ON THE ORIGIN AND HISTORY OF THE ENGLISH SYNTACTIC
TYPE *(and) none but he to marry with Nan Page*

The aim of this paper is twofold: in the first place, as one whose main line of research is Elizabethan English, I will seek to clarify the Shakespearian construction illustrated in the title; for want of a better term, this will be referred to henceforth as 'infinitive of future arrangement'. Additionally, I propose to trace the origin and subsequent development of this type, and to suggest its connection with such PE sequences — chiefly associated with newspaper headlines — as *senator to seek reelection.* Here the infinitive marker *to* is used 'to express the future or a predicted arrangement' (Quirk et al., 1985: 846), and is therefore often assumed to be a shortened variant of *is / are to.* Thus, alluding to the sentence *Swedish foreign minister to quit,* F. Th. Visser points out that 'conciseness has been achieved by suppressing the verb-form *is* (...) before the infinitive' (1966: II, 991), while Leech (1966: 94), Quirk et al. (1972: 415), and Lewis (1986: 145) adopt a similar position.

   The material on which we have based the following discussion derives from four plays in the Shakespeare canon, as well as from a number of secondary sources, in particular Söderlind (1958: 6), Mustanoja (1960: 542), Visser (1966: II, 992ff), and Ando (1976: 537). The plays in question are — in order of composition — *The Merry Wives of Windsor, As You Like It, King Lear,* and *The Winter's Tale;* altogether, they yielded the following instances of the structure under analysis:[1]

(1) *Wives* 1.4.97 *Mistress Quickly.* I keep his house, and I wash, wring, brew, bake, scour, dress meat and drink, make the beds, and do all myself-
Simple. 'Tis a great charge (i.e. 'burden') to come under one body's hand.
Mistress Quickly. Are you advised o' that? You shall find it a great charge -and *to be up early and down late.*
i.e. 'you shall or are to be up early'
(2) *ibid.* 4.4.83 *Mistress Page.* I'll to the Doctor, he hath my good will, /And *none but he to marry with Nan Page:* / (...) The Doctor is well moneyed, and his friends /Potent at Court: he, none but he shall have her.[2]
(3) *ibid.* 4.6.43 her mother hath intended (...) /That quaint in green she shall be loose enrobed, /With ribbons pendant flaring 'bout her head; /And when the Doctor spies his vantage ripe, */To pinch her by the hand,* and on that token /The maid hath given consent to go with him.
i.e. 'he shall pinch her by the hand'
(4) *As* 3.2.151 Heaven would that she these gifts should have /And *I to live and die her slave.*
i.e. 'that I should live and die her slave'

(5) *ibid.* 5.4.22 Keep your word, Phoebe, that you'll marry me, /Or else refusing me *to wed this shepherd.* /Keep your word, Silvius, that you'll marry her /If she refuse me
   i.e. 'that you'll wed this shepherd'
(6) *Lear* 1.165 *Lear* (to Kent). (...) take thy reward: /Four days we do allot thee for provision /To shield thee from dis-eases of the world, /And *on the fifth to turn thy hated back* /Upon our kingdom.
   i.e. 'you shall or are to turn thy hated back'
(7) *ibid.* 4.244 *Gonoril* (to Lear). Be thou desired (i.e. 'requested'), /By her that else will take the thing she begs, /A little to disquantity your train, /And *the remainder that shall still depend /To be such men as may besort your age,* /
   i.e. '... shall be such men ...'
(8) *Wint* 4.4.569 *Camillo* (to Florizel). A course more promising /Than a wild dedication of your-selves /To unpathed waters, undreamed shores; most certain, /To miseries enough -no hope to help you, /But as you shake off one, *to take another;* /
   i.e. 'you shall or are to take another'

Since the overall meaning of all eight passages is clear enough to the average reader, editors, as a rule, have not found it necessary to provide further commentary on the infinitive clauses underlined above. However, when they have occasionally done so, their notes seem to infer that they are not wholly familiar with the construction:

To may seem unusual (...) but the construction is not unlike others described in Abbott 349. (H. J. Oliver in the Arden edition (Methuen, 1971) of *The Merry Wives of Windsor,* alluding to line 4.4.57 of this play — which belongs to a different syntactic type — and to examples (2) and (3) above, neither of which would allow a bare infinitive.)

