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The Old English causative verb *hatan* and its demise[1]

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ABSTRACT

This paper examines the causative use in prose texts of the Old English verb *hatan*. A number of questions are asked here: to what extent can *hatan* be considered an 'implicative' verb, implying that the action described by its complement was necessarily performed? In what kind of syntactic and semantic environments does *hatan* appear? And what is its relationship to the other causative verbs in Old English? The distributional properties of *hatan* are compared to those of other, semantically similar verbs.

The paper also investigates the circumstances in which *hatan* disappears. It shows that the loss of *hatan* occurs in stages, the first of which is the disappearance of the implicative, causative uses, in the face of lexical competition from *let*.

1. Introduction

My intention in this paper is to examine the causative use of the verb *hatan* in Old English prose and the circumstances surrounding its rather abrupt disappearance towards the end of the Old English period. *Hatan* is an unusual verb in that, much like its Gothic cognate *haitan*[2] or its modern German and Dutch cognates *heissen* and *heten*, at various stages in their history, it appears to have at least two distinct uses[3]. It can occur with a "naming" sense, either

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[2]   See Cloutier (2010).
[3]   This is something of a simplification. *Gehatan* is also used, generally in the prefixed form, to mean 'promise'. For an attempt to "unify" the different meanings of *hatan*, see Nagucka (1980).

in a relic "medio-passive" construction[4], or as a straightforward transitive verb, with passive morphology, as in (1) and (2), respectively:

(1)   *Sum swyðe gelæred munuc com suþan ofer sæ* […] *and se munuc **hatte** Abbo.*
       (St. Edmund, II 341: 1)

       [A very learned monk came from the south over the sea […] and the monk was called Abbo.][5]

(2)   *Seo boc is **gehaten** Genesis, þæt ys 'gecyndboc'* (Heptateuch, 5: 1)

       [The book is called Genesis, that is 'original book'.]

It is also used with an infinitive complement, and occasionally with a finite complement introduced by *þæt*. Its basic meaning in these constructions seems to be something like 'order, command', although there is evidence that the 'order' sense shades at times into something closer to the meaning of causative *have* in modern English. It is with uses of this type that I shall be concerned here.

2. Causative *hatan*

Royster (1918) was perhaps the first to point out that *hatan* can, in some contexts at least, be considered a fully-fledged causative verb. He makes a distinction between "perfective" and "imperfective" uses of *hatan*, which could be illustrated by (3) and (4), respectively:

(3)   *Þa wearð ðis ðam casere gecydd, and he **het** ðone dry him to gefeccan* […]. *Simon bræd his hiw ætforan ðam casere.* (Homilies, 376: 10)

       [This was then made known to the emperor, and he commanded the magician to be brought to him […]. Simon changed his appearance before the emperor.]

(4)   *Se cing **het** hi **feohtan** agien Pihtas,* ⁊ hi swa dydan ⁊ *sige hæfdan swa hwar swa hi comon.* (*ChronA: 449*)

       ['The king ordered them to fight against the Picts, and they did so, and were victorious wherever they went.]

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[4]   Medio-passive *hatan* had a separate preterite form *hatte*, as opposed to *het* or *heht* for the other meanings.

[5]   All the translations and glosses given here, unless otherwise stated, are those of the author, who obviously accepts full responsibility for any errors or omissions.

Simon in (3) is the magician in question. In order for him to change shape before the emperor, it is clear that the emperor's command must necessarily have been carried out. One could gloss this example by a *have* + past participle construction in modern English: *he had the magician brought to him*. In (4), however, the writer has to state explicitly that the order was both given and performed, by means of the underlined *did so* phrase. *Have* + past participle would be inappropriate here: **he had them fight against the Picts, and they did so*. *Hatan* seems to evoke both the giving of an order and its execution in (3), but only the giving of the order in (4). Today, following Karttunen (1971), we would probably use the terms "implicative" to describe the use of *hatan* in (3), and "non-implicative" in cases such as (4).

