

## THE 1<sup>ST</sup> PERSON PLURAL ‘HORTATORY’ SUBJUNCTIVE IN PLAUTUS AND TERENCE

The Latin request has been the object of many fruitful studies; most recently, Rodie Risselada and Wolfgang de Melo consider how register, politeness, and immediate context may influence the choice of request-form.<sup>1</sup> In this note I intend to consider how one ‘socio-pragmatic’ factor, particularly the relationship between speaker and addressee, affects the use of one kind of request, the so-called 1<sup>st</sup> person plural ‘hortatory’ subjunctive (of the type *faciamus*, “let us do”) in Roman comedy.<sup>2</sup> Our corpus consists of all such ‘hortatory’ subjunctives in Plautus and Terence; these were gathered by reading through the plays. There are 93 in Plautus and 38 in Terence.<sup>3</sup> Before examining these in more detail, it will be necessary to review some particulars about the expression in question.

With a request of the type *faciamus* (“let us do”), the speaker proposes some action to the addressee for joint fulfillment by both. As the 4<sup>th</sup> C. grammarian Diomedes puts it, *conserit enim se prima persona cum aliis et, dum imperat, se quoque in idem ministerium vocat: quem [sc. modum] quidam hortativum potius, non imperativum esse putaverunt, cum dicimus faciamus legamus et similia.*<sup>4</sup>

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1) R. Risselada, *Imperatives and Other Directive Expressions in Latin*, Amsterdam 1993, esp. 158–162. W. de Melo, *The Early Latin Verb System*, Oxford 2007, 92–132, 191–215. L. Unceta Gómez, *La Petición verbal en Latín: estudio léxico, semántico y pragmático*, Madrid 2009, 41–66, discusses most recently the Latin request from a pragmatic perspective, but his main focus is on performative verbs like *peto*. In general terms, the tools of pragmatics and discourse-analysis have been employed to good effect in understanding Terence’s language, see e.g. R. Müller, *Sprechen und Sprache. Dialoglinguistische Studien zu Terenz*, Heidelberg 1997, and E. Karakasis, *Terence and the Language of Roman Comedy*, Cambridge 2005.

2) Cf. Kühner / Stegmann II.1 (Hannover 41962) 180; Hofmann / Szantyr II (München 1972) 335.

3) I exclude the instance at Pl. Cis. 712, where Seyffert’s supplement (*cistellam haec mulier <perdidit. tace>amus, era, parumper*) restores the line; Leo prints it in his 1895 edition. For Plautus, I use the Lindsay’s 1910 Oxford edition, and for Terence, the Oxford text edited by Kauer and Lindsay (21926).

4) Keil, GL I (1857) 338. Cf. S. A. Handford, *The Latin Subjunctive*, London 1946, 40: it is “used to express an exhortation, i. e. a request or suggestion addressed

So for instance, at the end of Plautus’ *Mercator*, a *senex* proposes to his son that each publicly shame an old man for attempting adultery with a slave girl: *quibus est dictis dignus usque oneremus ambo* (978). Both then commence insulting the hapless would-be adulterer, each in turn (979–1002). As this example shows, this kind of request typically looks forward to collaboration between speaker and addressee. In Terence, as we shall see, characters tend to propose collaboration with an equal or a person of the same gender using the 1<sup>st</sup> person plural hortatory subjunctive; the exceptions to this ‘rule’ are apparent exceptions only, but in fact prove the rule, or better, confirm the tendency.

This tendency is not so pronounced in Plautus, although Plautine slaves usually direct the form to equals: 18 of the 25 instances put in the mouths of slaves are directed to other slaves, representing a proportion of 72%.<sup>5</sup> Of 16 passages in which female characters use this form, 12 (75%) are addressed to another woman.<sup>6</sup>

In Terence, however, the tendency is much more regular and pronounced. Male characters with a few notable exceptions direct the form to equals. 27 of the 38 instances of the 1<sup>st</sup> person plural hortatory subjunctive are put in the mouth of high-status male characters, *senes* (17) and *adulescentes* (10).<sup>7</sup> Of the seventeen ex-

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to another person or persons, accompanied by an indication of the speaker’s desire or willingness to take part in the action which he recommends”. In speech act terms, these contain both a directive and a commissive (promise) element, cf. Risselada (n. 1 above) 158.

