

REMARKS ON THE TYPE *FAXŌ/FAXIM*

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1. INTRODUCTION

This paper deals with the origin of one of the more controversial morphological structures of Archaic Latin verb, the so called “*fax-ō/-īm* type”. The topic has been addressed since the very beginning of Indo-European studies, and it still represents a puzzling problem. In recent years, though, recent studies like those by W.D. De Melo offered new insights on the whole matter, specifically on the productivity of *faxō/im* forms along the entire Latinity; it seems possible now to reconsider some hypothesis about the origin and the distribution of these forms. The paper is organised as follows: in the second paragraph I will put some methodological claims forward; then (§ 3), the main morphological proposals will be mentioned; § 4 will be dedicated to the syntactic properties of *faxō/im* type, while in § 5 I outline my conclusive hypothesis. It will be shown that the basic syntactic environment where the type is observed are the prescriptive formulas of the juridical language, and this leads to hypothesise that the morphological cluster *-s-e/o-ī-* was a Latin innovation for licensing modal features bounded with anteriority.

2. METHODOLOGICAL PROBLEMS AND CONSISTENCY

Whoever wants to study the *faxō/im* type will easily notice that even Leumann (1977) relegates it in the very final part of his Grammar, and that most scholar call these forms “extra-paradigmatic”: the formal oddity was considered as a direct consequence of their archaic nature. In fact, some might say that “archaic” does not seem to be anything more than a label, or, in other words, that to ascribe the *faxō/im* type to the Archaic Latin is not an explanans, rather another explanandum. The point is that Archaic Latin is a sort of Restsprache, in which different kinds of Latin seems to cohabit, under which we keep different chronological stages, different phases of the Roman history, different places, and furthermore, different textual genres. That should have some consequences, because Restsprachen do not allow grammatical formalism at the same way ‘natural’ languages do, and consequently much more weight has to be acknowledged to any single text one considers¹; then, once we look to Archaic Latin as to an intrinsically composite language, the explanation of the origin and the function of sigmatic subjunctives and futures seems much more

¹ Cf. Prodocimi (2004).

complex. Under this light, the massive variability in any field of “Archaic Latin” morphology needs to be explored keeping in mind that any eventual innovation may have its own independent linguistic and historical reasons. This means (§5) that the origin of sigmatic modal forms has not to do only with Indo-European reconstruction, but also with internal processes of Latin morpho-syntax. In detail, I will show that a careful insight into *faxō/im*’s distribution is necessary for the analysis, and, moreover, that the crucial step will be to understand under which textual conditions the origin of such forms took place.

The type *faxō/im* is far widespread across different chronological stages within Archaic Latin² and different textual genres; from a formal point of view, it gives rise to basically three morphological sub-types:

- i. Type *cāpsō/capsim*: a simple *-s-* is applied on the zero grade root or, according to Leumann (1977: 623) the past participle stem: this formation prevails with 3rd conjugation verbs, cp. *dīxō/īt, fāk-s-ō/īt, surrepsit, āxim*, etc;
- ii. Type *amāssō/amāssīs*: a double *-s-* is applied on the long-vowel present stem; this holds only for 1st conjugation verbs and some for the 2nd one, cp. *cantāssit, prohibēssīs*; no examples but *ambīssit* are known from *-ī-* verbs;
- iii. Type *monērim*³: a single *-s-* is applied after the thematic short vowel, and then rhotacized (Rix 1998).

Such variation is challenging, because two strategies seem to coexist, one (type i) of athematic shape, and another, where a thematic formation seems to prevail (ii); the status of double *-s-* is then largely debated, as it may be ascribed to barely phonological reasons, or may entail more deeper morphological reason (§5).

Each of these types may appear under two different grammatical categories, according to the endings it bears: when the *-s-* element is followed by a thematic ending *-e/o-*, sigmatic forms belong to indicative mood, whereas if a *-ī-* ending follows, they appear linked to the subjunctive mood⁴. In this paper I will not deal with the distribution of the two sub-categories, as it entails syntactic parameters and it does not look immediately bound with the origin of the morphological category

² No traces have been found within Italic languages; the only possible instances are Hernic. (He2) **kait**, from **cad-s-* (Rix 1998) and SouthPic. *povaisis* (TE5) from **k^wō(w) axis* according to Martzloff (2009; different interpretation in Marinetti 1985).

