

# Nominal forms in extra-syntactic constructions in Ancient Greek: The case of the vocative and exclamative nominative

**Konstantinos Kakarikos**  
*University of Athens*  
*k\_kakarikos@hotmail.com*

**Abstract:** A typical argument for the independence of morphology is its asymmetric relation with syntax. In ancient Greek this is illustrated by nominal forms in the vocative or the exclamative nominative which, despite their clear morphological representation, express no relation to a syntactic head. Such a remark raises problems regarding the syntactic and morphological status of both forms and their relation to regular cases. In this paper, we re-examine both constructions and claim that their idiosyncratic character is explained by the different type of features involved in their syntactic definition. These are the Address Phrase and the feature of syntactic definiteness.

**Key words:** Address Phrase, case, definiteness, exclamative nominative, vocative.

## 1. Introduction

Modern approaches to case and morphology (Español-Echevarría & Ralli 2000, Πάλλη 2005) have pointed out the asymmetries which often exist between syntax and morphology. A typical example of this sort of asymmetry is illustrated in ancient Greek by the vocative case and other constructions like the exclamative nominative. More specifically, whereas other cases are usually defined as markers expressing the relationship of nouns to their governing heads (Blake 2001), vocatives and exclamative nominatives are nominal forms which occur in extra-syntactic positions and show no relation to any syntactic head. On the other hand, they are both morphologically realized via certain endings and are fully integrated into the inflectional system of the language. Such a remark raises questions with respect to their syntactic definition and morphological derivation.

In this paper, we re-examine the evidence which define the structural identity of these constructions, and aim at the formulation of a unified account for all relevant data. More specifically, we argue that vocatives and exclamative nominatives are nominal forms filling up positions which are called Address Phrases<sup>1</sup> and form structural domains with their own syntactic status. Each Address Phrase expresses a pragmatic role by pointing at the person or persons involved in a discourse (i.e. the speaker or the hearer), (Danon 2001; Anderson 2007). However, the exact definition of this role is context specific and is strictly related to the feature of definiteness which is also a syntactic element. This analysis is theoretically based on the Feature theory (Sigurðsson 2009) and draws on the traditional descriptions of the classical Attic Greek found in the literature (Humbert 1960; Kühner & Gerth 1963; Smyth 1976<sup>10</sup>; Μανδηλαράς 1985<sup>5</sup>; and Schwyzer 1958, [1950] 2002).

## 2. The theoretical background

The lack of overt correspondence in the syntax – morphology interface exemplified

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<sup>1</sup> Hill 2007 uses the term Role Phrase.

by structures with vocatives and exclamative nominatives is taken to be a strong piece of evidence for the independence of morphology. In this paper we adopt the idea of a separate morphological component. However, our view is that autonomous morphology does not necessarily mean the lack of syntactic background in structures like those examined here. More specifically, we claim that syntax is still present but the syntactic information underlying the morphological realization of the vocative or the exclamative nominative is of a different status compared to cases appearing in argument positions.

In theoretical terms, the main principles of our approach are the following:

- (i) Morphology is an autonomous component of the grammar which holds a post-syntactic position.
- (ii) The syntax – morphology interface is understood on the assumption that morphology interprets syntactic information in its own terms and expresses them via certain endings, aiming at the derivation of the appropriate inflectional forms for particular syntactic positions.

A necessary condition for any inflectional derivation is obviously the presence of a set of correspondences between the syntactic features, which define the properties of a syntactic position, and the morphological features, which activate the morphological operations responsible for the derivation of the inflectional form proper to that position.

Insofar as case relations are concerned, each syntactic position expresses a certain grammatical relation between a DP and a particular syntactic head. This relationship (which is also related to a semantic meaning or  $\theta$ -role) may be defined lexically, as a special property of the head stored in the lexicon, syntactically, as a structural property related to the syntactic position of the head in a construction, semantically, as a semantic property of the head<sup>2</sup> or finally as a combination of all these factors. In syntactic terms, the codification of a grammatical relation along with the factors conditioning it, is possible by what is called syntactic case (s-case), namely a syntactic feature concerning phrasal structures, such as DPs (Spencer 2006).

