**The Greek augment:  A most durable element and what we can learn from it**

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I offer here a detailed look at the history of the past tense marker in Greek known as the “augment” and use it to shed light on some key questions in our understanding of language change. The augment is a prefix that likely has deep roots within Indo-European, and it has been a part of the verbal morphology of Greek over the entire history of the language, from Mycenaean Greek up through Modern Greek. Importantly, however, despite this apparent stability over millennia, it has also developed a number of quirky characteristics at various stages, such as multiple occurrence in one and the same verbal form. Interestingly, several of these oddities carry over across different stages of the language. This situation means that the augment provides a basis for investigating how to develop a periodization of a language into different historical stages, how to gauge continuity between these stages in the face of change, and how, if at all, to predict what can or will change, three key areas of concern to historical linguists.