2.1 Causatives and implicativity

Implicativity is one of the properties which has been used to define the notion of a causative verb (see Shibatani 1976). It allows a distinction to be made between causatives, such as modern English *make*, *have*, *cause*, and *get*, and the so-called "manipulative" verbs of ordering and asking, which remain non-implicative. Consider, for instance, (i) and (ii):

(i)   *She **made**/**had** him open the door.*
(ii)   *She **got**/**caused** him to open the door.*

Both imply that the door was necessarily opened. This is an entailment, and as such cannot be cancelled, as (iii) and (iv) show:

(iii)   **She **made**/**had** him open the door, but he didn't open it.*
(iv)   **She **got**/**caused** him to open the door, but he didn't open it.*

The first part of each sentence, with a causative verb, is contradicted by the second, which affirms that the event did not take place. Verbs of ordering and asking can, of course, be used in modern English with implicit causative or implicative meaning, as in (v):

(v)   *She **ordered**/**commanded**/**asked** him to leave the room. Once he had gone, she regretted it.*

This time, however, we rely on the context to inform us that the referent of *he* did indeed leave the room, and that the order or the request was

performed. This is a pragmatic inference rather than an entailment, and like all pragmatic inferences (Grice 1989: 44) it can be cancelled:

(vi)   *She **ordered**/**commanded** /**asked** him to leave the room, but he didn't.*

In this instance, there is no contradiction. One question that we could ask is to what extent *hatan* functions as an implicative causative in Old English. In order to have a better understanding of the causative functions of *hatan*, we need to look at how it fits into the Old English causative group, and how its distribution compares to that of the other causatives.

2.2 Old English causatives

Verbs such as *gespanan*, *sendan*, and even *habban* are used sporadically with causative meaning, although causative *habban* is particularly rare (Kilpiö 2010). *Geniedan* also occurs as a coercitive causative, much like modern *force*. However, as has been pointed out elsewhere (Lowrey 2010, 2012), the most frequent causatives in Old English are *hatan* and (*ge*)*don*. These verbs are in largely complementary distribution, in that (*ge*)*don* appears most frequently in those contexts from which *hatan* is systematically absent, such as when the complement is a small clause or, as in the following examples, with a finite complement in contexts where the Causer or the Causee are non-agentive:

(5)   *Se arleasa **deð** þæt fyr cymð ufan swilce of heofonum on manna gesihðe.*
         (Homilies, 6: 6)

         [The impious one will cause fire to come from above, as if it were from heaven, in sight of men.]

(6)   *Myrra **deð**, swa we ær cwædon, þæt þæt deade flæsc eaðelice ne rotað.*
         (Homilies, 118: 11)

         [Myrrh, as we have before said, causes dead flesh not to rot easily.]

The agentive causative, on the other hand, appears to be *hatan*. One finds, in Old English prose texts, very many instances like (3) above, where *hatan*, in the presence of an agentive Causer and an agentive (implicit) Causee, is clearly used with implicative meaning. For example, it occurs regularly in the *Anglo-Saxon Chronicle* in the narration of historical facts, where a king, an archbishop, or some other authority figure orders something to be done, and the order is automatically deemed to have been carried out. As Royster (1918:

82-83) points out, in an age when social hierarchies enjoyed considerable respect, the conclusion that an action had indeed been performed as ordered would have been easy to draw:

(7)   *Her **het** Oswiu cining ofslean Oswine cining on .xiii. kalendas Septembris,*
        ₇ þæs ymbe .xii. niht forðferde Aidanus biscop on .ii. kalendas Septembris.
        (ChronE, 650)

        [Here king Oswiu ordered king Oswine to be slain on 13th September, & twelve days beforehand bishop Aidan died, on 2nd September.]

The chronicler in (7) is not merely informing us that Oswiu *gave the order* to kill Oswine on September 13th. The latter met his death on that day, just as the unfortunate bishop had met his shortly before. Both the giving of the order and the execution (no pun intended!) are considered to have been carried out.

        Similar examples can be found in the English version of Bede's *Historia Ecclesiastica* when historical facts are related:

(8)   *Ond he wæs bebyrged on Sce Andreas cirican þæs apostoles, ða Æþelberht se*
        *cyning in þære ilcan Hrofesceastre ær **heht** getimbran.* (Bede, 192: 30)

        [And he was buried in St. Andrew the Apostle's church, that king Ethelbert had ordered to be built in that same city of Rochester.]

The *hatan* construction in (8) tells us more than the simple fact that that the king had given the order for the church to be built. Both the ordering and the construction are assumed to have taken place, the latter being viewed as an attested historical fact.

        Sometimes it is the immediate context which makes it clear that the order has indeed been carried out, as in (3) above, in (9), and in (10):

(9)   *Þa ne mihte Iudas meteleas þær abidan, ac **het** abrecan þone weall, þeah þe he*
        brad wære. Eodon ða ealle inn, ₇ ofslogon ealle ða hæðenan & aweston ða burh.
        (Maccabees, 21: 394)

        [Judas could no longer wait there without food, but ordered the wall to be broken down, although it was broad. Then they all went in and slew all the heathens and laid waste to the town.]

