Editing and Transcribing

Dr. Elena Pierazzo

London 30 April 2014
Summary

- Edition given a single witness
  - Diplomatic, semi-diplomatic, facsimile, reading, genetic, etc. editions
- Edition given multiple witnesses
  - Stemmatics
  - Copy-text
  - Eclecticism
  - Phylogenetic
Editing AND Transcribing
Transcribing AND Editing
Editing OR Transcribing

EDITING
Editions given a single witness, when and why

1. the unique witness is the original, i.e. it is an autograph or a copy controlled by the author
2. the unique witness is the only surviving copy of a larger tradition
3. the witness is part of a wider tradition, but has an individual importance
4. the tradition of a text is so messed up that it is impossible to understand the relations among witnesses
5. the editor thinks that any critical edition is a historical falsification
6. The editor is interested in the process of authoring
The ‘original’

... is one of the most elusive concept in textual criticism!

1. The original is autograph
2. The original is not autograph but its production has been controlled by the author
3. The autograph is not the original: the author has made yet another copy of the original
4. The original is oral and someone at a certain level of the tradition has written it by memory, but its main tradition continues orally: the author is collective
Editorial operations and decisions

- **Scope**: the text or the document?
- **Reading the text**: how to handle holes, gaps, damages, unreadable passages, word spacing, and abbreviations?
- **History of the manuscript/layer and stratification**: are there annotations from different hands? What to do with them?
- **Codicological issues**: how was the original manuscript assembled? Is it still assembled in that way? Is it complete? Has it been bound with other material?
The weight of editorial intervention

Different types of edition fall on a spectrum from a minimum to a maximum of editorial operations concerning:

- Abbreviations
- Word spacing
- Line breaks
- Additions/deletions
- Spellings
- Errors
- Etc.
Different types of editions

- Type facsimile edition → Genetic editions
- Diplomatic edition
- Semi-diplomatic edition
- Critical edition
Multiple witnesses edition

- When multiple witnesses are present they normally present variant readings

- Which are the “correct” readings? How to choose them?

- Who’s the responsible for such variants?
Editorial methodologies

- **Stemmatics** → multiple scribal versions, mainly
- **Copy-Text** → multiple authorial versions, mainly
- **Eclecticism** → too many versions!
Stemmatics

- The Lachmannian method for editing includes different stages
  - Recensio
  - Collatio
  - Examinatio
  - Selectio (et emendatio)
  - Editio
Survey of **ALL** the existing witnesses

- Condition
- Particular circumstances
- How to find them?
  - Existing editions
  - Catalogues
Direct and Indirect

- The whole of preserved copies is known as **Tradition**
- **Direct Tradition**: direct copies of the text
- **Indirect Tradition**: translations, quotations…
Recentiores non sunt Deteriores

- What is important is not WHEN a witness was copied, but FROM WHICH exemplar (perhaps the lost original?)
Comparison of the readings of all the witnesses

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Source</th>
<th>Text</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>A</td>
<td>huius itaque sanctissimi viri episcopale inchoantes exordium</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MP1</td>
<td>episcopalem</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>N</td>
<td>ab episcopali</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SNB</td>
<td>explorare</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Evaluation of the readings

- Errors: the reading is clearly wrong (orthography, grammar, semantics, nonsensical words...)
- Variants: the reading is plausible (maybe by the author?)
Scribal Errors

- Anticipation: *put putting* instead of *but putting*
- Dittography: *hominines* instead of *homicines.*
- Haplography: *perpetrate* becomes *pertrate.*
- Eyeskip (homoioteleuton)
- Homoiioarchon: *train* instead of *trail.*
- Metathesis: *disaply* instead of *display.*
- Transposition: *Pater, Filus et Sanctus Spiritus* instead of *Pater, Filius et Spiritus Sanctus*
Error genesis

- **Polygenetic error**: an error that any scribe can do autonomously. Finding the same error in different manuscripts does not imply any genealogical relationship between the two witnesses.

- **Monogenetic error**: an error that has a statistically low probability of having been done by two people in the exact same way.
Substantial Variants

- substantial variants on the text that give plausible alternative readings

A: huius itaque sanctissimi viri *episcopale inchoantes exordium*

M: *certamina descripturi*
MP1: episcopalem
N: ab episcopali
SNB: explorare
Given Two Manuscripts, A and B
Significant or indicative errors

- Separative errors: used to prove that A is not copied from B
- Conjunctive errors: used to prove that A is copied from B
- They are not the same!
Building the stemma; eliminatio codicum descriptorum

The α family
- ABH Conjunctive error
- ABH separative error against CDEFG
- AH separative error against B
- H separative error against A

- ABH separative error against CDEFG
- AH separative error against B
- H separative error against A
The **archetype** is the non-preserved copy that contains at least **one error** common to the whole tradition and from which the whole tradition descends.
It is **not** necessarily extant!
Contamination

“ut recta [vel regia] via euntes”

Scribal editorial work

British Library, Burney 28, f. 2
Medieval/Modern Manuscript Studies in the Digital Age
Law of the majority of the direct descendants
Non mechanical choices

- Difficilior lectio potior
- Usus scribendi
- When everything fails: *emendatio ope ingenii*
Apparatus criticum et variorum

- Negative apparatus
- Positive apparatus
Limits to stemmatics

- Joseph Bédier: criticised bi-polar trees
- Contamination
- Fragmentary Texts
- Authorial variants
- Re-elaborative traditions (Pasquali)
Polygentics/Cladistic

- Peter Robinson’s *Canterbury Tales*
A form of eclecticism
Elaborated for early modern material
We have early autograph
We have one+ printed version with substantial variants
Combine accidentals of the autograph with substantial of later prints
Accidentals & Substantials

- Accidentals: Orthography and spellings, capitalisation, punctuation, word separation...
- All features that were regularised by publishers

- Substantials: likely to have been approved by the author, in proofs for instance

- Copy text: restoring the intention of the author
Copy-Text: criticism

- Hybridization of versions, which are the results of socio-economic & cultural conditions and interesting per se (McGann, McKenzie)

- Open to abuse: How to determine the real intention? (German school)

- Text-oriented: what about the documents?
The work as a process: genetic criticism/editing

- Autographs are interesting as objects in their own right
- Witnesses not of texts, but of the authoring processes
- Study of all states of the texts, within the same document (layers), or across different documents (dossier)
- Does not produce one text, nor many texts, but studies the ingredients to produce one/many texts
Another case of intentionalism
Each case is different, each requires a different methodology
Attention to the dossier and to the process, but aimed at the reconstruction of the One text
Eclecticism

-- Biblical studies

- Manuscripts in their thousands
- Impossible to compare them all
- Impossible even to classify by loci critici
- Millennia of scholarship
- Most authoritative witness are collated and their reading combined