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Constructing Texts

Roundtable Seville, 4 November 2021

Marietta Horster
(Universität Mainz)

Antonio Ramírez de Verger
(Universidad de Huelva)

Juan Martos Fernández
(Universidad de Sevilla)

Alejandra Guzmán Almagro
(Universitat de Barcelona)

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Edited by Prof. Dr. Marietta Horster and Dr. Erika Fischer
Historisches Seminar – Alte Geschichte
Johannes Gutenberg-Universität Mainz
Welderweg 18 (Philosophicum)
D-55122 Mainz
Email: carmen-itn@uni-mainz.de; <https://carmen-itn.eu>

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Roundtable “Constructing Texts”

Marietta Horster
Johannes Gutenberg-Universität Mainz
horster@uni-mainz.de

It was a great pleasure that we could all meet in person for the first time within our EU-CARMEN-ITN project after we had only had online meetings so far.

The ESRs, supervisors and co-supervisors participated and we had the opportunity for international exchange on the different problems, tasks and perspectives regarding editions in the beautiful and traditional University of Seville. We did not only address epigraphic editing but also discussed various aspects of epigraphic modern editing science and current projects in a roundtable. This created sensitivity and broadened the horizons of all participants in this international conference day on editing techniques regarding the possibilities that a modern edition – digital or analogue – offers.

It was particularly fortunate to choose the University of Seville for a first face-to-face exchange on the *Carmina Latina Epigraphica* between younger and more established researchers, as intensive work on these poems in inscription form has been going on here for several decades.

If you want to get an idea of who has been working on the Carmina over the years, both in preparation for a volume of the *Corpus Inscriptionum Latinarum* and for the fantastic online tool *Carmina Latina Epigraphica Hispaniae* (or *CLE-Hispaniae*), you can go to their website and see the names and photos of the various teams under the leadership of Professor Concepción Fernández Martínez. A first report on the planned new database and replacement of *CLE-Hispaniae* named CLEO is presented in the CARMEN Working Paper 3/2022. Concha Fernández has been part of all these undertakings from the very beginning, and she is also one of the founders of the CARMEN Innovative Training Network. I would like to thank her and María Limón for arranging everything so wonderfully for us in Seville and for putting together the programme of which the working papers will give but a cursory overview.

However, the theme of the roundtable was not restricted to attested epigraphic *Carmina*. It also included the editing of Latin texts, literary as well as inscribed ones.

The title we have chosen for this roundtable is “Constructing texts”. We are concerned with the interpretation of ancient legacies. These are not only of material nature, which is so obvious in Seville and the surrounding area with the Roman cities of Italica and Mérida, for example. For the most part, we are rather text workers. We analyse texts, we interpret them. We create an antiquity with our words and on the basis of words that have been handed down to us from ancient times.

We all are aware that we always face a methodological and theoretical problem in this regard – with what exactly has been handed down to us. With these very short Working Papers, we would like to give you, the readers, an insight into the presentations and discussions in Seville and the question of what the texts we are studying actually are and what challenges we face in dealing with them.

Even the inscriptions that have a monumental and immediate aura and seem to be authentic are not usually studied by us in their original context and on site. We work in libraries or at home by making use of editions. We rely on illustrations and even more on all the expertise accumulated in the critical editions and on the explanations provided by the experts who, in the best case, have seen the stone, the bronze or ivory tablet or the manuscripts transmitting the texts on now lost objects.

The situation is similar in the case of the many ancient authors who have been passed down to us, like through the eye of a needle, through the monastic Middle Ages in a multitude of independent manuscript traditions and, from the Renaissance to the present, have been presented and thus interpreted again and again in copies and editions. The traditions and ideas of philologists working on a classical author seeking to create an authoritative text from several manuscripts and the standards of epigraphers or those working on single manuscript editions are different. However, each of the four participants in this roundtable discussion was given the same task. We asked them to present their respective example and to answer the question of what is central to the edition of a text, how they construct their text, if you will. There are many decisions to be made that are related to the textual basis and tradition of the text. Developments as the work progresses might require the adjustment of decisions for the critical apparatus that were made at the beginning of the process.