(10)   *Hælend þa gestod ond hine **het** to him gelædon. On mid þy þe he him*
        genealæhte, he him tocwæð: Hwæt wilt þu þæt ic þe do? (Blickling, 10: 17)

[The Saviour stood there and ordered him to be brought to him. And when he drew close to him, he said to him: What do you want me to do for you?]

Obviously, the wall in (9) must have been broken down, in order for the next actions in the sequence, (going in, slaying the heathens, and laying waste to the town), to take place. Similarly, in (10), the phrase *he him genealæhte* shows that the blind man was indeed brought into Christ's presence. Otherwise, of course, the question could not have been asked.

In (7) - (10), *hatan* + infinitive could - and probably should - be translated into modern English by an implicative *have* + past participle construction. Obviously, the past narrative context in Old English prose texts, most of which contain either Bible stories or tales relating the exploits of the rich and powerful, tends to favour implicative interpretations of *hatan*. Nonetheless, the regularity with which *hatan* occurs with implicative meaning is striking.

The above examples illustrate a second important factor here: the grammatical construction in which the causative verb appears. It will be noticed that in all the implicative examples quoted so far, *hatan* appears in what Denison (1993: 165) calls the V+I ("Verb + Infinitive") construction, in which the Causee, a second agent on each occasion, is left implicit. V+I can be compared to the traditional "AcI" structure which, following Visser (1973: §2055), I shall call VOSI ("Verb + Object or Subject + Infinitive") as seen in (4), in which the Causee is present in the surface structure[6]. As shown in Lowrey (2002, 2013), causative V+I in Middle English is associated with a particular type of causation, in which:

- Both the causer and the (understood) causee are agents;
- The infinitive is invariably transitive, followed either by a NP complement or by a *that*- clause, and the predicate telic in nature, very often an "accomplishment" according to Dowty's (1979) classification;
- The causative itself generally denotes a single, specific causative act, and, in the narrative context of most Middle English texts, is very often in the preterite or imperative form.
- These constructions are often rendered by *have* + past participle in modern English.

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6   Unless otherwise stated, the terms V+I and VOSI are used in this paper to denote constructions in which the particle *to* does **not** appear before the infinitive. The variant of VOSI with *to* will be referred to as VOSI[to]. V+I with pre-infinitival *to* is essentially a Middle English innovation, and will not be dealt with here.

V+I in Old English is used in very much the same way. Interestingly, throughout almost the whole Old English period, *hatan* is the only verb to appear regularly in this construction. Only in very late texts does *lætan* begin to supplant it. There are no instances of *lætan* V+I, for instance, in *ChronA*, the oldest of the *Chronicle* manuscripts.

2.3 Implicative and non-implicative *hatan*

Since apparently implicative uses of *hatan* were so frequent, one might expect what was initially a pragmatic inference (as triggered by verbs of ordering and commanding in modern English) to become lexicalised, and *hatan* to become a fully-fledged implicative causative much like modern *make* or *have*. This, however, proves not to be the case, presumably because non-implicative uses of *hatan* also remain frequent throughout the Old English period, as in (4) above, and in (12) and (13):

(11)   …*& **het** hi beon bliðe on his gebeorscipe, & heo him behet þæt heo swa wolde.* (Judith, 10: 244)

   […and [he] commanded her to be happy at his feast, and she promised him that she would.]

(12)   *Com þa to his apostolum, and hi gefrefrode, and geond feowertigra daga fyrst him mid wunode;* […] *and **het** hi faran geond ealne middangeard, bodigende fulluht and soðne geleafan. Drihten ða on ðam feowerteogoðan dæge his æristes astah to heofenum, ætforan heora ealra gesihðe.* (Homilies, 28: 5)

   [[He] then came to his apostles, and comforted them, and for a space of forty days sojourned with them […] and ordered them to go all over the earth, preaching baptism and true faith. Then, on the fortieth day of his resurrection, the Lord ascended to heaven in sight of them all.]

In both cases, the two events (the ordering and what is ordered) are viewed as independent. While the ordering has clearly taken place, the second, ordered event may or may not do so at a later stage.

