Modeling Medieval Romances

An open database of works, traditions, and manuscripts

Kelly Christensen

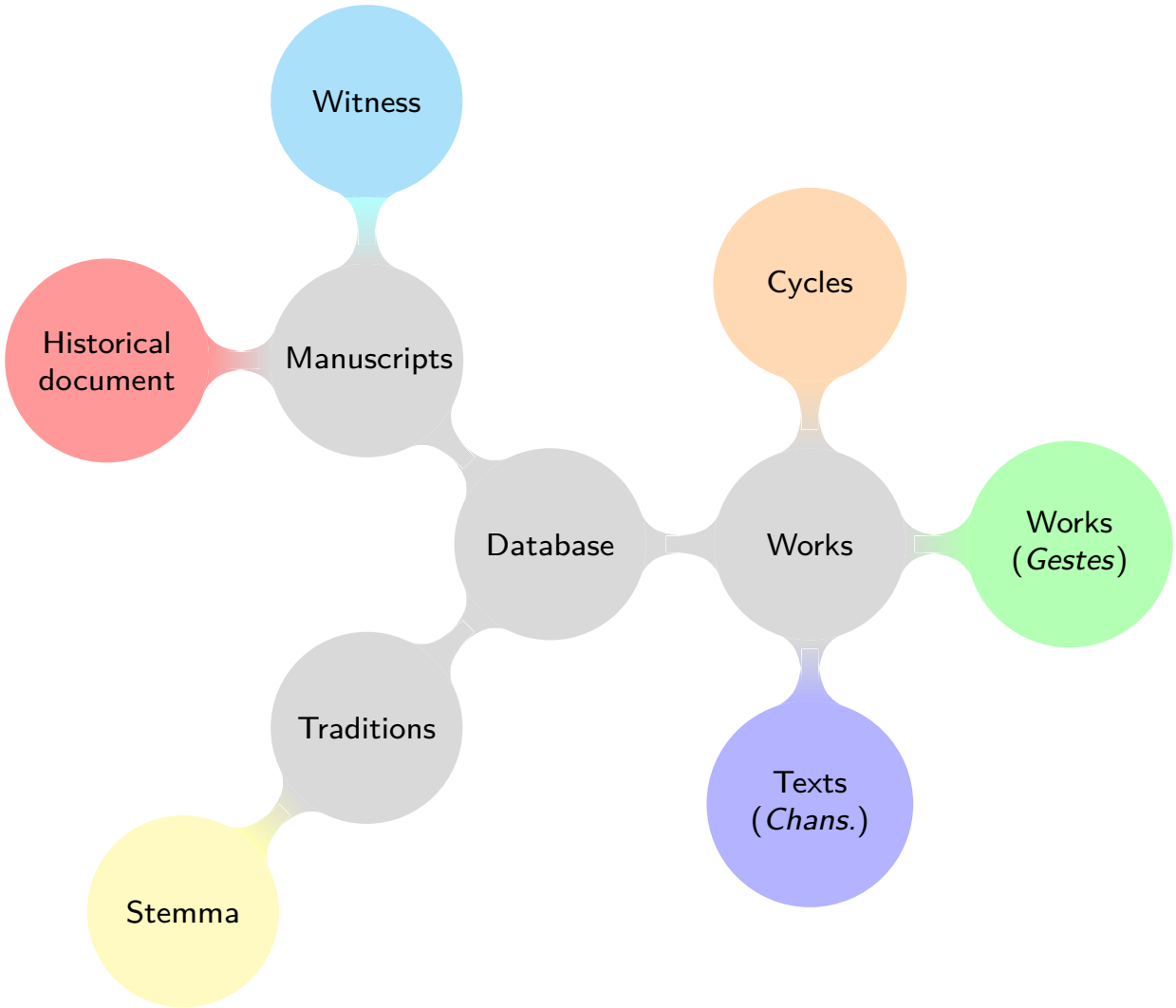
LostMa
École nationale des chartes
28 May 2024

Funded by the European Union

European Research Council
Established by the European Commission

Works, Traditions, and Manuscripts

Our database is oriented around 6 entities: cycles, works, texts, stemmata, witnesses, and historical documents.



