**Call for papers - International Workshop: “Editing Ancient Grammatical Texts: Challenges and Opportunities”**

University of Oxford (Wolfson College), 28th June 2023

We are pleased to invite proposals for an upcoming interdisciplinary workshop on editing grammatical texts in ancient languages, including but not limited to Greek, Latin, and Sanskrit. This workshop is generously supported by the Lorne Thyssen Research Fund for Ancient World Topics and by Wolfson College, Oxford.

Grammatical texts from a great number of languages and cultures come down to us from ancient and pre-modern times. Some of these are didactic works aimed at pupils learning a second language, or learning to understand, analyze, and perhaps produce texts in a literary variety of their own language. Some are intended to help those interested in establishing the correct text of a literary author, and in some quarters we may glimpse grammatical description being pursued for its own intellectual interest. Grammatical texts come in many formats, which vary depending on the tradition and may change over time: these may include marginal notes, commentaries, treatises, texts in question-and-answer format, composition exercises, tables, and so on.

The challenges facing those editing Greek grammatical texts can help to illustrate the reasons for this workshop. Today an incalculable number of these texts lies unknown and unpublished in medieval manuscripts. For a long time, Greek grammatical texts were ignored or actively despised by scholars, who judged them to be arid, pedantic and uninteresting compared to literary texts. This was unfortunate, since these texts enrich our knowledge of ancient literature. Frequent quotations from literary authors tell us which authors were being read and taught, and for what purposes. Furthermore, some Greek grammatical texts are mines of ancient literary fragments which are not otherwise preserved—and recent work has seen new literary fragments continue to emerge. But these texts also have an intrinsic value, since they are important pieces of the origins of the grammatical theory in use today, and they shed light on teaching practices in ancient and Byzantine times.

While the last few decades have seen a growth of interest in minor and neglected Greek grammatical texts, a lot of work still needs to be done. The reluctance of scholars to edit these texts may well be related to some recurrent challenges one has to face when dealing with them. The authorship and the chronology of these texts are often difficult to determine, since the texts are for the most part transmitted anonymously or under the name of some well-known grammarian who was probably not the author; not infrequently, the same grammatical text is attributed to different authors in different manuscripts. In addition, grammatical texts were often deliberately adapted by their users, who might add stock examples or explanations from memory. All this means that the relationships between different versions of the same text, and the relationships between different texts on a similar topic, can be extremely complicated and difficult to ascertain.

Those working on grammatical texts in other languages and from other cultures face challenges that are similar in some respects but different in others. The aim of this workshop is to bring together scholars who study or edit grammatical texts—and especially minor or neglected grammatical texts—from any pre-modern culture, in order to enable like-minded scholars to compare notes across disciplinary boundaries. Topics of common interest are likely to include: what challenges do we face when studying and editing texts of these kinds? How comparable are the challenges from one culture to another, and how can they be overcome? What value do minor grammatical texts have, and for whom? What can manuscripts with grammatical texts tell us about the social contexts in which these were being copied and read?

Participants will be asked to share a 25-minutes presentation. Please email an English abstract (max. 400 words) to Maria Giovanna Sandri ([maria.sandri@classics.ox.ac.uk](mailto:maria.sandri@classics.ox.ac.uk)) and Philomen Probert ([philomen.probert@wolfson.ox.ac.uk](mailto:philomen.probert@wolfson.ox.ac.uk)) **by December 15th, 2022**. Please indicate in your application whether you would like to be considered for a travel or an accommodation bursary. There will be no delegate fee for speakers. Notifications on the outcome of the call will be sent out by February 1st, 2023.

If you have any questions, please don’t hesitate to contact us.

Yours Sincerely,

Maria Giovanna Sandri and Philomen Probert (organizers)