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An Analysis of the Modal Particle in Homer Based on the Instances of the Root **wek* “speak”¹

Problemstellung and previous scholarship

According to the standard Greek grammars,² the use of the MP ἄν is governed by the following strict rules in Classical Greek prose: it is mandatory in the main clause and any other subordinate clause (except the conditionals) with a potential optative, an irrealis indicative and an iterative indicative and forbidden with the same forms in a conditional clause (exceptions are attested, but generally corrected by the different editors);³ it is mandatory with a subjunctive in any subordinate clause, except in the purpose clauses (where it can appear) and clauses after *verba timendi* (where it never appears); it is forbidden with a future indicative and a subjunctive in the main clause

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² GOODWIN (1890: 54-64); KÜHNER & GERTH (1898: 200-260, 1904: 347-557); GILDERSLEEVE (1900: 168-190); SMYTH & MESSING (1956: 491-527); HUMBERT (1960: 110-132, 182-246); DELAUNOIS (1988: 76-134) and RIJKSBARON (2002: 39-94). Recent treatments of the particle in Attic are GOLDSTEIN (2012), dealing with the repetition of the particle, and BECK, MALAMUD & OSADCHA (2012), discussing the use in conditional clauses. The only detailed historical syntax of Greek is STAHL (1907) and a more recent work (which treats the Mycenaean data) is still missing.

³ The standard grammars follow this editorial practice, but some grammars are more cautious and point out that the many exceptions cannot simply be disregarded as transmission errors (SCHWYZER & DEBRUNNER 1950: 324-325; HUMBERT 1960:120; CRESPO 1997: 50; MONTANARI 2015: 127). Even STAHL (1907: 298-302) who argued for the correction of the instances where the particle was missing, nevertheless voiced some doubts, as he admitted that the amount of instances to be corrected was relatively high.

(instances of these uses are attested, but they are generally to be corrected by the editors).⁴ In Homeric Greek, not only ἄν is used as MP, but also κεν; moreover, a future indicative and a subjunctive in the main clause can be used with an MP as well and so can optatives in conditional clauses and, inversely, the MP can also be left out. The differences between the presence and absence of the MP have not been conclusively explained. In what follows, I will discuss the suggestions that have been made to account for the different usages in Homer.⁵

1. Almost immediately, it was noted that the particle could be used to mark some doubts to the statement.⁶
2. The second explanation was that it described the conditions under which the action occurred and that it was used in sentences with a conditional meaning.⁷ The problem with this assumption (and the previous one) is that it does not explain why the particle is missing in some conditional clauses and relative clauses with a (quasi-conditional) meaning.
3. The third explanation was that the particle was used in sentences that referred to a specific instance and that it remained absent in generic statements. This explanation, first made by Hartung and von Bäumllein,⁸ was reiterated by Delbrück (who added that the prospective subjunctive could be used with an MP, but the voluntative one – i.e. the one used in wishes and exhortations – could not)⁹ and accepted by the standard Homeric grammars of Monro and Chantraine and scholars after them.¹⁰

⁴ HERMANN (1831) provided a monumental analysis of all instances of Greek literature known at that time; since that work, a canonical use seems to have been established and deviations from what Hermann explained were no longer accepted (see already HARTUNG 1833: 281 for criticism: *allein ist das seltene Vorkommen einer Erscheinung ein Grund zu ihrer Tilgung?* – words still valid today).

⁵ The most recent surveys are GERÖ (2000); COLVIN (2012) and DE MOL (2015). It was not addressed in the Oxford or Cambridge Commentaries. In the new *Basler Kommentar*, instances with MP are discussed (as e.g. *Iliad* 1,60 and 1,64), but the absence is not (see following note).

⁶ This had been noted in the very early treatises by DEVARIUS (1587: 45, edited by Klotz in KLOTZ & DEVARIUS 1835: 26) and HOOGEVEEN (1769, edited by Schütz in HOOGEVEEN & SCHÜTZ 1813: 30-34). It has been reiterated by LATA CZ & NÜNLIST & STOEVE SANDT (2002: 51: *betont die Potentialität noch stärker als ohne*).

⁷ See already VON THIERSCH (1818: 533-538); BERNHARDY (1829: 397); HERMANN (1831) and in 1832 in the *Philological Museum* on page 102 (the author is only known by his initials H.M.).

⁸ HARTUNG (1832: 294-297); VON BÄUMLEIN (1846: 208-245, especially 219-220).

⁹ DELBRÜCK (1871: 83-86), but his explanation was somewhat unclear as he also spoke about *das Eintreten der Handlung*, but on page 86 he stated that the particle was much more absent in generic statements than in specific ones. See also GILDERSLEEVE (1882), who applied it to Pindar.

¹⁰ MONRO (1891: 250, 259, 266, 327-335); KÜHNER & GERTH (1898: 208); LEAF (1900: 17); BRUGMANN (1900: 499); CHANTRAINE (1948: 279, 1953: 210-211); SCHWYZER & DEBRUNNER (1950: 305-306); VALGIGLIO (1955: 50); RUIGH (1971 *passim* but especially page

This explanation seems convincing, but the number of exceptions is considerable and they cannot all be emended away by changing $\tau\epsilon$ into $\kappa\epsilon$ and vice versa (as Monro tried to do).¹¹ Ruijgh showed that many instances Monro considered to be generic and to be in need of correction, were not (but this does not explain all the exceptions).¹²

4. Very early on, there were doubts as to the exact meaning and use. Already von Bäumlein, who argued that there was a distinction between generic and specific instances, also stated that there were many contexts in which one could not distinguish between the forms with and without MP;¹³ moreover, most commentaries and lexica mention “wohl, zwar” as meaning, but did not discuss when it was used and when it remained absent.¹⁴ This doubt has also led to the assumption that the use and absence of the MP were metrically motivated.
5. Other scholars assumed the MP had an emphatic value.¹⁵ In her study on the $\delta\pi\omega\varsigma$ clauses in Attic, Amigues argued that $\delta\pi\omega\varsigma \xi\nu$ with the subjunctive was more emphatic and outspoken than the simple $\delta\pi\omega\varsigma$ with the subjunctive,¹⁶ and recently, Gerö analysed $\xi\nu$ as “intensional” (*sic*).¹⁷ There is one important shortcoming, however: if the meaning were indeed intensive, one would expect the particle to occur with exhortative subjunctives and in wishes, but these subjunctives are almost never constructed with an MP. Moreover, Amigues’s explanation of $\delta\pi\omega\varsigma \xi\nu$ as being the more emphatic form is not necessarily correct: as many instances occur in legal texts (inscriptions) and in oratory, an explanation of the MP as particularising is also possible.¹⁸
6. Howorth observed that the “specific instance theory” had too many exceptions and could therefore not be correct, and suggested that the MP was originally only used in main clauses with verbs referring to a future action. From the main clause, it would then have spread to the subordinate clauses depending on those

275 and pages 286-302, 1992: 80-82); DUNKEL (1990, 2014b: 33-35, 397, 430); WAKKER (1994: 207-209 with reference to Monro, Basset and Ruijgh).

