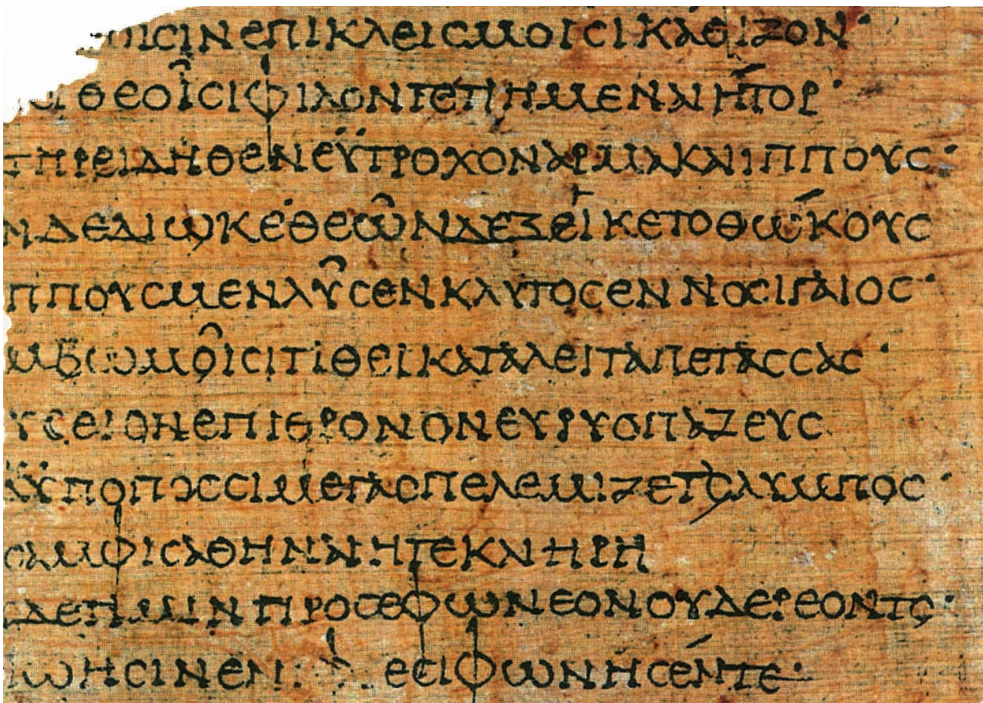


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Φιλοσοφικής Σχολής Πανεπιστημίου Αθηνών

ΠΑΡΟΥΣΙΑ

ΠΕΡΙΟΔΟΣ Β', ΤΟΜΟΣ Α' (ΚΑ')

(2017-2018)



Η ΡΟΔΟΤΟΣ

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Giannoula Giannouloupoulou

THE EMERGENCE OF THE GREEK DEFINITE ARTICLE

a. Introduction

Both for traditional grammarians and contemporary linguists, the study of articles is a fascinating area that can truly be described as a “puzzling problem”.

Such an extreme view of the article as a problem is expressed by Gardiner (1932) (as quoted in Christophersen [1939], 20) who states: “it is sometimes said that such relatively insignificant words [i.e. the articles] are grammatical tools. But the function of tools is to achieve some specific end. That is precisely what, in many cases, the article does not do, or at all events does only in a very slight and uncertain degree. Often it is mere useless ballast, a habit or mannerism accepted by an entire speaking community... The accumulation of old rubbish is so easy”.

The frequent presence of articles in some — but certainly not all — languages (often genetically relative) led some of the earlier researchers to connect the presence of the article in some languages to their extra-linguistic conditions. Thus, for example, Schütte (1922) (as translated and quoted in Christophersen [1939], 19) proposes: “The possibility must not be overlooked that it [the article] is a cultural phenomenon, which appears on Japhetic ground in the progressive regions towards the south-west and from thence spreads from people to people towards the west and north. The more old-fashioned languages in the but little civilized north-eastern parts of Europe have done without the article to the present day.”

However, such opinions, though unsuitable to contemporary linguistic thought, are not just limited to old-fashioned linguists. More recently, in the context of generative theory Moravcsik (1969), 85 expresses similar skepticism: “this term [i.e. the article] of course is fairly helpful in informal discussions; but the question is whether subsuming the indefinite and definite article under the same category in a grammar can be justified” (emphasis by the author).