From a morphological point of view, a grammatical relation expressed through an s-case feature, should also have a morphological realization via an inflectional form. Inflectional forms are built on the basis of morphological features, like gender, number, inflection class and case. Given this, morphological case (m-case) may be defined as a feature which accumulates the grammatical relation expressed by a syntactic position and connects it with a certain inflectional ending. Therefore it is a morphological property which now concerns inflectional forms (Spencer 2006). Summing up, this approach has the benefit of translating the syntax – morphology interface illustrated in case relations as an interface between the s- and the m-case features.

The distinction between the s- and the m-case is in accord with the post-syntactic position of morphology. Quite similarly, it fits properly to the derivation of nominal forms filling up argument positions, but seems to be inconsistent with forms occurring in non-argument positions, such as the vocative and exclamative nominative. In this framework, we claim that even these “extra-syntactic” positions are actually syntactic. In other words, the obvious lack of the s-case feature underlying their morphological derivation is replaced by syntactic features of a different type which are to be discussed in the following sections.

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<sup>2</sup> These factors distinguish the so called structural, inherent and lexical case. For the terminology see Haspelmath 2008.

### 3. Extra-syntactic constructions in ancient Greek: an overview

Traditional grammars define the vocative as an expression of address to the interlocutor which is typically identified with the hearer. The person being addressed may be represented either syntactically through an isolated phrase, which is represented graphically through commas or phonetically via breaks in the speech or variation in the prosodic contour (Hill 2007) and/or morphologically via a vocative case ending<sup>3</sup>. Almost all languages express the vocative syntactically, but some, like ancient Greek, have also a vocative case. From a historical viewpoint, vocatives in ancient Greek were considered to be a sort of independent clause, which later became an adjunct to a larger construction (Schwyzer [1950] 2002: 77). Quite apart from the vocative formations, in ancient Greek a person may be also addressed via the nominative case (Schwyzer [1950] 2002: 80-81). This sort of address, widely known as exclamative nominative (1), is taken to be a kind of exclamation this time aiming at the identification of the speaker rather than the hearer of a conversation (Hill 2007). This is the main indicator which marks the similarity of this type of nominative to the vocative and distinguishes it from other constructions, such as the appositional nominative (2) or the nominative in imperative constructions (3) which are not to be discussed here.

- (1) *Οἱ ἐγὼ ἐγὼ αὐτῆ ... λέαινα συγκοιμωμένη λύκῳ* (*Aesch. Ag. 1257*)  
“Alas! I myself ... the lioness who is sleeping along with a wolf.”
- (2) *Τὸ ἐναντίον ὄνομα ἀφροσύνη μετωνόμασται* (*Thuc. 1.122.4*)  
“It took the opposite name ‘imprudence’ ”
- (3) *Ἡ Πρόκνη ἐκβαίνει* (*Aristoph. Av. 665 – 666*)  
“You Prokne, get out”

Apparently, both vocative and exclamative nominative constructions reveal a gap in the syntax – morphology interface which is summarized in the following questions: (i) what is the grammatical status of the vocative and exclamative nominative if they truly express no case relation, (ii) how can we understand and explain their morphological derivation (their inflectional integrity given) in the absence of an obvious syntactic correspondent and finally, (iii) how is their derivation (especially that of the exclamative nominative) to be distinguished from the derivation of nominal forms occurring in argument positions, such as the regular nominative?

Possible answers to these questions may be given through the close examination of all relevant formations in order to define the properties of their morpho-syntactic identity.

### 4. The morpho-syntactic identity of the vocative and exclamative nominative

The specificity of the vocative and exclamative nominative forms in ancient Greek may be justified first morphologically by their representation in the system of inflection via certain endings and also syntactically by their special position as opposed to the positions filled up by regular cases.

In morphological terms, the inflectional status of the nominative and vocative is more or less identical, since both cases are represented by the same set of endings. This pattern, widely attested to all numbers and all inflections, is explained historically as a result of the gradual assimilation of the vocative to the nominative caused by case

<sup>3</sup> Syntactic expression of the addressee: English: *You*, what are you doing? Syntactic and Morphological expression of the addressee: Ancient Greek: Λήδας γένεθλο-ν, δωμάτων ἐμῶν φύλαξ, ... (< \*φύλακ-ς) (*Aesch. Ag. 914*), “*Child of Leda, warden of my lodgings*”.