   Once again the construction in which *hatan* appears is relevant to the manner in which the sentence will be interpreted. In all the non-implicative uses quoted thus far, *hatan* appears in the VOSI construction, and this reflects a clear overall tendency for V+I to be associated with implicative interpretations of *hatan*, while VOSI and the (much rarer) finite clause structure (V+*þæt*) tend to occur in non-implicative contexts. This should not

be thought of as some kind of hard and fast rule, however. Complement selection by causative verbs is subject to variation, and one sometimes finds instances of *hatan* VOSI used implicatively, as well as non-implicative uses of *hatan* V+I:

(13)　*Þa **het** se cyning ða anlicnysse towurpan. Hwæt þæt folc ða caflice mid rapum hi bewurpon, and mid stengum awegdon; ac hi ne mihton for ðam deofle þa anlicnysse styrian.* (Homilies, 464: 17)

[The king then commanded the image to be cast down. So the people then quickly threw ropes around it, and levered it with stakes, but they could not, for the devil, stir the image.]

Despite the V+I construction, the meaning of *hatan* is restricted here to the giving of the order, the following sentence making it clear that the order could not be carried out.

There seems to be an approximate but by no means perfect match between the semantics and the syntax. I assume V+I to be some kind of 2-place structure, possibly emphasising the importance of the caused event, and VOSI to be at least potentially 3-place, perhaps stressing more readily the transmission of an order from one agent to another. Probably the most accurate way of describing the distribution of *hatan* V+I and *hatan* VOSI would be to consider that what Smith (1996) would call their respective "variational spaces", the set of all the contexts in which each construction is likely to appear, overlap, as in Fig. 1:
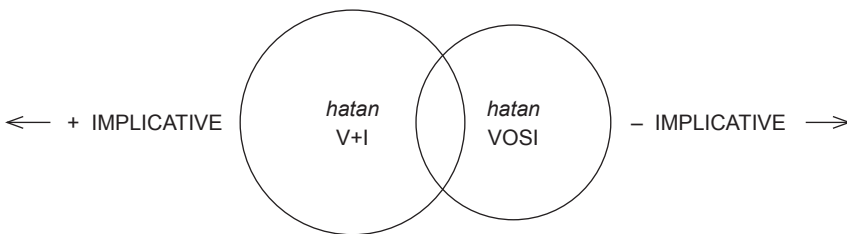

Figure 1. Variational space, *hatan* V+I and *hatan* VOSI

The variational space of *hatan* V+I will contain a greater number of implicative uses, that of *hatan* VOSI a majority of occurrences where the verb is used non-implicatively. Speakers will, however, sometimes hesitate between the two forms, causing their respective variational spaces to overlap. This overlap should not be viewed as the result of performance errors, but rather as something which is "communicatively necessary" (Smith, 1996: 45). Individual speakers, when confronted with a choice between two or more

variables, do not display systematically homogenous behaviour, and do not always select the same option(s). As Weinreich et al. put it: "language is characterised by synchronic oscillation in the speech of individuals" (1968: 166). It is this variation in the choices made by individual speakers that Fig. 1 is intended to illustrate.

The compatibility of causative *hatan* with the V+I construction is interesting. This property clearly distinguishes *hatan* not only from its causative "partner" (*ge*)*don*, but also from manipulative verbs of asking or ordering such as *biddan* and (*be*)*beodan*. This shows up if we compare these verbs in terms of complement selection across individual texts. Table 1 below shows the distribution of *hatan*, *gedon*, *biddan* and (*be*)*beodan* in Ælfric's *Homilies* (the first volume, approximately 100,000 words) by complement type:

Table 1. Distribution of *biddan*, (*be*)*beodan*, *hatan*, and (*ge*)*don* by complement type, Ælfric's *Homilies* (vol. I)

	V+I	VOSI	VOSI[to]	V+þæt	V+NP+þæt
biddan	–	–	–	15	21
(*be*)*beodan*	1	–	–	7	24
hatan	42	6	–	2	3
(*ge*)*don*	–	2	–	17	1

Table 1 highlights just how frequent the verb *hatan* was, even in later Old English, and particularly in the V+I construction, associated with agentive Causers and Causees. (*Ge*)*don* on the other hand, the causative which appears principally in non-agentive contexts, is absent from V+I. One can also compare *hatan* with (*be*)*beodan*, another verb signifying 'order, command', and theoretically very close to *hatan* in meaning, which occurs but once in V+I and otherwise displays a clear preference for the V+NP+þæt structure, examples of which are given in (15):

(14)   *Ic **bebead** þearfum, þæt hí blissodon on heora hafenleaste. […] Þam cildum ic **bead**, þæt hí gehyrsume wæron fæder and meder to halwendum mynegungum.* (Homilies, 378: 21)

   [I ordered the poor to rejoice in their indigence. […] I ordered the children to obey [their] father's and mother's salutary admonitions.]

