

The Tone of a Manuscript.

Literature – Edition – Life

Paweł Bem

ORCID: 0000-0002-2620-113X

1.

Wasilij Rozanov, a jester and peculiar genius, writes, probably at the turn of the first and second decades of the 20th century in a train compartment – if we are to believe the metatextual note of the author:

It is as if that bloody Gutenberg licked the bronze off all writers who printed, lost their face, character, they no longer have their souls. My “I” exists only in my manuscripts. In fact, this is the case with every writer. This is the reason why I experience the superstitious fear of tearing letters, notebooks (even those from childhood), manuscripts, and so I never tear anything. I keep each and every letter from my school friends. I only tear my own works, because there are too many of them; I do it very seldom and with pain¹.

¹ This note entered Rozanov's 1912 volume *Ujedinionnoje*. In Poland it was published in 2004 as *Odosobnione* [secluded] (Warsaw: Fundacja Augusta hr. Cieszkowskiego), translated by Ireneusz Kania and Piotr Nowak. The quoted excerpt appears in page 22. I used here Józef Czapski's translation, who cited the same excerpt translated by himself in his essay *Sprzeczne widzenie: Rozanow – Mauriac* [contradictory view] quoted after: Józef Czapski, *Patrząc* (Kraków: Znak, 1990), 282. Translated into English by PZ.

These words can be read in two ways: firstly, with some distance, seeing emphasis in them, characteristic for Rozanow, and maybe even a provocation, or secondly, completely seriously, understanding them as a testament of a responsible person, for whom writing is a document of utmost importance – a document of Existence.

The paradox is obvious. The reader reads those words in print. Although admittedly in this unique case it is supposed to be an equivalent of a manuscript², this is only the author's wish. Regardless of the form, print will not substitute for handwriting. In a way, Rozanow ridicules himself, "loses his face". But he also leaves a promise: you will find me *there*.

2.

Taking notes by hand is often spontaneous, instant, it captures a thought which is escaping with every movement of the body. This is why Rozanow did not trust any additional manipulations introduced by print. He often added information about the place and moment of writing to his hand notes, which were immanently ascribed. When taking notes, he was sometimes afraid to turn the page – for fear of losing his thought. In such cases he would take dense notes, everywhere where there was any free space left. "His whole life could be reduced to fighting for maintaining his ties to the Word"³ – that fight, as one may suppose, also had its completely material aspect.

Various disciplines and fields of science have dealt with manuscripts. It can be said that genetic criticism is a school (method) of studying manuscripts (more broadly: pre-published working material). This sentence is generally true, but imprecise, deprived of the fundamental addition, which defines the most important issue, i.e. the goal of such studies: the abstract, reconstructed writing process.

Process means time, and genetic criticism deals with time. It is a speculation regarding the temporal course of creation. It studies material documents, but its (postulated) stake is to capture, describe – and in most ambitious cases also to define – a non-material event. This is probably enough to consider genetic criticism paradoxical. And rightly so. Not without reason already in the 1970s one of its initiators, Louis Hay, author of the iconic volume *Essais de critique génétique*, told the story about fairy godmothers present at the birth of genetic criticism and the most powerful of divinations: the "divination of paradox"⁴. It was the biggest force that gave life to genetic criticism and defined its future stride.

² „[...] ever since the invention of print, none had the strength to overcome Gutenberg. My real loneliness, almost mysterious, has achieved this”, W. Rozanow, *Opadłe liście* [fallen leaves], quoted after: J. Czapski, *Sprzeczne widzenie: Rozanow – Mauriac*, 282, translated into English by PZ. This excerpt – translated differently – can be found in the Polish edition of *Opadłe liście* (translated by Jacek Chmielewski, Ireneusz Kania, [Warsaw: Fundacja Augusta hr. Cieszkowskiego, 2013], 110), but yet again I am using an earlier translation by Czapski.

³ Piotr Nowak, "Posłowie" [afterword], in W. Rozanow, *Odosobnione*, 157.

⁴ Louis Hay, "La critique génétique: origines et perspectives" in *Essais de critique génétique*, ed. Louis Hay, (Paris: Flammarion, 1979), 227.

Science does not like paradox. After all, it has to somehow deal with paradox, solve it, deconstruct it, explain it, describe it, and hence reduce it to a non-paradoxical form. The divination was problematic.

3.

Another paradox may stem from the fact that genetic criticism, which has to a great extent sprung from the structuralist tradition and the notion of text proposed by structuralism, has developed its own, completely different paradigm of text as an opportunity. “*Le Texte n’existe pas*”: *réflexions sur la critique génétique* – it is the categorical title of one of Louis Hay’s works from 1985⁵, although the text made its biggest career in its English translation entitled *Does ‘Text’ Exist?*⁶. The translators introduced some insurance – the original title refers to a quote from Jacques Petit – but it is only a stylistic measure, the contents of the paper are telling. By referring to the history of defining “text”, since the 18th century defined in opposition to “notes, comments, glosses”, Hay admits that it is not a good idea to stick to one, absolute interpretation of “text”; instead, one should always talk not about one “Text”, but rather many “texts”⁷, because a text held in hands is always one of many options. “In other words, the writing is not simply consummated in the written work. Perhaps we should consider the text as a *necessary possibility*, as one manifestation of a process which is always virtually present in the background, a kind of third dimension of the written work”⁸.

4.

Genetic criticism inspires obvious – and less obvious – controversies, often amongst editors. A lot of them treat it with suspicion and take a somewhat defensive approach towards it. Why? The first reason, not at all trivial, existing and irritating on a deep level, is – to my mind – that genetic criticism is very influential as a school of reading and describing the creative process. The French L’Institut des textes et manuscrits modernes (ITEM) has been successfully functioning since 1982, and the history of genetic criticism dates back to the 1960s. If we look at the edition of scenarios and plans for *Madame Bovary* published as a fruit of ITEM’s work, at the very end we will find a brochure-call by Daniel Ferrer, who organized subscription for a hypertextual edition of *Madame Bovary* in 1995. This means that a quarter of century ago French scholars realized something that in many countries, including Poland, has not even functioned as a topic of theoretical editorial considerations on a bigger scale. It should also be said that in France the significance of genetic criticism has led to its incorporation into high school curricula. Outside of France there has also been an interest in such literary studies, which in some cases has led to the creation of special

⁵ Louis Hay, “«Le Texte n’existe pas»: réflexions sur la critique génétique”, *Poétique* 62 (1985).

⁶ Louis Hay, “Does ‘Text’ Exist?”, trans. by M. Jocelyn, H. W. Gabler, *Studies in Bibliography* 41 (1988).

⁷ Hay, “«Le Texte n’existe pas»: réflexions sur la critique génétique”, 154.

⁸ Hay, “Does ‘Text’ exist?”, in: *Studies in Bibliography*, Vol. 41 (1988), 75.

research centers, directly inspired by this method: in Belgium, Brazil, Argentina, as well as in Poland. A few years ago Paolo D'Iorio, head of ITEM, set up an international research group "Genetic Criticism and Digital Humanities"⁹ in France, whose aim was to promote genetic criticism, among other things. In terms of that promotion there is a group who is working on a dictionary of genetic criticism and using digital tools for creating electronic genetic editions.

What are some reasons for the dislike for genetic criticism by editors? If we were to borrow one of the books devoted to it, such as *Logiques du brouillon* by Daniel Ferrer, we would soon learn that it cannot be found in the "editing" section. For instance, in the Institute for Literary Studies it can be found in the "Language of literature – theory. Poetics. Stylistics" section. Admittedly, it is not an optimal classification, but neither is it accidental. Genetic criticism is not a school of editing, and despite this fact it introduces some ferment to editing, some messiness, because genetic critics want to spread manuscripts, they want to make access to them and working with them easier, and so they also deal with editing, write about editing, they even come up with their own editing typologies¹⁰ and they publish editions. Editors often do not like such works, for they are often peculiar (since manuscripts are weird and peculiar), and "incorrect" (since manuscripts contain much "incorrectness" of various kinds), and editors by definition like to normalize, polish, make uniform.