syncretism (cf. Sg. 1<sup>st</sup> Inflection: *σκιά, ἀλήθεια* (nom/voc), 2<sup>nd</sup> Inflection: *δῶρον* (nom/voc), 3<sup>rd</sup> Inflection: *χειμῶν, ποιμήν* (nom/voc), Pl. 1<sup>st</sup> Inflection: *ποιηταί, σκιαί, ἀλήθειαι* (nom/voc), 2<sup>nd</sup> Inflection: *λύκοι, νῆσοι, δῶρα* (nom/voc), 3<sup>rd</sup> Inflection: *βασιλεῖς, χειμῶνες, ποιμένες* (nom/voc), Du. 1<sup>st</sup> Inflection: *ποιητᾶ, σκιά* (nom/voc), 2<sup>nd</sup> Inflection: *λύκω, νήσω, δῶρω* (nom/voc), 3<sup>rd</sup> Inflection: *βασιλεῖ, χειμῶνε, ποιμένε* (nom/voc) etc.) However, the system still preserves forms, probably relics of an older inflection, speaking for the morphological integrity of the vocative. These are attested in the singular number of all inflections and expressed by the identification of the vocative to the bare stem of the noun without a particular ending (cf. voc: *νεανία-ο, λεῶ-ο* vs. nom: *νεανία-ς, λεῶ-ς*). This practice is often accompanied either by the existence of a different ablaut in the vocative stem (cf. voc: *λύκε-ο, νῆσε-ο* vs. nom: *λύκο-ς, νῆσο-ς*) or by the adoption of a different stress pattern which involves a regressive accent (cf. voc: *βασιλεῦ-ο, Σωκράτεσ-ο* vs. nom: *βασιλεὺ-ς, Σωκράτησ-ο*) or finally by a combination of both (cf. voc: *πάτερ-ο, θυγάτερ-ο* vs. nom: *πατήρ-ο, θυγάτηρ-ο*).

The morphological integrity of the vocative and exclamative nominative is also syntactically supported by the idiosyncratic character of the positions they fill up in a sentence. This is to be found first in their structural distinction from nouns filling up regular argument positions and second by the special features marking the internal structure of the vocative and exclamative nominative DPs.

In general terms, the structural profile of both constructions is defined by three facts: (a) their occurrence outside the main clause they attach to, (b) their occurrence exclusively in main and not in subordinate clauses and (c) the frequent (but not necessary<sup>4</sup>) presence of the address marker *ὦ*; cf. the examples (4) – (7).

#### *The Vocative*

- (4) *Καὶ ταῦτα, ὦ Λακεδαιμόνιοι, ἐπεξήλθομεν, ἵνα ... εἰδῆτε* (Thuc. 3.67.1)  
 “We reported these, O men of Lacedaimona, in order to let you know”
- (5) *Ἄνθρωπε, τί ποιεῖς;* (Xen. Cyr. 2.2.7)  
 “(Bad) man, what are you doing?”

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- (6) *Κακῶν, ὦ τάλας, πέλαγος εἰσορῶ, ὥστε μήποτε ἐκνεῦσαι* (Eur. Hipp. 822)  
 “O miserable me, I see a sea of misfortunes, so that I will never escape”
- (7) *Τάλαινα ἐγῶ, τάλαινα, ποῖ πόδα πτερόεντα καταστάσω;* (Eur. Fr. 781)  
 “Miserable me, miserable, where should I put my winged foot?”

The observations for the structural specificity of vocatives and exclamative nominatives are also corroborated by their difference from the cases occurring in argument positions. In brief, cases in argument positions: (a) are fully integrated to the main or subordinate clause; cf. (8) – (11), (b) they are related to a certain thematic role; cf. (8) AGENT, (9) PATIENT, (c) they are accompanied with a definite article and/or another definiteness marker (i.e. pronoun, numeral etc); cf. (8) – (11) and (d) they are defined by the obligatory absence of the address particle; cf. (8) – (11).

<sup>4</sup> The absence of the address particle is related, in all instances, to pragmatic and stylistic factors which will not be discussed here. For a detailed presentation and analysis see Giagrande 1968 and Μανδηλα-ράς (1998<sup>5</sup>: 66 – 67).

