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Ubi est "qui"?
Wh-movement in pre-Classical Latin relative clauses

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Outline

- Opening questions
    - What is *wh*-movement and why does it matter?
    - What is its relevance in Latin (and Indo-European)?
- Theory
    - The left periphery
    - *Wh*-movement vs. pragmatic fronting
- Evidence
    - Pre-Classical Latin
    - Classical Latin
- The road ahead
    - Work in progress
    - Implications for our understanding of Latin and (Proto-)Indo-European

What is *wh*-movement?

- Movement of a "*wh*-item" (**interrogative** or **relative** pronoun) to the front of a clause

    (1) **quem** *dices digniorem esse hominem hodie Athenis alterum?* (Plaut. *Ep.* 26)

    "**Who** else will you say is a more worthy man in Athens today?"

    (2) *si erum vis Demaenetum,* **quem** *ego novi, adduce*

    "If you are willing, bring your master Demaenetus, **whom** I do know" (Plaut. *As.* 354-5)

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What is *wh*-movement?

- Why movement?

  - *Wh*-item appears in a marked position (generally clause-initially)

  - Leaves a "trace", conventionally labelled as *t*

    - Demaenetum, **quem$_i$** ego *t$_i$* novi

    - Demaenetus$_i$, **whom$_i$** I know *t$_i$*

- Movement *per se* is not theory neutral, but it is not theory exclusive

Enklitische Wörter **rücken** *möglichst an den Anfang des Satzes. Die Richtigkeit*

dieser Beobachtung lässt sich besonders an den enklitischen von Pronominibus

erweisen, weil wir bei ihnen wissen, an welcher Steller des Satzes sie stehen müssten,

wenn sie nicht enklitisch wären.   (Delbrück 1878: 48, emphasis mine)

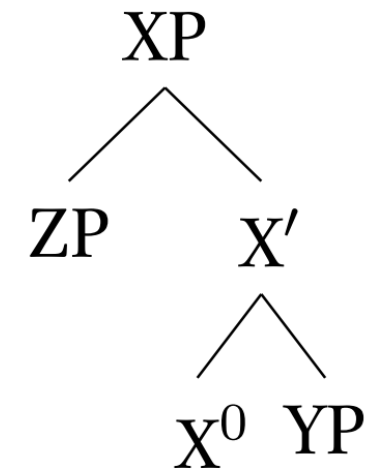# *Wh*-movement in Latin (and Indo-European)

- *Wh*-movement varies cross-linguistically

    - It can be obligatory in unmarked contexts (as in, e.g., English, German, Spanish)

    - It can be absent in unmarked contexts (as in, e.g., Mandarin, Japanese, Shona)

    - Its presence in relative vs. interrogative contexts may be variable (as in, e.g., Modern (nonstandard) French, Hindi, Hittite)

