

PREPOSITIONS IN ANCIENT GREEK

Prof. Vanessa Gorman
University of Nebraska-Lincoln
vgorman1@unl.edu

Prepositions

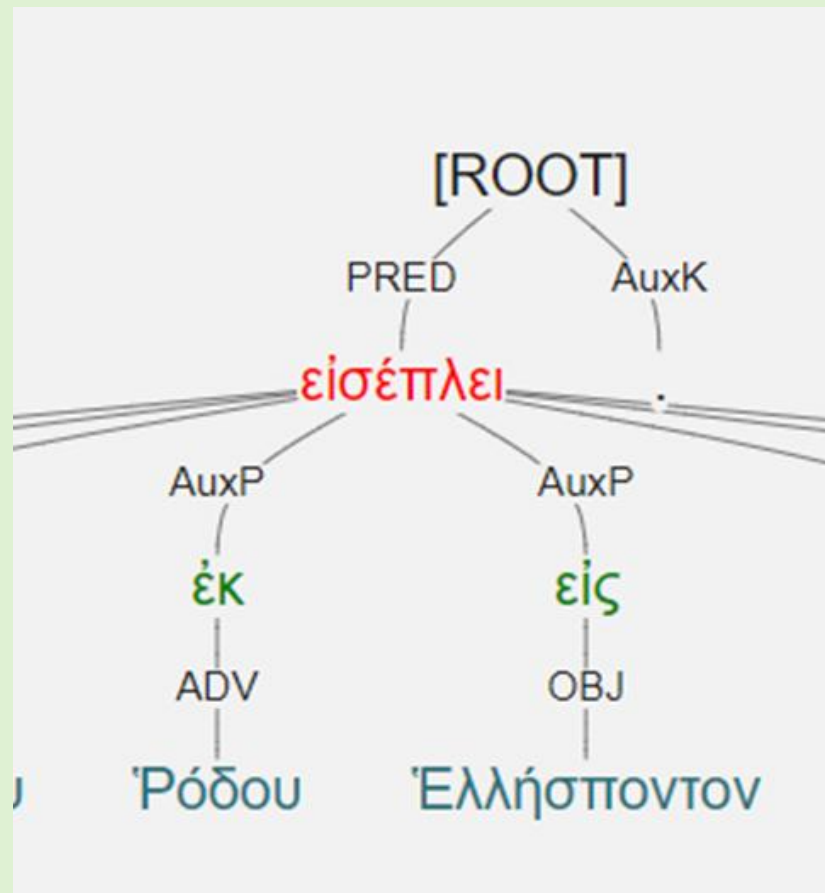
- A **preposition** is a word that sets up a relationship between a noun/pronoun and some other word in the sentence. [*on, in, from, during, for, etc.*]
 - Used to express a spatial or temporal relation or mark a semantic role.
- A **prepositional phrase** includes, minimally, a short, **indeclinable** word, called a “preposition,” and a **substantive** in an **oblique case** [NOT nominative] used as its “**object**.”
 - “on the pool table”
 - “in Delos”
 - “from genuine gratitude”
 - “during the long and bloody war”
 - “for them”

Prepositions were originally adverbs

- “Pericles marched out.” [*adverb*]
- “Pericles marched out the gate.” [*prepositional phrase*]
- “Pericles marched out the southernmost gate which was facing toward the sea.” [*Prepositional phrase can be quite lengthy!*]

Prepositions in Dependency Grammar

- The Part of Speech is always **adposition** [**ADP**] in the trees
 - In Greek, the preposition sometimes occurs *after* its object.
- The “relation” of the preposition word itself is always the same: **AuxP**.
- The object of the preposition can function [*relation*] substantively, adverbially, or adjectivally.
 - “They marched into Caria.” [**OBJ**]
 - “They marched into Caria with great speed.” [**ADV**]
 - “The army in Ionia marched into Caria with great speed.”
[adjectival = **ATR**]



- ἐκ Ῥόδου = “out of Rhodes”
- εἰς Ἑλλάσποντον = “into the Hellespont”

