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THE ARTISTIC RE-ELABORATION OF COLLOQUIAL LATIN IN THE *AENEID*. THE CASE STUDY OF *AEN*. 5.159–82

ABSTRACT. Beghini Giulia, *The Artistic Re-elaboration of Colloquial Latin in the* Aeneid*. The Case Study of* Aen*. 5.159–82*.

This article tries to identify some forms of artistic re-elaboration of colloquial Latin in the *Aeneid*, and to understand how Virgil integrated them in his work. After the definition of colloquial Latin, the method is explained: it combines a linguistic and stylistic approach with a pragmatic and sociolinguistic one. The results that emerged from the analysis of selected dialogues from the *Aeneid* are then summarised and Virgil's *modus operandi* is presented. Finally, an in-depth analysis of a case study (*Aen*. 5.159–82) shows the presence of colloquial phenomena, their artistic re-elaboration, and their effects. This paper therefore deals with the poetic art of Virgil and allows us to explore his profound linguistic sensitivity.

Keywords: *Aeneid*; Virgil; colloquial Latin; regatta; ethic dative; diminutives

The present paper discusses the presence of colloquial Latin in the *Aeneid*. It may seem unlikely to find traces of colloquial Latin in the *genus grande*, but through careful reading, it is possible to identify some forms of artistic re-elaboration of colloquial language. This article therefore deals with the poetic art of Virgil and allows us to explore his profound linguistic sensitivity.[1]

DEFINITION OF 'COLLOQUIAL LATIN' AND METHOD

Firstly, I will briefly define what I mean by 'colloquial Latin', as there are many labels for the phenomena under scrutiny and even more definitions.[2] I am

[1] I am sincerely grateful to the organizers of the conference "*Arma virumque.* Vergil's *Aeneid* and Its Reception (Poznan, 23rd–24th March 2023)" that was a great opportunity to deepen our knowledge of Virgil.

[2] For a discussion of the label 'colloquial Latin', see Dickey 2010; Clackson 2010, and Chahoud 2010. For the choice of the name 'colloquial Latin', see Beghini 2020: 12–23 with rich bibliography. In these pages, I considered the different namings in use and their strengths and weaknesses. I will briefly name here those more frequent with selected references: 'popular Latin' and 'spoken Latin' (Sofer 1963; Bonfante 1992; and Horsfall 1994; Boyce 1991: 26, and Ricottilli 2003b: 465–67;

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referring to the definition of Licinia Ricottilli,[3] in her methodological revision of Johann Hofmann's *Lateinische Umgangssprache*: colloquial Latin "is the language typical of the informal conversation of cultured as well as semi-cultured and uncultured people". In this definition, the *discrimen* is not so much sociolinguistic as it is contextual.[4] This is important because, owing to the object of study, we will not find the *sermo vulgaris* or the *sermo plebeius* of uncultured or semi-cultured people in the *Aeneid*, but only the refractions[5] of the *sermo familiaris*, which is typical of informal conversation between cultured people. In fact, we are aware that we are dealing with poetry and not a real face-to-face conversation: if there are colloquial phenomena, they will be artistically re-elaborated by the poet. Moreover, the ancient Romans were already aware of the existence of different styles and of the possibility of using an informal register even among educated people; see, for example, Quintilianus, who wrote of his pupils using *nihil supra cotidianum sermonem* (*Inst*. 2.4.9).[6] Such testimonials

Ricottilli 2003a: 22–33 and also 61–63 with the distinction between 'spoken language' and 'spoken style'); 'Lateinische Umgangssprache' (Hofmann 1926 = 1° German edition of Hofmann 2003; Boyce 1991: 1; Horsfall 1994: 15; Ricottilli 2003a, and 2003b: 466–73); 'latin vulgaire' (Väänänen 1982; Vineis 1984; Herman 2000 and the ongoing conference series *Latin vulgaire – latin tardif*. A synthesis of the various definitions of 'latin vulgaire', which is hardly ever used by Adams 2013, is present in Lloyd 1979: 110–22, and more recent definitions are present in Poccetti *et al.* 2005: 22–28, and Coseriu 2008: 147–67). On 'colloquial Latin', see Dickey, Chahoud 2010 (theoretical framework and textual analysis), and Cabrillana 2014; on 'informal Latin', see Adams 2016 (definition at page 1), and Ferri 2024; on 'social variations' or 'substandard' features of Latin, see Mazzini 2010: 21–61; Clackson 2011: *Part V*, and Adams 2013. On 'latin tardif', which is not the object of our study, see, e.g., Löfstedt 1959; Clackson and Horrocks 2007; Adams 2011: ch. 8; Banniard 2020 and the ongoing conference series *Latin vulgaire – latin tardif*.

[3] Ricottilli 2003b: 466–73 (466 for the translated quotation). Obviously, Ricottilli referred this definition to 'lingua d'uso latina', i.e., the Italian translation of *Lateinische Umgangssprache*. I chose the name 'colloquial Latin', instead of 'lingua d'uso latina', owing to the international favour it has been having in the last decades.

[4] It is difficult to distinguish between sociolects in a modern language and it is even more so in a dead language. Obviously, when possible, we can identify different *sermones*: sociolects (also in reference to different social groups) and special languages. E.g., see Müller 2001: *sermo rusticus* 29–78, *sermo agrestis* 79–84, *sermo plebeius* 85–92, *sermo humilis* 93–116, *sermo vulgaris* 117–66, *sermo cotidianus* 167–78, *sermo familiaris* 179–82, *sermo usitatus* 209–14, *sermo communis* 215–18, *sermo urbanus* 219–30, *sermo latinus* 231–58. For more on *sermo familiaris*, *vulgaris* e *plebeius,* see also Ricottilli 2003a: 49–51 and 2003b: 466–73. As for special languages, an example may be the technical languages, on which see, e.g., De Meo 1983, and Sconocchia and Toneatto 2000. As for sociolects, an overview with further bibliography is present in Mazzini 2010: 21–61 and Clackson 2011. For some specific examples, see Mosci Sassi 1983; Horsfall 1999, and Ferri 2021 on the language of soldiers; and Fögen 2010 and Kruschwitz 2012 on female speech.

[5] 'Refraction' is meant here as an artistic re-elaboration which reproduces colloquial Latin: colloquialism is not mirrored, but refracted, that is, it undergoes a certain degree of deformation. For more on refraction, see Ricottilli 2003a: 43–48.

[6] For more on the informal register, often defined as *genus exile* or *humile,* see Ferri and Probert 2010, and Müller 2001: 93–116.

ensure an emic approach to our study. Precisely because of the object of this study,[7] the analysis will focus on direct speech.

Secondly, I will briefly define the method I used and summarize the general results of my research on colloquial Latin in the *Aeneid*.

Tentative studies on the language of Virgil which consider the possible presence of colloquialisms are Milani 1990, Zaffagno 1987, and Görler 1987. More recently, Harrison 2010 and Cabrillana 2014 focus their attention on the study of colloquial Latin in the direct speech of gods in the *Aeneid*. These works,[8] far from being exhaustive, are important steps to a deeper knowledge of this complicated subject. In fact, identifying colloquial phenomena in a language is difficult, and even more so in a dead language that is accessible only through written sources. Therefore, in my book on colloquial Latin in the *Aeneid*, I tried to identify a working methodology[9] that allows us to consider different elements in the analysis of the text, in the hope of reducing subjectivity. The method I proposed combines a linguistic and stylistic approach with a pragmatic and sociolinguistic one.

The starting point is the list of colloquial phenomena provided by J. Hofmann in his *Lateinische Umgangssprache*, which is presented in an updated and revised version by L. Ricottilli, who reduces the importance of the *Affekt* and underlines the importance of the context. The same criteria are applied by the contributors to E. Dickey and A. Chahoud (2010), and were also used by J. Adams (at least 2013, 2016).

Once the phenomena that could be considered as colloquial have been identified, they are studied from an extralinguistic and linguistic point of view: as a result, the linguistic and stylistic analysis is enriched with data from pragmatic and sociolinguistic analysis, as we will see in practice later. From an extralinguistic point of view, I evaluated the context, the relationship between the characters, the psycho-emotional state and short and long term goals of the characters, as well as degree of formality, proxemics, gestures, audience, and the *Stimmung* of the scene. This allows us to understand whether the phenomenon in question can actually be used in an informal situation or whether it is based on other motivations (e.g. the personal subject pronoun *tu* with the jussive form of the verb can be considered a phenomenon of colloquial Latin or a form of reverence towards deities (Du-Stil) or humans, depending on the context).[10] From a linguistic point of view, the same phenomenon is studied within its micro-context constituted by other syntagmatic elements. Therefore, lexical and syntactic choices, the *ordo verborum*, the presence of figures of speech, the

[7] For further information about the object of the study, see Beghini 2020: 42–44.

