Case, function and PP structure in Ancient Greek

In this paper I will investigate case assignment in prepositional phrases in Ancient Greek and I will argue that it is not a lexical property of the preposition but a matter of the syntactic structure the preposition participates in (see also Abraham 2010). Based on distributional and morphological evidence regarding the lexical item of the preposition (cross-categorial distribution ranging from preposition and adverb to prefix; morphological decomposition into a root element and formatives relevant to categorial and locative exponence; see Schwyzer & Debrunner 1950) and in line with the syntactic decomposition approach to categorization (Marantz 1997 et seq., Harley 2005 et seq., Borer 2005, Ramchant 2008, a.o.), I will argue for a decomposition analysis of prepositions (see also Svenonius 2003, 2007, Koopman 2010, Terzi 2010, a.o.) according to which the category of preposition is decomposed into a Root element √, void of grammatical/syntactic information, and a functional layer, which includes a categorizing p head and is responsible for the syntactic properties of the preposition, namely argument structure, function and case assignment:

(1) $[_{FP}$ F ... $[_{pP}$ p $[_{√P}$ √$]]$...$]$

This analysis implies that case assignment in PPs is not a property of the lexical item of the preposition. Evidence for such an approach comes from the fact that in AG the case of the DP in a PP depends on the function of the PP (Luraghi 2003, Bortone 2010, a.o.):

(2)   a.   *para* + genitive = ablative
                 aggeliɛ: hɛ:kei   para   basileos   (*Hdt.* 8.40)
                 message-NOM come-PAST.3SG   PREP   king-GEN
                 'a message came from the king (from the court of the king)'

         b.   *para* + dative = locative
                 sito:ntai …   para   tɔ:i   didaskalɔ:i   (*X.Cyr.* 1, 2, 8)
                 eat-3PL   PREP   the   teacher-DAT
                 'they eat ... beside their teacher'

         c.   *para* + accusative = allative
                 para   tɛ:n   gephyran   pempsai   (*X.An.* 2.4.17)
                 PREP   the   bridge-ACC   send-AOR.INF
                 'to send to the bridge' (to the sides of the bridge)

Thus, in concrete locative constructions: (a) the dative denotes a spatial/temporal location (rarely motion); (b) the genitive, in its 'ablative' reading, indicates the source/starting point of a spatial/temporal Path, whereas in its partitive/whole meaning, it views the Ground as a whole or a series of parts, according to which the Figure is spatially/temporally located; and (c) the accusative denotes either that the Ground constitutes the end point of a spatial/temporal Path or that the Ground is viewed in its extent ("along"). Crucially, these correlations cut across the various prepositions (e.g. *hypo* + genitive = from under, *hypo* + dative = (at) under, *hypo* + accusative = to under, etc.), so that prepositions that incorporate in their lexical meaning a specific locative function may assign only the relevant case (e.g. *en* 'in' + dative, *es/e:s* 'into' + accusative, *apo* 'from'+ genitive). In addition, the correlation between function and case is also attested in adverbial bare DPs with a locative meaning:

(3)   *Genitive (ablative)*
         eiko:si   tɛ:s   odo: (*Hdt.* 2.80)
         leave-3PL   the   road-GEN
         'they retreat from the road'

(4)   *Dative (locative)*
         tɔ:n   de   marathɔ:ni   makhesamenɔ:n   (*Lycurg.* 104B)
         the-PL.GEN   PRT   Marathon-DAT fight-MDPSV-PRTC.MSC.PL.GEN
         'of those who have fought in Marathon'

(5)　　*Accusative (allative)*
　　　　ɛ:lthon　　　　　　　patros　　　　arkhaion　　taphon　　　(*Soph.El.* 893)
　　　　come-PAST.3PL　　　father-GEN　　ancient-ACC　grave-ACC
　　　　'They came to the ancient grave of their father'

