Negative directives in Homeric Greek

Function, origin, and development

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Abstract

This paper examines the form, function, and origin of negative directive constructions (prohibitions) in Homeric Greek. Curiously, the aspect of the verb in these constructions depends on its mood: aorist stem for subjunctive, present stem for imperative and infinitive. Previous scholarship has taken the Greek constructions to be replacements of earlier "injunctive" ones (based on comparison to Sanskrit) and seen aspect as responsible for functional differences in negative directives. I challenge both of these assumptions on the basis of a comprehensive corpus study of the Homeric language. My analysis introduces more precise usage labels and underscores the importance of the infinitive construction in the Homeric system. I show that mood, not aspect, underlies the observed functional differences. While I agree with prior research that the present infinitive is used for instructions and that the aorist subjunctive has a "preventive" function, I find that the present imperative construction is the semantically unmarked default. On this basis, I formulate a new diachronic model linking these constructions to a single Proto-Indo-European rule, accounting for the outcomes in Greek, Sanskrit, and related languages without positing arbitrary replacements of earlier constructions.

Keywords

1   Introduction

On the basis of a corpus study of the Homeric texts,[1] this paper investigates
and critically re-evaluates the claims of previous scholarship concerning the
meaning and origin of negative directives in ancient Greek (often called "neg-
ative commands" or "prohibitions").[2] In particular, I consider the notion of a
putative "paradigm" of directives in ancient Greek and explain the peculiar
asymmetry in the way aspect is encoded in positive vs. negative directives:
In positive directives, both the aorist and the present/perfect are used with
roughly equal frequency, suggesting aspectual contrast of the ordinary sort, as
found throughout the ancient Greek verb system. But in negative directives the
aorist is extremely rare compared to the present/perfect. Further, the aorist in
negative directives is virtually restricted to the subjunctive, a mood not other-
wise typical of direct commands. The present/perfect regularly appears in the
imperative or infinitive.

1.1   *The asymmetrical directive paradigm of ancient Greek*

I represent this state of affairs in Tables 1 and 2, for finite and non-finite con-
structions respectively. Both are asymmetric due to the aorist slot of the nega-
tive column, with the finite construction being subjunctive and the non-finite
construction being absent (rare exceptions are considered below, Section 4.2).
I group the perfect with the present because the two show identical functional
ranges in negative directives and because the perfect is virtually restricted to
verbs that do not build present stems[3] or that have some lexical-semantic
reason for using the perfect independent of negative directives.[4] As the total
number of perfect imperatives in negative directives is very small (14 all told),
counting them with the present does not skew the data in any significant way.

    This paradigmatic asymmetry is a peculiarity of ancient Greek, but my expla-
nation of its origin rests on a connection to another kind of asymmetry found
in the negative directive constructions of many languages. This is the asym-

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1   The term *Homeric* as used in this paper refers to the Greek language represented by the texts
    of my corpus, specified in Table 5 (Section 4.1).

2   I follow Willmott (2007) in using the term *negative directive*, as it includes not only direct
    commands but also hortatives, jussives, and the like (of the type *Let's go!* or *Let there be light*).
    The term *command* is used only where I wish to exclude other kinds of directives. The specific
    functional categories that I distinguish in this paper (preventive, prohibitive, instructive, etc.)
    apply as well to hortatives/jussives as to direct commands.

3   E.g., ἴστω 'know' in (31d) below; μεμάτω 'strive' (*Il.* 4.304); δείδιθι 'be afraid' in (27b) and (27d)
    below.

4   E.g., ἕσταθι 'stand' (*Od.* 22.489); ἀλάλησο 'wander about' (*Od.* 3.313).

TABLE 1   Regular directive constructions made with finite verbs (2nd pers.)

	Positive	Negative
ASPECT	present/perfect imperative aorist imperative	μή + present/perfect imperative μή + aorist **subjunctive**

TABLE 2   Regular directive constructions made with the infinitive (2nd pers. subject)

	Positive	Negative
ASPECT	present/perfect infinitive aorist infinitive	μή + present infinitive –

metry of how different constructions can be *used*. That is, constructions differ in the kinds of contexts to which they can be felicitously applied. In general, languages tend to have a widely applicable "unmarked" construction and one or more "marked" constructions with narrower applicability, specialized for a particular nuance. One of the central claims of this paper is that ancient Greek has a single unmarked negative directive construction, which is made with the present imperative. This means that, unlike positive commands, negative directives do not mark aspectual oppositions. They do, however, encode modal distinctions, which correspond to different kinds of prohibitive meaning: instructive (infinitive), preventive (subjunctive), and otherwise (imperative). (These distinctions are explained in Section 1.2.) The more marked constructions (infinitive and subjunctive) are specialized for particular meanings and so are limited to specific contexts.

I will illustrate what I have in mind by an analogy in English. English has a basic, default way of making negative directives, namely *Don't* + bare verb,[5] as in *Don't eat that!* We may call this the "unmarked" construction—the one with no specialized function (apart from being a negative directive) or morphosyntactic peculiarity. But there are also more specialized constructions, such as the inhibitive *Stop* + progressive verb, as in *Stop eating that!* This latter, "marked" construction may be felicitously used in just a subset of those contexts in which the unmarked construction can be used, namely when the addressee is cur-

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5   That this verb is historically an infinitive is irrelevant to my point.

rently in the process of eating something that the speaker commands them not to eat. In such a context, either construction may be used. But there are other contexts in which only the unmarked construction is felicitous, as in response to a question *Should I eat this?* Here, the speaker may reply *No, don't eat that* but not #*No, stop eating that.*[6] Thus the unmarked construction is compatible with all the contexts in which the marked one can apply, but the reverse is not true. As we shall see below, asymmetries of this kind are found also in the negative directives of ancient Greek. My analysis in this paper relies on the notion of semantically more specific, marked constructions in competition with semantically more general, unmarked ones. Unmarked constructions tend to use unmarked verb forms, though what counts as unmarked is language specific and is examined in detail below (Section 5).

1.2 *Meanings attributed to the different constructions*
With the differences of form, scholars have seen differences of meaning. The present/perfect imperative construction (hereinafter the *PIC*) is the most typical way to express a negative directive and may be properly called "prohibitive", in a modern technical sense to be defined below (cf. (16) in Section 4.3.1 and (30) in Section 4.4.1). The present infinitive construction (hereinafter the *PNC*) has been called "procedural" (Allen 2010), though I prefer the term *instructive*, as it is used to give instructions to the addressee that are to be carried out under some future set of circumstances (Wagner 1891). The aorist subjunctive construction (hereinafter the *ASC*) is referred to as "preventive" in meaning (since Ammann 1927), in that it is used when the speaker wishes the addressee to avoid some undesirable outcome, but the addressee lacks direct control over that outcome (Willmott 2007: 97–98). The difference between prohibitive and preventive meaning can be understood by contrasting the two dialogues in (1).

(1)   PROHIBITIVE (a.) vs. PREVENTIVE (b.) DIRECTIVES
    a.   PROHIBITIVE DIRECTIVE
       Speaker A: *Should I wake the baby?*
       Speaker B: *No, don't wake the baby (yet).*
    b.   PREVENTIVE DIRECTIVE
       Speaker A: (Talking loudly and making lots of noise)
       Speaker B: *Shh! The baby is sleeping, don't wake her!*

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6   The symbol "#" indicates that a sentence is infelicitous, though not strictly ungrammatical: It is syntactically well formed but not suited to the discourse context at hand.

In the prohibitive command in (1a), the addressee is ordered not to carry out the action expressed by the predicate WAKE THE BABY. In the preventive command in (1b), by contrast, the addressee is expected to reduce their noise level such that it will be more conducive to the baby sleeping, ostensibly to prevent the baby waking up for some time yet. Preventive commands thus order the addressee to do something other than what is actually commanded, in order to avoid the dreaded outcome, whereas prohibitive commands order the addressee to do (or avoid doing) exactly the action described by the verb used in the command.

As will be seen in the course of the corpus study (Section 4), the prohibitive and the preventive are both more complex than this and require some additional sub-classification in order to be fully understood. In addition to the type exemplified in (1a), which we may call *avertive*, in that it seeks to avert some action the addressee already has in mind, the prohibitive type further includes the subtypes "inhibitive" (type *Stop doing that!*) and "corrective" (type *Don't do that again*).[7] The preventive type is typically not further subdivided in the literature, but I have found it essential to do so, in order to account for the Homeric evidence. I call these subtypes *interventive* and *preemptive* and explain them further below (see Sections 2 and 4.4.1).

I summarize the different Greek constructions and the meanings commonly attributed to them in Table 3. Note especially the abbreviations, to be used throughout the paper.

In order to better understand the diachronic developments, whereby Greek acquired an asymmetric directive paradigm, we must first undertake an investigation of the usage of the various constructions in Homeric Greek (the most anciently attested literary Greek). This allows us to say for certain whether the alleged functional distinctions between the different negative directive constructions are real and consistent in the texts and helps us to see the relationships that hold between them, how they interact with one another, and what kinds of contexts favor the use of one over the other.

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7 The inhibitive and corrective were introduced by Ammann (1927). The term *avertive* is my own addition to the taxonomy, introduced in this study for reasons that will be explained further below.

TABLE 3   The three regular negative directive constructions

Form			Name	Abbreviation	Function
μή	+	present/perfect imperative	= Present/Perfect Imperative Construction	PIC	prohibitive {= *avertive, inhibitive, corrective*}
μή	+	aorist subjunctive	= Aorist Subjunctive Construction	ASC	preventive {= *interventive, preemptive*}
μή	+	present infinitive	= Present Infinitive Construction	PNC	instructive[a]

[a] The instructive is technically one of the prohibitive interpretations, but I separate it here because the PNC is specialized for this meaning. The PIC is sometimes instructive as well (see Section 4.3.1).

1.3   *Origin of the Greek constructions in relation to Sanskrit*

This investigation of usage is particularly important in light of my earlier work (Hollenbaugh 2020), in which I argued that in the related Indo-European (IE) language of Vedic Sanskrit, the distinction between the aorist construction and the present/perfect construction is semantically vacuous (contra Hoffmann 1967). In order to make sense of the relevance of this proposal, I offer here a brief account of how negative directives are constructed in Sanskrit.

Sanskrit makes its negative directives with the "injunctive" form of the verb. Despite its name, *injunctive* does not describe the function of this category. It refers to a verb form that is unspecified for tense and mood, marking only aspect, person, number, and voice (Kiparsky 2005). Injunctives are formally identical to the aorist, imperfect, or pluperfect indicatives without their augment. Such forms also occur in Homeric Greek, but the augmentless forms in Homeric are not tenseless or moodless: they are restricted to use as indicative past tenses (cf. Rix 1992: 194, § 207).[8] The Homeric situation is very different

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8   This is not to say that *no* distributional differences have been observed between the augmented and augmentless forms in Homer. There are several robust differences in usage, which likely correspond to functional differences (for a summary of these, see Willi 2018: 368–376), though these disagree in crucial—even paradoxical—ways with the facts of Vedic augmentation (cf. id.: 403–404). At any rate, the Homeric augmentless forms have nothing to do with

from Vedic, where the injunctives have many functions entirely unavailable to the augmented forms, such as modal or futurate interpretations and use in gnomic or generic statements (see Hoffmann 1967). The systematic usage of the injunctive as a tenseless and moodless category is unique to early Vedic (Whitney 1889: 221, §587).[9] But in all stages of Sanskrit the regular way of forming negative directives is with the modal negator *mā́* 'don't' (cognate with Greek μή) followed by the aorist injunctive or, much less frequently, the present or perfect injunctive. No other moods, including the imperative and subjunctive, are regularly used in negative directives in Sanskrit.

Since scholars have tended to view the Greek constructions as replacements of the supposedly original Sanskrit ones, we must first establish once and for all whether or not the Homeric constructions were meaningfully distinct, or, like Vedic, only formally distinct. As my study here shows, the former is in fact true, which means we have not only to explain why Greek negative directives are formed differently from the Sanskrit ones (whether by replacement of the original injunctive forms or by some other process) but also why they show distinct meanings while their Sanskrit counterparts do not.

1.4 *Course of the paper*

The paper is thus divided into two major parts: A synchronic corpus study investigating the usage of the negative directive constructions in Homeric Greek (Section 4), and a diachronic proposal for the development of the negative directive constructions in Greek (Section 5), which seeks to account for their forms as well as their meanings, where they came from prehistorically, and how they change over time within the history of Greek.

I give an overview of each of these parts in turn in Sections 2–3 and formulate in brief, general terms my various arguments, which are rather complex and engage with the literatures of diverse fields unlikely to be equally familiar to all readers (semantics, linguistic typology, Greek philology, Sanskrit philology, and Indo-European linguistics). The reader will therefore benefit, I think, from more exposition in an introductory format than is usual, before getting into the data itself. I also introduce here some important concepts that will be

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tenselessness or moodlessness: They are resolutely past and indicative (cf. id.: 372–376), with some few exceptions that have been proposed as relics of the old injunctive in generic statements (West 1989, De Decker 2024), besides clearly fossilized forms, such as imperatives in *-s* or *-so*, as in δός 'give!' and ἕπεο 'follow!' (Rix 1992: 264, §§288–289), or the 2sg. pres. ind. of athematic verbs like τίθης 'you are putting' (id.: 251, §274).

9 Cf. Lundquist & Yates (2018: 2144–2145), following Watkins (1969: 45), who says: "Der Injunktiv als solcher ist nicht eine idg. Kategorie, sondern eine indo-ir.; aber seine formalen Merkmale, Tempusstamm mit Sekundärendung … gehen in idg. Zeiten zurück".

relevant throughout the paper, such as *prejacent* ((2) in Section 2), and provide an overview of the different usage types, in Table 4, to be used as a reference as the reader makes their way through the paper, so as to stave off, to the extent possible, bewilderment liable to arise from so much specialized terminology.

Following the synchronic and diachronic analyses in Sections 4–5 are my general conclusions (Section 6), where I summarize my argument and leave the reader with key takeaways. A complete reckoning of my data may be found in the Appendix.

2   Overview of the synchronic corpus study

Some have argued that the observed distinctions in meaning between the PIC and ASC arise purely from the present/perfect vs. aorist aspectual contrast of the two constructions (Louw 1959), while others argue that the contrast is purely modal, arising from the imperative vs. subjunctive opposition (Willmott 2007: 90–112). One problem of the former view is that it ignores the PNC, which does not ordinarily participate in aspectual oppositions (see Section 4.2) and, in the rare cases where we do find an aorist infinitive used in a negative directive, it is never preventive, as would be predicted if aspect were the primary factor in the prohibitive/preventive distinction.

The latter view, taking mood to be the determining factor, leaves unexplained why the aspect stem changes in lockstep with the mood: why the present subjunctive is not used in negative directives (outside the first person) and why the aorist imperative and infinitive are avoided, when other kinds of modal contrasts in Greek systematically maintain aspectual oppositions, including positive directives. Even if modality is the thing that distinguishes prohibitive from preventive, why should aspectual contrasts be neutralized in negative directives? And why are they maintained in the first person?

I re-examine these opposing viewpoints on the basis of a corpus study of the Homeric language (Section 4) to determine the precise distribution of usage of the three main constructions, taking each in turn: the PNC (Section 4.2), the PIC (Section 4.3), and the ASC (Section 4.4). In addition, I devote a subsection to the extremely rare aorist imperative construction (Section 4.5), since so much has been made of it in the literature, most concretely by Stephens (1983), who views it as a vestige of the aorist injunctive (cf. Section 1.3 above), with which it is often formally identical.

In analyzing these constructions, I attempt to make more precise our understanding of their different shades of meaning by assigning specific and (I hope) intuitive usage labels that I will define. These allow for a more fine-grained

analysis of the prohibitive vs. preventive distinction in negative directives than prior treatments have made. While I add several terms to the technical vocabulary, this is not intended as taxonomy for its own sake, since it will be seen that in this case a greater degree of granularity results in more consistent generalizations (i.e., with fewer, if any, unprincipled exceptions to the general rules that I will establish).

I take a holistic approach to the data by looking at every occurrence of a negative directive in the texts of Homer, Hesiod, and other texts in the "Homeric" language. When dealing with the subjunctive, I provide a lower and an upper figure, since in many cases we cannot be certain that the construction is a negative directive and not a clause of fearing or negative purpose.[10] Both figures are shown to be in accordance with my general conclusions, and all data is summarized in the Appendix.

This comprehensive approach enables me to achieve definitive conclusions concerning usage, reducing the influence of confirmation bias that might arise from selecting only a subset of available examples. In this way, I am able to confirm Ammann's (1927) proposal that the ASC is preventive while the PIC is prohibitive, and the PNC is functionally instructive. The Greek situation is thus fundamentally different from the Vedic Sanskrit one, described in Hollenbaugh 2020, in that the different constructions correspond to different meanings and are not generally governed by formal constraints alone, as they are in Vedic. At the same time, I am able to refine Ammann's (1927) analysis by introducing more precise terminology and, as a result, show that Ammann's (1927) supposed exceptions are not, in fact, exceptional.

In addition, my study confirms Willmott's (2007: 90–112) claim—very differently argued and in less detail—that the essential semantic distinction between the PIC and ASC lies in their modal, rather than aspectual, opposi-

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10 I am not here concerned with the origin of fear clauses, nor with the relationship between fear clauses and the ASC. There is general agreement that fear clauses developed from the ASC (see Willmott 2007: 93, with references). I am content for now to assume so. But the great frequency of dependent μή + aorist subjunctive in Homeric compared to the ASC, coupled with the fact that there are also *independent* clauses of fearing (e.g., *Il.* 17.95; *Od.* 5.468, 18.334), at least allows the possibility that the development was the other way around, with the ASC developing from fear clauses. This would explain why the semantics of the ASC are originally very restricted, referring to dreaded outcomes (cf. n. 43 in Section 4.4.1 below), and become more like the PIC over time (see Section 5.2). We may imagine a development from *Quiet!* (*I'm worried*) *you could wake the baby* [fear] to *Quiet! Take care not to wake the baby* [preventive]. The latter is in fact an implicature of the former, so the semantic change would be motivated. The final stage is a simple prohibitive sense: *Don't wake the baby* [avertive] (cf. (42) in Section 5.2).

tion. Crucially, I show how the PNC forms an integral part of this picture, and how all three of the regular negative directive constructions relate to the more unusual ones (aorist infinitive, aorist imperative, present subjunctive), which do not show functions consistently distinct from their aspectual counterparts of the same mood. For this reason, the contrasting meanings of the various constructions must derive from their contrasting modalities, not their aspect forms.

An important advance of this study is that it acknowledges, for the first time, two distinct subtypes of preventive meaning: interventive and preemptive. What I call the *interventive* use is the one that is commonly understood under the heading *preventive* (as described in Section 1.2), wherein the addressee does not have direct control over the commanded action. In addition to this, I introduce the notion of a *preemptive* use in order to account for numerous examples of the ASC that cannot be sensibly interpreted as interventive (nor, indeed, as any of the other prohibitive subtypes). A preemptive directive is one that is cataphoric to a prejacent (see next paragraph) that has not yet been introduced into the discourse. This refinement allows us to readily make sense of otherwise puzzling pairs of examples, in which the ASC is used in contexts that are nearly identical to those of other examples that have the PIC (see especially (28) in Section 4.4). In such cases, the ASC is cataphoric (preemptive), while the PIC is anaphoric.

The notion of a prejacent is essential to understanding the different functions of negative directives.[11] I define the term *prejacent* in (2) and exemplify its role in conditional sentences in (3) and (4) below.

(2)   Prejacent: The circumstance(s) or precondition(s) that must hold in order for the directive to be interpretable and the commanded action carried out by the addressee.

The prejacent may be either explicitly expressed or left implicit, supplied by the immediate discourse context, also known as the "common ground" between speaker and addressee (cf. Stalnaker 1978). There are also contexts in which the prejacent is absent entirely, neither stated nor implicit, which we may call "out-of-the-blue" contexts (cf. my discussion of preemptive directives in Section 4.4 below.) In an out-of-the-blue context, if the speaker (A) says "Don't be angry", this is likely to prompt the addressee (B) to reply with something like "Angry

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11   Note that the prejacent is not the same thing as a protasis or antecedent clause.