And much more recently McColl Millar (2000), 275 suggests the following: “English has an overt, largely single-function discrete form *the* not so much because the language felt an overwhelming need for such a form, but rather because a gap had opened in the semantic fabric of the language due to the specialisation in meaning of *that*. *The* is, in other words, an historical accident.” And McColl Millar (2000), 304 concludes: “the development of a discrete definite article in English, whilst a not unlikely event, was by no means inevitable”.

In the context of grammaticalization theory much more attention has been given to articles and their evolution. Since Greenberg (1978) introduced the typology of the three stages for definite articles and the “cycle of the definite article”, several studies have shown that the evolution of deictic elements in definite articles is a paradigmatic case of grammaticalization (e.g. Selig (1992)· Himmelmann (1997)· Laury (1997)· Epstein (1993)· Diessel (1999)· Lehmann (2004)).

The aim of the present paper is to discuss the evolution of the Greek definite article and to describe its synchronic status in relation to its diachronic “journey”. Modern Greek has the definite article [o, i, to] <o, η, το> – ‘the’ for masculine, feminine and neuter genders. The article is declined both in singular and in plural.

More specifically, I will focus on one particular feature of the Modern Greek definite article, i.e. its obligatory presence with proper names, and I will examine the diachronic trajectory of this feature.

The reasons for this decision are as follows:

a) Proper names are instances of automatic definiteness (like vocatives and nouns modified by demonstratives and personal possessive pronouns), and they are conceived as “the clearest examples of semantic definites” (Löbner [1985], 299).

b) It is considered, following Greenberg’s formulation, that “proper names, both personal and place, are the group more consistently used in unarticulated form. No exception was found to the rule that in languages with Stage II articles, the article is not found with proper names” (Greenberg [1978], 64) and

c) The obligatoriness of the articulated form in proper names of Modern Greek is a feature that distinguishes Modern Greek from other European languages. Compare, for example, the Modern Greek

O *Yannis* *troi* — ‘John eats’

Art. N V

with the Italian: *Gianni mangia* “John eats”, the English: *John eats*, the French: *Jean mange*, and the German: *Hans isst* (except southern German dialects, such as Bavarian or Swabian).

b. The Greek definite article: Homeric language and Classical Greek

The first article uses of the demonstrative pronouns [ο, ι, το] <ό, ή, τό> appear already in the language of Homer (8th century BC). In fact, in the language of Homer the demonstrative use and the article use of the pronoun co-exist, as we can see in the following cases from the Iliad (translations generally as quoted in bibliography, but altered for grammatical accuracy).

1. οὐδ’ ἐδύνατο οὐθ’ ὁ **τόν** ἐξελάσαι οὐθ’ ὁ **τόν** ἄψ ὥσασθαι (O, 417)
‘Neither could he [Hector] dislodge him [his enemy] [and burn the ship], nor could the other force his attacker back’
2. ὅς εἴπη ὅτι τόσσον ἐχώσατο Φοῖβος Ἀπόλλων εἴτ’ ἄρ’ ὁ γ’ εὐχολῆς ἐπιμέμφεται, εἴθ’ ἐκατόμβης (A, 65)
‘Why all this anger of the god Apollo? Has he some quarrel with us for a failure in vows or hecatombs?’
3. τοῖσι δὲ Νέστωρ ἠδυεπὴς ἀνόρουσε, λιγύς Πυλίων ἀγορητής, **τοῦ** καὶ ἀπὸ γλώσσης μέλιτος γλυκίων ῥέεν αὐδή (A, 247)
‘But for the sake of both men Nestor arose, the Pylians’ orator, from his tongue rolled argument sweeter than honey’
4. ἀνὴρ ἀγαθός **τὴν** αὐτοῦ γυναῖκα φιλέει (I, 342)
‘[Are the Atreids of all mortal men the only ones who love their wives? I think not.] Every good man loves his own wife’
5. Φθίσει σε **τὸ** σὸν μένος (Z, 407)
‘Your anger would do you no good then’

In examples 1 and 2 above, the function of the pronouns is demonstrative, in 4 and 5 they serve as articles (see Chantraine (1958), 276 for example 5), while example 3 represents anaphoric use of the demonstrative pronoun.

