Ecdotica

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Ecdotica

21
(2024)

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MEMORY AND LOSS: DIGITAL TOOLS AND THE WRITING OF HISTORY. A FEW CONSIDERATIONS

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ABSTRACT

It has become almost a truism to state that digital tools constitute a ground-breaking innovation in the methods of textual analysis as well as a great improvement in terms of circulation of knowledge and therefore also preservation of memory. It is unquestionable that the sheer wealth of data available for analysis thanks to digital publication has widened very significantly the corpus of texts known to scholars and currently available for linguistic and philological analysis. Whether such wealth of data can become part of an historical narration and what kind of narration it might be, however, is a rather different matter, both because of issues relating to the sustainability – technical and economical – of the digital means through which such knowledge circulates and is preserved, and because of the kind of enquiry that digital publication allows. We have come to consider that a series of events, facts or documents, are part of a history only when such series belongs to a recognizable context, reveals a pattern and therefore constitutes a narration, or better, a narrative. What kind of narrative is currently being written, to what extent is it determined by the delusion of omniscience fostered by our perception of virtual archives and libraries, and what facts emerge or indeed remain hidden or lost?

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Two books dealing with digital philology and textual studies have recently come to scholars' attention.[1] One is devoted to issues of textual culture and editorial theory relating to the digital text,[2] the other illustrates the practice of digital publication and the issues it involves in the field of epigraphy, the only major sector in the humanities which can boast having most of its body of primary documentation entirely digitized and having over thirty years of experience in digital publication.[3] I should like to first discuss some of the issues Zaccarello's book addresses and later – since I am directly involved in a major project in digital epigraphy – I shall also make some remarks on the topic, by way of conclusion.

Michelangelo Zaccarello's reader aims at offering an overview of textual scholarship relating to the digital text. Zaccarello is an editor and the European Coordinator of the Society for Textual Scholarship, an international society which constitutes an important forum for scholarly discussions on editorial theory, electronic textualities, and textual culture in general and on how they shape the understanding of texts. In this capacity he sets out to illustrate the Society's activity and the scholarship issued from it.[4]

The book starts off with a passage taken from the mission of the Society which asserts its dedication «to exploring how the various cultures of textual production shape the creation, reception, dissemination, and understanding of texts».[5] Most of the articles included are devoted to the issue of how to establish control over the widely circulating electronic texts and how to guarantee their reliability, as well as how to ensure that the digital reproduction of 'correct' texts is accurate and lasting in time.[6] At the same time, the book devotes appropriate attention to the changed nature of the electronic text if compared to the traditional transmission in book format, and the challenge that poses to editors. A further field of enquiry relates to the potential for text interrogation unleashed by the possibility of marking up texts: what techniques are available, what

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[1] This contribution had originally been written in 2019. I believe that the gist of the argument has not changed significantly in the past few years and have limited my intervention on the text to just a few bibliographical updates.

[2] *Teoria e forme del testo digitale*, a cura di M. Zaccarello, Roma, Carocci, 2019.

[3] *Crossing Experiences in Digital Epigraphy. From Practice to Discipline*, edited by A. De Santis, I. Rossi, Berlin, De Gruyter, 2018.

[4] See the society's homepage: https://textualsociety.org [accessed 31st December 2024].

[5] *Teoria e forme del testo digitale*, p. 11, quoting from the homepage of the Society (https://textualsociety.org [accessed 31st December 2024]).

[6] See *Teoria e forme del testo digitale*, chapters 8 and 9.

is their history and what can be expected from this new type of textual analysis that only electronic publication can afford.

The relationship that the text bears with its means of transmission is of course no new territory for textual studies. It sits at the core of any historical discipline and certainly at the very core of philology and textual criticism in the various meanings that 'philology', 'textual criticism', and 'textual studies' have acquired from the second half of the 19th century to the present day in mainstream scholarship across Europe and beyond.

Zaccarello puts his work in direct filiation with textual bibliography and the revolution it brought to traditional ways of textual criticism applied to the printed text – especially on the continent of Europe where such methodology had to be imported from Anglo-American scholarship.

Long before the so called 'digital revolution' took place, book historians and paleographers have dealt with the study of written and print culture in its interrelation with textual studies, an approach which yielded exceptional insight into both fields; and I further believe that their work could and should be carefully reconsidered in the context of any discourse on 'textual revolutions'.

I am thinking, primarily, of Armando Petrucci and Donald F. McKenzie, both giants in their understanding of the link between the text and its material form of transmission. Petrucci was a paleographer, an epigraphist, but most of all an historian of European written culture in all its forms and across ancient, medieval and modern times; Don McKenzie is in my opinion the greatest historian of the printed book to date, as he seemed to have been able to combine – much in the same way as Petrucci – a formidable knowledge in his field (both historical and technical) with an exceptional and unusual sensitivity for the sociology of the text as can be described and understood through the study of the material forms of textual transmission.[7]