TABLE 4   Usage labels describing the various functions of negative directives

	Usage label	Type	Expressed by
	inhibitive	*Stop doing what you're doing.*	PIC
	corrective	*Don't do that again.*	PIC (AIC)
PROHIBITIVE	avertive*	*Don't do what you're about to do.*	PIC (AIC)
	instructive*	*Upon finding yourself in Y situation, do X.*	PNC (PIC, ANC, ASC [once])
	interventive*	*Make your actions such that X outcome is avoided.*	ASC (PSC)
PREVENTIVE	preemptive*	*Don't react in the way I'm worried you might in light of the following information or event.*	ASC (AIC)

about what?" since there is no basis in the common ground for B to know how to obey (or disobey) A's command. This renders the directive uninterpretable on its own, in the absence of further information.

(3)   A: "Now, don't be angry". (out-of-the-blue context)
       B: "Angry about what?"

On the other hand, when given sufficient context, in this case stated explicitly by the speaker, the addressee can readily determine how, and whether, to carry out the speaker's directive, as in (4).

(4)   A: "Please don't be angry with me about what I did to you yesterday".
       B: "I will never forgive you".

For ease of reference, Table 4 provides a synopsis of the various usage labels defined in this paper. Those labels followed by an asterisk (*) are my own coinage. In this table, the aorist imperative construction is abbreviated AIC; the aorist infinitive construction is ANC; the present subjunctive construction is PSC. I do not actually consider these three to have the same status as bona fide "constructions" as the others (PIC, PNC, ASC); these are just convenient shorthands for the purposes of this table. Constructions placed in parentheses are not the typical way of expressing the meaning of the associated row. Both second and third persons are considered in the table, but not the first person.

The various types are explained in detail in Section 4 below, but I give this table here so that it may be easily consulted as the reader progresses through the paper, as I acknowledge the potentially bewildering array of new terminology and wish to facilitate the reader's acquaintance with it as much as possible.

This synchronic study sets us up to explain the origin and diachrony of negative directives in Greek, as the more general meaning of the PIC will be seen to derive from its minimal markedness relative to the more specific ASC (Section 5.1). Understanding the functional ranges of these constructions in Homeric Greek is also crucial to understanding how they change in post-Homeric Greek, where the ASC becomes more incorporated into the directive "paradigm" and loses its distinctive preventive function (Section 5.2).

3   Overview of the comparative diachronic analysis

In the second part of the paper (Section 5), I seek to explain the apparent disruption of uniformity that the "paradigm" of commands brings to the modal/aspectual system of ancient Greek. I consider the prehistory of the negative directive constructions (Section 5.1), situating them in their Indo-European context and attempting to reconcile the apparently wide array of strategies employed to express negative directives in the various IE branches, while at the same time critically re-evaluating prior attempts to do so. Hoffmann's (1967) proposal that the injunctive construction in Vedic Sanskrit showed a preventive vs. inhibitive/corrective contrast was shown in Hollenbaugh 2020 to be not well founded, and I argue that the Vedic system of negative directives cannot, as such, be the inherited one (from Proto-Indo-European).

The common view up to now has been that Greek inherited negative directives that were constructed with the injunctive, as in Sanskrit (cf. Section 1.3), and which marked systematic aspectual oppositions between the aorist and present/perfect. The PIC is thought at some point in the prehistory of Greek to have ousted the present/perfect injunctive, and the ASC to have replaced the aorist injunctive. Stephens (1983) even dates the latter replacement to the Homeric epics themselves, taking as evidence that the only occurrences of the aorist imperative in negative directives are in metrical positions that would not allow replacement by the subjunctive.

But if this were so, we should expect the aorist construction, not the present, to be the default one, as it is in Vedic Sanskrit. According to Hollenbaugh 2020, the aorist is over five times as frequent as the present/perfect in negative directives in early Vedic. But this is plainly not the case in Homeric, where the PIC is

many times more frequent than the ASC (about 17 to 1).[12] An adequate account of negative directives in these languages should explain why the aorist injunctive in Vedic is so frequent compared to the present/perfect injunctive, while in Greek we find just the opposite—the ASC being much less frequent than the PIC, and the aorist imperative and infinitive occurring only exceptionally.

Even ignoring the comparative evidence, such an extreme imbalance in the frequency of the PIC/PNC and the ASC would be surprising, as there is no such imbalance between the present and aorist in positive directives (cf. (6b) in Section 4.1 and (11) in Section 4.3.1).[13] It would also be odd that the aorist construction should develop such a specialized function—preventive—in Homeric only to lose this specialization in later varieties of Greek (see Section 5.2). The "replacement hypothesis" also provides no clear reason why the aorist injunctive should have been replaced specifically with the subjunctive or, conversely, why the present injunctive was superseded by the imperative (not the subjunctive). In short, the "replacement hypothesis" fails to account for the paradigmatic asymmetry seen in Greek.

To make better sense of the observed facts, I take as a starting assumption that the PIC is the inherited negative directive construction in Greek, and that Greek originally did not systematically mark aspectual oppositions in its nega-

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12   There are 207 PICs and 12 ASCs attested in the Homeric corpus, considering the secure data only and excluding the first persons, where the PIC does not apply. Including the insecure data quadruples the number of ASCs (to 48), but the PIC remains over four times as frequent (or seven times if we consider only the second person, which has 164 PICs and 22 ASCs). Adding in the five or six occurrences of the aorist imperative construction does not significantly affect these proportions.

13   Allan (2010: 212) reports that the directive aorist and present in Homer "are roughly equally frequent". In fact they are of almost exactly equal frequency. Neuberger-Donath (1980: 79–81) collects all putative cases of directive infinitives in Homer, positive and negative. Subtracting my own counts of the latter from her data yields the following totals for affirmative directive infinitives: 84 present, 83 aorist, 7 perfect. However, Allan (2010: 211, n. 18) excludes some of her data on various grounds and adds a few that she omits. Following his revision we get: 80 present, 79 aorist, 6 perfect. In either case, there is nearly a 50/50 split between present and aorist infinitives in positive directives. This remains true even if we treat the present and perfect together (52% present/perfect, 48% aorist). As for the imperatives, based on a search of the Chicago Homer database (see n. 16 in Section 4.1), there are roughly 477 presents, 311 aorists, and 28 perfects. Subtracting my counts of negative directives from each category gives the following: 284 present, 306 aorist, 14 perfect. As can be seen, imperatives in affirmative directives likewise show a nearly even split between present/perfect (49%) and aorist (51%). Aspect distribution in affirmative directives is thus completely different from negative directives, where the present/perfect is many times more frequent than the aorist (207:5 for the imperative, 36:6 for the infinitive).

tive directives. This is shown to match the situation of Vedic Sanskrit, in a way, which likewise does not make regular aspectual contrasts in its negative directives. Instead, as demonstrated in Hollenbaugh 2020, Vedic uses the aorist as a kind of default prohibitive stem, while the present/perfect is used only as a last resort, when the verb in question cannot build an aorist. The present/perfect in Vedic negative directives shows no consistent functional difference from the aorist.

But there is a mismatch here, in that Homeric negative directives default to the present, while in Vedic they default to the aorist. I explain this by adapting the proposal of Hollenbaugh 2020 that Vedic negative directives originally selected not for the aorist in general but for the minimally marked *root aorist*. I project this selectional property of the negative directive construction back to Proto-Indo-European (PIE) as a preference for unmarked verb forms in negative directives. In Vedic (and probably PIE) the unmarked verb form was the injunctive. But this is not the case in most of the other branches (cf. Section 5.4). In Homeric Greek, the injunctive is no longer a tenseless, moodless category but is limited to use as an indicative past tense. As such, it is no longer available for use as a (functionally) unmarked verb. The present stem, as shown in Hollenbaugh 2021, is in Greek the unmarked stem in the aspectual domain (I provide an overview of the evidence for this claim in Section 5.1). As such, this is the form used (since the earliest texts) in negative directives, as expected under my hypothesis. The avoidance of the aorist in negative directives is thus explained as an avoidance of aspectual markedness.

The ASC, for its part, I argue to be a Greek-internal innovation (cf. n. 10 in Section 2), unrelated to the aorist injunctive construction seen in Vedic and originally independent of the prohibitive construction proper (the PIC). The fact that the ASC has a specialized use (preventive), based plainly on its modality and not its aspect, and blocks the application of the PIC in the preventive function (and not the other way around), is consistent with the assumption that the PIC is the older, the inherited, and the default prohibitive construction.

In Section 5.2, I look at the later development of negative directives in post-Homeric Greek, showing how the ASC loses its distinctive preventive character and is slotted in as the aorist counterpart to the PIC. In Section 5.3, I explain, in historical terms, why the present subjunctive is barely used in negative directives, again appealing to the notion of relative markedness. Finally, in Section 5.4, I compare the Greek negative directive constructions to those of other languages—one Indo-European (Hittite) and one non-Indo-European (Arabic)—in order to show that my "minimal markedness hypothesis" is readily able to account for what we observe in other languages related to Greek and is consistent with cross-linguistic tendencies in unrelated languages.

4 Corpus study of Homeric Greek

This corpus study aims to establish, on as firm ground as possible, whether the different negative directive constructions show consistently different meanings from one another and, if so, what those are. As stated above, I find that each of the three regular constructions (PIC, PNC, ASC) does indeed have a distinctive and definable functional range. Each of these constructions will be analyzed and its functional range described in precise terms. The interrelations of the constructions are also considered and framed in terms of relative markedness, which helps us understand the motivation for choosing one construction over the other in any given context. The semantically more specific constructions (PNC, ASC) block the application of the semantically broader PIC just in case the context calls for expression of the meanings for which they are specialized. The PIC applies elsewhere and can be described as a general prohibitive construction.

4.1 *Texts in corpus; relative frequencies of directive constructions*

The Homeric corpus used in this study consists of the Homeric epics and hymns, as well the works of Hesiod (or Pseudo-Hesiod). Table 5 lists all the texts with their standard abbreviations (to be used in citations below) and gives the number of negative directives in each text as raw token frequencies. These are expressed as ranges, since the precise number cannot be certainly determined, due mainly to the fact that some instances of μή + subjunctive are probably better interpreted as clauses of fearing (dependent or independent) or negative purpose.[14] The lower number in each range counts only the secure negative directives; the upper number includes insecure data that could *plausibly* be interpreted as negative directives. Not counted are cases where μή plainly introduces a dependent clause, making a negative directive interpretation impossible (or extremely implausible). I also exclude from consideration instances of μή + a verb in the optative mood, which occur 36 times in our corpus, mostly in the third person (24×). These are interesting in their own right, and especially so when compared with third-person subjunctive and imperative directives and wishes, but are beyond the scope of this paper.[15]

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14 Examples of possible fear clauses can be seen in (22) in Section 4.4.1. A possible case of negative purpose is (21).

15 Most instances of μή + optative are clearly not directive but express a negative wish. There are 31 such cases: 23 aorist, 7 present, 1 perfect. More interesting are the remaining five cases, which are more plausibly interpreted as genuine directives in various senses. In the *Iliad* there are four such cases, all aorist: 1 avertive (*Il.* 9.601), 1 instructive (*Il.* 3.407), 2 interventive (*Il.* 8.512, 17.341). In *Works and Days* there is 1 instructive use of the *present* optative

TABLE 5   Homeric corpus, abbreviations, token frequencies of negative directives

	Text	Abbreviation	Number of negative directives (all persons, optatives excluded)
Homer	*Iliad*	*Il.*	141–169
	Odyssey	*Od.*	101–125
	Homeric Hymns	HH	8–11
Hesiod	*Works and Days*	*WD*	32–33
	[*Theogony*]	[*Th.*]	0
	Shield of Heracles	*SH*	1
Total:			283–339

Data was collected using the Chicago Homer online database,[16] which contains all of the texts in Table 5. I manually went through every example to ensure that it was actually a negative directive and to determine, to the best of my ability, what sort of interpretation it has in context. The results of this process were entered into a spreadsheet for statistical analysis. Since μή + aorist subjunctive is formally ambiguous between the ASC and a negative purpose clause or clause of fearing, I went through every occurrence of μή and its compounds (μηδέ etc.) in the Homeric corpus, in order to investigate the syntax of each sentence and determine how it should be counted: secure directive (secure data), possible directive (insecure data), or non-directive (excluded from my data).

As can be seen, very little of the data comes from the Homeric Hymns and the *Shield of Heracles*. Of the Homeric Hymns, negative directives only occur in hymns 2 (4–5×), 4 (1–2×), 5 (2–3×), and 7 (1×).[17] As none of these hymns are suspected of being particularly late compositions, none of the data from the Homeric Hymns needed to be thrown out. But even if some readers would prefer not to count these texts as properly Homeric, excluding them entirely from

(line 491). All of these are third person except for the second-person μηδ᾽ ἔτι ὑποστρέψειας 'never again return' at *Il.* 3.407. The aorist optative is occasionally used in *positive* directives of the second person (e.g., *Od.* 4.193, 15.24; see Chantraine 1953 [2015]: 249).

16   https://homer.library.northwestern.edu/.

17   Respectively to Demeter, Hermes, Aphrodite, and Dionysus.

TABLE 6   Ways of forming directives in the second person (optatives excluded)

Positive	Negative
pres/perf. imperative	**μή + pres./perf. imperative** (153×)
aor. imperative	μή + aor. imperative (3–4×)
pres./perf. infinitive	**μή + pres. infinitive** (35–48×)
aor. infinitive	μή + aor. infinitive (4×)
[pres. subjunctive (not used?)]	[μή + pres. subjunctive (not used)]
aor. subjunctive (once: *Il.* 13.47)[a]	**μή + aor. subjunctive** (10–22×)

[a] σαώσετε λαὸν Ἀχαιῶν 'You should save the Achaean army' (*Il.* 13.47).

consideration would have little impact on the overall findings of this paper. The only quotation cited from the Homeric Hymns in this paper comes from Hymn 5, to Aphrodite (see (28b) in Section 4.4.1).

This study is primarily concerned with the second-person directives, which can be made in a variety of ways, as shown in Table 6. Those in boldface are considered regular ways of forming negative directives in the second person. As discussed above, there are clear asymmetries between the positive and negative directives in terms of which tense-aspect stems are permissible/regular. In positive directives, the aorist and present/perfect occur with nearly equal frequency; in negative directives the present/perfect is overwhelmingly predominant.[18]

As emerges clearly from the schematic representation in Table 6, the aorist imperative and infinitive are hardly used in negative directives. But not only are they rare, they are actively avoided. This can be observed in cases where a positive directive is coordinated with a negative one. Even in contexts where the aorist imperative is used for the positive directive, the negative directive consistently has the present imperative, as shown in (5).[19]

18   For counts of the positive directives in the second *and* third persons, see n. 13 in Section 3.
19   In all numbered examples the negative directives are put in boldface. All other highlighted information is underlined. I do not fully gloss the examples, since only the verb of the directive is typically relevant. These are glossed with their tense/aspect and mood only, in bracketed subscript. For ease of reference, this information is repeated in the translation.

(5) Aorist imperative coordinated with the PIC
   a. ἀλλὰ <u>πίθεσθε</u>[AOR.IPV.] καὶ ὔμμες, ἐπεὶ πείθεσθαι ἄμεινον·
      μήτε σὺ τόνδ᾽ ἀγαθός περ ἐὼν **ἀποαίρεο**[PRS.IPV.] κούρην (*Il.* 1.274–275).
      '<u>Obey</u>[AOR.IPV.], since obedience is better.
      Do not take away[PRS.IPV.] this man's girl, noble though you be'.

   b. μή μ᾽ **ἄγε**[PRS.IPV.] κεῖσ᾽ ἀέκοντα, διοτρεφές, ἀλλὰ <u>λίπ᾽</u>[AOR.IPV.] αὐτοῦ (*Od.*
      10.266).
      '**Don't take**[PRS.IPV.] me there against my will, Zeus-nurtured one, but
      <u>leave</u>[AOR.IPV.] me here'.

   c. ἀλλὰ, Ζεῦ, τόδε πέρ μοι <u>ἐπικρήηνον</u>[AOR.IPV.] ἐέλδωρ·
      αὐτοὺς δή περ <u>ἔασον</u>[AOR.IPV.] ὑπεκφυγέειν καὶ ἀλύξαι,
      μηδ᾽ οὕτω Τρώεσσιν **ἔα**[PRS.IPV.] δάμνασθαι Ἀχαιούς (*Il.* 8.242–244).
      'Still, Zeus, <u>bring to pass</u>[AOR.IPV.] at least this prayer of mine.
      <u>Allow</u>[AOR.IPV.] our men at least to get clear and escape,
      and **don't allow**[PRS.IPV.] the Achaeans to be thus beaten down by the
      Trojans'.

This is the case also for directive infinitives, as (6) shows. The aorist is regularly
avoided only when the directive is negative.[20]

(6) Aorist imperative or infinitive coordinated with the PNC
   a. εἰ δ᾽ ἐθέλεις, <u>ἐπίμεινον</u>[AOR.IPV.], ἐγὼ δ᾽ εἶμι προπάροιθεν·
      μηδὲ σὺ **δηθύνειν**[PRS.INF.], μή τίς σ᾽ ἔκτοσθε νοήσας (*Od.* 17.277–278).
      'Or if you want, <u>stay here</u>[AOR.IPV.], and I'll go ahead of you.
      But don't take long[PRS.INF.], lest someone notice you outside.'

   b. μηδέ ποτ᾽ ἐν προχοῇς ποταμῶν ἅλαδε προρεόντων
      μηδ᾽ ἐπὶ κρηνάων **οὐρεῖν**[PRS.INF.], μάλα δ᾽ <u>ἐξαλέασθαι</u>[AOR.INF.] (*WD* 757–
      758).
      '**Don't** ever **pee**[PRS.INF.] in the outlets of rivers that flow to the sea,
      nor into springs; on the contrary strictly <u>avoid</u>[AOR.INF.] it'.

I will now treat each of the regular negative directive constructions in turn,
beginning with the PNC. This construction has sometimes been disregarded in

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20   The rare exceptions to this rule often involve repetition of a word or formulaic phrase
      containing the word. Other times they are motivated by metrical considerations. See n. 28
      (Section 4.2) and my discussion of (33) and (34) in Section 4.5.

the literature, due to its being "poetic and Ionic" (Louw 1959). But, as will be seen, its functional relationship to the PIC is important in understanding the attested functions of the latter. I describe this relationship in terms of semantic blocking: The PNC, having a more specialized meaning, applies in a more specific context (what I call *instructive*), while the PIC, having a more general meaning, occurs elsewhere.

4.2 *Present infinitive construction (PNC)*

The PNC has a highly specialized distribution. It is used for instructions, whether specific or general, to be carried out typically in the speaker's absence from the addressee (Ammann 1927: 335–337, following Wagner 1891).[21] The circumstances under which the action is to be carried out (the "prejacent" of the condition) are a supposition of the speaker, and may be hypothetical, generic, or lie in the future.[22]

When the PNC is used in Homeric, the prejacent is almost always stated explicitly in the discourse preceding the negative directive. Unlike other directives, the prejacent here lays out future or hypothetical circumstances under which the addressee is meant to carry out the directive. Crucially, the directive is to be carried out only when, or if, the preconditions are met, which is not the case at the time when the directive is uttered. The function of the PNC type of negative directive is given schematically in (7).

(7) PNC type (INSTRUCTIVE): *Under X circumstance, you are not to do such-and-such.*[23]

I label this usage *instructive,*[24] illustrated by the Homeric examples in (8). In (8a), Circe gives instructions to Odysseus, which he is to carry out only once he has reached the land of the dead. In (8b), Agamemnon advises Diomedes

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21 The PNC does not differ from positive directive infinitives in this respect (present/perfect and aorist), which according to Allan (2010) are uniformly used for instructions and "cognitive scripts" (united under the term "procedural action").

22 An example of a hypothetical prejacent is *Il.* 24.592: αἴ κε πύθηαι 'if you find out' (cf. n. 55 in Section 4.4.1). Examples of future and generic prejacents are respectively (8a) and (9) below.

23 I choose the English idiom *you are not to do such-and-such* deliberately, as it matches the infinitive of the Greek construction. The similarity may hint at a reason why it is the infinitive, in particular, that has grammaticalized a specialized instructive function in Homeric, though adequate investigation of this point is beyond my current scope.

24 Ammann (1927: 328) classes these cases as "inhibitive" or "corrective" (cf. Section 4.3).

to choose the right man to accompany him on his mission behind enemy lines, irrespective of that man's social rank.

