

# TEXTUAL CULTURES

*Texts, Contexts, Interpretation*

13:1

SPRING 2020

Editor-in-Chief: MARTA L. WERNER

Editor and European Coordinator: MICHELANGELO ZACCARELLO

Digital Editor: ISABELLA MAGNI

U.S., British, and Anglophone Book Review Editor:

LOGAN ESDALE

European Book Review and Contributing Editors:

ALVARO BARBIERI & PAOLA ITALIA

Founding Editor: H. WAYNE STOREY

Board of Editorial Advisors:

HEATHER ALLEN, University of Mississippi

GEORGE BORNSTEIN, University of Michigan, Emeritus

JOSEPH BRAY, University of Sheffield

MATTHEW BROWN, University of Iowa

MARINA BROWNLEE, Princeton University

ED BURNS, William Paterson University, Emeritus

MATT COHEN, University of Nebraska, Lincoln

PHILIP GARY COHEN, University of Texas, Arlington

JUAN CARLOS CONDE, Oxford University

TERESA DE ROBERTIS, Università di Firenze

ELIZABETH GRACE ELM1, Independent Scholar

OGDEN GOELET, New York University

AMANDA GOLDEN, New York Institute of Technology

KATHERINE D. HARRIS, San Jose State University

STEVEN E. JONES, University of South Florida

DAVID KASTAN, Yale University

JEROME J. MCGANN, University of Virginia

RAIMONDA MODIANO, University of Washington

BARBARA OBERG, Princeton University

DANIEL O'SULLIVAN, University of Mississippi

PETER SHILLINGSBURG, Loyola University, Chicago, Emeritus

H. WAYNE STOREY, Indiana University, Emeritus

G. THOMAS TANSALLE, John Simon Guggenheim Memorial Foundation

RICHARD TRACHSLER, Universität Zürich

JOHN A. WALSH, Indiana University

JOHN YOUNG, Marshall University



# *Textual Cultures 13.1*

## Contents

### DEDICATION

### PRESIDENTIAL ADDRESS

- H. Wayne Storey*  
Borghini's Dilemma: Print Thinking and the Digital 1

### ARTICLES

- Rolena Adorno*  
"Obedezco pero no cumplo": Surviving Censorship  
in Early Modern Spain 29
- Ronald Broude*  
To Sing Upon the Book: Oral and Written Counterpoint  
in Early Modern Europe 75
- Giulia Benghi*  
Transcribing Petrarch's Genres in the Late Fourteenth  
Century: An Ongoing Conversation with the  
Observations from MSS Cologny Bodmer 131 and  
Gambalunga SC-Ms. 93 106
- Jürgen E. Grandt*  
The Sound of Red Dust: Jean Toomer, Marion Brown,  
and the Sonic Transactions of "Karintha" 126
- Kate Ozment*  
Rationale for Feminist Bibliography 146

Matt Cohen	
Time and the Bibliographer: A Meditation on the Spirit of Book Studies	177
Peter C. Herman	
EEBO and Me: An Autobiographical Response to Michael Gavin, "How to Think About EEBO"	207

## ANGLO-AMERICAN REVIEWS

CLOUTIER, Jean-Christophe. 2019. <i>Shadow Archives: The Lifecycles of African American Literature</i> .	217
<b>Stephanie Browner</b>	
EGGERT, Paul. 2019. <i>The Work and the Reader in Literary Studies: Scholarly Editing and Book History</i> .	223
<b>Christine Froula</b>	
FUENTES, Marisa J. 2016. <i>Dispossessed Lives: Enslaved Women, Violence, and the Archive</i> .	228
<b>Samantha Pinto</b>	
HOFFER, Matthew, and Michael GOLSTON, eds. 2019. <i>The L=A=N=G=U=A=G=E Letters: Selected 1970s Correspondence of Bruce Andrews, Charles Bernstein, and Ron Silliman</i> .	231
<b>Solveig Daugaard</b>	
JENSTAD, Janelle, Mark KAETHLER, and Jennifer ROBERTS-SMITH, eds. 2018. <i>Shakespeare's Language in Digital Media: Old Words, New Tools</i> .	237
<b>Suzanne Gossett</b>	
NOTES ON CONTRIBUTORS	242
THE SOCIETY FOR TEXTUAL SCHOLARSHIP	246

*Textual Cultures 13.1 is dedicated to the memory of*

## **David C. Greetham, 1941–2020**

Co-Founder of Our Society,  
Peerless Bibliographer and Theorist,  
Driving Force for Innovation,  
Source of Contagious Enthusiasm,  
and  
Dear Friend.

A future issue of *Textual Cultures* on the memory and work of David C. Greetham is in preparation for Fall 2021. For those who would like to make a contribution to this issue, please contact Marta Werner (mwerner7@loyola.edu / marta.werner@gmail.com).



# Borghini's Dilemma

## Print Thinking and the Digital

PRESIDENTIAL ADDRESS 2019

*H. Wayne Storey*

### ABSTRACT

The sixteenth-century Florentine philologist Vincenzo Borghini provides a model for our own examination of the influence of print as we consider the challenges, opportunities and responsibilities of producing digital editions and archives. Briefly examining several emended passages in the 1573 expurgated edition of Boccaccio's *Decameron*, the essay turns to Borghini's reliance in his 1574 *Annotationi* on his extensive studies of fourteenth-century Italian vernacular in manuscripts and their contrasts with the printed editions of his own day often edited — he fears — simply to sell books. Turning from Borghini's skepticism to his own editorial work for the 2003–2004 facsimile and commentary, the author reflects upon the failures of his own edition for the print medium and how they led to the founding and development of the Petrarche's rich-text edition and commentary. Reflecting on two examples of the representation of the use of space in Petrarch's medieval holograph possible only in a born-digital edition, the essay concludes its brief demonstration of the deep structuring of print in philological thinking as we develop new strategies for digital philology.

---

FOR THOSE OF YOU UNFAMILIAR WITH THE WORK OR EVEN THE name of the Renaissance Florentine philologist Vincenzo Borghini (1515–1580), I must apologize for the rare reference in my title.<sup>1</sup> Borghini is not a household name, not even in Italy.<sup>2</sup> A learned Benedictine monk,

1. The original essay from which this presidential address was drawn examines how the deep structures of print function at the core of the critical edition's philological apparatus. That essay, far too long for an after-dinner address, will be published separately. In keeping with the tradition of publishing the presidential address in *Textual Cultures*, I have elected instead to maintain for the most part the presentation's original structure and tone. Some elucidations have been added both in notes and in the text.
2. For a general introduction to the philological work of Vincenzo Borghini, see BELLONI and DRUSI 2002, an exemplary primer in the assessment of the deep

Borghini is remembered for his interest in manuscripts and his philological prowess, but is also renowned for an editorial failure, that is for his role in the 1573 expurgated edition of Boccaccio's *Decameron*, as well as for a remarkable volume of annotations and discussion of the textual condition of the work carried out by Borghini and his fellow commissioners, the "Deputati".<sup>3</sup> Though the 1573 edition saw but one printing, his 1574 *Annotationi*, devoted to explanations of the process of amending the edition and a study of Boccaccio's language were reprinted until 1857 (see FANFANI 1857), the relevance of Borghini's sixteenth-century research into the manuscripts and contexts of the *Decameron* was still deemed relevant by nineteenth-century philology.

After the Council of Trent, whose decrees were first published in 1564, Borghini and his fellow commissioners were given the task by the Church in Rome of producing a learned edition from an expurgated text that rewrote or selectively censored (usually with asterisks) those tales in Boccaccio's famous work that offended the Church or lessened the moral stature of priests and nuns.<sup>4</sup> If the edition's solutions led to some scholarly dereliction, they also supplied us — thanks to Borghini — with an erudite restoration of Boccaccio's fourteenth-century Italian. The edition also gave us remarkably inventive narrative changes: Boccaccio's original convent of nuns ("un monistero di donne" [BRANCA 1992, III 1, 1]) producing many little monks ("assai monachin" [III 1, 42]) fathered by a fellow whom the nuns believed was a gardener bereft of the power of speech becomes the castle of a widowed countess who takes in poor young women ("una Cont-

---

and strict methodological relationship between Borghini and the manuscripts he studied. The volume traces Borghini's extraordinarily learned interests and studies in art, antiquities and literature through many of his own manuscripts and those he used and annotated.

3. Originally published in quarto (specifically 235×160mm [text-block 180×100mm]), Borghini's 1574 *Annotationi* was often bound as an appendix, with its title page, fascicles and pagination intact, to Borghini's 1573 edition of the *Decameron*, with the "Annotationi", along with their indices, privileges and final device (and "Registro"), now appearing before Borghini's introduction to the work ("Proemio", signatures Aa Bb Cc Dd, the last of which includes Filippo and Iacopo Giunti's address to the readers). The text-block of the 1574 *Annotationi* (180×100mm) varied only slightly from that of the 1573 *Decameron* (175×100mm).
4. Ratified in early 1564 by Pius IV's papal bull, *Benedictus Deus*, the decrees were first published same year in Rome by Aldo Manutius's son Paolo (Aldo dies in 1515) as *Canones et decreta sacrosancti oecumenici et generalis Concilii Tridentini*.

essa [. . .] rimasa vedova haveva una usanza di ritenere appresso di se alcune damigelle povere" [BORGHINI 1573, 141]) who sleep with the gardener; the sexually liberated monk of Day 1, Tale 4 who tricks his abbot into the same carnal sin in which he has engaged ("un monaco caduto in peccato [. . .] rimproverando al suo abate quella medesima colpa, si libera dalla pena" [BRANCA 1992, I 4, 1) becomes a student who escapes punishment for his pleasure by getting his teacher to fall for a woman who appears in his cell ("Uno scolare caduto in peccato [. . .] rimproverando al suo maestro quella medesima colpa, si libera dalla pena" [BORGHINI 1573, 31]).<sup>5</sup> Only the infamously licentious story of Rustico, the anchorite (*Decameron* III 10) who teaches the very devout Alibech "true devotion", escapes Borghini's revisionist narrative skills with much of its text reduced to an asterisk that stands in for some of the most explicit sexual descriptions in the *Decameron*. The loss of key portions of the text replaced by strategic asterisks to substitute long sections of text renders the story dull and virtually incomprehensible.<sup>6</sup> The initial description of the story, a kind of abstract supplied by Boccaccio for all the tales, itself pivots on a crude but popular phrase to describe sexual intercourse: "Alibech divien romita, a cui Rustico monaco insegna rimettere il diavolo in Inferno: poi, quindi tolta, diventa moglie di Neerbale" [BRANCA III 10, 1]). But Borghini has little ideological choice; philology and explicit innuendo have gone by the wayside: "Alibech diviene romita \* poi quindi tolta diventa moglie di Neherbale" (1573, 197). Gone are the devil and hell and mention of the anchorite Rustico. Just a few lines later, Alibech only has a chance to meet the holy man Rustico before a great fire in her hometown of Gafsa, in Tunisia, kills most of her family, leaving the fourteen-year-old Alibech heir to her family's fortune and forcing her to return home and marry the enterprising Neerbale. Only a trace of Rustico's trials after his quick capitulation to temptation remains after a single asterisk substitutes just over 63% of the tale between Alibech's initial meeting with Rustico and her return to Gafsa, eliminating completely their long exchanges about devotion/sex: "il cui nome era Rustico, et quella dimanda gli fece, che a gli altri haveva fatta. \* Hora avvenne che

5. References to Branca's critical edition follow the editor's divisions of the Day in which the tale occurs, the sequential number of the story within the Day and the paragraph, while references to Borghini's 1573 edition note simply the page number. My transcriptions from sixteenth-century editions distinguish between *u* and *v* and change the long-s to a short-s. No punctuation has been altered or added. Abbreviations have been expanded in italics.
6. Of course today the asterisks would be used to signal a corrupt or irresolutely contaminated reading.

un fuoco s'apprese in Capsa [. . .]” (BORGHINI 1573, 198 [BRANCA 1992, III 10, 9\*31]).<sup>7</sup> In Borghini's edition all that remains is what is now Rustico's inexplicable happiness over Alibech's departure for Gafsa when he has just met her: “con gran piacer di Rustico, et contra al volere di lei [Neerbale] la rimenò in Capsa” (BORGHINI 1573, 198).<sup>8</sup> Also gone is one of medieval Italy's most delightful parodies of the temptations of the desert anchorites celebrated by Boccaccio's contemporaries as absolute examples of religious devotion beyond the devil's most intense temptations.<sup>9</sup>

It bears pointing out that Borghini was not, to put it bluntly, an ideological hack. His philological work on the *Decameron* and other works he knew well, including Dante's *Commedia* and Giovanni Villani's *Chronicle of Florence* (*Nuova cronica* 1344–1348), was based upon a profound knowledge of their manuscript traditions. Facing the task of editing one of the icons of early Italian prose, Borghini would have remembered well the good old days when even fellow monks and religious, such as the Benedictine Niccolò (Nicolaus) and an alternating unknown hand had in 1396 transcribed word for word without a whiff of censorship one of the early copies of the *Decameron* (today MS Firenze, Biblioteca Nazionale Centrale, Banco Rari 37). And Borghini must surely have known of the complete 1483 edition of the *Decameron* printed by the Florentine sisters at their press at the convent in San Jacopo di Ripoli.<sup>10</sup>

Borghini's 1573 *Decameron* was quickly and roundly criticized. Perhaps anticipating such attacks from literati and presses, the edition's subtitle contained virtually a legal disclaimer of its history: the text, by the Florentine citizen Giovanni Boccaccio, had — first of all — been newly corrected (*Ricorretto*) and emended (*Emendato*) in Rome by order of the Sacred Council of Trent; and — secondly — the text was produced in Florence by a process of comparing the work's ancient copies (*Testi Antichi*) and edited (*ridotto*) by the Commissioners into its “true form” (*vera lezione*):

7. The translation reiterates the narrative desolation of the expurgated edition's version: “whose name was Rustico; and she asked him the same questions she had asked the others. \* Then it happened that a fire occurred in Gafsa”.
8. Borghini's expurgated tale here reads: “to Rustico's great pleasure, and against her will [Neerbale] led her back to Gafsa”.
9. For a prolonged study of the rhetorical structures at the heart of Boccaccio's satire, see STOREY 1982.
10. For further discussion of MS Banco Rari 37, see CURSI 2007, 74–6; for the early copy of the *Decameron* printed by the Dominican sisters at San Jacopo di Ripoli on the press of the goldsmith and typographer Bernardo Cennini, see CONWAY 1999, 43n136.



Il Decameron di Messer Giovanni Boccacci. Cittadino Fiorentino. Ricorretto in Roma, et Emendato secondo l'ordine del Sacro Concilio di Trento, Et riscontrato in Firenze con Testi Antichi & alla sua vera lezione ridotto da' Deputati da loro Alt[ezze] Ser[enissime]

BORGHINI 1573, 1 (title page)

From the *Annotationi* alone it would be impossible to discern the reasons for the 1573 edition's most dramatic narrative reinventions and alterations, but Borghini reacts to the results. Calling the edition a "ritoccamento" and "il presente racconciamento" (sign. Aa1) at the beginning of his long address (*Proemio*) to his readers (*A' Benigni, & Discreti LETTORI*, [sign. Aa1–Dd4]), he ultimately mourns the reduced state of Boccaccio's masterpiece after its sanitizing and then the work of piecing it back together in an acceptable form:

Ma perche il libro restava in alcuni luoghi talmente tronco & cosi male appiccato il filo del ragionamento insieme, che difficile era cavarne senso, & quasi impossibile poterlo leggere: ne fu da loro dato alcuno ordine di potere rappicare insieme queste membra sparte: accioche la narratione del fatto venisse (quando la cosa pativa) continuata.<sup>11</sup>

The edition represents a problematic mixture of repression and philology, a contradictory fusion of linguistic and textual research and linguistic/thematic suppression, the former more fully addressed in Borghini's 1574 *Annotationi et discorsi sopra alcuni luoghi del Decameron . . . Sopra la correctione di esso Boccaccio, stampato l'Anno MDLXXIII*, published by the same Giunti. Borghini found himself caught between two ideologies: religious and textual. And while his philological discomfort with Rome's ordered suppression of parts of Boccaccio's work is borne out even in the title, in page after page of his *Annotationi*, it becomes ever more evident that the Florentine philologist suffers another dilemma as well. Though he has prepared a text for publication in a technology that had already been in use for a hundred years, the very notion of the textual authority and supe-

11. BORGHINI 1574, sign. Aa2r. "But since the book remained in some passages so chopped up and the narrative thread barely held together, so much so that it was difficult to make sense of it and virtually impossible to read, the [Church's] official request was to find a way to piece back together what remained of these narratives so that where it suffered the text would again be part of a sensical narrative thread".

riority unfolds in a nuanced intellectual struggle between the admirable but printed 1527 Florentine *Decameron*, cited throughout the *Annotationi*, and his preferred “Testi Antichi” represented primarily by the handwritten exemplar of 1384 (today MS Firenze Biblioteca Laurenziana 42.1), signed by Francesco d’Amaretto Mannelli and referred to by Borghini, and subsequently through the centuries, as “l’ottimo esemplare” (the best exemplar).<sup>12</sup> For Borghini, it is Boccaccio’s “originale” that served as Mannelli’s antigraph.<sup>13</sup> Borghini’s attention to the manuscript’s details includes Mannelli’s marginal annotations, upon which Borghini often stops to reason and discuss the reading in the manuscript, its copyist and the edition’s solution. Justifying a reading still adopted by modern editors for *Decameron* III 7 65 (“di lui temendo, come de morti corpi, se poi veduti andar come vivi, si teme”), Borghini notably mines not only Mannelli’s manuscript but also draws upon the linguistic usage of the early Tuscan Trecento writers found in the manuscripts he has studied. His entry for III 7 reasons through Mannelli’s text, his exemplar, his marginalia and even the fourteenth-century copyist’s “reverence for the text”. The passage is worth examining in its initial constructions:

La parola FOSSERO non era nell’Originale, il che ci significò il Mann[elli] che non l’ha, & scrive in margine. *sic erat textus*. La qual Chiosa puo esser segno, che e’ dubitasse di mancamento, ma per riverentia del testo non ardisse toccare. Et cosi sarebbe questo un ristignersi nelle spalle & dire che se difetto ci è non viene da lui. Potrebbe ancora pel contrario significare, che e’ ne fusse sicurissimo, & da vantagio volesse assicurare noi con questa nota, quasi che e’ dicesse. Non ci dubitare d’errore alcuno, perche cosi ha il testo dello Autore. Noi volentieri inchiniamo a questa seconda, perche piu di una volta si troverranno cosi fatti difetti (se difetti si debbono chiamare, & non piu presto figure e gratiose licentie delle

12. In the early 1570s we are still four centuries before the discovery and confirmation of Boccaccio’s own late (1370) holograph copy of *Decameron* in what is today MS Berlin Staatsbibliothek Hamilton 90, nonetheless problematic for its missing fascicles, which have been unscientifically substituted by relevant sections of Mannelli’s “ottimo manoscritto” (MS Laurenziano 42.1).
13. For example, see BORGHINI 1574, sign. H2v–3r (“come havea l’originale [. . .]”). While paginated, the 1574 *Annotationi* suffered from significant errors in its page numbers in its G and H signatures. To reduce this confusion I cite only the signatures and their chartae.

lingue) in questo & altri buoni Scrittori nostri & Romani, Et ce n'è un mondo di esempi.<sup>14</sup>

Borghini's deep dive into Mannelli's manuscript and the possible thinking of its copyist is not an exercise in a collation for variants but the demonstration of Borghini's method of absorbing the *forma mentis* of manuscript culture that transmits the linguistic and syntactic trends of early Italian literature that are not to be gleaned from printed editions. Deemed "defects" by Borghini's contemporary editors interested in "modernizing" and standardizing the language and in selling books, according to Borghini they are instead the remnants of the authentic forms that graced the literary origins — Latin and Italian — that inform Boccaccio's "original".

In the pages of his *Annotationi*, Borghini dutifully recognizes the "noble and learned young" scholars who with "gran diligentia & non minor giudicio" corrected the text of the *Decameron* for the 1527 edition (1574, sign. Bb2v). On the very next page (Bb3r), Borghini even says that there are not large differences between the 1527 Florentine edition and the Ottimo manuscript of 1384. These are the pages, however, where Borghini begins his lessons on Boccaccio's language that the Florentine monk has studied in the context of the *manuscripts* of Boccaccio's fourteenth century, materials with which the 1527 editors of the printed Florentine edition were unfamiliar. The subtlety of Borghini's constant referral to these manuscripts, and especially to the 1384 "Ottimo" exemplar of the *Decameron*, is summarized and — with far less nuance — clarified by Filippo and Iacopo Giunti, the publishers of the 1573 edition and the 1574 *Annotationi*, characterizing the printed tradition of Boccaccio's *Decameron* as "corrupt and beyond repair [. . .] perhaps in order to make printers' books more sellable

14. BORGHINI 1574, sign. H2v. "The word FOSSERO was not in the Original, which meant that Mannelli doesn't put it in his copy but writes in the margin: *thus was the text*. This Gloss can be a sign that Mannelli had his doubts that a word was missing, but out of reverence for the text he didn't dare touch the passage. This would be a kind of shrugging of his shoulders and an admission that if there is a defect it doesn't come from him [Mannelli]. It could also mean the opposite: that he was certain of the reading of his copy and that he could easily reassure us with this [marginal] note, as if to say: Don't worry that there might be an error here since this is exactly how the Author's text reads. We gladly bow to this second reason since more than once these so-called defects (if we can even call them 'defects' and not the figures and charming license of languages) can be found in this work as well as in other good Italian and Roman Authors; and there are a lot of examples".

to the common herd” (“molto corrotta, e guasta, forse per rendere i libri loro piu vendibili al vulgo” [1574, sign. \*2v]). Instead, Borghini and his colleagues have worked directly from numerous handwritten witnesses, foremost among them being Mannelli’s excellent copy:

[. . .] hora è stato fatto stampare da noi dintorno alla correzione del testo, leggere si deue, e non altramente, essendosi detti Deputati serviti dell’ottimo esemplare del Mannelli, del quale in piu luoghi si fa menzione, con la testimonianza di molti altri anchora confrontato, si come essi nel Proemio delle dette Annotazioni diffusamente di tutto rendono chiara, e giustificata ragione.<sup>15</sup>

But page after page of his *Annotazioni* bear out Borghini’s reliance on and preference for the medieval manuscripts in which he has absorbed the authentic linguistic forms of Boccaccio’s literary predecessors and contemporaries. Reading through Borghini’s studies in the *Annotazioni* we reflect more and more on his description of what we come to realize is the bad deal that Borghini and his fellow Deputati agreed to take on and, even more evident across the pages of the *Annotazioni* is fact that the Renaissance philologist’s true dilemma has to do with the nature of print itself. For Borghini print, and printers’ wholesale corruption of texts for profit and for a much wider circulation of moral corruption, has ushered in the suppressive intervention of Rome and the Council of Trent. In this light, our Borghini has been charged with the task of producing in print a philologically accurate text that by doctrinal necessity betrays the philological rigor of the best witness, Mannelli’s 1384 handwritten copy.

Borghini was not the first to grapple with the overly standardizing and reductive norms of printing on texts that had enjoyed the graphological freedom of handwriting. Vespasiano da Bisticci, the paper merchant turned purveyor of manuscripts for the libraries of the rich and famous, gave up his lucrative trade of deluxe manuscripts around 1480 when printing presses continued to meet with ever greater approval and commercial success (though many failed quickly). Individual works such as the *Divine Comedy* and Petrarch’s *Canzoniere* (more appropriately known by Petrarch’s title

15. “[. . .] now we have had printed the correction of the text, which must be read simply because the Commissioners used Mannelli’s superb exemplar, often mentioned in our commentary, as well as many other witnesses with which we compared it, all of which the Preface to the noted Annotations makes abundantly clear and justified”.

*Rerum vulgarium fragmenta* [Rvf]) had found already in the fourteenth- and early fifteenth-century's distinctive *mises en page* that were quickly altered in the earliest editions of both works (respectively 1472 [Foligno: Johannes Numeister] and 1470 [Venice: Wendelin of Speier]) to facilitate typesetting and space for handwritten marginalia or illustration. If there was one lesson from these *editiones principes*, it was that print would force a re-envisioning of the works themselves. This was certainly the case when the Paduan printer Bartolomeo Valdezoco had a look at Petrarch's supervised and partially holograph manuscript of the Rvf for his 1472 edition.<sup>16</sup> His colophon tells us that his volume is "taken from [Petrarch's] original book" ("ex originali libro extracta"), a claim to authenticity that had been repeated in numerous fourteenth- and fifteenth-century manuscripts, but in Valdezoco's case the claim was accurate. But with Petrarch's authorized manuscript under his nose Valdezoco's typographical guide was not Petrarch's *mise en page* for sonnets and the other four genres that constitute the *Fragmenta* but early fifteenth-century manuscripts such as British Library Kings 321 (dated 1400), Cornell Library MS 4648n22A (ca. 1470), and Beinecke Library M706 (ca. 1465–1470).<sup>17</sup> Since we know his editor worked in Padova directly from Petrarch's own manuscript with its unique and authorized *mise en page*, Valdezoco's verifiable conversion for his 1472 printed edition codifies two essential characteristics of Petrarchan poetics in late fifteenth-century print culture: the visual isolation of the single verse and the primacy of the complete sonnet, and — when possible — the single page containing two complete sonnets, which for the print tradition of the Rvf would become a typographical standard that endured into the twentieth century in editions without commentary. To maintain that primacy, where necessary, Valdezoco adjusts the editorial blank space to conclude where possible each page with a complete sonnet. In Figure 1 we see how with the conclusion of the long canzone *Ben mi credea passar mio tempo omai* (Rvf 207) on c. 90r, Valdezoco sets the type for *Rapido fiume che d'alpestra vena* (Rvf 208) beginning the sonnet after a full eight blank lines in order to conclude c. 90r with a complete sonnet:

16. See Gino Belloni's introduction to the 1472 Valdezoco edition (2001, xiii–liv) and his note on the history of Petrarch's partial holograph, MS Vaticano Latino 3195 in BELLONI, BRUGNOLO, STOREY and ZAMPONI 2004, especially 80–93.
17. While all three of these manuscripts demonstrate different page layouts for Petrarch's Rvf, they are linked by the common graphological feature, that is that each manuscript demonstrates a material memory of and link to Petrarch's *mise en page* for the work.

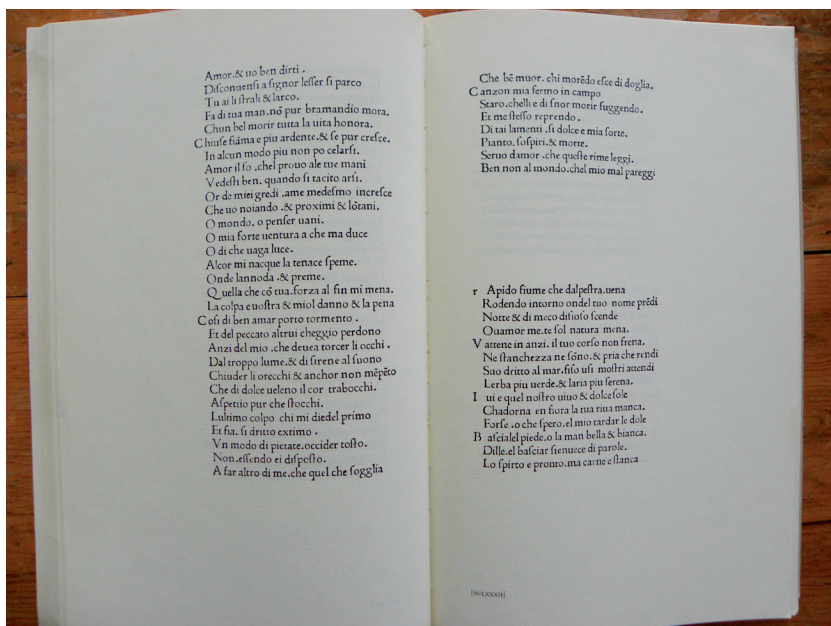


Figure 1. *Rerum vulgarij fragmenta*, Valdezoco edition 1472, cc. 89v–90r [BELLONI 2001]

With the rediscovery of Petrarch's own final manuscript (Vat. Lat 3195), the editor of the first "critical edition" in 1896, Giovanni Mestica, translates this primacy into a single sonnet per page, fusing the commentary tradition with Valdezoco's editorial principle of 1472.

Even in the 1532 post-mortem and unauthorized printing of Machiavelli's treatise *The Prince*, we encounter the editorial power of Petrarch's print verses. As the final chapter ends with sixteenth-century print's typically narrowing inverted triangular closure for Machiavelli's prose, Petrarch's verses from his canzone *Italia mia* (*Rvf* 128) stand apart and break that closure with their insistent editorial formula of one verse per typographical line.

After decades of talking about textuality, it would probably serve us well to face the fact that modern textual criticism is conditioned and structured by the conventions of print publication, from traditional page layouts that are ironclad not only in their shaping of how we read the text but also how we interpret it.

Indeed since well before Borghini's dilemma until today how we think of and visualize the printed page has configured the norms of our scholarly



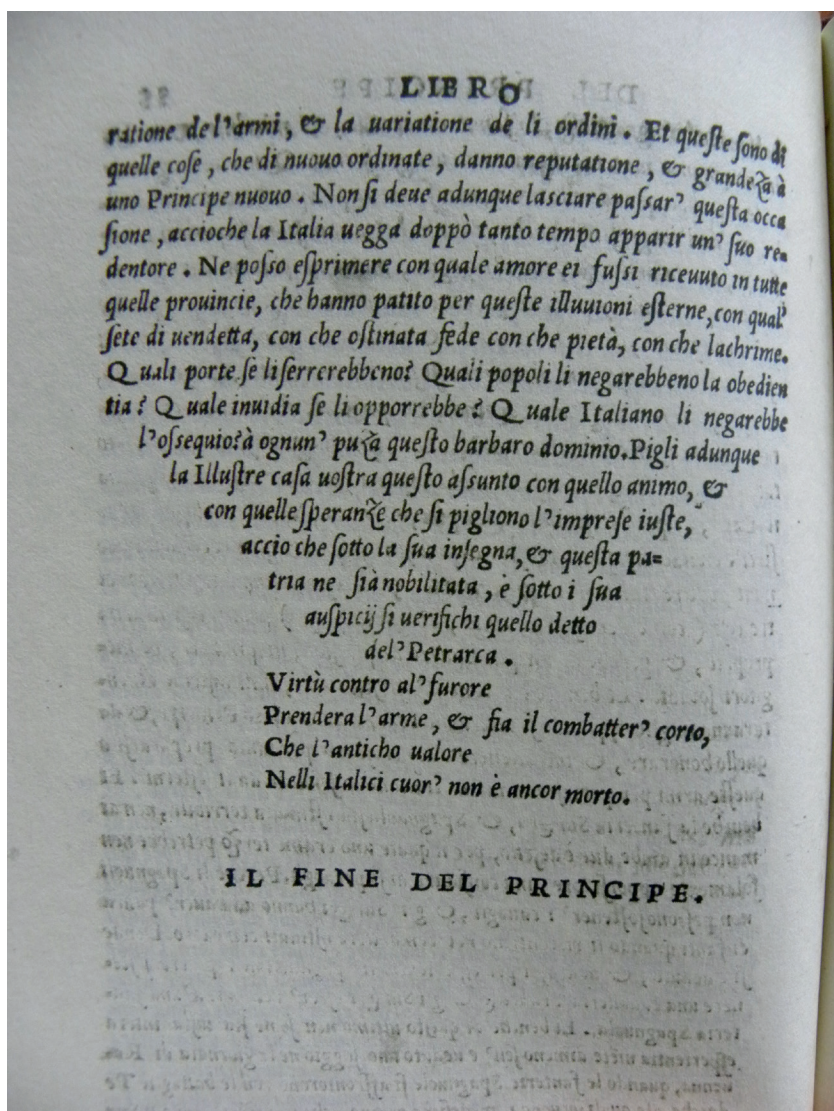


Figure 2. Niccolò Machiavelli. 1532. *Il principe* [. . .], c. 35v. Private collection.

editions from the position of the primary text on the page, the construction of the scholarly apparatus, and the edition's complex system of indexicality down to the print-based notions of accidentals in Greg's method — especially where debates about punctuation are concerned, and, perhaps most curiously, the Lachmannian tendency to disregard print and its

handwritten marginalia, especially ironic when we consider the fact that one of the oldest copies of the *Divine Comedy* is to be found in the variants copied by Luca Martini in the margins of a 1515 Aldine edition of Dante.<sup>18</sup> There is not always a straight line between the influence of the deep structures of print and scholarly editing. But if you pull on the thread of the structure of a critical edition, you'll see how quickly it unravels the fabric of the printed page rather than that of philological methods. This is especially true for the editorial genre of the anthology, from the earliest repertoires, such as the 1527 *Sonetti e canzoni di diversi antichi autori toscani* (Bernardo Giunta), Lodovico Dolce's *Primo volume delle rime scelte da diversi autori* (Gabriel Giolito 1565), and even Agostino Gobbi's *Rime di alcuni illustri autori viventi* (Lorenzo Basegio 1727) to the textbooks that still pay more attention to out-of-copyright texts or — perhaps at best — the *textus receptus* of fifty years before and sometimes with only canonical commentary. Usually stripped of their original material and cultural contexts, anthologized poems, often without the benefit of philologically advanced curation, must stand in telegraphically on the printed page for longer, more thoughtful and diversified representations of the richness of literary culture. The role of literary anthologies of every stripe has helped to cement deep cultural and textual accretions in various traditions to the extent that back in 1928 Robert Graves and Laura Riding felt compelled to publish *A Pamphlet Against Anthologies* to illustrate the editorial excesses of one of literary studies most popular tools.

Clearly the question of print, print traditions and printers and their influence on textual criticism is not a recent one. But we find ourselves in a unique place in the history of communication, not dissimilar to that of Borghini, decades into new digital formulae for representing texts. For if the norms and limitations of print and their effects literally on how we repackaging the works we edit are feeling a little threadbare and uncomfortable, it is in part because we are learning more and more about the intervention of consuming cultures on the standards of print, but in part as well because of new, digital ways of thinking, visualizing and reproducing texts. Not since the advent of photography has such an important and yet problematical tool been put into the service of philology, textual editing and the representation of texts.

\* \* \*

18. See PETROCCHI 1966, 76–8, for a description of Luca Martini's 1548 collation of the Florentine manuscript of the *Commedia* transcribed by Forese Donati between October 1330 and January of 1331. Donati's manuscript has been lost for centuries.



