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THE THIRD *QUI*, AND SIX WAYS TO RECOGNIZE IT, OR “WHO HAPPENS, MAECENAS?”

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All Latin students eventually have a problem with *qui*. To solve it, they need a third *qui* in their quiver. The problem shows up when they advance into third year, transitioning from Caesar to Roman Comedy, or to the poets. The familiar “who” often leads to nonsense, and they are at a loss. Here is an interesting illustration:

A trophy boar, killed by a shepherd, is brought to Lucius Domitius, the Roman governor of Sicily. Admiring, he asks who killed it. *Requisisse quis eum percussisset*. Then, when the *pastor* is bought before him, he asks another question: *quaesisse Domitium qui tantam bestiam percussisset. Ilium respondisse “Venabulo”* (Cic. *Verr.* 2.5.3).

Your students will have no trouble rendering “He asked who killed it,” but odds are good that the same student, notwithstanding the contrast with the first *quis*, will try “Domitius asked who killed such a beast” for the second sentence, and then even be pushed into looking for a first person verb with the base *venabul-*! And when the dictionary tells them *venabulum* is a hunting spear, perplexity is only augmented.

There are three *qui*’s: the relative pronoun, the interrogative adjective, and the old ablative instrumental, e.g.

1. *qui dixit*, who spoke
2. *qui vir*, which man
3. *illud qui*, that thing by means of which

It is the third that causes problems. In third year, Golden Age prose does not use it: Julius Caesar never uses *qui* to mean “whereby” or “how.”¹ Neither, apparently does Livy.² In Cicero it is rare.³ But in the poets, *qui* is ambiguous with two very different meanings, and the student trained on Caesar’s consistent avoidance of potential ambiguity often stumbles.

Of the *qui*’s in Plautus’ *Miles Gloriosus*, 14% turn out to mean “whereby” or “how.” Of the *qui*’s in Terences’ *Eunuch*, 17% are whereby/how. Of the *quif*s in Terences’ *Self-tormentor*, 21% are whereby/how. Not being alert to this *qui* can make Roman Comedy or even Horace’s lead-off line *Qui fit, Maecenas . . .* artificially difficult. So this article addresses the question “how do you tell *qui* from *qui*?”

There are six main ways to tell when to say “how,” “whereby,” or “the way” for *qui*:

1. The whereby/how *qui* is usually interrogative.
2. It is often marked further by being paired with a following *quia*: *qui? quia* “How . . . ? Because . . .”
3. The most frequent associated idea is of knowing, with a form of *scire* or *gnoscere*: *qui scis, qui noveris?* “How do you know?”

4. *Qui* followed immediately by an adverb or comparative is whereby/how/the way: *qui minus quam . . .* “How less than . . .”
5. The obvious noun antecedent is not a person, but a tool: *machinas qui*, “tools to __ with” (“with which to __”).
6. If the context is of giving or seeking, *qui* is instrumental, “how,” “a way,” “the means,” e.g. *da mi qui comparem* “Give me the means to buy . . .” There is no antecedent.

The Problem Illustrated

The Latin student embarking upon Plautus or Terence has no problem with *meum erum, qui Athenis fuerat* my master, who had been at Athens (*MG* 32); or *eos pro liberis habeo, qui mihi mittunt munera* I consider the ones who send me presents my children (*MG* 710); or *interea miles qui me amare occeperat* meanwhile, the soldier who fell in love with me (*Eun* 125). These exhibit the standard requirements for a “who,” namely a leading noun phrase, representing a person or persons, and a following verb.

Most students, though, are stumped with the *qui* a few lines farther on in *MG*: *itaque ego paravi hic intus magnas machinas, / qui amantis una inter se facerem convenas* And so I have prepared great machinations here inside, by which I may help the lovers rendezvous (138–9). Here, where the antecedent is *machinas*, a noun of means, Caesar would have written *machinas quibus*, as in *picem reliquasque res quibus ignis excitari potest* (7.24.4), but Plautus writes *machinas qui*. The *qui* stands revealed as an instrumental, equivalent to *quo*, *qua*, or *quibus*. Terence, needing to restate clever slave ideas, alternates this *qui* with *quo modo* “by which way,” and with *ea via*, literally “by that way.” The first time the desired means are sought in *Self-tormentor*, the means are *quo modo*: *non nunc pecunia agitur sed illud quo modo minimo periculo id demus adulescentulo* (*Heaut.* 476–7). When the means are reprised in lines 610 and 612, the *quo modo* becomes *qui*. The same means in line 850 become *ea via*. In Plautus, when the speaker asks “by what means?”, the *qui*, still an instrumental, becomes the interrogative: *nam tibi iam ut pereas paratum est dupliciter, nisi supprimis / tuom stultiloquium*. *SCEL: qui vero dupliciter?* *PAL: dicam tibi*. For it is doubly set for you to die if you don’t control your silly tongue. How, in what way doubly? I’ll tell you (*MG* 295–6).

