PREFACE

This collection, *Biblical Greek Language and Linguistics: Open Questions in Current Research*, brings together into one volume papers first delivered at the Society of Biblical Literature annual meetings in 1990 and 1991. These papers were all presented under the auspices of the then Consultation on Biblical Greek Language and Linguistics. This consultation was convened for the 1990 meeting, and, after two successful years, for the 1992 meeting has had its status elevated to that of a Section. It will continue in that capacity for at least the next five years.

When the original co-chairpersons of the Consultation, D.A. Carson and Stanley E. Porter, along with the two other original members of the steering committee, Daryl D. Schmidt and Moisés Silva, first discussed the possibility of instituting such a consultation, they did so because of a perceptible need within the discipline of New Testament studies and an apparent lack of opportunity at the Society of Biblical Literature's annual meetings. The annual meeting consisted of a variety of sessions focused upon various biblical topics, many of them hermeneutical and methodological in nature. There were sessions addressing questions of Hebrew language and linguistics, but none devoted in their focus to questions related to Greek language and linguistics. This struck us as significant, since the failure to provide a venue for concentrated examination of one of the two major biblical languages could only have serious repercussions for the discipline. It was not that issues of grammar did not arise in other sessions, to be sure, but that there was no place where one could choose to address solely grammatical issues, without necessarily feeling compelled to place them as subordinate to some other agenda, such as theology or history, as important as these may be in their own rights.

To go further, we considered the lack of opportunity to explore matters of language from self-consciously linguistic as well as more traditional grammatical perspectives to reflect sadly upon the general

state of regard for such matters within the wider profession of New Testament studies. Over the last thirty years there has been the increasing recognition that the study of the biblical languages has fallen on difficult times. More and more institutions do not require that Greek be studied to any significant level of technical competence. Consequently, fewer scholars are devoting their careers to matters of Greek language, and publications in the area have become relatively scarce. One cannot help but wonder whether such a condition does not have implications regarding the level of linguistic competence displayed by the exegetes who are in fact attempting to comment upon the Greek text.

As a result of the above observations, and after determining that there was significant and widespread interest among a variety of other scholars, application was made for a Consultation on Biblical Greek Language and Linguistics. The application consisted of the following statement of purpose and orientation. This same statement was resubmitted as part of the application for elevation to the status of Section, and is reprinted here.

> The Section on Biblical Greek Language and Linguistics is designed to promote and publish the latest research into the Greek of both Testaments. The Section does not assume that biblical Greek is a distinct dialect within the larger world of *Koine*: on the contrary, the assumption is that biblical Greek is part and parcel of the hellenistic Greek that dominated the Mediterranean world from 300 BC to AD 300. If the Section focuses on the corpora of the Old and New Testaments, it is because these writings generate major interest around the world, not only for religious but also for historical and academic reasons.
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> Research into the broader evidence of the period, including epigraphical and inscriptional materials as well as literary works, is more than welcome, provided the results are cast in terms of their bearing on biblical Greek. In the same way, the Section is devoted to fresh philological, syntactical, linguistic, and lexicographical study of the Greek of the biblical books with the subsidiary aim of displaying the contribution of such study to accurate exegesis.

The statement contains all of the essential requirements of the Section, including the material to be analysed, the methods to be used, and the purpose for which the research is done. The format for presentation of papers at the first two annual meetings has followed a consistent pattern that reflects the priorities of the statement of purpose. One session is devoted to a specified topic, with invited papers and

responses, and the other session is open to papers proposed by individual scholars. The response to this idea was noteworthy from the start. The designated session of 1990 in New Orleans, Louisiana, USA featured a panel discussion of the lexicon of the Greek New Testament edited by J.P. Louw and E.A. Nida. David Aune is to be thanked for his organizing and chairing this highly successful first session of the new Consultation. The designated session of 1991 in Kansas City, Missouri, USA featured a panel discussion of two recent volumes on Greek verbal aspect. The audience for that occasion was impressive in its size, in the light of the perceived technicality of the subject matter. The subject is an important one, and one that promises not to go away in the next several years. If the proponents of the theory are correct, the semantic category of verbal aspect will prove vital to future analysis and exegesis of Greek, including that of the New Testament. The two major papers and two responses from that session are introduced and included in Part I, below.

