A HISTORY OF THE ENGLISH PERFECT INFINITIVE

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0. Introduction

The combination of the infinitive of the auxiliary *have* and the past participle, most commonly referred to as the perfect infinitive, is found in the following constructions in Present-day Standard English:

(i) after modals expressing anteriority and/or counterfactuality: *she may have left, you should have told me,* including the future perfect tense *I will have finished by Monday*

(ii) in the complements of some linking verbs (especially *pretend/seem/appear/happen* and the copula *be*): *they appear to have lost, she was to have arrived yesterday*

(iii) in the accusative with infinitive (ACI): *we believe him to have done it*

(iv) in the nominative with infinitive (NCI): *Columbus is known to have discovered America*

(v) as the subject and the subject complement: *to have loved and lost is better than never to have loved at all*

(vi) as the complement of certain adjectives: *I am sorry to have kept you waiting*

In most cases its function is to mark past time reference, anteriority or perfectivity. Only after modals and the past copula is it used to express counterfactuality. In transformational grammar in some cases the structures that make use of the perfect infinitive are the result of the so-called subject raising rule, which obligatorily triggers off the infinitivization of the lower verb. The historical survey below will show that in the original occurrences of the construction (as early as the 12th century) the counterfactual interpretation prevails

and that non-counterfactual uses do not become common until late Middle English, when the perfect infinitive is found in an increasing number of syntactic structures. I believe that the misunderstanding of its role of a counterfactual marker on the part of the 18th and 19th-century prescriptivists, who unfortunately took a narrow view on linguistic development, is largely responsible for the demise of the perfect infinitive in various obsolete structures that expressed *irrealis*.

The language material comes mostly from the Diachronic Part of the Helsinki Corpus (cf. Kytö 1993), *Oxford English Dictionary*, *Middle English Dictionary*, Jespersen (1932), Visser (1963-1973) and Mitchell (1985). Additionally, I have used some machine-readable texts collected from various websites. Whenever it was possible, I checked the data in the Early English Text Society editions.

1. Old English background

It appears that Old English had not yet developed the perfect infinitive. In this judgement we can rely on the native speaker's competence of Ælfric (Zupitza 1880: 134), for whom the equivalent of the Latin *infinitivus perfecti amasse* vel *amavisse* is the simple Old English infinitive *lufjan* (likewise Latin second conjugation verb form *docuisse* is rendered by *tæcan*, etc.), without any adverbial qualification *fulfremedlice* 'perfectly' or *gefyrn* 'before', which he otherwise uses to render the Latin finite *plusquamperfectum* forms. Mitchell (1985: §922), however, notices that "occasional examples of what *were to become* [emphasis mine, RM] the perfect and passive infinitives do occur". Similarly to early finite (plu)perfect forms the past participle can still be inflected as in:

(1)   *Forðæm wæs swiðe ryhtlice beboden Ezechiele ðæm witgan ðæt he
        scolde ðone Godes alter **habban** uppan **aholodne***

                                                        CP 217.19

        'Therefore the prophet Ezekiel was very rightly commanded to have
        God's altar hollow above' (translation by Henry Sweet)

(2)   *þa he ðæs caseres mycclan hreowsunge geseah ... he ... hine þa na lenge
        ahwænedne habban nolde*

                                                        ÆLS 510.400

        'When he saw the emperor's great grief, he would no longer keep him afflicted'

The interpretation of the syntactic function of *habban* has always been a matter of dispute. In the cases above it should still be treated as a full verb of possession rather than an auxiliary (cf. Traugott 1972: 93). However, we also find

some sporadic examples of uninflected past participles, which shows that the structure was beginning to grammaticalize, e.g.,

(3)   *þaþa he wolde **habban forsuwod** þæt þæt na forholen beon ne mihte*
        'Then he wanted to pass over in silence that it could not be concealed'
                                                        GD 60.17

(4)   *mid hu micelan feo woldest þu þa **habban geboht** þæt ðu switole mihtest
        tocnawan þine frind 7 ðine fynd*
                                                        Bo 48.14

        *with how mochel woldestow **han bought** the fulle knowynge of thys?*
                                                Chaucer *Boece* ii.8.43 c1380

        *Ful dere thow woldest **haue bought** þis as we trowen*
                                                Walton *Boethius* 320.4 1410

        *With how much woldest thou, in prosperous state **haue bought** this?*
                                        Queen Elizabeth's *Englishing of Boethius* 41,21 1593

(5)   *Se forewitola Scyppend wiste on ær hwæt he of hyre **gedon habban** wolde*
        'The foreknowing God knew before what he would do with them'
                                                        ChronD 201.26 (1067)

The role of *habban* is unclear here, but it does not seem to be the marker of counterfactuality yet. Example (4) is particularly interesting, as all the later translations of *Boethius* have the perfect infinitive.

2. Early Middle English

First sporadic instances of the counterfactual use of the finite pluperfect tense forms are found in the *Ormulum*, but they become really common in the texts from the Katherine Group, *Ancrene Wisse*, *Vices and Virtues*, *Sawles Ward*, all written shortly before or around 1200 in Southwest Midlands (cf. Molencki forthcoming a: §3.2.2). Yet the earliest Middle English instances of past time reference marking by means of the auxiliary *habbe(n)* (still in the very conservative form with the -*bb*- geminate) + past participle (also with the archaic prefix *i-, y-* < OE *ge-*) are the first perfect infinitives occurring after (pre)modals, especially *mihte*, e.g., in the apodoses of the examples below. We should agree with Fischer (1992: 324), who thinks that most of the early examples do not concern an action in the past, but most often the perfect infinitive expresses the non-realization of an action. Thus it is natural that it is first usually "found in combination with modal verbs which express contingencies rather than facts". They precede the first occurrences of finite pluperfect counterfactuals and, interestingly, also represent South Midland dialects:

(6) *Ich mihte* **habbe** *bet* **i-don**, *hefde ich þen i-selðe*
     'I might have done better if I had had good sense then'
                                   Poema Morale 13 a1200 (c1150)

Some other turn of the 13th century examples are:

(7) *Mo ðanne fif ðusende besantes of gode þohtes, and of gode wordes, and*
     of gode woerkes, ðu mihtest **habben biʒeten**, *ʒif ðu woldest*
                                   Vices&Virtues 1 17 c1225 (c1200)

(8) *Hwenne schulde ich al* **habben irikenet** ['reckoned']
                                   HaliMeidhad 152 c1225 (c1200)

(9) *Muchel hofleas is þet ...vorte sechen ... more lefdischipe þen heo mukte*
     habben iheued [had] ... *i ðe worlde*
                                   Ancrene Riwle (Nero) 47.23 a1250

It seems to have been a natural therapeutic development making up for the loss
of the morphologically marked preterite. Some originally past modals (*wolde,
mihte, sceolde, ahte*) had already started to be used in present time contexts in
Old English:

(10) *Ne* **miht** *þu lencg tun-scire bewitan*
     'thou mayest be no longer steward'
                                   W.Sax. Gosp. Luke 16.2

