

One era's nonsense, another's norm. Diachronic study of Greek and the computer

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ePhilology and Classics

“... while our strategic goal may remain the *scientia totius antiquitatis* the practices whereby we pursue this strategic goal must evolve into something qualitatively different from the practices of the past.”

(Crane et al. 2007)

Available from Perseus (www.perseus.tufts.edu)

My perspective

- Point of view of the medievalist who works with Greek texts of the 12th-17th c.
- Focus on literary tradition, on continuity and discontinuity
- Classical or Hellenistic Greek remains at the core of my research
 - Greek is being used in “atticizing” registers
 - Manuscript scribes are speakers of Medieval Greek
 - Continuing literary tradition in Greek until today

Practices of the past?

- Print culture vs digital culture
- Distribution networks and academic practices
- Proprietary, closed digital libraries
- Use of a single, isolated print edition

And the future

- Pledge for open source, multi-perspective and polyphonic collections of electronic documents
 - The “corpus editor”
- Need for fine grained repurposable digital objects

What we need

“... we need encoded knowledge that can be maintained in real time and that can incorporate multiple points of view ... In a digital world, capital information sources such as editions and reference works evolve: where print publication freezes documents, digital publication only begins its functional life after publication.”

(Crane et al. 2007)

Distinguishing features of emerging digital resources

- They can be delivered everywhere anytime
- They are fundamentally hypertextual
- They recombine small, well-defined units of information
- They learn on their own and apply automated processes
- They learn from human readers
- They adapt themselves to the general background and purposes of their users

Medium and method

- “Stemmatic” method or the “one text” is associated with print culture and the need for a single, authoritative text as the basis of academic scholarship
- Edited texts are rational products of philological endeavor
 - Based on medieval witnesses, products of a manuscript culture
 - Medieval “polyphony” survives in the apparatus criticus, i.e. nowhere (see TLG)

Hybrid reconstruction

- Editor is trying to reconstruct an archetype
- Individual witnesses (manuscripts) sharing characteristics are grouped together
- In most cases there is a gap of more than 1000 years between time of composition and date of the earliest extant witness
- Editor's conjecture replaces the text of the manuscript
- The text is "cleaned" from later "mistakes"
- The text can be "contaminated"

Model needs discussion

- Critical editions transmitted in book format model the lost autograph of the author
 - Variants are presented “offline” in an apparatus
 - Linguistic information is lost in the process of normalization
- Would it be possible to revise this model?
 - For which texts?
 - For which readers?

... more than one ways

The image displays two overlapping browser windows. The left window shows the 'Corpus Medicorum Graecorum / Latinorum' website, which is a digital edition of ancient medical texts. The page title is 'ΤΑΙΗΝΟΥ ΕΙΣ ΤΟ ΠΕΡΙ ΑΡΘΡΩΝ' and it is identified as 'ΒΙΒΛΙΟΝ ΠΡΩΤΟΝ'. The text on the page is in Greek and discusses medical conditions, with some words highlighted in red. A sidebar on the left contains navigation and search options. The right window shows a reproduction of a manuscript page from the 'Biblioteca Medicea Laurenziana, Firenze', specifically 'Laurentianus Plut. 74.7, fol. 314v'. The text is in Greek and is a reproduction of the same or related text to the one in the left window. The manuscript page is aged and has a yellowish tint.

Electronic editions of classical greek texts ...

- would allow for variants to be represented inline or offline in a more transparent way
- would allow for hypertextual representation of complex intertextual relationships between texts and sets of texts
- would facilitate linguistic research on later periods of Greek
- would bring together isolated but related disciplines / research areas

Areas of application

- Byzantine epistolography
- Editions of scholia
- Texts with complex tradition where “contamination” has taken place
- Byzantine paraphrases of Classical Greek texts

Utopia?

- This kind of editing presupposes digital transcriptions of all extant witnesses
- Most areas of classics need only one text
- “Books” are still valued in academic circles

Not so utopia...

- Online applications that use existing material in digital form
 - Text collections
 - Lexica
 - Prosopographies
 - Etc.
- “Semantic web”
- Grouping and clustering techniques

Dendrea

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σώφρων, Ep. and poet. σα^οφρων (as in *Hom.*, v. infr., *Pl.Pae.9.46*), ονος, ὄ, ἡ: neut. σώφρον:—prop.