The open sessions of 1990 and 1991 included a number of papers on a range of topics in current research, including various theoretical linguistic orientations and a range of applications and useful exegetical insights. There are several important questions to ask when deciding which essays to include in the collection of a group of disparate essays such as this. The question is not simply which papers are the best or worst, since virtually every one of the papers has at least something to commend it. The questions instead focus on which ones give an accurate sampling of the kinds of papers presented at the conference, and which ones possess the greatest significance in the light of issues of linguistic modelling, demonstrable discussion of grammatical categories, insights gained for exegesis of particular texts, and potential to stimulate further discussion, to name only a few. The fact that we have decided to include certain of the papers means that some of the papers have had to be excluded for one reason or another. We do not mean to imply that these papers were not good, but it was felt that they were not as significant in giving evidence of the current state of informed analysis of New Testament Greek as those included. New Testament studies is beginning to see results from its attempts to reassess the accepted methods of New Testament analysis. It would be rewarding for all of us, editors, contributors and participants, to discover that this collection in some way serves as a catalyst for others to begin or continue their own work in the area of Greek grammar

and linguistics. They can be assured that there is a sympathetic venue for presentation of such results in the Section.

Because this volume divides itself so neatly into two sections, a separate introduction is provided to each part. Part I: Verbal Aspect includes the presentations and responses on the topic of Greek verbal aspect first read in Kansas City in 1991. It was rewarding to see that despite the specialized nature of the topic the papers prompted insightful responses and a number of penetrating questions in the time left after the formal presentations. The revisions to these papers consist only of incorporated responses to issues specifically raised during the session. Part II: Other Topics includes four papers selected from the eight presented in the two open sessions of 1990 and 1991. The constraints of time prevented the participants from being able to elucidate everything that they considered their subjects warranted, so the full papers are presented here, revised in the light of the informative question time following each.

The editors, who served as co-chairpersons of the original Consultation and who now serve as co-chairpersons of the Section, wish to recognize two groups of people who have enabled the Consultation on Biblical Greek Language and Linguistics to be as successful as it has been so far. The first vote of thanks must go to the various contributors. In the present climate of academic biblical studies, it is understandable that scholars would naturally gravitate towards exploration of the topics that appear to arouse the most interest and to constitute the heart of the discipline's current dominant concerns. One of the aims of this Consultation (and now Section) is to put issues of Greek grammar and linguistics back into the centre of the discussion. We are grateful to the contributors who have accepted this challenge. Many of them have had to work in relative isolation as they have developed interpretative grammatical strategies, and as they have dared to suggest that their grammatical matrixes have significant and even fundamental implications for how to interpret particular Greek texts. The second vote of thanks goes to those who have attended the various sessions. Even though attendance has varied depending upon the paper topics and format, it is fair to say that we have been pleasantly surprised to see the numbers in virtually every instance exceed our expectations. And the attenders have done more than simply occupy their seats. The discussion following papers has rarely suffered from a lack of participation. There are always more

questions than there is time for their asking, resulting in many useful discussions after the formal sessions have ended.

Looking to the future, we anticipate more of the same. In particular, we would like to encourage grammarians to develop grammatical models to apply to ancient Greek, including that of the New Testament. We wish always to illustrate the connection between grammatical description and exegesis. We would also like to encourage studies of the Greek found outside of the New Testament, including the Greek of the Septuagint (LXX), of the papyri and inscriptions, and of non-biblical authors. There are also a number of fundamental topics where there is room for serious discussion and debate, including the nature of the Greek found in the New Testament in the light of possible Semitic influence, the contribution of discourse analysis and rhetorical models for analysis of the text of the New Testament, and the use of stylistics in evaluating questions of authorship and sources. Any or all of these topics may be addressed in designated sessions in the future. Individual papers on them are also welcome.

Stanley E. Porter
D.A. Carson

AN INTRODUCTION TO THE PORTER/FANNING DEBATE

D.A. Carson

Students of elementary Greek tend to learn a large number of rules to which subsequent courses add the exceptions. The more reflective students ultimately ask themselves if the sheer number and variety of exceptions in some instances call in question the validity of the rule first articulated.

