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Between Page and Stage: Digital Scholarly Editing of Dramatic Texts
A Case Study on *Capitano Ulisse* by Alberto Savinio

Final Dissertation in

Scholarly Editing and Digital Approaches

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Declaration on the Use of Generative Artificial Intelligence

For the preparation of this thesis, generative artificial intelligence tools (OpenAI) were used as a support tool for linguistic revision, structural clarification, and refinement of technical explanations. A detailed description of their use is provided in the Appendix.

Introduction

This research investigates how a digital scholarly edition can address the specific challenges posed by dramatic texts. Drama occupies a particular position among literary genres, combining written transmission with an orientation toward staging.

In this context, the study examines how a digital environment can support an editorial approach that brings textual witnesses and performance-related materials into relation, while keeping their different roles distinct. Instead of placing performance at the margins of the edition or treating it as a form of textual variation, the research considers how the two dimensions can be connected within a single editorial framework.

To address this issue in a concrete way, the project focuses on a specific case study: *Capitano Ulisse* by Alberto Savinio. The play is characterised by a relatively linear process of textual transmission marked by successive phases of authorial revision, alongside a small but significant set of documented performances. This combination provides a suitable context for testing an editorial model that integrates genetic textual analysis with performative documentation in a digital setting.

The research seeks to fill a gap in existing scholarship by developing a formal editorial framework and testing it through a concrete digital application. It begins by outlining the theoretical problem and then proposes a practical editorial solution.

Chapter 1 outlines the theoretical background of the study, focusing on the hybrid nature of dramatic texts, issues of transmission and authorship, and the implications of textual instability for editorial practice.

Chapter 2 examines existing digital scholarly editions of drama, highlighting both text-centred approaches and projects that integrate performative materials, and identifies the theoretical gap addressed by this research.

Chapter 3 presents the methodological framework and editorial principles adopted in the project, including corpus construction, encoding strategies, semantic modelling, and the overall digital workflow.

Chapter 4 describes the concrete results of the implementation, illustrating the XML/TEI encoding, the RDF semantic model, the XSLT transformation processes, and the digital interface developed for the edition.

Finally, Chapter 5 discusses the outcomes of the project in relation to the research problem, reflecting on the strengths and limitations of the proposed model and outlining possible directions for further development.

1 Background

This chapter establishes the theoretical background of the research by addressing the editorial problem posed by dramatic texts. Drama represents a particularly complex object of scholarly editing, as it cannot be fully explained through models developed for literary works whose meaning and transmission rely primarily on the written form. The defining feature of dramatic texts lies in their concurrent existence both as written artefacts and as projects oriented toward performance, a condition that challenges traditional expectations about textual stability, authorship, and editorial authority.

From an editorial perspective, the main difficulty concerns how to describe and analyse dramatic texts in a way that keeps together their written structure and their performative dimension, without reducing one to a supplementary role. While the written text provides the material basis for transmission and analysis, performance intervenes in its realisation, revision, and circulation, generating forms of variation that are not easily accommodated within text-centred editorial frameworks. As a result, dramatic texts expose tensions between philological models grounded in stabilisation and theatrical practices characterised by change, negotiation, and reuse.

The chapter argues that addressing this tension requires an editorial perspective capable of considering the fluid and relational nature of theatrical textuality. Rather than treating instability as a problem to be resolved through textual fixation, the chapter approaches it as a structural feature of drama that must be acknowledged and modelled. This entails reconsidering how concepts such as textual authority, versioning, and editorial responsibility operate in contexts shaped by rehearsal processes, collaborative production, and repeated performance.

To develop this argument, the chapter is organised into two main sections. Section 1.1 defines drama as a fluid editorial object by examining the hybrid nature of the dramatic text, the implications of performance for transmission and authorship, and the role of instability as a constitutive feature of theatrical works. Section 1.2 moves from textual theory to editorial practice, analysing how traditional print editions have addressed, in different ways, the specific challenges posed by dramatic textuality, and outlining the need for editorial models that can accommodate plurality and relationality chapter.

1.1 Drama as a fluid object

The distinctive nature of dramatic texts positions them as uniquely polymorphic objects within literary scholarship and theatre studies. Unlike other literary works, drama does not belong

exclusively to a single domain: it exists simultaneously as a written artefact and as a project oriented toward performance. This dual condition challenges traditional approaches to textual analysis, since dramatic texts are neither self-contained literary objects nor merely ephemeral scripts destined to vanish in performance. Rather, they are constituted by the continuous interaction between page and stage, an interaction that shapes their transmission, authorship, and meaning.

1.1.1 The dual orientation of dramatic texts

The dramatic text is inherently polymorphic, functioning at once as a literary work and as a performative script: it is written to be read, yet conceived to be enacted[1]. This dual orientation has long defined the nature of theatre. As André Helbo observes: "Trace fragile de l'émotion immédiate et partagée, le patrimoine théâtral occidental incarne de façon emblématique une double appartenance: à la présence vécue et à la littérature."[2] In this sense, theatre can be described as "Le théâtre est double par nature: art du spectacle et littérature"[3]. This dual orientation distinguishes dramatic texts from other literary genres. As Pasquale Stoppelli notes:

> La caratteristica principale che distingue i testi teatrali dalle altre tipologie (con la sola parziale eccezione della poesia per musica) è il fatto che il loro punto d'invio naturale non è la pagina ma la scena: destinatario è dunque lo spettatore, non il lettore. [4]

Dramatic writing is therefore oriented from its inception toward an external realisation that exceeds the act of reading. These two dimensions are not independent. The stage continually reshapes elements of the written play, while the text acquires meaning through the performances that realise it[5]. As a result, the identity of a dramatic work emerges from the interplay between writing and performance, in which neither aspect can be fully grasped in isolation[6].

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[1] This conceptual separation emerges with the cultural reception of Aristotle's *Poetics*, which, by granting primacy to tragedy, foregrounds the figure of the dramatic poet while at the same time emphasising a disjunction between *opsis* and *logos*, that is, between representation and literature, a disjunction that has been widely accepted by later commentators. For reference: RICCO L. (1996) p. 14

[2] HELBO A. (2007), p.11 [English translation by me] « As a fragile trace of immediate and shared emotion, Western theatrical heritage embodies an emblematic dual affiliation: to lived presence and to literature. »

[3] VIALA A. (2016), p.1 [English translation by me] «Theatre is double by nature: a performing art and a literature. »

[4] STOPPELLI, P. (2024), p. 204. [English translation by me] «The defining characteristic that sets dramatic texts apart from other literary genres (with the partial exception of poetry for music) lies in their orientation toward the stage rather than the page. Consequently, their primary addressee is the spectator, not the reader. »

[5] ELAM, K. (1980), p.209.

[6] Ibidem.

However, this duality has often been reframed as a dichotomy[7] between two distinct research traditions: one focusing on drama as a literary artefact, the other on theatre as an ephemeral performative event. Such a reduction flattens the object of study into a binary scheme, depriving it of the interdependence that constitutes its specificity[8]. As Marc Fumaroli has argued, this represents a "false dilemma"[9] that obscures the specificity of the theatrical object and has produced an unbalanced disciplinary division.

This polarization has not only limited theoretical debate but has also shaped scholarly practice. Approaches that privileged performance as the sole locus of theatrical meaning tended to marginalise the text, reducing it to a secondary literary residue. Anna Scannapieco has described this stance as a form of "theatrical fundamentalism"[10], as it diverted attention from the philological questions raised by dramatic texts and encouraged editorial practices that treated plays as ordinary literary works, without fully accounting for their performative orientation.

The dramatic text must therefore be understood as a hybrid artefact, situated between literary composition and performative projection. On the one hand, it is a written object, structured through dialogue, stage directions, and layout, transmitted through manuscripts and printed editions. On the other, it is conceived as a project for performance, oriented toward embodiment, spatialisation, and collective enactment. These dimensions are inseparable: writing anticipates performance, and performance, reshapes the use, interpretation, and transmission of the text.

To resume, the identity of a dramatic work does not reside in the written text alone, but in the relationship between page and stage. This page–stage interaction constitutes a specific form of theatrical textuality, in which literary and performative elements are mutually defining. Any analytical or editorial approach that isolates one of these dimensions risks misrepresenting the nature of the object it seeks to describe.

1.1.2 Transmission and authorship

When dramatic texts are considered in relation to their hybrid orientation toward page and stage, their transmission emerges not as a linear process, but as one marked by fragmentation and continuous negotiation. Historically, the transmission of dramatic texts has followed two interconnected yet

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[7] BOTTOMS, S. (2003), p.178.

[8] DORT, B. (1986), p.20.

[9] FUMAROLI, M. (1990), p.7.

[10] SCANNAPIECO, A (2022), p.27.

uneven paths. Alongside a literary tradition oriented toward reading and preservation, a parallel scenic tradition took shape through texts designed for use on stage.

This scenic tradition was shaped above all by practical concerns. Scripts circulated as working documents, adapted to specific venues, casts, and theatrical circumstances, and modified throughout rehearsals to function effectively on stage. In this context, the dramatic text was not regarded as a stable artefact to be conserved, but as a flexible instrument, open to revision whenever performance demanded it.

Another destabilising factor was editorial piracy[11]. Plays were frequently transcribed during performances by spectators or professional copyists using shorthand techniques, producing texts reconstructed on the basis of auditory recollection.These versions circulated independently of authorial oversight and were often printed despite their acknowledged unreliability. From a philological standpoint, such witnesses are problematic but significant as they do not merely represent textual corruption but testify to forms of transmission in which performance precedes textual fixation.

Authorship in theatre must therefore be understood as distributed and negotiated. While the playwright provides an initial framework, actors, directors, stage managers, and institutional contexts actively shape the work's scenic realisation and, in many cases, its textual afterlife. Their interventions leave traces that cannot be dismissed as marginal, since they contribute to shaping how the work takes form and circulates[12].

This tension can be traced across later periods of theatrical history. In the twentieth century, playwrights such as Samuel Beckett and Arthur Miller repeatedly contested stagings they considered incompatible with their plays[13]. Beckett opposed productions that altered spatial arrangements, gestures, or casting conventions, while Miller intervened against performances that, in his view, distorted the ethical or dramatic structure of his texts[14]. These disputes demonstrate that conflicts between authorial control and performative autonomy are not historical anomalies, but enduring features of dramatic authorship.

At the same time, the instability of dramatic transmission has prompted different and sometimes opposing conceptions of authorial control. In early modern theatre, exemplified by figures such as

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[11] RICCO L. (1996) p.38

[12] STOPPELLI, P. (2024), p. 204.

[13] RABKIN G. (1985)

[14] Ibidem

Molière[15], the dramatic text was commonly understood as a functional instrument of performance rather than as an autonomous literary artefact. Once a play entered the stage, it was released from the author's control and treated as a mutable component of an ephemeral event[16]. Authorship, in this context, did not entail responsibility for textual fixation, and instability was neither contested nor perceived as problematic.

From the eighteenth century onward, however, some playwrights began to engage more explicitly with the textual afterlife of their works. Carlo Goldoni represents a pivotal moment in this shift: while fully embedded in the theatrical system as a "poeta di compagnia*"[17]*, he increasingly turned to print following some incidents such as Bettinelli Spuria[18] and Medebach[19] issue, as a means of asserting authorial authority over texts that circulated in scenically adapted or commercially mediated forms[20]. Authorised editions and paratextual interventions allowed Goldoni to reposition selected plays within a literary framework, even as a substantial part of his production continued to circulate outside the book[21]. Editorial intervention thus functioned not as a definitive solution to instability, but as a selective attempt to regulate it.

A further reconfiguration of dramatic authorship emerges in the twentieth century with Luigi Pirandello. Here, the author's concern extends beyond unauthorised textual circulation to encompass the interpretative freedom of performance itself[22]. Through extensive revision, the expansion of stage directions, and the organisation of his plays into coherent editorial corpora, Pirandello sought to anchor the dramatic text to an authoritative written form[23]. Yet this strategy likewise produces not a single stable text, but a plurality of authorised versions shaped by ongoing negotiation between writing and staging.

The persistence of such conflicts in twentieth-century theatre confirms that these tensions are not resolved by the imposition of authorial authority, whether editorial or juridical. Instead, they suggest

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[15] SCANNAPIECO, A (2022), p. 31

[16] Ibidem

[17] [English translation by me] «*company's poet* »

[18] [English translation by me] «*Spurious Bettinelli text*»

[19] RICCO A. (1996) p.17

[20] VESCOVO P. (2022) p.147

[21] Ibidem

[22] Ibidem, p. 154

[23] Ibidem

that authorship in theatre takes shape through negotiation, balancing the openness of performance with the desire to stabilise the text.

Even with the advent of modern technologies performance, remains an ephemeral event that can only be documented indirectly. What survives is not the performance itself, but its sedimentation within the textual tradition. Variants generated on stage often reappear in later editions, turning the printed play into a layered record of multiple scenic experiences.

For philology, this implies a shift in perspective. The transmission of dramatic texts cannot be described as the preservation of a fixed object. It must be understood as the history of a stratified process in which authorial agency, performance practice, material conditions, and institutional frameworks intersect. Editorial work, in this context, consists in mapping these relationships and making them intelligible, without reducing them to a single authoritative line of descent.

1.1.3 Textual instability as a characteristic of drama

Instability is not a secondary effect of theatrical practice, but a defining condition of dramatic texts. From the moment a play enters rehearsal, its written form becomes open to adjustment, reinterpretation, and negotiation. Changes introduced for scenic clarity, practical constraints, or interpretative choices are not external disruptions imposed on a stable text; they belong to the normal life of dramatic writing.

Unlike literary genres that tend to consolidate around a relatively stable textual form, drama exists through a plurality of coexisting states. Authorial manuscripts, rehearsal scripts, promptbooks, revised editions, and printed texts often circulate simultaneously, each fulfilling a specific function within a given theatrical or historical context. These states do not form a linear progression toward a final version. Instead, they constitute a plurality of related forms, connected by use and adaptation.

This condition aligns drama closely with models of textual fluidity. John Bryant's concept of the *fluid text*[24] offers a useful framework, as it shifts attention from the search for a definitive version to the relationships among textual states. In the case of drama, however, fluidity is intensified by performance, which repeatedly reactivates the text and subjects it to new interpretative possibilities.

Each staging generates a new reading that may leave material traces affecting later transmissions.

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[24] BRYANT J. (2002)

Anna Scannapieco has described this dynamic as a form of "genetica instabilità"[25], emphasising that the dramatic work is oriented toward a "perpetuo rinvio della definitività"[26]. The script seldom functions as a closed literary object. More often, it operates as a provisional framework for a specific theatrical occasion, embedded within a creative system that includes directors, actors, production practices, and audience reception. The dramatic text is thus not designed to reach closure, but to remain open to transformation.

This has important editorial consequences. In drama, variation is not necessarily a sign of corruption or deviation. It often records distinct modes of use and corresponds to different performative needs, which cannot always be organised within a simple hierarchy of authority.

Acknowledging instability as a structural feature of drama does not entail abandoning philological rigour[27]. On the contrary, it requires a redefinition of editorial responsibility[28]. This perspective provides the conceptual groundwork for examining how such challenges have been addressed within traditional editorial models, which will be discussed in the following section.

1.2 Editorial perspectives on dramatic texts

Editorial perspectives on dramatic texts constitute a distinctive field within textual scholarship, as they are compelled to confront an object whose identity is intrinsically unstable, stratified, and relational. Unlike literary works, dramatic texts exist at the intersection of written composition and embodied performance, and their transmission reflects this dual ontology. Theatrical textuality is shaped not only by authorial revision but also by rehearsal practices, staging constraints, censorship, commercial circulation, and audience response. As a result, dramatic works tend to survive not as single, self-identical texts, but as clusters of related redactions that coexist without converging toward a definitive form.

Marc Fumaroli has argued that separating the literary text from its performative dimension, deprives the theatrical work of its vitality[29]. From an editorial perspective, this implies that text and

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[25] TERRONI A. (2023) p. 211 [English translation by me] *«genetic instability»*

[26] Ibidem, p.210 [English translation by me] *«Perpetual deferral of definitiveness»*

[27] Ibidem

[28] Ibidem

[29] FUMAROLI, M. (1990)

performance cannot be treated as hierarchically ordered domains but must be understood as inherent aspects of the same object.

Within this framework, dramatic texts emerge as textual entities whose identity is shaped by ongoing variation instead of fixed stability. As Anna Scannapieco has argued, the task of the editor is not to stabilise the text in a definitive form, but to make visible the processes of transformation through which the work has taken shape[30]. Editorial practice thus shifts from the production of an authoritative text toward the documentation and interpretation of textual plurality as a constitutive feature of dramatic writing.

In theatrical contexts, textual variation is often functional more than accidental. Cuts, redistributions of dialogue, and alterations to stage directions frequently arise from the practical requirements of performance and may correspond to coherent and autonomous textual states. Treating such phenomena as subordinate variants risks flattening their significance and obscuring the relationship between textual form and performative use. As Anna Scannapieco has emphasised, relegating a non-conforming redaction to the apparatus simply because it diverges from an assumed original undermines its historical and critical value when that redaction is tied to a specific staging tradition[31].

Marzia Pieri's editorial work on Goldoni exemplifies these issues particularly well. Pieri has repeatedly drawn attention to the limits of traditional theatrical editing, arguing that a purely literary philology often proves inadequate when confronted with the inherent instability of dramatic texts[32]. In her view, the central problem lies in the dogma represented by the author's last will, a principle that turns the work into a fixed object by stripping away the traces of performance in order to adapt it to a logic of textual stability [33]. By advocating a "filologia del contesto"[34], Pieri calls for textual scholarship to engage more directly with performance history and scenic materials, recognising that theatre does not offer stable originals, but a plurality of textual states shaped by use and transmission.

Taken together, these perspectives show that the editorial challenges posed by dramatic texts are not marginal or exceptional, but structural. The coexistence of textual plurality, performative variation, and negotiated authorship places sustained pressure on editorial models grounded in stabilisation, hierarchy, and linear transmission. While traditional philological approaches have developed

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[30] SCANNAPIECO, A (2022)

[31] Ibidem

[32] TERRONI A. (2023)

[33] RICCO A. (1996), p. 32

[34] PIERI M. (2022), p.167 [English translation by me] «*philology of context*»

important tools to address some of these issues, their underlying assumptions often remain closely tied to print-oriented paradigms, which tend to sit uneasily with the relational and processual nature of theatrical textuality.

Against this background, digital scholarly editing appears as a potentially transformative field. Digital environments make it possible to represent plurality, stratification, and non-linear relationships in ways that are difficult to achieve within the limits of the printed page. At the same time, it is far from self-evident that these possibilities have been consistently translated into coherent editorial models for dramatic texts. The following chapter takes up this question by examining how current digital scholarly editions conceptualise and implement editorial solutions for drama, with particular attention to both their achievements and their unresolved tensions.

2 State of the Art

This chapter examines how digital scholarly editions address dramatic texts within current theoretical frameworks. Section 2.1 outlines how dramatic texts are positioned within current digital scholarly editing practices. Section 2.2 and 2.3 analyse selected case studies, focusing respectively on text-centred editorial models and on digital editions integrating performative and contextual materials. These examples are selected to highlight how current digital editions address the specific challenges posed by dramatic texts. Finally, section 2.4 offers a comparative discussion of the examined approaches and identifies the theoretical gap addressed by the present research.

2.1 Digital scholarly edition and dramatic text: an overview

Over the past two decades, digital scholarly editing practice has been accompanied by an extensive theoretical debate concerning its epistemological foundations and methodological ambitions[35]. While the digital paradigm has undeniably expanded the possibilities for representing, accessing, and manipulating textual materials, several scholars have questioned whether these possibilities have been fully integrated into editorial practice. A recurring concern within the field is that many digital editions continue to replicate conceptual models inherited from print culture, rather than rethinking them considering the potentialities of the digital medium.

Joris Van Zundert has articulated this tension by warning against a methodological stagnation that risks reducing digital scholarly editing to a "mere medium shift"[36], a phenomenon that he describes as "paradigmatic regression"[37]. From this perspective, the digital environment is often treated primarily as a medium for presentation, without fully exploring how it can reshape editorial questions, models, and interpretative strategies. This critique resonates with earlier observations by Peter Robinson, who noted that most scholarly digital editions had failed to present materials or modes of engagement that could not, in principle, be realised in print. As Robinson famously remarks:

> The first missing aspect is that up to now, almost without exception, no scholarly electronic edition has presented material which could not have been presented in book form, nor indeed

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[35] ROBINSON P. (2013)

[36] ZUNDERT V.J. (2016), p. 106.

