INTERDISCIPLINARY USES OF DIGITAL EDITIONS FOR ITALIAN HIGH SCHOOL STUDENTS
Shakespeare's *Cymbeline* and the Silvano Toti Globe Theatre Archive

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Abstract – Just as digital technologies have become an essential part of research in the Humanities field, digital editing of early modern texts has undergone considerable changes. The breadth of online materials and scholarly reflections on the rediscovery of Renaissance textuality as intrinsically fluid and unstable have paved the way for new theories and practices of editing that can also be used to help digital natives approach Shakespeare's multi-layered textual world. In this paper, I will outline the main features and learning objectives of an experimental template that will be made available on the website of the Silvano Toti Globe Theatre Archive. It will consist of new digital editions of selected scenes from Shakespeare's *Cymbeline* and from some of its presumed Italian narrative sources. The interface will show parallel texts of both modernised-spelling editions and facsimile reproductions; all texts will be TEI-based and interconnected through XML-encoded hyperlinks. These digital editions will be supported by critical apparatuses, learning activities for target groups of students and worksheets for their teachers. Students' resources will include linguistic exercises and activities aimed to foster their reflection on Shakespeare and cultural exchanges in the European Renaissance (as well as today), and to promote a more inclusive, intercultural and interdisciplinary view of Shakespearean texts and literature in general. Teachers will instead be provided with tips for class debate and interdisciplinary learning units also to be employed within CLIL thematic modules. The template is, therefore, dual in scope, as it is meant to develop both enduring understanding *and* specific linguistic, cultural, and digital skills. Especially now that the digital classroom has become the daily reality of millions of students all over world, an increasingly virtual and blended learning environment requires students not only to acquire new digital competences, but also to learn how to use digital technologies with greater awareness and critical thinking.

Keywords: *Cymbeline*; Shakespeare's Italian sources; digital editing; digital archives; digital natives.

1. Introduction

In this paper I will start from scholarly reflections on textual editing, digital tools, and younger generations to outline the main features and objectives of

an experimental template that will be made available on the website of the Silvano Toti Globe Theatre Archive for Italian high school students and teachers.

The creation of a digital template for high school students is one of the specific outputs of my Post-Doctoral Fellowship at Roma Tre University (co-funded by the Silvano Toti Foundation), which is part of the research project on "The Potentialities of Shakespeare's Theatre for L2 Learning" directed by Maddalena Pennacchia. This project is grounded in a broader theoretical and methodological research on the possible uses of Shakespeare's theatre and "aims to explore the field of teaching English as L2 by using Shakespeare's poetry for the theatre, while also investigating the power of Shakespeare's dramatic poetry to create empathic relations among young people" (Pennacchia 2021). This research is at the basis of the educational activities carried out in collaboration with the staff of the Roman Globe and, of course, with the Silvano Toti Globe Theatre Digital Archive project.[1]

The template aims to put to use new digital editions of selected passages from Shakespeare's *Cymbeline* and from its possible Italian sources. The idea of focusing on Shakespeare's Italian narrative sources was prompted by the research carried out within the *SENS* Archive project coordinated by the *Skenè* Research Centre of the University of Verona directed by Silvia Bigliazzi, a project with which I was given the opportunity to collaborate for some time with other Roma Tre University scholars.[2] Moreover, the choice of *Cymbeline* was due to the fact that it is one of Shakespeare's five Roman plays and therefore in line with the "Shakespeare's Rome Project", an ongoing international Departmental research programme of Roma Tre University started in 2004 at the initiative of Maria Del Sapio Garbero.[3]

