


Erlangen

Maximilian Forschner


This lengthy and ambitious book aims to describe and classify the principal characteristics of Direct Objects or Complements (abbreviated as OD) in Ancient Greek Prose, and to «dar razón de su marca casual» (VII). The corpus investigated consists of passages from Thucydides, Xenophon, Polybius, the New Testament and the Vita Aesopi G, with roughly the same number of words. But where this seemed appropriate references to Homer and other poets have been added. The book consists of four parts: I Cuestiones preliminares (3–66); II Transitividad y Complemento Directo en Griego Antiguo (67–146); III Las clases de Complemento Directo en Griego (147–525); IV Conclusiones (527–542). All this is preceded by a Presentación (VII–XII), an Introducción, on the terminology, the conventions and the corpus used (XXIII–XXXII), a detailed Índice de Contenidos (XIII–XXII), and followed by a number of appendixes, which mainly present statistics (543–588), an extensive bibliography¹ (589–616),

¹ But I noted the absence of Blake (1994) and Palmer (1994).
and a very, very brief English Summary (617–620). There are no Indexes, which, given the complex organization of the book and the complex nature of the material discussed, is most unfortunate. Their absence is made up for to some extent by the rather detailed survey of the contents, but the book is definitely neither easy to read nor easy to consult. Moreover for a great many readers the fact that it is in Spanish will be an extra barrier.

Daniel Riaño Rufilanchas (henceforth: RR) has assembled an enormous amount of material, and has submitted this to an impressive analytical apparatus, for which he draws both on the work of classical scholars and on that of general linguists. In Part I Cuestiones preliminares RR introduces a number of ‘nociones fundamentales’, e.g. (18–42) a distinction between Argumentos, entities that are necessary elements of the predicate frame of the verb, notably the Objeto or Complemento Directo, and Complementos Circumstanciales, entities that can be freely omitted and do not therefore belong the predicate frame. The class of Argument Objects consists of Direct Objects, characterized by the accusative, which are ‘fuertemente afectados’ and ‘claramente transitivos’, e.g. τὴν γῆν in ἐδῄουν τὴν γῆν (Th. 4.25.8) (26), and other Objects, e.g. τῷ θεῷ in χορηγίσθατι τῷ θεῷ (X. An. 1.1.9), that are ‘intuitivamente menos afectado[s] por el verbo’ than Direct Objects. RR also mentions the accusative of the Accusativus cum Participio here, as in ἔσθετο οἰόμενον τὸν Ἀράσπαν (X. Cyr. 6.1.45). These ‘less affected objects’ are called Suplementos by RR. Supplements also comprise ‘argumentos espaciotemporales’, like ἐς τὴν Μυτιλήνην in ἐσέρχεται ἐς τὴν Μυτιλήνην (Th. 3.25.1). Unlike Direct Objects, Supplements cannot become Subjects in a corresponding passive construction.

Some points of criticism. (1) The terms ‘afectado’ and ‘transitivo’ are introduced here without further comment. They are, to be sure, discussed and put to use later in the book (Part II) but one dearly misses a reference in Part I to these parts. (2) The AcP construction, too, is mentioned without comment, although the accusative in this construction would seem to be of an altogether different nature, since it is not ‘afectado’ by the action of the main verb at all. And the same applies, of course, to the accusative of the Accusativus cum Infinitivo (which is not mentioned). (3) Among the non-passivizable Supplements RR mentions (29) ἐρωμάς καὶ προφάσεις in ἐξήλθουν ἐρωμάς καὶ προφάσεις (Plb. 4.1.3), claiming that the passive occurs only in very late Greek. In reality, however, the passive is quite common in classical Greek, at least from active ζητεῖν in the senses seek, search after and investigate, see LSJ s.v. (I.) (1), 3, and 4. (4) After RR has told us that Supplements cannot become Subjects he goes on, quite unexpectedly but also quite correctly, to observe that non-accusatives in several cases can become Subject of a passive clause (φθονέω τινί – φθονοῦμαι, ἀρχω τινός – ἀρχόμεθα, etc.). It is not clear why RR has chosen this rather confusing way of presentation.

