

Reconsidering prepositions and Case assignment in the text of Revelation 4 and 5

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Abstract

In order to describe the government by prepositions in the book of Revelation in terms of the Government and Binding Theory, it is imperative that the sub-theory of Case assignment be considered. With the latter as point of departure one may describe, i) the shifts from autothematic and structural Case to oblique Case, ii) the use of prepositions with oblique Case instead of the structural genitive Case, and, iii) the peculiarities of the Case and case assignment of the preposition ἐπί as found in Revelation 4 and 5.

1. INTRODUCTION

The use of cases with regard to the government by prepositions forms an integral part of the remarkable and peculiar Greek featuring as the language of Revelation (cf Bousset [1906] 1966:164-8; Charles 1915:86; Mussies 1980:167; Dougherty 1992:10; Riekert 1996; 2003).

Musser (1992:1) mentions a number of suggestions advanced in the past to describe the peculiar grammatical usage of Revelation. Riekert (1996) departs from the hypothesis that the morphological cases in Revelation 4 and 5 can be adequately described and explained within the framework of the Case sub-theory of the Government-Binding Theory. Therefore he presents an analysis of those two chapters regarding the abstract Case assignment and the morphological realisations in terms of proposals made within the Government-Binding Theory and the application of these proposals to New Testament Greek (cf Riekert 1985; 1996; 2003). This study of Riekert (1996) shows that in terms of abstract Case assignment no irregularities could be found, at all.

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When the so-called “foreign” usage of morphological case in Revelation is considered within the framework of the Case sub-theory of the Government-Binding (GB) Theory of Chomsky, one should be in a better position to decide whether the “foreign” usage is quite so “foreign”.

Bearing in mind the developments in the realisations of the morpho-phonological cases from the usual in the rest of the New Testament to those in the book of Revelation (cf Charles [1920] 1971: xxxviii-cxi), one should realise that the deviations reflect only change and development within the Greek language which can easily be explained within the framework of the Case sub-theory of the Government-Binding theory (cf Riekert 1996). Nevertheless we may comment on the following developments.

2. SHIFTS FROM AUTOTHEMATIC AND STRUCTURAL CASE TO OBLIQUE CASE

We may take them together as shifts from autothematic and structural Case to oblique Case. The use of prepositions in this regard calls for a more detailed discussion.

2.1 Autothematic Case and prepositions with oblique Case

Riekert (1996:128) states with clarity that instrument and manner may be expressed by means of the so-called dative of instrument and dative of manner, but also by means of a preposition and its governed NP. It is remarkable that ἐν ἱματίοις λευκοῖς (cf Riekert 1996:71), in Revelation 4:4, is used as a prepositional phrase expressing instrument. In (1) we have the following analysis:

(1) Rev 4:4

καὶ	[IP [PP [P	ἐπὶ]	[NP	τοὺς	θρόνους]]
and		on		the thrones	
				accusative	
				OBLIQUE	
	[VP ([V	εἶδον])			
		(I saw)			
	[NP	εἴκοσι τέσσαρας	πρεσβυτέρους]	[AP [A	καθημένους]
		twenty four elders		sitting	
		accusative		accusative	
		OBJECTIVE		OBJECTIVE	

[A	περιβεβλημένους]	[PP [P	έν]	[NP	ίματίοις λευκοίς]]]]]
	clothed		in	clothes	white
	accusative			dative	
	OBJECTIVE			OBLIQUE	

For the analysis of the επί-phrase, see (4)(a). The omitted verb εἶδον assigned to the object εἴκοσι ... περιβεβλημένους objective Case, of course realised as accusative. The participle περιβεβλημένους – described by Dougherty (1992:330) as a "circumstantial participle" – governs a PP in which P έν assigns oblique Case to ίματίοις λευκοίς, realised as dative, according to Dougherty (1992:150) as a description of manner.

Charles ([1920] 1971:cxxxix) follows a reading which has the dative ίματίοις λευκοίς without the έν and comments that the dative of instrument "is mostly replaced in our author by έν".

In contrast to σφραγίσιν έπτα (Rev 5:1) and φωνή μεγάλη (Rev 5:12)(Riekert 1996:93-95, 115-116) we find έν τῶ αίματί (Rev 5:9) and έν φωνή μεγάλη (Rev 5:2) (Riekert 1996:95, 110-113) with identical functions in the sentence or expressing the same thematic relationship. It is clearly an illustration of the fact that the use of prepositions to express manner and instrument is augmented and that we have a concomitant shift from autothematic Case to oblique Case (cf Dougherty 1992:352), as in (2).