¹¹ MONRO (1891: 259, 266-267).

¹² RUIJGH (1971: 286-288).

¹³ VON BÄUMLEIN (1846: 216-217).

¹⁴ A good example is EBELING (1885: 691-735), who described all the uses but did not discuss the absence. The commentaries by FAESI (1858, 1860) and AMEIS (1870) and AMEIS & HENTZE described the meaning as “wohl”, but do not speak about the examples where the MP is missing.

¹⁵ As can be seen in Faesi’s explanation of *Iliad* 1,137: *die kecke doch gemessene Zuversicht des Sprechenden* (FAESI 1858: 50). But see also previous note. The emphatic value seems also accepted in LATACZ & NÜNLIST & STOEVESEN (2002: 50,52) where they state that the MP strengthens the potential value of the optative when used in a protasis and emphasises the expected outcome, when used in a relative clause with final nuance.

¹⁶ AMIGUES (1977: 142-169).

¹⁷ GERÖ (2000).

¹⁸ See already KÜHNER & GERTH (1904: 385-386) and RUIJGH (1971: 276). For the use of $\delta\pi\omega\varsigma \xi\nu$ in inscriptions, see MEISTERHANS (1885: 109). For criticism of Amigues’s theory, see also BERS (1984: 164-165).

future actions. In Attic, certain clauses generalised the use, while in others the absence became the rule.¹⁹

This cannot account for the examples in which the MP is missing in the main clause nor does it explain why in Homer the MP could be missing and present within the same category (although one could argue that the transition was still in progress). If his theory were correct, one would expect the vast majority of instances in the main clause to have an MP (including the wishes and desideratives), but this is not the case.

7. Also Basset noted that the particularising theory had too many exceptions and adapted it to state that the MP was only used when an action near to the speaker was related (*actualité du locuteur*), but not when actions in a remote past or future were described.²⁰
8. The validity of this assumption has been doubted, because there were too many exceptions to the rule,²¹ and the use was then considered to be “poetic” or “metrically motivated”.²² The metrical explanation can always be invoked in Homer²³ and there are several instances in which the particle is not metrically secure; yet, this theory does not explain why in some instances $\kappa(\epsilon)$ was used and in other $\tau(\epsilon)$, both being metrically equivalent.
9. Finally, Willmott argued that the particles did not contain any additional meaning and were in the process of being grammaticalised as part of the eventual and potential constructions.²⁴ This is only partly true; as she stated herself, the MP was used much less in the relative clauses with a generic meaning than in those with a specific meaning and in the purpose clauses of the *Odyssey* the MP was more often absent than present.²⁵
10. Independent from the exact meaning, it was also noted that in a sequence of optatives and subjunctives the MP usually only appeared with the first form.²⁶

¹⁹ HOWORTH (1958).

²⁰ BASSET (1988, 1989: 204-205).

²¹ HOWORTH (1958); BASSET (1988: 29, 1989:205); WILLMOTT (2007: 199-210). See also above. Many exceptions involve the use of the so-called *τε épique*. CHANTRAINE (1953: 349) had some reservations on the “particularising” meaning (in spite of his own analyses), as did GONDA (1956: 147-148), but he did not ascribe his doubts to the number of exceptions.

²² Already DEVARIUS (1587: 46; KLOTZ & DEVARIUS 1835: 27); HERMANN (1831:143) and later EBELING (1885: 692) had observed this. WAKKER (1994: 207) admitted that the metre played a role, but did not consider it to be the sole factor.

²³ The metre has been used as explanation for the augment use, the use of the tenses and the use of the dual. In all of these instances, the metre played – in my opinion – only a limited role.

²⁴ WILLMOTT (2007: 199-210). PROBERT (2015: 85) referred to Willmott to state that the presence or absence of the MP did not change the meaning of the relative clause.

²⁵ WILLMOTT (2007: 202-204); the data of the purpose clauses could be found in WEBER (1884) already, but she did not quote that book.

²⁶ MADVIG (1847: 152); KRÜGER (1853: 181); FROHBERGER (1867); KÜHNER & GERTH (1898: 248-249); GOODWIN (1890: 63-64); SMYTH & MESSING (1956: 400); RODRÍGUEZ-ADRADOS *et al.* (1986: 26); GERÖ (2001: 193).

This is a sort of *conjunction reduction*: if one verb is already marked for particularity, it is not necessary to mark it with the following verb forms.²⁷

In what follows, I will use as working hypothesis a combination of the explanations by Hartung - von Bäumlein and Basset, which can be summarised as follows: the MP was used in specific instances with a link to the present situation, and was omitted when the verb form described a generic instance or an action in a more remote future, and check if this is confirmed by the facts. Limitations in time and space prevent me from discussing the *Grundbedeutung* of the optative and subjunctive and the difference in meaning between these two modes.²⁸

An analysis of the instances of **wek* in Homer

I will now analyse of the instances of *ἔπειτα* and its compounds in the subjunctive and optative.

1. The corpus provides ample evidence for the use of the MP in specific instances with a link to the present situation and its absence in generic instances.

In the three passages quoted below, two refer to a specific instance of speaking by a defined subject and one to a generic *tis speech*:²⁹

τόν γ' εἴ πως σὺ δύναιο λοχησάμενος λελαβέσθαι,
ὅς **κέν** τοι εἴπησιν ὁδὸν καὶ μέτρα κελεύθου
νόστον θ', ὥς ἐπὶ πόντον ἐλεύσσαι ἰχθυόεντα.
καὶ δέ **κέ** τοι εἴπησι, διοτρεφές, αἴ κ' ἐθέλῃσθα (Odyssey 4,388-391).³⁰

“And if you are somehow able to catch him in an ambush and lay your hands on him, he will then reveal you the road and the ways to find your way home, how you have to go through the sea full of fish. And he will tell you, one nurtured by the gods, what you want (to know)”

καὶ νύ τις ὧδ' εἴπησι κακώτερος ἀντιβολήσας (Odyssey 6,275).

“And now so a lesser character might speak when he meets us:”

²⁷ This principle was first noted for Greek by KIPARSKY (1968), but he did not discuss the MP among the instances of possible reductions.

²⁸ The literature is large, see most recently TICHY (2006) and WILLMOTT (2007), and earlier, DELBRÜCK (1871, 1879); MASIUS (1885); MUTZBAUER (1903a, 1903b, 1908); METHNER (1908); WALTER (1923); GONDA (1956); BRUNEL (1980), besides the discussions in the standard grammars of KÜHNER & GERTH (1898: 217-289) and SCHWYZER & DEBRUNNER (1950: 301-338, with a bibliography until 1950).

²⁹ CHANTRAINE (1953: 211). MONRO (1891: 251-252) mentioned both instances, but did not discuss the difference between them. MUTZBAUER (1908: 14) discussed the instances with MP and linked the MP with the concrete situations, but he did not address the one without.

³⁰ In what follows, the optative or subjunctive form and the particle will be put in bold face; if the particle is missing, the verb form will be underlined.

