Cambridge Grammar of Classical Greek

This is the first full-scale reference grammar of classical Greek in English in a century. The first work of its kind to reflect the significant advances in linguistics made in recent decades, it offers students, teachers and academics a comprehensive yet user-friendly treatment. The chapters on phonology and morphology make full use of insights from comparative and historical linguistics to elucidate the complex systems of roots, stems and endings. The syntax offers linguistically up-to-date descriptions of such topics as case usage, tense and aspect, voice, subordinate clauses, infinitives and participles. An innovative section on textual coherence treats particles and word order and discusses several sample passages in detail, demonstrating new ways of approaching Greek texts. Throughout the book numerous original examples are offered, all with translations and often with clarifying notes. Clearly laid-out tables, helpful cross-references and full indexes make this essential resource accessible to users of all levels.

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Cambridge Grammar of Classical Greek

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Preface

On Cs and Gs: History and Aims of the Book

Conception and Development

Readers picking up this hefty tome may be surprised to learn that the first C of CGCG (as we like to call it) once stood for Concise. The syntax part of that Concise Grammar of Classical Greek began, as so many grammar books no doubt have, as lecture handouts – to be precise, as EvEB’s handouts used in first-year Greek syntax classes at the University of Oxford. The work grew from a dissatisfaction with existing teaching materials in English: the main concern was that those materials did not reflect decades’ worth of advances in the linguistic description of Ancient Greek, inspired by the incorporation of insights from various areas of general linguistics. The last good full-scale reference grammar in English, Smyth’s Greek Grammar, for all its excellence, stemmed from a time long before such advances had even been possible, and more recent grammar books had done nothing to bridge the gap. The truth was that no book existed that represented the current state of knowledge on the Greek language. There were other problems, too: Smyth was often perceived by undergraduates as daunting and dense, but alternatives were typically too limited in their coverage; examples used in existing grammars were not always representative, and based on antiquated text editions; terminology was confusing and outmoded; and so forth.

The lecture handouts began to look more like a book when EvEB was joined by AR in revising the material and producing additional chapters. LH, who had also been teaching at Oxford and who had run into similar difficulties with existing materials, then joined, and he and EvEB wrote the first version of the section on textual coherence – a particular desideratum in view of the advances in linguistics mentioned above.

Late in 2009, at the instigation of Juliane Kerkhecker, Grocyn Lecturer at Oxford, the material was sent, in the state that it had now attained (still without a morphology), to Cambridge University Press – not so much as a full-fledged book proposal (in the minds of the authors, at least: without the morphology the work could not yet lay full claim to its first G), but as an opening gambit. To our delight, the Press took the submission very seriously, and engaged a large number of readers to judge the work. This led to a contract, and a change of title to Cambridge Grammar of Classical Greek.

A very great deal of labour, however, was still to be done at this point. Over the next few years – with many delays as the result of other obligations – we drafted the phonology and morphology chapters, and overhauled the existing parts to take
into account the readers’ reports (which had been gratifyingly favourable and detailed). It is in this period that MdB, former Grocyn Lecturer at Oxford, who had himself been planning a similar effort, joined the writing team.

The revised work, which had grown considerably due to addition of the phonology/morphology and further additions requested by our readers, was resubmitted to the Press in the final months of 2013, and another full set of readers’ reports on the complete text followed in the subsequent year. These reports were once again very helpful and detailed, eliciting not only a final round of revision, but also a complete overhaul of the numbering system used for our sections. These changes were completed early in 2015; this was followed by a lengthy and complex production process (in our Bibliography, we have not systematically added references to works from 2016 or later).

The end product is in every way the result of a joint effort: although individual authors wrote first drafts of particular chapters, or took the initiative in revising chapters or sections, we discussed every page of the book as a group, and all four of us have reflected extensively on the entire work. Each of us is happy to share responsibility for the whole.

**Target Audience and Scope**

Our particular hope is that university students (at all levels) and teachers will profit from CGCG. Professional scholars whose main area of expertise is not Greek linguistics may also benefit from our presentation, particularly where it concerns areas which are less often covered in traditional grammars (word order is a prime example), but also more generally because of the manner in which we have tried to reflect current thinking in the field (on such issues as verbal aspect, the use of tenses, voice, the representation of reported discourse, complement constructions, particles, etc.).

CGCG’s coverage is such, we suggest, that it could be used in the context of undergraduate and graduate language courses, and that a commentary on a classical text geared primarily to a student audience could refer to it for most grammatical features, except those so rare that they deserve fuller discussion anyway. Still, there are many subjects about which we might have said much more, and some about which we have said almost nothing at all (syllable structure, the interjections, and forms of address spring to mind here). Other expansions, such as a section on metre and/or prose rhythm, or the kind of stylistic glossary often found in grammars, were never seriously considered: to our mind, readers are much better served on these issues by specialized resources.