From 1996 until 2003 I was engaged in the preparation of a new diplomatic edition of Petrarch's *Rerum vulgarium fragmenta* for the Vatican Library's publication of a new, color facsimile of Vatican Latino 3195 and a commentary prepared by three Italian colleagues and myself. Partially in the hand of Petrarch's trusted scribe — we believe to have been Giovanni Malpaghini — under Petrarch's direct supervision, and partially in Petrarch's own hand, both as the hand that intervenes to correct, revise and hone Malpaghini's previous work and as the copyist who completes both Parts I and II and then experiments with final orderings for the last 31 poems, the manuscript is one of the unique jewels in the crown of the Italian literary triad of Dante, Petrarch and Boccaccio.<sup>19</sup> Off and on I had spent many months of those six years with my head inside the Vatican Library's small wooden light box examining Petrarch's manuscript with a hand-held ultra-violet light, mapping every erasure and mark on the manuscript's 72 chartae, or 144 pages. The manuscript was unbound and then photographed before being rebound in its current red velvet covers. Examining the manuscript in its unbound state, documented in photographs I still turn to, was both an opportunity, for example to study the manuscript's gutters, and a challenge. Like other authors' manuscripts, Vaticano Latino 3195 is a complex "work site". A manuscript that began in 1367 as a fair copy, but eventually turned into the author's working copy, it bears the editorial, poetic and scribal marks left behind by its famous poet-copyist, layer upon layer of erasure, rewritings, sometimes multiple experiments in reordering, and the signs of hands that intervened on the chartae, sometimes even within the text. In the preparation of my own diplomatic-interpretative edition of the work, the more I attempted to represent for print publication what was on the surface (and where possible just below the surface), the more I attempted to represent the manuscript's layers, the more unfit for print my edition became. Many of the editorial devices I was using to portray the manuscript's complexities the more difficult actually reading the texts became for all but the most expert of readers willing to wade through color-coding, diverse fonts, ink saturations and, of course, a paleographic and philological apparatus that could cure any case of insomnia. And my goal had hardly been to produce an edition so complicated that no one would use it to understand better the progression and development of one of the great and influential songbooks of Italian and European literature.

19. For a recent attempt to put into doubt Malpaghini's role as "copyist A", see BERTÉ 2015. Early Italian literature is perhaps unique for its medieval tradition of numerous holographs in the hands of Petrarch and Boccaccio. So far we've found none of Dante's works in his own hand.

Discussions with the publisher broke down and my diplomatic edition was scrapped in favor of a reprint of Modigliani's 1904 edition.

Annoyed at the time that so much of my work was left on the editorial cutting floor, I can now say it was the best thing that could have happened. My own dilemma over the inappropriate nature of print for my edition, especially after foreseeing what would have been inevitably lost, was by necessity postponed. Even if in 2004 I had wanted to publish my edition online, the digital tools that were ultimately used to create and support the infrastructure of the *Petrarch* still hadn't been invented.

At the heart of my own dilemma and skepticism was in truth my own "print thinking": a condition whose methodological contours and implications I had already identified at the beginning of my collaborative work with my friend and colleague at IU, John Walsh, but only fully realized outside the context of my medieval and Renaissance perspectives on print culture when I began reading Marta Werner's chapters for a project devoted to the editing of Emily Dickinson's manuscripts, Dickinson's "Master documents" to be exact. Given Dickinson's idiosyncratic punctuation, line breaks, often coequal authorial variants that occupy virtually the same space on the paper and her works' emphasis on the materiality of their support, it became clear that literary period was not as central to my thinking about notions of visual poetics and the layering of medieval parchment as were the underlying — deeply underlying — structuring conditions of print from its origins to the so-called crisis of scholarly publishing.<sup>20</sup> For certain authors medieval and modern — and perhaps many more than we imagine when we find their works mostly in "definitive" print editions — but especially those for whom our modern notions of print publication were not central if not anathema to their production, the conventions of print represent a severe reduction of their poetics. Added to Dickinson's textuality are the layers of editorial accretions, or interpretative overlays, that obfuscate her work together with strata of critical and press politics fought over the bodies of editions, making Marta's work directly on the MSS a virtual return to origins absent of print and its conventions.<sup>21</sup> For authors like Dickinson and Petrarch, two very different characters in world

20. See DOWLING 1997. Among the earliest analyses of the crisis in scholarly publishing in our age was William C. Dowling's 1997 essay, reduced and reprinted in the now defunct but more widely circulated neoconservative *The Public Interest*. It remains one of the few essays where one can find Aulus Gellius's *Noctes Atticae* and Erica Rand's *Barbie's Queer Accessories* cited in the same sentence.

21. Marta Werner's *Writing in Time: Emily Dickinson's Master Hours*, see WERNER 2021.

literature if ever there were, print has proven to be an editorial straitjacket that chokes off and alters their poetics. The printed text invariably risks representing works as they are interpretatively structured through the lens of a culture's editorial mechanisms, a compromise between the author and the conventions that the reading public seems to expect only because it is what print has taught them to expect.

This is not to say that printed editions are ineffective or nefarious in their textual and interpretative results. Instead it is how we use the printed scholarly edition to impose rules and structures of thought and discourse and to suppress further intellectual invention that is creating in ever greater numbers of scholars, especially younger scholars, a growingly negative reaction to what should be considered the historical richness of print. Rather, what is perhaps needed is a fresh discussion and transparency about and disclosure of the actual, long-term effects of the print tradition on scholarly method and the advancement of our studies of works and their texts.

This kind of renewed focus on the cultural import (and baggage) of print sometimes forgotten by subsequent generations allows us to reevaluate the deep impact that editions of, say, Petrarch's *Rerum vulgarium fragmenta* or Boccaccio's *Decameron* have had on the ways we construct our thinking and subsequent representations of those works, both in our acceptance and rejection of previous editorial and interpretative formulations. When we think of the impact even of autograph manuscripts of Petrarch's *Rerum vulgarium fragmenta* or Boccaccio's *Decameron*, we must recognize that they are both relatively late scholarly discoveries of the last two centuries and have had to contend with still entrenched critical and editorial accretions accumulated over centuries in previous editions, a kind of *textus receptus*.<sup>22</sup>

22. Boccaccio's late holograph of the *Decameron* (Berlin, Staatsbibliothek Hamilton 90), recopied and revised by the author in 1370, just five years before his death, was only recognized in the middle of the twentieth century as being in the author's hand. Petrarch's partial holograph (Vaticano Latino 3195) was proven as belonging to the poet and another trusted copyist only late in the nineteenth century. For Boccaccio, see: CHIARI 1948 and 1955; as well as the confirmation of the manuscript's paternity in BRANCA and RICCI 1962. Chiari reminds us, however, that Boccaccio's hand had already been recognized by no less of a philologist than Michele Barbi who, upon examining the manuscript on-loan to the Biblioteca Laurenziana in Florence in 1933, noted matter-of-factly "È lui" (It's him [Boccaccio]). It should be noted that already in 1927 Aldo Massera had published an edition of the *Decameron* based on Hamilton 90 without claiming its holographic nature, only the quality of its readings. In Petrarch's case, the doubts and battles over the authenticity of the holograph manuscript that

Added to that, the missing quires in Boccaccio's MS Hamilton 90 have caused methodological questions about the treatment of the text in critical editions that resort to solutions that rely solely on Mannelli's old 1384 "ottimo esemplare" that we saw earlier. And in spite of Petrarch's highly nuanced visual poetics, a virtual road map to how he wanted his poems to appear both in relation to one another and as a songbook, old print standards that date back to the fifteenth century still guide editors of printed books.<sup>23</sup>

These days, publishing houses and philology find themselves on hard times. Most of my friends and fellow philologists turn to fewer and fewer venues to publish print editions with dramatically reduced philological flexibility and small print-runs that require subventions from institutions that seem ever less willing to invest in the humanities if they are not "digital". What does get published is subject to ever-stricter print values. And printing itself seems to have forgotten many of the skills of its glorious past. Complex foldouts were once a main stay of scholarly printing, and not just for technical publications, from Alessandro Vellutello's 1525 foldout map of Vaucluse to Avignon to the foldout of the family tree of Francesco d'Amaretto, the copyist of the "Ottimo Testo" of the *Decameron* printed in 1761.

And those familiar with Abraham Nicolas Amelot de la Houssaye's *Histoire du Gouvernement de Venise*, for which the author-diplomat spent some weeks in the Bastille, cannot imagine the work without the third edition's integral foldout illustrations that demonstrate the central places and hierarchies of the Venetian state in the late seventeenth century.

But rather than building on such a wondrous feature, modern presses invariably refuse such "innovations" as the foldout by claiming it would make the book's production costs too high and leading us right back to the Giunti's 1573 critique of printers.

---

would become Vaticano Latino 3195 started with Pietro Bembo's interest in the codex first as a late source for his 1501 Aldine edition (registered in his own editor's copy, now MS Vaticano Latino 3197) and again later as a personal acquisition (BEMBO 1552, II: 303) for his library before the manuscript passed through the hands of Fulvio Orsini and into the Vatican Library, where it sat virtually unnoticed until 1886 when both Pierre DE NOLHAC (1886, 1887) and Arthur PAKSCHER (1886) claimed the manuscript to be partially in Petrarch's hand.

23. See STOREY 1993, 201–433 for a general introduction to Petrarch's visual poetics with examples; STOREY 2004 for the principles of punctuation, space and markers in Petrarch's holograph; and STOREY 2011 for an introduction to the early reception of Petrarch's poetic layouts in manuscript and print.

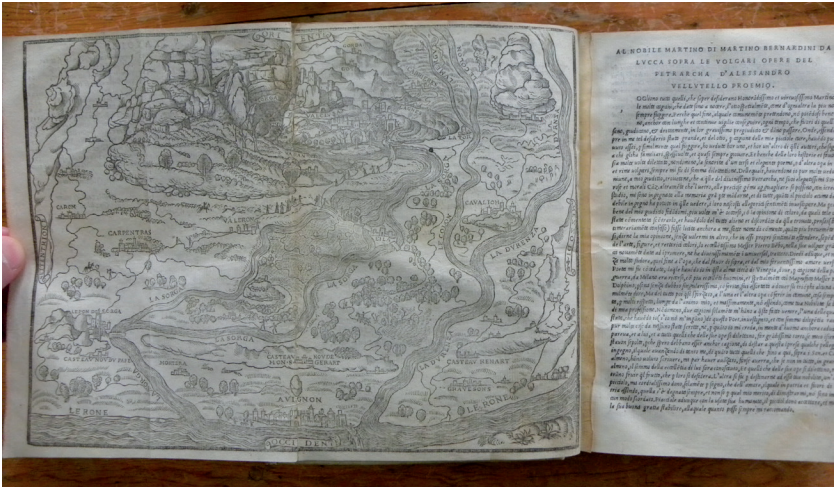


Figure 3. Alessandro Vellutello, ed. 1525. *Le volgari opere del Petrarca con la espositione di Alessandro Vellutello da Lucca*. Venezia: Giovanniantonio & Fratelli da Sabbia, sign. Aa4v. Private Collection.

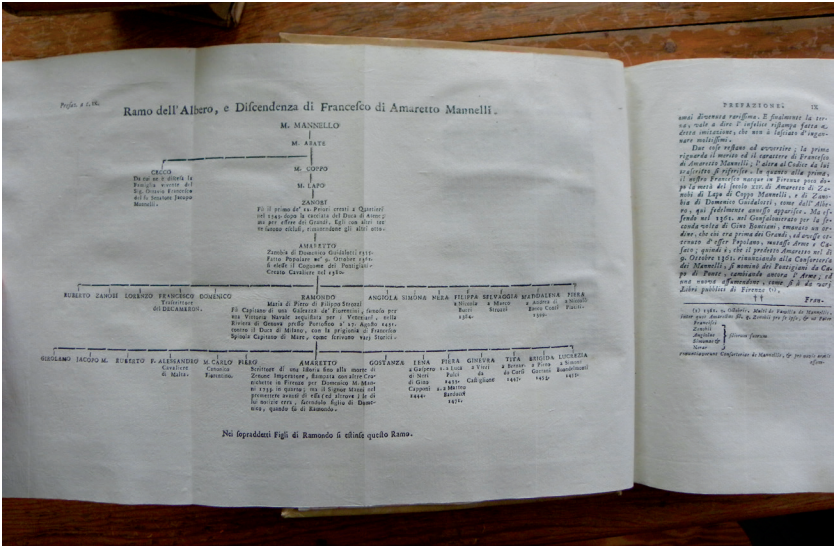


Figure 4. 1761. *Il Decameron* di M. Gio[vanni] Boccaccio tratto dall'Ottimo Testo scritto da Fran[ces]co d'Amaretto Mannelli sull'Originale dell'Autore, infra VIII et IX. Private Collection.





Figure 5. AMELOT DE LA HOUSSAIE, [Abraham Nicolas]. 1705. *Histoire du Gouvernement de Venise*. Tome Premier. Amsterdam: Pierre Mortier, pag. infra 200 et 201 (Veue de la Place St. Marc). Private Collection.



Figure 6. AMELOT DE LA HOUSSAIE, [Abraham Nicolas]. 1705. *Histoire du Gouvernement de Venise*. Tome Premier. Amsterdam: Pierre Mortier, pag. infra 6 et 7 (Le Grand Conseil). Private Collection.

Materially, intellectually and culturally we are at a crossroad, and I'm telling you nothing new when I say it's a bit like a war zone, alas in a war we've been in for a good twenty-five years. When, after early discussions with my future collaborator John Walsh, I first began learning the ins and outs of the digital publication of texts, I did so with trepidation. The world of online publication was and still is to a great extent the Wild West of publication. Many of us quickly grew tired of texts scanned with Optical Character Recognition (or OCR) and thrown up on the Web as "online editions". The problem still lurks, however, often in the form of "big data" results, where thousands of OCR scanned texts, produced with early and flawed recognition software, are analyzed to tell us about "Culture". Even the very expensive 2004 facsimile edition of Petrarch's *Rerum vulgarium fragmenta* that boasts of very high-resolution photographs of Petrarch's manuscript includes a packet of virtually restored images of some chartae where faded ink and other material damage has been digitally "corrected", but often with unfortunate results (see STOREY 2004, 135n13).

Like their counterparts in print, serious digital editions of texts are crafted with painstaking work that is intellectual, conceptual and very much the product of digital tools that must be sustainable over time. Serious digital editions take a long time and many collaborative and diversified hands to make: a fact not reflected in universities' often-unrealistic enthusiasm for "the Digital Humanities". One exercise I liked to conduct with my graduate students was the construction of a small, experimental site with an edition and critical apparatus for a single sonnet. One quickly learns that the sparkle of a well-crafted, digital edition, even of a single 14-verse poem, is not so easy to accomplish. Rather — as many of you know — a sound, functioning site/archive with a digital edition takes years of planning, conceptualization, encoding (or rewriting the texts in a new "tag language"), revision and integration of the codes, and finally a lot of testing, checking for broken code, and frequent maintenance. Thanks to many truly fruitful collaborations throughout the scholarly world we have made important advances in the viability and stability of digital editions and archives. Yet I would quickly add that we still have not tamed the Wild West. In spite of initiatives such as the Modern Language Association's 2016 "Statement on the Scholarly Edition in the Digital Age" (see MODERN LANGUAGE ASSOCIATION 2016) and Michelangelo Zaccarello's proposed 2017 "Committee on Digital Oversight for Italian Editions" (Osservatorio permanente sulle Edizioni Digitali di Autori Italiani [ [OPEDAI](#) ]) and a growing number of evaluative resources for digital sites, we are still far from any kind of standardized formulae for the digital publication of works and documents.

This is a good thing. Efforts, especially institutional efforts, to impose standardized forms and operating systems would choke innovation in numerous sectors, including the philological. In the last few years, academic-political turf wars undertaken by some institutions in surprisingly central fields of inquiry have suppressed or significantly altered initiatives that simply became bogged down in issues of public access, limited rights, firewalls, philological sources, and even page design.

In the case of the *Petrarch* (<http://petrarch.org>), John Walsh, Isabella Magni and I, along with many helping hands and consulting specialists have kept well under the radar of institutional intervention. And to their credit, Indiana University and the National Endowment for the Humanities have been truly benevolent and generous hosts and supporters. Our first two years of existence (2013–2014) were spent purely talking through and mapping structures and infrastructures and creating prototypes of diverse forms of representation of Petrarch's manuscripts and poems. In 2013 I had already been working on my own new edition, along with additional studies for a diplomatic edition, of Petrarch's *Rerum vulgarium fragmenta* and its early manuscripts, especially Petrarch's autograph copy, for some 22 years. Yet the weekly meetings with our small team of web designers, philologists and encoders to discuss everything from how to present sestinas that would be faithful to Petrarch's visual poetics to the code for complex forms of blank space as micro- and macrotextual punctuation in medieval manuscripts quickly taught me to rethink the results of my years of research in Petrarch's texts in new, philological ways, especially when it came to their representation. I had long been convinced of the necessity of representing the texts of the *Rerum vulgarium fragmenta* in the visual-poetic poetic form that Petrarch gave them rather than in the forms into which often anonymous, fifteenth-century scribes and typesetters had transformed them, the very transformed layouts in which modern print editions still incorrectly cast one of the most influential songbooks of Western literature. But old problems of representation lingered; and these were some of the first "hard cases" we elected to tackle in our early discussions and prototypes. One of the hardest was also one for which Petrarch himself had to find a makeshift material solution: a poem that wouldn't fit and couldn't be credibly handled by his usual solution of adding a bifolium (a folded sheet to make two chartae, or four pages front and back, as he did at the ends of Part I (Vaticano Latino 3195, cc. 49–52) and II (cc. 61–72 in the form of three separate bifolia [Fascicles X and XI folded into Fascicle IX]):



Fascicles IX, X and XI: 061r - 072v  
two binions within a  
binion



**Figure 7.** Fascicles IX, X, and XI (respectively cc. 61–62|71–72, 63–66, and 67–70 of Vaticano Latino 3195. From the Fascicler of the *Petrarchive*: <http://petrarchive.org>

In Fascicle XI, Petrarch faces the prospect of copying the long canzone *Quel' antiquo mio dolce empio signore* (Rvf 356 [revised as 360]) onto two sides of two chartae, 69v and 70r. But the canzone's 157 verses, which Petrarch would normally have copied in the same layout as the poem's prosodic sister, *Una donna più bella assai che 'l sole* (Rvf 119), simply won't fit in the space he has. Following his *mise en page* model he would have to do the materially impossible, add a single charta. Instead he copies the poem's stanzas 15 verses three verses per transcriptional line on five lines in a kind of medieval zip-form that would be expanded in a fair copy. By now the manuscript is little more than a draft or service copy which, according to Petrarch's habit, would have been destined to be rewritten as a fair copy by a professional scribe. As we see in the click that takes us from the diplomatic to the edited version, the digital edition automatically expands the canzone into the form it takes in later manuscripts such as New York Morgan Library M502 and Firenze, Biblioteca Laurenziana Segniano 1:

356 [360] ✱ charta 69 verso ✱

- 1 ¶ Quel àtìquo mio dolce|empio signore / Fatto citar dināci ala reina / Che laparte diuina .25.
- 4 Tien di nostra natura / encima sede. Iui comoro che nel foco affina / Mirap̃sēto carco didolore.
- 7 Di paura ⁊ dorrore. Quasi huom che teme morte / ⁊ ragion chiede. Encomincio / madōna ilmāco piede
- 10 Giouenetto posio nelcostui regno. Ondaltro chira ⁊ sdegno / Nō ebbi mai. ⁊ tātī ⁊ si diuersi /
- 13 Tormēti iui sofferesi / Chalfine uīta fu quellīfinita / Mia patīētia. enodio ebbi lauita.

**Figure 8.** *Quel' antiquo mio dolce empio signore*, Rvf 356[revised as 360], vv. 1–15. From the *Petrarchive*: <http://petrarchive.org>; diplomatic form.

356 [360]

§Quel' antiquo mio dolce empio signore      Fatto citar dinanzi a la reina,  
 Che la parte divina      Tien di nostra natura e 'n cima sede,  
 5    Ivi, com'oro che nel foco affina,      Mi rappresento carico di dolore,  
 Di paura et d'orrore,      Quasi huom che teme morte et ragion chiede;  
 E 'ncomincio: Madonna, il manco piede      Giovenetto pos'io nel costui regno,  
 Ond'altro ch'ira et sdegno      Non ebbi mai; et tanti et sì diversi  
 Tormenti ivi sofferisi,      Ch'al fine vinta fu quell'infinita  
 15    Mia patientia, e 'n odio ebbi la vita.

**Figure 9.** *Quel' antiquo mio dolce empio signore*; *Rvf* 356[revised as 360], vv. 1–15. From the *Petrarch* archive: <http://petrarch.org>; edited and expanded version.

This expansion of Petrarch's "zip file", of course, raises other representational questions as we move outside the material limits of his manuscript Vaticano Latino 3195 to "virtual chartae" to reconstruct the poem's ideal, edited form. It is an act of digital interpretation based on our best philological information about Petrarch's own transcriptional matrices and systems. It is also an act that interprets the very nature of Petrarch's manuscript at this stage of its execution, that is a draft/service copy.

In all honesty, for me these first years of our Petrarch archive collaboration were spent in good part teaching myself to move from print thinking to a digital re-envisioning the complex details of Petrarch's macrotext. Nowhere was this truer than our discussions and my own thinking about what to do with a "textual component" that you will find only in one other edition: the blank chartae, to be precise — seven (six ruled) blank sides of four chartae (or seven pages) that Petrarch leaves between the two parts of the *Fragmenta* (Part I: *Rvf* 1–263, cc. 1r–49r; and Part II: *Rvf* 264–366, cc. 53r–72v).<sup>24</sup> In the play between its regularity and its alteration, blank space has an especially important diacritical role in manuscripts that we can recuperate in the digital. Modigliani only partially accomplishes this in his diplomatic edition. Key to our interpretative encoding of these pages as

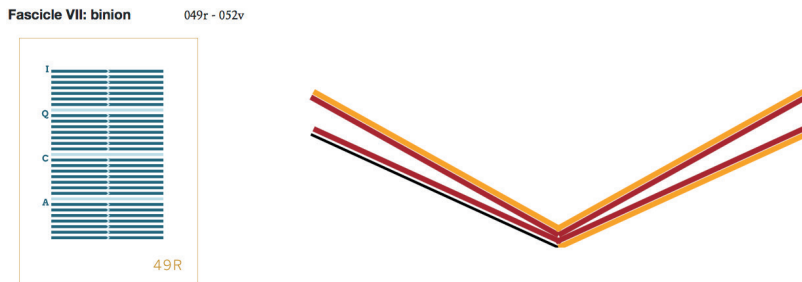
24. The only edition in which these "blank pages" is Modigliani's diplomatic edition (MODIGLIANI 1904, 114–20 (or cc. 49v–52v), though for c. 49v, which appears today to be blank, the otherwise cautious Modigliani must face the other problem of print: representing erasures that can still be read, which he does by including a more recent colophon and two long notes to explain its presence. Modigliani fills half the otherwise blank page of his diplomatic edition with text that one can't see with the naked eye, but does not represent the pages' rulings, a usually key preparation before the parchment was used.

“potential textual space” was also our underlying decision to represent the division of the textual space by the 31 ruled lines of Petrarch’s very regular transcriptional “canvas”.



**Figure 10.** Detail of the Visual Index of the *Petrarch* archive: <http://petrarch.org>; Line graphs for selected chartae.

Following the typical medieval practice of leave a blank charta as a textual divider between significant sections of a work, or between works themselves, Petrarch could easily have intended c. 52v as just such a divider between Parts I and II. But what would have been the reason for leaving so many ruled chartae blank (49r–52r)? Especially the entirely empty bifolium (cc. 50–51) at the heart of the binion (cc. 49–52)?



**Figure 11.** Fascicle VII Binion, Vaticano Latino 3195, cc. 49–52; Fascicler of the *Petrarch* archive: <http://petrarch.org>.

Our explicit coding of the ‘function’ of the seven blank pages as ‘potential poetic space’ has raised questions. Why represent blankness? Petrarch himself was responsible for preparing the two bifolia of the binion, Fascicle VII (today chartae 49–52) to transcribe the last four sonnets (*Rvf* 260–263; from *In tale stella* to *Arbor victoriosa*) he inserted into Part 1. While Petrarch uses only the recto of c. 49, all four chartae have been ruled in dry point with 31 lines, his usual canvas. The internal bifolium, cc. 50–51, was simply a folded and ruled sheet that was never used. Did he intend to use the final three chartae of Fascicle VII to record additional poems? Numerologist Petrarch scholars will tell you No; he could not have intended to add to his perfect “calendar” of 366 poems. The material evidence tells us only that the extra chartae were ruled and kept by the poet among his drafts at the time of his death in 1374. They were subsequently bound into the manuscript that Pietro Bembo later described as having seen briefly and that it was bound in white leather.<sup>25</sup>

But there is an additional, scholarly reason for identifying and encoding those blank chartae. It begins to answer an historical question about the view and treatment of authenticity and the justification of textual editing in antiquity, or at least in the fourteenth to the sixteenth century. After Petrarch’s death in 1374, the race to establish the “true” text of Petrarch’s *Rerum vulgarium fragmenta* was often founded on claims of access to the poet’s “original”. This was certainly Aldo Manuzio’s claim to the readers of his 1501 edition of Petrarch’s *Cose volgari*. But already in the late fourteenth and the fifteenth centuries, copyists had begun to identify variants as coming directly from the “hand of the poet” (even as late as in the collated seventeenth-century MS Casanatense 924). In several cases, these claims of authenticity and the use of the poet’s own personal copy point specifically to a manuscript that had four empty chartae between Parts 1 and 2. One of these witnesses, MS M706 at the Beinecke Library at Yale, records the rubric between Parts I and II: “Que sequuntur post mortem domine Lauree scripta sunt [. . .] proprio codice domini francisci annota-

25. See BEMBO 1552, II: 302–4, both letters to Girolamo Quirini (23 August and 20 September 1544), in which Bembo first queries Quirini if the book that Quirini has located is the one in “worn white leather” that Bembo had seen many years before in Padova and was now trying to acquire. In the second, of 20 September, Bembo declares to Quirini that the manuscript is precisely the one and: “È di mano dell’author suo senza nessun dubbio” (It is without a doubt in the hand of its author [303]).

tum est et carte quatuor pretermisse vacue”.<sup>26</sup> While not part of Petrarch’s text, the rubric of this 1393 Veronese exemplar, dutifully copied by the late fifteenth-century scribe of Beinecke M706, directly links both the early dissemination and the 1393 copy’s claims to editorial accuracy to a material feature, those four blank chartae, that was in the last quarter of the fourteenth century ascribable to Petrarch’s own hand. The digital representation of the blank pages, accompanied by an apparatus that examines its editorial treatment in diverse historical contexts, maintains a key material feature of the structure of Petrarch’s own artifact and documents its role in the structure of the macrotext.

To this day if you ask me if something called “Digital Philology” exists, my first inclination would probably be to say no. But when I reflect on the transformation of my own thinking in these years of collaborating on the *Petrarchive* and all I’ve learned about textuality by having to represent it in digital forms that are more reflective of Petrarch’s linguistic, formal and material structures, then I would have to say yes, absolutely. Digital Philology is a vehicle born out of the strictures of philology too often chained to print, a philological exploration that requires new ways of thinking and new tool sets to reconstruct literary works and their texts in more authentic contexts. We are at the nexus between Material and Digital Philology. The digital gets us closer to more accurate visualizations not just of texts and their reconstructions but of the more human and layered dimensions present in the construction of manuscripts and the texts they contain.

I would like to tell you that digital editions are the solution to the unhappiness in which philologists and textual scholars currently find themselves. While I believe they are a robust scholarly tool in the advancement of philology, editions and serious textual studies, I fear they will not improve your happiness. Like all serious endeavors there are no quick fixes that actually fix and promote the “textual condition”. We have seen the results of easy digital works that rely on other editions that have been scanned and “made available” to readers. Aside from the errors owed to OCR, they are better considered sites devoted to the history of reception. But scholarly digital projects big and small can take many years to plan, complete and maintain. During those years the tasks of checking for digital errors in the code and interface (and thus in what you see on the screen) seem never-ending, especially when the team is small. But the challenge to rethink what we

26. These [poems] that follow are written about Madonna Laura after her death [. . .] from a manuscript that has been annotated by Master Francesco, and he placed between [the two parts] four blank chartae [or leaves].

thought we knew and to move our thinking away from print and toward more deeply layered forms of textual representation can only sharpen our philological skills while, one hopes, making us and the ways we communicate philological concepts and results less insular and more central to cultural discussions in which we should be involved.

Somewhere between the continual improvement and growing rigor of the digital and the discouragement of a faltering book trade, philologists of every kind (traditional, material, digital) will hopefully take up our tools and make our standards even more rigorous. In the choice between studying and preserving our cultural heritages or allowing them to sink under the weight of obstinate resistance to technology, I hope that cultural heritage wins out, whatever representational form that victory will ultimately take. Just as Vincenzo Borghini, troubled I believe at numerous levels by his task, acted to save what he could of Boccaccio's literary icon, we must gather our skills and act. And just taking the books we are writing for print publication and creating e-books with page-turner does not a revolution in textual studies make. To be good digital philologists that revolution must begin in our heads and how we think, not in the repurposing of our products.

The Society for Textual Scholarship must itself be an actor in this task. The evolution of a society (lest we forget once a renegade society) originally organized to investigate and support diverse views in editorial theory and practice has a vital role to play; not to become another digital conference with sessions devoted solely to new tools and improvements in TEI. There are plenty of venues for that kind of important research. Rather I would suggest that now more than ever the Society can strengthen its voice as a cooperative, expert collaborator in the rigors of editing and textual preparation for digital editions. Those of you who have taken up the hard work of collaborating on a digital edition or archive know that artful balance of rigor and intellectual flexibility can make us weary, but we cannot abandon our posts, or our scholarly curiosity, or our principles, just re-examine them from time to time.

*Deep River, Connecticut*

## Works Cited

- BELLONI, Gino, ed. 2001. Francesco Petrarca. *Rerum vulgarium fragmenta*. *Anastatica dell'edizione Valdezoco Padova 1472*. Venezia: Regione del Veneto – Marsilio.
- BELLONI, Gino and Riccardo DRUSI. 2002. *Vincenzo Borghini. Filologia e invenzione nella Firenze di Cosimo I*. Firenze: Olschki.

- BELLONI, Gino. 2004. "Nota sulla storia del Vat. Lat. 3195". In BELLONI, BRUGNOLO, STOREY, and ZAMPONI 2004, 73–104.
- BELLONI, Gino, Furio BRUGNOLO, H. Wayne STOREY, and Stefano ZAMPONI. 2004. *Rerum vulgarium fragmenta. Codice Vat. Lat. 3195. Commentario all'edizione in facsimile*, Roma–Padova: Antenore.
- BEMBO, Pietro. 1552. *Delle lettere di Pietro Bembo*. Vol. 1–4, seconda impressione. Venezia: Gualtero Scotto.
- BERTÉ, Monica. 2015. "Giovanni Malpaghini copista di Petrarca?" *Cultura Neolatina* 75.1–2: 205–16.
- BORGHINI, Vincenzo, ed. 1573. *Il Decameron di messer Giovanni Boccacci cittadino fiorentino. Ricorretto in Roma, et emendato secondo l'ordine del Sacro Concilio di Trento, et riscontrato in Firenze con Testi Antichi & alla sua vera lezione ridotto da' Deputati di loro Alt[ezze] Ser[enissime]*. Firenze: Giunti.
- . 1574. *Annotazioni et discorsi sopra alcuni luoghi del Decameron di M. Giovanni Boccacci; Fatte dalli molto Magnifici Sig. Deputati da loro Altezze Serenissime, sopra la correctione di esso Boccaccio, stampato l'anno MDLXXIII*. Firenze: Giunti.
- BRANCA, Vittore, and Pier Giorgio RICCI. 1962. *Un autografo del Decameron (Codice Hamilton 90)*. Firenze: Olschki.
- , ed. 1992. *Giovanni Boccaccio, Decameron*. 2 vols. Torino: Einaudi.
- CHIARI, Alberto. 1948. "Un autografo del Decameron? *La Fiera letteraria* 11 luglio, 27.
- . 1955. "Ancora sull'autografia del codice berlinese del Decameron". *Convivium* n.s. 23: 352–6.
- CONWAY, Melissa. 1999. *The Diario of the Printing Press of San Jacopo di Ripoli 1476–1484*. Firenze: Olschki.
- CURSI, Marco. 2007. *Il Decameron: scritture, scriventi, lettori. Storia di un testo*. Roma: Viella.
- DE NOLHAC, Pierre. 1886. *Le Canzoniere autographe de Petrarque*. Communication faite à l'Académie des Inscriptions et Belles-Lettres. Paris: Klincksieck.
- . 1887. *La Bibliothèque de Fulvio Orsini*. Paris: E. Buillon and E. Vieweg.
- DOWLING, William C. 1997. "Saving Scholarly Publishing in the Age of Oprah. The Glastonbury Project". *Journal of Scholarly Publishing* 28.3 (April); partial rpt. as "The Crisis of Scholarly Publishing", in *The Public Interest* 129 (Fall): 23–37.
- FANFANI, Pietro, ed. 1857. *Annotazioni et discorsi sopra alcuni luoghi del Decameron di M. Giovanni Boccacci; Fatte dai Deputati alla correctione del medesimo*, 4th ed. Firenze: Le Monnier.
- MACHIAVELLI, Niccolò. 1532. *Il principe di Niccholo Machiavello al Magnifico Lorenzo di Piero de Medici*, cc. 2r–35v. Roma: Antonio Blado d'Asola.
- MAGNI, Isabella, H. Wayne STOREY and John WALSH. 2014–2020. *The Petrarche: a Rich-Text Digital Edition and Commentary of Petrarch's Rerum vulgarium fragmenta*. <http://petrarche.org>.
- MODERN LANGUAGE ASSOCIATION. 2016. "MLA Statement of the Scholarly Edition in the Digital Age", prepared by the Committee on Scholarly Editions (2015). <https://www.mla.org/content/download/52050/1810116/rptCSE16.pdf>

- MODIGLIANI, Ettore, ed. 1904. *Francisci Petrarche Laureati Poete Rerum vulgarium fragmenta*. Roma: Società Filologica Romana.
- PAKSCHER, Arthur. 1886. "Aus einem Katalog des Fulvius Ursinus". *Zeitschrift für romanische Philologie* 10:205–45.
- PETROCCHI, Giorgio, ed. 1966. *Introduzione*, vol. 1 of Dante Alighieri. *La Commedia secondo l'antica vulgata*. Milano: Mondadori.
- STOREY, H. Wayne. 1982. "Parodic Structures in 'Alibech and Rustico': Antecedents and Traditions". *The Canadian Journal of Italian Studies* 5: 163–76.
- . 1993. *Transcription and Visual Poetics in the Early Italian Lyric*. New York – London: Garland.
- . 2004. "All'interno della poetica grafico-visiva di Petrarca". In BELLONI, BRUGNOLO, STOREY and ZAMPONI 2004, 131–71.
- . 2011. "Petrarch's 'Original' of the *Fragmenta* 1362–1558. From Boccaccio to Rovillio's Third Printing". *Humanist Studies & the Digital Age* 1.1 (Winter): 28–49.
- VELLUTELLO, Alessandro, ed. 1525. *Le volgari opere del Petrarca con la espositione di Alessandro Vellutello*. Venezia: Giovanniantonio & Fratelli da Sabbio.
- WERNER, Marta. 2021. *Writing in Time: Emily Dickinson's Master Hours*. Forthcoming. Amherst: Amherst College Press.