[8] For more on the relevant points of these works, see Beghini 2020: 25–32.

[9] For further information about the method, see Beghini 2020: 23–42.

[10] For more on this, see Beghini 2020: 160–73.

stylistic level of certain expressions, and the presence of epithets, among other elements, are considered. This allows us to understand whether the presumed colloquial phenomenon remains isolated or accompanies other colloquial phenomena, and to what extent it is counterbalanced by elements of elevated language.

Moreover, for each case study I searched for the linguistic and situational equivalents within Virgilian poetry. In fact, the existence of (syntactic, lexical and stylistic) variants activates the concept of poetic selection, as we will see in practice: it can in fact be hypothesized that the poet chose such an expression, not because this was the only way to express that concept, but because, in his view, this expression was more suited to the context and the effects he aroused. Obviously, we do not claim to understand Virgil's effective will, but we want to at least ponder what effects have been aroused.[11]

After having familiarized ourselves with Virgil's *parole*, the same phenomenon is studied in the *langue*: that is the *testimonia latina*, which is not only literary and official, but also non-literary and non-official prior to and contemporary with Virgil. This made it possible to obtain data regarding the case study that are as updated and complete as possible, to evaluate whether the phenomenon could be perceived as colloquial.

The greatest challenge of my research is perhaps trying to understand what the colloquial language became within the epic text. Following this challenge, it seems that Virgil did not randomly draw from colloquial Latin, but he wisely exploited the communicative potential of typical expressions of colloquial Latin on the basis of the described context and the desire to obtain certain effects. In the dialogues analyzed, I identified a pattern of regularity between form and content.[12] Colloquial phenomena have greater intensity and are presented in greater concentrations precisely where the context is informal, the relationship among characters is confidential, and the audience is restricted, as we will see in Gyas' speech (as well as in Mnestheus' speech).[13] In these cases, the presence of colloquial language is not particularly counterbalanced by elevated linguistic and stylistic elements. The effect is that of a greater likelihood of the scene that is described. Conversely, when the context is solemn and formal, colloquial phenomena are generally absent and, if they appear, they remain isolated and are counterbalanced by elevated linguistic and stylistic elements. Colloquialisms

[11] In this paper, the (verifiable) effects of a certain poetic choice will be identified and an attempt will be made to hypothesise the poet's possible artistic motivations (which cannot be verified with absolute certainty). In the awareness that "it is now accepted that poetry is also able to 'revalue' certain areas of language in which a (deliberate, and conscious) choice is not directly manifested", as stated by Conte and Barchiesi 1989: 92.

[12] For a more detailed summary of the artistic re-elaboration of colloquial phenomena in the *Aeneid*, see Beghini 2020: 313–22.

[13] For more on Mnestheus' speech, see Beghini 2020: 90–131.

are used here either to attract the attention of the reader/listener[14] or to portray the characters and the relationship between them, as in the speeches of Aeneas in book V.[15]

THE CASE STUDY

Our case study consists in a passage from the *ludi* in the *Aeneid* Book V. The *ludi* open with the regatta, a race that does not appear in the usual epic games and to which Virgil dedicates vivid descriptions.[16] Direct speech is used sparingly by Virgil (17 out of 181 lines) and is valuable because it ensures a more realistic situational mimesis, the portrayal of the characters and focus on the most important elements. Our attention will focus on the first dialogue in the regatta, in *Aen.* 5.159–82:

iamque propinquabant scopulo metamque tenebant,[17]
cum princeps medioque Gyas in gurgite uictor
rectorem nauis compellat uoce Menoeten:
'quo tantum mihi dexter **abis**? huc derige gressum;[18]
litus ama et **l**aeua **s**tringat **s**ine pa**l**mu**l**a cautes;
altum **al**ii teneant.' dixit; sed caeca Menoetes
saxa timens proram pelagi detorquet ad undas.
'quo diuersus **abis**?' iterum 'pete saxa, Menoete!'
cum clamore Gyas reuocabat: et ecce Cloanthum
respicit instantem tergo et propiora tenentem.
ille inter nauemque Gyae scopulosque sonantis
radit iter laeuum interior subitoque priorem
praeterit et metis tenet aequora tuta relictis.
tum uero exarsit iuueni dolor ossibus ingens
nec lacrimis caruere genae, segnemque Menoeten
oblitus decorisque sui sociumque salutis

[14] In ancient Rome, the public was not only a reader but also a listener by the means of the *declamationes*.

[15] For more on Aeneas' speeches, see Beghini 2020: 177–311.

[16] Many authoritative scholars believe that the regatta is the most important contest in the *ludi*, see Cartault 1926: 368–74; Putnam 1965: 74–81; Kraggerud 1968: 127–79; Monaco 1972: 81–99; Harris 1968; Feldherr 1995; Polverini 1988: 420–21 and Delvigo 2001. On the Roman character of the regatta, see Anderson and Dix 2013. For the consulted bibliography, see Beghini 2020: 323–57. I will quote only the strictly pertinent contributions in the present paper.

[17] The editio critica is by Conte 2009, with the exception of one point only (see note 18).

[18] For l. 162, see Conte 2009: 129 cursum M^{a}ρω, Sen. and Tib.; gressum MPRaevzγ. Here I follow Williams 1960 et al. who accept gressum (in the same clausula also in Aen. 1.401 and 11.855, see infra) instead of cursum. For more on the defense of gressum, see Rivero García 2009: 332–33. Gressum is lectio potior, moreover, "se trata de una imagen con la que Virgilio añade viveza a las palabras que Gias lanza a Menetes, imagen de la que cursum no es otra cosa que su banalización" at p. 332.

in mare praecipitem puppi deturbat ab alta;
ipse gubernaclo rector subit, ipse magister
hortaturque uiros clauumque ad litora torquet.
at grauis ut fundo uix tandem redditus imo est
iam senior madidaque fluens in ueste Menoetes,
summa petit scopuli siccaque in rupe resedit.
illum et labentem Teucri et risere natantem
et salsos rident reuomentem pectore fluctus.

In this passage, Gyas is the commander of the Chimera, the largest ship, and is in the lead. He disapproves of the prudent conduct of his helmsman, Menoetes, who remains far from the rock that had been set as turning post (*meta*). Gyas orders him to tack closer to the rock twice, but Menoetes does not obey. When Gyas sees Cloanthus' ship (the Scylla) slipping between the Chimera and the rock, he loses control and throws Menoetes into the sea. The episode elicits an amused reaction from the audience, who experience a double burst of laughter, as they see Menoetes plummeting into the sea and then spitting out salt water. Note that this is the only instance of laughter of amusement in the *Aeneid*, other than one of Aeneas also in Book V.[19]

CONTEXTUAL AND PRAGMATIC CONSIDERATIONS

In the study of the phenomena of colloquial Latin we clearly focus on the verbal communication in the dialogue between Gyas and Menoetes, but we cannot ignore the study of the context and of all those nonverbal elements that can provide us with information on the relationship between the characters.

According to the pragmatics of human communication, theorized by Bateson and then systematised by Watzlawick, Helmick Beavin and Jackson,[20] there are in fact two aspects of communication: the report one and the command one. The report aspect of a message conveys information and is, in other words, the content of the message; the command aspect, conversely, refers to the relationship between the communicants and how a communicant sees himself/herself, sees the other and sees the other seeing him/her. The command aspect, or relationship aspect, is metacommunication, as it is communication about the communication: it has the instructions on how the interlocutor should interpret the content of the message (e.g. "this is an order" or "this is a joke").[21] In a relationship, the interlocutors are especially focused on the relationship

[19] For more on Aeneas' laughter, see Beghini 2023: 130–32.

[20] See, at least Bateson 1976a, 1976b, and Watzlawick *et al.* 1971. For the updated references of the application of this theory to classical texts and its results, see the *Introduction* in Ricottilli and Raccanelli 2023.