- Ancient IE languages show some variability

    - Hale (1987), Hock (1989, 1997) on Sanskrit

    - Goedegebuure (2009), Huggard (2011, 2015), Yates (2014) on Anatolian

    - Ram-Prasad (2022) for PIE

    - **Latin?**
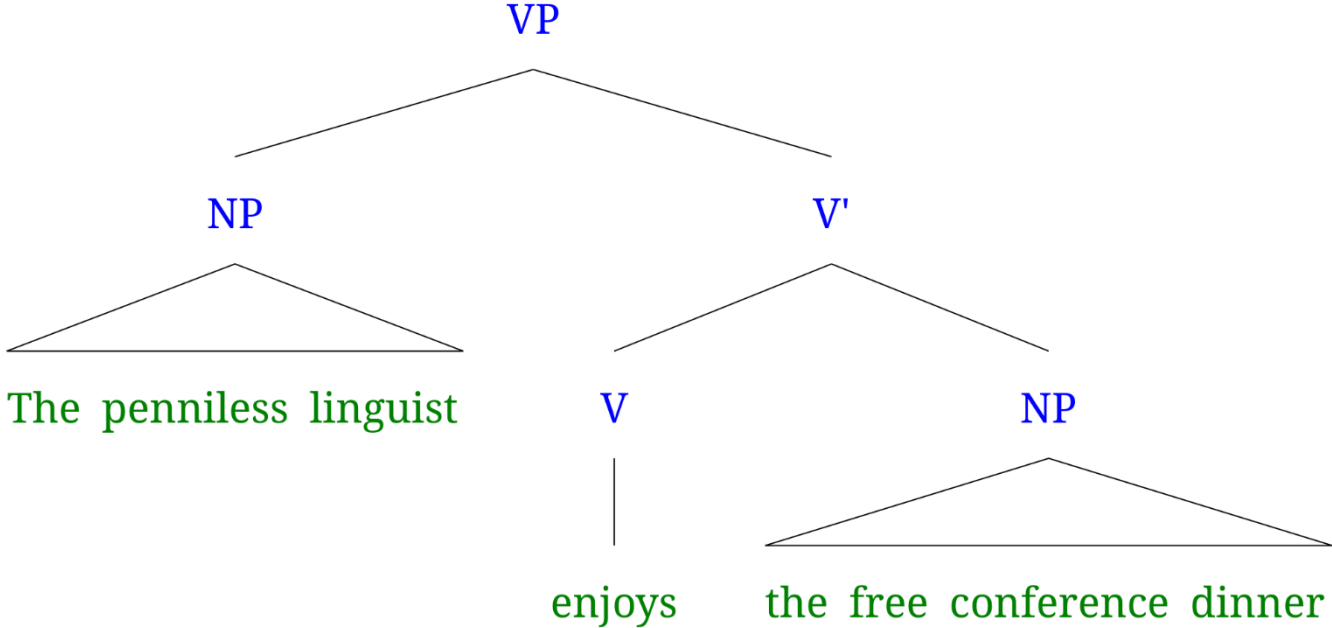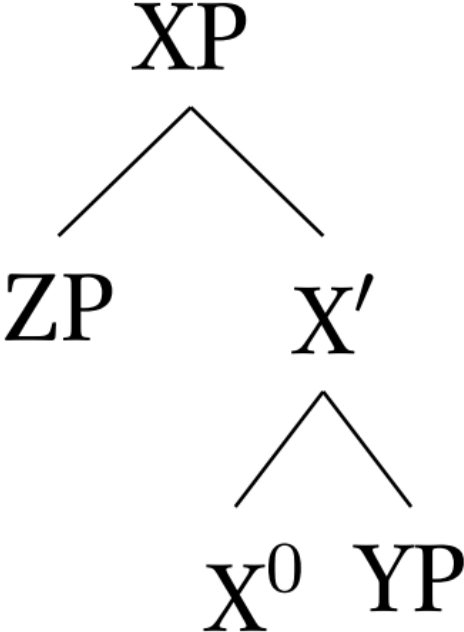
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Theory

- Minimalism (Chomsky 1995; see, e.g., Radford (1997, 2004); Boeckx (2007) for a more accessible intro)
    - Relevant points:
        - Hierarchical structure
        - Surface order ≠ Base-generated position (because of movement)
        - Functional categories (e.g., Complementisers, Conjunctions, Auxiliaries, Pronouns, Tense, Aspect etc.)
        - Lexical categories (e.g., Nouns, Adjectives, Verbs, Adverbs etc.)
        - Movement (a.k.a. "internal merge")
        - Distinction between **phrases** and **heads**
            - E.g., "linguist" is a head (N^0)* but "penniless linguist" is an (NP)
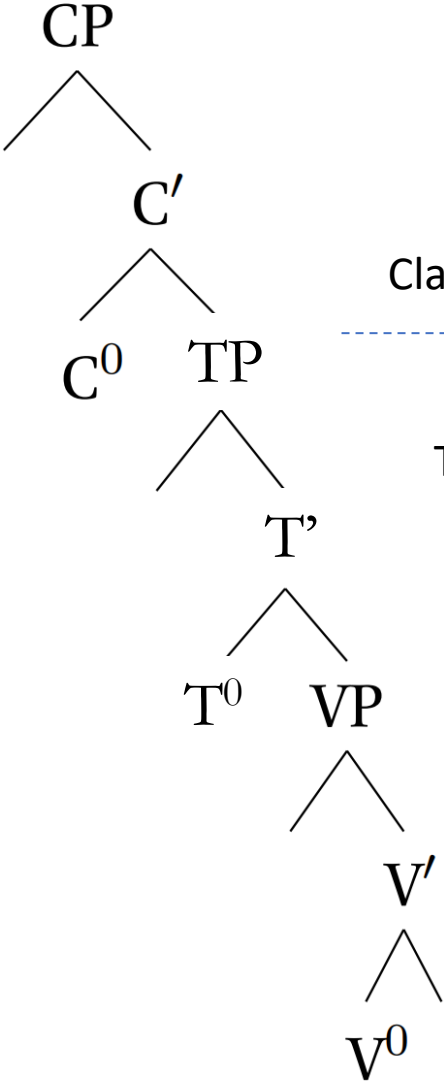   - X-bar schema