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[7] For a general overview of Petrucci's work see M. Palma, *Bibliografia degli scritti di Armando Petrucci*, Roma, Viella, 2002: most notable in this context are A. Petrucci, *La scrittura: ideologia e rappresentazione*, Torino, Einaudi, 1986; Idem, «Storia e geografia delle culture scritte (dal secolo XI al secolo XVII)», in *Letteratura italiana. Storia e geografia*, a cura di A. Asor Rosa, II. *L'età moderna*, Torino, Einaudi, 1988, pp. 1193-1292; Idem, *Scritti civili*, a cura di A. Bartoli Langeli, A. Ciaralli, M. Palma, Roma, Viella, 2019; Idem, *Scrittura, documentazione, memoria. Dieci scritti e un inedito (1963-2009)*, Roma, Edizioni Anai, 2019. On Don McKenzie see D. McKitterick, «Donald Francis McKenzie (1931-1999)», *Proceedings of the British Academy*, 115 (2002), pp. 297-31; N. Cannata, «L'eredità intellettuale di D.F. McKenzie (1931-1999). La bibliografia come sociologia dei testi», in *Recensioni e biografie. Libri e maestri*, Centro Studi filologici sardi. Atti del II

Their insights in the field of textual studies are still very useful and can be fruitfully interrogated further when addressing a series of complex questions with which the birth of the digital text and its geometric diffusion have challenged us. Some are relevant for both the digital text and more traditional forms of textual transmission, in manuscript and in print, some are completely new. All seem rather crucial.

Scholarship on the digital text has concentrated so far primarily on a series of broad 'social' issues mostly arising from the astounding multiplication of texts currently made available,[8] which entails a *de facto* alteration of the traditional perception of the text and its function. Such a wealth of textual materials newly circulating has prompted a discussion of the related issue of how to ensure the correctness of the transmitted text, and what 'correctness' actually means in such a changed context. Furthermore, the increasingly refined techniques of textual interrogation (XML, TEI, EpiDoc and suchlike) have unleashed unbeknown possibilities for the scholar to classify languages and styles, contextualise uses and record, compare, and contrast historical documents with each other – geographically, synchronically, and diachronically –, as well as decide upon questions of authorship.[9]

A second, major field of discussion relates to copyright and intellectual property – Google books and virtual libraries, the shift from public ownership of libraries to the virtual assignment to multinational corporations of the task of handling (and storing) huge quantities of textual data;[10] and, though to a lesser extent, on the issue that I believe to be the most burning of all: to what extent can the preservation and durability of the digital text be ensured and what are the serious implications of its dramatically shortened life expectancy.[11]

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seminario (Alghero, 19-20 maggio 2006), a cura di P. Maninchedda, Cagliari, CUEB, 2007, pp. 165-188.

[8] P. Robinson, «Social editions, social editing, social texts», *Digital Studies/le Champ Numérique*, 6 (2016), online (available at https://www.digitalstudies.org/articles/10.16995/dscn.6/).

[9] See, for example, P. Canettieri, «Le impronte digitali dell'autore. Un metodo di attribuzione automatizzata per i testi delle letterature romanze», *Le forme e la storia*, n.s., 6 (2013), pp. 229-243, also available in English as «The author's fingerprints: a computerised attribution method», *Archeologia e calcolatori*, suppl. 6 (2014), pp. 191-202. See also, more recently, F. Cupelloni, «Metodi non tradizionali di filologia attributiva. Bilanci e prospettive di ricerca», Ecdotica, 18 (2021), pp. 81-102.

[10] See *Teoria e forme del testo digitale*, chapters 8 and 9.

[11] This is the topic of the latter part of this article.

It has become almost a truism to state that digital tools constitute a ground-breaking innovation in the methods of textual analysis as well as a great improvement in terms of the circulation of knowledge, and therefore also the preservation of memory. It is unquestionable that the sheer wealth of data available for analysis thanks to digital publication has widened very significantly the corpus of texts known to scholars and currently available for linguistic and philological analysis.

In this context, the boundaries between edition and archive have begun somewhat to blur. This is a question that any digital editor faces, whether they choose to discuss it explicitly or just to leave it hovering in the background: what relation does a digital edition bear with a digital archive? According to Leonardi, digital editions constitute mostly archives, a welcome repository of texts which will help ensure their preservation.[12] He is not alone in this conviction. We are frequently led to believe that digital archives are the future of preservation, since modern technology allows the storage of an immense amount of data at comparatively little expense, and it also guarantees a circulation that paper could never allow. But does it really?

Let us start with the definition of archive. An archive to be considered such must be an institution – either private or public – holding a systematic and ordered collection of records: such records have been traditionally legal papers written to offer a testimony that a legal action has taken place and a change in rights and obligations has consequently occurred. Such documents may be public (issued by a chancery or any other state institution) or private.[13] Any archive should aim at the preservation of its records and be open to consultation.[14] The institutional element is essential. Failing that, an archive provides no guarantee that its responsibility of safekeeping, preservation, and resulting dissemination of knowledge is going to be fulfilled. The chain of memory relies on them, and institutional continuity is an essential part of it.

The biggest public archives are generally funded and controlled by the state. Important examples of such institutions in the United States are the National Archives in Washington D.C., which hold permanent

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[12] L. Leonardi, «Filologia elettronica fra conservazione e restauro», in *Digital Philology and Medieval Texts*, edited by A. Ciulia, F. Stella, Pisa, Pacini, 2007, pp. 65-75.

[13] A library is, in a sense, an archive, but does not fall into this category since its records traditionally were books and books alone. Nowadays it also holds audio-visual and digital materials. More on this later.