ὅς **κέν** τοι **εἴπησιν** ὁδὸν καὶ μέτρα κελεύθου (*Odyssey* 10,539).

“He will then reveal you the road and the ways to find your way home.”

The passages quoted above are probably the best examples to illustrate the difference between presence and absence of the MP. 4,388-391, Eidothea pointed out that her father Proteus would answer any question that was asked. As she referred to a specific person, the MP was used.³¹ 6,275, Nausikaa feared that an undefined Phaiakian might see her in company of Odysseus and would chastise her for choosing a foreign husband. *Odyssey* 6,275 relates how an undefined character could say something about her and Odysseus, while *Odyssey* 4,388-391 describes a well-defined person, namely Proteus. The difference in definiteness explains the use and absence of the MP.³² In the second instance, it has also been argued that the subjunctive *εἴπησι* was dependent on the negative purpose clause introduced by *μή* in line 273,³³ but I think that line 275 was a main clause, especially because there is a parenthetical indicative clause between the sentence introduced by *μή* and the *εἴπησι* sentence. In the third instance, Kirke explains Odysseus how Odysseus has to descend into the Hades and make Teiresias drink blood. Once he has done that, Teiresias will come to him and speak the truth. As this instance refers to the speech of a well-defined person on a specific occasion in the immediate future, the MP is used.³⁴

In the following examples, the MP is used in the main clause referring to a specific instance or an instance linked to the current situation:

τῶν δ' ἄλλων τίς **κέν** ᾗσι φρεσὶν οὐνόματ' **εἴποι** (*Iliad* 17,260).

“Who could name the names of the others in his heart?”

In this verse, Homer stated that there were so many Greek warriors present at that time, that no man could possibly name them all.

αὐτίκ' **ἄν** ἐξείποι Ἀγαμέμνονι ποιμένι λαῶν (*Iliad* 24,654).

“and he would immediately inform Agamemnon, the shepherd of men.”

The verse describes the warning by Akhilleus that Priam should make sure that nobody see him in his tent, because if somebody were to see him, he would inform Agamemnon straightaway. If this were to happen, the return of Hektor's body would become impossible. The link with the present situation is expressed by *αὐτίκα*.

ταῦτα δ' ἅ μ' εἰρωτᾷς καὶ λίσσῃαι, οὐκ **ἄν** ἔγωγε
ἄλλα παρὲξ **εἴποιμι** παρὰ κλισίῳ οὐδ' ἀπατήσω
(*Odyssey* 4,347-348=17,138-139).

³¹ CHANTRAINE (1953: 211). This distinction was not addressed in FAESI (1860:136, 191); MERRY & RIDDELL (1876: 167-168); WEST (1988) or HAINSWORTH (1988); GARVIE (1994: 150) noted the difference in usage, but did not explain it.

³² CHANTRAINE (1953: 211).

³³ FAESI (1860: 191).

³⁴ This was not addressed in HEUBECK (1989).

“Those things you ask and beg me for, I will not speak away from them nor about other things nor will I deceive you.”

The connection with the speaker and the present situation is clear: the speaker responds to a request made by the hearer.

καί **κ'** ἐλθὼν πρὸς δώματ' Ὀδυσσεύος θείοιο
ἀγγελίην **εἵποιμι** περίφρονι Πηνελοπείῃ (Odyssey 15,313-314).

“I would also (like to) go to the house of godly Odysseus and tell clever Penelope the news.”

παιδί δέ **κεν** **εἵποιμι** ἔπος, τό κε κέρδιον εἶη (Odyssey 18,166).

“I would tell the word to my son, that would be better.”

ὦ φίλοι, ἤδη μὲν **κεν** ἐγὼν **εἵποιμι** καὶ ἄμμι (Odyssey 22,262).

“Friends, now then I would say it to you as well.”

In all the instances mentioned above, the speakers speak about their own immediate actions. As such, the action refers to a specific instance related to the speaker's world and the MP is used.

In the following instance the MP is used in a conditional sentence referring to a specific instance closely related to the speaker.

σμπάντων Δαναῶν, οὐδ' ἦν Ἀγαμέμνονα **εἵπης** (Iliad 1,90).

“(No-one) of all the Danaans (will lay hands on you), not even if you name Agamemnon.”

In this verse, Akhilleus assures Kalkhas that nothing will happen to him, not even if he states that Agamemnon is the reason for the plague in the Greek army. The MP is used because Akhilleus is referring to a very concrete instance: the fact that Kalkhas requested protection in the first place, had already revealed (albeit not *nominatim*) that Agamemnon was the culprit. The MP is metrically secure here, because reading εἰ Ἀγαμέμνονα would require the diphthong in the conjunction not to be shortened in hiatus, which is possible, but yet less common.³⁵

In the following instance the MP is used in a temporal sentence referring to a specific instance closely related to the speaker.

ἔσται μὰν ὅτ' **ἄν** αὖτε φίλην γλαυκῶπιδα **εἵπῃ** (Iliad 8,373).

“The day will come, when he will call me again his beloved owl-eyed (girl).”

This verse is pronounced by Pallas Athene when she and Here have just tried to resist Zeus and have succeeded in angering him. She says that Zeus never remains angry with her for a long period. The MP is used, because the verse refers to the moment when Zeus will call her again his loved one.

³⁵ VON HARTEL (1874a, especially 330-333); SJÖLUND (1938: 43-70).

When a speaker asked (someone in) the audience to obey the words he was about to pronounce (only masculine speakers of this formula are attested), the following formula was used:

ἀλλ' ἄγεθ' ὥς ἄν ἐγὼ εἴπω πειθώμεθα πάντες (attested 10 times).³⁶

“But let us now all obey (the words) as I will speak them.”

κέκλυτε δὴ νῦν μευ, Ἰθακήσιοι, ὅττι κεν εἴπω (attested 4 times).³⁷

“Now listen to me, men of Ithaka, to what I will say.”

μῦθον ἀτιμήσατε πεφασμένον ὃν κ' εὔ εἴπω (Iliad 14,127).

“You could not dishonour any spoken word that I will (now) speak.”

ξεῖνε φίλ', εἰ καὶ μοι νεμεσήσῃς ὅττι κεν εἴπω (Odyssey 1,158).

“Dear guest, will you feel anger towards me for what I will say?”

Ἀντίνο', εἴ πέρ μοι νεμεσήσῃς ὅττι κεν εἴπω (Odyssey 1,389).

“Antinoos, will you feel anger towards me for what I will say?”

κήδεσιν. ἀλλ' ἄγε νῦν ξυνίει ἔπος, ὅττι κεν εἴπω (Odyssey 19,378).

“with sorrows. But come on, obey the word that I will speak.”

κρῆνον νῦν καὶ ἐμοὶ δειλῇ ἔπος, ὅττι κεν εἴπω (Odyssey 20,115).

“Make come true for me, wretched one, the word that I will speak.”

The MP referred to the specific words that were about to be spoken.

εἴμι μὲν, οὐδ' ἄλιον ἔπος ἔσσεται ὅττι κεν εἴπη. (Iliad 24,92).

