A negative cycle in 12-15th century Hungarian

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1. Introduction

This paper analyzes the changes having taken place in the syntax of negation in 12-15th century Hungarian. It points out a change in the position of the negative particle, and shows it to be related to the change of basic word order from 'SOV' to 'TopFocVX*'. The central topic of the paper is a negative cycle induced by the morphological fusion of the negative particle with different types of indefinites in the scope of negation. The opaqueness of the resulting morphological complexes necessitated the reintroduction of negation into sentences with indefinites, and led to the reinterpretation of negative indefinites as expressions with no negative force, participating in negative concord. The newly introduced negative particle, though morphologically identical with the negative particle that was input to the fusion with indefinites, assumed a different syntactic status in the new 'TopFocVX*' sentence structure; it acted as a functional head, eliciting verb movement.

The paper is organized as follows: Section 2 provides a background by surveying the syntax of negation in present-day

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Hungarian. Section 3 describes the structural positions of the negative particle in Old Hungarian, and section 4 analyzes the syntax of Old Hungarian negative indefinite noun phrases and pronouns. Both sections point out an archaic pattern surviving from Proto-Hungarian, as well as a new variant. Section 5 attempts to reconstruct the diachronic process emerging from the declining and novel patterns of negation in 12-15th century Hungarian documents.

2. Background: Negation in Modern Hungarian

Although this paper focuses on the history of negation in 12-15th century Hungarian, the directions of changes are clearer if we look at them from the perspective of the present-day language.¹

Negation in Modern Hungarian is encoded by the negative particle *nem*, assumed to head a NegP. NegP has two possible merge-in sites. In the case of predicate negation, it subsumes TP, and elicits verb movement across Spec,TP, occupied by a predicative complement, most often a telicizing particle, semantically incorporated into the verb.² (The Hungarian sentence has no distinguished subject position in the left periphery; the subject of (1a,b) is in Spec,TopP, a position not available for a non-specific or a universally quantified subject.) Compare the affirmative sentence in (1a), and its negated counterpart in (1b):

1

2
(1) a János meg látogatta Marit.
    John PRT visited Mary-ACC
    'John visited Mary.'

    b János nem látogatta meg tv Marit.
    John not visited PRT Mary-ACC
    'John did not visit Mary.'

The Hungarian sentence often also includes a focus projection above TP, which also elicits verb movement across the verbal particle in Spec,TP (2a). The focus projection can also be negated, i.e., it can also be subsumed by a NegP (2b). (As shown in (2b), V-movement elicited by the presence of negation and/or focus is not cyclic; it stops in the head position immediately preceding TP. It is unclear whether this is the head of a separate functional projection (FP), or is the head of the lowest operator projection (NegP or FocP).)

(2) a János TEGNAP látogatta meg tv Marit.
    John yesterday visited PRT Mary-ACC
    'It was yesterday that John visited Mary.'

    b János nem TEGNAP látogatta meg tv Marit.
    John not yesterday visited PRT Mary-ACC
'It wasn’t yesterday that John visited Mary.’

The primary predicate and the focus (an identificational predicate) can also be negated simultaneously:

(3) a János **nem** TEGNAP **nem** látogatta meg Marit.

'It wasn’t yesterday that John didn’t visit Mary.'

Hungarian is a negative concord language. Universal pronouns with scope over negation and existential pronouns in the scope of negation have a negative version beginning with *se/-so-*, which is licensed by an overt negative particle.

Indefinite lexical noun phrases in the scope of negation are obligatorily supplied with the minimizer *sem*.

(4) **Soha senki nem** késett el egy óráról **sem**.
never nobody not was.late PRT one class-from not.even

‘Nobody has ever been late for even one class.’