[14] See A. Petrucci, *Medioevo da leggere. Guida allo studio delle testimonianze scritte del Medioevo italiano*, Torino, Einaudi, 1992, p. 67.

records created by the U.S. Congress, the U.S. Supreme Court, the Federal District Courts in the District of Columbia, and selected Federal Agencies. This is where the so-called Charters of Freedom (Declaration of Independence, Constitution, Bill of Rights), along with records of U.S. military history, are preserved. Similarly, the U.K. National Archives hold millions of records which were created and collected by U.K. central government departments and courts of law: as they detail on their website, such records may be letters, reports, minutes, registers, map, photographs and films, digital files, sound recordings, etc.[15]

Public historical archives in Italy are way more numerous, as their number seems to reflect the role local history has played in Italian history. The most recent list of them that I know of was compiled by Petrucci in his precious little booklet *Medioevo da leggere*, published in 1992, which lists around 120 of them.[16] It looks like a large a number if compared to the U.K. and the U.S., but if we were to start counting the number of digital archives available on the internet on themes of relevance for the Medieval and the Renaissance scholar in textual studies alone, we would hit a figure of at least five times that provided by Petrucci.

Jerome McGann's seminal work, *A New Republic of Letters. Memory and Scholarship in the Age of Digital Reproduction,*[17] indicates indirectly, but in my opinion very clearly, one way of ensuring that the enormous combined effort which is delivering this enormous quantity of data in digital form is not lost in the chaos and numerosity of the available tools. He suggests creating a new institutional system of cultural memory, by organizing such memory in digital form and consider grouping a series of archives to create a library, as a digital repository of historical data. This would both enable the consultation of a greater number of archives communicating with one another, and ensure a critical mass which in itself will guarantee continuity and stability to the enterprise. The volatility of digital preservation encourages to preserve the immaterial memory of material records by hosting in the same ideal space items which would traditionally belong to different institutions.[18]

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[15] See Archives.org (Washington D.C.) and https://www.nationalarchives.gov.uk (Kew, Surrey, U.K.) [both accessed 4th February 2025].

[16] Petrucci, *Medioevo da leggere*, p. 67.

[17] J. McGann, *A New Republic of Letters. Memory and Scholarship in the Age of Digital Reproduction*, Cambridge (MS), Harvard University Press, 2014.

[18] Hence the request to guarantee FAIR data, that is to say data that are Findable, Accessible, Interoperable, and Reusable.

There are examples of such libraries on both sides of the Atlantic. The University of Virginia hosts the DPLA (Digital Public Library of America), which boasts, to date, 51.835.659 records (images, texts, videos and sounds) held within America's libraries, archives, museums, and other cultural heritage institutions. All its records – of whichever type of document (be it photographs, books, maps, news footage, oral histories, personal letters, museum objects, artwork, government documents), are immediately available in digital format.[19] This side of the Atlantic, the principal Digital Service Infrastructure for cultural heritage of the European Union is *Europeana*, which has the aim of making available digitised versions of artifacts, books, films and music from European archives, museums, galleries and libraries. Items are completed with introductions and explanations (metadata) so that, in the creators' intentions, the general public across Europe can access and appreciate our shared cultural heritage made available in all the languages of the Union. The site contained, on 8th December 2019, 57.704.325 records. It has now stopped counting.[20]

How does one navigate such a wealth of materials? And is such digital technology able to replace or embrace the textual form in its materiality, as well as the physical element of fine arts, to ensure the preservation of heritage? The sheer size of this virtual world, combined with the heterogeneity of materials it claims to preserve, does unfortunately defy any form of cataloguing, thus challenging (if not jeopardizing) the very idea of preservation, a concept which is, indeed, based on the idea that the items recorded and preserved should occupy an order that makes them easily retrievable.

The archives that we are used to frequent are not Pandora's boxes for all manners of records: in the real (as opposed to digital) world different types of institutions take care of different forms of historical documentation. Digital archives, therefore, archives are not. But they may be something very valuable all the same.

Let us now have a look at the vast array of available epigraphic databases, also grouped in a wide overreaching network, or portal, or library, called EAGLE, which stands for *The European Network of Ancient Greek and Latin Epigraphy*, a best-practice network co-funded by the European Commission, under its Information and Communication Technologies Policy Support Programme.

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[19] https://dp.la/ [last accessed 4th February 2025].

[20] See https://www.europeana.eu, and, for a more detailed explanation of the project, https://pro.europeana.eu/ [both accessed 31st December 2024].

The network was originally designed (as its title betrays) as a repository for research and documentation on Greek and Latin epigraphy; however, EAGLE provides now a single user-friendly portal to the inscriptions of the Ancient World, a massive resource for both a generally cultivated (but not specialized) public and for the scholarly, and it links several archives containing databases of epigraphy in various declinations: Roman epigraphy, Latin epigraphy in Italy and in the Roman provinces, Greek inscriptions, inscriptions produced in Sicily 7th c. B.C.-7th A.D., Herculaneum graffiti, Roman inscriptions in Spain, Pre-Islamic Arabic inscriptions, and more.

I have been recently involved in setting up a new epigraphic database, *EDV* (*Epigraphic Database in the Vernacular*, available at www.edv.seai.uni-roma1.it), which records the corpus of all vernacular inscriptions that were produced in Italy from the middle of the 9th century to the year 1500 AD. The database hosts any inscription produced in Italy in a language other than Latin, provided it was meant to be displayed publicly and is still extant. The aim of the study – which has been progressing since 2011 – is to collect documentary evidence of the uses of language(s) other than Latin in public script in late Medieval and Early Modern Italy, and to constitute a virtual archive (or digital collection) of Italian Late Medieval and Early Renaissance inscriptions, a research tool to study their languages, to help navigate their forms, functions, scripts, who had them executed and for what reasons, where, on what surface, and so on. As I write, EDV contains over 560 items, and new entries are constantly being added (albeit at a slowing pace now).[21]