# “Obedezco pero no cumplo”

## Surviving Censorship in Early Modern Spain

*Rolena Adorno*

### ABSTRACT

Better known by the royal decrees that governed it than by its practice, book censorship in Early Modern Spain remains an elusive topic. How did it work in individual instances? Were there authors who defied it? I take up here two works, one an imprint published and expurgated; the other a manuscript, approved for printing but never published. Both reveal the marks of the censor's pen (occasionally, knife) but also the literary personalities of the authors whose writings were scrutinized. Both works belong to the genre of “proto-anthropology” that studied civilizations ancient and modern, from the Old World and the New. Please meet Fray Jerónimo Román y Zamora and his *Repúblicas del mundo* [Republics of the World] and Fray Martín de Muriúa, author of *Historia General del Piru* [General History of Peru]. Along the way we encounter their respective readers, “Dr. Odriozola” and Fray Alonso Remón, as well as the larger-than-life presence of Fray Bartolomé de las Casas.

---

“OBEDEZCO PERO NO CUMPLO” IS AN OLD SPANISH SAYING THAT means “I obey but I do not comply”, that is, “I acknowledge your demand but I am not fulfilling its obligations”.<sup>1</sup> I have chosen it to set the tone for the consideration of my topic, which is book censorship and those authors who defied it.<sup>2</sup> Book censorship in Spain in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries is best known by its laws and its commonplaces. One of them is that if an author's work was censored — either prohibited from publication or expurgated afterward — it shut down that author forever. Another is that, if an author's work was not published in its day, it must have been because it was censored and prohibited from publication. But was this

1. All English-language translations are my own.
2. An initial version of this paper was presented as a keynote address at the Society for Textual Scholarship conference, “Ephemerality: The Precarious and the Preserved”, The New School and New York University, March 21, 2019. I thank STS Conference Organizer Stephanie Browner and *Textual Cultures* General Editor Marta Werner for inviting my contributions, respectively, to the conference and the journal.

always true? What about those authors who stood up to censorship? Institutional censorship, whether done by the church or the state, was bureaucratic and, like all bureaucracies then and now, it was inefficient and often arbitrary. Banking on this, fearless authors attempted to get around it. Let's see how they fared.

The Roman Catholic Church made its first move into book censorship, aimed at stopping the Protestant Reformation's spread to Spain, in 1521.<sup>3</sup> Although executed to preserve the "purity of faith", church and state soon enough were working hand in hand, and the son of Charles V, Philip II, who reigned from 1556 to 1598, used the institution against his political enemies.<sup>4</sup> A typical accusation was heresy, but it was often used to cloak the accused's criticism of the state. Although heretical ideas were cause for censorship, they alone were not cause for imprisonment; when physical incarceration accompanied textual suppression, something more was at stake: this included, famously, the use of empirical methods to perform Scriptural analysis.<sup>5</sup> (The reading and writing of novels were *not* targeted,

3. The first prohibitions of books in Spain came about during the reign of Charles V, when the Inquisitor General, Adrian of Utrecht, proscribed the entry into Spain of the works of Martin Luther. As LEA (1907, 3: 482) observed: Adrian's "decree of April, 1521, is couched in the most absolute terms; the books in question had been prohibited by the inquisitors and spiritual judges, wherefore the tribunals were instructed to order, under heavy censures and civil penalties, that no one should possess or sell them, whether in Latin or Romance, but should, within three days after notice, bring them to the Inquisition to be publicly burnt; the edict was to be published in a sermon of faith and, after publication, any one possessing or selling them, or knowing that others possessed them and not denouncing the offenders, was to suffer the penalties announced by the inquisitors, while all ecclesiastical and secular authorities were ordered to render whatever aid might be necessary".
4. As scholarship since the 1980s has taken the approach that the Inquisition was an agency of ideological control (MÁRQUEZ 1980; PINTO CRESPO 1983; KAMEN [1967] 1985), Lea's position of more than a century ago again gains currency: "The matters liable to condemnation were by no means confined to heresy, but covered a wide region of morals and of ecclesiastical and secular politics, for the Inquisition was too useful an instrument of statecraft not to be effectively employed in maintaining monarchical as well as clerical absolutism" (1897, 74).
5. Such was the case of Fray Luis de León, the Augustinian friar jailed for his Spanish translation and commentary of the *Song of Songs* (*Cantar de los Cantares*) along with other "offenses". Rendering Scriptural texts in the vernacular was considered a theological infraction by the Inquisition. The censors' quarrel

as has so often been claimed.) Although public and private morals deemed reprehensible were not overlooked, the gravest danger was posed by non-Christian religious belief and sacred custom.

The prohibition and confiscation of books was the first form of Inquisitorial censorship, and it was augmented by expurgation. The Expurgation Index was created in 1570 by Benito Arias Montano, the Hebraist who edited the Antwerp Polyglot Bible; he is considered to have been of possible *converso* origin (MÁRQUEZ 1980, 132). This method of censorship specified pages and passages for excision, not whole books for destruction (REKERS [1961] 1972, 16–7). Designed to censor imprints that were only partially or incidentally offensive to “good faith and morals”, it was a method of censorship that tended, in practice, to preserve more than it obliterated. Instituted under orders of Philip II for the Low Countries where neither the Roman Catholic Church nor the Spanish Inquisition had jurisdiction, Arias Montano’s Expurgation Index was adopted by the Spanish Jesuit historian Juan de Mariana for implementation in Spain, where it became a standard feature of the Spanish Inquisition from 1584 onward (MÁRQUEZ 1980, 131–2, 143). With these institutional proscriptions as background, I want to look at two cases of individual courage in facing it; both were precarious, and both have been, in different and paradoxical ways, objects of destruction — and preservation.

The first is an imprint that was published, then expurgated, then published again in a different but expanded version. Before one of its copies was seized from its private owner for expurgation, it tells a lively story of reader interest, and we will look at that, too. The second is a fair-copied, ready-to-print manuscript that received royal approbation, arriving at the threshold of publication without crossing it. This case reveals the internal workings, the “behind the scenes” phases of a book’s pre-publication. Both authors may well have uttered the phrase, “Obedezco pero no cumplo”, as they wrote the works by which we know them today.

---

was not with poetry and eloquence but rather with the discipline of philology, which, challenging the allegorical, authoritative interpretation of Scripture based on the Church fathers, attempted to establish formal and empirical criteria that clashed with the dogmatic conceptions of the inquisitors. As the cultural orientation of Christian humanism, philology was often considered Hebraist and rabbinical in its preference for literal rather than symbolic meanings, and its inquisitorial persecution continued to the end of the sixteenth century (MÁRQUEZ 1980, 40–1, 104–8).

## Fray Jerónimo Román y Zamora's *Repúblicas del mundo* (1575, 1595)

My first example of “Obedezco pero no cumplo” is Fray Jerónimo Román y Zamora (1536–1597). He was a member of the Order of Saint Augustine in Spain, and he wrote some twenty books on a wide range of religious topics, most of them concerned with the Augustinian Order, of which he was appointed official chronicler in 1573 (MORAL 1897, 14–6). He was active from the 1560s to the 1590s. His encyclopedia of “all the customs of all the peoples of the world, ancient and modern”, titled *Repúblicas del mundo* (1575, 1595), followed the model of Johann Boemus’s immensely successful *Manners, laws and customs of all nations*, published in Latin in Augsburg in 1520.<sup>6</sup> When it appeared in 1575, Román’s *Repúblicas del mundo* consisted of two volumes. Volume one treated Hebrew and Christian civilizations, and volume two, ancient and modern non-Christian (“pagan and barbarous”) civilizations, including those of the Ottoman Turk, the “Moors” (Muslims), and the pre-Columbian and early Spanish colonial Americas (“las Indias Occidentales”).

Román’s two-volume *Repúblicas del mundo* was censored and expurgated. It appeared in 1581 and 1583 on the respective Spanish and Portuguese Inquisitions’ indices of prohibited books and, in 1584, on Gaspar de Quiroga’s Spanish index of books to be expurgated. It appeared subsequently on the indices of censored books in Rome in 1590, Madrid in 1612, and Lisbon in 1624. Because the work was mandated for expurgation, I wanted to examine its evidence in available copies. I studied the first-edition imprint (1575) at the Beinecke Rare Book and Manuscript Library at Yale Univer-

6. Reprinted many times, the 1542 edition of *Omnium gentium mores, leges, & ritus ex multis clarissimis rerum scriptoribus* included the appearance of materials on the New World. In 1556, Boemus’s work appeared in Spanish, translated by Francisco Tamara and published in Antwerp under the title, *El libro de las costumbres de todas las gentes del mundo y de las Indias* (JOHN CARTER BROWN LIBRARY 1980, 1: 51, 85). Boemus’s work appeared in some twenty-three editions in Latin, Italian, French, and English as well as Spanish, between 1536 and 1611, according to HODGEN, who describes Boemus’s goals to assemble, on a “broad geographical plan, with the geographical features subordinated to the ethnological, [ . . . ] the range of human custom, ritual, and ceremony”, and “to inform his readers concerning the laws and governments of other nations” so that they could “form intelligent judgments as to ‘what orders and institutions’ were ‘fittest to be ordayned’ in their own lands for the establishment of perfect peace” ([1964] 1971, 132–3).

sity, the Lilly Library at the University of Indiana, and the Library of Congress, Washington, D.C.; I examined the second-edition imprint (1595) at the John Carter Brown Library at Brown University. Based on this evidence, I have cobbled together the account that follows.

We begin with the title page of volume two of an expurgated copy of *Repúblicas* (see Fig. 1) and follow it with the notice that expurgation has been performed on two copies. In one, the handwritten notice is pasted onto the "Yo el Rey", or royal authorization-to-print page; it is dated August 3, 1589. In the other, the notice of expurgation is handwritten prominently on the title page of volume one, affirming that it had been executed "according to the new expurgation mandate of 1612" (see Figs. 2 and 3). Nevertheless, its intrepid author soldiered on: Román published an expanded, three-volume edition of *Repúblicas* in 1595. The title page of its volume one carries a printed announcement that the work has been "expurgated according to the expurgation order of the Holy Office", that it has been examined by many learned men, that it includes much new material ("diversas Repúblicas, que nunca han sido impresas"), that many of the original *Repúblicas* have been substantially rewritten by the author, and that the work contains abundant, helpful indices (see Fig. 4). Román did not fear censorship; he openly challenged it. Let's examine the evidence of censorship of the edition of 1575.

*The República gentilica*: Román announced in his prologue that, after completing his principal tasks of writing about Hebrew and Christian civilizations (Part One, which corresponds to the work's volume one), he realized that his readers — both the learned and the unschooled — would love to know about ancient pagan cultures, and he confessed that, in his youth, these had been the objects of his keenest interest. Thus he wrote the *República gentilica*. Like other members of the clerical elite, Román had untrammelled access to the world of learning regarding both ancient pagan and modern non-Christian cultures, and he was so secure in his orthodoxy that he sometimes appeared to be heterodox. Among them all, no civilizations, ancient or modern, had been, in Román's view, so "good at being bad" as those of the ancient Greeks and the Romans after them.

So thought one of Román's readers, too. Examining here the Beinecke imprint, I identify its evident reader-owner as "Dr. Odriozola" (see Fig. 1).<sup>7</sup> He inscribed his name in the upper right-hand corner of the title page.

7. The surname is clearly "de Odriozola", but I cannot make out the abbreviated first name, so I will call him "Doctor" because of his curiosity and learned interests.





**Figure 1.** Jerónimo Román y Zamora. 1575. *Repúblicas del Mundo*. 2 vols. Medina del Campo: Francisco del Canto. Title page, volume 2. Beinecke Rare Book and Manuscript Library, Yale University.

## EL REY



O R quanto por parte de vos fray Hieronymo Romá frayle professo de la orden de sant Augustin nos fue hecha relacion, diziendo que vos auades hecho vn libro intitulado las Republicas del mundo, el qual era muy vtil y prouechoso, suplicandonos os mandassemos dar licencia para lo poder imprimir y priuilegio por el tiempo que fuessemos seruido, o como la nuestra merced fuesse. Lo qual visto por los del nuestro cōsejo y como por su mandado se hizierō las diligēcias que la pragmática por nos hecha sobre la impresiō de los libros dispone, por os hazer bien y merced fue acordado que deuamos mandar dar esta nuestra cedula para vos en la dicha razon, & yo tuuēlo por bien, y por la presente os damos licencia y facultad para que por tiempo de diez años primeros siguientes que corran y se cuenten desde el dia de la fecha desta nuestra cedula vos, o la persona q̄ vuestro poder vuiere podays imprimir y vender el dicho libro que de fuso se haze mēcio. Y por la presente damos poder y facultad a qualquier impressor deltos nuestros Reynos q̄ vos nombraredes, para que por esta vez lo puedan imprimir cō que despues de impresso antes q̄ se véda lo traygays al nuestro cōsejo para que se corrija con el original que va rubricado y firma do al cabo del de Gonçalo Pumarejo nuestro escriuano de camara delos que reside en el nuestro cōsejo y se os tale el precio que por cada vn volumen vuiere des de auer. Y mandamos que durante el dicho tiempo persona alguna sin vuestra licencia no lo pueda imprimir ni véder, sopena que el que lo imprimiere y vendiere aya perdido y pierda todos y qualquier libros y moldes q̄ del tuuiere y védiere en estos nuestros reynos. Y mādamos a los del nuestro cōsejo, Presidente & oydores delas nuestras audiencias, alcaldes, alguaziles de la nuestra casa & corte y chancillerias, & a todos los corregidores, alsi lente, gouernadores, alcaldes mayores, & ordinarios, & otros juezes & justicias qualesquier d todas las ciudades, villas & lugares delos nuestros Reynos & señorios, anli a los que agora son, como a los que seran de aqui adelante, que vos guarden & cumplan esta nuestra cedula & merced que anli vos hazemos, & cōtra el tenor & forma della vos no vayan ni colientan yr ni passar por alguna manera, sopena dela nuestra merced, y de diez mil marauedis para la nuestra camara. Dada en el Pardo a xxv dias de Enero de mil & quinientos & setenta & quatro años.

Yo el Rey.

Por mandado de su Magestad.

Antonio de Erasso.

52

*Este libro se expurga conforme a la expurgatoria de la Cardenal de Toledo y se presenta en tiempo y asi se puede usar de el y  
 firmada en la fecha en la villa de Avila a trece de agosto de 1578 años  
 El Obispo de Avila*

Figure 2. Handwritten expurgation notice on royal authorization page. Jerónimo Román y Zamora. 1575. *Repúblicas del Mundo*. 2 vols. Medina del Campo: Francisco del Canto. Volume 2, unnumbered folio. Beinecke Rare Book and Manuscript Library, Yale University.





**Figure 3.** Handwritten expurgation notice on title page. Jerónimo Román y Zamora. 1575. *Repúblicas del Mundo*. 2 vols. Medina del Campo: Francisco del Canto. Title page, volume 1. Courtesy Lilly Library, Indiana University, Bloomington, Indiana.

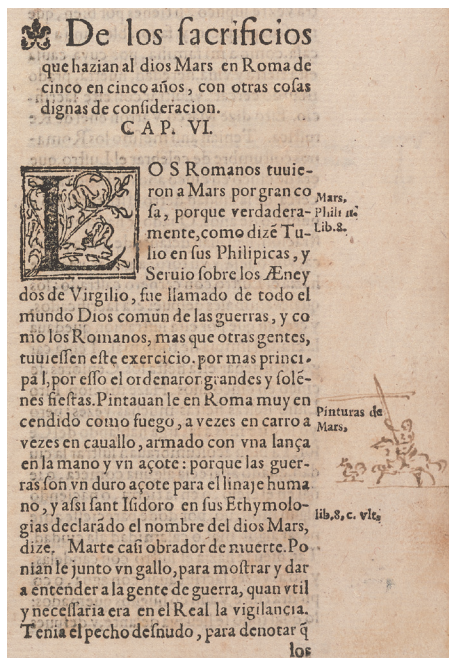


Figure 4. Second edition with printed explanation of expurgation performed. Jerónimo Román y Zamora. 1595. *Repúblicas del Mundo*. 3 vols. Salamanca: Juan Fernández. Title page, volume 1. Courtesy of the John Carter Brown Library at Brown University.



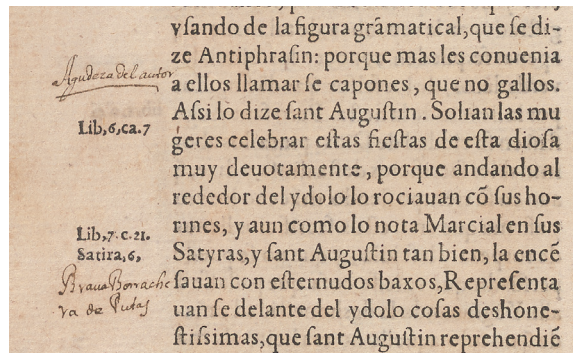
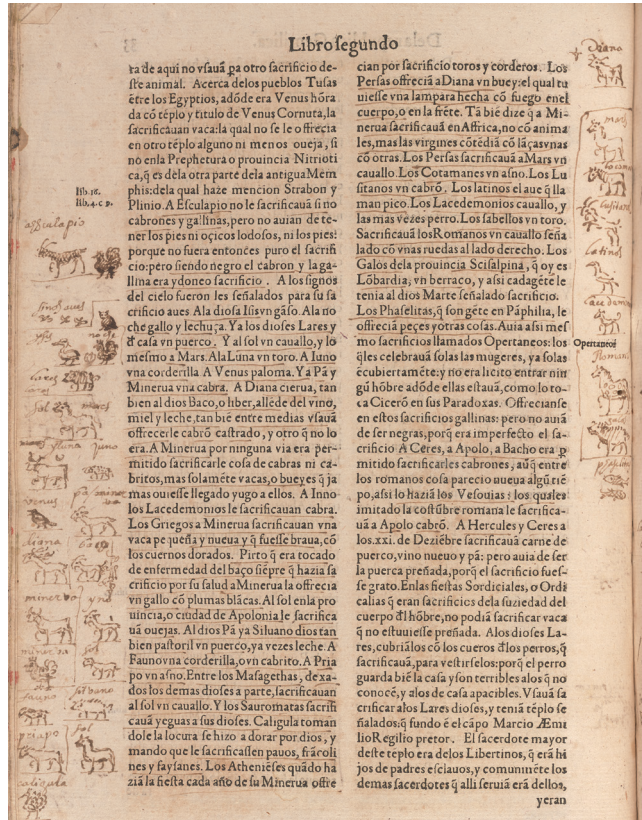


**Figure 5.** Dr. Odriozola's drawing of Venus swimming. Jerónimo Román y Zamora. 1575. *Repúblicas del Mundo*. 2 vols. Medina del Campo: Francisco del Canto. Volume 2, 21v. Beinecke Rare Book and Manuscript Library, Yale University.



**Figure 6.** Dr. Odriozola's drawing of a mounted Mars. Jerónimo Román y Zamora. 1575. *Repúblicas del Mundo*. 2 vols. Medina del Campo: Francisco del Canto. Volume 2, 38r. Beinecke Rare Book and Manuscript Library, Yale University.

**Figure 7.** Animals for sacrifice or veneration in ancient times. Jerónimo Román y Zamora. 1575. *Repúblicas del Mundo*. 2 vols. Medina del Campo: Francisco del Canto. Volume 2, 33v. Beinecke Rare Book and Manuscript Library, Yale University.



**Figure 8.** Dr. Odriozola comments on author's sharp wit and notes ancient drunken revelries. Jerónimo Román y Zamora. 1575. *Repúblicas del Mundo*. 2 vols. Medina del Campo: Francisco del Canto. Volume 2, 48v. Beinecke Rare Book and Manuscript Library, Yale University.

I will attribute to him a dizzying variety of marginalia, which has been entered sometimes in marginal notes but most generally in delightful little drawings. His exuberance is notable: He underlined passages and wrote marginal notes (ROMÁN 1575, 2: 79r), drew the pointing hand to signal interesting expositions (ROMÁN 1575, 2: 83v); he pictured Venus swimming in the nude (ROMÁN 1575, 2: 21v) and depicted Mars, the Roman god of war (ROMÁN 1575, 2: 38r), exactly as Román had described him (see Figs. 5 and 6). He drew dozens of animals (ROMÁN 1575, 2: 6r, 24v to 25v, 33v) which appeared either as objects of veneration (including the human “male member”, 7r, not shown here!) or as sacrifices to various deities. He admired the author’s cleverness (“Agudeza del autor”) and he gleefully made note of the places where ancient Roman prostitutes held parties of ribald drunkenness for their clients (ROMÁN 1575, 2: 48v) (see Figs. 7 and 8).

But then, in 1585, Dr. Odriozola’s treasured and, to him, highly entertaining book was subjected to Inquisitorial censorship. This meant that Inquisition officials of the jurisdiction, or perhaps local municipal officials, because all were “tasked” with pursuing infractions in private libraries (see footnote 3), entered his home and inspected his library. One of his acquaintances, or perhaps a disgruntled employee of his household, might have tipped off local officials. Had he bragged too boisterously about his remarkable library? Had he kept his prized books out of the hands of family members so that one of them became the jealous informant? We will never know, but we find evidence that Dr. Odriozola annotated and “illustrated” his copy of *Repúblicas* prior to Inquisitorial expurgation because some of his marginal notes can be seen alongside the subsequently expurgated passages (ROMÁN 1575, 2: 10r) (see Fig. 9).

In this example, Dr. Odriozola adds comments about the drunkenness (“Borracheras de estos brujos”) that accompanied the worship of ancient Greek gods. Here Priapus, the son of Bacchus and Venus, is featured; his statue, as Román’s now-expurgated text declared, had an enormous male member, “as large as the statue itself, which the women carried in procession, following the playing of a flute and singing ‘Bacchus, Bacchus’” (ROMÁN 1575, 2: 10r–v). Román had written such expositions by relying on, and comparing, classical sources such as Diodorus Siculus, Pliny, and Virgil. Dr. Odriozola’s edification, however, seems to have come from the sheer delight of reading about pagan ritual practices.

The expurgation of the *República gentilica* resulted in passages censured for their treatment not only of the gods of the ancient Greeks, but also Roman sacrifices and feasts and, occasionally, a custom of present-day



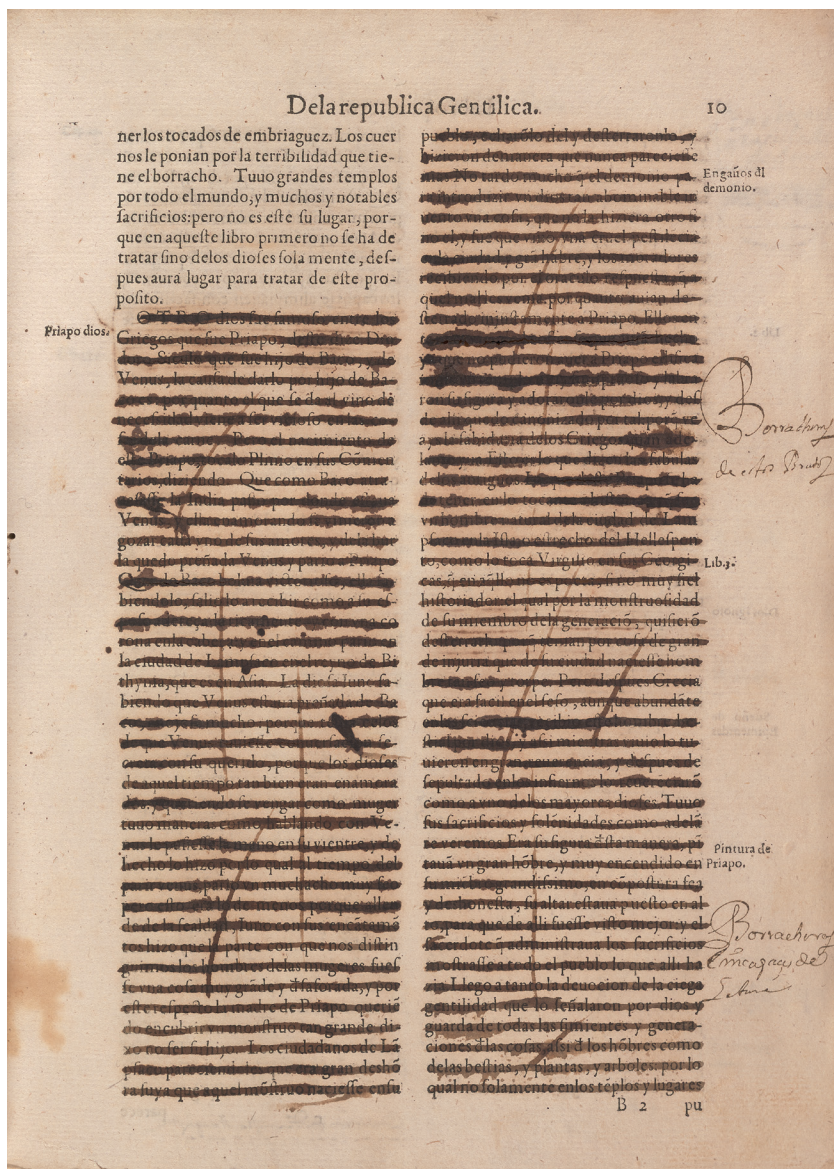


Figure 9. Dr. Odriozola's marginalia and subsequent Inquisitorial expurgation. Jerónimo Román y Zamora. 1757. *Repúblicas del Mundo*. 2 vols. Medina del Campo: Francisco del Canto. Volume 2, 10r. Beinecke Rare Book and Manuscript Library, Yale University.

Christian friars. Of this volume's three hundred and fifty folios, thirteen folios (twenty-six pages) have been inked over and three folios (six pages) have been cut out. From their immediate context and chapter titles, we can infer that the three excised folios and two of the thirteen inked-over folios pertained to "the antiquity of the trade of prostitutes (*rameras*) and bad women", with Román naming some who were "famous in the world" and describing their use of cosmetics. Here Román's playful sense of humor emerges. Through the inked-over passages, we can read that he had introduced the chapter by saying that he was not going to write about virtuous women "because it would be impossible to treat this topic except in a very long book" (!). Thus, Román continued, he would write about "bad women, who easily will fit into the space of a short chapter" (1575, 2: 300v). He excused himself with his feminine readers, those "who are fond of reading about new things", for his "excessive curiosity and diligence" on certain matters, unexpected in a friar writing on these topics ("demasiada curiosidad y diligencia en un frayle" [(1575, 2: 300v)]. What are we missing? The three now-excised folios that had appeared at the beginning of this exposition were devoted to the topic of "the corruption of the flesh".

Among ancient Roman festivals, Román described one, held during the month of August that he considered to be "very entertaining" ("muy graciosa"). The "principal ladies" of Rome went in pilgrimage to the temple of Venus that stood at the Porta Collina, where, he observed,

They carried with great devotion the likeness of a male member, and they presented it at the temple, and they went about this festival so devoutly that there was no other that was celebrated with as much reverence, the cause of which I would divulge, but, as I am a member of a religious order, I prefer not to. And so that I not be called malicious, I defer to the reader, and I refrain from telling about other things that the ladies did at that festival.

(1575, 2: 54r)

As is obvious, Román's humor expressed itself in suggestive, even saucy, comments, but of all the passages excised from the ten books of the *República gentilica*, perhaps none is more delightful than Román's commentary about the drinking vessels favored by friars like himself. Writing about the development of the mechanical arts in ancient times in his chapter titled "About the inventors of ceramic vessels and the one who discovered the wheel for making them", he commented on the form and size of the ancient manufactures, comparing them to drinking vessels of his own time:



They say that these [vessels] were made in the shape of a ship, or of another boat, yet I do not know which corresponds to those of our own times, except that we would say that they are the drinking cups and large vessels that we friars prefer, so [large] that it seems that we want to throw ourselves into or swim around in them, notwithstanding the opinions of certain gluttons who would pretend that this size is within proper limits. (1575, 2: 263r)

The censor struck the phrase "that we friars prefer, so [large] that it seems that we want to throw ourselves into or swim around in them". This example reveals the level of scrutiny that the expurgators applied to minute details, not overlooking even the briefest of objectionable passages. (We will find the same close attention paid in the examination of Murúa's manuscript.)

*The República Cristiana*: Román was on thin ice here, too, because his treatments of Christian doctrine and practice were expurgated on the sacraments of baptism (1575, 1: 351v) and communion (1575, 1: 105v, 206r, 216v), the conduct of the church councils (1575, 1: 224r, 225v), and the persistence of heresy among modern-day Christians (1575, 1, 259r, 260r, 261v).<sup>8</sup> Heresy was a topic that Román took up with gusto, announcing as the title of one of his chapters: "Of the beginning of heresies that arose in the Church, among other very curious and pertinent things". One of the expurgated passages is preceded by his statement: "To speak of all heresies is impossible [. . .] but, nevertheless, I will say something about some of them with which I intend to fill out this chapter and please the curious reader" (1575, 1: 260r).

The excised passage concerns a historical figure of special importance in Spain: Arius, the fourth-century presbyter from Alexandria, who was the source of Iberian Arianism.<sup>9</sup> Arius's views had threatened to open the way to a resurgence of pagan polytheism attended by a myriad of interme-

8. The Beinecke Library only has volume two of the 1575 edition, so to examine volume one, I relied on the Lilly Library's copy.

9. Román described Arius as one of the "most famous heretics in the world and one who gave the Church great grief" for his conviction about the Holy Trinity, namely, that of the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit, the Son [Jesus Christ] was not eternal like the Father. Román concluded, "This was a serious and difficult point that perturbed the universal Church and unsettled many saintly and learned gentlemen with the novelty of the idea" (1575, 260r). Arius's claim threatened the unity of the primitive Church; it provoked in the year 325 CE the convening of the Council of Nicea, which was the first general or ecumenical council of the Church; some two hundred and twenty bishops gathered and



diate gods and demons (BOKENKOTTER [1977] 1990, 38–9, 45, 47).<sup>10</sup> The looping cancellations of expurgation attempt to erase this vivid historical reminder about Spain's own heretical religious heritage (ROMÁN 1575, 1: 260r) (see Fig. 10).

*The República hebrea*: Román's portrayal of ancient Hebrew and modern Jewish history opened the first volume of his work. He explained in his Prologue that he did so following San Isidore of Seville regarding "those who first gave laws in the world and that, although Moses — that very holy man — was not the first giver of laws, he was the first who brought forth divine law" (1575, 1: 2v). For this reason, the *República Hebrea* takes priority of place in Román's magnum opus.

Books do not bleed but to see attacked the living traditions they describe creates a visceral reaction: As we would expect, Román's account of Jewish customs and rituals received the most severe expurgation. What is surprising is that Román knowingly defied Inquisitorial censorship on this point: he would have known full well that the discussion of Jewish tradition was proscribed by the *Indices* of 1551 and 1559. Of the twenty-four chapters of Book One of the *República hebrea*, which is devoted to religion, the two chapters that describe "the feasts and solemn days with which the Hebrew people honored the Lord" have been expurgated. One chapter is inked over (ROMÁN 1575, 1: 30v), and the other has been entirely cut out, as the foliation of this spread reveals (ROMÁN 1575, 1, 30v–38r) (see Fig. 11).<sup>11</sup> Lamentably there is no remaining reference to the specific topics of the excised chapter, but the contents of the expurgated chapter can be read through its inked cancellations. Román begins by noting that

the feasts and solemn days of the Jewish people are many and very festive, which, I discover, are divided into two parts, *as are ours today*, because there were ordinary feasts and special ones, just as we have our major feasts and the regular one that occurs every seven days. They also had their ordinary feasts, which were on Saturdays and others that were celebrated from one month to another [. . .] Now I would like to take

---

affirmed the chief dogma of the Church, that is, the belief in the divinity of Christ.

10. The Visigoths brought the Arian heresy to Spain in the fifth century and some followed the Arian creed even after Recaredo (r. 586–601) converted to Roman Catholicism, which was then introduced into the Visigoth population more generally (CHAPMAN [1918] 1965, 30–1).
11. Regrettably, the flaps remaining at the gutter on direct autopsy are not visible in this TIFF image.





Figure 11. Account of sacred Jewish feasts, expurgated and excised. Jerónimo Román y Zamora. 1575. *Repúblicas del Mundo*. 2 vols. Medina del Campo: Francisco del Canto. Volume 1, 30v-38r. Courtesy Lilly Library, Indiana University, Bloomington, Indiana.

up the first, for it is important to know which feasts God commanded, and which ones, afterward, were instituted by the Hebrews themselves.

(1575, 1: 30v; my emphasis)

Román here calls out the similarities of Jewish and Christian ritual because it seems, as with his acknowledgment of Moses as the first giver of divine law, that he wants his readers to be aware of Christianity's sacred source and antecedent. Expurgated in the edition of 1575, these two chapters are omitted altogether from the 1595 imprint, where the chapter numbers have been adjusted to exclude them. Nevertheless, the evidence of the materials removed remains in the 1595 edition, because the contents of these suppressed chapters appear in Book One's summary of its contents.<sup>12</sup>

12. "The first book deals with the religion and divine cult that God established among the Hebrews [. . .] Then we take up their ministers and sacrifices, including the most solemn feasts observed by the people" (ROMÁN 1575, 1: 1r).



Figure 12. Description of Jewish marriage and burial rites, expurgated and excised. Jerónimo Román y Zamora. 1575. *Repúblicas del Mundo*. 2 vols. Medina del Campo: Francisco del Canto. Volume 1, 46v-50r. Courtesy Lilly Library, Indiana University, Bloomington, Indiana.

Book Two of the *República hebrea* consisted originally of eighteen chapters concerning matters of government, war, the administration of justice and the like. These are left untouched, but the two chapters pertaining to rites of sacramental life (marriage and burials), as well as the description of sacred books, have been censored. Three folios have been cut from the volume as the foliation of this spread reveals (ROMÁN 1575, 1: 46v–50r) (see Fig. 12). Although now entirely missing, the two chapters describing sacred books are identified by the summary of their contents and authorship (“how many holy and canonical books there were, [and] who was the author of each one of them”) (ROMÁN 1575, 1: 48r). This section had included a discussion of “the three orders of Hebrew books”, which Román categorized as “juridical, prophetic, and hagiographic” (1575, 1: 50v). The only portion of this exposition not to be expurgated concerns sacred Hebrew books that had been lost.

Finally, the conclusion of the *República hebrea* was expurgated. This pertains not to Jewish culture as such but rather to Román’s views on the fate of the Jews throughout history, particularly in Spain. He begins by recounting how the emperor Hadrian banished the Jews from Jerusalem, and how

“thus, from this time forward, they have never been residents or tenants or lords of the holy city of Jerusalem, or of their country” (1575, 1: 67v; 1595, 1: 78r). Román continues by observing that the Jewish people of his day are “the most mistreated people of all peoples and nations in the world”: “There has been no nation where they have not been abused and exiled nor any city where they have not suffered injury, being killed or exiled or having their properties taken from them” (1575, 1: 67v–68r; 1595, 1: 78r).