³ Other instances: *adiūverō < -iūvī-s-* and *sīrīs < sei-s-* (cf. Rix 1998:630-631).

⁴ The opposition between *faxō* and *faxim*, then, resembles the one between future perfect and subjunctive perfect of the type *fēcerō/fēcerim*. A detailed distinction within forms apart 1st singular and 3rd plural is not always easy, inasmuch only metrics allows for detection of vowel length; alternatively, one may consider the syntactic environment, but this criterion does not look properly safe.

itself; moreover, the modal shape of *faxō/im* forms seems to be less meaningful if compared with their temporal reference, which is common to both forms, and consequently could be more basic.

A third aspect has to be stressed out: *faxō/im* forms have a long-time distribution, as well as they appear in several different kinds of authors, genres, and textual types; that is, the whole scenario makes difficult to identify the original function of this category. In detail, *faxō/im* is preserved by two main branches of tradition, being attested at the one hand within the literary corpus of all the first main Roman authors: namely, instances of this type are widespread in the works of e.g. Plautus, Ennius, Cato, Terence etc.⁵; at the other, grammarians, antiquity writers, glossaries offer data which come from the more ancient laws of Rome (*Leges XII Tabularum*, *Leges Regiae*); finally, we also have direct evidence from a little group of epigraphic data which do not come only from Rome itself, but also from Romanized area like Campania and Umbria (§4).

Thus, the corpus of attestations covers, even if one does not consider post-archaic data, at least four centuries, and at least two greatly different kinds of languages, namely, the juridical one, and the literary production. As we will show later, this asymmetry is not due to chance, but looks meaningful in order to understand the oldest distribution of *faxō/im* as well its morphological origin.

3. DIACHRONIC ANALYSIS AND MORPHOLOGICAL STRUCTURE

Faxō/im type has long time been regarded as a puzzling problem, given that these forms do not fit well with synchronic categories of Latin system, nor with the reconstructed morphological structure of I(ndo-)E(uropean) verb. Nevertheless, if one considers the single morphological units of *fāk-s-ī-m* or *fāk-s-e/o-*, the *-e/o-* morph of the indicative form has to do with the familiar thematic vowel, while the *-ī-* of subjunctive category shall be traced back to the well-known IE optative **jēH₁/iH₁-*, which Latin itself attests in modal function in the subjunctive forms like *velim*, *duim*, *si(e)m* etc.

Much more difficulties arise when addressing the origin and the function of the *-s-* morph, which has been traditionally acknowledged along two main opinions: a) most scholars⁶ explained it as derived from the IE sigmatic aorist; the cue for this claim should be obviously the persistence of *-s-* within the Latin verb, as a formative of perfect stems; this could be confirmed by the well-

⁵ See De Melo (2008) for a careful insight of each author's data.

⁶ Notably Meillet (1908), Leumann (1977: 621).

known lack of *-s-* perfects in Italic languages, which, in turn, at a first sight do not show traces of *faxō/im* type⁷.

Actually, the distribution of IE *-s-* in Latin and Italic seems more complex: at the one hand, many *faxō/im* forms could be compatible with an (ex-)aoristic morph, being characterised by a kind of past reference, like in (5) at § 4.

Nevertheless, both in Latin and in Italic, *-s-* morphology by itself, whatever its origin, seems to license eventuality/futurity features, as it appears either in modal forms whose past content is otherwise marked, like *-us* in e.g. perfect future Umbrian *dersicust*, or in non-past categories at all, e.g. future U. *fust*, O. *didest*, etc. Finally, it is to note that many tokens of *faxō/im* do not display any past reference, like in (1) at § 4.