The EAGLE portal, and the single databases contained therein, fulfil basically three concurring purposes:

- to preserve and disseminate in the scholarly community the results of advanced research;

- to provide the critical edition of the texts and make it available through the portal;

- to provide the scholarly community with a series of critical tools which traditional publication cannot afford. The project uses TEI-XML mark-up, according to the EpiDoc scheme;[22] bibliographies are avail-

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[21] N. Cannata, «Scrivere per tutti. Il volgare esposto in Italia (secc. ix-xv)», *Critica del testo*, 21/1 (2018), pp. 43-76. See also, most recently, N. Cannata, «New Solutions for Old Problems: Digital Publication, the Linguistic Study of Medieval Vernacular Texts, and the EDV Project», in *New Technologies and Renaissance Studies IV. The Changing Shape of Digital Early Modern Studies*, edited by R. El Khatib and C. Winter, Chicago, University of Chicago Press, 2024, (in print).

[22] EpiDoc is an international, collaborative encoding initiative originally developed for the representation of epigraphic texts in digital form and for the publication of dig-

able in Zotero, places are linked to Pleiades records;[23] several categories of metadata are aligned with the new EAGLE vocabularies; records are given unique identifiers in Trismegistos.[24]

A world wide web indeed, making the portal a very powerful editing tool. Texts can therefore be interrogated under different headings (languages, material, function, authors etc) and cross-referenced accordingly, as appropriate or as needed; bibliographies are indexed; items are geolocalised through appropriate programmes.

The website allows one to

- Search and browse the set of data made available by the so-called content providers (scholars and the websites they maintain) by using either a free text search or a more advanced interface, including faceted browsing through controlled vocabularies;

- Carry out similarity searches through the image recognition algorithm that has been integrated in the EAGLE Portal;

- Identify any duplication;

- Access peer-reviewed translations of the epigraphic texts, in several European languages;

- Export to the user own PC the EpiDoc document of an object for further analysis and processing;

- Link to the original data source (i.e. the database which is the source of the record);

- There are applications (storytelling, virtual museum) intended to entice the general public into the study and appreciation of epigraphy.

The availability of such tools makes EAGLE more than an archive and, also, something quite different from a critical edition.

The project had been originally designed to make freely available online the complete corpus of inscriptions falling into EAGLE's chosen field. It started as a revamping of the CIL (*Corpus Inscriptionum Latinarum*) and CIG (*Corpus inscriptionum Graecarum*),[25] but it now includes texts

ital editions of ancient inscriptions. It addresses not only the transcription and editorial treatment of texts themselves, but also the history and materiality of the objects on which the texts appear (i.e., manuscripts, monuments, tablets, papyri, and other text-bearing objects). See https://sourceforge.net/p/epidoc/wiki/Home/ [accessed 4th February 2025].

[23] https://pleiades.stoa.org/ [accessed 4th February 2025].

[24] https://www.trismegistos.org/index.php [accessed 4th February 2025].

[25] *Corpus Inscriptionum Latinarum (CIL)*, consilio et auctoritate Academiae Litterarum Regiae Borussicae editum, Berlin, Akademie der Wissenschaft, 1862-; A. Boeckhius, *Corpus inscriptionum graecarum,* 4 vols, Berlin, Akademie der Wissenschaft, 1828-1877. See for CIL also https://cil.bbaw.de/ [accessed 4th February 2025].

in a vast array of languages and in a time range spanning across over 1000 years.

Each of the above-mentioned functions of the database is supported by digital tools which enable the scholar to see in an extended gaze through time and space the forms and functions of public script across Europe and the ancient world. This probably facilitates a look through history which is more far-reaching than what traditional tools may allow, and this seems to be one of the added values of digital publication.

It has to be said that EAGLE originated to provide a digital edition of great classics of Latin epigraphy and gradually expanded into embracing also 'epigraphy at the borders', i.e. anything diverging from that canon, EDV included. In this way scholars seem to have at their disposal a comprehensive tool which enables them to look at epigraphy as a unit, and comprehensively at a whole genre, in this case practical texts designed for public exposure and communication within a community. Such possibility seems to me to have two important consequences in scholarly terms:

- the possibility of considering epigraphy in all its manifestations as ONE discipline whose objective is to study how, by whom, in which languages and in which scripts or forms of writing public script was produced by communities in the history of Europe – and no longer as a by-product of classical philology or medieval and Renaissance studies;

- on a grander scale, it enables a significant advancement in the studies of social history, linguistic history and suchlike through in effect the foundation of a new discipline.

The way we look at a discipline determines and defines, to an extent, the discipline itself. The possibility of creating a portal containing the nearly one million public inscriptions produced in Europe since the beginning of times fosters the idea that they form, indeed, a corpus, and one that is worth looking at as a unit, for all its variety and diversity. A narrative which would not have been possible to define and disseminate were it not for the breadth of scope that only digital publication allows.