We also wanted to know whether working with digital tools changed how our invited experts deal with their texts. Has working with texts changed in the last two decades because there are so many more possibilities e.g. at the word or syntax level through digital text mining? As it turned out, this tool has hardly been used so far, neither for the editions in progress nor for research. Thus, there is certainly still potential here, which is by no means compelling but inspiring and perhaps pointing to new directions.

Three of these contributions are summarised in this working paper, the fourth by Camilla Campedelli is published separately in the CARMEN Working Paper 4/2022. The first contribution is by Antonio Ramírez de Verger from the University of Huelva. He has come to prominence through his publications and translations of Plautus,

Cicero, Tacitus and even Corippus. He is an expert on Ovid and has edited the Teubner text of the *Amores*, the *Ars Amatoria*, the *Remedia Amores* and the *Medicamina*. In 2021, De Gruyter published an erudite and comprehensive commentary on Book 6 of Ovid's *Metamorphoses*. Against this background, it was all the more exciting to learn what has now brought him to work on an edition of Horace's *Epodes*.

The second contribution comes from Juan Martos Fernández from the University of Seville. He has published on both 16th century and ancient authors. However, his favourite topic for the last 20 years has been the North African Latin writer Apuleius. He has discussed editorial problems and analysed social issues addressed in Apuleius. He has published on the *Metamorphoses* as well as on *Florida*.

Finally, the third contribution is by Alejandra Guzmán Almagro from the University of Barcelona. She is an expert on Renaissance and Humanist manuscripts. She studies the transmission of Latin texts and works on manuscripts and antiquaries from the 15th to 17th century and works on erudites in the 17th and 18th century. She is interested in antiquarian decisions, traditions and presentations and summarises two case studies from the Renaissance.

The fourth contribution to the roundtable by Camilla Campedelli is published separately as mentioned above. She is a collaborator on the *Corpus Inscriptionum Latinarum* and has co-edited with Manfred Schmidt one of its volumes on milestones from Spain. She publishes on Roman history and Roman epigraphy, and her work has given her the experience of being both the author of a corpus of inscriptions and the editor of others.

Hacia una nueva edición de los *Epodos* de Horacio¹

Antonio Ramírez de Verger
Universidad de Huelva
rdverger@uhu.es

La función principal de un editor de textos clásicos es recobrar, a través de la evidencia de los manuscritos, lo que escribió el autor restaurando sus palabras para el lector moderno, nos recuerda Reeve (2000, 201). Los índices, las introducciones, los comentarios y las traducciones no son indispensables. Lo que es indispensable es que el editor, sigue diciendo Reeve, restaure las palabras del autor de la manera más exactamente posible. Y proseguía afirmando Reeve que para acometer una edición así son necesarios cinco requisitos: 1) un panorama de los testimonios disponibles; 2) razones para usar unos testimonios mejor que otros; 3) colación precisa; 4) orientación sobre la diferencia entre el mejor texto que se puede extraer de los testimonios y lo que parece probable que haya escrito el autor; y 5) progreso sustancial, al menos, en uno de los puntos anteriores.

Sin renunciar a estos, digamos, principios, me inclino por establecer tres fases en la edición, en este caso, de un texto latino: 1) leer/colacionar todos y cada uno de los manuscritos *antiquiores* y, si es posible, leer también el resto de ellos, los llamados *deteriores*; 2) leer las ediciones críticas desde la *princeps* hasta nuestros días, así como el resto de trabajos – comentarios, artículos y repositorios de crítica textual ..., disponibles hasta nuestros días; y 3) sopesar *ope codicum et ope ingenii* (bajo control del *usus Latini sermonis*) todo el material para intentar establecer el texto que más se acerque a lo que escribió el autor.

¹ Esta publicación forma parte del proyecto de I+D+i PGC2018-098024-B-I00 «Edición de poemas de Horacio» financiado por MCIN/AEI/10.13039/501100011033/“FEDER Una manera de hacer Europa”. Deseo agradecer las valiosas correcciones y observaciones de los Profesores Luis Rivero y Juan A. Estévez.