[21] For more on the two aspects of communication, see Watzlawick *et al.* 1971: 43–46.

aspect, as through it they define the image (or face)[22] they have of themselves, of their partner and the nature of their relationship and compete with each other to impose their own definitions on their partners. Digital language, i.e. verbal communication, conveys information especially of the report aspect, whereas analogical language, i.e. the nonverbal communication (gestures, paralinguistics, proxemics, kinetics) conveys information especially of the command aspect.[23] From this summary, it is clear how it is important to consider the whole system of communication (verbal and nonverbal).

By applying the pragmatics of human communication, we may see that there is a complementary relationship between Gyas and Menoetes, with the former in a one-up, dominant position and the latter in a one-down, subordinate position.[24] Gyas is therefore in the position of giving orders to Menoetes and expecting him to obey. When the *rector* refuses to obey, the commander rejects this insubordination, reacting with anger and reaffirming his position of power. The poet expresses this sequence of interchanges not only thanks to Gyas' informal and excited speech that we will see, but also thanks to paralinguistic notations and actions in the narration. The verb introducing Gyas' speech is *compellat* at *Aen.* 5.161, then taken up again *in variatio* in the Ringkomposition at the end of the direct speech, at line 167 *cum clamore revocabat*. Gyas' animosity is made explicit by these verbs that frame his discourse. After Menoetes disregards the command twice and the Scylla passes by the Chimera, Gyas loses control and, getting *oblitus decorisque sui sociumque salutis*, performs a brusque action: *deturbat*.[25] This vivid and abrupt verb contrasts with the more dignified *proiecit* of line 859, when Somnus throws Palinurus into the sea at the end of the book.[26] The trust and mutual collaboration that led Aeneas to follow Palinurus' advice at the beginning of book V (*Aen.* 5.12–31), are missing here between Gyas and Menoetes. The complementary relationship, the high degree of confidence, the competitive context, the restricted audience, and the urgency of the moment nullify any form of courtesy between the two interactors.[27] The aspect of the audience should also not be underestimated: sociolinguistic

[22] For face and facework, see at least Goffman 1955, and 1988.

[23] For more on digital and analogical communication, see Watzlawick *et al.* 1971: 51–57.

[24] For more on symmetrical and complementary interaction, see Watzlawick *et al.* 1971: 58–61.

[25] The verb *deturbat* appears only three times in the *Aen.*: here, then to describe Charon's brusque action towards the souls in *Aen.* 6.412, and that of Aeneas against Tarquitus in *Aen.* 10.555. For more on the abrupt action expressed by the verb cf. ThlL 5.1.846.27–847.5 s. v. *deturbo*. Page [1894] 1967: 406 considers the verb "a vivid and almost vulgar word", and Farrell 2014: 42 refers to Plaut. *Merc*. 116. Horsfall 2013: 311 defines it as a typical verb of comedy and prose, but also *semel* in Lucr. 5.401. Tabàrez 2015: 215 sees a farce-like tone in *Aen*. 5.167–77.

[26] Already in Williams 1960: 175.

[27] From a politeness perspective, which is not used here, this is a FTA (Brown and Levinson 1987: 66, 69, 72, 94–96): Gyas threatens the negative face of the hearer, on record, baldly, without redress, and with maxims of urgency and efficiency. In the last decades, the studies on politeness theory have flourished and nowadays we would talk of impoliteness in reference to Gyas'

studies have shown how speakers change register based on the audience that is present.[28] These studies can also be applied to the *Aeneid*: Gyas is acting away from the eyes and ears of the public, and above all in what can be defined as his "realm", therefore he allows himself less *decorum* in his actions and words than what is usually attributed to heroes.

A last piece of nonverbal information comes from the gesture of the double laughter. It is crucial, as it conveys information on the relationship aspect and can help identify the right *Stimmung* of the scene. The episode of the fall of Menoetes into the sea, indeed, was recently interpretated by some authoritative scholars as one of the problematic episodes that testify to the "darkness" that emerges in the course of book V and which culminates with the death of Palinurus.[29] On the other hand, most scholars acknowledge the humor of the scene[30] and, in my opinion, the repetition of the verb *rideo* is a good confirmation of this. The poet gives us the key to correctly interpret the episode and its *Stimmung,*[31] through explaining the gesture, especially considering the words of Horace, Virgil's friend:

> Ut ridentibus arrident, ita flentibus afflent[32]
> humani vultus: si vis me flere, dolendum est
> primum ipsi tibi.[33] (Hor. *Ars* 101–103)

Teucri's laughter is amused laughter in the face of something paradoxical involving Menoetes and is socializing, as it strengthens the relationship: laughing together about the same element, in fact, increases the cohesion of the group.[34] Obviously, Gyas' anger and Menoetes' fall are in themselves negative elements,

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behaviour. For a tentative differentiation between impoliteness and rudeness, see Bousfield 2010. For an updated overview of (Im)politeness, see Culpeper *et al.* 2017.

[28] See, e.g., Mühlhäusler and Harré 1990: 145 from which it emerges that a woman calls her stepmother familiarly only when the two stepsisters are not there; and Jonz 1975: 70–71 on the influence of the audience in the choice of address in the US Marine Corps.

[29] Fratantuono and Smith 2015: 24. They conclude that "the fifth *Aeneid* is perhaps the darkest of the poem's books".

[30] Among the most recent works, see Tabàrez 2015: 214–16. For further bibliography, see Beghini 2023: 120 note 3. In general, many scholars recognise that the fifth is the most joyful book of the *Aeneid*, see, e.g., Miniconi 1962 and Cairns 1989: 215–48.

[31] For the consideration of the whole system of communication (verbal and nonverbal) in the micro and macrocontext (of the regatta and *ludi*) as a means to help evalutate other problematic episodes, see Beghini 2020: 47–50 and Beghini 2023.

[32] The *editio critica* is by Shackleton Bailey 1995: 314 who accepts Bentley's emendation '*afflent*' instead of the *lectio 'adsunt'* (present, conversely, in Villeneuve [1934] 1989).

[33] This theory refers to tragedy but is applicable to epic, as well. For more on this, see Rieks 1989: 206–207 and Ricottilli 2018b: 14.

[34] For more of the social value of laughter, see Bergson [1916] 2003: 6, 14, and Watzlawick *et al.* 1971: 156.

but they should be considered in their macrocontext: these "dark" elements are functional to the *laetior* and funny final part of the first section of the regatta.

From a contextual and pragmatic point of view, therefore, the favorable conditions for an informal conversation are present. The context is less formal than the scenes that are most often represented in the epic genre, such as battles, deaths and farewells, political speeches between rulers, councils of the gods, etc. This does not mean that the heroes do not take the competition seriously, so it remains an important theater of *virtus*. However, the moment is clearly less elevated, and also open to funny situations, as demonstrated by the laughter, which is the only ἄσβεστος γέλως[35] in the *Aeneid*.

LINGUISTIC-STYLISTIC ANALYSIS

From a linguistic-stylistic point of view, Gyas' direct speech, at lines 162–66, includes many phenomena that recall colloquial Latin. These consist of the ethic dative *mihi*, the use of the verb *amo* in the locative sense, the diminutive *palmula* and the anthroponym *Menoetes* to refer directly to the addressee. Even the syntax responds to sense of urgency and the informal context: it is fast and mostly paratactic. Let us explore each of these elements.

1. THE ETHIC (OR ETHICAL) DATIVE *MIHI*

The first question *quo tantum mihi dexter abis*? (Verg. *Aen*. 5.162) expresses Gyas' disapproval and serves as a reproach: Menoetes' conduct must be corrected, according to what is expressed by the following imperatives: *huc derige gressum, litus ama et laeua stringat sine palmula cautes*. In the ethic dative *mihi*, recognized as such by many commentators,[36] we hear all the emotional participation of the speaker in the action performed by the addressee. This emotive dimension, however, is also present in other varieties of free datives, such as the (in)commodi and the sympatheticus. For this reason, Hannah Rosén identifies many features that a genuine dativus ethicus possesses and our case performs all of them.[37] The ethic dative distances itself from the *dativus (in)*

[35] *Sic* in Tabàrez 2015: 216. *Ibid*. for more on other details that he considers humorous, such as the epithet *gravis*, the hyperbolic *fundo imo, vix tandem, redditus* and *fluctus*.

[36] Monaco 1953: 23; Williams 1960: 78; Sabbadini and Marchesi 1964: 26; Farrell 2014: 42, and Fratantuono and Smith 2015: 261.