3. The position of the negative particle in Old Hungarian

In the 12th-15th century Old Hungarian texts examined (among them Halotti beszéd és könyörgés 'Funeral Sermon and Prayer’, a 50-clause sermon from 1193-95, Jókai Codex, a 15th- century copy of a 14th century translation of the Legend of St Francis, and the Bécsi 'Wiener, Müncheni 'Münchener’ and Apor Codices, containing 15th-century copies of various parts of the so-called Hussite Bible, translated after 1416), the majority of negative sentences represent predicate negation. Focus negation is rare, but so is structural focus itself. Here is an example of focus negation, with the negative particle in pre-focus position as in present-day Hungarian:

(5) nem PAYZUAL fegyuerkedet de ZENT

not shield-with armor-REFL-PAST-3SG but holy KERESTNEK YEGYUEL (Jókai Codex p. 147)
cross’s sign-with

‘It wasn’t a shield that he armored himself with but the sign of the holy cross.’
Sentences with predicate negation belong to two word order types, which co-occur in the same texts. The negative particle may intervene between the verbal particle and the V:

i. ... *PRT nem V...*

(6)a *hogy ezt senkynek meg-nem yelentene* (Jókai 27)

that this-ACC nobody-DAT PRT-not report-COND-3SG

‘that he would not report this to anybody’

b *ha meg nem kaváltandod kegyetlennek ew*

if PRT not shout-FUT-2SG cruel his

kegyetlenegett (Jókai 95)

cruelty-ACC

‘if you do not declare his cruelty to be cruel’

Alternatively, the negated verb precedes the verbal particle. In this case, the verb and the particle are not necessarily adjacent:

ii. ... *nem V... PRT...*

(7)a *Te nemynemew kewekrel ... nem fyzettel telyesseguel*

you some stones-SUBL not paid completely

*meg* (Jókai 7)

PRT

‘You have not paid completely for some stones’
b hogy en lelkem semegyben nem zegyengett meg
that my soul nothing-in not shamed PRT
engemett (Jókai 48)

me

'that my soul has not shamed me in anything’

Of the two patterns, pattern (i) is the more archaic variant. It represented the majority pattern in early Old Hungarian, and it has been losing ground to pattern (ii) ever since (cf. Gugán 2008). At present, pattern (i) is productively used only in Csángó, the most archaic dialect of Hungarian, and in two subordinate clause types of Standard Hungarian: in amíg ’as long as/until’ clauses, and in conditional clauses in combination with hacsak, meaning ’unless’. It is presumably a relic of the SOV Proto-Hungarian period. Jäger (2008) derives a similar pattern in Old High German by the rightward movement of the VP-final V to a right-hand side Neg head.

I assume that in sentences displaying the ’…PRT nem V…” order, the negative particle is adjoined to the verb. Pattern (ii), on the other hand, involves a left-peripheral negative head attracting the verb across the verbal particle. Since the basic word order of Hungarian had shifted to TopFocVX* by the time of the first surviving coherent Hungarian texts (cf. É. Kiss 2013), it seems likely that Old Hungarian speakers analyzed both patterns in the framework of a head-initial verb phrase
preceded by left-peripheral functional projections. This hypothesis is supported by the distribution of the two word order patterns, which is related to the presence versus absence of a negative pronoun or negative indefinite (a se-expression) in the left periphery. In Jókai Codex, 60% of sentences displaying the ‘…PRT nem V…’ order contain a se-expression in post-topic position, at the left edge of the comment, but only 13% of sentences displaying the ‘…nem V…PRT…’ order do so. This suggests that in the emerging TopFocVX* sentence structure of Old Hungarian, with separate thematic and functional domains, operators were expected to precede and c-command their scope. In sentences with a se-expression in the left periphery, the se-expression acted as the scope marker of negation. In sentences with no se-expression, the scope principle, requiring that the scope of negation be preceded and c-commanded by an overt negative constituent, elicited the preposing of the negated V. First it may have been the negated verb that moved; then the negative particle must have been reanalyzed as a head generated in the left periphery, attracting the V.

This is the structure I hypothesize for sentences displaying the ‘…PRT nem V…’ order:
If the NegP projection is not lexicalized by a *se*-pronoun, the negated V is preposed into the Neg head:

'(that he would not report this to anybody)'

'You have not paid completely for some stones'
In the minority of Old Hungarian sentences that display a ’…PRT nem V..’ order but contain no se-expression, I assume a phonologically empty NegP, whose head position is filled by the negated verb in LF. Ürögdi (2009), analyzing the present-day relic of this construction occurring in amíg-clauses, e.g., that in (10a), argues for a similar structure, with nem LF-moved into the left periphery. The LF attributed to (10a) reflects the fact that negation must have scope over the adverb hirtelen ’suddenly’ – otherwise the need of the adverb amíg ’as long as’ for a complement clause denoting a durative eventuality is not satisfied.