        *The 0 superscript is optional

Theory
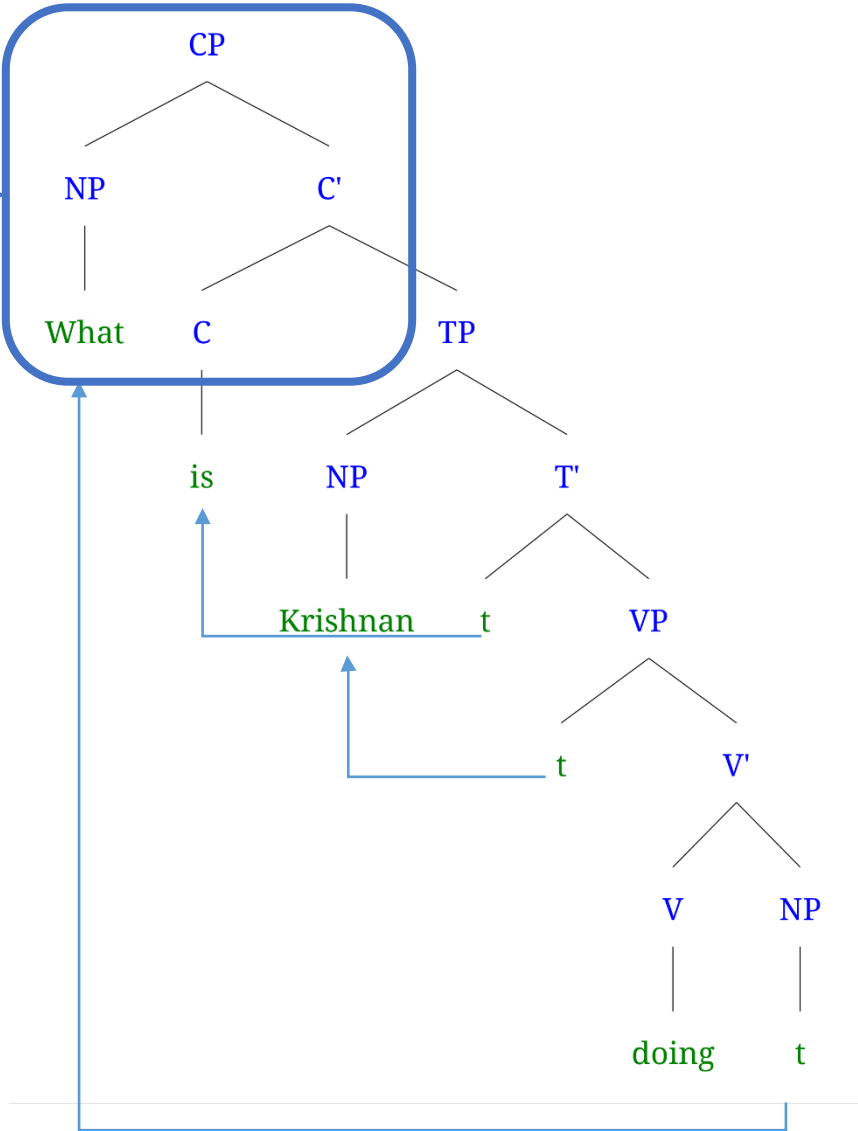
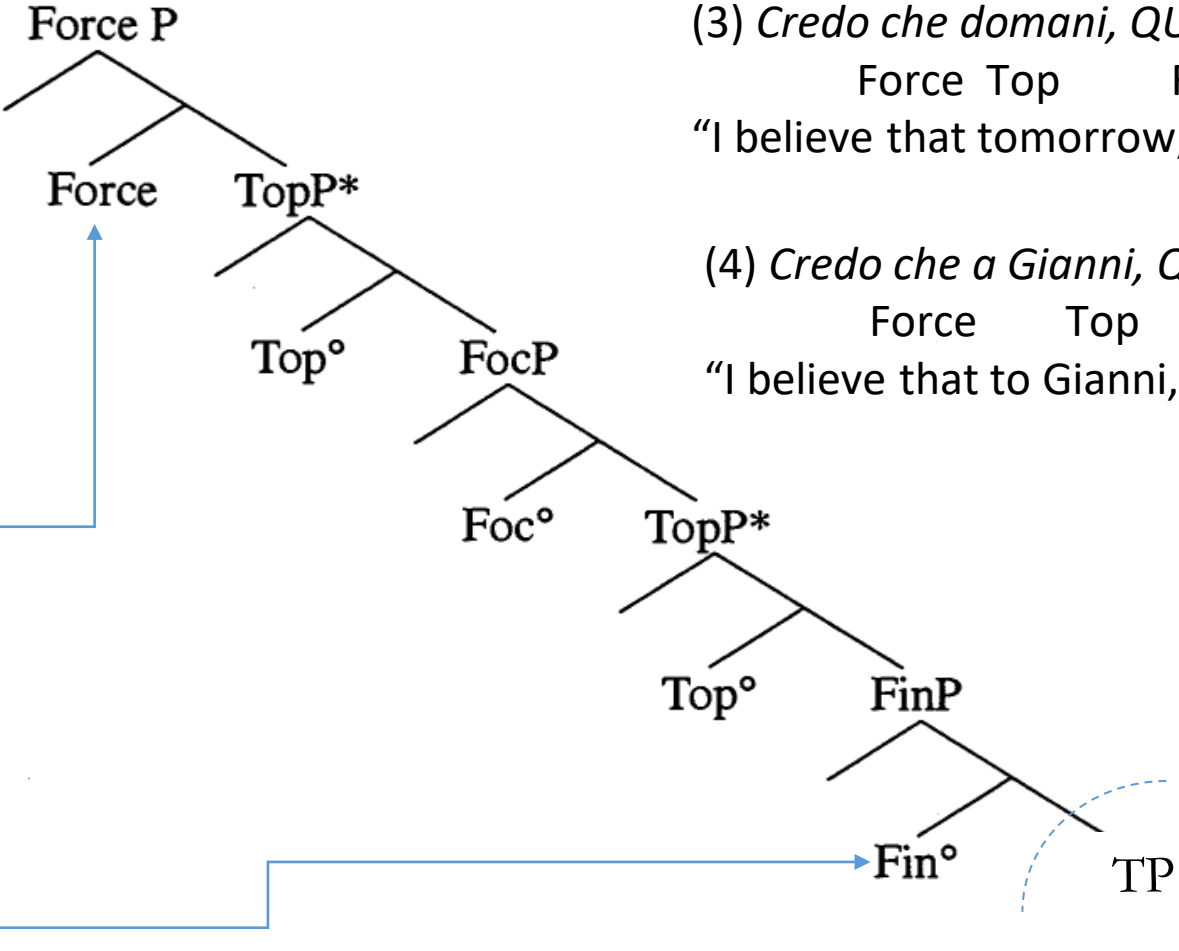# Theory