5) I include in this count the instances at Pl. Per. 768, 833, which the slave Toxilus addresses to other slaves and a courtesan recently purchased from a *leno* by Toxilus, and Per. 791, which the slave Sagaristio speaks to Toxilus and the same courtesan. If one discounts these instances, the proportion is 60%. One interesting exception is at Pl. Am. 543, where Mercury, disguised as Sosia, directs the form to his father, Jupiter, disguised as Amphitruo. But since both are deities, the expression conforms to the above-mentioned tendency.

6) Here are the exceptions: in one, an *ancilla* proposes to a slave that each share a secret: *fide data credamus* (Per. 243). In another, a *virgo* recently recognized as a freeborn citizen, speaks one to a mixed group consisting of her father and her maidservant (Rud. 1182); the two remaining occur in an erotic context, as a courtesan attempts to seduce a young man (Men. 387, 431). I do not have the proportion of lines women address to other women in Plautus; nevertheless the proportion stated above (75%) seems high.

7) For the distinction between high-status and low-status characters, see Karakasis (n. 1 above) 17–18. The figure (38), again, is based on my own collection, made by reading the plays. The totals for 1<sup>st</sup> person plural hortatory subjunctive, in sum, are: 17 instances spoken by *senes*, 10 by *adulescentes*, 3 by the *meretrix* Thais

amples spoken by the *senes*, all with one exception are directed to free males; none are spoken to slaves.<sup>8</sup> Even the aforementioned exceptional occurrence could be included in the total which *senes* direct to free-citizen males, for at Phorm. 1054, a *senex* directs the form to a collective consisting of a *senex*, *parasitus*, and *matrona*.

The instances put in the mouths of *adulescentes* are perhaps more interesting to consider. Young men speak six of their ten examples to characters of the same status.<sup>9</sup> This leaves four examples apparently not addressed to an equal. One is in fact directed at a plurality: a slave and an *adulescens* (Ad. 287).<sup>10</sup> Three are spoken by one of the *adulescentes amantes* of the *Eunuch*, Chaerea (Eun. 377, 380, 906). We recall that Chaerea, on the advice of his slave, disguises himself as a eunuch in order to gain access to a neighboring brothel where the object of his desire is kept. Chaerea directs the first two of his three hortatory subjunctives to a slave, shortly after his entrance-monologue, which Ortwin Knorr has convincingly assimilated to a running slave speech (Eun. 292–322), and which, as Knorr argues, anticipates Chaerea's role as a eunuch, that is, an actual slave.<sup>11</sup> Chaerea speaks the final example to a courtesan, when he is dressed as a eunuch. In other words, it is precisely

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(Eun. 864, to Chaerea, dressed as a eunuch; at 441f., This is impersonated by Gnatho, and thus addresses the *miles* Thraso; 850 to her maid, Pythias), 3 by the *parasitus* Gnatho (Eun. 459, to the *miles* Thraso and a *meretrix*; 443 and 811 to the *miles*), 1 by the *miles* Thraso (506, to a *meretrix*), 1 by the *matrona* Sostrata (to her *ancilla* at Ad. 320), and 1 by an *ancilla* (to her mistress at Ad. 309), in addition to 2 examples spoken by *servi* at Phorm. 562 and Ad. 278.

8) The one example that is apparently directed to a slave – at Andr. 171 – is in fact directed to the freedman Sosia. Of the remaining, twelve (71%) of these are spoken to other *senes*, 2 are directed at *adulescentes* (Hec. 622 and Ad. 678), one is directed at the above-mentioned collective (Phorm. 1054), and one is directed at the *parasitus* Phormio (Phorm. 981).

9) Eun. 609, 612, 613, 1068; Phorm. 103, 195.

10) At Ad. 287, *hilare[m] hunc sumamus diem* is evidently spoken by Ctesipho to Syrus, but the context makes this clear that it refers not just to Syrus, but to Aeschinus and the courtesan who hides within (at l. 282 Ctesipho though speaking to Syrus directs his imperative to both Syrus and Aeschinus: *quam primum absolvitote*. At l. 285, Syrus refers to party preparations being made for himself, Aeschinus, and Ctesipho: *et lectulos iube sterni nobis et parari cetera*).