Few areas of Greek grammar have produced more puzzlement of this kind than the verbal system. The history of the study of the language betrays the difficulty of accurately describing the semantics of verbal morphology. There is not space here to trace these developments from the time of the early Greek grammarians (second century BCE) to the present. In the modern period, however, it would be fair to say that the prevailing influence of rationalism resulted in the view, throughout most of the nineteenth century, that time and tense-forms are isomorphic.[1] The number of exceptions was so daunting that some other key was sought. Various developments in comparative philology led many in the second half of the nineteenth century to link tense-forms not to time but to the kind of action that actually occurred—in short, to *Aktionsart*.[2] Some combination of these two models still controls most of the major Greek grammars. The first model, it is usually argued, operates in the indicative, and the second everywhere else in the Greek verbal system.[3] One of the most remarkable features

1. One thinks, for instance, of G.B. Winer, *A Treatise on the Grammar of New Testament Greek Regarded as a Sure Basis for New Testament Exegesis* (trans. W. F. Moulton; Edinburgh: T. & T. Clark, 3rd edn, 1882).

2. So K. Brugmann, *Griechische Grammatik* (ed. A. Thumb; Munich: Beck, 4th edn, 1913 [1885]).

3. So, more or less, J.H. Moulton, *A Grammar of New Testament Greek.* I. *Prolegomena* (Edinburgh: T. & T. Clark, 3rd edn, 1908); A.T. Robertson, *A Grammar of the Greek New Testament in the Light of Historical Research* (Nashville: Broadman, 4th edn, 1934); F. Blass and A. Debrunner, *A Greek*

of these grammars, however, is how the authors oscillate between an implicit definition of *Aktionsart* that grounds tense-form differences in the kinds of action to which reference is made, and an implicit definition that grounds tense-form differences in the decision of the author to describe or think of an action in a certain way. One model tries to tie tense-forms to what actually takes place; the other ties tense-forms to the author's depiction of what takes place. The two are constantly confused. Even where there is formal recognition that the two models are different (thus BDF §318 labels *Aktionsarten* as 'kinds of action' and aspects as 'points of view'), these grammars feel no embarrassment in assigning a tense-form to one or the other depending entirely on the apparent exigencies of the context.

In fact, aspect theory had been growing alongside the publication of these grammars, yet was largely unrecognized by them. Sometimes developments occurred that did not explicitly use the expression 'aspect theory' but nevertheless contributed to the field. For instance, at the end of the last century Donovan, in a series of articles, persuasively demonstrated that the common assertion that the present imperative exhorts to continuing action while the aorist imperative exhorts to beginning action simply will not stand up.[1] Although a number of subsequent studies have strongly buttressed his evidence,[2]

Grammar of the New Testament and Other Early Christian Literature (trans. and rev. by R.W. Funk; Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1961); N. Turner, *A Grammar of New Testament Greek.* III. *Syntax* (Edinburgh: T. & T. Clark, 1963); F. Blass, A. Debrunner and F. Rehkopf, *Grammatik des neutestamentlichen Griechisch* (Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 14th edn, 1976)—to cite but a few.

1. J. Donovan, 'Greek Jussives', *Classical Review* 9 (1895), pp. 145-49; and, 'German Opinion on Greek Jussives', *Classical Review* 9 (1895), pp. 289-93, 342-46, 444-47.

2. See H.D. Naylor, 'More Prohibitions in Greek', *Classical Review* 20 (1906), p. 348; A. Poutsma, 'Over de tempora van de imperativus en de conjunctivus hortativus-prohibitivus in het Grieks', *Verhandelingen der Koninklijke Akademie van Wetenschappen te Amsterdam* 27/2 (1928), pp. 1-84; J.P. Louw, 'On Greek Prohibitions', *Acta Classica* 2 (1959), pp. 43-57; W.F. Bakker, *The Greek Imperative: An Investigation into the Aspectual Differences between the Present and Aorist Imperatives in Greek Prayer from Homer up to the Present Day* (Amsterdam: Hakkert, 1966).

the major grammars have not mentioned it.[1] More broadly, verbal aspect theory, largely a development generated by the study of Slavonic languages, became the focus of much work. Some of this filtered into the study of Greek. So far as I am aware, the first full-length treatment of verbal aspect in Greek was that of Holt (1943),[2] but his focus was not on the Greek New Testament. Mandilaras treated the Hellenistic papyri;[3] Comrie, followed by Dahl and Bache, produced full-length studies of verbal aspect as a semantic category.[4]

But it was left to Mateos,[5] and especially to McKay,[6] to attempt systematically to introduce verbal-aspect theory to Greek generally, and especially to the Greek of the New Testament. While preserving the traditional categories of *Aktionsart*, Mateos attempted to make space in the study of New Testament Greek for verbal aspect by tying

1. For example, Turner (*Syntax*, pp. 74-75) published his work after all but Bakker, yet does not mention any of the relevant studies by Donovan, Naylor, Poutsma or Louw.