Outline

1. Works and Manuscripts
   - Entities
   - Relationships
2. Traditions
3. Data management

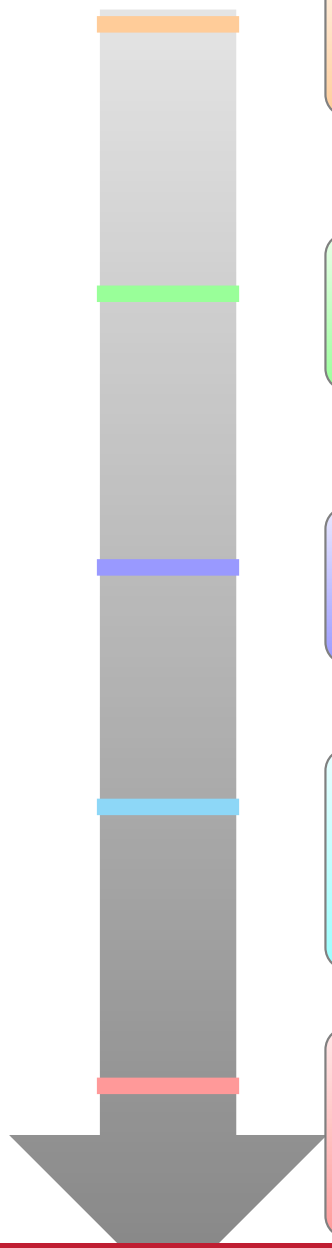
Outline

1. Works and Manuscripts
   - Entities
   - Relationships

2. Traditions

3. Data management

5 core entities: from abstract to concrete



Cycle:
A collection of stories

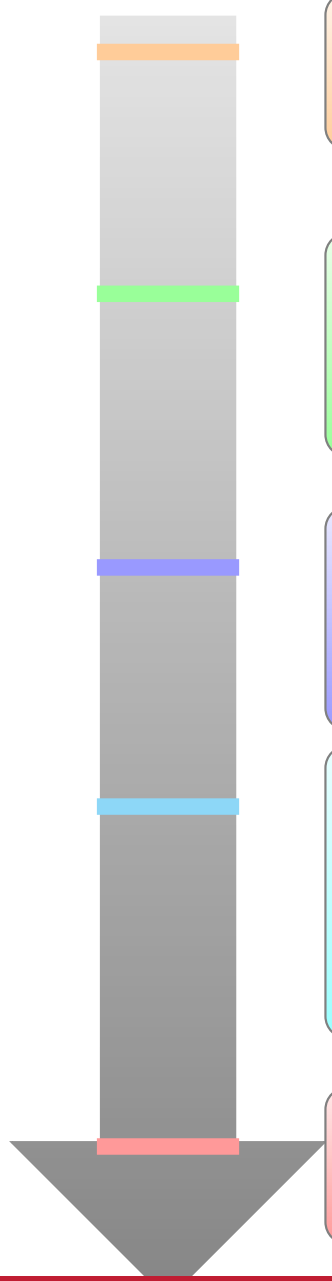
Work [*Geste*]:
A story

Text [*Chanson*]:
A version of the story

Witness:
An instance of the version of a story

Historical Document:
A physical copy/edition of the instance

5 core entities: Marvel example 1



Cycle:
Spider-Man - Peter Parker

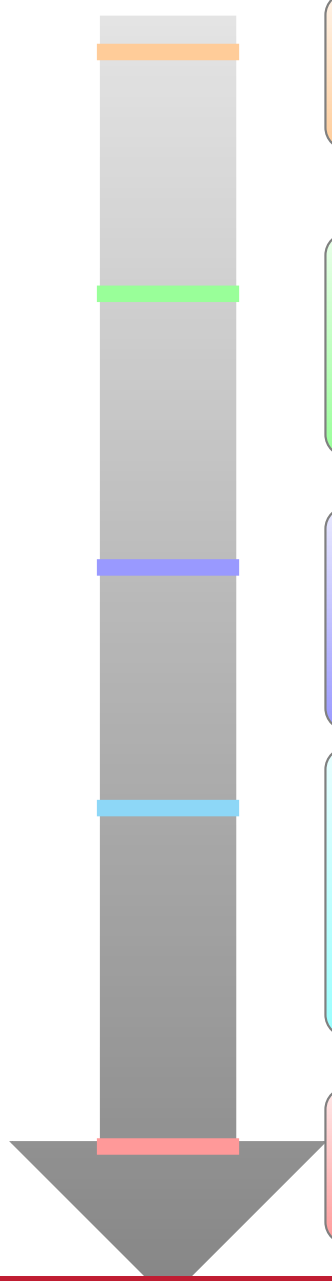
Work (aka "story"):
Green Goblin learns of Spider-Man's identity