- (8) *Τισσαφέρνης διαβάλλει τὸν Κῦρον πρὸς τὸν ἀδελφὸν* (*Xen. Anab. 1.1.3*)  
 “Tissaphernes accuses Cyrus to his brother”
- (9) *Ἐν γὰρ τῷ δρόμῳ (τὸ ξύλον) πᾶν τὸ σῶμα τύπτει* (*Xen. Cyneg. 9.19.2*)  
 “While running (the wood) bits the whole body”
- (10) *Οἱ λόγοι τοιαύτην ἔχουσιν τὴν φύσιν* (*Isocr. 4.8*)  
 “This is the nature of speeches”
- (11) *Ὁ ἡμέτερος ἑταῖρος Πρόδικος οὗτος* (*Pl. Hipp. Maj. 282c*)  
 “Our own friend, this Prodicus”

The examination of the data presented reveals two main points regarding the character of both constructions in ancient Greek and the definition of their special properties in general. The first is the address particle  $\omega$  while the second is the presence of the definite article and other similar markers. As we will see, the address particle functions as an indicator of the status of the vocative and exclamative nominative constructions as Address Phrases defining the interlocutor of a conversation. On the other hand, the definite article is a marker of the feature of definiteness. In what follows, we will argue first that the Address Phrases constitute a structural domain with its own syntactic status and second that the feature of definiteness functions as a syntactic element which is central to the specification of the Address Phrase as a marker of the speaker or the hearer of the conversation.

## 5. The properties of the extra-syntactic positions

### 5.1. The Address Phrase

As it has been pointed out in section 3, according to traditional grammars, the main feature of both vocatives and exclamative nominatives is their role as address forms defining the interlocutors of a conversation. Both structures provide enough evidence speaking for their identity as syntactic units. This is to be found, in addition to what has been already mentioned in section 4, in the distribution of the address particle  $\omega$ , which is subject to a number of syntactic restrictions and constraints. These are all summarized in the following.

The particle  $\omega$  in both constructions: (a) occurs in root and not in embedded clauses (cf. 12a, 12b, 16a, 16b), (b) it always precedes the noun (cf. 13a, 13b, 13c, 17a, 17b, 17c), (c) it does not allow the intervention of an interjection or is in complementary distribution with it (cf. 14a, 14b, 18a, 18b) and finally, (d) it is not repeated in the same clause under coordination (cf. 15a, 15b, 19a, 19b).

#### The Vocative

- (12a) *Δίκαια λέγετε, ὦ ἄνδρες Πλαταιῆς, ἣν ποιῆτε ...* (*Thuc. 2.72.1*)  
 “You speak right, O men of Plataea, if you act ...”
- (12b) *\*Δίκαια λέγετε, ἣν, ὦ ἄνδρες Πλαταιῆς, ποιῆτε ...*  
 “You speak right, if, \*O men of Plataea, you act...”
- (13a) *ᾠ παῖ φίλε* (*Pl. Symp. 117e*)  
 “O my beloved child”
- (13b) *\*Παῖ ὦ φίλε*  
 “Child \*O my beloved”
- (13c) *\*Παῖ φίλε ὦ*  
 “Child, \*my beloved O”
- (14a) *Οἶμοι, τίν' ἐξήνεγκας, ὦ τέκνον, λόγον;* (*Soph. Trach. 741*)  
 “Alas! what word did you say, O child?”

- (14b) \*Τίν' ἐξήνεγκας, ὦ οἴμοι τέκνον, λόγον;  
 "What word did you say, \*O alas child?"
- (15a) ὦ γῆ καὶ ἥλιε καὶ σύνεσις καὶ παιδεία (*Aeschin.* 3.260)  
 "O earth and sun and wisdom and knowledge"
- (15b) \*ὦ γῆ καὶ ὦ ἥλιε καὶ ὦ σύνεσις καὶ ὦ παιδεία  
 "O earth and \*O sun and \*O wisdom and \*O knowledge"