Students transitioning to Latin where *qui* can equal *quo modo* will need guidance. When the instructor needs to give it, the following examples, sorted by the company they keep, will be useful illustrations.

Models for Recognition 1: Interrogative

Most *qui*’s of the *qui fit, Maecenas* mold are interrogative; they ask a question, and often the verb of asking goes right with it: *qui quaeso* is a comedy formula, “How, I ask.” These can be very simple like Example 3 below, “How does this happen?” In later Latin, the interrogative took over: all the instrumental *qui*’s of

Horaces *Satires* are interrogative.

Examples:

1. PA: *qui quaeso?* CH: *amo.* PA: *hem.* CH: *nunc, Parmeno, ostendes te qui vir sies.* PA: How, I ask? CH: Please. PA: Hem. CH: Now, Parmeno show yourself what kind of man you are (*Eun* 307). The question format—and no nominative masculine noun to go with it—marks the first *qui* in this example as “why” or “how,” while the *vir* marks the second *qui* as the interrogative adjective.

2a. THR: *quid ignave? Peniculon' pugnare, qui istum huc portes, cogitas?* (*Eun.* 777). Here the *-ne*, not the *qui*, holds the interrogative function: “What, silly, do you intend to fight with a sponge, you who brought this here?” And so, if *qui* in a question is not the initial interrogative word, it is still “who.”

2b. SA: *Egon? Imperatoris virtutem noveram et vim militum;/ sine sanguine hoc non posse fieri: qui abstergerem volnera?* (778–9) SA: Me? I know the leader’s prowess and the violence of the troops; this wasn’t going to happen without blood, and how would I staunch the wounds? Here, silly Sanga replies with what I call “the third *qui*.”

3. *hoc qui fit?* How does this happen? (*Heaut.* 154)

4. *qui istuc, miror.* How that, I wonder. (*Heaut.* 612)

Models for Recognition 2: Answers with *Quia*

Quia trailing a *qui* has one meaning: abandon the “who” and say “how” or “why”:

1. PA: *Tum mihi sunt manus inquinatae.* SC: *Qui dum?* PA: *Quia ludo luto.* Then my hands are soiled. How so? Because I’m dealing with dirt. (*MG* 325)

2. MIL: *Quin tua causa exegit virum ab se.* PYRG: *Qui id facere potuit?*/ MIL: *Quia aedis dotalis huius sunt.* Why, for your sake, she threw her husband out of the house. How was she able to do it? Because the house was part of her dowry. (*MG* 1276–7)

3. PYRG: *qui tu scis eas adesse?* PAL: *quia oculis meis/ vidi hic sororem esse eius.* How do you know they’re there? Because I saw her sister here with my own eyes (*MG* 1104).

4. PA: *utrumque hoc falsumst: effluet.* TH: *qui istuc?* PA: *quia* Each one is a lie; they’ll leak. How’s that? Because . . . (*Eun.* 121).

Models for Recognition 3: Knowing Context

In the face of unease, students invariably render Example 1 below as “You who know?” and resist translating *qui* as “how” or “why”. The verb of knowing is a very good marker for this use of *qui*.

1. THR: *qui scis an quae iubeam sine vi faciat?* How do you know whether what I want might happen without force? (*Eun.* 789)

2. *qui scio an ista non sit Philocomasium atque alia eius similis sit?* How do I know it’s not Philocomasium but just someone like her? (*MG* 447–8)

3. PH: *insanis: qui istuc facere eunuchu' potuit?* PY: *ego illum/ nescio qui⁴ fuerit; hoc quod fecit, res ipsa indicat* You’re insane! How could a eunuch do it? I don’t know how it was; this thing which he did, the fact itself shows (*MG* 657–8).

4. PYRG: *quis erat igitur?* SER: *Philocomasio amator.* PYRG: *qui tu/ scis?* SER: *scio.* So who was it? Philocomasium’s lover. How do you know? I just know (*MG* 1431–2).

5. ACR: *quia non est intus quem ego volo.* MIL: *qui scis?/ ACR: Scio.* Because the one I want isn’t inside. How do you know? I just know (*MG* 1254–5).

6. ACR: *Numquam vidit; qui noverit me quis ego sim?* He’s never seen me; how would he know who I am? (*MG* 925)

Models for Recognition 4: *Qui* [Comparative/Adverb]

One of the costumes the third *qui* likes to wear is an immediately following adverb or comparative: *qui tam, qui minus, qui dum.* All are translated “how?” or “why?”