Text (version of story):
Green Goblin follows Peter down an alley

Witness (instance of version):
"How Green Was My Goblin!", *The Amazing Spider-Man*, vol. 1, no. 39 (1966)

Historical Document:
A physical copy of issue 39

5 core entities: Marvel example 2



Cycle:
Spider-Man - Peter Parker

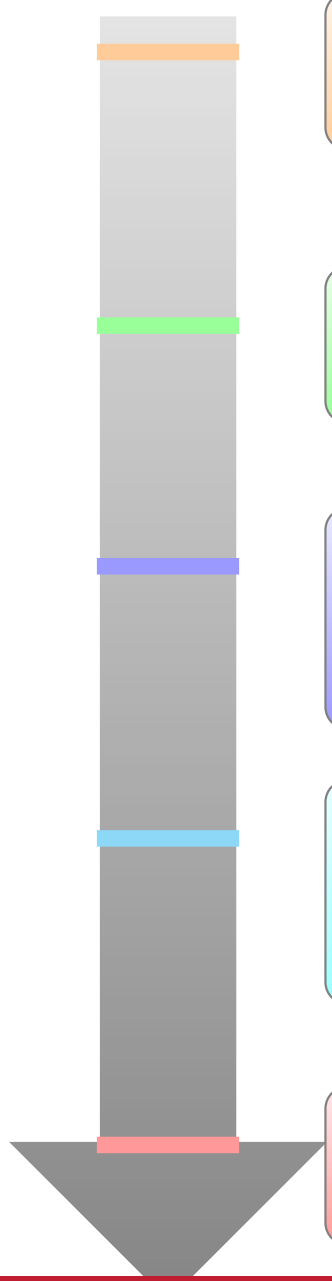
Work (aka "story"):
Green Goblin learns of
Spider-Man's identity

Text (version of story):
Goblin notices Peter's
wound during dinner

Witness (instance of version):
Spider-Man (2002)
Bibliothèque du cinéma
François Truffaut - P RAIM