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- (16a) Κακῶν, ὦ τάλας, πέλαγος εἰσορῶ, ὥστε μήποτε ἐκνεῦσαι (*Eur.Hipp.* 822)  
 "O miserable me, I see a sea of misfortunes, so that I will never escape"
- (16b) \*Κακῶν δ' πέλαγος εἰσορῶ, ὥστε, ὦ τάλας, μήποτε ἐκνεῦσαι  
 "I see a sea of misfortunes, so that I, \*O miserable me, will never escape"
- (17a) ὦ τάλας ἐγὼ ἀπόλωλα (*Soph. Phil.* 744)  
 "O miserable me, I have been lost"
- (17b) \*Τάλας ὦ ἐγὼ, ἀπόλωλα  
 "Miserable \*O me, I have been lost"
- (17c) \*Τάλας ἐγὼ ὦ, ἀπόλωλα  
 "Miserable me \*O, I have been lost"
- (18a) Οἴμοι, κακῶν δύστηνος, ὦ τάλας ἐγὼ (*Eur. Phoen.* 1345)  
 "Alas! I am unhappy for my misfortunes, O miserable me"
- (18b) \*Κακῶν δύστηνος, ὦ οἴμοι τάλας ἐγὼ  
 "I am unhappy for my misfortunes, \*O alas miserable me"
- (19a) ὦ λαμπρὸς αἰθὴρ ἡμέρας θ' ἄγνὸν φάος (*Eur. Fr.* 443, 1)  
 "O bright sky and pure light of the day"
- (19b) \*ὦ λαμπρὸς αἰθὴρ ἡμέρας θ' ὦ ἄγνὸν φάος  
 "O bright sky and \*O pure light of the day"

The restricted distribution of the address particle and its close relationship to the accompanying noun is an obvious indicator for the definition of both vocative and exclamative nominative phrases as independent syntactic units. The internal structure of both constructions (and especially that of the vocatives) has been widely discussed in the literature. According to this, vocative phrases are described as DPs which either lack a D head (Longobardi 1994, cited by Hill 2007) or are unable to use it (Szabolcsi 1994, cited by Hill 2007). Both approaches are founded on specific reasoning which is not going to be further discussed. On the contrary, what concerns here the most is first the acknowledgement of the syntactic identity of these positions, namely the fact that they both form a structural domain, the Address Phrase, which conditions the distribution of the DPs realized as vocatives or exclamative nominatives and second the recognition of their role as syntactic codifications of pragmatic roles, like the hearer or the speaker. This second point is decisive for the distinction of the Address Phrases from the DPs occurring in argument positions.

More specifically, whereas regular DPs function as syntactic codifications of semantic relations, the thematic roles, under lexical, structural and semantic conditions, Address Phrases function as the structural domain for the syntactic codification of pragmatic roles (Hill 2007), namely the roles played by the interlocutors of a conversation. As mentioned already, the exact definition of the role codified by each construction is context specific; however it is also related to the feature of definiteness.

### 5.2. The feature of definiteness

Definiteness is a common feature of many languages whose principal function is to specialize and identify the meaning of a DP (Lyons 1999: 282 ff.); therefore, it is usually seen as a semantic or pragmatic property. In languages like ancient Greek, definiteness is usually marked by the presence of the definite article or other markers with similar function, such as pronouns or numerals. However, despite its semantic concept, in recent years, definiteness has been also discussed in the syntactic literature. Seen in this context, it is taken to be a formal feature which plays a role in syntactic processes as well.

The motivation for claiming that there is a syntactic definiteness feature varies from language to language. In ancient Greek, this is to be found in its asymmetric relationship to its semantic equivalent, which concerns the semantic referent of a DP. In other words, the formal manifestation of the feature of definiteness in syntactic terms via the presence of a definite article or other similar marker does not necessarily imply the existence of its semantic counterpart and vice versa. This is the main reason why nouns marked as definite in syntactic terms may be semantically indefinite or similarly, nouns having no overt syntactic definiteness marking may be semantically definite in nature; cf. (20) – (21) and (22), respectively.

- (20) *Ὁ μὲν νομίζων τοῖς γονεῦσιν μόνον γεγενῆσθαι ... (Dem. 18.205)*  
 “Whoever thinks he has been born for his parents sake ...”
- (21) *Ἐυνεκφέρει δὲ ὁ βουλόμενος καὶ ἀστών καὶ ξένων (Thuc. 2.34.4)*  
 “Whoever from the citizens and foreigners wants to follows the funeral”
- (22) *Κλέων ὑπέφευγε τὸν πλοῦν (Thuc. 4.28.3)*  
 “Cleon avoided sailing”

This sort of asymmetric relation is fully understood in pragmatic terms as we will see; however it is decisive for the exact definition of the role expressed by the DP in the structural domain of both types of Address Phrase.

