

Why are there no comprehensively digital scholarly editions of classical texts?

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Abstract

Currently, no “canonical” classical text with a multi-testimonial tradition has a digital scholarly edition based on a complete digital transcription of all primary sources, and on the automated collation of those transcriptions. Most classicists simply do not feel that they need such editions. I argue that this is ultimately due to the “canonization” of the corpus of classical texts. Classicists are more focussed on the “Text” than on the documents (manuscripts) and their texts: they tend not to consider the textual variance in the manuscripts as culturally meaningful in itself, but merely instrumental in view of the *constitutio textus*. I suspect that we will not have “comprehensively digital” editions of “canonical” classical texts with a multi-testimonial tradition until classical philology broadens its research agenda.