“I will go. The word will not be fruitless, if he says it.”

In this instance, Priam had just been instructed by Hermes to go to the camp of the Greek army and to Akhilleus' tent in order to ransom Hektor's body. In this verse, he told Hekabe that he was planning to do that and said that he was certain that he would succeed, because he had received the confirmation of a god. The MP refers to the specific speech (and assurance) by Hermes.

γαμβρὸς ἐμὸς θύγατέρ τε, τίθεσθ' ὄνομ' ὅττι κεν εἴπω (Odyssey 19,406).

“My son-in-law and daughter, give him the name that I will say.”

This verse is pronounced by Eurykleia when she is about to wash Odysseus' feet (whom she has not yet recognised). She relates how Odysseus's grandfather Autolykos told her, his daughter and son-in-law the name they had to give to Odysseus. As this

³⁶ The instances are *Iliad* 2,139; 9,26; 9,704; 12,75; 14,74; 14,370; 15,294; 18,297 and *Odyssey* 12,213; 13,179.

³⁷ The instances are *Odyssey* 2,25; 2,161; 2,229; 24,454.

refers to a specific instance with close connection to speaker and addressee, the MP is used.

In the following instances, the MP refers to a specific instance as well, but it is not metrically secure (i.e. one could theoretically remove it from the text and not violate the metre).

ὅς κ' εἴποι ὅ τι τόσσον ἐχώσατο Φοῖβος Ἀπόλλων (Iliad 1,64).

“who could tell us why Phoibos Apollon is so enraged.”

This instance also seems to be a good example for the use of *κε* as a particle in a specific context, but the MP is not metrically secure here and Bentley suggested to remove the particle to restore the digamma,³⁸ but this is not necessary, as not all instances of digamma are observed. After the Greek army was hit by the plague, Akhilleus suggested that somebody should tell them why Apollo was so enraged. In a relative clause with final or consecutive meaning, the optative is very often accompanied by the MP *κε*, and indicates the likely consequence of the action.³⁹ The augment in ἐχώσατο also refers to the specific situation,⁴⁰ and might have perfect meaning “(has become angry and) is now so enraged”.⁴¹

ἦν τίς τοι εἴπῃσι βροτῶν, ἢ ὅσσαν ἀκούσης (Odyssey 1,282).

“If some mortal tells you or if you hear a voice ...”

ἦν τίς μοι εἴπῃσι βροτῶν ἢ ὅσσαν ἀκούσω (Odyssey 2,216).

“if some mortal tells me or if I hear some voice ...”

These instances refer to Athene’s suggestion to Telemakhos to go to Pylos and Sparta to inquire with Nestor and Menelaos about his father, Odysseus, and to Telemakhos’ positive response to Athene’s suggestion. At first sight, the presence of the MP seems surprising, because the subject is undefined. It is true that one could read εἰ without violating the metre, but I believe that the MP is used, because the speaker is referring to an immediate action in the future: “I/you will now go and see if some mortal can tell me/you.” It is distinct from the *tis* speeches that refer to an imagined future.

ἦν χ' ἡμῖν σάφα εἴποι, ὅτε πρότερός γε πύθοιτο (Odyssey 2,31).

“(Or has he heard a message) that he might clearly tell us, when he heard it before us.”

³⁸ Bentley’s conjecture was quoted in MAEHL (1868: 163) and WRIGHT (1884: 124 – Wright was the librarian of Trinity Library in Cambridge and published in *Bentleiana* all of Bentley’s remarks on Homer). BEKKER (1858a: 8, 406) read ὅς εἴπῃ (in the subjunctive).

³⁹ CHANTRAINE (1953: 249); LATACZ & NÜNLIST & STOEVESSANDT (2002: 52 with reference to Chantraine).

⁴⁰ BAKKER (2005: 118), see already PLATT (1891).

⁴¹ LEJNIEKS (1964: 46-47). This is what PLATT (1891) called “the perfect-aorists”.

This verse is pronounced by Aigyptios, the father of one of Odysseus's men. He was grieving for his son for a long time, because he had not received any information about him. When he heard that an assembly was being announced in Ithaka, he was surprised and wanted to know who the speaker would be and if that speaker had any news about Odysseus and his men. As such, the particle is used in this instance, because it links the future situation with the present.

ἦν χ' ὅμῃν σάφα $\epsilon\lambda\pi\omega$, ὅτε πρότερός γε πυθοίμην (*Odyssey* 2,43).

“(I have not heard a message) that I will clearly tell you, when I would have heard it first.”

This is the reaction by the herald in the assembly to Aigyptios' request and thus clearly refers to a specific instance.

In the last two examples, the MP is not secure, as one could remove χ' and therefore, we cannot be entirely certain about the use of the MP.

2. Inversely, the MP was not used in the instances with an undefined subject and/or when the future tense was accompanied by the adverb ποτέ. This word means “someday, some time” and is unspecified. It is therefore less frequently combined with the specific value of the MP $\kappa\epsilon/\acute{\alpha}\nu$: ποτέ is combined 46 times with a future, subjunctive or optative,⁴² and in 39 instances there is no MP.⁴³ The instances are (the instances in the negative purpose and wish clauses are not included):

καὶ ποτέ τις $\epsilon\lambda\pi\eta\sigma\iota\nu$ ἰδὼν κατὰ δάκρυ χέουσας (*Iliad* 6,459).

“And someday someone will say, looking at (you) shedding tears:”

καὶ ποτέ τις $\epsilon\lambda\pi\eta\sigma\iota$ καὶ ὀψιγόνων ἀνθρώπων (*Iliad* 7,87).

“And someday someone of the later born humans will say:”

καὶ νῦν τις ὥδ' $\epsilon\lambda\pi\eta\sigma\iota$ κακώτερος ἀντιβολήσας (*Odyssey* 6,275).

“And now so a lesser character might speak when he meets us:”

This instance has been discussed above already.

⁴² The instances are *Iliad* 1,166; 1,205; 1,213; 1,234; 1,240; 1,340; 2,97; 2,325; 2,379; 4,164; 4,182; 6,448; 6,459; 6,462; 6,479; 7,87; 7,91; 7,343; 8,148; 8,150; 9,495; 10,453; 13,625; 14,481; 15,40; 18,283; 22,106; 23,575 and *Odyssey* 1,308; 2,76; 2,137; 2,203; 2,256; 2,342; 3,216; 8,461; 17,249; 18,141; 19,22; 19,81; 21,324; 21,403; 24,196.

⁴³ The instances are *Iliad* 1,213; 1,234; 1,240; 1,340; 2,97; 2,325; 2,379; 4,182; 6,459; 6,462; 6,479; 7,87; 7,91; 7,343; 8,148; 8,150; 9,495; 10,453; 13,625; 14,481; 15,40; 18,283; 22,106; 23,575 and *Odyssey* 1,308; 2,137; 2,203; 2,256; 2,342; 8,461; 17,249; 18,141; 19,22; 19,81; 21,324; 21,403; 24,196.