Up to this point in the text of the editions of 1575 and 1595 nothing is suppressed; they carry the same content. However, Román’s subsequent remarks, in which he implicated Spain in the perpetration of these unconscionable atrocities, are all inked over. Here he challenged those readers who did not believe what he wrote to read the histories of Spain, in which they would see the testimony of

the outrages that have been committed against the Jews and, in spite of some of them having converted to Christianity (of which I believe there are few who have done so truly), there are none more persecuted than they are. Whether it be in public places, in churches or city councils, in religious congregations, wherever it might be, they are detested and abhorred. May the people of this nation pardon me, for in truth I am loathe to speak ill of them.

(1575, 1: 68r)<sup>13</sup>

In this final statement, which can only be read through the censor’s ink, we come to the conclusion of the *República hebrea*. In total, some twelve folios of the original ninety have been cut out, and passages on two or three more have been inked over. Suppressed are the accounts of rituals and traditions that the censors considered dangerous because they portrayed sympathetically the fundamental customs — the visible markers — of Jewish life. They obviously also objected to the author’s statement of sympathy for the Jewish people and the assignment of guilt to Spain for crimes committed against them. Nevertheless, Román’s courage and outspokenness were not

13. This excision, and some that will follow in Murúa’s manuscript, merit transcription in the original Spanish: “Sino lean nuestras hystorias de España, y verán qué estragos han sido hechos en ellos, y aun con ser ya Christianos (que creo que pocos lo son buenos) no los pueden llevar. Sea en repúblicas, sea en yglesias y cabildos, sea en congregaciones de religiosos doquiera, son malquistos y aborrecidos: y perdónenme los de esta nación, que en verdad yo quedo corto en decir mal de ellos” (ROMÁN 1575, 1: 68r).

deterred by the censorship that he surely knew would befall his work. It had been worth a try.

*The República de las Indias Occidentales*: Immediately after the publication of Román's *Repúblicas del mundo*, the Royal Council of the Indies, which was the policy-administering body of Spain's American territories, entreated Philip II on September 30, 1575, to authorize the Royal Council of Castile to retrieve all copies of Román's *Repúblicas* and remove from its account of Spanish dealings in America its final two chapters. The Royal Indies councilors railed against the "dishonoring" of the first conquistadores, placing in jeopardy their prerogatives — that is, their perpetual domination over the native peoples and products of the lands over which the conquistadores were trustees — and for conveying "other indecent and insolent" ideas.<sup>14</sup>

Here Román had followed closely a manuscript version of Fray Bartolomé de las Casas' *Apologética historia sumaria*, a major treatise that circulated mostly in manuscript up until the twentieth century. This was the theoretical work, or rather, a proto-ethnographic treatise, that denied the existence of a natural hierarchy among all the cultures of the world, ancient and modern, including the Americas. Although without personal experience in the Americas, Román's interest, like that of Las Casas, was the dignity and welfare of the autochthonous peoples and the need to protect them from exploitation and abuse under Spanish colonization. Decrying the destruction of the Inca state, as well as that of the Aztecs, Román characterizes the Spaniards' executions of native princes as regicide; on this and other conquest matters, Román closely echoes Las Casas's devastating accounts of the conquistadores' ruthlessness.<sup>15</sup>

There is no evidence of suppression of the *República de las Indias Occidentales* in the imprints of Román's work that I have seen, nor would I expect there to be any, for this reason: The Royal Council of the Indies' complaint against the king, and the Royal Council of Castile on his behalf, reflects — and allows us to glimpse — their institutional differences. The court-appointed officials of the Royal Council of the Indies criticized their peers, the court-appointed officials of the Council of Castile, for overlook-

14. The Royal Council of the Indies' *Consulta* is reproduced in TORRE REVELLO 1940, xxv. The institution of trusteeship (the *encomienda*) was a major source of colonialist exploitation and abuse of the native populations because under the private control of the trustee (the *encomendero*) they had no recourse to a higher court of appeal.

15. For Román's reliance on Las Casas's works, see ADORNO 1992, 818–20.



ing, or for being indifferent to, Román's injurious, anti-conquistador arguments and thus for having granted, irresponsibly, approval of the work's publication.

The Royal Council of the Indies demanded that henceforth all works dealing with the Indies be submitted to their body for approval. If the Royal Council of Castile, under instructions from the king, did not act to suppress Román's published work, it was because the matter was out of their hands; their mandate was to make judgments about books *prior* to publication. If the Inquisition's censors, who step in subsequent to publication, paid no heed to Román's representation of Indies affairs, it was because their mandate was to be vigilant over matters of private morals and Christian conduct, of adherence to the teachings of Christian doctrine and belief. Nevertheless, the issues raised by the Royal Council of the Indies regarding Román's work would be of great consequence for our second case, Fray Martín de Murúa's *Historia General del Piru*.

### **Fray Martín de Murúa's *Historia General del Piru* (1616)**

My second example of "Obedezco pero no cumplo" is that of Fray Martín de Murúa (c. 1566–1615), a member of another mendicant order, the Order of Mercy; he was from the Basque region of Spain.<sup>16</sup> Murúa wrote a history of the Incas of pre-Columbian Peru, where he served as a missionary friar to convert native Andeans to Christianity. He was active in Peru from the 1580s until he returned to Spain in 1615 and wrote without hesitation about the Incas, the present-day Andeans, and the colonizing Spaniards. He examined in great detail the ancient rites of the Incas and the ongoing, traditional rituals of the Andean peoples a half century after the Spanish conquest of Inca Peru; he did not shrink from admitting the failure of evangelization. In the same work he wrote a scathing critique of the Spanish conduct of the conquest of Peru for its cruelty and greed. Over the course of his long trek from Cuzco in highland Peru in 1611 to the port of Buenos Aires from which he set sail for Spain in 1615, Murúa collected some eleven

16. The recent biographer of Murúa, FRANCISCO BORJA DE AGUINAGALDE, estimates the Mercedarian's birth to have occurred in the Basque town of Escoriaza, Guipuzcoa, in 1566, and he has confirmed that Murúa's death took place there on December 6, 1615, shortly after his return to Spain via Lisbon, in September 1615, and just a month after arriving at his ancestral home (2019, 205, 219–22).

endorsements of his manuscript work from churchmen and lay officials in La Plata, La Paz, Potosí, and Tucumán. By the time he was back in Spain, his *Historia General del Piru* was ready to be submitted for pre-publication approval in Madrid. There are two extant manuscript versions of Murúa's history; the first is in the private collection of Mr. Seán Galvin of County Meath, Ireland, and the second is conserved at the J. Paul Getty Museum, Los Angeles.<sup>17</sup> It is the second manuscript book that Murúa presented for publication, first for its approval by the Mercedarian Order, after which it was sent on to the crown of Castile for its evaluation.

We recall here the request, back in 1575, by the Royal Council of the Indies to withdraw Román's *Repúblicas del mundo* from circulation; it followed the royal decree of 1556 by Philip II, prohibiting the publication of any work on the Americas that did not have prior approval of the Royal Council of the Indies; this was followed by another in 1560 demanding the confiscation of any such books and reiterating that all books written about the Spanish Indies required pre-publication approval from the Royal Council of the Indies as well as that of Castile.<sup>18</sup> This reiteration of blanket orders reveals their ineffectuality. But it also tells us that, as time wore on, Murúa's Mercedarian advisors in Madrid, if not Murúa himself, would have been well aware of the challenges facing any author who wrote on Indies topics; among them, the history of the Incas, their conquest by the Spanish, and the state of affairs in colonial viceroyalty of Peru, were especially sensitive.

The manuscript of Murúa's *Historia general del Piru* received royal approval for publication in May 1616. Why was such a work, thoroughly vetted and approved at all levels, not published? Here we must ask a related, unexpected question: Can pre-publication approbation ever look like censorship? Frozen in time in its approved-for-publication, pre-publication state, Murúa's manuscript book offers a glimpse at a significant, unwritten portion of the history of censorship available only through the materiality of the manuscript, which serves as a witness to its own mutilations.

The complete title of Murúa's work is "General history of Peru, on the origin and descent of the Incas, which treats of their civil wars as well as those occasioned by the arrival of the Spanish, and includes the descrip-

17. Murúa's first manuscript, known as the Galvin Manuscript, was published in a facsimile edition in 2004; his second manuscript, known as the Getty Manuscript, was published in 2008. For the relationship between the two manuscripts and their making, see ADORNO and BOSERUP 2008.

18. These decrees are reproduced in TORRE REVELLO 1940, xii–xiv.

tions of its cities and regions and many other notable things". Let's take a look at the manuscript's frontispiece to get an impression of its author (MURÚA 1616, 2r) (see Fig. 13). This striking composition contains elements that serve both literary and bureaucratic ends. Its ornamental shield has at its center the eyes and ears of the historian-witness, with the coat of arms of Castile above and that of the Order of Mercy below. The shield is flanked, on the left, by the coat of arms of the viceroyalty of Peru and, on the right, by another, which was intended to represent the Inca kings in the style of European heraldry. This composite image brings together the Old World and the New, the crown and the cross, the Spanish viceroyalty of Peru and the fallen Inca empire — in short, all the elements of Spain's transatlantic empire pertinent to a history of Inca Peru.

Let's look even closer: The Latin motto on the shield interprets the meaning of the eyes and the ears, into which the putti trumpet. Reading clockwise around the rim of the shield from the upper left, and then down its center, the motto announces, "We testify to what we have seen and heard" (*Testamur quod vidimus e.t. audivimus*). Repeating this clockwise movement, we read, moving down the right edge of the page, "I perceive with pricked-up ears, just as I have penetrated and discovered much with [my] lynx-like vision", and, at the left edge, reading vertically from bottom to top, "If this work does not ring like sweet music in your ears, O reader, you must illuminate it with your mind's eye". While this imagery is conventional, its warnings are pointed: The reader is advised to be prepared to learn from the author, and if the reader finds the work's contents wanting, he is invited (or dared!) to try to best the author, if he can. Murúa was an author proud of his work and fearless in presenting it. We will soon learn about the extent of that fearlessness.

The other point of interest on the title page is the swirling rubric that appears at its foot, just above the stricken phrase, "In La Plata [Sucre, Bolivia] around our year of 1613". This rubric has been entered on the recto of virtually every one of the nearly four hundred folios of the manuscript. Its final occurrence is found on the verso of the last inscribed folio (MURÚA 1616, 387v), where it is accompanied by the signature "Gerónimo Núñez de León". Núñez de León was the royal notary or clerk of the royal chamber who rubricated the entire manuscript (see Fig. 14).

The real test of the work's approval, however, had come earlier; here are its results. First is the approval of the chronicler and historian of the Mercedarian Order, Fray Alonso Remón (MURÚA 1616, 8r). (Keep Remón in mind; he figures prominently in what follows.) (see Fig. 15). His statement is complemented by the approval by the Order's master general, Francisco



**Figure 13.** Title page of Fray Martín de Murúa's *Historia general del Piru*. 1616. The J. Paul Getty Museum, Los Angeles, Ms. Ludwig XIII 16, fol. 2. Digital Image Courtesy of the Getty's Open Content Program.



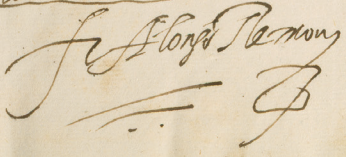
cap. 3. de la dispuision dela tierra grandes	f. 288
cap. 4. de las Nequeas del Reyno del piuu	f. 291
cap. 5. del govierno que otiene el Reyno del piuu	f. 295
cap. 6. que prosigue el govierno de Justicia. que otiene el piuu	f. 298
cap. 7. de como los primeros Religiosos que pasaron a la conquista deste Reyno occidental del piuu fueron los de la sagrada Religion de mas. de las mdt. de captuor y del fruto que en el fueron	f. 300
cap. 8. de como los Religiosos de la orden del abito Real de mas. de las mdt. fueron despues de aver conquistado y predicado el saneto e Van selio en este Reyno del piuu a la spm y por benedixiones de sancta cruz y suaman para suay y Reyno de esile	f. 303
cap. 9. del govierno espiritual que ay en el Reyno del piuu	f. 306
cap. 10. de la gran ciudad de Culcui y su descripcion	f. 309
cap. 11. de las fiestas q. se hicieron en la ciudad de Culcui al nacimiento del principe don jse li jse año de mill y seys cientos y seys	f. 313
cap. 12. que prosigue las fiestas que se hicieron en la ciudad de Culcui	f. 317
cap. 13. de la ciudad de los Reyes y su descripcion	f. 322
cap. 14. que prosigue las cosas notables de la ciudad de los Reyes	f. 325
cap. 15. de Callao, y puerto de la ciudad de los Reyes	f. 329
cap. 16. de la ciudad de Leon de suanuco	f. 331
cap. 17. de la gran ciudad de sathfran de quito y de su nombre	f. 333
cap. 18. de otras ciudades y Villas deste Reyno hasta la ciudad de truxillo	f. 335
cap. 19. de la Villa de canete y de jca.	f. 338
cap. 20. de los Valles de la nasca y la Villa de camana	f. 341
cap. 21. de la muy noble y leal ciudad de ariquipa	f. 342
cap. 22. de la miserable ruyna que vino a la ciudad de ariquipa	f. 345
cap. 23. de la Villa de sanct marcos de arica	f. 351
cap. 24. de la Villa Rica de coropesa y la ciudad de castro Vieja	f. 352
cap. 25. de la ciudad de s. Juan de la frontera de suamanca	f. 355
cap. 26. de la ciudad de mas. de la pta y su descripcion y antig. de quiquap	f. 357
cap. 27. de la Villa de jururu y de su descubrimiento	f. 358
cap. 28. de la Villa de coropesa y anata en el valle de clapampa	f. 360
cap. 29. de la ciudad de sanct miguel de la plata y pui. de los latco	f. 361
cap. 30. del Rico y famoso serro de potossi y de sus grandes ay.	f. 363
cap. 31. de la Villa y mperial de sanctiago de potossi	f. 365

No  
Sa mung Leon

Figure 14. The final verso, with Gerónimo Núñez de León's signature and rubric. The J. Paul Getty Museum, Los Angeles, Ms. Ludwig XIII 16, fol. 387v. Fray Martín de Murúa. 1616. *Historia general del Piru*.

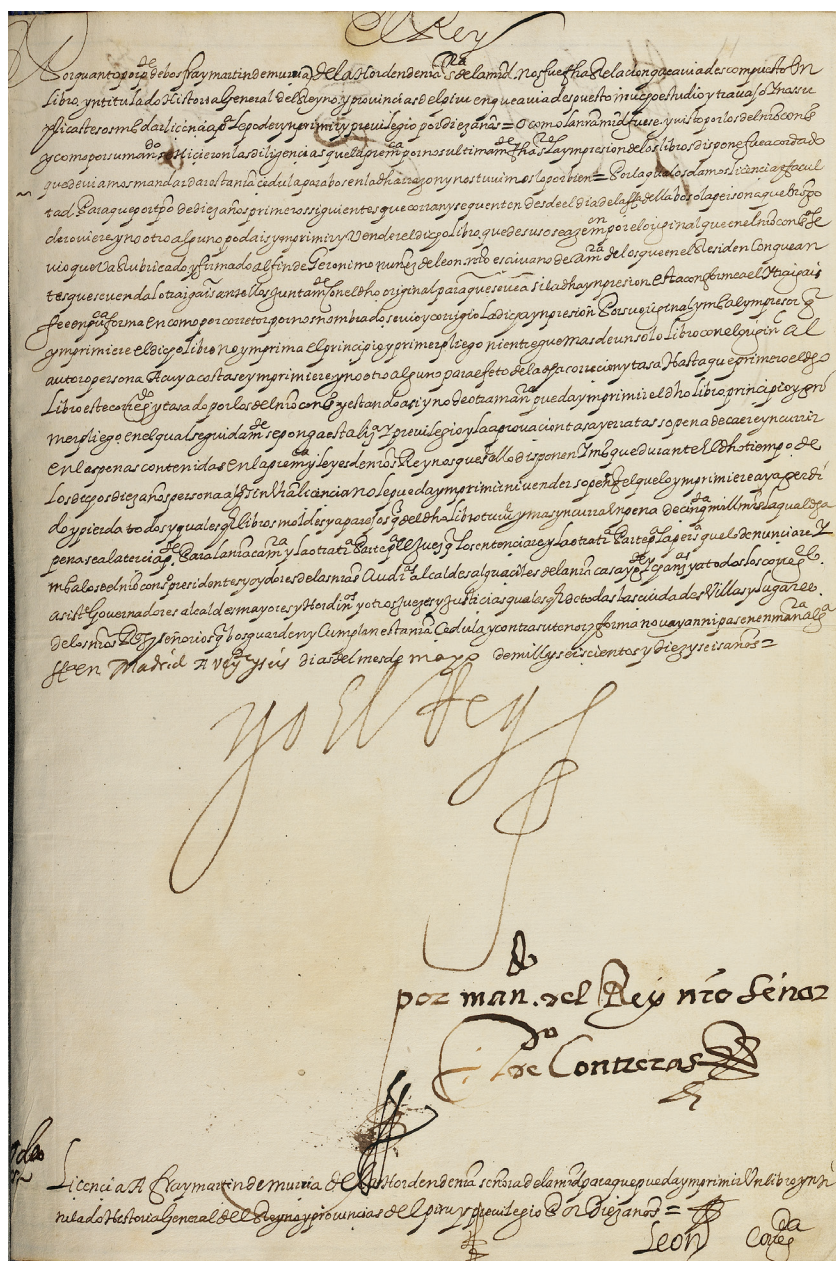
8

Por mandado de nro Padre Reverendi Simo el padre  
 maestro fray ffrancisco de Tobar maestro general  
 de los dñs dñs de nra señora de la merced en su  
 offfio que aco[m]plido el padre fray martin de  
 murua de la orden de nra señora de la merced en su  
 offfio de capitulo general. poraquella provincia del  
 peru cuyo offfio es de la general de los  
 Reyes Ingas y de aquel tiempo y en su offfio  
 en esta contra nra fe ni las buenas costumbres  
 ni contra la noticia que se tiene de los sucesos  
 de aquella monasteria antes me pareze la  
 historia verdadera y el offfio apacible y  
 que sea de consideracion y importancia  
 futura, y asi me pareze y nra fe  
 podra mandar dar la orden que se pide pa  
 ra poder se presente en el offfio de la  
 suma y offfio para que se le de para im  
 primir y por la verdad lo ffrime en su  
 convento de nra señora de la merced de ma  
 drid a 22 de octubre de 1616

Fray Alonso Remon  


**Figure 15.** Fray Alonso Remón's approval statement. The J. Paul Getty Museum, Los Angeles, Ms. Ludwig XIII 16, fol. 8. Fray Martín de Murúa. 1616. *Historia general del Piru*.





**Figure 16.** “Yo el rey”, the royal authorization to print. The J. Paul Getty Museum, Los Angeles, Ms. Ludwig XIII 16, fol. 11. Fray Martín de Murúa. 1616. *Historia general del Piru*.



de Ribera, who authorized the manuscript to be forwarded to the Royal Council of Castile. The manuscript book was then sent to the royal court and, six months later, the king's censor, Pedro de Valencia, completed his evaluation on April 28, 1616, recommending that the Murúa's Inca history be granted a license to print (MURÚA 1616, 9r). Completing this quartet is the royal decree signed "Yo el Rey" (I, the King), and countersigned by the royal secretary, Pedro de Contreras (MURÚA 1616, 11r) (see Fig. 16). It includes at the bottom of the page the *tasa*, which fixed the period of production of the book and its sale price; this statement, written and signed by the royal notary Núñez de León, is dated, as is the king's decree, May 26, 1616.

I take up the previously-stated questions in reverse order: Can pre-publication approval look like censorship? Why was the work not published?

This royally approved manuscript was a final clean copy (*puesto en limpio*), of Murúa's work; prepared by two scribes, the second took over from the first at the approximate midpoint of the manuscript. Murúa himself then went over it in its entirety and made slight modifications on more than one hundred of the three hundred ninety-nine folios; these instances reveal his painstaking proofreading and textual corrections.<sup>19</sup> But there is another distinctive hand at work, and we readily recognize it as that of Fray Alonso Remón.

*Fray Alonso Remón, careful editor and friendly censor:* Remón may rightly be called an editor of Murúa's manuscript because of the many instances in which he corrected Murúa's word choice, deleted his statements of excessive self-praise, and altered verb tenses from present to past. In a few instances Remón and Murúa seemed to have been working in sequence if not in concert: Murúa overrode Remón's emendation of Murúa's original text because Remón had misidentified the site of a particular event and, on another occasion, he had eliminated Murúa's useful cross-reference to entire folios. Remón was also responsible for eliminating some of the watercolor drawings (there are a total of thirty-seven in the manuscript), such as the one of Pachacuti Ynca Yupanqui, for the sake of producing, in print, only one portrait painting per Inca. Thus appears the instruction, in Remón's hand, "no se a de pintar": "this one is not to be reproduced" (MURÚA 1616, 40v) (see Fig. 17).

The distinction between editorial correction and censorship is often a fine one, and in the case of Remón's review of Murúa's manuscript, it was decidedly so. Beyond the discrete, limited corrections and additions that

19. See ADORNO 2008, 101–2 for a calendar of these corrections.

Remón entered in Murúa's text, he also undertook a systematic review of the whole manuscript. In this process he eliminated dozens of passages and, in a few instances, entire folios. Yet his efforts amount to what I would call "friendly censorship", because it was clearly designed not to condemn Murúa's work but rather to ensure its passage through the appropriate royal channels to publication.<sup>20</sup> It was, after all, Remón's signed, formal recommendation of the manuscript that initiated in Madrid the series of events that culminated in the awarding of the all-important royal license to print (see Fig. 15).

The first clue that Remón's was the hand at work comes from the evidence of the excision of a single folio and the repairs made to compensate for it. On an otherwise blank verso appears a chapter title, scrawled in Remón's hand, "On the current government of the kingdom of Peru" ("Del gobierno que oy tiene el reino del Peru") (MURÚA 1616, 318v) (see Fig. 18). That title was originally found on the following folio, which has been excised, its removal being registered by the jagged stub at the gutter (which, I regret, is not visible); the now-following folio begins with a passage that has been cancelled because it concluded the censored discussion of the cut-out folio; note the cancellation style of undulating lines, which do not obliterate but merely strike out the unwanted words (MURÚA 1616, 319r) (see Fig. 19). As the member of a religious community, Murúa would have been aware of the conflicting interests between ecclesiastical and civil institutions of colonial Spanish governance. Despite that awareness, he must have offered on the now-excised folio a highly negative assessment of Spanish civil governmental policy and conduct.

Overall, Remón excised two types of text: (1) passages critical of Spanish actions — that is, Murúa's views on the ruthless conduct of Spanish soldiers during the conquest and the greed of present-day Spanish settlers and clerics — and (2) passages describing in detail native Andean practices and beliefs considered worthy of condemnation by the Christian (Roman Catholic) Church. Remón had made no effort to render illegible these canceled texts. He may, in fact, have wanted the royal censor to see exactly what he had excised, which would provide assurance that Remón's work could be trusted with confidence.

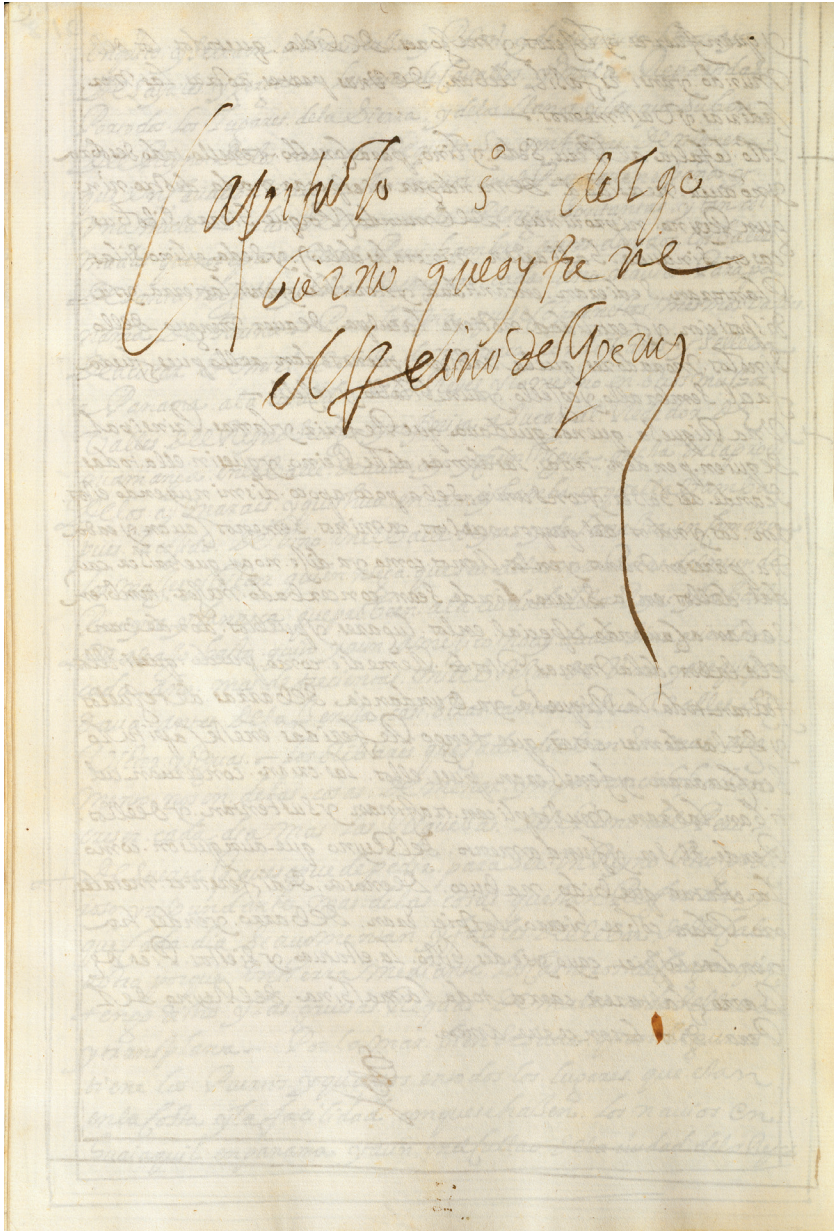
Remón muted or canceled Murúa's negative statements about conquistadores' and colonialists' conduct throughout the manuscript. If some of Murúa's colonial South American recommenders had tolerated or even

20. ADORNO 2008, 103–15 contains a detailed account of all these interventions.



**Figure 17.** Fray Alonso Remón eliminates a water-colored drawing. The J. Paul Getty Museum, Los Angeles, Ms. Ludwig XIII 16, fol. 40v. Fray Martín de Murúa. 1616. *Historia general del Piru*. Digital Image Courtesy of the Getty's Open Content Program.





**Figure 18.** Fray Alonso Remón excises a folio on Spanish governance of viceroyalty and writes in title of the now-excised leaf. The J. Paul Getty Museum, Los Angeles, Ms. Ludwig XIII 16, fol. 318v. Fray Martín de Murúa. 1616. *Historia general del Piru*. Digital Image Courtesy of the Getty's Open Content Program.

~~En la villa de Lima en el Reyno del Peru un lugar teniente suyo. contrito  
 de Muxy. y que Representa. Supersona iaur Soñdad. Real con amplios  
 y altances. poderes. para govarnar. el Reyno. en pab. y fulticia. y en las ocañones  
 de guerra. entera. y para que de ofenden. para las mercedis de enco  
 mendas yndias ydas. Reparamientos. alor guse. ubiuen. Señalado. en el  
 Servicio de Su Rey. y alor. desendentes. de los conquistadores yda ubi de los  
 del Reyno. de los ofidos. georne Jimientos. de mdis. y de. Españoles ydmas  
 Justicias. necesarias. al govierno. Reparo. yndias. para las labors. ydels. pre  
 rias. Sementeras. ydandas. en las deparado. mayor y menor. tiene. de Salario  
 quarenta mill pesos en ayadas. y quarenta. alabarderos. conu. capitán. y  
 Jimiento. que. asitten. sea. de persona. y se. acompañan. Si en la deuido  
 acaado. y Resperado. entrado el Reyno. confor ma. la persona. Real por que  
 amí goviern. Cales. cedulas lo manda. el Rey. y quise. Recibido. es. Supera  
 aguatro. y cinco. Panilleras. como. son. la que Regida. en Panama. y la que  
 en la ciudad. de los. Reyes. y en la provincia. de quito. y en la. ciudad. de  
 La Plata en la. Pucunayo. de los. Baucos. y en el Reyno. de Chile. donde.  
 en lo. quito. alor ubiuen. pende. del. S. lo. y del. S. de alor. alor. mercedis de  
 fido. y alor. los. negocios. que. ofenden. de fido. en la. ciudad. de los. Reyes.  
 como. en. la. mayra. mas. Sumptuosa. y probada del. Peru. Sustenta. una. fua.  
 de tanto. gasto. y en. como. qualquiera. de los. mas. grandes. de. España. en.  
 aparato. y Servicio. de cañes. y todas. las. cosas. concernientes. al. que. Re  
 pueren. —~~

+ de fido. siempre notable. el. cuido. que. an. tenido. los. Reyes. católicos. de.  
 España. des. de. que. se. descubrió. este. Reino. en. embiar. al. V. lo. uen.  
 Xpianos. y celosos. del. aumento. del. fe. católica. y quise. de bul. que.  
 y propagar. el. Evangelio. y de la. concuacion. de los. naturales. del. Reino.  
 como. con el. Servicio. de Su. Rey. Por que. el. primero. que. fue. Vasco. núñez.  
 Ocho. un. muy. noble. caballero. natural. de. uila. Ocho. de las. guardias.  
 de la. villa. por. cumplir. las. ordenanzas. y leyes. que. la. Magestad. se. axa.

**Figure 19.** Fray Alonso Remón cancels text concluding censored discussion of a folio now cut out. The J. Paul Getty Museum, Los Angeles, Ms. Ludwig XIII 16, fol. 319. Fray Martín de Murúa. 1616. *Historia general del Piru*.



applauded Murúa's negative views on the Spanish conduct of the conquest of Peru, the Mercedarians close to the royal court and the king's councils in Madrid did not — could not — concur. Similarly, although some of Murúa's South American endorsements explicitly lauded his detailed descriptions of Andean rites and practices, pointing out that this material would be helpful in indoctrinating the natives in the Christian faith (1616, 3v, 5r, 6v), such descriptions could well have seemed scandalous and provocative to a Mercedarian official at the seat of royal power, far from the field of evangelical struggle in Andean America.

The chapter in the Getty manuscript that has been subjected to the most intense scrutiny, producing blanket cancellations, is titled "How Pizarro confronted [the Inca captain] Chalco Chima and Atahualpa and ordered the death of Atahualpa" ("Cómo el Marqués Pizarro careó a Chalco Chima y Atao Hualpa y mandó matar a Atao Hualpa") (MURÚA 1616, 134v to 137r). This chapter reveals that Remón made not one but two passes over the manuscript to assure its ultimate approval. I take folio 136r as the best example (see Fig. 20). Remón's first pass over the text resulted in the undulating scrawls that cancel some seven lines in the middle of the page. Here, Murúa had written that those who killed the Inca prince Atahualpa may be "burning perpetually in hell" because with a single act they committed several injustices: the first, by imprisoning someone against whom they had no justifiable reason or cause to make war; the second, by not setting him free; the third, by making themselves the judges of a person over whom they had no authority; the fourth, by being guided by their passions; and the fifth, even if the war had been just and carried out fairly, the conquistadores had no right, once the ransom they demanded of Atahualpa was received, to kill him.

In this same pass over the manuscript — which I identify by the use of undulating lines that we saw in Figure 19 — Remón canceled passages on the topics of native customs, such as marriage practices (Remón deleted Murúa's references to them as violations of natural law) (MURÚA 1616, 23v, 169r); he excised lists of organic materials used for shamanic practices such as killing enemies, repelling the attentions of a member of the opposite sex, engendering the affection of such a person, and performing various types of divination (1616, 288v, 289v, 291r). He also suppressed a reference to male genitalia (1616, 214v) as well as a comment about the role of luck (*fortuna*) in human affairs (1616, 127v). Spanish colonial governance was the topic most subject to Remón's expurgations in this first pass over the text of which we have already seen examples (1616, 318v, 319r) (see Figs. 18

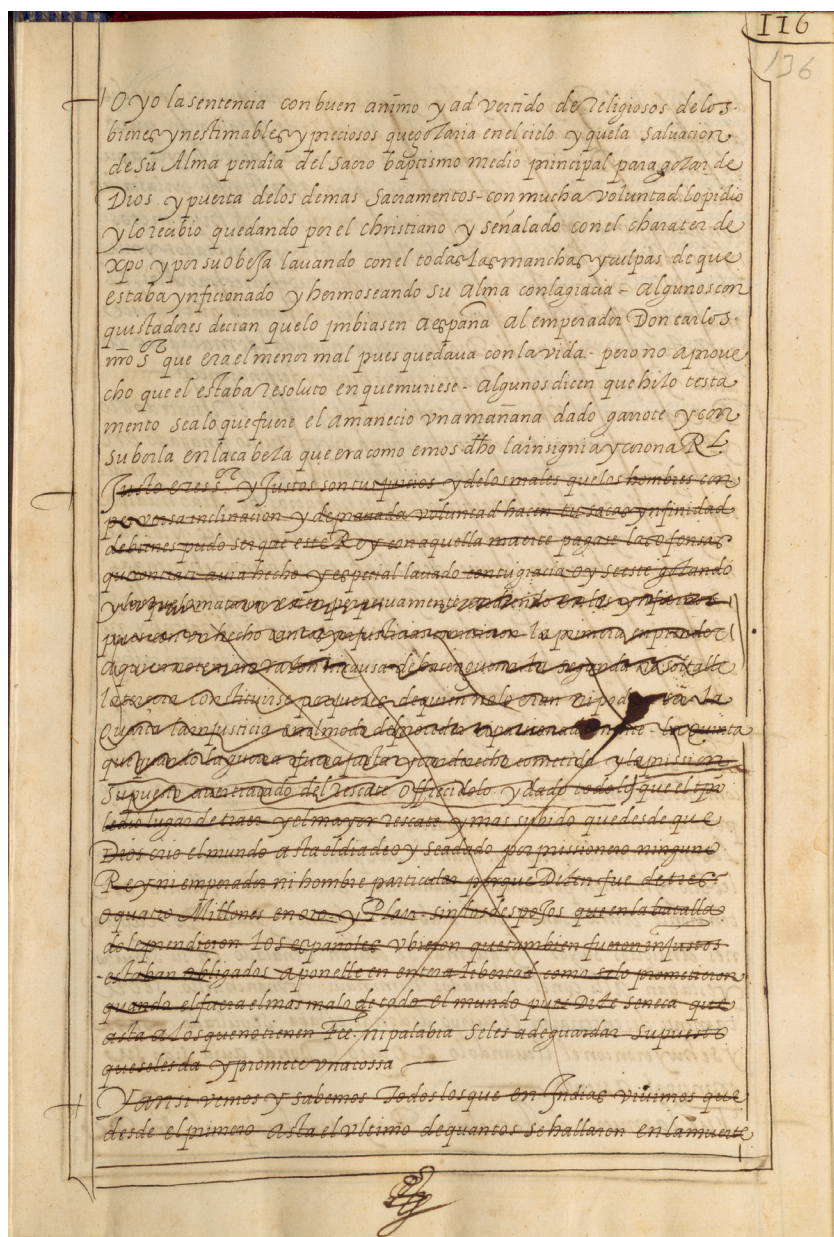


and 19). He also deleted a comment about the abuses suffered by the Andeans under Spanish rule (1616, 319v), and he struck comments about the corruption of Spanish colonial government officials (1616, 322r, 323v) as well as Murúa's remarks about greed among the Spanish missionary clergy (1616, 316r).<sup>21</sup>

Now we consider Remón's second pass over the manuscript, and to do so we return to folio 136r (see Fig. 20). Here we saw that in his first pass Remón canceled Murúa's scathing condemnation of the execution of Atahualpa, enumerating the injustices of the Spaniards' nefarious deeds in doing so. This second pass is executed with straight horizontal lines. Overall, and like the first-pass undulating-line suppressions, the bulk of these straight-lined, second-pass cancellations censor accounts of events pertaining to the capture and execution of Atahualpa as well as descriptions of native Andean ritual practices in pre-Columbian and colonial times. In this chapter 63 (MURÚA 1616, 134v–137r) they are used to eliminate the sharp thrust and long harangues of Murúa's critique of Pizarro and the Spanish war of conquest. Thus Remón cancels the entire opening paragraph of this chapter, suppressing Murúa's tirade on greed as the source of all evil, which he closes with the admonition: "What law is not kept, what commandments not broken, what brother not killed, what faith not violated, what friendship not rent asunder, what truth not obscured, what justice not being done and remaining undone: Of all this we have a good example in the present chapter, by the actions of the marquis Don Francisco de Pizarro and the Spaniards against the unfortunate Atahualpa" (1616, 134v).<sup>22</sup>

On folio 136r the four straight-lined cancelations just above the seven undulating lines call on the offices of divine judgment. Murúa writes: "Just thou art, O lord, and fair are thy judgments, even about the evils that men

21. Remón's scrutiny reached an extraordinarily minute level of detail. He struck the characterization of the eleventh viceroy, Juan de Mendoza y Luna, as "most worthy" (*meritísimo*), eliminated the qualifier "learned" (*docta*) from the description of Fray Pedro Guerra's preaching, and removed "royal" (*real*) from the description of the Mercedarian habit (MURÚA 1616, 320r, 327v, 328r). In these instances, which reveal his aversion to exaggeration and hyperbole, Remón revealed himself more as an editor than a censor.
22. "Que ley [no] guarda, que mandamientos no quebranta, que hermano no mata, que fee no viola, que amistad no quiebra, que verdad no obscurece, que justicia no deshaze y deshecha. Desto tenemos buen exemplo en el presente capítulo en lo que sucedió al marqués don Francisco Pizarro y los españoles con el desdichado Ataohualpa".