(8) PNC AS INSTRUCTIVE

    a. αὐτὸς δὲ ξίφος ὀξὺ ἐρυσσάμενος παρὰ μηροῦ
      ἧσθαι[PRS.INF.], **μηδὲ ἐᾶν**[PRS.INF.] νεκύων ἀμενηνὰ κάρηνα
      αἵματος ἆσσον ἵμεν, πρὶν Τειρεσίαο πυθέσθαι (*Od.* 10.535–537).
      'You yourself, having drawn your sharp sword from beside your thigh
      <u>sit</u>[PRS.INF.], **but don't let**[PRS.INF.] the helpless heads of the dead
      go close to the blood before you question Teiresias.'

    b. τὸν μὲν δὴ ἕταρόν γ᾽ αἱρήσεαι ὅν κ᾽ ἐθέλῃσθα,
      φαινομένων τὸν ἄριστον, ἐπεὶ μεμάασί γε πολλοί.
      μηδὲ σύ γ᾽ αἰδόμενος σῇσι φρεσὶ τὸν μὲν ἀρείω
      καλλείπειν[PRS.INF.], σὺ δὲ χείρον᾽ ὀπάσσεαι αἰδοῖ εἴκων
      ἐς γενεὴν ὁρόων, μηδ᾽ εἰ βασιλεύτερός ἐστιν (*Il.* 10.235–239).
      'Pick your man to be your companion, whichever you wish,
      the best of all who have shown up, since many are eager to do it.
      But do not, for the reverence you feel in your heart, **pass over**[PRS.INF.]
      the better man—for by giving way to decorum you'll take the worse
      man looking at his station; but don't (take him) even if he is kinglier'.

Directives using the infinitive often have the force of advice, rather than an outright injunction, and are common in general precepts or proscriptions that may be considered universally applicable. The infinitive accordingly predominates in *Works and Days*, being used in about 81 percent of the negative directives in that text, as in (9).[25]

(9) PNC IN GENERAL INSTRUCTION (ADVICE)
    μηδὲ δόμον ποιῶν ἀνεπίξεστον **καταλείπειν**[PRS.INF.],
    μή τοι ἐφεζομένη κρώξῃ λακέρυζα κορώνη (*WD* 746–747).
    'When you are building a house, **do not leave**[PRS.INF.] it rough-hewn,
    lest a cawing crow may settle on it and croak'.

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25   26 out of 32 negative directives in *Works and Days* use the infinitive. Of those, all are present except for two that have the aorist, on which see further below. The remaining negative directives in *Works and Days* are made with the PIC (5×) (see Section 4.3.2) and once with the ASC: μηδ᾽ ... οὐρήσῃς 'don't pee' (729–730), which is not appreciably different in meaning from (6b) above. Perhaps read aor. inf. οὐρῆσαι, as Solmsen reads aor. inf. ἔρξαι rather than aor. sjv. ἔρξῃς at 708. The aorist may be explained as substituting for the present *metri gratia* (cf. n. 28 below).

In the texts, the PNC is found to have the instructive reading uniformly, with no clear exceptions (36–51×).[26] For the third person of this construction, see the end of Section 4.3.2. The PNC does not occur with first person subjects.[27]

There are very few occurrences of the aorist infinitive in negative directives (with second-person subject: 2× in *Od.*, 2× in *WD*; with third-person subject: 2× in *Il.*). This is surprising given that in positive directives aorist infinitives are as common as present infinitives (see n. 13 in Section 3). Aorist infinitives that do occur in negative directives show precisely the same function as the PNC, namely instructive, and may be motivated by metrical or lexical constraints. For instance, the verb in (10) does not build a present stem in Homeric.[28]

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26   In interpreting the data it is of course impossible to be 100 percent confident, in any given instance, that one reading is correct and the others are excluded. I have tried to assess each data point carefully, considering its context of occurrence. While I acknowledge the possibility of alternative interpretations, I have thought it useful to choose only one interpretation for each occurrence of a negative directive, in order to get a broad view of their patterns of use. Further, interpreter bias is lessened by the fact that I consider all instances of negative directives in the corpus, rather than a sample. Given the quantity of data, though other scholars may disagree with my interpretations of this or that example, it is unlikely that our opinions will differ to a great enough extent that the patterns of use that emerge from this study would not continue to hold if alternative interpretations were preferred here or there. In other words, the big picture emerges clearly, even if we might quibble over the details.

27   First person subjects of *positive* directive infinitives may be attested. As putative examples, Neuberger-Donath (1980: 79, n. 10) cites the infinitives at *Il.* 19.140 (aorist) and *Od.* 24.380 (present, 2×). But Allan (2010: 209, n. 14; 211, n. 18) argues against all three of these examples.

28   Cf. similarly μή ποτε … εἰπεῖν 'don't ever speak' at *Od.* 22.287–288. Other occurrences of the aorist infinitive appear to be metrically motivated or are due to formulaic repetition (cf. Section 4.3.2), as μὴ δόμεν 'don't give' at *WD* 354, where the present infinitive would have too many syllables and the form δόμεν is a formulaic repetition of the positive directive in the first part of the same line: 'give (δόμεν) to whoever gives (δῷ) and don't give (μὴ δόμεν) to whoever doesn't give (μὴ δῷ)'. The repetitious wordplay would be destroyed by using the present infinitive here. With third-person subject we find δῦναι 'sink, set' at *Il.* 2.413. This verb has a present stem but the present infinitive is never used in Homeric. It is followed by another aorist infinitive in the same line, ἐλθεῖν 'go', where the present infinitive ἔρχεσθαι would not fit and in any case would not match the coordinated aorist δῦναι. Only μή … κακὸν ἔρξαι 'don't do wrong' at *WD* 708 eludes explanation along these lines, as it could reasonably be substituted with the present infinitive ἔρδειν, which is commonly used with directive force in Homeric, including elsewhere in *Works and Days* (e.g., 382). It is possible, however, that the syntax here should be interpreted differently. The full clause reads: μή μιν πρότερος κακὸν ἔρξαι 'don't be the first to do him wrong', which could be understood to have a null copula construed with the μή, as if μή … πρότερος εἶναι 'don't be the first', with ἔρξαι 'to do' as an epexegetic infinitive after the adjective πρότερος 'first', and so not properly part of the negative directive at all. Cf. n. 25.

(10) NEGATIVE DIRECTIVE WITH AORIST INFINITIVE (INSTRUCTIVE)
ἡ δέ σ’ ὑποδδείσασα κελήσεται εὐνηθῆναι·
ἔνθα σὺ μηκέτ’ ἔπειτ’ ἀπανήνασθαι_[AOR.INF.] θεοῦ εὐνήν (*Od.* 10.296–297).
'And she, cowering, will and urge you sleep with her,
and **don't** then afterwards **refuse**_[AOR.INF.] the bed of the goddess'.

It thus seems that the present is the default stem in this construction and the aorist is avoided (cf. (6) in Section 4.1). The fact that there is no discernible functional difference between the present and aorist infinitive in negative directives suggests that the construction's modality, and not its aspect, is the primarily operative feature in determining its function. In negative directives, infinitive means instructive, regardless of aspect.

4.3 *Present imperative construction (PIC)*

I now turn to the PIC, which shows the widest range of functions of all the negative directive constructions. This is consistent with viewing it as the default, general prohibitive construction. And indeed its attested range of meanings can be characterized as "prohibitive" in the technical sense to be defined in what follows, as opposed to preventive. I first enumerate its functions (Section 4.3.1), then discuss its partial blocking relationship with the PNC (Section 4.3.2).

4.3.1 Uses of the PIC

The PIC is occasionally instructive, like the PNC (12× in the second person), as in (11).

(11) INSTRUCTIVE USE OF PIC (COORD. WITH AOR. INF.)
μηδὲ πρὶν ἀπόπαυε_[PRS.IPV.] τεὸν μένος, ἀλλ’ ὁπότ’ ἂν δή
φθέγξομ’ ἐγὼν ἰάχουσα, τότε σχεῖν_[AOR.INF.] ἀκάματον πῦρ (*Il.* 21.340–341).
'**Do not let up on**_[PRS.IPV.] your fury until such time as
I lift my voice and cry to you. Then stay_[AOR.INF.] your weariless burning'.[29]

This type is discussed in relation to the PNC in Section 4.3.2 (and cf. n. 30 below).

The other (more common) functions of the PIC are as follows.

– INHIBITIVE: Addressee is told to cease some action that they are currently engaged in.
  – Type: *Stop doing what you're doing!*

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29 This example is classed as "preventive" by Ammann (1927: 333) (cf. Section 4.4).

(12) INHIBITIVE PIC

μηκέτι <u>νῦν</u> χαλεποῖσιν ἀμείβεσθον$_{[PRS.IPV.]}$ ἐπέεσσιν
Αἶαν Ἰδομενεῦ τε κακοῖς, ἐπεὶ οὐδὲ ἔοικε (*Il.* 23.492).
'**No longer** <u>now</u>, Ajax and Idomeneus, **continue
to exchange**$_{[PRS.IPV.]}$ this bitter and evil talk. For it is not appropriate'.

– CORRECTIVE: Addressee is told not to repeat an action that they have just
  carried out.
  – Type: *Don't do that again!* (implication: *You shouldn't have done that*)

(13) CORRECTIVE PIC

Εὐρυνόμη, μή <u>ταῦτα</u> παραύδα$_{[PRS.IPV.]}$, κηδομένη περ,
χρῶτ' ἀπονίπτεσθαι καὶ ἐπιχρίεσθαι ἀλοιφῇ (*Od.* 18.178–179).
'Eurynome, **don't urge**$_{[PRS.IPV.]}$ <u>these things</u>, though you care for me,
to wash off my body and anoint myself with unguent'.

– AVERTIVE: Addressee is told not to carry out an action that the speaker
  thinks they intend to carry out.
  – Type: *No, don't do that* [= *what you're intending to do*] (*yet*)*!*

(14) AVERTIVE PIC

μή με **κτεῖν**'$_{[PRS.IPV.]}$, ἐπεὶ οὐχ ὁμογάστριος Ἕκτορός εἰμι (*Il.* 21.95).
'**Don't kill**$_{[PRS.IPV.]}$ me, as I am not from the same womb as Hector' (cf. also
(5) above).

In the second person, the PIC always expresses one of these four meanings
(most often the latter three),[30] which we may group together as the four *pro-*

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30 There are only two plausible exceptions in the second person, which could be viewed
    as preventive (preemptive), in that they apparently lack a prejacent (cf. Ammann 1927:
    333). But I treat both as instructive: *Il.* 4.234 (Ἀργεῖοι, μή <u>πώ τι</u> μεθίετε$_{[PRS.IPV.]}$ θούριδος ἀλκῆς
    'Argives, **do not** <u>yet</u> **let go**$_{[PRS.IPV.]}$ of your furious valor <u>at all</u>') and 10.249 (Τυδεΐδη μήτ' ἄρ με
    <u>μάλ'</u> αἴνεε$_{[PRS.IPV.]}$ μήτέ <u>τι</u> νείκει$_{[PRS.IPV.]}$ 'Son of Tydeus, **do not praise**$_{[PRS.IPV.]}$ me <u>so much</u>, **nor
    insult me**$_{[PRS.IPV.]}$ <u>at all</u>'). Note that both involve the adverb τι 'at all, in any way', which could
    be taken to underscore the lack of a current or recently past prejacent (as in (26a) and
    (27a) in Section 4.4): the directive aims at warding off a future event for which the precon-
    ditions do not presently hold. In the first case, the group of Argives being addressed has no
    intention of letting up on their valor, as we are explicitly told two lines earlier. So the mean-
    ing, in effect, is something like 'keep up the good work' or 'keep doing what you're doing'. I
    interpret it as instructive because the speaker is imagining a hypothetical prejacent under
    which the action expressed by the directive would need to be avoided (similarly instruc-
    tive is *Il.* 10.69, μηδὲ μεγαλίζεο 'don't be over-proud', which Ammann (1927: 333) classes as

hibitive interpretations. The PNC thus regularly expresses only one of the prohibitive meanings, while the PIC may express the full prohibitive range. In the third person the usage of the PIC is similar, except that the instructive uses are more numerous than they are in the second person (12×, see end of Section 4.3.2), being second in frequency to the avertive uses (15×) and nearly twice as common as the corrective and inhibitive uses (7× apiece). In addition, the third-person PIC twice, in a repeated passage (*Od.* 2.230–232 = 5.8–10), is coordinated with the optative and apparently expresses a wish, albeit a "corrective" one (with ἔτι 'ever again').[31]

With predicates expressing emotions or other typically non-agentive experiences, the meaning of the negative directive remains agentive in a sense something like 'get a hold of yourself!' (with the prejacent in the common ground). The addressee is expected to take control of their emotions or thoughts.

(15) EXPERIENCER VERBS AS AGENTIVE NEGATIVE DIRECTIVES (PROHIBI
     TIVE)
     a. Πηλεΐδη μήτ' ἄρ τι λίην τρέε[PRS.IPV.] μήτέ τι τάρβει[PRS.IPV.] (*Il.* 21.288).
        '**Do not** be so **afraid**[PRS.IPV.], son of Peleus, **nor** be so **anxious**[PRS.IPV.]'.

     b. δαιμονίη, μή μοί τι λίην ἀκαχίζεο[PRS.IPV.] θυμῷ (*Il.* 6.486).
        'What's gotten into you! **Don't grieve**[PRS.IPV.] too much for me in your heart'.

In all the PIC's uses the addressee has direct control over the performance of the action (agency). This typically involves the addressee's control of their own

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preventive despite noticing that it follows the "positive Weisung" ('positive instruction') φθέγγεο 'call out' in line 67). In the second case, Odysseus tells Diomedes not to praise him so much, as he has just been doing, and so the function of αἴνεε 'praise' is plainly corrective. But he also tells him not to insult him (νείκει), which Diomedes has of course not done, nor is he intending to do. The meaning is again technically instructive, with a hypothetical prejacent. Compare the English idiom *rain or shine*, where "shine" is really superfluous, since only rain is typically a hindrance. The rhetorical effect of Odysseus's command is a polite refusal to be spoken good or ill of in front of the Argives, since there is no need, as they already know all the virtues and (nonexistent) faults of Odysseus, as he explains in the next line. The lack of prejacent in these cases is thus only apparent, and they may in some sense be understood as anaphoric to what has just happened or is happening. In any case, they are plainly not cataphoric, unlike the preemptive use of the ASC (see Section 4.4). Moreover, the use of adverbs meaning 'at all' and 'so much, too much' is well paralleled in clear prohibitives (as in (15) below, (27c) and (27e) in Section 4.4).

31   μή τις ἔτι ... ἤπιος ἔστω[PRS.IPV.] ... ἀλλ' αἰεὶ χαλεπός τ' εἴη[PRS.OPT.] '**Let no** (king) ever again
      be[PRS.IPV.] amenable ... but may he always be[PRS.OPT.] obstinate' (*Od.* 2.230–232 = 5.8–10).

behavior, or else that of subordinates over whom they have authority (see, e.g., (31c) in Section 4.4.2).[32] The prejacent of the command is assumed to be in the common ground between speaker and addressee before the directive is uttered, and the directive is often accompanied by anaphoric pronouns or adverbs that refer to the prejacent deictically, as in (13) above. The inhibitive, corrective, and avertive interpretations differ from the instructive interpretation in that the prejacent is not future or hypothetical but present or recently past. All four interpretations of the PIC can be schematized as in (16).

(16) PIC type (PROHIBITIVE): Given the circumstances in which we find (or might find) ourselves, the performance of X action is not to be undertaken (any longer / again / yet / at all).

For a unified definition of the prohibitive type, see (30) at the end of Section 4.4.1.

Notice that while the prejacent of a prohibitive directive can be past, present, or future, the event described by the predicate may only be present or future, since a directive cannot be carried out in the past. In the case of the avertive, for instance, the prejacent is present, though the commanded action lies in the future. This is because the speaker takes evidence of the addressee's intentions from the current situation, then seeks to avert their intentions being carried out, as in (14) above. Likewise for the corrective, the speaker takes the addressee's recently past action as a basis to forbid them repeating that same action in the future (or simply reprimand them for it), as in (13) above.

The different interpretations (subtypes) of prohibitive directives can thus be classified according to a kind of feature system that specifies the temporal location (with respect to time of utterance) of two parameters: (i) the prejacent and (ii) the event described by the verb/predicate in the directive. For instance, if the prejacent is past and the event is future, the interpretation is corrective: *Don't do again (in the future) that thing you just did (in the past)*. In this case, the circumstances that prompt the negative directive to be uttered lie in the recent past (the action just taken by the addressee), while the prohibited event itself lies in the future (it is not currently ongoing but is forbidden from happening again). In the case of the inhibitive interpretation, the prejacent is present (the utterance of the directive is prompted by an ongoing action) and the prohibited event is also present (that same ongoing action): *Stop doing what you're*

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32 Telemachus may thus be seen to assert his authority over the suitors in using the PIC to say τῶ μή τίς μοι ἀεικείας ἐνὶ οἴκῳ / φαινέτω[PRS.IPV.] 'Therefore, **let no one exhibit**[PRS.IPV.] disgraceful conduct in my house' (*Od.* 20.308–309).

TABLE 7   Temporality of prejacent and event in prohibitive directives

Prejacent feature	Event feature	Interpretation (usage label)	Example
past	future	corrective	*Don't do what you just did again.*
present	present	inhibitive	*Stop doing what you're currently doing.*
present	future	avertive	*Don't do what you're currently intending to do.*
future	future	instructive	*Don't do what will become doable under some (already specified) future circumstance.*

currently doing or *You shouldn't be doing that.* Table 7 summarizes these features for all prohibitive subtypes attested by the PIC.

The system of usage labels adopted here is my own, building on that of Ammann (1927: 328) but with the addition of the categories *instructive* and *avertive*.[33] The latter is essential to distinguish from the "preventive" category, as will be explained below (Section 4.4), and provides a more coherent means of grouping the functions of the PIC in opposition to those of the ASC than Ammann's (1927) system allowed. In all, my treatment of the PIC improves on Ammann's (1927: 333) account, which must class at least three instances of the PIC in the second-person as "preventive" (see Section 4.4), contrary to his expectations: namely (11) above, *Il.* 10.69 (μηδὲ μεγαλίζεο 'don't be over-proud'), and *Il.* 10.249 (μήτέ τι νείκει 'nor fault me'). I class these as instructive (for discussion see n. 30 above).

4.3.2   Failure of the PNC to block the PIC in instructive contexts

While the instructive reading typically falls to the PNC, there is nothing in the semantics of the PIC that excludes its use in the same function, since (in my view) the PIC is simply the general prohibitive construction and so compatible with any kind of prohibitive meaning.[34] Rather, the PNC, specialized for instructive meaning, regularly *blocks* the application of PIC in instructive contexts. That is, the PNC applies wherever it *can* apply, namely when the intended meaning is instructive. But what are we to make of the twelve cases where the PNC fails to block the PIC in the second person?

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33   Ammann (1927) classes these cases as corrective/inhibitive or "preventive".
34   By way of comparison, recall that the English construction (*Don't do* X) can apply in inhibitive contexts, but the inhibitive construction (*Stop doing* X) cannot apply in non-inhibitive contexts (Section 1.1).

Assuming that the PIC is semantically compatible with instructive meaning, we should expect it to be available for use as a last-resort metrical substitute for the PNC, wherever the infinitive could not fit in the metrical position in which the verb occurs. This prediction is borne out: Of the twelve cases of instructive PICs, all but two can be explained as being motivated by the meter, or as matching a coordinated form motivated by the meter.

Before examining the details, a word on the concept and analytical utility of metrical motivation is in order. While appeal to meter can be abused as an explanation for atypical usage,[35] the fact is that poetic texts can and do make use of particular forms and constructions not ordinarily found in prose. One well-known phonological device in Homer is "metrical lengthening/shortening". But we also observe metrical motivation at the morphosyntactic level, as when a plural verb is used with a neuter plural subject just in case the meter requires it (e.g., *Il.* 7.6, 14.332), or when the imperfect is used in place of an aorist for metrical convenience (see Hollenbaugh 2021: 141–142). In such cases, what is called poetic license is merely the artistic deployment of alternatives permitted by the ordinary grammar of the language. As such, poetic license is not a free-for-all. Though a poetic construction may lie on the edge of what is grammatically possible, there are clear and definable limits to what a poet can and can't do in the name of poetic license while still being understood by their audience and producing grammatical sentences. To take some extreme examples, we would never expect a poet to use, say, a finite verb in place of an adjective where it better suits the meter, nor could a pluperfect stand in place of the future indicative without altering the meaning. A "licensed" poet must still abide by the ordinary rules of grammar: The rules may be bent, but not broken.[36]

Explaining *some* phenomena as being metrically motivated does not imply that anything and everything can be understood as metrically motivated, nor does it mean that the poet could not have rearranged the line if they had ardently wished to use a particular form. Metrically motivated usage generally doesn't amount to grammatical alterations that the poet *had* to make because there was no other way of constructing a metrical line. It shows us, rather, what

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35 For a striking recent example see Ringe 2024: 27, n. 18.

