INTRODUCTION

PAUL EGGERT AND PETER SHILLINGSBURG

Although editing in every country is as old as literature, it is fair to say that between the 1930s and 1950s the editing of anglophone literary and theatrical works became a scholarly or «scientific» discipline. Focusing first on the Renaissance period, the new editorial methods soon radically influenced editorial practice for literary works of the later periods. Particularly in North America, this revolution in editorial practice became pervasive in the late 1950s and prevailed through the 1970s. The delayed but inevitable reaction has made Anglo-American editorial debates richer in the last thirty years than in any comparable previous period. Because editors within Britain and the United States were often in disagreement about theory and divergent in their practice, the overview of the period 1980-2005 given here cannot be both brief and comprehensive; and our narrative is further complicated by the fact that much editing of British literature was conducted in America and some in other anglophone countries[1].

Selecting twenty-one essays to represent the very recent past has therefore been difficult, leaving discarded on the compilers' floor many important contributions to the debate. Viewing this period from within, we believe the Anglo-American editorial scene was and is more varied than it may appear to European readers, though we could not, of course, watch also from that point of view. Nevertheless, we are aware that what might outwardly have looked like a sudden shift in Anglo-American editorial aims from eclectic editing of authorial final intentions to a recording or archiving of a work's multiple documentary witnesses remains in fact a contentious development. Chief among current and renewed arguments are those over the intentions of the agents of textual change, choice of copy-text, principles of emendation, versional editing, and fundamental redefinitions of what is meant by the terms *text*, *document*, and *work*[2].

These arguments were, gradually from the 1970s, fuelled by a remarkable increase in the number and variety of editions of post-Renaissance works. Unlike the case with Shakespeare where the original manuscripts are nearly entirely lost (so that editing had to rest mainly on the bibliographical analysis of printed books), the later centuries have yielded literary archives whose textual richness and variety defied easy incorporation into traditional single-text or best-text editorial approaches. Change in Anglo-American editing practice was inevitable, but the speed of change was slowed by the institutional drag of traditionally minded funding agencies and oversight organizations, the expectations of publishers, as well as the conservative effect of still unfinished complete-works editions that had set their editorial policies in the 1960s and 1970s. To deal with the mixed signals produced by this (apparently paradoxical) situation, we have included a representative essay for each of many aspects of the ongoing debate, relying upon the footnote references and a list of additional reading to guide readers in filling out our unavoidably selective sketch.

The contents of this volume must first be seen against its predecessors. Anglo-American editorial theory and practice branched off at the beginning of the twentieth century from editorial traditions usually (but wrongly) associated with Lachmann and based in emphasis on stemmatics[3]. A. E. Housman's work on classical Latin texts, in particular his edition of the works of Manilius, signalled the change. Objecting to editorial practices arbitrarily tied to «best documents», Housman applied critical intelligence to every aspect of the work to be edited. This involved tracing extant versions in ancient manuscripts but relying more heavily on his trained critical faculties to assess the reliability of their textual witness at points of variation, rather than on a general appeal to their documentary authority[4]. His contemporary and equal in editorial reputation, R. B. McKerrow, followed Housman's lead in the exercise of critical faculties in choosing the most authoritative text, but advocated retaining, except in the case of demonstrable error, all readings from the source finally adopted as copy-text. Both editors were rejecting, but by different means, too simple-minded an adherence to source documents and too cavalier a use of speculative emendation. McKerrow's reasons for rejecting Housman's freedom in the exercise of critical judgement included his distrust of the critical acumen of many earlier editors and his acknowledgement of the unknowns about the agents of change in texts for which few, if any, original documents survived.

The search for a proper balance of these two tendencies underlies nearly all the arguments and developments in Anglo-American editori-

al theory and practice in the twentieth century. At mid-century, the balance tilted toward Housman, when W. W. Greg demurred from McKerrow's caution, claiming it suffered from the «tyranny of copy-text»[5]. It forced editors into accepting unfortunate readings because they happened to be found in the most authoritative document but did not reach the standard of demonstrable error that would allow their rejection. Instead, Greg advocated separating «substantive» from «accidental» elements for, according to usual practice, substantive aspects of text (words and word order) were more usually controlled by authors, whereas a document's formal aspects (capitalization, spelling, word-division, and punctuation) were more likely to have been controlled by compositors.