Thus, some scholars (cf. Benveniste 1922) claimed for a different origin, and traced the *-s-* morph back to the *-s-* which appears in some ‘modal’ categories of various languages, most notably Sanskrit and Old Irish. In detail, only Sanskrit had a proper desiderative stem, indicating a kind of effort of the speaker, and characterised by reduplication, normal grade of the root, and secondary endings; in Old Irish, beside the common subjunctive formations in *-a-*, some verbs show a *-s-* subjunctive which is supposed to be cognate with Sanskrit desiderative (e.g. *téis* ‘may he go’ vs. *téit* ‘he goes’). In fact, the possibility of keeping such categories under a single IE form does not seem very easy, not only for semantic reasons (the functionality of each of them is quite language-specific), but also for morphological reason: comparing the formal properties of those forms reveals that they are strikingly different as regards to reduplication, apophony, the kind of morphs which follow the *-s-*, their positions, and even thematicity⁸.

From a comparative perspective, then, tracing Latin *-s-* forms back to an unitary category under the label ‘desiderative’ does not seem satisfactory; furthermore, provided that a reconstruction should also be able to account for the syntagmatic properties of morphs, one could hardly explain which kind of meaning the optative *-ī-* might have carried, if *-s-* was already a modal morpheme.

Thus, most scholars have preferred to claim for an aoristic origin, even if many of them acknowledged that the systemic status of *faxō/im* could not fit with a direct IE inheritance; Rix (1998) and Meiser (1998) have proposed that they reflect an innovative Proto-Italic category, the ‘Perfektivfutur’, expressing futurity in the aspectually marked forms of perfective (cf. also Jasanoff 1987). Each of the preceding hypotheses share some difficulties, due to the fact that they rest on

⁷ In fact, data are more complex: Venetic shows a perfective form *vhagsto* where *-s-* follows as a bare past marker the root **d^heH₁-*; the existence of such a form proofs a narrow relation between Latin and Venetic (*infra*).

⁸ As to Old Irish, Watkins (1962) claimed for the *-s-* subjunctive an indicative aoristic origin, while McCone (1986: 244-245) argues against the idea of a desiderative without reduplication, and traces the subjunctives back to thematic subj. aorists (cp. Homeric Gk. *τεῖ-σ-ε-τε*).

reconstructive categories of aorist or desiderative, rather than on Latin verb's characters; on the contrary, I will follow De Melo (2007) in claiming that a more careful insight in the semantics of *faxō/im* type is necessary. In order to do this, I will show that *faxō/im* forms may occur in two main morphosyntactic environments, one with anterior reference and another with bare futural/modal value; I will try to show that the first one is more archaic as regards to its textual distribution, and that this will fit with a revised version of the aoristic origin.

4. TOWARDS A DISTRIBUTION OF FAXŌ/IM IN ARCHAIC LATIN

De Melo (2008) considered the whole corpus of Archaic Latin and emphasised some major syntactic types:

1. the prohibitive construction, in which *faxim* appears in the 2s *faxīs* and is preceded by various negation forms like *ne, cave, ne cave*:

(1) *ne me istoc posthac nomine appellassis* (Ter. Phor. 742)

2. the causative construction, where *faxō*, basically in the 1sts form, introduces futures, subjunctives as well as non-finite forms:

(2) *Quin venis quando vis intro? faxo haud quicquam sit morae* (Pl. Amph. 972)

3. In many instances, *faxō/im* seems to overlap with simple futures (3) or present subjunctives (4, with optative meaning):

(3) *Nam cogitatio, si quis hoc gnato tuo/ tuos seruos faxit, qualem haberes gratiam?* (Pl. Capt. 711)

(4) *Ita di faxint inquito/ita di faciant. Et mihi ita di faciant* (Pl. Aul. 788-9)

On such bases, De Melo concludes that the original function of *faxō/im* forms was barely futural, according to the fact that the most widespread distribution is in modal environments such as commands, prohibitions, potentials, optative constructions, or within final clauses etc. The *-s-* morpheme would get this modal function as a consequence of its aoristic origin⁹: being the output of the *-s-* of IE aorist, it is supposed to have maintained a tenseless, punctual value which made it fit to express modality when followed by a modal morpheme. The past oriented values of *faxō/im* are explained by De Melo as an effect of the analogical pressure of standard perfect futures and subjunctives, which origin is left unexplained.