On the point of coverage, a few words must also be said about the second C and G of our title. There was a temptation (and a desire among a minority of our readers) to increase the diachronic and dialectological scope of the work to cover Homer, archaic lyric, the Koine, etc.; we also would have loved to say more about
the Greek of inscriptions. However, as any such move would have drastically increased the size and complexity of the book (and accordingly decreased its accessibility), we decided to limit our purview to classical Greek. Again, such omissions seemed all the more feasible given the availability of specialized resources on the dialects, Homeric grammar, etc. Since Herodotus and the dramatists fall clearly under the heading of classical Greek, we did include a chapter on Ionic prose and some dialectal features of drama (particularly the ‘Doric’ alpha).

Some Principles of Presentation

Although we abandoned *Concise* for our first C early on, we have still strived for concision and accessibility in our presentation. Implicated in this is our decision not to clutter the book’s pages with bibliographical references or extensive discussion of diverging views. We do provide a brief, thematically organized bibliography at the end of the book, and trust that the resources listed there will allow interested readers to follow up particular subjects. We are well aware, of course, that at some points our presentation is open to genuine debate or uncertainty. Where we have elided such discussions, it is not from dogmatism but from a desire for consistency and clarity.

Another way in which we have attempted to keep the book approachable is by making it ‘theory-light’ and by taking a considered approach towards our terminological apparatus. Whether or not we have succeeded in this must be judged by our users: we provide some further discussion of our choices in terminology at pp. xl–xlii.

Keeping the book approachable also meant forgoing radical departures from ‘normal’ ways of organizing a grammar. Our syntax chapters, for instance, follow a traditional pattern, moving from the constructions of simple sentences (including basic nominal syntax and verbal categories such as tense, aspect and mood), to various kinds of subordinate constructions, gathered under such headings as ‘causal clauses’, ‘purpose clauses’, ‘the participle’, etc., which are strongly correlated to form. Another approach – one more attuned to the fact that language is not merely a system of forms, but a medium used by speakers and writers to accomplish certain goals and effects – might have been to give much more prominence to function, for instance by discussing all ways of expressing ‘cause’ or ‘purpose’ under one heading. This is not, in the end, the course we took, but gestures towards such an approach may be found throughout the book, and some chapters (e.g. the chapter on wishes, directives, etc.) more expressly align with such organizing principles.

We have put considerable effort into the selection of our Greek examples: some, of course, were found in our predecessors and recommissioned, but most were newly culled from a wide range of texts. Our aim has been to find, in varied sources, examples that are clear and actually representative of the phenomenon they are meant to exemplify. Digital search corpora such as the *Thesaurus Linguae Graecae*
and Perseus under PhiloLogic were of great help in finding suitable material. We also decided to dispense almost entirely with fabricated sentences, from a conviction that working with real Greek examples is the best way of learning how to deal with real Greek texts (and from what we consider a healthy mistrust of our own ability to produce Greek that would have sounded true to an ancient hearer).

In the phonology/morphology part, too, our presentation of forms is often based on a fresh examination of the corpus. Some exceptional forms that are often listed in grammars but do not actually occur in classical Greek have been left out. This is particularly relevant in the case of our list of principal parts, where we have generally avoided giving forms which are non-existent (or nearly so) in classical Greek.

While on the topic of the phonology/morphology: we have in those chapters provided rather more historical information than is now usual in university-level grammars. Much of what is ‘irregular’ in Greek forms and paradigms can be explained with a little historical background, and it is our experience that students benefit greatly from being provided with such information. It should be stressed that our aim in this was expressly didactic, not to provide a proper historical grammar. This is the only excuse we can offer to experts wondering about our principles of selection (no labiovelars?), or our manner of presentation (e.g. the use of the Greek alphabet for reconstructed forms, yielding, for instance, such infelicitous reconstructions as *σεχ*- instead of *σεγ*-). Students interested in finding out more about the historical background of the language are strongly encouraged to refer to the works on this topic listed in the bibliography.

In the phonology/morphology part we have given indications of vowel quantity (ᾱ/ᾰ, ἴ/ῑ, ὑ/ῡ) where we deemed such indications helpful for the analysis of forms, or for students’ memorization of prevalent patterns (e.g. vowel quantities in endings). We often give full indications only once within a section, or only when a form or ending first appears. We have not strived for complete consistency, nor attempted to replicate the information about individual lexical items available in dictionaries.