Apart from that, editors, who typically make a face when they hear "genetic criticism", generally deal with old manuscripts (copied), which *de facto* served as publications. Genetic criticism is only interested in modern manuscripts, i.e. those written after 1750¹¹, for they are – generally speaking – documents of a far more private character.

The already mentioned subject of research for genetic criticism, i.e. the writing process, is another potential controversy, and not just for editors. It is elusive, reconstructed through genetics, it does not exist materially, being only hypothetical – which is what editing, which used to be compared to the sciences, does not like by definition. It is true that critical editing "reconstructs a text" through textual criticism, and so it dissects a textual entity, which maybe existed or did not exist at all, but boasts about the final, material product of its reconstruction (sometimes referred to as "canonic"). Of course, there are also genetic editions, but their job is to reproduce and spread source materials rather than compile a text out of them. The textological story remains the domain of genetic criticism.

One could say that there are two global tendencies in works devoted to genetics: some focus on acquiring new knowledge about the text, on studying the manuscript and the creative process in order to learn more about the work itself: to learn the story of its production, find out more about its enigmatic, unclear, suspicious, troubling moments. But there are

⁹ GDRI DIGEN, <http://www.item.ens.fr/digen/>, date of access: 15.06.2020.

¹⁰See for example Pierre-Marc de Biasi, *Genetyka tekstów* [genetics of texts], translated by Filip Kwiatek, Maria Prussak (Warsaw: Wydawnictwo IBL PAN, 2015), 113–130.

¹¹De Biasi, 22.

also works which focus entirely on studying the text production process itself, in order to discover its dynamics or the mechanisms of its creation, in order to learn about the writing process. In such a case looking beyond the process is not necessary at all, or even banned. The product of the process is beyond the scope of many genetic papers; an aberration for scholarly editing.

There are other differences which cause resistance against getting to know and adapting genetic criticism. Transcription or transliteration of a manuscript will always depend on the researcher's perspective, on their perception of the document and interpretation. It is hard to read manuscripts "canonically". They can be read and understood in many ways, many of which will be fully valid. Hence, one document can be transcribed and understood in various ways. For scholarly editing in its critical version, which strongly aims at establishing one binding text, this is a strange way of thinking. Similarly to methods applied by genetic criticism, which are supposed to make the genesis legible – they are different, depending on the material and the goal. Critical editing likes using the defined and strictly limited set of methods and tools.

Moreover, textual criticism and editing are interested in what is repeated in the following versions of a text. Editing is based on repetitions, it traces what is repeated, both from the perspective of "correctness" and "error". After all, stemmatics is based on the "community of error implies community of origin" rule, hence by definition we look for what is repeated in order to sometimes confirm the credibility of a lesson, and we look for errors repeated in different versions, in order to confirm the common origin. Meanwhile, genetic criticism does the opposite – it analyzes what is different, new, diverging from the rest, focusing on that what transforms and how it does it. For editing everything that diverges from the dissected "correct" text is worth referring to the critical apparatus, typically at the end of the volume. Genetic criticism thrives on what is different in different versions. Hence the different approaches of editing and genetic criticism to the notion and term of a "variant". It is an essential thing which forces us to mention here several fundamental terms of genetic criticism – one can either accept or reject them, but nevertheless it is important to be aware of their existence and significance, in order to understand what the most problematic proposals of genetic criticism are.

5.

A genetic *dossier*, i.e. a genesis document, includes various testaments which help reconstruct the origin of a text. These are predominantly various working manuscripts by the author: projects, plans, notebooks, drafts, drawings, notes from books, collections of books with marginal notes by the author, extracts from documents, first drafts, final drafts, author's correction, etc. However, there are also documents which are in no way incorporated into the forming text, other materials which help understand its genesis: diaries, correspondence, contracts with publishing houses, etc.

A *dossier* is the result of preparatory work. It is not an entire archive of an author, their complete archival heritage. It is things selected from those materials for the purpose of specific studies.

Text and pre-text. In a nutshell, genetic criticism, especially in its rigorous form, equals “text” with print. Print’s caesura separates the intimate sphere, the sphere of pre-text, the sphere of what led to a text, from the public sphere, the result of creative work: the “text”. Pre-text is the work of a researcher, their critical construct. It is not just manuscripts as such, but their critical arrangement. Pre-text is the result of the selection of the material from the *dossier*, a classification of this material, arranging it chronologically, in short: it is the result of subjective critical activities, on the basis of which it is possible to create a convincing textological narrative. It should be openly admitted that pre-text is always a hypothesis, but that hypothesis is strictly rooted in the source material. It is not a creation, but rather an extraction of specific material and composing it into a collection, which will give a basis for reconstructing the origins. One *dossier* can serve as a basis for many pre-texts, which in turn can be analyzed in different ways, depending on the method of reading the pre-text: socio-critical, linguistic, psychoanalytical (very popular in the French genetic criticism), etc.

6.

Hence, genetic criticism analyzes the stages of the creative process rather than the result of this process, i.e. the text. In consequence, it is not interested in the teleological perspective (at least in terms of the theoretical declaration). Most geneticists do not study manuscripts as an inferior testament of stages of perfecting the text. Teleology, so important for critical editing, is mostly interested in the effect of the process, perfected on subsequent stages. It does not concern genetic criticism, because – again: according to the theory – a geneticist should not, while dealing with the creative process (and most often, some fragment of it), take the perspective of the effect of the process which the studied manuscripts could not know at the time of their production. In other words, genetic criticism wants to get to know the text better through the prism of manuscripts, their causal and temporal arrangement, but warns against interpreting them with the use of the text, since this would be a *par excellence* anachronistic action. Logics introduced to the world of chaos – arranged, but still chaos – and a narrative referring to the arrangement of the final goal would be a reversal of perspective, would mean imposing a ready-made sense on something that a moment earlier was the origin of various senses; we would know the destination before studying the way to it.

The echo of the ominous divination can be heard. One could accept that genetic criticism sometimes feeds on – at least on the theoretical level – the utopia of abstracting the text, created by itself. De Biasi writes:

Hence, a geneticist should, especially on the stage of interpretation, avoid any teleological reduction and evaluate the role and specific status of these “remnants” of creative activities, this colossal “surplus” (often far more extensive than the “basic” text), which is an irremovable trace of other ways in the genesis of the text, ways it could have chosen, which it actually did choose or it tried to choose, before it shrank to its final form, which we know thanks to the final draft or printed version of the text, as accurately as possible¹².

Wherein, as de Biasi states simultaneously, the arrangements introduced by a geneticist “assume some simulation of the goal, to which the pre-text strives”. It is also true that the very name of “genetic criticism” may imply the kind of teleology it undertakes¹³, and that it is very difficult to avoid the sometimes unnoticeable forms of teleology in genetic considerations, but the anti-teleological stand is frequently present in genetic works (especially in the theoretical ones).

7.

What are the consequences of identifying text with print? We should pay attention to the name of the most important genetic center: ITEM, institute of texts and manuscripts – which is a fundamental distinction. This distinction means accepting the manuscript’s autonomy, respecting its existence on different laws than the text. Hence, if the manuscript is not a “text” (Daniel Ferrer calls manuscript “a protocol of creating the text”¹⁴), then any handwritten notes and other pre-texts cannot be a variation of the text – they belong to two different worlds. De Biasi categorically states that the term “variant” loses its application in the usage tying it to the modern manuscript – the manuscript does not know the text, and thus it cannot be treated as its variant.

For a long time, during the creation, nothing is accepted, or stable, or definite – each created element can at any moment disappear or transform into its opposite, or develop itself at the cost of some other element, or lead the whole creative work to annihilation.

