

Toward a Digital *Editio Princeps*: Using Digital Technologies to Create a More Complete Scholarly Edition in the Classics

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ABSTRACT

The social and scholarly revolution enabled by printing technology was engendered by the choices of those with access to texts and the training to exploit novel possibilities, not by the mere existence of a new technology. The printed page has exhausted its utility as a container for knowledge and as the primary tool of textual scholarship, with the result that fields of study reliant on paper have become increasingly marginalized and self-referential. In Classical Studies, the reliance on traditional media impedes the linkage between the source materials and the scholarly tools necessary for their analysis. The development of an augmented model of textual scholarship that fully exploits the possibilities of digital technology offers the potential for an interconnection and depth of study at orders of magnitude beyond what is possible with the printed word.

The Perseus Project Treebanking Initiative leverages a constellation of emerging technologies to enable the creation of digital editions of texts with transparent and immediate connection to the corpus of relevant texts and scholarship. A digital scholarly edition offers a means of encoding the expertise of an editor with a clarity and density of information impossible with the printed word. We propose a digital *editio princeps*, containing a full syntactic commentary on every lemma of the text as well as multiple variant readings and direct links to full-text comparanda and relevant bibliography. This model will be illustrated by three ongoing projects: the *Tragedies* of Sophocles, the *Satires* of Juvenal, and a corpus of ancient Greek inscriptions. In this last

case, such an edition is accompanied by photogrammetric models and high resolution digital images, which allow the publication of inscriptions as complete cultural artifacts. Unlike the inevitable obsolescence of print, the digital edition becomes an evolving tool of scholarship that is infinitely scalable, readily updated, and universally accessible.