

Taming Caesar: Debra L. Nousek and Rose Williams
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(For Rose Williams' presentation, see <http://roserwilliams.com/TamingCaesar.pdf>)

Debra Nousek: Nouns and Pronouns in Caesar

Introduction

When I first began to think about Caesar's use of pronouns for this workshop, I was expecting the task to be rather tedious and somewhat unproductive. But as I worked through the text, highlighting the instances of various pronoun types in the AP selections, I found that pronouns could be quite interesting after all. Certainly, patterns of Caesarian usage emerged, which I'll focus on here, and while I'd say that few of these are unique to Caesar, but rather are features of Latin historiographical prose more generally, I recognize that many of you will have been teaching verse more extensively than prose, and so I hope that there will be something of interest for everyone.

Review of Pronoun Types

Latin has quite a number of pronoun categories, compounded with some forms that can be used either as pronouns proper or, together with a noun in agreement, adjectivally.

The main categories of pronouns and their uses are:

- Personal pronouns: ego, nos; tu, vos. Used mainly for emphasis or contrast, since Latin inflected verbs do not require a separate pronominal subject.
- Reflexives: Primarily occur in the third person in narrative prose (se, sui, sibi, se se), but can also appear in the oblique cases of the personal pronouns: "me video" "se vident"
- Possessives (meus, tuus, suus, etc.) [more commonly used as adjectives]
- Demonstratives
 - hic, haec hoc = emphatic, used to indicate proximity
 - ille, illa, illud = emphatic, used to indicate distance
 - is, ea, id = used as the pronoun of context – refers to something in a previous sentence or clause
- Intensives (a subset of demonstratives): ipse, ipsa, ipsum and idem, eadem, idem
- Relative pronouns (qui, quae, quod)
- Interrogatives (quis, quid)
- Indefinites (quisque, quicumque, quisquis, quidam, aliquis)

Introduction to Demonstratives and Relatives

Of these groups, the most commonly used in Caesar are the demonstratives and the relative pronouns. In the interests of time, though I will say a few words about reflexive pronouns shortly, we will focus on these two groups. As it happens, the two are often found together in Caesarian prose, since Caesar is prone to use a relative clause adjectivally in his narrative mode. Let's look at the opening of the *BG* (1.1-3):

Gallia est omnis divisa in partes tres, **quarum** unam incolunt Belgae, aliam Aquitani, tertiam **qui** ipsorum lingua Celtae, nostra Galli appellantur. **Hi** omnes lingua, institutis, legibus inter **se** differunt. Gallos ab Aquitanis Garumna flumen, a Belgis Matrona et Sequana dividit. **Horum** omnium fortissimi

sunt Belgae, propterea quod a cultu atque humanitate provinciae longissime absunt, minimeque ad **eos** mercatores saepe commeant atque **ea quae** ad effeminandos animos pertinent important, proximique sunt Germanis, **qui** trans Rhenum incolunt, **quibuscum** continenter bellum gerunt.

Translate:

Gaul as a whole is divided into three parts, **of which** the Belgae inhabit one, the Aquitani another, and the third those **who** are called Celtae in their own language, but in ours Galli. All **these** (peoples) differ among **themselves** in language, customs and laws. The Garumna river separates the Galli from the Aquitani, the Matrona and Sequana (rivers) separate them from the Belgae. Of all **of these**, the bravest are the Belgae, particularly because they are furthest away from the culture and civilization of the (Roman) province, and because traders do business with **them** least often and bring in **those things which** relate to the softening of minds, and they are closest to the Germani, **who** live across the Rhine, **with whom** they constantly wage war.