11) O. Knorr, The Running Ephebe and Other Visual Jokes in Terence, American Philological Association paper given at the 2007 meeting in San Diego, CA, USA. Abstract available at [http://apaclassics.org/sites/default/files/documents/abstracts/knorr\\_1.pdf](http://apaclassics.org/sites/default/files/documents/abstracts/knorr_1.pdf).

after Chaerea has been assimilated to a slave that he directs the 1<sup>st</sup> person plural hortatory subjunctive to a slave; it is precisely when he is dressed as a (genderless) eunuch that he addresses the final occurrence of the form put in his mouth to a woman. This pattern suggests that Terence may be underscoring Chaerea’s role-shift through a corresponding shift or change in his language.<sup>12</sup>

If we consider the *faciamus*-type on the axis of male / female speech, women speak 5 examples of the 38 total (Ad. 309, 320, Eun. 441–442, 850, 864). All observe the stated ‘rule’, in that they are all – with two notable exceptions to be discussed below – spoken to other women.<sup>13</sup> In one of these noteworthy exceptions, Thais is impersonated by the parasite Gnatho, as the parasite imagines a dialogue between the courtesan and the soldier Thraso (Eun. 440–443):

*ubi nominabit Phaedriam, tu Pamphilam continuo; si quando illa dicet “Phaedriam intro mittamu’ comissatum” Pamphilam cantatum provocemu’.*

Whenever she names Phaedria, you immediately name Pamphila. If ever she says, “Let’s send Phaedria in to the party,” you and I, let’s invite Pamphila to sing.

In the remaining exceptional instance, Thais speaks to Chaerea, when the latter is still dressed as a eunuch, and just before Thais reveals that she is aware of his identity (864). These latter two instances constitute the only moments when a female character directs a 1<sup>st</sup> person plural hortatory subjunctive to a male character.

The use of the 1<sup>st</sup> person plural hortatory subjunctive by *senes* in Terence displays a pattern similar to that in his forebear, Menander. This is not surprising since Menander provides the model for four of Terence’s plays. According to Martha Krieter-Spiro, writing on Menander, “the speaker addresses such a command, for the

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12) Karakasis (n.1 above) 115, in his chapter on idiolect in Terence, points out Chaerea’s frequent use of alliteration and assonance, and his “particular propensity for rhetorical questions”. Interestingly, instances of the latter occur in the very scene when he enters the play for the first time and which is heralded by his ‘running-slave’ monologue.

13) One is spoken by the *meretrix* Thais to her *ancilla* (Eun. 850), one by an *ancilla* to a *matrona* (Ad. 309) and one by a *matrona* to an *ancilla* (320).

most part, to a member of the same social group”: specifically, in Menander, masters address this expression to each other four times, but on only one occasion does a master address a slave this way (Aspis 455b).<sup>14</sup> *Senes* (or masters) in Terence direct a similarly high number to other *senes*: 12 of the 17 examples, and it will be recalled that nowhere do they direct the form to a slave.<sup>15</sup>

The 1<sup>st</sup> person plural hortatory subjunctive, as mentioned, looks forward to collaboration between speaker and addressee. The results from Menander and Terence show that those of the same social status are more likely to propose collaboration with each other using this request type. Perhaps *senes* in Terence do not at all use it with their slaves because doing so would imply that both are equals.<sup>16</sup> At the same time, a slave who directs a command of the *faciamus*-type to a superior might appear presumptuous, putting himself on the same level as his master. In fact, Terence puts only three such forms in the mouth of slaves (Phorm. 562; Ad. 278, 309).<sup>17</sup> This number represents a proportion of 7.9% (3:38), far below the expected one of 27.0%, which is the proportion of slave speech in Terence’s plays.<sup>18</sup> Again, the exceptional passages are worth considering in some detail. In two, a slave orders his young

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14) M. Krieter-Spiro, *Sklaven, Köche und Hetären: Das Dienstpersonal bei Menander*, Stuttgart / Leipzig 1997, 228–229, esp. 228, speaking of the 1<sup>st</sup> person plural ‘hortatory’ subjunctive: “Bei der Sammlung der Belege fiel uns auf, dass der Sprecher eine solche Aufforderung meistens an einen Angehörigen der gleichen sozialen Gruppe richtet.”