[37] Ibidem, p. 83

presented this material in a manner significantly different from that which could have been managed in print.[38]

Taken together, these critiques suggest that digital scholarly editing can be understood through different editorial approaches. In some cases, digital technologies are used primarily to transfer textual content into a new medium, largely reproducing pre-existing editorial assumptions without substantially rethinking the underlying model. In others, they support the development of editorial frameworks that actively engage with the digital environment to articulate editorial reasoning and interpretative complexity. The challenge of digital scholarly editing, therefore, lies not solely in adopting digital technologies per se, but in developing methodologies capable of moving beyond print-oriented paradigms. It is precisely within this unresolved tension between theoretical ambition and editorial practice that the question of dramatic texts becomes particularly relevant.

As discussed in the previous chapter, theatre as an object of study continues to be shaped by a long-standing and only partially resolved dichotomy[39] between text and performance. While digital environments offer the theoretical possibility to address this complexity, examples of digital scholarly editions of dramatic texts remain relatively limited.

This situation does not reflect a marginal role of theatre within the digital humanities. According to Debra Caplan, theatre studies occupy a distinctive position in this field, marked by less consolidated infrastructures for the production, dissemination, and evaluation of digital scholarship[40]. At the same time, this institutional fragility contrasts with the strong affinity between digital humanities methodologies and theatrical objects. Caplan argues that digital approaches are particularly well suited to theatre research precisely because of features such as the ephemerality of performance, the centrality of liveness, the involvement of audiences, and the production of heterogeneous traces[41].

Despite this strong potential, many existing digital editions of dramatic texts tend to mirror traditional print-based editorial models. Consequently, plays are often treated primarily as literary artefacts, while their function as scripts intended for enactment and circulation remains secondary. From this perspective, drama is frequently handled in ways that do not substantially distinguish it from other textual genres within the digital editorial landscape. In this context, the difference becomes most

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[38] http://computerphilologie.digital-humanities.de/jg03/robinson.html

[39] BOTTOMS S. (2003)

[40] CAPLAN D. (2015), p.348

[41] Ibidem

visible in digital editions that engage with texts whose meaning is closely tied to performance, embodiment, and social enactment.

To explore how these issues are addressed in practice, the following sections turn to a series of selected digital scholarly editions of dramatic texts. The aim is not to establish a hierarchy of projects, but to analyse how different editorial models conceptualise the relationship between text, performance, and digital representation.

2.2 Text-centred approaches to digital editing of drama

As discussed in the previous section, a significant portion of digital scholarly editions of drama has been described in the literature as remaining grounded in textual and philological models inherited from print culture, focusing on text establishment, the documentation of witnesses, and the reconstruction of textual transmission. The following case study is not intended to be exhaustive, but to illustrate how this text-centred orientation is implemented through concrete editorial choices within a digital environment.

2.2.1 The PROLOPE digital edition of *La dama boba*

The digital edition of *La dama boba*[42] developed within the framework of the PROLOPE[43] project exemplifies a consciously text-centred approach. Conceived primarily as a scholarly web application, the project focuses on the textual tradition of Lope de Vega's comedy, with the explicit aim of addressing the complexity of its transmission history through digital means. Although the edition does not exclude contextual or explanatory materials, its core concern remains the establishment, documentation, and visualisation of the critical text and of the witnesses on which it is based.

The project positions itself firmly within the tradition of critical editing and textual scholarship, clearly distinguishing its aims from other freely accessible digital versions of *La dama boba*, such as those offered by the Biblioteca Virtual Miguel de Cervantes[44] or by Artelope[45]. While these platforms provide searchable texts and basic structural markup, they do not engage directly with the reconstruction of the play's textual history. By contrast, the PROLOPE edition places the study of

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[42] https://damaboba.unibo.it/

[43] https://prolope.uab.cat/

[44] https://www.cervantesvirtual.com/

[45] https://artelope.uv.es/

the textual tradition at the centre of the project, using the digital environment to address some of the limits of print, especially in the representation of the material and genetic features of the documents.

A key premise of the project is the recognition that early modern Spanish drama challenges conventional notions of what constitutes a text. Plays from the *Siglo de Oro*[46] are transmitted through documents of diverse typologies and provenance, including autograph manuscripts, authorised printed editions, and copies that may derive from memorial reconstruction. These witnesses often reflect different stages of composition, revision, performance, and corruption, and therefore resist reduction to a single, stabilised textual state. The PROLOPE edition responds to this complexity by presenting the critical text alongside diplomatic transcriptions and high-resolution facsimiles of the most relevant witnesses, allowing users to examine the relationship between documentary evidence and editorial decisions in a transparent and systematic way.

The edition provides access to the critical text of *La dama boba* together with three key witnesses: the autograph manuscript (O), the manuscript copy (M), and the authorised printed edition (A). Each document is available both as a facsimile and as a TEI/XML encoded transcription, developed according to criteria established within the PROLOPE editorial tradition. The interface enables users to view these materials either individually or in a synoptic layout of up to three modules, facilitating direct comparison between the critical text and the underlying documentary evidence. This modular visualisation represents one of the project's most significant contributions, as it closely links the act of reading to the processes of textual reconstruction.

Particular attention is devoted to the autograph manuscript, which serves as the base text for the critical edition. Its TEI transcription encodes deletions, additions, substitutions, and other authorial interventions, and, where possible, advances hypotheses concerning their chronological sequence. Through colour coding and animated visualisations, the interface makes visible aspects of the writing process that are often flattened in print editions. In this respect, the project aligns explicitly with approaches developed within *filologia d'autore*[47] and genetic criticism, adapting them to the specific conditions of early modern theatrical texts.

The critical text is accompanied by a full apparatus of variants and scholarly commentary, accessible through interactive calls embedded in the text. Notes address textual, linguistic, and interpretative

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[46] [English translation] «*Spanish Golden Age*»

[47] [English translation] «*Authorial Philology*». This term designates a branch of philology focused on the study of authorial variants in manuscripts and printed texts, as theorised by Dante Isella. For an overview of the field, see the website *Filologia d'autore*: http://www.filologiadautore.it/wp/

issues, while supplementary sections provide detailed information on versification, segmentation, editorial criteria, and the textual tradition of the play. A dedicated search engine operates across the critical text and all witnesses, enabling targeted queries that would be difficult or impracticable in a print-based environment.

Notably, performative materials play no structural role in this edition. The project does not engage with staging history, audiovisual resources, or performance as an object of editorial inquiry. Editorial attention remains exclusively focused on the textual tradition and the relationships between witnesses. This deliberate exclusion of performance is not presented as a limitation, but reflects a precise editorial positioning grounded in philological priorities.

From the perspective of digital editions of dramatic texts, the PROLOPE edition of *La dama boba* therefore exemplifies a text-focused model, in which the digital medium is mobilised to enhance philological analysis rather than to integrate performative objects. The project demonstrates how digital tools can strengthen the connection between documents, transcriptions, and critical text, offering levels of transparency and visualisation that go beyond those achievable in traditional print editions. At the same time, its methodological choices clearly distinguish it from editions that foreground theatricality through multimedia integration, positioning it as a complementary, yet conceptually distinct, approach within the broader landscape of digital scholarly editing of drama.

2.3 Digital editions integrating performative and contextual materials

While many digital scholarly editions of drama remain anchored in text-centred editorial paradigms, a growing number of projects aim to use the digital medium to engage more directly with the performative and contextual dimensions of theatrical texts. These initiatives start from the assumption that, in drama, the written text is only one element of a broader and inherently unstable cultural object, whose meaning is continually reshaped through performance, reception, and historical circulation. From this perspective, the digital edition is not conceived simply as a more flexible container for textual data, but as a space in which different forms of evidence, textual, visual, and performative, can coexist and be examined in relation to one another.

As multiple scholars such as Brett D. Hirsch, Janelle Jenstad[48], and Patrick Sahle[49] have argued, the digital medium can be justified as an editorial environment only if it offers something qualitatively

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[48] HIRSCH D.B., JENSTAD J. (2016).

[49] SAHLE P. (2016), p. 20.

different from print. Merely making texts machine-readable or enriching them with hyperlinks does not in itself constitute a methodological shift. In the case of dramatic texts, the crucial difference lies in the possibility of moving beyond the written text by integrating materials related to performance, staging, and theatrical practice in ways that are structurally embedded within the editorial framework, rather than added as supplementary context[50]. In this view, performance-related materials function not as illustrative extras, but as sources of scholarly insight, that bring into focus aspects of the text that are difficult to address through textual analysis alone.

However, Hirsch and Jenstad also have stressed that such integration raises significant conceptual and practical challenges[51]. Digital editions are not static objects but long-term scholarly projects, requiring ongoing maintenance, editorial responsibility, and technological updating. Their open-ended character complicates traditional ideas of editorial completion, while the inclusion of multimedia resources brings issues of selection, authority, and sustainability to the fore. These constraints help explain why many projects approach performance with caution, often treating it as contextual enrichment rather than allowing it to shape editorial interpretation in a more substantial way.

Within this context, digital editions of drama can be understood as occupying a spectrum of approaches. At one end there are projects in which performative materials primarily complement the text, without substantially altering the underlying text-centred model. At the other there are theatre-oriented initiatives that treat performance as an integral part of the editorial process, sometimes adopting practice-based methodologies that challenge the traditional hierarchy between text and performance. The following case studies explore how different projects position themselves along this spectrum, illustrating the varied ways in which digital environments have been used to mediate the relationship between textual transmission, performance, and scholarly interpretation.

2.3.1 The Digital National Edition of Luigi Pirandello's Opera Omnia

The first case examined is the Digital National Edition of Luigi Pirandello's *Opera Omnia*[52], which provides a useful framework for analysing how performative and contextual materials are integrated within a generalist editorial infrastructure. A preliminary clarification is necessary: this project was not conceived as a digital edition devoted specifically to drama, nor as an initiative primarily aimed at investigating the performative nature of theatrical texts. Instead, it was designed as a

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[50] HIRSCH D.B., JENSTAD J. (2016)., p. 121

[51] Ibidem, p.107

[52] https://www.pirandellonazionale.it/

comprehensive digital infrastructure intended to manage, publish, and disseminate Pirandello's literary production as a whole**,** bringing together novels, short stories, essays, and plays within a single, genre-independent editorial framework.

One of the defining features of the Digital National Edition is its transversal approach to textual enrichment. Multimedia materials, didactic resources, linguistic tools, and contextual documentation are systematically associated with texts across the entire corpus, regardless of genre. In this sense, the integration of supplementary materials is not conceived as a strategy specific to theatrical works, but as a general editorial principle intended to support interpretation and scholarly engagement with the texts.

Within this unified framework, however, a significant distinction emerges at the level of interface design. Among the various genres included in the Digital National Edition, only the theatrical texts are, in selected cases, presented through the so-called *hyperedition*. This interface, characterised by a split-screen layout that places the dramatic text alongside dynamically updated contextual materials, is not employed for novels, short stories, or essays. The hyperedition therefore constitutes a genre-specific mode of presentation, selectively applied to drama within a project otherwise grounded in a uniform editorial architecture. The criteria guiding its selective application are not explicitly articulated, and it remains unclear whether this interface represents an experimental feature limited to specific plays or a model intended for broader adoption within the edition.

The theatrical corpus of the Digital National Edition consists of four plays: *Sei personaggi in cerca d'autore*[53], *Enrico IV*[54], *La vita che ti diedi*[55], and *Diana e la Tuda*[56]. These works are not treated in a homogeneous manner. Three of them: *Enrico IV*, *La vita che ti diedi*, and *Diana e la Tuda*, make use of the hyperedition interface, while *Sei personaggi in cerca d'autore* does not. This internal variability points to the experimental nature of the theatrical section and suggests that the hyperedition functions as an additional layer grafted onto an existing editorial system, not as the outcome of a fully consolidated editorial model for drama.

The case of *Sei personaggi in cerca d'autore* is particularly revealing in this respect. In its digital form, the play does not offer access to a transcribed text, manuscript witnesses, or comparative

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[53] [English translation] «*Six Characters in Search of an Author*»

[54] [English translation] «*Henry IV*»

[55] [English translation] «*The Life I Gave You*»

[56] [English translation] «*Diana and Tuda*»

editions. Instead, it is presented exclusively through a collection of supplementary resources, including images, audiovisual materials, and contextual documentation related to its reception and staging history. While these materials provide valuable insight into the cultural and performative life of the play, the absence of a digital textual edition effectively removes it from the philological dimension of the project. Here, the integration of performative objects operates independently of a textual core, highlighting the limitations of enrichment when it is not anchored in an editorial engagement with the text itself.

At the opposite end of the spectrum stands *Enrico IV*, which represents the most complete and technologically articulated example within the theatrical corpus. Presented through the hyperedition interface, the play offers multiple forms of access to manuscript materials, including an EVT-based viewer; layouts displaying manuscript images alongside transcriptions; documentation of digital restoration processes in PowerPoint format; downloadable restoration videos; and static visualisations opening external PDF files. While this multiplicity of access points testifies to the richness of the available documentation, it also produces a fragmented user experience. The various representations of the manuscript cannot be consulted simultaneously, nor do they allow for a continuous visualisation of textual modifications or a synoptic comparison of variant states within a single environment.

Alongside manuscript visualisation, *Enrico IV* also provides several options for textual comparison. A static edition can be displayed next to the transcription via an embedded PDF, while the selection of individual acts opens new pages presenting three editions in parallel, with modifications visually highlighted. This feature constitutes one of the most explicitly philological components of the theatrical section. Nevertheless, it remains functionally separate from the manuscript visualisations, reinforcing the impression of a modular editorial system in which different dimensions of the text are distributed across distinct interfaces.

The resource section associated with *Enrico IV* is particularly rich and dynamically responsive to the progression of the text. As readers move through the play, the interface updates to display plot summaries, descriptions of the characters appearing on the current page, explanations of locations and significant terms, video excerpts from theatrical productions, and images of stage sets, costumes, and correspondence. These materials substantially enhance the reading experience and foreground the performative and historical dimensions of the play. However, they function primarily as contextual supplements rather than as editorially operative elements. Although images and videos are accompanied by descriptive information, such as subject, date, and director, there is no clear evidence

of a formally structured metadata schema or of a systematic conceptual modelling of the relationship between text and performance.

The remaining two plays, *La vita che ti diedi* and *Diana e la Tuda*, occupy an intermediate position between the minimal presentation of *Sei personaggi in cerca d'autore* and the complexity of *Enrico IV*. Both are presented through the hyperedition interface and provide access to manuscript materials and princeps editions via external PDFs, as well as static editions displayed alongside the transcription. In both cases, users can select individual acts, which open new pages presenting editions in parallel, following a comparative model like the one used for *Enrico IV*. Vocabulary tools and resource sections are also available, contributing to a consistent mode of enrichment across the theatrical corpus.

Across the plays that employ the hyperedition, the integration of performative objects emerges as the most coherent and user-oriented aspect of the edition. Images, videos, notes, and character descriptions are effectively linked to specific portions of the text and support a layered and interactive mode of reading. The possibility of accessing contextual information either through direct interaction with the text or via the adjacent resource panel further enhances reader engagement. These design choices suggest an implicit awareness of the specificity of theatrical texts and of the importance of visual and audiovisual materials for their interpretation.

At the same time, this awareness does not result in a reconfiguration of the underlying editorial model. Performative materials are not treated as variants, nor are they conceptualised as alternative realisations of the text. No explicit attempt is made to establish a philological or empirical relationship between written text and performance. Instead, performance remains external to the textual structure and functions as a supplementary layer intended to enrich interpretation and study, while the primacy of the written text is preserved.

From the perspective of digital editions that integrate performative objects, the theatrical section of the Digital National Edition of Pirandello's works can therefore be described as an example of enrichment-oriented integration developed within a generalist editorial framework. The selective application of the hyperedition to theatrical texts, within a project not originally conceived for drama, highlights both the flexibility and the limitations of this approach. While it reflects a recognition of the distinctive nature of theatrical texts, it stops short of a fully articulated, model-based integration of text and performance, positioning the Pirandello edition as an important yet transitional case within the current landscape of digital scholarly editions of drama.

2.3.2 Richard Brome Online: a theatre-specific digital edition

Unlike the Digital National Edition of Luigi Pirandello's works, which was conceived as a general editorial infrastructure designed to manage an author's literary production in its entirety, *Richard Brome Online*[57] is a digital scholarly edition developed explicitly for dramatic texts. Funded by the Arts and Humanities Research Council and carried out over a four-year period, the project focuses exclusively on the theatrical output of the Caroline playwright Richard Brome. From its inception, the edition was shaped by a strong awareness of drama as a form that exists simultaneously as text, performance, and historical practice. This theatre-specific orientation has direct consequences for both the integration of performative materials and the role that performance plays within the editorial process.

The edition includes all fifteen extant plays by Brome, together with his collaboration with Thomas Heywood, *The Late Lancashire Witches*. Each play is presented in two parallel versions: a period text and a modernised text. These can be read independently or displayed side by side, allowing readers to compare the original printed form of the play with an edited version conceived explicitly with performance in mind. This dual presentation is central to the project's editorial philosophy, as it renders editorial intervention immediately visible and foregrounds the interpretative choices involved in preparing a dramatic text for modern readers and practitioners.

The transcriptions aim to preserve key visual and structural features of early modern printed drama, including page divisions, running titles, signatures, and typographic conventions such as the long *s*. While certain material aspects of the original books inevitably resist complete translation into digital form, the period texts are nonetheless presented as historically grounded artefacts that retain the logic of seventeenth-century print culture. By contrast, the modernised texts are edited explicitly as scripts intended for performance. Editorial decisions concerning punctuation, layout, scene division, and stage directions are guided by considerations of dramatic rhythm, pacing, and theatrical intelligibility, with departures from the period text systematically documented in the annotations.

One of the most distinctive features of *Richard Brome Online* is the integration of performance practice into the editorial workflow through recorded workshop material. For each play, selected scenes were explored in workshop settings involving professional actors and a director, and these sessions were recorded and incorporated into the edition. Crucially, these recordings are presented as exploratory rather than definitive. Actors work directly from the scripts, alternative interpretations

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[57] https://www.dhi.ac.uk/brome/

are tested, and discussions between editors and performers are often preserved. The aim is not to document finished productions, but to make visible the process through which dramatic meaning emerges in rehearsal and embodied experimentation.

These workshop recordings are closely connected to the edition's annotation system. Alongside glosses, explanatory notes, and textual commentary, annotations frequently refer to specific moments in the recorded workshops. In many cases, notes explicitly reflect on how insights gained through performance informed editorial decisions, for instance regarding tone, timing, or the practical feasibility of stage directions. Performance thus functions not merely as illustrative material, but as a mode of critical inquiry that actively shapes textual interpretation.

Beyond the workshop materials, the edition includes a substantial corpus of critical essays, both play-specific and thematic, many of which engage directly with questions of theatrical practice. Topics such as directing early modern comedy, the use of props and cosmetics, the role of beards, or the representation of gender and race are examined through approaches that combine textual analysis, performance history, and practical experience, or patterns in speech allocation among characters.

From the perspective of digital editions that integrate performative objects, *Richard Brome Online* moves beyond enrichment-based models in which images or videos function primarily as supplementary resources. While performance materials are not treated as textual variants in a strict philological sense, they are structurally embedded within the editorial framework and play an active role in shaping scholarly interpretation. Performance is not external to the edition but constitutes part of the critical apparatus through which the plays are read, understood, and discussed.

At the same time, the project avoids imposing a single authoritative interpretation or staging of Brome's plays. The workshop recordings emphasise multiplicity, experimentation, and openness, reflecting an understanding of drama as a form whose meanings are realised differently across performative contexts. Performance is therefore acknowledged as context-dependent and evolving, and its scholarly value is located precisely in this instability rather than in the production of definitive outcomes.

Within the broader landscape of digital editions of theatrical texts, *Richard Brome Online* stands in clear contrast to generalist editorial infrastructures such as the Digital National Edition of Pirandello's works. Its exclusive focus on drama, its systematic integration of performance practice into the editorial process, and its sustained collaboration between scholars and theatre practitioners make it a particularly instructive case study. By treating performance as an external supplement, the project

demonstrates how digital scholarly editing can engage with theatrical texts through a genuinely practice-informed methodology, offering a model in which performance operates alongside text as a core dimension of scholarly knowledge.

