

ACCADEMIA NAZIONALE DEI LINCEI

PRESS RELEASE

From 27-29 May 1998 the Accademia Nazionale dei Lincei will host an international conference entitled "I nuovi orizzonti della filologia. Ecdotica, critica testuale, editoria scientifica e mezzi informatici elettronici" (New horizons in philology: text edition, textual criticism and scientific publishing in a computing environment). The conference, which begins on Wednesday 27 May at 3.30 pm, will take place at the seat of the Academy, Palazzo Corsini, Via della Lungara 10, Rome.

Speakers include Cesare Segre, Almuth Gresillon, Bruno Gentili, Tito Orlandi, Peter Robinson, Jean-Louis Lebrave, Claude Cazale, Giuseppe Gigliozzi, Gianfranco Capriz, Consuelo Dutschke, Alfredo Stussi, Ezio Raimondi.

Throughout the centuries literary texts and their transmission were strictly bound to the material on which they were written: parchment and paper, legitimizing and giving a historical dimension to erasures and rewritings, variations and copies, autographs and apographs, thus enabling us to define them.

Today, electronic text editing renders text both present and virtual: it can be altered without leaving any trace, recalled or made public through the same electronic means.

Philology, therefore, companion and guardian of the text, questions its function in a future textual community. In the new environment of computer science, the very sense of the concept of truth, autographs and localization is under discussion.

A valuable aid and an open question, computer science can control archives and catalogues, but it also confronts us with the problem of new editorial practices and the critical control of texts.

Lastly, preservation poses the problem of the "historical dimension" of computerized libraries, very different from the centuries old history of our paper archives.

The more the electronic text is available to readers, the less it is possible to define it within a historical certainty: a new responsibility which threatens philology and which our Conference will try to clarify.