Meanwhile combining these two textological orders is common in critical editions. The world of notebooks has its own rules and requires its own typology and research methodology, within its framework – just like the world of print – it is full of variants, indeed, but these are not “text” variants. For genetic criticism the difference between writing and text is fundamental. This is why it will use such enunciations as “secondary writing” (*réécriture*), “stages of writing” or “history of the writing process”, and “variant” will use first of all “for describing changes in texts of the same status, occurring between different versions of the same text”¹⁵. De Biasi calls such activities “print genetics”, whose task is to “describe and interpret changes in the text on each stage of its printed existence”¹⁶.

¹²De Biasi, 136–137.

¹³Frank Paul Bowman, “Genetic Criticism”, *Poetics Today* 11 (1990): 628.

¹⁴Daniel Ferrer, *Logiques du brouillon* (Paris: Éditions du Seuil, 2011), 182.

¹⁵De Biasi, 36.

¹⁶De Biasi.

8.

Spreading access to manuscripts and working materials remains one of the missions of genetic criticism. Genetic editions play the same role. The ones that are printed can be divided into two types: horizontal and vertical. A horizontal edition shows documents concerning a specific moment of a text's genesis, highlighting the stage of shaping ideas¹⁷. A vertical edition shows subsequent genetic phases of a given text, hence it is chronologically arranged and shows a defined course of transformations.

Do these editions fulfill their roles? Methods and textological effects of actions of genetic critics are commonly acknowledged, however, book genetic editions are equally often considered to be unclear, time-consuming and, as a result, useless. One good example of this problem is the edition of *Billy Budd*¹⁸.

Genetic critics soon started to think about electronic editions. The main argument was of course the capacity of the new medium and the possibilities of presenting the creative process, inaccessible in print. De Biassi roughly estimates that the disproportion between the volume of first and "final" drafts is more or less 5-10 pages of first draft per one page of final draft, whereas diplomatic transliteration in a genetic edition takes 2-3 pages per one page of autograph. As a result, a genetic edition documenting the writing process will be 10 to 30 times more extensive than the final text. Hence, if we were to transliterate first drafts of a 500-page long novel, we would have to deal with a 5,000- to 15,000-page book.

9.

If the paper medium is not good enough for a clear, and (as far as possible) complete, extended genetic edition, we have to resort to the digital medium. The basic question is: what is a genetic electronic edition? Or, more accurately: what do we want it to be? There is no commonly accepted definition of such an edition, but there are postulates. If we assume that a genetic edition showing the process, and hence liquidity, is our goal – how do we want to show this liquidity? Is it enough to scan the manuscripts with different hand-written editions of the text? Or maybe facsimiles and electronic transcription/transliteration of manuscripts? Or maybe it should be something more? Visualization of changes? Diagrams – what kind and for what purpose? A tool for collating changes?

First let us say that – for instance – a digital facsimile edition, reliable, but still a facsimile, i.e. with no transliteration and thus unable to serve as a basis for operations on the text, interesting from the academic perspective, is surely different from a digital genetic edition (henceforth DGE). Such an edition is, for example, a part of the Nietzsche Source project,

¹⁷Plans and scenarios for *Madame Bovary* are an example of such an edition, see footnote 9.

¹⁸See <https://christopherohge.com/hayford-sealts-billy-budd-transcription.pdf>, date of access: 15.06.2020.

which emerged from the pioneering Hyper Nietzsche (1999)¹⁹. We will find a digitized critical edition of texts which are encoded in the XML-TEI standard, but first and foremost, we will find there an edition of the whole (sic!) archive left behind by Nietzsche.

A digital edition of a manuscript/manuscripts, which typically means sharing scans of manuscripts and their simultaneous transliteration, is a completely different thing. There are many such projects, for example *Jane Austen's Fiction Manuscripts Digital Edition*²⁰.

There are also editions, and more often archives, which share high resolution scans of manuscripts, supplemented by transcriptions which are already available in paperback editions, not new criticism-wise – for example, the digital archive of Emily Dickinson²¹.

An interesting and useful thing can be found in the digital archive of Walt Whitman²². It is worth paying attention to its elements: apart from the scan and transliteration with a basic key, it also contains the metadata which includes the names of the people responsible for a specific digital element (which is a very good practice). Typically such editions are the result of many people's work, often students, and they deserve credit for their efforts.

There are many similar manuscript editions, and they may have different goals. The family archive of the Shelleys-Godwins²³, which comprises facsimiles, transcriptions, and transcriptions with code, offers a very convenient insight into the documents, and as such should also be mentioned here. Finally, there are also projects which aim at showing – in a clear, useful way – textual liquidity, such as the so-called *fluid edition of Taipi* by Herman Melville²⁴ (paid access).

10.

Let us consider then, what a digital genetic edition in a strict sense should be, and what such a project should encompass. Proposals regarding the contents of such an edition were presented already 10 years ago by Paolo D'Iorio²⁵. It would seem that this proposal should still be taken into consideration. To put it simply, D'Iorio lists the following elements of such an edition:

¹⁹<http://www.nietzschesource.org>, date of access: 10.06.2020.

²⁰<https://janeaugusten.ac.uk/index.html>, date of access: 10.06.2020.

²¹<http://www.edickinson.org>, date of access 10.06.2020. The project offers an additional convenient option: after logging in, it is possible to take notes and make own editions.

²²<https://whitmanarchive.org/>, date of access 10.06.2020. Notice the fundamental feature of such an edition: there are whole pages devoted to the used coding.

²³<http://shelleygodwinarchive.org/>, date of access: 10.06.2020.

²⁴<https://rotunda.upress.virginia.edu/melville/>, date of access: 10.06.2020.

²⁵Paolo D'Iorio, "Qu'est-ce qu'une édition génétique numérique?", *Genesis* 30 (2010).

1. A genetic dossier. If we have a medium with more capacity than a book at our disposal, we should gather all written, visual, audiovisual documents concerning a text or a work of art whose origins we are trying to present. In the case of a text this would be first drafts, consulted books by other authors, letters concerning this text, biographical materials, contracts, invoices, etc. Finally, if they exist, galley proofs with the author's corrections and the text published under the author's control. In other words: this part should encompass the author's archive concerning a given text. Of course, one could also create such an edition and a relevant dossier for the purpose of editing the materials, which have not been published, and which also are the subject of genetic editions, tracing – sometimes – the whole creative process, which did not necessarily end up as a complete work.

Creating such a dossier, just like in the case of a printed edition, typically relies on a strict classification of the genesis documents. It is important to remember that here we are talking about a critical edition, for which one should gather documents often scattered in different institutions. A dossier collects those documents, and hence it is often an entity with no material, i.e. a non-digital equivalent. A dossier requires cataloguing and providing readers with information on where the documents are stored. A table of contents of such a dossier is also necessary.

2. A facsimile edition of documents, which is a “necessary, yet insufficient”²⁶ part of the whole project. Such an extended dossier, which includes textual, iconographic, and audio elements have been created for e.g. *The Dream* by Emil Zola²⁷ (wherein the whole facsimile material is unavailable at the moment – which is often an issue with digital projects; to this day editors have problems with maintaining the continuity of the whole digital project). The above-mentioned edition also encompasses the history of reception, which is more and more frequently practiced in digital editions, similarly to presenting possible continuations of motifs in the theater, cinema, etc.

3. Transcription. From a purely theoretical perception, according to D'Iorio a transcription is not a necessary element of a digital genetic edition, because – as has already been stated – it is not supposed to create a new text (like in a critical edition). Its task is to share the documents from the creative process, hence the realization of such an edition could be boiled down to a facsimile edition of the dossier with a classification of documents and presentation with explanation of the basic genetic processes. The contents of such an edition would greatly depend on the target reader. Genesis documents available only in such a facsimile form may be difficult to read by laymen. It will depend on the legibility of the author's handwriting, and one should also remember that apart from manuscripts there are also newer genetic documents, often typed. Of course D'Iorio suggests supplementing the edition of a transcription which would allow to work with the text, and which is necessary from the practical perspective. But which transcription/transliteration should it be? First of all, diplomatic, i.e. preserving the *mise-en-page*, as well as linear, which finds a wider application when searching the

²⁶D'Iorio, 50.

