



The Uppsala Declaration

on the Preservation of Philology and the Study of Historical Languages

*adopted by the General Assembly of the World Philology Union
in Uppsala, Sweden, on the 6th of December, 2024*

The signatories to this Declaration hold that

- § 1 Philology, defined as the grammatical and literary study of the oral and written heritage of the world's various languages, is the ultimate foundation of the humanities.
- § 2 Philology, as an academic pursuit, should be a central component of the curriculum of any modern university.
- § 3 More specifically, competence in one or more philological fields is inherently a prerequisite for all informed study of both historical human cultures and present-day societies in their diversity.
- § 4 Philology is an important element in education on all levels, as a method to access classical texts that preserve the cultural heritage, and as a mode of reading which advances a more comprehensive literacy.
- § 5 Philology is also of crucial importance to society at large, since (1) we need to listen to the human voices of the past, in their own languages, if we want to understand the history and cultural traditions of any society; (2) only a society that studies and actively reflects on its own past can be a healthy and truly prosperous society; (3) the philological mode of reading historical documents can be an antidote to ideological abuses of history, in particular ideological readings of national literature or religious writings.
- § 6 Seeing that Philology has always been the foundation of the humanities, the signatories are alarmed that during the last half-century many philological fields have been either completely marginalised within university departments and faculties or, at some universities, eliminated from the academic portfolio.
- § 7 When universities, and even faculties and departments where the humanities are otherwise promoted, do not acknowledge the pivotal role of Philology in underpinning and preserving the relevance of the humanities to society at large, Philology becomes an endangered species among academic disciplines. Without Philology the very existence of the humanities as a meaningful academic activity is at risk.
- § 8 Accordingly, the signatories resolve to take action to ensure the preservation and flourishing of the rich academic traditions within the different fields of philology.

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