The verb (*be*)*beodan* has two internal arguments: a dative NP, and a further clausal argument, the subject of which is usually co-referential to the dative

NP. Notice too that (*be*)*beodan* is used non-implicatively in both instances in (15). The acts of ordering are obviously considered to have taken place, whereas the second events, the rejoicing and the obeying, may or may not do so subsequently. This is relatively typical of the use of (*be*)*beodan* in the *Homilies*. Again, there is some degree of variation here, and (*be*)*beodan*, much like modern *ask* or *order*, does sometimes give rise to the inference that the second event did indeed take place. On the whole, however, non-implicative uses of (*be*)*beodan* tend to outnumber implicative ones, whereas the opposite seems to be true of *hatan*.

That the distribution patterns illustrated in Table 1 are no isolated phenomenon, but representative of a general trend in Old English, can be seen from the corresponding figures for five other texts; the English version of Bede's *Historia* (approximately 80,000 words), the *Blickling Homilies* (30,000 words), the A or 'Parker' MS of the *Anglo-Saxon Chronicle* (15,000 words), Marsden's edition of the *Heptateuch* (68,000 words), and *Appolonius of Tyre* (6,500 words):

Table 2. Distribution of *biddan*, (*be*)*beodan*, *hatan*, and (*ge*)*don* by complement type, *Bede*

	V+I	VOSI	VOSI[to]	V+þæt	V+NP+þæt
biddan	–	1	–	16	28
(*be*)*beodan*	–	1*	2**	4	9
hatan	42	20	–	6	3
(*ge*)*don*	–	1	–	2	–

  * More exactly, a VOSI construction with a passive complement.
** To simplify the presentation, I have included under this heading one construction in which the matrix verb is in the passive, followed by a *to-* infinitive.

Table 3. Distribution of *biddan*, (*be*)*beodan*, *hatan*, and (*ge*)*don* by complement type, *Blickling*

	V+I	VOSI	VOSI[to]	V+þæt	V+NP+þæt
biddan	–	–	–	6	16
(*be*)*beodan*	–	–	–	2	13*
hatan	16	5	–	–	–
(*ge*)*don*	–	1	–	4	–

* I have included among the 13 occurrences of *bebeodan* V+NP+þæt three in which the matrix verb is in the passive.

Table 4. Distribution of *biddan*, (*be*)*beodan*, *hatan*, and (*ge*)*don* by complement type, *ChronA*

	V+I	VOSI	VOSI[to]	V+þæt	V+NP+þæt
biddan	–	–	–	1	2
(*be*)*beodan*	–	–	1	–	2
hatan	18	3	–	–	–
(*ge*)*don*	–	–	–	–	–

Table 5. Distribution of *biddan*, (*be*)*beodan*, *hatan*, and (*ge*)*don* by complement type, *Heptateuch*

	V+I	VOSI	VOSI[to]	V+þæt	V+NP+þæt
biddan	–	–	–	10	22
(*be*)*beodan*	–	1	–	4	19
hatan	29	16	–	–	1
(*ge*)*don*	–	–	–	15	–

Table 6. Distribution of *biddan*, (*be*)*beodan*, *hatan*, and (*ge*)*don* by complement type, *Appolonius*

	V+I	VOSI	VOSI[to]	V+þæt	V+NP+þæt
biddan	1	1	–	2	4
(*be*)*beodan*	–	–	–	–	–
hatan	15	4	–	–	–
(*ge*)*don*	–	–	–	–	–

Although the texts were selected on a random basis, they nonetheless present a selection of Old English prose from a variety of sources, on religious and secular themes, and span much of the recorded Old English period: *Bede* and *Blickling* are both classed as O2 by date of origin on the Helsinki Corpus scale[7], whereas the *Homilies*, the *Heptateuch* and *Appolonius* are from the O3 period and *ChronA* straddles O2 and O3. What is significant is the relative consistency of the distribution of *hatan*, across all these periods and registers, even in a heavily Latin-influenced text such as *Bede*.

The patterns observed in each text are reminiscent of those observed for Middle English in Lowrey (2002, 2013), where the verb that serves as the "central" causative, used most extensively with agentive Causers and Causees,

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7   The Helsinki scale is as follows: O1 pre- 850; O2 850-950; O3 950-1050; O4 1050-1150.

is also the verb that appears most frequently in the V+I construction. In Northern dialects, for example, *gar* functions as the central, V+I causative, while *let* is used in much the same capacity in the West and the South, and *don* more commonly in the East. Alongside the central causative, we find a second verb, associated more readily with non-agentive contexts. In Early Middle English, especially, the most frequent second causative is *maken*. The Old English texts presented here display a similar pattern, with *hatan* playing the role of the agentive, V+I causative, and (*ge*)*don* that of the second causative.