2.3.3 The Queen's Men Editions

The *Queen's Men Editions*[58] (i.e. QME) represents one of the most theoretically explicit and methodologically ambitious attempts to redefine the role of performance within digital scholarly editions of dramatic texts. Unlike projects that incorporate performance materials primarily as contextual documentation or illustrative supplements, QME is founded on the principle that performance constitutes a legitimate and autonomous form of scholarly inquiry. The project explicitly adopts the framework of Performance as Research (i.e. PaR)[59], a methodology that emerged at the intersection of Performance Studies and Practice-as-Research, and that challenges the epistemological primacy traditionally accorded to textual analysis within literary and philological scholarship. Within this perspective, performance is not merely the execution of a pre-existing textual meaning, but a site in which meaning is actively produced through embodied, procedural, and collaborative practices.

This epistemological stance has significant implications for the editorial logic of QME. The dramatic text is not presented as a fixed centre, but as part of a broader network in which meaning is produced through the interplay of text, performance, historical evidence, and scholarly interpretation. As a result, the editorial object is not limited to the establishment of a text or the reconstruction of its transmission but extends to the documentation and critical articulation of performative processes. Rehearsals, staging experiments, and interactions with audiences are understood as research activities capable of generating insights that cannot be fully recovered through textual scholarship alone. This approach directly challenges print-based editorial paradigms, in which performance has traditionally been relegated to a marginal or derivative status.

The structure of QME's performance editions reflects this conceptual reorientation. Each edition integrates modern and old spelling texts with a wide range of performative materials, including video recordings of research productions, production photographs, promptbooks, and detailed performance annotations. These materials are not presented as parallel archives detached from the edited text;

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[58] https://lemdo.uvic.ca/qme/

[59] https://lemdo.uvic.ca/qme/PAR.html

instead, they are deeply interwoven with the textual interface through dense systems of hyperlinks and annotations. Users are encouraged to move fluidly between the written text and its performative realizations, exploring how specific editorial or interpretative decisions manifest both on the page and on the stage. In this sense, the digital environment is exploited not simply to aggregate heterogeneous resources, but to construct a navigable space in which textual and performative layers remain in constant dialogue.

A crucial role in this architecture is played by performance annotations, which constitute one of the most distinctive features of QME. These annotations go beyond the descriptive documentation of staging choices and explicitly frame performance as an interpretative act. They articulate the reasoning behind decisions concerning blocking, gesture, vocal delivery, pacing, and spatial organization, often linking these choices to historical research on early modern performance practices or to unresolved textual ambiguities. In doing so, the annotations highlight how performance functions as a form of critical commentary on the text. They aim to make visible the interpretative processes through which meaning is negotiated among editors, directors, actors, and audiences, instead of fixing meaning in a single authoritative reading.

Importantly, QME does not attempt to erase the distinction between text and performance, nor does it reduce performance to a variant or alternative textual state. The project maintains a clear conceptual separation between textual transmission and performative realization, while simultaneously asserting the equal scholarly value of both domains. Performance is conceived as a practice shaped by context and process, whose value does not depend on producing stable outcomes. The inclusion of video recordings, for instance, is accompanied by a critical awareness of their limits: recordings capture the outcome of a performance but cannot fully convey the embodied, collaborative processes that produced it. Performance annotations are therefore designed to compensate for this gap by opening up the rehearsal process and exposing the interpretative labour behind the recorded event.

From an editorial perspective, QME advances a plural and non-hierarchical understanding of dramatic meaning. Meaning is neither fixed in an authoritative text nor fully entrusted to performance practice. Instead, it takes shape through the interplay of edited texts, historical sources, embodied experimentation, and scholarly interpretation. The digital environment makes this interplay possible, allowing users to move across different kinds of evidence without being guided along a single, linear path. This approach contrasts with text-centred digital editions that, even when implemented digitally, continue to rely on models of editorial authority and textual centrality inherited from print culture.

At the same time, the scope and ambitions of QME also reveal certain structural constraints. The integration of performance materials is necessarily selective, depending on the availability of research productions and the resources required to document them in sufficient depth. As a result, this editorial approach is not applied uniformly across all texts included in the project, raising questions about the extent to which it can be implemented consistently. While QME explicitly frames performance editions as the project's long-term goal, the uneven distribution of performative materials highlights the practical challenges of sustaining a practice-as-research editorial paradigm within large-scale digital infrastructures.

Nevertheless, QME remains a paradigmatic example of how digital scholarly editing can move beyond text-centred models when engaging with dramatic works. By treating performance as important as text, the project does not simply expand the range of materials included in an edition but fundamentally rethinks the nature of the editorial object itself. Drama is no longer approached as a literary artefact awaiting reconstruction or stabilization, but as a dynamic field of interaction in which textual, performative, and scholarly practices intersect. In this sense, QME exemplifies a genuinely transformative use of the digital medium, one that aligns editorial methodology with the ontological complexity of dramatic texts.

2.4 Comparative perspectives and theoretical gap

The case studies examined in the previous sections reveal a heterogeneous landscape of digital scholarly editions of dramatic texts, shaped by different editorial priorities, methodological assumptions, and degrees of engagement with performance. While these projects vary considerably in scope, scale, and institutional context, several shared patterns and structural tensions emerge when they are considered comparatively.

At one end of the spectrum lie text-centred editions grounded in established philological traditions, such as the PROLOPE digital edition of *La dama boba*. Here, the digital medium is mobilised to enhance the transparency, accessibility, and analytical depth of textual scholarship, particularly regarding the reconstruction of the authorial revision processes. Performance remains external to the editorial object, either excluded altogether or considered only indirectly as a factor affecting textual corruption. This model illustrates the ongoing relevance of digital philology, while also showing how drama can be treated in ways that do not substantially differ from other literary genres when performance is bracketed out of the editorial framework.

A different configuration emerges in generalist editorial infrastructures such as the Digital National Edition of Luigi Pirandello's *Opera Omnia*. In this case, the integration of performative and contextual materials signals an awareness of the theatrical specificity of dramatic texts, yet this awareness is unevenly translated into editorial practice. Performance-related resources enrich the reading experience and foreground the historical and cultural life of the plays, but they remain conceptually external to the textual structure. The selective and experimental use of the *hyperedition* interface further highlights the absence of an explicit model governing the relationship between text and performance. As a result, the edition oscillates between innovative forms of enrichment and a fundamentally text-first editorial logic.

The theatre-specific orientation of *Richard Brome Online* marks a significant shift in this landscape. By integrating performance workshops into the editorial workflow and allowing embodied experimentation to inform annotation and interpretation, the project moves beyond enrichment-based approaches. Performance functions here as a tool for scholarly inquiry, shaping editorial decisions and interpretative arguments. At the same time, performance is not treated as a textual substitute or as a stable object to be archived, but as an exploratory practice whose value lies in its capacity to open interpretative possibilities. This model foregrounds the epistemic contribution of performance while preserving a clear distinction between textual transmission and performative realisation.

The *Queen's Men Editions* push this reconfiguration further by adopting *Performance as Research* as an explicit epistemological framework. In QME, performance is fully integrated into the editorial object and recognised as an autonomous form of knowledge production. Meaning emerges through the interaction of edited texts, historical evidence, embodied experimentation, and scholarly reflection, without privileging one domain as the primary site of authority. The digital environment enables this plural model by supporting non-linear navigation and sustained dialogue between textual and performative layers. However, the project also exposes practical constraints, particularly in terms of scalability and the uneven availability of performance materials.

Taken together, these examples show that digital scholarly editions of drama tend to cluster around two broad tendencies. On the one hand, text-centred models prioritise philological stability and transparency, often at the cost of marginalising performance. Performance-oriented projects challenge text-first paradigms by emphasising theatrical practice but often focus on project-specific or research-led performances that are difficult to extend to larger corpora or longer historical spans.

Between these approaches, generalist infrastructures attempt to integrate performative materials through enrichment strategies, but often without a fully articulated conceptual model.

This comparative analysis highlights a persistent theoretical gap within the field. While the importance of performance for understanding dramatic texts is widely acknowledged at a theoretical level, there remains a lack of editorial models capable of systematically linking textual transmission and performance history within a single scholarly framework. Performance databases, audiovisual archives, repertory platforms, and critical editions often coexist in parallel, without being structurally connected. As a result, the relationship between text and performance continues to be managed through juxtaposition rather than through formal integration.

For digital scholarly editing, this gap has significant methodological implications. Editing drama cannot be reduced to the establishment of a reliable text accompanied by contextual materials. The editorial object is inherently broader and more unstable: it includes textual witnesses and revision layers, but also the performance horizon implied by the script and realised, transformed, and reinterpreted across successive productions. Digital environments make it technically possible to represent this complexity by linking texts, variants, annotations, performance records, images, audiovisual documents, and structured metadata within a shared research space. The central challenge, however, is not only technical but conceptual: how to integrate these elements into an editorial model that recognises their interdependence while preserving their distinct roles.

3 Editorial and Digital Approach

Building on the theoretical discussion developed in Chapters 1 and 2, this chapter presents the methodological approach and editorial principles adopted in this research.

The chapter is organised into three main sections. Section 3.1 defines the research problem from an editorial perspective. Section 3.2 outlines the premises and guiding principles of the adopted approach. Section 3.3 presents the methodological framework and editorial workflow, introducing the role of the case study and the logic guiding corpus selection and modelling. Finally, section 3.4 presents how editorial principles have been applied through encoding practices, semantic modelling, transformation processes, and interface development.

3.1 Research problem

The research problem addressed in this study concerns the editorial implications of treating dramatic works as objects shaped by both textual transmission and performative practice. As shown in the previous chapters, the interdependence of text and performance is widely recognised at a theoretical level and has been explored in different ways by both traditional and digital scholarly editions[60]. The issue, therefore, is not whether this relationship should be acknowledged, but how it can be clearly integrated within an editorial framework.

As discussed in the *State of the Art* (Chapter 2), existing digital scholarly editions of dramatic texts adopt different editorial priorities in relation to performance: some integrate performance-related materials into their model as contextual or illustrative elements, while others treat performance as an integral component of the editorial model.

What remains less explored is how textual documents and the performance dimension implied by the script can be meaningfully related without reducing their differences. The challenge lies in studying these materials together while respecting the distinct methods and logics through which texts and performances are produced, transmitted, and interpreted.

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[60] For the theoretical dimension, see HELBO A. (2007); FUMAROLI M. (1990); SCANNAPIECO A. (2022). For its implications in digital scholarly editing, see CAPLAN D. (2015); HIRSCH B. D. (2016).

This research is situated precisely within this space. Rather than concentrating on a single performance or committing to one established methodological model, it investigates how a digital scholarly edition can operate as a relational environment, capable of holding together different components of a dramatic work without forcing them into a single category. Textual materials are approached through structured encoding, whereas performance related objects are incorporated through selective curation and metadata-based description. This perspective leads to the following research question: how can a digital scholarly edition articulate the relationship between textual transmission and performance practices in a way that preserves their distinct logics while making their interdependence visible?

3.2 Editorial premises and guiding principles

The methodological approach adopted in this research is grounded in a set of editorial premises and guiding principles that shape both the structure of the edition and the organisation of materials (textual and performance-related materials).

3.2.1 Editorial premises

A first premise concerns the nature of the dramatic text itself. The dramatic work is not conceived as a self-sufficient textual object, but as a form that is realised in performance. While the written text remains the primary vehicle of transmission, its meaning and function cannot be fully understood independently of the performative orientation that shapes its structure.

A second premise follows from this observation. Performance does not function as a textual variant. Scenic realisations do not produce alternative versions of the text comparable to manuscripts or printed editions. They operate according to different logics, shaped by practical constraints, interpretative choices, and historical contexts. Performance related materials therefore require an editorial treatment that recognises their specificity, without forcing them into philological categories designed for textual witnesses.

A third premise concerns plurality. Variation, stratification, and multiplicity are not regarded as editorial problems to be resolved, but as constitutive features of dramatic works. The coexistence of different textual states, revision layers, and scenic interpretations is treated as a resource for understanding the work's history and dynamics, rather than as noise to be eliminated.

Finally, the edition is conceived as a transparent editorial construct. Editorial intervention is not hidden behind a stabilised text but made visible through the organisation of materials and the explicit modelling of relationships. The aim is not to impose an authoritative reading, but to provide users with the means to navigate complexity and to understand how different elements of the work relate to one another.

3.2.2 Methodological principles

From these premises follow a set of methodological principles guiding the design of the digital edition.

First, a clear distinction is maintained between domains. Textual transmission and performative realisation are treated as related but non-hierarchical dimensions. Their interaction is modelled through explicit links rather than through assimilation. This separation allows each domain to retain its own logic, while remaining intelligible in relation to the other.

Second, the edition adopts a relational model. Instead of presenting the dramatic work as a sequence leading toward a definitive form, the digital environment is used to represent networks of relationships between documents, textual states, and performance records. This approach reflects the non-linear and evolving nature of dramatic textuality[61].

Third, the digital environment is understood as an active editorial space. Digital technologies are employed not merely to display content, but to support the articulation of editorial reasoning. Visualisation strategies, navigation mechanisms, and structured metadata are used to support the representation of relationships across documents and materials.

Finally, the project adopts a modular and extensible design. The edition is conceived as an open structure, capable of accommodating additional materials and future developments, such as the integration of further performances or the formulation of exploratory queries across datasets. This openness reflects both the unfinished nature of dramatic works and the evolving character of digital scholarly editions.

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[61] TERRONI A. (2023) p. 210

3.3 Methodology, sources, and editorial workflow

The methodological framework developed in this research is designed as a general model for dramatic texts that combine a complex textual transmission with a performative dimension. The choice of *Capitano Ulisse* by Alberto Savinio as a case study responds mainly to methodological needs. The play presents a relatively linear textual history shaped by successive phases of authorial revision, together with a limited but meaningful set of documented performances. This configuration offers a suitable context for testing an editorial approach that connects text and performance within a digital scholarly edition, without immediately facing highly fragmented traditions or extremely complex staging practices.

While the choice of *Capitano Ulisse* primarily responds to methodological considerations, it also has specific interpretative implications that are relevant to the editorial model developed in this research. The manuscript of *Capitan Ulisse* seems to have been written for a stage production that was expected to take place shortly after its composition and it contains references to a specific theatrical context[62]. That staging, however, did not take place at the time of composition. Instead, the text was stabilised in the printed edition of 1934 and entered circulation in book form before it reached the stage[63].

In this sense, the play seems to have followed an unusual path: conceived as a theatrical work, it first became fixed in a textual form and only later reached the stage. The change of title, from *Capitan Ulisse* in the manuscript to *Capitano Ulisse* in the printed edition, can be read as a sign of this shift from a working theatrical project to an authorised published text. When the play was eventually staged, it was no longer an evolving working script, but a text already fixed in print.

This sequence makes the play particularly suitable for the present research. The aim of the project, as outlined in *Research Problem* (Section 3.1), is to investigate how a digital scholarly edition can articulate the relationship between textual transmission and performance while preserving their distinct logics. In *Capitano Ulisse*, manuscript, printed edition, and performances represent distinct yet connected phases in the history of the work. The manuscript records a process of writing oriented toward the stage[64]; the printed edition fixes a textual form that circulates independently of performance; the later stagings relate to that fixed text under different theatrical conditions. These

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[62] VALENTINO L. (1991), pp. 20

[63] TINTERRI A. (2018), p.53

[64] ACOCELLA, S. (2014)

moments are not interchangeable stages of a single process, but phases governed by different conditions and functions.

By modelling these phases as related but non-hierarchical domains, the edition makes explicit their connections without reducing performance to a textual variant or treating the work as a straightforward progression from draft to stage. The case therefore provides a concrete context in which the relational structure proposed by this research can be implemented and observed.

3.3.1 Access to sources and corpus construction

After selecting the work, access to the primary archival materials was obtained through direct contact with the Archivio Contemporaneo G. P. Vieusseux in Florence, which preserves both the autograph manuscript and two related typescripts. Consultation required formal authorisation from the author's heirs, which was granted for all the manuscript and typescript materials. Through the archive's library, it was also possible to consult a physical copy of the first printed edition of *Capitano Ulisse* (1934), available only for on-site consultation.

Because of this material, the textual corpus was defined as follows:

Textual materials

- The autograph manuscript[65] of *Capitan Ulisse* (1925), consulted at the *Archivio Contemporaneo G.P. Vieusseux*. This witness preserves multiple phases of authorial revision and correction
- Typescript[66] (1925), preserved in the same archival unit as the manuscript. It reflects a more stabilised textual state derived from the manuscript
- A typescript[67] corresponding to the version prepared for print in 1934, also preserved at the archive. Textually identical to the 1925 typescript, it bears the title *Capitano Ulisse* and represents the immediate pre-publication state
- First printed edition[68] (princeps) of *Capitano Ulisse* (1934), establishing the authorised published form of the text

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[65] C.U. 1925

[66] CU TS 1925

[67] C.U. TS 1934

[68] C.U. 1934

Philologically, the textual tradition of *Capitano Ulisse* is characterised by a linear transmission from the autograph manuscript to the first printed edition through intermediary typescripts. The present analysis focuses on the transmission up to the publication of the first printed edition, which represents the last textual version supervised by the author.

For clarity, Figure 1 provides a schematic representation of the relationships between the witnesses, offering a simplified exemplification of the stemma codicum *that underlies the editorial design*

Figure 1: Simplified stemma codicum of Capitano Ulisse.

Because high-resolution digital reproductions of the manuscript involved significant costs, detailed genetic encoding was intentionally limited to the first ten pages of the autograph witness. These pages were selected as a representative sample of the revision process and were also used for systematic comparison with the printed edition and the intermediary witnesses.

Alongside the textual corpus, a small set of performance-related materials was assembled. The aim was not to reconstruct the full staging history of the play, but to include different types of performative evidence suitable for integration within a digital environment:

Performance-related materials

- A critical newspaper review of the 1991 staging by Teatro Stabile di Palermo (touring production in Montréal).[69]
- A video recording of the July 2009 performance at the Teatro Romano of Volterra.[70]
- A promotional poster connected to the April 2022 production at Hangar Duchamps (Teatro Trastevere, Rome).[71]

These objects were collected through online repositories, and publicly accessible documentation. Particular attention was paid to the selection of materials of different natures, here including materials documenting the reception of the work, audiovisual documentation, and promotional artefacts. An

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[69] https://www.erudit.org/en/journals/jeu/1991-n58-jeu1068940/27380ac/

[70] https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=cBRyzjBWw_k&t=1s

[71] https://www.exhimusic.com/magazine/2020/03/07/teatro-trastevere-presenta-dal-17-al-22-marzo-2020-capitano-ulisse-di-alberto-savinio-regia-di-andrea-martella/

attempt was also made to obtain stage-oriented textual materials from the company responsible for the 2022 production, but no rehearsal scripts or performance texts were made available. This reflects a broader condition in theatrical transmission, where such materials are often not preserved or publicly accessible.

The corpus is therefore intentionally limited in scope. This controlled selection allows the editorial model to be tested in a clear and manageable context, while remaining adaptable to larger and more complex corpora in future work.

3.3.2 Editorial organisation of the corpus

Once the corpus was defined, the editorial workflow focused on how its different components should be organised and related within the digital edition. The project does not privilege a single object as the centre of the edition. Instead, it is structured around the interaction between textual transmission and performative documentation.

The first printed edition of *Capitano Ulisse*, here referred to as CU 1934, serves as a shared reference point and shared reference point of the digital edition. This stabilised form incorporates the author's final interventions and became the basis for later printed editions. It provides a common textual anchor through which stage materials can be connected and interpreted.

At the same time, the manuscript, here referred to as CU 1925, is treated as a genetic document rather than as an alternative witness competing with the printed text. The CU 1925 records a sequence of revisions through which the play was progressively reshaped. Passages were rewritten, displaced, or removed, creating textual states that were later abandoned and do not appear in the authorised version. For this reason, the manuscript is approached as a record of the compositional process itself.