(2)	(a)	Revelation 5:2			
	καί	[IP [VP [V	εἶδον]		
	and		I saw		
		[NP [N	ἄγγελον]	[AP [A	ίσχυρόν]] [AP
			an angel		strong
			accusative		accusative
			OBJECTIVE		OBJECTIVE
	[A	κηρύσσοντα]	[PP [P	έν]	[NP φωνή
		proclaiming		in	a voice
		accusative			loud
		OBJECTIVE			dative
					OBLIQUE

The head N ἄγγελον with its head A's of the adjectival determinations, viz. ίσχυρόν and κηρύσσοντα, is accusative as realisation of the objective Case. The verb εἶδον governs the NP ἄγγελον..... μεγάλη. Dougherty (1992:333) describes κηρύσσοντα as a "supplementary participle" after εἶδον. The preposition έν (as part of the AP κηρύσσοντα) governs the NP φωνή μεγάλη realised as dative.

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(2) (b) Revelation 5:1

[A γεγραμμένον] written accusative OBJECTIVE	[ADVP ζσωθεν inside	καὶ ὀπισθεν] [AP and outside
[A κατεσφραγισμένον] sealed accusative OBJECTIVE	[NP σφραγῖσιν (with) seals dative AUTOTHEMATIC CASE	ἑπτὰ.]] seven

The A's γεγραμμένον and κατεσφραγισμένον receive by indexation with βιβλίον accusative case which realises objective Case. The participle κατεσφραγισμένον as verb has a free adjunct σφραγῖσιν ἑπτα which receives dative case as realisation of autothematic Case, in terms of the traditional grammar as instrument (cf Dougherty 1992:149). Correctly the translation uses a preposition (with) which theta-governs σφραγῖσιν ἑπτά and assigns a theta role to it. The NP σφραγῖσιν ἑπτά reflects the theta role of instrument. The traditional grammar (cf Dana & Mantey 1957:84; Riekert 1996:131) ascribes the theta role to the dative case or rather to the phenomenon that the case of instrument at one stage is embodied in the dative.

(2) (c) Revelation 5:9 and 10

[CP [COMP καὶ	ὅτι]	[IP [VP ἔσφάγης]]		
	because and	you have been slaughtered		
[IP [VP [V ἠγόρασας]		NPt ₃	[NP τῷ (for) {the} dative INHERENT	θεῷ] God
[PP [P ἐν]	[NP [NP τῷ αἵματι]	[NP σου]]]]]		
with	the blood dative OBLIQUE	(of) you genitive STRUCTURAL		

There are however less convincing readings which supply ἡμᾶς (us) accusative. Nevertheless it would seem best to accept a trace here (cf Brüttsch 1970:264). We assume that after ἠγόρασας there is an NP-trace which may be recovered after deletion, according to Rienecker (1966:616) as object from the subsequent passage. The NP τῷ θεῷ shows in the analysis a theta role, governed by the verb, and the dative case is a realisation of inherent Case (cf Dougherty 1992:143,145-6, 156). The preposition ἐν governs the NP τῷ αἵματι and assigns to it dative case as realisation of the oblique Case.

That ἐν governs an NP here which receives a theta role of instrument or of price (cf respectively Blass, Debrunner & Funk 1961:118; Charles [1920] 1971:147), does not affect Case assignment, however the latter NP governs in its turn again the NP σου and assigns to it structural genitive Case.

2.2 Structural genitive Case and prepositions with oblique Case

Another confirmation of the prevalence of the use of prepositions is seen in (3). The circumscription ἐκ τῶν πρεσβυτέρων (Rev 5:5, cf Riekert 1996:99-100) is an equivalent for a (partitive) genitive, or ἐκ could be considered as a kind of marker of the genitive (cf Charles [1920] 1971:cxxix; Dougherty 1992:360). It represents a shift towards oblique Case assignment, away from structural Case assignment.

(3) Revelation 5:5.

καὶ [IP [NP [NP and	εἰς] one nominative STRUCTURAL	[PP [P ἐκ] [NP τῶν πρεσβυτέρων]] from the elders genitive OBLIQUE
[INFL 3 sg. pres. act.]	[VP [V λέγει] say	[NP μοι·] (to) me dative INHERENT

The NP εἰς is the head of the NP-phrase which serves as subject of the verb λέγει and which is coindexed with the INFL element of the verb. Therefore εἰς receives nominative case and Case (cf Dougherty 1992:74,266 who draws attention to the fact that εἰς is semantically equivalent to an indefinite pronoun). The preposition ἐκ governs the NP τῶν πρεσβυτέρων and assigns therefore genitive case which realises Oblique Case. The verb λέγει governs the pronoun μοι which fills a theta role position (cf Dougherty 1992:140, 155) and assigns dative case to it as realisation of the inherent Case.