2. J. Holt, *Etudes d'aspect* (Acta Jutlandica Aarskrift for Aarhus Universitet, 15.2; Copenhagen: Universitetsforlaget I Aarhus, 1943).

3. B.G. Mandilaras, *The Verb in the Greek Non-Literary Papyri* (Athens: Hellenic Ministry of Culture and Sciences, 1973).

4. B. Comrie, *Aspect: An Introduction to the Study of Verbal Aspect and Related Problems* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1976); Ö. Dahl, *Tense and Aspect Systems* (Oxford: Basil Blackwell, 1985); C. Bache, *Verbal Aspect: A General Theory and its Application to Present-Day English* (Odense: Odense University Press, 1985).

5. J. Mateos, *El aspecto verbal en el nuevo testamento* (Madrid: Ediciones Cristiandad, 1977).

6. Beginning in 1965, K.L. McKay has left a trail of important articles: 'The Use of the Ancient Greek Perfect down to the End of the Second Century AD', *Bulletin of the Institute of Classical Studies* 12 (1965), pp. 1-21; 'Syntax in Exegesis', *TynBul* 123 (1972), pp. 39-57; 'Some Linguistic Points in Marxsen's Resurrection Theory', *ExpTim* 84 (1972–73), pp. 330-32; 'Further Remarks on the "Historical" Present and Other Phenomena', *Foundations of Language* 11 (1974), pp. 247-51; 'On the Perfect and Other Aspects in the Greek Non-Literary Papyri', *Bulletin of the Institute of Classical Studies* 27 (1980), pp. 23-49; 'On the Perfect and Other Aspects in New Testament Greek', *NovT* 23 (1981), pp. 289-329; 'Repeated Action, the Potential and Reality in Ancient Greek', *Antichthon* 15 (1981), pp. 36-46; 'Aspects of the Imperative in Ancient Greek', *Antichthon* 20 (1986), pp. 41-58. See also his *Greek Grammar for Students: A Concise Grammar of Classical Attic with Special Reference to Aspect in the Verb* (Canberra: Australian National University, 1974).

the aspect of verbs to the kind of action reflected in their lexical meaning. McKay goes much further. The traditional labels attached to verbal morphology are inadequate, he insists, since they are connected in our minds with the time of event. Although he continues to use the labels 'perfect' and 'aorist', he introduces a new label, 'imperfective', to refer to the semantic weight of the present and imperfect verbal forms. Verbal aspect, he writes, is 'the way in which the writer or speaker regards the action in its context—as a whole act [aorist], as a process [imperfective], or as a state [perfect]'.[1] McKay insists that outside the indicative verbal aspect determines verbal meaning. Even in the indicative mood, he tends to minimize the extent to which the time of event is connected with verbal form.

Obviously I have mentioned only a few of the major players. Nevertheless this potted history sets the stage for Porter[2] and Fanning.[3] Their respective works are described and assessed (by each other and by others) in the following pages, and it is no part of my task to duplicate those efforts here. Still, it may be of use to students and to grammarians who have not wrestled with verbal-aspect theory if I briefly indicate where Porter and Fanning agree (and what an achievement this agreement signals), and where they disagree. The latter, though initially difficult to delineate precisely, is especially important: each ends up insisting the other has not really been consistent or even properly informed in his use of verbal aspect. An orientation to this polarization may make the debate somewhat easier to follow.

Both Porter and Fanning argue that verbal aspect is concerned with the 'viewpoint' of the author toward the event represented by the verb. Porter defines verbal aspect as

> a synthetic semantic category (realized in the forms of verbs) used of meaningful oppositions in a network of tense systems to grammaticalize the author's reasoned subjective choice of conception of a process.[4]

1. McKay, *Greek Grammar*, p. 44.

2. S.E. Porter, *Verbal Aspect in the Greek of the New Testament, with Reference to Tense and Mood* (Studies in Biblical Greek, 1; New York: Peter Lang, 1989).