The scholars who study the history of the Greek language, and more specifically of Homeric Greek, do not agree on the precise dating of the use of demonstrative pronouns as articles. Grimm, Düntzer, Meillet, among the earlier scholars, as well as more recently Lombardi Vallauri (2007), deny the existence of a definite article in the language of Homer. Krüger, Thiersch, Chatzidakis and Anagnostopoulos accept that demonstrative use and article use of the pronoun co-exist in the Homeric language, an opinion I agree with (cf. Giannouloupoulou [2007]).

It is also a fact that we do not have primary sources for the Homeric language. As Manollessou & Horrocks [2007], 229) suggest: “the issue, unfortunately, must remain at least partly problematical, since the manuscript tradition is often uncertain, and our (Alexandrian) text may well have been affected by copyists introducing the article, at least where it was metrically permissible, according to later usage”.

According to the typology of Greenberg (1978), 61 the demonstrative is “stage zero”. We could suggest that in Homeric Greek the definite article is in *status nascendi*, as the examples 4 and 5 above show, or in other words, that its introduction had begun during stage I, carrying the meaning “identified”.

Evidence for the evolution from demonstrative to definite article is clearer in Classical Greek. For the purposes of the present study, I have looked at the language of two historical texts of the 5th century BC: the first book of Thucydides, *Historiae*, and the first two chapters of Xenophon’s *Hellenica*.

In Thucydides, I have looked at whether the following names appear in articulated or unarticulated form: *Homer*, *Agamemnon*, *Minos*, *Athenians*, *Lacedaemonians*, *Hellenes*, *Hellas*.

In Xenophon’s work, I did the same for the following names: *Athenians*, *Lacedaemonians*, *Peloponnesians*, *Thymochares*, *Alcibiades*, *Pharnabazos*.

Table 1: Thucydides, *Historiae*

	Total number of forms	Unarticulated forms	Articulated forms
Homer	2	2	
Agamemnon	1	1	
Minos	1	1	
Athenians	6	5	1
Lacedaemonians	5	2	3
Hellenes	6		6
Hellas	5		5

Table 2: Xenophon, *Hellenica*

	Total number of forms	Unarticulated forms	Articulated forms
Thymochares	1	1	
Alcibiades	7	7	
Pharnabazos	4	3	1

Athenians	12	3	9
Lacedaemonians	3	3	
Peloponnesians	2		2

The above data permit the following observations:

a) Proper names denoting persons appear generally in unarticulated form. There is only one articulated form of the name *Pharnabazos* in Xenophon's text:

[6]

καὶ ὁ Φαρνάβαζος

παρεβοήθει, καὶ ἐπεισβαίνων τῷ ἵππῳ εἰς τὴν θάλατταν

μέχρι δυνατόν ἦν ἐμάχετο, καὶ τοῖς ἄλλοις τοῖς αὐτοῦ ἵππεῦσι

καὶ πεζοῖς παρεκελεύετο.

‘Pharnabazos rode up along the shore in their support and joined the fighting, urging his horse into the sea as far as it could go and shouting orders to the rest of his cavalry and infantry.’

b) Proper names denoting origin (*Athenians*, *Peloponnesians*, *Lacedaemonians*) display variability as far as their articulated or unarticulated form is concerned. The name *Athenians*, for example, appears in Thucydides mostly in unarticulated form (5/6), and only once in articulated form, having the meaning “Athenians, on the other hand”, as opposed to the Lacedaemonians:

[7]

καὶ μεγάλου κινδύνου ἐπικρεμασθέντος οἳ τε Λακεδαιμόνιοι τῶν συμπολε-

μησάντων Ἑλλήνων ἡγήσαντο δυνάμει προύχοντες, καὶ οἱ

Ἀθηναῖοι ἐπιόντων τῶν Μήδων διανοηθέντες ἐκλιπεῖν τὴν

πόλιν καὶ ἀνασκευασάμενοι ἐς τὰς ναῦς ἐσβάντες ναυτικοὶ (5)

ἐγένοντο.