3. THE PREPOSITION EVPI, WITH SHIFTS OF CASES IN THE REALISATION OF OBLIQUE CASE

Charles ([1920] 1971:cxlii) quotes Moulton who refers to "uncertain use of cases" in Revelations. One such instance is the government of the preposition ἐπί. This preposition is used with different cases and all of them indicate the *place where*. In Revelation 4 and 5 it is conspicuous that ἐπί governs all three cases of the oblique Case in the sense of *on, at* (positionally in a place). Even more conspicuous is the use of ἐπί with forms of θρόνος (=throne) as

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prepositional phrase following a participle of καθῆσθαι (=sit) (cf Charles [1920] 1971:112; Riekert 1993:69-71). The latter instances are analysed in (4).

(4) (a) (i) Rev 4:4

καὶ	[IP [PP [P	ἐπὶ]	[NP τοὺς	θρόνους]]	
and		on	the	thrones	
			accusative		
			OBLIQUE		
	[VP ([V	εἶδον])			
	(I saw)				
[NP	εἴκοσι τέσσαρας	πρεσβυτέρους]	[AP [A	καθημένους]	
twenty four		elders	sitting		
accusative			accusative		
OBJECTIVE			OBJECTIVE		
[A	περιβεβλημένους]	[PP [P	ἐν]	[NP ἱματίοις	λευκοῖς]]]]]
clothed		in	clothes	white	
accusative			dative		
OBJECTIVE			OBLIQUE		

The preposition ἐπὶ governs its NP τοὺς θρόνους and assigns to it oblique Case realised as accusative, as a free adjunct to the omitted verb εἶδον (cf Riekert 1996:70). For the analysis of the object εἴκοσι τέσσαρας πρεσβυτέρους καθήμενους περιβεβλημένους ἐν ἱματίοις λευκοῖς – objective Case assignment – etc, see (1).

(4) (a) (ii) Rev 4:4, two elements selected in the original order.

ἐπὶ	τοὺς	θρόνους	καθημένους
on	the	thrones	sitting
accusative			accusative, participle

(4) (a) (iii) Rev 4:4, two elements rearranged for comparison.

καθημένους	ἐπὶ	τοὺς	θρόνους
sitting	on	the	throne
accusative, participle	accusative		

(4) (b) (i) Revelation 4:2

καὶ	[IP [VP ([V	ἰδοῦ])]	NPt ₁ [PP [P	ἐπὶ]
and		(look there is)		on
[NP τὸν	θρόνον]]	[NP ₁ (ἄνθρωπος)	καθήμενος,]]]	
the throne		(a man) sitting		
accusative		nominative		
OBLIQUE		STRUCTURAL		

The expletive element ἰδοῦ should be considered as omitted and the functioning is as in Riekert (1996:61-65). The NP (ἄνθρωπος) καθήμενος, has moved for the sake of emphasis with deletion of ἄνθρωπος, or it may be a substantiated participle without the article (cf Dougherty 1992:76). The Case assignment to the NP is with co-indexation to the expletive element. The realisation of the case of PP ἐπὶ τὸν θρόνον draws the attention: the Case assignment is oblique, but the realisation as accusative deviates from that of classical Greek (cf Swete [1908] 1968:67; Charles [1920] 1971:112-3). Stylistically the PP is detached from a possible structuring with the NP as an adjectival phrase (cf Dougherty 1992:398) by reason of the NP movement and without any doubt made part of the VP as predicate or in the predicate position.

- (4) (b) (ii) Rev 4:4, two elements selected in the original order.

ἐπὶ	τὸν θρόνον	καθήμενος,
on	the throne	sitting
	accusative	nominative, participle

- (4) (b) (iii) Rev 4:4, the two elements rearranged for comparison.

καθήμενος	ἐπὶ	τὸν θρόνον
sitting	on	the throne
nominative, participle		accusative

- (4) (c) (i) (α) Revelation 4:9-10

Καὶ	[CP [COMP	ὅταν]	[IP NPt ₁
and		whenever	
[INFL 3 pl. fut. act.] [VP [V		δώσουσιν]	
		give	
[NP τὰ ζῶα ₁]			
the living creatures			
nominative			
STRUCTURAL			
[NP δόξαν καὶ τιμὴν καὶ εὐχαριστίαν] [NP			
glory and honour and thanksgiving			
accusative			
OBJECTIVE			
[NP τῷ καθημένῳ ₂]	[PP [P ἐπὶ] [NP τῷ θρόνῳ]]		
(to) the One sitting	on the throne		
dative	dative		
INHERENT	OBLIQUE		