1. Los manuscritos

Prácticamente, nunca se han leído todos los manuscritos de una obra clásica. Tarrant (2004), por ejemplo, confiesa haber leído en su edición oxoniense unos cuarenta códices de las *Metamorfosis* de Ovidio, cuando existen más de quinientos. Lambinus (1561) no pasó de la docena de manuscritos para su edición de Horacio y ediciones siguientes hasta 1604. Shackleton Bailey (1985, VI n. 8) en su edición Teubneriana de Horacio ni siquiera se molestó en colacionar uno solo de los más de ochocientos códices de la obra horaciana.

Aunque sea verdad que los resultados sean pobres en relación al trabajo realizado, a veces se puede uno topar con lecturas que han pasado desapercibidas. Pongo un ejemplo:

Hor. *epod.* 3.9–14

*ut Argonautas praeter omnis candidum
Medea mirata est ducem,
ignota tauris illigaturum iuga
perunxit hoc **Iasona**,
hoc delibutis ulta donis paelicem
serpent fugit alite.*

12 *Iasona Ba, Cuningamius 1721: iasonem Ω, edd.: iasonę Li2 •*

Quando, espléndido por encima de todos los Argonautas,
Medea miró al jefe con fascinación,
al ir éste a trabar yugos ignotos a los toros
con esto untó a Jasón,
con dones ungidos con esto tras castigar a su rival
en alada serpiente huyó.

(trad. L. Rivero)

Casi todos los editores leen, como en casi todos los manuscritos, *Iasonem* en el v. 12. La lectura del acusativo griego *Iasona* en una edición se debe a Cuningamius o Cunningham (1721a, 130; 1721b, 40), aceptada por Shackleton Bailey (1985, 143) en su primera edición, pero no en la cuarta edición (Shackleton Bailey 2008), donde imprime *Iasonem*. Ahora, L. Rivero ha encontrado *Iasona*, lectura que consideramos correcta, en el código *Ba* (Barcelona, Biblioteca de Catalunya 1845, f. 43^v, s. xi–xii).

Por otra parte, Cuningamius (1721b, 40) defiende la declinación greco-latina en nombres propios griegos y lo hace en estos términos: «Cum Graecae priorum nominum terminationes *os, on, an, a, en* aures magis demulceant quam Latinae *us, um, am, em* ... ego sane quin earum ope multi loci restitui possent dubitandum non esse existimavi». Y así lee, creo que con razón, *Caucason* (1.12), *Molossos* (6.5), *Pactolos* (15.20) y *Telephos* (17.8).

2. Ediciones

Los medios tecnológicos actuales ya nos permiten acceder a muchos manuscritos de autores clásicos, a prácticamente todas las ediciones desde las *principes* hasta nuestros días y a contribuciones filológicas hasta ahora inaccesibles. Por ello, ya no caben excusas para descuidar los datos que se anotan en los aparatos críticos de las ediciones de autores griegos y latinos. Pongo un solo ejemplo:

Hor. *epod.* 15.1–4

*Nox erat et caelo fulgebat luna sereno
inter minora sidera,
cum tu, magnorum numen laesura deorum,
in uerba iurabas mea,*

Era de noche y la luna brillaba en el cielo sereno
entre astros más pequeños,
cuando tú, que habrías de herir el numen de los grandes dioses,
jurabas con mis propias palabras ...

La puntuación con comas en el verso 3 se lee por primera vez una *editio minor* a cargo de Petrus Gualterius Chabotius (1587, 249). También se encuentra en J. Bond (1606, 149), en G. Bersman (1616, 197) y en la edición francesa de M. de Marolles (1660, 154), quien fue seguido por Plessis (1924, 366). Así queda mucho más clara la aposición a *tu*. En el mismo verso ha pasado desapercibida entre los editores la propuesta de Heinsius (ap. Bentley 1711, 203ⁿ), *lusura* en lugar de *laesura*. A la propuesta de Heinsius Bentley comentaba: “Doctissimus Nic. Heinsius, *forte*, inquit, *lusura*. Sed nihil est opus. *Ludere, fallere, laedere deos* aequè quidem apud Auctores occurrunt. Sed *laedere* hic, ut fortius verbum et atrocius, sententiae magis convenit; et Neaeram perjurii sui poena magis territat”. Puede que Bentley tenga razón, pero no es menos cierto que el tono satírico y punzante de este *jusjurandum amoris* se ajusta más a *ludere* (‘burlarse de, insultar, ofender’) que a *laedere* (‘herir’). *Lusura* merecería, al menos, un *fort. recte* en el aparato crítico.

