesse
       wandiað ðæt hi hit **ne** sprecað;
       'And in one way those are to be admonished who do not rightly
       understand the words of the holy law, in another those who rightly
       understand them, and yet for humility hesitate to speak it'

(42)   *ÆCHom* 27 48
       Eala þu casere, nast þu þa micelnysse þæra manna slege[s] þe ðu
       gefremodest þurh þine reðnysse, ne þin mód ne oncnæwð þone micclan
       hefe þinre dyrstignysse þe þu gedon hæfst; oððe hwæþer þin miht þe mæge
       forwyrnan þæt ðu þas synne **ne** sceole oncnawan?
       'O you Caesar, do you not know the greatness of manslaughter which you
       did through your cruelty, or does your mind not perceive the great burden
       of your presumption which you have made, or whether your power which
       could deny that you must recognise these sins?'

(43)   *ÆCHom* 30 75
       ac gyf hyt se witega wære, he wolde him **forwyrnan** þæt he to hym **ne**
       gebæde, his Hælende on teonan;

'but if it were the prophet, he wished to deny him that he should pray
for him, in view of insulting his Lord'

(44) *TrinHom* 107.10
    and for to **bileande** *þat* **no** man werpe þe gilt of his sinne anuppen god
    'and to prevent that anyone should throw the guilt of his sins upon God'

Tweogan, tweonian, and *tweo beon* behave slightly differently from other verbs or
verbal phrases. They always take '*ne* + Verb + *þæt* + *ne*', i.e. the main verb or verb
phrase is negated as well as the content of the following *þæt*-clause. Examples
are (45) from *Boethius* (Cotton Otho A. vi, mid-tenth century), (46) and (47)
from homilies in the late tenth to the eleventh century, and (48) from the
transitional period.

(45) *Bo* 37.113.21
    Forðæm **ne** þearf nænne wisne mon **tweogan** þæt ða yflan **næbben** eac ecu
    edlean hiora yfles; þæt bið ece wite.
    'For no wise man need doubt that the evil men do not also have eternal
    reward for their evil, that is eternal punishment' (tr. Godden & Irvine)

(46) *HomU* 11 (*ScraggVerc* 7) 66
    Nu sio idelnes swa swiðe þam lichoman dereð, **ne tweoge** þe na þæt hio
    þære sawle **ne** sceððe,
    'Now idleness greatly injures the body; doubt that not at all, that it cannot
    (but) injure the soul' (tr. Nicholson)

(47) *HomS* 17 (*BlHom* 5) 178
    forþon **nis** nan **tweo** þæt he forgifnesse syllan **nelle** þam þe hie geearnian
    willaþ.
    'for there is no doubt that he will grant forgiveness to those who desire
    to merit it'

(48) *BodHom* (*Bod343*) 52.21
    Þeah ðe þenne hwylc mon beó swiðe sinful, ⁊ arleas, ⁊ unrihtwis, **ne** sceal
    he him
    tweoniȝæn þæt he **ne** maȝe Godes mildheortnesse biȝitæn, ȝif he wyle to
    dædbote
    cýrræn.

'Any man, then, although he is very sinful, and wicked, and unrighteous, shall not doubt the possibility of his obtaining God's mercy, if he will turn to repentance' (tr. Belfour)

This feature is handed down to French loan verb *douten* (see Ogura 2007); examples are (49) and (50) from *Cursor Mundi* (Cotton Vespasian A. iii and Göttingen). In Merlin (?*c.* 1450), an example from MED, which I quote in (51), there is no negation of the main verb and the context shows a slightly different sense. The last example (52) is another loan verb *denien* from Chaucer's *Boece* (*c.* 1380).

(49)   *Cursor* 10869
        C: þis leuedi **nathing doted** sco þ*at* godd **ne** moght his will do,
        G: Þis leudy **na-thing doutid** scho, þat godd **ne** miht his wille al do,
        'This lady she doubted nothing that God could do his will'

(50)   *Cursor* 12321
        C: For sco was traist and **duted noght,** þat godds wil **ne** suld be wroght.
        cf. *T*: She was trusty & **douted nouȝt** But goddess wille wolde be wrouȝt
        'For she was faithful and did not doubt that God's will should be done'

(51)   *Merlin* (*CmbFf.*3.11) I 6.9 (MED: **douten that .. nought** fear lest (sth. happen))
        he [deuell] **dought** that he myght **not** wynne hem [these sustres] by felschip of man, with-oute counseille of some woman;
        cf. 30 I **doubte** that ye will me sle.

(52)   *Chaucer Bo III Prose* 10.12
        But it may **nat be denyed** that thilke good **ne** is, and that it **nys** ryght as a welle of alle goodes.