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[NP [NP	τῷ	ζῶντι ₂]	[PP [P	εἰς]	
	(to) the	One living		in to	
	dative				
		INHERENT			
[NP [NP	τοὺς	αἰῶνας]	[NP	τῶν	αἰῶνων,]]]]]]
	the eternities		(of) {the}	eternities	
	accusative		genitive		
	OBLIQUE		STRUCTURAL		
[IP NPt ₃	[INFL 3 pl. fut. mid. dep.]				
[VP [V	πεσοῦνται]				
	fall (down)				
[NP ₃	οἱ	εἴκοσι	τέσσαρες	πρεσβύτεροι]	
	the	twenty	four	elders	
	nominative				
	STRUCTURAL				
[PP [P	ἐνώπιον]	[NP			
	before				
[NP τοῦ	καθημένου]	[PP [P	ἐπὶ]	[NP τοῦ	θρόνου]]]]]]]
	the One sitting		on	the	throne
	genitive		genitive		
	OBLIQUE		OBLIQUE		

The NPs τὰ ζῶα and οἱ εἴκοσι τέσσαρες πρεσβύτεροι are generated in the SPEC- or subject position of INFL. These NPs are coindexed with INFL and therefore receive structural nominative Case and case; they are at a later stage moved to a position to the right of the verb (cf Dougherty 1992:392). We may note here that INFL is marked plural where Attic Greek would prefer singular (cf Riekert 1996:84; Dougherty 1992:102). Otherwise it can be accepted with Thompson (1985:88) that they have been generated under the influence of the Hebrew syntactic rules in that position, without any influence on Case assignment. The recursive composed NP δόξαν καὶ τιμὴν καὶ εὐχαριστίαν is generated by the verb δώσουσιν (from δίδωμι) and it assigns to it objective Case which is realised as accusative (cf Dougherty 1992:187). The NP τῷ καθημένῳ is also governed by the verb δώσουσιν which assigns inherent Case, realised as dative in a theta-grid position (cf Dougherty 1992:140,156,179). The NP τῷ ζῶντι is in apposition with the NP τῷ καθημένῳ and it is antecedent-governed by it and receives the same Case and case by coindexation. As substantiated participles the NP's τῷ καθημένῳ and τῷ ζῶντι have the possibility to take free adjuncts in the form of prepositional phrases (cf Dougherty 1992:396). The preposition ἐπί governs in the first instance the NP τῷ θρόνῳ and in the second instance the NP τοῦ

θρόνου; both NP's are affected by oblique Case assignment, but the two assignments are respectively realised as dative and genitive. The preposition ἐπί which realised its oblique Case as accusative in sentences (6) and (10) also features in this sentence. In this instance the assignment of oblique Case is problematic. The presupposition by oblique Case as inherent Case is that the assignment would be dependent on the inherent characteristics of the Case assigner. In all these instances ἐπί has the same meaning. We have therefore no justification for more than one case realisation to be found, cf Riekert 1996:132-146. The prepositions εἰς and ἐνώπιον also assign oblique Case, respectively realised as accusative (τοὺς αἰῶνας) and genitive (τοῦ καθημένου), according to the inherent characteristics of the Case assigners. The NP τοὺς αἰῶνας also governs the NP τῶν αἰώνων, and assigns to it structural genitive Case and case, all according to the principles of Greek Case assignment, (cf Dougherty 1992:124-5) even if the expression reflects a Hebrew and Aramaic superlative construction.

(4) (c) (i) (β) Revelation 5:1

Καὶ [IP PPt ₁ * [VP [V	εἶδον] [PP ₁ [P	ἐπὶ [NP
and	I saw	on
[NP τὴν δεξιάν]	[NP [NP τοῦ	καθημένου] [PP
the right hand	(of)the	(One) sitting
accusative		genitive
OBLIQUE		STRUCTURAL
[P ἐπὶ [NP τοῦ θρόνου]]]]]]	[NP [N βιβλίον]	
on the throne	a book	
genitive		accusative
OBLIQUE		OBJECTIVE

The PP ἐπὶ..... τοῦ θρόνου could move from any one of the two trace positions [PPt] marked by an asterisk. It does not affect, however in any way the Case assignment regardless from which trace position it would move. The move however eclipses to a degree the observation of the objective Case of βιβλίον γεγραμμένον..... κατεσφραγισμένον..... when the PP₁ moves to a position between εἶδον and its NP with objective Case realised as accusative. The preposition ἐπί governs firstly τὴν δεξιάν and secondly τοῦ θρόνου and assigns to them oblique Case, respectively realised as accusative and genitive case, but with the same meaning (cf Brüttsch 1970:244). This difference indicates a clash with the oblique Case as an inherent Case assignment (cf Riekert 1996:132-146). The NP τὴν δεξιάν governs the NP τοῦ καθημένου and assigns to it genitive case and Case.