The contrast between the complements selected by *hatan* and those selected by (*be*)*beodan* and by *biddan*, which could also give rise to the implicative inference discussed in 2.1, is striking. Fischer (1992: 53-54) points out that it is not uncommon for verbs of her "persuade type" (which includes verbs of ordering) to come to be used as "pure causatives", and suggests *hatan* and *biddan* as possible English examples. Its frequent use in the V+I construction suggests that *hatan* has advanced substantially further along the road to causative status than either *biddan* or (*be*)*beodan*.

3. What happens to *hatan*?

Given the high frequency with which *hatan* occurs in Old English prose texts, and its central position among the causatives, the question as to why and how it should disappear becomes even more intriguing. Unfortunately, its loss seems to coincide with the period when the Old English written standard collapses, and reliable evidence becomes thinner on the ground. Nonetheless, there are good reasons to believe that one of the causes, at least, of *hatan*'s demise was lexical competition from causative *lætan*.

3.1 The rise of the *lætan* causative

Throughout most of the Old English period, *lætan* is used, sometimes in V+I, more commonly in VOSI, with its modern so-called "permissive" sense[8]. There are signs, however, in later Old English that its meaning has begun to shift in a causative direction:

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[8]   For the sake of convenience, I use the term "permissive" to describe the meaning expressed by modern *let*, although this is, of course, largely inaccurate. "Permission" can only be given when both the causer and the causee are Agents. A more accurate term might be that proposed by Talmy (1985: 301), "cessation of impingement", the idea that the subject of *let* ceases to impede or prevent the realisation of a situation involving the subject of the infinitive.

(15) *He gegaderode hundseofontig manna of Israhela folce, þa he **let** standan beforan ymbe utan þa eardungstowe.* (Heptateuch, 142: 12)

[He gathered seventy men of the people of Israel, whom he had stand round about the tent.]

Moses, the referent of *he*, is organising his forces, and places his men around the tent in question. A causative reading is the only one that fits the context here. Otherwise, *lætan* VOSI is used generally in the *Heptateuch* with an unambiguously permissive meaning, although the *Homilies* text also contains one example which seems to hesitate between a permissive and a causative reading:

(16) *Se mildheorta Drihten, ðe **læt** scinan his sunnan ofer ða rihtwisan and unrihtwisan gelice, and sent renas and eorðlice wæstmas godum and yfelum.* (Homilies, 406: 28)

[The merciful Lord, who lets/makes his sun shine over the righteous and unrighteous alike, and sends rains and earthly fruits to the good and evil.]

It is the spread of causative *lætan*, apparently, that spells the end for causative *hatan*. Royster (1922: 351) speaks of the "synonymity of *hatan* and *lætan* in late OE", while Timofeeva (2010: 108), noticing an increase in the frequency of *lætan* V+I, suggests that this "may well mean that the two structures [*lætan* and *hatan* V+I] started to compete in some contexts". I think that Timofeeva's intuition is correct.

3.2 *Hatan* and *lætan*, two verbs in competition

To find evidence of competition between these two verbs, I compared their relative distribution in *ChronE*, the only version of the *Chronicle* to continue on into the Early Middle English period. A significant change occurs in the entries dated after 1040. Before that date, the relative distribution of *lætan* and *hatan* follows the general Old English pattern:

Table 7. Distribution of *hatan* and *lætan*, *ChronE*, pre - 1040

	V+I	VOSI
hatan	19	1
lætan	1	2

To simplify matters, I have restricted the comparison to infinitive complements. *Lætan* is altogether rare with finite *þæt-* complements.

Other Old English narrative texts display a very similar distribution. The corresponding figures for *Appolonius*, for example, are given in Table 8:

Table 8. Distribution of *hatan* and *lætan*, *Appolonius*

	V+I	VOSI
hatan	15	4
lætan	–	1

In both cases, causative *lætan* is rare. The verb occurs most frequently in the VOSI construction, with the modern, so-called permissive meaning and does not come into competition with *hatan*. If we take the *ChronE* entries for the years from 1040 onwards, however, a very different pattern emerges:

Table 9. Distribution of *hatan* and *lætan*, *ChronE*, 1040-

	V+I	VOSI
hatan	11	1
lætan	28	4

There has been a considerable increase in the frequency of *lætan*, especially in the V+I construction, where it is used as a causative. *Lætan* is now twice as frequent as *hatan* in this type of context. Similarly, *hatan*, present in all but one of the occurrences of causative V+I in the first part of *ChronE*, occurs in less than 29% of those found in the second part, and is apparently in decline.