CP

C′

C⁰　TP

T'

Clausal information

Tense information (inflection)

T⁰　VP

V′

Verbal (& Nominal) information

V⁰

Left Periphery

CP

NP　C'

What　C　TP

is　NP　T'

Krishnan　t　VP

t　V'

V　NP

doing　t

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Left Periphery

(3) *Credo che domani, QUESTO, a Gianni, gli dovremmo dire*
Force Top   Foc   Top   TP
"I believe that tomorrow, THIS, to Gianni, we should say"

(4) *Credo che a Gianni, QUESTO, domani, gli dovremmo dire*
Force   Top   Foc   Top   TP
"I believe that to Gianni, THIS, tomorrow, we should say"

(Rizzi, 1997: 295-7, adapted)

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Left Periphery

- Topic and Focus in Latin

    (5) *de Aufidiano* *nomine nihil te hortor*   (Cic. *Fam*. 16.19)

      "In the matter of Aufidius's debt, I put no pressure on you"

    (6) *provincias* *praetores nondum sortiti sunt*

      "As for the provinces, the Praetors have not yet drawn lots for them"   (Cic. *Att*. 1.13.5)

    (7) *id ipsum* *sumus in eorum sermon adumbrare conati*   (Cic. *Or*. 3.16)

      "That very thing we have attempted to portray in their speech"

   (8) *quos* *ego equites Romanos, quos senatores vidi…*   (Cic. *Att*. 7.5.4)

      "Which Roman equestrians, which senators did I see…"

    See further: Adams (1994); Salvi (2005); Devine & Stephens (2006); Spevak (2006, 2008); Danckaert (2012); Bortolussi (2017); Halla-aho (2018)

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Wh-movement vs. Pragmatic fronting

- Why do *wh*-words raise to the left periphery?
    - Is it because they bear a special pragmatic function (e.g., Focus for interrogatives)?
        - If so, what is the special pragmatic function of relative pronouns?
    - Can *wh*-movement be understood as simultaneously pragmatic and grammatical?