Historical Document:
A DVD copy of the film

5 core entities: LostMA example



Cycle:
Charlemagne - Agolant

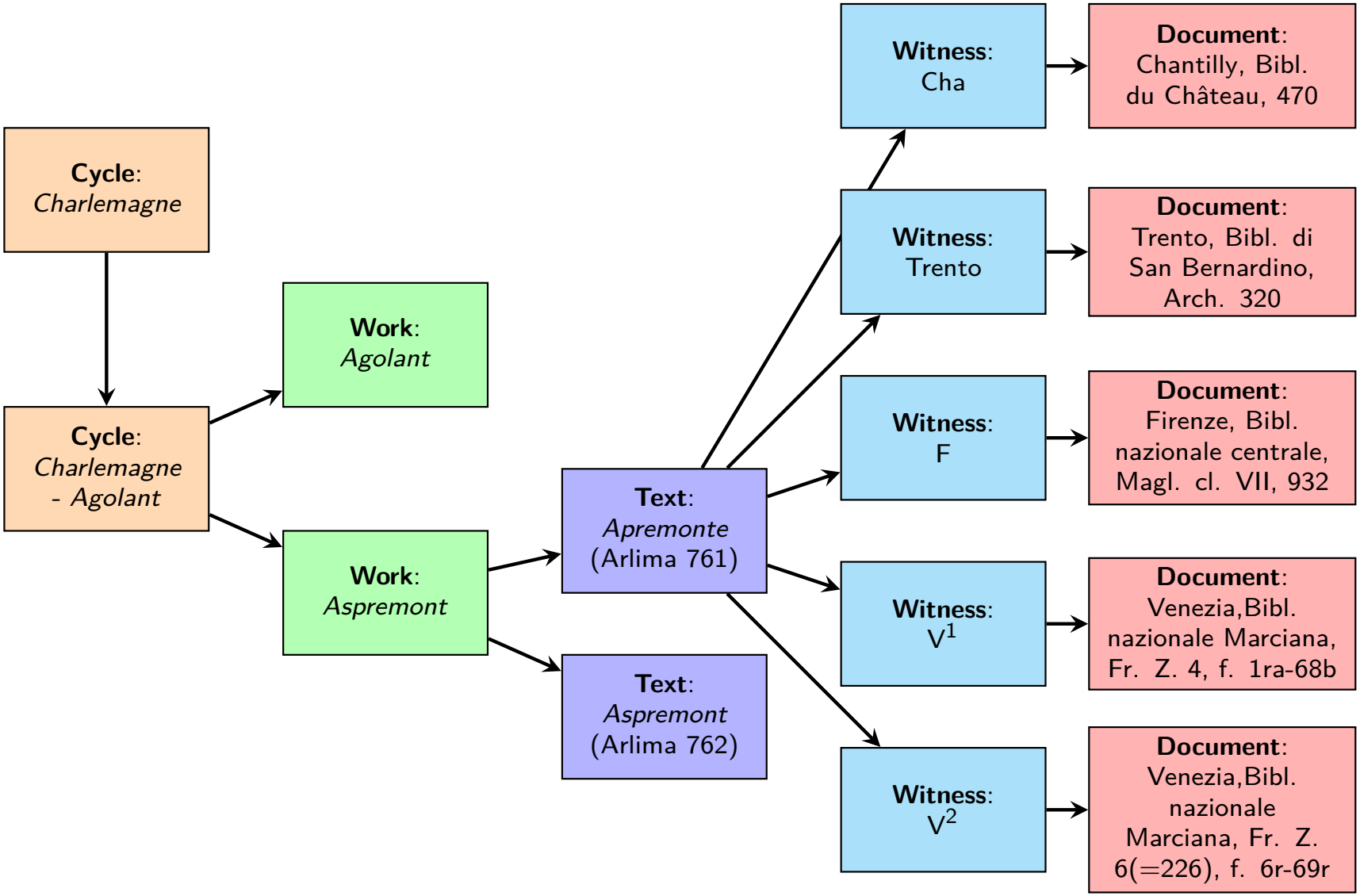
Work:
The geste *Aspremont*

Text:
The Franco-Italian chanson
"Romanus Aspremontis"

Witness:
Manuscript with siglum V^1
Fr. Z. 4 (=225)

Historical Document:
Folios 1ra-68b of Fr. Z. 4 (=225)