In the space of just 10 lines here, we have five relative clauses, all used with the indicative simply as a means of adding more information about the nouns or ideas that form their antecedents. We also see two instances of the demonstrative pronoun *hic-haec-hoc* and two of *is-ea-id*. Latin, much more than English, likes to make connections between statements, and the demonstratives help to “point out” what aspects of the preceding sentence should be kept in mind for reading forward. For students just starting out with Caesar, this can be a real challenge, since the reader has to be aware always of what has preceded. For both the relatives and the demonstratives, it is important to remember that the pronoun agrees in gender and number with its antecedent, and that its case is determined by its function in its own clause. Let’s look more closely at the examples above:

Gallia est omnis divisa in partes tres, **quarum** unam incolunt Belgae

This one is pretty straightforward. Here the relative pronoun (*quarum*) is feminine plural, agreeing with the antecedent *partes*. Its case is genitive, since it forms a genitive of the whole with *unam*. Latin especially likes to place relative clauses immediately following the antecedent, which is a good rule-of-thumb for students.

tertiam **qui** ipsorum lingua Celtae, nostra Galli appellantur

Here, however, a quirk of Caesar’s is apparent: if I ask you what the antecedent is for the relative pronoun *qui*, you could say that it’s a masculine plural noun, but it doesn’t appear in the sentence. Caesar sometimes omits the antecedent, especially if it would be a pronoun, such as here (*ei qui*).

More commonly, the demonstrative and relative are used together as a unit, as

ea quae ad effeminandos animos pertinent

Here the unemphatic demonstrative pronoun (*ea*) is explained by the relative clause that follows (*quae ad effeminandos pertinent*). The relative clause acts as an adjective. (Cf. below *qui trans Rhenum incolunt*, an almost formulaic descriptor of the *Germani* throughout the *BG*).

Caesar also uses an emphatic demonstrative (*hi, horum*) in this opening passage to point to the peoples he has just been describing. The difference between *hic-haec-hoc* and *is-ea-id* is one of tone or emphasis:

- *Hi omnes* = all these peoples that I’ve just mentioned; *horum omnium* = of all of these peoples here.

- *ad eos mercatores saepe comeant*: here the emphasis is on the *mercatores*, not the recipients, thus the unemphatic demonstrative-of-context (*ad eos*)
- *ea quae ad effeminandos animos pertinent important*: here the demonstrative merely points forward to the relative clause.

Demonstrative Clusters:

When Caesar is narrating an episode or giving background for a specific event, he tends to group together a number of demonstratives, expecting the reader to follow along from context. To an inexperienced reader, this can be a challenge. Let's look at a passage from *BG* 5 (5.25):

Erat in Carnutibus summo loco natus Tasgetius, cuius maiores in sua civitate regnum obtinuerant. Huic Caesar pro eius virtute atque in se benevolentia, quod in omnibus bellis singulari eius opera fuerat usus, maiorum locum restituerat. Tertium iam hunc annum regnantem inimicis, multis palam ex civitate eis auctoribus eum interfecerunt. Defertur ea res ad Caesarem. Ille veritus, quod ad plures pertinebat, ne civitas eorum impulsu deficeret, Lucium Plancum cum legione ex Belgio celeriter in Carnutes proficisci iubet ibique hiemare, quorumque opera cognoverat Tasgetium interfectum, hos comprehensos ad se mittere.

There was among the Carnutes Tasgetius, born in the highest rank, whose ancestors had held the kingship in their community. To this man, in return for his courage and kindnesses towards Caesar, because he (=Caesar) had availed himself of that man's outstanding service in all the wars, Caesar had restored the position of his (=Tasgetius') ancestors. As he was reigning for his third year now, they killed him, with his personal enemies responsible (for the deed) many openly from his own community†. That matter is reported to Caesar. He, since the matter involved a large number of people, being afraid that the community might defect at the instigation of those men, orders Lucius Plancus along with his legion to set out speedily from Belgium for the (territory of the) Carnutes, and by the work of whom he had learned that Tasgetius had been killed, to send these men to himself once they had been captured.