The construction is loose although the sense is clear. We may regard the words as equivalent to 'And that I should live &c'; or supply some verb from 'would' of the previous line, as if it were either 'And I would live, or am willing to live, & c'. (R. Knowles in the New Variorum edition (New York, 1977) of *As You Like It,* with reference to line 3.2.151.)[3]

Actual emendation of the Quarto or Folio texts has been rare, though a case in point is the treatment given to *Wiv* 4.4.83 (cf. (2) above) by the editors of The Oxford Shakespeare, whose punctuation of that line detaches the infinitive *to marry* from its subject *none but he,* thus making it depend on the noun *will:*

> I'll to the Doctor. He hath my good will,
> And none but he, to marry with Nan Page.

Yet the infinitive of future arrangement is well documented throughout the

---

[3]   The Shakespearian grammars of Abbott (1869) and Franz (1939) also comment — if briefly — on the construction. For the former, *As* 3.2.151 and 5.4.22 are 'construction(s) changed for clearness (...) *to* might be omitted, or *should* might be inserted instead, but the omission would create ambiguity, and the insertion would be a tedious repetition' (cf. Section 416, where, however, several of the examples do not belong to our type); as will become apparent later in this paper, there is some measure of truth in this view. Franz, who also alludes to *As* 3.2.151, adopts a similar stance: 'Gelegentlich erscheint er (= der Nominativ mit dem Infin-itiv) als ein Mittel, um einen Satz zu kürzen und um den Ausdruck und die Konstruktion zu variieren' (p. 548).

history of English, as a glance at the long list of examples collected by Visser (1966: II, 992 ff) will testify. According to him, the type

> is used, in Middle and Modern English, in ordinances, testamentary dispositions, wills, bequeath-als, parliamentary rules, prescriptions, ecclesiastic, monastic, commercial and military regulations and arrangements, in contracts and appointments. From the context it appears that the activity expressed by the infinitive is commanded, ordered or arranged to be performed in the future. It is possible to read the sentences with *is* or *are* before the infinitive (...) this is of course not to imply that the idiom should owe its origin to the suppression of *is* or *are*. As a matter of fact the origin is unknown and in Old English there are no examples.

Our first suggestion in connection with this account is that, in all probability, the ultimate source of the construction lies in those Old and Middle English sequences in which *to* was prefixed to the second of two infinitives governed by the same modal verb, as in (9):

(9) ic sende þe, þaet þu *sceoldest* man to me *gelaedan* na gaers *to beranne* (quoted from Mitchell, 1985: I, 417)

According to Mitchell, only six such examples are on record from OE: two involving **sculan,* one *willan,* two more *cunnan,* and one **durran.* Even if we view all these with suspicion, as Mitchell himself does, and try to explain them away in some other form, clear ME instances are found with *shall* and *will* from the early thirteenth century on (cf. Visser, 1969: III, 1, 1730-1); the following is a slightly later example:

(10) 1303 Robert Mannyng of Brunne, *Handlyng Synne,* 10271, He shal not serue at þe auter, Noþer halewed þyng *to come* ner (quoted from Visser, III, 1, 1731)
     'He shall not serve at the altar, nor come near any hallowed thing'

Such structures seem to have been more frequent with *shall* than with other modals, and it is particularly from those containing *shall* that we believe the infinitive of future arrangement derived. Thus, it is easy to see that (10) above could have naturally evolved into (11) and (12), which are among the earliest quotations adduced by Visser to illustrate the future use of the *to*-infinitive:

(11) c1330 Robert Mannyng of Brunne, *Chronicle of England,* Part I, 6464, Þis lond is Bretones wynnyng ... Hit shal hote þe Lesse Bretayne, And *we* Bretons *to be* cheuentaine (Visser, II, 992)
     'This land is the Britons' conquered territory ... It shall be called the Smaller Britain, and we Britons shall be (or "are to be") chieftains'
(12) c1377 William Langland, *Piers the Plowman* B-text, VIII, 102, ȝif dowel or dobet did aȝein dobest, /þanne shal þe kynge come and casten hem in yrens, /And but if dobest bede for hem *þei to be þere for euere* (ed. by W.W. Skeat, EETS, 1869)
     'if either Do-well or Do-better should wrong Do-best, then the king shall come and cast them in fetters, and, unless Do-best pleads for them, they shall be there forever'

It is indeed possible that both examples should have been apprehended by ME readers exactly in the same way as (10); that is, simply as clauses with an ellipted *shall.* Yet this interpretation will not do in those cases in which the first of the