36 For a more contemporary example in English, in the 1966 song *April Come She Will* Paul Simon is able to employ ordinary movement rules of English to poetic effect (for the sake of rhyme). When the rhyme doesn't require movement, unmarked constituent order is used: "May, she will stay", "July, she will fly" but "August, die she must". Yet no amount of poetic license could permit him to sing **April, she come will* or **August, she die must*, because such sentences would violate the grammar of English.

alternative structures were *available* to the poet working within the meter. It is *metri gratia* rather than *metri causa*.

Crucially, in the places where the grammar allows a degree of flexibility to the poet, we find asymmetries in what can be substituted for what. For instance, in Homer there is no metrical constraint that can "license" a singular verb with an animate plural subject, nor a plural verb with a singular subject. Likewise, we find the imperfect used in place of the aorist but never the reverse. Asymmetries of this kind tell us not only about poetic grammar but about the limits of ordinary grammar. The fact that the aorist can't have imperfective meaning but the imperfect can have "aoristic" meaning tells us something important about the *semantic* limits of both categories (*pace* Ringe 2024: 27, n. 18).

So too in the case of the PIC and PNC: Analyzing the PNC as being specialized for a subset of the interpretations available to the PIC makes concrete predictions about the kinds of poetic license we expect to see: The first prediction is that the PIC (the default construction) is available to the poet for use "in place of" the PNC to suit the meter. The second prediction is that the reverse is not possible. A poet wishing to express, say, an avertive or inhibitive directive cannot do so with the PNC,[37] however well suited it might be to the meter. Here we see the limits of poetic license as determined by the ordinary grammar of the language.

To be clear, the asymmetry whereby the PIC can have an instructive interpretation but the PNC cannot be avertive, corrective, or inhibitive is predicted *only* if the PIC is the unmarked, default construction. This fact would be completely mysterious otherwise. In this way, the use of the PIC *metri gratia* in instructive contexts demonstrates its status as unmarked relative to the other negative directive constructions in the language.

I now turn to the specific instances of the PIC in place of the PNC (i.e., in instructive directives). Metrical motivation can be seen in (11) above, in which the PIC provides a short syllable where the PNC would require a long one. The present infinitive ἀποπαύειν 'stop' would not fit the meter, so the present imperative ἀπόπαυε is used instead (cf. μὴ … παύειν 'don't let up' at *Il.* 21.294). In *Od.* 22.251, the imperative ἐφίετε 'throw at' is used where the infinitive ἐφιέμεν would result in a heavy syllable (preceding a consonant). The same is true of μεθίετε 'let go' at *Il.* 4.234: The infinitive μεθιέμεν would not work, as the following word begins with a consonant (cf. n. 30 in Section 4.3.1 above). Similarly, in *Il.* 10.69, the present middle imperative μεγαλίζεο 'be over-proud' is used in place of the

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37   The phrase μὴ μίμνειν 'not to wait' at *Il.* 18.255 is not a PNC but a complementary infinitive after κέλομαι 'I urge' in the preceding line. Neither Allan (2010) nor Neuberger-Donath (1980: 79–81) count this example as imperatival.

metrically inconvenient infinitive μεγαλίζεσθαι (unattested in Homeric). At *WD* 604, the present middle φείδεο 'use sparingly' is used in place of the infinitive φείδεσθαι, coordinated with a positive instruction in the infinitive (κομεῖν 'take care of').[38] Tellingly, we do in fact find the infinitive φείδεσθαι used in a positive instruction at *WD* 369 where it is metrically suitable.

In some instances, an instructive imperative appears to be motivated by its coordination with another imperative. So, while προτιόσσεο 'look at' in *Od.* 7.31 and 23.365 (instead of the infinitive προτιόσσεσθαι) can be explained by metrical constraints, the conjoined imperative ἐρέεινε 'interrogate' simply follows suit, despite being at line end, where the weight of the final syllable is metrically irrelevant, so the infinitive could in principle have been used. The idea here is that once the use of the imperative is established, the unmarked form (PIC) continues to be used in subsequent directives that are closely coordinated.[39] The same explanation applies to the line-final imperative ἐπίκευθε 'conceal' at *Od.* 18.171, following the middle imperative φάο 'speak' (in a positive command), itself used in place of the metrically unsuitable infinitive φάσθαι (though this form is used in positive directives elsewhere).

Slightly different is νείκει 'insult' at *Il.* 10.249 (on which see n. 30 in Section 4.3.1). This is coordinated with a corrective, rather than instructive, use of the PIC. It seems that close coordination of the PIC and PNC is avoided even when only the second of the directives is instructive. Since the corrective command (αἴνεε 'praise') comes first in the line, it sets the precedent of using the imperative, which is followed in the instructive directive (νείκει 'insult') at line end. This explanation is not fundamentally different from those given in the preceding paragraph, except that the motivation for the first directive to be in the imperative is functional rather than metrical. Similarly, τάρβει 'be afraid' at *Od.* 7.51 (see (27c) in Section 4.4), although metrically equivalent to the infinitive (unattested in Homeric), follows the mood of the coordinated positive imperative κίε in the preceding line.

We may note here in passing that in the single instructive use of the *aorist* imperative construction (see (33) in Section 4.5) the meter would not allow the aorist infinitive λιπεῖν 'leave' to be used in the position that λίπετ' occupies. Nor, for that matter, could the present imperative λείπετ' or infinitive λείπειν be substituted.

Different is the case of the third-person directives. When the meaning is instructive, for some reason the PNC is regularly avoided if the subject would

be third person. Instead, the third person of the PIC is strongly preferred (12×
in Homeric).[40] Only three cases of the infinitive with a third-person subject are
attested in Homeric, and two of them are aorist (cf. n. 28 in Section 4.2).[41] All
three have instructive meaning, as expected. But it is surprising that we find
so many more instances of the PIC in this function in the third person, given
that in the second person the PNC is predominant for instructive directives.
Further, unlike the second-person cases, the third persons do not in general
admit of metrical explanations (only about half could be so explained). All I
can say is that the PNC is generally avoided here, though where it does occur
its meaning is what we would expect it to be. One very probable reason for this
avoidance, however, is that the imperatives in -τω originally required their pre-
jacents to lie in the future (cf. Wackernagel 1926–1928 [2009]: 278–282), which
is precisely the definition of what I call instructive (see Table 7 above).

One thing that emerges clearly from the use of the PIC in these cases is
that the PIC is not *semantically* incompatible with instructive interpretation,
nor even *less compatible* with it than the PNC is. This fact lends support to
the blocking analysis that I proposed above (Section 4.3.1): The PNC is used
wherever it can apply in the second person, with a handful of principled excep-
tions; it is regularly avoided in the third person. Wherever the PNC cannot
apply—whether by metrical substitution (second person) or by regular avoid-
ance (third person)—the PIC, as the unmarked construction, is available for
use instead.

4.4 *Aorist subjunctive construction* (*ASC*)

The ASC stands apart from the PNC and PIC, both in form (built to the aorist
stem) and in function: In Ammann's (1927: 328, 334–335) terms it has "preven-
tive" meaning.[42] As the subjunctive constructions are the only ones to occur
in all three persons, and as the present subjunctive is regularly used only in
the first person (and never in the second), I treat the second person of the
ASC separately from the other two persons, beginning with the second person

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40   For an example, see (31c) in Section 4.4.2 below.
41   The aorist infinitives are δῦναι 'sink, set' and ἐλθεῖν 'go' at *Il*. 2.413, with ἠέλιον 'the sun' as
      subject. The present infinitive is φαιδρύνεσθαι 'wash clean', with ἀνέρα 'a man' as subject
      (*WD* 753–754).
42   Ammann (1927: 328), however, does not distinguish the preventive type from my "avertive"
      type discussed in Section 4.3. Most of what I class as avertive he classifies as inhibitive or
      corrective, some as preventive. As discussed above, the additional nuances of my taxon-
      omy allow me to make more consistent generalizations about the data and leave fewer
      exceptions to those generalizations, such that, for instance, the PIC is never preventive
      and the ASC is never avertive, inhibitive, or corrective (outside the first person).

(Section 4.4.1) and then taking up the third and first persons (Section 4.4.2). I conclude this section (Section 4.4.3) by considering the relationship between the ASC and the other two constructions discussed so far, the PIC and the PNC.

4.4.1   Second-person ASC

Recent scholarly literature holds that preventive sentences order the "non-performance of uncontrollable actions" (Birjulin & Xrakovskij 2001: 34). The more general "prohibitive" type is said to order the "non-performance of controllable actions" (represented in Greek by the PIC). But I have found that this view of preventives is not sufficient to account for the full range of meanings expressed by the ASC in Homeric.

I have therefore found it necessary to distinguish two subtypes of preventive sentence. The first is the type that orders the "non-performance of uncontrollable actions", which I term *interventive*, since the addressee is expected to intervene by means of some intermediate action (or inaction) so as to avoid the undesirable outcome that the speaker aims to have prevented.[43]

While the interventive use resembles the avertive and instructive types in being future oriented, there are key differences. In an avertive or instructive (prohibitive) negative directive, the addressee is expected not to perform some action. In an interventive (preventive) negative directive, the addressee is expected not to let a dreaded outcome come to pass by means of some action(s) that the speaker has not commanded but leaves implicit. This distinction has been shown by example in (1) in Section 1.2, which I repeat in abbreviated form in (17).

(17) DIFFERENCE BETWEEN THE AVERTIVE (PROHIBITIVE) AND INTERVEN-
TIVE (PREVENTIVE)
a. Avertive: *No, don't wake the baby* (*yet*). (to one who has offered to wake the baby)
b. Interventive: *Shh! Don't wake the baby!* (to one who is being too noisy)

A Homeric example is given in (18), to be contrasted with the avertive PIC in (18b), built to the same verb, ἐάω 'let, allow'.

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43   Similarly Ammann (1927: 334): 'The speaker fears *that it could get to the point where* [such-and-such happens] and asks the addressee not to let it get to that point' ("der Sprechende

(18) a. INTERVENTIVE ASC (ἐάω 'let, allow')
Πριαμίδη, μὴ δή με ἕλωρ Δαναοῖσιν ἐάσῃς[AOR.SJV.]
κεῖσθαι, ἀλλ᾽ ἐπάμυνον (*Il.* 5.684–685).
'Son of Priam, **do not let**[AOR.SJV.] me become prey for the Danaans,
but defend me!' (Sarpedon to Hector)
[i.e., Don't let them kill me!]
  b. AVERTIVE PIC (ἐάω 'let, allow')
λίσσομ᾽ ὑπὲρ ψυχῆς καὶ γούνων σῶν τε τοκήων
μή με ἔα[PRS.IPV.] παρὰ νηυσὶ κύνας καταδάψαι Ἀχαιῶν (*Il.* 22.338–339).
'I entreat you, by your life, by your knees, by your parents,
do not let[PRS.IPV.] the dogs feed on me by the ships of the Achaeans'.
(Hector to Achilles)

What is crucial is not only control but *directness of control* over the action commanded. In (18), Sarpedon asks (his ally) Hector to intervene in order to prevent others from killing him. By contrast, in (18b), Hector begs (his enemy) Achilles not to let the dogs feed on his corpse after killing him. The former involves indirect action on Hector's part (intervention); the latter involves direct action on Achilles's part (allowing his dogs to do something). Hector has no direct control over whether or not Sarpedon becomes prey for the Danaans, but Achilles does have direct control over whether or not Hector becomes prey for the dogs. Achilles can obey Hector's directive by simply not letting the dogs feed on him, whereas Sarpedon's directive requires Hector to do some other action or series of actions than the one commanded in order to interfere and avoid the dreaded outcome.

The interventive use is defined in (19).

(19) INTERVENTIVE: The addressee is expected to carry out some action(s) not explicitly stated in order to avoid the dreaded outcome expressed in the speaker's directive. What these intervening actions might be is left implicit (often up to the addressee to decide).

I provide a further set of examples in (20), illustrating the difference between the interventive ASC and the corrective and inhibitive readings of the PIC. In this case, the examples all involve verbs meaning 'rouse (to anger), agitate, upset; provoke, antagonize'.

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fürchtet, *es könnte dahin kommen, daß* …, und bittet den Partner, es nicht dahin kommen zu lassen").

(20) INTERVENTIVE ASC (a.); CORRECTIVE PIC (b.); INHIBITIVE PIC (c.):
 'anger'

  a. INTERVENTIVE ASC (ὀρίνω 'stir, agitate, trouble')
    τὼ νῦν **μή** μοι <u>μᾶλλον</u> ἐν ἄλγεσι θυμὸν **ὀρίνης**[AOR.SJV.],
    μή σε, γέρον, οὐδ' αὐτὸν ἐνὶ κλισίῃσιν ἐάσω
    καὶ ἱκέτην περ ἐόντα, Διὸς δ' ἀλίτωμαι ἐφετμάς (*Il.* 24.568–570).[44]
    'Therefore, from now on **do not stir**[AOR.SJV.] my spirit <u>further</u> in its sor-
    rows! lest, sir, I not leave you alone in my shelter,
    suppliant though you are, and transgress Zeus's commands'.
    [Priam is commanded to take responsibility for Achilles's mental state,
    over which Priam has no direct control. Effectively = *Don't undertake
    any actions* (*whatever those might be*) *that would lead to the outcome of
    me being upset more than I already am* (μᾶλλον 'further').][45]

  b. CORRECTIVE PIC (ὄρνυμι 'stir up, rouse, raise'; ὀρίνω 'stir, agitate, trou-
    ble')
    μῆτερ ἐμή, **μή** μοι γόον **ὄρνυθι**[PRS.IPV.] **μηδέ** μοι ἦτορ
    ἐν στήθεσσιν **ὄρινε**[PRS.IPV.] φυγόντι περ αἰπὺν ὄλεθρον (*Od.* 17.46–47).
    'My mother, **don't raise**[PRS.IPV.] lamentation in me **nor trouble**[PRS.IPV.]
    the heart in my chest, since I've escaped sheer destruction'.
    [In contrast to (20a) where Priam is warned not to stir Achilles's anger
    further (something that has not been done yet), here Penelope is told
    not to do something that she has just done.]

  c. INHIBITIVE PIC (ἐρεθίζω 'provoke, antagonize')
    μηκέτι νῦν μ' **ἐρέθιζε**[PRS.IPV.], γέρον· νοέω δὲ καὶ αὐτὸς
    Ἕκτορά τοι λῦσαι (*Il.* 24.560–561).
    '**Stop antagonizing/pestering**[PRS.IPV.] me now, sir. Of my own accord I
    already intend to release Hector to you'.
    [Priam is commanded to stop being annoying or antagonistic, which
    unlike (20a) refers to an action he directly controls. (20c) immedi-
    ately follows Priam's insistence that Hector's body be released to him at

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44 A reviewer points out that ὀρίνης could theoretically also be a present form. That is of
    course true, but it would have to be a present *subjunctive* of the second person, which we
    find zero examples of elsewhere in our corpus. So assuming that the form is aorist here is
    far more economical.

45 Compare the famous line from *The Incredible Hulk* TV series (1977–1982): "Don't make me
    angry. You wouldn't like me when I'm angry". This sentiment is similar to *Don't wake the
    baby* in (17b).

once, and the directive serves to inhibit his words. (20a) comes later in
the same utterance, warning Priam to avoid an undesirable outcome.
The preventive directive of (20a), it is understood, is to be accom-
plished by means of the prohibitive directive in (20c).]

A similar contrast in the interpretation of (20a) and (20c) is made by Will-
mott (2007: 101). Part of the difference depends on the lexical distinction of the
verbs in the two sentences: ἐρεθίζω means 'provoke, antagonize' and is a verb
of direct action, always with an animate and volitional subject, as at *Il.* 4.5–6:
ἐπειρᾶτο Κρονίδης ἐρεθιζέμεν Ἥρην / κερτομίοις ἐπέεσσι 'The son of Cronus was
trying to provoke Hera with offensive words'. On the other hand, ὀρίνω means
'stir, agitate' and may be done on purpose or by accident, as at *Od.* 4.366, where
it is not persuasive words that "move" Eidothea's heart (θυμὸν ὄρινα) but her
pity for Odysseus's plight; or again at *Od.* 21.86–87, where the swineherd and
the cowherd are accused of "stirring up" Penelope's heart not deliberately or
directly but as a result of their failure to restrain their own tears at the sight
of their master's bow (lines 80–83). Unlike ἐρεθίζω, ὀρίνω sometimes has an
inanimate or non-volitional subject (e.g., *Il.* 9.4 and 11.298, where the subject is
wind). Accordingly, ὀρίνω is compatible with interventive use (as expressed by
the ASC in (20a)), which by its nature refers to indirect action (i.e., 'be sure not
to do things that would lead to me getting any more upset than I already am'),
whereas ἐρεθίζω can only refer to the direct actions themselves—the ones that
will bring about Achilles's wrath warned against in (20a) if left unchecked—
namely 'pestering' (expressed by the PIC in (20c)).

The indirectness of action inherent in the ASC can give the predicate a non-
literal sense, as in (21).[46] Priam, speaking to Hector, is saying that if Hector stays
to fight Achilles outside the walls he will surely be killed and so 'hand over
great glory' to Achilles. But the "handing over" is of course not direct or literal:
It will be accomplished by intermediate actions, namely Hector's defeat and
death.[47]

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46   This example, while illustrative of my point here, is in fact not treated as a secure instance
     of the ASC in my data, since (after ὄφρα 'so that') it could be interpreted as a negative
     purpose clause.

47   Cf. similarly *Il.* 9.522: τῶν μὴ σύ γε μῦθον ἐλέγξῃς[AOR,SJV.] '**Do not make vain**[AOR,SJV.] their
     speech'. This is not something Achilles does directly, nor necessarily wishes to do, but
     is a logical consequence of his stubbornness against their message. Willmott (2007: 102)
     explains this example as merely a "strengthened" prohibition, which in my view is unwar-
     ranted and does not adequately account for the ASC.

(21) Nᴏɴ-ʟɪᴛᴇʀᴀʟ sᴇɴsᴇ ᴏꜰ ᴘʀᴇᴅɪᴄᴀᴛᴇ ɪɴ ASC, Iɴᴛᴇʀᴠᴇɴᴛɪᴠᴇ (ɪɴsᴇ-ᴄᴜʀᴇ ᴅᴀᴛᴀ)

ἀλλ᾽ εἰσέρχεο τεῖχος ἐμὸν τέκος, ὄφρα σαώσῃς
Τρῶας καὶ Τρῳάς, μηδὲ μέγα κῦδος ὀρέξῃς[AOR.SJV.]
Πηλεΐδῃ, αὐτὸς δὲ φίλης αἰῶνος ἀμερθῇς[AOR.SJV.] (*Il.* 22.56–58).
'Come then inside the wall, my child, so that you can rescue
the men and women of Troy, and **don't hand over**[AOR.SJV.] great glory
to Peleus's son, and yourself **be robbed**[AOR.SJV.] of your precious life'.

The ASC is also compatible with passivization, whereas the PIC and PNC are not.[48] This makes sense given that the ASC involves indirectness of action (i.e., the addressee does not have direct agency over the action commanded), whereas the PIC and PNC typically require direct action on the part of the addressee (i.e., the addressee is to be the agent of the action commanded). Further, verbs with inherently non-agentive meaning, such as γίγνομαι 'become' are never found in PICs, only ASCs (3×, though none are secure), as in (22b) below and (31a) in Section 4.4.2.[49] A passive ASC (not secure) has just been seen in (21) above: ἀμερθῇς 'be robbed'. Two examples of mediopassive ASCs with passive or non-agentive meaning are given in (22), though neither are considered secure data. For a secure example of the passive ASC, see (26a) below.[50]

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48 Of the imperative negative directives in our corpus, 63 are mediopassive in form, none of which have passive meaning. 149 are active (i.e., in form and meaning). Of the infinitive negative directives, 11 are mediopassive, 1 of which has passive meaning (καλέεσθαι 'be called, known as', *WD* 715). 31 are active. By contrast, the *subjunctive* negative directives (including insecure data) have passive or non-agentive meaning in 9 out of 22 mediopassive forms. There are also 3 aorist passives (in form and meaning) and 44 actives. Subjunctive negative directives are thus passive or non-agentive in meaning no less than 18 percent of the time (12/69). In fact, the number is a bit higher, as even the active forms used in subjunctive negative directives can have non-agentive meaning, as in (31b) in Section 4.4.2.