²⁷<https://gallica.bnf.fr/dossiers/html/dossiers/Zola/>, date of access: 15.06.2020.

entire corpus. D'Iorio also mentions a potential ultra-diplomatic transliteration, which adds – instead of manuscript symbols – typographic symbols to the facsimiles of manuscripts. Such an “ultra” edition may be interactive in such a way as to change symbols at a user's request, for instance by placing a cursor on a given manuscript symbol, which then changes to a typographic one.

4. A genetic classification. The already mentioned cataloguing is the first form of classifying an archive, whose aim is to locate and describe the significance of those documents, which also takes place while arranging them according to their types. On the other hand, a strictly chronological classification, significant for genetic criticism, should leave out the typology of the documents, and place each element on a timeline according to the date of production, if it is possible to establish it precisely. Hence it is also about a classification which overlaps with the so-called genetic path.

5. The final and the most important element of a genetic edition: recreating the creative processes. How does one reconstruct this process in a digital edition? 10 years ago D'Iorio suggested that the so-called genetic diagrams can be of use here. They allow to show, for instance, what manuscript pages are the basis for a given text segment, chapter, etc. Another digital tool which makes understanding the origins easier is visualization of textual changes. If a text is adequately tagged, it is possible to visualize genetic operations, such as adding, moving, crossing out text, etc.

I still find D'Iorio conclusion regarding possible forms of digital representation of the text-creating process as a key one. Despite the indisputable effectiveness of these tools, the history of text creation is better told than shown. The editor has to become an interpreter and narrator of changes to a greater extent than before, and the true history of a text's origins, according to D'Iorio, most likely remains between a genetic edition and genetic criticism, which is “only” a story.

11.

As has been mentioned, there is no one and unchangeable definition of DGE. Neither is it known whether such a definition will ever be created, and, more importantly, whether it is required. However, it would seem that such a project should approach the model sketched above, and certainly consider it in the theoretical phase. There is no doubt that DGE is the most difficult type of edition: regardless of how one designs it, its goal is predominantly to present changes in time, which is still problematic also in the digital environment.

There are not many projects which can define themselves as DGE. If there are, typically one has to pay to access them. *The Beckett Digital Manuscript Project*²⁸ is in many ways a model project. It is an edition by Dirk Van Hulle, *spiritus movens* of the Beckett project. Van Hulle

²⁸<https://www.beckettarchive.org> date of access: 10.06.2020.

stresses that this is not a model of digital genetic edition, but rather a model of an scholarly edition which serves genetic criticism, for the use of genetic criticism²⁹. Van Hulle derives this edition's model and its contents and functionality based on five aspects of genetic criticism, predominantly exogenesis and endogenesis³⁰.

Exogenesis is also known as selection and assimilation of different sources in a way in which external elements “fit into” manuscripts, how they pave their way to them. In the case of historical novels it would be about extracting materials/facts from historical sources by the author and transforming them into literature. Marginalia preserved in books belonging to the author's book collection can also be related to their own works. Van Hulle gives the example of Beckett's notes on Proust's novel and proves that while working on his essay on Proust, Beckett very actively read *In Search of Lost Time* – for example, he combined different threads scattered across various volumes, gave them numbers, and this was his writing practice, his creative practice: intensive reading. Hence the postulate that a digital genetic edition should not just reconstruct an author's book collection, but also conduct a simulation of a pathway of this aspect of the creative process, i.e. a simulation of how the author used external sources.

Endogenesis means forming structures, i.e. subsequent stages of the writing and transformation process. It is obviously closely tied to exogenesis; in fact, sometimes it is difficult to separate the two.

In order to present these transformations in the digital world, tools for collation, such as the still very popular CollateX, are often used. In the Beckett project it was used, for example, for locating any sentence selected by the reader – a sentence being here a comparative unit – and visualized its forms on different stages of the creative process in an instant.

Van Hulle also considers epigenesis, i.e. processes which take place in texts accepted as completed, published. It can be assumed that they do not belong to pre-text, but there are cases like Beckett, in which what the author introduces as a change to the text becomes a pre-text to another text. For instance, when Beckett translated his own texts into different languages and when the original text became, to some extent, the translation's pre-text.

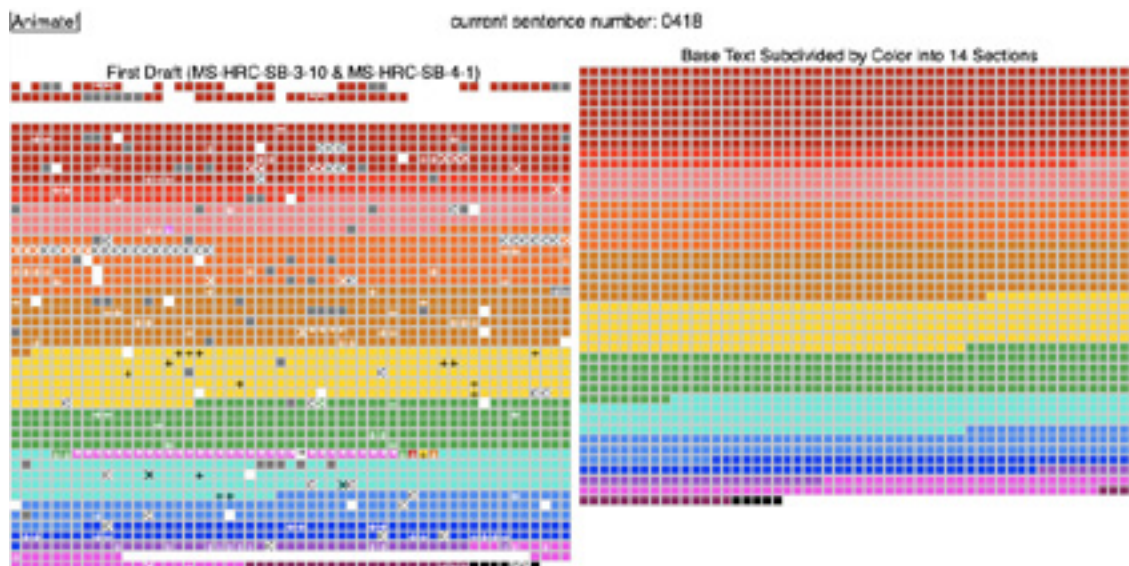
Another aspect, microgenesis, i.e. transforming some exogenetic source text or a history of changes of one element in the whole endogenesis and/or epigenetics in the writing process, or changes or corrections in one version.

In turn, macrogenesis is the entire work's genesis from the perspective of all its versions.

²⁹Dirk Van Hulle, “Modelling a Digital Scholarly Edition for Genetic Criticism: A Rapprochement”, *Variants. The Journal of the European Society for Textual Scholarship* 12-13 (2016): 36, footnote 3.

³⁰The terms were introduced to genetic criticism already in 1970s, see Raymonde Debray Genette, “Genétique et poétique: Le cas Flaubert”, in *Essais de critique génétique*, 21–67.