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(4) (c) (i) (γ) Revelation 5:7

καὶ and	[IP [VP [V	ἔλληφεν] he took	[PP [P ἐκ] [NP from
[NP	τῆς δεξιᾶς] the right hand genitive OBLIQUE		[NP τοῦ καθημένου] (of) the (one) sitting genitive STRUCTURAL
[PP [P	ἐπὶ] on	[NP τοῦ θρόνου.]]]]]] the throne genitive OBLIQUE	

The PP ἐκ θρόνου receives a theta role from the verb ἔλληφεν. The P ἐκ assigns genitive case as realisation of the oblique Case to τῆς δεξιᾶς which in turn governs the NP τοῦ καθημένου and assigns to it structural genitive Case. As a participle καθημένου has a theta role which has been filled by the PP ἐπὶ τοῦ θρόνου where P ἐπὶ with genitive case offers a realisation of the oblique Case assignment.

(4) (c) (ii) (α) Rev 4:9; 5:13, two elements selected in the original order.

τῷ καθημένῳ	ἐπὶ	τῷ θρόνῳ
the one sitting	on	the throne
dative, participle		dative

(4) (c) (ii) (β) Rev 4:10; 5:1; 5:7, two elements selected in the original order.

τοῦ καθημένου	ἐπὶ	τοῦ θρόνου
the One sitting	on	the throne
genitive, participle		genitive

(4) (c) (iii) Rev 4:9; 5:13, variant readings of (4)(c)(ii)(α).

τῷ καθημένῳ	ἐπὶ	τοῦ θρόνου
the One sitting	on	the throne
dative, participle		genitive

In (4) (a) (i), (4) (b) (i), (4) (c) (i) (α) and (4) (c) (i) (β) present instances where ἐπὶ is used with an alternation between accusative, genitive and dative without any difference in meaning. When one rearranges the word order of (4)(a)(i) and (4) (b) (i) to have all of them uniform, (as in respectively (4) (a) (iii) and (4) (b) (iii)), then they correspond with (4) (c) (ii) (α), (4) (c) (ii) (β) and (4) (c) (iii) in structure and the following pattern (5) which Bousset [1906] 1966:165-6, cf Charles [1920] 1971:113; Lohmeyer 1953:45) has already indicated, becomes obvious.

- (5) (a) following a nominative or accusative participle ἐπί governs an NP in the accusative, as in (4) (a) (iii) and (4) (b) (iii)
 (b) following a genitive participle ἐπί governs an NP in the genitive case, as in (4) (c) (ii) (β)
 (c) following a dative participle ἐπί governs an NP in the dative case, as in (4) (c) (ii) (α).

Only the variant reading according to (4) (c) (iii) disturbs the pattern: in this case ἐπί governs a NP in the genitive case following a dative participle.

It seems that we have here assimilation, or rather assonance, of the case governed by ἐπί to the case of the participle of καθῆσθαι. Nevertheless, the assimilation is limited, for the nominative participle preceding ἐπί, fails to bring about that the case following ἐπί be nominative, but indeed accusative. That should be ascribed to the rules regulating Case assignment. Nominative case cannot realise an oblique Case assignment (cf Riekert 1993:70). Assimilation-assonance however cannot completely explain the use of different case of the word θρόνος.

The Case theory determines that the preposition ἐπί just like all the other prepositions assigns oblique Case. The question is now how would it be realised in terms of cases. All three of those cases which realise oblique and inherent Cases, could be considered in principle. The fact that the nominative participle has a different case following ἐπί and breaks the pattern of correspondence between the case of the participle and the case of the NP following ἐπί, confirms that the Case assignment rules are obeyed here. Riekert (1996:136-141) analyses combinations of καθῆσθαι as well as other verbs with ἐπί where the formulation of (5) is not valid.

The instances in (6) come into consideration.

- (6) (a) (i) Revelation 4:4

καὶ	[IP [PP [P	ἐπὶ]	[NP	τὰς κεφαλὰς]	[NP	αὐτῶν]]
and		on		the heads	(of) them	
				accusative	genitive	
				OBLIQUE	STRUCTURAL	
[VP ([V	εἶδον])		[NP	στεφάνους	χρυσοῦς.]]	
(I saw)				crowns	golden	
				accusative		
				OBJECTIVE		

- (6) (a) (ii) Rev 4:4

ἐπὶ	τὰς	
on	the heads	
	accusative	

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The preposition ἐπί governs its NP τὰς κεφαλὰς and assigns to it oblique Case realised as accusative; the NP τὰς κεφαλὰς in its turn the NP αὐτῶν and assigns to it structural genitive Case and case. The omitted verb εἶδον realises as accusative the assigned objective Case of its object στεφάνους χρυσοῦς (cf Riekert 1996:71, 72), with the PP ἐπι αὐτῶν as a free adjunct to the omitted verb.