49 And 4× in the aorist optative. There are, in fact, no present modal or infinitive forms of γίγνομαι attested in Homeric.

50 The present subjunctive in third- and first-person negative directives is likewise frequently passive or non-agentive in meaning. See examples in (32) in Section 4.4.2.

(22) INTERVENTIVE ASC (INSECURE DATA)

    a. PASSIVE ASC[51]

      ἵππους δ' Ἀτρεΐδαο κιχάνετε, μηδὲ λίπησθον[AOR.SJV.],[52]

      καρπαλίμως, μὴ σφῶϊν ἐλεγχείην καταχεύῃ

      Αἴθη θῆλυς ἐοῦσα· τίη λείπεσθε φέριστοι; (*Il.* 23.407–409).[53]

      'But catch the horses of the son of Atreus, **and do not be left
      behind**[AOR.SJV.].

      Quickly! lest Aithe who is female shower you

      in mockery. Are you being left behind, my brave horses?'

    b. NON-AGENTIVE ASC[54]

      μή πως ὡς ἀψῖσι λίνου ἁλόντε πανάγρου

      ἀνδράσι δυσμενέεσσιν ἕλωρ καὶ κύρμα γένησθε[AOR.SJV.] (*Il.* 5.487–488).

      '**Don't**, caught as in the sweeping toils of the spun net,

      be made[AOR.SJV.] war-spoil and plunder by the men who hate you'.

The second type of preventive sentence also involves indirectness of the commanded action, but in a fundamentally different way. I call this type *preemptive*, referring to those preventive sentences in which no prejacent of the directive has been introduced into the common ground at the time when the directive

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51   This example is considered insecure because it is possible that μηδὲ λίπησθον is a dependent clause of fearing and καρπαλίμως 'quickly' is to be construed with κιχάνετε 'catch': 'and, lest you be left behind, (catch them) quickly' (NB the position of καρπαλίμως).

52   Despite being in the middle voice, rather than the passive, the form λίπησθον appears here to have a passive meaning 'be left behind', its most common sense in Homer (cf., e.g., *Od.* 8.125, *Il.* 11.693; the actual aorist passive of this verb occurs only once in Homeric, at HH 4.195). Alternatively, it could be taken as a third person, with the opposing horses as subject, in the sense 'don't let them leave you behind', which would be equally interventive in meaning. But such a meaning of the aorist middle is not securely paralleled in Homeric: Only the infinitive λιπέσθαι (4×) is plausibly transitive, in the sense 'to leave behind as a protector', but in all four cases the accusative is probably better taken as the subject of the infinitive, rather than its object, in the sense 'to be left behind as protector' (especially at *Od.* 3.196), thus conforming to all the other occurrences of the mediopassive of this verb in Homeric, which are intransitive. And at any rate the unambiguously second-person form λείπεσθε two lines later supports a second-person reading of λίπησθον.

53   The occurrence of λείπεσθε 'you are falling back' in line 409 may be seen as a kind of "poetic repair" (to borrow Jamison's (2006) term) of the somewhat unusual construction with λίπησθον in 407, so that the passage is haunted by a ghost of the PIC μηδὲ λείπεσθε 'don't fall back'.

54   This example is considered insecure because it could be interpreted as an independent clause of fearing (cf. Section 4.1).

is uttered (cf. (3) in Section 2). As a result, the addressee cannot readily evaluate how they are to carry out the directive or not until further information is supplied by the speaker. The preemptive use is thus cataphoric, telling the addressee, for example, not to react in a certain way to information that is about to be disclosed. An example is given in (23).

(23) PREEMPTIVE ASC
κλῦθι, Ποσείδαον γαιήοχε, **μηδὲ μεγήρῃς**[AOR.SJV.]
ἡμῖν εὐχομένοισι τελευτῆσαι <u>τάδε</u> ἔργα (*Od.* 3.55–56).
'Listen, Earthshaker Poseidon, and **don't begrudge**[AOR.SJV.]
those of us who pray for the fulfillment of <u>these [= the following]</u> deeds'.

The cataphoric nature of preemptive sentences distinguishes them from the prohibitive uses of the PIC and PNC treated above: In preemptive sentences the prejacent always follows the directive, whereas in the prohibitive types the prejacent typically precedes the directive (or is implicitly understood in the common ground before the directive is uttered).[55] The preemptive meaning is defined and typified in (24).

(24) PREEMPTIVE: The speaker anticipates and seeks to prevent an expected attitude or action of the addressee that will proceed from information not yet disclosed, for which nothing in the immediate discourse context (common ground) at the time of utterance has supplied a prejacent.
   – Type: *Don't get upset at what I'm about to tell you.*

As with the interventive type, in the preemptive type the addressee's lack of direct agency over the commanded event arises from the situation that holds at the time of the utterance (the discourse context). In the case of the interventive, the situation is such that the addressee cannot (or at any rate is not expected to) directly carry out the action commanded. In the case of the preemptive, the addressee lacks any basis for carrying out the directive at all until further information is provided, because the prejacent has not yet been introduced into the common ground.

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55   This precedence of the prejacent need not always be strictly linear. In *Il.* 24.592, the prejacent is in a subordinate clause that follows the instructive directive μή … σκυδμαινέμεν 'don't be angry'. Nonetheless, the directive is not cataphoric, and Achilles is not *informing* Patroclus of anything. His directive is contingent on a hypothetical prejacent (cf. n. 22 in Section 4.2).

We may contrast the preemptive use with the other prohibitive types discussed above, as shown in the following sets of examples, (25)–(28). Examples are grouped by similarity of lexical semantics of the verbs used in their negative directives. A general gloss of these semantics is given at the head of each group, with the specific Greek words glossed in the heading for each quotation, so that the common semantic core may be readily recognized and subtle differences of lexical meaning noticed.

The most important thing to observe here is that in the preemptive examples the prejacent always follows the directive (cataphoric), whereas in the other types the prejacent precedes (anaphoric). To make this easier to see, I have underlined the prejacents (or "postjacents") wherever possible. One and the same lexical item can be represented as either preventive or prohibitive, since this distinction does not depend on lexical semantics alone.

(25) PREEMPTIVE ASC (a.) VS. AVERTIVE PIC (b.): 'hide'
    a. PREEMPTIVE ASC (ἐπικεύθω 'cover up, withhold, conceal')
       λίσσομ᾽ ὑπὲρ θυέων καὶ δαίμονος, αὐτὰρ ἔπειτα
       σῆς τ᾽ αὐτοῦ κεφαλῆς καὶ ἑταίρων, οἵ τοι ἕπονται,
       εἰπέ μοι εἰρομένῳ νημερτέα μηδ᾽ ἐπικεύσῃς[AOR.SJV.]·
       τίς πόθεν εἶς ἀνδρῶν; πόθι τοι πόλις ἠδὲ τοκῆες; (*Od.* 15.261–264).
       'I entreat you, by your offerings and the divinity, then after that
       by your own life and that of your companions who follow you,
       tell me what I ask infallibly, and **don't conceal**[AOR.SJV.] it [*conceal what?*
       namely]:
       What man and from where are you? Where are your city and parents?'

    b. AVERTIVE PIC (κεύθω 'cover, hide')
       τέκνον τί κλαίεις; τί δέ σε φρένας ἵκετο πένθος;
       ἐξαύδα, μὴ κεῦθε[PRS.IPV.] νόῳ, ἵνα εἴδομεν ἄμφω (*Il.* 1.362–363).
       'Why then, child, do you lament? What sorrow has reached your heart?
       Tell me, **do not hide**[PRS.IPV.] it in your mind, so that we both may know.'

(26) PREEMPTIVE ASC (a.–b.) VS. AVERTIVE OR CORRECTIVE PIC (c.): 'be/get
    angry (at)'
    a. PREEMPTIVE ASC (χολόω 'anger, enrage')
       Ἀτρεΐδη σοὶ πρῶτα μαχήσομαι ἀφραδέοντι,
       ἣ θέμις ἐστὶν ἄναξ ἀγορῇ· σὺ δὲ μή τι χολωθῇς[AOR.SJV.] (*Il.* 9.32–33).
       'Son of Atreus: I will be first to fight with your folly,
       as is my right, lord, in this assembly; but **do not be angered**[AOR.SJV.] [by
       what I'll say]'.

b. PREEMPTIVE ASC (νεμεσάω 'blame, resent')
μὴ νῦν μοι **νεμεσήσετ**'[AOR.SJV.] Ὀλύμπια δώματ' ἔχοντες
τίσασθαι φόνον υἷος ἰόντ' ἐπὶ νῆας Ἀχαιῶν (*Il.* 15.115–116).
'You who have your homes on Olympus, **do not blame**[AOR.SJV.] me
now
for going among the ships of the Achaeans to avenge my son's slaugh-
ter'. [Ares has not yet done this but is about to.]

c. AVERTIVE OR CORRECTIVE PIC (χώομαι 'be angry (at)'; νεμεσάω
'blame, resent')
αὐτὰρ μὴ νῦν μοι τόδε **χώεο**[PRS.IPV.] **μηδὲ νεμέσσα**[PRS.IPV.] (*Od.* 23.213).
'But **don't be angry**[PRS.IPV.] at me **nor resent**[PRS.IPV.] me now for this'.
[τόδε 'this' refers to what Penelope has just been doing.]

(27) PREEMPTIVE ASC (a.); AVERTIVE PIC (b.); INSTRUCTIVE PIC (c.);
INHIBITIVE PIC (d.); CORRECTIVE PIC (e.): 'fear'

a. PREEMPTIVE ASC (δείδω 'fear')
ἄξετε νῦν Τρῶες ξύλα ἄστυδε, μηδέ τι θυμῷ
δείσητ'[AOR.SJV.] Ἀργείων πυκινὸν λόχον (*Il.* 24.778–779).
'Now, men of Troy, bring timber into the city, **and do not
fear**[AOR.SJV.] at all in your heart a cunning ambush of the Argives'.
[Priam anticipates his people's fear, as he explicitly stated to Achilles
earlier: τηλόθι δ' ὕλη / ἀξέμεν ἐξ ὄρεος, μάλα δὲ Τρῶες **δεδίασιν**[PF.IND.] 'a
long way off is the wood to be gotten from the mountain, and the
Trojans **are** very **afraid**[PF.IND.]' (*Il.* 24.662–663). It was on the basis
of this fear that Priam secured the eleven-day truce from Achilles,
so that the Trojans would not have to be afraid when going out for
wood for Hector's funeral pyre. But the point is not that the Trojans
are to cease the fear they already have (the fear Priam referred to
in line 663), nor that they should not be afraid in general, but only
that they do not need to fear the Argives while going out to fetch
wood, as Priam reasonably supposes that they might. Crucially, nei-
ther the speaker nor the addressees have introduced the source of
fear into the discourse at the time when the directive is uttered. This
information—a cunning ambush of the Argives—*follows* the direc-
tive (similar to (28a) below) and is in turn followed by additional
information that the Trojans are not yet privy to: that Achilles has
promised that no assault should come for eleven days. Contrast (27b)
and (27c).]

b. AVERTIVE PIC (δείδω 'fear')
τῶν δ' ἄλλων μή τιν' Ἀχαιῶν / δείδιθι [PRF.IPV.]. (*Od.* 18.62–63).
'**Don't fear** [PRF.IPV.] any of the other Achaeans' (Telemachus to Odysseus).
[In contrast to (27a), here the cause of fear has already been introduced into the common ground in lines 55–57, where Odysseus asks that no one else harm him on Irus's behalf. Hence the prejacent precedes the directive in this discourse.]

c. INSTRUCTIVE PIC (ταρβέω 'be frightened, terrified')[56]
δήεις δὲ διοτρεφέας βασιλῆας
δαίτην δαινυμένους· σὺ δ' ἔσω κίε, μηδέ τι θυμῷ
τάρβει[PRS.IPV.]· θαρσαλέος γὰρ ἀνὴρ ἐν πᾶσιν ἀμείνων (*Od.* 7.49–51).
'You'll find the Zeus-nurtured king and queen there
dining at dinner. Go in, **and don't** at all **be frightened**[PRS.IPV.]
at heart, for the undaunted man turns out to be better'.
[This differs from (27a) in the order of the directive and its prejacent (cause of fear).]

d. INHIBITIVE PIC (δείδω 'fear')
μήτε σύ γ' Ἄρηα τό γε δείδιθι[PRF.IPV.] μήτε τιν' ἄλλον (*Il.* 5.827).
'**No longer be afraid**[PRF.IPV.] of Ares on this account, **nor** of any other (god)'.
[Athena reassuring Diomedes, who has expressed his dread of Ares in line 824.]

e. CORRECTIVE PIC (δειδίσσομαι 'frighten, alarm')
θάρσει, μηδέ τί πω δειδίσσεο[PRS.IPV.] λαὸν Ἀχαιῶν (*Il.* 4.184).
'Take courage, **and do not** yet **frighten**[PRF.IPV.] the Achaean people'
[i.e., as you have just done].

(28) PREEMPTIVE ASC (a.); AVERTIVE PIC (b.): 'name'
a. PREEMPTIVE ASC (ὀνομαίνω 'name, call by name')
νῦν δ' ἔρχευ πρὸς δῶμα, καὶ ἴσχεο μηδ' ὀνομήνῃς[AOR.SJV.]·
αὐτὰρ ἐγώ τοί εἰμι Ποσειδάων ἐνοσίχθων (*Od.* 11.251–252).
'But go home now, and keep quiet, **and don't disclose my name**[AOR.SJV.],
but I am really the Earth-shaker Poseidon!'

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56   Cf. Section 4.3.2.

    b. Avertive PIC (ὀνομαίνω 'name, call by name')
       εἴρηταί τοι πάντα· σὺ δὲ φρεσὶ σῇσι νοήσας
       ἴσχεο μηδ' ὀνόμαινε[PRS.IPV.], θεῶν δ' ἐποπίζεο μῆνιν (HH 5.289–290).
       'Everything has (now) been told to you; but, having considered it in
       your heart,
       keep quiet and **don't mention my name**[PRS.IPV.], but fear the wrath of
       the gods'.

This last pair, in (28), is especially illuminating. In (28a), Poseidon reveals his identity only *after* giving the command for his name not to be disclosed (cataphoric), and so uses the ASC. By contrast, in an otherwise very similar context in (28b), Aphrodite uses the PIC built to the same verb. The only difference is that in this case, as she says explicitly, her identity has already been revealed before the command is given (anaphoric), so the PIC is selected instead.

    Willmott (2007: 90–112), who does not consider the Homeric Hymns, naturally has no account of (28b) in contrast to (28a). Of (28a) she says (p. 102): "By taking the subjunctive as preventive here, the power of the injunction is increased, since it would imply that naming the god or questioning the story would be harmful in some way". But if this were correct, then the same should apply to (28b), and the PIC would then be unexplained and unexpected. My notion of the preemptive subtype of preventive directives predicts precisely the distribution we find in (28) and so accounts for this subtle distinction without appealing to vague notions like "emphasis" or "forcefulness", as Willmott (2007: 97–98, 102) does.

    A unified definition of preventive meaning is given in (29), accounting for both subtypes.

(29) Preventive: The speaker lays in the charge of the addressee the avoidance of some undesirable outcome, over which the addressee does not have direct control given the prejacent at the time of utterance.

This may be contrasted with a unified definition of prohibitive meaning—accounting for the instructive, inhibitive, corrective, and avertive subtypes—given in (30).

(30) Prohibitive: The speaker lays in the charge of the addressee the (non)performance of some action, which is specified by the verb/predicate used in the directive, over which the addressee has (or will have) direct control given the prejacent at the time of utterance.

4.4.2   Third- and first-person ASC

The third-person of the ASC functions essentially as in the second person and stands in the same relation to the third-person imperative as the second-person ASC to the second-person imperative. It is consistently interventive, as shown in (31), contrasted with the instructive and avertive uses of the PIC.[57] Note that in the PIC examples ((31c)–(31d)) the addressee has direct control over the event, either by their own action or by being in a position of authority over the subject of the directive, allowing them to enforce its fulfillment. The difference between the ASC and the PIC in these examples is thus, essentially, the difference between *Don't let anyone find out* and *Don't tell anyone* (or *Don't let your companions do so*)—a difference of directness of control or agency.

(31) INTERVENTIVE ASC (a.–b.); INSTRUCTIVE PIC (c.); AVERTIVE PIC (d.):
      'disclose; find out'
   a. INTERVENTIVE ASC (INSECURE) (γίγνομαι 'become')
       μὴ πρόσθε κλέος εὐρὺ φόνου κατὰ ἄστυ γένηται[AOR.SJV.]
       ἀνδρῶν μνηστήρων, πρίν γ' ἡμέας ἐλθέμεν ἔξω (*Od.* 23.137–138).
       '**Don't let** the rumor of the suitor men's murder
       become[AOR.SJV.] widely known throughout the city before we go out'.
       [Intervening action to avoid an undesirable outcome.]

   b. INTERVENTIVE ASC (INSECURE) (ἀκούω 'hear')
       σίγα νῦν, μή τίς σευ Ἀχαιῶν ἄλλος ἀκούσῃ[AOR.SJV.] (*Od.* 14.493).
       'Be quiet now; **don't let** [or 'lest'] any other Achaean **hear**[AOR.SJV.] you'.
       [Intervening action to avoid an undesirable outcome.]

   c. INSTRUCTIVE PIC (προσαυδάω 'speak to, address')
       σιγῇ νῦν, μή τίς με προσαυδάτω[PRS.IPV.] ἐπέεσσιν
       ὑμετέρων ἑτάρων, ξυμβλήμενος ἢ ἐν ἀγυιῇ
       ἤ που ἐπὶ κρήνῃ (*Od.* 15.440–442).
       'Silence now. **Have none** of your companions
       speak to[PRS.IPV.] me, if he meets me either in the street
       or by chance at a fountain'.
       [Direct control over subordinates (= *Don't let them do it!*)]

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57   The ASC examples in (31a) and (31b) are chosen for their illustrative qualities in contrast
      to the PIC, but neither are in fact counted as secure instances of the ASC in my data.

d. AVERTIVE PIC (οἶδα 'know') AND AORIST IMPERATIVE (ἀκούω 'hear')[58]
εἰ ἐτεόν γ᾽ ἐμός ἐσσι καὶ αἵματος ἡμετέροιο,
μή τις ἔπειτ᾽ Ὀδυσῆος ἀκουσάτω[AOR.IPV.] ἔνδον ἐόντος,
μήτ᾽ οὖν Λαέρτης ἴστω[PRS.IPV.] τό γε μήτε συβώτης (*Od.* 16.300–302).
'If you're truly mine and of our blood,
then **let no one hear**[AOR.IPV.] that Odysseus is really home:
neither let Laertes **know**[PRS.IPV.] it, **nor** the swineherd'.
[= *Don't tell them!* (Compare the English idiom *let someone know = tell them*.)]

In third-person directives, unlike the second person, the subject and addressee are not the same. The addressee, not the subject, is the one expected to carry out the directive, and so a directive in the third-person can often be understood to have the force of a direct, second person command ('don't let such-and-such happen'). It is the action assigned to the addressee(s) in the directive, not the action of the subject of the verb, that is of concern in differentiating preventive and prohibitive uses. Hence, (31d) differs from (31a) and (31b) as follows. In (31d), the addressee is expected to directly avoid an action of his own: verbally disclosing information. In (31a) and (31b), however, the addressees are expected to engage in some indirect activity so as to avoid the dreaded outcome. In (31a), they are expected to put on a mock wedding to keep the murder of the suitors from being discovered. In (31b), the addressee is expected to avoid being overheard. There is thus an essential difference between "Take care that no one hears you talking *by keeping your voice down*" (31b) and "Don't let anyone hear about it *by not telling them*" (31d).

In the third person (1–3×) and in the first person (11–12×) we find also the *present* subjunctive.[59] It shows a range of meaning similar to that of the ASC, being regularly interventive and frequently passive or non-agentive in meaning (cf. n. 48 in Section 4.4.1), as shown in (32). All data in (32) is secure.

