



Medieval/Modern Manuscript Studies in the Digital Age

Editing and Transcribing

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Summary

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



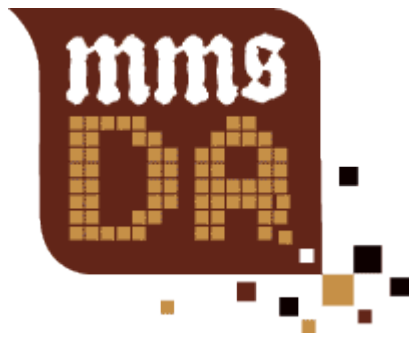
Editing, Transcribing

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'

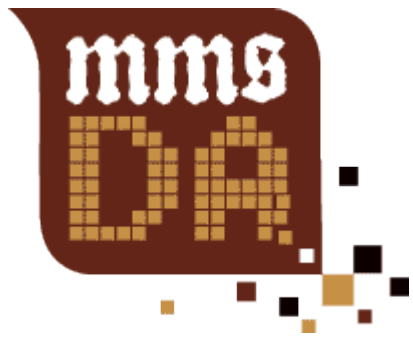
... is one of the most elusive concept in textual criticism!

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

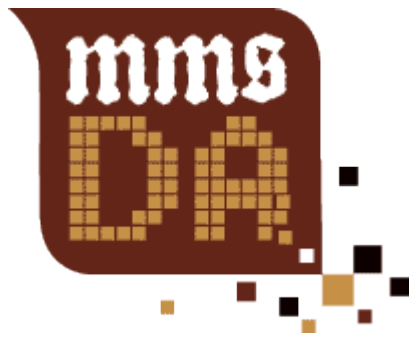
Different types of edition fall on a spectrum from a minimum to a maximum of editorial operations concerning:

- 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



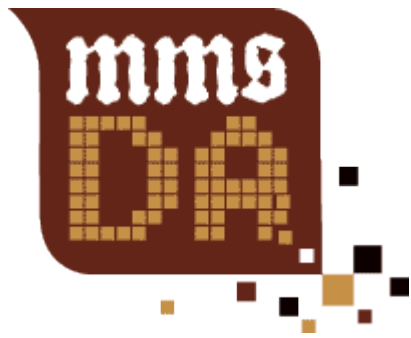
Multiple witnesses edition

- 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*



Recensio

- 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?)



Collatio

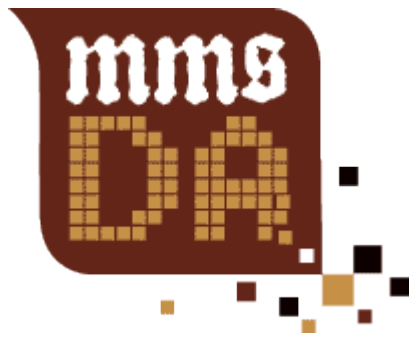
Comparison of the readings of all the witnesses

A:	huius itaque sanctissimi viri episcopale inchoantes exordium
MP1:	episcopalem
N:	ab episcopali
SNB:	explorare



Selectio

- 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 *homines*.
- Haplography: *perpetrate* becomes *pertrate*.
- Eyeskip (homoioteleuton)
- Homoioarchon: *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