As the phenomenon was becoming more and more common in Early Middle Eng-
lish, the language needed to find a new way of expressing the present-past contrast
by analogical extension of the increasingly used perfect to nonfinite forms. There
was no other way to express past time reference (cf. Brunner 1962: 348).
     A similar process occurred in other Middle Germanic languages – cf.
Mettke's (1983: 220) discussion of the Middle High German infinitive, e.g.,

(11) *und solde mit in* **hân gestriten**
     'and should have fought with him'
                                   Iwein 6350

which is interesting in the light of later developments in German. We also find
occurrences of the perfect infinitive expressing anteriority rather than
counterfactuality in Old Icelandic sagas, e.g.,

(12) *Þá grunaði Vani at Æsir mundi* **hafa falsat** *þá í mannaskiptinu*
     'Then the Vanir suspected that the Æsir must have played them false in
     exchange of men'
                                   Ynglinga Saga 4.14 (after Garmonsway 1928: 48)

(13) *Hann kvazk fleiri menn* **hafa drepit** *en þenna einn*
     'He said he had killed more men than this one' (after Gordon 1957: 64)
                                   Hrafnkels Saga 3.188

But we cannot be certain when exactly the perfect infinitive developed in Old
Norse, as most texts are available to us in much later versions. Jespersen (1932:
149) observes that the indication of past might be added to either of two verbs
and that different languages may go different ways. Since English premodals
made less and less use of their past participles *have* was added to the dependent
verb.
     Unlike in Romance and other Germanic languages only *have* is found as the
auxiliary, also with intransitive verbs:

(14) *Seint thomas tolde hem þo ...ʒwodere he þouʒte* **to habbe iwent**
                                   Th. Becket c1300

This is usually explained by the fact that English *be* was increasingly charged
with other auxiliary functions, especially in the passive voice after the elimina-
tion of *weorþan* and later also as the progressive aspect auxiliary. There are,
however, forms which are ambiguous and can equally well be interpreted as ei-
ther passive or perfect infinitives even in Early Modern English:

(15) *weene them selfe ...* **to be fallen** *into an outragious sinne*
                                   More *Works* 1196 C7 1534 (see also 115)

     Some examples (especially with *wolde*), however, appear to continue the Old
English usage as in (3-5) above, where the auxiliary *habben* indicates past time
reference and is not counterfactual:

(16) *wepð and woneð ðat he æure was to manne iscapen, ðat he scolde swa*
     michel **habben misdon** *aʒean his sceppend, for hwat he ofearneð helle*
     pine
                                   Vices&Virtues 1 63 c1225 (c1200)

     Another very early Middle English example of the non-counterfactual usage
of the perfect infinitive, albeit an isolated one, is

(17) *Sire ich am awummon and schulde mid rihte beon more scheomeful uorte*
     habben ispeken *ase ich spec. oðer* **idon**. *ase ich dude*
     'Sir, I am a woman and should rightly be more ashamed to have spoken
     as I spoke or done as I did'
                                   Ancrene Wisse 143, 19 c1225 (c1200)

In a similarly unusual Middle English example:

(18)   *And she no husbonde had I-had, hir **to haue gouerned & lad***

                                    Cursor Mundi (Trinity MS) 10803 a1400

the perfect infinitive appears to be superfluous, as it expresses the (non)action simultaneous with that of the main verb. I believe that in this case we have an early instance of what was to become very common in late Middle English/ Early Modern English, viz. the peculiar verb agreement found in hypothetical and counterfactual constructions discussed in Section 3.2 below. Another argument for having the (counterfactual) perfect infinitive here may be the fact that the imaginary husband did not exist. Interestingly, other (earlier northern) manuscripts of the *Cursor Mundi* do not have this sentence at all.

Examples like those above are rare – all Visser's (1963-1973: §§2044-2047) Middle English examples of the perfect infinitive represent unreality of one kind or another. Otherwise, most Early Middle English clear examples of the perfect infinitive follow a modal verb. In the latter half of the 14th century we also find first instances of the perfect passive infinitive, which is particularly interesting in the light of the fact that the present passive infinitive itself was a novelty (cf. Fischer 1991):

(19)   *For wald he noght **haf knaun bene***

                     Cotton MS Cursor Mundi 14601 c1340 (a1325)

   *(Fairfax MS: ne walde he noȝt **knawen bene**)*

(20)   ***Amendid** in no maner ne miȝt it **haue bene***

                                 Will. of Palerne 1946 a1375

In the *Cursor Mundi* one can come across numerous examples where the perfect infinitive is found only in the southern versions, which is further evidence of the fact the structure must have spread to the north from southern dialects – as I said above all the early 12/13th century instances appear mostly in southwest Midlands. The fewest instances of the perfect infinitive are found in the Fairfax manuscript most probably copied in Lancaster in the late fourteenth century (cf. Molencki forthcoming b).

Except after modals, the perfect infinitive is usually marked by *to* or *for to*, as in (18) and (17) respectively – for an extensive discussion of infinitive marking in Middle English see Fischer (1995, 1996) and Los (1998). Very soon the past participle must have made one unit with the auxiliary *have*, as even in early texts they are placed one next to the other. If some element intervenes the construction appears to have the possessive or causative meaning:

(21)   *To shewe you this. ye must vnderstonde that for the synnes of the Jewes it pleysyd god **to haue them punysshed***

       Richard Fitzjames *Sermo Die Lune In Ebdomada Pasche* A4V c1495

The perfect infinitive must already have been very well grammaticalized by the fifteenth century as some examples with phonetic reductions cited in the *MED* show, e.g., *talived* for *to have lived*, *tafallen* for *to have fallen* etc., e.g.,

(22)   *I hadde a sone wonder fair, likly **tabene** [= to have been] his successour and hair*

                      Lydgate *Siege of Thebes 918* ?c1421

(23)   *He hadde to help cese þe riot þat was like **to agrowe** in þat behalfe*

                          Proc. Privy C. 4.107 1431

(24)   *Þe grete inconveniences that weren like **to afalle** in his longe absence*

                          Proc. Privy C 5.105 1438

(25)   *Freynchmen and Pykardes ... kome to Arfleet, **for to arescuyd** it*

                          Paston Letters 2.47 1440

(26)   *I told hym if hys fadyr had do as he dede, he wold **a be achamyd to a seyd** as he seyd*

                       Paston Letters 1.219 1422-1509

and some other examples, all from the 15th century, also with modals, e.g., in *The Book of Margery Kempe*.