One could, for example (and one perhaps should) argue that vernacular epigraphy as such does not and should not exist as a separate discipline, since the production of public inscriptions in languages different from Latin was a fact across antiquity, and public inscriptions in Latin continued to be produced and displayed way into the modern and indeed also the contemporary era. But nobody is going to argue against the existence of modern languages deriving from Latin and our defining them as '*vulgares*' or 'vernaculars', referring to languages spoken and also

written in the centuries before we can confidently term them as Italian, French, Spanish, etc. There is in Italy (and also elsewhere in Europe) a sub-group of inscriptions which were written not in Latin or Greek, but in a langauge closer to whatever those communities spoke. However this group of inscriptions must be kept in the general context of public script produced in their relative community, place, and date – in this case in Italy across several centuries and languages.[26]

It is a known fact to sociolinguistics that any sociolinguistic investigation depends upon the ability to engage with a comprehensive dataset, and to contextualize whatever the linguistic document under scrutiny is into the wider picture of usage, or, as I prefer to term it, the linguistic culture into which it falls. In order to do this, digital tools are most precious, since once the texts of the inscriptions are edited and marked up they can be extracted and interrogated by linguists at their leisure, as well as considered in the wider context of other bodies of practical texts which may be made available through the net. Context, in sociolinguistics – and in particular in historical sociolinguistics – is paramount.

Public script usually records the language dominant in a community at any given time. It constitutes one among the noblest forms of writing, because of its and formal nature, which is usually appropriate to the dignity and importance of the message conveyed (be it the commemoration of the dead, of an event, or the issuing of a law).[27] Public script also documents the relationship between orality and written records, i.e. the language(s) in use in speech and in written documentation. They do not necessarily coincide, and literature often uses a language that may be very different, or a different language altogether, from the spoken language, especially in medieval Europe, and Italy in particular. Inscriptions tend, however, to document a language that approaches more closely what was in use in the community. Inscriptions were produced to convey messages addressed to an entire group, and – in order to be effective and to fulfil their function – they should

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[26] If Latin palaeography does have a history as a discipline looking at scripts according to their function, in epigraphy for far too long we have imagined that, since the predominant language in public texts has been Latin across Europe and across millennia, we should be concluding that it was the only language in use in antiquity, and moreover that it had no varieties, in a sense no sociolinguistics. Somebody termed this as the "epigraphic habit".

[27] *Visibile parlare: le scritture esposte nei volgari italiani dal Medioevo al Rinascimento.* Atti del Convegno internazionale di studi (Cassino-Montecassino, 26-28 ottobre 1992), a cura di C. Ciociola, Napoli, Edizioni scientifiche italiane, 1997.

have been written in a language understood by most, if not all. Often, since they were preserved to this day, they appear to have been valued by that community across the centuries as monuments to a shared past and shared identity.[28]

Is EAGLE, or indeed any of the new and ever-growing portals which present themselves as digital archives, a gigantic historical archive? Hardly, for the reasons detailed above. However, they can and they do add something that amounts to a new and extraordinary philological fourth dimension to the task of preserving historical records and disseminating knowledge relating to, or issuing from, them.

Archivists are not charged with the obligation to provide a critical edition of the documents they preserve, but they are nonetheless responsible for the label that gets attached to the preserved documents. Including or excluding an item in a database is in itself a critical action.

Providing a critical edition means establishing a text which is as close as possible to the original version as intended by its author, and at the same time as comprehensible as possible to the modern reader. In order to achieve that, the philologist or critical editor needs to investigate and provide historically well-grounded answers to an array of questions, relating to who, how, when, for whom, and why a certain text was written. Digital publication may help enormously with these tasks.

However, there is a last and most worrying implication which needs to be faced: at the time of writing most of these wonderful and extra-sophisticated tools have a life expectancy which cannot be set beyond the decade. This brings us to the all-important issue of durability and sustainability, possibly the real Achilles' heel of the digital revolution.

Let us bring some examples. The first implementation of I.Sicily, the research project mentioned above on Sicilian inscriptions 7th B.C. – 7th A.D.,[29] cost – for around 2500 records alone – about £80,000, and this does not include the number of hours invested by academics and students, mostly largely unpaid, to enable the site to take off.

The Oxford website dedicated to inscriptions on statues dating after the end of the 3rd c. (http://laststatues.classics.ox.ac.uk/) declares that they do not have the funding to be updated continuously and therefore is

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[28] L. Cacchioli, N. Cannata, A. Tiburzi, «EDV – Italian Medieval Epigraphy in the Vernacular (IX-XV c.). A New Database», in *Off the Beaten Track: Epigraphy at the Borders*. Proceedings of 6th EAGLE International Event (24-25 September 2015, Bari, Italy), edited by A.E. Felle, A. Ruocco, Oxford, Archaeopress, 2016, pp. 91-129; Cannata, «Scrivere per tutti».

[29] https://isicily.org/ and http://sicily.classics.ox.ac.uk/ [accessed 4th February 2025].

maintained for the time being, but no longer open. Recently also the Epigraphic Database in Heidelberg (EDH) – the greatest epigraphic digital archive to date – has closed down for the very same reasons.

EAGLE is generously supported and co-funded by the ICT (Information and Communication Technology Policy) Support Programme of the European Commission (80%) and EAGLE's former partners (20%), contributions gone towards it now counting in millions of euros. To ensure the sustainability of the project in 2016 a private association has been set up, named IDEA – International Digital Epigraphy Association –, thanks to which we, their members, pay a contribution to see that our data are looked after and maintained visible and usable on the EAGLE portal.[30]

The amount of money that gets poured into these enterprises is enormous, and outweighs by far any expense which may be incurred in a lavishly engineered paper edition of the same material.

Once that money dries out what is going to happen? And, more to the point, beyond our lifespan, in 20, 30, 50, 100 years, what will become of the enormous amount of work poured into such new conception of archive?

This is the challenge that we must address, and it is upon us to ensure that this exciting revolution does not result in the implosion of memory and the loss of the very history it should supposedly help preserve.