Top Five Prepositions in Xenophon's *Hellenica*

1. εἰς = *into* [+ acc]
2. ἐν = *in* [+ dat]
3. ἐπί = *on, against, for* [+ gen, dat, acc]
4. ἐκ = *out of* [+ gen]
5. πρὸς = *to* [+ acc]

Cases

- Genitive = *place from which, separation, time until*
 - Motion/time away from = από and εκ [*out of or from*]
 - Separation = έξω [*outside of*]
 - Time until/before = μέχρι [*until*], πρό [*before*]
 - Miscellaneous = αντί [*in exchange for*], ένεκα [*on account of*; usually postpositive], πλην [*except*]
- Dative = *where, when, with, by means of*
 - εν [*in or at*], σύν [*with*]
- Accusative = *place to which*
 - εις/ές [*into*]

Some take multiple cases with the same general meaning

- κατά = “down from” [+ **gen** or acc]
- ὑπέρ = “over” [+ gen or acc]
- περί = “around,” “about,” “concerning”
[+ gen, **dat**, or acc]

Some take multiple cases with different meanings

- πρός
 - gen = *from*
 - dat = *near* or *in addition to*
 - **acc = to or toward**
- ὑπό = “under” or “by”
 - **gen = position or agent**
 - dat = *under the power of*
 - acc = *during*

Some take multiple cases with different meanings

○ μετά

▪ genitive case = *with*

- Μίνδαρος ἦσαν καὶ Φαρνάβαζος μετὰ τοῦ πεζοῦ.
- Mindaros and Pharnabazos were with the infantry.

▪ accusative case = *after*

- μετὰ τὴν ἐκκλησίαν ἀνηγάγετο.
- He set off after the assembly

○ διά

▪ gen = *through*

- acc = *by reason of*

Some take multiple cases with different meanings

○ επί

- gen = *in the time of*
- dat = *in addition to*
- acc = *toward or against*

○ παρά

- gen = *from*
- dat = *alongside or at the house of*
- acc = *to the side of or beyond*

	form	translation	case	count
1	ἀντί	against, in exchange for	gen	31
2	ἀπό, ἀφ'	From, by	gen	176
3	διὰ	through	gen, acc	165
4	εἰς, ἐς	into	acc	764
5	ἐκ, ἐξ	out of	gen	432
6	ἐν	in	dat	686
7	ἕνεκα	on account of	gen	25
8	ἔξω	outside of	gen	36
9	ἐπί, ἐπ', ἐφ'	on, against, for	gen, dat, acc	521
10	κατά, καθ'	down	gen, acc	254
11	μετά, μετ', μεθ'	with (gen), after (acc)	gen, dat, acc	202
12	μέχρι	until	gen	37
13	παρά, παρ'	beside, from, near	gen, dat, acc	147
14	περὶ	around, about	gen, dat, acc	254
15	πλὴν	except	gen	28
16	πρὸ	before	gen	28
17	πρὸς	to	acc	399
18	σὺν	with	dat	129
19	ὑπὲρ	over, beyond, concerning	gen, acc	35
20	ὑπὸ, ὑπ', ὑφ'	by (agent), under	gen, dat, acc	202