All these undefined instances appear in what are called *tis-Reden*.⁴⁴ This term refers to a speech by a group of anonymous characters. There are two types, speeches referring to the future and speeches with past reference. The ones with future reference were inserted as *speech-within-a-speech* in a speech of a famous character and had the function to discuss possible consequences of the speaker's actions.⁴⁵ As they describe speeches by an unknown character, are only imagined in the speaker's mind and do not refer to a specific instance with specific speaker, the MP is not used in them (several of them occur in wishes and purpose clauses).

3. When a repeated action was described, the MP was much more absent than present.⁴⁶ This is clear in the following instance:

δῶρ' ἀποαιρεῖσθαι ὅς τις σέθεν ἀντίον ἐΐπῃ (Iliad 1,230).
 "to take away the gift from whomever who speaks back at you."

In this case, one would expect a MP to occur, because Akhilleus is referring to his specific situation, but he makes the situation more generic, and states that Agamemnon always takes the gifts from people who dare to stand up to him.⁴⁷ This is seen in the (iterative) present form ἀποαιρεῖσθαι⁴⁸ instead of the expected aorist, in the use of the generic ὅς τις,⁴⁹ and in the subjunctive ἐΐπῃ without MP. As such, Agamemnon's behaviour is not interpreted as an individual *faux pas* but an illustration of his systemic abuse of power. Ruijgh noted that the MP was used with the relative ὅς, but much less often with the indefinite relative and generic ὅς τις.⁵⁰ This agrees with the specifying value of the MP: when a specific person is referred to, the MP is used, but not when a generic situation is described.

4. When an action in the remote past was described, the MP was not used.

τῷ δόμεν ὅς μετὰ τοῖσι δίκην ἰθύντατα ἐΐποι (Iliad 18,508).
 "to give to him (sc. that herald) who among them rendered judgement in the most straightforward manner."

⁴⁴ The term was coined by FINGERLE (1939: 283-93). The first in-depth study about them was HENTZE (1905), who compared them with the chorus in the tragedies and used the term *Chorreden*.

⁴⁵ WILSON (1979); DE JONG (1987).

⁴⁶ DELBRÜCK (1871: 172-176); HENTZE (1907); HOWORTH (1955); HETTRICH (1992: 266-267, 1996: 136).

⁴⁷ AMEIS (1868a: 18); LATACZ & NÜNLIST & STOEVEsandt (2002: 98).

⁴⁸ AMEIS (1868a: 18); KIRK (1985: 77). I agree here with Chantraine's analysis in his *Grammaire homérique* and with VAN EMDE BOAS & HUITINK (2010) and GARCÍA-RAMÓN (2012) that the difference in tenses in subjunctive, imperative, optative and infinitive was aspect-based and not random, as FOURNIER (1946b: 60-65); CHANTRAINE (1966) and BASSET (2004a and 2004b) argued.

⁴⁹ KIRK (1985: 77); LATACZ & NÜNLIST & STOEVEsandt (2002: 98).

⁵⁰ RUIJGH (1971: 448-449); BASSET (1989: 204-205).

This verse occurs in the depictions of Akhilleus's new shield made by Hephaistos. Homer describes how one can see on the shield that in a city far away in distant times a blood feud is settled by a court of elders. As these verses describe an event in a remote mythical world, the link with the present is missing, and consequently no MP is used.

5. The MP is missing in exhortative clauses, purpose clauses,⁵¹ wishes and after *verba timendi* (which may have been an original wish construction after all⁵²).

νῦν δ' αἰνῶς δειδοίκα κατὰ φρένα μή σε παρείπη (*Iliad* 1,555).
 “Now I fear in my heart that she has swayed you.”

μή ποτέ τις εὔησι κακώτερος ἄλλος Ἀχαιῶν (*Odyssey* 21,324).
 “Lest some other and lesser of the Akhaians says someday ...”

This is a speech introduction formula which occurs in the speech of the suitor Eurymakhos. After the suitors failed to string the bow and to shoot the arrows through the axes, Penelope suggested the beggar be given a chance to shoot as well. Eurymakhos then responded that it would be a cause of great shame for all the suitors, if the beggar were to succeed. The clause is a negative wish but also has the idea of fear in it.⁵³

ὄφρ' εὔπω τά με θυμός ἐνὶ στήθεσσι κελεύει (attested 9 times).⁵⁴
 “So that I may speak what my heart orders me in my chest.”

The absence of the MP in the purpose and exhortative clauses is an important argument against the “intensive” theory, because especially exhortative sentences have an intensified meaning, and one would therefore expect the MP to appear in these contexts, if its meaning were to intensify the verbal action. The same applies to negative purpose clauses, because this is something the speaker really does not want to happen, and therefore the “intensive” particle would have been expected.

The instances in the corpus are

ὄφρ' εὔπω τά με θυμός ἐνὶ στήθεσσι κελεύει (attested 9 times).
 “So that I may speak what my heart orders me in my chest.”

⁵¹ WEBER (1884: 32-38); MONRO (1891: 262); CHANTRAINE (1953: 266-273). The only in-depth investigation of the Homeric purpose clauses is WEBER (1884); for an historical comparison between the Homeric and the RigVedic final clauses, see HETTRICH (1987).

⁵² DELBRÜCK (1871: 23); KÜHNER & GERTH (1904: 390-391); HENTZE (1907: 368); CHANTRAINE (1953: 208-209, 288); BRUNEL (1980: 251).

⁵³ AMEIS & HENTZE (1901: 87); CHANTRAINE (1953: 208); FERNÁNDEZ-GALIANO (1992: 186).

⁵⁴ The instances are *Iliad* 7,68; 7,349; 7,369; 8,6 and *Odyssey* 7,187; 8,27; 17,469; 18,352; 21,276.

ὄφρα τις ὧδ' εἴπησιν Ἀχαιῶν τε Τρώων τε (Iliad 7,300).

“So that someone of the Akhaians and Trojans may thus say:”

ὄφρα τις ὧδ' εἴπη Λυκίων πύκα θωρηκτάων (Iliad 12,317).

“So that someone of the close-armoured Lykians may speak thus:”

ὄφρ' ἥ μὲν μετὰ λαὸν Ἀχαιῶν χαλκοχιτώνων
ἔλθῃ, καὶ εἴπησι Ποσειδάωνι ἄνακτι (Iliad 15,56-57).

“So that she may go to the people of the Akhaians with their bronze armour and tell the ruler Poseidon ...”

ὄφρα τί μιν πρωτιείπῃ ἀμειβόμενος ἐπέεσσιν (Iliad 22,329).

“So that he could respond to him answering with words.”

ὥς μεμνέωτο δρόμου καὶ ἀληθείην ἀποείπῃ (Iliad 23,361).

“So that he could remember the race track and judge correctly.”

ὄφρα τί οἱ εἴπω πυκινὸν ἔπος, ὥς κεν Ἀχιλλεὺς (Iliad 24,75).

“So that I can speak a close word to her to make sure that Akhilleus (accepts the money).”