[30] https://www.eagle-network.eu/category/idea-association/ [last accessed 31st December 2024].

Norme editoriali

Sin dalla sua fondazione Ecdotica, proponendosi come punto di incontro di culture e sensibilità filologiche differenti, ha sempre lasciato libertà agli autori di indicare i riferimenti bibliografici secondo la modalità **italiana** o **anglosassone**. È fondamentale, tuttavia, che vi sia omogeneità di citazione all'interno del contributo.

I testi vanno consegnati, con la minor formattazione possibile (dunque anche senza rientri di paragrafo), in formato Times New Roman, punti 12, interlinea singola. Le citazioni più lunghe di 3 righe vanno in carattere 10, sempre in interlinea singola, separate dal corpo del testo da uno spazio bianco prima e dopo la citazione (nessun rientro).

Il richiamo alla nota è da collocarsi dopo l'eventuale segno di interpunzione (es: sollevò la bocca dal fiero pasto.[3]). Le note, numerate progressivamente, vanno poste a piè di pagina, e non alla fine dell'articolo.

Le citazioni inferiori alle 3 righe vanno dentro al corpo del testo tra virgolette basse a caporale «...». Eventuali citazioni dentro citazione vanno tra virgolette alte ad apici doppi: "...". Queste ultime o gli apici semplici ('...') potranno essere utilizzati per le parole e le frasi da evidenziare, le espressioni enfatiche, le parafrasi, le traduzioni di parole straniere. Si eviti quanto più possibile il *corsivo*, da utilizzare solo per i titoli di opere e di riviste (es: *Geografia e storia della letteratura italiana*; *Nuova Rivista di Letteratura Italiana*; *Griseldaonline*) e per parole straniere non ancora entrate nell'uso in italiano.

N.B: Per le sezioni *Saggi, Foro* e *Questioni* gli autori\le autrici, in apertura del contributo, segnaleranno titolo, titolo in inglese, abstract in lingua inglese, 5 parole chiave in lingua inglese.

Si chiede inoltre, agli autori e alle autrici, di inserire alla fine del contributo indirizzo e-mail istituzionale e affiliazione.

Per la sezione *Rassegne*: occorre inserire, in principio, la stringa bibliografica del libro, compresa di collana, numero complessivo di pagine, costo, ISBN.

Indicare, preferibilmente, le pagine e i riferimenti a testo tra parentesi e non in nota.

Nel caso l'autore adotti il **sistema citazionale all'italiana** le norme da seguire sono le seguenti.

La **citazione bibliografica di un volume o di un contributo in volume** deve essere composta come segue:

• Autore in tondo, con l'iniziale del nome puntato;

• **Titolo dell'intero volume** in corsivo; **titolo di un saggio all'interno** del volume (o in catalogo di mostra) tra virgolette basse «...» seguito da "in" e dal titolo del volume in corsivo (se contiene a sua volta un titolo di un'opera, questo va in corsivo);

• eventuale numero del volume (se l'opera è composta da più tomi) in cifra romana;

• eventuale curatore (iniziale del nome puntata, cognome per esteso), in tondo, preceduto dalla dizione 'a cura di';

• luogo di edizione, casa editrice, anno;

• eventuali numeri di pagina, in cifre arabe e/o romane tonde, da indicare con 'p.' o 'pp.', in tondo minuscolo. L'eventuale intervallo di pp. oggetto di particolare attenzione va indicato dopo i due punti (es.: pp. 12-34: 13-15)

In **seconda citazione** si indichino solo il cognome dell'autore, il titolo abbreviato dell'opera seguito, dopo una virgola, dal numero delle pp. interessate (senza "cit.", "op. cit.", "ed. cit." etc...); nei casi in cui si debba ripetere di séguito la citazione della medesima opera, variata in qualche suo elemento – ad esempio con l'aggiunta dei numeri di pagina –, si usi 'ivi' (in tondo); si usi *ibidem* (in *corsivo*), in forma non abbreviata, quando la citazione è invece ripetuta in maniera identica subito dopo.

Esempi:

A. Montevecchi, *Gli uomini e i tempi. Studi da Machiavelli a Malvezzi*, Bologna, Pàtron, 2016.

A. Benassi, «La teoria e la prassi dell'emblema e dell'impresa», in *Letteratura e arti visive nel Rinascimento*, a cura di G. Genovese, A. Torre, Roma, Carocci, 2019.

S. Petrelli, *La stampa in Occidente. Analisi critica*, IV, Berlino-New York, de Gruyter, 2000⁵, pp. 23-28.

Petrelli, *La stampa in Occidente*, pp. 25-26.

Ivi, p. 25.

Ibidem

La citazione bibliografica di un **articolo pubblicato su un periodico** deve essere composta come segue:

• Autore in tondo, con l'iniziale del nome puntato

• Titolo dell'articolo in tondo tra virgolette basse («...»)

• Titolo della rivista in corsivo

• Eventuale numero di serie in cifra romana tonda;

• Eventuale numero di annata in cifre romane tonde;

• Eventuale numero di fascicolo in cifre arabe o romane tonde, a seconda dell'indicazione fornita sulla copertina della rivista;

• Anno di edizione, in cifre arabe tonde e fra parentesi;

• Intervallo di pp. dell'articolo, eventualmente seguite da due punti e la p. o le pp.

Esempi:

C. De Cesare, «Una corrispondenza corale. Alcune integrazioni al corpus episto-
lare ariostesco a partire del carteggio del suo luogotenente», *Bollettino di italiani-
stica*, n.s., a. xix, 2 (2022), pp. 121-134.