(6) (b) (i) (α) Revelation 5:3

καὶ	[IP [NP [NP	οὐδεὶς]		[INFL 3 sg. impf.]
and		nobody		
		nominative		
		STRUCTURAL		
	[VP [V ₁ {AUX}	ἐδύνατο]	[PP [P ἐν]	
		is able	in	
[NP τῷ οὐρανῷ]]	οὐδὲ	[PP [P ἐπὶ] [NP	τῆς γῆς]]	
the heaven	and (not)	on	the earth	
dative			genitive	
OBLIQUE			OBLIQUE	
οὐδε.	[PP [P ὑποκάτω]	[NP τῆς γῆς]]		
and (not)	underneath	the earth		
		genitive		
		OBLIQUE		

The NP οὐδεὶς has nominative case and Case as subject which is coindexed with INFL of ἐδύνατο which is directly next to οὐδεὶς (vgl Dougherty 1992:72, 387, 389). The preposition ἐν governs the NP τῷ οὐρανῷ and assigns to it dative case which realises the oblique Case (cf also Riekert 1996:96-98, 113, 118-121). The Ps ἐπὶ and ὑποκάτω govern the NP τῆς γῆς and assign to it genitive case which realises the oblique Case.

(6) (b) (i) (β) Revelation 5:10

καὶ [IP [VP [V βασιλεύσουσιν] [PP [P ἐπὶ] [NP τῆς γῆς.]]]]
 and they shall rule on the earth
 genitive
 OBLIQUE

(6) (b) (ii) Rev 5:3, 10, 13

ἐπὶ τῆς γῆς
 on the earth
 genitive

(6) (c) (i) Revelation 5:13

καὶ [IP [NP₁ [NP πᾶν κτίσμα] [CP COMPe
 and every creature
 accusative
 OBJECTIVE

[IP [NP ὃ] ([INFL 3 sg. praes.])
 which
 nominative
 STRUCTURAL

[VP ([V ἐστι < εἰμι]) [PP [PP [P ἐν]
 (is) in

[NP τῷ οὐρανῷ] καὶ [PP [P ἐπὶ] [NP τῆς γῆς] καὶ
 the heaven and on the earth and
 dative genitive
 OBLIQUE OBLIQUE

[PP [P ὑποκάτω] [NP τῆς γῆς] καὶ [PP [P ἐπὶ]
 underneath the earth and on
 genitive
 OBLIQUE

[NP τῆς θαλάσσης]]]]]]]] καὶ [NP [DET τὰ] [PP [P ἐν]
 the sea and the (things) in
 genitive accusative
 OBLIQUE OBJECTIVE

[NP αὐτοῖς]] [AP πάντα] [VP [V ἤκουσα]
 them all I heard
 dative accusative
 OBLIQUE OBJECTIVE

NPt₁ [IP [A λέγοντας:]]]
 saying
 accusative
 OBJECTIVE

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Because of the length of the NP $\pi\acute{\alpha}\nu \dots \alpha\upsilon\tau\omicron\iota\varsigma \pi\acute{\alpha}\nu\tau\alpha$ which moved in front of the verb to take the topicalisation position, the construction of the sentence is not so obvious.

The verb $\eta\kappa\upsilon\sigma\alpha$ governs the NP-construction above and assigns to the heads of the recursive composed NP, viz. to $\pi\acute{\alpha}\nu \kappa\tau\acute{\iota}\sigma\mu\alpha$ and $\tau\acute{\alpha}$, objective Case realised as accusative case (cf Riekert 1996: 64; Dougherty 1992:127-8).

The DET $\tau\acute{\alpha}$ is accentuated by means of the PP $\acute{\epsilon}\nu$ which governs the NP $\alpha\upsilon\tau\omicron\iota\varsigma$ and assigns to it dative case as realisation of the oblique Case. Lohmeyer (1953:57) is of the opinion that $\tau\acute{\alpha} \acute{\epsilon}\nu \alpha\upsilon\tau\omicron\iota\varsigma$ resumes the last three nouns together, thus a resumption of the detailed description of $\pi\acute{\alpha}\nu \kappa\tau\acute{\iota}\sigma\mu\alpha$ now from the viewpoint of a totality, or as Bratcher (1984:53) formulates it “the whole universe”, according to Bousset ([1906] 1966:262, cf Charles [1920] 1971:150) in terms of a quatro-partition. The fact that the whole is meant seems to be confirmed by the use of $\pi\acute{\alpha}\nu\tau\alpha$ as an adjective to strengthen the resumption. Charles ([1920] 1971:136) shows that $\pi\acute{\alpha}\nu\tau\alpha$ follows its noun only in two other instances in Revelation. Dougherty (1992:220, 225) considers $\pi\acute{\alpha}\nu\tau\alpha$ as a substantive adjective. In this case we have a different construction and AP with $\pi\acute{\alpha}\nu\tau\alpha$ changes to NP. It is also part of the chain with $(\pi\acute{\alpha}\nu \kappa\tau\acute{\iota}\sigma\mu\alpha) \tau\acute{\alpha}$ and $\lambda\acute{\epsilon}\gamma\omicron\nu\tau\alpha\varsigma$ and it has the Case assignment in common with the rest.