ἄλκιμος ἔσσις, ἵνα τίς σε καὶ ὀψιγόνων ἐν εἴπῃ (Odyssey 1,302=3,200).

“You are valiant, so that someone of the humans that will live later will speak well about you:”

πάντες, ἵν' ὑμῖν μῦθον ἀπηλεγέως ἀποείπω (Odyssey 1,373).

“(Let us) all (sit down), so that I can tell you my word.”

εἴμ', ἵνα θαρσύνω θ' ἐτάρους εἴπω τε ἕκαστα (Odyssey 3,361).

“I shall go, so that I can put courage into my friends and tell (them) everything.”

κλυτέ μοι, ἀμφίπολοι λευκώλενοι, ὄφρα τι εἴπω (Odyssey 6,239).

“Listen to me, white-armed maidens, so that I can speak.”

ἀλλ' ἄγε νῦν ἐμέθεν ξυνίει ἔπος, ὄφρα καὶ ἄλλῳ
εἴπῃς ἡρώων, ὅτε κεν σοῖς ἐν μεγάροισι (Odyssey 8,241-242).

“Come on then, obey now my word, so that you can tell it to another hero, when you (dine) in your palace ...”

αἵματος ὄφρα πῶ καὶ τοι νημερτέα εἴπω (Odyssey 11,96).

“(Give me) some blood so that I can drink and tell you the blameless truth.”

ὄφρ' ὑμῖν εἴπω μαντήϊα Τειρεσίαο (Odyssey 12,272).

“So that I can tell the predictions of Teiresias.”

εἶπω θ' ὅσσα τοι αἶσα δόμοις ἔνι ποιητοῖσι (Odyssey 13,306).

"So that ... I can tell you how many troubles you are destined to endure in your well-built palace."

ἀλλ' ἔπεο, κλισίηνδ' ἵομεν, γέρον, ὄφρα καὶ αὐτός,
σίτου καὶ οἴνοιο κορεσσάμενος κατὰ θυμόν,
εἵπης ὀππόθεν ἔσσι καὶ ὀππόσα κήδε' ἀνέτλης (Odyssey 14,45-47).

"Come, follow me, old man, let us go to bed, so that you can satiate yourself with food and wine as you wish and can tell (me) who you are and how many troubles you have endured."

κέκλυτέ μευ, μνηστῆρες ἀγήνορες, ὄφρα τι εἶπω (Odyssey 18,43=20,292).

"Listen to me, brave suitors, so that I can speak."

ὄφρα καθεζόμενος εἵπῃ ἔπος ἦδ' ἐπακούσῃ (Odyssey 19,98).

"So that the stranger can sit down and tell his story and (then) listen to me."

ὄφρα γνῶς κατὰ θυμόν, ἀτὰρ εἵπῃσθα καὶ ἄλλῳ (Odyssey 22,373).

"So that you know in your heart and tell it also to someone else."

ὄφρα ἔπος εἵπωμι τό μοι καταθύμιόν ἐστιν (Odyssey 22,392).

"So that I can tell (her) the word that is in my heart now."

ἔρχεο: κικλήσκει σε πατήρ ἐμός, ὄφρα τι εἵπῃ (Odyssey 22,397).

"Go, my father calls you, so that he can tell you something."

It is absent in the following purpose / complement clause:

λίσσεσθαι δέ μιν αὐτόν, ὅπως νημερτέα εἵπῃ (Odyssey 3,19).

"and beg himself that he tells you the truth."

In the following two examples, the optative appears in a sentence introduced by *εἰ*. The context is specific and so is the subject, but the object is undefined. There are two possible explanations for this. The MP might be missing, because the *εἰ*-clause still has its old voluntative meaning "if (only)",⁵⁵ or because the *εἰ*-sentence has a purpose nuance in it ("to see if"), and hence the MP is missing.

ἦλθον Τειρεσίαο κατὰ χρέος, εἴ τινα βουλὴν
εἵποι, ὅπως Ἰθάκην ἐς παιπαλόεσσιν ἰκοίμην (Odyssey 11,479-480).

"I went to Teiresias to consult him, if he could tell me a plan so that I could reach rocky Ithaka."

⁵⁵ LANGE (1872, *passim*, but especially page 91 for Odyssey 11,479-480 and page 98 for Odyssey 23,91).

ἤστο κάτω ὀρόων, ποτιδέγμενος εἴ τί μιν εἴποι (Odyssey 23,91).

“He sat looking down, waiting for his mighty wife to say something to him.”

It is not used in the following negative purpose clauses / negative wishes:

μή ποτέ τις εἴπησιν Ἀχαιῶν χαλκοχιτώνων (Iliad 23,575).

“Lest someone of the Akhaians with bronze tunics might say:”

ἢ που ἐπὶ κρήνῃ· μή τις ποτὶ δῶμα γέροντι
ἐλθὼν ἐξείπῃ, ὃ δ’ οἴσάμενος καταδήσῃ (Odyssey 15,442-443).

“(let no-one meet me in the city) or somewhere near the well, lest someone go to the house of the old man, tell him (about me) and bind me, when he finds out.”

μή ποτέ τις εἴπησι κακώτερος ἄλλος Ἀχαιῶν (Odyssey 21,324).

“Lest some other more evil Akhaians say:”

παύεσθον κλαυθμοῖο γόοιό τε μή τις ἴδῃται
ἐξελθὼν μέγαροιο, ἅτάρ εἴπῃσι καὶ εἴσω (Odyssey 21,228-229).

“Stop your crying and wailing, lest someone who passes by the palace see (us) and tell the ones inside.”

The MP is not used in the following wish clause:

πάντα τάδ’ ἐλθόντες καταλέξομεν· αἶ γὰρ ἐγὼν ὥς
νοστήσας Ἰθάκηνδε, κιχὼν Ὀδυσῆ’ ἐνὶ οἴκῳ,
εἴποιμ’ ὥς παρὰ σείο τυχὼν φιλότῃτος ἀπάσης (Odyssey 15,156-158).

“We will relate all this once we have gone (home); may I return to Ithaka, meet Odysseus in (our) home and tell him all the friendship I received from you.”

It is not found in the following exhortative clauses, in which the difference with a “normal” future is hardly visible:⁵⁶

ἀλλ’ ἄγ’ ἐγὼν, ὃς σεῖο γεραίτερος εὔχομαι εἶναι,
ἐξείπω καὶ πάντα διίξομαι· οὐδέ κέ τις μοι (Iliad 9,60-61).

“But come on, let me, who can rightly hold to be older than you, explain and relate everything; none could (dishonour my word.)”

ἀλλ’ ἄγ’ ἐγὼν ἀναβᾶς ὑπερώϊα σιγαλόεντα
εἴπω σῇ ἀλόχῳ, τῇ τις θεὸς ὕπνον ἐπῶρσε (Odyssey 22,428-429).

“Let me go upstairs to the bright upper-chamber and tell your wife, to whom a god has sent sleep.”