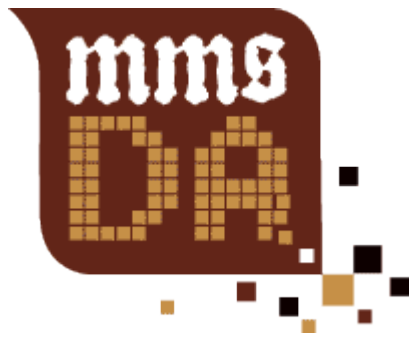
N: ab episcopali

SNB: explorare



Given Two Manuscripts, A and B





Significant or indicative errors

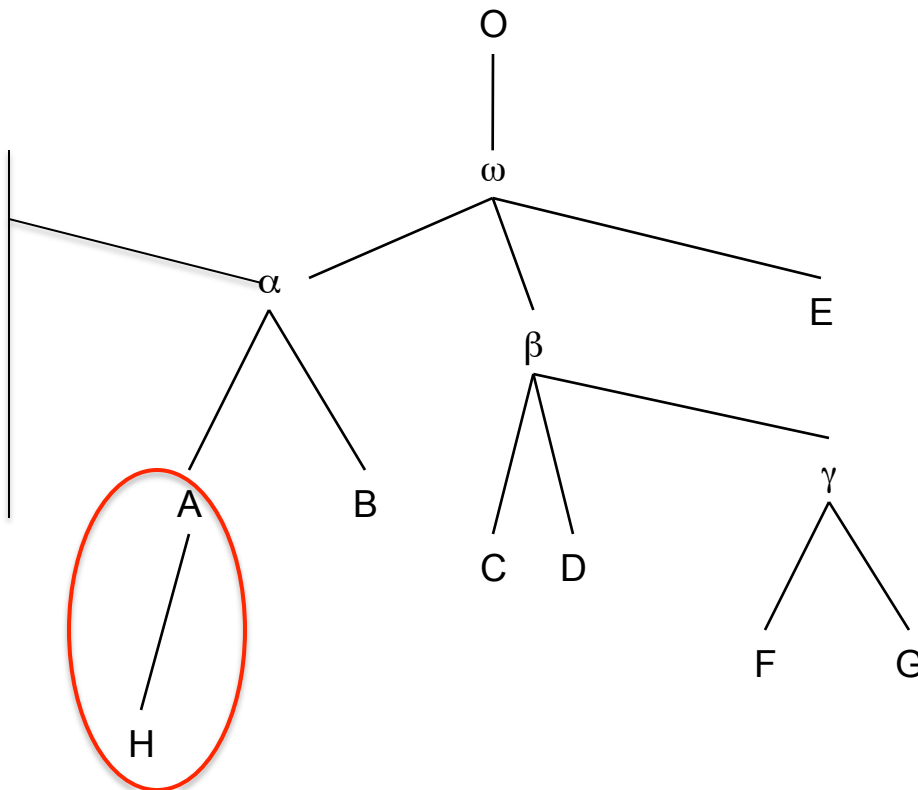
- Separative errors: used to prove that A is not copied from B
- Conjunctive errors: used to prove that A is copied from B
- They are not the same!



Building the stemma; eliminatio codicum descriptorum

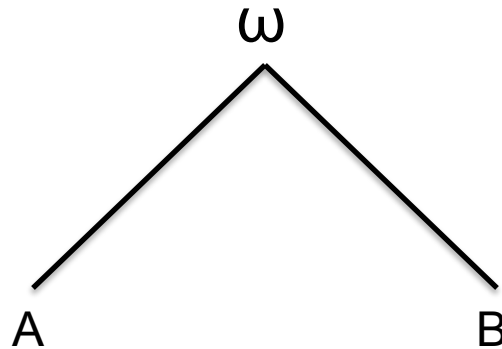
The α family

- ABH
Conjunctive error
- ABH separative error against CDEFG
- AH separative error against B
- H separative error against A





Archetype?