- Where do *wh*-words raise to?
    - [Spec, TopP]?
        - Lower or higher?
    - [Spec, FocP]?
    - Something else?
    - Additional Q for relatives: what about the antecedent?

- Key difficulty: Lack of overt complementation in old IE langs

(Hackstein 2013; Windhearn 2021)
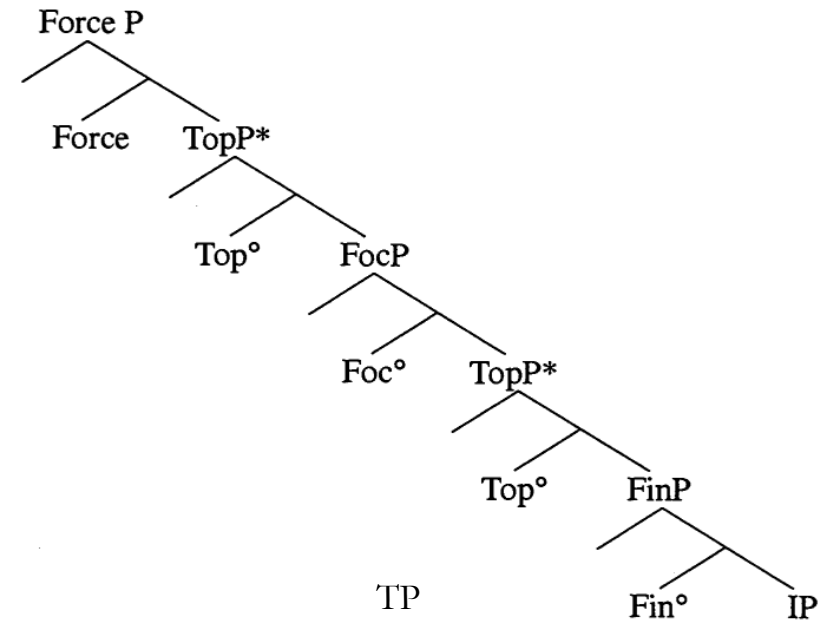
Pre-Classical Latin: Some examples

(9) *si vidulum illum* [_RC_ **quem** *ego in navi perdidi*]*…investigavero*   (Plaut. *Rud*. 1339-40)

  "If I find that suitcase which I lost in the ship…"

(10) *O Libane, uti miser est homo* [_RC_ **qui** *amat*]   (Plaut. *Asin*. 616)

  "O Libanus, how miserable is a man who's in love"

(11) [_RC_ **qui** *sibi mandasset delegati ut plauderent*]*…* **eius** *ornamenta et corium uti conciderent.*   (Plaut. *Amph*. 83-5)

"Whoever ordered the claqueurs to applaud [him] … they should tear up his costume and his skin"

Familiar, "Classical" pattern – **"Type A"**

- RP is first in relative clause
- Appears to precede focalised elements (?)
- Topics harder to ascertain

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Pre-Classical Latin: Some examples

(12) *pallam ad phrygionem cum coronoa ebrius ferebat,* [RC *hodie tibi **quam** surrupuit domo*]   (Plaut. *Men*. 563-4)

"With a garland, drunk, he was carrying the mantle to the embroider, which he took from your house today"

(13) *quin* [RC *tibi **qui** bene volunt], bene vis item?*   (Plaut. *Poen*. 165)

"Why not, for those who wish you well, wish them well in return?"

(14) *salvere iubeo, spectatores optumos,* [RC *Fidem **qui** facitis maxumi – et vos Fides*]   (Plaut. *Cas*. 1-2)

"I welcome you, most excellent audience, who esteem Faith so highly – and Faith, you"

- (15) [RC *ex malis multis malum **quod** minimumst], id minimest malum*   (Plaut. *Amph*. 83-5)

   "Whatever is least an evil among the many evils, that is the least an evil"

- "Pre-Classical" pattern – "**Type B**"
  - RP is non-initial within relative clause
  - RP can be preceded by various different types of material
  - RP often in close proximity to the RC verb

Interim Summary: Pre-Classical Relative Clauses

- Exhibit some patterns that are the same as Classical Latin [prose] ("Type A")
    - RP initial within relative clause
    - RP adjacent to head noun
    - Embedded Relatives + Correlatives

- Exhibit some patterns that are not typically associated with Classical Latin [prose] ("Type B")
    - RP non-initial within relative clause
    - RP not adjacent to head noun
    - Embedded Relatives + Correlatives

Type B is the interesting one!