⁵⁶ AMEIS & HENTZE (1875: 77) translated *ich will es heraussagen, offen aussprechen*. CHANTRAINE (1953: 209) *À la première personne, en particulier, il est malaisé de tracer une frontière entre le sens de volonté et le futur emphatique*. See also MONRO (1891: 251).

ἀλλ' ἄγε τοι καὶ σῆμα ἀριφραδὲς ἄλλο τι εἵπω (Odyssey 23,73).

“But come on, let me tell you (yet) another very clear sign.”

I interpreted the subjunctives as exhortative-voluntative and not as prospective, because of ἀλλ' ἄγ' which appears mostly in exhortative sentences “let us, let me, let him/her, ...”

6. The particle is missing if the preceding verb form has already been constructed with a MP.⁵⁷ The following examples make this clear (the marked verb and the particle are put in bold face, while the “reduced” verb is underlined):

ὅφρ' **ἄν** ἐγὼ **βείω** προτὶ Ἴλιον, ἥδ' ἐ γέρουσιν
εἵπω βουλευτῇσι καὶ ἡμετέρῃς ἀλόχοισι (Iliad 6,113-114).

“Until I have gone to Troy and told the elders in the assembly and our wives.”

ὅς **χ'** ἕτερον μὲν **κεύθῃ** ἐνὶ φρεσὶν, ἄλλο δὲ εἵπῃ (Iliad 9,313, cf. *infra*).

“(hated to me is he) who hides one thing in his heart, but says another.”

ὅς δέ **κ'** **ἀνήνηται** καὶ τε στερεῶς ἀποείπῃ (Iliad 9,510).

“He will deny it and speak strongly against it.”

ὦ φίλ', ἐπεὶ τόσα εἶπες, ὅς' **ἄν** πεπνυμένος ἀνήρ
εἵποι καὶ ῥέξειε, καὶ ὅς προγενέστερος εἴῃ (Odyssey 4,204-205).

“O friend, since you have spoken all these things as a clever man would speak and do, who is much older than you, ...”

ἀλλὰ μὲν εἰς ὃ **κ**ε δῶρα φέρων ἐπιδίφρια **θείω**
καλά, σὺ δ' ὀφθαλμοῖσιν ἴδῃς, εἵπω δὲ γυναῖξιν (Odyssey 15,75-76).

“But, let us wait until I can bring the fine gifts and put them on the chariot, you can see (them) with your eyes and I can tell the women (to prepare a meal).”

ταῦτα δ' ἅ μ' εἰρωτᾷς καὶ λίσσσαι, οὐκ **ἄν** ἔγωγε
ἄλλα παρὲς **εἵποιμι** παρὰ κλισίῳ οὐδ' ἄπατήσω (Odyssey 17,138-139).

“Those things you ask and beg me for, I will not speak away from them nor about other things nor will I deceive you.”

ὦ φίλοι, οὐκ **ἄν** δὴ τις ἀν' ὀρσοθύρῃν **ἀναβείη**
καὶ εἵποι λαοῖσι, βοή δ' ὦκιστα γένοιτο (Odyssey 22,132-133).

“O friends, could not someone go through the door in the wall, tell the people (outside) and could a war cry be raised as soon as possible?”

⁵⁷ See note 26.

One could also analyse the optatives εἴποι and γένοιτο as a wish “may one tell and may the war cry be heard”,⁵⁸ which is also possible, but I believe that the parallelism with the previous optative might make the analysis of a single MP for several optatives more likely.

In all the instances mentioned above, the first verb was determined by a MP, and therefore the second verb did not need an additional modal marking. This is a tendency and not an absolute rule.

7. There are two instances in which the MP is used in a context that seems generic.

ἐχθρὸς γάρ μοι κείνος ὁμῶς Ἄϊδαο πύλῃσιν
ὅς χ’ ἕτερον μὲν κεύθῃ ἐνὶ φρεσὶν, ἄλλο δὲ εἴπη (Iliad 9,312-313).

“Equally hated to me as the gates of Hades is he who hides one thing in his heart, but says another.”

In this verse, Akhilleus scathingly rebukes Odysseus for being not truthful and accuses him of having the possibility to think one thing and say another. There is no agreement as to whether this passage is generic or specific. Chantraine argued that the meaning was generic, because Akhilleus expressed his disapproval by a maxim but also specific at the same time, because it involved a specific instance,⁵⁹ while Ruijgh argued that the presence of μοι made the statement clearly personal and individual and that this explained the use of the MP⁶⁰ (it is used with κεύθῃ and missing with εἴπη, cf. *supra*). The presence of the MP is not entirely metrically secure, because one could argue that the particle had been inserted after the *h* of ἕτερον ceased to operate as a genuine consonant and that the MP was nothing more than an *Hiatusstilger*.⁶¹ One could therefore remove the MP, but that would be a case of solving difficulties by discarding them. Given the presence of the pronoun μοι, I tend to agree with Ruijgh’s explanation.

ὁποῖόν κ’ εἴπησθα ἔπος, τοῖόν κ’ ἐπακούσας (Iliad 20,250).

“The kind of word you speak, that kind you will hear.”

This verse is a general statement with a lasting truth in it, and is not the only instance where the MP appears in a generic context.⁶² It is echoed in Hesiod, *Works and Days* 721 εἰ δὲ κακὸν εἴποις, τάχα κ’ αὐτὸς μείζον ἀκούσας “If you speak bad (about someone else), you will soon hear something even bigger (and worse) yourself”. The use of the MP in Homer’s verse is remarkable. The first MP can easily be removed,

⁵⁸ AMEIS & HENTZE (1901: 104) analysed both optatives as a wish, MUTZBAUER (1908: 159) only considered the second to be a wish.

⁵⁹ CHANTRAINE (1953: 247).

⁶⁰ RUIJGH (1971: 286-287).

⁶¹ Surprisingly enough, this was not noted by RUIJGH (1971: 286-287), in spite of the fact that he was one of the first scholars to note that Homer sometimes preserved the *h* as a full consonant as was the case in Mycenaean.

⁶² MONRO (1891: 259-260) listed several of them (not including this one) and suggested to change the text. The instance was not discussed in RUIJGH (1971).

if one assumes that it had been inserted to compensate for the lengthening effects of the digamma after it ceased to operate,⁶³ but even if one does this, the second MP remains and can only be removed by assuming a lengthening under the ictus or by changing it into τ' (*te épique*). The Hesiodic verse seems to argue for a removal of the first MP (as the final syllable of *κακὸν* scans as long), but even if we were to remove the first MP in the Homeric verse, the second MP in the Homeric passage and the one in the Hesiodic verse cannot be removed either, unless one is prepared to accept a hiatus or change it into τ' here as well. The fact that both the Homeric and the Hesiodic instance have an MP in the main clause is in my opinion an indication that the MP might well have been original and is therefore better not removed. More generally speaking, one should not be removing or changing particles or conjunctions just for the sake of it. One could argue that the verse is not generic per se, but that it is used in a specific context, namely in Aineias's speech to Akhilleus just before they were to engage in battle. On the other hand, Aineias includes many generic descriptions and comparisons in his speech.