Parent-children relationships



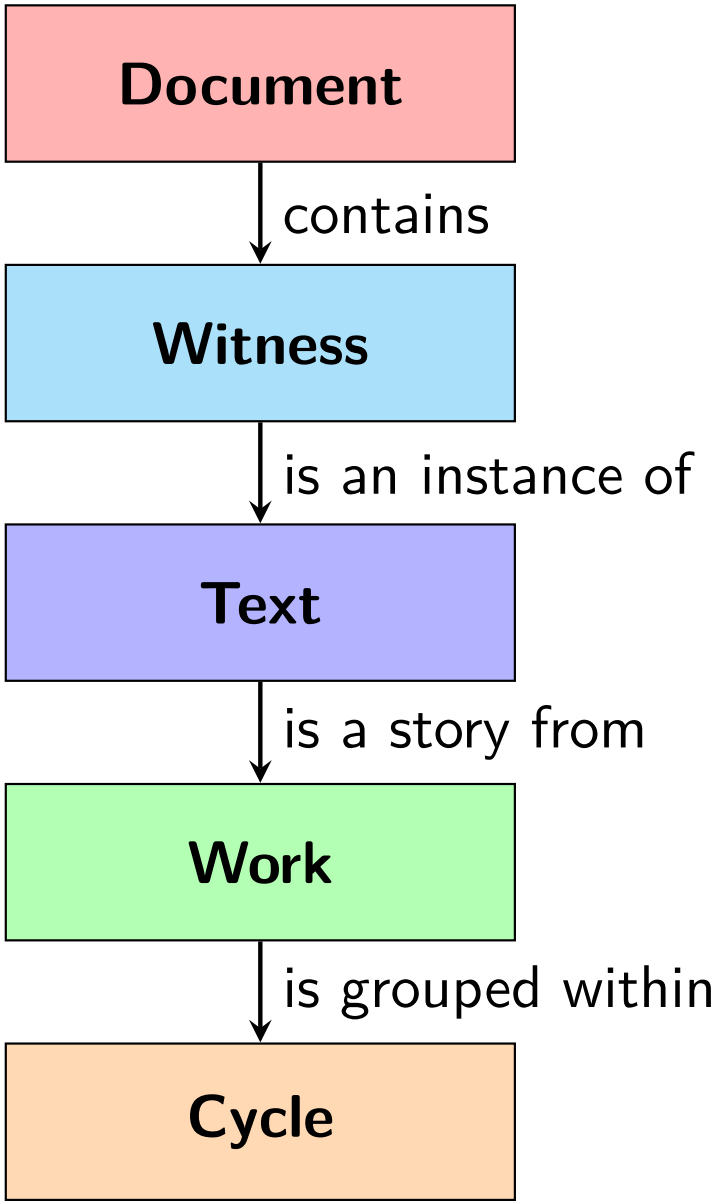
Outline

1. Works and Manuscripts
   - Entities
   - Relationships

2. Traditions

3. Data management

Inter-entity relationships

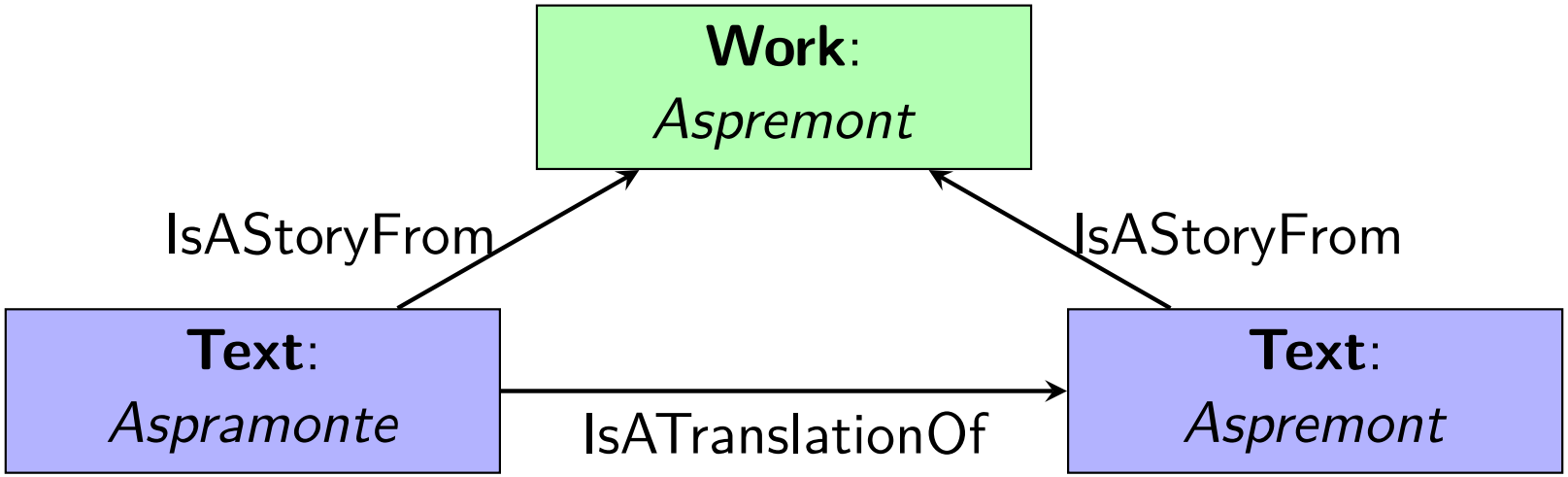


Cycle-to-cycle relationships

A cycle can be related to another cycle.

Text-to-text relationships

A text can be derivative of / related to another text in multiple ways.



Text A is . . . Text B:

- is a *version* of [inverse: is a *model* for]
- is a *translation* of
- is a *prosification* of [inverse: is a *reversification* of]
- is an *abridgement* of [inverse: is an *amplification* of]