The verb $\acute{\alpha}\kappa\omicron\upsilon\omega$ is sub-categorised to take the participle together with the object and in this case $\lambda\acute{\epsilon}\gamma\omicron\nu\tau\alpha\varsigma$ which then like $\pi\acute{\alpha}\nu \kappa\tau\acute{\iota}\sigma\mu\alpha$ and $\tau\acute{\alpha}$ have accusative case as realisation of the objective Case which is also a *constructio ad sensum* (cf Charles [1920] 1971: cxlii; Dougherty 1992:343). Consequently the agreement with regard to number and case and Case is uncomplicated (cf Dougherty 1992:332, 341-2), however with regard to grammatical gender there is a problem, which becomes obvious from the text critical apparatus reflecting attempts to change $\lambda\acute{\epsilon}\gamma\omicron\nu\tau\alpha\varsigma$ to neuter plural in agreement with $\tau\acute{\alpha}$.

(6) (c) (ii) Rev 5:13

$\acute{\epsilon}\pi\iota$	$\tau\eta\varsigma$	$\theta\alpha\lambda\acute{\alpha}\sigma\sigma\eta\varsigma$
on	the	sea
		genitive

The preposition governs $\tau\eta\varsigma \gamma\eta\varsigma$ and assigns to it genitive case which is a realisation of the oblique Case. Blass, Debrunner & Funk

(1961:96) correctly assume that the PP ἐπι τῆς γῆς is not a substitute for a direct object – it is in fact a free adjunct.

All the principles of case realisations which are gleaned from (4)(a)(i) to (4)(c)(iii), seem to be valid here. The explanation of the assimilation of the cases of θρόνος (=throne) would rather be sought in the rhetorical situation. The word θρόνος with the participial construction of καθῆσθαι ἐπί serves as an indication of God being the One who holds sway over everything. Therefore Lohmeyer (1953:45) explains the pattern in the use of ἐπί with different cases as follows: "Das ist grammatisch gekünstelt, hat aber, zieht Man die damit verbundene Vermeidung des Gottesname in Betracht, den eindeutige Sinn Thron und Gott zu einen Begriff gleicher Art und gleichen Wesens zu verbinden, dass auch durch Deklination diese gleichschwebende Einheit nicht gestört wird". The assimilation respects the principles for Case assignment.

In all the instances supplied in (4) ἐπί has the meaning of *on, at* in the meaning of *place where something rests, be positionally*. From the perspective of language economy it is problematic to have three cases to serve one function. Charles ([1920] 1971:112-3; cf Swete [1908] 1968:67; Riekert 1996:67) draws attention to the efforts made to find different meanings in the usage of three cases, regrettably with scant success, should we ignore the mere listing of cases.

The definition of Liddell e a (1968:621-2) of the meaning of ἐπί and usage, to express locality, may be expressed as in (7).

- (7) (a) ἐπί with genitive: locality with verbs of resting, or with verbs of movement where the subject is resting *on* something (like on a horse or wagon): *on*, with *at*. A number of idiomatic expressions are only used with the genitive.
- (b) ἐπί with dative: locality, similar in meaning to (a).
- (c) ἐπί with accusative; locality, with verbs of movement, unto an object or place, or to a higher object, place or in hostile sense: *to; unto; against*.

The conclusion (8) may now be drawn:

- (8) (a) ἐπί in the sense of *on, at* might take in classical Greek its case in either genitive or dative to realise the oblique Case, and in this regard there was always the freedom of stylistic choice between genitive and dative.
- (b) ἐπί with its NP in accusative case in the sense of *on, at* shows a shift in the case realisation which should be investigated in more detail.

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According to Browning (1983:82) all prepositions in late medieval Greek govern the accusative. Where the genitive still appears, Browning (1983:83) ascribes it to the aftermath of literary Greek. The classical distinctions in meaning between prepositions with different cases then fall away.

Riekert (1996:142-144) gives the following examples from Revelation where ἐπί with accusative is used in the classical meaning of (7)(c).

- (9) (a) Revelation 14:16, cf 2:24; 18:19.