(10)a  Olvastam, amíg hirtelen ki nem aludt a fény.
read-I as.long.as suddenly out not went the light
’I was reading as long as it wasn’t the case that suddenly the light went out.’

LF: b  Olvastam [CP amíg nem [TP hirtelen [TP ki t_{nem} aludt a fény]]]

Verbal particle + V combinations display the same word order as predicative nominal + copula combinations both in Modern Hungarian and in Old Hungarian, with the particle/predicative nominal in Spec,TP, and the verb/copula in T. Interestingly, whereas the preposing of the negated verb
across the particle still represents a minority pattern in early Old Hungarian, the preposing of the negated copula across the nominal predicate nearly always takes place – even in the presence of *se*-expressions. E.g.:

(11) *sonha nem lez zomoro* _tv_ (Jókai 55)

    never not _be-FUT.3SG_ sad

    'he will never be sad’

Kádár (2006) argues that the Hungarian copula is not a verb; it is an expletive generated in T, providing lexical support for inflection. Apparently, overt T-to-Neg became general earlier than overt [V+T]-to-Neg in the history of Hungarian.

### 4. *Se*-expressions in Old Hungarian

Though Modern Hungarian is a strict negative concord language, in which negative polarity items, the so-called *se*-pronouns, require the presence of a negative particle, in early Old Hungarian texts we find negative sentences in which the *se*-expression is not accompanied by a negative particle. These sentences are so sharply unacceptable for present-day speakers that historical linguists generally regard them as scribes’ mistakes due to Latin interference. However, there is evidence that in Proto-Hungarian, and, to some extent, in early Old Hungarian, as well, *se*-pronouns had negative force. First of all,
there are fossilized expressions with a *se*-expression conveying negation, e.g.:

(12) semmit-tevés, semmit-mondó
    nothing.ACC-doing nothing.ACC-saying
    'idleness’ ’meaningless’

    semmire-kellő, semmibe vesz
    nothing.SUBL-needed nothing-ILLAT take
    'good-for-nothing’ ’ignore’

Modern Hungarian also has a productive relic of the pre-negative-concord period of the language; there is a finite negative construction in which a *se*-expression occurs without a negative particle. The underlying construction from which this pattern derives contains an indefinite in the scope of negation, obligatory accompanied by the minimizer *sem*:

(13) a Nem indult el egy ember sem.
    not left PRT one man MINIMIZER
    ’No man left.’

When such an indefinite supplied with the minimizer *sem* is preposed into focus position, *sem* lands right in front of the position of the negative particle. In this construction the negative particle is not spelled out. The reason must be that *sem*
appears in the same linear position where the negative particle is expected, hence present-day speakers reanalyze it as the negative particle, an allomorph of *nem*:

(13) b  **Egy ember sem**  [Neg Ø]  indult el.

   one  man  MINIMIZER  left  PRT

   'No man left.'

If the occasional lack of the negative particle in the presence of a *se*-expressions in Old Hungarian were a mistake of the scribe caused by Latin interference, the lack of *nem* would be random; however, it is systematic to a large extent. Namely, (i) in the non-finite clauses of Jókai Codex, the negative particle is never spelled out in the presence of a *se*-expression. Non-finite clauses have archaic features in Old Hungarian; for example, they often retain the strictly SOV order with a morphologically caseless object of Proto-Hungarian. This is never attested in finite clauses any more. The negative pattern they have preserved, in which negation is expressed by a *se*-phrase without the particle *nem*, is also likely to be a Proto-Hungarian archaism. Cf.

(14)a  bodog  ferencz  monda  magat  alazatost  lenny

   blessed  Francis  said  himself-ACC  humbly  be-INF

   semmy  tudonak  

   *(Jókai 95)*
nothing-Ø know-PARTICIPLE-DAT³

’Blessed Francis said himself to be knowing nothing’

b mendenestewlfoguan semegyben meg-haraguuan altogether nothing-in PRT being.angry

’not being angry for anything at all’ (Jókai 21)

c ew kerelmenek sem egy haznalattyat aloytuán his request-GEN not one use-ACC assuming

’ assuming no use of his request’ (Jókai 153)

(ii) In finite clauses, the presence or lack of the negative particle is related to the lexical choice of the se-phrase. Semmi ’nothing’, semegyben ’in nothing’, semegyképpen ’in no way’, semegyk ’none’, as well as lexical noun phrases modified by sem-egy ’not one [no]’ can occur either without nem (15) or with nem (16):