Outline

1. Works and Manuscripts

2. Traditions

3. Data management

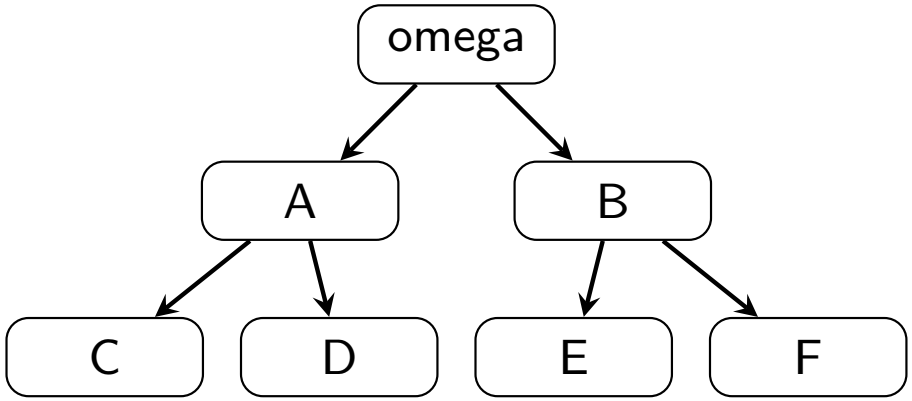
Stemmata

Through their instances, both works and texts evolve over time.

A text evolves through different witnesses. A work evolves through different texts. Such evolution is described through stemmata.

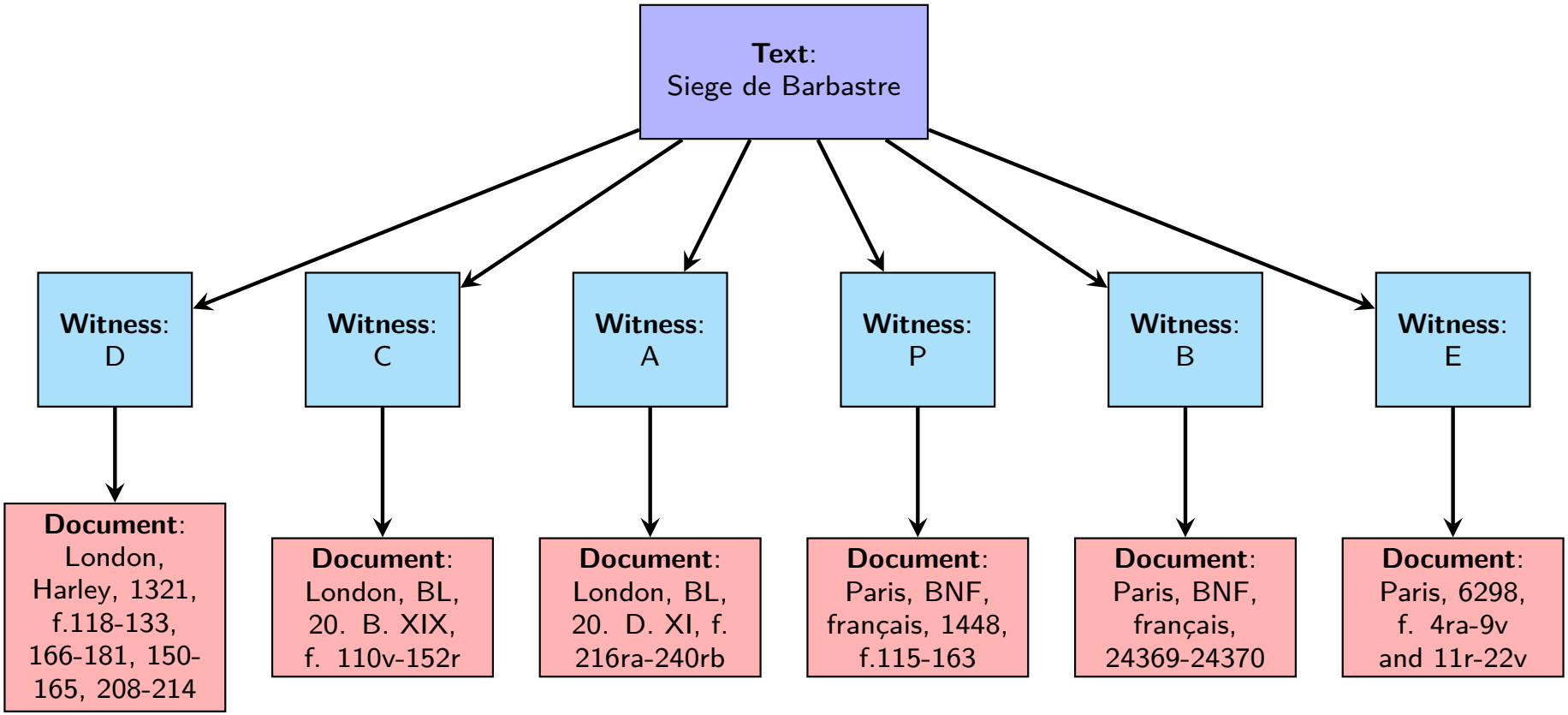
Stemma

Historical text genealogy.