[37] Rosén 2015: 241–46: an ethic dative has got an emotive dimension, is limited to personal pronouns, cannot be replaced by any prepositional phrases, will not sustain an attribute or an apposition, will not serve as an antecedent to a relative clause or as first term in constructions of comparison, has not got coreferential vocative, is never coordinated to other elements, is not

commodi or the sympatheticus, primarily as the participation in the verbal action of the speaker seems superfluous or inappropriate from the point of view of formal language.[38] In his commentary on this passage, Servius already recalled that the dative *mihi* is generally not present in this type of question: Serv. *ad Aen.* 5.162 *QUO TANTUM MIHI vacat 'mihi', ut solet plerumque*. Instead, this participation[39] is felt as useful, or even necessary, by the speaker. As many scholars have recalled, the phenomenon is colloquial, as is highlighted by the more frequent[40] occurrences in texts that are generally mimetic of colloquial Latin, which can be seen in the following examples taken from the comedy of Plautus and Terence, with the interesting commentary by Donatus *ad loc*., from Cicero, from Horace's *Epistles* and from the *Rhetorica ad Herennium* in the famous *exemplum infimi et cottidiani sermonis*:

quoianam vox mihi prope hic sonat? (Plaut. *Rud.* 229)
em[41] tibi hominem (Plaut. *Capt.* 373)
atque eccum[41] tibi lupum in sermone (Plaut. *Stich.* 577)
qui mihi condita prata in patinis proferunt (Plaut. *Pseud*. 811)

negatable, never occupies the initial or final slot in the sentence, is never focused (for example by *quidem*), or brought into focus by parallel or chiastic antithesis, is not admitted in the epitactic position, does not occur as a response to a sentence-part question, is omissible without changing the representation of the event, and does not convey an affectedness beyond possessivity. Among the numerous examples of ethic datives in Rosén 2015 Verg. *Aen*. 5.163 is missing.

[38] Hofmann, Szantyr 1972: 93–94 § 67a; Kühner, Stegmann 1962: 323–24 §76 Anmerkt 9c; Palmer 1988: 29; Hofmann 2003: 293 § 127; Rosén 2015: 243–45, and Pinkster 2015: 931–32 and 1203 with an extensive updated bibliography in the notes.

[39] Virgil prefers the form *dexter*, a predicative adjective connected to Menoetes, to the impersonal locutions of the type *ad dext(e)ram* (ThlL 5.1.932.43–934.29 *s. v. dext(e)r*). The reference to Menoetes, otherwise silent in this first section of the speech (lines 162–64), occurs precisely thanks to the predicative *dexter*, which is located immediately after the ethic dative *mihi*. Thus, the *ego-tu* opposition is recreated: *quo tantum mihi dexter abis?* In Latin, in fact, personal pronouns and/or possessive adjectives are usually placed close together to iconically underline the (often contrastive) relationship between the two parties. For more on iconicity, see Ricottilli 2000 *passim,* especially 89–91 about the relationship between Dido and Aeneas, and Dainotti 2015 *passim*, esp. 7–17 on iconicity typologies and ancient awareness of it. Through this strategy, the poet manages to linguistically represent the two counterparts who take opposite positions regarding the direction to take.

[40] The importance of frequency has already been underlined by Chambers' sociolinguistic studies of phonological variants used in Scotland and Northern England (Chambers 2002). The scholar notes that the use of the velar stop as a variant of the sound /t/ in a post-tonic position occurs in all classes, but its frequency changes a lot. The higher frequency in the low socio-cultural strata of the variant determines its sociolinguistically connoted nature as low, and therefore determines its use by speakers belonging to different social classes and the evaluation that each of them receives from others. The fields of study are undoubtedly different, but these considerations are valid for both ancient Latin and modern English.

[41] The type *em/en/ecce* and the ethic dative *tibi* (*vobis*) is very prolific. For more on this, see Rosén 2015: 247–48.

quid ait tandem nobis Sannio? (Ter. *Ad.* 276) with the comment of Don. ad loc.: nobis τῷ ἰδιωτισμῷ additum; non enim 'nobis ait' intellegendum est.
qui mihi [...] in conviviis [...] eructant sermonibus suis caedem bonorum atque urbis incendia (Cic. *Catil.* 2.5.10)
quid mihi Celsus agit? (Hor. *Epist.* 1.3.15)
ecce[41] tibi iste de traverso (*Rhet. Her.* 4.10.14)[42]

Other examples with verbs of motion, like in *Aen.* 5.162, may be found in Cicero:

At tibi repente paucis post diebus, cum minime exspectarem, venit ad me Caninius mane. (Cic. *Fam.* 9.2.1)
hic tibi rostra Cato advolat (Cic. *Att.* 1.14.5)

However, as Ricottilli[43] and Adams[44] have already noted, the ethic dative is not sociolinguistically connoted. Adams (2013, 348) affirmed that "the ethic dative occurs in excited narrative [...] and as such is not infrequently found in informal style, but to describe it as characteristic of vulgar language (Cennamo 1999: 115) would be going too far (note the literary examples cited by Landgraf 1893: 50)".

The ethic dative, in fact, can also be used by educated speakers but in informal situations, as it is capable of emphasizing the interest of the speaker, as in our case, or of calling that of the addressee into question, thus directing attention to the relationship between the two parties. Its use is, indeed, not diastratically but diaphasically marked. In our case study, the ethic dative *mihi* in the assertive and rhetorical question underlines the annoyance of the speaker and enhances his wish that is frustrated by the addressee.[45]

The data from Virgil's poetry also confirm that other ethic datives never appear in more or less excited questions, which are introduced by *quo* with verbs of movement.

Among the numerous examples of questions devoid of the ethic dative which I have included in the note,[46] *Aen.* 11.855, *'cur' inquit 'diuersus abis? huc derige*

[42] For more on this last passage, see Adams (2016: 124–32, especially 127–28), who comes to the same considerations on the ethic dative.

[43] Ricottilli 2003a: 53 with note 118 recalls that the ethic dative belongs to the category of *discours* as defined by Benveniste 1971: 283–300. *Discours* is made up of all the phenomena that characterize face-to-face dialogue. *Discours* is not sociolinguistically connoted, but rather typical of informal conversation.

[44] Adams 2013: 347–48.

[45] This is in line with the analysis of the effects of the first person singular ethic dative in Rosén 2015: 253–58.

[46] These questions, introduced by the interrogative *quo*, may be more or less indignant, emotional and urgent, depending on the context: *Aen.* 9.781 *et Mnestheus: 'quo deinde fugam, quo tenditis?' inquit;* 5.670–71 '*quis furor iste nouus? quo nunc, quo tenditis' inquit/ 'heu miserae*

gressum' is particularly interesting. It recalls, in fact, two parts of Gyas' speech in *Aen.* 5.162 *quo tantum mihi dexter abis? huc derige gressum* and 166 *quo diuersus abis?* but the ethic dative is missing. Not surprisingly, this line of Book XI is characterized by a completely different context and tone from ours. In Book XI, Opi, who has come to avenge Camilla's death, presses her killer with an angry question of bitter sarcasm where the ethic dative is missing.

Therefore, there was no single form to express this kind of questions: the most frequent form is devoid of the ethic dative, whereas the rarer one is with the ethic dative in the *Aeneid*. These data are in line with the *langue* of that period. The alternative is important, since it activates the concept of poetic selection: the presence of the ethic dative allows the expression of the characters' emotional participation (in our case of the speaker) and is perfectly aligned with the context in which it is inserted. There are other passages in the *Aeneid* where the ethic dative is present.[47] I can anticipate that my analysis reveals how the ethic dative is extremely rare in the poem and seems to have been chosen by Virgil when there is a good degree of confidence, a strong emotional participation of the characters, and an informal context.

2. THE UNUSUAL *IUNCTURA: LITUS AMA*

Several scholars find it difficult to explain the presence of the verb *amo* in a context of anger. Ancient commentaries[48] do not dwell on the verb, while explaining *litus*, which is unusual for *saxum* or *scopulus*. Servius ad *Aen.* 5.163 even tries a paraethimology: *LITUS AMA 'litus' est omne quod aqua adluitur: unde et saxum 'litus' vocavit.* From the context it is clear that *ama* should not be translated or understood as 'love': *litus ama* is, in fact, a periphrasis of the later *pete saxa*[49] at line 166 and its contrary is, in my opinion, *fuge litus*[50] at *Aen.* 3.413.