(15)a es azokes semmyre valanak yok (Jókai 86)

and they-too nothing-SUBL were good-PL

’and they, too, were good for nothing’

b Semmy ygazb ezeknel (Jókai 93)

nothing true-COMPARAT these-ADESS

’Nothing is more true than these’
c **semegyk** mendenestewlfoguan indoltatyk-uala

none altogether leave.3SG-PAST

‘none of them at all was leaving’ (Jókai 139)

(16)a ky kewnuek **semmyre** yok **nem** leznek

which books nothing-SUBL good-PL not be-FUT.3PL

‘which books will not be good for anything’ (Jókai 109)

b **Semegykeppen** **nem** lehett hug …

not-one-manner-in not was possibile that

‘It was not possible in any way that …’ (Jókai 3)

c **hogy mendenestewlfoguan** **semmy** meg **nem** yelennek

that altogether nothing PRT not appear-

COND-3SG

‘that nothing at all would appear’ (Jókai 66)

The *se*-words *senki* ‘nobody’ and *soha* ‘never’, on the other hand, always require the presence of a negative particle:

(17)a **De** meg nyttuan az kapput **senkett** **nem** lele

but PRT opening the door nobody-ACC not found

‘But opening the door, he did not find anybody’

(Jókai 17)
b kytt sonha nem latam-uala ez vilagban

whom never not see-PERF-1SG-PAST this world-in

’whom I had never seen in this world’ (Jókai 47)

(iii) In negative subjunctive, imperative and optative clauses, the *ne* allomorph of the negative particle is used. *Ne* is never omitted in the company of a *se*-expression:

(18) Hogy semegy frater az zerzetben hust ne ennek

that no brother the convent-in meat-ACC not eat-

COND.3SG

’that no brother should eat any meat in the convent’

The fact that a *ne* accompanying a *se*-expression is always spelled out must be due to the fact that, in addition to the negative feature it shares with the *se*-expression, it also carries a modal feature.

The fact that *semegy* ’no’, *semegyik* ’[+specific] none’, and *semmi* ’nothing’ can occur without the negative particle, whereas *senki* ’nobody’ and *soha* ’never’ always require the presence of *nem/ne* in Old Hungarian is obviously related to their morphological makeup. *Se*-words have a complex morphological structure, involving the particle *sem*, and the numeral *egy* ’one’ or its specific counterpart *egyik*, or an indefinite pronoun (*mi* ’what’, *ki* ’who’, *ha* ’when’). *Sem* is also
a complex morpheme, the fusion of *es*, a particle with various (additive, distributive, and emphatic) functions, and the negative particle *nem*. These ingredients are still transparent in the following example from 1193-95. (The vowel of the negative particle, spelled as *u*, may have been pronounced as [ü].)

(19) *isa es num igg ember mulchotia ez vermut*

    surely even not one man avoid-can this pit-ACC

    ’surely, no [not even one] man can avoid this pit’

    *(Funeral Sermon and Prayer, 1193-95)*

*Es* has the allomorph *s* in present-day Hungarian, and it might have had it in Old Hungarian, as well. Old Hungarian did not tolerate word-initial consonant clusters, so a fused *snem* predictably developed into *sum/sem*.

As a next step, *sem* fused with the indefinite pronouns. Although the preposing of indefinite pronouns into the left periphery was not obligatory, as shown by the example in (20), it was very general. They may have been preposed via focus movement.

(20) *de az egyebekrewl nem tudok mytt*

    but the rest-about not know-I what-ACC

    ’but about the rest, I don’t know anything’ *(Jőkai l45)*
In view of these, the *se*-expressions of Old Hungarian had the following underlying morphological structure:

(21) semegy: \([es+nem]+egy\)
    semegyik: \([es+nem]+egyik\)
    semmi: \([es+nem]+mi\)
    senki: \([es+nem]+ki\)
    soha: \([es+nem]+ha\)