3. La edición

En primer lugar, hay que empaparse muy bien del texto que se pretenda editar. Georg Luck (1964, xv–xvii) incluso aconsejaba escribir la traducción del texto para empezar a detectar las dificultades que se pudieran presentar. Es, de hecho, una constante que, allá donde el texto presenta alguna corrupción, las traducciones ofrecen un panorama de divergencias y tendencia a la paráfrasis.

En segundo lugar, hay que leer todos los manuscritos *antiquiores* y, al menos, unos pocos *deteriores* sin fiarse de las lecturas transmitidas de edición en edición. Yo, desde luego, soy escéptico respecto de la *eliminatio codicum* porque muchas tradiciones textuales están contaminadas. Todo el tiempo que se emplee en establecer el llamado árbol genealógico de los códices, hay que emplearlo en la lectura de manuscritos. Y cuanto más joven se sea, mejor disposición física se tendrá para aplicarse en una tarea tan ardua y necesaria como la lectura de códices.

En tercer lugar, hay que ir aprendiendo de los mejores editores y comentaristas, en este caso, de Horacio, desde Landinus (1482) hasta Watson (2003) pasando por Lambinus (1561), Cruquius (1567), Bentley (1711), Baxter – Gesnerus (1752), Keller – Holder (1864–69), Müller (1900), Plessis (1924), Kießling – Heinze (1955), Shackleton Bailey (1985), Cavarzere (1992) y Mankin (1995).

En cuarto lugar, hay que poner a buen recaudo todo el material recogido. Me refiero a las lecturas de los manuscritos y a las lecturas de los editores, que se añadirán al texto editado, sea en Apéndices o en ediciones electrónicas.

En quinto lugar, leer, leer y leer muchas veces para decidir cuál es el texto que se cree más cercano a lo que debió de haber salido del autor dado. Aquí entran en juego TODOS los instrumentos del filólogo: *usus scribendi*, sintaxis, léxico, métrica, retórica-estilo, contexto literario e histórico ... Y aquí entra el eterno debate entre los conservadores y radicales en la edición de textos clásicos. Quizás el término medio sea el mejor. Las ediciones de Propertio a cargo de Heyworth (2007) y Giardina (2010) son un ejemplo de radicalidad textual. Fedeli (2006) lo sería de prudente conservadurismo. El camino medio vendría representado por la edición de *Metamorfosis* de Ovidio a cargo de Tarrant (2004).

Todo este trabajo no puede ser abarcado por una sola persona. El trabajo en equipo es hoy más necesario que nunca. Se necesitaría más de una vida profesional para leer todos los manuscritos y todas las ediciones de los grandes autores clásicos.

Lo que quiero transmitir es muy sencillo. Primero, hay que dotarse de una sólida base filológica (textos originales y buenos comentarios filológicos); después, hay que aplicar los conocimientos filológicos al establecimiento de un texto que se acerque lo más posible a lo que salió de la pluma del autor. Este es, ni más ni menos, el reto de todo editor de textos clásicos.

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Unnecessary corrections in Apuleius

Juan Martos Fernández
Universidad de Sevilla
juanmartosf@us.es

Of the many tasks entrusted to philology, the edition of texts is the fundamental one as it constitutes the basis for all the others: without texts, philological studies are simply not possible, and these texts must be available in reliable editions. All other reflections on the scope of the discipline are subordinate to the production of editions.