You can see from the number of highlighted areas that there is a distinctive cluster of demonstratives in this passage. Caesar is narrating a past event (his restoration of Tasgetius to power) in order to contextualize the current episode. The passage presents a number of difficulties: (1) the text is corrupt at the point where the daggers mark off the description of the men responsible for Tasgetius' assassination. This mostly affects the translation of that chunk of text, and can be left aside for our purposes; (2) readers must stay alert to keep sorted exactly who is meant by the various demonstratives. The second sentence is particularly illustrative:

Huic Caesar pro eius virtute atque in se benevolentia, quod in omnibus bellis singulari eius opera fuerat usus, maiorum locum restituerat.

The yellow highlights represent demonstratives, and the green a reflexive pronoun of the third person. The more emphatic demonstrative (*huic*) is used to refer back to the man just pointed out to the reader (*Erat ... Tasgetius*), while the pronoun-of-context, (*eius*) is used to continue that reference in a less "pointy" way.

The reflexive pronoun *se* often causes students some trouble, especially in indirect statement or in dependent clauses (as is the case here). Formally, the reflexive pronoun refers back to the grammatical subject of the clause in which it stands. Since "Caesar" is the subject of the main clause (*Caesar...*

restituerat), *in se* refers to Caesar.¹ There is a clear demarcation between Caesar (referred to via the reflexive pronoun, since he is the grammatical subject) and Tasgetius (referred to by demonstratives of context). But when the narrative turns back to Caesar in the present, another demonstrative, this time *ille*, to indicate a distinction between the past actions of Caesar/Tasgetius and the current situation – in a sense, the “*ille*” is more remote from what has just been narrated.

Other groupings of se/eius: 1.7.3:

qui dicerent sibi esse in animo sine ullo maleficio iter per provinciam facere, propterea quod aliud iter haberent nullum: rogare ut **eius** voluntate id **sibi** facere liceat.

Reflexive Pronouns

By far the most common occurrence of reflexive pronouns are in speeches in indirect discourse, where the accusative + infinitive construction requires that the subject of the infinitive be explicitly expressed. In the AP Caesar curriculum, this mainly happens in the negotiations between Ambiorix and Caesar’s legates in Book 5, (5.27 [with Arpineius]; 5.36, [with Sabinus via the translator Cn. Pompeius]; and with Q. Cicero in 5.41) but also occurs in instances of implied indirect discourse as well, e.g.:

5.26.4: Tum suo more conclamaverunt, uti aliqui ex nostris ad colloquium prodiret: **habere sese quae de re communi dicere vellent...**

Relative Clauses with the Indicative and the Subjunctive

In the AP curriculum, Caesar uses relative clauses about 170 times. About 75% of these are straightforward adjectival relative clauses of the type we looked at above, where the relative pronoun + indicative merely adds information about the antecedent. But there is one use of the relative clause with the indicative that always trips up my students, and is very common in Caesar, namely the **connecting relative**. Latin likes to make connections between clauses where English doesn’t. Thus, where in English you might find a series of coordinate sentences not connected by particles or other contextual clues, Latin prose authors do the opposite, preferring to connect sentences and to use asyndeton for special effect. This construction is best translated into English by a demonstrative and a conjunction (e.g., “and this...”, “but he...”, etc.)

The connecting relative always begins its clause, often at the start of a new paragraph, chapter, or sentence. Let’s look at some examples (all from *BG*):

1.1.4: *Qua de causa Helvetii quoque reliquos Gallos virtute praecedunt* (And for this reason the Helvetii also surpass the other Gauls in courage...)

4.24.4: *Quibus rebus nostri perterriti atque huius omnino generis pugnae imperiti...* (And our men, thoroughly frightened by these things and altogether inexperienced in this type of battle...)

4.25.1: *Quod ubi Caesar animadvertit...* (And when Caesar noticed this...)

cf. 4.26.4: *Quod cum animadvertisset Caesar* (And when Caesar had noticed this... [subjunctive generated by *cum* clause, not relative clause])

4.30.1: *Quibus rebus cognitis* (And when these things were discovered...)