The *se*-expressions that could convey negation in early Old Hungarian were those in which the particle *sem*, resulting from the fusion of *es+nem*, was still transparent. In the case of *senki*, and, especially, in the case of *sonha* (Modern Hungarian *soha*), the fusion of the constituent morphemes was so advanced that *sem*, let alone the underlying *nem*, were not recognizable any longer. *Senki* only preserved the vowel of *nem*. In the case of *sonha*, both the vowel of *sem* was assimilated to the back vowel of *ha*, and its *m* was affected by the adjacent *h* as regards its place of articulation (before disappearing completely). Mary’s *Lament* from 1300 preserved an earlier form of *sonha/soha*:

(22) qui **sumha nym** hyul
    which never not ceases
    ’which never ceases’
Apparently, the more opaque a morpheme complex including the negative particle was, the less it could preserve its negative force. The morphologically opaqe senki and soha obligatorily needed the presence of a separate negative particle. For the morphologically more transparent semmi, semegy, semegyik, reinforcement by a preverbal negative particle was still optional in the Old Hungarian period under investigation.

The negative particle also fused with the dual connective es… es… ’both… and…’, yielding sem… sem… ’neither… nor…’. The insertion of an additional negative particle was optional in coordinate clauses introduced by sem… sem…, as shown by the following example of Jókai Codex, where the second coordinate clause contains an additional nem, and the first one does not.

(23) Tehat zent ferenc sem magat valta az so Saint Francis neither himself-ACC shifted that heylbelewl sem arczayat le nem hayta place-from nor face-his-ACC down not turned menbewl heaven-from

'So Saint Francis neither moved himself from that place, nor turned his face down from heaven.’ (Jókai 16)
5. A negative cycle in 12-15th century Hungarian

Interestingly, the negative construction that represented the initial stage of the changes having taken place in Old Hungarian has been shown by Gugán (2012) to be the output of a former negative cycle. Negative cycles, beginning with the morphological/phonological and semantic weakening of the negative marker at stage 1, to be followed by its subsequent reinforcement by a negative adverbial element at stage 2, by the degradation of the original negative marker into an optional element at stage 3, and by its eventual disappearance at stage 4, have been observed in a large number of languages from various language families – see, among others, Jespersen (1917), Croft (1991), van Kemenade (2000), Wallage (2005), Biberauer’s, Hoeksema’s, and van der Auwera’s chapters in van Gelderen (2009), Chapter 8 of van Gelderen (2010), and the studies in Larrivée & Ingham (2011). Gugán argues that the Hungarian negative particle nem is also the result of a negative cycle having taken place in Proto-Hungarian. Most Uralic languages have a negative auxiliary, which also existed in Proto-Ugric in the form *e ~ā ~a. In Proto-Hungarian, however, its negative force underwent weakening, and an indefinite pronominal element reconstructed as nēmθ was introduced to reinforce it (Sipos 1991: 395). Eventually, the negative auxiliary disappeared (except in yes-no questions, where it has survived as an interrogative particle), and the pronoun assumed the role
of negative operator. The negative particle \textit{nem} is the
descendant of \textit{nëmB}, hence it is cognate with the indefinite
pronouns and proadverbs \textit{né-mi} 'some-what' (originally
meaning 'something', today meaning 'some'), \textit{né-hol}
'somewhere', \textit{né-ha} 'some-when', \textit{né-mikor} 'some-time', and \textit{né-
hány} 'some-many'. As Gugán (2012) points out, a similar
process has been reported from Old High German and Middle
High German, where the indefinite pronouns \textit{uu iht} and \textit{iht},
respectively, were introduced to strengthen the negative
particle, and came to replace it (Jäger 2008:118). The negative
particle \textit{ik} of certain Upper-German (Bavarian) dialects is a
present-day descendant of this indefinite pronoun.

In the late Proto-Hungarian period, the cycle began anew. As
a first step (resulting in stage 2 of the new cycle), negated
indefinites were strengthened by the emphatic/additive/
distributive particle \textit{es}, and the numeral \textit{egy, egyik} 'one'.\textsuperscript{4} \textit{(Egy
is identical with today’s indefinite article, however, in the Old
Hungarian period examined, there was no indefinite article yet
in the language.) Recall \textit{es num igg ember} 'even not one man',
an example from 1193-95, quoted in (19) above. Negation was
strengthened by \textit{es} also in the case of indefinite pronouns in the
scope of negation.