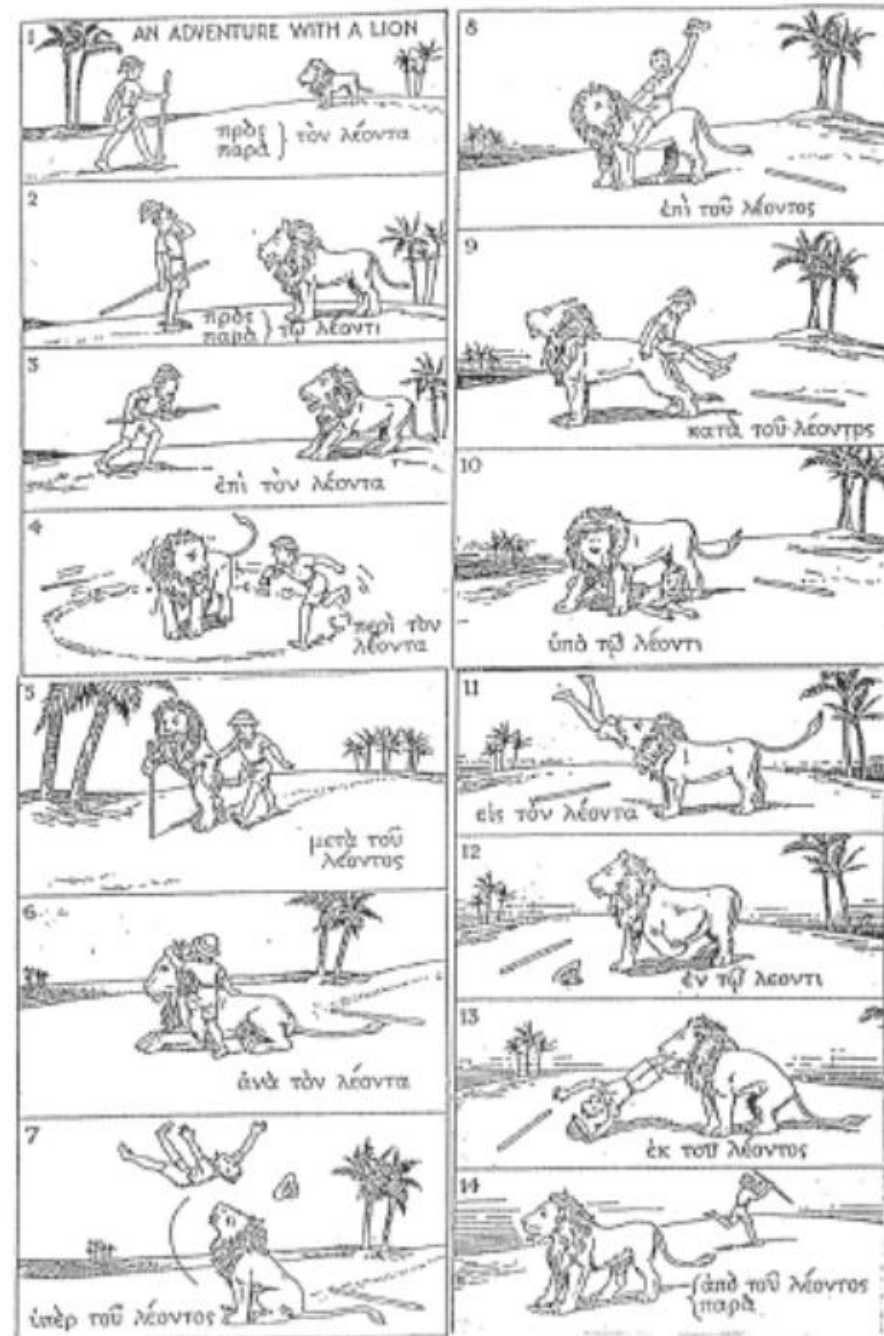
A Beginners' Guide to Prepositions

ὁ λέων = nom

