

MODERN GREEK STUDIES YEARBOOK

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And as one would expect of such difficult tasks it has a few mistakes. For example, at the end of the last chapter where the author "sings" the nine articles of the "profound and magical incantation," one searches in vain to find the eighth article. Still on the whole, the translation is a remarkable accomplishment. It was a noble undertaking and through it Koreans can be introduced to the thought of Nikos Kazantzakis.

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Rolf Hesse, *Syntax of the Modern Greek Verbal System. The Use of the Forms, Particularly in Combination with Θα and να*. *Opuscula Byzantina et Neograeca*, Vol. 2. (Copenhagen: Museum Tusulanum Press, 1980), pp. 132.

The past several years have seen an increased interest in the study of theoretical aspects of the Modern Greek language, as attested by the appearance of several books and doctoral dissertations in the area of Modern Greek linguistics, both in Europe and the United States, the publication of a number of articles on Modern Greek in linguistics journals and in journals with a wider scope as well, the presentation of papers on Greek topics at linguistics conferences, and even the convening of a now-annual international meeting on Greek and general linguistics at the University of Thessaloniki. Similarly, as the growth of Modern Greek Studies programs in the past decade in the United States demonstrates, there is now considerable interest in practical aspects of Modern Greek, specifically in learning the language and in learning how to use it effectively. It is within this context of the two-fold interest — theoretical and practical — in the Modern Greek language that Hesse's book must be considered, for it aims at both targets.

Hesse states his goal as follows: "The present study attempts to provide a survey of the use of Modern Greek verbal forms" (p. 11). His book is thus a "syntax" in the traditional sense, with a focus on use and description and not on analysis *per se*. This is underscored by the author's somewhat naive and partly cryptic remarks in the foreword (p. 9)

about "the fundamental naivistic-structural approach to language lying behind the [present] description and analysis, viz. that:

1. Language is built up of words,
2. in Greek, words are inflected,
3. it is a reasonable method . . . to describe the use of the different forms, and
4. notions of semantics should be introduced as late as possible.

A second goal of Hesse's is revealed in his discussion of the advantages of his descriptive and analytic system (p. 11): "The plan is simple and makes it easy to find answers that inevitably present themselves to anyone trying to learn Greek. e.g. when is the form γράφω used?"

Hesse proceeds to carry out his goals, giving numerous examples to illustrate his point and discussing them in a relatively nontechnical style so that even someone with little background in linguistics can make sense of what he writes. The examples include several idiomatic usages (e.g. *δπου φύγει φύγει* on p. 113) and discussion of turns of phrase which undoubtedly give a foreign learner of Greek problems (e.g. pp. 115–116 regarding the multiplicity of introducers for concessive clauses). Moreover, he introduces some very perceptive analytic insights, such as his classification of the perfect tense formative (e.g. *δέσει, δεθεί*) as aorist participles, his account of the future time use of the aorist (p. 38, e.g. *φύγαμε* 'off we go!'), and his distributional statements regarding the various negative particles in Greek (pp. 124 ff.).

Despite these positive points, though, Hesse's book is not without flaws. Although some analysis of the use of forms is given, there is not enough to satisfy the reader who has a background in linguistics. Most such readers will find frustrating remarks such as "but as it demands rather clumsy additions and transformations to carry through the nominal interpretation of all *να*-clauses, it is perhaps safer not to venture any general definition of the nature of *να* in Modern Greek" (p. 118); moreover, in some cases, for example, his classification of various "small words" in Greek (*νά, πού* etc.) as "introductions", several important questions are

begged. Is the *πού* used in relative clauses the same morpheme as the conjunction *πού*? (Yes, most likely, but one does not find the answer here.) Does *ἀλλά* really belong in the same class as *νά*, *πού*, *θά*, *ὅτι*, etc.? (Probably not, but no justification is even given for grouping it with them.)

In addition, one can take issue with several of the tangential remarks Hesse adds at times. For example, his "historical note" (pp. 67-8) regarding the Modern Greek future and conditional vastly oversimplifies a complex series of developments (and note also that *ἤθελα γνωρίσω* cited in footnote 1, p. 68 from *Erotokritos* A987 as an instance of a doubly inflected conditional could actually have *ἤθελα* from *ἤθελε νά* with an invariant auxiliary verb), and probably would have best been omitted.

Finally, there are two mechanical fail-

ings. Better glosses for the Greek examples, especially word-by-word glosses to go with the freer translations provided, would have made this book more generally usable, for example by linguists interested in Greek but with no background in the language or by people consulting it near the beginning of their study of the language. Similarly, one wonders if it would have been more generally useful if the examples had been in transcription instead of Greek characters.

Still, these are essentially quibbles, and the few negative comments here are not meant to detract from what is generally a very useful and interesting book. It is a welcome addition to the growing body of work on Modern Greek linguistics.

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