**Figure 20.** Fray Alonso Remón cancels text in two separate passes. Note bleed-through from other side of folio and Núñez de León's rubric. The J. Paul Getty Museum, Los Angeles, Ms. Ludwig XIII 16, fol. 136. Fray Martín de Murúa. 1616. *Historia general del Piru*.

by their inclination and depraved will do to deprive thee of an infinity of good things; it could be that this king [Atahualpa], by his death, paid for the offenses that had been done against thee, and may he be cleansed by thy grace and may he now be rejoicing".<sup>23</sup> Remón continues this second-pass inspection and deletes the remainder of the page, which described Atahualpa's ransom as "the largest and highest ransom that had ever been heard of or paid, since God created the earth until the present day, for the imprisonment of any king or emperor or private citizen", and he concludes with Seneca's admonition that "one's bond should be kept with those to whom one has made a promise", adding: "And this we see and know, all of us who live in the Indies, from the first to the last of all those who were present at the death of this unfortunate king" (MURÚA 1616, 136r-v).<sup>24</sup> With the diagonal slashes along with the large X and its careless ink blots thrown over the bottom half of this page, we can imagine Remón exclaiming, "No, no, and again, no!"

What we have seen in Murúa's strident condemnation of the conduct of the Spanish conquistadores is its assessment and approval of the moral conviction and rhetorical tone of the writings of Fray Bartolomé de Las Casas. In the 1570s, the viceroy of Peru, Francisco de Toledo, had written that he would carry out the royal order to confiscate Las Casas's works, which were, he asserted, held dear by all the friars of the Peruvian vice-royalty and responsible for doing great harm to the kingdom.<sup>25</sup> Nearly a

23. "Justo eres, señor, y justos son tus juicios y de los males que los hombres con perversa inclinación y depravada voluntad hacen tu sacas infinidad de bienes; pudo ser que este Rey y con aquella muerte pagase las ofensas que contra ti auía hecho y especial lavado con tu gracia oy se esté gozando".

24. "Pues dize Séneca que asta a los que no tiene fee ni palabra se les a de guardar supuesto que se les da y promete una cossa. Y ansí vemos y sabemos todos los que en Indias vivimos que desde el primero asta el último de cuántos se hallaron en la muerte deste desdichado Rey".

25. On September 24, 1572, the viceroy Toledo wrote to the Spanish king Philip II: "The books of the bishop of Chiapas and the other works printed without being licensed by the Royal Council will be confiscated as Your Majesty requires, for those of the bishop of Chiapas were the heart of most of the friars in this kingdom, to which they have brought much harm" ("*Los libros del obispo de Chiapa [Bartolomé de Las Casas] y los demás ympresos sin licencia del real consejo se yrán recojiendo como vuestra magestad lo manda, que los de chiapa era el corazón de los más frailes de este reino y con que más daño han hecho en él*") (LEVILLIER 1924, 4: 442). Las Casas's tracts were privately printed in Seville in 1552 and 1553, before royal pre-publication approval and licensing were mandated in 1554.

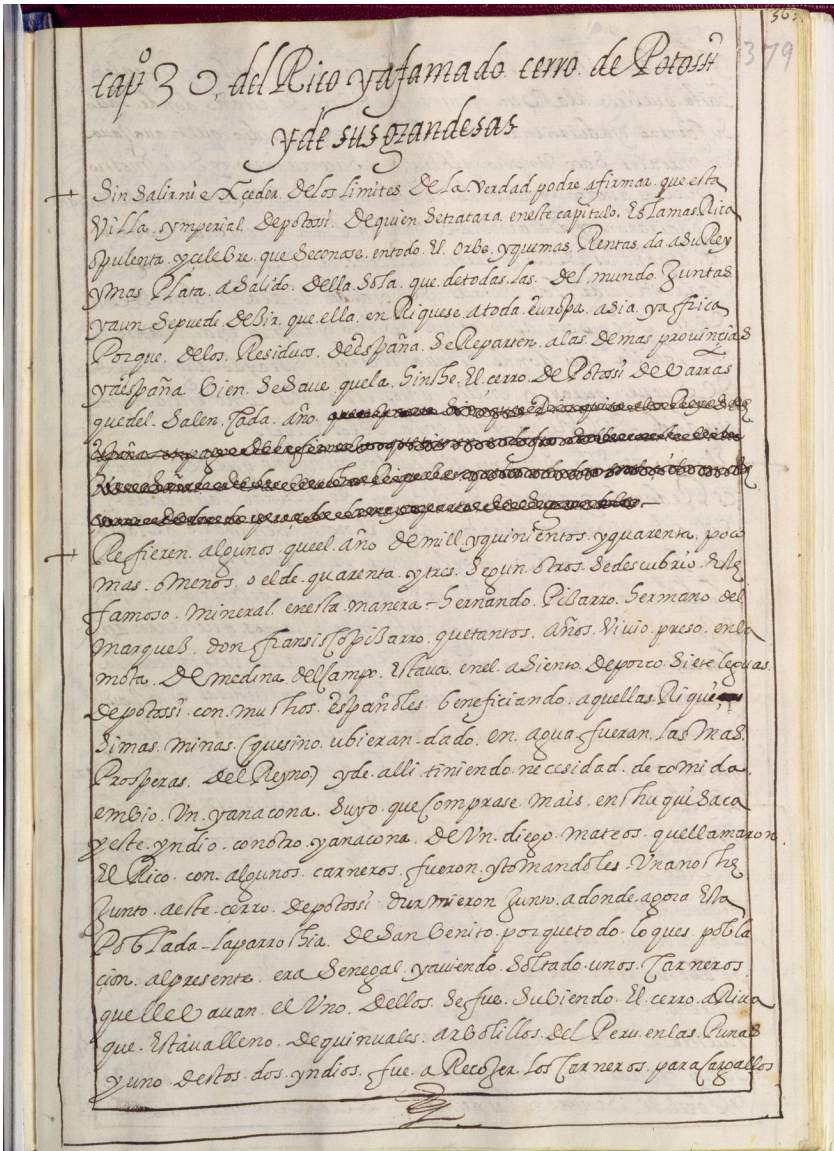
half century later, we find that Murúa was one of Las Casas's enthusiastic adherents. His declarations about the sins committed by the conquerors to satisfy their greed and the need for the Spaniards and their heirs to make restitution to their Andean victims (and to *their* heirs) echo with high-decibel intensity the fundamental Lascasian message that resonated throughout the decades following Las Casas's death in 1566. Upon reviewing Murúa's manuscript in 1615, Remón would have taken into account the state's aversion to any discussion critical of Spanish conduct in the Indies. His "friendly censorship" helped Murúa's cause accordingly.

*Official state censorship:* We find additional cancellations in another style, which are cramped, having been painstakingly entered to render the stricken words entirely unreadable (MURÚA 1616, 379r) (see Fig. 21). This was the state censorship that occurred prior to publication. Again we find that the censorial eye pays close attention to controversial matters at the level of their most minute detail. There are only five such cancellations in Murúa's voluminous manuscript. (Remón, in effect, had done the bulk of the censor's work.) All five of these brief cancellations are illegible upon ocular examination of the manuscript, but their topics can be readily identified. The first cancellation is not the subject of the chapter, which is the reign of the tenth Inca, Tupac Yupanqui, but rather the introduction of the Christian faith in the Andes (MURÚA 1616, 48r). The second excision refers to an aspect of the negotiations used to convince the surviving Inca prince, Tupac Amaru, to surrender to his captor, Martín García de Loyola (MURÚA 1616, 195r). The third concerns Fray Diego de Martínez's mission to the bellicose Chunchos (*indios de guerra*) (MURÚA 1616, 325r). The fourth, a single word, pertains to the royally granted privileges enjoyed by the ancient Inca capital of Cuzco (MURÚA 1616, 334v), and the fifth comments on the vast new wealth available to Spain, thanks to the silver mines at Potosí (see Fig. 21).<sup>26</sup>

Strikingly different from the other types of cancellation markings in the manuscript, the illegibility produced by these pen strokes points to the work of a royal censor. As we have seen, Román's expurgated *Repúblicas del mundo* of 1575 provided many examples. The tightly looped scrolling

26. These dozen lines of text may remain illegible: Ink testing done at by the Getty Research Institute in 2005 on the first of these passages (MURÚA 1616, 48r) revealed that the ink of the original text and the subsequent application of cancellation ink could not be separated because they were found to be in the same spectral range.





**Figure 21.** Cancellation of text by royal censor to render censored text illegible. The J. Paul Getty Museum, Los Angeles, Ms. Ludwig XIII 16, fol. 379. Fray Martín de Murúa. 1616. *Historia general del Piru*.



line, which corresponds nearly exactly in size and height to that of the text to be eradicated, was a successful means of obliterating a line of text either handwritten or printed. Such is the case here, and it is at wide variance with the techniques employed by Remón to eliminate controversial passages without any special effort to obliterate them. In fact, the style of Remón's cancellations reveals that, once he decided where to introduce them, he could enter them rapidly and expeditiously. This is quite different from the cramped and painstaking obliterations in the few instances introduced by the royal censor.

The telling detail that identifies with certainty the royal censor's hand is the cancellation of the first two syllables of the word "imperial" (*ympe- reales*), turning it into "royal" (*reales*) (MURÚA 1616, 334v). This seemingly trivial emendation makes an important technical distinction. The current monarch, Philip III (r. 1599–1621), and his father, Philip II, did not hold the title of Holy Roman Emperor, as had Philip III's grandfather, Charles V.<sup>27</sup> Modifying the word from "imperial" to "royal" in reference to the privileges enjoyed by the ancient Inca city of Cuzco was a small but significant correction. The precision of this emendation, plus the longer excisions that speak of the (lack of) progress of the Catholic faith in the Americas and of the bounty bestowed on the kings of Spain by the wealth of Potosí, leave little doubt that these acts of censorship were carried out at the court, by or under the supervision of, the royal censor Pedro de Valencia.

The most lengthy of these cancellations gives the full flavor of the court's concerns; I translate it here: "It does not seem otherwise but that God wanted to grant to the kings of Spain, in payment for the firmness of their faith, a sign, in this life, of the new riches that He will grant them in the next, that is, in heaven by means of that great mountain [Potosí], which is the source of the greater part of the monarchs' grandeur" (*grandeza*) (MURÚA 1616, 379r) (See Fig. 21).<sup>28</sup> From the royal censor's point of view, Murúa's attribution of the glory of Spain's rulers to the material wealth provided by the silver of Potosí was objectionable enough; com-

27. The title had passed in 1558 to Charles's younger brother Ferdinand, king of Bohemia and Hungary, after Charles abdicated the throne in 1556 and divided the states over which he was sovereign between his brother Ferdinand I and his son Philip II.

28. "Que no parese sino que Dios quiso a los Reyes de España en pago de la firmeza que tienen en la fe a dalles en esta vida una señal de las nuevas riquezas que les a de dar en el cielo con el cerro de donde procede la mayor parte de su grandeza".

pounding it with the notion that this earthly wealth was a sign of God's promise of their eternal spiritual reward, albeit predicted by a mendicant friar, was entirely unacceptable. Yet with these few objectionable passages deleted (Remón, we are reminded, had done yeoman's work in this regard), the Getty Murúa was ready for — and received — the coveted royal approval (see Fig. 16).

Our other question remains: Why was the *Historia General del Piru* not published in its day? There are many possible causes, but I offer the one I find most plausible.<sup>29</sup> On the topic of Inca history, there was laid on the table of the royal Castilian court at that very moment one of the most widely heralded works of its time: El Inca Garcilaso de la Vega's *Comentarios reales de los Incas*. Its *Primera parte* (Part One) had been published in Lisbon in 1609, and its *Segunda parte* (Part Two) was now at the court in Madrid, awaiting the final inspection that was required to start the presses rolling.

In fact, and this may be the greatest irony of all concerning the fate of Murúa's *Historia General del Piru*, El Inca Garcilaso's *Segunda parte* manuscript had been approved by the royal censor Pedro de Valencia on January 6, 1614, and, having been rubricated by the king's notary (Gerónimo Núñez de León), the royal license to print ("Yo, el Rey") was issued on January 21, 1614. Now, in 1616, the manuscript had been typeset and Garcilaso's printer, with a printed copy in hand, awaited its royal inspection and comparison with the previously approved manuscript. On November 12, 1616, the court's officially appointed reader, the licentiate Murcia de la Llana, declared that the printed version corresponded to the manuscript. Thus, only five days later, on November 17, 1616, Gerónimo Núñez de León executed the *tasa*, declaring that the king and his council had seen and licensed for printing the *Segunda parte de los comentarios reales* and that it could now be sold for a fixed period of time at a royally set fair-market price (VARNER 1968, 376).<sup>30</sup>

29. There were additional factors that would have been at play, including the competition between Murúa's work and two other publishing projects that received Mercedarian support: Remón's own history of the Mercedarian Order, *Historia general de la Orden de Nuestra Señora de la Merced* (1618–1633), and the conquistador Bernal Díaz del Castillo's *Historia verdadera de la conquista de la Nueva España* (1632) in which a Mercedarian friar, Bartolomé de Olmedo, was given a featured role in the conquest of Mexico. See ADORNO 2009, 34–6.

30. The pertinent documents are referenced in MEDINA [1898–1907]1968, 2: 163–4. Garcilaso did not live to see the *Segunda parte* in print; he died on April 23,

Another factor was the wide international acclaim that El Inca Garcilaso's *Primera parte de los comentarios reales de los Incas* was already achieving. For example, the *Comentarios reales* made its debut in a partial English translation in London only some eight years after the *Segunda parte* appeared in print, and this was eight years before its first translation into French was published.<sup>31</sup> In his *Purchas his Pilgrimes* (1625), the English Protestant minister and compiler of historical narratives Samuel Purchas translated into English and published portions of both the first and second parts, hailing Garcilaso's history of the Incas as "a jewell, such as no other Peru Merchant hath set to sale" ([1625] 1906, 17: 412). The novelty of Garcilaso's native heritage as an "Inca-Spaniard" appealed greatly to Purchas, for being "of the bloud of the Incas, or as others call them, Ingas, Emperours of Peru, by the mothers side, his father a Spaniard"; Purchas offered his reader the opportunity to "heare a Peruan speake of Peru", and to supplement the accounts of Spanish authors by collecting "such things as either they had not, or had by false information received and deceived their Readers, whom this Authour correcteth out of better intelligence"; emphasizing his delight at having native accounts on which to rely, Purchas adds: "Besides, hee seemes to hold counterpoise, as drawing things from their originall, with our Mexican Picture-antiquities" ([1625] 1906, 17: 311).<sup>32</sup> It seems that there was no room, or rather, no financial support, for a second comprehensive history of the Incas of Peru, especially since its antecedent was authored not by the likes of a Spanish mendicant friar but rather by a "son of the Incas", the male offspring of an Inca princess and a Spanish captain.

---

1616. Although his manuscript went through the court's censorship procedure in 1614 under its original title, it was changed posthumously to *Historia general del Perú*. This was an immodest, pompous title that Garcilaso would not have sanctioned. We wonder if the idea for it came about during the court's inspection of Murúa's manuscript.

31. *Le commentaire royal, ou L'histoire des Yncas, roys du Peru* [. . .] traduite [. . .] par J. Baudoin. Paris: A. Courbé, 1633. This is a translation of the *Primera parte* (JOHN CARTER BROWN LIBRARY 1982, 2: 335).

32. The "Mexican Picture-antiquities" referred to the Codex Mendoza, an early account of Mexican civilization produced by native artists and informants in Mexico circa 1550; Purchas translated portions of the Mendoza into English and reproduced in woodcut dozens of its drawings. (See ADORNO 2014).

## Colophon

The writings of Jerónimo Román y Zamora and Martín de Murúa have more in common than I would have thought when I decided to put them together to explore the topic of censorship. One of the most distinctive similarities that comes clear only under this type of autopsy is their shared regard for the ideas of Bartolomé de las Casas. Murúa's friendly censor Remón had an axe to grind with Las Casas regarding the Dominican's assessment of the Mercedarians' role in the Spanish conquests, and he readily perceived the Lascasian legacy in Murúa's *Historia General del Piru*, which condemned the execution of the last Inca princes as regicide. Remón, like the viceroy Toledo fifty years earlier, understood that Las Casas "was the heart" of the friars of Peru, and he certainly found it to be true in the case of his Mercedarian confrere. As Remón's slashing pen strokes suggest, he must have been struck forcefully by this realization as he helped Murúa, the veteran missionary friar, prepare his work for royal censorship and, hopefully, approval and publication.

In the portion of *Repúblicas del mundo* devoted to the *República de las Indias Occidentales*, Román y Zamora's reading of Las Casas's work is even more overtly in evidence. Román named "the bishop of Chiapas" on several occasions, and when he praised the principles of governance instituted by pre-Columbian Amerindian peoples, he took the opportunity to remark on the prerogatives of the Christian prince. He made the argument that Christian sovereigns should not seek to prohibit by law all the sins and vices that their subjects might commit or practice but rather feign indifference and allow certain vices to go ignored, because to attempt to eliminate all vice would be as futile as trying to control men's thoughts, whereas — it should be remembered — the only true function of the law was to conserve a just and ordered state ([1575] 1897, 1: 272–3). I discovered that Román's source for this rumination was Las Casas, and that his argument came virtually word-for-word from Las Casas' *Apologética historia sumaria*.<sup>33</sup>

I think Murúa understood that his decades abroad working in the missionary field of Quechua-speaking colonial Peru did not prepare him to face the demands of a royal court whose intimate workings he had not experi-

33. Román paraphrased the text of a manuscript copy of the *Apologética historia sumaria*, which was one of Las Casas's many works that were not published but circulated in manuscript in the decades following his death. See ADORNO 1992, 818–20 and CASAS [1527–1560] 1958, 4: 269–70.

enced personally. And if he was, as it seems, infirm at that point in his life, all the more so (see footnote 16). Somewhat earlier, Román y Zamora had been surrounded not by native, neophyte new Christians but rather by old and new books in which, I believe, he found his vocation — just as the fictional Don Quijote would do in his personal provincial library — and like Don Quijote, Román y Zamora sallied forth in the pursuit of justice. Along the way, Román y Zamora, like Murúa after him, never doubted the importance or validity of the principle of intellectual freedom. Both subscribed to it. This is what prompted them to respond to censorship by declaring, in the spirit of their historical and fictional counterparts Las Casas and Don Quijote: “Obedezco, pero no cumplo”.

Yale University

## Works Cited

- ADORNO, Rolena. 1992. “Censorship and its Evasion: Jerónimo Román and Bartolomé de las Casas”. *Hispania* 75.4: 811–27.
- . 2008. “Censorship and Approbation in Murúa’s *Historia General del Piru*”. In *The Getty Murúa: Essays on the Making of the “Historia General del Piru”*, J. Paul Getty Museum Ms. Ludwig XIII 16. Edited by Thomas B.F. CUMMINS and Barbara ANDERSON, 95–124. Los Angeles: Getty Research Institute.
- . 2009. “Censorship and its Seasons: Madrid, 1615”. *The Yale Review* 97.3: 18–37.
- . 2014. “El estreno de *Comentarios reales de los Incas* en el extranjero (Londres 1625)”. In *Sujetos múltiples: colonialidad, indigenismo y feminismo: Homenaje a Betty Osorio*. Editado por Carolina ALZATE y David SOLODKOW, 3–38. Bogotá, D.C.: Universidad de los Andes.
- ADORNO, Rolena and Ivan BOSERUP. 2008. “The Making of Fray Martín de Murúa’s *Historia General del Piru*”. In *The Getty Murúa: Essays on the Making of the “Historia General del Piru”*, J. Paul Getty Museum Ms. Ludwig XIII 16. Edited by Thomas B.F. CUMMINS and Barbara ANDERSON, 7–75. Los Angeles: Getty Research Institute.
- BOKENKOTTER, Thomas. [1977] 1990. *A Concise History of the Catholic Church*. New York: Doubleday.
- BORJA DE AGUINAGALDE, Francisco. 2019. “Un misterio resuelto. El autor de la *Historia general del Piru*, fray Martín de Murúa (¿1566?–1615), de Eskoriatza”. In *Vida y obra: fray Martín de Murúa*. Edited by Thomas B.F. CUMMINS and Juan OSSIO, 194–226. Lima: EY, Ernst & Young Perú.
- CASAS, Bartolomé de las. *Apologética historia sumaria*. [1527–1560] 1958. In *Obras escogidas de fray Bartolomé de las Casas*. Edited by Juan PÉREZ DE TUDELA BUESO. Vol. 4. Madrid: Atlas.
- CHAPMAN, Charles E. [1918] 1965. *A History of Spain*. New York: Free Press.



- HODGEN, Margaret T. [1964] 1971. *Early Anthropology in the Sixteenth and Seventeenth Centuries*. Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania.
- JOHN CARTER BROWN LIBRARY. 1980–1997. *European Americana: A Chronological Guide to Works Printed in Europe Relating to the Americas, 1493–1750*. 6 vols. Edited by John ALDEN with the assistance of Dennis C. LANDIS. New York: Readex Books.
- KAMEN, Henry. [1967] 1985. *La inquisición española: nueva edición totalmente reescrita y puesta al día por el autor*. Translated by Gabriela ZAYAS. Barcelona: Crítica.
- LEA, Henry Charles. 1897. *Chapters from the Religious History of Spain*. Philadelphia: Lea Brothers.
- . 1907. *A History of the Inquisition in Spain*. 4 vols. New York: Macmillan.
- LEVILLIER, Roberto. 1924. *Gobernantes del Perú: Cartas y Papeles, Siglo XVI. Documentos del Archivo de Indias*. Vol. 4. Madrid: Juan Pueyo.
- MÁRQUEZ, Antonio. 1980. *Literatura e Inquisición en España (1478–1834)*. Madrid: Taurus.
- MEDINA, José Toribio. [1898–1907] 1968. *Biblioteca hispano-americana (1493–1810)*. 7 vols. Amsterdam: N. Ireland.
- MORAL, Bonifacio. 1897. "Noticias de Fr. Jerónimo Román, sacadas principalmente de sus obras". In ROMÁN Y ZAMORA [1575] 1897, 1, 13–28.
- MURÚA, Martín de. [1590–1606] 2004. *Códice Murúa: Historia y genealogía de los reyes incas del Perú del padre mercenario [sic] fray Martín de Murúa*. 2 vols. Madrid: Testimonio Compañía Editorial.
- . [1613–16] 2008. *Historia general del Piru: Facsimile of the J. Paul Getty Museum Ms. Ludwig XIII 16*. Los Angeles: Getty Research Institute.
- PINTO CRESPO, Virgilio. 1983. *Inquisición y control ideológico en la España del siglo XVI*. Prologue by Joaquín PÉREZ VILLANUEVA. Madrid: Taurus.
- PURCHAS, Samuel. [1625] 1906. *Hakluytus Posthumus or Purchas His Pilgrimes in twenty volumes*. Vol. 17. Glasgow: James MacLehose and Sons.
- REKERS, Ben. [1961] 1972. *Benito Arias Montano (1527/1598)*. London: Warburg Institute, University of London.
- ROMÁN Y ZAMORA, Jerónimo. 1575. *Repúblicas del mundo, divididas en XXVII libros*. 2 vols. Medina del Campo: Francisco del Canto.
- . 1595. *Repúblicas del mundo, divididas en tres partes*. 3 vols. Salamanca: Juan Fernández.
- . [1575] 1897. *Repúblicas de Indias: Idolatrías y gobierno en México y Perú antes de la Conquista*. 2 vols. Madrid: Vitoriano Suárez.
- TORRE REVELLO, José. 1940. *El libro, la imprenta y el periodismo en América durante la dominación española*. Buenos Aires: Peuser.
- VARNER, John Grier. 1968. *El Yncas: The Life and Times of Garcilaso de la Vega*. Austin: University of Texas.
- VEGA, Garcilaso de la Vega. 1609. *Primera parte de los Commentarios reales, que tratan del origen de los yncas, reyes que fueron del Perú, de su idolatría, leyes, y gobierno*

en paz y en guerra de sus vidas y conquistas, y de todo lo que fue aquel imperio y su república, antes que los españoles passaron a él. Lisboa: P. Crasbeek.

———. 1617. *Historia general del Peru trata el descubrimiento del y cómo lo ganaron los Españoles, las guerras ciuiles que huuo entre los Piçarros, y Almagros, sobre la partija de la tierra*. Córdova: Viuda de Andrés Barrera.

———. [1609, 1617] 1633. *Le commentaire royal, ou L'histoire des Yncas, roys du Peru [ . . . ] traduite [ . . . ] par J. Baudoin*. Paris: A Courbé.

# To Sing Upon the Book

## Oral and Written Counterpoint in Early Modern Europe<sup>1</sup>

*Ronald Broude*

### ABSTRACT

*During the fifteenth century, many musici thought of counterpoint as an improvisational practice in which certain procedures were employed to produce a musical texture in which interest lay in the interplay of two or more melodic lines. The improvisational practice was called singing upon the book (cantare super librum): it required one singer to realize a pre-existing melody (called a cantus firmus) inscribed in a text while one or more other singers (called concentors), reading from that same text, devised, ex tempore, a countermelody or melodies that obeyed the rules of counterpoint with respect to the cantus firmus. Similar procedures, applied in writing, produced resfacta, contrapuntal texture in textual form. Counterpoint and resfacta were alternative means of providing music for occasions both sacred and secular. During the sixteenth century, several factors combined to alter the relationship between improvised and written counterpoint, and by the end of the century the importance of the former was greatly diminished. The growth of music printing provided an abundance of music for a growing community of amateurs who could read music but were not interested singing upon the book. The composers responsible for this new music embraced emerging ideas that stressed the advantages of written music, which enjoyed permanence that improvised counterpoint lacked, which was usually more observant of the rules than improvised counterpoint could be, and which enhanced the reputations of the composers who created it. As a result of these developments, emphasis shifted from improvised to written counterpoint, from the procedures that produced a contrapuntal texture to the texture itself, and singing upon the book came to be seen by many not as an end in itself but as a way to sharpen com-*

1. This paper was prepared for the Society for Textual Scholarship's 2019 conference, the theme of which was Ephemerality. The Society is interdisciplinary, and the paper was therefore prepared to be intelligible to an audience most of whom would not be specialists in Renaissance music. The indulgence of such specialists is therefore requested, since they will encounter on the following pages elementary explanations of terminology and practice as well as simplified discussions of matters about which, notwithstanding many years of lively debate, no consensus has been reached; for more controversial matters, references to selections of papers representing diverse views will be found in the footnotes.

posers' skills. Marginalized by print, improvised counterpoint survived in a much reduced community, largely in Catholic France and Iberia, and eventually, for want of a musical community large enough to sustain it, ceased to be a living musical tradition.

---

IN ORAL TRADITIONS, CREATION AND PERFORMANCE ARE ONE AND the same, and the entities created are ephemeral. Oral composition proceeds, inexorably, in real time, and when a performance is finished, it is — or at least until the age of electronic recording it was — gone forever, surviving only in memories that decay with time and dissolve with death. The technology of writing can produce entities that mimic certain aspects of orally composed creations, but it can also reconfigure the ways in which those entities are created and transmitted and the forms that they take. The transition from oral to script culture is therefore of interest to several disciplines.

At each such transition, there was presumably a period during which the oral and the written co-existed, and such periods are of particular importance in understanding the relationship between orality and writing. A repertoire in which there was this sort of overlap is fifteenth- and sixteenth-century counterpoint, which was governed by principles applicable to both oral and written composition. This repertoire may be exceptional in important ways, but it does provide a useful window into the dynamics of at least one triumph of writing — or, rather, into the eclipse of one oral practice. Those dynamics involved loyalty to a tradition that viewed counterpoint as a process rather than a product; the growth of a music-printing industry that provided an abundance of music for a growing community of amateurs who could read music but could not improvise counterpoint; and the emergence of a rudimentary “work concept” that portrayed musical compositions as polished and enduring artifacts that, committed to writing, overcame the impermanence and imperfections of improvised music.

Today, counterpoint has several meanings: it may mean the practice of combining two or more melodies according to certain rules; it may mean the musical texture created by this practice; or it may mean one of the melodic lines that make up such a texture. In the late fifteenth century, however, counterpoint had a different meaning: it was a procedure in which a new melody (a countermelody) was constructed by setting successive notes against the notes of a preexisting melody, called a *cantus firmus*, in accordance with rules governing the relationship of the two melodies. In its most basic form, *contrapunctus simplex*, one note of the countermelody was placed against one note of the *cantus firmus*; in its more elaborate

form, *contrapunctus diminutus*, several notes of the countermelody were placed against one note of the cantus firmus, again with the proviso that certain conditions be met. Fifteenth-century counterpoint involved only two voices, the cantus firmus and the countermelody, but a texture of more than two voices could be created by adding more countermelodies each of which obeyed the rules of counterpoint with respect to the cantus firmus, and, for written counterpoint, with respect to each other.<sup>2</sup>

Some fifteenth- and sixteenth-century composers and theorists distinguished between counterpoint, which was performed by singers improvising, and composition, which was the creation in writing of the texture that improvised counterpoint produced. This distinction was not consistently maintained, but an overall impression created by multiple theoretical works and instructional manuals confirms its existence, as does careful reading of particular texts (one such reading will be offered below).

The rules of late fifteenth-century counterpoint were concerned with two musical elements: intervals and motion. An interval is the distance between two pitches, measured in degrees of the scale. Certain intervals were considered consonant, pleasing to the ear, and therefore permissible in most situations: consonant intervals were the unison, third, fifth and sixth as well as their octave derivatives. Certain other intervals were dissonant and displeasing to the ear; they were permissible only in certain carefully defined situations. Dissonant intervals included the second, seventh and their octave derivatives. The fourth was treated as dissonant in some circumstances and permissible in others.

The second set of rules dealt with motion — the movement of the countermelody from one note to another over a certain span of time seen in relation to the movement of the cantus firmus over the same span of time. In practical terms, rules of motion specified which intervals could be succeeded by which intervals approached in what ways. For example, parallel fifths — two successive perfect fifths — were prohibited.

With *contrapunctus simplex*, every note of the countermelody was expected to be consonant with the note of the cantus firmus against which it had been set. But with *contrapunctus diminutus*, in which two or more notes of the countermelody might be set against one note of the cantus firmus, dissonance between the countermelody and the cantus firmus was permissible, and consonance between these two voices was obligatory only

2. CROCKER 1962 influentially emphasized the essentially two-part nature of fifteenth-century counterpoint.



at certain points, which were determined by the operative mensuration (a measure of time similar but not identical to modern musical meter).

The form of orally composed counterpoint practiced from the fifteenth century onwards was called “singing upon the book”, *cantare super librum* (the phrase was usually used with the infinitive *cantare*). In this practice, one singer realized the cantus firmus, which he read from a text — i.e., the book — while one or more other singers, called concentors, reading that same text, improvised a countermelody or melodies that responded to the cantus firmus while obeying the rules of counterpoint.

Singing upon the book had important features in common with oral composition in various traditions. Like the *rhapsodes* who retailed Homeric tales, the Anglo-Saxon *scops* who sang about Beowulf, and the *guslar* of the former Yugoslavia, the concentor singing upon the book combined in one and the same person the functions of creator and performer; he commanded skills acquired by training and sharpened by experience; he created at performance speed; he drew upon a repertoire of formulae; and his creation/performance was governed by a set constraints. On the other hand, singing upon the book can hardly be considered run-of-the-mill orality. The creator/performer was literate, for he needed to be able to read the cantus firmus. And, whereas the *rhapsode*, *scop* and *guslar* worked solo, the concentor performed as part of an ensemble; at the least there was one other singer, the one realizing the cantus firmus; more often there were other concentors devising other countermelodies. Finally, singing upon the book, rather than re-creating a pre-existent entity — e.g., re-telling a familiar story — addressed new material with each performance, and it seems sometimes to have involved a series of run-throughs intended to refine the rendition, as the concentors tried to fix passages that broke the rules and to polish passages that might not have broken rules but that could have been musically improved.

In the fifteenth century, the relationship between orally composed counterpoint and composition in writing was not a case in which there had existed a fully developed oral practice to which writing was, post facto, applied. At least since the eleventh century, embellishing a pre-existing melody by adding one or more new melodies had been practiced through much of Europe in both oral and written forms, although, in general, innovations probably occurred first in oral practice and only later appeared in written music. Innovations included the re-classification of intervals as consonant or dissonant and the refinement of rules governing which voices were required to be consonant with which other voices at which points.