The historical context of the manuscript further shapes its editorial interpretation. The text was written between 1924 and 1925 in preparation for a stage production[72] that did not take place until several years later, in 1938. Even though the performance was unrealised at the time, it strongly shaped the manuscript. Numerous stage directions explicitly refer to the architectural features of the Teatro Odescalchi, which was used by the Teatro d'Arte company led by Pirandello. These references indicate that the manuscript already embodies the author's first concrete vision of the work not only as a written text but as a staged performance. Revisions and rewritings are therefore directly oriented towards the scene, projecting the dramatic text into its performative dimension. Consequently, CU

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[72] TINTERRI A. (2018), p.53

1925 plays a central role in the edition as both a genetic source and an early trace of the play's performative horizon.

The relationship between CU 1925 and CU 1934 is explored through focused comparison, especially between the final revision layer attested in CU 1925 and the CU 1934 version. This approach highlights what was kept from CU 1925 and what was removed in the transition to print, while maintaining CU 1925 layered structure.

Performance-related materials constitute an integral component of the corpus. These objects are not treated as textual substitutes or independent versions of the play. Instead, they function as relational elements that connect the written text to its scenic realisations.

3.3.3 Performance and the concept of the stage text

One of the main methodological issues addressed in the project concerns the relationship between the dramatic text, performance, and the materials that document performance. In theatrical practice, the transition from script to stage often involves several stage-oriented textual configurations, such as rehearsal scripts, actor's copies, or directorial working documents. These materials are often incomplete, unevenly preserved, or not preserved at all.

This situation is not specific to *Capitano Ulisse* but reflects a broader condition of dramatic transmission. The project therefore does not treat the partial availability of stage texts as a problem to be solved. Instead, it incorporates this condition into its conceptual model.

Within this framework, the notion of a performance text is introduced as a conceptual intermediary between the written dramatic text and the documentation of a specific staging. The performance text represents the transformation of the script in relation to a given production, even when no stable or complete stage document survives as an autonomous artefact.

In practice, a single performance may involve multiple stage-oriented textual configurations corresponding to different perspectives within the theatrical process. Acknowledging this plurality is important but modelling it in full would require a level of documentation that is rarely available and would exceed the scope of the present project. For this reason, the current implementation adopts a controlled abstraction. Each documented performance is associated with a single conceptual performance text representing the staging as a whole.

This conceptual performance text does not aim to capture all the textual configurations involved in the production process. It functions as a mediating node that links performance-related materials to the printed edition in a coherent way. The printed version serves as the shared reference point between textual transmission and performance. This choice reflects a methodological decision focused on clarity and operability within a proof-of-concept model, rather than a claim about the nature of theatrical practice itself.

A clear distinction is maintained between performance texts and performative objects. Performative objects are the concrete artefacts connected to specific performances, such as video recordings, photographs, reviews, or programmes di sala. These objects relate to the performance text in different ways, depending on their function. A video recording provides a direct visual trace of a staged configuration, while a newspaper article offers an interpretative account shaped by critical discourse. Both presuppose a performance text but engage with it at different levels.

By modelling these relationships explicitly, the edition integrates performance without treating it as a textual variant or as generic contextual material. Performance objects are not interchangeable, nor are they collapsed into a single category. Their links to the conceptual performance text make it possible to connect heterogeneous materials while preserving their specificity.

This approach articulates the relationship between text, performance, and documentation in a clear and adaptable way. The abstraction proposed here is intended as a foundation that can be refined or expanded in future work, rather than as a definitive account of theatrical mediation.

3.3.4 From editorial reasoning to a digital workflow

The editorial framework is organised around three interconnected domains: textual transmission, performance events, and the conceptual mediation represented by the stage text.

Textual transmission forms the most structurally stable domain. It is grounded in authorial documents and printed editions and can be analysed through established philological and genetic approaches. Performative realisation constitutes a second domain characterised by historical contingency and material diversity. Between them lies an interactive space that plays a key role in understanding how a stable text gives rise to multiple scenic interpretations.

The methodological workflow developed in this research translates this conceptual model into a computable digital system. Textual materials are encoded to represent both documentary structure and genetic stratification. Performance-related objects are described and connected through

structured metadata and semantic relations. The digital environment functions as a relational space where these heterogeneous materials can be brought into dialogue without being merged into a single hierarchy.

The aim is not to capture the full fluidity of dramatic textuality or the entire range of performative configurations. Instead, the project adopts a controlled perspective that allows the relationship between a relatively stable dramatic text and its performative horizon to be explored within a coherent digital scholarly edition.

3.4 Implementing the editorial model and workflow

The technical implementation of the edition follows a structured and modular workflow designed to translate the editorial model outlined in the previous sections into a functioning digital system. Rather than relying on a single framework, the project adopts a multi-step pipeline in which different standards and technologies are applied sequentially, each addressing a specific dimension of the dramatic object.

This design reflects the methodological premise developed in this chapter and articulated in *Editorial premises and guiding principles* (Section 3.2): textual transmission and performative realisation constitute distinct but interrelated domains. The workflow therefore preserves the specific logics of each domain, while making their relationship explicit within a single digital environment.

The implementation is organised into four main operational stages:

1. XML (eXtensible Markup Language)[73] and TEI (Text Encoding Initiative)[74] encoding of textual witnesses and performance-related materials
2. RDF(Resource Description Framework)[75] semantic modelling of conceptual entities and relationships
3. Transformation and integration through XSLT (eXtensible Stylesheet Language Transformations) [76] into web-oriented structures
4. Development of a web interface for navigation, comparison, and contextual exploration

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[73] https://www.w3.org/XML/

[74] https://tei-c.org/

[75] https://www.w3.org/RDF/

[76] https://it.wikipedia.org/wiki/XSL_Transformations

Figure 2 provides a schematic overview of the editorial transformation process, illustrating how the XML/TEI and RDF datasets are dynamically integrated through the XSLT mediation layer into the interactive HTML interface.
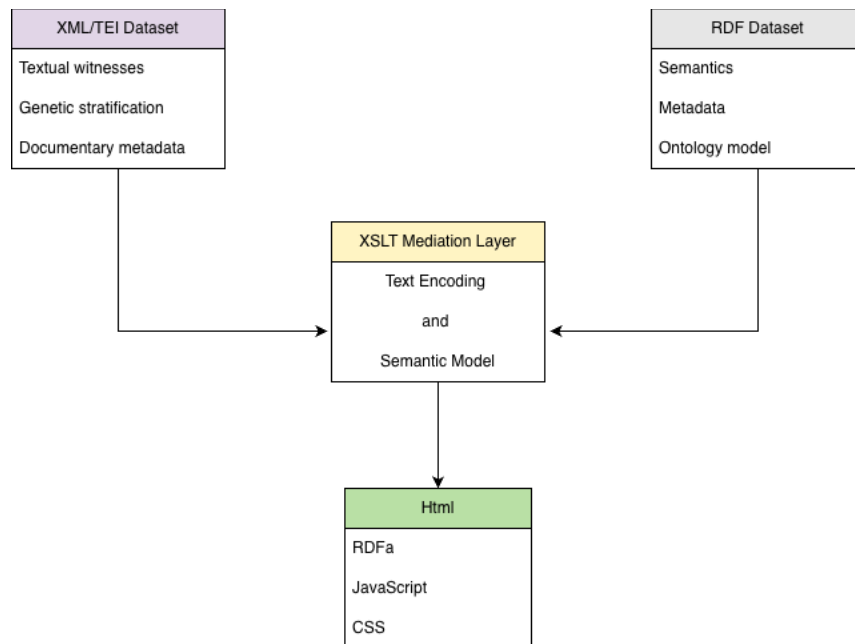
Figure 2: Workflow of the editorial transformation process: TEI/XML and RDF datasets are dynamically integrated through XSLT into the interactive HTML interface

Each stage is technically autonomous while remaining logically connected. This modular structure allows the different components of the edition to evolve independently, for instance by extending the semantic model without modifying the textual transcriptions or refining the interface without restructuring the encoded sources.

The implementation has been designed with two representational layers: the documentary layer expressed in XML format and using (TEI) guidelines, which provides structured, schema-based representations of textual witnesses and documentary materials, and a semantic layer expressed in RDF, which formalises conceptual entities and their relationships.

Within this architecture, XSLT functions as the mediation mechanism that connects documentary encoding and semantic modelling, translating philological structures and conceptual relations into navigable digital outputs.

3.4.1 XML/TEI encoding of textual and documentary materials

The XML/TEI layer functions as the documentary backbone of the edition. Building on the TEI guidelines, a standardised and interoperable framework for representing both textual witnesses and performance-related materials as structured digital documents.

TEI is adopted as the primary encoding standard to ensure consistent modelling of dramatic structure, genetic variation, and documentary metadata across the corpus, while XML serves as the underlying syntax supporting machine-readable representation and transformation.

The encoding strategy is designed to reflect the editorial roles of the different materials introduced in the methodological framework (Section 3.3), distinguishing between:

- CU 1925, encoded through a layered genetic model representing successive phases of authorial revision
- the intermediary typescripts (CU TS 1925 and CU TS 1934) associated with the stabilisation of the text prior to publication, encoded as aligned textual witnesses,
- CU 1934, encoded as the stabilised reference state for comparison,
- performance-related materials such as reviews, video recordings, and promotional objects, encoded as structured documentary entities.

Textual witnesses are encoded according to a shared structural model (XML/TEI), documented in *XML/TEI encoding of documentary materials* (Section 4.1), that preserves the organisation of dramatic writing across manuscript and print. This design is aimed at ensuring that textual states can be compared and visualised through comparable structural units.

For CU 1925, particular attention is devoted to representing dense authorial revision in a readable and computable manner. Rather than marking individual deletions and insertions as isolated operations, revision is modelled through a system of aligned textual layers corresponding to successive local states of writing.

The identification of eight revision layers (Layer 0 to Layer 7) results from an editorial analysis conducted within the scope of this project. Material evidence, such as successive corrections, different writing tools, added sheets, and the author's internal foliation, guided the distinction of discrete phases of intervention. This layered model constitutes an editorial abstraction aimed at supporting genetic representation and computational operability, without claiming to reconstruct the exact chronological sequence of writing.

The numerical labelling of revision layers and textual witness functions as a stable technical reference without implying semantic meaning. It provides a consistent key shared across the encoding, transformation, and interface components of the workflow to activate and compare successive textual states.

Across the edition, variation is recorded according to a negative apparatus logic: only readings that diverge from the selected reference state (lemma) are explicitly encoded. Where a layer or witness does not introduce a change, the absence of divergence is not redundantly recorded.

Cu 1934 is treated as a stabilised textual expression. While it does not function as the conceptual centre of the edition, it provides a shared reference point against which CU 1925 and the intermediary typescripts (CU TS 1925 and CU TS 1934) are analysed, and through which performative documentation can be coherently related, as conceptually introduced in *Performance and the concept of the stage text* (Section 3.3.3).

Performance-related materials are encoded using TEI-conformant documentary structures, but they are not incorporated into the apparatus of textual transmission. They are represented as independent documentary entities described through structured metadata records. This approach avoids reducing performance documentation to supplementary contextual material while preventing its assimilation into philological categories designed for textual witnesses.

Together, these encoding strategies ensure that the XML layer provides a rigorous documentary foundation for both textual transmission and performative documentation. A detailed description of the TEI file structure adopted for textual witnesses and documentary materials is provided in *XML/TEI encoding of documentary materials* (Section 4.1), where the encoding model is presented and exemplified.

3.4.2 RDF semantic modelling of entities and relationships

The edition develops a semantic modelling component aimed at formalising the conceptual structure of the corpus and the relationships connecting its heterogeneous materials. This component is grounded in three premises discussed in the *Background* (Chapter 1) and articulated as guiding principles in *Editorial premises and guiding principles* (Section 3.2):

1- Drama is a hybrid object whose identity emerges from the interaction between written text and performance (Section 1.1),

2- Textual transmission and performative realisation constitute distinct but interrelated domains and should be modelled without collapsing one into the other (Section 3.2)

3- The editorial task consists in making relationships explicit, rather than reducing plurality to a single text-centred hierarchy (Sections 1.2 and 3.2).

The semantic layer introduced here translates these theoretical premises into a formal representation capable of explicitly connecting textual transmission with event-based realisation and documentation.

While TEI offers philologically grounded representation of individual documents, it is primarily document-centred and not designed to express higher-level conceptual entities such as abstract works, performative events, institutional actors, or the complex networks linking them. For this reason, the project introduces a semantic layer based on RDF.

The semantic model aligns explicitly with FRBRoo[77], harmonised with CIDOC CRM[78], which together provide a widely adopted ontological framework for representing cultural heritage objects, abstract works, textual expressions, material carriers, and events. Selected elements from Dublin Core[79] Terms are employed for lightweight descriptive metadata, while Schema.org[80] is used to support web-oriented resource description and interoperability with common digital infrastructures.

The modelling strategy follows a clear separation of concerns:

- textual transmission is represented through entities distinguishing the abstract work, its textual realisations, and their material embodiments, together with explicit derivation relations,
- performance is represented as an event domain, with performances modelled as historically situated realisations of the work,
- performance documentation is represented as a documentary domain, with each object linked to the performance it records.

As discussed in *Performance and the concept of the stage text* (Section 3.3.3), the model introduces the performance text associated with each documented staging as an intermediate conceptual entity.

This conceptual performance text does not aim to reconstruct the full complexity of the production process. It functions as a mediating node linking performance-related materials to the printed edition

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[77] http://cidoc.ics.forth.gr/frbr_inro.html

[78] http://cidoc.ics.forth.gr/index.html

[79] https://www.dublincore.org/resources/glossary/dublin_core/

[80] https://schema.org/

(CU 1934), which serves as the shared reference point between textual transmission and performative realisation. This abstraction makes the interpretative step between script and performance explicit without redefining performance as a philological witness.

For example, the video recording of the 2009 staging is modelled as a performance-related object linked to a specific performance event. That event is associated with a performance text representing the staged configuration, and this performance text is in turn related to CU 1934 as its textual basis. In this way, each level: the object, the performance event, the performance text, and the printed edition, remains distinct, while their connections are formally articulated within the model.

Semantic data are stored in external RDF files, where the relationships between works, performances, and documentary objects are formally described. During transformation, selected relations are exposed in the web interface through RDFa[81] annotations. While RDF structures the semantic model as separate data files, RDFa makes parts of this structure visible within the HTML pages of the edition.

This hybrid strategy preserves full TEI schema validation, maintains independence between documentary encoding and semantic modelling, and simultaneously exposes the conceptual structure of the edition in a machine-readable form within the published web pages. A detailed description of the RDF structure adopted *RDF representation of textual and performative entities* (Section 4.2), where the encoding model is presented and exemplified.

3.4.3 Transformation and integration through XSLT

XSLT functions as the mediation layer that integrates XML-encoded sources and RDF-based semantic data into coherent web-oriented structures. Through this process, documentary representations are converted into readable digital texts (HTML), genetic stratification is operationalised for interactive comparison, and selected semantic relations are retrieved and embedded within the interface through RDFa-enriched structures.

3.4.4 Interface development for navigation and interaction

The final stage of the workflow concerns the development of the web interface, which serves as the presentation layer through which the documentary and semantic components of the edition are made accessible and interoperable.

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[81] https://rdfa.info/

The interface is designed to support aligned visualisation of textual transcriptions and facsimiles, interactive activation of revision layers, and structured access to contextual and performance-related materials. Rather than functioning as a simple display environment, the interface operationalises the relational logic of the edition by connecting textual stratification, documentary evidence, and semantic entities within a unified navigational framework.

In methodological terms, the interface is conceived as a translation of the editorial model into navigational form. Its structure preserves the distinction between textual transmission and performance-related documentation, while making their connections explorable through controlled user interaction. The separation between the main textual display and the metadata panel, the distinction between layer activation and witness comparison, and the mediated access to performance-related objects all reflect the non-hierarchical organisation of domains defined in *Editorial premises and guiding principles* (Section 3.2).

Performance-related materials are integrated as part of the same editorial infrastructure, linked to textual transmission through the conceptual mediation levels defined in the semantic model. In this way, the workflow translates the methodological framework developed in this chapter into a coherent digital system in which textual transmission and performative realisation remain distinct yet explicitly connected.

The description above introduces the overall architecture of the model. *Results* (Chapter 4) presents in detail the XML and RDF structures adopted in the project, together with the XSLT transformation logic and the design of the web interface. There, the model is illustrated through concrete examples, and its implementation is shown in its functional form.

4 Results

This chapter presents the concrete outputs produced through the technical implementation of the workflow outlined in *Editorial and Digital Approach* (Chapter 3). Section 4.1 presents the results of the textual encoding process, focusing on the representation of genetic layers, textual witnesses, and performance-related materials. Section 4.2 discusses the semantic model developed in RDF and illustrates how textual and performative entities are formally connected. Finally, Section 4.3 showcases the digital interface that integrates documentary and semantic data into an interactive scholarly environment. The full set of project files is stored in a public GitHub repository, where the source data and code are available together with a link to the web interface of the digital edition.[82]

4.1 XML/TEI encoding of documentary materials

TEI supports the consistent representation of acts, scenes, speaker turns, dialogue, and stage directions across manuscript and print; genetically, it provides mechanisms for modelling additions, deletions, substitutions, and stratified interventions, which are essential for the autograph material.

As shown in Figure 3[83], the manuscript presents successive corrections within stage directions and dialogue, with insertions, rewritings, and reformulations accumulating over time. This passage presents Euriloco speech and related stage directions.
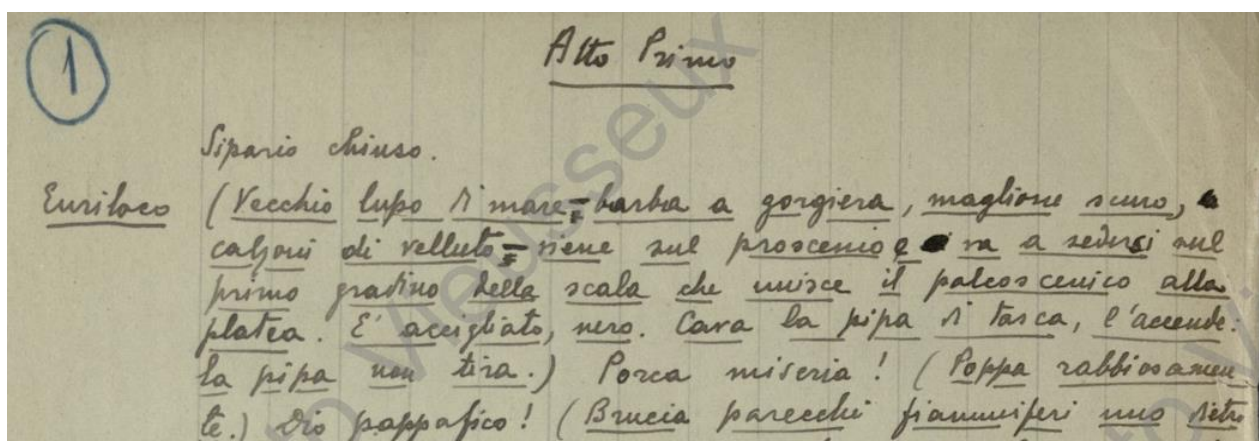

Figure 3: Opening passage of the autograph manuscript of Capitano Ulisse showing its dramatic structure and stage directions

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At the dramatic level, elements such as `<div>`, `<sp>`, `<speaker>`, `<stage>`, and `<p>` are used to encode the organisation of the play into acts, speeches, and stage directions. At the genetic level, variation is captured through the apparatus structure `<app>`, `<lem>`, and `<rdg>`, which allows multiple textual states to be aligned within the same passage. In the textual encoding, `<lem>` marks the reference state used for rendering (the latest authorial layer within the encoded segment), while `<rdg>` preserves earlier local states.

In the manuscript transcription, transcription authorial revision is represented through a system of numerically `<rdg>` layers (from `strato0` to `strato7`) which functions as practical markers for successive stages of writing, as discussed in XML/TEI encoding of textual and documentary materials (Section 3.4.1).

By contrast, in the printed edition transcription, variant readings are recorded only where the published text diverges from the reference state (`U34`), reflecting the stabilised nature of the authorised version rather than a stratified process of revision.

The following excerpt illustrates how structural and genetic encoding are combined in the XML/TEI transcription and corresponds to the manuscript passage presented above (Fig. 1). Only three revision layers (`#strato0`, `#strato5` and `#strato6`) out of the eight encoded ones are shown here for illustrative purposes. These layers are not consecutive, since not all revision stages are necessarily attested in every passage, reflecting the non-linear dynamics of authorial revision.