In the third stage of the cycle, the morphological fusion of
\textit{es+nem}, and, especially, the morphological fusion of
\textit{es+nem+}pronoun complexes lead to the semantic weakening of
negation, and created a need for further strengthening. This was attained by the adjunction of another negative particle to the verb. The reintroduction of the negative particle was first optional. The se-pronouns soha and senki, whose morphological structure had become completely opaque owing to word-internal phonological processes, lost their negative force and came to require an additional negative particle prior to the Old Hungarian period. In the case of the rest of se-expressions, the additional, V-joined negative particle was still optional in the first Old Hungarian documents.

According to the evidence of 14th-15th century codices, the pattern without a reinforcing negative particle was becoming less and less common, and by the end of the 15th century it had disappeared completely. In stage 4 of the negative cycle, Hungarian became a strict negative concord language, where negation is conveyed by a negative particle, and se-expressions are negative polarity items.

The process of reinforcing negation – first optionally, later obligatorily – by the addition of a negative particle went on parallel with the syntactic restructuring of negative sentences, as a result of which the negative particle assumed head status eliciting verb movement. (The process of the negative particle becoming a high functional head has been identified as a key element in negative cycles by van Kemenade (2000) and van Gelderen (2010).) As was discussed in connection with (6) and
(8), in the archaic type of negative sentences, the *se*-expression occupies the specifier of a left-peripheral NegP. The negative particle, if any, behaves like an adverb; it is left-adjoined to the V, and appears sandwiched between the verbal particle and the verb. In the emerging new pattern, discussed in connection with (7) and (9), Neg attracts the negated verb, which moves forward crossing the verbal particle and the elements adjoined to TP. If the sentence also contains a *se*-phrase, the negated verb is adjacent to it:

Since the Old Hungarian negative cycle reached its final stage, only minor changes have taken place in the syntax of negation. Until the end of the 14th century, sentences could only contain a single *se*-expression, confined to the left periphery. From the 15th century on, we also find postverbal *se*-phrases, which is evidence of their analysis as negative polarity items:
In Middle and Modern Hungarian, *se*-expressions can also be stacked, and can stand either pre- or postverbally. This may be the consequence of the analysis of [+specific] *se*-expressions as universal quantifiers (cf. É. Kiss 2009, 2010) with scope over negation. As such, they are subject to Q-raising, which is an iterable operation with no fixed direction, realizable as either left- or right-adjunction. Observe an example of the Hungarian National Corpus from 1881:

(26) **nem lopott el senki semmit**

    not stole PRT anybody anything

    ’Nobody stole anything.’

The history of negative indefinites involving *sem* and the numeral *egy ‘one’* has been somewhat different from the history of *se*-pronouns. Both *es* and *sem (es+nem)* were premodifiers in the earliest Old-Hungarian documents. Later *es* also came to be used as an enclitic, and its two positions came to be associated with different functions. És, the standard
Modern Hungarian version of the proclitic variant, is the connective corresponding to *and*. *Is*, the descendant of the enclitic, is an additive/distributive particle today. *Sem*, incorporating the additive particle, acting as a premodifier in the early Old Hungarian period, has also become a postmodifier. Jókai Codex contains, in addition to the regular archaic structure in (27a) and the regular novel structure in (27d), two patterns (those in (27b) and (27c)) which seem to anticipate the change in the position of *sem*:

(27)a  *sem egy N V:*

ew kerelmenek **sem egy hazalattyat aloytuan**
his request-GEN not one use-POSS.3SG-ACC assuming

'not assuming any use of his request' (*Jókai* 153)

b  *sem egy N nem V:*

kyben **semegy nugodmat nem akarula** ew
what-in not-one rest-ACC not want-3SG-PAST his
sebynek vettny (*Jókai* 65)

wound-DAT give

'where he didn’t want to give any rest to his wound’

c  *sem egy N sem V:*

Es hogy ottegyel **Semegy lakas semuala** holot
and that there not-one dwelling not-was where
feyet le haytana (Jókai 27)
head-POSS.3SG-ACC down lay-COND-3SG

’And that there was no dwelling where he could lay his head’

d egy N sem V:

az tonak… zygetebe kyben meglen egy
that lake-GEN island-POSS3SG-to where still one

ember-sem lakott-uala (Jókai 26)
man not live-PERF-3SG-PAST

’to the island of that lake where still no man had lived’