515

two clauses does not contain a modal of the appropriate kind, but merely a subjunctive — as in (13) and (14) — or various other verb forms — as in (15) to (17) — . Though rarely, it is even possible to find passages where the infinitive stands alone, and is not, properly speaking, coordinated with a preceding clause, as in (18):

(13) 1387 (from a will), I will þat John Edmund have þe kechyn þat stont in forneys, *he to paie* þerfor as it ys worthy. (quoted from Visser, II, 992)

(14) 1469 (from another will), I wil that John Herbert be sent for hem, and *he to be* one of myne executours. (Visser, II, 993)

(15) 13.. *Cursor Mundi* (Trinity MS), 7123, he het men to ȝyue hem mede /If þei coude hit riȝtly rede /And *þei to ȝyue* þe same aȝein /If þei hit red nouȝt certeyn
'he promised the men to give them a reward if they could solve it (i.e. the riddle) properly, and they were to give back the same if they did not solve it correctly'

(16) 1359 *Libeaus Desconus*, 1387, þey praide god loude and still, ȝif hit were his will, Helpe þat cristen kniȝt, And *þat file geaunt ... þat day to diȝe* in fiȝt. (Visser, II, 993)
'they prayed to God at all times, if it was His will, to help the Christian knight, and that the evil giant ... should die that day in fight'

(17) c1377 William Langland, *Piers the Plowman* B-text, II, 93ff, Glotonye he gaf hem eke and grete othes togydere, /And alday *to drynke* at dyuerse tauernes, /And there *to iangle* and *to iape* and *iugge* here euene cristene, /And in fastyng-dayes *to frete* ar ful tyme were.
'He also gave them Gluttony, and Great Oaths together with it, and they are to drink all day long at various taverns, and they are to gossip there and to mock and criticise their fellow Christians, and on fast days they are to eat before the proper time'

(18) ibid., II, 101, (...) And þanne wanhope to awake hym so with no wille to amende, /For he leueth be lost þis is here last ende. /And *þei to haue and to holde and here eyres after,* /A dwellyng with þe deuel and dampned by for eure
'(...) and then Despair is to wake them up with no will to amend, for they believe themselves to be lost, this is their final end. And *they and their heirs after them are to have and to hold* a dwelling-place with the devil and be damned forever

In all of the preceding passages the infinitive clause — with or without a surface subject, as in (17) — seems indeed to be capable of denoting futurity by itself, and *to* can no longer be considered a mere substitute for *shall,* as it was in (10), and perhaps also in (11) and (12). In addition, a second, and no less interesting, innovation is apparent in some of the examples, notably in (14) and (16); name-ly, that the construction can behave at times much as a noun clause with overt complementiser would behave now, so that *he to be* in (14) amounts in fact to 'that he be', *þat file geaunt to diȝe* in (16) to 'that the evil giant should die', and so on. In our view, such extension in function must have been bound up with the fact that, at about the same time, the surface sequence *(nominative) NP to-Inf* had emerged in ME as a new complement type; witness (19)-(20) and cf. Visser (1966: II, Chapter 8):[4]

---

[4] For a different dating of the rise of this complement type, cf. A. Warner, *Complementation in Middle English and the Methodology of Historical Syntax* (London & Canberra, 1982), pp. 48ff. According to Warner, the evidence for 'a nominative complementiser' prior to c1450 is scanty: 'It seems to me that before this date the scanty evidence points as much to an "accusative and infinitive" as to a "nominative and infinitive", and that much of what has been cited as earlier evidence for the "nominative and infinitive" has been misinterpreted (...) most of the examples of the "nominative and infinitive" cited by Zeitlin (1908) and by Visser (in particular in II, 971) (...) can be better interpreted than as nonfinite clauses, for example

(19) 13.. *Cursor Mundi* (Cotton MS), 10459, Haldes þou me for ani idiot? /Quar-for suld i haue ioi and blis /Quen i mi spused lauerd mis? /*I to mak me* blith or glad /Bot i him sagh be-for me stad, /þat nu (= na) mai be, thar þe noght wene.
'Do you take me for a fool? Why should I feel happy when I miss my espoused lord? *That I should make myself happy or glad without seeing him placed before me,* that cannot be, you need not think it.'

(20) 1385 Chaucer, *The Legend of Good Women* (Skeat), Prologue, A-version, 366, This is the sentence of the philosophre: /*A King to kepe* his liges (= 'liege men') in Iustyce, /With-outen doute, that is his offyce.