To escape the tyranny of copy-text, Greg recommended choosing as copy-text that document for which the accidentals were most likely to represent the author's work, and to emend into that copy those substantive changes in other documents that bore evidence of authorial intervention. An editor, he argued, was usually in a better position to exercise critical discrimination among variant substantives than was possible among variant accidental forms. The result would be an eclectic edition that derived its reading text from two or more sources. It is important to note that Greg invoked the copy-text rule only when the evidence for authorial preferences in matters of form could not be ascertained in detail. His so-called theory of copy-text editing (as later commentators would refer to it) was never, for him, more than a rule of thumb. Richard Bucci's essay in this volume on «editing without a copy-text» demonstrates that the term is a mislabelling, and a sign of carelessness about or of failure to understand Greg's rationale.

With the advocacy of Fredson Bowers and, later, G. Thomas Tanselle, and with the institutional support of governmental funding agencies, Greg's views prevailed in major editorial projects on writers from the Renaissance through the nineteenth and even twentieth centuries, especially for works by American authors. By 1975 the Center for Editions of American Authors (CEAA) had overseen and approved 140 scholarly-edition volumes, all adhering to the so-called «Greg-Bowers school» of editing. The late 1970s witnessed the high, triumphant moment of the Housman-Greg-Bowers approach to critical editing and of eclectic texts established on principled grounds.

In 1976 the National Endowment for the Humanities (NEH) shifted its funding of scholarly editing away from the CEAA, dealing directly with scholarly editors for practical funding purposes, and turning evaluation duties over to the Modern Language Association's Center for Scholarly

Editions (cse). The result was a broadening of the purview of the cse to include British and foreign literatures and a more inclusive approach to editorial practice.

By 1980, the start of our period, the increased experience of editors of modern texts for which multiple authorial documents survive was beginning to reconfigure the editorial domain. Instead of the pursuit of a single, truly authorial text, the editorial mindset was gradually shifting to an awareness of textual surplus, making possible the establishment of multiple texts for multiple purposes. Thus, Hershel Parker found ample documentary support for the idea that frequently an author's «final» intentions violated the author's «initial» intentions and that, from a critical point view, the results of old authors editing their own younger selves could be attended by unfortunate results[6]. Likewise, Don Reiman began advocating «versioning» as a richer approach to editing than the homogenizing effect of eclectic editing. This trend toward seeing multiple authorial texts as a legitimate goal of scholarly editing reached crescendo levels at the 1985 Society for Textual Scholarship conference in New York, where Jerome McGann's culturally resonant arguments, advocating a completely different focus on the question of textual authority, began exercising their seductive power.

Beginning with a 1982 conference paper on textual criticism and literary interpretation (published in 1985)[7], but first making a dramatic splash in the relatively calm waters of authorial editing in 1983 with *A Critique of Modern Textual Criticism*[8], McGann began what was in effect a rehabilitation of McKerrow's resistance to eclecticism and to the exercise of individual editorial judgment. He offered, however, a different basic argument – not distrust of editorial judgement but an emphasis on the fact that published literary texts bore the historical evidence of the social, economic, and discursive community's collective influence on what had originally been published. It would distort the history of that social process if editors turned their backs on the texts that previous generations had actually read. Adapting Donald F. McKenzie's arguments about the book as expressive form in *Bibliography and the Sociology of Texts* (a chapter of which is reprinted here), McGann's argument took much further the work of James Thorpe in the 1970s and would in turn be further advanced by that of G. E. Bentley Jr. and Jack Stillinger in the 1990s (for William Blake and John Keats, respectively) and by George Bornstein in the 1990s and 2000s (for W. B. Yeats)[9].

Among other scholars, Bornstein helped us to see the meanings inherent in the various orderings of poems in W. B. Yeats's collections, in their

presentation on the page, and even in their bindings. Bornstein's essay of 1999 is reprinted here, as is Bentley's from 1988: his pioneering exposure of the ways in which the self-illustrating and self-printing poet confounded editorial expectations about the print medium can be seen to have helped open the door to a fuller appreciation of the physical or material meanings of the printed page. The ongoing power of bibliographical investigation to question its own fundamental assumptions is further illustrated in Harold Love's work on the continuance of scribal publication some hundreds of years after the invention of the printing press. His early findings, which stem from archival research from and after the mid-1980s, are reprinted here.