As outlined in the methodological framework (Section 3.4.1), variation throughout the edition follows a negative critical apparatus, whereby only readings diverging from the reference lemma are explicitly encoded.

```
<div type="act" n="1">

    <p>Atto Primo</p>

    <pb facs="#P1" n="2"/>

    <app>
        <lem wit="#strato5"> <stage> Sipario chiuso.</stage></lem>
        <rdg wit="#strato0"><gap reason="notInVersion"/></rdg>
    </app>
```

```
<sp>
        <speaker> <persName ref="#Euriloco">Euriloco</persName></speaker>

        <app>
                <lem wit="#strato6"><stage>Vecchio lupo di mare barba a
                gorgiera - maglione scuro, calzoni di velluto viene sul
                proscenio e va a sedersi sul primo gradino della scala che
                unisce il palcoscenico alla platea. É accigliato nero. Cava
                la pipa di tasca, l'accende:la pipa non tira.)</stage></lem>
                <rdg wit="#strato0"><gap reason="notInVersion"/></rdg>

                <rdg wit="#strato5"><stage>(Vecchio lupo di mare barba a
                gorgiera, maglione scuro e calzoni di velluto, viene sul
                proscenio si va a sedere sul primo gradino della scala
                che unisce il palcoscenico alla platea. É accigliato nero.
                Cava la pipa di tasca, l'accende: la pipa non tira.)</stage>
                </rdg>
        </app>

        <p>Porca miseria! <stage>(Poppa rabbiosamente.)</stage> Dio
        pappafico!</p>

        [...]
    </sp>
</div>
```

Listing 1: XML/TEI encoding of autograph manuscript of Capitano Ulisse, Act I

The excerpt combines the structural encoding of the dramatic text with the representation of genetic variation within the same XML segment. At the structural level, `<div type="act" n="1">` establishes the division into acts, while `<sp>` and `<speaker>` encode the speech structure and identify the speaking character through `<persName ref="#Euriloco">`. Stage directions are introduced through the `<stage>` element, which allows non-spoken theatrical actions and scenic indication to be embedded directly within the dramatic text. The element `<pb facs="#P1" n="2"/>` marks the page boundary and connects the textual sequence to the corresponding facsimile surface, enabling page-based alignment between transcription and image.

Genetic stratification is encoded through the apparatus structure `<app>`, which aligns different revision layers within the same passage[84]. In the first example, the stage direction "Sipario chiuso" appears only in `#strato5` while it is absent in `#strato0`, as indicated by `<gap reason="NotInVersion"/>`. In the second apparatus entry, the same stage direction is attested in both `#strato5` and `#strato6` with modifications reflecting successive stages of authorial corrections. The TEI header records bibliographic information, manuscript provenance, and institutional context, while named entities such as authors, characters, and historical figures are declared in controlled lists. Characters and relevant persons are encoded in dedicated `<listPerson>` sections as shown in Listing 2:

```
<listPerson type="play_characters">
     <person xml:id="Ulisse">
          <persName ref="https://www.wikidata.org/entity/Q47231"
          xml:lang="it">Ulisse</persName>
     </person>
     <person xml:id="Circe">
          <persName ref="https://www.wikidata.org/entity/Q187602"
          xml:lang="it">Circe</persName>
     </person>
     <person xml:id="Euriloco">
          <persName ref="https://www.wikidata.org/entity/Q993387"
          xml:lang="it">Euriloco</persName>
     </person>
</listPerson/>
```

Listing 2: XML/TEI encoding of characters list marked as instances of <listPerson>

Each character is assigned a stable internal identifier and, where possible, linked to external authority resources such as Wikidata (e.g., Euriloco is referenced with its Wikidata corresponding URI `https://www.wikidata.org/entity/Q993387`). These identifiers are then referenced consistently throughout the transcription using `<persName ref="#Euriloco">`, allowing the interface to recognise speakers, extract named entities, and connect textual occurrences to structured metadata.

---

[84] This approach is conceptually comparable to digital projects such as *Ecdosys*, where successive authorial correction layers are represented within a structured genetic model. For reference: https://leopardi.ecdosys.org/it/Home/

Additionally, personal and place names that appear incidentally within the text are directly linked to external authority resources in the transcription itself, ensuring broader semantic enrichment beyond the controlled character lists. For instance, Listing 3 shows the alignment of the family name Poiret with its corresponding Wikidata URI withing the encoded text.

```
<app>
      <lem wit="#U34">Casa <persName
      ref="https://www.wikidata.org/entity/Q631884" cert="medium">
      Poiret</persName>.</lem>

      <rdg wit="#Ums25">sartoria <persNam
      ref="https://www.wikidata.org/entity/Q631884"
      cert="medium">Poiret</persName>, di <placeName
      ref="https://www.wikidata.org/entity/Q90">Parigi</placeName>
      </rdg>
</app>
```

Listing 3: XML/TEI encoding of named entities with external authority links

The relation between textual transcription and manuscript or printed facsimiles is preserved for each page of the manuscript and printed edition by the `<facsimile>` section through `<surface>` elements linked to image files as shown in Listing 4:

```
<facsimile>
      <surface xml:id="Title" n="1">
            <graphic url="assets/img/Ums25/page1.jpg"/></surface>

      <surface xml:id="P1" n="2">
            <graphic url="assets/img/Ums25/page2.jpg"/> </surface>
      [...]
<facsimile/>
```

Listing 4: XML/TEI encoding of facsimile surfaces linked to manuscript images

Within the textual body, corresponding page breaks are encoded using `<pb facs="#P1" n="2"/>`, creating an explicit link between each textual segment and its documentary source.

Performance-related materials occupy a distinct position within the documentary layer of the edition. They are not treated as textual witnesses and are not encoded as variants of the dramatic text. Instead, they are represented as independent TEI-conformant documentary entities that record the performative realisations and reception history of the work.

These materials, including reviews, audiovisual recordings, and promotional objects, are described through structured metdata and, where available, linked to associated facsimiles. This approach enables their interoperability with the textual corpus while preserving their specific documentary nature. A detailed discussion of their encoding is provided in *Encoding performance-related objects* (Section 4.2.4).

4.1.1 Encoding the manuscript text

As discussed in *Methodology and Editorial Approach* (Chapter 3) and introduced in *XML/TEI encoded textual materials* (Section 4.2) the manuscript is characterised by dense stratification resulting from successive phases of authorial revision. To represent this genetic complexity, parallel segmentation is employed not to align multiple documentary witnesses, but to model successive layers of correction within a single manuscript source.

The transcription distinguishes eight revision layers (Layer 0 to Layer 7), each corresponding to a coherent level of intervention across the encoded segment. These layers represent successive local states of the text resulting from the author's corrections. The uppermost layer (Layer 7) corresponds to the final authorial state and functions as the default reading text in the digital interface when no specific layer is selected. Earlier layers remain accessible as parallel states, allowing users to inspect the evolution of individual revision sites across successive interventions.

Technically, as already mentioned in the previous section (Section 4.2.1), this is implemented through the TEI `<app>` element, which groups aligned readings corresponding to different revision layers (see Figure 4). The final state is encoded as the lemma, while earlier layers are represented as readings associated with their respective layer identifiers, as shown in Listing 5:
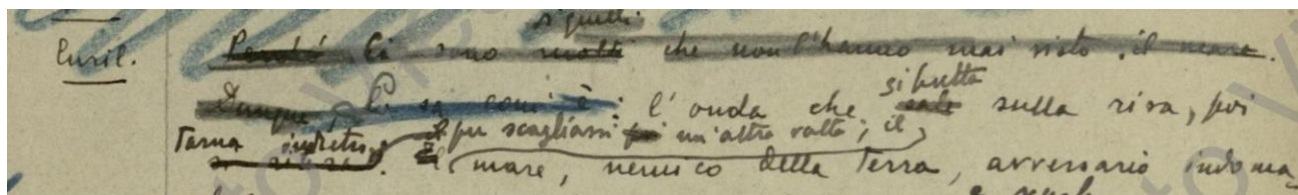

Figure 4:Passage from the autograph manuscript of Capitano Ulisse showing successive layers of authorial revision

```
<p>l'onda che
    <app>
        <lem wit="#strato2">si butta</lem>
        <rdg wit="#strato0">sale</rdg>
```

```
    </app>

    sulla riva, poi

    <app>
        <lem wit="#strato3">torna indietro per scagliarsi
        un'altra volta; il</lem>
        <rdg wit="#strato0">si ritira. Il</rdg>
        <rdg wit="#strato1">torna indietro il</rdg>
        <rdg wit="#strato2">torna indietro per scagliarsi poi
        un'altra volta; </rdg>
    </app>

    mare, nemico della terra, avversario indomabile;
</p>
```

Listing 5: XML/TEI encoding of successive layers of authorial revision

In this structure, each `<rdg>` preserves an earlier local textual state, while the `<lem>` represents the final revised form within the encoded segment. Instead of marking isolated insertions and deletions, the transcription captures the passage as a sequence of successive textual states.

The second apparatus entry in Listing 5 illustrates this process clearly. The earliest layer (`<rdg wit="#strato0">`) records the brief formulation *"si ritira. Il"*. In the next stage (`<rdg wit="#strato1">`), the author rewrites the segment as *"torna indietro il"*. A further revision (`<rdg wit="#strato2">`) expands the action into *"torna indietro per scagliarsi poi un'altra volta;"*, introducing a more articulated movement. In the final revision (`<lem wit="#strato3">`), the phrasing is further refined by removing the adverb *poi*, producing the stabilised form rendered as the lemma.

Through this aligned representation, the progressive reshaping of the passage becomes directly observable, allowing the manuscript's genetic development to be explored as a sequence of evolving textual states within a single coherent structure.

Unclear passages, illegible segments, and textual gaps (see Figure 5) are encoded using standard TEI elements such as `<unclear>` and `<gap>`, preserving degrees of textual uncertainty explicitly within the transcription. For instance, Listing 6 shows an unclear passage (`<unclear cert="low" reason="erased">`) and two gaps(`<gap reason="erased" unit="word">`):
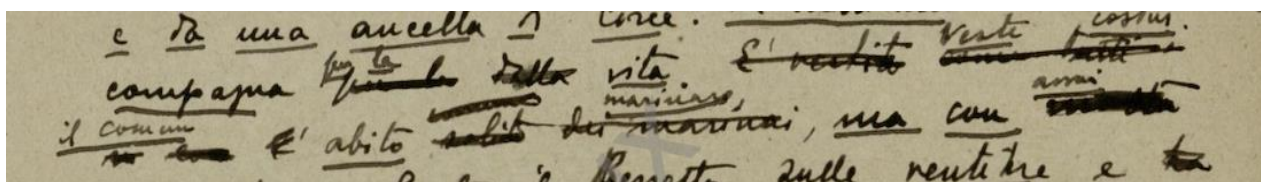
Figure 5: Manuscript passage from Capitano Ulisse showing erased and unclear segments

```
<app>
      <lem wit="#strato2">Veste costui il commun marinaro</lem>

      <rdg wit="#strato0">È vestito come tutti i <unclear cert="low"
      reason="erased">con tutti i </unclear><gap reason="erased" unit="word"
      quantity="2"/> l'abito <gap      reason="erased" unit="word"
      quantity="1"/> dei marinai</rdg>

      <rdg wit="#strato1">Veste costui il commun abito <gap unit="word"
      quantity="1"/> dei marinai</rdg>
</app>
```

Listing 6: XML/TEI encoding of unclear and illegible passages as instances of <unclear> and <gap>

When a textual element is introduced only in a later revision layer and is entirely absent from earlier states, this absence is explicitly encoded using a `<gap>` element with the `@reason` attribute set to "`notInVersion`", as shown in Listing 7:

```
<app>
     <lem wit="#strato5"> <stage> Sipario chiuso.</stage></lem>
     <rdg wit="#strato0"><gap reason="notInVersion"/></rdg>
</app>
```

Listing 7: XML/TEI encoding of textual elements introduced in later revision layers using <gap reason="NotInVersion"/>

The excerpt in Listing 7 makes visible that the stage direction appears only from Layer 5 onwards and was not present in the original drafting phase.

When a word or passage existed in earlier layers but was later removed in the stabilised state, the erasure is represented either through a `<gap reason="erased"/>` (see Listing 8) when the content is no longer interpretable, or through `<unclear>` (see Listing 9) when the deleted text remains partially legible:

```
<app>
     <lem wit="#strato1"><gap reason="erased"/></lem>
```

```
        <rdg wit="#strato0">comodamente</rdg>
 </app>
```

Listing 8: XML/TEI encoding of textual elements erased and illegible using <gap reason="erased"/>

```
<app>
        <lem wit="#strato5">condannati.</lem>
        <rdg wit="#strato0"><unclear cert="low"
        reason="erased">moribondi!</unclear></rdg>
        <rdg wit="#strato1">condannati!</rdg>
</app>
```

Listing 9: XML/TEI encoding of textual elements erased and partially legible using <unclear>

The `<unclear>` element is also used in cases of irregular or eccentric handwriting that hinders secure interpretation, with the degree of certainty explicitly encoded.

Together, these conventions allow the edition to distinguish between textual absence, physical erasure, and interpretative uncertainty, in accordance with philological principles of genetic transcription.

Given that the main language of the text is Italian, foreign words and non-Italian expressions (see Figure 6) are marked using the `<foreign>` element, maintaining linguistic specificity for later transformation and visualisation, as shown in Listing 10:
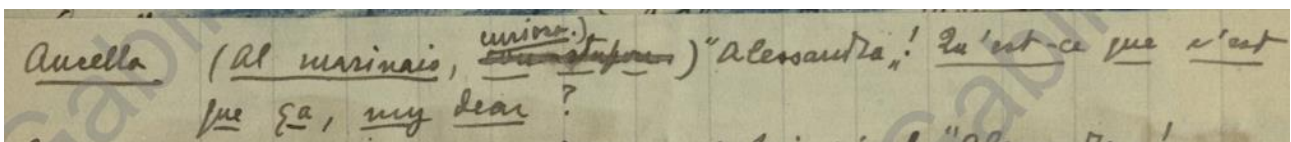
Figure 6: Manuscript passage from Capitano Ulisse illustrating the presence of foreign language expressions

```
<sp>
        <speaker><persName ref="#Ancella">Ancella</persName></speaker>
        <p><stage>(Al <persName ref="#Marinaio">marinaio</persName>
            <app>
                    <lem wit="#strato6">curiosa</lem>
                    <rdg wit="#strato5">con stupore</rdg>
            </app>
        </stage>
        "Alessandra„ <foreign xml:lang="fr">Qu'est-ce que c'est ça</foreign>,
        <foreign xml:lang="en">my dear</foreign>?</p>
</sp>
```

Listing 10: XML/TEI encoding of foreign language expressions using <foreign> element

The `xml:lang` attribute specifies the language of each expression, allowing precise linguistic identification. In Listing 10, the French phrase *"Qu'est-ce que c'est ça"* is annotated with `xml:lang="fr"`, while the English expression *"my dear"* is marked with `xml:lang="en"`.

4.1.2 Encoding the printed text

The first printed edition of *Capitano Ulisse* (1934) is treated within the digital editions a distinct stabilised textual expression corresponding to the authorised form prepared for publication. As in the manuscript transcription, TEI structural elements such as `<sp>`, `<speaker>` and `<stage>` are employed to delineate the dramatic organisation of the play, as shown in Listing 11:

```
<sp>

        <speaker><persName ref="#Euriloco">EURILOCO</persName>
        </speaker>

        <p>Chi parla?</p>

        <stage>Guarda in platea </stage>

</sp>
```

Listing 11: XML/TEI encoding of the dramatic structure in the printed edition of Capitano Ulisse

In the printed edition transcription, parallel segmentation is adopted to divide the text into corresponding structural units, so that passages can be directly compared with the others witnesses wherever variation is attested. The complete list of witnesses included in the corpus is presented in *Methodological framework and editorial workflow* (Section 3.3).

In the transcription, CU 1925 is represented as witness `#Ums25` and includes the final revision layer attested in the manuscript (`#strato7`). The intermediary typescripts are encoded as `#Uds25` for CU TS 1925, corresponding to the textual state immediately following the manuscript, and `#Uds34` for CU TS 1934, which closely reflects the form of CU 1934 (`#U34`).

The printed edition textual version functions as the lemma marked with the `<lem>` element, while the manuscript and earlier textual configurations are encoded as parallel readings only where divergences occur, in accordance with the negative critical apparatus described in *XML/TEI encoding of textual and documentary materials* (Section 3.4.1). The following excerpt (Listing 12) illustrates the application of this encoding strategy, showing how a passage from the printed edition is encoded

as the lemma (`<lem wit="#U34">`) and aligned with a divergent version attested in the manuscript witness (`<rdg wit="#Ums25">`).

```
<app>
    <lem wit="#U34"><persName ref="#Margalone">
    Margalone</persName> e la <persName ref="#A1">prima ancella</persName> di
    <persName ref="#Circe">Circe</persName> escono dal lato destro dell'arco
    scenico.</lem>

    <rdg wit="#Ums25">Sulla parola "ormai" pronunciata dal <persName
    ref="#Euriloco">quartiermastro</persName>, esce sul una coppia costituita
    da un giovane marinaio e da una ancella di <persName
    ref="#Circe">Circe</persName>.</rdg>
</app>
```

Listing 12: XML/TEI encoding of parallel segmentation across documentary witnesses in Capitano Ulisse

Through this structure, corresponding passages are aligned within a single apparatus entry, allowing the formulation preserved in the printed edition to be directly compared with the alternative description recorded in the manuscript. The printed edition thus functions both as a readable reference text and as a point of comparison for earlier textual states. This alignment enables users to compare the evolving manuscript formulations directly with the corresponding passages of the printed edition.

As in the manuscript transcription, standard TEI elements such as `<gap>` and `<unclear>` are also used within the critical apparatus to encode discontinuities and uncertainties attested in the manuscript witnesses. In the printed edition view, these elements appear exclusively within the readings (`<rdg>`) associated with the manuscript or intermediary witnesses, while the stabilised printed text encoded as the lemma remains complete (see Listing 13 and Listing 14).

```
<app>
    <lem wit="#U34">Capitano <persName ref="#Ulisse">
    Ulisse</persName></lem>

    <rdg wit="#Ums25"> Capitan <persName ref="#Ulisse">
    Ulisse</persName></rdg>

    <rdg wit="#Uds25"><gap reason="notInVersion" sameAs="NIT"/
    ></rdg>
</app>
```

Listing 13: XML/TEI encoding of <gap> within parallel segmentation in Capitano Ulisse

```
<app>
     <lem wit="#U34"> Mentre <persName ref="#Euriloco">
     Euriloco</persName> si volta e vede avanzare la coppia,
     Interrompe la frase</lem>

     <rdg wit="#Ums25"> <unclear/> quella che <persName
     ref="#Euriloco"> Euriloco</persName> si volta e vede
     Avvicinarsi la coppia, interrompe la frase incominciata</rdg>
</app>
```

Listing 14: XML/TEI encoding of <unclear> within parallel segmentation in Capitano Ulisse

In Listing 13, the lemma from the printed edition (`<lem wit="#U34">`) presents the form "*Capitano Ulisse*", the manuscript witness (`<rdg wit="#Ums25">`) shows the variant "*Capitan Ulisse*", and the intermediary witness (`<rdg wit="#Uds">`) includes a `<gap>` marked as `reason="notInVersion"`, signalling the absence of the passage in that version.

Similarly, in Listing 14, the lemma from the printed edition provides a continuous stage direction, whereas the manuscript witness ((`<rdg wit="#Ums25">`) includes an `<unclear>` element at the beginning of the reading, signalling a portion of text that is illegible or uncertain in the autograph material.

The `<foreign>` element is also consistently applied to mark non-Italian expressions in both the manuscript and printed transcriptions (see Listing 15)

```
<p><foreign xml:lang="fr">Tenez</foreign> mio povero signore</p>
```

Listing 15: XML/TEI encoding of <foreign> to mark non-Italian expression in Capitano Ulisse

4.1.3 Encoding performance-related objects

Each performance-related object, such as a video recording of a staging, a critical review, or a promotional poster, is described through structured TEI-compatible XML files that provide a standardised documentary representation of source object, including its basic identification, provenance and associated facsimile where available. In this way, these heterogeneous materials can be described and linked creating a networked description of the evolving nature of the source materials.