In a world in which music was equated with performance, improvisation and realizing a fully written-out text were alternative ways of producing music. Compared to singing upon the book, realizing a text was the final stage in a relatively cumbersome and costly process, involving composers, parchment, music scribes, etc.; singing upon the book, however, was a quick and easy means of producing competent counterpoint — and in a world in which good composers and good compositions were far less numerous than they would later become, singing upon the book enabled fresh music to be performed in up-to-date styles with a minimum of bother and expense.

The rules that governed late fifteenth-century counterpoint reflected a style that had coalesced by the 1430s in what is now northern France and the southern part of the Benelux countries, from where “Northerners” carried it to much of the rest of Europe. These Northerners, whose services were much in demand in both courts and religious establishments, offered Europe not just a dazzling style of polyphony but also an easy way to produce it: the singers who emerged from the rigorous musical education provided in northern musical establishments were highly skilled in singing upon the book.

Our most important extant fifteenth-century source for singing upon the book — and, indeed, for the counterpoint of the period generally — was the composer and theorist Johannes Tinctoris (c. 1430–1511).<sup>3</sup> Tinctoris was born in Barre l’Alleude (about 25 kilometers south of Brussels), and probably received his musical training in one of the musical centers nearby. As a young man, he moved to France, studying at the university in Orléans. Early in the 1470s, he took up a position at the Neapolitan court, which under Ferrante I was an important center for the movement that today is called Humanism. During his stay in Naples, Tinctoris prepared a suite of treatises that, taken altogether, covered with an unprecedented thoroughness most of the topics that would have been of interest to theorists, composers, and singers of the day. Tinctoris’ treatise on counterpoint, the *Liber de arte contrapuncti*, offered a thorough exposition of traditional

3. The first extensive effort to gather documentary evidence for Tinctoris’ biography was WOODLEY 1981. What began as the “Tinctoris Project”, an effort to gather biographical material, to prepare editions of Tinctoris’ theoretical works, and to provide convenient access to sources of those works, has found a home online at <http://earlymusictheory.org/Tinctoris>. For biographical details, updated as new information becomes available, follow <http://earlymusictheory.org/Tinctoris/BiographicalOutline>.

teaching, to which the author added some of his own ideas about the management of dissonance. His writings were typical of the ways in which late fifteenth- and sixteenth-century authors of both theoretical treatises and practical manuals were endeavoring to represent music as what Humanists would have considered an *ars* — a skill acquired not simply by mechanically mastering a series of procedures (which is what mere craftsmen did) but by learning the rational bases of relevant rules and by imitating approved models; Tinctoris' use of Humanist terminology — beginning with *ars* in the title of his treatise — must therefore be approached with an awareness that it was often being applied to music in innovative and hence atypical ways, as part of a programme to make music respectable in Humanist terms.<sup>4</sup>

Tinctoris explained that counterpoint may be done in two ways. On the one hand, it could be done mentally — i.e., devised without benefit of text, by what we today would call oral composition; on the other, it could be performed from a fully written-out text:

Porro tam simplex quam diminutus contrapunctus dupliciter fit, hoc est aut scripto aut mente. Contrapunctus qui scripto fit communiter resfacta nominatur. At istum quem mentaliter conficimus absolute contrapunctum vocamus, et hunc qui faciunt super librum cantare vulgariter dicuntur.<sup>5</sup>

This important passage has been much discussed by musicologists over the past sixty years.<sup>6</sup> It is usually translated to this effect: “Counterpoint is *made* either mentally or *in writing* [*italics added*]”.<sup>7</sup> Such a translation

4. On the concept of *ars* in Humanist thought, see BAXANDALL 1971, 15–17. In effect, Tinctoris was trying to do for music what Leon Battista Alberti had done for painting a half century earlier in *De pictura*.

5. TINCTORIS 1475, Liber II, cap. xx. All quotations from this work are taken from Brussels, Bibliothèque Royale, II 4147, a manuscript prepared probably in Naples in the 1480s, while Tinctoris was resident there. Brevographs have been expanded silently, and some punctuation has been added. For the convenience of readers who may prefer not to refer to this manuscript, references are made to book and chapter, which are consistent among early sources and modern editions.

6. Among the key discussions are FERAND 1957; BENT 1983, 371–91; BLACKBURN 1987, 210–60; and WEGMAN 1996, 439–44.

7. For translations rendering fit as “made” and scripto as “in”, see, for example, SEAY 1972, 102–3, and BENT 1983, 302.

imposes on Tinctoris' words the modern idea of counterpoint as a texture that can be created in two ways, by improvising (*cantare super librum*) or in writing (*resfacta*). However, as is made clear by a close reading of the entire chapter in which this passage occurs, Tinctoris was concerned here not with how counterpoint may be created but with how it may be performed. The passage may also be translated: "Counterpoint can be done [i.e., performed] in two ways, from the mind or from writing". The latter reading, I would suggest, conveys the sense that Tinctoris intended.<sup>8</sup> Throughout the chapter, Tinctoris, instead of treating *resfacta* as a form of counterpoint, presents *resfacta* as something different from and opposed to counterpoint. This is evident in the title of the chapter, in which Tinctoris promises to explain "in quo *resfacta* a contrapunctus differt". It is clear also in the sentence in which Tinctoris explains that counterpoint done mentally — i.e., by singing upon the book — is absolute (*absolute*) counterpoint, i.e., counterpoint without qualification, or as we might say today, "real" counterpoint. Counterpoint performed from writing is something quite different, *resfacta*, which most musicologists agree means composed music, i.e., music created in writing and circulated in texts.<sup>9</sup> And the distinction is confirmed by Tinctoris' condition, discussed below, that in *resfacta* all voices must be mutually obligated whereas in counterpoint all voices need not be. For Tinctoris, then, counterpoint was produced without benefit of text by skilled concentrors, whereas counterpoint done by reading from a text con-

8. Tinctoris is not unique in distinguishing between counterpoint and composition in this way; see, for example, COCLICO 1552, A2v: "Cæterum de modo eleganter canendi, de Contrapuncto, & de Compositione [ . . . ]". Juan Bermudo (1555, c. 128) defines counterpoint specifically as improvisation: "El contrapunto es una ordenación improvisa sobre canto llano, con diversas melodias".

9. The meaning of *resfacta* has been much discussed. The prevailing opinion is that *resfacta* means composed — i.e., written — counterpoint, but BENT 1983, passim but explicitly 306 and 315, maintains that *resfacta* denotes any counterpoint in which all voices are mutually obligated. Tinctoris himself (1495, s.v. *res facta*) defines *resfacta* as "*cantus compositus*", but it is not certain whether *compositus* as used here means written counterpoint or refers to an esthetic quality valued by Humanists, an organic arrangement of parts in which each has a carefully worked out relationship to the others. On this latter meaning of *compositus*, see BAXANDALL 1971, 129–35. On the origins of the term *resfacta*, see BLACKBURN 1987, 260–5; Blackburn concludes that the term may have originated with Tinctoris, for whom it was an obvious Latin equivalent of the French *chose faite*.

taining all the parts was something that any singer who could read musical notation could produce.

Singing upon the book was appreciated for two reasons. On the one hand, it was valued as an easy way to produce good counterpoint quickly and easily. Esteemed for this reason, singing upon the book was prized for the quality of the music produced, and to produce music of acceptable quality required preparation. At some point shortly before they were scheduled to perform, the singers might engage in collective preplanning, deciding which concantor would sing in which range, where cadences might fall, and how to avoid potential problems.<sup>10</sup> Alternatively, the singers might do several run-throughs, consulting after each to correct passages that they noticed had broken rules or to refine passages that did not break rules but that might be musically improved. And Margaret Bent has suggested that singers might have done successive run-throughs in which a voice was added at each pass.<sup>11</sup> In any of these cases, when the concantors were ready to go before their public, they had a polished presentation ready. Tinctoris describes the process only in general terms:

Non tamen vituperabile immo plurimum laudabile censeo si concinentes similitudinem assumptionis ordinationisque concordantiarum inter se prudenter evitaverint. Sic enim concentum eorum multo repletorem suavioremque efficient.<sup>12</sup>

On the other hand, singing upon the book was also a test of skill, a demonstration of the ability to produce on the spur of the moment elegant — or at least musically correct — counterpoint.<sup>13</sup> Listening to skilled concantors had all the excitement of attending any exhibition of virtuosity: there was the anticipation, the uncertainty about whether or not the performer would be successful, and the satisfaction produced by his pulling off something extremely difficult. Valued for such reasons, singing upon the book required *ex tempore* improvisation, for preparation of any sort reduced the level of skill demonstrated. Fans who appreciated singing upon the book as a display of skill seem to have denigrated preplanned

10. On preplanned improvisation (“concerted counterpoint”), see CANGUILHEM 2011, 80–3.

11. BENT 1983, 312–13.

12. TINCTORIS 1475, Liber II, cap. xx.

13. On the value placed upon skill in improvising counterpoint, see WEGMAN 1996, 414–28.



performances: presumably, Tinctoris was answering such fans when he said that he considered concentrors' consulting not as blameworthy (*vituperabile*) but as admirable.

Tinctoris applied the same rules to both counterpoint composed mentally and counterpoint performed from writing, with one exception: with counterpoint performed from writing, each voice was required to observe the rules of counterpoint with respect to all the other voices — Tinctoris' formulation was that the voices must be “*mutuo obligentur*”, i.e., mutually obligated — but when two or more concentrors were singing upon the book it was sufficient that each mentally composed voice obey the rules of counterpoint with respect to the *cantus firmus* only:

In hoc autem resfacta a contrapuncto potissimum differt, quod omnes partes reifacte sive tres sive quatuor sive plures sint, sibi mutuo obligentur, ita quod ordo lexque concordantiarum cuiuslibet partis erga singulas et omnes observari debeat. [ . . . ] Sed duobus aut tribus, quatuor aut pluribus super librum concinentibus alteri non subiicitur. Enimvero cuilibet eorum circa ea, que ad legem ordinationemque concordantiarum pertinent, tenori consonare sufficit.<sup>14</sup>

The reason for this exception is easily inferred: when counterpoint was performed from a text, the composer who prepared the text controlled all the voices and had the leisure to correct breaches of the rules, but when two or more concentrors were devising their lines without prior consultation, no concentror could know what the other concentror or concentrors would do, so he had no way of making his line obey the rules of counterpoint with respect to the lines of those other concentrors.

Notwithstanding the fact that they were considered two different activities, improvising counterpoint and writing in contrapuntal textures shared the same compositional procedures.<sup>15</sup> Notionally, when writing, a composer simply took the part of each concentror in turn. And this was quite natural in an age in which all composers were — or had been at some point in their careers — singers. Moreover, singing upon the book and writing counterpoint were seen to complement each other: by requiring singers to make decisions on the spur of the moment, the former sharpened the skills that composers used when writing, while the latter, by providing opportu-

14. Liber II, cap. xx.

15. The most thorough survey of Renaissance compositional process remains OWENS 1997. See also BLACKBURN 1987.

nity to study recurrent situations at leisure, enabled composers to develop strategies that could be applied when singing upon the book.<sup>16</sup>

Composers mimicked the procedures of concentrors by composing sequentially: each voice was composed and entered completely before work on the next voice was begun. The composer began by laying out the *cantus firmus*, making any adjustments in value or pitch that he might anticipate would be helpful during the next stages of composition. Next, he added a second voice, a process involving essentially what a concentror would have done: construct a countermelody in which the rules of counterpoint were followed with respect to the *cantus firmus*. When the second voice had been completed, the composer entered the third voice: this would have been considerably more difficult than composing the second, since the third voice would have had to obey the rules of counterpoint with respect not only to the *cantus firmus* but also to the first, previously composed, countermelody. Fifteenth- and early sixteenth-century layouts and the conventions of staff notation made composing counterpoint of more than two voices an awkward task.

The layouts in use reflected both the compositional process and a larger conception of musical entities as having their existence exclusively in performance. Several layouts were employed, but in each, each voice was treated as a discrete unit. In part books, each voice was entered on a separate physical piece of parchment or paper — on a fugitive leaf or on a page in a booklet containing the parts for one voice (e.g., tenor) for several different pieces. In choir books, each voice occupied a quadrant of an opening (for examples of such layouts, see Fig. 1). Such layouts would therefore have been useful only for performing, for they rendered it difficult if not impossible to imagine how the several voices would sound together.<sup>17</sup> Because

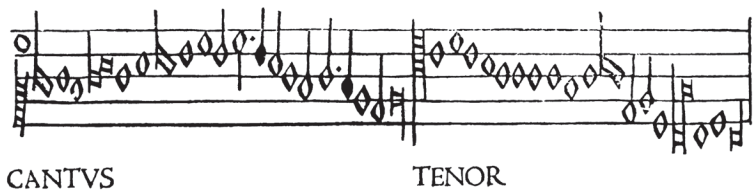
16. See, for example, COCLICO 1552, L2v: “Primum itaque quod in bono compositore desideratur, est, ut contrapunctum ex tempore canere sciat. Quo sine nullus erit”. On the importance of singing upon the book for composers, see WEGMAN 1996, 414–28.

17. OWENS 1997, 48–51, suggests that composers might have been able to read such separate voices and to combine them mentally. On the other hand, BOORMAN 1986, 222, argues that such layouts were “useless to anyone except a complete set of performers. The act of silently studying music from such books was, if not impossible, very tedious”. JUDD 2000, 9–16, seeks to reconcile these views. Like Boorman, I am inclined to doubt that the readership of such publications was able to construct from such layouts a mental “image” of multiple notes sounding simultaneously; this was, after all, an age in which silent reading of verbal texts (a much simpler process) was a skill far from universal.

Figure 1. Layouts with Parts Presented Separately

Figure 1a. Part Book: MORLEY 1594, Cantus B1r. One of four part books; each part book is musically useless without the other three.

Figure 1b. Choir Book: Petrucci 1504, B3v–B4r. The separate parts are (clockwise from upper left) Cantus (by convention not identified as such), Altus, Bassus, Tenor.



**Figure 1c.** Musical Example in a Treatise: parts entered adjacent to each other on the same staff. GAFURIUS 1496, dd3r.

<p><b>XIX. CANTO.</b></p> <p>Hail I see shall I take for guest Shall I pray Shall I power Shall I</p> <p>There is a heavenly lay, with an earthly heart I think that a bleeding heart or</p> <p>accomplish, Or a high constant the whole to unite to him.</p> <p><b>1</b> Silly wretch forsake their dreamer, of a vain desire, O belinke what his regard, holy he never requires, Favours is late as things are, modest is not bought, Favours is not won with words, not the will of a thought.</p> <p><b>2</b> Fools is late a poor defence, for a dying love, Ladies respect no more, in a natural desire, She is to woe for her, for a woe for her, Cruel and her will is there, in my will displace.</p> <p>Julius glaze each man his own though my love be dead, Yet will not thee part my girl, therefore did I send, Silly heart then yield to die, perth in displace, Winless yet how faine I die, When I die for the face.</p>	<p><b>XIX. TENOR.</b></p> <p>Hail I see shall I take for guest Shall I pray Shall I power Shall I</p> <p>There is a heavenly lay, with an earthly heart I think that a bleeding heart or</p> <p>accomplish, Or a high constant the whole to unite to him.</p> <p><b>1</b> Silly wretch forsake their dreamer, of a vain desire, O belinke what his regard, holy he never requires, Favours is late as things are, modest is not bought, Favours is not won with words, not the will of a thought.</p> <p><b>2</b> Fools is late a poor defence, for a dying love, Ladies respect no more, in a natural desire, She is to woe for her, for a woe for her, Cruel and her will is there, in my will displace.</p>
---	--

**Figure 1d.** Table Book: DOWLAND 1600, L1v–L2r. The parts are oriented so that the music may be performed by four singers sitting around three sides of a table.

the composition emerged only as the result of combining voices in performance, there could be little idea of the composition as an organic whole in which each voice had a carefully worked out function. In fact, new voices were often added — sometimes many years later and by agents other than the original composers — to compositions that had been regarded as completed.

Because part book and choir book layouts presented individual voices separately, to identify what notes in what voices were sounding at any particular moment, a composer was obliged to count mensural units in each voice, and the staff notation of the day made doing so a difficult process. Until well into the sixteenth century, there were usually no bar lines to divide staves into uniform metrical units, and, unlike modern notation, in which the spacing between notes has some relation to their value (notes of greater values are followed by more space than notes of lesser values), fifteenth-century notation spaced notes equidistantly from each other, regardless of their values (observe how notes are spaced in the examples in Fig. 1). These inconveniences made composing a second or subsequent countermelody not only tedious but conducive to error, and it must have been a taxing operation to fix a problem discovered after all the voices had been entered.<sup>18</sup>

The way in which instructional manuals of the day dealt with consonances suggests that countermelodies, whether created by improvisation or by writing, were built up in units spanning the movement from one obligatory consonance to the next. Tinctoris discussed each consonance in turn, and all the discussions followed the same plan: each began with the etymology of the interval's name and the features that define it (thus providing a theoretical grounding) and proceeded to a list of the intervals from which that consonance might be approached and followed.<sup>19</sup> In effect, Tinctoris offered a catalogue of the various situations that a concantor or composer might encounter and of the acceptable options in each situation. A concantor or composer who had mastered the contents of this catalogue constructed his countermelody by reading ahead: from one obligatory consonance, he looked ahead to identify the next note of the cantus firmus with which his countermelody was required to be consonant; having identified that note, he reviewed mentally the options available to him for moving from the present obligatory consonance to the next, and he then chose from the available options the note he would sound and the consonance it would produce; finally, he worked his way, as smoothly as he could, from the present note to the note needed for that next obligatory consonance. For a concantor singing upon the book, the decision-making process must

18. An example of an error in counting is mentioned in correspondence between Giovanni Spataro and Pietro Aaron. For a discussion of this passage, see BLACKBURN, LOWINSKY & MILLER 1991, 122–3; the edition of the letter — Letter 30 — is printed on 415–26, with the relevant passage occurring on 426.

19. TINCTORIS 1475, Lib. II, cap iii–xviii.



have required only a split second; for a composer, a provisional decision was probably reached in a comparable span, although more time was available to reconsider that decision. The process was repeated from one obligatory consonance to the next until the end of the cantus firmus was reached. The resulting line was not so much a carefully shaped melody as it was the result of a series of local decisions.

In his catalogue of consonances, Tinctoris dealt with two voices only — the cantus firmus and the countermelody — but later writers provided instructions for the addition of third and fourth voices (second and third countermelodies) to existing two- and three-voice textures. Such catalogues were given sometimes in prose, sometimes in tables, and sometimes in musical notation (Fig. 2 provides a sampling of tables). Although beginners might have memorized these catalogues, with practice an experienced concentror or composer would have internalized the options available in each situation, and eventually, after he had encountered each situation often enough, he would have found that providing an appropriate response — a response characteristic of him and therefore constitutive of his personal style — had become second nature to him.

The procedure by which a composer added a third voice to a two-voice texture was similar to that for adding one voice to a cantus firmus in that it moved incrementally from obligatory consonance to obligatory consonance. It was more complex, however, for it was necessary to consider not only the notes sounded by the voices already composed but also the intervals between them. Having arrived at a point of obligatory consonance, a composer located the next such point; he identified the notes of the cantus firmus and the existing countermelody sounding at that point and the interval between them; taking account of the present consonance, he mentally reviewed his options and chose one; he then worked his way from his present note to the note he had chosen. If he was adding a fourth voice to a three-voice texture, he identified the notes sounded by the three existing voices and the intervals among them. Such processes enabled a composer to construct each countermelody by proceeding in small, manageable segments, but as with the concentror working against a cantus firmus only, each countermelody was the cumulative result of local decisions. Compared to a composer, each concentror devising a voice in a three- or four-part texture had a relatively simple task, and that task was the same for all the concentrors: to improvise a part that followed the rules with respect to the cantus firmus. Concentrors doing a series of run-throughs, however, must have conferred between run-throughs to identify points at

Figure 2. Consonance Tables

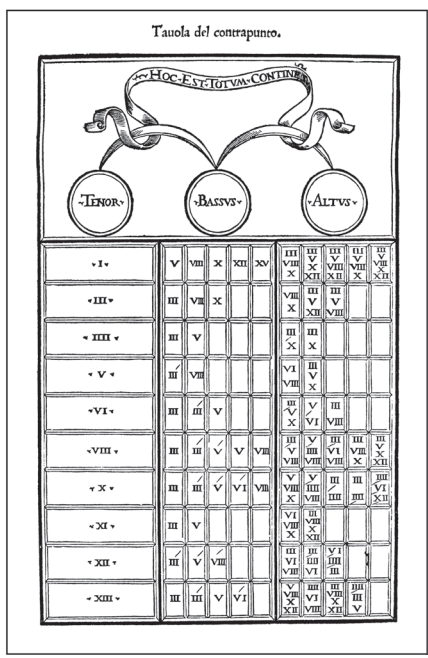


Figure 2a. AARON 1523, K2r. A chart for three-voice composition, to be read: If the Tenor (left-hand) column sounds this scale degree, then the Bassus and Altus may sound the scale degrees shown.

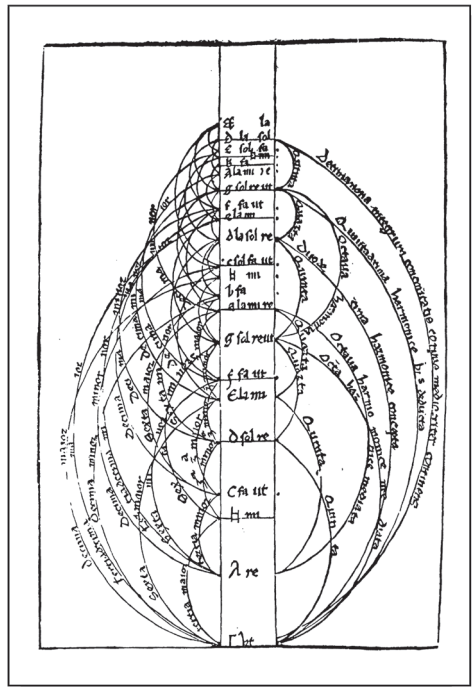


Figure 2b. GAFURIUS 1508, G4v. A chart in a form usually used to show the mathematical relationships of intervals, but here used to show which notes are consonant with which other notes. The notes of the gamut are presented on a staff of eleven lines, with arcs on either side that connect each pitch to other pitches with which it is consonant.

**A Table containing the vsuall cordes for the  
composition of foure or more partes.**

OF THE VNISON.	
If the treble be and the bafe your <i>Alto</i> or meane ſhal be	an vnison with the tenor a third vnder the tenor a fifth or fixth about the bafe.
But if the bafe be the <i>Alto</i> ſhal be	a fifth vnder the tenor a third or tenth about the bafe.
Likewiſe if the bafe be then the <i>Alto</i> may be	a fixth vnder the tenor, a 3. or tenth about the bafe
And if the bafe be the other parts may bee	an eight vnder the tenor, a 3. 5. 6. 10. or 12. about the bafe.
But if the bafe be the meane ſhal be	a tenth vnder the tenor, a fifth or twelfth about the bafe.

But if the bafe be the <i>Alto</i> may be made	a twelfth vnder the tenor, a 1. or 10. about the bafe.
Also the bafe being a the other parts may be	fifteenth vnder the tenor, a 3. 5. 6. 10. 12. and 15. about the bafe.

OF THE THIRD.	
If the treble be and the bafe the <i>Alto</i> may be	a third with the tenor a third vnder it an vnison or 8. with the parts.
If the bafe be the <i>Alto</i> may be	a fixth vnder the tenor, a third or tenth about the bafe.
But if the bafe be then the <i>Alto</i> ſhal be	an eight vnder the tenor, a fifth or fixth about the bafe.
And the bafe being then the parts may be	a tenth vnder the tenor, in the vnison or eight to the tenor or bafe.

OF THE FOVRTH.	
When the treble ſhal be and the bafe then the meane ſhal be	a fourth to the tenor a fifth vnder the tenor a 3. or 10. about the bafe
But if the bafe be the <i>Alto</i> ſhal be	a 12. vnder the tenor a 10. about the bafe

OF THE FIFTH.	
But if the treble ſhal be and the bafe the <i>Alto</i> may be	a fifth about the tenor an eight vnder it a 3. or tenth about the bafe
And if the bafe be the <i>Alto</i> ſhal be	a fixth vnder the tenor, an vnison or 8. with the parts

OF THE SIXTH.	
If the treble be and the bafe the <i>Alto</i> may be	a fixth with the tenor a fifth vnder the tenor, an vnison or eight with the partes
But if the bafe be the <i>Alto</i> ſhal be	a third vnder the tenor, a fifth about the bafe.
Likewiſe if the bafe be the meane likewiſe ſhal be	a tenth vnder the tenor, a fifth or 12. about the bafe.

OF THE EIGHT.	
If the treble be and the bafe the other parts ſhal be	an 8. with the tenor. a 3. vnder the tenor a 3. 5. 6. 10. 12. 13. about the bafe
So alio when the bafe ſhal be the other parts may bee	a 5. vnder the tenor a 3. about the bafe.
And if the bafe be the other parts ſhal bee	an eight vnder the tenor a 3 5 10. 12. about the bafe.
Laſtly if the bafe be the parts ſhal make	a 12. vnder the tenor a 10. or 17. about the bafe

Figure 2c.

MORLEY 1597,  
129–30. The table  
is spread over two  
pages: the first five  
modules dealing  
with the unison are  
on page 129, and  
the rest of the table  
is on page 130.

which there were problems, agreed upon solutions, and applied the solutions during the next run-through.

Scholarship over the last twenty years has stressed the degree to which both concentrators and composers benefitted from training that provided them with strategies for managing material when improvising or composing. Jessie Anne Owens has stressed the degree to which composition was done mentally,<sup>20</sup> and Anna Maria Busse Berger has studied the ways in which concentrators and composers were taught how to store material in memory, organize material in memory, and recall from memory material needed for specific tasks.<sup>21</sup> Such strategies had been used by the ancient Greeks and Romans to train their orators, whose orations were performances prepared and delivered without benefit of text. The teachings of the Ancient World descended through the Middle Ages in a rich tradition of *ars memoria* literature. Humanism, with its intense interest in Classical oratory, made such strategies a basic part of education. Although it was in their application to verbal entities that aspiring singers would first have encountered them, many of these strategies were readily transferable to musical composition.

For both oral and written composition, a function of such strategies was to simplify the task of devising a countermelody by minimizing the number of decisions that a concentrator or composer would be obliged to make on the spur of the moment. The tables for managing consonances and interval successions (discussed above) provided means for managing obligatory consonances. To reduce the amount of freely composed material between such consonances, concentrators and composers accumulated repertoires of melodic formulae that enabled them to cover the interval from the note being sounded at one consonance to the note being sounded at the next in a musically effective way; depending on the time between the two consonances, melodic formulae could be adjusted by altering values or by adding ornamentation, so that the right note was reached at the right moment.<sup>22</sup> Contrapuntal formulae were also available to concentrators and composers: these consisted of standardized successions of intervals, such as those employed to approach and form cadences.

Strategies applicable to larger units substituted for the need to invent new musical material the possibility of developing a musical idea by per-

20. OWENS 1997, 54–5, 61–73.

21. BERGER 2005 and BERGER 2015, 139–45.

22. Antoine Busnoys, for example, used what PERKINS 2018, B:121, describes as “an idiomatic flourish in descending minims that can be seen as a sort of signature”.

forming a series of operations on it: such operations included diminution, augmentation and inversion. Larger scale planning was also available in the form of canon, broadly understood as a verbal instruction to derive from a given voice by a specified procedure one or more other voices. Although there exists no direct evidence of how such formulae and operations were employed in improvised counterpoint, we may draw inferences from the many such formulae and operations found in the written music that has come down to us.

Central to the practice that Tinctrois described was a sense of counterpoint as an institution sustained by a community that accepted certain constraints and followed certain procedures in order to produce a certain sort of music. This sense explains why composers of written counterpoint were seemingly indifferent to some advantages offered by writing. Aside from the obvious advantage that writing made possible multiple performances of the same musical entity, the principal benefit that composers of counterpoint gained from writing was the ability to manipulate time. Unlike a concantor improvising his countermelody in real time, a composer with quill in hand could slow time down to weigh his options, could stop time to look and plan ahead, or could reverse time to revisit and revise a passage that had created problems unnoticed when it was inscribed or had led to unanticipated ones later in the composition. The ability to manipulate time in this way is what made it reasonable for Tinctoris to insist that all of the voices in written counterpoint be mutually obligated.

A potential advantage of writing that did not gain quick acceptance was the ability to compose several voices at the same time. Today, we call this procedure “simultaneous composition”, a term that covers practices ranging from preplanning before writing voices sequentially to composing all of the voices — including a voice functionally equivalent to a *cantus firmus* — by proceeding through a piece in small segments, entering a few notes or a phrase in each voice and completing all the voices in a segment before moving on to the next.<sup>23</sup> Composing simultaneously should have had several advantages: a composer could easily keep track of his place in each voice, as he was dealing with all of the voices at the same point in his composition and with only a few notes in each voice. He would therefore have been less likely to break rules because of miscounting mensural units, and he was less prone to work himself into dead ends.

23. That Renaissance composers may have employed simultaneous composition was proposed in LOWINSKY 1946 and 1948; Lowinsky's ideas were developed in BLACKBURN 1987.



Simultaneous composition was evidently known in German-speaking regions shortly after 1500: the German theorist Johannes Cochlaeus, in his *Musica* of 1507, offers both simultaneous and sequential composition as strategies available to composers: “Possunt autem omnes partes simul componi, et quelibet item primum ac seorsum”.<sup>24</sup> The procedure was known in Italy by the 1520s: the Italian theorist Pietro Aaron, in his *Thoscanello de la musica*, published in 1523, lists some of the problems encountered by composers of a previous generation when composing sequentially, and observes that modern composers (“li moderni”) consider all of the parts together (“considerano insieme tutti le parti”).<sup>25</sup> Yet even though composers were aware of simultaneous composition, they were slow to take advantage of it; sequential composition remained the preferred mode of proceeding into the seventeenth century. Paradoxically, the advantages of simultaneous composition were recognized even by those who advocated sequential composition: Gioseffo Zarlino in *Le istitutioni armoniche*, published in 1558, observes that composing all the parts together (“tutti le parte insieme”) is easier than adding a third part to two existing parts (“aggiungere a due parti la Terza”); the latter, he adds, is quite difficult to do.<sup>26</sup>

A benefit of writing that provided even more advantages than simultaneous composition was the layout that English speakers today call score. In its fully developed form, score represents each voice on its own staff, and it combines the staves of all the voices into systems in which staves are placed one above another, co-ordinated temporally, so that the notes sounded at any particular moment line up in the same vertical plane. Moreover, score divides systems into uniform metrical units marked off by bar lines. With score, a reader — whether a performer, a composer, or a student — can conveniently see what notes are being sounded by what voices at any moment in a piece.

Score offered composers more convenience and greater control over their compositions than had previously been possible, rendering passages

24. COCHLAEUS 1507 [3d ed.], Eivv . This book, which Cochlaeus had published under the name Johannes Wendelstein, went through three editions, the second and third being expanded versions of their immediate predecessors. The passage quoted occurs in the third edition.

25. AARON 1523, c. lii. This passage has received much attention, since it is central to the argument about simultaneous composition propounded in LOWINSKY 1946, 67–8 and pursued in BLACKBURN 1987, 212–19.

26. ZARLINO 1558, 260: “[. . .] altro è il comporre insieme tuttle le parti, & altro è aggiungere a due parti la Terza ; che è cosa molto difficile [. . .]”.

that broke rules easy to identify and easy to correct. It also enabled a composer to compose out of temporal order: he could start at the beginning, skip to a point farther along, and then fill in what lay between. And score meant that each voice could easily be subordinated to an overall conception, producing a composition that was more an organic whole and less a product of the additive process that had been a characteristic of counterpoint produced by sequential composition.

But like simultaneous composition, score was slow to gain acceptance. An essential principle of score — the inscription of two or more voices on a graph in which the horizontal axis tracks the passage of time while the vertical axes mark pitch — was understood by the beginning of the sixteenth century. That principle informed a layout that may be called the “expanded staff”, a staff that extended beyond the normal four or five lines, providing as many lines as necessary to accommodate the lowest and the highest notes in a contrapuntal texture. The largest such staff contained eleven lines and could easily accommodate four voices, but the ten-line staff (*scala decemlinealis*) was the configuration most frequently used.<sup>27</sup> Two or more voices could be entered on expanded staves, with notes sounding simultaneously entered more or less in the same vertical plane (two expanded staves are shown in Fig. 3). Such staves were certainly known in some regions by the early sixteenth century, but they were still experimental layouts. However, beyond their occasional use in manuals on composition, expanded staves were employed only by beginners, as a means to facilitate their mastering combinations of intervals; proficient composers were expected to do without them. Andreas Ornithoparcus puts the matter thus:

Figure 3. Expanded Staves

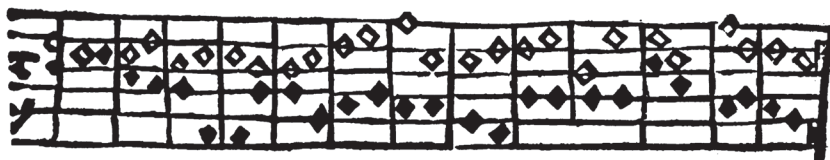
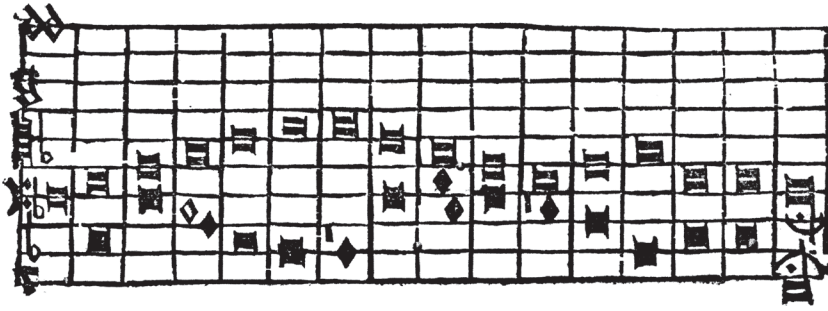


Figure 3a. Six-line Staff. COCHLAEUS 1507, F2v. The staff accommodates 2 voices. The upper-voice is printed in void notes, the lower in black notes.

27. On the use of the ten-line score, see OWENS 1997, 56–61.



**Figure 3b.** Ten-line Staff. ORNITHOPARCUS 1519, L3r. Two voices are shown on this staff, which could easily accommodate four. The upper voice is printed in void notes, the lower mostly in black notes.