Another major shift in emphasis was occurring more or less simultaneously. Instead of text being seen as a final product – whether of the intentions of an author or the machinations of the social complex of production and distribution – texts began to be described as processes to be understood through the study of manuscripts and, if edited at all, prepared in such a way that the work's progression from composition through revision and production could be plotted. In Anglo-American editorial circles, this focus of attention was not called genetic criticism until the influence of French *critique génétique* began to inflect Anglo-American practice in the 1990s[10]. Sally Bushell's essay from 2005, reprinted here, is a good example of anglophone adaptation of the influence.

The increased editorial and analytical interest in the process of textual change, and thus the awareness of instability as an unavoidable textual condition, is registered by Hans Walter Gabler in his essay, reprinted here, from 1987. Over the following several years editorial theory rapidly expanded to absorb the new insights around the phenomenon of textual instability. The situation would be described neatly by Joseph Grigely in 1991 as including:

a moment of writing by the author, the moment of publishing, or the moment of reading – or any point in between. A [...] moment of stasis. [...] a series of moments of inscription, some authorial, some not, some authorized, some not; moments of stasis [...] best characterized not by what they say but what they do not say: they leave us with a disembodied, decontextualized text that does not mean anything unless bound to an agent of meaning – an interpreter[11].

The multiple textual instances, produced by the various agents of textual change in the process, are analysed by Peter Shillingsburg as «script acts»[12]. This naming – part of a broader theory of text – occurred in 1997, but it was based on an article (excerpted here) that had appeared in *Stud-*

ies in Bibliography in 1991. Marta Werner's work on Emily Dickinson, appearing in the 1990s, and John Bryant's work on Melville, in the 2000s, would offer highly developed and radical expositions of an anglified text-process theory, commentary, and practice[13]. An implication of the (newfound) textual instability was the need to re-cast received understandings of relationships between the documentary and textual dimensions of the work: Paul Eggert's meditation on this matter, reprinted here, appeared in 1994 in *TEXT*[14]. The rise of the Society for Textual Scholarship and of its journal *TEXT* is another measure of the new burst of editorial thinking in the period covered by the present volume[15].

By the late 1980s the new doctrines of textual instability and textual process had begun, fortuitously, to encounter the invention of hypertext and then, around 1991-92, the Internet – access to which was now available on personal computers. A new future for scholarly editing beckoned. Suddenly, the limitations of the codex form of the scholarly edition seemed, potentially at least, no longer to apply, and thus no longer to possess the trump card during discussions of editorial possibilities. The early frustrated hopes, and the more gradual and considered development of this medium for scholarly editing purposes in recent years, point to a continuing narrative whose technical and theoretical complexities lie, however, outside the scope of the present collection[16].

To complete our story instead, the essays here by Trevor H. Howard-Hill and Paul Werstine show that the vigour of earlier debates about Shakespearean editing had returned with force in the fertile 1980s and 1990s. For obvious reasons, Shakespeare editing had traditionally served as the workshop from which most Anglo-American editorial advances in thinking had emanated. But that was arguably not the case in the 1960s and 1970s when institutional and funding pressures saw a great deal of attention devoted to the editing of American literature and then saw it inflect the editing of eighteenth-, nineteenth-, and twentieth-century British literature. However, the rise of the so-called «performance Shakespeare» movement from the late 1970s and throughout the 1980s, as well as the belated recognition that even Shakespeare editors of the older, bibliographic school had not routinely been following the Greg-Bowers approach, revived and clarified editorial argument in our period.

Another rise of interest from the 1980s – a new formation of anglophone book history, no longer seen only as a form of (historical) bibliography – shadowed the revival in editorial theory that we have been tracing. The influence of this more broadly defined book history may be noted throughout the volume, but most self-consciously in Kathryn

Sutherland's book (excerpted here), published in 2005 – the end of our period – on the textual «lives» of Jane Austen's novels.

Like Richard Bucci's essay, mentioned above, David Hoover's essay from 2005, the last one in this volume, is another recuperative gesture. Hoover contests the importance that Jerome McGann's ideas have come to exert during our period and gives warning that the ignoring of authorial intention, as ordinarily understood, artificially impoverishes critical attention to literary works, in whose service scholarly editors finally stand. James McLaverty's essay of 1984 on intention and textual criticism, also reprinted here, is a reminder of the importance of what has become, in recent years, unfortunately neglected.

It is fitting that a collection of essays about editing should declare its own editorial approach to the selected essays, many of which have appeared in revised forms, as well as (typically) having been preceded by a conference presentation. To print the final form in each case would arguably have been of benefit; but it would have also confused the historical record of thinking in the period that the volume traces. Accordingly, we have taken the historical route, choosing the text of first publication – which we hope will produce for readers a sense of the newness of the thinking as it was emerging during 1980-2005.