Finally, one other point of principle in the morphology has been to analyse forms explicitly: we find in our teaching that there is a crucial difference between telling a student that the acc. pl. masc. aor. ppl. act. of παιδεύω is παιδεύσαντας, and explaining that the form is built up from a sigmatic aorist stem παιδευσ- (itself the product of regular processes of formation), the participle-suffix -σαντ-, and a third-declension accusative ending -ας. Our aim throughout has been to stimulate the second, analytical approach to Greek morphology.

Using CGCG: A Few Points of Guidance

The chapters of the book were written so as to be suitable for continuous reading, yet we recognize that most users of a reference grammar will come to it looking for
A detailed table of contents and extensive indexes should allow for easy navigation to the right place.

We have also included many cross-references throughout the book, so that related topics or terms may be followed up quickly. In some cases the ‘target’ of these references is a (more) complete treatment of a topic which is not (fully) discussed at the ‘source’; in others, a cross-reference is inserted when a grammatical term or concept is used which users may not know, or which they may wish to see treated in more detail; we also use cross-references in the discussion of examples, helping readers with difficult points of grammar. Some readers will want to follow up more of these cross-references than others: we trust that individual users will soon develop their own preferences and practices in this respect.

A difference in type-size represents the difference between sections discussing features of the language that are more frequent, central, or significant (to our mind), and those that are less so. Notes are added to sections for further discussion, exceptions, etc. The general idea is that text in larger type presents the main features of a particular grammatical topic – those which an undergraduate student might be expected to know – whereas the notes and smaller-type sections offer additional information, or features with which students will be confronted when reading texts, but which they may not be expected to know by heart. Naturally, when CGCG is used as a teaching resource, instructors will determine for themselves which material they wish to emphasize.

In the morphology, tables of forms are presented before a paradigm is discussed in detail. Those looking for nothing but the tables, gathered together in one place, may find them online, at the book’s page on the Cambridge University Press website.

Acknowledgements

CGCG has been a long time in the making, and over the years many have contributed to its improvement. Where it falls short the responsibility is of course ours. It is a genuine pleasure to record here some of the debts we have incurred.

A first word of thanks must go out to the community of scholars working on Greek linguistics at large. Many of them will see their ideas reflected in these pages, and although, outside of our bibliography, we do not cite individuals by name (for reasons outlined above), their contribution in shaping our thinking is no less significant.

The Cambridge University Press-assigned readers offered generously of their time (twice!) to comment on a large manuscript in detail. Their general endorsement has been gratifying, their criticism has sharpened our presentation in many
places, and their corrections have saved us from a large number of mistakes. We are pleased to be able to mention some of the readers by name: Patrick Finglass wrote acute comments and was the ideal person to comment on our Ajax-passage; Helma Dik provided superior input and has continued doing so even after her task was done; Coulter George deserves a special deal of gratitude for the breadth and detail of his report.

Benjamin Allgaier, Maurits de Leeuw, Karel Stegeman and David Cohen checked the text and citation of all of our examples, working with precision and speed. Mirte Liebregts took on the mammoth task of drafting our Index Locorum and parts of the other indexes: we are grateful for her diligent efforts.

Juliane Kerkhecker provided early encouragement and was instrumental in making contact with the Press. Gerry Wakker was intimately involved in early discussions, and commented on the first draft of the section on textual coherence. Rutger Allan offered insightful comments on several chapters, and more generally we have profited from his published work in many places.

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The book uses a specially modified version of the Press’s house font for Greek, Neohellenic. Additional characters were designed by EvEB and by George Matthiopoulos of the Greek Font Society. For his elegant designs, produced at very short notice, George has our sincere thanks.

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Students in Oxford (especially at Merton College), Amsterdam, Groningen and Leiden have been using pages from the book or earlier versions of the whole for some time, and have offered their views. To all our students, we owe a great debt. It is with them in mind that we wrote this book.
### Abbreviations Used in This Book

