Doubling phenomena in the DP

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In this paper I will focus on possessor (clitic) doubling from a comparative perspective by looking at French, Greek, and German. In French, (1), as well as in Greek, (2), a postnominal possessive strong pronoun can be doubled, i.e. the possessive pronoun is doubled by a clitic:

(1) son amie à lui
    his friend to him

French (Cardinaletti 1998)

(2) To vivlio mu emena den pulithike katholu
    the book Cl.1sg. me.Gen.STR not sold at all

Greek (Giusti & Stavrou 2008)

My book was not sold at all.

French and Greek lack clitic doubling of full possessor DPs. However, the languages differ as far as their verbal doubling patterns are concerned: Greek, but not French, allows clitic doubling of full DPs in the verbal domain. Nevertheless, the pronominal doubling illustrated above has identical properties to its verbal counterpart. By contrast, German allows clitic doubling of full pronominal possessor DPs, and it lacks clitic doubling in the verbal domain.

(3) dem Hans sein Haus
    the Hans.DAT his house

As can be seen from the data in (1)-(3), the doubling patterns differ: we have full DP possessors in German preceding the possessor-clitic, while we have post-nominal possessors following the clitic in French and Greek. I will argue that two ingredients seem to be relevant to understand doubling patterns: (i) a clitic possessor should be able to realize D°, and (ii) a full possessor DP should be able to occupy Spec,DP which has A-properties. When both conditions are met as in e.g. German the two elements co-occur in the DP layer. Moreover, in languages such as French, or German the possessor clitic realizes D°, but this is not the case in Greek where the possessor clitic is an en-clitic to an XP. Furthermore, Greek Spec, DP is an A’-position, making thus the Greek DP parallel to CP, and the German DP parallel to TP.