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ciues?; 5.741 *Aeneas 'quo deinde ruis? quo proripis?' inquit;* 10.369 *quo fugitis, socii*?; 10.649 '*quo fugis, Aenea*?; 12.313 *quo ruitis? quaeue ista repens discordia surgit?*; 1.370 *quoue tenetis iter*?; 3.88 *quem sequimur? quoue ire iubes? ubi ponere sedes?;* 2.520 *quo ruis*?; 10.811 *quo moriture ruis maioraque uiribus audes*?; 6.845 *quo fessum rapitis, Fabii*?; 9.490 *quo sequar*?; *Ecl.* 3.19 *quo nunc se proripit ille?;* 9.1 *Quo te, Moeri, pedes? an, quo uia ducit, in urbem?;Georg.* 4.504 *Quid faceret? quo se rapta bis coniuge ferret?*

[47] For more on this, see Beghini 2020: 267–69.

[48] Serv. *Aen.* 5.163 in the text, and Claud. Don. *Aen.* 163 *LITUS AMA hoc est finem saxi*.

[49] Sabbadini and Marchesi 1964: 26 find a series of correspondences between Gyas' first and second interventions.

[50] In the *Aeneid*, there are cases in which the verb *odi* also means the idea of departure (Beghini 2020: 80–81 but nothing in OLD, nor in ThlL s.v. *odi*), but not with the rocks and the coast. Regarding these latter items, the verbs are especially *fugio* and compounds (*effugit scopulos* at *Aen.* 3.272, *refugit ab litore* at 3.536).

Henry (1889: 57) compares this use to the expression "hug the land" of English sailors and specifies that some verbs that originally had an affective meaning can lose their affective nuance. This data is very interesting but not accompanied by examples in Latin.

Moreover, according to Delvigo (2001: 19–20), *litus ama* is a typical expression of prudence referring to navigation along the coast. The scholar brings an epigram by Martial 12.44.7–8, *Nec deerant zephyri, si te dare vela iuvaret;/ sed tu litus amas,* as a proof of this meaning. *Litus amas* is in contrast with *dare vela*, intended here as metaphors for both the humblest poetry and the great poetry. The scholar therefore believes that Gyas is not clear in his order, as he asks for more daring conduct (keeping to the rock) but uses an expression that alludes to the prudence of sailing along the coast (*litus ama*). However, in my opinion, there can be no misunderstanding because the expression *litus ama* is not uttered by itself but inserted in a discourse that already has all the semantic and contextual markers that clarify its value (*quo tantum mihi dexter abis? huc derige gressum;/ litus ama et laeua stringat sine palmula cautes;/ altum alii teneant Aen.* 5.162–64).

What I hereby propose is simpler and tries to consider sense, tone, and context. In my opinion, the verb *amo* is not to be understood in its affective meaning, nor in its value of intellectual predilection as a synonym of *probo* (see *infra* at page 39), but as having locative value. The locative value is the 4b in OLD (s.v. *amo* 4b p. 119): 'to keep close to' and 'to stay in'. Obviously, the verb has also a dynamic nature in our Virgilian context: as previously mentioned, its meaning is similar to *pete saxa*.

The examples of the locative value of *amo* in OLD[51] and those proposed by some commentators[52], with the exception of Hor. *Carm*. 1.25, which we will see *infra*, are all posterior to Virgil. I identified some cases similar to ours, prior and contemporaneous to Virgil through a personal analysis. In these cases, the verb *amo* accompanies a direct object of places and the idea of natural predilection joins that of location in space. Such uses of the verb *amo* are found in texts and context characterized by non-elevated language:[53]

quod [anseres] amant locum purum (Varro *Rust*. 3.10.7)
dum iuga montis aper, fluvios dum piscis amabit (Verg. *Ecl*. 5.76)
aut herba lapathi prata amantis (Hor. *Epod*. 2.57)

[51] Hor. *Carm.* 1.25.3 (see *infra* in the text) and Stat. *Theb.* 9.113–15 *motusque per omnes/ corpus amat, corpus servans circumque supraque/ vertitur*.

[52] Many scholars recall Hor. *Carm.* 1.25.3, e.g., Conington and Nettleship [1884] 1963: 344; Pascoli [1897] 1958: 176, Williams 1960: 78–79, and Farrell 2014: 42.

[53] Text and context are uncertain, as well as the value of *amant*, in Plaut *frg*. 60 De Melo (*Condal.* 1) *tam crepusculo, ferae ut amant, lampades accendite.* For more on this, see Aragosti 2009: 140–41 and De Melo 2013: 442–43.

There are also much more stringent examples, where the meaning of the verb *amo* is clearly locative. These passages may constitute an example of what Henry said about the loss of the original affective nuance of a verb. Such examples are represented by the expression *limen amo*, which appears three times in unchanged form in Publilius' collection of *Sentences,*[54] Propertius' *Elegies* and Horace's *Carmina*:

qui debet limen creditoris non amat (Publ. *sent*. Q33 de Lachapelle = Q33 Meyer)
et quaecumque viri femina limen amat! (Prop. 2.6.4)
amatque/ ianua limen (Hor. *Carm.* 1.25.3–4)

These texts belong to different genres and feature differences, but they have also some similarities.[55] The microcontexts[56] in which *limen amo* appears are not elevated and refined, and the verb *amo* may be translate with 'to stand'; as a result, the debtor does not stand at the creditor's door (Publilius), any lucky woman stands at her husband's door (Propertius), and Lydia's door stands on the threshold[57] and never opens (Horace). The occurrences *sine variatio* of the expression *limen amo* with the same meaning suggest that the *iunctura* is an idiom. *Limen amo* is not inserted, as far as I could see, in the collections of Latin idioms and proverbs and, unfortunately, there are no studies on it.[58] There are few data and it is difficult to draw definitive conclusions; however, I will try to add some tentative considerations. Another element that could support that *limen amo* is an idiom is its presence in the collection of the *Sententiae* of Publilius, where an expression is included, as it is already frequent in colloquial language or, after being inserted, tends to get fixed. Finally, as often in the case with idioms, *limen amo* features a good degree of catchiness: both members are bisyllabic and the nasal bilabial /m/ sound is repeated. These considerations show that *limen amo* is probably colloquial in nature. In fact, idioms and proverbs often draw on colloquial Latin and, in some cases, coincide with it.[59] Obviously, an idiomatic

[54] The oldest *testimonium* of this is Publilius Syrus, composer of mimes and sentence. However, caution must be exercised as the collection of Publilius was reworked during the Middle Ages, with the addition of some sentences by other authors. On Publilius' identity, see Reeve 1983: 328, on Publilius' *sententiae*, see Giancotti 1963 and 1967; Morgan 2007: 84–121, and Panayotakis 2013a and 2013b.

[55] For the analysis of these three passages, see Beghini 2020: 73–78 with further references.

[56] For the importance to consider and study not only the genre and the macrocontext but also the microcontext in its different aspects, see Ricottilli 2003b; Chahoud 2010, and Beghini 2020: 23–42.

[57] Nisbet and Hubbard 1970: 294: "The ancient threshold was not simply an imaginary line but a block of wood, designed to fit the door precisely in a day of uneven floors".

[58] Otto 1890; Arthaber 1986; Tosi 1991; De Genova 1927; Vannucci 1880–1883, and Lelli 2009–2011.

[59] It is no coincidence that genres such as the Menippean satire, satire and fable record a frequent use of proverbs and idioms, see Bonandini 2011: 35 with further references in note 1, and Tosi 1994.

expression is not necessarily colloquial in nature: some of them, indeed, can derive from high poetry (*e.g. timeo Danaos et dona ferentis*[60]). However, this does not seem the case of *limen amo*, which is composed of a high frequency verb that tends to expand its semantic area, especially in colloquial Latin. In fact, *amo* belongs to those expressions of tenderness that the colloquial language uses in place of expressions of praise and approval.[61] Moreover, we have already noted that the verb *amo* takes on a locative value in literary contexts where the linguistic expression is not elevated (Varro *Rust*. 3.10.7, Verg. *Ecl*. 5.76, Hor. *Epod*. 2.57). Maintaining the same locative value, the verb *amo* is then inserted in a fixed *iunctura* that could be an idiom. Finally, it is important to bear in mind that idioms and proverbs can be used on several occasions. The reasons for the use of an idiom are different, as are the contexts of usage (that could be more or less (in)formal). Certainly, a fixed *iunctura* is comfortable and meaningful, in short, preferable for the speaker compared to a more precise expression belonging to standard or elevated language. In our case study, the presence of this probable idiom in one of Publilius' *Sententiae* seems to suggest a certain circulation in the ordinary conversation. In fact, Gellius (17.14.3 Marshall) recalls that *huius Publilii [edd.:publii codd.] sententiae feruntur pleraeque lepidae et ad communem sermonum usum commendatissimae*. Gellius' evaluation and the occurrences in Horace and Propertius go in this direction. The previous considerations of the verb *amo* and the belonging to the genre of the *sententia*, *i.e*. a production that implements a mimesis of colloquial Latin,[62] seem to suggest the colloquial nature of *limen amo*, or at least of the verb *amo* in its locative meaning. Obviously, it is not the case of an example of substandard Latin, but rather a use attributable to *sermo familiaris*, i.e. the language used by educated people in an informal context.[63]

Now I would make a suggestion, but with the awareness that there are no certain confirmations. It seems that the *iunctura limen amare* was an idiom that was certainly in use at least between the first century BC and the first

[60] See Otto 1890: 120–21: from *Aen*. 2.49. Moreover, Moskalew 1990: 277 suggests that in *Aen*. 2.44 (*dona…Danaum*) and in 2.49 (*Danaos…dona*) there a wordplay between *Danai* and *dona*. See also Casali 2017: 116.

