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Beek, L.C. van

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THE GREEK VERB AND ITS INDO-EUROPEAN ORIGINS

WILLI (A.) *Origins of the Greek Verb*. Pp. xxxii + 713, figs. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2018. Cased, £120, US\$155. ISBN: 978-1-107-19555-4.

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Why are there so many different present stem formants in ancient Greek verbal morphology? How did certain typical pairings of aspect stems originate? What was the function of reduplication in the perfect stem? It is these types of questions concerning the relation between form and function that W. addresses in this important monograph. The answers are sought not only within Greek itself, but also in the reconstructed verbal system of Proto-Indo-European (PIE) and its ancestral stages.

In the preface, W. outlines the main reason for his endeavour: a sense of unease when explaining commonly accepted ideas about the Indo-European verb in teaching. In discussing his predecessors' theories, W. (p. xxiii) aims 'to set out where and why ... their ideas call for discussion and improvement'. He also offers his own theory, but not in a dogmatic way: the book 'wants to be read ... as a contribution to an open debate'. Since their discovery, branches like Anatolian and Tocharian have caused an ongoing reassessment of PIE reconstructions, but W. aims 'to re-establish Greek at the heart of the agenda' of Indo-Europeanist research (p. xxv). Incidentally, much of the book's main argument can be found in condensed form in W.'s 2007 article 'Of aspects, augments, aorists – or how to say to have killed a dragon' (in C. George [ed.], *Greek and Latin from an Indo-European Perspective*, pp. 34–48).

The book is divided into a preface, ten chapters (the longest 88 pages) and an epilogue. All chapters are divided into small subsections; the numerous cross-references to these sections are very helpful, as are the index of forms and general index. In discussing etymological details, W. makes use of clear tables. An immense asset is the exhaustive, up-to-date bibliography; references to it are usually helpful and functional. This makes the book an invaluable guide through the maze of studies on the Greek and Indo-European verb.

Chapter 1 presents an overview of the Greek verbal system: its different morphological markers and their Indo-European reconstructions. Chapter 2 dives straightaway into the central issue: what was the prehistoric relation between tense and aspect? W. discusses four models (K. Hoffmann and K. Strunk, J. Jasanoff, W. Cowgill and J. Kuryłowicz), highlighting their advantages and drawbacks. He subscribes (pp. 56–7) to the view that an older PIE aspect-dominated system was superseded by a tense-dominated system in the daughter languages, and retains Cowgill's idea that the **-h₂e* conjugation pattern underlying i.a. the Greek perfect started off as forming nominal verbs.

The Greek evidence is discussed in Chapters 3–8, which form the book's core. Each chapter deals with a specific morphological type, trying to distinguish its original function: reduplicated aorists, reduplicated presents, the perfect stem, the thematic aorist, the augment and the sigmatic aorist. The focus is on those formations that may shed light on more original functional distinctions within the verbal system, but most features of the Greek verb receive at least some discussion (exceptions are the optative, nasal presents and the aorist morphemes *-(θ)η-*, but see pp. 597–8 for suggestions on the latter's origin).

The future in **-se/o-* is treated together with the sigmatic aorist (pp. 441–52); according to W. it originated from the aorist subjunctive. The origin of the thematic root presents like $\phi\acute{\epsilon}\rho\omega$ and their relation to the subjunctive is discussed in Chapter 4 (pp. 184–200). W. follows C. Watkins in analysing the 3 sg. of the structure **CeC-e-ti* as an extension of a stative form **CeC-e/o*.

One of W.'s most controversial claims concerns reduplication. Cross-linguistically, reduplication usually signals iteration, plurality or intensification (p. 119), but W. submits that it could mark perfectivity or even telicity in (early) PIE, perhaps developing from a 'verbal collective' (p. 122). The reduplicated aorist is a case in point: it productively forms factitives in Homeric Greek ($\pi\acute{\epsilon}\phi\phi\alpha\delta\epsilon$ 'made sbd. notice') and Vedic Sanskrit, but not in inherited formations like **we-wk^w-e/o-* 'say' (> $\epsilon\iota\pi\epsilon\iota\nu$) and **g^{wh}e-g^{wh}n-e/o-* 'slay' (> $\pi\epsilon\phi\nu\epsilon\iota\nu$). W. therefore argues (pp. 109–10) that the reduplicated aorist was originally merely aspectually perfective ($\epsilon\iota\pi\epsilon\iota\nu$, $\pi\epsilon\phi\nu\epsilon\iota\nu$ being relics of this situation) and that it developed high-transitive semantics when it was pushed towards the margins of the perfective domain, under the pressure of new perfective formations like the *s*-aorist. Moreover, W. holds that the reduplicated aorist was once the *only* productive marker of aspectual perfectivity; following Kuryłowicz, he assumes that root aorists are 'aspectually shifted imperfectives' (cf. pp. 52–3; 124–5) to telic roots. The claim that reduplication encoded higher transitivity is further elaborated for the present stem in Chapter 4.