The same correlation holds with the abstract functions of prepositions (although the pattern is somewhat blurred by the fact that many abstract meanings can be denoted by a variety of prepositional phrases with different cases used metaphorically, or as an extension of their original locative meaning). In AG all prepositions may express, besides their concrete locative meanings, abstract grammatical functions like manner, cause, purpose, etc. Significantly, the case of the DP depends on the function of the PP and cuts across the various prepositions and it is the same in the corresponding adverbial bare DP constructions:

(6)　　*Manner, instrument, the means: dative*
　　　a.　　<u>Bare DP in dative</u>
　　　　　　auto:s　　　　tois　　　　　lithois　　　　　ballɛ:somen　　　（*Ar.V.* 222）
　　　　　　this-PL.ACC　the-PL.DAT　stone-PL.DAT　hit-FUT.3PL
　　　　　　'we will hit them with the stones'
　　　b.　　*en* + dative
　　　　　　ti　　d(e)　　en　　dolɔ:i　　　dei　　...　　agein　　　（*S.Ph.* 102）
　　　　　　why　PRT　　PREP　trick-SG.DAT　must-3SG　　get-INF
　　　　　　'But why must I get him by using a trick ...
　　　c.　　*syn* + dative
　　　　　　all(a)　arkteon　　　　　　　to　　　pragma　　　syn　　takhei
　　　　　　but　　start-DA-NT.SG.NOM　the　　matter-NOM　PREP　quickness-DAT
　　　　　　'but we should start doing this quickly'　　　　　　　　　　（*S.Aj.* 853）

Based on these facts, I will put forward the hypothesis that case assignment is a property of a p_{CASE} functional head in the functional layer of an extended PP structure and I will argue that the constructions in which the correlation between function and case is attested derive from the same structure (7), depending on its lexicalization by means of a root vocabulary item.

(7)　　[$_{FP}$ F ... [$_{pCASEP}$ p_{CASE} [$_{pP}$ p [$_{\sqrt{P}}$ $\sqrt{}$ DP]]]...]

Thus, concrete locative PPs involve the whole structure lexicalized by a root vocabulary item, which surfaces as the lexical category of preposition, whereas concrete locative adverbial bare DPs involve the same structure without the insertion of a root vocabulary item. This proposal accounts for the similarities between PPs and the so-called semantic cases (Fillmore 1968, Mcfadden 2004), by assuming that adverbial bare DPs are in fact prepositional structure fragments, i.e. functional skeletons including the p_{CASE} head, not lexicalized by a root. Finally, building on the dissociation approach to *v* and Voice (Harley 2014, a.o.), and based on evidence from *prepositional prefixation* constructions (i.e. constructions in which the preposition appears prefixed onto another lexical item, e.g. a verb; Humbert 1960, cf. Acedo-Matellán 2016) in which prepositional categorization is independent of case assignment, I will argue that p_{CASE} and p are distinct functional projections: p is simply a categorizing head that turns a root into a preposition, whereas p_{CASE} is responsible for case assignment (and perhaps for introducing the Figure argument; Svenonius 2010) and it may come in different flavors (like 'flavored' *v* heads; Folli & Harley 2005 et seq.), namely p_{ACC}, p_{GEN}, and p_{DAT}.

Selected References: Acedo-Matellán, V. 2016. *The Morphosyntax of Transitions*. Oxford: OUP * Bortone, P. 2010. *Greek Prepositions: From Antiquity to Present*. Oxford: OUP * Folli, R. & H. Harley. 2005. Flavours of *v*: Consuming results in Italian and English. In P. Kempchinsky & R. Slabakova (eds.), *Aspectual Inquiries*, 1-25. Dordrecht: Springer * Luraghi, S. 2003. *On the Meaning of Prepositions and Cases*. Amsterdam: J. Benjamins * Svenonius, P. 2007. Adpositions, particles and the arguments they introduce. In E. Reuland, T. Bhattacharya & G. Spathas (eds.), *Argument Structure*, 64-103. Amsterdam: J. Benjamins.