Let us have a look at Van Hullen's example, *The Unnamable*, the third installment of his trilogy. When Beckett was completing the first twenty-something pages of the first notebook with the manuscript of *The Unnamable*, he got the idea for the ending of the novel. He wrote it down on two separate pages and put them at the end of the notebook. Eventually he did not use those notes as the ending – instead, he reproduced them for one fragment towards the end. A macrogenetic analysis establishes and presents the relationship between the notebook's topography and the narration's development. The visualization used in the edition highlights the fact that those two loose pages were written in the early stage of the writing process (which is contradictory to the impression created by the notebook's topography). In order to visualize this event within the framework of macrogenesis, the same numerical system was used (encoded in XML), which allows a comparison in a synoptic preview. The reader can create several visualizations, including a "more textual" and a "more documentary" one. A documentary visualization, focused on the documentary aspect of the manuscript, shows the sequence of sentences as they were written on the manuscript's page (and simultaneously compares them with the book edition). It presents each sentence as a page related to its number based on the sentence sequence of the text, and color-encoded according to 14 narrative sequences into which the editors divided the novel. Visualization focused on the text concentrates on the author's sentence sequence in the manuscript rather than their location on the notebook page. Hence, if Beckett wrote down a sentence,



Il. 1. Samuel Beckett Digital Manuscript Project. Screenshot of the effect of the finished animation visualizing (left) the sentence sequence in the French manuscript of *The Unnamable* and their relationship with the printed version of the novel. Sentences from the manuscript, which did not enter the final text, are marked grey. In white – those sentences which did not appear in the manuscript, but occur in the printed version of the novel. The “+” symbol marks a working version of a sentence, which appears in the manuscript it yet another form, “x” – sentences crossed out from the manuscript, and the arrows show the direction in which a sentence was moved in the later stage of the writing process. Source (and animation which can be played!): <https://www.beckettarchive.org/writingsequenceofinnommable.jsp>

and then, in some relatively distant place he wrote down another one on the margin, which is its continuation, in the visualization they will be shown linearly. In a documentary visualization, they will be presented in the same sequence as the topography of the manuscript. Such tools allow us to “see the difference between the document’s topology and the text’s chronology”³¹.

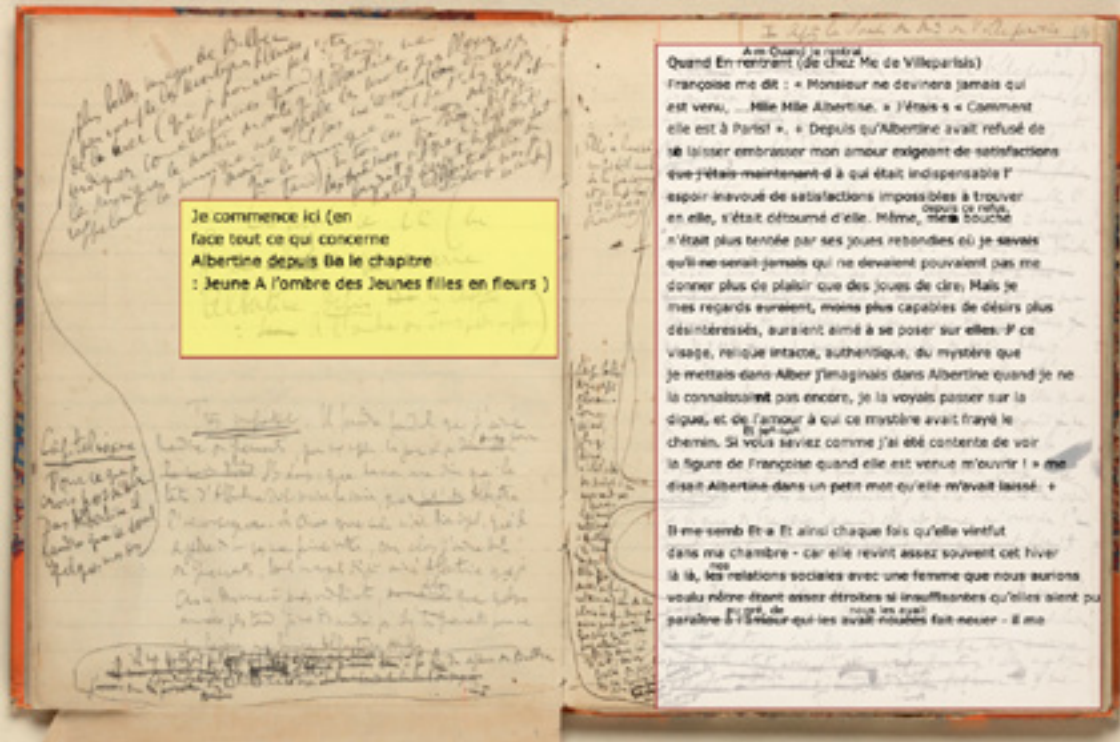
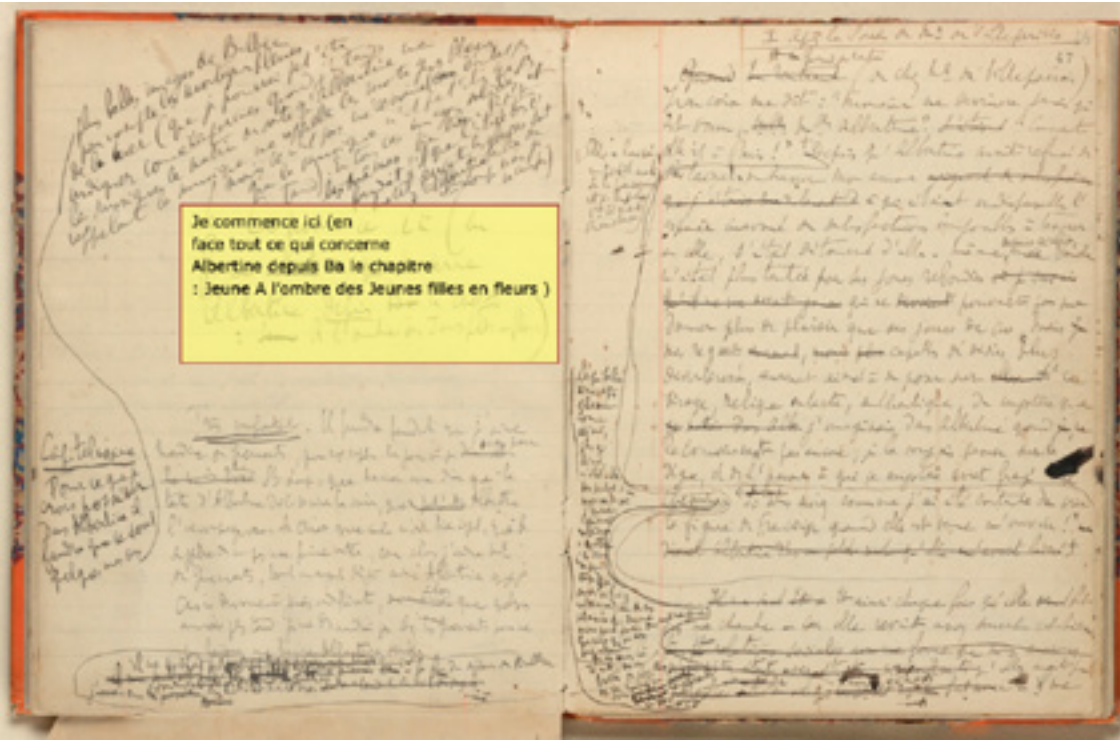
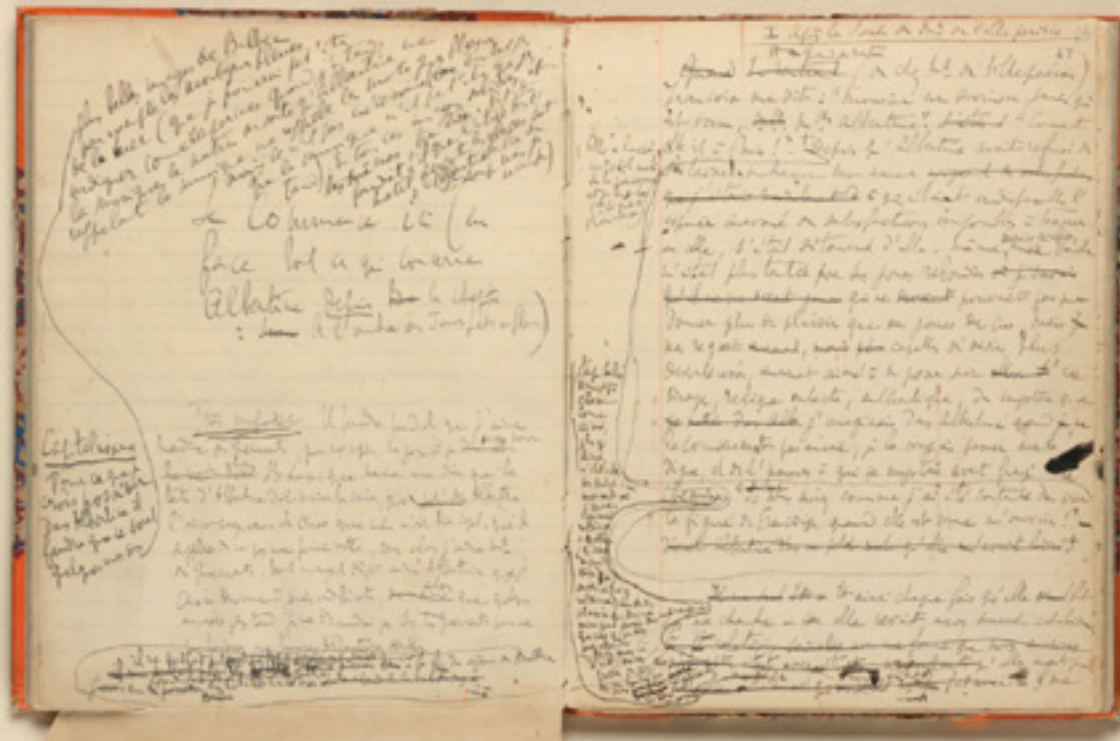
Another interesting – through, unfortunately, only prototypical – digital project, which allows us to take advantage of visualizations of subsequent sequences of “accretion” of handwritten notes, was created in 2011, while working on the coding language appropriate for encoding manuscripts with numerous corrections. The project, presented on a conference organized by ITEM in 2012, was devoted to one of Proust’s notebooks³². It showed facsimiles of a document and transliteration. Such digital enterprises typically face two problems: one is sometimes known as “the page paradigm”³³, i.e. the ambition to maintain the topography of the manuscript page in the presentation of the transliterated material. First of all, such a presentation never reflects the dynamics of writing, and secondly, even the most ultra-diplomatic edition will never fully reflect the page’s typography – it is still impossible to achieve. Transcription will most likely never reflect the spirit of the page. Moreover, such a solution typically forces the reader to single-handedly combine a fragment of the manuscript with the transcription presented next to it, which can be inconvenient. Additionally, digital editions generally present the text “page by page”. In some cases this could be unreliable – in his notebook, Proust took notes on one side, and used the opposite side for corrections, additions, etc. The sequence of writing is thus not page-by-page, which required introduction of transcription to facsimiles or rather: on facsimiles. In such projects most often a simple solution is used: when the user places the cursor on a fragment of the manuscript, a transcription appears immediately next to it. In this case the solution was to click on any place of the facsimiled picture. Hence, the visualization showed, through electronic transcription appearing in the place of hand-written notes, the reconstructed sequence of writing dropping down after each mouse click (Fig. 2). The project’s goal was to maintain the academic value, as well as to encourage reading and give some pleasure to laymen. To put it simply: to spread and popularize the manuscript³⁴.