‘In the face of this great danger the command of the confederate Greeks was assumed by the Lacedaemonians in virtue of their superior power; and the Athenians having made up their minds to abandon the city, broke up their homes, threw themselves into their ships, and became a naval people.’

On the other hand, in Xenophon the name *Athenians* appears generally in articulated form (9/12) and just three times in unarticulated form. Out of these three occurrences of the unarticulated form, the first is found in the beginning of the first chapter (text 8) and the second in the beginning of the second chapter (text 9).

Here we have an interesting situation: in the beginning of the chapters the name *Athenians* appears unarticulated and as the discourse continues, the name appears articulated having a meaning such as ‘the Athenians about whom I have talked earlier’. I think that this finding confirms an observation by Hawkins (1978), 100: “The use of the definite article in such cases reflects not just a relationship of a certain kind between two things, but in addition: knowledge of that relationship as shared by speaker and hearer.”

And this order of unarticulated and articulated *Athenians* is also a paradigmatic case for what Guillaume (1945), 80 calls the “*mémoriel*” feature of the definite article and for what Himmelmann (1997), 81-82 has analyzed as the “*anamnestic use*” [*anamnestischer Gebrauch*] of the demonstratives in their transition to definite articles.

[8]

Μετὰ δὲ ταῦτα οὐ πολλαῖς ἡμέραις ὕστερον ἦλθον ἐξ
Ἀθηνῶν Θυμοχάρης ἔχων ναῦς ὀλίγας· καὶ εὐθὺς ἐναυμά-
χησαν αὐθις Λακεδαιμόνιοι καὶ Ἀθηναῖοι, ἐνίκησαν δὲ
Λακεδαιμόνιοι ἡγουμένου Ἀγησανδρίδου.

‘Some days later Thymochares arrived from Athens with a few ships, and the Lacedaimonians and Athenians immediately fought another naval action in which the Lacedaimonians, under the command of Agesandridas, were victorious.’

[9]

Τῷ δὲ ἄλλῳ ἔτει [ᾧ ἦν Ὀλυμπιάς τρίτη καὶ ἐνενηκοστή,
ἣ προστεθεῖσα ξυνωρίς ἐνίκᾳ Εὐαγόρου Ἡλείου, τὸ δὲ στα-
διον Εὐβώτας Κυρηναῖος, ἐπὶ ἐφόρου μὲν ὄντος ἐν Σπάρτῃ
Εὐαρχίππου, ἄρχοντος δ’ ἐν Ἀθήναις Εὐκτῆμονος,] Ἀθη-
ναῖοι μὲν Θορικὸν ἐτείχισαν, Θράσυλλος δὲ...

‘The following year was that of the ninety-third Olympiad in which Euagoras of Elis won the two-horse race (a newly added event) and Eubotas of Cyrene won the two-stadia foot race. Euarchippos was ephor of Sparta and Euktemon archon of Athens. In this year the Athenians fortified Thorikos.’

c) Of particular interest is the frequency of the articulated forms of the names *Hellenes* and *Hellas* in Thucydides. It occurs in the first book of his work, where he searches for historical proofs for the origin of the Greeks and Greece:

[10]

πᾶσα γὰρ ἡ Ἑλλὰς ἐσιδηροφόρει διὰ τὰς ἀφάρκτους

τε οἰκῆσεις καὶ οὐκ ἀσφαλεῖς παρ' ἀλλήλους ἐφόδους, καὶ
 ξυνήθη τὴν διαίταν μεθ' ὅπλων ἐποιήσαντο ὥσπερ οἱ βάρ-
 βαροι.

'The whole of Greece used once to carry arms, their habitation being unpro-
 tected, and their communication with each other unsafe; indeed to wear
 arms was as much a part of everyday life with them as with the barbarians.'

[11]

οἱ γὰρ Ἕλληνες τὸ πάλαι καὶ τῶν βαρβάρων
 οἳ τε ἐν τῇ ἡπείρῳ παραθαλάσσιοι καὶ ὅσοι νήσους εἶχον,
 ἐπειδὴ ἤρξαντο μᾶλλον περαιοῦσθαι ναυσὶν ἐπ' ἀλλήλους,
 ἐτράποντο πρὸς ληστείαν,

'For in early times the Greeks and foreign peoples of the coast and islands,
 as communication by sea grew more common, became pirates.'