3. Late Middle English and Early Modern English

Another construction became very common in later English with verbs of will, intention, purpose, expectation, fear or hope in the past, where the perfect infinitive serves to indicate that the intention was not carried into effect (cf. Visser 1963-1973: §2120; Jespersen 1932: 142). Mustanoja (1960: 517) also discusses this "peculiar ME use of the perfect infinitive to express a hypothetical action simultaneous with that of a non-auxiliary finite verb". The earliest instances I found are again in the Katherine group:

(27)   *efter þat he wende **forto habben idon** al þat he wilnede*

                        Seinte Juliene 84 c1225 (c1200)

(28)   *þei ... wenden of me ... **haue maked** al hare ahen, and hefden forsoðe maked, nere helpe nere [sic!] þe nerre*

                      Wohunge Ure Lauerd 277 c1225 (c1200)

It is relatively frequent in the 14th century:

(29)   *Þe feondes hopeden suyþe wel **habbe ihaued** a wel god cas*

                         SLeg. Brendan (Ld) 496 c1300

(30) *and on hir bare knees adoun they falle And wolde* **have kist** *his feet*
                                        Chaucer *CT Knight's* 1759 c1390

but becomes really common in the 15th and 16th centuries. As Görlach (1991: 129) says "The perfect infinitive was used in EModE (unlike PrE) to express a possible, intended or unreal action" (see also Brunner 1962: 348):

(31) *As he rode in a valley he sey a knyght chasyng a lady with a naked swerde* **to have slayne** *hir*
                                        Malory *Morte d'Arthur* 207 c1470

(32) *And the pryour that was voyded* [had retreated] *and hydde vnder the bedde wende* **to haue take** *his breche but he fonde none*
                                        Caxton *Knight of Tower* 89.1 1486

(33) *And Abraham stretched forth his hande, and toke the knyfe* **to haue kylled** *his sonne*
                                        Tyndale's *Bible Gen* 22.10 1534

(34) *the carpenters boy having stoln a shirt was hoysed to the yerd arme* **to have been ducked**, *but I begd his pardon*
                                        Richard *Madox's Diary* 11 June 1582

(35) *My deere Harte the cause of my not writing to thee the last week was becaus I thought* **to haue been** *at home with the before my letter, and therfore I cannot chose but condemne yr to rashe censure of my forgettfullnes; which although it proceeds from yr infinite love, yet ...*
                                        Thomas Knyvett's letter to his wife 9 Oct 1621

(36) *They hop'd my daughter would* **ha bin** *a Nun; But she's at home*
                                        Marlowe *Jew of Malta* 773 1592

The perfect infinitive in such cases is often accompanied by some explicit expression (most typically the adversative conjunction *but*) that the action did not occur:

(37) *þe seyd John Grys and hys sone and a seruaunt man of hese by here bodyes tokyn and fro þe seyd dwellyng place by þe space of a myle to a peyre galwes ledden, þere hem* **for to have hangyd**; *and by-cause hem* **fayled** *ropes convenient to here felonowse purpos*
                                        Paston Letters 8 1426-7

(38) *This day came the Lieutenant of the Swiftsure (who was sent by my Lord to Hastings, one of the Cinque ports,* **to have got** *Mr. Edw. Mountagu to* **have been** *one of their burgesses);* **but could not**, *for they were all promised before*
                                        Pepys *Diary* 3 Apr 1660

Mustanoja (1960: 519) attributes this use to "obvious points of contact with later ME usage of pluperfect subjunctive ... under French influence" and gives examples of the same verbs as those that were combined with "modal pluperfect". Indeed, instead of the perfect infinitive we sometimes find a finite complement clause with the pluperfect verb following verbs of thinking. Sweet (1898, 2: §2247) believed that the tense was "more graphic than the preterite as heightening the surprise by the reminder that it was too late to take advantage of the knowledge". Visser (1963-1973: §2039) rightly observed that the use of pluperfect "is not obligatory in this case":

(39) *The wowf* [wolf] *went all* **had bene** *on sleep*
                                        Dunbar *Poems* 53 1500-20

(40) *men supposed it* **had ben** *syr Peter of Craon*
                                        Berners *Froiss*.VI.63 1523-25

(41) *I thought we* **had been** *safe*
                                        Austen *Sense & Sensibility* 203 1811

Mustanoja (1960: 518) does not exclude the possibility "that the English use of the perfect infinitive for unrealised action is due to or at least promoted by the influence of Latin and French", as we observe a spectacular increase in the 14th century, when the influence of French was particularly strong. A feature that is common to all the languages is that the finite verb governing the perfect infinitive usually expresses a desire or a wish.

In the literature we find several explanations, all referring to psychological factors. Kellner (1924: 233) ascribes it to "the speaker's/writer's desire to keep such a contemplated but unrealised action out of the sphere of the present and retain it within the limits of the past". Other authorities, as Mustanoja (1960: 519) says, believe that "the phenomenon is due primarily to the common tendency of the popular psyche to anticipative thinking, more interested in the outcome than in the course of an action. The fulfilment of desire is awaited with such eagerness and impatience that the perfect tense is felt to be more appropriate for the infinitive than the present. Likewise one tends to imagine that a feared event has already happened."

In earlier English such verbs were usually followed by clauses with subjunctive verbs. It is no wonder that with the gradual demise of the mood, the perfect infinitive came handy as a replacement. However, the simple infinitive sometimes occurred in such situations, as well; compare Old English, Middle English

and Early Modern English version of *Luke* 23.8, where Wycliffe still has the simple infinitive:

(42) a. *and he **hopode þæt he gesawe** sum tacen þe fram him gewurde*

> W.Sax. Gospels

b. *& **hopede to seen** sum tokne to be maad of hym*

> Wycliffe c1380

c. *and he **hoped to have seen** some miracle done by him*

> Auth. Version 1611

But in most cases, the perfect infinitive was preferred when one wished to express an unfulfilled plan, whereas the simple infinitive usually referred to facts, e.g.,

(43) *There was a lady which had good gounes & ryche but she wolde not were them on sondayes ne on festful dayes but yf she **supposed to fynde** there noble men of estate*

> Caxton *Knight of Tower* 45.21 1486

(44) *And he thought and **supposed wel to haue torned** her but he myght not*

> Caxton *Knight of Tower* 56.22 1486

By way of analogy the perfect infinitive is also found in complements of nouns denoting plans, purposes or hopes (*hoping, conseil, licence, leave, necessity*) that were not fulfilled:

(45) *theyr ententis were **to have taken** lande*

> Berners *Froiss.* I,33 1523-5

(46) *My purpose was not **to have seen** you here*

> Shakesp. *MerchVen* III.ii.228 1596

(47) *All her hope was **to have had** her daughter married before it* [journey] *took place*

> Fanny Burney *Evelina* 1778

That the perfect infinitive expresses an action that did not occur is seen in the infinitival complementation of the verb *to be* in (49-50), whereas in (48) the simple infinitive is used because Judas did betray Jesus:

(48) *Iudas Scarioth, oon of hise disciplis, that **was to bitraye** him, seide*

> Wycliffe *John* 12.4 c1380

(49) *Mr. At. Gen. Mr. Oates **was about to have made** him a Priest, but it seems he hath a Wife and Children, and so is out of danger*

> The Trial of Titus Oates IV 83 C2 1685

(50) *I **was to have dined** to-day with Lord Keeper, but would not*

> Swift *Journal to Stella* 492 c1710

The use of the perfect infinitive may have been a characteristic stylistic device – Mustanoja (1960: 517) notes that it was particularly common in Malory's *Morte D'Arthur* and in London documents of Chaucer's time, especially in the writings of Thomas Usk:

(51) *the ful purpos of the persones toforn nempned was **to have had** the town in thair governaile and **have rulid** it be thair avys, and **have holden** under, or elles devoyeded owt of towne, al the persones that had be myghty **to have wythseyde** hem, and the remenant, that had non such myght, **to have holden** hem under for ever*

> Bk London E24, Usk 1384

In Early Modern English the use of the perfect infinitive was even extended to the complements of present tense verb form expressing unreality:

(52) *Yf Nature haue done any thing in him, & in a diuers sorte, when we speake of God the guyder of all thinges, who can imagine **to haue Joynd** all these diuersities?*

> Queen Elizabeth's *Englishing of Boethius* 63 1593

(53) *those reasons ... which I loath **to have repeated** Lyly*

> *Euphues* 413 1580

But some sentences where perfect infinitives follow present tense verbs are more difficult to interpret. In most contexts, however, they appear to refer to contrary-to-fact situations with the perfect infinitives usually accompanied by some explicit expressions of unreality:

(54) *Where that his lords desire him **to have borne** his bruised helmet and his bended sword before him through the city: he **forbids it** ...*

> Shakesp. *Henry V* V.Prol.17 1599

(55) *now she stands & eies thee fixt, **About t'have spoke***

> Milton *Samson Agonistes* 727 1671

Jespersen (1932: 146) and Visser (1963-1973: §2049) noted that perfect infinitives were particularly frequent after expressions of likelihood, especially *had (been) like*:

(56) *After the treaty had been like **to have been broken** off*

> Strype *Ann. Ref.* I.xx.367 1709

(57) *The young Lady was amorous and had like to have run away with her*
Father's Coachman Steele Spectator 78, 4 1711

(58) *I met with a little Adventure, which had like to have cost me dear*
Defoe *Moll Flanders* 1722

(59) *They had on this Occasion a squable one Day about me at Table, that had like to have put the whole family in an Uproar*
Defoe *Moll Flanders* 1722

The perfect infinitive is often attested with the impersonal *had better (been)*:

(60) *better hym hadde ybe haue bileued þer þan ylerned for to fle*
Robert of Gloucester *Chronicle* c1300

(61) *Bettur had him ben to ha ben ded*
Cursor Mundi 15473 a1340 (a1325)

Here we have a peculiar verb form agreement. The *have* part of the infinitive might have started as a copy of the main clause pluperfect auxiliary. I believe that in such cases, rather than with "hypercorrect marking of 'past'" (Görlach 1991: 111) we are dealing with examples of discontinuous grammaticalization of *have* as the counterfactuality marker. In Middle English this is mostly found with verbs of thinking and in counterfactual conditionals:

(62) *Cardenal Comeracence ... had purposit ... to have y maad the ferste Collation to for the Kynge*
Forester in Rymer *Fædera* IX.434 1417 (1710)

(63) *and told here þat ʒe had sergyd to a fownd wrytyng þer-of and ʒe kwd non fynd in non wyse*
Paston Letters 128.21 1448

(64) *For yf it had not be so ye had not take me for to haue lefte her*
Caxton *Knight of Tower* 160.8 1486

3.1. Variations

In various texts there occur some isolated variations of the perfect infinitive. Thus in the first medical writing in Scots instead of the expected auxiliary *have* we find its past form *had*:

(65) *And howbeit it become me rather ... to had vrytin* [Lat. *scripsisse*] *the samin in Latine, Zit vnderstanding sic interpryses had bene nothing profitable to the commoun and wulgar people*
Skeyne *Ane breve descriptiovn of the pest* 22 1586
(after Görlach 1991: 365)

Sometimes a superfluous *had* is added before the past participle, e.g.,

(66) *He might never **have had escaped***
Let. Bekyngton in RS 56. 2. 213 1442

or *have* is left out. Ando (1976: 588) notes that "From the 14th century down even to the 17th century, the past participle is sporadically used instead of the perfect infinitive. It may be that the disappearance before the past participle of an unstressed *have* has given birth to the idiom":

(67) *speake, had it not beene much better **To kept** thy promise then be thus surpriz'd?*
Marlowe *Jew of Malta* 2105 1592

(68) *I would have sworn the pulling girl **Would** willingly **accepted Hammon's love***
Dekker *Shoemaker's Holiday* III.iii.62 1600

(69) *We **should** by this ... **found** it so*
Shakesp. *Coriolanus* IV.vi.34 1608

3.2. "Pleonastic" *have's*

The above-mentioned cases of discontinuous grammaticalization, a kind of verb form agreement across clauses where one *have* is a copy of another, become particularly abundant in the Early Modern English period:

(70) *yt **had** been a poynt of curtesy to **have** doen Sir Francis that honowr as to **have** come to Plymmowth*
Richard Madox's *Diary* 1 June 1582

(71) *it **had** been better not to **have** given the earth unto Adam*
AV 2Esdras 7.46 1611

(72) *I **had** thought to **have** written unto him aboute it, but finding myself an ill scribe I have left it undonne*
Richard Oxinden's letter to his son 14 June 1626

(73) *I **had** hoped to **have** seen you the next week, but my husband is so importuned by Colchester men to be there on Monday that it hinders my joyrnye because he goeth in his coatch*
Lady Elizabeth Masham's letter to her mother July 1629

The structure is frequently found in both protases and apodoses of counterfactual conditionals:

(74)   *they went always in Cloaths, though in their Frollicks they would* **have** *chosen sometimes to* **have** *gone naked, if they had not feared the people*
                              Gilbert Burnet *Biography of John, Earl of Rochester* 23 1680

(75)   *And by this time I* **had** *gotten timber, and plank, and iron-work enough to* **have** *builded a good boat, if I had known how*
                              Defoe *Crusoe* 1719

(76)   *if he* **had** *known where to* **have** *found me, he would certainly* **have** *embrac'd my Proposal of going with me to Virginia or to* **have** *settled in a Plantation, on some other Parts of the English Colonies in America*
                              Defoe *Moll Flanders* 1722

(77)   *If Leigh Hunt* **had** *ever had the misfortune to* **have** *been tarred and feathered, he would have written a sonnet on his plumification*
                              Blackw. Mag. VI. 75 1819

and in optative wishes:

(78)   *I* **had** *liked to* **have** *begged a parrot for my wife*
                              Pepys *Diary* 22 Aug 1662

(79)   *Oh that there* **had** *been but one or two, nay, or but one soul, saved out of this ship, to* **have** *escaped to me, that I might but* **have** *had one companion, one fellow-creature, to* **have** *spoken to me, and to* **have** *conversed with!*
                              Defoe *Crusoe* 1719

Sometimes we may have a whole series of copies, as is illustrated above and in the following sentences with strings of multiple consecutive *have*'s:

(80)   *It* **had** *been a thing, we confess, worthy to* **have** *been wished that the author himself* **had** *lived to* **have** *set forth and overseen his own writings*
                              Preface to Shakespeare: *To the Great Variety of Readers* 20 1623

(81)   *if the plotters of the Powder Treason in England* **had** *seene this Mine, that they (perhaps) would* **haue** *attempted to* **haue** *left the Parliament House, and* **haue** *vndermined the Thames, and so to* **haue** *blowne vp the Barges and Wherries, wherein the King, and all the Estates of our Kingdome were*
                              John Taylor *The Pennyles Pilgrimage* 133 C1 1630

(82)   *and I* **had** *great mind to* **have** *gone back to* **have** *seen, but yet would correct my nature and would not*
                              Pepys *Diary VIII 344.21* 19 Jul 1667

(83)   *I would* **have** *been very glad to* **have** *gone back to the island, to* **have** *taken one of the rest from thence, but it could not be*
                              Defoe *Crusoe 2,210* 1719

3.3. Prescriptivists' opposition

Despite their very common occurrence in the literary texts of the time, multiple *have*'s were despised by the 18th and 19th-century language purists and prescriptivists, who were particularly active and influential during the period when these forms were spreading. Being not only prescriptive, but even proscriptive (stating what should not be said), they condemned and banned many "improprieties" although they were in widespread use among educated people, especially if the English structures did not conform to the rules of Latin, a language considered superior to English. The arbiters of "correctness" considered double and mutliple *have*'s illogical and superfluous and one can wonder to what extent their influence changed the actual usage as it did in the case of double negation, future auxiliaries or relative pronouns. In his most interesting discussion of *have* expressing unreality Denison (1993: 356) observes that "The prescriptive tradition frowns upon some of the patterns with double use of HAVE."

There was also a very strong opposition against using even the perfect infinitive itself to express intended or unreal action, as in examples (31-38). Robert Lowth, Bishop of Oxford, (1775 [1979]: 87) is the first grammarian who condemns this usage (cf. Rissanen 1998: §6.2.1). Visser (1963-1973: §2154) has an interesting selection of quotations from later prescriptive grammarians, who use the following derogatory terms referring to the construction in question:

Brittain (1778: 109):	"speculatively rather improper, practically esteemed proper"
Murray (1805: 277):	"evidently wrong"
Cobbett (1831: §259):	"most common error"
Abbott (1871: 259):	"ungrammatical"
Hall (1873: 200):	"faulty syntax"
Bain (1879: 185):	"erroneously used"
White (1882: 170):	"ungrammatical and unmeaning"

Nesfield (1898: 169) appears to have been the only dissident, writing about such usage: "sanctioned by authority as well as by idiom, and was common in Elizabethan English". It is no wonder that with so many influential authorities speaking against the usage the structure is rarely found in the literary texts – cf. Curme (1931: 468): "this usage seems at present to be less common in *good* [emphasis mine, RM] literature than formerly." In the eighteenth century it is still quite common in Daniel Defoe's *Robinson Crusoe* published in 1719, but conspicuously

rare in contemporary *Gulliver's Travels* written in 1726 by another notorious prescriptivist Jonathan Swift, who only used the counterfactual perfect infinitive following the phrases *had like/had better.* According to Brunner (1962: 326) such usage continued quite long, but in modern literature is limited to the cases where past marking cannot be made on the finite form, as in *He must/ought to have done it.* Otherwise modern speakers prefer to mark the finite form, i.e.

(90)	*I should have been glad to go*	rather than	*I should be glad to have gone*
(91)	*I had meant to write you a letter*	rather than	*I meant to have written you a letter*

The use of the double (or multiple) perfect, as in (81-83), was the subject of even stronger and more aggressive condemnation. In spite of continuous attacks, however, the proscribed construction survived in the Victorian literature and even well into the 20th century:

(84) *It would have been a rare sport to have done it*
<div align="right">Dickens <i>Pickwick Papers</i> 154 1837</div>

(85) *I should have liked to have taken a stroll in the hayfields*
<div align="right">Thackeray <i>Sam Titmarsh</i> Ch.I,2 1841</div>

(86) *He thoroughly detested his son-in-law, and would have given much to have had his money back again – so that Mr Traffick should have had no share in it*
<div align="right">Trollope <i>Ayala's Angel</i> 1881</div>

(87) *it would have been ever so nice to have gone on the cliffs*
<div align="right">Powell <i>Afternoon Men</i> 169 1931</div>

(88) *I would have liked to have left that past time alone*
<div align="right">Greene <i>End of the Affair</i> 26 1951</div>

(89) *Whatever my condition I'd have had to have gone back to England early next month*
<div align="right">Ellis <i>The Rack</i> 26 1958</div>

Only diachronic linguists familiar with the history of English defend the construction, first of all Jespersen (1932: 141): "imaginative use of the perfect infinitive has not, however, been understood by all grammarians". According to Visser (1963-1973: §2188) sentences like *I would have liked to have gone* have been "frequently and unintermittently employed since the beginning of the fif-

teenth century". He gives a long list of great men of letters who made use of the construction including Spenser, Shakespeare, Dryden, Donne, Defoe, Fielding, Sterne, Scott and many others. Visser believes that the major reasons why prescriptive grammarians are reluctant "to recognize the legitimacy of the idiom" are "the misapprehension that in this pattern the formula *have* + past participle should refer to the completedness of the action and the ignoring of its potency to suggest irreality." He thinks that in such constructions the verbal forms *have* are not "time-indicators", but "their function in the sentence is almost exclusively to be a means to express modality". *Have* is repeated to lend "extra force to the motion of non-reality ... a speaker who wants to emphasize ... his regret will ... consider the pattern with double *have* as stylistically preferable."

In the first half of this century, prescriptive grammars do not often refer to the construction, but as Visser notes, "in the middle of the 20th century grammarians, almost to a man, suddenly begin to condemn the idiom" (Visser 1963-1973: §2188). Rowe and Webb (1930: 158) call it simply "wrong", Wood (1954: 190) talks about "a very common error" and in a later book about a "mistaken use of a double perfect" (Wood 1962: 175). Likewise, Millington Ward (1957: 49) labels it as "incorrect" in his *Peculiarities [!] in English.* The construction has frequently appeared in the 1950s and the 1960s among the "Sentences for Correction" in the examination for the Cambridge Certificate of Proficiency in English. Fowler (1965: 444) talks about "forms that push their way in where they are not wanted". Other grammarians mention the high frequency of occurrence of a double perfect, both in British and American English, e.g., Allen (1957: 196): "clumsy but strangely enough quite commonly heard" or Myers (1953: 184): "so common in standard usage that it can hardly be considered a serious mistake".