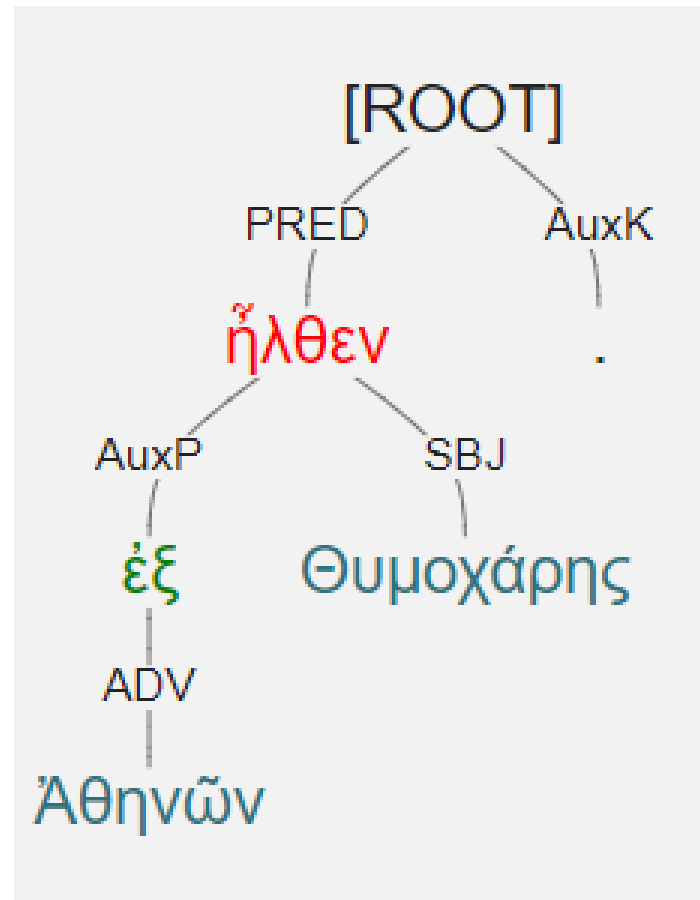
τοῦ λέοντος = gen

τῷ λέοντι = dat

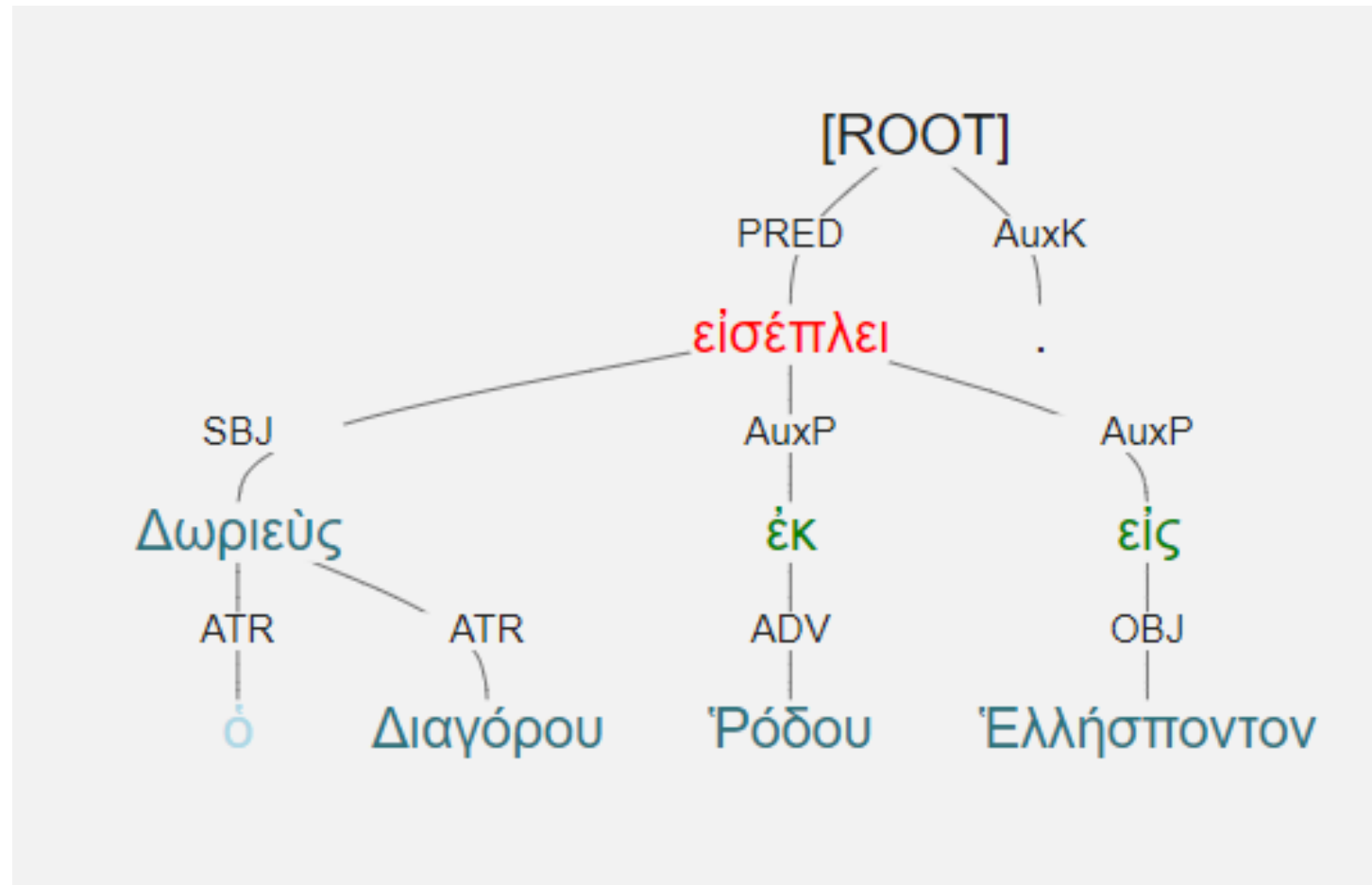