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Abbreviation</th>
<th>Meaning</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>first person</td>
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<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>second person</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2x acc.</td>
<td>double accusative</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>third person</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>acc.</td>
<td>accusative</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>act.</td>
<td>active</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>adj.</td>
<td>adjective</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>adv.</td>
<td>adverb</td>
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<tr>
<td>Afrik.</td>
<td>Afrikaans</td>
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<tr>
<td>aor.</td>
<td>aorist</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>athem.</td>
<td>athematic</td>
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<tr>
<td>Att.</td>
<td>Attic</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>augm.</td>
<td>augment(ed)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>cf.</td>
<td>compare (confer)</td>
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<tr>
<td>class.</td>
<td>classical</td>
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<tr>
<td>dat.</td>
<td>dative</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>decl. inf.</td>
<td>declarative infinitive</td>
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<tr>
<td>du.</td>
<td>dual</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>dyn. inf.</td>
<td>dynamic infinitive</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Engl.</td>
<td>English</td>
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<tr>
<td>fem./f.</td>
<td>feminine</td>
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<tr>
<td>Fr.</td>
<td>French</td>
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<tr>
<td>fut.</td>
<td>future</td>
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<tr>
<td>fut. pf.</td>
<td>future perfect</td>
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<tr>
<td>gen.</td>
<td>genitive</td>
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<tr>
<td>Germ.</td>
<td>German</td>
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<tr>
<td>Gk.</td>
<td>Greek</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>imp.</td>
<td>imperative</td>
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<tr>
<td>impf.</td>
<td>imperfect (=secondary present indicative)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Abbreviations of authors and works used in the examples follow those of the *Oxford Classical Dictionary*, except that the orators are cited, where possible, by speech number, and that Euripides' *Heracles* is abbreviated (*Her.*). Fragments are
cited (fr.) with the edition from which they (and their numbering) are taken. When scholarly consensus holds a work to be spurious, this is indicated by square brackets (e.g. ‘[Andoc.] 4’). For a complete list see the Index of Examples at the end of the book.

Other Symbols

The symbol → (‘see’) indicates a cross-reference to another chapter (e.g. →1), section (e.g. →1.2) or range of sections (e.g. →1.2–4). In some cases a cross-reference points to a specific note (e.g. →1.2 n.1).

Greek examples are numbered (1), (2), (3), etc. (the numbering restarts each chapter), and referred to using that format. Three dots ( . . . ) in Greek examples indicate that a part of the text has been left out for the sake of brevity or clarity. A vertical bar ( | ) indicates a line division in the Greek text. A double semicolon ( :: ) is used to indicate a change of speaker. Explanatory notes in and following the translations of Greek examples are given in italics.

For the signs > and <, the asterisk * and the symbol †, →1.48.

For the representation of (reconstructed) sounds using the International Phonetic Alphabet (IPA), →1.14.

Texts and Translations of Examples

Our examples were typically taken from electronic sources – we have made extensive usage of the online edition of Thesaurus Linguae Graecae, as well as the excellent search functionality of Perseus under PhiloLogic. All examples were subsequently checked against printed editions, normally the most recent Oxford Classical Text, in a few cases a Budé or Teubner edition. We have indicated any material left out, but have freely added full stops (or question marks) to sentences which are syntactically complete in our example but run on in the original. We have also indicated line divisions and speaker changes (see above, ‘Other Symbols’).

All translations are our own, although we have often borrowed phrasing from published translations (particularly those in the Loeb Classical Library series).
On Terminology

Problems and Principles

Greek grammar is something of a terminological morass. All kinds of phenomena are known by different overlapping – or not quite overlapping – labels, variously popular in different periods or different regions. Conversely, for some features of the language no good term has ever been firmly established. Matters are not helped by the fact that, outside of Greece, the traditional terminology for Greek grammar is largely based on Latin grammar, even though there are some fundamental differences between the two languages (particularly in the verbal system).

The challenges for the grammar writer are many, ranging from the trivial to the serious: should we call εἰ + optative a ‘hypothetical’ condition, a ‘remote’ condition, a ‘should-would’ condition, a ‘potential’ condition, or perhaps a ‘future less vivid’? Should we refer to μήν as a ‘modal’, ‘attitudinal’ or ‘interactional’ particle, or perhaps as a particle which ‘expresses a mode of thought in isolation’ (all the while well aware that the term ‘particle’ itself has fallen out of favour with linguists today)? Being no real fans of the ‘declarative’ and ‘dynamic’ infinitive, should we yet abandon those terms – now fairly well established in Greek linguistics, if not in Classics at large – for an older apparatus which blurs the crucial distinctions? Are ‘imperfective’ and ‘perfective’, the fully standardized terms in the linguistic literature on verbal aspect, too confusing to use when there are also imperfects and (not at all perfective) perfects to contend with?