Necessarium erit artis huius Tyronibus, scalem decemlinealem ut forment, formatam cancellis distinguant. Ita ut singula tempora, singulis cancellis, clavibus rite signatis, ne confusa notarum commixtione impediantur, inscribere valeant. Prenstantius tamen est absque scala condere, quod cum difficile sit, a scala incipiant adulescentes, hoc modo.<sup>28</sup>

The view of such layouts as devices for enabling neophytes to gain proficiency in an oral activity is reminiscent of the use of writing by the ancient Greeks and Romans to train their orators: beginners might work out their orations on wax tablets, but mature orators were expected to compose their orations and to deliver them without benefit of text; only after an oration had been given might it be committed to writing, no doubt in a polished form incorporating second thoughts.

Notwithstanding the benefits score offered, no form of score seems to have been widely used for composing or performing earlier than the middle of the sixteenth century,<sup>29</sup> and it was not until the seventeenth century, when an unambiguously harmonic language gained currency, that score

28. ORNITHOPARCUS 1519, L3r.

29. It is sometimes assumed that in the early sixteenth century scores must have been used in composing but that none has survived. See, for example, LOWINSKY 1949 and BLACKBURN 1987, 268, 276. There is, however, no evidence to support this view, and the absence in any manual of the time of any description of composing in score argues against it. OWENS 1997, 98–100, rightly expresses doubt that score was used for composing before the second half of the sixteenth century.

was securely established both as a compositional tool and a layout for dissemination in manuscript and print.

There were several reasons for composers' seeming indifference to some of the benefits that writing offered, but all can be traced to the view of counterpoint as a particular procedure for producing a particular sort of music. A sense of professional identity must have played its part: for all the Humanist trappings in which it was described, the practice of improvising and writing counterpoint had many of the qualities of a medieval *mystère*, loyalty to which precluded the use of certain procedures that writing made possible.<sup>30</sup> For composers whose training had taught them to sing upon the book, it was natural to compose sequentially, since composing one voice at a time echoed what they had done as concentors. Composers who used simultaneous composition were managing several voices at once, and so they were no longer doing what concentors did. For such composers, simultaneous composition was not just an interesting technical advance over fifteenth-century compositional procedures; it was a new and different way of looking at counterpoint, for it shifted emphasis from where it traditionally had been — on the process of producing a contrapuntal texture — to the texture produced by that process. True, by using this new procedure, composers could produce a musical texture that was similar to — and often more complex, more polished, and musically more satisfying than — that produced by sequential composition, and they could do so more easily, but what they were doing was no longer counterpoint in the traditional sense.<sup>31</sup>

For similar reasons, score was not a viable option for composers who saw counterpoint as a set of procedures. After all, for such composers, score was not a means to create contrapuntal texture more easily but merely a device to prepare students for the more difficult tasks of singing upon the book and composing sequentially; to employ score would have been *infra dig*.

The relationship between orally composed and written counterpoint was reconfigured during the sixteenth century, but several factors were involved, and most of the century was required to complete the shift from

30. On craft traditions in composition — oral and written — see WEGMAN 1996, 462–4.

31. The situation is perhaps most easily understood by thinking of twentieth-century Jazz, which in its original form was a style that could only be performed without the use of texts. For purists, therefore, the idea of written Jazz is a contradiction in terms, and, although compositions can be written in a style that imitates performed Jazz, and actual performances can be transcribed note for note, in neither case will performances done from the texts thus produced be regarded by purists as “real” Jazz.

concern with the process to concern with the product. Some of the factors were musical. By 1600, polyphony, which had been the dominant feature of fifteenth- and sixteenth century music, was no longer the only game in town: accompanied monody, which had had a long tradition in improvised form, had begun to appear in manuscripts and prints, and we can trace the development of a texture in which interest lay not in the interplay of several melodies but in a single melody supported by a bass that generated harmonies.<sup>32</sup> And by 1600, simultaneous composition and score had become acceptable: with the advantages they offered, creating textures similar to those produced by traditional procedures required less effort and less skill, and for composers whose training had not imbued them with a fierce loyalty to the old procedures, honoring the constraints of traditional counterpoint must have seemed pointless. In addition to purely musical factors, developments sociological, technological, and theoretical combined to marginalize improvised counterpoint.

The sixteenth century saw substantial changes in the make-up of that part of the musical community actively engaged in performance. Castiglione was reflecting his society's cultural priorities when he stipulated that his courtier should be musically competent. Many men and women of gentle birth could read music, but such people were not necessarily interested in learning how to sing upon the book, and the practice was therefore left to "professionals" whose training in choir schools had prepared them for careers in music. Amateurs who could read music but could not sing upon the book were therefore a constituency for written music, and during the sixteenth century composers and printers developed an industry that could not only meet the needs of this constituency but could encourage its growth.

The sixteenth century, as has been well documented, saw continuing increases in the number of printers who specialized in music — or at least who made it an important part of their catalogues — and this in turn created a demand for newly composed music. The earliest printed collections, such as Petrucci's *Odhecaton* and his series of motets, had substantial retrospective components, but a market for new music quickly developed, and a music industry consisting of printers and composers emerged to supply it. This new industry required several decades to sort itself out, but by the 1530s there were important music printers in several European cities —

32. On improvised monody, see PIROTTA 1984, 51–79, and WILSON 2015.



including Venice, Paris, and Lyons — turning out ever increasing numbers of publications.<sup>33</sup>

For the composers responsible for this new music, it was natural that interest in the procedures by which they composed should be complemented by an interest in the products that those procedures produced, and thus there arose a concern with the ontological status of musical compositions. This concern had its origins in fifteenth-century Italian efforts to make music respectable in Humanist terms, but in the generations after Tinctoris it was pursued largely in German-speaking territories. Recognizing the ephemerality of musical performance, authors of theoretical treatises and instructional manuals stressed the idea that the technology of writing recorded entities — now referred to as *opera* — that could be performed repeatedly and that enhanced the reputations of their creators. Greater effort was now made to identify the best of these entities by title and to name the composers responsible for them.<sup>34</sup> Movement in this direction can be seen in the distinction among *musica theorica* (the mathematical principles to which music gives audible form), *musica practica* (the application of those principles in performance) and *musica poetica* (music that goes beyond understanding and performance and leaves a record of performance in a work or *opus*, which, inscribed in a text, can incorporate a high degree of polish and can generate other similar performances). Nicolaus Listenius offered a typical expression of this idea in his *Musica*, one of the most frequently republished music manuals of the sixteenth century (the quotation below comes from the 1537 edition):

[Musica] poetica quae neque rei cognitione, neque solo exercitio contenta, sed aliquid post laborem relinquit operis, veluti cum a quopiam Musica aut Musicum carmen conscribitur, cuius finis est opus consummatum et effectum. Consistit enim in faciendo sive fabricando, hoc est, in labore tali, qui post se, etiam artifice mortuo, opus perfectum et absolutum relinquit.<sup>35</sup>

33. For Petrucci in Venice, see BOORMAN 2006; for Attaingnant in Paris, see HEARTZ 1969; for Moderne in Lyons, see POGUE 1969; for a general discussion of the impact of printed music, see VAN ORDEN 2015 and the papers in VAN ORDEN 2000.

34. On interest in attributions see VAN ORDEN 2014 and FELDMAN 2000.

35. LISTENIUS 1537, c. a3v. RISM lists 46 printings of *Musica* between 1535 and 1583. The expression of this idea was formulaic, and similar formulations appear in works such as FINCK 1556, c. a2v, and HEBRST 1643, 1. There is a substantial musicological literature on the development of this idea, the source of which

In this context, the Latin *poetica*, which preserves the sense of the Greek *ποίημα*, something made, suggests an artifact that has been brought into being by the application of skill, and so associates written music with a materiality that implies permanence. In fact, Johannes Herbst's early seventeenth-century formulation of this commonplace explicitly compares writing a musical work to constructing a building.<sup>36</sup> The idea of *musica poetica* as formulated in the sixteenth century was far removed from the "work concept" that developed towards the end of the eighteenth century and that shapes much of our thinking today, but it represents a decisive shift away from the idea of music as what Classical authorities called a practical *ars*, an *ars* of action upon the completion of which nothing remains,<sup>37</sup> and towards the idea of a musical composition as a stable entity recorded by its creator in a text and therefore having its existence apart from performance.<sup>38</sup>

This new attitude towards written music resolved an important inconsistency in Tinctoris' thinking. Tinctoris had regarded "real" counterpoint as something that was improvised rather written, but his ideal had been performance in which each voice obeys the rules of counterpoint with respect to all the other voices. However, singing upon the book in more than two voices could rarely if ever have satisfied this condition: mutual obligation

---

is generally recognized to be Quintilian's *Istitutio oratoria*, II.xviii. For a brief review, see BLACKBURN 1987, 274–8; CURTIUS 1953, 144–6, traces this idea from Aristotle to the Middle Ages. WEGMAN 1996, passim but especially 439–44, recognizes the Renaissance distinction between doing and making, between singers and composers, and associates the increasing respect for composition in the late fifteenth and early sixteenth centuries with an increasing respect for composers.

36. HERBST 1643, 1: "Dann gleich wie ein Werckmeister oder Zimmermann/ein Hauß oder sonst ein Gebäw/so von ihme [the Composer] verfertiget/hinter ihm verläst [. . .]".
37. Thus Quintilian, II.xviii: "aliae [artium] in agendo, quarum in hoc finis est et ipso actu perficitur nihilque post actum operis relinquit, quae *πρακτική* dicitur, qualis saltatio est; aliae in effectu, quae operis, quod oculis subiicitur, consummatione finem accipiunt quam *ποιητικήν* appellamus, qualis est pictura". This passage is probably the immediate source for the idea of *musica poetica*.
38. The seminal (if controversial) essay on the "work concept" remains GOEHR 1992, but for divergent views, see the essays in TALBOT 2000. On ideas anticipating the work concept in the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries, see PERKINS 2003 and LÜTTEKEN 2015.

could be achieved consistently only in writing. Recognizing written counterpoint as a valid form of counterpoint resolved this contradiction.

The idea that writing could enable musical entities to achieve the dignity of “works” was attractive to members of the musical community, but such use of the word “work” (*opus*, *opera*, *obra*, *œuvre*, *Werk*) did not necessarily reflect usage outside that community<sup>39</sup>; rather, it was employed self-consciously by *musici* in the face of a longstanding prejudice against regarding any entity produced by one of the “practical” arts — music, drama, or dance — as a work.<sup>40</sup> Works, after all, were creations that withstood the test of time, commanding respect and readers through the ages. But songs, plays and dances, because they were performed and because performance was fleeting, lacked permanence. Moreover, because performance even from fully written-out texts often involved improvisation — performers frequently added ornamentation or made other adjustments *ex tempore* — musical entities were particularly vulnerable to shifts in fashion: entities fortunate enough to survive a change of fashion were likely to be modified to satisfy the next wave of taste: new forms and patterns of ornamentation might be applied, and fourth voices might be added to three-voice chansons. To update in an analogous fashion a verse of Virgil or a stanza from Dante’s *Commedia* would have been unthinkable, and so outside the musical community performing entities were seen to lack the long-term stability required of works. And changes in musical fashions occurred with depressing regularity: writing in the 1470s, Tinctoris was famously unwilling to acknowledge the worth of any music composed more than forty years earlier.<sup>41</sup> Nevertheless, within the world of music if not necessarily in the wider world, the idea of *musica poetica* gained currency.

Because of such developments, by the end of the sixteenth century, counterpoint had come to mean the texture rather than the procedure

39. Tinctoris had used the word “opus” to denote musical compositions (e.g., Prologus: “Quorum omnium omnia fere opera tantum, suavitudinem redolent, [. . .]”), but he had not provided the intellectual underpinning for use of the word that Germans such as Listenius were to offer.

40. Such a prejudice was still in force at the beginning of the seventeenth century, and underlies the notoriously adverse response in 1616 to Ben Jonson’s publication of his collected plays and poems under the title *Workes*. One wit wrote mockingly: “Pray tell me Ben, where doth the mystery lurke | What others call a play you call a worke?” (*Wits Recreation* 1640, G3v).

41. TINCTORIS 1475, Prologus: “Neque, quod satis admirari nequeo, quipiam compositum nisi citra annos quadraginta extat, quod auditu dignam ab eruditis existimetur [. . .].”

that created that texture, and the idea that “real” counterpoint must be orally composed had disappeared. In 1610 Giovanni Battista Chiodino could publish a manual teaching how “di far Contrapunto à mente, & à penna”,<sup>42</sup> and by 1643, Johannes Herbst could casually lump composition and counterpoint together.<sup>43</sup> In 1597, Thomas Morley brought together in a single forceful paragraph several of the themes that had marked the transition from an emphasis on performance to an emphasis on written composition, from concern with the procedures that produced contrapuntal texture to concern with the texture that those procedures produced. In such a context, the ability to sing upon the book (which Morley calls “descant”) had no use other than to sharpen the skills of composers; producing a work, which had permanence, had become preferable to improvising a performance, after which nothing remained; and singing skillfully upon the book, which now had no purpose of its own, risked seeming suspiciously like vulgar display:

for that singing extempore upon a plainsong is in deede a peece of cunning, and very necessarie to be perfectly practiced of him who meaneth to be a composer for bringing of a quick sight, yet it is a great absurditie so to seeke for a sight, as to make it the end of our studie applying it to no other use, for as a knife or other instrument not being applied to the end for which it was devised (as to cut) is unprofitable and of no use, even so is descant, which being used as a helpe to bring readie sight in setting of parts is profitable, but not being applied to that ende is of it selfe like a puffe of wind, which being past cometh not againe, which hath beene the reason that the excellent musitions have discontinued it, although it be impossible for them to compose without it, but they rather employ their time in making of songes, which remaine for posterity then to sing descant which is no longer known then the singers mouth is open in expressing it, and for the most part cannot be twice repeated in the same maner.<sup>44</sup>

The views expressed by Morley were widely but not universally held: in the seventeenth century there remained conservative musical communities, especially in Catholic France and Iberia, in which singing upon the book remained a valued skill. In 1604, when the post of choirmaster at the

42. CHIODINO 1610.

43. HERBST 1643, 5.

44. MORLEY 1597, 121. Errors involving transposed or inverted letters have been silently corrected.

Cathedral of Toledo became vacant, applicants were expected to demonstrate an impressive range of skills in orally composed counterpoint: in their auditions they were required to add new voices *ex tempore* to a cantus firmus and to complexes of two and three pre-existing voices, and they were asked to improvise canons enabling singers following their direction to produce counterpoint in three and four voices.<sup>45</sup> Philippe Canguilhem has traced the continuance of a sophisticated practice in Spain into the eighteenth century. In France, Joseph-Louis Marchand published in 1739 a *Traité de contrepoint simple, ou chant sur le livre*, although he seems to have been describing a simplified skill set producing an elementary style of counterpoint for use in certain situations in religious establishments.<sup>46</sup>

But the wide availability of printed music had reduced the need for skilled concentrators, and the loss of interest in counterpoint as a set of procedures had produced a corresponding decline of interest in singing upon the book, which was, after all, the audible application of those procedures. To remain a living tradition, improvised counterpoint required a community large enough to sustain a body of singers who could carry on the practice and could train the next generations; also necessary was a knowledgeable and appreciative audience for whom singing upon the book was more than a curious practice preserved for its nostalgic value rather than for any practical purpose. Such a critical mass was lacking, and by the end of the eighteenth century, singing upon the book had ceased to be a relevant form of performance.

The rapid growth of interest in Early Music, beginning in the 1970s, encouraged two developments that might have been expected to generate a revival of singing upon the book. Renaissance music, scored up, published in modern editions, and recorded by amateur and professional groups, acquired a substantial and musically sophisticated audience, and courses in historical performance became essential components of early-music programs offered by universities and conservatories. But a musical tradition such as singing upon the book requires a mix of innovation and continuity if it is to remain alive, and once continuity has been broken the tradition cannot be revived. Thus, although in the odd classroom or cathedral

45. CANGUILHEM 2011, 55–8.

46. MARCHAND 1739. Marchand's book was published in Bar-le-Duc (in what is now Alsace); its title specifies that the skills will be useful in religious establishments "tant en France, que de Flandre & autres"; and the author, iii–iv, names specific cities in what is now eastern France where practitioners were likely to be appreciated.



there have been experiments in teaching how to sing upon the book in accordance with rules such as those set out by Tinctoris, such projects are undertaken with the debilitating awareness that they will produce little of musical value and that they are merely historical exercises.

*The Broude Trust*

## Works Cited

### *Manuscript Sources*

TINCTORIS, Johannes. 1475. *Liber de arte contrapuncti*. Bibliothèque Royale, II 4147, cc. 52r–101r.

### *Printed Sources*

- AARON, Pietro. 1523. *Thoscanello de la musica*. Venice: Vitali fratelli.
- BAXANDALL, Michael. 1971. *Giotto and the Orators: Humanist Observers of Painting in Italy and the Discovery of Pictorial Composition 1350–1450*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.
- BENT, Margaret. 1983. “Resfacta and Cantare Super Librum”. *Journal of the American Musicological Society* 36: 371–91.
- BERGER, Anna Maria Busse. 2005. *Medieval Music and the Art of Memory*. Berkeley, Los Angeles & London: University of California Press.
- . 2015. “Oral Composition in Fifteenth-Century Music”. In BERGER and RODIN 2015, 139–48.
- , and Jesse RODIN, eds. 2015. *The Cambridge History of Fifteenth-Century Music*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- BERMUDO, Juan. 1555. *El Libro llamado declaración de instrumentos musicales*. Ossuna: Juan de Leon.
- BLACKBURN, Bonnie. 1987. “Compositional Process in the Fifteenth Century”. *Journal of the American Musicological Society* 60: 210–84.
- , Edward LOWINSKY, and Clement MILLER, eds. 1991. *A Correspondence of Renaissance Musicians*. Oxford: Clarendon Press.
- BOORMAN, Stanley. 1986. “Early Music Printing: Working for a Specialized Market”. In *Print and Culture in the Renaissance: Essays on the Advent of Printing in Europe*, edited by Gerald TYSON and Sylvia WAGONHEIM, 222–45. Newark, Delaware: University of Delaware Press.
- . 2006. *Ottaviano Petrucci: A Catalogue Raisonné*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.
- CANGUILHEM, Philippe. 2011. “Singing Upon the Book According to Vicente Lusitano”. *Early Music History* 30: 55–103.

- . 2015. "Improvisation as Concept and Musical Practice in the Fifteenth Century". In BERGER and RODIN 2015, 149–63.
- CHIODINO, Giovanni Battista. 1610. *Arte pratica Latina et volgare di far Contrapunto à mente, & à penna*. Venice: Ricciardo Amadino.
- COCHLAEUS, Johannes. 1507. *Johannes Cochlaeus: Musica*. 3d ed. Cologne: Johannes Landen.
- COCLICO, Adrian Petit. 1552. *Compendium Musices*. Nuremburg: Johannes Montanus & Ulrich Neuberg.
- CROCKER, Richard. 1962. "Discant, Counterpoint and Harmony". *Journal of the American Musicological Society* 15: 1–21.
- CURTIS, Ernst Robert. 1953. *European Literature in the Latin Middle Ages*. Bollingen Series 36. New York: Pantheon.
- DOWLAND, John, 1600. *The Second Booke of Songs or Ayres, of 2. 4. and 5. Parts*. London: Thomas Este.
- FELDMAN, Martha. 2000. "Authors and Anonyms: Recovering the Anonymous Subject in Cinquecento Vernacular Objects". In VAN ORDEN 2000, 163–200.
- FERAND, Ernst. 1957. "What is *Res Facta*?". *Journal of the American Musicological Society* 10: 141–50.
- FINCK, Hermann. 1556. *Practica Musica*. Wittenburg: Heirs of George Rhau.
- GAFURIUS, Franchinus. 1496. *Practica Musices*. Milan: Guillaume Le Signerre for Pietro da Lomazzo.
- . 1508. *Angelicum ac divinum opus musice*. Milan: Gatardo da Ponte.
- GOEHR, Lydia. 1992. *The Imaginary Museum of Musical Works: An Essay in the Philosophy of Music*. Oxford: Clarendon Press.
- HEARTZ, Daniel. 1969. *Pierre Attaingnant, Royal Printer of Music: A Historical Study and Bibliographical Catalogue*. Berkeley & Los Angeles: University of California Press.
- HERBST, Johannes. 1643. *Musica Poetica, sive Compendium Melopoëticum*. Nuremburg: Jeremiah Dümlers.
- JUDD, Cristle Collins. 2000. *Reading Renaissance Music Theory: Hearing with the Eyes*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- LISTENIUS, Nicolaus. 1537. *Musica*. Augsburg: Heinrich Steiner.
- LOWINSKY, Edward. 1946. "The Concept of Physical and Musical Space in the Renaissance". *Papers of the American Musicological Society, Annual Meeting 1941* (1946): 57–84.
- . 1948. "On the Use of Scores by Sixteenth-Century Musicians". *Journal of the American Musicological Society* 1: 17–23.
- LÜTTEKEN, Lawrence. 2015. "The Work Concept". In BERGER and RODIN 2015, 55–64.
- MARCHAND, Louis-Joseph. 1739. *Traité du contrepoint simple, ou chant sur la livre*. Barle-Duc: Briflot.
- MORLEY, Thomas. 1594. *Madrigalls to Foure Voyces*. London: Thomas East.
- . 1597. *A Plaine and Easie Introduction to Practicall Musicke*. London: Peter Short.

- ORTHINOPARCUS, Andrea. 1519. *Musice Active Micrologus*. Leipzig: Valentin Schumann.
- OWENS, Jessie Ann. 1997. *Composers at Work: The Craft of Musical Composition 1450–1600*. New York & Oxford: Oxford University Press.
- PERKINS, Leeman. 2003. “Concerning the Ontological Status of the Notated Musical Work in the Fifteenth and Sixteenth Centuries”. *Current Musicology* 20: 15–39.
- . 2018. “Commentary”. In Antoine BUSNOYS, *Works with Texts in the Vernacular; The Collected Works* 1. Masters and Monuments of the Renaissance 5/1. New York: The Broude Trust.
- PETRUCCI, Ottaviano [compiler]. 1504. *Harmonice Musices Odhecaton A*. 3d Edition. Venice: Ottaviano Petrucci.
- PIROTTA, Nino. 1984. *Music and Culture in Italy from the Middle Ages to the Baroque: A Collection of Essays*. [Harvard] Studies in the History of Music 1. Cambridge & London: Harvard University Press.
- POGUE, Samuel. 1969. *Jacques Moderne: Lyons Music Printer of the Sixteenth Century*. Geneva: Minkoff.
- QUINTILIANUS, Marcus Fabius. *Institutio Oratoria*. Edited by C[harles] HALM. Loeb Classical Library 124. Cambridge: Harvard University Press; London: William Heinemann.
- SEAY, Albert, ed. & transl. 1972. Johannes Tinctoris, *The Art of Counterpoint*. Musico-logical Studies and Documents 5. Rome: American Institute of Musicology.
- TALBOT, Michael, ed. 2000. *The Musical Work: Reality or Invention?* Liverpool: Liverpool University Press.
- TINCTORIS, Johannes. 1495. *Terminorum Musicæ Diffinitionum*. Treviso: Gerardus de Lisa.
- VAN ORDEN, Kate, ed. 2000. *Music and the Cultures of Print*. Critical and Cultural Musicology 1. New York & London: Garland Publishing.
- . 2014. *Music, Authorship and the Book in the First Century of the Age of Print*. Berkeley, Los Angeles & London: University of California Press.
- . 2015. *Materialities: Books, Readers and the Chanson in Sixteenth-Century Europe*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.
- WEGMAN, Rob. 1996. “From Maker to Composer: Improvisation and Musical Authorship in the Low Countries, 1450–1500”. *Journal of the American Musicological Society* 49: 409–79.
- WILSON, Blake. 2015. “Canterino and Improvistore: Oral Poetry and Performance”. In BERGER and RODIN 2015, 292–320.
- WITS RECREATIONS. 1640. *Wits Recreations Selected from the Finest Fancies of Moderne Muses With a Thousand outlandish Proverbs*. London: R. H. for Humph[rey] Blunden.
- WOODLEY, Ronald. 1981. “Johannes Tinctoris: A Review of the Documentary Biographical Evidence”. *Journal of the American Musicological Society* 34: 217–48.
- ZARLINO, Gioseffo. 1558. *Le institutioni harmoniche*. Venice: [Pietro Da Fino].

# Transcribing Petrarch's Genres in the Late Fourteenth Century

An Ongoing Conversation with the  
Observations from MSS Coligny Bodmer  
131 and Gambalunga Sc-Ms. 93

*Giulia Benghi*

## ABSTRACT

In spite of its apparent 'betrayal' of Petrarch's visual poetics due to its one-column layout, the copy of the *Rerum vulgarium fragmenta* contained in MS Coligny Bodmer 131 documents a way of employing common graphic devices that still shows awareness of the graphological distinctions among the five genres of the *Fragmenta*, and yet unavoidably slips in occasional errors deriving from the loss of Petrarch's original *mise en page*. Gambalunga Sc-Ms. 93, in its first unit, reproduces the same choices of organization of the genres, and often even the same errors, demonstrating its derivation from the same *antegrph* as the Bodmer manuscript. The two copies, both from the end of the fourteenth century, provide evidence that such transcriptional choices were already consolidated shortly after the death of the poet, suggesting that scribes of the earliest copies of the *Rvf* did not follow the formats of their *holograph*.

---

“AS WE THINK ABOUT THE POSSIBILITY OF LITERARY HISTORY AND about the meaning of textual authority in relation to Petrarch, it will be increasingly necessary to take into account as many of the scribal versions of his poems as we can” (DEL PUPPO 2004, 131). With these words, Dario Del Puppo was sending an open invitation to further proceed on the inspection of the “evolving transcriptional pragmatics” of Petrarch's poems in the fifteenth century (2004, 130). MSS Bodmer 131 from the Fondation Martin Bodmer of Coligny (Geneva) and Sc-Ms. 93 from the Biblioteca civica Gambalunga in Rimini are two copies of Petrarch's *Rerum vulgarium fragmenta* produced in the Veneto in the late fourteenth century that allow us not only to broaden the spectrum of “witnesses of how he [Petrarch] was read and understood” (DEL PUPPO 2004, 130), but also to redate to the last

decade of the Trecento the time of that widespread circulation of Petrarch's lyric poetry when scribes undertook a variety of editorial choices, altering the poet's unique "visual poetics" within just a couple of decades from his death.<sup>1</sup>

The two manuscripts have been dated from the end of the fourteenth century in their respective catalogues, and, in agreement with the given dates, I intend to demonstrate the importance of dating these two codices by the end of the fourteenth century, especially for their copyists' editorial choices in altering Petrarch's poetics.<sup>2</sup> The anonymous scribes of these two copies, in fact, align the text in the single column, one-verse per line format that "took root at the end of the Trecento", a transcriptional style that became the norm of "the *vulgata* in the Quattrocento" (DEL PUPO 2004, 128). The popularity of this, so called 'modern', layout in the fifteenth century is renowned, while it might have been underestimated by literary historians for the fourteenth century. In the codicological examination made by Marco Cursi (2014) of the earliest manuscripts of the *Canzoniere* (*Rerum vulgarium fragmenta*, or the *Rvf*) we notice that the group of codices with layout "ad una colonna" is made up of only six manuscripts out of the total of 29 dated as "*antiquiores*", and that only three out of those six are datable to the end of the fourteenth century.<sup>3</sup> However, our MSS Bodmer 131 and Sc-Ms. 93 can be rightly added to the group, as they fully respect the two criteria applied by Cursi to his examination — the two criteria being 1) a dating within the first decade of the fifteenth century, and 2) the nature of the collections as *books*, and not as *miscellanies*.<sup>4</sup> By adding Bodmer

1. The term "visual poetics", coined in the 1980s by Storey (1989; see also 1993) and now in wide usage, refers to the use of transcriptional and typeset layouts in manuscripts and printed works as part of the intentional poetics of a literary composition.
2. For MS Bodmer 131, a detailed codicological description by ALLEGRETTI 2003 and the digital version of the codex are available on the website of the "Virtual Manuscript Library of Switzerland": <https://www.e-codices.unifr.ch/it/description/fmb/cb-0131/>. For Sc–Ms. 93, instead, I refer to the two descriptions available on the website of the "Biblioteca Digitale Italiana", by selecting "Biblioteca Civica Gambalunga" and searching the codex with its previous shelf-mark, that is D. II. 21, in both "Catalogo Lucchesi" and "Catalogo Nardi": [http://catalogoistorici.bdi.sbn.it/indice\\_cataloghi.php](http://catalogoistorici.bdi.sbn.it/indice_cataloghi.php). See also the Images in my Appendix for SC-MS 93, pp. 123–24.
3. See the "Tabella 5 – Codici dei *Rvf* ad una colonna" in CURSI 2014, 244.
4. Cursi (2014) suggests that "ammesse nel *corpus* le raccolte palesemente orientate verso l'adesione ad un modello di libro lirico d'autore, pure se aperte a contributi



131 and Sc-Ms. 93 to this group of codices of the *Fragmenta* as classified by Cursi, the number of manuscripts in one-column layout and dated to the end of the Trecento increases from three to five. When we compare the other charts made by Cursi with all the types of layouts employed by the *codices antiquiores*, but confining the analysis to the last quarter of the fourteenth century, we realize that the number of codices with one-column layout (5) is almost equal to the number of codices with other types of layouts: the manuscripts with a two-column layout but with the verses copied in vertical order rather than horizontal (“a impaginazione verticale”, CURSI 2014, 242) are also 5 (6 when including MS London British Library, King’s 321 dated “anno 1400” by its Venetian copyist), while the number of codices employing a two-column layout but with a variety of copying solutions between horizontal and vertical readings (“a impaginazione mista”, CURSI 2014, 240) are 3, or 4 if including MS Firenze Biblioteca Laurenziana Segniano 1, dated to between the end of the fourteenth and the early fifteenth century first by Storey (2006, 295) and later again by Cursi (2014, 240). The predominant group of manuscripts remains those that transcribed Petrarch’s lyrics in what Cursi would later call an “impaginazione nobile” (i.e., in two columns, reproducing Petrarch’s *mise en page* [2014, 238–46]), which are six — eight when including MS Firenze Biblioteca Laurenziana Pluteo 41.10 and MS Paris Bibliothèque nationale de France, Italien 551, actually dated by Cursi between the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries.<sup>5</sup>

Thus, while the use of the two-column layout shows to be prevalent overall in this early period, when we focus on the variety of changes to Petrarch’s ‘noble’ *mise en page* already employed by the scribes at the end of the fourteenth century, we realize that the one-column layout was not simply the outcome of a progressive corruption of Petrarch’s visual poetics, but rather part of a spectrum of editorial choices available to the scribes, behind whose choices there were specific reasons caused by the circumstances of the copying process and/or imposed by the terms of the manuscript’s commission: a situation well described by Storey with reference to the first half of the Quattrocento,<sup>6</sup> but that may be already happening by

---

extravaganti, escludendo invece i testimoni riconducibili alla tipologia del *canzoniere miscellaneo*”, and limits the manuscript’s dates “dagli anni in cui l’autore era ancora vivente fino al primo decennio del secolo XV” (229).

5. For a prolonged description of the Petrarch’s two-column layout and its philological and interpretative implications in his visual poetics, see STOREY 1993, 201–419.
6. “una diffusione del *Canzoniere* multiforme già nella prima metà del Quattrocento, ormai inestricabilmente legata alla variabile di copia e alle scelte ‘edi-

the last decade of the Trecento, for we see in the comparison above that some of the eminent copies of the *Rvf*, such as MS Laurenziano Pluteo 41.10 and Paris Bibliothèque nationale de France, Italien 551, date from slightly later than other manuscripts with the one-column layout like the Bodmerian and Riminese codices.<sup>7</sup>

The evidence offered by witnesses such as MSS Bodmer 131 and Sc-Ms. 93 can therefore address this research along the paths indicated by Brugnolo, Storey, Del Puppo, and other scholars,<sup>8</sup> which is to inspect the formats of the early copies of the *Fragmenta* in order to verify what they can tell us about their antigraphs and the earliest circulation of Petrarch's poems. As Del Puppo points out, "Wilkins does not discuss whether the poems in earlier forms of the *Canzoniere* are laid out as they are in the holograph, Vaticano latino 3195, and whether scribes would have followed these formats" (2004, 116), while this is, in fact, a crucial point that awaits further investigation.

Before proceeding, I must outline the unique list of features that Bodmer 131 (for which I will use the initial "B") and Sc-Ms. 93 (SC) have in common. Codicologically, they depict the favorite *forma-libro*, or book form, of the earliest tradition of the *Canzoniere*, which is an average-sized book with gothic or semi-gothic script on parchment.<sup>9</sup> By coincidence, they are both composed of two different units: in B, the first section (cc. 8r-143v) contains the *Rerum vulgarium fragmenta* plus 36 mostly interspersed Dis-

---

toriali' dei vari copisti, siano esse frutto di adattamenti (o fraintendimenti) di comodo del singolo amanuense o il riflesso di una nuova esigenza socio-culturale dettata dalla committenza", in STOREY 2006, 300.

7. While Del Puppo describes MS Laurenziano Pluteo 41.10 as "made during the last two decades of the fourteenth century in the Veneto" (2004, 121), Cursi suggests that the manuscript was produced sometime between 1397 and the first years of the Quattrocento (PULSONI — CURSI 2010, 258–68); Teresa De Robertis recently dated it "circa 1400" (2016, 67).
8. See especially BRUGNOLO 1991 and 2004, PACIONI 2004, and DEL PUPPO 2004 and 2007.
9. Cursi generally describes the standard format for lyric transcriptions: "per le Rime il modello librario preferito prevedeva il materiale scrittoria membranaceo, misure medie, scritture gotiche o semigotiche" (2014, 233). MS Bodmer 131 measures 230 x 163 mm, with a writing space of 32–33 lines, while Sc-Ms. 93 is 210 x 113 mm, with a ruled writing space varying between 24 and 26 lines in the first part and 23 in the second part. As for the script, it is a *littera textualis*; Pancheri (1993, 78) claims that it has a touch of *bastarde*.