M. Petoletti, «Poesia epigrafica pavese di età longobarda: le iscrizioni sui monu-
menti», *Italia medioevale e umanistica*, LX (2019), pp. 1-32.

Nel caso che i **nomi degli autori**, curatori, prefatori, traduttori, ecc. siano
più di uno, essi si separano con una virgola (ad es.: G.M. Anselmi, L. Chines,
C. Varotti) e non con il lineato breve unito.

I **numeri delle pagine** e degli anni vanno indicati per esteso (ad es.: pp. 112-
146 e non 112-46; 113-118 e non 113-8; 1953-1964 e non 1953-964 o 1953-64 o 1953-4).

I **siti Internet** vanno citati in tondo minuscolo senza virgolette (« » o < >)
qualora si specifichi l'intero indirizzo elettronico (es.: www.griseldaonline.it).
Se invece si indica solo il nome, essi vanno in corsivo senza virgolette al pari del
titolo di un'opera (es.: *Griseldaonline*).

Se è necessario usare il termine Idem per indicare un autore, scriverlo per
esteso.

I **rientri di paragrafo** vanno fatti con un TAB; non vanno fatti nel paragrafo
iniziale del contributo.

Nel caso in cui si scelgano **criteri citazionali all'anglosassone,** è possibile ren-
dere sinteticamente le note a piè di pagina con sola indicazione del cognome
dell'autore in tondo, data ed, eventualmente, indicazione della pagina da cui pro-
viene la citazione, senza specificare né il volume né il periodico di riferimento,
ugualmente si può inserire la fonte direttamente nel corpo del contributo.

La bibliografia finale, da posizionarsi necessariamente al termine di ciascun
contributo dovrà essere, invece, compilata per esteso; per i criteri della stessa si
rimanda alle indicazioni fornite per il sistema citazionale all'italiana.

Esempi:

• Nel corpo del testo o in nota, valido per ciascun esempio seguente: (Craig 2004).
Nella bibliografia finale: Craig 2004: H. Craig, «Stylistic analysis and author-
ship studies», in *A companion to Digital Humanities*, a cura di S. Schreibman,
R. Siemens, J. Unsworth, Blackwell, Oxford 2004.

• Adams, Barker 1993: T.R. Adams, N. Barker, «A new model for the study of the
book» in *A potencie of life. Books in society: The Clark lectures 1986-1987*, London,
British Library 1993.

• Avellini et al. 2009: *Prospettive degli Studi culturali*, a cura di L. Avellini et al.,
Bologna, I Libri di Emil, 2009, pp. 190-19.

• Carriero et al 2020: V.A. Carriero, M. Daquino, A. Gangemi, A.G. Nuzzolese,
S. Peroni, V. Presutti, F. Tomasi, «The Landscape of Ontology Reuse Approaches»,
in *Applications and Practices in Ontology Design, Extraction, and Reasoning*,
Amsterdam, IOS Press, 2020, pp. 21-38.

Se si fa riferimento ad una citazione specifica di un'opera, è necessario inse-
rire la pagina:

• (Eggert 1990, pp. 19-40) (nel testo o in nota).
    In bibliografia finale: Eggert 1990: Eggert P. «Textual product or textual pro-
cess: procedures and assumptions of critical editing» in *Editing in Australia*,
Sydney, University of New South Wales Press 1990, pp. 19-40.
    • In caso di omonimia nel riferimento a testo o in nota specificare l'iniziale del
nome dell'autore o autorice.

Referaggio

Tutti i contributi presenti in rivista sono sottoposti preventivamente a processo
di *double-blind peer review* (processo di doppio referaggio cieco) e sono, per-
tanto, esaminati e valutati da revisori anonimi così come anonimo è anche l'au-
tore del saggio in analisi, al fine di rendere limpido e coerente il risultato finale.

Editorial rules

Since its very beginning Ecdotica, intending to favour different philological sensibilities and methods, enables authors to choose between different referencing styles, the Italian and 'Harvard' ones. However, it is fundamental to coherence when choosing one of them.

All the papers must be delivered with the formatting to a minimum (no paragraph indent is permitted), typed in Times New Roman 12 point, single-spaces. All the quotes exceeding 3 lines must be in font size 10, single spaces, separated with a blank space from the text (no paragraph indent). Each footnote number has to be put after the punctuation. All the footnotes will be collocated at the bottom of the page instead of at the end of the article.

All the quotes lesser than 3 lines must be collocated in the body text between quotation marks «...». If there is a quote inside a quote, it has to be written between double quotes "...". The latter or single quotation marks ('...') may be used for words or sentences to be highlighted, emphatic expressions, paraphrases, and translations. Please keep formatting such as italics to a minimum (to be used just for work and journal titles, *e.g. Contemporary German editorial theory, A companion to Digital Humanities*, and for foreign words.

N.B: For all the sections named *Saggi, Foro* and *Questioni*, the authors are required, at the beginning of the article, to put the paper's title, an abstract, and 5 keywords, and, at the end of the article, institutional mail address and academic membership.

For the section named *Rassegne*: reviews should begin with the reviewed volume's bibliographic information organized by:

Author (last name in small caps), first name. Date. *Title* (in italics). Place of publication: publisher. ISBN 13. # of pages (and, where appropriate, illustrations/figures/musical examples). Hardcover or softcover. Price (preferably in dollars and/or euros).

In case the author(s) chooses the Italian quoting system, he/she has to respect the following rules.