4. Non-counterfactual uses of the perfect infinitive

4.1. The accusative with infinitive

Despite the rich literature concerning the accusative with infinitive in English, it is surprising how little information one can find about the origins of the construction where the perfect infinitive is used. Its function here is to express anteriority rather than unreality and the usage is attributed to foreign (mostly Latin) influences in Late Middle English. In Modern English this application of the form is very common indeed, almost as frequent as with modal verbs. Since Old English had not yet had the perfect infinitive, it is natural that Ælfric is forced to use different West Saxon equivalents of the *infinitivus perfecti* in Latin *accusativus cum infinitivo* (Zupitza 1880: 134, 144, 150):

(92) *sciui te aliquando amasse deum*   *ic wiste, þæt ðu hwilon lufodest God*

(93) *olim uolui te amatum esse VEL fuisse*   *gefyrn ic wolde, þæt ðu wære gelufod*

(94) *uidi aliquando te docuisse pueros*   *ic geseah hwilon ðe tæcan ðam cildum*

The perfect infinitive in such structures is not yet found even in the early fourteenth century, despite the fact that it was well-established in other (mostly counterfactual) constructions:

(95) *Ghe wiste of water it **boren ben***
      'She knew it (baby Moses) to have been born from water'
      Genesis&Exodus 2632 a1325 (c1250)

The first instances come from Wycliffe's *Bible, so the Latin influence may have been at least partially responsible*

(96) *He that seith him **for to haue knowe** God, and kepith not his commaundementes*
      Latin: *Qui dicit se **nosse** eum et mandata eius non custodit*
                                                    I John 2.4 c1380

(97) *I sey to þee petir, þe koc shal nott crowen to-dai, til þou þries forsake **to han knowen** me*
                                                    Luke 22.34
      *Dico tibi, Petre, non cantabit hodie gallus, donec ter abneges **nosse** me*

What is interesting in the two instances above is that in addition to expressing anteriority both these perfect infinitives are also counterfactual. Perhaps from such contexts the form was analogously extended to past non-counterfactual instances as in:

(98) *To denye crist for to haue ascendid*
                                                    Wycliffe *Pauline Epistles* 10.6 c1400

(99) *whiche I trustede to god to haue proued by lawe by fore the kyng and the worchepeful lordes and comunes in that parlement that the processe of myn outelawerye was vnlawefully made*
                                                    Petition of Thomas Paunfelt of Cambridgeshire 1414

(100) *we know our autor to haue quicknid*
                                                    Wycliffe *Apology for Lollard Doctrines* 68 c1400

(101) *of whom somme men trawe* [=believe] *that cite to have taken name*
                                                    Higden *Trolls* II,121 1432-50

(102) *surmising him to have been the son of the Duc of Clarence*
                                                    Henry VII Letters i,I,20 1477

(103) *For I haue wist that tyrant with his hands 2 To haue killed a 100 knights and moe, And shamefully driuen them to dead*
                                                    Egar&Grime 883 c1500

(104) *in such Schooles as these, I have knowne some boyes more pregnant witted then the rest, to have proved very good Grammarians, and to have profited so in the Latine and Greek Tongues, as to come to good maturity in University studies, by a Tutors guidance*
                                                    Charles Hoole *A New Discovery of the Old Art of Teaching Schoole* 214 1660

(105) *at the same time I know myself to have been the occasion of all their sufferings*
                                                    Fielding *Tom Jones* iii.viii.91 1749

With the growing spread of the ACI construction (with the simple infinitive) to new semantic classes of verbs (cf. Visser 1963-1973: §§2066-2081) in the 16-17th centuries, we also find more and more examples of the perfect infinitive:

(106) *which blessing reason wyll that we ... understande to have ben geuen by god*
                                                    More *Works* 378 A8 1532-3

(107) *we reade the very shadow of Peter to haue healed the deseased persons*
                                                    Stapleton *A Fortresse of the Faith* 98r.3 1565

(108) *Whilest the Parliament yet continued, the Duke of Yorke was restored to his olde dignitie, whome many men thought to haue bin dead in prison.*
                                                    John Stow *The Chronicles of England* 566 1580

(109) *thine own mouth accuses thee to have slain thy Master my confederate Brother, and the Lords Anointed*
                                                    Milton *The History of Britain* X.278 1670

(110) *but as for Mr. Hicks, I did not in the least suspect him to have been in the Army, being a Presbyterian Minister, that used to preach, and not to fight.*
                                                    The Trial of Lady Alice Lisle IV 122 C1 1685

(111) *the world concludes his real father to have been a groom or a coachman*
                                                    Swift *Gulliver* 1726

(112) *I suppose Ulysses to have been the captain of a merchant-ship*
> Fielding *Voyage to Lisbon* 256 1743

and numerous examples with such verbs as *disclose, expone, record, profess, detect, find, hold, suppose, suspect, fancy, believe* etc. There are also examples of multiple *have*'s as in (80-83) above or:

(113) *who would haue thought the olde man to haue had so much blood in him?*
> Shakespeare *Macbeth* V.1.39 1606

(114) *I should not have taken you to have been so old*
> Congreve *Double Dealer* III. ii 1694

Contrary to counterfactual usage, there appeared to have been the possibility of using the auxiliary *be* for intransitive verbs:

(115) *came to a Bishop, viz the Bishop of London (but I suppose it was some other Bishop, for hee is reputed to be honest) and told Him that hee came to acquaint Him of a liveing was said lately **to be fallen** by the Incumbent's decease and desired hee might have it*
> Henry Oxinden's letter to his wife Sept 1662 (see also 15)

Interestingly, we also find it with verbs like *make, see* or *allow,* whose modern counterparts never combine with the perfect infinitive, as they express the action that is simultaneous or even posterior to the main verb. Contrary to verbs of speaking, believing etc. discussed above, these are verbs which appear in the so-called ditransitive ACI. In transformational analyses the object NP is simultaneously the subject of the lower infinitival clause and as such is represented twice in the underlying structure (cf. Warner 1982: 33-37; Molencki 1987: 46-48). In Late Middle English/Early Modern English the verb agreement rule seemed to have played a greater role and also monotransitive ACIs made use of the perfect infinitive. What is more important, in most cases the interpretation is counterfactual:

(116) *þai thoght þat kynd him* [Cain] *mond forbede To haf don suilk a nogli dede*
> *Cursor Mundi* 1104 a1340 (c1325)

(117) *[God] myȝt haue made vs haue ben ... a toode or a neddir*
> *þe Pater Noster of Richard Ermyte* 11,31 c1400

(118) *in hys woodnes he wolde have made hys horse to have lopyn over the watir*
> *þe Pater Noster of Richard Ermyte* 535 c1400

(119) *she would haue made Hercules haue turned spit, yea, and haue cleft his club to make the fire too*
> Shakesp. *Much Ado* II.i.249 1599

(120) *it would have made any one have thought I was haunted*
> Defoe *Crusoe* 187 1719

(121) *it would have made any man's heart have bled*
> Sterne *Tristram* 245 1759-67

(122) *gladly she wolde have sene the duke ... to have attaygned to the crowne of Fraunce*
> Ld. Berners *Froiss.* VI, 391 1523-5

(123) *for we have seen the very poorest to have come to dignities of preferment by being learned*
> Charles Hoole *A New Discovery of the Old Art of Teaching Schoole* 222 1660