[61] Hofmann 2003: 300–303. See also, e.g., the colloquial *te amo* o *amamus*, which is equal to the formal or register-neutral *gratias ago* (ThlL I 1957,33–42 s.v. *amo* and Hofmann 2003: 301). For the definition of 'register-neutral', see Dickey 2010: 4.

[62] For the *sententiae* a situation is hypothesised similar to mime-plays. See Panayotakis 2013b: 109: "Most of the 'proverbial' sayings, as they have come down to us, are composed in the metres of the comic stage, senarii or septenarii, and the assumption is that they were originally part of mime-plays written in verse".

[63] See also Gellius' evalutation of Publilius' mimes in comparison with those of Laberius: *Publilius mimos scriptitavit, dignusque habitus est qui subpar Laberio iudicaretur. C. autem Caesarem ita Laberii maledicentia et adrogantia offendebat, ut acceptiores et probatiores sibi esse Publilii* [edd.: *publii* codd.] *quam Laberii mimos praedicaret* (Gell. 17.14.1–2).

century AD. It cannot be excluded that Virgil coined *litus ama* on the basis of his familiarity with *limen ama*. We recall that *litus* is the only element that the ancient commentators had already perceived as worthy of explanation, since it was unexpected, as one would have expected *saxum* or *scopulus*. *Litus* would replace *limen* in the paronomastic form.[64] *Litus* and *limen* are similar from a phonetic and rhythmic point of view due to the same initial syllable (omeoarcto) and because they are both disyllables. Furthermore, they are similar from a semantic point of view, as they refer to a dividing line: a *limen* lies between the interior and exterior of the house, and a *litus* between water and earth. Therefore, Virgil would have exploited the potential of an idiom in which the verb *amo* indicates a position in space and would have artistically re-elaborated it adapting it to the Aeneadic context.

3. THE DIMINUTIVE *PALMULA* TO INDICATE *REMUS*

Numerous scholars recognize that epic language traditionally lacks diminutive forms,[65] which do not seem suited for the *gravitas* of the genre, as they are perceived as belonging to familiar and affective language. The diminutive formation via the suffix -*elo[66]- is very prolific in Latin, producing various meanings: the idea of diminution between equal entities, or the idea of similarity between different entities (via metaphor, metonymy, synecdoche), partitivity, and approximation.[67] Sometimes on a denotative level the diminutive form does not indicate anything different from the original form,[68] but on a connotative level it can take on a wide range of tones and meanings, ranging from endearment to derogatory.[69] Furthermore, we should not forget the rhythmic-musical aspect of the diminutive: it has a pleasantness and a rhythmic-expressive fullness to which the human ear is accustomed from the first years of life.[70] This has also favored

[64] For more on the appreciation of later Latin poets for the expression *litus ama*, see Beghini 2020: 74–75 and 80.

[65] See, e.g., Hakamies 1951: 40; Zucchelli 1985; Axelson 1945: 40; Williams 1960: 79, and Gow 1932, who states that the poetry of the Augustan age is particularly poor in diminutives. For a more extensive bibliography, see Hofmann 2003: 297 note 129. For more on diminutives, especially the ones in -*elo-, see also Fruyt 1989; Hanssen 1951; Gaide 1988 and 1992, and Magni 1999.

[66] The Indo-European suffix -lo- comes to Latin -*elo- and to the suffix -*olo*- e -*ulo*-, see Leumann 1977: 216; Zucchelli 1970: 23; Magni 1999: 139, and Gaide 1992: 15–16.

[67] Fruyt 1989: 128–29. Similar classifications in Gaide 1992: 18–24 e Magni 1999.

[68] Fruyt 1989: 129 point 5; Magni 1999: 140–41; Zucchelli 1970, who studies the derived forms in -lo without diminutive value. On 'formes élargies', i.e. forms that are morphologically diminutive but semantically synonymous with their base form (lacking a clear affective value), see Gaide 1988, and 1992: 23–24.

[69] Ronconi 1971: 87–94.

[70] Ronconi 1971: 89–90, 93, and Zucchelli 1970: 132–39.

its diffusion within language, without the diminutive conveying an idea different from its primary form.[71] The diminutive can therefore take on a vast range of tones and meanings, thus escaping a clear internal classification.[72]

In general, Virgil uses very few diminutives in the *Aeneid* and significantly fewer less than in the *Bucolics* and the *Georgics*. As regards this specific case, *palmula* is a *unicum* in Virgil's poetry. The poet uses *palmula* to refer to the 'oarblade' or 'oar'[73] in our passage only, while in all other occasions (35 times in *Aen.*) he uses *remus*. As previously mentioned, the presence of variants is important, as it activates the concept of poetic selection. Moreover, *palma*, i.e. the basic form for *palmula* (37 times in *Ecl*., *Georg*. and *Aen.*), never indicates the 'oar', but rather 'the hand', 'the palm leaf' and therefore 'the prize' and 'victory'.

It is clear that Virgil did not employ *palmula* because it was the only form to express the 'oar'; on the contrary, its unique occurrence seems to indicate the peculiarity of our case study. This distribution is very interesting and to call into question metrical motivations does not seem reasonable for the master of the hexameter, especially where there may be explanations related to the context, style, and tone.

First of all, we can exclude the diminutive value for the oars because they belong to the largest ship of the four in the race. The poet insists on its size, as can be clearly seen in the poliptoton at l. 118 (*ingentemque Gyas ingenti mole Chimaeram),* in the reiteration of a sort of epithet for the ship at l. 223 (*ingenti mole*) and in the *variatio* expressing the triple order of oars at ll. 119–20 (*triplici pubes quam Dardana uersu/ impellunt, terno consurgunt ordine remi*). The *Chimera*, which was as big as a city (*urbis opus* at l. 119), was the most imposing ship of the race, so its oars could certainly not be referred to as 'little oars'.

Secondly, given the context, the urgency, and especially the emotional state of Gyas, the hypothesis that the diminutive *palmula* expresses the delicacy required by the verb *stringat* is also unconvincing.[74]

Thirdly, the data show that *palmula* is not a tecnicism for *remus*. As previously mentioned, I searched and studied the occurrences of *palma* and *palmula* not

[71] Löfstedt 1933: 35 ff. Years earlier, Hofmann (2003: 297–300) had already pointed out the loss of value of diminutives, especially in the familiar tone apostrophe by indicating another reason, i.e. their frequent use tends to erode the diminutive nuance.

[72] One detailed tentative may be found in Gow 1932: 153–54.