³¹Van Hulle, 52.

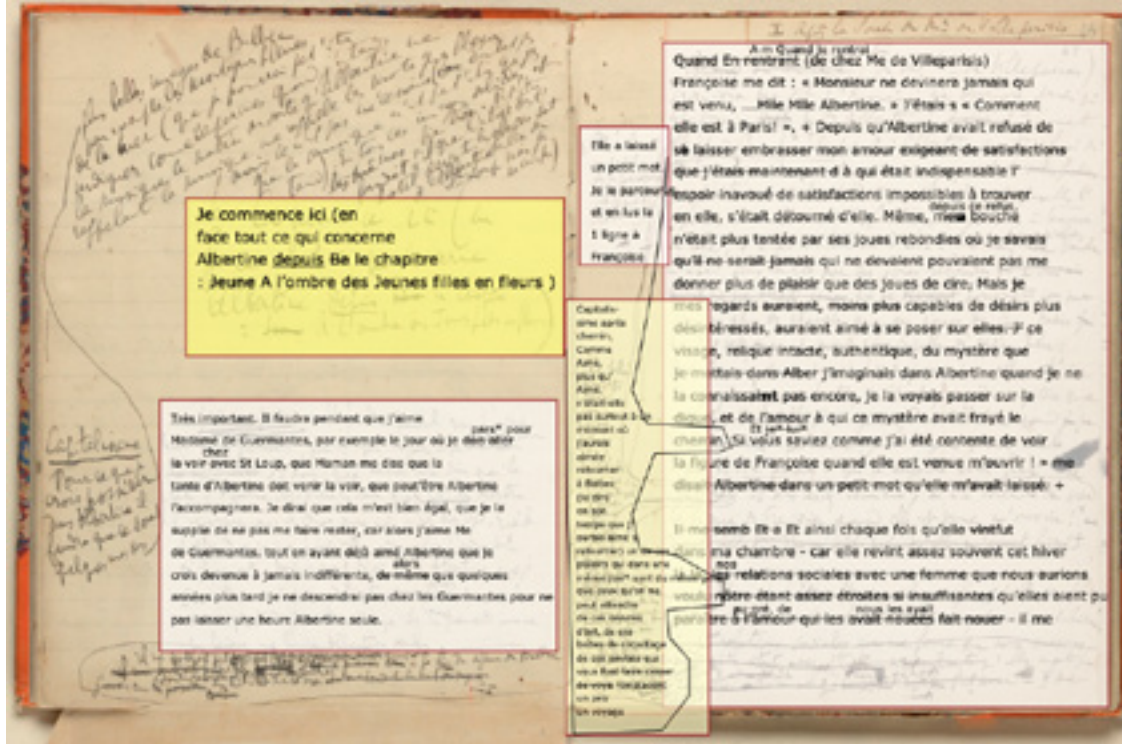
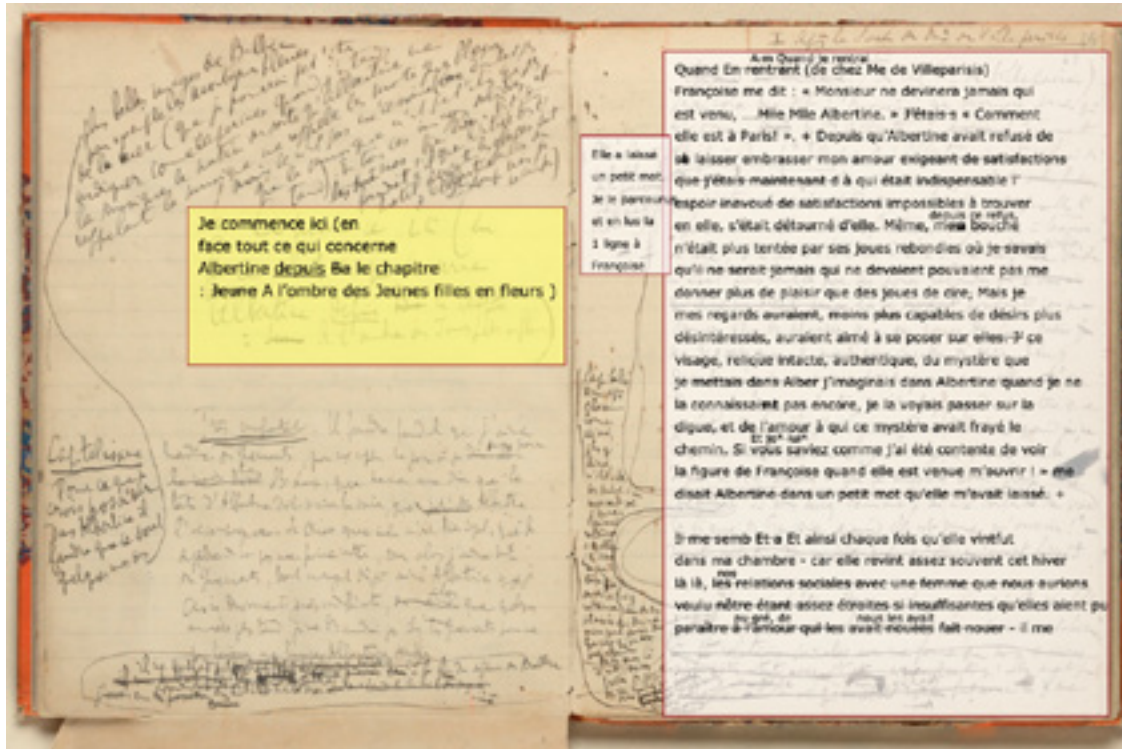
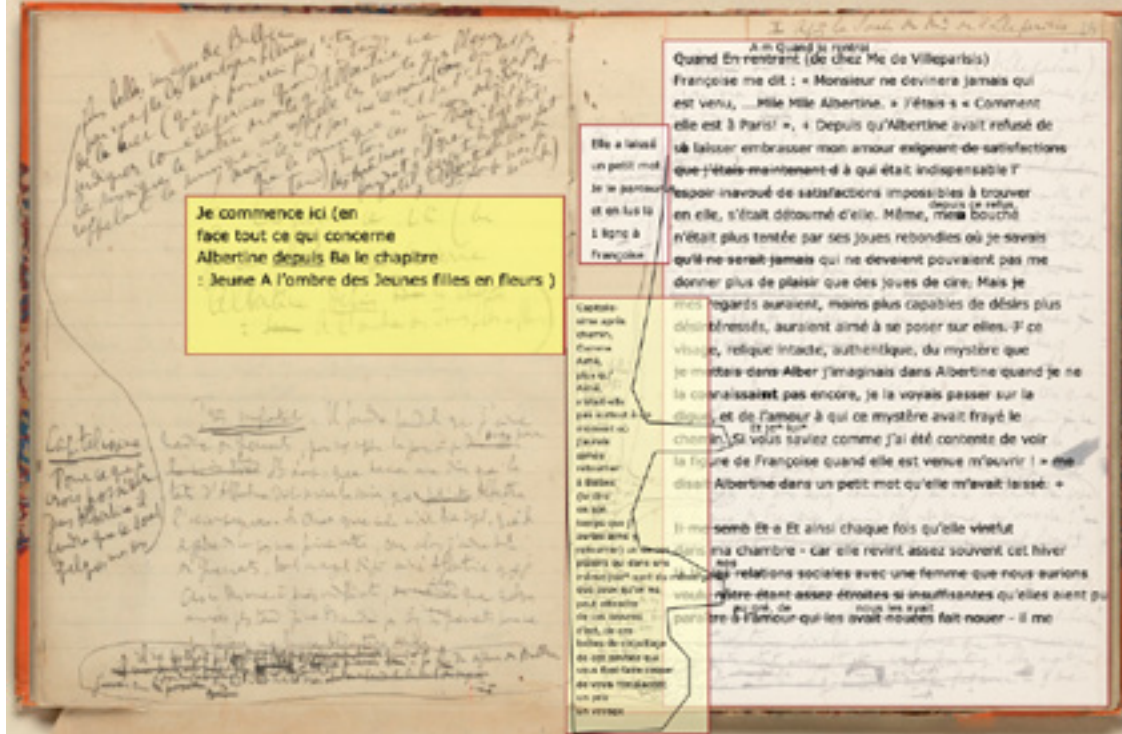
³²http://research.cch.kcl.ac.uk/proust_prototype/, date of access: 16.06.2020.