⁹ The starting point would have been forms like *dīk-s-ī-s* from *dīcō*, where the relation with sigmatic aorist was granted by the historical *-s-* perfect (De Melo 2007).

Two points have to be stressed out: first, the hypothesis holds only under the condition that *fāk-s-ō/-ī-* were optative and subjunctive aorists, i.e., two forms with reconstructive nature and with aspectual value, basically. Even if the passage from modal forms of the sigmatic aorist to future or modality is quite common¹⁰, one might wonder whether documentary Latin keeps any remnant of such an original aspectual value in *faxō/im* type. Actually, De Melo claims that only telic verbs have sigmatic forms, but cases like *curāssīs*, *amāssīs*, and *dīxīs* among others, which are activity verbs, are hardly coherent with the hypothesis; furthermore, broadly speaking, it is not clear under which conditions Aktionsart properties like telicity may interfere directly with the tenseless value argued for *-s-*.

The second major claim deals with historical chronology and distribution of the forms within the corpus: the majority of tenseless *fax-* seem consistent with two major types occurring with high frequency, namely the prohibitive and the causative one: they appear frozen (mostly in the 1sts and 2nds person) and are the most responsible for the prevalence of *faxō/im* with bare futural meanings. Furthermore, those constructions are mostly found within the literary Authors with manuscript transmission, who cover the latest phase of the s.c. “Archaic Latin”: on the contrary, if one considers the part of the corpus containing legal texts, either directly epigraphic or not, the distribution of *faxō/im* looks slightly different: tenseless modal uses like prohibitions, potentials, and causatives are scarcely attested, compared to anterior uses (5) exclusive in subordinate clauses.

(5) *si iniuriam alteri faxsit viginti quinque aeris poenis sunt* (Lex. apud Gell.)

Obviously such a distinction needs deeper investigations in order to find concrete linguistic or textual cues. In detail, it could be doubtful to identify a sub-part of the corpus under the label ‘epigraphic texts’, as it is incorrect from a philological point of view, provided that the *Leges Regiae* and the *Leges XII Tabularum* have been transmitted only by grammarians, antiquarians, historians, etc., namely, they may have been inscribed, but their tradition is indirect. Nevertheless, as many scholars have outlined (Courtney 1999), even if the phonological shape may have undergone standardisation within the quotation process, morphological and syntactic structures are probably been preserved: it is to remind that for most of our findings, linguistic oddity itself was the trigger for quotations¹¹. As a consequence, rather than epigraphic texts, “legal texts” seems to be an appropriate label for a group of texts which: (a) are more ancient than those of literary Authors; (b) are homogeneous as regards the language and the contents; (c) may represent a source also for

¹⁰ E.g. in the Greek *-se/o-* futures.

¹¹ For instance, the form *plorassit* is reported by Verrius Flaccus under the lemma *endplorato*, i.e. for lexical reasons.

literary Latin: the first Latin prose as well as many parodist passages in Plautus may easily show that Latin literature was largely in debt with the language of legal texts¹².

Under this light, I want to show that an analysis of *faxō/im* within the sub-corpus of legal texts reveal a narrow distribution which is crucial in order to explain the morphosyntactic characters and the origin of our forms.

First, if we consider only those texts, notably *faxō/im* forms occur almost only with anterior reference in subordinate clauses, mainly conditional and temporal ones; the following examples are all from *LR* and *XII Tab.*:

- (6) *si quisquam aliuta faxit ipsos Iovi sacer esto (LR)*
- (7) *si parentem puer verberit ast olle plorassit paren(s), puer divis parentum sacer esto (LR)*
- (8) *si hominem fulmen Iovis occīsīt, ne supra genua tollito (LR)*
- (9) *si nox furtum faxsit si im occisīt iure caesus esto (XII Tab.)*
- (10) *si membrum rupsit ni cum eo pacit talio esto (XII Tab.)*
- (11) *si servus furtum faxit noxiamve noxit (XII Tab.)*
- (12) *viam muniunto: ni sam delapidassunt, qua volet iumento ageto (XII Tab.)*

This last ex. is relevant as it shows that, although the whole temporal reference is toward future, the action of taking the stones away from the road shall be taken as anterior with respect to the license of carrying cattle freely; in other words, no one can dispute that *-s-* forms do have future meaning, but this is a consequence of the hypothetical environment, while their distinctive function seems to be to set the event in the past with respect to a reference point.