However, textual criticism is not an exact science, and ideas about what it should actually do are diverse. The generalities are not disputed by anyone, but some issues are subject to discussion and it is quite difficult to reach a consensus on, for example, when to resort to correction or when to propose a conjecture. This is what I am going to discuss and what I intend to illustrate with some examples from Apuleius' text.

From the moment I started working on the works of Apuleius at least twenty-five years ago, I noticed that there were perfectly avoidable or even unjustified corrections that were reproduced uncritically in annotations and texts just for the sake of tradition. It stands to reason that a conjecture should solve a textual problem. However, a conjecture should always be the last resort. Another fundamental requirement is that the conjecture should be sufficiently close to the existing evidence and that, if possible, the genesis of the text's corruption is explained. This last issue of palaeographic verisimilitude deserves a slightly broader comment: various mechanisms are known to explain problems that frequently occur in handwritten copies. They are obviously useful, but in many cases they pose risks. Thus, for example, the *saut du même au même* can be an excuse to fill in gaps or to imagine the text that was lost. In short, it can be an excuse to fabricate a text and perhaps (*horribile dictu!*) correct the author himself.

However, as has already been stated, the primary debate that arises in textual criticism does not concern which conjecture is the most appropriate but which passages

need to be amended. In this respect, a distinction can be made between editors who are fundamentally conservative and others who are more inclined to amend the text. According to the former, corrections are only to be made when the transmitted text does not make any sense; any other amendment is unnecessary. The critic's task is the *constitutio textus* by all the means and the restoration of its original state, but when this task becomes an art of divination, the most sensible thing to do is to leave the text as it is, recognising that it is impossible to reconstruct anything close to what the author wrote.

While it is true that a super-conservative edition may attract the criticism of those who consider it unintelligible, it is worth asking, on the other hand, what the benefit of correcting a text is. Not only are we in a better position than the former critics to understand a text, but we have also freed ourselves from an eagerness to amend and present conjectures for the sake of showing the editor's talent instead of for a genuine philological purpose. As for the first aspect, we are much more familiar with the manuscript tradition than researchers were in the 16th to 18th centuries. Despite the extraordinary expertise, sensitivity and portentous knowledge of those *virī doctissimi*, more is known about the language and work of all Latin authors today than a few centuries ago.

Another important question is whether philologists, no matter how much intuition and knowledge they possess, are in a position to assume that their ratio and understanding of the *res ipsa* are close enough to the author's to be as valuable an authority as most of the manuscripts. I sincerely believe that what has been transmitted to us through manuscripts should not be taken as absolute truth. In my opinion, amending a text is legitimate only in the last resort as the chances of critics restoring a text right are so slim, no matter how well they know the author.

In conclusion, I would like to illustrate my thoughts with some examples from the text of Apuleius' *Metamorphoses*. Of the three most widespread editions, that of Helm (1968) sticks most closely to the main manuscript (F) and is clearly the best edition from my point of view. Zimmerman (2012) and Robertson (1946, 1956), on the other hand, present a much greater number of conjectures in the text in addition to the proposals of the editors themselves. Van der Vliet (1897) has produced, however, the most palpable example of an edition plagued by gratuitous corrections and absurd interventions on the part of the editor. Helm thus replaced van der Vliet as an editor among other reasons for not having known how to restrain his *libidinem vel, ut ita dicam, pruriginem coniectandi*.

We will look at some examples. A review by Delz (1988) of an edition of Horace by Shackleton Bailey (1985), who died not many years ago, went as far as saying that the editor was *Richard Bentley redivivus* because of the number of amendments he made to the text. In the case of Apuleius, Shackleton Bailey (1988), undoubtedly a distinguished philologist, published a series of conjectures to the text of the *Metamorphoses*. They are generally gratuitous, but one of them referring to 1.21 is quite nonsensical, despite it is qualified with 'perhaps', and has its origin in the fact that he simply did not understand the text:

... et de quadam anu caupona ilico percontor: 'Estne' inquam 'Hypata haec ciuitas?' Adnuit. 'Nostine Milonem quendam e primoribus?' **Adrisit** et: 'Vere' inquit 'primus istic perhibetur Milo, **qui extra pomerium et urbem totam colit.**' **Remoto** inquam **'ioco, parens optima, dic oro et cuiatis sit et quibus deuersetur aedibus.'**

... inquired from some old woman innkeeper: 'Is this city', I said, 'Hypata?' She nodded. 'Do you know someone called Milo, one of your first citizens?' She smiled, and said: 'In truth, Milo is regarded as the first man here, because he lives outside the city boundaries and the whole town.' 'Joking aside,' I said, 'most excellent mother, could you please tell me where he is from and in which house he dwells?' (Translation after May 2013)

"Not only do the words *qui... colit* make no sense, but any sense which they have been supposed to make ... fails to implement *arrisit* and *remoto ioco*. Nothing that is not sharp and humorous can possibly be right. The clue must be sought in the character which the old woman goes on to give this Milo. He was a very rich man, who lived like a very poor one. His wealth came from usury, and he never made a loan except on collateral in gold or silver (1.22 [20.7]). It may safely be inferred that a large quantity of his fellow citizens' precious metal had found its way into his possession – the vast treasures which the thieves make away with in 3.28. So what did the old woman say? Perhaps *qui extra pomerium et <intra> urbem totam compilarit*, 'considering that he has plundered the entire city inside the boundary and outside.'" (Shackleton Bailey 1988, 168)

Another striking example from the same book is from Rohde (1875), who proposes to write *cruribus* instead of *auribus* in 1.20:

'... *asperam denique ac prolixam uiam sine labore ac taedio euasi. Quod beneficium etiam illum uectorem meum credo lactad, sine fatigatione sui me usque ad istam ciuitatis portam non dorso illius sed meis **auribus** peruecto.*'

'... Here I've got to the end of this long and rugged road without effort and haven't been bored. I believe my horse too thinks you've done him a favour, for without tiring him I see I've reached the city gates transported not on his back but, you might say, by my ears.' (Translation after Kenney 1998).

In the critical apparatus, Helm (1968) notes *sale non cognito*; I do not think Rohde's proposal is worth to ever be reproduced again.

The examples of conjectures scholars would not have proposed if they had known the author or other texts any better are innumerable. I will add another one, also from *Metamorphoses*: *medici fidi* is the reading of manuscript F in 1.18, before which *medici sciti* (Hildebrand 1842), *medicûm filii* (Scioppius 1605), *medius fidius* (Roßbach 1895) and *dei medici filii* (Haupt 1876) have been proposed. A single quotation from a great editor, Helm (1968), suffices to settle the whole controversy. Following the opinion already held by Price (1650, 46), Helm adduced Hor. *Ep.* 1.8.9 *fidis offendar medicis*. Incidentally, this is a good example of how nowadays, with better dictionaries, concordances and especially electronic means at our disposal, we are in an advantageous position to find quotations or parallels, to know the lexicon, to check usages or to define the language of an author.

I will end with an example of another procedure that can lead to unjustified interventions in the text. Interpreting words as marginal glosses inserted into a text is only based on assumption. Although this might explain problems with the text, it can seriously disturb its understanding. It is certain that such accidents have occurred and some cases are, so to speak, certain. However, overusing or misapplying this interpretative procedure can lead to unwanted and inaccurate alterations of transmitted texts. The correction by Magnaldi (2014) is a good example: she claims that two words in which some previous philologists had seen difficulties are nothing but glosses inserted into the text and, consequently, deletes them. Searching for corrections with *parole-segnali* that were introduced into the text, although useful on occasion, can be quite dangerous. Let us take this comment on *Florida* 3 as an example:

⁸*sed Marsyas, quod stultitiae maximum specimen, non intellegens se deridiculo haberi, priusquam tibias occiperet inflare, prius de se et Apolline quaedam deliramenta barbare effuttiuit, laudans sese, quod erat et coma relincinus et barba squalidus et pectore hirsutus et arte **tibicen** et fortuna egenus: ⁹contra Apollinem – ridiculum dictu – aduersis uirtutibus culpabat, quod **Apollo** esset et coma intonsus et genis gratus et corpore glabellus et arte multiscius et fortuna opulentus.*

[...] He prided himself on the mane thrown back from his brow, on his unkempt beard, his shaggy breast, his skill upon the pipes and his lack of wealth. By contrast (oh the absurdity of it!) he blamed Apollo for the opposite of these qualities, for being Apollo, for wearing his hair long, for having a fair face and smooth body, for his skill in so many arts, and for the opulence of his fortune. (Translation after Butler 1909).