(32) FIRST- AND THIRD-PERSON SUBJUNCTIVE
a. ASC (INTERVENTIVE)
μὴ πατέρ᾽ ἀντίθεον διζήμενος αὐτὸς
ὄλωμαι[AOR.SJV.],
ἤ τί μοι ἐκ μεγάρων κειμήλιον ἐσθλὸν ὄληται[AOR.SJV.] (*Od.* 15.90–91).
'**Let me not perish**[AOR.SJV.] searching for my godlike father
or **have** any good treasure in my palace **lost**[AOR.SJV.] to me'.

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58   On the aorist imperative here, see Section 4.5.
59   The perfect subjunctive does not occur in negative directives in Homeric.

b. PRESENT SUBJUNCTIVE (INTERVENTIVE)
ἀλλ᾽ ἄγετ᾽, ὄφρ᾽ ἐν νηὶ θοῇ βρῶσίς τε πόσις τε,
μνησόμεθα βρώμης, μηδὲ τρυχώμεθα[PRS.SJV.] λιμῷ (*Od.* 10.176–177).
'But come, as long as there's food and drink in our swift ship,
let's remember food **and not let ourselves be consumed**[PRS.SJV.] by
hunger!'

c. PRESENT SUBJUNCTIVE (INTERVENTIVE)
μή νύ τι σεῦ ἀέκητι δόμων **ἐκ** κτῆμα **φέρηται**[PRS.SJV.] (*Od.* 15.19).
'**Be sure no** property **is carried off**[PRS.SJV.] from your home against your
will'.

The fact that the present subjunctive in this construction shows the same uses
as the aorist makes it difficult to maintain that aspect is responsible for the dif-
ferences in meaning observed between the PIC and ASC. Mood seems rather
to be the distinguishing factor (in agreement with Willmott 2007: 90–112).

Only in the first person, where no formal imperative exists, does the sub-
junctive (of either aspect) show corrective, inhibitive, and avertive uses.

– The first-person present subjunctive is: inhibitive (7–8×), avertive (3×), inter-
ventive (1×)
– The first-person aorist subjunctive is: corrective (2×), avertive (1×), interven-
tive (2–3×)

This fact supports a blocking analysis: When there is no PIC available for use,
namely in the first persons, the ASC steps in and takes on functions it doesn't
have otherwise.[60]

4.4.3 Conclusions about the ASC vs. the PIC/PNC

Both preventive types are in line with the future time reference typical of the
subjunctive mood. My findings thus support Willmott's (2007: 90–112) sug-
gestion that the primary distinction between the PIC and the ASC is modal
rather than aspectual. Likewise for the PNC. In particular, the PIC is pro-
hibitive and the ASC is preventive, and the PNC is instructive. Given that,
cross-linguistically, preventives tend to be of lower token frequency than their
prohibitive counterparts (id.: 91, 105–106, 108, with further references), the rel-
ative scarcity of the ASC in Homeric is understandable.[61]

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60   The PNC is never used with a first-person subject, though there may be some first-person
      positive directives made with the infinitive (see Allan 2010: 209, n. 14).
61   This is not true of Hoffmann's (1967) proposal for Vedic, where the aorist injunctive in
      negative directives, which he supposes to be preventive in meaning, is far more numer-
      ous than the present/perfect. See Section 5.1.

As in the case of the PIC, my treatment of the ASC improves on Ammann's (1927: 334–335) account, which cannot handle examples (22a) and (27a) in Section 4.4.1, resorting to calling these passages "late". I interpret them both as preventive, respectively interventive and preemptive.

4.5 *Aorist imperative construction*

Though not one of the regular negative directive constructions, I here consider the handful of occurrences of the aorist imperative in negative directives. For convenience I refer to μή + the aorist imperative as "the aorist imperative construction", though it does not have status as a "construction" in the way that the others so far considered do. I devote an entire subsection to its few occurrences because so much has been made of them in the literature (see review in Willmott 2007: 90–93), and an understanding of their functional range allows us to decide how to categorize them with respect to the other, regular constructions. Some scholars have grouped the aorist imperative construction with the ASC (e.g., Stephens 1983), since both use the aorist. But I find that there is no functional basis for this. On the contrary, the aorist imperative construction more closely resembles the functional range of the PIC, suggesting that its modality, rather than its aspect, is what determines its usage.

The aorist imperative construction is extremely rare (2nd person: 3–4×; 3rd person: 2×) and is thought by some to represent a vestige of the inherited aorist injunctive construction (Stephens 1983: 75), as the aorist imperatives attested in negative directives are not formally distinct from the injunctive. These are supposed to be holdovers, preserved by virtue of their inability to be replaced by their subjunctive counterparts, since doing so would disturb the meter, while all attested ASCs in Homer are said to be replacements of earlier aorist injunctives. A prediction of this view is that the aorist imperative in negative directives will not be functionally distinct from the ASC, since the two are not considered to be distinct constructions. But in fact (the paucity of data notwithstanding) the meanings attested for the aorist imperative construction are mainly in line with those observed for the PIC, not the ASC, showing one corrective, one avertive, and one instructive use, given in (33).

(33) AORIST IMPERATIVE CONSTRUCTION
    a. CORRECTIVE
        τὼ μή μοι πατέρας ποθ᾽ ὁμοίη ἔνθεο[AOR.IPV.] τιμῇ (*Il.* 4.410).
        'Therefore, **never again** in my presence **accord**[AOR.IPV.] our fathers the same honor'.

  b. Avertive
    ἀλλὰ σὺ μὲν **μή πω καταδύσεο**[AOR.IPV.] μῶλον Ἄρηος (*Il.* 18.134).
    'Therefore **don't yet go into**[AOR.IPV.] the grind of the war god'.

  c. Instructive (insecure)[62]
    Ξάνθέ τε καὶ Βαλίε τηλεκλυτὰ τέκνα Ποδάργης
    ἄλλως δὴ φράζεσθε σαωσέμεν ἡνιοχῆα
    ἂψ Δαναῶν ἐς ὅμιλον ἐπεί χ᾽ ἕωμεν πολέμοιο,
    μηδ᾽ ὡς Πάτροκλον **λίπετ**᾽[AOR.IPV.] αὐτόθι τεθνηῶτα (*Il.* 19.400–403).
    'Xanthos, Balios, famed sons of Podarge,
    take care to bring your charioteer safe by another way
    back to the company of the Danaans, when we take our fill of fighting,
    and do not, as you did to Patroclus, **leave**[AOR.IPV.] (me) there dead'.

The aorist imperative shows no particular affinity for preventive (= interventive
or preemptive) uses, contrary to what Hoffmann's (1967) or Stephens's (1983)
accounts would predict. Its use in (34), if it is preventive, is the sole example.[63]

(34) Preemptive aorist imperative construction
    ἄλλο δέ τοι ἐρέω, σὺ δὲ **μὴ χόλον ἔνθεο**[AOR.IPV.] θυμῷ·
    αὐτόν σ᾽ οὐκ ἀγαθὴ κομιδὴ ἔχει, ἀλλ᾽ ἅμα γῆρας
    λυγρὸν ἔχεις (*Od.* 24.248–250).
    'And I'll tell you another thing, but **don't put**[AOR.IPV.] anger in your heart:
    Good care doesn't hold you, yourself, but you hold baneful old age'.

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62   This example is not recognized by Stephens (1983), nor in any commentaries, grammars,
     or papers that I am aware of. The consensus seems to be that λίπετε is not an aorist imper-
     ative but an augmentless aorist indicative in an "abbreviated comparison" (Edwards 1991:
     282–283) or "elliptically phrased comparison" (Coray 2016: 180), as at *Od.* 21.427 and 24.199
     (though those both have οὐχ ὡς rather than μηδ᾽ ὡς), with the interpretation "and (act) not
     as (before, when) you left behind Patroclus". My interpretation is more straightforward in
     that it requires less elliptical material to be supplied and motivates the use of the modal
     negator μηδέ rather than the unmarked negator οὐκ.
63   Lest too much be made of this one preventive example of the aorist imperative, recall that
     the present subjunctive has interventive uses (see (32b) and (32c) in Section 4.4.2 above).
     So it is, again, unlikely to be aspect that marks the distinction between the prohibitive and
     preventive meanings. Rather, we should say that the imperative mood is not inherently
     incompatible with preventive meanings but is ordinarily blocked in such contexts by the
     ASC. Hence, rare cases like (34) are not semantically anomalous, only unusual (i.e., not
     in accordance with ordinary *usage*). The positive directives cited below are free to be cat-
     aphoric, since the subjunctive is not used in positive directives (cf. Table 6 in Section 4.1).

μή … ἔνθεο is unlikely to be archaic, as the second half of line 248 seems to be a play on the standard formulations 'put this in your heart' that typically follow the phrase ἄλλο δέ τοι ἐρέω 'and I'll tell you another thing', with an imperative: σὺ δ' ἵλαον ἔνθεο θυμόν 'and you make your spirit gracious' (*Il.* 9.639); σὺ δ' ἐνὶ φρεσὶ βάλλεο σῇσιν 'and you put it in your mind' (a frequent formula); σὺ δὲ σύνθεο καί μευ ἄκουσον 'and you take heed and listen' (a frequent formula).

More broadly, Stephens's (1983) observation that the occurrences of the aorist imperative in negative directives cannot generally be substituted by the subjunctive without ruining the meter may be reframed as a way of explaining, in a principled way, the use of the aorist imperative instead of the present imperative or aorist subjunctive, since meter would not permit the use of the corresponding PIC or ASC in the examples quoted above (cf. id.: 74).[64] Further, καταδύσεο, as Chantraine (1953 [2015]: 230–231) observes, "n'est pas proprement dit un aoriste", being thematic and perhaps having its origin in a future stem (see Stephens 1983: 71, with further references), and so not the likeliest candidate for a deep archaism.

In the third person, the two occurrences of the imperative are both avertive in meaning, again contrary to the prediction of an account that would view the preventive readings as arising from aoristic (or perfective) aspect. One of these has already been given in (31d) above, where the aorist imperative μή τις … ἀκουσάτω 'let no one hear' (= *don't tell anyone*) is coordinated with the PIC μήτ' … ἴστω 'let him not know' (= *don't let him know*). The other is given in (35).

(35) Third-person aorist imperative construction (Avertive)
      Μυρμιδόνες, **μή τίς** μοι ἀπειλάων **λελαθέσθω**[AOR.IPV.]
      ἃς ἐπὶ νηυσὶ θοῇσιν ἀπειλεῖτε Τρώεσσι (*Il.* 16.200–201).
      'Myrmidons, **let no one forget**[AOR.IPV.] the threats
      that you made by the swift ships against the Trojans'.

With (35) compare *Il.* 2.33–34, which has the PIC (not the ASC) in a very similar context: μηδέ σε λήθη / αἱρείτω '**Let not** [= *Don't let*] forgetfulness **take** you' (here probably instructive rather than avertive).

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64   One possible exception is (33b), in which a present imperative *καταδύεο could in principle be substituted, though such a form never occurs in Homeric, nor does uncompounded *δύεο. But (κατα)δύσεο is peculiar in any case (see next sentence) and is the only middle imperative form attested to this verb in Homeric, so it is not really surprising that its sole occurrence in a negative directive construction should match the positive form.

The aorist imperative construction thus shows no particular function distinct from the PIC, just as the aorist infinitive construction is not functionally distinct from the PNC (as discussed in Section 4.2). This is consistent with Willmott's (2007: 90–112) conclusion that the PIC and ASC differ primarily in modality rather than aspect. The scarcity and non-preventive meaning of the aorist imperative in negative directives is in no way expected if we assume that the aorist injunctive was the inherited construction.

Given that both the imperative and the infinitive do not regularly show aorist forms in negative directives (cf. the end of Section 4.2), and where they do occur they show no consistent function distinct from their present/perfect counterparts, I conclude that as matters originally stood Greek did not regularly make aspectual contrasts in negative directives. When occasional formal deviations from this rule are met with (i.e., where we find an aorist imperative or infinitive), the aorist stem should not be understood as having been selected in place of the present/perfect in order to express some distinctive meaning. Often non-functional explanations can be pointed to, whether formal, metrical, or formulaic (as, e.g., in my explanation of μή … ἔνθεο in (34) above).

4.6   *Conclusions on meaning*

In Homeric, the range of uses typical of the imperative and infinitive negative directives may be properly referred to as *prohibitive* and are summarized in (36).

(36) PROHIBITIVE MEANINGS
  – Inhibitive, Corrective, Avertive, Instructive
  – Anaphoric only:
    – Prejacent in the common ground, whether past (corrective), present (inhibitive, avertive), or future (instructive).
  – Addressee has direct control over the action commanded.

The range of uses typical of the subjunctive negative directives are preventive and are summarized in (37).

(37) PREVENTIVE MEANINGS
  – Preemptive, Interventive
  – Cataphoric (preemptive) or anaphoric (interventive):
    – Prejacent may not be in common ground (preemptive).
    – Prejacent not such that addressee has direct control of performance of the commanded action (interventive).
  – Addressee has no *direct* control over the action commanded at the time in which it is uttered.

As observed in Section 4.3.1 above (see Table 7), the full range of prohibitive meanings can be captured elegantly by just two features: (i) the temporal location of the prejacent and (ii) the temporal location of the event described by the predicate (both relative to the time of utterance). Assigning different values to these two parameters yields all four prohibitive interpretations attested.

Entirely different are the preventive sentences. There, it does not matter where the prejacent or the event are situated in time; it matters of what sort the prejacent is (for the interventive interpretation) and how the prejacent is situated in the discourse (for the preemptive interpretation). If the prejacent is such that the addressee lacks direct control over the fulfillment of the commanded event, then the sentence is interventive. If the prejacent has not been introduced into the common ground at the time of the utterance but is deferred until after the negative directive is uttered, then the sentence is preemptive.

Given this fundamental difference between preventive and prohibitive sentences, it makes good sense that preventive sentences are expressed in Homeric by an entirely different construction (the ASC), differing both in aspect and in mood, from the prohibitive types (the PIC and the PNC). Still, all types rely crucially on the notion of the prejacent for adequate definition.

We thus find in Homeric no aspectual contrast in negative directives in the way that there is for positive ones, leading to an asymmetry in the paradigms of the imperative and infinitive which is not seen in the other moods.[65] The regular way of negating a directive, whatever its aspect might be in the affirmative, is with the PIC. Other constructions are used just in case the standard functions of the PIC do not apply (ASC) or when greater specificity of meaning is intended (PNC). These alternative functions do not resemble aspectual oppositions seen elsewhere in Greek but are consistent with its modal contrasts. The question, then, is why didn't Greek have an aspectual opposition in its negative directives, particularly if it inherited such an opposition, as is commonly held? To this I now turn in the second major part of the paper (Section 5).

5 The origin of Greek negative directives

Now that we have a clear picture of the functional ranges of each of the regular negative directive constructions and an analysis of their interrelations to one

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65 I.e., the aorist vs. present/perfect contrast does not generally disappear when the subjunctive or optative are negated.

another (semantic blocking), we are in a position to compare these findings with what we see in Vedic Sanskrit, which, of the Indo-European languages, most nearly matches ancient Greek in how it forms its negative directives. I undertake this comparative analysis in Section 5.1.

In Hollenbaugh 2020 I concluded that the distinction between present/perfect and aorist in the negative directives of Vedic is only formal and does not correspond to a regular functional contrast. I now attempt to reconcile this finding with what we find in Homeric Greek, which, as we have seen, does show regular semantic contrasts in its negative directive constructions. Rather than viewing the PIC as a replacement of the present/perfect injunctive and the ASC as a replacement of the aorist injunctive, I derive the PIC from selectional properties of the negative directive construction that were already there in the parent language. In fact, both the aorist injunctive in Sanskrit and the present/perfect imperative in Greek can be derived from the same original preference for unmarked verb forms in negative directives dating back to PIE. There is thus no need to account for any replacement in Greek, per se. We have only to explain the existence of the ASC, which I argue to be a Greek-internal innovation (not a replacement of the aorist injunctive/imperative).

Consistent with the ASC being an innovation of Greek is that it becomes more integrated into the "paradigm" of commands over time, which coincides with its meaning becoming more general, having lost its originally specific, preventive function by the time of Classical Greek. This development, from Homeric to Classical, is taken up in Section 5.2.

The complete lack of present subjunctives in Greek negative directives of the second person is particularly striking, and I provide a diachronic explanation for this in Section 5.3, again appealing to markedness and paradigmatic blocking.

In Section 5.4, I conclude my historical investigation by comparing the negative directive construction of another ancient Indo-European language, Hittite, which on the face of it looks very different from what is found in Greek or Sanskrit, and show that it can be derived from the same principles by assuming a common IE preference for unmarked forms in negative directives. To ground my conclusions for the IE languages in linguistic typology, I compare the IE negative directive constructions to a non-IE language, Arabic, which has analogous constructions in its different dialects, showing that the kinds of diversification I propose for the IE languages is well paralleled cross-linguistically.

5.1 *From PIE to Homeric Greek*

Languages with preventive vs. prohibitive contrasts encoded aspectually tend to use the imperfective stem as the prohibitive or basic type and the perfective as the preventive type (Birjulin & Xrakovskij 2001: 36, Willmott 2007: 109), and preventive sentences tend to be relatively infrequent compared to prohibitive ones (id.: 91, 105–106, 108, with further references). If Hoffmann's (1967) account is accepted, Vedic Sanskrit would show precisely the opposite distribution to what we should expect from these cross-linguistic tendencies. In Hoffmann's (1967) view, the aorist injunctive construction (= perfective) is preventive, while the present/perfect injunctive construction (= imperfective) is inhibitive or corrective (we would now collapse these latter two under the heading *prohibitive*). But the aorist injunctive is far more common than the present/perfect in negative directives and appears to be the default type. If the aorist injunctive construction really did express preventive meaning, this would make Vedic typologically aberrant.

However, in Hollenbaugh 2020, arguing against Hoffmann (1967), I have shown that aspectual differences in Vedic negative directives do not correspond to consistent differences in meaning. Rather, both constructions express the same range of meanings, as exemplified in (38). In (38a), the aorist injunctive has a clear inhibitive meaning, contrary to what Hoffmann's (1967) analysis would predict. Whereas the aorist injunctive is the default form used in negative directives, the present/perfect injunctive is used just in case there is no aorist stem available to the verb in question, as is the case in (38b), where the verb *irasyaḥ* 'get envious' is denominative, a formation that is inherently present and has no aorist equivalent in early Vedic (cf. Hollenbaugh 2020: 20–25).

(38) Vedic aorist (a.) and present (b.) injunctive negative directives

   a. Aorist injunctive

   áhe mriyásva[PRES.IPV.] ***mā́ jī́vīḥ***[AOR. INJ.] *pratyág abhy ètu tvā viṣám*
   (*Atharvaveda Śaunakīya* v.13.4cd ≈ *Atharvaveda Paippalāda* VIII.2.3c–e).
   'Serpent, die[PRES.IPV.], **don't live/stop living**[AOR. INJ.]. Let your poison go back against you'.

   b. Present injunctive

   mā́ *átra pū́ṣann āghr̥ṇa* ***irasyo***[PRES.INJ.] *várūtrī yád rātiṣā́caś ca rā́san*
   (*Ṛgveda* VII.40.6ab).
   '**Don't get envious**[PRES.INJ.] now, glowing Pūṣan, when the Shielding Goddess and the Gift-Escorts will make bestowal'.

If I am correct that Vedic has no specialized preventive construction, then the fact that the aorist is more common than the present/perfect in negative directives becomes much less surprising.[66] This account thus makes better sense of the observed facts and makes Vedic less unusual with respect to the cross-linguistic tendency mentioned above.

I argue further in Hollenbaugh 2020 that the original negative directive construction in Vedic selected not just for aorists but specifically for *root* aorists. An implication of this proposal is that the original negative directive construction that Vedic inherited was as in (39):

(39) PRE-VEDIC NEGATIVE DIRECTIVE CONSTRUCTION:
      NEG + verb root + personal endings

The negative directive construction seems to have selected for a minimally marked verb form, as near to the bare root as possible. Vedic later generalized this selection to all aorists, which would explain the typological oddity of using the perfective stem for general prohibitions. The only exceptions to (39) in Vedic are derived stems encoding a meaning that could not be expressed by the bare root and lacked an aorist counterpart (e.g., desideratives, intensives, and denominatives, as in (38b) above).

We may now take this hypothesis a step further by assuming that PIE negative directives selected not for any particular aspect or mood but for an unmarked form of the verb. Compare modern English *Don't* + bare verb (cf. Section 1.1 and n. 5). We can thus reconstruct a rule like (39) for PIE, generalizing "verb root" to "unmarked verb", as in (40).