Any answer to such problems is inevitably a compromise, and one which will leave a number of people unhappy to see no preference accorded to their preferred terms. What remains is to briefly state our general principles in selecting and using terminology in this book:

- We aim to use, whenever possible, terms which have some currency in general linguistics, not merely in Greek grammar.
- We wish to reflect, through our selection of terms, some of the significant advances made in Greek linguistics in recent decades.
- We aim to use terminology which is accurate and discrete (i.e. terms cover the phenomena they are meant to cover, and no more or less).
- Taking the above principles into account, we aim to use terminology which is intuitive (ideally, self-explanatory) and, where possible, familiar.
- Finally, and most importantly, we have strived for ‘terminological inclusiveness’ throughout: our notes and our Index of Subjects provide many alternative terms for the phenomena we treat (sometimes we also indicate why those alternative terms were not chosen).
Verbal Terminology

Separate attention in this context is demanded by the verb. A satisfying description of the Greek verbal system is made especially difficult by the confusion plaguing traditional grammatical terminology. This confusion is not easily resolved, other than by completely abandoning that traditional terminology (a course we decided not to take). Although we aim to be precise in our use of verbal terminology, some overlaps and forms of shorthand will remain, and it is good to be clear about these at the outset (reference to the table that opens chapter 11 may be helpful here; fuller discussion of the relevant terms may be found in that chapter).

Tenses, Aspects and Moods

- The term tense is found used as (i) a morphological concept identifying certain indicatives (‘the imperfect tense’, ‘the aorist tense’, ‘narrative tenses’, etc.), (ii) as the equivalent of what we will call tense-aspect stems (‘a participle of the aorist tense’, ‘a present-tense optative’, ‘the tenses outside the indicative’, etc.) and (iii) as a grammatical concept referring to the expression of temporal relationships (‘past tenses’, ‘present tenses’, etc.; ‘anteriority’, ‘simultaneity’, etc.). In this grammar ‘tense’ is primarily used in the third sense, occasionally in the first. The second use will (and should) be avoided, since the term ‘tense’ is much less relevant to the description of (e.g.) participles and optatives.
- Similarly, the terms present, aorist, future and perfect are used both (i) to refer to tense-aspect stems (‘a perfect infinitive’, ‘the aorist optative does not have an augment’) and (ii) to refer to the indicatives of these tense-aspect stems (‘aorists and imperfects’, ‘the aorist has an augment’) . It may be noted that in the latter use, ‘aorist’ is a direct equivalent of ‘imperfect’, but not in the former (there is, in Greek, no ‘imperfect subjunctive’ parallel to the ‘aorist subjunctive’). In this book we write ‘aorist’ for ‘aorist indicative’ (etc.) only when there can be no doubt about the intended meaning.

Note 1: Thus, most often, ‘aorist’ in this book stands for a stem which expresses a kind of aspect (perfective aspect), ‘present’ for a stem which expresses another kind (imperfective aspect), etc.: for these distinctions, →33.4–7. We observe that in some recent treatments in general linguistics, the stems are in fact referred to by these names (yielding such terminology as ‘primary imperfective indicative’ for Greek forms which we will call ‘present indicative’, and ‘perfective infinitive’ for what we call ‘aorist infinitive’). Such a system has considerable advantages, but strays, perhaps, too far from territory familiar to most students and scholars of Greek.

- We prefer simple imperfect and pluperfect over ‘imperfect indicative’ and ‘pluperfect indicative’, since the latter formulations are tautologous (Greek imperfects and pluperfects are by definition indicatives), and may suggest that
other variables could go into the indicative ‘slot’ (which they cannot: there is no ‘imperfect subjunctive’). For the definition of the imperfect as ‘secondary present indicative’ and the pluperfect as ‘secondary perfect indicative’, →11.7.

– We identify only indicatives, subjunctives, optatives and imperatives as moods: the infinitive and participle should not be classed as such.

On ‘First’ and ‘Second’ Aorists and Perfects

Finally, there is a persistent tradition in handbooks to distinguish between ‘first’ (or ‘weak’) and ‘second’ (or ‘strong’) forms in the aorist, aorist passive and perfect stems:

– An aorist stem is called first (or ‘weak’) when σ is added to the verb stem (e.g. παιδευσ(α)-), an aorist passive stem when θ is added (e.g. παιδευθη(ν)-), a perfect stem when κ is added (e.g. πεπαιδευκ(α)-).
– Otherwise, forms are second (or ‘strong’).

We have not followed this use: ‘first’ and ‘second’ are, in our view, unhelpful terms which provide insufficient morphological information (note, for instance, that the ‘second’ thematic aorist ἐλιπμεν has a thematic vowel, whereas ‘second’ root aorist ἔγνωμεν does not; these should not be classed together), and which misleadingly suggest that phenomena which are in fact highly regular (e.g. perfect active stems ending in χ or φ) are irregular. Instead, we distinguish between three types of aorist stem (sigmatic, thematic, root; →13), between two types of aorist passive stem (θη- and η-; →14), and between three types of perfect active stem (κ-, aspirated, stem; →18).