Where material has been omitted an ellipsis within square brackets [...] has been used, and usually we have introduced a short abstract in a footnote. Footnote numbers have been made consecutive when omission of text has taken some footnotes with them. When needed, full bibliographical references have been supplied. No attempt has been made to standardize bibliographical references. Section numbering has been maintained even when whole sections are omitted.

Notes

[1] The best single guide to twentieth-century scholarly editorial theory and practice in England and America is David Greetham (ed.), *Scholarly Editing: A Guide to Research*, New York, Modern Language Association, 1996 (an Italian translation is now announced by Bologna UP). The guide traces scholarly editorial practice in biblical and classical, medieval and early English, Renaissance (especially Shakespearean), and eighteenth-, nineteenth-, and twentieth-century editing; it also has essays on German, French, Italian, and Spanish scholarly editing. An extensive evaluative survey of editorial discussion is to be found in G. Thomas Tanselle, *Textual Criticism Since Greg: A Chronicle, 1950-2000*, Charlottesville (VA), Bibliographical Society, 2005. Tanselle also offers comprehensive bibliographies up through 2002 at http://www.rarebookschool.org/tanselle, viewed 25 October 2009. Other summaries of Anglo-American editorial practice include: Ronald

Gottesman, *Art and Error: Modern Textual Editing*, Bloomington (IN), Indiana University Press, 1970; Geert Lernout, «Anglo-American Textual Criticism and the Case of Hans Walter Gabler's Edition of *Ulysses*», *Genesis*, 9 (1996), pp. 45-65 (in French but available in English at http://www.antwerpjamesjoycecenter.com/genesis.html, viewed 9 February 2009); Peter Shillingsburg, «Anglo-amerikanische Editionwissenschaft: Ein knapper Überblick», in Rüdiger Nutt-Kofoth, Bodo Plachta, H. T. M. van Vliet, Hermann Zwerschina (eds.), *Text und Edition: Positionen und Perspektiven*, Berlin, Erich Schmidt, 2000, pp. 143-64; an updated English version of the latter is «On Being Textually Aware», *Studies in American Naturalism*, 1 (2006), pp. 170-95; Ernst Honigmann, «The New Bibliography and Its Critics», in Lukas Erne, Margaret Jane Kidnie (eds.), *Textual Performances: The Modern Reproduction of Shakespeare's Drama*, Cambridge, Cambridge University Press, 2004, pp. 77-93; and Paul Eggert, *Securing the Past: Conservation in Art, Architecture and Literature*, Cambridge, Cambridge University Press, 2009, chapters 8 and 9 (reviewed by Paola Italia in this issue of *Ecdotica*).

[2] For an overview and discussion, see Eggert, *Securing the Past*, cit., chapters 7-10.

[3] See Giovanni Fiesoli, *La genesi del lachmannismo*, Firenze, SISMEL – Edizioni del Galluzzo, 2000, reviewed by L. Castaldi in *Ecdotica*, 1 (2004), pp. 55-65; in English, Peter L. Schmidt, «Lachmann's Method: On the History of a Misunderstanding», in A. C. Dionisotti *et al.* (eds.), *The Uses of Greek and Latin*, London, Warburg Institute, 1988, pp. 227-36.

[4] A. E. Housman, «The Application of Thought to Textual Criticism», *Proceedings of the Classical Association*, 18 (1922), pp. 67-84; rpt. in John Carter (ed.), *Selected Prose*, Cambridge, Cambridge University Press, 1961, pp. 131-50. See also Ernst Honigmann's discussion of Housman in «The New Bibliography and its Critics», in Erne, Kidnie (eds.), *Textual Performances*, cit., pp. 77-93. See further, D. C. Greetham, «Textual and Literary Theory: Redrawing the Matrix», reprinted here from *Studies in Bibliography*, 42 (1989), pp. 1-24; and Jeremy Lawrance, «Stoppard, Housman and the Mission of Textual Criticism», in *Ecdotica*, 3 (2006), pp. 187-205.

[5] W. W. Greg, «The Rationale of Copy-Text», *Studies in Bibliography*, 3 (1951), pp. 19-36; Italian transl. in Pasquale Stoppelli, *Filologia dei testi a stampa*, Nuova edizione aggiornata, Cagliari, CUEC/Centro di Studi Filologici Sardi, 2008, pp. 39-58.