15) Slaves in Menander address the 1<sup>st</sup> person plural hortatory subjunctive six times to each other; on three other occasions a slave directs the expression to a young master (Dysk. 86b, 135b, 556c): Krieter-Spiro (see n. 14 above) 228–229. In Terence, on the other hand, of the three examples total given to slaves, two are addressed to an *adulescens* (Ad. 278; Phorm. 562), and an *ancilla* speaks one to her mistress (Ad. 309: *propius obsecro accedamū’, Sostrata*).

16) See again M. Krieter-Spiro (n. 14 above) 229: “Die gemeinsame Aufforderung an sich selbst und den Dialogpartner drückte wohl eine Gleichheit aus, die Sklaven nur gegenüber jungen Zöglingen simulieren durften; und ein Herr liess sich vermutlich nur selten dazu herab, sich mit einer solchen Aufforderung auf die gleiche Stufe wie den angesprochenen Sklaven zu stellen.”

17) In the first two instances, a slave addresses an *adulescens*; in the last-mentioned instance an *ancilla* speaks to her mistress (Ad. 309: *propius obsecro accedamū’, Sostrata*).

18) For the proportions of male and female, free and slave speech in Roman comedy, I draw on the exhaustive word-counts of Michael Gilleland, *Linguistic Differentiation of Character Type and Sex in the Comedies of Plautus and Terence*, Univ. of Virginia Diss. 1979, 30–83.

master (Ad. 278; Phorm. 562); this is to be explained by the fact that those clever subordinates often order about lovelorn or hapless *adulescentes*. In the remaining instance, at Ad. 309, an *ancilla* instructs her mistress with *propius obsecro accedamus*. Note however, the form is mitigated with the polite *obsecro*, one of the only two times in Terence the 1<sup>st</sup> person plural subjunctive is softened. The other instance, is, interestingly, put in the mouth of Chaerea, still costumed as a eunuch, when he addresses Thais.<sup>19</sup>

Terence, a “half-pint Menander” – as C. Iulius Caesar affectionately refers to him – is concerned to hold up a mirror to reality like his New Comedy exemplar.<sup>20</sup> This means that not only does he make women sound convincingly like women, men like men and so on (as recent work has shown);<sup>21</sup> he also depicts the interactions between characters in a realistic manner: one example of this lies in the use of the *faciamus*-type, which Terence tends to reserve for speech among equals, or between those of the same gender.<sup>22</sup>

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19) Compare Chaerea’s *obsecro / abeamus intro, Thais* (Eun. 905–906) with the *ancilla* of *Adelphoe: propius obsecro accedamu’, Sostrata* (309). On the polite *obsecro* in Roman comedy, see J. N. Adams, *Female Speech in Latin Comedy*, *Antichthon* 18, 1984, 57–58.

20) According to Caesar’s praise in an epigram quoted by Suetonius in his *Vita Terenti: tu quoque, tu in summis, o dimidiata Menander, / poneris et merito, puri sermonis amator* (Aeli Donati quod fertur commentum Terenti . . ., rec. P. Wessner I, Leipzig 1902, 9). Menander is praised for his true-to-life depictions of character by the grammarian Aristophanes of Byzantium: ὁ Μένανδρε καὶ βίε, πότερος ἄρ’ ὑμῶν πότερον ἀπεμιμήσατο; (Menandri quae supersunt, ed. A. Körte, retr. A. Thierfelder II, Leipzig 1959, 7, test. 32).

21) See e.g. the work of R. Maltby, *Linguistic Characterization of Old Men in Terence*, *CPh* 74, 1979, 136–147, Gilleland (n. 18 above), Karakasis (n. 1 above), and D. Dutsch, *Feminine Discourse in Roman Comedy*, Oxford 2008.

22) The foregoing discussion of the first plural hortatory subjunctive has left out four instances. These, again, observe the tendency with one exception: at Eun. 443, 459, and 811, Gnatho directs the form to the *miles* Thraso; at Eun. 506, however, Thraso speaks *eamus* to the *meretrix* Thais.