Once such a pattern was available in the language, it could be freely used in other structural positions, including the one now under discussion.[5]

If we now turn to the Shakespearian passages which are the concern of the present study, it will be seen that they too illustrate those various uses of the construction pointed out in the preceding pages. Thus, as in (11) and (12) above, it sometimes serves as a convenient stylistic variant of a previous *NP shall Infinitive;* cf. in this connection (1), (2) ('*I'll* to the Doctor ... And none but *he to marry*'), (3) or (7) ('*the remainder that shall* still *depend To be* such men ...'). Not surprisingly, *NP shall Infinitive* can in its turn be used to avoid the repetition of *NP to-Infinitive,* as when in *Wiv* 4.4.83 Mrs. Page rounds off her speech with the words 'he, none but he shall have her' (cf. example (2)).

However, the vicinity of *shall* is not a requisite condition for the occurrence of the infinitive of future arrangement, for this is found in Shakespeare in isolation from that auxiliary or, indeed, from any other auxiliary, as was also the case in quotations (13) to (18) above; witness examples (6) and (8), where it seems to constitute a useful metrical device. Lastly, the use of the construction as a complement type with future reference is also exemplified in a few instances; cf. (4), (5), and probably also (7), a passage which we take to be equivalent to 'be thou requested ... to disquantity your train a little, and (be thou requested) that the remainder ... shall be such men, etc.' For other examples of two different complement clauses governed by a higher verb of asking or commanding, compare (14) and (16) above (with *will* and *pray* respectively).

To summarise thus far, we have suggested that, because of its frequent occurrence in patterns like (10) on p. 515, the *to-Infinitive* gradually acquired future

as subjunctive clauses, or as elliptical structures' (pp. 49–50). Thus, alluding to *Cursor Mundi,* 10459 (cited above as example (9)), he concludes that 'it seems better to render "Am I to make myself happy without seeing him placed before me? That cannot be, you need not think it" taking *I to mak* as an independent sequence with future sense' (p. 51). On the face of it, the same analysis could be applied to (20) above (i.e. 'a king is to keep his liege men ... that is his duty'); but, in our view, with little justification, for the use of a pronoun — *that* in the above instances — to recapitulate a subject clause is a common feature of ME grammar. Compare *Havelok the Dane* (c1285), 803, 'To liggen (= "lie") at hom *it* is full strong (= "shameful")', and cf. Visser, I, 73, and Fanego, 'Complement Clauses in Shakespeare's English', *Studia Neophilologica* 62 (1990).

5   Shakespearian instances of the 'nominative with infinitive' include the following:
Timon of Athens 4.3.267, *I to bear this,* /That never knew but better, is some burden.
The Winter's Tale 1.2.60, To be your prisoner should import offending, /Which is for me less easy to commit /Than *you to punish.*

connotations, and could then be used in contexts where it no longer functioned as a mere substitute for a preceding *shall,* but denoted futurity in its own right. Such a development no doubt accounts for the following characteristics:

1) Its frequent appearance from ME on in the vicinity of *(NP) shall Infinitive;*
2) the close correspondence between its meaning and that of *shall,* a modal now largely superseded by various other auxiliaries — among them, *be to* —, but which in the early stages of the language was regularly used for events that were seen as pre-arranged, and imposed upon the subject by a will other than his own;
3) its early, and permanent, association with 'ordinances, testamentary dispositions, wills, bequeathals, parliamentary rules, prescriptions' and so on (cf. p. 515), all of them contexts where *shall,* as defined above, was naturally very common;
4) its frequent — if not almost exclusive — use in the second of two coordinate clauses.

Finally, as regards the post-Elizabethan history of the infinitive of future arrangement, examples of its occurrence in dependent clauses — along the lines mentioned on p. 516 above — do not seem to be recorded after Shakespeare. This is not surprising, for it is in the early years of the seventeenth century that the complement type *NP to-Inf* eventually died out, ousted by the modern pattern with *for* as complementiser (cf. Visser, 1966: II, Chapter 8). But in its purely future use the construction has continued to occur, and — if we exclude its adoption, for the sake of brevity, by newspaper headlines — it seems to have retained some of its early characteristics; for instance, its intimate connection with the preceding context, or even — in an example like (22) — its association with *shall:*