A closer look at the data reveals that *hatan* and *lætan* V+I now appear in exactly the same kinds of environment, principally with agentive causers and (implicit) causees, and with the same types of verb. Compare, for instance, the 12th century entry involving *let niman / let gebringon* in (18) with the earlier *het nimon / gebringon* in (19):

(17)   *And se cyng […] þone biscop Rannulf of Dunholme **let** niman. ₇ into þam ture on Lundene **let** gebringon. ₇ þær healdan.* (ChronE, 1100)

       [And the king […] had bishop Ranulf of Durham taken & brought to the Tower of London & held there.]

(18)   *se cyng þa genam eall heora æhta. ₇ **het** nimon Sigeferðes lafe ₇ gebringon binnon Mealdelmes byrig.* (ChronE, 1015)

       [the king then took all their possessions & had Siegferth's widow taken & brought to Malmsbury.]

The predicates embedded beneath both verbs fit the profile for V+I defined in 2.2. They are almost invariably agentive, transitive, and generally telic in character. In the same way, *het makian* appears in (20) in much the same type of context as *let (ge)makian* in (21) & (22):

(19)   *Ac þa ða se cyng geseah þæt he hine gewinnan ne mihte. þa **het** he makian ænne castel to foran Bebbaburh.* (ChronE, 1095)

   [But when the king saw that he could not win it, then he had a castle built just outside Bamborough.]

(20)   *₇ se cyng ferde ₇ besæt þone castel æt Arundel. ac þa he hine swa hraðe gewinnan ne mihte. he **let** þær toforan castelas gemakian.* (ChronE, 1102)

   [And the king went forth and laid siege to the castle at Arundel, but as he could not win it straight away, he had castles built before it.]

(21)   *Ac þa ða se cyng geseah þæt he nan þingc his willes þær geforðian ne mihte. he ongean into þison lande for. ₇ hraðe æfter þam. he be þam gemæron castelas **let** gemakian.* (ChronE, 1097)

   [But when the king saw that he could accomplish nothing of what he wanted there, he returned into this land and immediately afterwards he had castles built near the borders.]

It would appear, then, that the two verbs are indeed in competition. The new form, of course, wins out. *Hatan* V+I appears in the *Chronicle* for the last time in the entry dated 1096. Interestingly, causative *lætan* V+I is always implicative, a further indication that the structure it replaces, *hatan* V+I, was used implicatively too.

   Evidence that the decline of causative *hatan* continues into Middle English is provided by La₃amon's *Brut*, a late 12th century text of Western origin, in the dialect that conserves the greatest number of West Saxon features:

Table 10. Distribution of *haten* and *let* by complement type, *Brut*, ll 9,000-14,500

	V+I	VOSI	V+þæt	V+NP+þæt
haten	3	64	6	1
let	46	27	–	–

Table 10 shows the distribution of both *haten* and *let* across some 5,500 lines of La₃amon's poem. It shows a marked rise in the frequency of *lætan/let*,

which can be directly ascribed to increased causative use, principally in the V+I construction. *Let* has now replaced *haten* as the agentive, V+I causative. *Haten* remains frequent, but is now largely confined to the VOSI construction, where it always has the non-implicative 'order' sense, as in (23):

(22) *Arður **hehte** þene king cume; and bringen his aldeste sune / and he swa dude sone; þe king of Denemarke.* (Brut, 11 652)

[Arthur ordered the king to come, and bring his eldest son, and he, the king of Denmark, did so straight away.]

The causing and the caused events are presented as independent, the author adding the *do so* phrase to signify explicitly that the action ordered by Arthur was indeed performed. The decline in the use of *haten* at this stage concerns only causative V+I contexts, from which it has been evinced by *let* (in the Western dialect) in what appears to be a fairly straightforward lexical swap. In purely manipulative, ordering contexts, however, implicative *let* and *haten* do not come into competition, and the latter continues to function much as it had before in such circumstances. And of course, no competition arises in the 'naming' sense. *Haten* continues to occur with the latter meaning both as an ordinary passive and as a medio-passive.

