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Several languages possess compounds in which a preposition governs a nominal constituent. One example is the English adjective <i>up-stream</i>, where <i>up</i> syntactically governs the noun <i>stream</i>. Ancient Greek too possessed a class of compounds of this type (e.g. ἐπίδημος 'among the people'), not to be confused with other formations in which the prepositional constituent does not govern the noun, but modifies it: e.g. ἐπίχρυσος 'with gold on top, overlaid with gold'. Nathalie Rousseau's extensive and thoughtful book is devoted to the development of the former category of compounds, whose structure she analyses as [preposition + noun radical (+suffix) + ending]. This wide-ranging, linguistically and philologically informed study amply shows that these prepositional compounds, far from being marginal, were a productive category from the very first stages of written records in Greek. Rousseau's account is based on a corpus of c. 400 forms extending from Mycenaean to Aristotle, which she assembled on the basis of existing dictionaries and indexes (pp. 14-15). The focus, therefore, is mostly on literary texts, but the odd epigraphic or post-Classical form is also included.

The volume is divided into two parts. The first part is devoted to the morphology of prepositional compounds and the surrounding theoretical issues. The second part provides a lexical and semantic analysis of the compounds by lexical domain and a close consideration of their context of use up to the end of the Classical age. Both parts, which may be of interest to different kinds of readers, are rich in information and of overall excellent quality. This review will first focus on some aspects of Rousseau's theoretical approach and will then provide an example of her lexical analysis.

The methodological approach which this volume adopts, and at the same time critically reviews, is based on the assumption that prepositional compounds are linked to the syntactic phrases ("syntagms") formed by preposition+noun. Although this link is clear, the theoretical issue here concerns whether each and every compound must have a syntagm behind it, i.e. a syntactic origin. The way we view this issue has an impact on the definition of these prepositional formations. Are they 'true' compounds (i.e. the compounding of two lexemes) or derivations (i.e. forms derived from a lexeme through the use of a suffix)? Rousseau's conclusion is that preposition+noun nominals show the typical traits of compoundhood: they are lexicalized (i.e. have different meanings from those of the corresponding syntagms) and therefore manifest a semantic evolution which is unique to them.

Chapter 1 ("Un procédé relevant à la fois de l'hypostase, de la dérivation et de la composition") is devoted to an overview of this theoretical issue within the history of studies on Greek compounds. The chapter addresses the meaning, definition and function of the technical term 'hypostasis', which identifies a problematic mechanism at the crossroads between derivation and compounding. In her very informed review of previous works Rousseau shows that this phenomenon and the very term 'hypostasis' have been received and treated in very different manners in the scholarship.

Chapter 2 contains a formal analysis of features which characterize prepositional compounds: accent, nature of the first and second constituents, and suffixes. Rousseau illustrates the five grammatical categories to which prepositional compounds may belong: adjectives (mostly thematic ones), nouns (mostly derived from substantivized adjectives), adverbs (construed with special suffixes), verbs derived directly from the corresponding syntactic syntagms (for the most part -ίζω verbs), and finally the forms derived from all the above categories. The most substantial and informative section of the chapter is devoted to the role which suffixes play in all the above categories. Although some compounds may not show any suffix (see the case of δῆμος and ἐπίδημος), the use of suffixes – the most common of which are -ο-, -ιο-, -ιδ-, and -ιδιο- (the last three associated to consonantal stems) – marks prepositional compounds against their nominal bases.

Suffixes also distinguish prepositional compounds from possessive compounds (e.g. ῥοδοδάκτυλος), which tend to omit the use of a special suffix when the second constituent is a thematic noun (cf. δάκτυλος and ῥοδοδάκτυλος). Similarly, the lack or presence of a suffix allows us to tell prepositional

compounds apart from determinative ones with a prepositional first constituent. Rousseau concludes that the use of suffixes constitutes the main identifying characteristic of prepositional compounds (pp. 92-93). The variety of the employed suffixes also determines another trait of these compounds: the high number of doublets whose only difference is the final suffix, e.g. ἔνυχος / ἐννύχιος ‘at night’ (pp. 109-119). Ad hoc explanations aside (e.g. metrical constraints), according to Rousseau there are no real differences between these competing forms, which often co-exist in the same chronological period.

For its theoretical interest, chapter 3 (tellingly entitled “Au delà du syntagme”) comes across as the most engaging in Part 1. Here Rousseau further explores the relation between prepositional syntagms and compounds. Introducing the question of how compounds can issue from syntagms, she rightly notes that prepositional compounds derive first and foremost from a process of lexical formation, subjected to reinterpretation and analogical processes which, as it were, distance them from their theoretical syntactic sources, the syntagms. This all the more so since such syntagms often are not even attested. Rousseau rightly considers unsatisfactory the explanation that this owes to the vagaries of textual transmission. Her proposal is that there exists a structural correspondence which allows the creation of compounds from prepositions and nouns: the resulting compound corresponds to these associations, but it is not necessarily its genetic issue (p. 124).

Rousseau therefore postulates an organized and cohesive system in which compounds may be created through analogical processes even in the absence of an attested corresponding syntagm, according to Saussure’s “notion du relativement motivé” (p. 124). In other words, when a syntagm is not present, the compound system itself allows the analysis of certain compounds as prepositional formations, based on an analogical criterion. Pp. 129-151 address the issue of how these prepositional compounds become part of the compound system, focusing on their potential structural ambiguities, since prepositional compounds may be confused with possessive or determinative compounds marked by the same suffixes.