The chapters on the perfect and the augment are among the strongest, even if I cannot agree with everything. Chapter 5 includes a persuasive case (pp. 225–44) for viewing the Indo-European perfect as a stative, rather than stative-resultative (a more widespread view; see e.g. M.J. Kümmel, *Das Perfekt im Indoiranischen* [2000], pp. 65ff.). Following Cowgill, W. interprets the (originally unreduplicated) perfect shape **CoCe* as reflecting an agentive nominal verb (e.g. **b^hore* 'is a carrier', whence 'is carrying'), and derives the types $\phi\phi\acute{\epsilon}\omega$ (iteratives) and $\phi\phi\acute{\beta}\acute{\epsilon}\omega$ (causatives) from this.

Chapter 7 contains a very clear summary of the problems relating to the Homeric augment and of previous interpretations of its function. Traditionally, the augment is viewed as a past tense marker, but Homer uses it relatively often (i) with resultative aorists and recent pasts, which link a past event to the present situation, and (ii) in the gnomic aorist and in similes. Furthermore, the past iteratives in *-σκε/o-* regularly omit the augment. As previous scholars have observed, this flatly contradicts the traditional view, but no unanimity exists as to how Homeric augmentation tendencies should be analysed. As in his 2007 article, W. proposes that the augment marks perfectivity. This indeed explains its higher frequency with aorists (as opposed to imperfects and pluperfects) and ties in well with the frequent absence of augmentation in Homeric narrative and in Mycenaean administrative documents. W. then compares the augment to reduplication, arguing that zero-graded thematic aorists of the structure **h₁e-CC-e/o-* are 'reduplicated aorist[s] in disguise' (p. 348). I find this the most salient weak spot in the overall argument. The main problem, even granting the non-trivial technical details concerning the generalisation of *e*-reduplication with all laryngeal-initial roots, is that a motivation for replacing **Ce-CC-e/o-* with **h₁e-CC-e/o-* is lacking.

Notwithstanding this objection, W.'s book contains many valuable observations that should give any Indo-Europeanist food for thought. For instance, in Chapter 6 W. rightly stresses the difficulties with viewing the Greek thematic aorist as a replacement of older root aorists. Another example: present formations of the so-called *tudāti*-type (thematic with zero-grade root) are usually viewed as archaic relics, especially in Indo-Iranian, but W. argues that they reflect imperfectivised thematic aorists.

After a lengthy discussion of the sigmatic aorist and its origins in Chapter 8, the reader is taken back into deep linguistic prehistory. Chapter 9 is devoted to alignment systems; W. argues that in a pre-stage PIE was an ergative language and that traces of a shift to

accusative alignment are visible not only in nominal morphology, but also in verbal morphology and stem formation. Chapter 10 spells out the consequences of this claim for Greek.

As noted in the preface (p. xxiii), at least three types of Indo-Europeanists can be distinguished: ‘reconstructionists’, who only care about the formal aspects of the proto-language; traditional ‘philologists’, who concentrate on the historical developments of the attested languages; and ‘typologists’, who study the function of verbal categories cross-linguistically. W. rightly observes that there is too little interaction between these three approaches. It is to his advantage that he does not belong to any specific regional ‘school’ of Indo-European linguistics, and he succeeds well in offering an unbiased treatment of the literature. In developing his own argument the focus is (inevitably) on typology and internal reconstruction, sometimes at the expense of formal comparison.

The book provides an excellent discussion of long-standing problems in Indo-European verbal morphology; it offers some intriguing new solutions while also clarifying many details about the early Greek verb itself. As such, the book deserves to be on the desktop of all Classical linguists, philologists and comparativists working on the verb.

Leiden University

LUCIEN VAN BEEK
l.van.beek@hum.leidenuniv.nl

TENSE, ASPECT AND MODALITY IN ANCIENT GREEK

BENTEIN (K.), JANSE (M.), SOLTIC (J.) (edd.) *Variation and Change in Ancient Greek Tense, Aspect and Modality*. (Amsterdam Studies in Classical Philology 23.) Pp. xiv + 303, figs. Leiden and Boston: Brill, 2017. Cased, €115, US\$133. ISBN: 978-90-04-31164-0. doi:10.1017/S0009840X18002640

This volume grew out of the ‘International Colloquium on Greek Linguistics’ in Ghent in 2011. It is not just a conference collection, however. It has a clear focus on Greek tense and aspect; the chapters, many of which are important contributions to the study of Greek, work together organically to give an overview of the state of the art of Greek grammar after four decades of the interaction of functional approaches to the Greek language with other modern work in Greek linguistics. The chapters are generally clearly and accessibly written, so the volume will also be useful for non-specialists who want a sense of the lasting contributions of recent work. There are twelve chapters (a general introduction followed by eleven contributions on specific aspects of Greek mood, tense and aspect). For reasons of space I have picked seven chapters to talk about briefly.

G.C. Wakker’s ‘The Gnomic Aorist in Hesiod’ resumes a suggestion made by A. Rijksbaron (*The Syntax and Semantics of the Verb in Classical Greek* [1984]) on the choice of the aorist. The chapter is a useful overview of the Hesiodic examples, which touches helpfully on more recent discussion of the augment. She shows how the ‘omnitemporality’ of this aorist is always signalled by other elements in the immediate context, specifically the present tense and particles such as τε. The aorist encodes aspect (the