³³Patrick Sahle, *About a catalog of Digital Scholarly Editions*: <http://v3.digitale-edition.de/vlet-about.html>, date of access: 16.06.2020.

³⁴The availability and accessibility of the material presented in the digital edition and the toolset is crucial. Some digital solutions, although interesting and ambitious on the conceptual level, can scare off. One sophisticated (both academically and technologically) as well as – to my mind – somewhat difficult example is the complex digital edition of *Faust* which incorporates genetic aspects: <http://faustedition.net>, date of access: 16.06.2020.



Il. 2. Julie André, Elena Pierazzo, *Around a sequence and some notes of Notebook 46: encoding issues about Proust's drafts*. A screenshot of a chronological visualization of the reconstructed writing process. The sequences are shown to the reader after each click. The shades of yellow reflect different levels of the editors' certainty regarding the arrangement of the sequences – the more intense, the less certain. Source: http://research.cch.kcl.ac.uk/proust_prototype/, date of access: 16.06.2020.



12.

What language should be used for encoding manuscripts in a genetic edition? The first one, from 2003, was known as “Genetic Encoding Language” (GEL), earlier known as “HyperNietzsche Markup Language” (HNML) – a variation of the XML³⁵ language created for encoding manuscripts. A bit later, a dedicated working group was created within TEI³⁶, who was supposed to design such a language. It can be assumed that the workshops *Genetic Editions in a Digital Framework* organized by ITEM in May 2009 in Paris by, among others, Paolo D’Iorio and Elena Pierazzo, were the founding event for the new language. The goal was to work out a coding model for the purpose of genetic editions, which indeed happened in 2011 with the publication of TEI P5 2.0. It incorporated solutions which allow to encode some features of the document, not just its text. Moreover, they simplify encoding time, sequencing, and stages of writing in the transcripts of the documents. The <sourceDoc> element, which exists in the code’s hierarchy on the same level as <teiHeader>, <facsimile> or <text>, was introduced then. It was a TEI manifesto of a sort, an initiative, which – as the very name suggests – so far had favored “text”. Ever since it has been possible to transcribe documents as documents³⁷, rather than using coding dedicated to texts. In order to make encoding a sequence in the transcription of the manuscript easier, for example, a <change> element was introduced, which allows to mark changes in a single document. The model is constantly updated, but its core persists³⁸.

13.

After this quick and necessarily skin-deep reconnaissance I would like to return to Rozanow and controversy. Andriej Biely recorded a meeting with this “hostile, splendid writer”³⁹:

On one occasion, after bumping into me, trampling me and groping me, he spat out a question; and I, when answering it, traced my finger on a tablecloth, without thinking about it. At first he didn’t hear me. He leaned forward with his (huge) ear, watched the trace of my fingernail, with which I was drawing zigzags. Next, looking intently at that drawing, he accidentally spat and said: “You understand!”.

Genetic criticism wants to understand traces, establish how the process of human creative and intellectual activity proceeds. Literary studies remain the most common example of it. “Our notion of European literature would be radically different, however, were it not for the fortuitous survival of such unique manuscripts as Pascal’s *Thoughts* or the *Urfaust* by Goethe, *Lucien Leuwen* or Kafka’s great novels”⁴⁰. History of Polish literature would also be

³⁵XML (ang. Extensible Markup Language) – a universal language used for representing structured data.

³⁶TEI (ang. Text Encoding Initiative) – a standard used for defining the formal structure of XML documents.

³⁷For example, *Shelley Godwin Archive* uses it: <http://shelleygodwinarchive.org/>, date of access: 09.06.2020.

³⁸[An Encoding Model for Genetic Editions: https://tei-c.org/Vault/TC/tcw19.html](https://tei-c.org/Vault/TC/tcw19.html), date of access: 09.06.2020.

³⁹Andriej Biely, *Rozanow*, w W. Rozanow, *Odosobnionie*, 5.

⁴⁰Louis Hay, “Does ‘Text’ Exist?”, trans. by M. Jocelyn, H. W. Gabler, *Studies in Bibliography* 41 (1988), 68.

different – it is enough to mention *Liryki lozańskie* or late plays by Słowacki, *Vade-mecum*. The spectrum of interest of genetic criticism is systematically growing, more and more often incorporating other fields of life – geneticists deal with laboratory records, which register the development of a scientific experiment, they study music scores, preparatory sketches and drawings of painters, unused film records, photographic collections, scene notes, etc.⁴¹ Would all authors of manuscripts be happy if subsequent generations of scholars investigated them? Sometimes the answer is clear, but sometimes there is no way for us to know. Probably not all writers shared Rozanow's attitude towards their manuscripts. And definitely many authors who only make their text public, leaving out hand-written notes, which could be highly intimate, would rather avoid scholars' inquisitiveness. For example, Ladislav Klíma and Claude Simon destroyed many of their manuscripts. Others, such as Czesław Miłosz and Zbigniew Herbert, carefully maintained their private archives. The very fact that they did – which required a lot of work – does not prove anything, and does not automatically mean that they would consent to browsing through such archives. Actually, do we even have the right to do such research without written consent? The solution of this dilemma goes far beyond academic arguments, and the possible conflict is of moral nature, in which there are no right answers. If an author had not formally forbidden access to such materials, the matter remains open for discussion. Finally, there are also authors who actually shared reproductions of their manuscripts so that they would be printed (Tadeusz Różewicz), thus changing the potential pre-text into a text. By looking into working materials which document numerous transformations of author's records, in a way we bring them back to life, we give them a new rank, and sometimes we re-situate abandoned fragments.