By using the articulated forms of the names *Hellas* and *Hellenes*, the writer marks these referents as the subject of the discussion. As Epstein (1993), 170 observes for the French definite article: "one main function of the articles is to mark referents along several discourse level-dimensions, for instance, as given vs. new information, or as important, foregrounded (referential) entities vs. backgrounded (non-referential) entities".

But the question remains: why do proper names sometimes appear in articulated form in the above texts?

Greenberg (1978), 65 states that Classical Greek is a language "with ordinary Stage I article". If we agree with that opinion, then we must accept that the article in articulated forms, as the above-mentioned *Hellas*, *Hellenes*, is a revival of the demonstrative, it functions like the German *der*, which according to Greenberg (op. cit. 62) "may be an unstressed variant of the demonstrative, which continues in its former use in unstressed form".

Or is it perhaps the case that the article in Classical Greek belongs already to the Second Stage and the formulation of Greenberg that "no exception was found to the rule that in languages with Stage II articles, the article is not found with proper names" (op. cit. 64) is too strict?

I think that the above data do not confirm that the forms are still demonstratives, but rather that in Classical Greek the definite article is an article of the Second Stage, since the majority of proper names appear in unarticulated form. The rarity of articulated forms of proper names can be explained as the very beginning of the transition to a Third Stage article, a transition that continues for thousands of years, up to Modern Greek.

Written texts from the following centuries, especially from the genre of geometry can help us follow this process. Take, for example, the following examples from the work *Data* by Euclid (3rd century BC):

[12] Euclid, *Data*

Τὰ πρὸς τὸ αὐτὸ λόγον ἔχοντα δεδομένον καὶ πρὸς ἄλληλα λόγον ἔξει δεδομένον. (Proposition 8)

‘Magnitudes which have given ratios to the same magnitude have a given ratio to one another also.’

[13] Euclid, *Data*

δοθὲν γὰρ τὸ AB παρὰ δοθεῖσαν τὴν ΑΓ παραβεβλήσθω ὑπερβάλλον εἶδει δεδομένῳ τῷ ΓΒ. λέγω, ὅτι δοθεῖσά ἐστιν ἑκατέρω τῶν ΘΓ, ΓΕ. (Proposition 59)

‘Let the given area AB be applied to AC, exceeding by the figure CB given in species. I say that each of the sides HC, CE is given.’

In this text, the definite article is used extensively to help identify geometrical concepts, e.g. τὸ AB, τὴν ΑΓ, τῶν ΘΓ, ΓΕ ‘the AB, the AC, of the HC, CE’.

We have here the construction of the geometrical discourse, a process that extended the use of the definite article. Similar processes have happened in the construction of discourse of other specialized fields, such as philosophy. I would like to mention here the work of Sansone (1993), who discusses the use of the definite article in platonic dialogues and concludes that the extended use of the definite article with names such as ἀρετή ‘virtue’, ἀνδρεία ‘bravery’, ἀκολασία ‘wantonness, debauchery’, etc. in Plato can be interpreted as an important means of *topicalization*.

In regard to the aforementioned entities, the discourse of extensive, specialized texts required the definite article as a means of deixis, a means of defining entities and concepts. That does not, of course, mean that the definite article was an *ad hoc* creation of writers, but that the dialectic tension between orality and “Schriftlichkeit” reinforced the article’s expansion. Let me mention here an observation by Selig (1992), in her study of the evolution of nominal determinants in Late Latin:

“(Konzeptionelle) Schriftlichkeit — konzeptionelle Schriftlichkeit kann *medial* mündlich oder schriftlich sein — stellt besondere Anforderungen an die Systeme von Sprachen, die sich in dem zeigen, was etwa Heinz Kloss als den ‘Ausbau’ einer Sprache bezeichnet.”