Hence, in all these tokens, sigmatic forms seem to largely overlap with historical perfect subjunctive/futures, which can also overtly co-occur; consider the following ‘classical’ example:

- (13) *Si tribunos plebei decem rogabo, si qui vos minus hodie decem tribunos plebei feceritis, tum ut ii quos hi sibi collegas cooptassint legitimi eadem lege tribuni plebei sint ut illi quos hodie tribunos plebei feceritis (Liv. III,64,10)*

Here the relative clause containing the sigmatic form *cooptassint* requires a sequence-of-tense effect, then the selection of *-ss-* form seem coherent with the hypothesis that it still had a kind of past reference¹³. In (14), the parallelis between *faxo* and the perfect future looks complete as well:

- (14) *Peribo si non fecero; si faxo vapulabo (Pl. Fretum.)*

¹² Cf. Prosdocimi (2002).

¹³ It is to remind that Livius is quoting a speech, that is, probably he was fully conscious of using an archaic form, and the choice was meaningful.

On the other hand, (15) shows that the standard construction with the perfect future is already well known in archaic *iura*:

(15) *cui testimonium defuerit is tertiis diebus ob portum obvagulatum ito (XII Tab.)*

The distribution is not exclusive of proper conditional clauses, occurring also in hypothetical-relative and temporal ones:

(16) *qui malum carmen incantassit occentassit (XII Tab.)*

(17) *uti legassit super pecunia tutelave suae rei ita ius esto (XII Tab.)*

(18) *cum nexum faciet mancipiumque uti lingua nupassit ita ius esto (XII Tab.)*

Similar patterns also appear in other laws, with epigraphic transmission as well as indirectly reported by Antiquarians:

(19) *Seiquis faxsit, quotiens faxit, in agri iugra singula L <(sestertios) n(ummos) ... dar>e debeto ei queiqomque id publicum fruendum redemptum comductumue habebit. (Lex agr. CIL I², 585, 25 late II b.C.)*

(20) *Ceterarum rerum praeter hominem et pecudem occisos si quis alteri damnum faxit, quod usserit fregerit ruperit iniuria, quanti ea res erit in diebus triginta proximis, tantum aes domino dare damnas esto (Lex Aquilia, ap. Vlp. dig. 9. 2. 27. 5, III b.C.)*

(21) *Si quis magistratus aduersus hac dolo malo pondera, modiosque, uasaque publica modica, minora, maioraue faxit, iussitue fieri, dolumue adduit quo ea fiant, eum quis uolet magistratus multare, dum minore parti familias taxat, liceto; siue quis im sacrum iudicare uoluerit, liceto (Lex Sil. ap. Fest. p. 288, III b.C.)*

(22) *Neiue, quod pequniae ob eam rem propior<e> die exactum er<it>, atque uteiqu>e in h(ace) l(ege) s(criptum) e(st), is quei pequniam populo dare debebit ei, quei eo nomine ab populo mercassitur, ob eam rem pequniam ei nei <minus soluito (Lex agr., CIL I², 585, 71)*

There are, of course, a few examples of *faxō/im* with bare modal/future value, like in:

(23) *tua pace rogans te cogendei dissolvendei tu ut facilia faxseis (CIL I², 632)*

In fact (23) is not a conditional clauses: *faxseis* is the verb of a completive clause with optative meaning (Ernout 1916:75) governed by *rogans* in the previous line.