τὸν λέοντον = acc



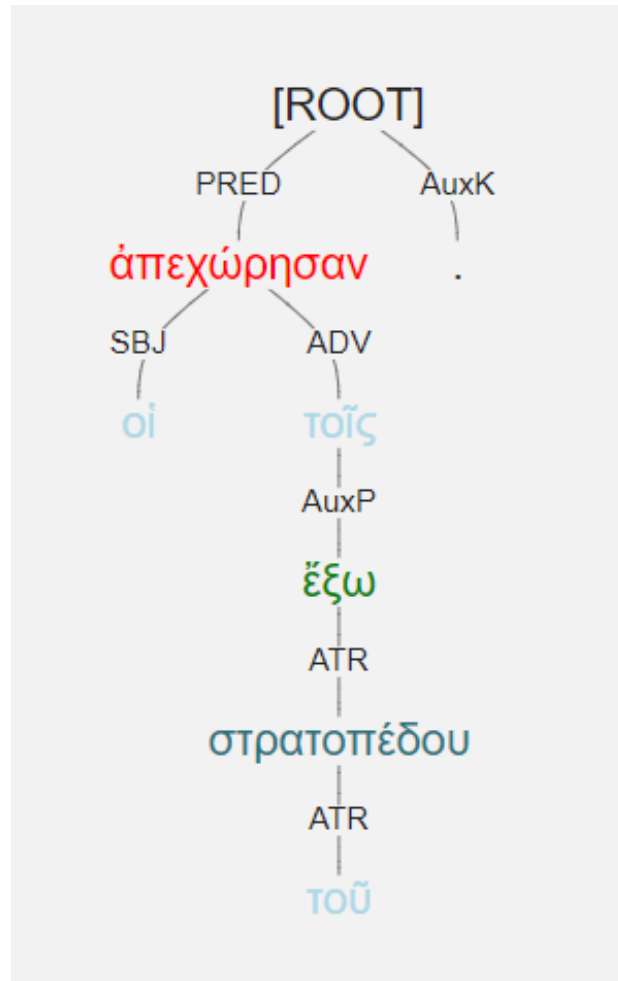
ἦλθεν ἐξ Ἀθηνῶν Θυμοχάρης.
[1.1.1]