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[1] The Silvano Toti Globe Theatre Archive was created thanks to a formal agreement signed on 18 May 2018 between Politeama S.r.l. (artistic direction of the Silvano Toti Globe Theatre) and the Department of Foreign Languages, Literatures and Cultures of Roma Tre University. This digital archive has been created to collect all the materials related to the shows produced by or held at the Silvano Toti Globe Theatre since its foundation (2003-2020): recorded performances, pictures, translations, scripts, costume and scenography sketches, statistic data, press-releases. For copyright reasons, the Archive can only be consulted on site at the Multimedia Centre of the Department, where any visitor can register and have access to the materials. The Archive's Project is directed by Maddalena Pennacchia, who coordinates a team composed of: Simone Trecca and myself for Roma Tre University; Carlotta Proietti, Susanna Proietti, Loredana Scaramella and Alessandro Fioroni for Politeama S.r.l., with the support of a Scientific Committee: Masolino d'Amico (Roma Tre University), Maria Del Sapio Garbero (Roma Tre University), Keir Elam (Bologna University), Viola Papetti (Roma Tre University), Gilberto Sacerdoti (Roma Tre University). See the website of the Silvano Toti Globe Theatre: https://bacheca.uniroma3.it/archivio-globe/.

[2] Shakespeare's Narrative Sources: Italian Novellas and their European Dissemination: https://skene.dlls.univr.it/sens/.

[3] Roma Tre's Shakespeare's Rome Project: https://bacheca.uniroma3.it/sriss/shakespeares-rome-project/.

*L*ingue e *L*inguaggi

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In the following pages I will especially focus on the possible interdisciplinary applications of this pedagogical tool and on its potential uses for the study of Shakespeare but also, and perhaps foremost, for foreign language learning, for the valorisation of intercultural exchanges in the European Renaissance and beyond, and for the development of digital skills.

Digital technologies, after all, have now fully become part of any Renaissance and Shakespearean scholar's everyday toolkit. The breadth of primary materials available online makes it possible to access large databases of information, consult fragile and rare documents and early editions at the click of a button, and explore the seemingly infinite possibilities connected with Shakespeare's elusive textuality also through new methods for encoding humanities data in electronic form thanks to the Text Encoding Initiative (Burnard *et al.* 2006; Pierazzo 2014). As is well known, the remarkably diversified number of online digital secondary resources within the cross-media landscape plus more sophisticated and accurate software programs and computing instruments allow scholars – as well as any user – to draw together collections of materials around any research topic in ways that not only delve into but also trigger the multiplicity of meanings of any given text, thus enhancing the "restless kineticism" (Marcus 2007, p. 128) of the text Postmodernist theorists would advocate for.

This "hyper-mediated, windowed, fragmented, and increasingly interactive textual space" (Squeo 2019, p. 259) has become a metamorphic virtual space. In the passage from page to screen and from *the* screen to screens, the huge potential of the hypertextual, multimedia environment can "enhance our reading experience of Shakespeare's texts" (Best 2007, p. 145) by gradually turning the reader into a user. Moreover, this potential has radically changed the ways scholars do and share research, urging them to rethink research questions and goals. As far as textual editing is concerned, for instance, "both the way in which editors envisage the editorial task and the way in which readers approach the materials the editor provides" (Massai 2004, p. 103) has been affected.

As scholars in the past decades have made clear, from the beginning of the 2000s onward, online editing of Renaissance texts has been considerably transformed within the fluid cyberspace. Whereas early projects were primarily meant either to create digital libraries with as many records available as possible or to emulate print-based editions (Carson 2006, p. 169), after two decades digital editing of early modern texts – and especially of Shakespearean ones – has mostly reached the same quality standards in terms of philological accuracy, in-depth analyses, and informed critical paratexts as printed scholarly editions. The rapid spread of computing facilities, moreover, has made it possible to overcome a number of practical limits posed by the codex form. As underscored in the course of a lively critical

debate over the past few years, digital editions, in addition to being more accessible and more interactive, have also offered scholars and readers the chance to rediscover aspects of early modern textuality traditionally dismissed by textual scholars under "the imperatives of cultural heritage, which privilege authenticity, wholeness, and transmissibility" (Galey 2014, p. 160; see also Massai 2006; Squeo 2019). As Sonia Massai puts it,

> A growing awareness of different types of textual instability and variation both *within* and *between* early modern printed editions of Renaissance play-texts has led to a crisis in editing for the medium of print. (Massai 2004, p. 94)

The very idea of a definitive, authoritative version of the text, which has been at the core of paper editions for decades, has been called into question by presenting Renaissance texts as intrinsically unstable and often existing in significantly different variants. New technological tools have thus contributed to "historicising print-based notions of textual uniqueness and stability" (Squeo 2019, p. 259) and to "distrust[ing] many of the author-centred narratives by which earlier editions have traditionally determined textual authority" (Marcus 2007, p. 129).