“(Conceptual) Writtness — conceptual written-ness can be oral or written as far as the medium is concerned — places particular demands on linguistic systems, which are manifest in what Heinz Kloss, for one, calls the ‘Ausbau’ or ‘functional elaboration’ of a language.”

c. Evolution of the article in the later periods of the Greek language

The expansion of the use of definite article with proper names continues in the language of the New Testament (1st-2nd century AD). According to the grammar of Blass & Debrunner ([1976] 1982) the use of the article with proper names varies: it appears “ο δε Σαύλος” ‘the Saul’ but “Σαύλος δε” ‘Saul’, “απεκρίθη ο Ιησούς” ‘the Jesus replied’ and “απεκρίθη Ιησούς” ‘Jesus replied’; the word Μακεδονία ‘Macedonia’ rarely takes the article, the word Αίγυπτος ‘Egypt’ almost never, while the names of rivers and seas always have the article, ο Ιορδάνης ‘the Jordan’.

Although the language of the New Testament “also suffers from high levels of variation across manuscripts with respect to the presence/absence of the article in specific contexts, including proper names” (Manolessou & Horrocks (2007), 231), it remains a useful source for the evolution of the Greek article.

The language of the Byzantine period shows an increased frequency in the use of the definite article. An example is the work by Michael Psellos, *De omnifaria doctrina* (11th century AD). In the nine paragraphs I have studied, there are 16 instances of proper names. Out of these, 12 instances are in articulated form and four in unarticulated form. When proper names are in subject position, they are usually in articulated form (ο Χριστός ‘the+Christ’, ο Αδάμ ‘the+Adam’, ο δε Αριστοτέλης ‘the+Aristotle’, ο μιν Πλάτων ‘the+Plato’, etc.) and just twice in unarticulated form (Μωϋσής ‘Moise’, Έλληνες ‘Hellenes’). In prepositional phrases we find both articulated and unarticulated forms (e.g. κατά τον θεολόγο Γρηγόριο ‘according to theologian Gregorius’, κατά Πλάτωνα ‘according to Plato’).

Finally, texts from the medieval period, where the roots of Modern Greek can be located, show, as far as the definite article is concerned, a situation similar to Modern Greek, i.e. an extended obligatoriness of the article and an increasing bondedness between the article and the nominals. For example in the verse text *Chronicle of the Morea* (beginning of the 14th century), namely in the chapter “How the Franks conquered the Morea”, the first 120 lines contain 45 proper names, of which the 40 are articulated and just five unarticulated. It is worth mentioning that there is no unarticulated form of proper

name in the subject position. All proper names in subject position are articulated (e.g. οι Φράγκοι ‘art+Franks’, η Ανδραβίδα ‘art+Andravida’, η Κόρινθος ‘art+Corinth’, ο Μορέας ‘art+Morea’, etc.).

In the work by Ioannikios Kartanos, *The Old and New Testament*, (16th century), specifically in just two chapters of it (chaps. ροζ’, ροη’), 28 instances of proper names occur. Twenty-four of them are in articulated form, and just four in unarticulated form. These last four instances are precisely the instances where the proper names would also appear unarticulated in Modern Greek, i.e. vocatives and in the predicate position (*Κύριέ μου* ‘my Lord’, *Ω Ιησού Χριστέ* ‘Jesus Christ’, *Ω Φίλιππε* ‘Philipp’, *την λένουν Ιεριχώ* ‘they call it Jericho’). The usage in Modern Greek is exactly the same.

d. The Greenberg typology (1978) and the Greek definite article

Greenberg’s typology has had a great influence on research. Many works have applied Greenberg’s criteria to the articles of European languages, although Greenberg’s entire proposition was not based on European linguistic data.

Harris (1980), 81 proposes that: “Italian and Spanish are probably best viewed as having Stage I articles, beginning to develop towards Stage II ... but only tentatively ... Here in French, we seem to have a situation in which the language is nearer to Stage III than Stage II.”

Lyons (1999), 337-9 suggests that “[Greenberg’s] Stage I would embrace all the definite article uses I have so far discussed — that is, where the article genuinely expresses definiteness, whether in the limited version of fifth-century romance or the greatly expanded version of Modern Greek” and classifies the definite articles as follows:

English: simple definite

French: simple definite, generic

Italian: simple definite, generic, possessive

Greek: simple definite, generic, possessive, proper names / unique-reference nouns

(op. cit., 337).