1 Only after the completion of this review I found out that the author published, in 2009, a separate book with the Índices de ‘El complemento directo’ (146 pp.; € 16,44). The author (there seems to be no commercial publisher) should perhaps have sent this book to Gnomon as well.
2 In most of the analyses the terms Complemento and Objeto seem to be used as synonyms, without further elucidation. I note, furthermore, that although Objeto is meant to denote a syntactic function, it clearly often refers to ‘objects’, i.e. entities, in the outer world (e.g. on p 385: «desplazamiento de un Obj.»).
This syntactic part is followed by a presentation of the formal characteristics of the Greek case system (51–66). Some of RR’s claims are unwarranted. On p. 45, section 6, we are told that the «marca ... de caso gramatical» always expresses gender and number, too. But this is not wholly correct, exceptions being the (deictic) personal pronouns (ἐμέ, μιν, ἡμῶν etc.), as well as the interrogative and indefinite pronouns (τίνα/τινα), which do not distinguish between masc. and fem. On p. 50, section 21, RR claims that relations of concordance between nominal elements require «concordancia de género, número y caso.» But there is an important exception, viz. the frequent occurrence of attraction in its various forms, notably attractio relativi. The discrepancy of form and function in e.g. ἀπὸ τῶν πόλεων ὑμῖν (for ἅς ἔπεισε (Th. 7.21.1) should at least have been mentioned.

In Part II (69–146) the notions ‘transitivity’ and ‘affectedness’ get a full treatment, from a decidedly semantic perspective. After a discussion of the views of some major grammars of Greek the author turns to modern treatments of these notoriously difficult notions. Drawing on these treatments he suggests that, in a language having cases, expressing affectedness is the main function of all oblique cases, the different case forms expressing different degrees of affectedness. To show this he establishes two scales of affectedness, along which he classifies the various complement types, one for Complementa Effecta, i.e. entities that did not exist prior to the verbal action (cp. the traditional effiziertes Objekt), and one for Non-effected Complements. In a table on p. 141 RR presents these notions and their subdivisions in schematic form, followed by brief comments, without examples. These follow in Part III: Los Clases de Complemento Directo en Griego (147–523). Among the Effected Complements (163–225) entities belonging to the visible world are highest on the scale of affectedness, e.g. πόλιν in πόλιν οἰκίσαι (the Effecta Propria; 164). Here, πόλιν is a Complemento Durativo or Effectum Durabile, which is opposed to the Complemento Interno or Effectum non Durabile, e.g. βίον in θηριώδη ζῶσι βίον (Plb. 4.3.1). Both complement types appear typically in the accusative. Effecta Improperia (189–227) come lower on the scale. They belong partly to the world of speech and of the mind, e.g. ἥκει in ἥκει Πρωταγόρας, partly to a category called Complementa Efficienda, e.g. τὴν ἀφοδόν in παρεσκεύαζον τὴν ἀφοδόν (p. 218), and partly to a third category, called Complementa Incocativa, which appear in the genitive and express partial affectedness, for instance in ἤρχετο λόγου τοιοῦτο. As for the Non-effected Complements (229–523), these consist of Objetos Transformados, also called Complementa Mutata (235–286), e.g. accusative complements with ἀπόλλυμι, and Objetos No Transformados (287–508). This