3.3 Other possible factors contributing to the loss of causative *hatan*

Mention should perhaps be made here of an important word order change that takes place in English at about the time when causative *hatan* is lost and which, as Fischer (1992) points out, directly affects causative constructions: the shift from underlying SOV to SVO order. This is one of the factors suggested by Fischer to explain the spread of the "learned AcI construction", and ultimately the loss of V+I.

Fischer examines strings involving a causative verb (*let*, in her Middle English examples), an intermediate NP and an infinitive. Of particular interest here are her "subject construction", in which the intervening NP is the subject of the infinitive (our VOSI with an intransitive infinitive), and what she calls the "object construction", where the NP is the object of the infinitive whose subject is left unexpressed (our V+I). As Fischer observes, the change from SOV to SVO will cause speakers increasingly to analyse the NP in sequences of this type as the subject of the infinitive. The idea is interesting in view of the tendency mentioned in 2.2 for V+I to occur principally with transitive infinitives. In contexts of this type, VOSI and

V+I would have been in complementary distribution. With the lone NP appearing in what is henceforth seen as a subject position, it is easy to imagine how the V+I construction might have been felt to be anomalous, and become obsolete.

It is not clear, though, why this change should have affected *hatan*. One might be tempted to suggest that, as the older form, *hatan* could have been closely associated with the earlier SOV order, and given way to a newer verb at the same time as the new word order supplanted the old. This, however, seems not to have been the case. First of all, as Fischer (1992: 50) points out, the transition to SOV does not immediately cause the loss of V+I. Instead, the object NP is simply sent, initially, to the new post-verbal object position, a syntactic option that remains productive until the end of the Middle English period: Lowrey (2002) notes at least 147 unambiguous occurrences of causative *let* V+I in Malory's late 15th century *Morte d'Arthur*, for instance, with basic SVO order. Furthermore, the fact that the loss of SOV V+I does not lead directly to the loss of *hatan* is demonstrated by the existence of a number of attested examples of *hatan* V+I in later Old English texts with the new SVO order, as in (9) and (20) above or again in (24), below:

(23)   *Ða eode heo ut and **het** feccan hire hearpan.* (Appolonius, 24: 26)

        [Then she went out and had her harp fetched.]

In none of these examples is the object NP sent to the end because of exceptional "heaviness", a factor that sometimes caused the object NP to appear in post-infinitival position even under SOV. Clearly, *hatan* V+I continued to be used, initially at least, with the new SVO order. Lexical rivalry with *lætan* remains the probable primary cause of the disappearance of causative *hatan*.

4. Conclusion

There seems to be ample evidence to support Royster's (1918) view that *hatan* did indeed function as a fully fledged causative, at least in the Old English prose narratives, when some kind of hierarchical relationship between the causer and the causee was involved. The implicative or perfective inference, to use Royster's terminology, never seems to fully lexicalise, however. *Hatan* expresses a range of meanings, from the simple giving of an order, the so-called manipulative sense, to the idea that an order was not only given

but also carried out. It has also been shown that the choice of complement construction goes some way to determining the meaning. In other words, causative meaning is not the exclusive preserve of the causative verb alone, but is constructed rather by the association in context of a given verb with a given complement type.

Further confirmation of *hatan*'s causative status is provided by the circumstances of its loss. Although *hatan* no longer exists at all in Modern English, we have seen that causative meaning is lost before its other meanings, due to lexical competition from implicative *lætan*. This would again seem to indicate that *hatan* was very probably felt to be an implicative verb in precisely those contexts in which *lætan* comes to replace it. Non-implicative *hatan* survives, however, because at no stage is it concerned by competiton from *lætan*.

Of course, a number of questions remain to be answered, not least of which concerns the reason why *hatan* and *lætan* came to compete. Is it a case of *hatan*'s decline causing *lætan* to shift towards more frequent causative use, so as to fill a slot left vacant, or is it an expansion of the variational space of *lætan* to include more causative meanings that forces *hatan* out of the causative sub-system? The odds would appear to favour the second hypothesis. The trend which sees *lætan*, even in VOSI constructions, begin to acquire causative meaning in late West Saxon Old English, and which continues on into early Western Middle English, probably indicates that it is the use of *lætan* which expands, creating a push-chain effect. But what triggers the increased frequency of *lætan*? One can also wonder, given the rapidity with which the change takes place once the West Saxon literary standard has collapsed, to what extent *hatan* may have been kept alive "artificially" in the late West Saxon written standard, long after *lætan* had replaced it in everyday speech. Further research will obviously be necessary if we are to attempt to answer these questions.

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