How could we classify the definite article of the various periods of the Greek language following the Greenberg typology (1978)? Does the definite article in Classical Greek, in Medieval Greek and in Modern Greek, respectively, correspond to different stages of the Greenbergian typology? And more generally, is this typology applicable to Indo-European languages?

Greenberg (1978), 65 states that Classical Greek is a language “with ordinary Stage I article”. He later proposes (1991) that: “It is noteworthy that Stage II articles only occur in languages which have no indefinite article and are particularly frequent in Asia, an area in which indefinite articles are uncommon” (Greenberg (1991), 313, fn. 5). It is worth mentioning here that in Modern Greek an indefinite article *enas, mia, ena* ‘a, un’ also exists, which derives from the numeral *enas, mia, ena*. The first traces of it can be detected in Classical Greek, but its expansion has taken place in the Hellenistic period and later (cf. Anagnostopoulos [1922]· Chila-Markopoulou [2000]).

Our analysis has concentrated on one particular feature, the articulated or unarticulated form of proper names. It has shown that:

a) In the Homeric language, a Stage I article is observed, i.e. the emergence of the article from a distal demonstrative takes place.

b) In Classical Greek, the article enters Stage II. That is why proper names usually appear in unarticulated form, as the typology of Greenberg demands. This process lasts for centuries.

c) In the Koine (Hellenistic Greek) of the New Testament and later the article is a *vero e proprio* article of the Second Stage. It shares all the features of a Second Stage article that Greenberg’s typology lists.

However, if we compare the article of Hellenistic Greek with the Modern Greek article, we will find that while the former conforms to all the features of a Second Stage article, the latter does not share some of them:

1. The article does not occur because the noun is determined by something else in the construction (e.g. a demonstrative modifier):

[15]

Hellenistic Greek (New Testament):

παραγγελίαν τοιαύτην λαβών ‘after having taken the order’

N D

While in Modern Greek:

αφού πήρε αυτή την παραγγελία ‘after having taken the order’

D. A N

2. Kinship terms show far less affinity for the definite article:

[16]

Hellenistic Greek (New Testament):

συν γυναιξί και τέκνοις ‘with women and kids’

τις γαρ υιος ου ου παιδεύει πατήρ; ‘which son is not trained by his father?’

Modern Greek:

Με τις γυναίκες και τα παιδιά ‘with women and kids’

Ποιον γιο δεν εκπαιδεύει ο πατέρας του; ‘which son is not trained by his father?’

3. The articulated form does not occur in locative and temporal constructions:

[17]

Hellenistic Greek (New Testament):

απ’ αγρού ‘from the farm’, απ’ αγοράς ‘from the market place’, επί θύραις ‘at the door’, προς εσπέραν ‘at night’

Modern Greek:

από τον αγρό ‘from the farm’, από την αγορά ‘from the market place’, στην πόρτα ‘at the door’, προς το βράδυ ‘at night’.

The fact that Modern Greek does not share the above features of a Second Stage article confirms the conclusions derived from the analysis of the proper names: Although in modern Greek the definite article is still in Stage II, it has started to display an extended obligatoriness, and to gain features of a Third Stage article. Thus it is in a transitional stage, but it is hard to determine whether or when it will become integrated. Data from everyday language in Modern Greek show occasional omission of the article.

[18]

Πάω Θεσσαλονίκη ‘I go to Thessaloniki’, Πάω σπίτι ‘I go home’.

It seems that the extended generalization of the article leads to its omission.

e. Conclusions

Can we hope to offer some tentative explanations for the omnipresence of the definite article in Modern Greek? The first and most obvious one is its antiquity in the language. This establishedness, however, has to be accompanied by the impelling force exerted by the construction of specialized genres (geometry, philosophy, etc.) and “Schriftlichkeit” on the evolution of the definite article during its emergence (around 2,500 years ago).

The second explanation could be that during its long history, the Greek language did not break up into different languages, and did not give birth to daughter languages, unlike for example Latin. In other words, the evolution of the article was not halted for some reason. In Greek, there happens the complete opposite of what Greenberg (1991), 302 states for Aramaic and the development of its article over a period of approximately 3,000 years: “during such a long period most languages will break up into separate dialects and languages several times”.