In sum, it seems that the relict forms are adopted in a overwhelmingly specific environment, namely, in a particular kind of textual scheme in which the conditional clause identify/describes a crime or an eventuality, while the apodosis explains the consequences in legal term, either a punishment or a procedure¹⁴. In turn, in the texts I am dealing with there are not instances of present subjunctive in the protasis, while only a few tokens have simple futures or indicative presents, like in:

(24) *si intestato moritur cui suus heres nec escit adgnatus proximus familiam habeto (XII Tab.)*

(25) *Si in ius vocat ito. Ni it antestamino: igitur em capito (XII Tab.)*

Here, in fact, the environments seem rather different, as the eventuality depicted in the protases does not seem on a plain with those of exx. (6-12). While in the typical textual strategy requiring *faxō/im* forms the law wants to set a concrete fact, when the protasis contains a simple present or a simple future, it does not usually describes a crime, rather, a generic eventuality or a phase in the legal action, and consequently does not represent it as a fully temporised event. In other words, the event of a clause like (25) is not conceived like an ‘historical’ fact, and, then, does not deserve to be set in the time exactly. In some way, it is out of time, while, on the contrary, if the *si* clause introduces the illegal action as an event, there is a compelling need to collocate it with respect to its consequence, and to express carefully both its modal nature and its anteriority properties.

Having shown that *faxō/im* seems, at least in the oldest part of the corpus, preferentially selected in highly temporalised events may open some new perspective, but, first of all, shall not sound strange: following Daube (1956), it is well known that legal language often displays peculiar characters¹⁵; more generally, Prosdocimi (2002) has shown that at the turning point of the IV and the III century b.C., the written redaction of the s.c. Ius Flavianum by Appius Claudius had relevant effects on the contemporary Latin literary prose as well on the giuridic language in other Italic cultures. *Faxō/im* may then be considered another instance of similar processes: textual necessity of juridical language selects for an archaic form which is able to license modal and anteriority features together, in order to express consequence between a crime and its punishment.

¹⁴ Notably in most cases the conditional clauses lack overt subjects, or these are represented by indefinite pronouns (cf. ex. 9).

¹⁵ E.g. the distribution between *si* and *quod si* in legal prose seems ruled by the extent of reliability related to the content of those clauses.

Under this light, the anterior meanings look consistent with a very archaic syntactic pattern, which has important consequences even for the morphological origin of *faxō/im*; before dealing with my proposal, let us highlight that such a textual form is not restricted to archaic Latin, but seems to have spread outside Rome, being one of the strong parameters of the whole Italic koine¹⁶.

The following examples may show that the syntactic constructions requesting a modal form with overt anterior reference are quite common both in later Latin prose (26), whether Roman or not (27, 28, 29), and also in Italic languages (30-31).

(26) *Neiquis eorum Bacanal habuisse velet... sei ques esent quei arvorsu ead fecisent* (SC de Bach., CIL I², 581)

(27) *seiquis violasit, Iove bovid piaculum datod* (iscrizione di Spoleto, CIL I², 366)

(28) *in hoce loucarid stircus nequis fundatid neve cadaver proiecitad neve parentatid. Sei quis arvorsu hac faxit...* (Lucera's inscription, CIL I², 401)

(29) *...seive advorsus hance legem fecerit eam pequniam quei volet magisteratus exsigito..* (Tab. Bantina, CIL I², 582)

(30) **suepis contrud exheic fefacust ionc suepis herest meddis moltaum licitod** (Tab. Bantina, Oscan redaction Ve 2)

“If anyone against this will have acted, whoever wants, being an official, will have the license to fine him”

(31) *suepo esome esono anderuacose uašetome fust* (Tavole di Gubbio, VIb,47)

“If anything of this sacrifice will have been affected by interruption, (then) there will be a vitium”

What seems crucial is that these structures are not proper of legal prose only, as they definitely depend on the major genus of prescriptive texts: similar strategy is developed in Iguvinian Tables at such an extent that morphological categories dealing with mood and anteriority appear largely innovative wrt. to both IE inheritance and the possible Latin models (ex. 31)¹⁷

5. MORPHOLOGICAL ANALYSIS

Let's now turn back to morphology. In the preceding section I have shown that one of the oldest textual patterns of Ancient Italy indicates that *faxō/im* are functionally on a pair with the standard perf. fut. and subsj.: this, in turn, tells us that their morphs shall express not only modality,

¹⁶ It could be matter of debate whether such a common patter was due to direct inheritance or to any kind of politically-driven process, in which case under which historical conditions.

