

## 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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*Greeks on Hellenes, Ancient Greek scientific texts critically edited in 18<sup>th</sup>-19<sup>th</sup> century Greece*

**Abstract** - During the so-called Modern Greek Enlightenment (1750-1821) a scholarly movement aimed to develop the intellectual and cultural status of the Greek speaking people in South-Eastern Europe, a number of scientific books had been published. Though some of them were based on contemporary European originals others were translations or critical editions of ancient Greek scientific texts.

The main reason for this activity was to rediscover the ancient heritage, to prove that between ancient and modern Greeks there was a continuous, unbroken link and thus that the Greek national identity could be founded on the ancient kleos.

In this paper we aim to discuss:

- The criteria followed by the Greek scholars to choose the texts they translated or edited.
- Which were their sources? Why they had chosen them?
- How were their attempts received by the Greek scholarly circles? Were they well received or were they heavily criticized? Which were the reasons they faced such a criticism?
- The issue of the language used in these editions. Had the Greek editors used the formal language supported by the conservative purists or they preferred a language more easily understood by the common people?
- Which was their quality? Were these editions equivalent with other relevant ones in Europe?
- Had these publications played finally the role they were intended to do?

We claim that the answers to the above roughly described questions will shed more light on those texts not only from a philological point of view but also from a history of science perspective.