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Classical Latin: Some examples

- Type B is not typically associated with Classical Latin, and does not appear to be attested in Classical Latin prose (more on this later), cf. Salvi (2005: 453):

(46) a. *Domi   servi   qui   sunt*
       at-home servants who(N) are
       'who are servants in the house'   (Pl. *As.* 237)

   b. *Patronus qui   vobis   fuit futurus*
       patron   who(N) you(D) would-have-been
       'who would have freed you and been your patron'   (Pl. *As.* 621)

Examples (46), from Early Latin, are all the more striking because, otherwise, relative Wh-phrases are always the first constituent in embedded clauses. In all probability we have here an alternative form of the embedded clause, a relic of the archaic age where the movement of constituents to the front of an embedded clause was freer and, unlike Classical Latin, was also possible in relative clauses (Watkins 1993: 9.3.1).

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Classical Latin: Some examples

- What about Classical Latin *verse*?

(16) *arma virumque cano* [_{RC} *Troiae **qui** primus ab oris Italiam, fato profugus, Laviniaque venit litora*]　　　　　(Verg. *Aen*. 1.1-2)

　"I sing of arms and the man who first came, from the coast of Troy, to Italy and the Lavinian shores, put in flight by fate"

(17) *"quaere alium,* [_{RC} *tua **quem** moveant miracula*]*" dixit Thescelus*　　　　　(Ov. *Met*. 5.181-2)

　"'Look for someone else **whom** your marvels would disturb,' said Thescelus"

(18) *at mi nullus erat nec hic neque illic*, [_{RC} *fractum **qui** veteris pedem grabati in collo sibi collocare posset*]　　　　(Catull. 10.21-3)

　"But I had noone either here or there **who** was able to hoist the broken leg of an old couch on his neck"
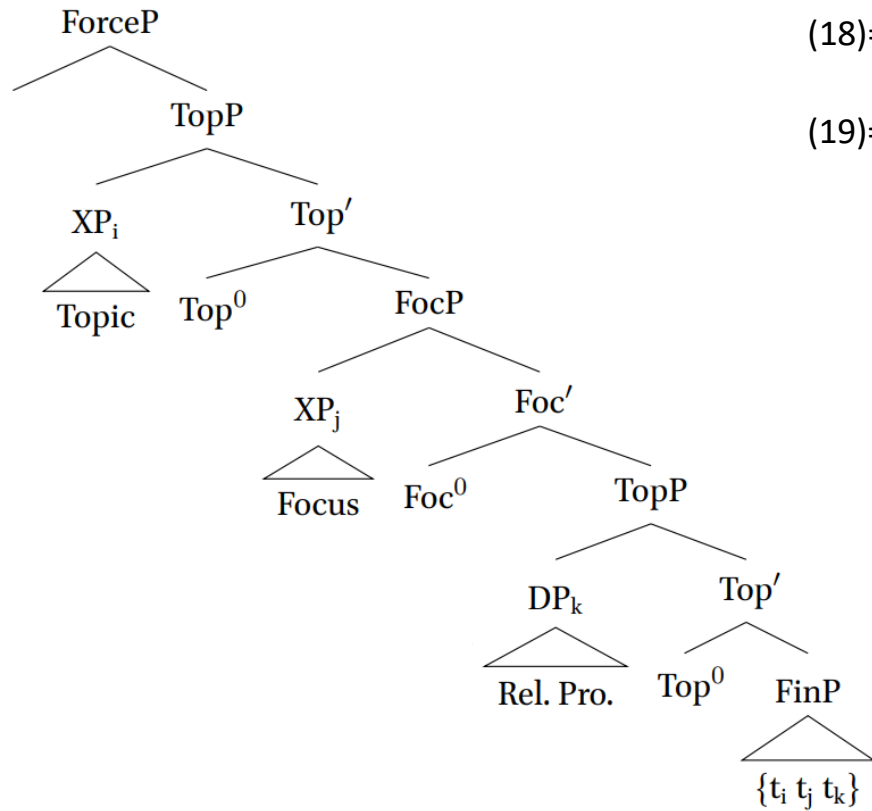
and **many** more!