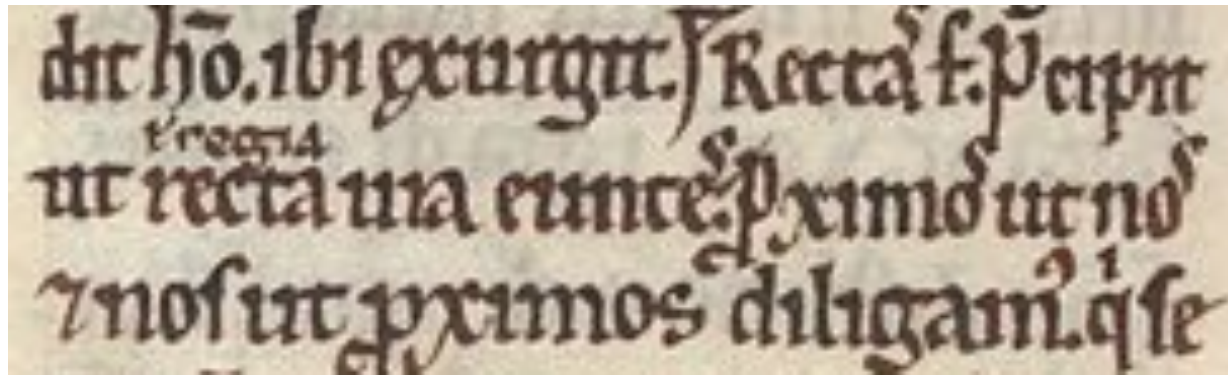


The **archetype** is the **non-preserved** copy that contains at least **one error** common to the whole tradition and from which the whole tradition descends.

It is **not** necessarily extant!



Contamination



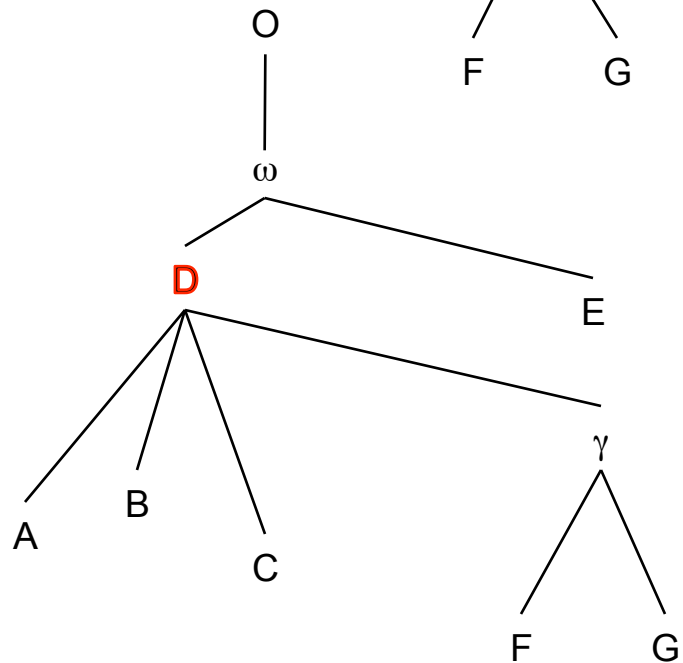
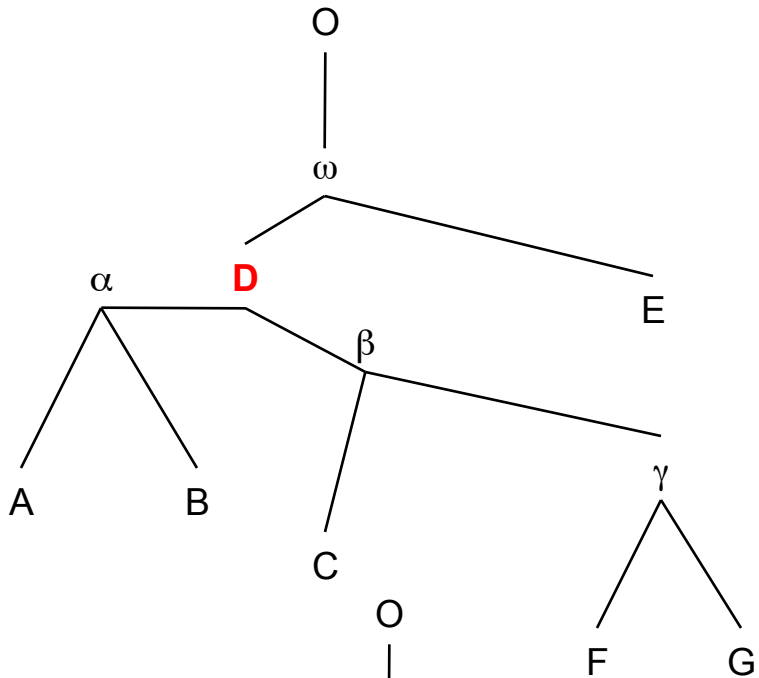
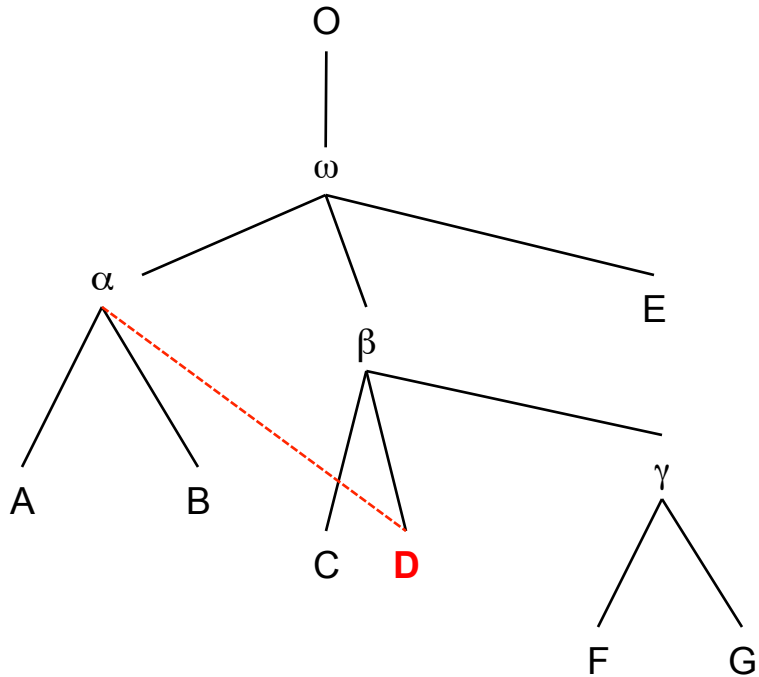
British Library, Burney 28, f. 2