The diversified approaches to editing Renaissance texts empowered by the digital turn have often been channelled to meet the needs of students and younger scholars. Besides, high school and university teachers have been endowed with tools and methodologies to better use and take advantage of online resources in increasingly intercultural, interdisciplinary and intermedial educational contexts. In particular, teaching Shakespeare and exploring his textuality with new technologies – an ongoing process – has prompted questions on how digital practices can be applied in pedagogical environments. This has been the crucial concern of a continuing critical debate, even more so when Shakespeare is being read and taught in predominantly non-English speaking countries, where the cultural exchange at stake often brings issues of diversity, multiplicity, and contamination to the fore.

In this sense, not only can "digital platforms […] help to challenge students' understanding of Shakespeare as one single canonical text" (Bell, Borsuk 2020, p. 5), but – by doing so – they can also help debunk inherited, long-standing assumptions about 'high' vs 'low' culture and literature, and about supposed cultural gaps between nations, insofar as understanding the digital world also means to understand its power structures and struggles. Digital tools can also help raise awareness in students about cultural formation processes and accordingly "serve as a vector for provoking student introspection about their position in their specific culture and socio-political context that can challenge authoritative readings and meaning-making processes within educational systems" (Bell, Borsuk 2020, p. 6).

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Digital editing of Shakespeare's texts has, therefore, also paved the way for a number of initiatives designed to support teaching. Of course, it is not only a matter of making the reading of Shakespeare's 'original' version(s) of a play-text more accessible, especially to second-language learners (Evain, De Marco 2016, p. 163). It is also a question of devising new ways to make digital natives of the 'Generation Z' – "who participate, since birth, in a digital media circuit where different semiotic systems and codes are constantly remediated" (Pennacchia 2017, online) – approach Shakespeare's textuality. The aim is to make students profit from a digital tool created with a view to address their interests, as well as their "specific cognitive abilities" (Pennacchia 2017, online).

2. Learning with digital editions of *Cymbeline* and of its Italian sources

The template here under consideration is built on newly-created digital editions with critical apparatuses of selected scenes from Shakespeare's *Cymbeline* and from some of the Italian sources scholars have commonly identified for this Shakespearean late play (namely, Giovanni Boccaccio's *Decameron* and Torquato Tasso's *Gerusalemme liberata*). Introductory comments on their Renaissance European translations and/or rewritings are also included, in line with the growing research interest in the European circulation and transmission of Shakespeare's sources. As we will see, the template consists of digital editions of Renaissance texts with specific activities devised for target groups of students, as well as related worksheets and lesson plans for their teachers.

This teaching device, entirely written in English, will be created for and uploaded on the official website of the Silvano Toti Globe Theatre Archive, a digital archive devoted to the theatrical productions held at this replica of an Elizabethan theatre in the heart of Villa Borghese in Rome. Both the archive and its website are hosted by Roma Tre University, thanks to a formal agreement with the Silvano Toti Globe Theatre dating back to 2018 and to an enduring collaboration, purposely established "to broaden [this theatre's] educational mission beyond acting training" (Calvi, Pennacchia in press). The template will be made available in the section of the website dedicated to online resources for Italian high school teachers and students (which will be open-access for registered users) and has been devised mainly for Italian secondary school students attending their fourth year, that is, those students who are expected to achieve – by the end of the school year – English language proficiency equal to the level B1 of the Common European Framework of Reference for Languages (CEFR). Fourth-year students are the

ideal target group of this template because it is during this year that in Italian *licei* Shakespeare and the Elizabethan and Jacobean Ages are usually taught as part of the English classes' ministerial syllabus, as well as the history, literature, philosophy, and art of the sixteenth and seventeenth century mostly in Italy but also in a European perspective. The template could, however, be of use also to students at the end of their third year – provided they have been introduced to Shakespeare's theatre and the English Renaissance – or in their fifth year, with activities recalibrated so as to meet the standards of linguistic proficiency at the A2 (third year) or B2 (fifth year) level.