[73] Serv. *ad Aen.* 5.163 *palmula extrema pars remi in modum palmae protenta*. See also, e.g., Isid. *Or*. 19.2.7 *palmula est extrema latitudo remi, a palma dicta, qua mare inpellitur.* Paulus Diaconus in the epitome to Fest. (Müller 1839: 220) *palmulae appellantur remi a similitudine manus humanae.* For more on this, see ThlL X 1.154.83–155.78 s.v. *palmula.*

[74] Conington and Nettleship's ([1884] 1963: 344), as well as Fratantuono and Smith's (2018: 263) hypothesis.

only in the literary and official, but also in the non-literary and non-official *testimonia latina* prior and contemporaneous to Virgil.[75] The diminutive *palmula* in the meaning of 'oar' does not appear in the non-literary Latin texts, never appears in the didactic treatise, and more in general is not attested before Virgil with the exception of Catullus, which we will see *infra*. Conversely, the original form *palma* was already used as a synonym of *remus*, as we can read in passages from Decimus Laberius,[76] and Vitruvius (*palma* occurs once in 10.3.6,[77] while *remus* occurs twice in 6.2.2, then once in 10.3.6 and once in 10.9.7).[78]

Compared to Virgil, the use of *palma* and *palmula* by Catullus seems to be more interesting.[79] Catullus uses, with the meaning of 'oar', *palmula* twice in reference to the *phaselus* in the polymetric and trifling *Carmen* 4 (4.4 and 4.17), but he uses *remus* twice in reference to Theseus' ship in the *carmen doctum* 64 (64.58 and 64.183) and *palma* once in reference to Argo always in 64.7. Not only is the use of *palmula* necessary for metrical reasons in the *Carmen* 4,[80] but it also seems to be related to the use of *palma* in the *Carmen* 64. In fact, from the data in our possession, *palmula* is not attested before Catullus and the parallelism between *palma* and *palmula* is emphasized: *palmula* in Catull. 4.4 is in the same case (plural ablative), in the same metrical position (the *clausula*), and in the same part of the poem (the *incipit*) as *palma* in Catull. 64.7. Moreover, *palmula* in Catull. 4.17 is collocated next to the word *aequor* as *palma* in Catull. 64.7. It is clear that this parallelism is contrastive: the parodic tone of the Carmen of the *phaselus gloriosus* is also expressed by this diminutive form.[81] As Ronconi (1971: 75) recognizes that diminutives "sono sempre forme che Catullo trasceglie dal fondo linguistico appropriato al contesto", therefore *palmula* is in accordance with the discursive tone and familiar language of

[75] For the long list of consulted non-literary, and non-official *testimonia*, see Beghini 2020: 38–39 and notes 116–22.

[76] In Laber. *mim*. 27 Panayotakis (= 53 Ribbeck) also presents the word *palma* to indicate *remus*: *nec palmarum pulsus nec portisculi*. The codes and the indirect quotation by Nonius Marcellus have *palmarum.* In Panayotakis' opinion, there is no need to adopt Carrion's emendation *palmularum*, as Ribbeck (1873: 287), the Library of Latin Texts, and ThlL X 1.155.64 s.v. *palmula* did. For more on this, see Panayotakis 2010: 246–47.

[77] Rose and Müller-Strübing 1867: 254 solved the *crux* '*parmis'* of *codices,* accepting the *lectio* '*palmis'* from the *editio princeps*.

[78] I am writing a paper that I presented in the Conference *Latin vulgaire – latin tardif* XV (Munich, 2nd–6th September 2024), on the possible motivations of these occurrences and further details.

[79] For more on Virgil's appreciation of Catullus, see Westendorp Boerma 1958. For an updated bibliography, as well as for another example of Virgil's literary imitation of Catullus, see Ricottilli 2018a.

[80] Catullus does not use *remulus* which has the same metrical scansion and has been already used in Turp. *Lemniae* IV (5) Rychlewska.

[81] For the parodic tone in Catull. 4, see MacKay 1930; Ax 1993; Davis 2002: esp. 112–19 and 123; Massaro 2010; Morelli 2015: 480, 491–93, 501, and Harrison 2021: section 13.6. For the parodic tone of *palmula*, see Massaro 2010: 18 note 3.

Carmen 4; while the serious and higher tone of Carmen 64 requires the original form *palma*.[82] In my opinion, from the data collected, this is a case of literary imitation of colloquial Latin.[83] In choosing *palmula* in the dialogue between Gyas and Menoetes, Virgil seems to be aware of this variation in tone. The poet, indeed, uses with the meaning of 'oar' *remus* 35 times in formal and standard epic context, whereas inserts the diminutive *palmula* in an informal context featuring a tone that is less elevated. Considering the degree of confidence and the way in which the young commander is addressing his *rector*, the diminutive form seems to be more appropriate, also by virtue of the strength of the (also rhythmic) familiarity that it can convey. Finally, it is worth noting, especially considering Virgil's appreciation for sound effectiveness, that the diminutive *palmula* allows the insistent reiteration of the sound /l/ at ll. 163–64.[84]

4. THE UNMODIFIED PROPER NAME IN ADDRESS

At l. 166, after Menoetes' refusal to obey Gyas' commands, the latter, *iterum*, blurts out the question *quo diversus abis*? and closes with an order, *pete saxa*, followed by the vocative[85] of the proper name *Menoete*.[86] The vocative *Menoete* has the function of catalyzing the speaker's anger and arousing the attention of the addressee, who is explicitly called into question, even more. This is a post-positioned vocative and, as Berger (2021: 613) identified in some dialogues of Roman comedy, it "seems to be stressing the involvement of [the addressee] in the action, making [speaker's] imposition even higher",[87] thus increasing the face-threat. Furthermore, as Dickey has pointed out,[88] "in Latin, the use of unmodified names in address is partly register-dependent".[89] It is therefore acceptable in all literature, but rare in some genres, such as epic and tragedy, while it is more frequent in other genres featuring colloquial Latin, such as

[82] Catull. 64.7. Ronconi 1971: 122–30 recognises that poem 64 is not devoid of diminutive forms (such as *labellum* and *occelli*), but these are present with a consciously literary affectionate nuance.

[83] For more on this topic, see Chahoud 2010: 64: "Imitation of everyday language may result in the invention of word-types associated with everyday language, but belonging to the literariness of the particular text, not to spoken idiom".

[84] For more on the phonetic iterations in Latin literature (especially Plautus) and sound symbolism in Virgil, see respectively at least Traina 1999 and Dainotti 2015.

[85] Studies on nominal address in Latin include Dickey 2002; Cabrillana 2008; Ctibor 2017; Fleck 2021, and Berger 2021 with an extensive bibliography.

[86] For the semantic relations of the proper names Gyas and Menoetes, which appear in our case study 3 and 5 times, respectively, see Paschalis 1997: 187.

[87] For more on post-positioned nominal address, see 612–14.

[88] Dickey 2002: 41–76, especially 41–46.

[89] *Ibid.* 43. For more on Greek, see Dickey 1995, and 1996: 47–48 and 250–55.

comedy.[90] According to Dickey's quantitative data, Virgil uses unaccompanied proper names in addresses in only 24% of the *Aeneid*, while the percentage rises to 66% in the *Bucolics*.[91] A qualitative study of mine on addresses in the *Aeneid* shows that the unaccompanied proper name in address generally appears in informal contexts, often with a restricted audience, with familiarity among the characters and a sense of urgency, especially in orders and in reproaches, like in our case. In contrast, in formal and solemn contexts, and more often in the presence of the community, the address is richer and more high-sounding and can include the use of patronymics, formulaic epithets, the played role et cetera.[92] Therefore, Dickey's quantitative data coincide with my qualitative data, and it seems, with good probability, that in colloquial Latin the usual way to appeal to a person was to use his or her unmodified first name. Therefore, the unmodified proper name in address seems to be colloquial and Virgil, who was careful to align his language with changes in context and tone, also reflects this use in our case study.

5. THE SYNTAX

In *Aeneid* 5.162–66, even syntax reflects situational urgency, which does not require complex and hierarchically structured constructs, but rather the asyndetic and rapid juxtaposition of thoughts. After the angry question *quo mihi tantum dexter abis?* three imperatives in the second singular person are directed at Mnestheus and are coordinated in parataxis,[93] a fact that is quite regular (*Aen.* 5.162–63). Then, an exhortative subjunctive prescribes, with a note of contempt, the attitude of the opponents (*alii*) and the adversative coordination is in parataxis

[90] This occurs in other authors with the following frequency: Cicero 89%, Tacitus 92%, Columella and Varro 100%, Terentius 74% and Martial 86%, while in Virgil only 35%, Ovid 38%, Statius 25% and Silius 30%. The scholar pays attention to various aspects, even in this generalisation. For example, in the comedy genre, the use of proper names as addresses decreases compared to common expectations, because it is substituted by terms of kinship or insults; similarly, proper names are scarce in declamations due to the fictitious nature of the speeches in which the characters do not even have a name. For more on the use of proper names as a means of mocking the addressee, see Corbeill 1996: 57–98.

[91] In a very similar way, Catullus uses it in 33% of the cases in Carmen 64 and in 50% of the rest of his production.