A simplified example of a TEI-based description for a performance-related object is shown below (Listing 16):

```xml
<?xml version="1.0" encoding="UTF-8"?>
<TEI xmlns="http://www.tei-c.org/ns/1.0" xml:id="poster-2022">
    <teiHeader>
   <fileDesc>
          <titleStmt>
             <title level="a">Promotional Poster for <title
                level="m">Capitano Ulisse</title>(2022)</title>
          </titleStmt>
          <publicationStmt>
             <p>Digital scholarly edition project Text on Stage
             </p>
          </publicationStmt>
          <sourceDesc>
             <p>Promotional poster associated with the 2022
             staging of <title level="m">Capitano Ulisse</title>
             <ref type="source"
             target="https://www.exhimusic.com/magazine/2020/03/
             7/tetro-trastevere-presenta-dal-17-al-22-marzo-2020
             Capitanoulisse-di-alberto-savinio-regia-di-andrea
             martella/">image</ref></p>
          </sourceDesc>
   </fileDesc>
   </teiHeader>

   <facsimile>
         <graphic url="assets/img/Poster2022.jpg"/>
   </facsimile>
   <text>
         <body>
              <div type="object" xml:id="poster" >
                   <head>Poster</head>
                   <p>This object records a promotional poster
                   associated with the 2022 staging of <hi
                   rend="italic">Capitano Ulisse</hi>. The poster
                   documents the event and contributes to the
                   historical reconstruction of the performance
                   context.</p>
              </div>
```

```
            </body>

        </text>

</TEI>
```

Listing 16: XML/TEI encoding of the 2022 staging promotional poster of Capitano Ulisse

In this TEI description, the `<teiHeader>` provides the core metadata associated with the performance-related object. The `<titleStmt>` identifies the object as a promotional poster linked to the 2022 staging of *Capitano Ulisse*, while the `<publicationStmt>` situates the description within the digital scholarly edition project. The `<sourceDesc>` records the provenance of the object and includes a reference to the original digital source of the image.

The visual representation of the poster is encoded within the `<facsimile>` element through the `<graphic>` tag, which links the TEI document to the corresponding image file stored in the digital edition.

Within the textual body, the `<div type="object">` element is used to describe the performance-related object itself, including its historical context, production details, and its relation to the specific staging it documents. This section records information such as the producing company, venue, date of performance, and other relevant contextual references that situate the object within the performance history of the work. The `<head>` provides a label for the object, while the paragraph offers a short descriptive note outlining its documentary function in relation to the 2022 staging. Together, these components enable each performance object to be recorded as an individual documentary entity, combining metadata, visual material, and contextual description within a structured TEI framework.

These TEI files provide the documentary layer for recording each object, including metadata, provenance, and facsimile links. Relationships between performances, agents, venues, and institutions are subsequently modelled in RDF, as will be discussed later in this chapter (Section 4.3.2 *Modelling performance and documentation*).

Performance-related materials are encoded as independent TEI documentary records, ensuring consistent documentary representation across the corpus while remaining distinct from the genetic encoding of textual witnesses.

4.2 RDF representation of textual and performative entities

The semantic component of the edition is implemented through RDF files that formalise the relationships between textual witnesses, performances, and performance-related objects, following the modelling principles outlined in RDF semantic modelling of entities and relationships (Section 3.4.2).

The model reuses FRBRoo harmonised with CIDOC CRM as its core ontological framework, complemented by selected elements from Dublin Core terms for descriptive metadata and Schema.org for web-oriented resource description. Listing 17 presents the prefixes used in the semantic model:

```
rdf:    http://www.w3.org/1999/02/22-rdf-syntax-ns

xsd:    http://www.w3.org/2001/XMLSchema

frbroo: http://iflastandards.info/ns/fr/frbr/frbroo/

crm:    http://www.cidoc-crm.org/cidoc-crm/

dct:    http://purl.org/dc/terms/

schema: http://schema.org/
```

Listing 17: List of prefixes reused in the semantic model

Figures 7 and 8 present simplified visualisations of the knowledge graph generated from the RDF files of the edition. They highlight the relationships between the abstract dramatic work (`frbroo:F1 Work`), its textual expressions (`frbroo:F22 Expression`), the performance events (`frbroo:F31 Performance`), and the associated documentary objects (modelled either as `crm:E31 Document` or `frbroo:F4 Manifestation Singleton`, depending on their material nature).

Together, the graphs make visible the layered structure of textual transmission and performative realisation discussed throughout this study and show how the textual and performative domains are formally connected within a unified semantic network.
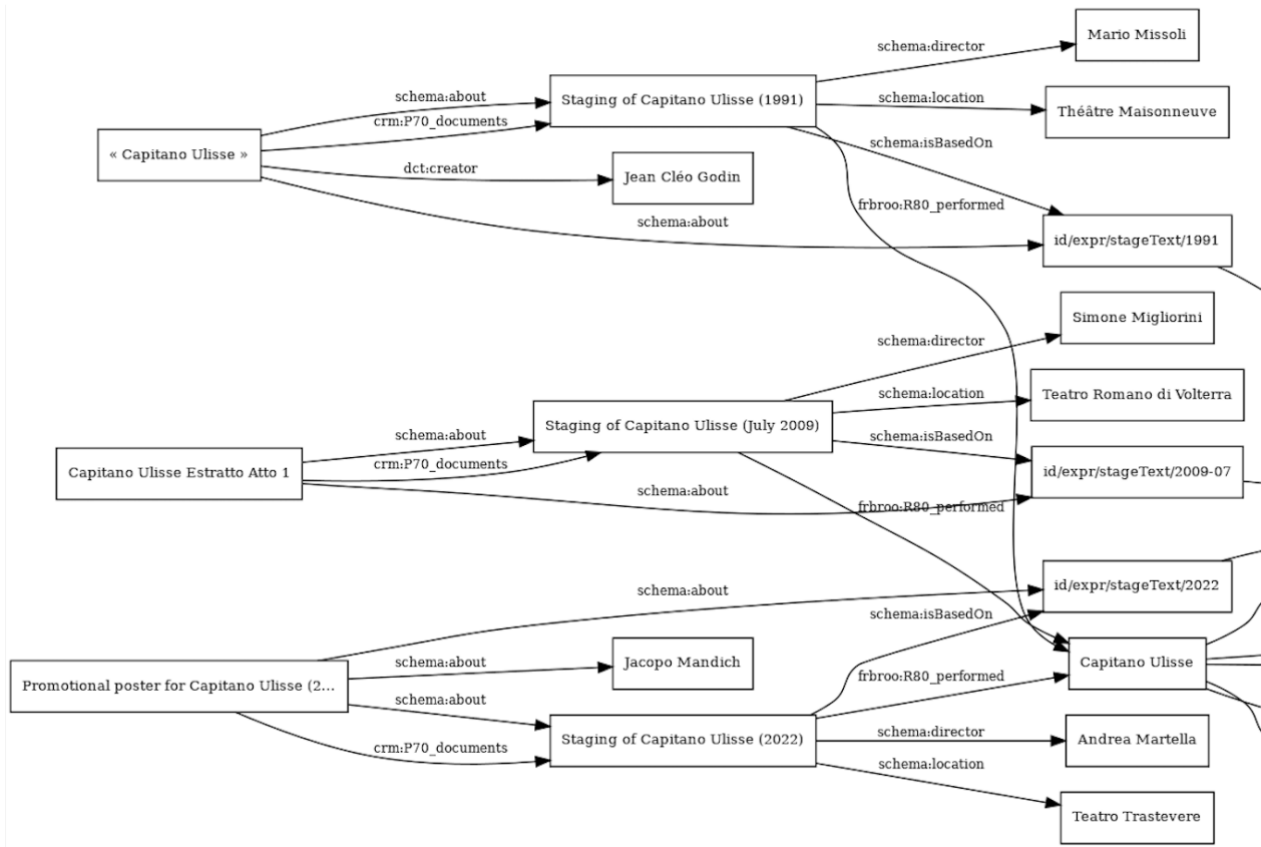
Figure 7: Knowledge graph visualisation of the performative and documentary layer

Figure 7 presents the performative and documentary layer of the knowledge graph. Performances are modelled as `frbroo:F31_Performance` linked to the abstract work through `frbroo:R80_performed` and associated with specific stage-oriented textual configurations via `schema:isBasedOn`. Performance-related objects, such as critical articles, videos, and promotional materials, are connected to the events they document through `crm:P70_documents` and `schema:about`, thereby integrating heterogeneous documentation within the same semantic network.
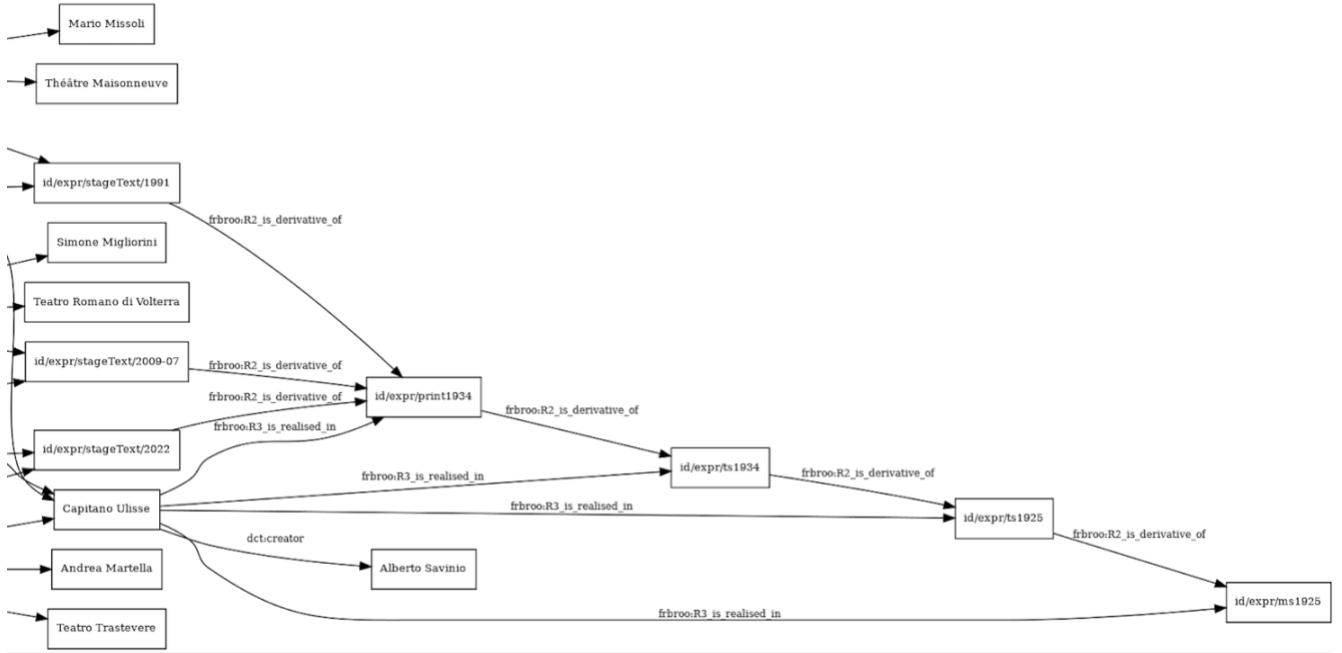
Figure 8: Knowledge graph visualisation of the textual transmission layer

Figure 8 illustrates the relationships between the abstract work Capitano Ulisse, its successive textual expressions, and the inferred transmission steps between manuscript, typescript, and printed edition.

Derivative relations (`frbroo:R2_is_derivative_of`) make explicit the progression between textual states, while realisation links (`frbroo:R3_is_realised_in`) connect the work to its different expressions. This representation formalises the stratified and non-linear nature of the textual tradition discussed in *Background* (Chapter 1).

Listing 18 presents a simplified RDF snippet in Turtle syntax illustrating the core structure of the knowledge graph, connecting the abstract work, a performance event, its associated stage-oriented text, and a related documentary object.

```
@prefix tos:    <https://textonstage.github.io/Capitano-Ulisse/> .
@prefix id:     <https://textonstage.github.io/Capitano-Ulisse/id/> .
@prefix schema: <http://schema.org/> .
@prefix dct:    <http://purl.org/dc/terms/> .
@prefix frbroo: <http://iflastandards.info/ns/fr/frbr/frbroo/> .
@prefix crm:    <http://www.cidoc-crm.org/cidoc-crm/> .
@prefix xsd:    <http://www.w3.org/2001/XMLSchema#> .

id:work/CU
  a frbroo:F1_Work ;
  schema:name "Capitano Ulisse"@it .
```

```
id:expr/print1934
  a frbroo:F2_Expression ;
  dct:type "Printed edition text (1934)"@en .

id:expr/stageText/1991
  a frbroo:F2_Expression ;
  dct:type "Performance text (inferred) for the 1991 staging"@en ;
  frbroo:R2_is_derivative_of id:expr/print1934 .

id:perf/1991
  a frbroo:F31_Performance ;
  frbroo:R80_performed id:work/CU ;
  schema:isBasedOn id:expr/stageText/1991 ;
  schema:startDate "1991-01-05"^^xsd:date ;
  schema:endDate   "1991-01-06"^^xsd:date .

id:doc/article-1991
  a crm:E31_Document ;
  dct:title "« Capitano Ulisse »"@it ;
  dct:date "1991"^^xsd:gYear ;
  schema:about id:perf/1991, id:expr/stageText/1991 ;
  crm:P70_documents id:perf/1991 .
```

Listing 18: Core RDF triples illustrating the semantic relationships between the dramatic work, its textual expressions, a specific performance event, and a related documentary object

In this example, the dramatic work is modelled as an `frbroo:F1_Work`, realised in multiple textual expressions, including CU 1934 (`frbroo:F2_Expression`) and a performance-oriented stage text inferred for the 1991 staging. This inferred stage text is explicitly linked to the printed edition through the derivative relationship `frbroo:R2_is_derivative_of`, reflecting the adaptation of the authorised textual form for theatrical realisation.

The 1991 staging is represented as an `frbroo:F31_Performance`, connected to the abstract work via `frbroo:R80_performed` and associated with its corresponding stage text through `schema:isBasedOn`. Temporal information is provided through explicit start and end dates.

Finally, a critical article documenting the performance is modelled as a `crm:E31_Document` and linked both to the performance and to the inferred stage text using `schema:about` and

`crm:P70_documents`, thereby integrating documentary evidence within the performative network.

Together, these triples demonstrate how the semantic model connects abstract works, textual realisations, performative events, and heterogeneous documentation within a unified knowledge graph.

4.2.1 Semantic modelling in RDF

Within the semantic component of the edition, the dramatic work *Capitano Ulisse* is represented as an abstract entity corresponding to `frbroo:F1_Work`, which constitutes the conceptual root of all textual and performative realisations.

The work entity is explicitly connected to its textual expressions through realisation relationships (`frbroo:R3_is_realised_in`), as illustrated in Listing 19. Relative URIs are used to identify entities within the project namespace, whose base URI is declared through the `xml:base` attribute (`https://textonstage.github.io/Capitano-Ulisse/`). This ensures that all identifiers are resolved as stable, globally unique, and dereferenceable resources. This structure formalises the existence of multiple textual embodiments deriving from a single abstract dramatic work.

```
<frbroo:F1_Work rdf:about="id/work/CU">

  <schema:name xml:lang="it">Capitano Ulisse</schema:name>
  <frbroo:R3_is_realised_in rdf:resource="id/expr/ms1925"/>
  <frbroo:R3_is_realised_in rdf:resource="id/expr/print1934"/>

</frbroo:F1_Work>
```

Listing 19: RDF linking of F1 Work to its textual expressions

Textual states are modelled as Expressions (`frbroo:F2_Expression`). In the current implementation, this choice covers both the documentary textual witnesses (manuscript and printed edition) and a set of conceptual and inferred expressions used to make the transmission chain explicit. For instance, the manuscript expression is connected to a carrier via `frbroo:R4_is_embodied_in` and linked to the corresponding HTML entry point, as shown in Listing 20:

```
<frbroo:F2_Expression rdf:about="id/expr/ms1925">
```

```
    <dct:type xml:lang="en">Manuscript text (1925)</dct:type>
    <frbroo:R4_is_embodied_in rdf:resource="id/manifest/ms1925"/>
    <schema:url rdf:resource="Ums25.html"/>
    <schema:relatedLink rdf:resource="U34.html"/>
</frbroo:F2_Expression>
```

Listing 20: RDF encoding of an F2 Expression and its carrier

The material carrier of the manuscript is modelled as a distinct entity of type `frbroo:F4_Manifestation_Singleton`, in accordance with the FRBRoo distinction between abstract textual expressions and their unique physical embodiments. This allows the physical manuscript to be described independently from the textual content it conveys. Provenance and identification data are recorded using CIDOC CRM properties.

The current holding institution is linked through `crm:P50_has_current_keeper`, while the manuscript's shelf-mark is represented as an instance of `crm:E42_Identifier` connected via `crm:P48_has_preferred_identifier`. The symbolic content of the identifier is encoded using `crm:P190_has_symbolic_content`, as shown in Listing 21.

```
<frbroo:F4_Manifestation_Singleton rdf:about="id/manifest/ms1925">
      <crm:P50_has_current_keeper rdf:resource="id/repo/ms-repo"/>
      <crm:P48_has_preferred_identifier rdf:resource="id/ms1925-shelfmark"/>
</frbroo:F4_Manifestation_Singleton>


<crm:E42_Identifier rdf:about="id/ms1925-shelfmark">
      <crm:P190_has_symbolic_content>AS. II.
      11.5</crm:P190_has_symbolic_content>
</crm:E42_Identifier>
```

Listing 21: RDF encoding of an F4 Manifestation Signgleton and its identifier

Successive stages of textual transmission are made explicit through inferred intermediary expressions corresponding to the typescript phases preceding publication. These expressions are linked through derivative relationships (`frbroo:R2_is_derivative_of`), producing a structured chain from manuscript to printed edition (Listing 22).

```
<frbroo:F2_Expression rdf:about="id/expr/ts1925">
      <dct:type xml:lang="en">Typescript text (1925)
      conceptual/inferred</dct:type>
      <frbroo:R2_is_derivative_of rdf:resource="id/expr/ms1925"/>
</frbroo:F2_Expression>
```

```
<frbroo:F2_Expression rdf:about="id/expr/ts1934">
      <dct:type xml:lang="en">Typescript of the printed edition
      text (1934) – pre-publication copy</dct:type>
      <frbroo:R2_is_derivative_of rdf:resource="id/expr/ts1925"/>
</frbroo:F2_Expression>
```

Listing 22: RDF encoding of derivate relationship between F2 Expressions

Finally, the authorised printed edition is modelled as a further textual expression derived from the last typescript state and connected to its digital visualisation, as shown in Listing 23.

```
<frbroo:F2_Expression rdf:about="id/expr/print1934">
      <dct:type xml:lang="en">Printed edition text (1934)</dct:type>
      <frbroo:R2_is_derivative_of rdf:resource="id/expr/ts1934"/>
      <schema:url rdf:resource="U34.html"/>
</frbroo:F2_Expression>
```

Listing 23: RDF encoding of the printed edition as an F2 Expression

Together, these RDF statements produce a structured representation of textual transmission in which manuscript, intermediary stages, and printed edition are articulated as a connected sequence of textual realisations rather than as a flat set of witnesses.

This semantic structure complements the documentary TEI encoding by making explicit the genetic and transmissional relationships between textual states within the knowledge graph, while preserving the documentary specificity of each source.

4.2.2 Modelling performance and documentation

Within the RDF model, theatrical performances are represented as event entities corresponding to `frbroo:F31_Performance`. Each performance is explicitly linked to the abstract work through the property `frbroo:R80_performed` and associated with a stage-oriented textual configuration through `schema:isBasedOn`.

For each documented staging, a dedicated performance-oriented textual expression is introduced as an `frbroo:F2_Expression` node, derived from the authorised printed edition. This inferred stage text represents the textual configuration presupposed by the specific production and functions as an intermediary between the printed script and the performance event.