From the structural point of view, the template presents an initial user-friendly interface showing parallel texts of a facsimile reproduction of Shakespeare's First Folio (1623) on the left and a digital edition with modernised spelling and punctuation of the same scenes on the right, with English glosses on complex or obsolete words or syntagmas to facilitate reading comprehension. In spite of not being an experienced textual editor myself, modernisation of the text has not been an excessively demanding task, in light of the specific purpose of this digital edition of a Shakespeare play: there only exists a single authoritative text of the play – i.e., the one published in the 1623 First Folio, where *Cymbeline* is included as the last of the tragedies, to which a second version published in the 1632 Second Folio with only minor revisions is added. As for punctuation, lineation and stage directions, as editors of this play have often acknowledged, the text of *Cymbeline* is mostly clear and requires little intervention by the editor, displaying only a few misprints and minor errors.[4]

The critical apparatus of this students' digital edition of *Cymbeline* will include a number of linkable resources: a short overall introduction to the play (dating, settings, genre(s), characters, main plot, in-depth analyses of major themes, etc.); brief summaries of the action taking place in between the scenes that have been selected for editing; explanatory notes addressing core historical and cultural issues, as well as intertextual connections with the play's sources included in the template; short textual histories of the main transmission and circulation of both the quoted sources and of their translations and/or adaptations at the top of each edition. Starting from the comparison between Shakespeare and (part of) his estimated Italian sources, the following scenes from *Cymbeline* have been selected:

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[4] For an accurate review of all the textual issues connected to *Cymbeline*'s early print version(s), their restoration, and emendations, see Appendix 1 to the Arden Third Series Edition of the play, edited by Valerie Wayne (Shakespeare 2017, pp. 378-401). In particular, refer to the section devoted to the name of the female heroine, "Innogen or Imogen?" (pp. 391-398), for a detailed overview of perhaps the most contentious editing issue since the editors of the Oxford *Complete Works* first changed the spelling in 1986.

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Act 1, Scene 4[5]	wager scene
Act 2, Scene 2	bedchamber scene
Act 2, Scene 4	Iachimo's report to Posthumus
Act 2, Scene 5	Posthumus' anger
Act 3, Scene 3	Innogen in Belarius' cave
Act 3, Scene 4	Innogen's disguise as Fidele
Act 4, Scene 2	Cloten's death and Innogen's fury

Table 1
Scenes from Shakespeare's *Cymbeline* selected for the template.

The modernised edition of these scenes will be TEI-based with XML-encoded hyperlinks[6] connecting the text of *Cymbeline* with those of its main Italian sources, Boccaccio's *Decameron* and Tasso's *Gerusalemme liberata* (*GL*).[7] Hyperlinks, enabling to visualise editions in overlapping windows on the screen and allowing to skip from one document to the other in no pre-established order, are displayed through small windowed menus each time offering the possibility to choose the source one wants to browse. Hyperlinks are both to complete sources (or specific passages from them, if intertextual connection only partly concerns a given work) and to specific sentences that are mostly reminiscent of the 'target' text.

Just as in the case of Shakespeare's *Cymbeline* split-screen interface, facsimiles of early print versions of the Italian sources are placed side by side

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[5] All references to *Cymbeline* are to the Arden Third Series Edition of the play, edited by Valerie Wayne (Shakespeare 2017).

[6] The fifth revision of the Guidelines for Electronic Text Encoding and Interchange (TEI Guidelines P5, 2020): https://tei-c.org/release/doc/tei-p5-doc/en/html/index.html.

