

# Authoritative Practices and Collective Validation: Wikidata within the Collaborative Digital Edition of the Greek Anthology

Mathilde Verstraete      Maxime Guénette      Marcello Vitali-Rosati

## Introduction

The management and preservation of research data in the Humanities increasingly raises questions about its sustainability, sharing, and validation. In this context, Wikidata constitutes a powerful and collaborative tool. By challenging traditional models where researchers act as both producers and gatekeepers of authority, Wikidata redefines these issues and fosters new paradigms of collaboration.

! To add

Données issues de la recherche comme golden standard -> problématique

## Contexte

Since 2014, Marcello Vitali-Rosati and his team have been developing a digital and collaborative edition of the *Greek Anthology* (Verstraete and Mellet (2024), Verstraete (2024), Vitali-Rosati et al. (2021), Mellet (2020), Vitali-Rosati et al. (2020)). The project was born out of the need to index and make accessible this foundational corpus, which gathers nearly all the known epigrams of ancient Greek literature. This project has led to [the creation of a platform](#). Drawing on the contributions of a wide range of collaborators, it provides, for each epigram a cluster of information. Each epigram, thus, has its own page where one can find (1) its position in the *Palatine* manuscript (the *codex Palatinus graecus* 23, the principal testimony for the *Palatine Anthology*), retrieved via the IIIF protocol through the Heidelberg Library's annotation tool linked to its API, (2) multiple translations in various languages, (3) various keywords (author, cities and other thematic keywords), (3) commentaries, (4) internal and external references, and (5) cross-alignments between translations. [A REST API is available](#) for querying the dataset.

This paper focuses specifically on the use of keywords—covering entities such as (a) authors, (b) cities, and (c) others keywords collections divided in sections like deities, epithets, and epicleses – [the full list can be found on the website](#). As part of the project’s development, we introduced a rule requiring all keywords to be linked to Wikidata: any new keyword must be associated with a corresponding Wikidata identifier. This policy prompted a comprehensive reconciliation of our existing metadata with the Wikidata knowledge base.

## History of the platform(s)

Since 2014, our team has been developing a digital editorial model tailored to the *Greek Anthology*, an ancient corpus, similar to a fragmentary one. Early stages of the project focused on exploring how digital tools could enhance both access to and understanding of that material. Initial prototypes—such as a SPIP-based website—provided a foundation for collaborative enrichment and allowed us to begin identifying the technical and hermeneutic challenges of such an edition.

These early experiments revealed that designing a digital edition involves more than providing access (Sahle (2016)): it requires a coherent epistemological model to structure the relationships among texts, editions, translations, annotations, and contributors. Over time, the platform evolved to support collaborative editing, allowing users to contribute translations, metadata, and commentary: that is when the platform *Anthologia Palatina* was created. Yet, as the project expanded and new collaborators joined, the limits of the initial technical infrastructure became increasingly apparent—particularly regarding multilingualism and the lack of stable identifiers for core entities like authors, cities, or any kind of tag represented by a keyword.

Building on an initial REST API, a second platform was developed – *Anthologia graeca, augmented with an API*. It uses GraphQL and the backend schema is implemented using Django, a Python-based web framework. We focused on collaborations (with Perseus, Perseids, the Library of Heidelberg, by example), highlighting the importance of strong data structuring and interoperability, core principles in the Digital Classics community. Our model had to be compatible with broader efforts in open scholarship and heritage valorization. The platform introduced a more granular editorial model centered on the epigram as a fundamental unit. This new platform adopts a semantic web approach and is grounded in the systematic use of Wikidata identifiers<sup>1</sup>, marking a significant evolution in our editorial framework. This

---

<sup>1</sup>Note that all data from previous platforms have automatically been imported into this one, though not all entities are currently linked to Wikidata—an ongoing task. This transition reflects our evolving editorial model: one that is increasingly open, decentralized, and connected to the wider ecosystem of digital knowledge production. Another second note is that the project is not finished — and never will be. This is not just a matter of ongoing development; it’s inherent to the nature of the corpus itself. It’s an anthology — a form that, by definition, resists closure. New readings, translations, annotations, and connections will always be possible. At present, nearly all the epigrams are available on the platform, but not all of them. Some are still being reviewed, others are pending transcription or metadata enrichment. And beyond the texts themselves, the work of annotation, translation, and linking — especially through tools like Wikidata

decision is a turning point. Not only does it resolve earlier issues around entity identification, but it also reaffirms the project’s original commitment to collaborative editorial practices: by aligning with Wikidata, we ensure that each new contribution is embedded in a broader, federated knowledge network.