Tibicen ut glossema seclisit lacunamque indicavit Magnaldi (cf. Vallette in app.: «certe videtur *tibicen* in textum irrepsisse auctorisque manum expulisse»): *unimodus* Brakman (coll. Plat. 227 *unimodam... virtutem*), *uniformis* vel *unicanus* Hunink (coll. *met.* 11, 5, 1 *deorum dearumque facies uniformis* et *flor.* 13, 3: *philosophi ratio et oratio ... omnicaena*) // *Apollo* del. Krüger, *servant* edd. (App. crit. by Magnaldi 2014, 382)

At least in my opinion, there is not a single reason to mistrust the transmitted text, whether the source of the error is explained or not.

Obviously Shackleton Bailey was a great philologist – and nobody is safe from error. The examples above are only intended to show that, before amending a text, it is necessary to rule out any inclination to interpret the text. Lastly, the countless times that various passages have been unjustifiably corrected make it advisable to be very cautious with amendments.

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Editing Renaissance epigraphical manuscripts. Case studies

Alejandra Guzmán Almagro
Universitat de Barcelona
aguzman@ub.edu

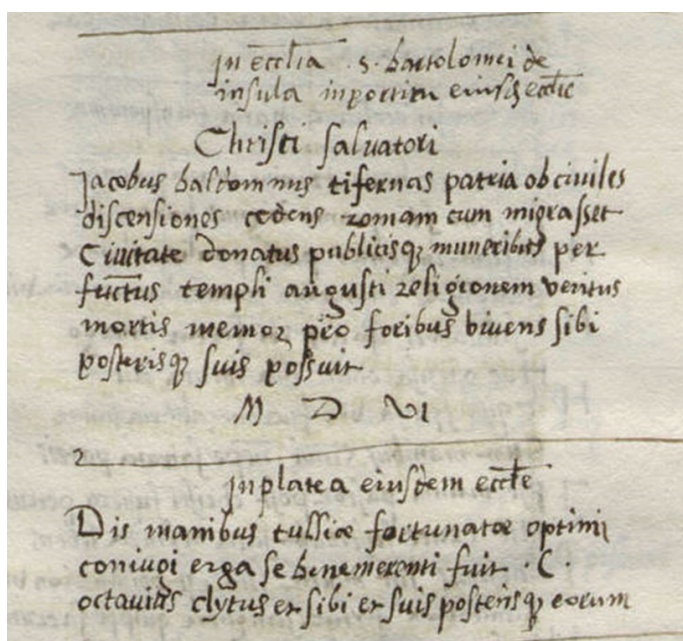
Direct access to an inscribed text is not always possible, and there is a huge number of Roman inscriptions that are difficult to read today due to damage or because they are lost. Working with lost inscriptions requires finding a way through a labyrinth of textual editing and transmission, as these inscriptions are preserved in documents from the Renaissance onwards. The activity of a variety of hands, readings and contexts can be compared to the transmission of literary texts, and it is important to pay attention to the variants in order to establish the reading of a lost inscription. Any edition of lost Roman inscriptions has to examine different sources critically, a task that the editors of the *Corpus Inscriptionum Latinarum* have taken on since the 19th century.

However, epigraphical manuscripts and early editions of *syllogai* (that is, compilations of inscriptions) are not only a source for specific inscriptions and auxiliary material. They are interesting objects of study themselves since they contain information about the authors and their context and they shed more light on the perception of antiquity. As a result, epigraphical manuscripts are being studied and edited as a whole. This is a challenge because editors of epigraphical manuscripts have to apply specific criteria and deal with a complex source of information. Manuscripts contain marginal notes and comments sometimes made by later possessors of the document as well as intercalate folios with letters and drawings. On other occasions, there are brief copies of literary texts.