[7] In this essay, I mostly to refer to Geoffrey Bullough's still unchallenged, eight-volume classification of Shakespeare's dramatic and narrative sources, in which he includes – alongside other sources like Holinshed's *Chronicles* (1587 edition) and *The Description and Historie of Scotland* (1587 edition), and the anonymous *Frederyke of Jennen* (1560 edition) – three Italian sources: Boccaccio (source), Tasso (analogue), and Bandello (analogue) (Bullough 1975, pp. 38-111). Bandello has not been edited for this template because, as we will see, this author does not usually belong with the Italian high school curriculum. He distinguishes between "source", "probable source", and "analogue", "which may suggest how Shakespeare's contemporaries and predecessors approached similar topics, and also how individual or traditional his treatment was" (Bullough 1975, p. 346). An alternative terminology to distinguish between sources with different degrees of contamination is given by Robert Miola, within his classification of seven types of intertextuality (Revision, Translation, Quotations, Sources, Conventions and Configurations, Genres, Paralogues). According to him, sources can be divided into "the source coincident" ("the earlier text exists as a whole in dynamic tension with the later one, a part of its identity"), "the source proximate" (which "functions as the book-on-the-desk; the author honors, reshapes, steals, ransacks, and plunders". This is the case of Boccaccio's *Decameron*), and "source remote" ("all sources and influences that are not clearly marked, or that do not coincide with the book-on-the-desk model", as Tasso's *Gerusalemme liberata*). See Miola 2004, pp. 19-20.

with modernised digital editions,[8] preceded by short introductions and with English glosses and footnotes that are mainly functional to comment on the junctures between that specific source text and *Cymbeline*. Given that this is not a scholarly critical edition meant for academics, no collation of different early witnesses of the source texts has been done, but single witnesses have been selected according to previous philological scholarly research.

In the first case, most critics now agree – on the basis of clear textual evidence – that the wager subplot of *Cymbeline* was greatly inspired by Boccaccio's *Decameron*, namely by the tale "Bernabò da Genova" ("Bernabò from Genoa", *Decameron*, II.9), in which a Genoese merchant called Bernabò is deceived by Ambruogiuolo into believing that his virtuous and faithful wife, Zinevra, has betrayed him and thus orders her to be killed; Zinevra manages to escape by disguising herself as a man and serving the sultan for the following six years, until she meets both Bernabò and Ambruogiuolo in Alessandria, unveils her true identity, and goes back to Genoa with her husband. The Italian edition selected for being encoded in the hypertextual space of this template has been pointed to by many scholars as the one that might have been circulating in England by the time Shakespeare wrote *Cymbeline* (1609-1610): Lionardo Salviati's first edition, published in Florence in 1582, which was probably the version that was used for the first English translation of the *Decameron* (Wright 1936, p. 500; Wyatt 2005, p. 221).[9]

As regards Tasso's *Gerusalemme liberata*, which is a different kind of source – being an analogue or a source remote – due to the fact that there is less textual correspondence with Shakespeare, there are some stanzas presenting "influences that are not clearly marked" (Miola 2004, p. 20) but that are, especially according to Bullough, particularly reminiscent of some passages in *Cymbeline*. A digital edition of some of these stanzas – namely VII.5-19, VIII.52-5, and XIX.102-9 – will be offered using the edition of the poem by Francesco Osanna (Mantua, 1584). As argued by some scholars (Dodge 1929, p. 688; Kirkpatrick 1995, p. 173), this is the Italian version that is most credited as being the one employed for the first English translation of Tasso by Edward Fairfax (1600).

As previously anticipated, the crucial feature of interpretive digital editions of scenes from *Cymbeline* and Italian sources, encoded following the latest TEI criteria, is that they will be complemented by activities for students and worksheets for teachers freely available on the website of the Silvano

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[8] All the early-print versions of the texts are available in PDF format on online research databases: *Early English Books Online* (*EEBO-TCP*) and *The Internet Archive*.

[9] Salviati made multiple following re-editions of Boccaccio's *Decameron* (1597, 1602, 1614). The first English translation of the novellas (1620, *The Decameron containing An hundred pleasant novels*) is anonymous, but it has often been attributed to John Florio (Wright 1953; *et al.*).

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Toti Globe Theatre Digital Archive. Possible learning activities are divided into four categories, the former of which includes:

1. linguistic exercises starting from the modernised texts of *Cymbeline* and sources, or from other resources made available in the template to develop language skills at B1 level in English: standard reading comprehension exercises (multiple-choice or open questions, 'fill-in-the-gaps' exercises, etc.), lexical exercises also supported by suitable online tools such as the Open Shakespeare glossary[10] or free online dictionaries, production tasks such as writing a summary of the scene(s), listening comprehension exercises.

