

(Historical) linguistics and/or (classical) philology: Two strangers in the same town or what?

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Abstract

It has been argued that historical linguistics is the child of classical philology, yet the boundaries between the two disciplines have not always been so clearly defined or delineated. Their history reflects a turbulent coexistence, at times demonstrating cross-fertilizing collaboration and at other times diverging along centrifugal paths but always following a ‘love-and-hate’ course.

The present contribution is divided into two parts: First, a brief historical overview of the relationship between historical linguistics and (classical) philology is provided. Second, we revisit this relationship through case studies that highlight the applicability and value of linguistic methods in philological analysis of classical texts. The overarching principle is a ‘linguistics-cum-philology’ approach, which seeks to bridge the two disciplines in a partnership and in ways that are mutually beneficial and applicable to both historical linguistics and philology.

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