Regarding the contents, the editors' first choice is which type of information is worthwhile publishing. They decide on whether to publish the corpus of inscriptions with an introduction and whether to pay attention to secondary texts as well. The following two examples represent a small sample of different materials and different approaches.

2. A “problematic” *miscellanea*

A different case is the codex preserved at the Biblioteca Universitaria de Barcelona (BUB 99) containing two different *syllogai* with a different chronology each (Guzmán Almagro 2021). The main one gathers both Renaissance and ancient epigraphy. This combination of contemporary and ancient texts was common in the *miscellanea* due to the different meanings of the Greek word *epigramme* in the Renaissance. It reached from “inscription” to “poem” and belonged to the wider spectrum of *memoria* and *monumentum*. Nevertheless, it is interesting to explore Renaissance Latin epitaphs from the churches of Rome because, as in the case of Roman inscriptions, they are in most cases lost or illegible today, and just a few contemporary sources copied them. Therefore, the edition of Renaissance inscriptions requires critical methodology to establish a proper reading of the text. Besides, Renaissance epitaphs were often built imitating classical sources, so editing such a document could focus on the emulation of classical tradition in funerary texts.

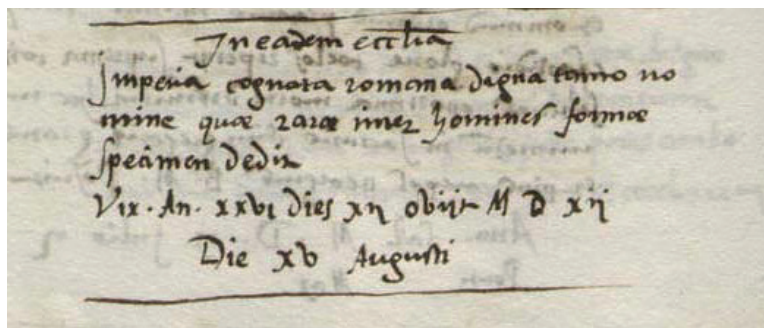


Ms. BUB 99, fol. 9v. A Renaissance and an ancient inscription (CIL VI, 27750) from the church of S. Bartolomeo in Isola sharing a similar epigraphical formula. © Biblioteca de la Universitat de Barcelona.

This is particularly interesting in the case of epitaphs of certain individuals. In this regard, I would like to mention the epitaph on Imperia Cognati’s tombstone (1488–1512) at the Chiesa di S. Gregorio. Cognati was a Roman courtesan known as “The Divine”. She was a friend of influential men like the humanist Angelo Colocci or Raphael. Her tomb was demolished in 1725 during the restoration of the church because it was considered scandalous for a church to hold the tomb of a prostitute.

The text in the *miscellanea* is:

*Imperia Cognata¹ romana / digna tanto nomine quae rarae inter / homines formae
specimen dedit.*



Ms. BUB 99, fol. 56v. Imperia Cognati's epitaph. © Biblioteca de la Universitat de Barcelona.

In the 19th century edition of Renaissance inscriptions from Rome, Vincenzo Forcella (1873, 104 no. 287) included the epitaph assuming the readings of the preceding tradition.² For instance, he reads *cortisana* instead of the surname *Cognata*, as it appears in the *miscellanea*. *Cognata* is presumably the proper reading since it seems that *cortisana* was an addition in order to make the epitaph more “identifiable” for the readers. That example shows that variants sometimes reveal more than simple textual problems; they also expose cultural prejudices.

The two examples illustrate that scholars who work with manuscript material face the conundrum of which of them is worthwhile to be published and how, and which information is to be included. The choices are as manifold as the manuscripts preserved.

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¹ In the copy of the manuscript, the year of Cognati's death is 1512 instead of 1511. See Gnoli 1910.

² Possibly Forcella followed the tradition of edited compilations such as that by Schrader 1592.