

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

What is at stake in editing and translating ancient texts? A Historical perspective

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*Editing a Foundational Work on Classical Indian Medicine: The Printed Editions of the
Carakasamhitā in Context*

Abstract – The paper will attempt to address some of the numerous aspects and highly stimulating questions outlined in the Conference blueprint, by taking the example of the *Carakasamhitā*, a foundational treatise on classical Indian medicine. Since the publication of its *editio princeps* in 1868 by Gangadhar Kaviraj, who was highly instrumental in the renaissance of classical Indian medicine in Eastern India, more than fifty editions of the Sanskrit text, many with second, third or even further editions or reprints, were published mainly from India, in a large variety of regional scripts and often supplied with translations and/or commentaries or annotation in English or vernacular South Asian languages. All available and – wherever appropriate – reported, but unavailable editions will be considered in an analytic survey and from the point of view of their form and historical circumstances (script, presentation, structure, etc.; utilized sources; editor, place, publication organ or publisher, date, etc.). Due to my linguistic limitations, however, in the analysis of issues like the editors' motivation, purpose, self-perception, conceptualization of the nature of the edited text and of its author(s), etc., the focus will have to be on editions with prefaces and other prefatory matter, translations and commentaries (or annotation) in Sanskrit, Hindi and European languages. As far as can be determined, different editorial policies and conventions will be highlighted and contextualized.