2. The most linguistically skilled students will also have the possibility to test themselves with brief translations into Italian of passages from the English text, as well as with rewritings in contemporary English of selected passages in early modern English and with editing sample-tasks on the spelling modernisation of very short, accessible passages from the different facsimile reproductions.

3. There will also be activities to guide students into making written or oral comparisons between *Cymbeline* and Boccaccio or Tasso: for instance, analogies and differences between Shakespeare's and Boccaccio's tale in terms of plot developments and main events (e.g. the wager and bedchamber scenes in the texts), settings, time schemes, and characters; comparisons between the bucolic representations of space in Tasso (*GL*, VII.5-19) and in *Cymbeline* (3.3), between Innogen's fierce fury for the presumed death of Posthumus (4.2.306-32) and Erminia's for the one of Tancredi (*GL*, XIX.102-9). This category of activities will also include guided thematic analyses of given topics, such as the different gender constructions of Innogen, Erminia, and Zinevra; the respective features of literary genres (romance, novella, epic-chivalric poem); the divergent functions and uses of cross-dressing for female characters; the contrasting stereotypes on women in a European Renaissance perspective.

4. Finally, students will be asked to do some extra individual online research, using provided links, on topics such as the history of Roman Britain, Shakespeare's late plays, specific aspects of the life and works of one of the three authors, or core differences between Italian and British Renaissance.

In order for teachers to fully explore the possibilities offered by the template, worksheets and lesson plans will also be available, providing not only tips for class debates but also interdisciplinary learning units to be used in

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[10] See the glossary section on the *Open Shakespeare* website: http://www.shakespeare-online.com/glossary/.

collaboration with teachers of other disciplines: prompts and suggestions for more in-depth analyses of – for instance – the culture, literature, history, and art of the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries in Europe within the syllabus of the English, Italian, History, Philosophy, and Art History classes; modules on the Roman colonial Empire within English and Latin classes; on the broad relationship between Shakespeare and Italian culture; or on *Cymbeline* in the arts (visual arts, music, intermedial transits into film and TV adaptations).

3. The rationale of the template

That this interdisciplinary and interactive digital template should be made available as an online tool for students on the website of this theatre's archive is in line with the Silvano Toti Globe Theatre's passionate and enduring concern with younger generations: since its foundation in 2003, late Artistic Director Gigi Proietti[11] has conceived this theatre as a place for the theatrical education of new audiences, of the growing number of young people who have crowded the pit of this Globe year after year, in a place where Shakespeare has always been staged for a horizontal – cross-generational and inter-classist – audience as a product of both 'high' and popular culture, i.e. in its authentic early modern dimension (Calvi, Pennacchia in press). Such interest is displayed and has mainly resulted into the long-standing and ongoing collaboration with Roma Tre University on the research and didactic projects documented on the archive's website.

The fact that the template will be hosted on the archive's open-access website is even more relevant now that the Covid-related global health crisis has forced us to face the fact that digital technologies will long be a pivotal element of our social, relational, working and studying lives. Hence the increasing urge to train teenagers in the use of technologies, by making them aware of the different issues at stake whenever they choose what to consult, what to read, and where to write.

Besides including the catalogue of all the materials collected in the archive, the website has also been specifically conceived of by the Project Team directed by Pennacchia as a hub of online content and resources related to Shakespeare aimed at different kinds of users, in order to make the work of the Silvano Toti Globe Theatre known to as wide an audience as possible (theatre and Shakespeare scholars and lovers, practitioners and school teachers/students), as well as to share outputs of academic research and offer

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[11] Gigi Proietti (1940-2020), Roman actor, writer and director, passed away just before this essay was submitted for publication. Proietti, who first conceived the idea and made it possible for the Silvano Toti Globe Theatre to be built in 2003, has since been its Artistic Director (with his production company, Politeama S.r.l.).

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more widely accessible multi-media resources connected to the productions of the Villa Borghese Globe and to Shakespeare's plays in general.