ἔβαλεν	τὸ δρέπανον	αὐτοῦ	ἐπὶ τὴν γῆν
he threw	the sickle	of him	on the earth
			accusative

- (b) Revelation 6:16, cf 2:24; 18:19

Πέσετε	ἐφ' (=epi)	ἡμᾶς
fall	on	us
		accusative

- (c) Revelation 1:17, cf 22:18 (twice)

ἔθηκεν	τὴν δεξιάν	αὐτοῦ	ἐπ' ἐμέ
he placed	the right hand	(of) him	on me
			accusative

- (d) Revelation 7:17

ὁδηγήσει	αὐτοὺς	ἐπὶ	....	πηγὰς
he will guide	them	to	.....	springs
				accusative

- (e) Revelation 3:12, cf 2:17; 17:5, 8; 19:16

γράψω	ἐπ'	αὐτὸν	τὸ	ὄνομα
I will write	on	him	the	name
			accusative	

- (f) Revelation 16:8, cf 16:10, 12, 17.

ἔξέχεεν	τὴν φιάλην	αὐτοῦ	ἐπὶ τὸν ἥλιον,
he poured out	the bowl	of him	on the sun
			accusative

- (g) Rev 16:21

καταβαίνει	....	ἐπὶ	τοὺς	ἄνθρώπους,
it descends		onto	the	people
			accusative	

(h) Rev 20:4

ἐκάθισαν	ἐπ’	αὐτούς
they sit down	on	them
		accusative

(i) Rev 20:9

ἀνέβησαν	ἐπὶ	τὸ πλάτος τῆς γῆς
they went up	onto	the broad plain of the earth
		accusative

(j) Rev 21:10

ἀπήνεγκέν	με	ἐπὶ	ὄρος
he took away	me	.... to	a mountain
			accusative

In (9)(a) to (j) it becomes conspicuous that ἐπί with the accusative functions in the classical meaning. It would appear that ἐπί with the genitive never functions in this sense. The only possible instances are in (10)

(10) Revelation 7:1

(10) (a)	πνέη	ἐπὶ	τῆς	γῆς
	blow	on	the	earth
				genitive

(10) (b)	(πνέη)	ἐπὶ	τῆς	θαλάσσης
	(blow)	on	the	sea
				genitive

(10) (c)	(πνέη)	ἐπὶ	πᾶν	δένδρον.
	(blow)	on	every	tree
				accusative

Charles ([1920] 1971:191) would like to read the phrase (10) (a) to (c) in the same way when he says: "We should expect either accusatives throughout or genitives". He attributes the alteration to the fact that the author uses certain characteristic phrases. It is possible, but this instance may serve as tangible proof that the distinction between ἐπί with accusative is still maintained (cf Mounce 1977:165-6; 166N3; Riekert 1993:73). The translations supplied, present such an understanding for (10)(c) for which we have a parallel in (11).

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(11) Rev 3:3

ἥξω	ἐπὶ	σέ.
I will come	against	you
		accusative

Riekert (1996:144-5) discusses the uses of ἐπὶ, + genitive and accusative in Rev 7:1 and Rev 3:3. Which leads to the conclusion:

Therefore we may assume that the author offers us a subtle distinction here: the wind will blow *on* the earth and *on* the sea but *against* the trees. In this case: (10)(a) to (c) presents a demonstration that the distinction between ἐπί with accusative and ἐπί with the genitive still exist for the author of Revelation. Please note that the change goes in one direction only: the accusative gain usage and assumes usage from the genitive.

4. CONCLUSION

The question arises as to how we should account for the facts in (4) to (11) with the Case theory. In the classical period there it is settled that Case assignment by prepositions was oblique. This oblique Case was potentially realised in three different cases and these cases were inevitably determined by the meaning which should be expressed. The instances in (4) to (9) in contrast with (10) demonstrates that as far as it concerns ἐπί, the distinction between ἐπί with accusative and ἐπί with genitive or dative was on the wane. Furthermore, this indicates that the accusative acquires greater use and it reflects a development similar to the usage of prepositions in English which prevails upon Chomsky (1981:49, 50, 292-3) to conclude that English has the marked characteristic that a P assigns structural objective Case.

Should one assume that Case in Revelation is still assigned obliquely after prepositions, then it follows that an N can be taken from the lexicon in either accusative, genitive or dative case. The Case control filter is indeed functional, but it passes any one of the three forms as realisation of the oblique Case, because of the developments discussed above. In the phase preceding Revelation, the filter has prevented the accusative with ἐπὶ in the sense of *on, at* (positional in a place). When the genitive and dative in a subsequent development, were in the process of becoming obsolete, then only would the Case control filter start to prevent them. ἐπί with accusative was already gaining usage at the expense of ἐπί with genitive or dative. The distinction in meaning between ἐπί with accusative and ἐπί with genitive or dative was already disappearing in Revelation.

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