“ut recta [**vel regia**] via euntes”

Scribal editorial work



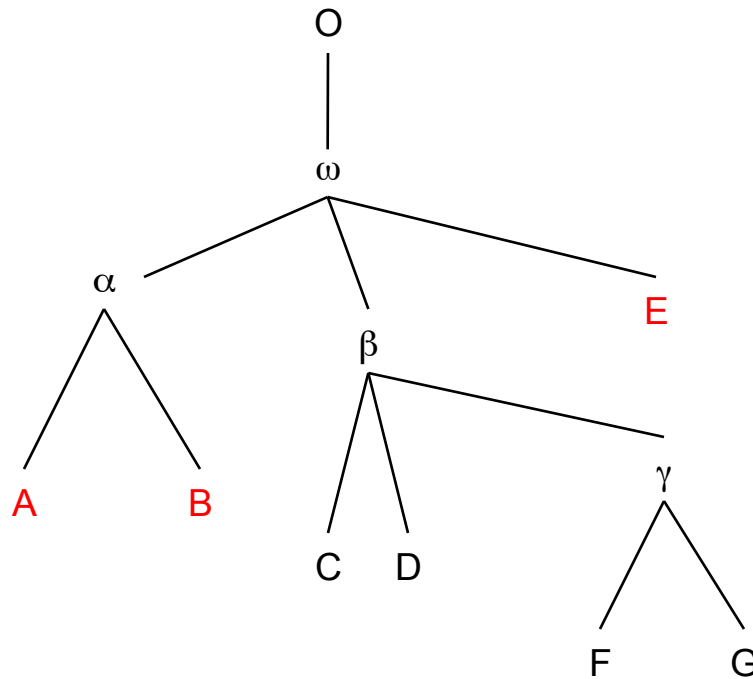
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Editio: mechanical choices