Most importantly, the website of the Silvano Toti Globe Theatre Archive is the 'window' of a place deputed to store and crystallize the memory of all the work of this theatre and of the research activities connected to it for generations to come. However truistic this statement may be – archives have long been "the dominant metaphor for cultural memory" (Galey 2014, p. 1) –, when students and teachers browse the website, they are bound to perceive the highly symbolic value of the virtual Shakespearean place on which the website relies. At the same time, the website of the archive is meant to create a transgenerational and diverse community of users, who may also want to come and visit the archive at Roma Tre University. They might thus paradoxically contribute to making the materials that the archive is bound to preserve live anew "in the transfer to a new [im]material context" (Galey 2014, p. 56) where they become part of a common cultural heritage.

In order to fully understand the rationale of the template described above, it is also worth explaining why *Cymbeline* is a particularly apt play in this case, despite not having been put on stage at the Silvano Toti Globe. Unlike the other Roman plays, *Cymbeline* does have alleged Italian sources – Boccaccio and Tasso – that students may have studied or will study at school. On the contrary, Bandello – whose XXVII novella (Bandello 1554; Fenton 1567), also mentioned by Bullough as an analogue for this play (1975, vol. 8, pp. 87-90) – is not included for he is not part of the Italian Literature syllabus. Equally unknown to Italian students are the possible Italian antecedents of *Julius Caesar* and *Antony and Cleopatra*, respectively *Il Cesare* by Orlando Pescetti (1594, possible source) and *Cleopatra* by Giambattista Giraldi Cinthio (1583 edition, analogue), mentioned in Bullough's classification of Shakespearean sources and analogues (Bullough 1964, vol. 5, pp. 174-194, 343-357).

A final remark is here due on how providing digital editions not only of Shakespeare's *Cymbeline* but also of its presumed main Italian sources may indeed benefit students. Presenting modernised texts of sources is relevant, in this case, insomuch as it allows students and teachers to explore Shakespeare's textuality not as part of a self-contained dramatic phenomenon (i.e., early modern English theatre) but with a view to cultural exchanges and diversity: Italian students approaching Shakespearean plays will crucially benefit from discovering how much Shakespeare owes to their own culture. The field of Source Studies with regard to Shakespeare is by now no longer conceived only as "an overtly positivistic and bardolatrous pursuit" (Walter, Klann 2018, p. 1), for in the last two decades attention has been paid not only to Shakespeare's sources as such, but also to their "circulation, transmission,

transformation and function" (Bigliazzi 2018, p. 13).[12] Studying sources as part of a wide, more nuanced and less hierarchical range of intertextual interactions (Miola 2004, p. 13) will, therefore, prompt reflections on "the intersections of early modern political, gendered, sexual, and racial subjectivities, conditions of theatrical practice, and the materials from which Shakespeare produced his plays" (Britton, Walter 2018, p. 1), thus fostering class discussion on such topical issues as politics, power, gender, race, and intercultural transactions.

It is also extremely important that activities designed for Post-Millennial, European students who are only now beginning to study literature in general, and Shakespeare and the English Renaissance in particular, should raise awareness about how narrations circulated all over the Continent and how the digital medium can afford us deeper insights into the complex dynamics underpinning such circulation.

The set of edited texts of this digital template, along with the introductory references to their broader circulation within a complex network of intertextual connections, will thus achieve greater relevance in the light of what is emerging in the scholarly debate as a profound rethinking of the 'linear transmission' paradigm in Source Studies, as Silvia Bigliazzi has pointed out,

> in terms of a dynamic and complex process embedded in the larger cultural context in which translation is grounded. Each stage [is] viewed as a palimpsest of readings, stratified with successive processes of selection and inclusion of material derived from each immediate source, but also from other contemporary cultural models and influences, as well as interdiscursive material. (Bigliazzi 2018, p. 15)

4. Teaching objectives and beyond

The template is dual in scope, insofar as its core function is to develop both enduring understanding *and* specific linguistic, cultural, and digital skills in high school students. On one side, besides making the reading of Shakespeare more accessible to L2 learners, the teaching goals of this technological tool include providing teachers with a methodology and creating curriculum materials for multiple uses, as well as for different targets and pedagogical objectives. In terms of content, the first purpose of the template is, of course, to improve knowledge about Shakespeare, *Cymbeline* and its sources in a broad perspective. A related and no less relevant aim is to promote a more inclusive,

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[12] For an updated review of the qualification of the word 'source' in the large body of scholarly literature in the field of Source Study, refer to Maguire, Smith 2015, pp. 16-18.