(124) *they allowed the language of the capuchin to have been indiscreet and worthy of censure*
> Scott *The Antiquary* 173, 1816 (after Visser 1963-1973: §2075)

The verb *remember,* which in modern times is complemented by the gerund, was most typically followed by the perfect infinitive in the Early Modern English period, e.g.,

(125) *Such groans of roaring wind and rain, I never remember to have heard*
> Shakespeare *King Lear* III.ii.47 1606

(126) *I lay down on the grass, which was very short and soft, where I slept sounder than ever I remember to have done in my life, and, as I reckoned, above nine hours*
> Swift *Gulliver's Travels* 1726

4.2. The nominative with infinitive

Similarly to the ACI, first instances of the nominative with (the simple) infinitive construction are already attested in Old English (cf. Callaway 1913: 59-60; Molencki 1991: 124-126; Denison 1993: 224-225), where most examples are interpreted as close imitations of Latin. They all involve verbs of mental or physical perception used in the passive form. Verbs of speaking still make use of finite complementation only, e.g.,

(127) *Scs Agustinus is sægd þæt he beotigende forecwæde*
      'St. Augustine ... is said to have threatened and foretold'
                                                    Bede 102.20

(Latin: *Agustinus fertur minitans praedixisse*)

The first instances of the lower verb's infinitivization are again found in Wycliffe's texts:

(128) *A man is seyd to loue hys lyf, þat loueþ it more þan oþur þing*
                                      Wycliffe *Serm* II 59.28 a1425

but the perfect infinitive is not found before the sixteenth century:

(129) *Lorde Lawarre hath ben detected to have offended your Majeste*
                        The Lords of the Council to King Henry VIII 1539

(130) *For the like reason he is thought to have married Emma*
                              Milton *The History of Britain* X,280 1670

(131) *and wonderful snakes, such as Alexander is reported to have encounter'd at the river of Amazons*
                                      Aphra Behn *Oroonoko* 193 1688

(132) *Noble Banquo, That hast no less deserved, nor must be known no less to have done so*
                                      Shakesp. *Macbeth* I.iv.31 1606

(133) *Kelwulf the West-Saxon is annal'd to have done against the Scots and Picts*
                              Milton *The History of Britain X,146 1670*

(134) *the heirs ... have not been known to have disgraced themselves*
                                      Richardson *Pamela* 334 1741

Examples like above have often been used to illustrate the subject raising rule in transformational studies. It is believed that the underlying structure here is *People say that X did something*, which can undergo first passivization *it is said that X did something*. The structure can then receive "second passive" by promoting the subject of the lower clause to the main clause, which, however, must be obligatorily accompanied by the infinitivization of the lower verb: *X is said to have done something*.

4.3. Linking verbs

Similar raising rules have been proposed in analyses of such linking verbs as *seem, appear, happen, pretend*. For *it seems that he did it*, which has an indeter-

minate subject *it*, modern speakers prefer the version with a concrete main clause subject *he seems to have done it*. First examples are again found in the Old English translations from Latin:

(135) *swa þæt me þynceþ of gemynde* **beon** *Paulines wundor Nolane burge biscopes*
      'so that the miracle of Paulinus, bishop of the city of Nola, seems to me to have been forgotten'
                                      GD 179.8 (after Denison 1993: 221)

(Latin: *ita ut Paulini miraculum, Nolanæ urbis episcopi, ... memoriæ* **defuisse** *videatur*)

Denison (1993: 222) provides several Middle English examples, but the perfect infinitive does not appear in the structure until the 16th century:

(136) *for by the name it apperith to have beene ful of okes*
                              John Leland *The Itinerary* I,71 1535-1543

(137) *For by his rusty outside he appears to have practised more the whipstock than the lance*
                                      Shakesp. *Pericles* II.ii.52 1608

(138) *Thympacient wiendes of that coostis shold seme to have ben greatly aggreved and not peasably to suffer the bifore-desired passage of the said Princesse to the coostes of Englond*
                                      Receyt Kateryne 1.12 1502-3

(139) *though he seems to have had no hand in the Death of Ironside*
                              Milton *The History of Britain* X, 279 1670

(140) *But heer Simeon the relater seems to have committed some mistake, having slain Uthred by Canute two years before, and set Eric in his place*
                              Milton *The History of Britain* X, 277 1670
      (nb. one of the early instances of the perfect participle *having slain*)

(141) *I found him so lifted up, that he seemed to have lost the little sense he had.*
                              Burnet *History of My Own Time* 1,II,162 a1703

Examples of *pretend* and *happen* are much later:

(142) *he confessed he met with a Dutch skipper, who pretended to have landed with five others of his crew upon a certain island or continent south of New Holland*
                                      Swift *Gulliver* 1726

(143) *"Colonel Stubbs, my dear," she said, "happens to have been thrown a good deal about the world*

Trollope *Ayala's Angel* 1881

(144) *Main Street, which is always put down as my first book, happens to have been my seventh*

Lewis in *Colophon* 220 Feb. 1937

5. New syntactic functions

5.1. Perfect infinitive as subject

In the constructions discussed above the perfect infinitive is the marker of anteriority of the action expressed in the lower clause in relation to the main verb. Further extension of the function is its usage as the subject of clauses. Visser (1963-1973: §2044) quotes the first instance in the subject position from 1545, and the structure becomes quite common in the 17th century:

(145) *althoughe to have vvritten this boke in Latin or in Greke ... had bene more easier*

Ascham, *Toxophilus* Dedic. 1545

(146) *to haue seene much, and to haue nothing, is to have rich eyes and poor hands*

Shakespeare *As You Like It* IV.i.23 1600

(147) *If to have loved be guilt, then I have sinned* Dryden *All for Love* IV.i 1678

(148) *for to have fallen into the hands of any of the savages, had been as bad as to have fallen into the hands of lions and tigers*

Defoe *Crusoe* 1719

However, there are much earlier examples with the extraposed subject in impersonal constructions *him were better, me rueth* etc., e.g.,

(149) *Better him wer with eise in clostre haf led his life*

Rob. of Brunne *Chronicle Pt. 2* p172 c1338

(150) *it behofte ... not to haue takun awey the schippe fro crete*

Wycliffe *Acts Apost* 27,21 c1380

5.2. Adjectival constructions

In the corpus we also find some instances of perfect infinitives complementing adjectives. The first example is one of the earliest attestations of the perfect infinitive, i.e. the *Ancrene Wisse* use of *shameful* repeated here for convenience:

(17) *Sire ich am awummon and schulde mid rihte beon more scheomeful uorte habben ispeken ase ich spec. oðer idon. ase ich dude*

This is, however, an isolated case. No other instances are attested until the early 15th century:

(151) *Sche was euyr a-ferd to a be rauischyd*

MargKempe 241,10 c1438

(152) *He seide I were worthi for to a been hangen*

App. Bk. LondE 282 1402

(153) *all the world had not be sufficient To haue receyued so large a geaunt*

Occleve Reg Pr 145 c1412

In the 17th-18th centuries we find first examples of the modern usage with adjectives expressing various attitudes (*sorry, glad, loath* etc.):