¹⁷ *Anderuacose* is usually traced back to something like **intervacatus set*, namely, a periphrastic form in which modality is carried out by the subjunctive form of **H₁es-* ‘to be’ and anteriority stems from the resultative feature of the past participle (Bertocci 2012).

but also some past value. Notably, I want to remark that such past feature deals with anteriority, rather than aspect properly, so that the identification of *-s-* with a direct output of the aoristic IE morpheme appears doubtful; this will have some consequences on the analysis.

Hence, a sequence *fāk-s-ī-* or *fāk-s-e/o-* may be explained only assigning to *-s-* such an anteriority value; this means that it enters the derivation of such forms not as ‘IE’ aorist morph, but as a preterital element, then, the ratio of sigmatic forms has not to do with IE categories, but with a new system, where modality and tense are morphologically integrated.

More precisely, then, I claim that *-s-* morpheme is adopted here on the basis of a property that might be labelled as a kind of “weak” nature: according to Meiser (2003), the allomorphs of Latin perfect system differentiate between strong forms, like reduplicated and long vowel perfects, and other forms, i.e. *-s-* and *-w-* perfects, which are adopted when none of the other possibilities was available. Under this light, then, *-s-* is the perfect morph with the broadest distribution, and this could explain why it was selected to enrich modal forms with tense features; strong perfect morphs, instead, could violate some constraint against combining heavily aspect-marked forms with modal categories (cp. Bertocci 2006, on the line of pivotal Rix 1986). A weak preterital nature of *-s-* looks also coherent with the derivative stem it selects for: was it a proper aorist marker, the base should be expectedly a lengthened grade of the root rather than the past participle stem of *fāk-s-* type or the ‘thematic’ one of *am-ā-ss-* (infra)¹⁸.

Given a form *fāk*_[root]-*s*_[+past]-*ī*_[+eventuality]-, one may wonder why it declined and got ousted by the standard forms like *fēcero/im* < **fēkīsō/im*, which cover the same meanings. My hypothesis is that *faxō/im* forms were actually the ancestors of *fēcero/im*, along the line of Jasanoff (1987): once the Latin verb paradigms got grounded on the opposition between a present stem and a perfect stem, a form like *fāk-s-ī-* lost morpho-syntactic transparency, as its morphological elements did not correspond to any of them; hence, reanalysis started. The sequence *-sō/ī-* was reinterpreted as a single morphological entity licensing mood and tense features together: having an anterior meaning, it was structurally assigned to perfect stem, giving rise to **fēk-sō/ī-*.

A problem arises, indeed: if *fāk-s-ō/im* was the direct ancestor of *fēcero/im*, there remains to explain the reasons why **fēk-sō/ī-* had *fēk-ī-sō/ī-* as their outcomes: insertion of *-ī-* has been explained as an epenthesis by Jasanoff (1987), but such a phonological rule is not safely reconstructed for similar environments in Proto-Latin, thus the phenomenon should have a proper

¹⁸ It is usually said that neither Latin nor Italic languages admit *-s-* aorist after long vowel bases; nevertheless, both Venetic (*donasto*) and Latin (*amāsti*, *amārint*, cp. Prodocimi-Marinetti 1993, Schmidt 1985; for the sake of brevity I do not deal with the possibility that *-s-* in these forms belongs to the perfect ending) crucially do it; the point is that forms such as *amāsti* or even Ven. *vhaḡsto* are not true aorists at all, at least as one may conceive them in a IE perspective, but the instantiation of a Latin category whose different properties open a broader distribution to the *-s-* morph.

morphological explanation. Following Prosdocimi and Marinetti (1993) I claim that *-ĩ-* has to do with the *-ĩ-* which characterises at least the 2nds. of indicative perfect, where it is unclear as well (Narten 1972, Schmidt 1985). Independently from its origin, it is possible to argue that it became a morphological unity selected by perfective stems, in particular as a kind of thematic element sensitive to secondary formatives like modal ones, typically *fēk-ĩ-sō/īm* > *fecero/im* as well as *amā-w-(ĩ)-sti*¹⁹.