1. CLIT: *at hoc demiror qui tam facile potueris/ persuadere illi* But I wonder at this, how you could so easily persuade him. (*Heaut.* 362–3)

2. GN: *qui minu' quam Hercules servivit Omphalae?* How less than Hercules served Omphale? (*Eun.* 1027)⁵

3. GN: *at num quid aliud?* PA: *qui dum?* GN: *quia tristi's.* Anything else? Why do you ask? Because you’re unhappy (*Eun.* 272–3).

4. *aceto/ diluit insignem bacam: qui sanior ac si/ illud idem in rapidum flumen iaceretve cloacam? . . .* dissolved a priceless pearl in acid: how [was this] saner than to throw the same thing into a stream or sewer? (*Hor. Sat.* 2.3.239–41)

5. *qui peccas minus atque ego* How are you less in the wrong than I? (*Hor. Sat.* 2.7.46)

Models for Recognition 5: Non-personal Antecedent

The antecedent for “who” has to be a person. When the plain antecedent is impersonal, you have that impersonal as a means. Examples below exhibit *causa qui, argentum qui, and illud qui*—all instrumentals. Translation pattern is “to ___ with” or “with which to ___.”

1. *postquamst inventa vera, inventast causa qui te expellerent.* After the truth came out, they found an excuse to throw you out. (Lit: a cause was found by which they might expell you) (*Heaut.* 989)

2. CH: *fortasse.* SY: *argentum dabitur ei ad nuptias./ aurum atque vestem qui . . . tenesne?* CH: *comparet?* CH: Maybe. SY: Money will

be given him for the wedding, clothing and jewelry with which to . . . you get it? CH. Buy clothes and jewelry? (*Heaut.* 777–8)

3. *ibit ad illud ilico/qui maxume apud te se valere sentiet: arbiturum se abs te esse ilico minitabitur.* He'll go straight to the way for him to win you over: he'll threaten to leave you on the spot (Lit.: He'll go straight to that by which he feels he most prevails with you . . .) (*Heaut.* 487–9).

Models for Recognition 6: No Antecedent at All (Substantive Clauses)

A *qui*-clause which is complement to a verb of seeking or giving and which has a subjunctive verb can be rendered “a way to,” “the means to,” “the wherewithal to.” The means is typically money, as in Example 2 of the preceding set, where the antecedent was spelled out, *argentum qui*.

1. PY. *spero me habere qui hunc meo excruciem modo* I hope I've got a way to torture him in my turn (*Eun.* 920).

2. PE. *dicat 'da, mi vir, kalendis meam qui matrem munerem'* She'd say “Husband, give me by means of which I may get a present for my mother on the first” (*MG* 691).

3. CH. *des qui aurum ac vestem atque alia quae opu' sunt comparet.* so you'd give the wherewithal to buy jewelry, clothes, and other needfuls (*Heaut.* 855).

4. CH. *somnum hercle ego hac nocte oculis non vidi meis/ dum id quaero tibi qui filium restituerem.* I stayed awake all night looking for a way to get your son back to you (*Heaut.* 491–2).

In sum, Type Five, above (impersonal antecedent) is the quintessence, since the converse, a personal antecedent, would give you the “who”—the overall essential for the third *qui*. It is sometimes also the most obvious visual cue. This is less helpful in the interrogative because the “antecedent” is being asked for and will be the answer to the question, a postcedent! Thus the other sets of cues, Types One—Four and Six are needed, and describe common companions of the third *qui*. Many of the six types often come together in a single example. Visually, one factor or another of the six will be most obvious in a given passage.

Appendix: A Word on the Second *Qui*

A nearby nominative masculine marks the interrogative adjective (*qui* type two above). It asks a question, it has an obvious nominative masculine noun right with it as in *qui locus est, iudices, quid tempus, qui dies, quae nox . . .* (Cic. *Mur.* 82). The question can be direct: *Is est an non est? ipse est. quid hoc hominis? Qui hic ornatus?* Is it him or not? It's him. What kind of guy is this, what get-up is this? (*Eun.* 546) Or indirect: AN: *tum equidem istuc os tuom impudens videre nimium vellem/ qui esset status, flabellulum tenere te asinum tantum* I really would like to that impudent face of yours then, what your pose was, you holding that fan—such an ass!

Endnotes

¹ This statement is made at the cost of a day spent cross-examining every *qui* in the two Commentaries. All appear to be innocent.

² 75 of the 17,837 words in Book 2 of Livy are *qui*. All 75 turn out to be “who.”

³ Of the 216 *qui*'s in Cicero *Ad Familiares II* and *Pro Roscio* combined, one turns out to be the means/manner *qui*: *Quaero qui scias* “I wonder how you know.”

⁴ In isolation, the *nescio qui fuerit* would certainly be “I don't know who it was,” but answering the “How could a eunuch do it?” the *qui* could be read either way, probably as rendered above.

⁵ This one is arguably an “ablative of degree of difference”: e.g., “By what degree less than Hercules was slave to Omphale?”

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