(21) We were going to spend most of the summer in a cottage we had rented together with some friends of ours, *they to occupy* the front room and the attic, and *we to have* the rest at our disposal (quoted from Zandvoort, 1975[7]: 87)
(22) 1960 Pence, *Grammar of Present-day English,* 121, We shall assemble at ten forty-five, *the procession to start* at precisely eleven (quoted from Visser, II, 992)

University of Santiago de Compostela   TERESA FANEGO

REFERENCES

Abbott, E.A. 1869. *A Shakespearian Grammar.* London: Macmillan.
Ando, S. 1976. *A Descriptive Syntax of Christopher Marlowe's Language.* Tokyo: University of Tokyo Press.
Franz, W. 1939. *Die Sprache Shakespeares in Vers und Prosa.* Halle: Max Niemeyer Verlag.
Leech, G. 1966. *English in Advertising. A Linguistic Study of Advertising in Great Britain.* London: Longman.
Lewis, M. 1986. *The English Verb. An Exploration of Structure and Meaning.* London: LTP.
Mitchell, B. 1985. *Old English Syntax.* I-II. Oxford: Oxford University Press.
Mustanoja, T.F. 1960. *A Middle English Syntax.* Helsinki: Mémoires de la Société Néophilologique XXIII.

Quirk, R., et al. 1972. *A Grammar of Contemporary English*. London: Longman.
—— 1985. *A Comprehensive Grammar of the English Language*. London: Longman.
Söderlind. J. 1958. *Verb Syntax in John Dryden's Prose*. II. Uppsala.
Visser, F.Th. 1963-73. *An Historical Syntax of the English Language*. I-III. Leiden: E.J. Brill.
Zandvoort, R.W. 1975[7]. *A Handbook of English Grammar*. London: Longman.

STIR WITHIN STASIS IN *WAITING FOR GODOT*

After finishing the (still unpublished) play *Eleutheria* in 1947, Samuel Beckett started to work on *En attendant Godot* in October 1948 and completed it in late January of the following year. It was published in Paris on October 1952 and had its world *première* at the Theâtre de Babylone on 5 January 1953. In what was perhaps the first published review of the performance, 'a little-known French critic' Sylvain Zegel wrote: 'In my opinion, Samuel Beckett's first play – "Waiting for Godot", at the Theâtre de Babylone, will be spoken of for a long time'.[1] The enormous popularity that the play has received in the succeeding decades abundantly justifies Zegel's prescience and prediction. (One is reminded in this connection of the accuracy of Kenneth Tynan's prognosis about the fate of *Look Back in Anger*.) Beckett himself translated the play into English and it was published as *Waiting for Godot* by Grove Press in America in 1954, and by Faber and Faber in Britain in 1956. Both the editions are still in print: according to Grove Press's announcement in March 1975, 'the American paperback edition had sold more than one million copies and was still selling at the rate of 2,500 a week'.[2] It is reasonable to assume that even now, fifteen years later, the publishers would, if asked, produce similarly impressive sales-figures of the book.

One would be equally justified in seeing a correlation between the book industry and the critical industry in this matter, for although 'an American college professor was forced to resign after directing *Godot*, which was declared "detrimental to the moral fibre of the college community"',[3] *Waiting for Godot* has been the subject of wide and serious discussions in the groves of Academe where 'it is now widely accepted as the greatest dramatic achievement of the last generation, some would say the greatest imaginative work of any kind during the same period. ...'[4]Though, according to Beckett, *Waiting for Godot* was written 'as a relaxation, to get away from awful prose (he) was writing at that time',[5] it has left its readers and critics in far from a state of relaxation, as the sizeable amount of critical writings on it would testify. They represent diverse critical methodologies as well as viewpoints. The eminent Beckett scholar Ruby Cohn has remarked: 'I have edited a volume that contains theatrical, source, genre, Marxist, Christian, mythic, philosophic, phenomenological, imagistic,

---

1 Sylvain Zegel. 'En attendant Godot', *Liberation* (7 January 1953). In *Samuel Beckett: The Critical Heritage*. Ed. Lawrence Graver and Raymond Federman. London, 1979, p.88.
2 *Samuel Beckett: The Critical Heritage*, p.12.
3 Ruby Cohn. 'Waiting.' In *Samuel Beckett's* Waiting for Godot. Ed. Harold Bloom. New York, 1987, p.42.
4 Richard Gilman, 'The Waiting Since.' In *Samuel Beckett's* Waiting for Godot. p.69.
5 Ruby Cohn, p.43.