

(e.g., Matt 5:45; Luke 3:22, 23-31; Rom 3:25; 2 Cor 2:9, 8:21; Phil 1:20; Heb 11:13; Rev 2:1), and the support for 3 readings was removed (Acts 5:9; Gal 1:3; Rev 1:6); and (2) within the Catholic Epistles, 10 variants were removed, and the support of 21 other readings was affected. While the loss of the testimony of these 18 miniscule manuscripts is unfortunate, their textual value simply did not outweigh their absence in a hand edition of the NT.

Other casualties in the NA28 apparatus include the loss of subscriptions, the ¶ symbol identifying readings from the NA26, conjectures, and the signs *pc* (*pauci*) and *al* (*alii*), due to the confusion over the significance of the presence or absence of these two signs on a given reading.

The absence of the above manuscripts and features from the apparatus of the NA28 was offset by a number of additions. The most notable is the inclusion of new manuscripts deemed more significant for the study of the text, including 11 papyri, 1 uncial ms (0211); and 10 miniscule mss (5 18 30 288 606 1175 1718 2473 2521 2685). An example of how these new witnesses augment the current apparatus can be seen in the revised support of the initial text of Rom 5:2. In addition to increasing the textual support of the passage by seven new witnesses, the revised apparatus also includes the support of three current witnesses (104 630 1241) that were not listed previously. Until a searchable form of the new apparatus is available, it is impossible to determine how significant these particular manuscripts will be on the current text.

Other noteworthy features that should not be overlooked include (1) the much welcomed decision to spell out the full text of variant readings instead of merely abbreviating them (e.g., James 1:17), (2) a bolder vertical line to separate variant readings in the apparatus, (3) the revision of the minor readings in Appendix 2 (an increase from 15 to 28 pages) that includes moving some minor readings to the main apparatus itself (e.g., Matt 2:23), and (4) the expansion of the textual citations and allusions in Appendix 4 (now Appendix 3).

The NA28 marks another significant and much welcomed stage in the history of NT textual criticism. The advances it has made in establishing the text of the Catholic Epistles and the accuracy and clarity of its revised textual apparatus will make it the definitive text for scholarly study for years to come. It is a “must have” purchase for professors, seminary students, and pastors alike.

Walla Walla University  
College Place, Washington

CARL P. COSAERT

Joosten, Jan. *The Verbal System of Biblical Hebrew: A New Synthesis Elaborated on the Basis of Classical Prose*. Jerusalem Biblical Studies, 10. Jerusalem: Simor Ltd., 2012. 513 pp. Hardcover, \$75.00.

Since the days of pioneers such as Wilhelm Gesenius and Samuel Driver in the nineteenth century, the question of how to understand the verbal system

of biblical Hebrew has proven to be a major challenge for Hebraists. The rise of new linguistic methods and the discovery of new Semitic texts and languages have provided a fertile ground for discussion. As the title indicates, Jan Joosten attempts to elucidate the various aspects of the Hebrew verb into one system. Thus, he does not simply synthesize the scholarly debate, but supplies the reader with valuable and clear examples of the points under discussion. While he reviews previous studies, he also aims at presenting a new comprehensive theory of the Hebrew verbal system. Linguistically, he places himself within the Saussurian structuralist school, meaning that he searches for “an underlying system” (*langue*) “in the multifarious phenomena attested in texts” (*parole*) (9). He accepts a diachronic approach to biblical Hebrew and associates himself with scholars such as Avi Hurvitz and Steven Fassberg from Hebrew University.

Joosten’s stated goal for the book is “to provide exegetes of biblical texts with a dependable analysis of the meaning and use of Hebrew verbal forms” (7). Thus, the book is not primarily meant for linguists, even if they will benefit from it. He focuses on classical biblical Hebrew (Genesis–2 Kings), but also includes two chapters on poetry and late biblical Hebrew.

The methodological choice to approach the text from a structuralist viewpoint leads Joosten to attempt to determine the meaning of verbal forms based on opposition: “the meaning of a given verbal form is determined in opposition to that of another verbal form, the meaning of a group of forms in opposition to another group” (10). Even if he acknowledges the value of text-linguistic approaches, making the distinction between narrative and discursive texts foundational in their approach to Hebrew grammar, he does not see this distinction as primary. He also argues frequently against the notions of foreground and background in the text used by text-linguistics. Further, even if he acknowledges major differences between the genres of prose and poetry (he does not operate with a “language of the law” as a separate category, as some grammarians do) he does not see this difference as basic. Rather, he argues that all base themselves upon the same verbal system, even if the verbal system of poetry is only partially understood. He therefore disagrees with those claiming that poetry represents an entirely different verbal system.