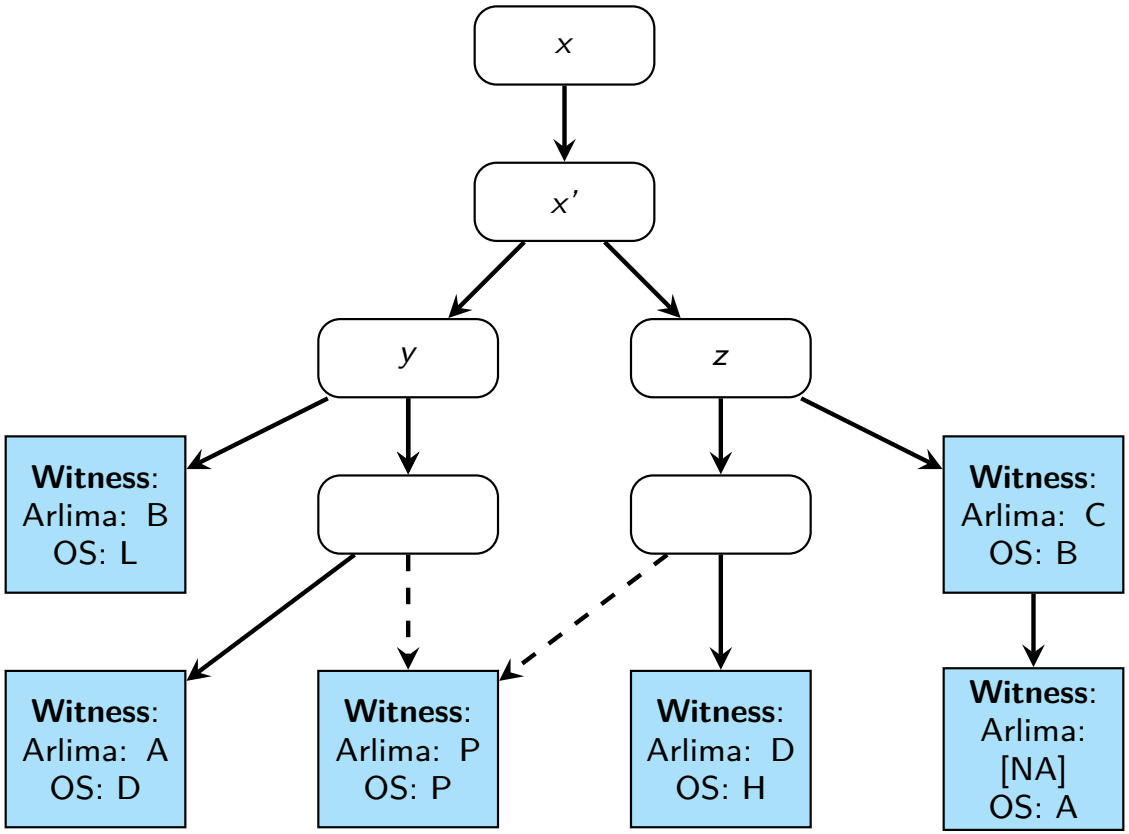
Text stemmata

The Arlima database has genealogical information available for texts and their witnesses. We can use this information to imitate stemmata.



Text stemmata

The OpenStemmata Project maintains a repository of stemma publications, which we will leverage to connect texts to witnesses.[1] The challenge is linking the witnesses in the Arlima database with those in the OpenStemmata (OS) repository.



[1] Gundlach 1883 Siege Barbastre, *OpenStemmata*.

Outline

1. Works and Manuscripts

2. Traditions

3. Data management

Publication strategy

We plan to make the data available in multiple ways.

- Heurist database:
  - Project contributors: Platform for modifying entities with a user-friendly graphic interface.
  - Users: Hosted website for completing certain queries and visualizing the data.
- GitHub repository:
  - : Project contributors: Depository for data dumped from Heurist, available for enriching and querying with a variety of tools.
- API:
  - Users: Endpoint for users to query and collect certain data.