Starting with the vocatives, the pragmatic role of the hearer is defined by the absence of the syntactic definiteness feature which is formally realized by the lack of the definite article or any other marker of the same type. The only explanation to this fact is that a vocative DP, in contrast to a DP in an argument position, functions by nature as a marker of direct address and as such, it expresses definiteness as an inherent feature of its semantic constitution. As a result, there is no particular reason for the syntactic marking of this feature, since it exists by definition<sup>5</sup>.

Quite similarly, structures with an exclamative nominative are typically marked by the presence of a personal pronoun which functions as an indicator of syntactic definiteness. Again the principal role of the formal marking of definiteness is to specify the referent. Yet this very fact is totally irrelevant to the presence or absence of the definiteness marker, since that referent could easily be semantically indefinite.

Apparently, the crucial point in both instances is not so much the semantic definiteness of the DP appearing in the structural domain of an Address Phrase, as the presence or absence of its syntactic counterpart in combination to that domain. The main reason for this is that the structural context of the Address Phrase and the presence

<sup>5</sup> This may be also understood by the fact that in normal communication it is rather unnecessary for any speaker to have to assume that the interlocutor have to identify the referent, since he obviously knows who it is. Therefore any possible failure in the identification may be explained either as a failure of deixis or as a failure of the lexical storage on the part of the speaker or finally, as a failure of the addressee to accept the name or description by which he or she is addressed (Anderson 2007: 281).

or absence of the syntactic definiteness feature results in the syntactic codification of the pragmatic role which is related to that context and is understood as the equivalent of the s-case assigned to the DPs filling up argument positions.

This approach to the feature of definiteness opens the way for a new treatment of all extra-syntactic DPs in a way which does not radically distinguish them from the DPs occurring in argument positions. In particular, both constructions reveal that there is actually an asymmetry in the syntax – morphology interface, since they are not assigned an s-case. However, this lack is counterbalanced by the different, though equally syntactic, feature of syntactic definiteness, which may work as an input to the morphological operations leading to the derivation of m-cases, like the vocative and exclamative nominative.

## **6. The interpretation of the extra-syntactic constructions: a proposal**

The discussion in the previous section led to the conclusion that the derivation of a vocative or an exclamative nominative is based on the combination of the feature of syntactic definiteness with the structural domain defined by the Address Phrase. We also concluded that this approach allows for the interpretation of both constructions in similar terms as the DPs appearing in argument positions.

The details of this analogy are summarized in the following points: (i) the structural domain where each construction occurs, (ii) the factors conditioning its position inside this domain, (iii) the semantic concept or relation which is codified in each instance, (iv) the form of the syntactic codification and finally (v) the type of the morphological case which represents each construction.

In DPs filling up argument positions, the structural domain may be either another DP or a VP or a PP; the factors conditioning their position inside that domain may be structural or lexical or semantic or a combination of the three; the semantic concept codified is related to a certain  $\theta$ -role, whereas the form of the syntactic codification is through an s-case feature. This sort of information is morphologically realized by the set of m-cases available in a language. In ancient Greek this set involves four cases: the nominative, genitive, dative and accusative.

In vocative and exclamative nominative DPs, the structural domain is the Address Phrase; the factors conditioning their position are always structural, whereas the semantic concept codified is that of semantic definiteness. This codification of semantic definiteness is possible through its syntactic counterpart, namely the feature of syntactic definiteness, which is always absent (i.e. negatively marked) in structures with the vocative and present (i.e. positively marked) in structures with the exclamative nominative. Its combination, in the first instance, with the structural domain of the Address Phrase leads to the identification of the latter with the hearer of the conversation and allows for its morphological realization by the vocative. In the second instance, the combination identifies the Address Phrase with the speaker of the conversation and, accordingly, allows for its morphological representation by the exclamative nominative.

An interesting point of the description of the derivation of vocatives and exclamative nominatives is the fact that the specificity of the information involved in their derivation, namely the absence of the s-case feature in syntax and its replacement by the feature of syntactic definiteness is possibly responsible for their morphological peculiarity which distinguishes them (and especially the vocative) from the other cases, as we saw already in section 4.

In the remaining of the paper, we will try to apply our proposal to certain instances like those illustrated in (23), (24) and (25).