3. B.M. Fanning, *Verbal Aspect in New Testament Greek* (Oxford Theological Monographs; Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1990).

4. Porter, *Verbal Aspect*, p. 88.

Somewhat similarly, Fanning writes,

> Verbal aspect in NT Greek is that category in the grammar of the verb which reflects the focus or viewpoint of the speaker in regard to the action or condition which the verb describes... To be more specific, aspect is concerned with the speaker's viewpoint concerning the action in the sense that it implicitly sets up a relationship between the action described and a reference-point from which the action is viewed... It is... a rather subjective category, since a speaker may choose to portray certain occurrences by one aspect or another without regard to the nature of the occurrence itself.[1]

To traditionalist grammarians, this level of agreement, in work undertaken quite independently but building on a heritage of research that has been overlooked far too long, is nothing short of stunning. It means, for instance, that insofar as verbal aspect has been grammaticalized in the morphology of the Greek verb, one cannot immediately leap to the kind of event to which reference is being made (*Aktionsart*), or to the time of event to which reference is being made (as in a time-based analysis of the verbal system), but to the writer's or speaker's decision to depict the event in a particular way. The bearing of this result on exegesis cannot easily be overestimated.

On the other hand, Porter and Fanning find themselves at odds over several principles and countless details. If I understand them correctly, the heart of the issue between them is extremely important at the level of fundamental theory—although, interestingly enough, in many instances they would arrive at rather similar exegetical *conclusions* even if their respective ways of arriving there are disparate. The issue between them can be simply put. Porter argues that aspect and only aspect is grammaticalized in the tense-forms of Greek, in all moods (which in his analysis are now renamed 'attitudes'). There are quasi-exceptions, such as the future, which has a place apart, morphologically speaking, in the Greek verbal structure; or a verb such as εἶναι, which does not offer a full range of tense-form choices and is therefore 'aspectually vague', but in no case does the tense-form carry an unambiguous semantic feature other than what is aspectual (such as indication of time or *Aktionsart*). Fanning sharply distinguishes aspect from *Aktionsart* at the theoretical level, but holds that the actual semantic freight carried by any particular verbal form

1. Fanning, *Verbal Aspect*, pp. 84-85.

depends on complex interaction with lexis (the basic semantic range of the verb in question), context, temporal structures and much more. He is not saying merely that the sentence or the discourse carries this additional meaning, but that the verbal form itself takes it on board.

All the points of dispute between Porter and Fanning turn on these fundamentally different perceptions as to what meaning is conveyed by the verbal forms themselves. Fanning is greatly interested in the work of Vendler and Kenny[1] and their successors. Operating with philosophical rather than linguistic concerns, Vendler and Kenny, working independently, proposed rather similar taxonomies of verbs[2] and related these classifications to the kinds of action verbs might depict—that is to something akin to what Greek grammarians would call *Aktionsart*. One of Fanning's distinctive contributions is his attempt to relate the Vendler–Kenny taxonomy to aspect. In numerous instances this generates exegeses that have the feel of being fresh and nuanced. From Fanning's perspective, Porter's approach is reductionistic, failing to take into account the complexities that interrelate to convey meaning through the Greek tense-forms. Moreover, dependent as he is on Comrie's theoretical construction of aspect, Fanning objects to Porter's use of 'stative' as an aspect, judging that 'stative' is inseparably tied to *Aktionsart*. Porter, then, in Fanning's view, has not only failed to learn from the Vendler–Kenny taxonomy, but is reductionistic and even inconsistent.

Porter's approach to the subject is that of a working linguist. He adopts systemic linguistics as his model, a flexible and powerful (and astonishingly non-dogmatic) analytical tool developed by J.R. Firth and especially M.A.K. Halliday[3] (though as far as I can see his analysis

1. Z. Vendler, 'Verbs and Times', *Philosophical Review* 66 (1975), pp. 43-60—reprinted and slightly revised in his *Linguistics in Philosophy* (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 1967), pp. 97-121; A. Kenny, *Action, Emotion and Will* (London: Routledge & Kegan Paul, 1963), pp. 151-86.