(154) *And vndoubtedly the protectour loued him wel, & loth was to haue loste him*

More *The History of King Richard III* 46 c1514

(155) *it had been vicious to have mistrusted her*

Shakesp. *Cymb* V.v.66 1609

(156) *I would have been very glad to have had my boat again on my side of the island; but I knew not how it was practicable to get it about*

Defoe *Crusoe* 1719 (see also 83)

(157) *although he should be sorry to have taken so ill a man into his ship, yet he would engage his word to set me safe on shore in the first port where we arrived.*

Swift *Gulliver* 1726

Except for Swift, all the examples concern unrealised actions. Also at this time appear the first occurrences of the perfect infinitive following modal adjectives *sure, certain, likely* etc.:

(158) *The wind blew from the NNE., which was contrary to my desire; for had it blown southerly I had been sure to have made the coast of Spain, and at least reached to the bay of Cadiz*

Defoe *Crusoe* 1719

In the corpus there are sporadic examples of the perfect infinitive replacing a finite relative clause. The first instance of such nominal postmodification is

(18) *And she no husbonde had I-had, hir to haue gouerned & lad*

The construction does not reappear until the end of the 17th century:

(159) *or nor Plutarch himself ... could have found a Greek or a Roman to have compared to him*

Dryden *Vindication of the Duke of Guise* 158 1683

5.3. Adverbial adjunct

In late Middle/Early Modern English the perfect infinitive is found in new syntactic functions of adverbial adjuncts of purpose, cause, condition, consequence, concession, comparison, etc. – cf. Fischer (1992: 326), Visser (1963-1973: §2050). Witness the following examples, where the perfect infinitive is semantically and syntactically equivalent to finite adverbial clauses.

5.3.1. Purpose

(160) *sche turned here þan tiʒtly to haue slept a wile*

Will. of Palerne 487 c1375

(161) *he smot mid more maine, To abbe icloue him al þat heued*
'he struck with more power in order to split his head right open'

Gloucester *ChronA* (Clg) 1134 c1425

(162) *he wolde have rydden aftir hym for to have slayne hym*

Malory *Works* 539 c1470

(163) *and for to haue be slayne she wold not haue sayd one worde that myght haue displeased him*

Caxton *Knight of Tower* 112.32 1486

(164) *I would have given My life but to have call'd her mine*

Byron *Mazeppa* 1817

We should be aware that what superficially looks like a perfect infinitive may not be one, as in the following quotation from Shakespeare with a misleading word order where the causative *have* is used:

(165) *barefoot plod I the cold ground upon, with sainted vow my faults to have amended* [= to have my faults amended]

Shakesp. *All Well* III.iv.7 1603

5.3.2. Cause and condition

(166) *a Iew would haue wept to haue seene our parting*

Shakesp. *TwoGent* II.iii.12 1591

(167) *would it so have hurt you ... to have waited here?*

Jonson *Staple of News* I,43 1626

Jespersen (1932: 147) draws our attention to the equivalence of perfect infinitives and counterfactual conditionals, e.g.,

(168) *Rousseau would have been charmed to have seen me so occupied*

Cowper *Letters* 1.37 c1780

(169) *she would have been glad to have been sure of such a letter every week*

Austen *Mansfield Park* 257 1814

(170) *more welcome would they have been to have ridden further on their way*

Scott *Ivanhoe* 55 1819

6. The future perfect

Apart from anteriority the perfect infinitive may express perfective aspect only, as in the modern future perfect tense. The first sporadic instances are as early as the turn of the 13th century:

(171) *7 I shall hafenn addledd me Þe Laferrd Cristess are*
'And I shall have earned for myself the Lord Christ's favour'

Ormulum 151 c1180

(172) *Now tell me maister, what ʒe will haif done*

Dunbar *The Freires of Berwik* 509 c1500

But the structure does not become common until the early 19th century:

(173) *Ere the sun through heaven once more has rolled, The rats in her heart will have made their nest*

Shelley *Letters* 731 c1820

It even occurs in temporal clauses where modern rules require the future auxiliary to be omitted. Visser (1963-1973: §2154) noted that as early as 1685 Cooper wrote in his *Grammatica Linguae Anglicanae* that "aliquando *shall* omittitur"; cf. also Jespersen (1932: 282): "the idiomatic expression now is the simple perfect":

(174) *And quen we sal haf halden þaa Thre dais o paskes wit-vten ma We sal be rauist forth a-wai, Sal na man se us fra þat dai*

Cursor Mundi 18481 a1340 (a1325)

(175) *as one on shore, Gazing vpon a late embarked friend, Till the wilde waues will haue him seene no more*

Shakespeare *Venus* 819 1593

(176) *woman cannot take advantage of these reforms, until she herself shall*
have undergone a still mightier change

Hawthorne *The Scarlet Letter* 183 1850

Will + perfect infinitive also developed the epistemic modal sense. Such suppositions referring to the past are first found in romantic literature (Jespersen 1932: 264):

(177) *My earliest acquaintances will not have forgotten the eagerness with*
which I laboured

Coleridge *Biographia Literaria* 7 1817

(178) *you will have heard of it?*

Charlotte Brontë *Jane Eyre* 393 1847

The fact that English modals developed their epistemic senses much later than the original deontic ones confirms Traugott's (1989) theory of subjectification.

7. Conclusion

To sum up, the perfect infinitive has been used in English to express anteriority and counterfactuality alike. Perfect infinitives in both these functions have been found since Early Middle English, but the construction denoting unreality is by far more common in the Middle Ages. It is not before the 16th century that the time reference contrast between simple and perfect infinitives is fully established, e.g.,

(179) *O woe is me to have seen what I have seen, see what I see*
Shakespeare *Hamlet III.i.*164 1602

Fascinated and blinded by the usage of the Latin *infinitivus perfecti*, the 18th and 19th-century prescriptivists misunderstood the role of the English perfect infinitive. They spoke profusely and aggressively against its application to expressing counterfactuality, especially if it has already been expressed in a sentence. Their numerous influential grammar books may well have been responsible for the Early Modern English shift, by virtue of which expressing anteriority became the primary function of the perfect infinitive. Nevertheless, both usages have survived and can be juxtaposed as in:

(180) *he should by no means have suffered his right hand to have got engaged*
Sterne *Tristram Shandy* III.ii.126.19 1759

(181) *Then that wicked uncle had died, and was found to have expended on his*
own pursuits the money which was to have been left to his nephew

Trollope *Ayala's Angel* 1881

The scope of this work does not allow me to penetrate the subject further. A problem worth pursuing, as it is not satisfactorily described in English historical grammars, are the first occurrences of the perfect progressive infinitive (*to have been doing*) and of other expanded forms. Another interesting development in spoken Present-day English is the cliticization of counterfactual *have* > *'ve* (cf. Boyland 1997) and its more and more common attachment (suffixation) to the modal rather than to the past participle.

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