Much more research is needed in order to form a comprehensive view of the evolution of Greek articles. Nevertheless, I propose that so far the Greek evidence supports in a paradigmatic way the opinion presented by Lehmann (2004), 161 (among others), that “the grammaticalization of a demonstrative to a definite article is an evidence of pure grammaticalization without analogy” and that “the category change associated with grammaticalization happens, *in situ*” (op. cit. 166).

Finally, I think that the above analysis does not confirm what McColl Millar (2000), 304 proposes for the English article: “the development of a discrete definite article in English, whilst a not unlikely event, was by no means inevitable”.

On the contrary, our analysis has shown that there are both intra-linguistic (pragmatic, semantic, contextual) and extra-linguistic reasons for the emergence and the expansion of the article from Homeric language up to Modern Greek, reasons that made the development of the Greek article possible and perhaps inevitable.

It seems that grammatical elements have a starting point in time, and probably a specific date of birth.

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ΠΕΡΙΛΗΨΗ

Το άρθρο εξετάζει την κατανομή, τη σημασιολογία και το γραμματικό καθεστώς του οριστικού άρθρου στην ελληνική. Υποστηρίζεται ότι το οριστικό άρθρο της νέας ελληνικής είναι ένα άρθρο δευτέρου σταδίου (σύμφωνα με την τυπολογία του Greenberg 1978), το οποίο όμως έχει αρχίσει να αποκτά χαρακτηριστικά άρθρου τρίτου σταδίου.

Η σύγκριση του νεοελληνικού οριστικού άρθρου με τα αντίστοιχα άλλων ευρωπαϊκών γλωσσών δείχνει ότι αυτό παρουσιάζει σοβαρές διαφορές από τα αντίστοιχα ευρωπαϊκά. Το οριστικό άρθρο στη νέα ελληνική εμφανίζει εκτεταμένη υποχρεωτικότητα, η οποία δεν εμφανίζεται σε άλλες ευρωπαϊκές γλώσσες. Π.χ. είναι υποχρεωτικό πριν από τα κύρια ονόματα, όταν αυτά βρίσκονται σε θέση υποκειμένου.

Μετά την εισαγωγή από τον Greenberg (1978) της τυπολογίας των τριών σταδίων για τα οριστικά άρθρα και του παρεπόμενου «κύκλου του οριστικού άρθρου», αρκετές μελέτες έχουν αποδείξει ότι η εξέλιξη των δεικτικών στοιχείων σε οριστικά άρθρα είναι μια τεκμηριωμένη περίπτωση γραμματικοποίησης. Ο στόχος της παρούσας εξέτασης είναι να συζητήσει την εξέλιξη του ελληνικού οριστικού άρθρου και να περιγράψει το συγχρονικό του καθεστώς σε συνάρτηση με το διαχρονικό του «ταξίδι».

Ερευνώνται σώματα κειμένων από όλες τις περιόδους της ελληνικής (κλασική, ελληνιστική, μεσαιωνική, νέα ελληνική).

Λέξεις κλειδιά: οριστικό άρθρο, γραπτότητα, γραμματικοποίηση, υποχρεωτικότητα.

ABSTRACT

This paper examines the distribution, semantics and grammatical status of the definite article in Modern Greek. It argues that the definite article in Greek is an article of the Second Stage (following the typology of Greenberg 1978), which has started to acquire features of a Third Stage article.

If we compare it with definite articles in other European languages (e.g. in Italian, in English) we can easily discern differences in their distribution.

Definite articles in Modern Greek present an extended obligatoriness, which is not observed in other European languages, e.g. the definite article in Modern Greek is obligatory before proper names, when they are used in subject position:

Since Greenberg (1978) introduced the typology of the Three Stages for definite articles and of the “cycle of the definite article”, several studies have shown that the evolution of deictic elements in definite articles is a well-attested case of grammaticalization. The purpose of the present investigation is to discuss the evolution of the Greek definite article and to describe its synchronic status in relation to its diachronic “journey”.

The investigation examines corpora of texts from every period of the Greek language (Classical Greek, Hellenistic Greek, Medieval Greek, Modern Greek).

Keywords: definite article, Schriftlichkeit, grammaticalization, obligatoriness.