

## Conference Shaping the sciences of the ancient world

Text criticism, Critical editions and Translations of ancient and medieval  
scholarly texts (18th-20th centuries) - June 17—21, 2013

### The treatment of ancient readers and commentators in modern editions & translations

June 18<sup>th</sup>, 2013

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*What do you do with commentaries, what do you do with structure? H. T. Colebrooke,  
Sudhākara Dvivedin and the mathematical chapter of the Brahmasphuṭasiddhānta*

**Abstract** – In 1817, Henry Thomas Colebrooke (1765–1837) published English translations of different Sanskrit mathematical texts, including a translation of the 12th chapter of Brahmagupta's *Brahmasphuṭasiddhānta* (628 C.E.), with the help of Pṛthūdaka's *Vāsanabhāṣya* (fl. 960). Almost ninety years later, in 1902, Sudhākara Dvivedin (1855–1910/11) published an edition of the *Brahmasphuṭasiddhānta* with his own commentary, which refers also to Pṛthūdaka's commentary. Since both texts were crucial to the access one could have to Brahmagupta's mathematics, their point of views durably marked the historiography. Dvivedin's and Colebrooke's publications are striking for the different ways they deal with Pṛthūdaka's commentary in relation to Brahmagupta's treatise.

I will argue that these author's views on commentaries went together with a specific idea of what a Sanskrit mathematical text was to be, informing their editorial choices.