In *Opadłe liście* [Fallen leaves], a later collection of fast notes, Rozanow writes:

They totally didn't notice, what was new about *Odosobniony* [Isolated]. They compared them to Rousseau's *Confessions*, whereas this was not my intention at all.

What is new – the tone, tone (again!) of the manuscripts, tone “from before Gutenberg”, for myself⁴².

Genetic criticism is inquisitive. In terms of literature, for a few decades now it has been analyzing someone's “tone for myself”. I think that the fascination with manuscripts has its actual source not in the wish to get to know the process for the process's sake. The epistemological stakes are even higher: it is not just about discovering tendencies and creative predilections, various author's inclinations and practices, but, to put it bluntly – about discovering some part of the author's “essence”. I would not like to evaluate the cognitive abilities, legitimacy or academic usefulness of such investigations, but the fact remains that to my mind genetic criticism, even if it shies away from such a thesis, wants to understand the specificity of the person it writes about. This is why it is probably no coincidence that its

⁴¹<http://www.item.ens.fr/thematique/>, date of access: 09.06.2020.

⁴²Wasilij Rozanow, *Opadłe liście*, trans. by Jacek Chmielewski, Ireneusz Kania (Warsaw: Fundacja Augusta hr. Cieszkowskiego, 2013) 110.

closest relationships, evident from the subject bibliography and several specific case studies, are with psychoanalysis and its tools; if we look at the state of research accumulated over several decades, they are among the most often-used tools by geneticists. Hence genetic criticism studies a person and their life. And if philosophy is also about “experiencing words intimately”⁴³, then only “the tone of a manuscript” can provide a deep experience and new knowledge.

translated by Paulina Zagórska

⁴³P. Nowak, *Posłowie*, in W. Rozanow, *Odosobnione*, p. 157.

References

- An Encoding Model for Genetic Editions, date of access 09.06.2020, <https://tei-c.org/Vault/TC/tcw19.html>.
- André, Julie, Pierazzo, Elena. *Around a sequence and some notes of Notebook 46: encoding issues about Proust's drafts*, date of access: 16.06.2020, http://research.cch.kcl.ac.uk/proust_prototype/
- De Biasi, Pierre-Marc. *Genetyka tekstów*. Translated by Filip Kwiatek, Maria Prussak. Warszawa: Wydawnictwo IBL PAN, 2015.
- Bięły, Andriej. *Rozanow*. W Rozanow, Wasilij. *Odosobnione*. Translated by Ireneusz Kania and Piotr Nowak. Warszawa: Fundacja Augusta hr. Cieszkowskiego, 2004.
- Bowman, Frank Paul. „Genetic Criticism”, *Poetics Today* 11 (1990): 627–46.
- Czapski, Józef. *Patrząc*. Kraków: Znak, 1990.
- Daniel Ferrer, *Logiques du brouillon*. Paris: Éditions du Seuil, 2011.
- Debray Genette, Raymonde. „Genetique et poétique: Le cas Flaubert”. In *Essais de critique génétique*, ed. Louis Hay, 21–68. Paris: Flammarion, 1979.
- Emily Dickinson Archive, date of access: 09.06.2020, <http://www.edickinson.org>
- Faust Edition, date of access: 16.06.2020, <http://faustedition.net>.
- Ferrer, Daniel. *Logiques du brouillon*. Paris: Éditions du Seuil, 2011.
- Flaubert, Gustave. *Plans et scénarios de Madame Bovary*, présentation, transcription et notes par Yvan Leclerc. Paris: CNRS/Zulma, 1995.
- Gallica, date of access: 09.06.2020, <https://gallica.bnf.fr/dossiers/html/dossiers/Zola/>
- GDRI DIGEN, date of access: 15.06.2020, <http://www.item.ens.fr/digen/>
- Hay, Louis. “Does ‘Text’ Exist?”, trans. by Matthew Jocelyn, Hans Walter Gabler, *Studies in Bibliography* 41 (1988): 64–76.
- . „La critique génétique: origines et perspectives”. In *Essais de critique génétique*, ed. Louis Hay, 227–236. Paris: Flammarion, 1979.
- . „«Le Texte n'existe pas»: réflexions sur la critique génétique”, *Poétique* 62 (1985): 146–58.
- Herman's Melville's "Typee". A Fluid Edition, date of access: 09.06.2020, <https://rotunda.upress.virginia.edu/melville/>
- Van Hulle, Dirk. “Modelling a Digital Scholarly Edition for Genetic Criticism: A Rapprochement”. *Variants. The Journal of the European Society for Textual Scholarship* 12- 13 (2016): 34–56.

D'Iorio, Paolo. „Qu'est-ce qu'une édition génétique numérique?“, *Genesis* 30 (2010).

L'ITEM, date of access: 09.06.2020, <http://www.item.ens.fr/thematique/>.

Jane Austen's Fiction Manuscripts Digital Edition, date of access: 09.06.2020, <https://janeausten.ac.uk/index.html>

Nietzsche Source, date of access: 09.06.2020, <http://www.nietzschesource.org>

Nowak, Piotr. "Posłowie". In Rozanow, Wasilij. *Odosobnionie*, translated by Ireneusz Kania and Piotr Nowak, 141–59. Warszawa: Fundacja Augusta hr. Cieszkowskiego, 2004.

Rozanow, Wasilij. *Odosobnionie*. Translated by Ireneusz Kania and Piotr Nowak. Warszawa: Fundacja Augusta hr. Cieszkowskiego, 2004.

———. *Opadłe liście*. Przetłumaczone przez Jacek Chmielewski and Ireneusz Kania, Warszawa: Fundacja Augusta hr. Cieszkowskiego, 2013.

Sahle, Patrick. *About a catalog of Digital Scholarly Editions*, date of access: 16.06.2020, <http://v3.digitale-edition.de/vlet-about.html>.

Samuel Beckett Digital Manuscript Project, date of access: 09.06.2020, <https://www.beckettarchive.org/writingsequenceofinnommable.jsp>

Shelley Godwin Archive, date of access: 09.06.2020, <http://shelleygodwinarchive.org/>.

Walt Whitman Archive, date of access: 09.06.2020, <https://whitmanarchive.org>.

KEYWORDS

digital genetic edition

scholarly editing

ABSTRACT:

The paper is about the theoretical and practical proposals of genetic criticism and its complicated relations with scholarly editing. The author discusses the benefits from applying that method of reading manuscripts, the related difficulties and possibilities of using its effects in digital editing. Examples of existing digital genetic editions are presented, with practical tips regarding the technical aspects – including the language used for encoding manuscripts and digital reconstruction of the text-producing process – related to such a presentation of a text in a digital environment.

DIGITAL HUMANITIES*g e n e t i c c r i t i c i s m***NOTE ON THE AUTHOR:**

Paweł Bem – PhD in the humanities, assistant professor in the Center for Philological Studies and Scholarly Editing at IBL PAN, member of the editing committee for the series *Filologia XXI*. Author of, among other works, *Dynamika wariantu. Miłosz tekstologicznie* [the dynamics of a variant. Miłosz textologically] (Warsaw 2017), awarded in the Inka Brodzka-Wald competition. His research interests focus on textology and the Polish emigration literature after 1945. |