3. Conclusion

It was Visser (1963–1973) who first explained appropriately on this construction with examples of both an affirmative and a negative þ*æt*-clause from one of the earliest Old English texts of *Cura Pastoralis*, and Mitchell (1985: §§2039–2043) used the term "expletive negative" for this construction, as he explained it with many examples in his *Old English Syntax*. But after them, some

overgeneralisation has been accepted that the construction of expletive negative was a feature throughout the Old English period. From my investigation focused on Old English up and early Middle English some points have been made manifest: (i) A verb with negative import shows a tendency to invite the negative particle *ne* in the dependent clause it takes, owing to the negative import of the governing verb; this is a kind of correlative construction based on Old English syntax; (ii) Alternative expressions like 'Verb (with negative import) and Verb of saying + direct speech or indirect speech (with *ne*)' may suggest that the construction 'Verb (with negative import) + *þæt* + *ne*' is not illogical but a contracted and correlative form, meaning 'he forbade saying, "You should not do that"' or 'he forbade and said that I should not do that'; (iii) 'Verb (with negative import) + *to*-infinitive' was found in Old English as an alternative of 'Verb (with negative import) + *þæt*-clause' with or without *ne*, which means that the shift from *forbid that* to *forbid to* is a tendency rather than a historical development; (iv) The 'Verb (with negative import) + *þæt* + *ne*' construction could be highly deemed in late Old English and early Middle English as Anglo-Saxon syntax.

In addition, the fact that the distinction between direct and indirect speech was not so complete as in the present-day English can be a cause of the existence of this construction, since *þæt* could be employed as an indicator of direct speech in biblical contexts, and also the fact that OE prefix *for-* could not be morphologically distinguished in two senses, i.e. in the sense of opposition (cf. G *ver-*) and in the sense of emphasis (cf. G *vor-*), has made the Old English syntax less explicit.

References

DICTIONARIES
BT An Anglo-Saxon Dictionary. 1898; rpt. 1972. Ed. J. Bosworth. London, Oxford University Press.
BTS An Anglo-Saxon Dictionary. Supplement. 1921; rpt. 1973. Eds. J. Bosworth & T. N. Toller. With revised and enlarged addenda by A. Campbell. London, Oxford University Press.
DOE: *Dictionary of Old English, A–G in CD-ROM*. 2008. The Pontifical Institute of Mediaeval Studies, University of Toronto.
DOEWC: *Dictionary of Old English Web Corpus*. 2009-. Eds. A. diPaolo Healey et al. Toronto, University of Toronto Press. www.doe.utoronto.ca

MED: *Middle English Dictionary*. 1952–2001. Eds. H. Kurath, S. M. Kuhn, J. Reidy & R. E. Lewis. Ann Arbor, University of Michigan Press. http://quod.lib.umich.edu/m/med

OED3: *The Oxford English Dictionary Online*. 3rd ed. 2015. Oxford, Oxford University Press. www.oed.com

SECONDARY SOURCES

Ishiguro, T. 1998: Verbs of Negative Import: A Syntactic Study that Benefited from the Dictionary of Old English Project. *Old English Newsletter* 26: 23–32.

Iyeiri, Y. 2010: *Verbs of Implicit Negation and their Complements in the History of English*. Amsterdam & Philadelphia, John Benjamins.

Ker, N. R. 1957/1990: *Catalogue of Manuscripts containing Anglo-Saxon*. Oxford, Clarendon Press.

Mitchell, B. 1985: *Old English Syntax*, 2 vols. Oxford, Clarendon Press.

Ogura, M. 1988: Direct or Indirect? — *þæt* as a Quotation Indicator. In O. Kinshiro et al. eds. *Philologia Anglica. Essays Presented to Professor Yoshio Terasawa on the Occasion of his Sixtieth Birthday*. Tokyo, Kenkyusha: 88–105.

Ogura, M. 2007: ME *douten* and *dreden*. In G. D. Caie ed. *The Power of Words in Lexicography, Lexicology and Semantics in Honour of Christian Kay*. Amsterdam, Rodopi: 117–130.

van der Wurff, W. 1999: On Expletive Negation with Adversative Predicates in the History of English. In I. Tieken-Boon van Ostade, G. Tottie & W. van der Wurff eds. *Negation in the History of English*. Berlin, Mouton de Gruyter: 295–327.

Visser, F. Th. 1963–1973: *An Historical Syntax of the English Language*. 3 Parts, 4 vols. Leiden, Brill.

Wallage, P. W. 2017: *Negation in Early English Grammatical and Functional Change*. Cambridge, Cambridge University Press.

Author's address
School of Arts and Sciences
Tokyo Woman's Christian University
2-6-1 Zempukuji, Suginami-ku
Tokyo 167-8585, Japan
e-mail: ogura.dainagon@jcom.home.ne.jp