ὦ φίλ', ἐπεὶ τόσα εἶπες, ὅς' ἄν πεπνυμένος ἀνήρ
εἴποι καὶ ῥέξειε, καὶ ὃς προγενέστερος εἴη (Odyssey 4,204-205).

"O friend, since you have spoken all these things as a clever man would speak and do, who is much older than you, ..."

This verse is pronounced by Menelaos in response to Telemakhos's explanation of why he has come to Sparta. Menelaos praises Telemakhos for his insights and stated that even a wiser and older man would not have acted this thoughtfully. The MP ἄν is metrically secure.⁶⁴ One could argue that Menelaos's statement is generic, but I think that the MP was used, because Menelaos specifically wanted to stress Telemakhos's wisdom and compare his cleverness to that of someone who is much older. The MP is missing in ῥέξειε and εἴη because it had been used with εἴποι already (cf. *supra*).

8. There are two instances in which the optative without MP could be interpreted as a potential optative without MP or as a wish. I discuss them now.

καὶ ποτέ τις εἴποι 'πατρὸς δ' ὃ γε πολλὸν ἀμείνων' (Iliad 6,479).

"And someday someone could say / may say: 'he is much better than his father.'"

If it is a wish, the absence of the MP is logical (cf. *supra*); if it is a potential optative,⁶⁵ the absence can be explained by the fact that we have an undefined instance here. In this particular instance, the subjunctive εἴπῃσι is also transmitted (καὶ ποτέ τις εἴπῃσι 'πατρὸς δ' ὃ γε πολλὸν ἀμείνων' "and then someone will say 'he is much better

⁶³ CHANTRAINE (1953: 246). The removal had already been suggested by BENTLEY and BEKKER (1858a: 553).

⁶⁴ CHANTRAINE (1953: 249).

⁶⁵ As was suggested by SCHWYZER & DEBRUNNER (1950: 324) and BASSET (1984: 55 = 2004: 13).

than his father”’),⁶⁶ and was adopted by several editions and commentaries.⁶⁷ In that case the absence of the MP would be due to the undefined nature of the subject. As such, the absence of the MP is not a problem here, but I nevertheless believe that the optative has preference over the subjunctive. First of all, the subjunctive would require the *a* in *πατρός* to be read with *correptio Attica*, which never happens elsewhere in this word.⁶⁸ Ludwich argued that the occurrence of *correptio* was not conclusive against the subjunctive, as it occurred in other words and added that the optative *εἴποι* was not found elsewhere.⁶⁹ Reading *εἴπη* could avoid the problem of the *correptio*.⁷⁰ The argument used in favour of the subjunctive is that Hektor was convinced that his son would surpass him in bravery,⁷¹ but only a few verses before, he had dramatically described how it was very likely that Andromakhe would be enslaved after the fall of Troy. This is clearly a contradiction. Moreover, this subjunctive would then be the only subjunctive in a prayer with other optatives and the clearer certainty expressed by subjunctive would be out of place.⁷² The optative therefore has preference and the subjunctive reading is probably influenced by *Iliad* 6,459.⁷³

ὧς ἐπέτελλ’ ὁ γέρων, σὺ δὲ λήθεις· ἄλλ’ ἔτι καὶ νῦν
ταῦτ’ εἴποις Ἀχιλῆϊ δαΐφρονι αἴ κε πείθεται (Iliad 11,790-791).
“So did the old man tell you (to act), but you forgot it; now you should / could
tell battle-skilled Akhilleus, so that he may be persuaded.”

⁶⁶ Only the *Marcianus Graecus* 822 in superscript, the *archetypus b* (of the manuscripts *Marcianus Graecus* 821, the *Laurentianus* 32.3 and the *Scorialensis* Y.I.1), the *Vaticanus Graecus* 1319 and the *Oxoniensis Bodleianus New College* 298 have the optative. The optative is also quoted by the grammarian Nikanor (WEST 1998: 201).

⁶⁷ FAESI (1858: 254); LUDWICH (1885: 351-354); WITTE (1913: 2242); VAN THIEL (1996: 120); GRAZIOSI & HAUBOLD (2000: 218, with reference to Ludwich), the online *Chicago Homer* also printed the subjunctive.

⁶⁸ DAWES (1745: 148-149 = DAWES & HARLESS 1800: 118-119); AMEIS (1870b: 81-82); MONRO (1884: 318); LEAF (1900: 292) (both with reference to Dawes); STOEVE SANDT (2008: 152, with reference to Leaf). The optative was printed in WILLCOCK (1978: 249) and KIRK (1990: 223-224), but the issue was not discussed by either of them.

⁶⁹ LUDWICH (1885: 351-354).

⁷⁰ DAWES (1745: 148) suggested this but argued against the subjunctive, HEYNE (1821a: 327); MAGNIEN (1922: 134); according to West, this was already suggested earlier, but his apparatus only stated “t” (WEST 1999: 201), which meant *testimonium auctoris unius* (WEST 1998: LIX).

⁷¹ LUDWICH (1885: 351-354); GRAZIOSI & HAUBOLD (2000: 218, with reference to Ludwich).

⁷² DAWES (1745: 148-149); HAGEN (1853: 385-386); AMEIS (1870a: 121, 1870b: 81-82 with reference to Dawes and Hagen); LEAF (1900: 292, with reference to Dawes); STOEVE SANDT (2008: 152, with reference to Leaf).

⁷³ HAGEN (1853: 385-386); AMEIS (1870a: 121, 1870b: 81-82).

In this verse, the optative can be interpreted as a potential without MP, which comes in this instance close to a gentle imperative,⁷⁴ or as a wish with the meaning of a polite demand.⁷⁵ If this instance is a wish, the absence of the MP is not surprising, but if it is a potential optative, the absence is remarkable and difficult to explain, as it clearly refers to a specific instance, as is visible by καὶ νῦν. This is one of the instances, where wish and potential optative come very close. One could try to remove the problem by changing καὶ νῦν into καὶ νῦν, but that would not solve anything.⁷⁶

Conclusion

In this article, I discussed the use and absence of the modal particle (MP) ἤν/κεν in Homeric Greek. I started by giving an overview of the previous explanations and discussed them critically. Then I proceeded to the subjunctive and optative forms of the root *wek^w. These forms provided us with a representative corpus of about 120 instances. I found that the MP was used in specific instances related to the speaker's world, but that it remained absent, when something generic was described, an event from a remote past was related, when an undefined character was the subject, when the subjunctive or optative was used in a wish or a (negative) purpose clause and when the form was preceded by another form that had already been constructed with an MP. These observations will be confirmed and expanded to other corpora in Homer and in epic Greek.

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⁷⁴ VON THIERSCH (1818: 520); MONRO (1884: 377, 1891: 271); LEAF (1900: 519-520); VAN POTTENBERGH (1939: 19). This was not discussed in HAINSWORTH (1993: 307-308).

⁷⁵ CHANTRAINE (1953: 216).

⁷⁶ As far as I could judge from the different *apparatus critici*, this suggestion had not been made before (and is not necessary either).

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