## The Authors of the *Greek Anthology*

Wikidata thus plays a central role in the AG project. From the new platform on, all new keywords used to annotate the platform are created via a Wikidata URI – note that some old keywords still have not been linked to a wikidata id yet, as we said above. This integration proved particularly useful in addressing inconsistencies within our list of authors. Since both Wikidata and our data model are multilingual, discrepancies such as missing authors, duplicate entries, and inconsistent information across languages were directly reflected on our platform (<https://anthologiagraeca.org/authors/>). To resolve these issues, we first ensured that all authors on the platform had a Wikidata URN. We then expanded our contribution by searching for author names in multiple languages (French, English, Italian, Ancient Greek, and Latin) and adding them to Wikidata. Once this information was uploaded, the Wikidata community quickly reviewed and refined our data to align it with their standards. This process not only enhanced our own dataset but also strengthened Wikidata’s overall accuracy and consistency.

### ! To add

- AG
- Chantier Auteurs
- Interactions avec la communauté

## Quelques problématiques

### On co-existing informations and visions du monde

### ! To add

- Coexistence des informations ?
- Diversité des visions du monde ?

peut-être exemplifier avec le label officiel pour les alternatives label ? (genre, “je veux que ma data soit le vrai label officiel et pas relégué à un label alternatif”)

---

— opens up an infinite horizon of contributions. The platform is designed to remain open, both structurally and epistemologically, to future layers of meaning and interpretation.

## Wikidata as a multilingual authority

### On delegating the curation of academic data

Rather than positioning ourselves as the sole custodian of authority, we are delegating that responsibility to a wider community. What are the implications of this shift toward distributed authority. How can that shift in authority benefit academic research projects? Is Wikidata's epistemological paradigm coherent with ours? Can we think of a generic epistemological framework to be effectively applied to specific academic endeavors?

### On the dissemination on academic database

## Wikidata and DH

! To add

- Je pense qu'on n'a pas grand chose de révolutionnaire à dire ici

## Conclusion

We suggest that Wikidata is not merely a technical tool but rather a space where methodological and epistemological debates can unfold. By engaging with this dynamic, researchers can enhance their projects while contributing to the creation of a more sustainable, inclusive, and collaborative knowledge base.

! To add

- our presentation invites reflection on the implications of this shift toward distributed authority.
- How can that shift in authority benefit academic research projects?
- Is Wikidata's epistemological paradigm coherent with ours?
- Can we think of a generic epistemological framework to be effectively applied to specific academic endeavors?

## Bibliographie

Mellet, Margot. 2020. "Penser Le Palimpseste Numérique. Le Projet d'édition Numérique Collaborative de l'anthologie Palatine." *Captures* 5 (1). <https://doi.org/https://doi.org/10.7202/1073479ar>.

- Sahle, Patrick. 2016. “2. What Is a Scholarly Digital Edition?” In *Digital Scholarly Editing : Theories and Practices*, edited by Matthew James Driscoll and Elena Pierazzo, 19–39. Digital Humanities Series. Cambridge: Open Book Publishers. <https://books.openedition.org/obp/3397>.
- Verstraete, Mathilde. 2024. “Dynamiques Auctoriales Au Sein Du Projet d’édition Numérique Collaborative de l’ Anthologie Grecque.” *Sens Public*. <http://sens-public.org/articles/1692/>.
- Verstraete, Mathilde, and Margot Mellet. 2024. “Passés et présents anthologiques. Le projet d’édition numérique collaborative de l’Anthologie grecque.” In *Communautés et pratiques d’écritures des patrimoines et des mémoires*, Presses universitaires de Paris-Nanterre. Paris.
- Vitali-Rosati, Marcello, Margot Mellet, Servanne Monjour, Antoine Fauchié, Timothée Guicherd, David Larlet, and Enrico Agostini-Marchese. 2021. “L’épopée numérique de l’Anthologie grecque : entre questions épistémologiques, modèles techniques et dynamiques collaboratives.” *Sens Public*, July.
- Vitali-Rosati, Marcello, Servanne Monjour, Joana Casenave, Elsa Bouchard, and Margot Mellet. 2020. “Editorializing the Greek Anthology: The Palatin Manuscript as a Collective Imaginary.” *Digital Humanities Quarterly* 014 (1).