¹ Cf. the end of this passage, where Caesar orders (*iubet*) Plancus to send the conspirators to him (*ad se*). Caesar is subject of the main verb of the clause and therefore the reflexive pronoun is used.

5.33.4: *Quod consilium etsi in eiusmodi casu reprehendendum non est* (And although this plan ought not to be criticized in a situation of that sort...)

5.42.4: *Qua quidem ex re hominum multiudo cognosci potuit* (But from this situation the vast number of men was able to be recognized)

Once you get the hang of it, the relative pronoun is easy to spot and relatively easy to construe as a demonstrative + conjunction.

Relative Clauses with the Subjunctive

We saw above that most of the relative clauses in AP Caesar occur with the indicative mood. Relative clauses with the subjunctive could be one of a number of syntactical features. I will state at the outset that these categories are sometimes fuzzy: for example, a subjunctive could be due to the fact that the clause is a subordinate clause in indirect speech, or because the clause is a relative clause of characteristic. In such cases I find it best to remind students that the categories are not always absolute, and that part of learning Latin is to realize that languages contain ambiguities. That said, here are the most common categories:

- relative clauses of characteristic
- subordinate clauses in indirect discourse
- relative clause of purpose
- relative clause of result
- causal relative clauses

Of these, the last three are essentially subordinate clauses of the usual sort (i.e. regular purpose/result or causal clauses) with a connecting relative pronoun instead of the usual conjunction (*ut, ut non, ne, cum*). In AP Caesar, there are two relative clauses of purpose, both in Book 1 (1.6.4, 1.7.3), two causal relative clauses (5.33.1, 5.33.2). The majority of instances of relative clauses with the subjunctive are relative clauses of characteristic, followed closely by relative clauses in indirect statement. Let's look at these two more closely.

Relative Clauses of Characteristic: This type of clause is one that inevitably causes students trouble since it is peculiar to Latin. Relative clauses with the indicative simply state something *as a fact* which is true of the antecedent, whereas a relative clause with the subjunctive and an non-specific antecedent "*defines* the antecedent as a person or thing of such a character that the statement made is true of him or it and all others belonging to the same class."² In understanding this construction, the reader must (1) recognize that it is a relative clause; (2) check the mood of the verb, and (3) check whether the antecedent is definite or indefinite.

Here are some examples:

1.3.1: [Helvetii] constituerunt **ea quae ad proficiscendum pertinerent** comparare.

5.39.2 **non nulli milites qui lignationis munitionis causa in silvas discessissent**

5.42.3: **nulla ... copia quae esset ad hunc usum idonea**

In each example the antecedent is non-specific and the verb of the relative clause is in the subjunctive. Allen and Greenough also note that the relative clause of result has its origins in the rel. clause of

² Allen and Greenough, §534.

characteristic; thus if you come across a relative clause with the subjunctive and a clearly defined antecedent, such as at *BG* 4.34.4:

Secutae sunt continuos complures dies tempestates quae et nostros in castris continerent et hostem a pugna prohiberent.

Continual storms followed for several days which (“were of a type that”; OR: “with the result that they”) both kept our men in the camp and prevented the enemy from battle.

The antecedent (*tempestates*) is more concrete than the examples we saw earlier (*ea, non nulli*, etc.), but the subjunctive in the relative clause still acts to define the character of the storms, shading into giving the reader the result or effect of the storm on the two groups.

Relative Clauses in Indirect Discourse

Finally, I’d like to touch on the other common use of relative clause + subjunctive. The syntactical rules here are not limited to relative clauses, but to other kinds of subordinate clauses as well (temporal, causal etc.). Here the main challenge for students is to recognize correctly that the subjunctive is generated by the fact that the clause occurs in the context of indirect speech, and that if the speech were in direct discourse the indicative would apply.

