From a digital critical edition to a Virtual Research Environment: the *Achilleid* of Statius as case study

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Online access to high-definition images of manuscripts opens up new perspectives for research and changes the paradigm of the critical editor of classical texts, both at the level of editing and publishing. In particular, the editor now has the opportunity to make available and share every stage of his work (images of the text witnesses, collation, analysis of the manuscript tradition, editorial choices) and so allow the community of researchers in Classics to validate every stage in the creation of a new edition and encourage broad collaboration.

First conceived as an experimental platform for producing a born-digital critical edition of the *Achilleid* of Statius (a Latin poem of the late first century CE), as part of the FNS project “Towards a critical edition of the Achilleid of Statius”, the new *Digital Statius: the Achilleid* website (http://achilleid.unige.ch/) already allows users to move from any given verse in the text to images of the 224 surviving manuscripts in which the text is transmitted. The website is intended, moreover, to become (1) a multimedia archival space for the whole material that we are taking into account in preparing our own text and for the data and user tools we are producing; (2) a place of open collaboration and annotation for scholars and/or students interested in the *Achilleid*, wishing to comment on the critical edition, suggest emendations based on personal reading of the manuscript images, report intertextual parallels, share bibliography, and so on. With the text of the poem at its centre, this platform marks the first step in the construction of a digital environment for the study of the *Achilleid* and could host in the future other editorial projects of the same kind. It is addressed mainly to professional scholars interested in the business of editing texts, in palaeography and in the history of transmission, but via enrichments of various kinds (for example a complete morpho-syntactic analysis and translations), it also aims to be accessible to students of different levels and to the wider public.