[92] E.g. in the *Aeneid*, a patronymic is *sate sanguine diuum,/ Tros Anchisiade* (6.125–26), a formulaic epithet is *nate dea* (11 times), a mention of the people to which they belong is *Deiphobe armipotens, genus alto a sanguine Teucri* (6.500), specific characteristics are, e.g., *o tandem magnis pelagi defuncte periclis* (6.83), and *o decus Italiae uirgo* (11.508), the played roles may be found in *Troiugena, interpres diuum* (3.359), *maxime Teucrorum ductor* (8.470), *o sanctissima uates* (6.65), *rex, genus egregium Fauni* (7.213), and *rex optime* (11.294), and an enriched term of kinship is *o germana mihi atque eadem gratissima coniunx* (10.607).

[93] I follow Traina's definition of 'parataxis' (1966: 174).

(*Aen.* 5.164). This syntax ensures some speed and realistically conveys Gyas' sense of urgency. At this point, one last form of parataxis deserves further study: the asyndetic subordination (or parenthetic juxtaposition)[94] between *stringat* and *sine*. Some Virgilianists[95] and most authoritative grammarians[96] consider this phenomenon colloquial, as it is mostly found in the comedy of Plautus and Terence, in the *De agri cultura* of Cato and in the *Epistles* of Horace,[97] while the most frequent construction in classical Latin is that with the infinitive. However, in evaluating this phenomenon, it is necessary to keep in mind that the parataxis has been a feature of the epic genre since Homer,[98] and its presence could therefore depend on the genre. Furthermore, the study I conducted on the use of the verb *sino* showed that the construction with the subjunctive introduced by the conjunction *ut* never appears in Virgil. In Virgil's work, in fact, the verb *sino* can perform two syntactic constructions:[99] the objective infinitive (in 16 cases),[100] and the exhortative subjunctive in parataxis (in only 4 cases: *Aen.* 5.163, 5.717, 12.828, and 2.669–70). From the analysis of the occurrences, it is clear that these two different constructs are not totally comparable either in terms of semantics and focus, or in those of linguistic style.[101] The construction with the infinitive can be used both in dialogues and in narrations, while the exhortative subjunctive in parataxis appears only in dialogues and is therefore configured as a typical construct of conversational language. Obviously, 'conversational' does not coincide with 'colloquial': the phenomenon is colloquial only if it is typical of informal conversation. The in-depth analysis of the contexts of the use

[94] Görler 1987: 273 already claimed that it is difficult to distinguish between paratactic hypotaxis and parenthetic juxtaposition. The latter presupposes the pragmaticalization of *sine*, which is well attested in comedy but not in epic, see Hofmann 2003: 151 § 45.

[95] See, e.g., Williams 1960: 79; Farrell 2014: 42 for *Aen.* 5.162, and Austin 1973: 253 for *Aen.* 2.669–70.

[96] Hofmann, Szantyr 1972: 530, § 289 α, 532–33 § 290; Kühner, Stegmann 1962: 227–29 § 185; Hofmann 2003: 249–68, § 100–108. Pinkster 2015: 352 inserts *sine* + conj. among the cases of directive metadirectives but does not judge the colloquial nature or otherwise of the phenomenon.

[97] E.g., Plaut. *Amph.* 806; Ter. *Andr.* 900; Cato *agr.* 109.14; Hor. *Epist.* 1.16.70, and 1.17.32.

[98] For more on parataxis as a constitutive element of the epic genre, see Norden [1957] 1984: 378–80; Worstbrock 1963: 130–40; Quinn 1968: 425 note 1, and 428 ff.; Weissenborn 1879: 42–46; Görler 1987: 274; Calboli 1987; Horsfall 1995: 231; Ricottilli 2003a: 59; Dionisotti 2007: 82: "the traditional epic dress is paratactic and anaphoric", and Conte 2018.

[99] For more on this, see Beghini 2020: 60–69. The verb *sino* can also hold a direct object in the *Aeneid*, e.g., in *Aen.* 9.620 *sinite arma uiris* and *Aen.* 10.598 *sine hanc animam*.

[100] Verg. *Aen.* 5.391, 6.870, 7.270, 9.291, 10.26, 10.433, 10.700, 11.103, 11.505, 11.701, 12.25, 12.147, 12.680, *Georg.* 1.269, 3.206, and *Ecl.* 8.12.

[101] See Beghini 2020: 61–62: there are cases in which, both in the diegesis and in the mimesis, lawfulness is explained with the verb *sino* at III person and cases in which, in mimesis only, the speaker asks for the addressee's permission or blessing to do something with the verb *sino* at II person.

of the subjunctive governed by *sine/sinite* in parataxis highlights a variety of contexts.[102] These contexts are characterized by different degrees of formality, speakers' emotion, and urgency, but they share a high level of confidence between the speakers: the commander Gyas with his rector Mnestheus, with whom he had navigated for years in *Aen.* 5.163; old Nautes, who implicitly recalls the father figure in a complex moment of Aeneas' life and political role in 5.717; the royal couple of Olympus in 12.828; and finally, the *heros* with his *viri*, with whom he used to live side by side in 2.669–70. Therefore, it is difficult to draw conclusions about the colloquial nature of this phenomenon; it undoubtedly recalls lively face-to-face dialogue and is particularly adherent to the context described in *Aen.* 5.163. The syntax that proceeds quickly and through simple juxtaposition perfectly conveys Gyas' urgency. A final consideration on the form of *stringat sine* of *Aen.* 5.163 is in order: the speaker places the element perceived as most important,[103] i.e., the action he wants to be performed (*stringat*) first (as also occurs in *Aen.* 5.717, 12.828). The role that the interlocutor could play in this realization (*sine*) is recalled by the speaker only later. Finally, it is important to note that the sentence without the imperative *sine* would still make complete sense and that the postponed verb *sine* only adds a nuance of meaning, as it shows the importance of the addressee from the speaker's point of view. For this reason, Farrell (2014: 42) sees a redundant (and also colloquial) construction in *stringat sine palmula cautes* of *Aen.* 5.163.

CONCLUSIONS

In conclusion, there is a set of phenomena typical of colloquial Latin that best expresses the state of mind of the speaker, familiarity among characters, informal context and a restricted audience. The colloquialisms refer to semantics, pragmatics and perhaps syntax. We have seen the colloquial (belonging to spoken idiom or invented) variants instead of the register-neutral[104] or formal expressions in the case of *palmula* in the meaning of *remus*, and in the case of the use of the verb *amo* in its locative value. From a pragmatic point of view, the use of the ethic dative expresses the emotional participation of the speaker in the form of a reproach. Moreover, the unmodified name in address stresses the addressee's involvement in the action and makes the speaker's imposition higher on one hand, and recalls a use that is typical of colloquial Latin on the other. The syntax is simple, fast and mostly paratactic and responds to the sense of urgency and informal context.

[102] See Beghini 2020: 63–66.

[103] The choice of positioning the element considered most important first is a linguistic attitude that is typical of the speaker in colloquial Latin, see Hofmann 2003: 243–48 and 269, § 98–99 and 109.

[104] For the definition of 'register-neutral', see Dickey 2010: 4.

Considering the microcontext, the language is not particularly elevated: in the hexameters studied, there are no high-sounding terms or refined rhetorical figures, nor complex syntaxis or constructions that are made less transparent by a poetic *ordo verborum*. The hexameter itself clearly leads to a departure from everyday language, and there are rhetorical devices such as the insistent reiteration of the sound /l/ in lines 163–64, the double alliteration of the sound /s/ in line 163 and of the sound /al/ in line 164, and the anaphora of the interrogative pronoun *quo* as well as the epiphora of the verb *abis* that show a clear parallelism between the two questions at lines 162 and 166. However, we do not find a strong counterbalance to the colloquial phenomena. The effect is that of greater linguistic verisimilitude in relation to the scene that is described, and therefore that of a more colloquial tone compared to the standard of the *genus grande*. At no point is the artistic mimesis of colloquial Latin that is typical of comedy achieved, as there is never a disruption of *decorum* (also from a linguistic point of view) or of the rules of the epic genre. However, it is also true that the boundaries of the epic genre[105] are sometimes pushed further, resulting in an expansion of the area of epic diction and a wider range of linguistic expressions. As a result, the presence of the colloquial does not degrade, but rather enriches Virgil's epic language, which is never flat and never flattened, but is sensitive to changes in context and in the relationship among characters.

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[105] For more on the boundaries of the epic genre with reference to the *Aeneid*, see Conte 1984.

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