Some Examples:

4.27.1: (the Britons send representatives to Caesar to negotiate)
obsides daturus quaeque imperasset sese facturos polliciti sunt.

Polliciti sunt indicates that the clause that follows (or here, precedes) is in indirect speech, and we see the accusative+infinitive construction (*obsides daturus [esse], sese facturos [esse]*). The relative clause (*quaeque impera(vi)isset*) is embedded within the indirect speech, and so takes a subjunctive verb, since the factualness of the subordinate clause is not confirmed by the person making the statement – that is, in this example, the factualness of “what Caesar had ordered” is not claimed by the subject of the verb introducing the indirect statement (here, the British legates, who “polliciti sunt”).

Final example as summary if time allows, for practice together (Ambiorix’s speech to the Roman interpreters, 5.27) [*Note: there wasn’t time for this practice*]

Mittitur ad eos colloquendi causa Gaius Arpineius, eques Romanus, familiaris Quinti Tituri, et Quintus Iunius ex Hispania quidam, qui iam ante missu Caesaris ad Ambiorigem ventitare consuerat; apud quos Ambiorix ad hunc modum locutus est: sese pro Caesaris in se beneficiis plurimum ei confiteri debere, quod eius opera stipendio liberatus esset, quod Aduatucis finitimis suis pendere consuisset, quodque ei et filius et fratris filius ab Caesare remissi essent, quos Aduatuci obsidum numero missos apud se in servitute et catenis tenuissent; neque id quod fecerit de oppugnatione castrorum, aut iudicio aut voluntate sua fecisse, sed coactu civitatis, suaque esse eiusmodi imperia, ut non minus haberet iuris in se multitudo quam ipse in multitudinem.

Notes:

ad eos: demonstrative pronoun of context (here referring to the enemy’s demand that some Romans come out to parley with them, narrated just above in 5.26)

qui iam ante missu Caesaris ad Ambiorigem ventitare consuerat: relative clause with indicative, defining or describing Quintus Iunius

apud quos: connecting relative

ad hunc modum: demonstrative pointing forward to the content of the speech

sese ... confiteri debere: accusative + infinitive in indirect discourse

in se: referring to Ambiorix, as the subject of the verb

quod eius opera stipendio liberatus esset: not a relative clause, but a causal clause (nevertheless in subjunctive because it's subordinate in indirect discourse)

quod Aduatucis finitimis suis pendere consuesset: this *is* a relative clause – stipendio is its antecedent; subjunctive because it's in oratio obliqua, pluperfect to indicate time prior to that of the main verb (locutus est)

quodque ei et filius et fratris filius ab Caesare remissi essent: another relative clause in o.o. [Note however, that Caesar wrote “ei” instead of “sibi”, perhaps due to the influence of *a Caesare*]

quos Aduatuci obsidum numero missos apud se in servitute et catenis tenuissent: relative clause in o.o.; antecedent of *quos* is *filius et fratris filius*. Note that since *Aduatuci* is the subject of *tenuissent*, the phrase *apud se* refers to them, not to Ambiorix or his relatives.

neque id quod fecerit de oppugnatione castrorum, aut iudicio aut voluntate sua fecisse: another point begins here, with a new acc. + infin., although Caesar omits the accusative subject of the infinitive, since it can be thought to carry over from the last statement (*sese*). *id quod fecerit:* relative clause in indirect discourse

suaque esse eiusmodi imperia: another new point (*imperia* is a new accusative subject of the infinitive)

ut non minus haberet iuris in se multitudo quam ipse in multitudinem: result clause; note that the acc.+infin. breaks off in the comparative clause (*quam ipse in multitudinem*).