(40) PIE NEGATIVE DIRECTIVE CONSTRUCTION:
      NEG + unmarked verb + personal endings

Crucially, the rule in (40) does not require selection of the injunctive per se, only of a minimally marked verb form. While the unmarked form happened to be the injunctive in Vedic and (probably) PIE, other languages that inherited this rule would have different unmarked forms, having lost the injunctive as a tenseless and moodless functional category. But the underlying rule would not

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66 It is worth noting here that in the Iranian languages Avestan and Old Persian, which are closely related to the Indic branch that includes Sanskrit, preventive meaning is not expressed by the aorist (Kellens 1984: 431–433). Avestan forms its negative directives with the optative or imperative moods regularly built to the present stem (id.: 298, 300–303, 314, 318), occasionally aorist optative (id.: 391–392), twice with the present injunctive

have to change, since the output of the rule would still be the unmarked form, only now that form would be a different one from what the parent language had. In this way, one and the same rule can account for different outcomes in the different daughter languages. If we can show, on independent grounds, what counts as the unmarked verb form in a particular IE language, (40) predicts that that form will be the one used in the negative directive construction in that language (or, at least, in its default, unmarked negative directive construction).

On this basis, I propose that Homeric Greek, too, selected for the unmarked verb form in its negative directives. But in Homeric, unlike Vedic, the augment-less verbs are restricted to use as indicative past tenses (cf. Section 1.2) and, as such, they are no longer semantically unmarked (i.e., they are specified as both indicative and past). The present stem, as the unmarked competitor in the aspectual domain, is available to satisfy the rule in (40).

The semantic unmarkedness of the present stem in Homeric Greek is evident from its behavior vis-à-vis the aorist. While, for considerations of space, I cannot give a full account of this evidence here, I summarize the key points noticed in Hollenbaugh 2021, where I concluded that the present stem is indifferent to or "neutral" in aspect. A more precise way of saying this is that the present stem is unspecified for aspect, whereas the aorist is specified as perfective.[67] In consequence, the imperfect is predicted to be able to stand in for the aorist, under certain conditions, but never the reverse. This asymmetry is conceded as a fact by Ringe (2024: 27, n. 18), though he offers no explanation for it.

The main evidence for the present stem being unspecified for aspect is as follows. Because "aspectual contrasts are most robust in the past tenses of the indicative" (Hollenbaugh 2021: 24, with refs.), the evidence is mainly based on the competition of the aorist and imperfect, but I also provide some evidence

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(id.: 244), and dubiously with the present subjunctive (id.: 274–275). Tellingly, Avestan does not use the aorist injunctive, imperative, or subjunctive in negative directives. The Old Persian negative directive construction is formed most often with the present injunctive (6×) (Kent 1950: 90, 92; cf. Kellens 1984: 244, n. 3), but we also find the aorist optative (3–4×), the present optative (1–2×), the present subjunctive (4×), and a present imperative (1×) (Kent 1950: 89–90; cf. Kellens 1984: 298, Joseph 2002: 106). Whether these languages have a preventive/prohibitive opposition, as has been claimed (Kellens 1984: 431–433), is in need of careful reassessment.

67   This differs from the claim of Hollenbaugh (2018, 2021) that the aorist started out as a perfect, rather than perfective, aspect category. Though various kinds of evidence, especially in Vedic Sanskrit, point to the aorist's origin as a perfect, their assessment is beyond my current scope. So, for simplicity, I here treat the aorist as a perfective.

that suggests that the present system as a whole is unmarked for aspect, as shown by the comparison of the present and aorist in non-past contexts, in addition to modal and non-finite forms.

The imperfect often has "perfective" interpretations (see example (41) below), but the aorist never has "imperfective" interpretations. In particular, we observe asymmetrical treatment in the following cases:

– Metrical substitution: The imperfect may be substituted for the aorist *metri gratia* but never the reverse (cf. discussion in Section 4.3.2).

– Paradigmatic gaps: When a lemma only builds a present stem, its imperfect may have "perfective" interpretations, but aorist-only verbs do not have "imperfective" interpretations. So the imperfect ἔφη (to φημί 'say') simply means 'said', rather than 'was saying' (vel sim.), there being no other stem form available to this lemma. But the aorist εἶπον also means 'said'. It cannot mean 'was saying' even though no present stem can be built to this root. This shows that forms of the present system may stand in, functionally, for a missing aorist in the paradigm, but the aorist may not stand in for a missing present/imperfect.

– Contextual reduction: This is a broader formulation of Kiparsky's (1968: 34–35) "conjunction reduction". Narrative passages tend to open with aorists and then "reduce" to the imperfect, without distinction in aspectual interpretation (according to Sicking (1996: 103), their truth conditions can be identical). The idea is that, once the perfective aspect is introduced into the discourse, it does not need to be specified in subsequent statements, and the unmarked form (the imperfect) may be used instead.[68] Thus, in (41), the imperfect δίδου means simply 'gave'. It serves to specify the giving event introduced in the previous line with the aorist πόρον 'gave'.

(41) CONTEXTUAL REDUCTION OF AORIST TO IMPERFECT IN HOMER
οἳ δὲ καὶ ἀλλήλοισι πόρον[AOR.] ξεινήϊα καλά
Οἰνεὺς μὲν ζωστῆρα δίδου[IPF.] φοίνικι φαεινόν
Βελλεροφόντης δὲ χρύσεον δέπας ἀμφικύπελλον (*Il.* 6.218–220).
'And they **gave**[AOR.] each other lovely gifts in token of friendship:
Oineus, for his part, **gave**[IPF.] a war belt bright with the red dye,
while Bellerophontes (gave) a golden double-handled cup'.

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68   The concept of contextual reduction is just what we see in English in conversations like the following, from Comrie 1976: 55: (Speaker A) *I've broken my arm.* (Speaker B) *Did you break it today?* (not #*Have you broken it today?*). The information that the action is resultative (*have broken*) is not repeated after it is introduced into the discourse.

Similar is the aorist δῶκε 'gave' followed by δίδου at *Il.* 7.303–305, 10.255–260. In such cases, Sicking (1996: 75) renders the imperfect as simply 'did so', the contextually reduced form that verbs take in English.[69]

The situation is similar for the other forms in the present system, which may sometimes show "aorist-like" usage, whereas the reverse does not occur. In particular, we observe asymmetrical treatment in the following cases:

– Epic similes/gnomes: One context in which the present indicative alternates with the aorist is in epic similes and gnomic statements. In these contexts, the present is about twice as common as the aorist (data from Beck & van der Horst 2023). Further, according to Wackernagel (1926–1928 [2009]: 232), "the aorist is always used when the meaning is 'effective' or ingressive". The present, meanwhile, may refer to simple sequential actions (= Wackernagel's "effective" meaning) or to states or events in progress (id.: 232). In other words, the functional range of the present is broader than that of the aorist, and we see the same asymmetry as above, whereby the present stem shows compatibility with perfective interpretation but the aorist is not compatible with imperfective interpretation.

– Perfect-like use: Outside of similes and gnomic statements, the present may sometimes be used to refer to action which lies strictly in the past but whose effects continue through the present moment (Wackernagel 1926–1928 [2009]: 213–214), as at *Il.* 24.543: τὸ πρὶν μὲν ἀκούομεν ὄλβιον εἶναι 'We hear [= have heard] that you were formerly prosperous' (similarly *Il.* 2.486; *Od.* 2.118, 3.193, 11.458, 15.403). When the aorist is used to refer to the present time, it regularly has this sort of interpretation, as at *Od.* 19.270: ἤδη Ὀδυσῆος ἐγὼ περὶ νόστου ἄκουσα 'I've already heard about Odysseus's return'. So, the present indicative, in addition to all of its ordinary presential interpretations (habitual, progressive, stative, etc.), is also compatible with an interpretation more commonly expressed by the aorist. Once again, the reverse is not true, and the asymmetry runs in the same direction as above.

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69   Another Homeric example is *Il.* 2.106–107 (Kiparsky 1968: 39, Wackernagel 1926–1928 [2009]: 235), in which the aorist ἔλιπεν is followed in the next line by the imperfect λεῖπε, both meaning 'left (the scepter to so-and-so)'. Wackernagel (1926–1928 [2009]: 234) quotes a similar example from Herodotus (ἐκόμισε followed by ἐκόμιζον 'transported') and another from a fifth-century inscription (*IG* v.1.213). Sicking (1991: 28, 1996: 75, 104–105) cites further examples in Classical Greek. The opposite order is attested but atypical. An example is *Il.* 23.259–270, in which Achilles sets out prizes for a contest. The prizes are first mentioned with the imperfect, νηῶν δ᾽ ἔκφερ᾽ ἄεθλα 'he brought out prizes from the ships', referring to the prizes in general. But then the subsequent placement of each individual prize is expressed with the aorist (θῆκε, ἔθηκεν, κατέθηκε 'he set out').

– Modal and non-finite forms: The present shows the same versatility of aspectual interpretation as elsewhere, sometimes referring to ongoing actions (e.g., κεῖσ᾽ οὕτω 'lie/keep lying so!' (*Il.* 21.184)) and sometimes not (e.g., πὰρ δὲ τίθει δίφρον 'set out a stool' (*Od.* 21.177), coordinated between two aorist imperatives). For its part, the aorist is again not compatible with imperfective interpretations (e.g., δότε simply means 'give!'). See Hollenbaugh 2018: 49–54 for a fuller treatment and data. Cf. also my discussion of the contextual reduction of the PNC to the PIC in Section 4.3.2.

Given all these asymmetries of usage, wherein the interpretations available to the present stem are always a superset of those available to the aorist, the most economical conclusion is that the present stem is unspecified for aspect, while the aorist is specified as perfective. This predicts that the present stem will be used in the expression of imperfective as well as perfective meaning, while the aorist will only be used to express perfective meaning. I know of no Homeric data that contradicts this generalization.

To the above list of evidence for the aspectual unmarkedness of the present stem, we may now add the negative directives. Whatever else may be said of them, a general dispreference for the aorist (of any mood) in negative directives emerges quite plainly from the data in Section 4. The overwhelming prevalence of the PIC and PNC over the aorist constructions is strongly suggestive of the present as a default verb form in the expression of negative directives. If the present is the unmarked aspect stem, then the rule in (40) predicts that it will be selected over possible alternatives (aorist, perfect) as the form used in the default negative directive construction in Greek, as is indeed the case.

Typologically, languages tend not to use the same construction for negative directives as for positive directives, and those that mark aspectual distinctions in positive directives do not necessarily do so in negative ones (Birjulin & Xrakovskij 2001: 36–37). There is therefore no reason to expect aspectual contrast in negative directives just because we find it in positive directives. As I concluded in Section 4.5, the system of negative directives that Greek inherited did not regularly distinguish aspect. This is clear, as attested in Homeric, from the lack of aorist imperative or infinitive in negative directives, while both are very common in positive directives (cf. n. 13 in Section 3).

If Homeric Greek negative directives prefer unmarked aspect stems, this would explain why the two most frequent types of prohibitive constructions (μή + imperative, μή + infinitive) uniformly disprefer the aorist, and why aspect is apparently neutralized when directives are negated (outside the first person). I therefore propose that the PIC and PNC are not replacements of the injunctive, per se, but the continuation of the selectional properties of negative directives for unmarked verb forms, which I reconstruct for PIE.

But, of course, if the injunctive was unavailable for use in prohibitions, the present stem, however unmarked relative to the aorist, had to be realized by some non-injunctive form or other. The choice of modal form in Greek negative directives can be made sense of by considering the available alternatives. The present indicative cannot be used, since it is not regularly compatible with modal interpretations. The same is true of the imperfect. The subjunctive and optative have specialized meanings (as do the negative directives formed with them) and so are not viable candidates for the unmarked negative directive construction. As a default, then, negating the imperative (the form used in positive directives) seems to be an obvious choice. But the infinitive, which is unmarked for person, number, and mood, is also a viable candidate for use in negative directives. Homeric thus ends up with two competing negative directive constructions that do not mark aspectual oppositions, namely the PIC and the PNC. Both may be considered to be generated by rule (40). Given two forms competing for the same semantic space, however, specialization of one or the other of them is practically inevitable, if both are to survive. I assume that the specialization of the PNC happened prehistorically, such that it is in its full vigor in Homeric. In non-poetic and non-Ionic varieties of Greek, the PNC simply does not occur, and the PIC is used for all prohibitive functions.

5.2 *From Homeric to Classical Greek*

The ASC, for its part, has nothing to do with the aorist injunctive but is an innovation of Greek, which can be seen to become more integrated into the "paradigm" of commands over time. Its modal meaning is evident in its Homeric usage, but by the time of Classical Greek we find it showing the same sort of prohibitive functions as the PIC (corrective, avertive, etc.), differing only in aspectual interpretation (see below). The following examples were noticed in casual reading of the texts and could easily be multiplied.[70]

(42) CLASSICAL GREEK ASC: INHIBITIVE (a.), CORRECTIVE (b.), AVERTIVE (c.–d.)
a. INHIBITIVE ASC
οὗτος σύ, κλήθρων τῶνδε **μὴ ψαύσῃς**[AOR.SJV.] χερί (Eur. *Or.* 1567).
'You there! **Don't touch**[AOR.SJV.] those bolts with your hand!'
[Orestes to Menelaus, who is currently trying to open the barred doors.]

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70 Other prohibitive examples of the ASC in Soph. *El*. include: μὴ νῦν ἔτ᾽ εἴπῃς μηδέν 'Speak no word more at this time' (324), μή μέ νυν μηκέτι παραγάγῃς 'Divert me no longer now' (855–856), μηκέτ᾽ ἐλπίσῃς 'hope no longer' (963).

b. CORRECTIVE ASC

Electra: φεῦ.

Chorus: μηδὲν μέγ᾽ ἀΰσῃς[AOR.SJV.] (Soph. *El.* 829–830).

Electra: 'Ah!'

Chorus: '**Give out** no great **cry**[AOR.SJV.]' [sc. *such as you have just done*].

c. AVERTIVE ASC

παῦε, μὴ λέξῃς[AOR.SJV.] <u>πέρα</u>·

μάτην γὰρ ἂν εἴπῃς γε πάντ᾽ εἰρήσεται (Soph. *Phil.* 1275–1276).

'Wait, **don't say**[AOR.SJV.] <u>anything further</u>;

for whatever you say will all be said in vain'.

[Said to one about to say something else.]

d. AVERTIVE ASC

μέν᾽, ὦ τάλαινα· μὴ τρέσῃς[AOR.SJV.] ἐμὴν χέρα (Eur. *El.* 220).

'Stay, poor girl! **Do not flee from**[AOR.SJV.] my hand'.

[Orestes to Electra who has just urged flight for herself and the other women.]

Many more such examples can be found in Louw 1959: 48–52, including examples outside the genre of tragedy, such as Xenophon and Plato (see especially p. 51). Louw (1959: 57) distinguishes three main groups of negative directives: those referring to ongoing or repeated action, those referring to future action, and those referring to timeless "moral precepts". He concludes that, "For each of these [types]", (i.e., in Classical Greek) "both present imperative and aorist subjunctive can be used". The distinction he makes between the two constructions is purely aspectual (e.g., the aorist is used for ingressive states) and is not drawn along the lines of prohibitive vs. preventive interpretations. Indeed, the preventive/prohibitive distinction has collapsed by the time of Classical Greek. Post-Homeric Greek is thus quite different from what we have seen so far.[71]

We can observe, then, a diachronic development within the history of Greek from a stage at which negative directives did not contrast aspect (Homeric) to a stage at which they did (Classical), and so from a stage that lacked a uniform paradigm for positive and negative commands to a stage that had one (so too concludes Willmott 2007: 110). This was achieved by slotting the ASC into the

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71   It is possible that the preventive meaning could be expressed in later Greek by the doubly negated οὐ μή construction, with aorist subjunctive or future indicative, as in καὶ μὴ κρίνετε, καὶ οὐ μὴ κριθῆτε 'judge not and **be not judged**' (Lk. 6:37), but the matter needs investigation.

TABLE 8   Development of the paradigm of commands in Greek

Stage I: Homeric Greek paradigm (λύω 'release')

	Positive	Negative
Present	λύε	μὴ λύε
Aorist	λύσον	——

Stage II: Classical Greek paradigm (λύω 'release')

	Positive	Negative
Present	λύε	μὴ λύε
Aorist	λύσον	μὴ λύσῃς

"Aorist, Negative" cell of the paradigm, which at the Homeric stage was strictly empty, since in Homeric the PIC and ASC did not participate in aspectual oppositions. I show this in Table 8. All forms shown are second-person singular active, and all are imperative except for λύσῃς, which is subjunctive.

Achieving system uniformity entailed semantic change in the ASC: Whereas before it was not used to express prohibitive meanings,[72] only preventive ones, it could later express a full range of prohibitive meanings (inhibitive, corrective, avertive) in addition to its original preventive functions. Once this point had been achieved, the choice between aorist and present stem in negative directives became precisely like the choice between the two in positive directives, signaling aspectual distinctions pure and simple, of the usual sort that we think of as being demarcated by the different aspect stems: ingressive, progressive, conative, iterative, habitual, terminative, and so on (cf. Louw 1959).

This diachronic picture, it should be noted, is incompatible with proposals that the aorist construction is the older of the two, since that would require the aorist construction to have retreated in the prehistory of Greek (going into Homeric), becoming more limited functionally and of lower frequency than the present/perfect construction, only to rise again in both respects in post-Homeric Greek. While strictly possible, this is not the most economical explanation. Further, viewing the diachronic developments as I have described them above allows us to explain the asymmetry in the paradigm of commands,

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72   Excepting the first person, as discussed in Section 4.4.2.

whereas viewing the ASC as having always been part of the paradigm provides no such explanation.

5.3   *The present subjunctive in negative directives*

The lack of present subjunctive in negative directives can be explained as follows. The present stem is used in the PIC because it is the unmarked verb stem, following the rule in (40) in Section 5.1. Since the contrast between prohibitive and preventive meanings was originally modal rather than aspectual, the aspect of the verb is able to change in lockstep with the mood in order to maximize contrast with the PIC, the default prohibitive construction.[73] Because this maximization of formal contrast was possible (without undesirable semantic correlates), it was done: To express a more marked (i.e., specific) meaning, a more marked form is desirable. Once the aorist subjunctive became associated with preventive meaning, it would regularly block the present subjunctive from occurring in preventive contexts. Hence there are no present subjunctives in negative directives of the second person, and exceedingly few in the third person.

A prediction of this explanation for the lack of present subjunctives in negative directives is that in parts of the paradigm where no PIC was available, the present subjunctive would occur roughly as freely as the aorist (i.e., no blocking would occur, since there is no need for the subjunctive construction to distance itself formally from the imperative construction). This prediction is borne out: In the first person, where no imperative exists, we find present subjunctives alternating with aorist subjunctives (see Section 4.4.2), and both forms are used with preventive and non-preventive meanings. In Homeric, the present subjunctive is in fact more than twice as frequent as the aorist in first-person directives (11:5). The discrepancies in relative frequency of the aorist vs. present subjunctive according to person are thus well explained under this analysis, whereas they are arbitrary under prior accounts (including Willmott 2007: 109–110).

By contrast, in the persons capable of making imperatives the default negative directive construction, the PIC, regularly blocks any finite forms from

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73   Cross-linguistic examples of mood-dependent aspect marking and aspect-dependent modal marking are easy to think of. In Sanskrit, for instance, the present system ends up as the base to which all moods are built (Whitney 1889: 298), and even in the *R̥gveda* many verbs do not show complete modal paradigms across aspect stems (see Hollenbaugh 2018: 54–55, with refs., especially Jamison 2009). Similarly, in Arabic only the imperfective system has modal forms (imperative, subjunctive, jussive), and the indicative mood, in varieties that mark it, is likewise limited to the imperfective (see Sellami 2022).

occurring that would compete with it in the aspectual domain, meaning that the present subjunctive is generally excluded. The aorist subjunctive is free to occur, as it does not compete in the aspectual domain with the present imperative. In the third person, we do find some present subjunctives, but only one is secure (viz. (32c) in Section 4.4.2). Including insecure cases, the aorist subjunctive is nearly nine times as frequent as the present.[74]

Crucial here is the notion that negative directives originally did not participate in aspectual oppositions. Any form that would establish such an opposition (viz. present subjunctive or aorist imperative/infinitive) is regularly avoided. So, rather than coexist alongside one another, as they do in the other modal domains of Greek, the existence of one aspect form for a given mood in negative directives means the exclusion of the other aspect form for that mood. Thus, the fact that the PIC and PNC are built with the present/perfect excludes the use of an aorist imperative or infinitive; the fact that the ASC is built with the aorist excludes the use of a present/perfect subjunctive. Exceptions are in most cases principled: The present subjunctive can occur where there is no imperative form to compete with; the aorist infinitive is used for certain verbs that do not build present stems (see (10) in Section 4.2); the aorist imperative is motivated by metrics or formulaic considerations (see Section 4.5).