Even the analysis of the remaining two subtypes, namely *amāssō/im* and *monerim*, may corroborate this hypothesis. As briefly outlined in §2, *amāssō/īm* has been traced back since Rix (1998) to an aorist optative where *-s-* was lengthened in order to avoid voicing between vowels and finally rhotacism, but the existence of forms like *monerim* < **moně-s-ĩ-* seems to go against this proposal. Prosdocimi and Marinetti (1993) on the contrary argued for a more complex morphological sequence where an aoristic *-s-* was followed by another *-s-*, with modal value, and by the optative *-ĩ-*. Although it is difficult to identify the systemic value of the ‘second’ *-s-*, this hypothesis is crucial for highlight that a morphological process must have been responsible for *amāssō* type. In detail, I propose that the now familiar tense-mood suffix *-sō/īm* was applied here not on the standard perfect stem, but on a sequence *amā-s-*. From a structural point, this sequence parallels with *fek(i)-*, namely, is an overtly past-marked stem: thus, it follows that the first *-s-* of *amāssō* type should have perfect value. Yet, this *-s-* is no more a proper aorist morpheme: it is a weak perfect marker which a sub-variety of Latin associated with bases in long vowel.

As to the type *monerim*, it can be easily explained starting from the stem *mon-ě-*, perhaps not directly from **mon-ē-*, but from the past participle (Leumann 1977:623): differently from *-ā-* and some *-ē-* verbs²⁰, where the thematic sequence root-*ā/ē-* is coherently interpreted as a present stem, and then an overt past marking with *-s-* is required, *moně-* seems to tolerate defectiveness; in fact, the rarity of this subtype may have to do with the fact that *moneo* is not on a pair with other *-ē-* verbs, being causative rather than stative and having a *-to* participle (Leumann 1977: 624). More particularly, it is conceivable that the lack of a long vowel base prevented *moně-* to be acknowledged as a regular verbal base and consequently to undergo the complete derivation with *-s-sō/īm*.

Finally, the rising of new forms *fecerō/im* caused *faxō/im* to undergo a sort of functional neutralization, so that they could be used also as simple future or present subjunctives; only the juridical texts, for the reasons outlined above, maintained the archaic distribution.

¹⁹ According to Schmidt (1985), *-ĩ-* arose from forms like 2nds. perf. **deiks-stai*, and extended to the whole perfective paradigm. Prosdocimi-Marinetti (1993) remarked that a sequence *-Cā-w-C* was not allowed in Latin and Italic, so that two morpho-phonological repair strategy could be expected: (i) deletion of *-ā-*, like in Italic (cp. u. *portus-*), or (ii) *-i-* insertion after perfective *-w-*, in Latin.

²⁰ *Prohibessis, habessis*.

CONCLUSIONS

Finally, I summarise here the main results of this proposal:

- i) A careful syntactic analysis reveals the great weight of textual factors as triggers for the rise and the diffusion of *faxō/im* type.
- ii) The necessity of merging eventuality with an anteriority feature seems intimately bound with the urgency of legal language in order to express the order of events within prescriptions carefully.
- iii) As this strategy is largely familiar in most Italic languages, and looks very archaic, I hypothesise that the basic value of a sequence *fāk-s-ō/im* is not the simple future/mood one usually claimed, but the anterior one largely attested in *Leges Regiae*, in *Leges XII Tabularum* and in inscriptions.
- iv) The morphological structure of *fāk-s-ō/im*, then, traces back to a sequence where a weak preterital *-s-* (not more aoristic) hosts the modal morphemes, and soon merges with it becoming an amalgamate mood/tense morph.
- v) The necessity to ascribe any verbal form either to a present stem or a perfectum one leads a reanalysis in which the morph *-sō/im* applies to the perfect stem (*fēk-(i)-*) or to a past-marked weak stem (*amā-s-*).

The origin of the so called sigmatic futures, thus, looks deeply related at the one hand with the function they cover in historical texts, at the other with the main characters of Latin morphological system, rather than with the reconstruction of PIE categories.

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