Nouns in Caesar

AP Caesar and “Caesar”

In a work that attempted to show the tendentiousness of Caesar's *Commentarii*, Michel Rambaud catalogued some 775 instances of Caesar's name in the *Bellum Gallicum* and *Bellum Civile* combined.³ In his words, this repetition keeps Caesar's name at the forefront of the reader's mind, just as Caesar himself is said to have kept sending reports and letters back to his friends, political allies and officials in Rome. For this reason, readers of Caesar's *Commentarii* often feel overwhelmed by the omnipresence of Caesar in the works. Certainly, there is something here, for the narrative tactic of using the third person – and of always referring to himself by his cognomen alone – does have the effect of making it seem as though it's really just this one man, Gaius Julius Caesar, who is himself engaging in battle, building bridges and conducting negotiations throughout the text.

But in the passages chosen by the AP curriculum committee, this aspect of the *Commentarii* is toned down. Of the passages in Books 1, 4, 5, and 6 that appear on the curriculum, Caesar is himself central only to sections of Book 4: in the selections from Book 1, the focus is on Gaul and the conspiracy of Orgetorix that sets the narrative in motion (Caesar himself appears in the work for the first time at the opening of 1.7). In Book 5, the narrative focuses on the actions of Caesar's legates, first Cotta and Sabinus and then Quintus Cicero, with Caesar himself only coming to the rescue at the end of the selection (5.46-8). The passages from Book 6 are of course ethnographical in nature, and can be said to have a Caesar-centric focus only insofar as these are the author's observations about Gallic customs and culture. This leaves the

³ Rambaud 1966: 196-98.

selections from Book 4, where Caesar is directing the action as his ships attempt to land on the shores of Britain.

And yet, even where the character Caesar is not actively present, as in the events of Book 5, his name is still very much in the forefront. I present the following observations about Caesar's use of "Caesar" as a way to approach the text from a literary standpoint: what is the distribution of the name "Caesar" in various cases in the AP selections; can we draw any conclusions about the way Caesar *auctor* constructs the narrative from this?

Distribution by book:

Book 1: 2

Book 4: 17

Book 5: 20

Book 6: 1*

*plus one "mihi" in an editorializing statement at 6.14.4

Distribution by case:

Nominative: 13

Genitive: 8

Dative: 6

Accusative: 10

Ablative: 3

The largest excerpts chosen by the AP curriculum committee are in Books 4 and 5, so it is not surprising that there are more instances of Caesar's name there. But as I observed above, Caesar is himself largely absent from the events of Book 5, so it is rather surprising that his name still appears so often. In fact, most of these references to Caesar come in the speeches of other people, so that even when absent Caesar is very much on the minds of those around him. Indeed, further analysis shows that aside from the introductory reference at 5.25.1, where the narrator recounts Tasgetius' services to Caesar and the latter's restoration of the Gaul to the kingship, nearly all the instances of Caesar's name in Book 5 are in oblique cases. It is only when the dire situation facing the wintering legates – the disaster that befell Sabinus and Cotta, and the siege of Quintus Cicero's camp – comes to Caesar's attention that he becomes the focus of the narrative again, and consequently, appears again in the nominative as the subject of the action verbs at 5.46.1 and 5.48.1.

This pattern is confirmed elsewhere in the AP selections, where Caesar's most 'active' presence is in Book 4, as the back-and-forth of battle with the Britons is described. Of the 17 uses of "Caesar" in various cases in Book 4, nine are in the nominative. Here Caesar is the quintessential 'man of action', not only taking charge of the situation and coming to the rescue of his struggling ships, on the one hand (4.25, 4.26), and highlighting his military acumen and foresight on the other (4.31, 4.32, 4.34, 4.35).

As a preliminary observation, then, I would suggest that there is something to the notion that Caesar wrote himself into the text in a meaningful way, and that while certain uses of the name Caesar are in a particular case because of the syntactical requirements of the Latin (e.g. as object of a prepositional phrase), the overall effect is to create a text where Caesar's general characteristics – *celeritas*, *prudencia*, *virtus* – are on display. And even where Caesar is himself absent, he has been written into the narrative in an almost starring role.