The bibliographic quotation of a book or of an essay in a book must be composed by:

• Author in Roman type, with the name initial;

• The volume's title in Italics type; the paper's title between quotation marks «...» followed by "in" and the title of the volume (if the title contains another title inside, it must be in Italics);

• The number of the volume, if any, in Roman numbers;

• The name of the editor must be indicated with the name initial and full surname, in Roman type, preceded by 'edited by';

• Place of publishing, name of publisher, year;

• Number of pages in Arab or Roman number preceded by 'p.' or 'pp.', in Roman type. If there is a particular page range to be referred to, it must be indicated as following pp-12-34: 13-15.

If the quotes are repeated after the first time, please indicate just the surname of the author, a short title of the work after a comma, the number of the pages (no "cit.", "op. cit.", "ed. cit." etc.).

Use 'ivi' (Roman type) when citing the same work as previously, but changing the range of pages; use *ibidem* (Italics), in full, when citing the same quotation shortly after.

Examples:

A. Montevecchi, *Gli uomini e i tempi. Studi da Machiavelli a Malvezzi*, Bologna, Pàtron, 2016.

A. Benassi, «La teoria e la prassi dell'emblema e dell'impresa», in *Letteratura e arti visive nel Rinascimento*, a cura di G. Genovese, A. Torre, Roma, Carocci, 2019.

S. Petrelli, *La stampa in Occidente. Analisi critica*, ivi, Berlino-New York, de Gruyter, 20005, pp. 23-28.

Petrelli, *La stampa in Occidente*, pp. 25-26.

Ivi, p. 25.

Ibidem

The bibliographic quotation of an article published in a journal or book must be composed by

• Author in Roman type, with the name initial;

• The article's title in Roman type between quotation marks «…» (if the title contains another title inside, it must be in Italics);

• The title of the journal or the book in Italics type;

• The number of the volume, if any, in Roman numbers;

• The year of the journal in Roman number;

• Issue number (if any), in Arabic numbers;

• Year of publication in Arabic number between brackets;

• Number of pages in Arab or Roman number preceded by 'p.' or 'pp.', in Roman type. If there is a particular page range to be referred to, it must be indicated as following pp-12-34: 13-15.

Examples:

C. De Cesare, «Una corrispondenza corale. Alcune integrazioni al corpus epistolare ariostesco a partire del carteggio del suo luogotenente», *Bollettino di italianistica*, n.s., a. xix, 2 (2022), pp. 121-134.

M. Petoletti, «Poesia epigrafica pavese di età longobarda: le iscrizioni sui monumenti», *Italia medioevale e umanistica*, LX (2019), pp. 1-32.

When authors, editors, prefaces, translators, etc., are more than one, they should be separated by a comma (e.g. G.M. Anselmi, L. Chines, C. Varotti) and not by a hyphen. Page and year numbers should be written in full (e.g. pp. 112-146, not 112-46; 113-118, not 113-8; 1953-1964, not 1953-964 or 1953-64 or 1953-4). Internet sites should be cited in lowercase without quotation marks (« » or < >) if specifying the full web address (e.g. www.griseldaonline.it). If only the name is provided, it should be italicized without quotation marks like a title of a work (e.g. *Griseldaonline*).

If necessary to use the term "Idem" to indicate an author, write it out in full.

Paragraph indentation should be done with a TAB; no indentation should be made in the initial paragraph of the contribution.

In case the Anglo-Saxon citation criteria are chosen, it is possible to make footnotes more concise with only the author's surname in round brackets, date, and possibly the page number from which the citation is taken, without specifying the volume or periodical reference. Similarly, the source can be directly inserted into the body of the contribution. However, the final bibliography, to be positioned necessarily at the end of each contribution, must be compiled in full; for its criteria, reference is made to the instructions provided for the Italian citation system.

Examples:

• In the body of the text or in a note, valid for each following example: (Craig 2004).
In the final bibliography: Craig 2004: H. Craig, «Stylistic analysis and authorship studies», in A companion to Digital Humanities, edited by S. Schreibman, R. Siemens, J. Unsworth, Blackwell, Oxford 2004.

• Adams, Barker 1993: T.R. Adams, N. Barker, «A new model for the study of the book», in *A potencie of life. Books in society: The Clark lectures 1986-1987,* London, British Library, 1993.

• Avellini et al. 2009: *Prospettive degli Studi culturali*, edited by L. Avellini et al., Bologna, I Libri di Emil, 2009, pp. 190-19.

• Carriero et al 2020: V.A. Carriero, M. Daquino, A. Gangemi, A.G. Nuzzolese, S. Peroni, V. Presutti, F. Tomasi, «The Landscape of Ontology Reuse Approaches», in *Applications and Practices in Ontology Design, Extraction, and Reasoning*, Amsterdam, IOS Press, 2020, pp. 21-38.

If referring to a specific citation from a work, it is necessary to include the page number:

• (Eggert 1990, pp. 19-40) (in the text or in a note)
In the final bibliography: Eggert 1990: Eggert P., «Textual product or textual process: procedures and assumptions of critical editing», in *Editing in Australia*, Sydney, University of New South Wales Press 1990, pp. 19-40.
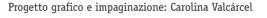
In case of homonymy in reference to a text or in a note, specify the initial of the author's name.

Peer review

All contributions to the journal undergo a double-blind peer review process, whereby they are examined and evaluated by anonymous reviewers, as is the author of the essay under analysis, to ensure clarity and coherence in the final outcome.