Type B?

- Non-initial RP
- Verb position?
- Hyperbaton?

"Type B" Relative Clauses: Analytic possibilities

- A non-initial RP could be analysed in (at least) two ways:
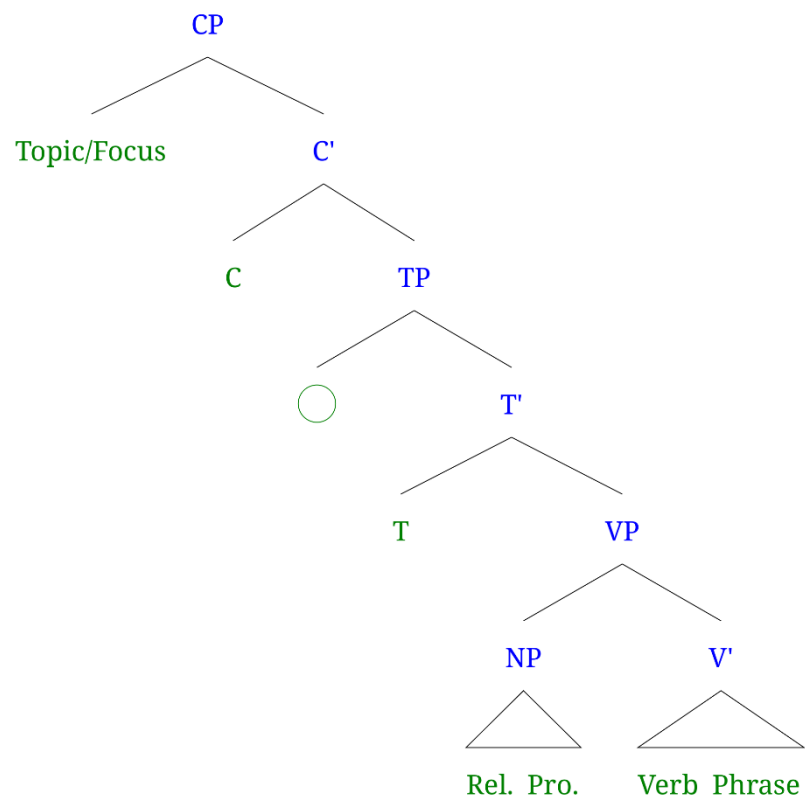 - *Wh*-movement + Pragmatic fronting around the RP

(18)=(14) *spectatores optumos,* [$_{RC}$ *Fidem* **qui** *facitis maxumi – et vos Fides*]

(19)=(16) *virum …* [$_{RC}$ *Troiae* **qui** *primus ab oris Italiam, fato profugus, Laviniaque venit litora*]

"Type B" Relative Clauses: Analytic possibilities

- A non-initial RP could be analysed in (at least) two ways:
  - *Wh-in-situ* (± pragmatic fronting)

CP

Topic/Focus   C'

C   TP

○   T'

T   VP

NP   V'

Rel. Pro.   Verb Phrase

(18)=(14) *spectatores optumos,* [RC *Fidem **qui** facitis maxumi – et vos Fides*]

(19)=(16) *virum …* [RC *Troiae **qui** primus ab oris Italiam, fato profugus, Laviniaque venit litora*]

"Type B" Relative Clauses: Analytic possibilities

- How do we determine which is correct?
  - Interpretive criteria (?)
  - **Position of verb**

Next step: Corpus-based study

- Quantitative study of non-initial RPs in Plautus, Terence, Vergil, Ovid (?)
  - Testing for:
    - Proximity of RP to verb
    - Number of elements preceding RP
    - Category of elements preceding RP
    - Other factors (?)

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Implications (in the form of Concluding Questions)

- Was *wh*-movement a grammatical and/or pragmatic feature of Latin (and other ancient IE languages, and PIE)?

- How does this compare to other kinds of *wh*-movement systems cross-lingusitically?

- How does the presence/absence of *wh*-movement relate to pragmatic marking (i.e., Topic & Focus)?

- Is there a genuine diachronic link between "Type B" RCs in Classical and pre-Classical Latin verse? Is it artifice?

- Why is "Type B" absent (or lost) in prose, and in later stages of the language?

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