The variants in (27a-d) may correspond to subsequent stages of a diachronic process. (27a) contains no negative particle in addition to that incorporated in the particle sem associated with the indefinite. In (27b) the negative particle is reintroduced in a position left-adjoined to the verb. (Since the sentence contains no verbal particle, the preposing of the negated verb from T to Neg is string-vacuous, hence it cannot be verified.) In (27c) we find two sem particles; the second one is between the se-phrase and the verb, in exactly the same position where the negative particle nem should appear. I hypothesize that in this unique example, sem does, in fact, occupy the position of nem; it is a nem phonologically assimilated to the preceding sem. This pattern, not found elsewhere, may represent an intermediate
stage in the change to (27d). In (27d), which also occurs only once in Jókai Codex, but has become the winning pattern in the long run, the proclitic sem is missing, but the indefinite is followed by a sem. If the prosody of (27d) was the same as it is today, then its sem is not the stressed negative particle but an unstressed enclitic modifying the indefinite. Its status as an enclitic of a minimizing role is shown in present-day Hungarian by the fact that it can be moved together with the indefinite:

(28) a Nem lakott egy ember sem a szigeten.
not lived one man sem the island-on
'No man lived on the island.'

b Nem lakott a szigeten egy ember sem.

As is clear from these Modern Hungarian examples, and the Old Hungarian example in (25), the enclitic sem could only retain its negative force when cliticized to a focussed, hence immediately preverbal, indefinite, where it could be reanalyzed as the occupant of the adjacent Neg position. Non-focussed, postverbal indefinites in the scope of negation require the presence of both the negative particle nem, and the minimizing enclitic sem.

6. Summary
This paper has shown that Hungarian negative constructions of the late Proto-Hungarian period, representing the output of a former negative cycle, underwent another cycle in the 12th-15th century. This more recent cycle was set off by a morphological change. Negated indefinites came to be reinforced by the emphatic/additive/distributive proclitic es, which fused with the negative particle nem, yielding sem. Sem underwent further fusion with indefinite pronouns. Owing to word-internal phonological processes, the sem+indefinite pronoun complexes became morphologically more and more opaque. When the incorporated negative particle ceased to be recognizable, it was reintroduced adjoined to the verb, and negative pronouns were reinterpreted as pronouns participating in negative concord. The sem particle accompanying indefinite noun phrases lost its negative force owing to a change in its position (originally a proclitic, it became an enclitic, and came to be interpreted as a minimizing particle, the negative polarity counterpart of the additive es). It could retain its negative force in a single construction: in the case of focussed, i.e., immediately preverbal, negated indefinites, where the enclitic sem could be reanalyzed as the negative particle preceding the verb.

These changes went on parallel with the restructuring of the Hungarian sentence from SOV to TopFocVX*, a sentence structure with separate thematic and functional domains. In the
new sentence structure, the negative particle is the head of a functional projection, eliciting V-movement.

References:


Gugán, Katalin. 2012. Zigzagging in Language History: Negation and Negative Concord in Hungarian. *Finnou-Ugric Languages and Linguistics (FULL) 1/1-2. full.btk.ppke.hu*


*Sources:*


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1 For analyses of Hungarian sentence structure, see É. Kiss (2002; 2008).

2 For further details, see Surányi (2006a,b), Olsvay (2006), and É. Kiss (2009, 2010).

3 The dative is a structural case marking tenseless predicates – see Ürögdi (2006).

4 The numeral *one* is frequently employed as a strengthener. In Latin, both the negative particle *non* derives from the earlier
negative marker *ne* merged with *oinum* ‘one’, and the negative pronoun *nullus* derives from *ne* merged with *oinolos* ‘one+ diminutive suffix’ (Wackernagel 1926: 253).

5 A *se*-expression could only be extraposed when it was explicitly contrasted, e.g.:

(i) Es *nem* zeretek egýebet *semmýt* hanem czak tegedet
    and not love-I else anything but only you
    ‘I love nothing else but you’ (*Jókai 47*)

(ii) Azert *nenczen* *semým* hanem Czak engalya
    therefore isn’t anything-1SG but only engalya
    ruham (Jókai 46)
    dress-1SG
    ‘Therefore I have nothing but only an engalya dress’

Abbreviations:

ACC - accusative
NOM - nominative
DAT - dative
SUBL - sublative
COMPARAT – comparative
FUT – future