The last part of chapter 2 goes back to the role of lexicalization in the relation between syntagm and compound. Starting from a well-known and much-debated theory of Benveniste’s, according to which compounds transfer the syntactic predication onto a virtual level,[[2]] Rousseau suggests that prepositional compounds have a “virtual value”, because they express qualities, whereas their corresponding syntagms have an “actual value”, because they express “la circonstance d’un procès”. However, there also are a few compounds which express an actual value, forms which Rousseau identifies as the first step in the transition from syntagm to the lexicon (p. 157): this is because the compound possesses the formal traits of an adjective, but is not yet lexicalized and therefore remains closer to the syntagm (which, as just mentioned, expresses an “actual value”). The acquisition of a “virtual value”, which marks the loss of all connections with the syntagm, is identified by lexicalization.

As these notes show, the first part of the volume is characterized by a very theoretical approach, which may perhaps appear slightly too abstract to some readers (who may therefore find it useful to read the more approachable general Conclusion on pp. 599-607 first). The second and more extensive part of the volume, however, provides a useful practical application of the principles enunciated in the first part to the context of use of each compound. Textual philologists, commentators and translators will find accurate semantic notes on many literary passages here. Rousseau describes the evolution of each compound, commenting on its productivity (Is it a hapax? Is it a poetic formation? etc.), examining the potential adherence to syntactic phrases (according to the criteria addressed in Chapter 2 of the first part), and finally discussing its use in context.

The chapters from the second part of the book are organized according to the spatial, temporal or abstract meaning of the compounds. In the very long Chapter 1 (“Situation dans l’espace”, pp. 171-460) readers will find an analysis of compounds relating to the human body (pp. 171-266), animate or inanimate bodies (animals, vegetables: pp. 267-299), constructions (pp. 299-347), the political space and society (pp. 347-381), nature (381-419) and the universe (pp. 420-460). Chapter 2 (“Situation dans le temps”) analyzes the compounds conveying temporal notions (e.g. “night”, pp. 461-488) and human occupations (e.g. daily occupations such as lunch, pp. 489-508). Chapter 3 addresses the “Situation abstraite”, namely those compounds describing human relations (pp. 510-527), ethical notions (527-559), logical notions (e.g. calculation, pp. 559-581), and finally emotions (pp. 581-598).

I have found Chapter 1 particularly interesting as it addresses many terms pertaining to the technical vocabulary of medicine and science, of which Rousseau is an expert. The section devoted to the human body shows the dramatic increase that prepositional compounds relating to the human body underwent with the invention of Greek technical vocabulary. Rousseau here comments on the doublets made up by a current word and its technical counterpart (e.g. ὑπόπια vs. ὑποφθάλμια ‘parts under the eyes’), and on the alternation between the technical term and a substantivized syntagm (e.g. τὰ ὑπὸ τοῖσιν ὀφθαλμοῖσιν, attested in Hippocrates). In this respect, it is regrettable that the painstaking one-by-one analysis of such medical compounds, their corresponding syntagms, and the context in which both occur does not address such co-occurrence in the broader context of the strategies employed by Greek medical writers to endow the language with a new technical vocabulary. The alternation between phrasal terms (or ‘syntagms’) and compounds has long been recognized as one of such strategies (together with reduced syntax, nominal style, and affixal derivation among others) and has been specifically addressed in the literature.[[2]]

In a similar way, the classic linguistic framework adopted in Rousseau’s book may lead some linguists to lament the lack of a theoretical updating, chiefly with regard to the topics of the syntax/morphology interface, prepositions, and classification of compounds. Rousseau makes sparse reference to typological accounts of compounding;[[3]] some of the latest studies on Greek compounding are also missing (this may partly owe to the fact that the volume is the revision of a doctoral dissertation completed in 2003, but some omissions are nevertheless notable).

In spite of these minor shortcomings, for the wealth of information it provides and its careful treatment of both the linguistic and philological side of compounds, Rousseau’s study comes as a very welcome addition to the existing bibliography on Greek compounding, most of which is now outdated. Linguists will find a morpho-semantic approach which, in the spirit of the best French philological tradition, carefully combines linguistic theory with a pronounced literary sensitivity.[[4]] Classicists interested in the meaning and contextual use of many prepositional compounds will profit from Rousseau’s balanced and well-informed discussions, sensitive to textual criticism and the history of Greek literature.

[[1]] É. Benveniste, ‘Fondements syntaxiques de la composition nominale’, <i>BSL</i> 62, 15-31.

[[2]] E.g. by D. Langslow, <i>Medical Latin in the Roman Empire</i>, Oxford 2000, pp. 206-279.

[[3]] The literature on all these topics is vast. For an introduction to the modern theoretical frameworks readers may start from R. Lieber, P. Štekauer (eds.), <i>Oxford Handbook of Compounding</i>, Oxford 2009.

[[4]] This is apparent both in its pronounced theoretical bent and in the many references to Saussure, Benveniste, Chantraine, and Lamberterie to name only a few authors.