---

1 In both cases he might have summarized more often instead of quoting at length.
2 Note that RR makes effected objects a subcategory of affected objects, apparently to have one single notion as the characteristic of all objects. This might seem confusing but in actual practice this turns out not to be the case.
3 As appears from these quotations, the terminology switches from Latin to Spanish and back, for no clear reason.
major category comprises e.g. genitive complements with verbs of ruling, and with verbs involving physical contact (like ἔφυει, these genitive complements express a lesser degree of affectedness than those of the first group. Also partitive complements (§29f), as in μετέχειν τῆς ἀποικίας (Th. 1.27.1) belong here. To this subtype belongs also the most common type of non-effected complements, that of the Direct Object in the accusative with verbs of mental activity (γιγνώσκω, κρίνω), verba dicendi (παραγγέλλω, ἀιτέω), verbs of perception (ἀκούω, ὁράω), and some other verb-types. RR ranges these Objects – correctly – not simply under the label No Transformado but under No Afectado. However, for someone who holds that expressing various degrees of affectedness is the primary function of the oblique cases this category poses of course a major problem. For how can it be that the accusative is used on the one hand for complements that are highest on the scale of affectedness (see above) and on the other for complements that are not affected at all? On 483 ff RR addresses this issue for verbs of seeing. After he has admitted that it will be difficult to explain this phenomenon in terms of metaphorical extension, he states, in a truly Apollonian fashion, that seeing involves «un órgano activo que se dirige al Obj.» (484). Unfortunately, such a reasoning cannot be meaningfully applied to the verba dicendi or verbs like πάσχω. In the latter case RR considers the Object an origin or cause of the sensation/feeling (485). Possibly so, but this is still irreconcilable, it seems, with expressing affectedness. After all, in this case it is the Subject which is affected. All in all, the treatment of one of the most common uses of the accusative is far from satisfactory.

Let me draw the balance. Kuryłowicz once wrote (1964: 181, quoted by RR on p. 79): «The acc. of the direct object is independent of the semantic context: there is no common meaning or semantic common denominator to all transitive verbs except that they are just transitive, i.e. govern the acc. of the direct object.» This was obviously directed against (very crude) semantic approaches like that of Smyth (1956: 257): «Verbs capable of taking a direct object [in the acc.] are called transitive because their action passes over to an object.» RR has now made a
strong case for a semantically based approach of a more sophisticated nature. There is much of value in this book, and the idea that case marking in Ancient Greek can be accounted for in terms of the expression of affectedness is important and for a large part well illustrated. It would be a pity if the research presented in this book would remain unknown outside the Spanish speaking world. But in order to reach an international audience for his work this reviewer would strongly advise RR to present it, in a much condensed and much more user-friendly form, in one or more papers, or in a reasonably sized monograph, in English.

One final remark: what would in RR’s view be the position of the nominative in the Greek case system? After all, it may be the marker of nouns with a great variety of semantic functions, among them affectedness (ὁ ἀνὴρ ἔτυπτε/ἔπαθε κακά/ἐφθονεῖτο) and agentivity (ὁ ἀνὴρ τύπτει), the only common element being that it expresses subjecthood, which is a syntactic function. Would case semantics then be confined to the oblique cases? If so, how should this be accounted for theoretically? For some pertinent observations on the problems involved see Blake (1994: ch. 2-3: ‘Meanings and functions’). Kuryłowicz’ view should perhaps not be discarded too hastily.¹

Amsterdam


Le rôle de plus en plus important attribué à Cicéron par ceux qui s’intéressent à la philosophie ancienne, et tout particulièrement à la philosophie hellénistique et romaine, a eu, entre autres conséquences, l’apparition d’un certain nombre de travaux consacrés aux Tusculanes, dont l’importance s’est trouvée ainsi considérablement réévaluée.² Le livre consacré par B. Koch aux disputationes s’inscrit donc dans un mouvement général de redécouverte de la pensée philosophique de Cicéron, avec une caractéristique particulière, qui est de focaliser l’étude sur un aspect particulier de l’œuvre: la philosophie comme thérapeutique de l’âme. Il est organisé en quatre grandes parties, mais nous dirons d’abord un mot de l’introduction. Celle-ci présente clairement le propos de l’auteur, tout en laissant de côté une question importante, préalable selon nous à l’alternative ‘éclectisme ou