Again, this blocking analysis only works if the PIC is the *older*, not the younger, of the two constructions. This makes sense, given how integrated the PIC is in the verb system from its earliest attestations, and marks an improvement over prior accounts, which have to appeal to "waves of replacements" to explain the predominance of the PIC over the ASC in Homeric (Willmott 2007: 91, 93, 96).

5.4   *Comparison to other languages*

A similar situation to what I have described for Homeric—whereby the unmarked verb stem is selected for in negative directives—can be found in Hittite, which regularly uses *lē* (modal negator) + present *indicative*.[75] Hittite, like Greek, has merged the injunctive with the past indicative. Unlike Greek, however, Hittite has no future tense, no subjunctive, and no optative mood. There being no morphological future or marked moods to compete with, the present indicative is the form used for expressing all non-past meanings: future,

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74   The aorist subjunctive occurs 26 times, the present only 3 times. Note, however, that third-person subjunctives often express wishes, and their semantic distinction from the optative and imperative is not always clear. Still, the imperative—specifically the PIC—overwhelmingly predominates (40× in Homeric).

75   Hittite has no aorist or perfect.

modal, or otherwise. (The past tense is specifically marked as such.) On this basis, the present indicative appears to be the unmarked verb form in Hittite. The rule in (40) in Section 5.1 would accordingly predict that Hittite should use the present indicative in its negative directives, as is indeed the case. My "minimal markedness hypothesis" thus renders unremarkable a construction that otherwise might appear exceptionally odd (using the indicative rather than the imperative or infinitive in negative directives). The rule in (40) thus has good predictive power, accounting for the outcomes, divergent as they are on the surface, in at least three different IE branches.[76]

It appears, then, that the rule in (40) may provide a unified explanation for negative directives in Indo-European and fares considerably better than prior accounts that attempted to derive the divergent negative directive strategies used in the different IE branches from a single strategy—that of Vedic Sanskrit—presumed to be the most archaic. Such a position has the serious disadvantage of having to suppose that each daughter language other than Vedic replaced the inherited construction (the injunctive) with essentially arbitrary tense-aspect and modal categories. On the other hand, assuming selection for minimal markedness provides non-arbitrary explanations for the temporal and modal categories found in the negative directive constructions of the various daughter languages.

In contrast to Hittite, Greek's present indicative competes with a synthetic future and marked modal forms. For this reason, due to semantic blocking, the Greek present indicative is both specifically present and specifically indicative in a way that the Hittite "present indicative" is not.[77] The Greek present indicative is accordingly ill-suited to use in negative directives. Instead, the form specific to commands is used, namely the imperative, or the unmarked non-finite form, the infinitive, built to the present stem (see end of Section 5.1 above).[78]

Typologically, we may compare dialects of Arabic, some of which resemble the Hittite situation (using the indicative), others the Greek situation (using the imperfective stem). For example, Tunisian Arabic uses its imperfective

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76   The details of the other IE branches, and their explicability in light of the rule in (40), must be left for another occasion. But cf. n. 66 in Section 5.1 and n. 78 below.

77   For this reason the Hittite "present indicative" is often simply called *non-past*.

78   The negative directive strategies of early Latin are similar to Greek: modal negator *nē* + (present) imperative or (perfect) subjunctive. I tentatively view the latter as an independent development of Latin, rather than an inherited construction. Like Greek, Latin also develops a construction with the infinitive (after *nōlī* 'don't'). Unlike Greek, it uses the present subjunctive in one of its constructions (after *cavē* 'don't').

verb form to express both present indicative (e.g., *tiktib* 'you write') and negative directive meaning (*ma-tiktib-sh* 'don't write', with a discontinuous negator *ma-…-sh*). This matches Hittite in using a single form for both functions.

On the other hand, Greek's PIC somewhat resembles the Modern Standard Arabic (MSA) negative directive construction, which uses a truncated imperfective stem, as in *lā taktub* 'don't write' (the full imperfective stem is *taktubu* 'you write'). MSA thus matches Greek in defaulting to the imperfective aspect stem in its negative directives but using a non-indicative form. Like Hittite, however, MSA has a separate imperative form for positive commands that is not used in negative directives (*uktub* 'write').

The perfective stem is not used in the negative directive constructions of Arabic. The imperfective is manifestly the unmarked form in Arabic, being used as an "infinitive" in many contexts, in which it is indifferent to aspect (Hallman 2015). This being the case, it appears that Arabic negative directives resemble those of the IE languages in their preference for unmarked verb forms. This, in turn, implies that the rule proposed in (40) is typologically unproblematic.

6 General conclusions

This paper has shown that, in their essentials, the traditional semantic associations of the different negative directive constructions hold true for the Homeric language: the PIC is prohibitive (encompassing the inhibitive, corrective, avertive, and instructive subtypes), the ASC is preventive (= interventive and preemptive), the PNC is instructive (a subtype of prohibitive). I have demonstrated this by means of a comprehensive corpus study. At the same time, I updated the terminology applied to the observed functional contrasts among the different constructions. This was done not only to refine our understanding of the different nuances but to allow for more sensible and consistent generalizations to be made. In this way, the functions attested for each construction were shown to cluster in well defined groups, broadly along prohibitive and preventive lines. Introducing the subtypes *avertive* for prohibitive directives, and *preemptive* for preventive directives allowed me to make sense of certain examples that have been considered exceptions under prior accounts, including pairs of examples that otherwise elude coherent explanation (e.g., (28) in Section 4.4.1).

Above all, precision has been the aim of this analysis. Rather than appealing to the idea that the ASC is more "emphatic" or "forceful" than the PIC (Willmott 2007: 97–98, 102), I explain all uses of the ASC by means of pragmatic considerations, involving the status of the prejacent in the discourse context

at the time when the negative directive is uttered. The prohibitive functions are also defined precisely with reference to the prejacent, using a two-feature system referring to the temporal location of the prejacent relative to time of utterance.

Whereas Willmott (2007: 108) claims that "the choice between a prohibitive or preventive marker generally appears to be a rather subjective one" and "it is difficult to clearly delimit the distinction", my analysis does precisely that: The distinction is not ultimately subjective but governed by definable principles that underlie the discourse moves made by speaker and addressee in any given exchange. We may therefore explain the choice between prohibitive and preventive constructions (and so between the PIC and ASC) in virtually all cases.

Such advances of precision and generalizability allowed me to show that the PIC is the default negative directive construction in Homeric and that form does indeed follow function in negative directives, but only in the modal domain: These constructions do not systematically make aspectual contrasts in Homeric. A crucial observation of my analysis is that it is not only the aorist imperative that is avoided in negative directives but also the aorist infinitive. This prompted me to explain the complementary distribution of aspect forms along modal lines, concluding that aspect was functionally irrelevant in these constructions (outside the first person).

This synchronic analysis of usage was a necessary preliminary to comparing the system of Homeric with that of another important IE language, Vedic Sanskrit. Vedic's apparent formal match with Greek's system of negative directives has, in my view, misled scholars to conclude that proto-Greek inherited a system very similar to Vedic's, but then replaced it with the PIC and ASC. Such a conclusion is incoherent for several reasons, especially in light of my finding in Hollenbaugh 2020 that the Vedic negative directives do not actually show a prohibitive vs. preventive contrast, along with the fact that the relative frequencies of the aorist and present/perfect in Vedic are very different from what we see in Homeric. The two apparently similar systems turn out to be quite different, both in form and in function.

To reconcile the two divergent systems, I posited the rule in (40) that says that the negative directive construction selects for minimally marked verb forms (Section 5.1). For ease of reference, I repeat this rule here.

(43) PIE NEGATIVE DIRECTIVE CONSTRUCTION:
       NEG + unmarked verb + personal endings

While in Vedic this minimally marked form was the (root) aorist injunctive, in Homeric there was no tenseless and moodless injunctive category. As a result,

the augmentless forms in Homeric were not viable candidates for satisfying the rule in (43) and so could not be used in negative directives. The present stem, being a verbal category unspecified for aspect, was then available for use as the unmarked verb in the realization of the rule in (43).

In contrast to prior treatments, this analysis does not require us to think of Greek as "replacing" the injunctive with the PIC, per se, nor of Hittite replacing it with the present indicative. Rather, Greek and Sanskrit and Hittite all inherited the same rule for generating negative directives: (43). It's just that what verb form was available to satisfy the requirement "unmarked verb" of (43) differed in the different languages: Sanskrit had the injunctive, Hittite the present indicative, and Greek had the present imperative.[79] A major benefit of analyzing the data this way is that it makes the different constructions of the different languages non-arbitrary. Under prior, "replacement hypotheses", the choice of tense-aspect form that replaced the supposed original Sanskrit-like system had to be essentially arbitrary.

This analysis explains why the PIC was the default negative directive construction already in Homeric. The ASC, for its part, I have argued to be a Greek-internal innovation, created for a specific semantic purpose (preventive) and formed so as to maximize contrast with the PIC. Only in later Greek does the ASC become slotted in to the paradigm of directives as the aorist counterpart to the PIC (Section 5.2).

The absence of the present subjunctive in the second and third persons falls out directly from the foregoing: Wherever the PIC and ASC coexist, the present subjunctive and aorist imperative are predicted not to occur (Section 5.3). Accordingly, in the first person, where there is no PIC, we should expect to find the present and aorist subjunctive both being used in negative directives, as is indeed the case. The occurrence of any individual construction is thus best understood in terms of its relationship to other constructions in the system. Prior accounts have tended to overlook the interconnectedness of the different constructions and so have missed the insights afforded thereby.

In all, this paper not only has developed a more coherent and precise account of negative directives in ancient Greek, it has located these constructions in their Indo-European context in a way that departs radically from the current consensus view. My approach allows us to reconcile apparently contradictory surface facts by means of a single underlying rule that prioritizes unmarked verb forms in the negative directive construction. This rule has been

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79   The reasons for Greek using the imperative while Hittite uses the indicative have been given in Section 5.4.

shown to generate the correct outcomes in at least Vedic, Homeric, and Hittite and to be typologically unremarkable. It thus has potential to provide a unified account of Indo-European negative directives in a way that does not resort to a succession of arbitrary replacements in each branch and language. Such a unified account of negative directives has implications for many open questions concerning the IE verb and diachronic semantics generally, including the nature of aspectual and modal contrasts in early IE, the role of paradigmatic blocking in accounting for the forms we do and don't find attested, and the importance of pragmatic considerations in the interpretation of meaning.

Appendix: data tables and charts

TABLE A1   All data, optatives excluded

Pers.	Tense/Mood	Avert.	Correct.	Inhib.	Instruc.	Interv.	Preempt.	Wish	Total
1st		4	2	8	–	4	–	–	18
	aor. sjv.	1	2	–	–	3	–	–	6
	prs. sjv.	3	–	8	–	1	–	–	12
2nd		56	65	33	67	14	7	–	242
	prs. ipv.	47	64	30	12	–	–	–	153
	prf. ipv.	7	–	3	1	–	–	–	11
	aor. ipv.	1	1	–	1	–	1	–	4
	aor. sjv.	–	–	–	2	14	6	–	22
	prs. inf.	1	–	–	47	–	–	–	48
	aor. inf.	–	–	–	4	–	–	–	4
3rd		17	7	7	17	15	–	16	79
	prs. ipv.	12	7	7	12	–	–	2	40
	prf. ipv.	3	–	–	–	–	–	–	3
	aor. ipv.	2	–	–	–	–	–	–	2
	aor. sjv.	–	–	–	–	14	–	12	26
	prs. sjv.	–	–	–	–	1	–	2	3
	prs. inf.	–	–	–	3	–	–	–	3
	aor. inf.	–	–	–	2	–	–	–	2
Total		77	74	48	84	33	7	16	339

TABLE A2   Secure data only, optatives excluded

Pers.	Tense/Mood	Avert.	Correct.	Inhib.	Instruc.	Interv.	Preempt.	Wish	Total
1st		**4**	**2**	**7**	**–**	**3**	**–**	**–**	**16**
	aor. sjv.	1	2	–	–	2	–	–	5
	prs. sjv.	3	–	7	–	1	–	–	11
2nd		**55**	**65**	**33**	**53**	**3**	**7**	**–**	**216**
	prs. ipv.	47	64	30	12	–	–	–	153
	prf. ipv.	7	–	3	1	–	–	–	11
	aor. ipv.	1	1	–	–	–	1	–	3
	aor. sjv.	–	–	–	1	3	6	–	10
	prs. inf.	–	–	–	35	–	–	–	35
	aor. inf.	–	–	–	4	–	–	–	4
3rd		**17**	**7**	**7**	**15**	**3**	**–**	**2**	**51**
	prs. ipv.	12	7	7	12	–	–	2	40
	prf. ipv.	3	–	–	–	–	–	–	3
	aor. ipv.	2	–	–	–	–	–	–	2
	aor. sjv.	–	–	–	–	2	–	–	2
	prs. sjv.	–	–	–	–	1	–	–	1
	prs. inf.	–	–	–	1	–	–	–	1
	aor. inf.	–	–	–	2	–	–	–	2
Total		**76**	**74**	**47**	**68**	**9**	**7**	**2**	**283**

FIGURE A1   All data, optatives excluded
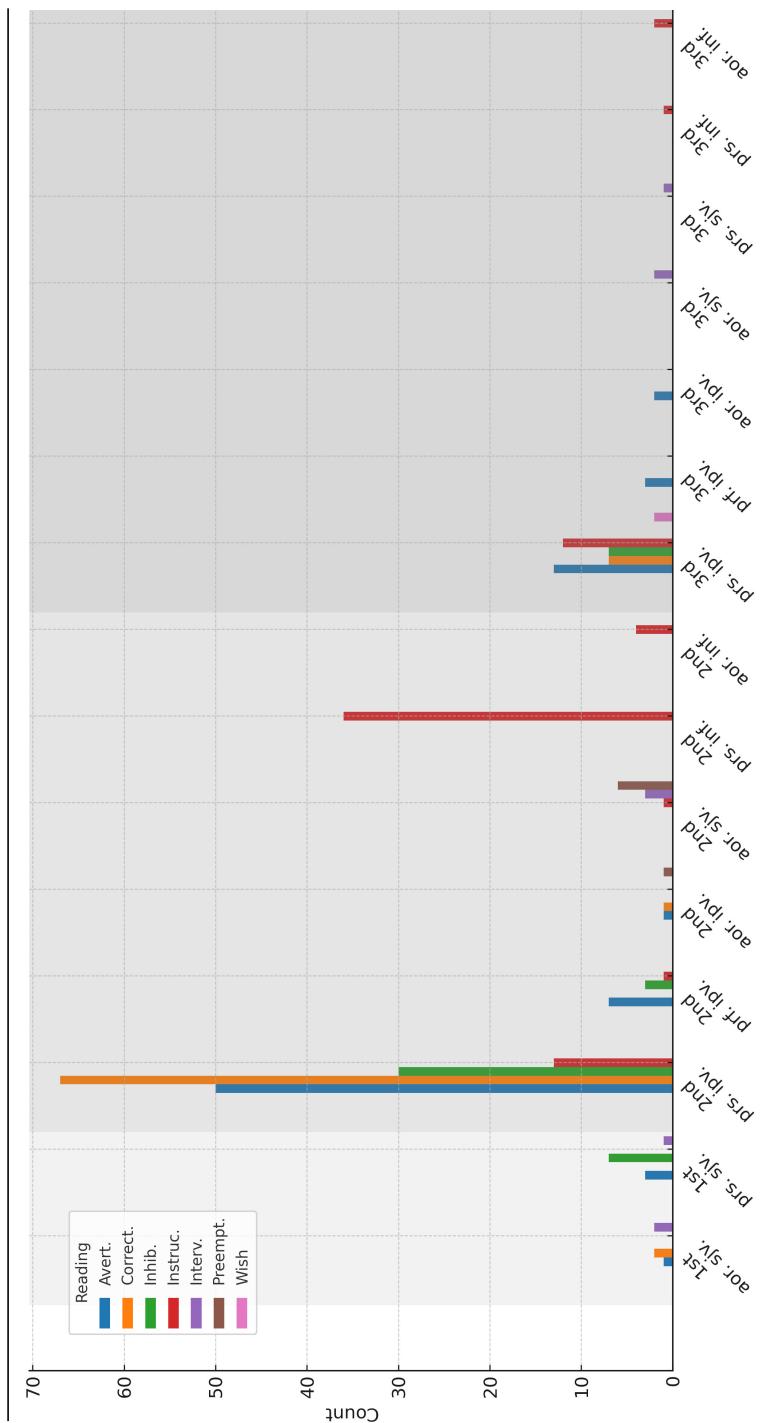
FIGURE A2 Secure data only, optatives excluded
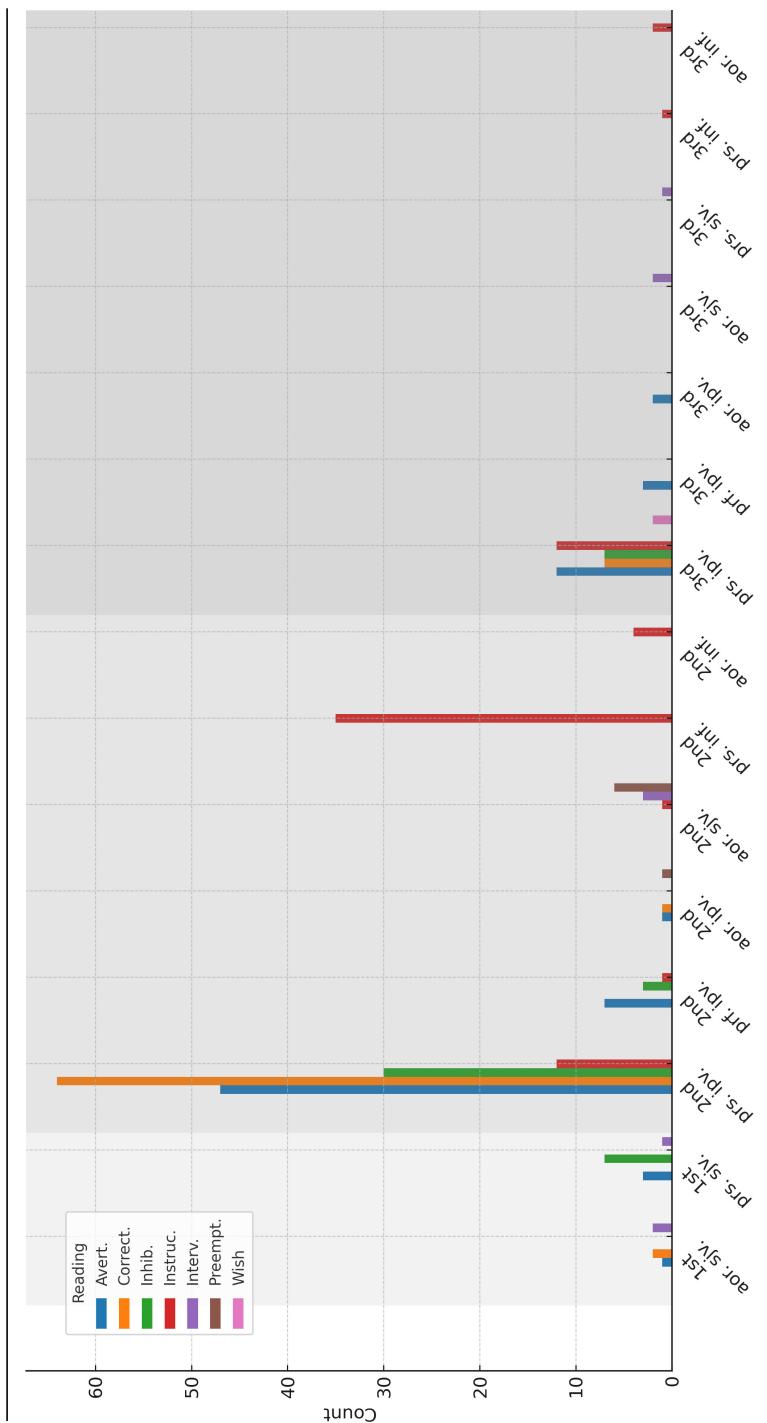
Acknowledgments

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