- (23) *Οἱ δὲ Πλαταιῆς ἀπέκτειναν τοὺς ἄνδρας εὐθύς* (*Thuc. 2.5.7*)  
 “The Plataeans killed the men immediately”
- (24) *Θύγατερ, τί ποτ’ αὐτίκα κύρσει;* (*Soph. Oed. Col. 224*)  
 “O daughter, what happened right now?”
- (25) *Ῥ κατάρρατος ἐγώ, τίς ἐμόν οὐκ ἐπόψεται πάθος;* (*Eur. Fr. 122. 1048*)  
 “O damned me! who is going to see my sufferings?”

As we see, in (23) the noun *ἄνδρας*: (a) is the head of a DP which belongs to the structural domain of the VP *ἀπέκτειναν*, (b) its position is conditioned by structural factors (i.e. it is a verb complement), (c) it is related to the thematic role PATIENT. Accordingly, it is assigned a structural accusative s-case and is realized by its morphological counterpart.

In (24), the noun *Θύγατερ*: (a) occurs in the structural domain of an Address Phrase (b) its position is conditioned by the structural factors defining the independence of that position of the main clause, (c) it expresses semantic definiteness, but (d) lacks syntactic definiteness (i.e. there is no definite article). The absence of the feature of syntactic definiteness within the domain of the Address Phrase defines the role of the latter as the hearer of the conversation and realizes it by the vocative case.

Finally, in (25) the noun *κατάρρατος*: (a) appears in the structural domain of an Address Phrase, (b) its position is structurally conditioned, (c) it expresses semantic definiteness and (d) marks it syntactically through the personal pronoun *ἐγώ*. This time, the presence of the feature of syntactic definiteness within the domain of the Address Phrase identifies its role as that of the speaker and realizes it via the (exclamative) nominative case.

Summing up, all case types involve syntactic information to the extent they fill up certain syntactic positions defined by a number of conditioning factors. Vocatives and exclamative nominatives are distinguished first by the feature of syntactic definiteness and second by the lack of correspondence to an s-case feature. The feature of syntactic definiteness is crucial for their assignment in the sense it compensates the lack of the s-case feature and accordingly, the absence of the semantic relation or  $\theta$ -role codified by it in the cases appearing in argument positions. In addition, it is related to the pragmatic role of the speaker or the hearer of a conversation, which is expressed by the vocative and exclamative nominative and acts as the functional equivalent of the  $\theta$ -role. In such a context, the feature of syntactic definiteness is nothing but a means for the syntactic codification of this pragmatic role just as the s-case feature is responsible for the syntactic codification of a  $\theta$ -role. However, despite its importance for vocatives and exclamative nominatives, syntactic definiteness may be also present in regular cases. The only difference is that it plays no role to the syntactic codification of the semantic relations expressed by them and therefore it adds nothing to the s-case feature underlying their formation. This interpretation of the data is consistent with the asymmetry in the syntax – morphology interface and the autonomy of morphology as a separate component of the grammar of language. Yet, it does not imply the total lack of a syntactic background in the morphological derivation of vocatives and exclamative nominatives, but its definition in different terms.

## 7. Conclusions

In this paper, we saw that vocatives and exclamative nominatives, although exceptional in their syntactic constitution, have the same morphological status as the other cases and therefore they may have a similar interpretation. In this vein, despite their exceptional

syntactic position outside the core sentence, syntax is still present in their formation and plays a crucial role in defining their syntactic domain and function. This is expressed by features, such as the Address Phrase and the syntactic definiteness. The Address Phrase constitutes the structural domain in which they occur, whereas the syntactic definiteness is the abstract codification of the semantic concept which underlines them and it is identified with the pragmatic roles of the speaker or the hearer of a conversation. This is the way with which both constructions counterbalance the lack of the s-case feature in the syntactic component, which however allows their overt morphological realization. On the other hand, regular cases represent a symmetric type of correspondence between the features of the s- and m-case, which is enough for their morphological derivation without the presence of extra features like that of syntactic definiteness which, accordingly, have no active role in the set of syntactic information underlying their morphological derivation. Such an approach is enough to interpret the idiosyncratic morphological character of the vocative and exclamative nominative with regards to the other inflectional forms of the paradigm. Moreover it has the benefit that, while accepting the existence of asymmetries in the syntax – morphology interface, allows for their restoration in a different context.

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