Listing 24 illustrates this structure for the 1991 staging, where the inferred stage text is modelled as an Expression derived from the printed edition:

```
<frbroo:F2_Expression rdf:about="id/expr/stageText/1991">
      <dct:type xml:lang="en">Performance text (inferred) for the
      1991 staging</dct:type>
      <frbroo:R2_is_derivative_of rdf:resource="id/expr/print1934"/>
</frbroo:F2_Expression>
```

Listing 24: RDF encoding of a inferred performance text as an F2 Expression

Although FRBRoo provides the class `frbroo:F25_Performance_Plan` for staging-oriented plans, in this implementation the stage text is modelled as an `frbroo:F2_Expression`, because it is treated primarily as a context-specific textual configuration derived from the authorised script, rather than as a preserved production dossier.

The corresponding performance event is then modelled as an `frbroo:F31_Performance` entity linked both to the abstract work and to its associated stage text (see Listing 25):

```
<frbroo:F31_Performance rdf:about="id/perf/1991">
      <schema:name xml:lang="en">Staging of Capitano Ulisse
      (1991)</schema:name>
      <dct:date rdf:datatype="xsd:gYear">1991</dct:date>
      <frbroo:R80_performed rdf:resource="id/work/CU"/>
      <schema:isBasedOn rdf:resource="id/expr/stageText/1991"/>
</frbroo:F31_Performance>
```

Listing 25: RDF encoding of a performance event as an F31 Performance

Importantly, this intermediate level is included even when no material stage text survives as a separate document. In many theatre contexts the stage text is implicit embedded in rehearsal practice and production decisions rather than preserved as a stable written artefact. Modelling it as an inferred entity makes the interpretative step between printed script and event explicit, without turning performance into a philological "variant" of the printed witness.

Performance-related materials are modelled as documentary entities linked to the specific performance they record. Documentary relationships are expressed through the CIDOC CRM property `crm:P70_documents`, while Schema.org classes are used to represent concrete digital objects such as articles, videos, and images.

For example, a critical article documenting the 1991 performance is represented as a `crm:E31_Document` (see Listing 26):

```
<crm:E31_Document rdf:about="id/doc/article-1991">
      <dct:type xml:lang="en">Critical article / review</dct:type>
      <schema:mainEntityOfPage rdf:resource="objects/article
       1991.html"/>
      <schema:contentUrl rdf:resource="pdf/Article1991.pdf"/>
      <schema:about rdf:resource="id/perf/1991"/>
      <schema:about rdf:resource="id/expr/stageText/1991"/>
      <crm:P70_documents rdf:resource="id/perf/1991"/>
</crm:E31_Document>
```

Listing 26: RDF encoding of a performance-related article as a crm:E31_Document

Audiovisual and promotional materials follow the same modelling logic. A video recording documenting a specific staging is represented as a `schema:VideoObject` (see Listing 27):

```
<schema:VideoObject rdf:about="id/video/2009-07">
      <dct:type xml:lang="en">Video recording of
      performance</dct:type>
      <schema:mainEntityOfPage rdf:resource="objects/video-2009
       07.html"/>
      <schema:about rdf:resource="id/perf/2009-07"/>
      <schema:about rdf:resource="id/expr/stageText/2009-07"/>
      <crm:P70_documents rdf:resource="id/perf/2009-07"/>
</schema:VideoObject>
```

Listing 27: RDF encoding of the performance-related video recording as schema:VideoObject

Similarly, promotional objects such as posters are represented as `schema:ImageObject` entities (see Listing 28):

```
<schema:ImageObject rdf:about="id/poster/2022">
      <dct:type xml:lang="en">Promotional poster</dct:type>
      <schema:mainEntityOfPage rdf:resource="objects/poster
      2022.html"/>
      <schema:about rdf:resource="id/perf/2022"/>
       <schema:about rdf:resource="id/expr/stageText/2022"/>
      <crm:P70_documents rdf:resource="id/perf/2022"/>
</schema:ImageObject>
```

Listing 28: RDF encoding of the promotional poster as schema:ImageObject

Through this structure, each documentary object is anchored to the historically situated performance it records, while remaining connected to the corresponding stage-oriented textual configuration.

This RDF representation establishes explicit semantic links between the abstract dramatic work (`frbroo:F1_Work`), its textual expressions (`frbroo:F2_Expression`), its performative realisations (`frbroo_F31_Performance`), and the documentary entities that record and contextualise them (`crm:E31_Document`, `schema:VideoObject`, `schema:ImageObject`). In doing so, it integrates textual transmission, performance events, and documentary traces within a unified and formally structured semantic network.

4.3 Rendering the editorial model

Having outlined the documentary and semantic components of the edition, this section turns to the mechanisms through which they are integrated and presented to users.

4.3.1 XSLT as mediation layer

The transformation layer operationalises the integration between the documentary TEI encoding and the RDF semantic model within the web interface. Through a set of XSLT stylesheets, XML transcriptions are converted into structured HTML output, while selected semantic data are dynamically retrieved from external RDF files and incorporated into the generated pages.

The RDF dataset is maintained in separate RDF/XML files and accessed during transformation through the XSLT `document()` function, which allows external XML resources to be loaded into the transformation context. As shown in Listing 29, the RDF file is imported and bound to a variable:

```
<xsl:param name="RDF_PATH" select="'Ums25_RDF.xml'"/>
<xsl:template match="/tei:TEI">
<xsl:variable name="RDF" select="document($RDF_PATH)"/>
```

Listing 29: Loading RDF data in XSLT with document() function

Here, the global parameter `RDF_PATH` specifies the semantic source file, while the variable `$RDF` stores the parsed RDF document as a node tree accessible during transformation. This allows the stylesheet to query semantic entities and relations without embedding RDF directly within the TEI source files.

Specific resources are then selected through XPath expressions targeting stable identifiers. For instance, the manuscript expression displayed in the transcription interface is retrieved as shown in Listing 30:

```
<xsl:variable name="msExpr"
select="$RDF//frbroo:F2_Expression[@rdf:about='id/expr/ms1925']"/>
```

Listing 30: Selecting RDF nodes in XSLT

This variable resolves the semantic node corresponding to the manuscript expression, enabling the stylesheet to access associated metadata, derivation relations, and links to documentary carriers.

To expose semantic relations within the HTML output, RDF triples retrieved from the external graph are serialised using RDFa attributes. The main transcription container is annotated as a semantic resource (Listing 31):

```
<div class="manuscript-viewer" about="id/expr/ms1925"
typeof="frbroo:F2_Expression"
```

Listing 31:RDFa annotation of a transcription container

Additional semantic relations are embedded in the HTML output through RDFa-annotated structures generated by the XSLT transformation, as illustrated in Listing 32:

```
<div class="rdfa-graph" hidden="hidden">

    <div hidden="hidden" about="id/work/CU"
    typeof="frbroo:F1_Work">
    <span property="schema:name" lang="it">Capitano Ulisse</span>
    <span rel="frbroo:R3_is_realised_in"
    resource="id/expr/ms1925"></span>
    <span rel="frbroo:R3_is_realised_in"
    resource="id/expr/print1934"></span>
</div>
<div hidden="hidden" about="id/expr/ms1925" typeof="frbroo:F2_Expression">
    <span property="dct:type" lang="en">Manuscript text (1925)</span>
    <span rel="frbroo:R4_is_embodied_in"
    resource="id/manifest/ms1925"></span>
    <span rel="schema:url" resource="Ums25.html"></span>
    <span rel="schema:relatedLink" resource="U34.html"></span>
</div>
```

```
<div hidden="hidden" about="id/manifest/ms1925"
typeof="frbroo:F4_Manifestation_Singleton">
      <span property="schema:name" lang="en">Capitano Ulisse &#8211; Manuscript
      carrier (1925)</span>
      <span rel="crm:P50_has_current_keeper" resource="id/repo/ms-repo"></span>
      <span rel="crm:P48_has_preferred_identifier" resource="id/id/ms1925-
      shelfmark"></span>
</div>
<div hidden="hidden" about="id/repo/ms-repo" typeof="crm:E40_Legal_Body">
      <span property="schema:name">Archivio Contemporaneo Gabinetto
      Vieusseux</span><span rel="schema:sameAs"
      resource="https://www.wikidata.org/wiki/Q930825"></span>
</div>
<div hidden="hidden" about="id/id/ms1925-shelfmark" typeof="crm:E42_Identifier">
      <span property="crm:P190_has_symbolic_content">AS. II. 11.5</span></div>
</div>
```

Listing 32:RDFa annotation of semantic entities embedded in the HTML output.

In Listing 32, RDFa attributes are highlighted in bold to emphasise their semantic function. The `hidden` attribute suppresses the visual rendering of these elements in the browser while preserving them in the Document Object Model (DOM)[85]. Each nested `<div>` functions as an RDFa subject node. The `about` attribute identifies the subject of each RDF statement, while `typeof` specifies its ontological class (e.g., `frbroo:F1_Work`, `frbroo:F2_Expression`, `frbroo:F4_Manifestation_Singleton`). Semantic properties and relations are expressed through the `property` and `rel` attributes, and the `resource` attribute identifies the object of relational statements.

Through this serialisation process, RDF statements retrieved from the external semantic graph are transformed into RDFa-compliant HTML structures. These structures remain invisible to the user interface but expose a machine-readable semantic layer within the published pages, allowing the HTML output to function simultaneously as a human-readable edition and as a Linked Data[86] resource.

---

[85] https://dom.spec.whatwg.org/

[86] https://www.w3.org/wiki/LinkedData

In parallel, the XSLT transformation restructures the TEI apparatus encoding to support interactive visualisation of genetic layers. Each `<app>` element is converted into a wrapper structure, while the aligned `<lem>` and `<rdg>` elements are rendered as selectable textual variants (see Listing 33):

```
<xsl:template match="tei:app" mode="render">
     <span class="choice text-block">
          <xsl:apply-templates select="tei:lem | tei:rdg" mode="render"/>
     </span>
</xsl:template>
```

Listing 33: XSLT rendering of TEI apparatus elements

The `apply-templates` instruction recursively processes both the lemma and the associated readings using the same rendering mode. Each `<lem>` and `<rdg>` element is then transformed by a dedicated template, as shown in Listing 34:

```
<xsl:template match="tei:lem | tei:rdg" mode="render">
```

Listing 34: XSLT template for TEI <lem> and <rdg> elements

Within this template, the `@wit` attribute is normalised and stored in a variable, as illustrated in Listing 35:

```
<xsl:variable name="wit" select="normalize
space(translate(@wit, '#', ''))"/>
```

Listing 35: Normalisation of witness identifier in XSLT

This operation removes the # character and produces a clean witness or layer identifier.

The transformed content is wrapped in an HTML `<span>` whose class is dynamically constructed using `local-name()` to distinguish between lemma and reading (see Listing 36):

```
<xsl:value-of select="local-name()"/>
```

Listing 36: Dynamic class generation in XSLT using local-name()

When a witness identifier is present, it is written into a custom `data-wit` attribute (see Listing 37):

```
<xsl:attribute name="data-wit">
```

Listing 37: Creating custom data attributes in XSLT

This attribute is subsequently used by client-side scripts to activate specific genetic layers within the interface.

Finally, the textual content is rendered through recursive template application, as shown in Listing 38:

```
<xsl:apply-templates mode="render"/>
```

Listing 38: Recursive processing in XSLT

This transformation preserves the logical structure of TEI apparatus entries while converting them into interactive HTML elements representing successive textual states.

Together, these transformation mechanisms connect:

- documentary TEI structures
- external semantic RDF graphs
- interactive HTML visualisation

within a single transformation pipeline. XSLT thus functions as the operational mediation layer through which philological encoding and semantic modelling converge into a navigable digital edition.

4.3.2 Interface design and navigation

The web interface constitutes the operational projection of the editorial and semantic model described in the previous sections. Rather than functioning as a neutral display layer, it is designed as an interactive environment in which textual transmission, genetic stratification, and performative documentation are made navigable through coordinated visual components. Additionally, the visual interface serves as a proof of concept for the underlying data model, demonstrating the effectiveness of the dual annotation framework adopted throughout the project. Specifically, it validates the interoperability between the XML/TEI encoding layer and the RDF semantic annotation layer. The interface therefore is used to provide empirical evidence that the modelling choices are both technically effective and capable of supporting scholarly inquiry by rendering these interconnected data structures in a navigable and human-readable format.

The layout of the text viewer is organised according to a dual-column structure that synchronises the transcription with the corresponding facsimile image. In both the manuscript and the printed edition views, each page is delimited in the TEI source by <pb/> elements and is rendered as a discrete visual unit. In the manuscript, <pb/> reflects the material articulation of the autograph foliation; in the printed edition, it marks the pagination of the 1934 volume. In both cases, this structure allows users to navigate the document page by page while preserving the alignment between transcription and material support (Figure 9).
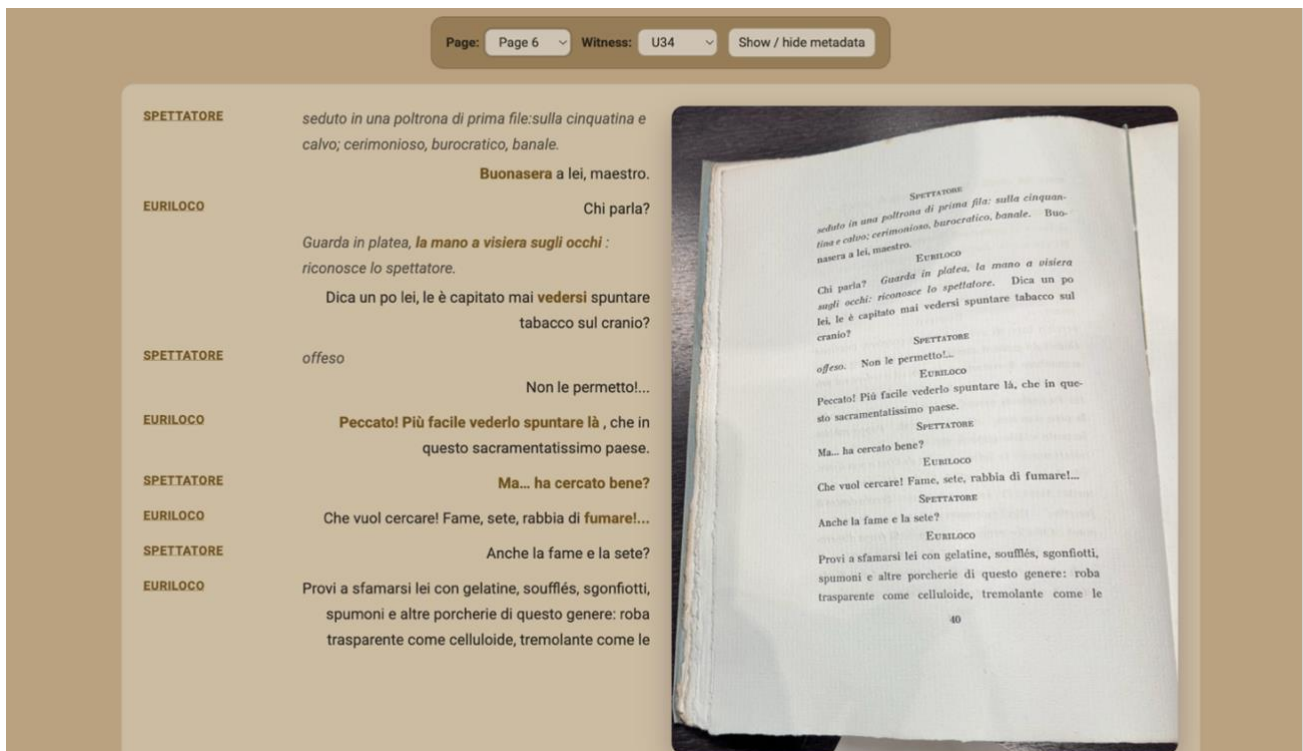
Figure 9: Interface view showing the synchronised display of the TEI transcription and the corresponding print edition facsimile

At the top of the interface, a navigation toolbar provides two central controls: a page selector and a witness/layer selector. The page selector enables direct access to individual pages, while the witness/layer selector dynamically activates the available textual states encoded through parallel segmentation. Users can therefore switch between successive states without reloading the page or consulting separate apparatus views.

In the manuscript view, these selectable states correspond to revision layers representing successive phases of authorial intervention. In the printed edition view, they correspond to distinct documentary witnesses aligned for comparison. While the technical mechanism remains identical, its editorial function shifts from representing internal genetic stratification to representing variation across witnesses.

The visual behaviour of variants is governed by the logic implemented in the XSLT transformation and client-side scripting. Each variant group generated from `<app>`, `<lem>`, and `<rdg>` elements is rendered as a structured block in which the active layer is highlighted, while fallback readings are displayed when a given layer or witness does not contain a specific intervention (Figure 10). This mechanism reflects the cumulative nature of authorial revision in the manuscript and, in the printed edition view, makes documentary variation directly observable within the same structural frame.
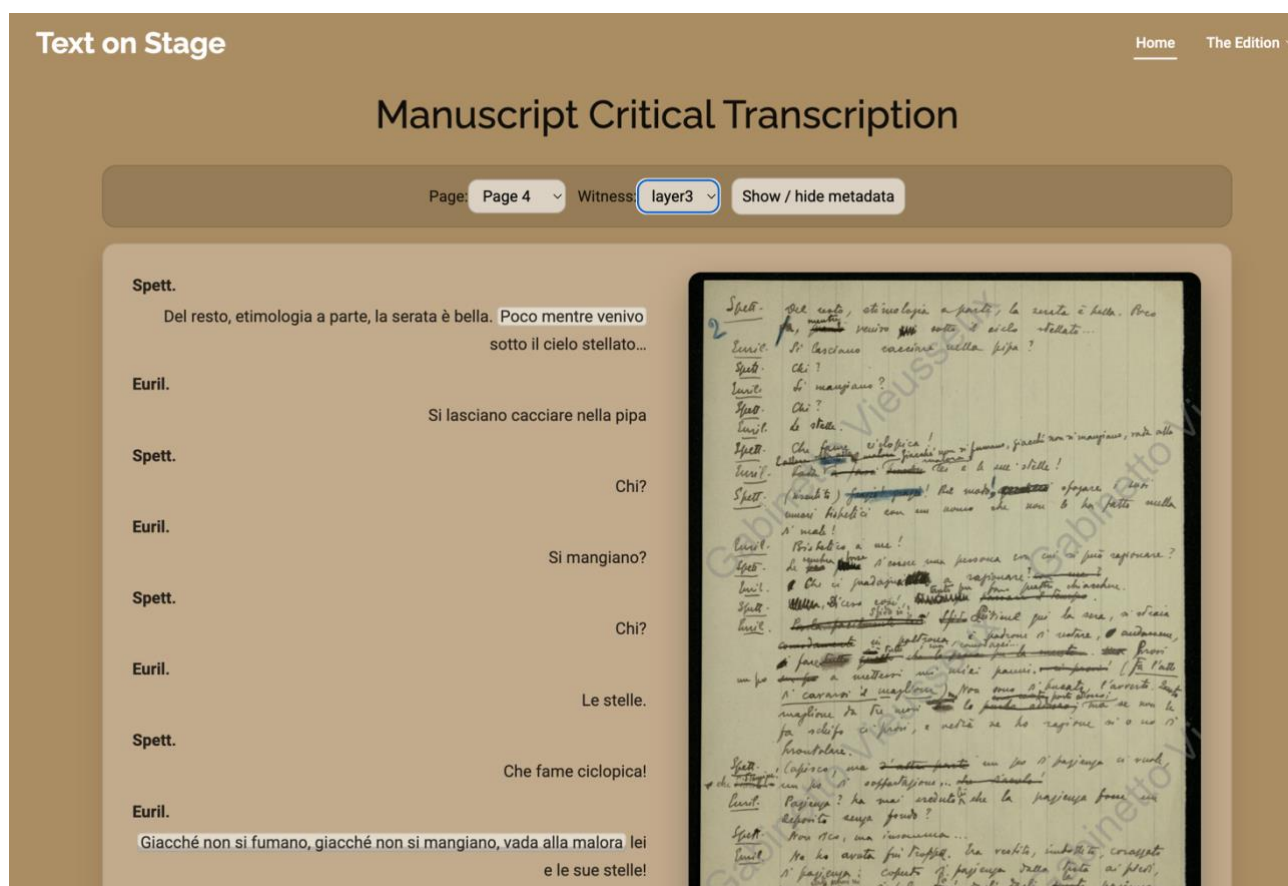
Figure 10: Interface view showing the active layer (layer 3) parts highlighted

As mentioned in *Encoding the printed text* (Section 4.1.2), in the printed edition transcription CU 1934 (`#U34`) is encoded as the lemma and functions as the stabilised reference state, while CU 1925 (`#Ums25`), CU TS 1925 (`#Uds25`), and CU TS 1934 (`#Uds34`) are encoded as parallel documentary witnesses. In the interface, this encoding strategy is translated into a comparative view in which eliminations, reformulations, additions, and lexical adjustments between the four witnesses can be examined as stages in the consolidation of the text, from manuscript drafting to authorised publication, without disrupting the continuity of reading.