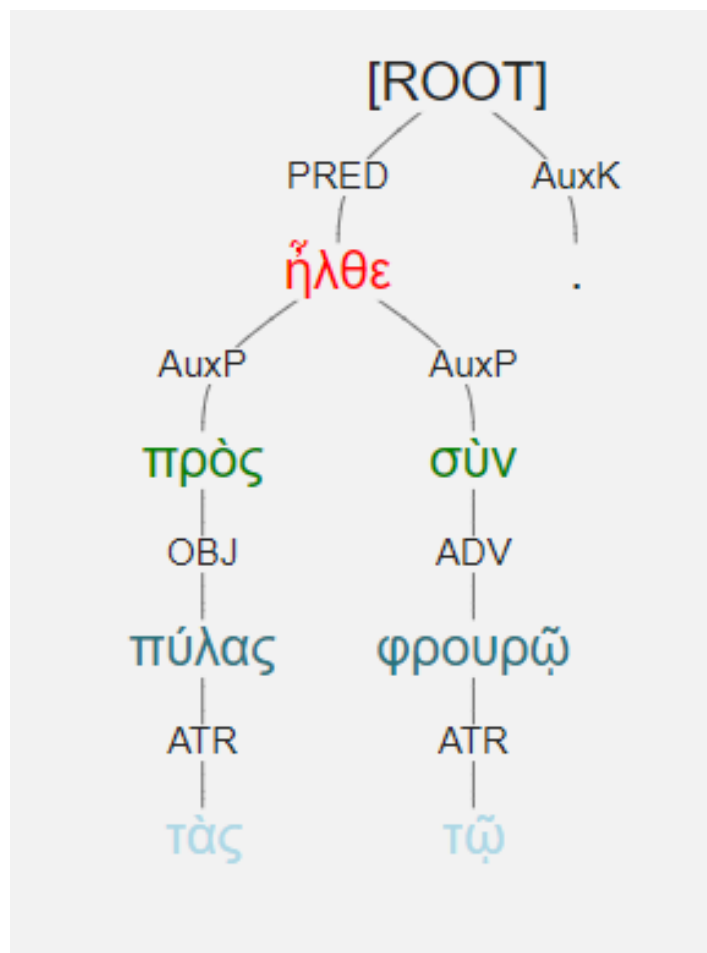
Δωριεὺς ὁ Διαγόρου ἐκ Ῥόδου εἰς Ἑλλάσποντον
εἰσέπλει. [1.1.2]



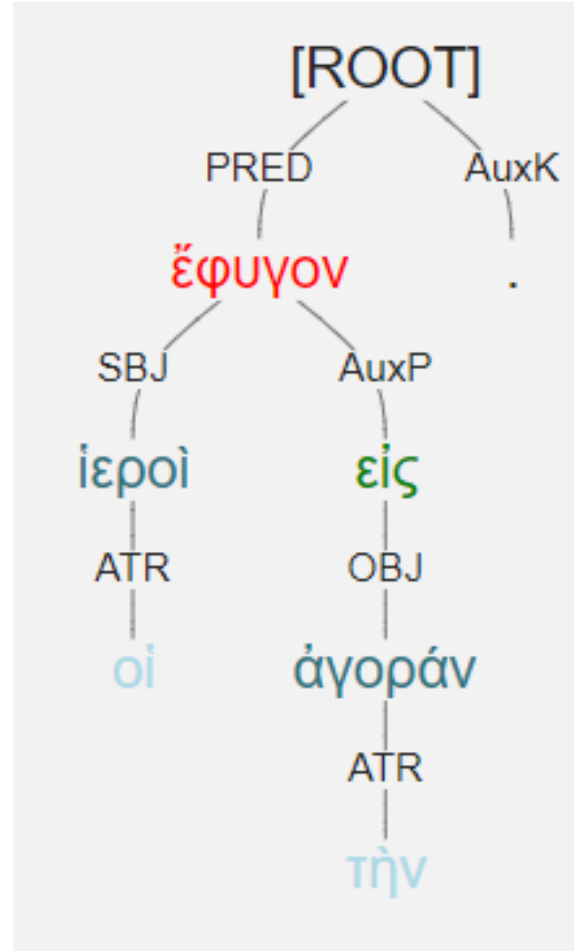
οἱ ἀπεχώρησαν τοῖς ἔξω τοῦ στρατοπέδου.



ἤλθε πρὸς τὰς πύλας σὺν τῷ φρουρῷ.

