

The Corbett Lecture 2016

Many of the differences between Homeric and Classical Greek are due to the chronological and/or dialectal gap separating the two varieties, and the 'artificial' element in epic language is also commonly acknowledged. Sometimes, however, there are divergences which do not easily fit into one of these moulds.

Focusing on the Homeric verb, we will explore some particularly well-known features of the latter kind – augmentation patterns, the absence of historical presents, and the use of past iteratives – and ask to what extent comparative and typological linguistics can help to account for Homeric usage and where Homeric language in its turn necessitates a revision of conventional Indo-Europeanist doctrine.

Of prickly heroes, powerful gods, and puzzled sailors - or how much Indo-European did Homer know?

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5pm on Thursday 17 November, Faculty of Classics Room G.19