Similarly, as explained in *Encoding the manuscript text* (Section 4.1.1), the manuscript transcription distinguishes eight revision layers (from `#strato0` to `#strato7`) within a single documentary witness. In the interface, these encoded layers are rendered as selectable textual states, allowing users to trace the internal genetic development of the text and to observe the progressive reshaping of individual passages across successive authorial interventions.

Speaker names are consistently aligned to the left margin, while dialogue and directions occupy the main textual column, reproducing a clear theatrical reading flow while remaining grounded in the TEI structural encoding.

Beyond textual visualisation, the interface integrates a dynamic metadata panel that exposes documentary and semantic information associated with the currently displayed page (Fig. 11).

Figure 11: Interface view displaying the dynamic metadata panel associated with the currently selected manuscript page

The panel can be toggled by the user and is populated at runtime through the interaction between XSLT-generated data structures and JavaScript processing. Two different levels of information are combined within this component. Global metadata such as title, author, repository and shelf-mark, date are extracted from the TEI header during transformation and rendered in the HTML output.

These elements are associated with the selected witness as a documentary entity: in the manuscript view, the metadata correspond to CU 1925; in the printed edition view, they refer to CU 1934 as the stabilised reference text. These data remain stable regardless of the activation of individual layers or parallel readings

In parallel, page-level named entities (persons, places, and other referenced objects) are scoped using the `<pb/>` structure and emitted as per-page, machine-readable lists in the DOM. On page change, JavaScript collects these entries from the active page, deduplicates them via stable identifiers, groups them by semantic category, and renders them into the metadata panel while preserving external authority URIs such where available.

This distinction allows the interface to separate textual content from documentary identity, while presenting both within a unified visual environment. The running text remains visually uncluttered, avoiding excessive hyperlinks, whereas the metadata panel functions as a contextual and analytical layer that supports structured semantic navigation. The same metadata logic is applied in the section dedicated to performance-related objects, where the documentary entity is presented through a structured layout combining descriptive text, image display, and semantic relations (Figure 12).

Figure 12: Interface showing the general layout for performance-related objects

User interaction plays a central role in transforming the encoded data into an exploratory scholarly environment. The interface is conceived not merely for passive consultation but as a tool for navigating between textual states, documentary evidence, and semantic relations.

The witness selector enables users to activate different textual states within the edition. In the manuscript view, it allows users to trace the progressive development of the text by activating successive correction layers. In the printed edition view, it enables comparison between aligned documentary witnesses. Visual highlighting distinguishes direct variants from fallback readings, making explicit where new interventions occur and where earlier states or parallel witnesses persist unchanged.

Hover-based tooltips provide additional interpretative cues for specific encoded phenomena. Foreign words marked in TEI using <foreign> elements display language information upon interaction (Figure 13), while unclear or erased passages encoded with <unclear> and <gap> reveal the nature of textual uncertainty, such as illegibility or erasure (Figure 14). These micro-interactions preserve the diplomatic transparency of the transcription while maintaining visual readability.
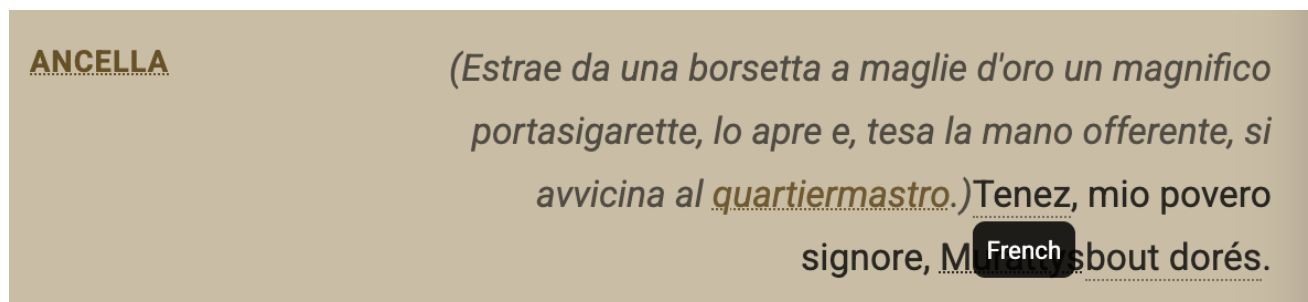
Figure 13: Interface view showing hover-based tooltips for foreign-language expression encoded with the <foreign> element
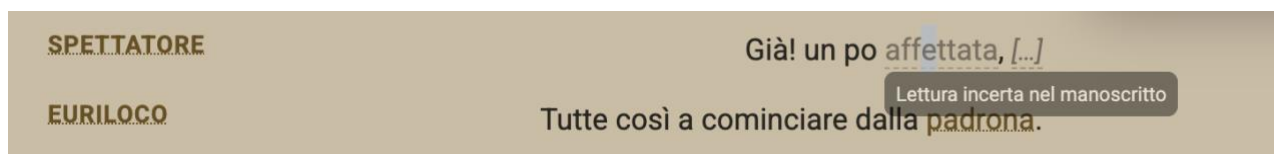
Figure 14: Interface view showing tooltips-based visualisation of textual uncertainty encoded with <unclear> and <gap> elements

The synchronisation between transcription and facsimile allows users to verify editorial decisions directly against the corresponding witness image, reinforcing the critical dimension of the edition. By moving page by page, users experience each document not as a continuous abstract text but as a sequence of material writing or printing surfaces shaped by its specific conditions of production. In the manuscript view, this highlights the dynamics of revision practices, while in the printed edition it foregrounds the stabilised typographic form of the 1934 volume.

More broadly, the interface enables movement across the editorial ecosystem of the project. Through RDFa-enriched links and metadata references, through the section named *Related resources*, users can navigate from manuscript expressions to the printed edition, and from textual states to performance-related objects presented in other sections of the site (Figure 15). In this way, the interface operationalises the semantic network described in *RDF representation of textual and performative entities* (Section 4.2), transforming the knowledge graph into a set of navigable scholarly pathways.

Printed Edition Metadata

WORK
Title: Capitano Ulisse
Author: Alberto Savinio

EDITION
Publisher: Novissima
Place: Roma
Date: 1934
Repository item: Biblioteca del Gabinetto Scientifico Letterario G.P. Vieusseux
ID item: FSAV-994

RELATED RESOURCES
Related manuscript: Manuscript (1925)
Performance objects:
- Critical article / review
- Video recording of performance
- Promotional poster

PEOPLE
- Ulisse

PLACES
- —

Figure 15: Detailed view of the metadata panel showing global metadata and page-level named entities, as well as semantic links to related resources within the edition.

Overall, the interface translates the layered architecture of the edition into a coherent and usable research environment. Page-based navigation, layer activation, and contextual metadata work together to make both the genetic development of the manuscript and the broader documentary network of the work accessible and verifiable. By combining close engagement with the sources and relational exploration across textual and performative materials, the interface gives practical form to the editorial model proposed in this study, while preserving a clear distinction between encoding, semantic modelling, and presentation.

5 Discussion

This chapter discusses the results presented in *Results* (Chapter 4) in relation to the research problem and methodological framework outlined in *Editorial and Digital Approach* (Chapter 3).

Section 5.1 examines how the research question formulated in *Research Problem* (Section 3.1) has been addressed through the concrete implementation of the digital edition. Section 5.2 reflects on the main editorial and technical choices adopted in the project, highlighting their implications for digital scholarly editing of drama.

Subsequently, Section 5.3 discusses the strengths of the proposed model, followed by Section 5.4, which analyses its limitations. Finally, Section 5.5 outlines possible directions for further development.

5.1 Research Problem discussion

Research Problem (Section 3.1) addressed the editorial challenge of treating dramatic works as shaped by both textual transmission and performance practice. Although the relationship between text and performance is widely recognised in theatre studies and digital editing, many existing editions still privilege the textual dimension or include performance materials mainly as contextual support, as shown in *State of the Art* (Chapter 2).

The research question therefore asked how a digital scholarly edition could relate textual transmission and performance while keeping their different logics intact and making their connection visible.

The outcomes presented in *Results* (Chapter 4) show that this goal can be achieved through a relational editorial model in which textual and performative components are organised as distinct but connected domains. The edition does not treat performance as a variant of the text, nor as supplementary material detached from the editorial structure. Instead, textual witnesses, performances, and documentary objects are linked within a coherent framework.

At the documentary level, XML/TEI supports both the genetic representation of textual development and the structured description of performance-related materials. The layered encoding of the manuscript allows the revision process to be observed over time, while the alignment with the printed edition and intermediary witnesses makes the transition towards a stabilised text visible. Performance-related materials are encoded separately from the textual apparatus, which allows them to be integrated without being absorbed into philological categories.

The semantic modelling layer connects textual expressions, performances, conceptual performance texts, and documentary objects. Through these links, performance appears as an event-based dimension related to the stabilised dramatic text and to the materials documenting each staging. The conceptual performance text acts as a bridge between script and performance, showing how the written text is transformed in specific production contexts.

This relational structure is reflected in the digital interface. Users can move between genetic layers, stabilised textual states, performances, and documentary materials within a single environment. Each domain remains clearly identifiable, while their connections are made explicit.

Overall, the outcomes demonstrate that a digital scholarly edition can articulate the hybrid nature of dramatic works without reducing text and performance to a single editorial category. By keeping textual transmission and performative realisation distinct and linking them through structured relationships, the proposed model moves beyond text-centred approaches and enrichment-based solutions, such as those explored in *State of the Art* (Chapter 2). It offers an integrated framework that reflects the complexity of dramatic works in both their written and staged forms.

5.2 Discussion of editorial and technical choices

The implementation of the editorial model required a series of methodological and technical decisions aimed at translating theoretical premises into a functional digital system. One of the central choices concerned the adoption of TEI as the documentary encoding standard for both textual witnesses and performance-related materials.

TEI provides a well-established framework for representing dramatic structure, genetic variation, and documentary metadata. It proved particularly effective for modelling layered textual relationships across the autograph manuscript and the printed edition through parallel segmentation and critical apparatus structures.

At the semantic level, the project relies on FRBRoo harmonised with CIDOC CRM as the main ontological framework for modelling textual expressions, material carriers, performances, and documentary objects. These ontologies are widely used within the cultural heritage domain and provide an event-oriented and relational perspective suited to the complexity of theatrical works. Lightweight vocabularies such as Dublin Core and Schema.org were also incorporated to support interoperability and web-oriented description.

As discussed in *Implementing the editorial model and workflow* (Section 3.4), a clear separation was maintained between documentary encoding and semantic modelling. This approach preserved the integrity of philological representation while enabling the relational integration of texts, performances, and documentation through the RDF-based semantic layer, mediated in the interface by XSLT transformations.

The modelling of performance through an inferred stage text represents another significant editorial choice. While FRBRoo provides the class F25 Performance Plan for staging-oriented documents, the stage text was instead modelled as an F2 Expression derived from the printed edition. This reflects its function within the project as a context-specific textual configuration presupposed by a production, rather than as a preserved material artefact. This abstraction simplifies the representation of theatrical mediation while making explicit the interpretative step between script and performance.

Overall, these choices result in a modular and extensible architecture. Each component of the workflow remains technically autonomous while logically interconnected, allowing future expansion of the corpus, refinement of the semantic model, or enhancement of the interface without structural disruption.

5.3 Strengths of the proposed model

One of the main strengths of the proposed editorial model lies in its capacity to integrate textual transmission and performative documentation within a single scholarly environment without reducing one domain to the other. Unlike text-centred digital editions that marginalise performance and performance-oriented projects that detach performative practice from philological foundations, as discussed in *State of the Art* (Chapter 2), the present approach maintains a balanced and relational perspective.

The layered TEI encoding of the manuscript allows the revision process to be represented in a systematic and readable form, while the transcription of the printed edition provides a stabilised reference state for comparison. This configuration supports the observation of both genetic development and textual stabilisation within a coherent editorial framework.

The semantic modelling component contributes a formal representation of the relationships connecting works, textual expressions, performances, and performance-related materials. By organising these entities within a knowledge graph, the edition offers a structured conceptual view of

the dramatic object in its textual and performative dimensions. This structure also facilitates interoperability and the potential reuse of data in other digital contexts.

The digital interface reflects the relational logic of the editorial model by combining textual visualisation, facsimile alignment, and access to contextual information. Users can explore the edition at different levels, from detailed textual comparison to the broader network of documentary and semantic relations. The separation between the main textual display and the metadata panel supports focused reading while allowing access to structured contextual data.

Finally, the modular organisation of the workflow supports the addition of further materials and the refinement of individual components. Textual witnesses, performance-related objects, semantic relations, and interface elements can be extended or modified independently, while remaining part of a coherent editorial system.

5.4 Limitations of the study

Despite its strengths, the project presents several limitations, many of which derive from its nature as a proof-of-concept implementation developed within the constraints of a master's thesis.

The textual corpus is intentionally limited. Detailed genetic encoding was applied only to the first ten pages of the autograph manuscript, selected as a representative sample of the revision process. While sufficient to test the layered encoding strategy and interface functionality, this partial transcription does not capture the full complexity of the manuscript as a whole.

Similarly, the set of performance-related materials is restricted to a small number of documented stagings and associated objects. This limited corpus does not allow for a comprehensive reconstruction of the play's performance history, nor for the exploration of more complex scenarios involving multiple stage texts, overlapping productions, or conflicting documentary evidence.

The abstraction of the performance text, while methodologically useful, also simplifies the reality of theatrical practice. As mentioned in *Performance and the concept of the stage text* (Section 3.3.3), theatrical production typically involves multiple stage-oriented textual configurations. Modelling each performance through a single inferred stage text necessarily reduces this plurality.

From a technical perspective, the integration of RDF data is currently static and mediated through XSLT transformations. While effective for demonstration purposes, this approach does not yet exploit

the full potential of semantic technologies, such as live SPARQL querying or dynamic graph visualisation.

Finally, the model has been tested on a single dramatic work with a relatively linear textual transmission. More fragmented traditions or highly collaborative contemporary theatre practices may present additional challenges requiring further adaptation of the model.

5.5 Further developments

The limitations identified above suggest several directions for future development.

At the textual level, extending the genetic encoding to the full manuscript would allow for a more comprehensive representation of Savinio's revision process. The inclusion of further intermediary witnesses and later printed editions could also enrich the transmissional dimension of the edition.

At the performative level, integrating a larger number of stagings and diverse types of performance-related materials would enable more complex modelling of theatrical history. Where available, stage-oriented textual documents such as promptbooks or rehearsal scripts could be incorporated as distinct entities, refining the abstraction of the performance text.

From a semantic perspective, implementing live querying mechanisms and interactive knowledge graph visualisations would enhance analytical capabilities and user engagement. Linking the edition to external Linked Open Data resources, such as theatrical archives or authority datasets, could further extend its interoperability.

Although developed through the case of *Capitano Ulisse*, the proposed model is not tied to its specific transmission history. The distinction between textual transmission, performance mediation, and documentary evidence is intended as a generalisable framework for digital scholarly editions of dramatic works. Applying the editorial model to additional dramatic works would allow for comparative analysis and refinement of the framework. Testing the approach on plays with different textual traditions, collaborative authorship, or extensive performance histories would provide useful insights into its adaptability to diverse editorial contexts.

Conclusion

This research has investigated how a digital scholarly edition can articulate the relationship between textual transmission and performance practices in the context of dramatic works. Starting from the recognition of drama as a hybrid object shaped by both written texts and scenic realisations, the study addressed the editorial challenge of integrating these dimensions without reducing their distinct logics.

The project focused on the play *Capitano Ulisse* by Alberto Savinio as a case study, selected for its relatively linear textual transmission and documented performance history. This controlled corpus provided a suitable context for testing an editorial approach capable of connecting genetic textual development, stabilised printed forms, and performative documentation within a single digital environment.

The methodological framework combined documentary encoding and semantic modelling. XML/TEI was adopted to represent both textual witnesses and performance-related materials as structured digital documents, allowing genetic stratification, critical comparison, and documentary description to coexist within a consistent editorial logic. A semantic layer based on RDF was introduced to formalise the relationships between textual transmission, performance events, and documentary objects.

The introduction of the conceptual performance text as an intermediate entity between the printed text and individual productions made it possible to represent the passage from script to stage without treating performance as a textual variant. In this way, textual transmission and performative documentation remain separate while being formally connected.

The outcomes presented in *Results* (Chapter 4) and examined in *Discussion* (Chapter 5) show that this relational approach can be implemented in a coherent way. More specifically, *Results* (Chapter 4) documents the implementation outputs: the XML/TEI encoding of genetic layers, documentary witnesses, and performance-related objects (Section 4.1), the RDF semantic model connecting textual and performative entities (Section 4.2), and the interface that integrates these layers through XSLT and interactive navigation (Section 4.3). *Discussion* (Chapter 5) then relates these results back to the research question (Section 5.1), discusses the main methodological and technical choices (Section 5.2), and evaluates strengths, limitations, and future developments (Sections 5.3, Section 5.4 and Section 5.5). The digital interface reflects this structure by enabling navigation across genetic layers, stabilised textual states, performance events, and documentary materials within a single environment.

In relation to the digital editions discussed in the *State of the Art* (Chapter 2), the proposed model differs in the way it connects textual transmission and performance-related materials. Rather than treating performance as contextual enrichment or as external documentation, performative evidence is integrated through explicit editorial relations, while remaining distinct from the philological apparatus.

At the same time, as a proof of concept, the project deliberately relies on a restricted textual corpus in order to remain within the scope of the research. The number of documented performances is therefore limited, the use of a single inferred performance text for each staging simplifies theatrical practice, and semantic integration currently relies on static transformation mechanisms.

Despite these constraints, the study outlines a structured editorial framework for relating textual and performative dimensions within a digital scholarly edition. The combination of genetic encoding, documentary representation, and semantic modelling provides a coherent method for organising heterogeneous materials while preserving their specific roles.

Further work could extend the genetic transcription to the complete manuscript, include a broader range of performances and stage-oriented documents, and introduce dynamic querying of the semantic layer. Applying the model to additional dramatic works with more complex transmission histories would also allow for testing its adaptability.

Overall, the research shows that a relational digital edition can represent the interaction between textual transmission and performance without collapsing them into a single editorial category. By modelling their connections while maintaining their distinct logics, the approach offers a way of addressing performance alongside textual transmission, rather than leaving it in a secondary or contextual position.

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Original Manuscript

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- CU TS 1925

1925 Typescript

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- CU TS 1934

1934 Typescript

Capitan Ulisse. Fondo Alberto Savinio, ACGV AS. II. 11.9. Archivio Contemporaneo «Alessandro Bonsanti» del Gabinetto Scientifico Letterario G.P. Vieusseux, Firenze.

- CU 1934

First Print Edition

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- CU 1989

Capitano Ulisse. curated by Alessandro Tinterri, Milano, Adelphi.

ARCHIVAL FUNDS

- Bonsanti Archive

  Alberto Savinio fund in Archivio Contemporaneo «Alessandro Bonsanti» del Gabinetto Scientifico Letterario G.P. Vieusseux, Firenze.

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APPENDIX

During the preparation of this thesis, I made use of generative artificial intelligence tools, specifically ChatGPT (OpenAI), as a support instrument for drafting and revising selected sections of the work.

The tool was primarily used in Editorial and Digital Approach (Chapters 3) and in Results (Chapter 4), particularly in relation to the formulation of methodological explanations, the clarification of technical descriptions concerning TEI encoding, RDF modelling, XSLT transformations, and interface logic, and for improving linguistic coherence in complex theoretical passages.

The AI tool was not used to generate original research data, primary interpretations, or conceptual contributions. All editorial decisions, modelling strategies, and analytical arguments were independently developed and critically evaluated by the author.

All content has been carefully reviewed, verified, and integrated by the author, who retains full responsibility for the scholarly content of this work.