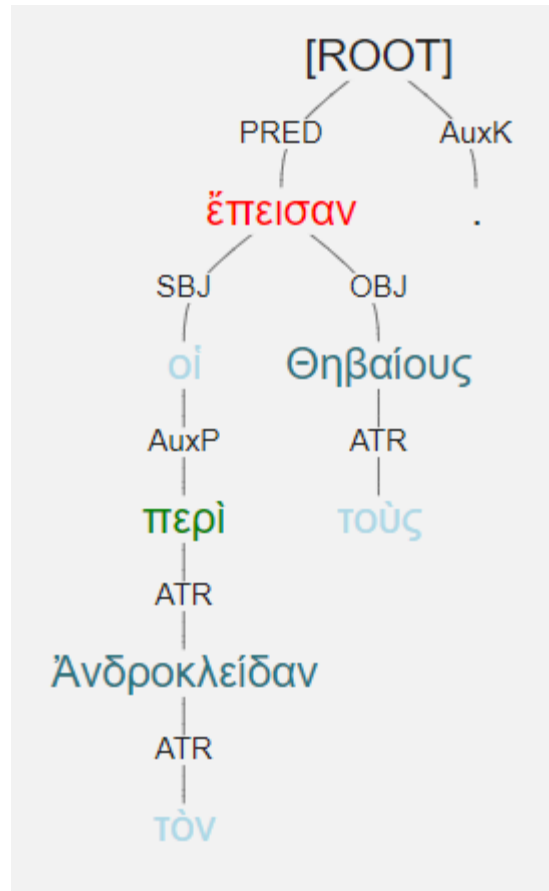


οἱ ἱεροὶ ἔφυγον εἰς τὴν ἀγορὰν.

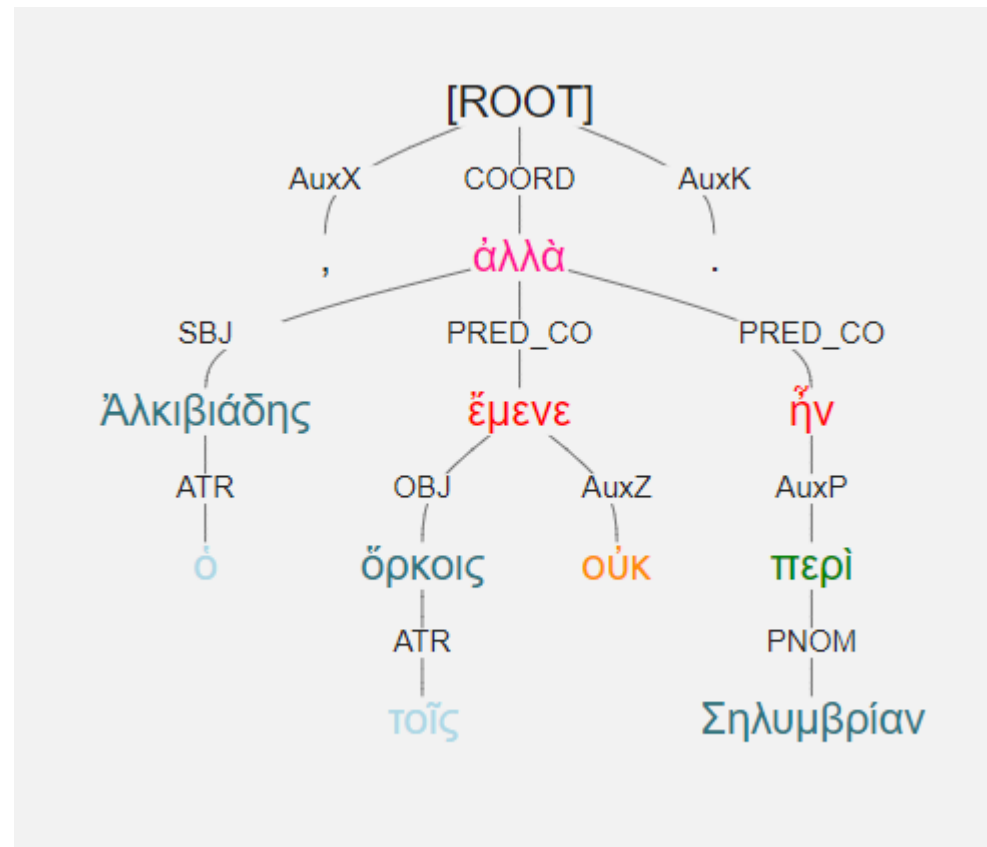


οἱ περὶ τὸν Ἀνδροκλείδαν ἔπεισαν τοὺς Θηβαίους.

[3.5.4]



ὁ Ἀλκιβιάδης τοῖς ὄρκοις οὐκ ἔμενε, ἀλλὰ περὶ
Σηλυμβρίαν ἦν.



Λύσανδρος μὲν διέπλευσεν εἰς Ἔφεσον, οἱ δ' Ἀθηναῖοι
[διέπλευσαν] εἰς Σάμον.

Verb is elided.