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intercultural and interdisciplinary – i.e., a more democratic – view of Shakespeare and literature in general, in contrast with common assumptions still widely spread in high school teaching on the literary text and its ontology, and on such issues as the 'Author', originality, uniqueness, local vs global culture, 'high' vs 'low' cultural products.

As far as the level of competences to be achieved is concerned, one of the main aims is to train linguistic skills in English as a foreign language (EFL) through activities on the four linguistic abilities (written and oral comprehension, written and oral production), preparing fourth year students to meet the international standard of language proficiency at the B1 level (or another corresponding level for students attending a different year). Special focus will be placed on training students to read and understand the complex texts they are confronted with (be it Shakespeare's or a source text or part of the critical apparatuses), so as to help them learn how to read any form of written textuality closely, and how to become aware of the meaning(s) that text is expected to convey, as well as of its nuances and gaps.

A more interdisciplinary approach to the humanities will also be fostered through the digital editions and activities in this template, devised to be used in thematic multidisciplinary modules taught in English with the CLIL approach by teachers of other disciplines (e.g., Italian, History, Philosophy, Art History, Social Sciences). In the words of one of its 1994 inventors, the Content and Language Integrated Learning (CLIL) is "a dual-focused educational approach in which an additional language is used for the learning and teaching of both content and language" (Coyle *et al.* 2010, p. 1). CLIL modules in English, which are being increasingly adopted in Italian high schools, are particularly appropriate for the '*Cymbeline* and its Italian sources' template. The CLIL methodology was in fact specifically crafted as a three-dimensional approach – stimulating linguistic, disciplinary, and metacognitive competences – to turn students into active learners by developing "Cognitive Academic Language Proficiency" (CALP) competences (such as writing argumentative texts and summaries) instead of "Basic Interpersonal Communication Skills" (BICS). Students are thus trained to use "High Order Thinking Skills" (HOTS) rather than "Low Order Thinking Skills" (LOTS). Urging students to reflect, in a multidisciplinary environment where English works as a sort of lingua franca, on such issues as translation as an intercultural practice, the circulation of Italian cultural heritage in the Renaissance, European pre-print culture, cultural (and, therefore, political) relations between England and Italy in the sixteenth and seventeenth century will help students broaden the scope of their knowledge. It will also prompt them to perceive the international, interdisciplinary and intermedial nature of Renaissance culture as a backdrop to our twenty-first-century global, interconnected culture.

As a matter of fact, the template also aims to develop some of the new digital skills required by a less text-based and more virtual and blended learning environment (Ehrlich 2008, p. 271), as well as by a growingly digital society. Now that the digital classroom has become, during frequent Covid-related lockdowns, a daily experience for millions of students all over world, it is all the more mandatory to train students to use digital technologies with greater awareness and critical thinking: digital natives born in the rhizomatic culture, where every information is available along multiple, simultaneous, horizontal paths, should be taught how to draw hierarchies among contents, data, and information sources, as well as how to choose among the endless resources available online.

Most of these objectives, of course, could not be achieved (at least not in the same way) with print-based critical editions of the same texts, which – unlike the composite, multimedia, interactive template here described – do not encompass the pivotal logics of transparent immediacy and hypermediacy Bolter and Grusin (1999) identified as the core principles of virtual reality.[13] At the same time, the template also responds to the increasingly imperative social function of the humanities, by putting scholarly research at the service of young people in ways that meet their needs and interact with their language(s).

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[13] On the one hand, Bolter and Grusin refer to "promise[s of] transparent, perceptual immediacy, experience without mediation, for […] virtual reality to diminish and ultimately deny the mediating presence of the computer and its interface". On the other, they define "hypermediacy" as being "most evident in the heterogeneous 'windowed style' of World Wide Web pages, […] a medium that offers 'random access'; it has no physical beginning, middle, or end" (Bolter, Grusin 1999, pp. 22-32).

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