- Law of the majority of the direct descendants





Non mechanical choices

- **Difficilior lectio potior**
- **Usus scribendi**

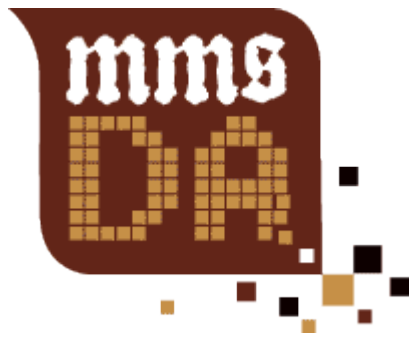
- **When everything fails: emendatio
ope ingenii**



Apparatus criticum et variorum

^{a-a} eius in omnibus] in omnibus *H*, omnibus eius *L* ^b Regnante . . . tempore
(p. 414)] written mg. alongside 959 *C*³, om. *HL*, outer mg. alongside 957 with sign pointing
to 959 p. 410 n. f *P*³

- Negative apparatus
- Positive apparatus



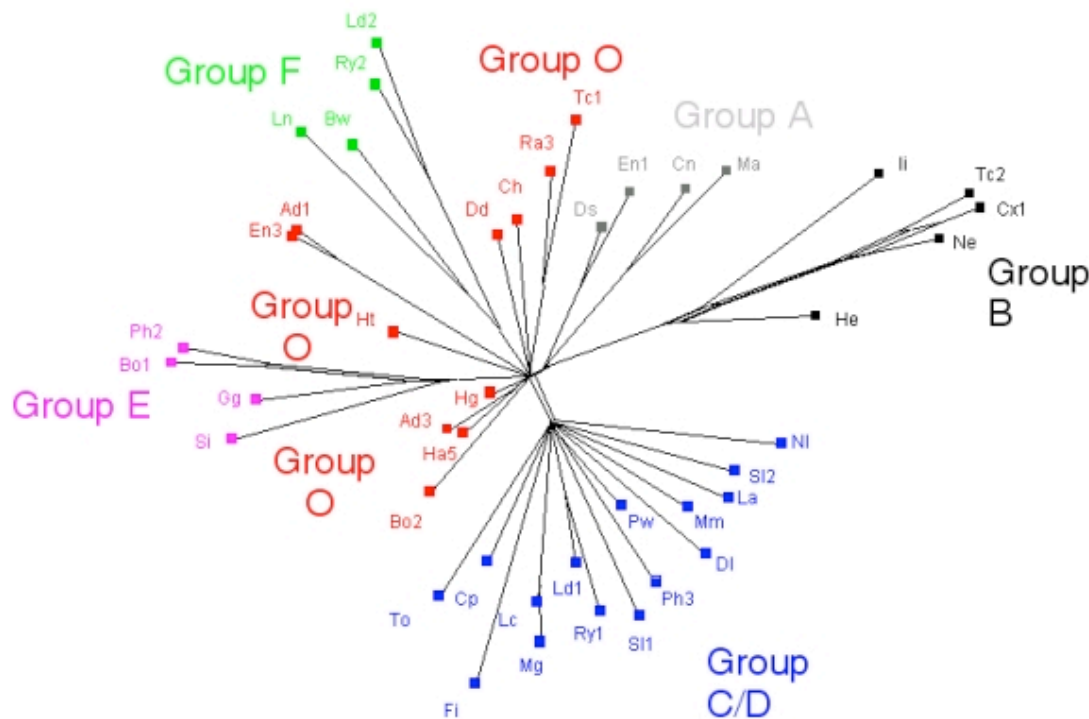
Limits to stemmatics

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



Polygenetics/Cladistic

- Peter Robinson's *Canterbury Tales*





Copy Text Greg, 1950

- 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 substantials 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 object 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



“Filologia d’autore”

- 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