In general, his basic argument is that only the *wayyiqtol*, *qatal*, and predicative participle really belong to the indicative system, while he classifies under modal forms *yiqtol* and *weqatal* on one side, with the volitives (cohortative, imperative, and jussive) on the other. It means that the indicative forms are the only ones expressing factuality, while the modal forms indicate *irrealis*, a process that is not, or not yet, real. Further, while *wayyiqtol* is a preterite, he sees *qatal* as a tenseless expression of anteriority. He sees *wayyiqtol* as going back to a Proto-Semitic prefix preterite form, attested in the Akkadian preterite *iprus*. Contrary to most grammars, he does not see the *wayyiqtol* as expressing

sequence. Rather, according to him the form expresses that an action took place in the past, while it is the genre that turns it into a sequential story. He also sees within the biblical corpus indications that the *wayyiqtol* becomes replaced by *w' + qatal*, something clearly seen in Mishnaic Hebrew. Similarly, he does not see *weqatal* as essentially expressing succession. Rather, this “is due partly to the conjunction and partly to the VS word order” (292). According to him, Su-Ptcp often implies the ongoing nature of an action, while Ptcp-Su stresses the factuality of a situation. Su-Ptcp is a way that biblical Hebrew can express the “actual present,” contrary to the claims of many grammarians. He also argues that the verbal participle (Su-Ptcp), originally expressing progression, in late biblical Hebrew began encroaching on meanings originally expressed by the *yiqtol* (imminent future, general present, and repeated action in the past). He sees the main function of the imperative not to be a command, but “to express the will of the speaker regarding the addressee” (94).

Joosten chooses to take the various morphological forms of the Hebrew verb as his basic starting point. The advantage with this is that he bases himself upon objective, verifiable phenomena in the language. But the form and semantics of the verbal system do not have a one-to-one relation. One form might have various meanings depending on the context, and the same meaning can be expressed by various forms. As he believes that meaning is constituted in difference, he is forced to constantly compare various forms with one another. Even if his methodological approach requires this, it makes his discussion become somewhat repetitive. On the other hand, semantic similitude often becomes Joosten’s basic argument for associating various forms. But then it also rests more on subjective and disputable interpretation than the phenomena of the forms themselves.

Joosten argues against those collapsing biblical Hebrew into one unified system, such as Young and Rezetko do. He also challenges those dating texts more on historical-critical theories than on linguistic data. From a conservative approach to the biblical text, it is noteworthy that he argues that classical biblical Hebrew bears features “very close to the language used in Judean inscriptions of the monarchical period” (379), meaning that they belong to the pre-exilic era. As current linguistic studies, according to the author, cannot with certainty establish further subdivisions in biblical Hebrew than the pre-exilic (classical biblical Hebrew) and post-exilic (late biblical Hebrew), Joosten’s arguments will challenge critical scholarship in their late dating of many biblical books. He also pushes the boundaries and argues that precursors of the classical biblical Hebrew verbal system are found with identifiable features (419). With signs of archaic biblical Hebrew, this would indicate an early date of biblical books, even if the language of the main corpus might have been updated at a later stage, thus bearing the profile of classical biblical Hebrew.

A minor critique is that the book deserved a more quality binding. My cover loosened. As it will work as a reference grammar, it should have been made more durable. It is also a shame that the book was not given a more distinct layout. The various levels of titles are not always immediately clear and are, at times, confusing. This is only partly remedied by the “Detailed Table of Contents.” This section would be more helpful if it included page numbers to the subsections so the reader could go directly to a specific area of interest. There is an “Index of Biblical References” that is a valuable tool for exegetes, but it would have been desirable to have a subject index.

Joosten goes beyond any up-to-date approach to the Hebrew verbal system in scope and detail. Undoubtedly, the question of whether the difference between verbal form, the distinction between narrative and discourse, and the difference between genres will color the debate around Joosten’s theory. I also expect that there will be debate around Joosten’s denial of the consecutive aspect of the *wayyiqtol* and *weqatal* forms and his classification of the verbal forms into indicative and modal forms. I do, however, appreciate his modesty and openness as he is fully aware that he is not providing the final word on the verbal system. He points out cases that might challenge his own theory. In several places, he points out areas that need further study. Joosten takes the analysis of the Hebrew verbal system to a level of sophistication the serious student of Hebrew should appreciate. For the biblical exegete, this book will indeed be a valuable reference grammar for analyzing and understanding the verbs in specific passages.

Berrien Springs, Michigan

KENNETH BERGLAND

Jung, Martin H. *Reformation und Konfessionelles Zeitalter (1517-1648)* (Reformation and Confessional Era [1517-1648]). Göttingen: V&R Unipress, 2012. 288 pp. Paper, €24.99.

Martin H. Jung is Professor of Evangelical Theology, particularly historical theology, church history, and confessional history, at the University of Osnabrück, Germany. As with his concise introduction to 2,000 years of church history, *Kirchengeschichte* (Grundwissen Christentum, 3 [Göttingen: Vandenhoeck and Ruprecht, 2010]), and his excellently formulated and researched book *Philipp Melanchthon und seine Zeit*, 2d ed. (Göttingen: Vandenhoeck and Ruprecht, 2010), this current volume on the Reformation and Confessional eras (1517-1648) is succinct, informative, and readable.

The textbook contains fifteen neatly arranged chapters that are preceded by an introduction. Chapter 1 delineates the background, preconditions, and general conditions in the empire, the church, the educational system, and the discoveries. Chapters 2-8 focus on influential people, groups, and countries during the Reformation period. Chapter 2 outlines developments