2. Vendler's classification (to choose one of the two) is fourfold, in two groupings: A. Continuous verbs: (1) activities that 'go on in time in a homogeneous way'; (2) accomplishments that 'also go on in time' but 'proceed toward a terminus which is logically necessary to their being what they are', including a 'climax'; B. Non-continuous verbs: (1) achievements, which 'can be predicated only for single moments of time' or 'occur at a single moment'; (2) states, which 'can be predicated for shorter or longer periods of time' or may 'last for a period of time'.

3. Probably their most important works are, respectively, J.R. Firth, *Papers in*

is not dependent on this model). Partly to avoid the confusion of using current labels in fresh ways, Porter adopts terminology common in Slavonic linguistics, and finds three fundamental aspects: perfective, grammaticalized in the aorist; imperfective, grammaticalized in the present and the imperfect, and the stative, grammaticalized in the perfect and pluperfect. Subtle adjustments are introduced into almost every dimension of Greek verbal morphology, but the result is that Porter argues that the *tense-forms* of Greek grammaticalize verbal aspect, and that alone. Of course, Porter is not unaware of the contributions to the meaning of verbs used in particular contexts made by lexis, context, and a complex web of markers that linguists sum up as *deixis*, but the entire focus of his work is on the semantics of the morphology of the Greek verb, not on pragmatics. From this perspective, a critic might disagree with many of Porter's brief exegeses without denting his theory in the slightest (in exactly the same way that traditionalist adherence to *Aktionsart* in moods outside the indicative could generate many different exegeses). From the vantage point of Porter, then, Fanning so seriously confuses semantics and pragmatics that his work is fatally flawed. Without any consistent, undergirding theory of the semantic contributions made by the morphology of the Greek verbal system Fanning's approach, in Porter's view, is methodologically arbitrary and linguistically without rigor.

At the consultation where these papers were first read, I found myself in the chair and therefore committed to neutrality. In introducing these essays, or at least the fundamental issue that has called them forth, I must maintain the same stance. But perhaps I might be permitted to venture one or two suggestions to the principal protagonists.

Porter has focused most of his considerable energies on developing a consistent semantic theory of Greek verbal morphology. Although he has not entirely ignored pragmatics, I suspect that his aspect theory will find wider and more rapid acceptance if he now devotes more attention to a systematic articulation of the ways in which a wide range of factors impinge on the meaning of a verb in a particular

Linguistics, 1934–51 (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1951); and M.A.K. Halliday, *Halliday: System and Function in Language* (ed. G.R. Kress; Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1976).

context. The Vendler–Kenny taxonomy, for instance, could easily be adapted to dealing with the challenge of exegesis where the interpreter has adopted Porter's aspect theory. When Porter is charged with too forcefully stressing the subjective nature of the choice in tense-form made by the speaker or writer, he could develop at greater length than he has the kinds of factors (lexical, temporal, social and others) that might prompt the speaker to opt for one particular form. For instance, the fact that perhaps 85 per cent of finite aorists in the indicative are past-referring might owe a fair bit to the intrinsic likelihood that an action in the past will be presented as a 'complete' action: the speaker's or writer's choice of tense-forms (grammaticalizing aspects), theoretically as open-ended as the forms available, may be sharply constrained, or at least reduced within definable probabilities, by the pragmatics. Systematizing such reflections would go a long way toward deflating the protests of those grammarians who at this point are still unwilling to abandon all connections between verbal form and time in the indicative. It is not that Porter has done none of this work; rather one suspects that he will win more adherents by extending his theory along such lines in the future—or, more accurately put, by applying his theory to these kinds of problems.

Fanning has frequently demonstrated a fine sensitivity to the complexities of exegesis, and an admirably wide reading of many elements of aspect theory. On the long haul, however, if his theory is to prevail he must make explicit how morphology is tied to aspect (and other semantic elements?). More broadly, his future work on this topic will have to demonstrate a greater grasp of the fundamental distinction between semantics and pragmatics.

To both of these scholars all of us owe an immense debt of gratitude. Their work will be sifted and evaluated with profit for decades. For that reason the evaluations of Daryl Schmidt and Moisés Silva, published here, are not only invaluable in their own right, but harbingers of discussions to come. From now on, treatments of the verbal system of New Testament Greek that do not probingly interact with Porter and Fanning will rule themselves outmoded. Few works can claim so much; for their achievement we are grateful.