A. of sound mind (from σώς, φρήν, cf. *Pl.Cra.411e*, *Arist.EN1140b11*): hence, **discreet, prudent**, "οὐκ ἂν με σαόφρονα μνήσαιο ἔμμεναι" *Pl.21.462*, cf. *Od.4.158*; opp. ἄφρων, *Thgn.431, 454, 497*; opp. νήπιος, *Id.483*; opp. ἀνόητος, *Hdt.1.4*; "σώφρονες περὶ θεός" *X.Mem.4.3.2*; "σωφρονέστατος ἐν τῇ τέχνῃ" *Hp.Pronth. 2.2*.

2. of things, "τοιοὶ λόγοις σώφρον ἔπαισιν ἄνθος" *Ar.Nu.1025* (lyr.); ζ. οἶκτος **reasonable compassion**, *Th.3.59*; "έστατον κήρυγμα" *Aeschin.3.4*; "σώφρον' εἶπας" *E.IA1024*; "ἄλλο τι -έστερον γνώσεσθε" *Th.5.111*; σώφρον ἔστι c. inf., *Id.1.42*.

II. in Att., esp. having control over the sensual desires, temperate, self-controlled, chaste ("σώφρων ὁ μετρίας ἐπιθυμίας ἔχων" *Pl.Def.415d*, cf. "σωφροσύνη" I), "μοι δὲς -εστέραν πολὺ μητρὸς γενέσθαι" *A.Ch.140*, cf. *S.Aj.132*; γυνή ζ. *And. 4.14*, cf. *S.Fr.682*; "ζ. καὶ ἐγκρατὴς ἑαυτοῦ" *Pl.Grg.491d*, cf. I *Ep.Ti. 3.2*, etc.

Etym	Syn	Ant	Rel
ΣΥΝ-			
			συνδιασφίζω
			σφίζω
			ἀνασφίζω
			ἀποσφίζω
			διασφίζω
			ἐκσφίζω
			σῶσ
			σωτήρ
			σωτηρία
			σωτήριος
			σωφρονέω
			σωφροσιζω
			σωφροσικός
			σωφροσίνη
			σωφρόσυνος
			σώφρων

Something similar for Greek

The screenshot displays the KartOO visual meta search engine interface. The browser window title is "KartOO visual meta search engine" and the address bar shows "http://www.kartoo.com/flash04.php3". The search bar contains the query "classics association conference birmingham".

The main content area features a network map of search results. The map is a blue, abstract shape with various nodes and connections. Nodes include:

- www2.open.ac.uk
- www.classics.ox.ac.uk
- www.nobirmingham.ac.uk
- archnet.asu.edu
- college department
- alabama teacher foreign language
- www.sanford.edu
- archnet
- annual
- www.classicalassociation.org
- education history
- www.le.ac.uk
- university
- info
- www.ohi.org
- april
- www.stoa.org
- enland
- www.lib.cla.ac.uk
- www.ca2007.bham.ac.uk
- antiquity
- institute

On the left side, there is a sidebar with a "Saved map" section and a "Topics" list:

- department of classics
- classical association annua
- annual meeting
- constanze witt
- april 2007
- april 2000
- higher education
- institute
- archnet
- antiquity
- university
- education
- history
- annual
- april
- info
- alabama
- teacher
- foreign
- language
- england
- december
- department

On the right side, there is a sidebar with a list of actions:

- print the map
- Send a map
- Add a site
- Add a Topic
- save the map...

At the bottom left, there is a logo for "KartOO" and "THUMB SHOTS". At the bottom right, there is a "next map" button and the number "217 000".

Classics in a Digital World

Announcements

- **Site Notice**

On April 3, 2007, Perseus hardware was compromised. In order to protect our data and comply with university policy, a number of servers were removed from the network, making Tufts-hosted Perseus sites inoperable. Repairs are in progress to methodically restore services while improving their overall security. We apologize for the inconvenience.

- **Classics in a Digital World**

Curious about where classics might go in a digital world? See the [preprint of a new article about ePhilology](#) that will appear in *The Blackwell Companion to Digital Literary Studies*.