[6] *Flawed Texts and Verbal Icons*, Evanston (IL), Northwestern University Press, 1984, and see his essay here.

[7] «The Monks and the Giants: Textual and Bibliographical Studies and the Interpretation of Literary Works», in Jerome McGann (ed.), *Textual Criticism and Literary Interpretation*, Chicago (IL), University of Chicago Press, 1985, pp. 180-99 and reprinted here.

[8] *A Critique of Modern Textual Criticism*, Chicago (IL), University of Chicago Press, 1983; its chapter 3 is reprinted here.

[9] Donald F. McKenzie, *Bibliography and the Sociology of Texts* (Panizzi Lectures, 1985), London, British Library, 1986; for translations see *Suggested Additional Readings*, below; James Thorpe, *Principles of Textual Criticism*, San Marino (CA), Huntington Library, 1972; Jack Stillinger, *Multiple Authorship and the Myth of Solitary Genius*, New York, Oxford University Press, 1991; and George Bornstein, «How to Read a Page: Modernism and Material Textuality», *Studies in the Literary Imagination*, 32, 1 (1999), pp. 30-57 (reprinted here) and *Material Modernism: The Poetics of the Page*, Cambridge, Cambridge University Press, 2001.

[10] Daniel Ferrer and Hans Walter Gabler offered examples originally at Society for Textual Scholarship conferences (*TEXT*, *passim*) and the Iconic Page conference, memorialized in George Bornstein, Theresa Tinkle (eds.), *The Iconic Page*, Ann Arbor (MI),

University of Michigan Press, 1998. See also Jed Deppman, Daniel Ferrer, Michael Groden (eds.), *Genetic Criticism: Texts and Avant-Textes*, Philadelphia (PA), University of Pennsylvania Press, 2004; and Dirk Van Hulle, *Manuscript Genetics, Joyce's Know-How, Beckett's Nohow*, Tallahassee (FL), University Press of Florida, 2009.

[11] Grigely's «The Textual Event» is reprinted in this collection from Philip Cohen (ed.), *Devils and Angels: Textual Editing and Literary Theory*, Charlottesville (VA), University Press of Virginia, 1991, pp. 167-94 [p. 172].

[12] Script acts, like «utterances» in speech acts, are undertaken at specific times and places by authors, production staff, and readers. Meaning for each script act is dependent not only on the agent of textual change and the circumstances that prompted the change, but on the agent and circumstances of reception; see further, Peter L. Shillingsburg, *From Gutenberg to Google: Electronic Representations of Literary Texts*, Cambridge, Cambridge University Press, 2006 (reviewed by Paola Italia in *Ecdotica*, 4, 2007, pp. 299-310), chapter 3 (an Italian translation by D. Fiormonte may be found in *Ecdotica*, 2, 2005, pp. 60-79, under the title «Verso una teoria degli atti di scrittura»). Script act theory is first named in the introduction to Shillingsburg's *Resisting Texts: Authority and Submission in Constructions of Meaning*, Ann Arbor (MI), University of Michigan Press, 1997. The 1991 article is «Text as Matter, Concept and Action», *Studies in Bibliography*, 44 (1991), pp. 31-82.

[13] See Marta Werner, *Emily Dickinson's Open Folios: Scenes of Reading, Surfaces of Writing*, Ann Arbor (MI), University of Michigan Press, 1995, and cf. Martha Nell Smith, *Rowing in Eden: Rereading Emily Dickinson*, Austin (TX), University of Texas Press, 1992; and John Bryant, *The Fluid Text: A Theory of Revision and Editing for Book and Screen*, Ann Arbor (MI), University of Michigan Press, 2002, and *Melville Unfolding*, Ann Arbor (MI), University of Michigan Press, 2008.

[14] «Document and Text: The "Life" of the Literary Work and the Capacities of Editing», *TEXT*, 7 (1994), pp. 1-24.

[15] The Society for Textual Scholarship was founded in 1979 and published *TEXT* annually from 1984 to 2007, when the journal's name and charter were reorganized as *Textual Cultures*.

[16] For an overview, see G. Thomas Tanselle's Foreword to Lou Burnard, Katherine O'Brien O'Keeffe, John Unsworth (eds.), *Electronic Textual Editing*, New York, Modern Language Association of America, 2006. See also Paul Eggert, «Those Post-Philological Days...», *Ecdotica*, 2 (2005), pp. 80-98, and David C. Greetham, «Philology Redux?», *Ecdotica*, 3 (2006), pp. 103-28.