*perse* (or *Estravaganti*),<sup>10</sup> while the second section (cc. 144r-178r) contains 29 poems by Dante plus seven by Guinizelli, Cavalcanti and Cino; in spite of its position at the end of the book, the script and the construction of the quires suggest that the second section was transcribed earlier than the first one.<sup>11</sup> On the other hand, what undermines the unity of MS SC is not the content but an abrupt change in the script and in the *mise en page*, on c. 61v (in the midst of *Rvf* 181, v. 4, see my Appendix Image 1 and Image 2), due to the intervention of a second scribe, so that the manuscript must be considered as two units, independent from one another both in their codicological and textual aspects; these two units I will indicate as “SC(a)” and “SC(b)”. A significant common trait between B and SC, instead, is the identical sequence of the poems — though only up to *Rvf* 215, and excluding the mechanical *lacunae* both at the beginning, at the end, and in the midst of the collection.<sup>12</sup> In addition to containing the same four-

10. “Disperse” (uncollected) and “estravaganti” are the terms usually used for those poems not included by Petrarch in his holograph (MS Vatican Latino 3195) but attributed to Petrarch by the manuscript tradition. The first and only complete edition of all these spurious poems was edited by Angelo Solerti in 1909, and recently republished in fac-simile with an introduction by Vittore Branca and an Afterword by Paola Vecchi Galli (see SOLERTI 1909 and VECCHI GALLI 1997).
11. I provide a more detailed analysis of the Dante and Stilnovo section of MS Bodmer 131 (B) in BENGHI 2020. For the convenience of online and remote readers, references to the Bodmer manuscript will be to the most immediate access to the codex in its digital form in the *e-codices* site (see n.2 above). This means that in some cases the original numbering of the chartae in the upper right-hand corner of the recto of each charta will not be reflected in the digital access information for the manuscript due in part to a missing charta between the index (cc. 1r–7v in the original numbering) and its initial leaf (c. 9r in its original numbering = digital c. 8r [note the reference on c. 7v in the ancient index to *Voi che ascoltati in rime sparse il sono* [sic] as c. 9]). Those who consult the codex directly in Cologny should adjust the numbering accordingly.
12. See the *Appendix* below with the complete sequence of the *Rvf* in both manuscripts. Please note that the numbers assigned correspond to the order revised by Petrarch by means of marginal numbers in his holograph MS Vatican Latino 3195. Thus my numbers are different from those of the physical order in which the last 31 poems appear in the manuscript, the order that was adopted by Wilkins (1951) and in the *Petrarch archive* (MAGNI, STOREY and WALSH, 2014–2020), the latter of which indicates Petrarch’s revised order as “rev”. Thus the final sequence of B, described by Wilkins (1951, 232) for what he knew as “Melziano A” (the codex resided in the Melzi Library in Milano at the beginning of the twentieth century), was: “356–360, *Un clima*, c, cxxix, 361, 366” is in its

teen *Disperse* copied in the same position, the two manuscripts share — in fact — the same inversions in the two sequences *Rvf* 90, 89, 91 and *Rvf* 153, 155–158, 154.<sup>13</sup> Finally, a comparison of the *lectiones* reveals that B and SC share numerous variants (*varianti congiuntive*), while also containing a minority of different readings (*varianti disgiuntive*); therefore, we deduce that they must descend, even if not directly, from the same antigraph (as documented also by their sequence), while we must exclude that one is copy of the other. An examination of their *mise en page* confirms this close relationship between the two manuscripts, which, based on an analysis of the variants, I have identified as similar to two ‘cousins’: they share the same system of graphic features, and sometimes even the same mistakes, to reproduce the metrical schemes of the *Fragmenta*, proving that their formats derive mostly from their antigraph, and yet the two copies also contain independent mistakes by either one of the scribes.<sup>14</sup> All this is true, however, only pertaining to the first section of SC, that includes *Rvf* [\*44]–181 (*Rvf* 1–43 are missing due to mechanical loss of the chartae), since the change of scribe on c. 61v coincides with a change of the antigraph — as a change in the *lectiones* also confirms.<sup>15</sup>

MS Bodmer 131 is a very clean, finished product, which displays lavish illuminations of leafage and dragons on its opening charta (c. 8r), and has each poem initial in red ink with blue *entrelacs*, while all capital letters are marked in red. The Riminese codex, in its first section, is instead completely devoid of all rubrics and decoration, leaving empty spaces for the missing decorated initials (of the size of three or four writing lines, as in B). In spite of the different aesthetics, the scribes of both B and SC(a) organize all five genres of the *Canzoniere* in the same one-column, one verse per line format, and distinguish the five poetic genres of the *Fragmenta* through the use of capital letters, that are always located slightly toward the left margin (and that, in B only, are marked in red), in order to separate the metrical units of each genre. It is useful for the modern reader to remember that these capital letters do not follow a period, and therefore do not express the real syntactic flow of the discourse, but serve purely as metrical markers

---

corrected and revised order (reported in my Appendix): 360–364, *Disp.* 50, *Disp.* C, *Disp.* CXXIX, 365–366.

13. I refer to the *Disperse* by the number in the order assigned by SOLERTI 1909. These are the fourteen *Disperse* contained both in B and SC-MS 93: CCXIII, XXV, CC, CLXXXII, XXVII, XXIX, XIX, LXIV, CX, XLVIII, L, C, CXXIX.

14. The nomenclature suggests that they are copies of two different exemplars that, in turn, derive from the same antigraph.

15. For an extended examination of this topic, see BENGHI 2020.

(in any case, in B and SC, punctuation is rare, and mostly represented by the *punctus*).

Among the five genres, the sonnet stands out for its typical, unchanging structure of 4+4+3+3 verses, resulting from the identification of the quatrains and the tercets by the capital letter that introduces the first verse of each metrical unit. As modern readers, we tend to take this layout for granted, failing to realize that in this way the constituent unity and visual solidity on which Petrarch's sonnet was conceived is completely disrupted,<sup>16</sup> for "Petrarch's sonnet format is to assure integration of the tercets into the body of the sonnet by not spatially distinguishing them from the octave" (STOREY 1993, 238). A brief digression needs to be opened here to recall that the breakage of the sonnet's unity as designed by Petrarch is already found in some of the 'faithful' copies such as MS Laurenziano Pluteo 41.17, where a paragraph mark is placed next to the first tercet, or in MS Laurenziano Segniano 1, where the capital letter of v. 9 (that is the beginning of the first tercet) is taller than all the other *versali*, occupying two writing lines. Not only the separation of the tercets from the octave was common practice, deriving directly from the poetic tradition of the thirteen century,<sup>17</sup> and applied independently from the type of layout (for instance, in MS Trivulziano 1091, that has a mixed layout,<sup>18</sup> the capital letter of v. 9 is marked in red<sup>19</sup>), but also the breakdown of the tercets seemed somehow

16. "La forma progettata del cod. Vat. lat. 3195 è infatti concepita per essere visivamente e semanticamente organica, unitaria e compatta nel suo svolgimento in progressione dall'ottava (le due quartine) alla prima terzina e soprattutto da questa alla seconda terzina", in STOREY 2004, 153.

17. As Storey explains, "l'impostazione petrarchesca riprende modalità di *mise en page* codificate dal duecentesco cod. Vat. Lat. 3793, tralasciandone i marcatori paratestuali più superficiali, quali le graffe per le *distinctiones* più difficili" (2004, 153). As a matter of fact, the scribes of MS Vatican Latino 3793 tend to place a paragraph mark next to the first tercet, and also emphasize the overall structure of the sonnet as composed of an octave plus two tercets by tracing two brackets on the right side of the sonnets, with the first bracket enclosing the two quatrains (vv. 1–8) and with the second bracket enclosing the two tercets (vv. 9–14).

18. "ad impaginazione mista" (CURSI 2014, 240). This codex can be seen on line, thanks to the "Manus Online" project: [https://manus.iccu.sbn.it/opac\\_SchedaScheda.php?ID=50126](https://manus.iccu.sbn.it/opac_SchedaScheda.php?ID=50126). It contains Petrarch's *Fragmenta* and also the fifteen *canzoni distese*, as we find in MS Bodmer 131. But in MS Trivulziano 1091 Dante's songs are at the beginning of the collection, before the *Rvf*.

19. Starting from c. 10v, in *Rvf* 12. In this sonnet, we actually see a red paragraph mark next to v. 9, presumably to point out even more clearly the beginning of



necessary to the eye of most readers — as Boccaccio's renowned copy of the early version of the *Fragmenta*, the *Fragmentorum liber*, in MS Vatican Chigiano L.v.176 witnesses, with the regular red and blue paragraph marks that introduce respectively the first and the second tercet of each sonnet. As we know, Boccaccio's copy dates from at least twenty-five years earlier than the other ancient manuscripts so far taken into account (and also embodies the gothic culture Petrarch strived to reform with his revolutionary visual poetics), therefore it might seem an inappropriate example.<sup>20</sup> However, when we look again at MS Trivulziano 1091, dated 1391–1410 by the catalogue of the Trivulziana Library, we find that the copyist felt the need to separate the second tercet from the first one by placing two oblique dashes between vv. 11 and 12: in other words, “il copista applica una ‘traduzione culturale’ per cui impiega una rete — a volte anche microscopica — di meccanismi per rendere la veste grafica del sonetto il più leggibile possibile per un pubblico attuale” (STOREY 2017, 97). These comparisons help us realize even better how Petrarch's visual poetics, in his holograph MS Vatican Latino 3195, was truly unique, and how “la ripresa da parte di Petrarca dell'antico stile dei Siciliani [. . .] risulta già una formula considerata arcaica nel primo Quattrocento *se non prima*” (STOREY 2017, 97 [my italics]).

Going back to the graphological organization of the genres in B and SC(a), *ballate* and *madrigali* are also identified in their metrical schemes by capital letters, or initials, so that they are distinguished from the sonnets by their variable units (and length), reproducing rather faithfully Petrarch's metrical experimentation. In B, for example, it is striking to find that the copyist doesn't fall into the error of confusing the two *ballate grandi* (Rvf 11 [*Lassare il velo o per sole o per ombra*] and Rvf 14 [*Occhi miei lassi, mentre ch'io vi giro*]) as sonnets, in spite of the same number of total verses (14): in these two poems the capital letters are placed only in vv. 5 and 11, resulting in the scheme 4+6+4, that resembles the structure of the *ballata grande* (refrain [4 verses]+*pie*de [3 verses]+*pie*de [3 verses] +*vol*ta [4 verses]), with the only exception of not dividing the two *pie*di. Nevertheless, with the *ballate* we begin to see how a less sophisticated reproduction of Petrarch's poetics inexorably gives way to confusion. In *ballata mezzana* Rvf 55 (*Quel foco ch'i' pensai che fosse spento*, c. 30r), the capital letters are placed at the beginning of vv. 4 and 11, establishing a structure of 3+7+7 verses that reveals that the copyist of B identifies the refrain from the body of the *ballata*, while

---

the tercet, but this practice remains an exception.

20. See the extensive work by Storey both on Boccaccio's conservative practice of copy and on the uniqueness of Petrarch's visual poetics in STOREY 1993 (and also in STOREY 2015 for Boccaccio's copy of the *Fragmenta*).

he does not pay attention to the separation of two *piedi* from the *volta*. In *Rvf* 59 (*Perché quel che mi trasse ad amar prima*, c. 31r), another *ballata mezzana* with the same scheme of *Rvf* 55, the copyist instead begins v. 4 with capital letter, and then again v. 6, 11 and 15, thus establishing the scheme 3+2+5+4+3, which blurs the original formula of the two *piedi* (2 verses+2 verses) followed by the *volta* (3 verses), repeated twice.<sup>21</sup> Unfortunately, due to the loss of several *chartae* in SC, we cannot complete a comparison of these *ballate*. However, SC(a) does contain the two remaining *ballate grandi*, *Rvf* 63 and 149 (*Volgendo gli occhi al mio novo colore*, cc. 51r–v, and *Di tempo in tempo mi si fa men dura*, c. 70v), that share with B the same (correct) scheme, though in B we find a red paragraph mark next to v. 5 (i.e. the beginning of the *piede* after the refrain) of *Rvf* 149, that does not appear in SC(a).<sup>22</sup> The case is particular, since neither in B nor in SC(a) did the scribes ever apply the paragraph marker to the genre of the *ballata*, while we remember that Petrarch uses it in the three *ballate* *Rvf* 55, 59 and 63, but not for *Rvf* 149.<sup>23</sup>

Moving to the four madrigals of the *Rvf*, the division of the verses substantially resembles the original metrical schemes:

<i>Rvf</i> 52: <i>Non al suo amante più Diana piacque:</i>	ABA BCB CC	[3+3+2]
<i>Rvf</i> 54: <i>Perché al viso d'Amor portava insegna:</i>	ABA CBC DE DE	[3+3+4]
<i>Rvf</i> 106: <i>Nova angeletta sovra l'ale accorta:</i>	ABC ABC DD	[3+3+2]
<i>Rvf</i> 121: <i>Or vedi, Amor, che givenetta donna:</i>	ABB ACC CDD	[3+3+3]

The only exception occurs in B's transcription of *Rvf* 54 in which the copyist fails to distinguish the two couplets.<sup>24</sup> The division units, indicated in brackets above, are as follows: 3+3+2 for *Rvf* 52 (c. 28r in B), 3+3+4 for *Rvf*

21. The metrical scheme of this *ballata mezzana* is as follows: XyY Ab Ab ByY Cd Cd DyY.

22. The breakdown of the verses in *Rvf* 63 is 4+3+3+4, which represents the metrical scheme XYYX ABC BAC CDDZ, and in *Rvf* 149 is 4+4+4+4, representing X(x)YyX AbbC AbbC CDDZ.

23. We should note, however, that *Rvf* 149 is the only *ballata* that employs mid-verse rhymes, *rima al mezzo*, in the refrain, an element that might play a role in this graphic solution by the copyist of B. We should also keep in mind that these poems were actually copied by Malpaghini (see STOREY 1993, 264 and 2004, 158), whose work Petrarch oversaw and corrected. The layout of these poems in MS Vatican Latino 3195 can be consulted on the *Petrarcharchive* (see MAGNI, STOREY, and WALSH: <http://dcl.slis.indiana.edu/petrarcharchive/content/c013r-c013v.xml>).

24. *Rvf* 52 and 54 are missing in SC.

54 (c. 29v in B), 3+3+2 for *Rvf* 106 (c. 48r in B; c. 23v in SC), and 3+3+3 for *Rvf* 121 (c. 56r in B; cc. 34r–v in SC). When we compare the organization of the madrigals in B and SC with Petrarch's *mise en page* in his partial holograph (Vatican Latino 3195), we can see how the later manuscript

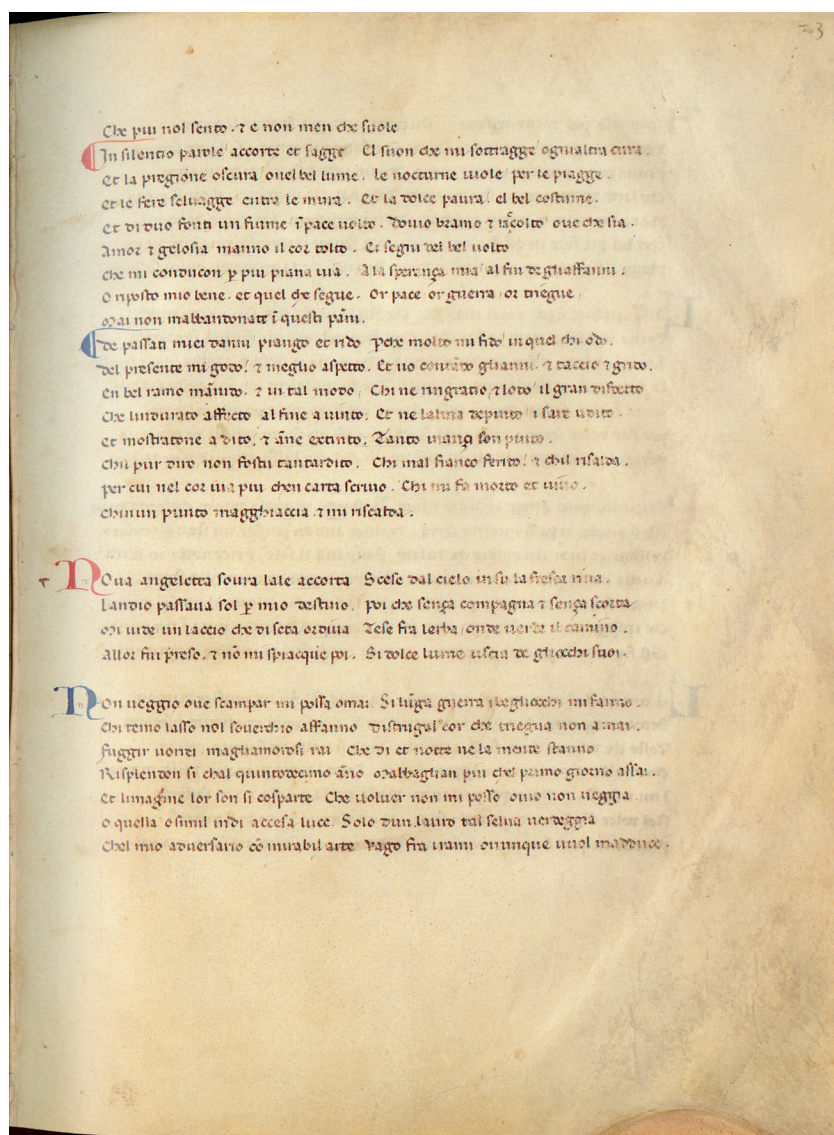


Figure 1. Vatican Library, Latino 3195, c. 23r; courtesy of the Biblioteca Apostolica Vaticana

tradition exemplified by B and SC was based exclusively on the metrical schemes. Yet in the case of *Rvf* 106, c. 23r of Latino 3195, we note that Petrarch's scribe Giovanni Malpaghini has copied the madrigal two verses per line (2+2+2+2) in order to stress the couplets instead of the two initial tercets (vv. 1–3 and 4–6), now distributed over three lines of transcription.

While Petrarch's own *mise en page* for *Rvf* 52 (c. 11v), *Rvf* 54 (c. 12v) and *Rvf* 121 (c. 26r) reinforces the prosodic and syntactic phrasing in these madrigals' tercet structure, the layout of *Rvf* 106 emphasizes the meter and closure of the interlocking rhymes –orta (vv. 1, 4 [*accorta* – *scorta*]) and –ino (vv. 3, 6 [*destino* – *camino*]) that link internally the syntactic construction of the first six verses against the closing couplet (vv. 7–8 [*poi* – *suoil*]).<sup>25</sup> In the case of the Bodmer copy, the scribe's transcriptional system ignores the integrative value of Petrarch's approved layout designed to underscore the madrigal's variation. The 3+5 visual structuring of the madrigal in B instead reinforces the madrigal's opening tercet, and, in opposition to Petrarch's model, links the second tercet to the final couplet (see Fig. 2).

The genre of the *canzone* in the Bodmer codex demonstrates instead two-line decorated initials that introduce every stanza, while the internal structure of the stanzas is conveyed by regular-sized and rubricated small initials. In essence, these decorated initials opening the stanzas actually distinguish the canzoni from the other genres, as opposed to the red paragraph marks employed for the stanzas of the *sestina*. This distinction is only true in B, since in SC(a) the *sestina* is simply organized by small initials at the beginning of each stanza. It is remarkable that in both copies the *sestina*, calculated by Petrarch as part of the *canzone* genre, are transcribed without errors, with their six stanzas succeeding one another in the correct order.<sup>26</sup> We find one exception in SC(b) (cc. 120r–121r): the verses of *Rvf* 332 (*Mia benigna fortuna*) — the only double *sestina* (*sestina doppia*) of the *Fragmenta* — are copied in a strangely alternating sequence, that is 1, 24, 2, 25, 3, 26, 4, 27, and so on. This is a significant error for which a clear understanding of B's and SC's common ancestor can guide us. What has happened here is that the scribe of SC(b) has copied from an antegraph

25. Marco Pacioni (2004) remarks that even in Petrarch's short madrigals variation in rhyme constructions are invariably reflected in a nuanced *mise en page* (“la *variatio* rimica è così strutturante che è necessario renderla sempre evidente sul piano grafico, nella *mise en page*” [373–4]).

26. One error is found in B's copy of *Rvf* 239 (c. 93v), in which the scribe fails to copy the *congedo*, which is then added by the same hand on the left margin of the poem, thus this case is to be considered simply a distraction of the copyist rather than due to the complexity of Petrarch's original layout.



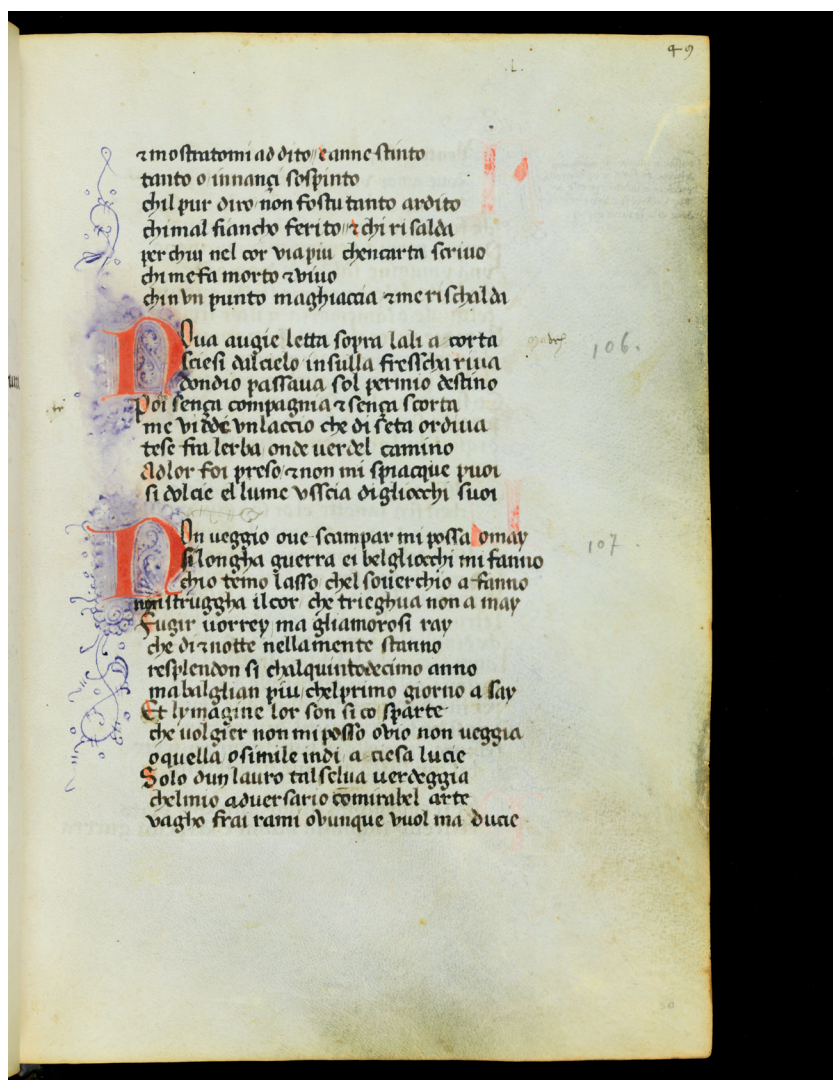


Figure 2. Cologny, Fondation Martin Bodmer, Cod. Bodmer 131, c. 48r (49r original number)

whose transcription of the double sestina is in the same two-column *mise en page* as that of Petrarch's authorized copy, MS Vatican Latino 3195, which lays out the sestina, uniquely among the five genres, in a vertical reading down the left-hand column and then continues the song's remaining verses down the right-hand column, invariably producing two columns of unequal



length with a blank space at the bottom of the right-hand column.<sup>27</sup> This change in Petrarch's usual horizontal layout, from the left to the right column for all genres except the sestina, clearly caused some confusion with the SC copyist, just as it did with the scribe of Laurenziano Segniano 1.<sup>28</sup> The copyist of SC read his exemplar from the left to the right column, just as he had clearly done in the case of the other poetic genres, converting their horizontal reading strategy into a vertical presentation. We should note one additional detail in SC: red paragraph markers are placed next to vv. 25, 7 and 31, which are the first verses of, respectively, the fifth, second, and sixth stanzas. When the copyist returns to rubricate his copy — for the rubricator's hand coincides with the scribe's — he identifies the correct beginnings of every stanza in spite of the wrong order of the verses. The use of paragraph marks in the sestina *Rvf* 332 is even more puzzling when we realize that this is the only case in which the rubricator applies them to a sestina (rubricated as “sonetto”), and that the only two additional places where the same red markings are found are not in sestine but in the canzoni *S'i'l dissì mai* (*Rvf* 206 [cc. 69v–70v]), rubricated as a “sonetto”, and *Ben mi credea* (*Rvf* 207 [cc. 70v–72v]) — rubricated as “cançona morale”.

MS Bodmer 131 instead reveals an example of confusion between the genres of canzone and sestina, a problem originating perhaps with the disruption of Petrarch's *mise en page*: on cc. 18v–19v, *Rvf* 29, *Verdi panni*, a canzone, which is punctuated with red paragraph markers reserved for the sestina next to each stanza, just like the poem that follows it, *Rvf* 30, *Giovane donna*, which is a sestina. But the unique prosody of *Rvf* 29, which consists of *coblas unissonans*, requires the same rhymes for each stanza, a repetition that might have caught the eye of the rubricator, leading him to mistake the canzone for a sestina (though the copyist doesn't seem to mind that each stanza of the mistaken sestina has seven verses rather than the sestina's required six).

As we recall, the “struttura metrico-strofica” (STOREY 2004, 162) of the canzoni is conveyed as well by the rubricated initials, by which the metrical sub-units of each stanza are identified, and, overall, faithfully represented. And yet, in addition to the loss of Petrarch's subtle experimentation in

27. For a description of this standardized use in Petrarch's visual poetics, defined by Storey as “descriptive sestina space”, see “Sestina” and “Spaces” in the Glossary of MAGNI, STOREY and WALSH 2014–2020, <http://dcl.slis.indiana.edu/petrarchive/content/glossary.xml>.

28. The copyist of MS Laurenziano Segniano 1, from the first part of the Quattrocento, standardizes all the layouts of Petrarch's lyrics in the *Rvf* to conform to Petrarch's horizontal reading strategy, also applied to the sestinas.

variation (*variatio*) based on similar metrical structures, copyists required to intervene between the two systems of the copy and his modern reader invariably misunderstood certain forms. In *Rvf* 127 (*In quella parte dove Amor mi sprona*), for instance, the copyists of both B (c. 59v–61v) and SC(a) (cc. 38v–40v) structure the first three stanzas with initials to create four internal units of 3+3+5+3 verses for the rhyme scheme: ABC BAC CDE eDe FF.<sup>29</sup> But from the fourth stanza on the subdivision changes to 3+3+3+3+2, and then in the fifth stanza it changes again into 3+3+3+2+3 perhaps to reflect the changing syntactic structures of the stanzas. In the famous canzone *Italia mia, benché 'l parlar sia indarno* (*Rvf* 128, cc. 61v–63v in B, cc. 40v–43r in SC), we notice even greater variation in how the copyists organize the metrical structure of each stanza whose rhyme scheme is AbC BaC cDE eDdf GfG. The first stanza is divided into units of 3+3+3+4+3 verses, the second in 3+3+3+2+2+3, the third like the first, the fourth is instead changed to 3+3+2+6+2, the fifth changes again to 3+3+3+2+3+2, and the sixth to 3+3+3+3+2+2 and 3+3+3+5+2 for the seventh and final stanza. It is noteworthy is that these variations are identical in both B and SC(a), as it happens for many other poems as well, such as *Rvf* 71, *Perché la vita è breve*, for which the copyists change the repeated 6+3+4+2 visual-syntactic division of the verses to 5+3+5+2 for the last stanza, or *Rvf* 72, *Gentil mia donna, i' veggio*, where they change the same structuring division (6+3+4+2) into 3+3+3+6 for the last stanza. In *Rvf* 129, *Di pensier in pensier, di monte in monte*, along with the same changes in the subdivision of the stanzas, the two copies also share an error in the transcription, introducing the third stanza with a larger initial, as if it were the incipit of a new song. In fact, the copyist of SC(a) even leaves a line of blank space before this stanza. Yet only in SC(a) the fourth stanza is also introduced by a taller, three-line initial (instead of two), thus causing the stanzas of *Di pensier in pensier* (*Rvf* 129) to be split into individual poems (compare c. 64r in B with cc. 43v–44r in SC(a), see Appendix, Image 3).

This and other occurrences of the same errors (*coniuntivi*) in the transcription (often sustained by the same variants in the text) are, at the same time, accompanied by independent errors (*disgiuntivi*), leading us to exclude the possibility that one manuscript may be a copy of the other. *Rvf* 126 offers, in this regard, one more excellent example: it contains one variation of the strophic division in common, and one instead unique to SC(a); moreover, the copyist of B omits v. 56, and adds it in the margin (c.

29. See CAPOVILLA 1998 for a description of the metrical structure of Petrarch's songs and for their rhyme schemes.

59v), while in SC(a) it is transcribed regularly in the body of the text (c. 38r); but in both copies the verse reads “orsi charco doblo”, differing from Petrarch’s holograph (“cosi carco doblo”).

The second section of SC (to which I refer as SC(b)), nonetheless, must derive from another antegraph, proved by the readings and its very different modality of transcription: all the poems, still in a single-column layout, are copied with the head verse (*versale*) opening each verse (always traced in red), without deference to the prosody, and therefore with no distinction between genres. Moreover, all the poems are separated only by a one-line rubric (in the same hand) that reads “Sonetto di mess(er) franc(esc)o petrarcha” for every genre, whether it is actually a sonnet, short poem (as madrigals and ballate were sometimes deemed) or not, as it happens for the sestina *Rvf* 214 (on c. 74v), for all the *ballate* and madrigals, and for several canzoni, while there are only a few canzoni that carry the rubric “Cançona morale”.<sup>30</sup>

In the homogeneous and compact layout of SC(b), visually the opposite of the division of the metrical units of SC(a) and B, the few graphological devices employed to organize the prosody stand out, along with the inconsistency with which they are used. *Rvf* 206 and 207 (*S’i’ ’l dissì mai, ch’i’ vegna in odio a quella* and *Ben mi credea passar mio tempo omai*, cc. 69v–72v, the first two canzoni in our section SC(b)) are transcribed in a prose format, and with paragraph markers inserted only to signal the stanzas. By the same token, the same copyist transcribes *Rvf* 264, 268 and 270 (*I’ vo pensando, et nel penser m’assale, Che debb’io far? che mi consigli, Amore? and Amor, se vuo’ ch’i’ torni al giogo anticho*, c. 90r to 97v) rigorously one verse per transcriptional line, with the stanzas distinguished by the empty space for what we suppose to be decorated initials. Even more variations occur in subsequent canzoni: in *Rvf* 323 (*Standomi un giorno solo a la fenestra*, cc. 113r–114v) there is no separation of the stanzas whatsoever; in *Rvf* 325

30. We should keep in mind that it is common in many copies of the end of the fourteenth century to find a discrepancy between the differentiation of the genres by layout and graphic devices and their actual labeling: Petrarch’s poems are usually referred to, in fact, as either “sonetto” or “canzone” (usually accompanied by “morale”), as we read in the rubric opening the *Rvf* in MS Trivulziano 1091: “Sonetti echançoni morali di mess(er) francescho P(etrarca) poeta fiorentino” (c. 9v). It is interesting to find an individual label of the genre of the *madrigale* (expressed by the letter “m.” in opposition to “s.” and “c.” of all the other poems) in the index of MS Trivulziano 1015 (dated last quarter of the fourteenth by CURSI 2014, and accessible online through the *Manus* database: [https://manus.iccu.sbn.it/opac\\_SchedaScheda.php?ID=229873](https://manus.iccu.sbn.it/opac_SchedaScheda.php?ID=229873)).

(*Tacer non posso, et temo non adopre*, cc. 115r–117r) the scribe leaves one empty line between the stanzas, and yet he has copied *Rvf* 325 immediately after the ballata *Rvf* 324, *Amor, quando fioria*, without an introductory rubric nor any space between the two poems. What determines these changes in copying the same genre? Was the scribe of SC(b) simply negligent, or was he perhaps sensitive to subtle variation? Can we conjecture that he was copying from a single antegraph for *Rvf* 206–207, from a different exemplar for the group *Rvf* 264, 268 and 270, and then from a third (and even forth) for the next songs? It is not very likely that a single copyist would have consulted three or four different exemplars to reconstruct a text like the *Rvf*.<sup>31</sup> Rather it is more likely that some canzoni were read in a different way than others, and therefore reproduced differently. In this light, the reason why only a few songs were introduced by “Cançona morale”, instead of by “Sonetto” as the majority, could find explanation, though the — mostly wrong — identification of the genre of the canzone still leaves us with the question on whether it was taken from the antegraph or was rather generated autonomously by the scribe.

MSS Bodmer 131 and Sc-Ms. 93 show, on one hand, how Petrarch's antegraph/s must have played a key role in influencing the editorial choices of a specific format and graphological devices, while, on the other hand, these later copies' usual, one-column format and graphic-metrical system was by the last decade of the fourteenth century already being tested and solidified. Comparing all the “forme strofico-grafiche” (STOREY 2004, 166) of the canzoni, I was able to verify that the capital letters placed in B and SC(a) to organize the poems' prosodic and syntactic structures coincide exactly with the initials — traced in yellow/gold — placed by Boccaccio in his copy of the *Fragmentorum liber* in MS Chigiano L.v.176 (with the only exclusion of the subdivisions of some stanzas).<sup>32</sup> Thus we can say that in the long trajectory from ca. 1360 to the late Trecento, the majority of the stanza's metrical subdivisions applied both by the copyists of MSS B and SC and by Boccaccio respect the original metrical scheme of the canzoni — so the coincidence does not seem necessarily striking. It is, however, remarkable to find that Boccaccio's copy and the two late-fourteenth codices share occasionally the same but often mistaken subdivisions for the canzoni. I refer in particular to *Rvf* 71, 72 and 73, three canzoni

31. See BENGHI 2020 for a comparison of the *lectiones* of these canzoni in Bodmer 131 and Sc-Ms. 93.

32. For this comparison with the Chigiano manuscript, see cc. 55v–57r in the phototype reproduction of the codex in DE ROBERTIS 1974.

whose stanzas are comprised of 15 verses each and that share the same prosody and, in MS Vaticano Latino 3195, the very same *mise en page*, with two verses per line on seven lines, and the last verse isolated on the last line (see MAGNI, STOREY and WALSH 2014–2020, *ad loc.*). The metrical scheme of the songs is aBC | bAC | CDEeD | fD | FF, therefore the correct subdivision of the stanzas would be in 3+3+5+2+2 verses. And yet Boccaccio, for all three canzoni, applies the marking initial to vv. 1, 4, 7, 10 and 14, thus mistakenly dividing the stanzas in 3+3+3+4+2 verses. MSS B and SC, for their part, show a subdivision in 6+3+4+2 verses in *Rvf* 71 and 72, which clearly replicates Boccaccio's mistaken subdivision of the *sirna*, and then a subdivision of 3+3+3+4+2 verses for the stanzas of the canzone *Poi che per mio destino*, *Rvf* 73, just as Boccaccio had transcribed the poem. It is noteworthy that scholars have identified in Petrarch's authorized copy in Vatican Latino 3195 four small paragraph markers that are placed and subsequently erased at the beginning of the intra-strophic units of the first stanza in each of the three canzoni, a device that Petrarch, his copyist Malpaghini or a subsequent reader might have inserted in order to ensure the accurate understanding of his challenging prosody.<sup>33</sup> As in the course of other research I have found that B and SC partially derive from the same manuscript tradition from which derives also the Chigi copy,<sup>34</sup> it may not be too daring to suppose that graphical solutions and metrical errors similar to the ones we have seen in Bodmer 131 and Sc-Ms. 93 were already practiced in 'non-authorized' copies of the *Fragmenta* circulating in a time preceding the spread of the model of Petrarch's own copy in the holograph.

*Indiana University–Bloomington*

33. Savoca (2008) observes that “regolari segni di paragrafo metrico intrastrofico sono davanti ai vv. 4, 7, 12, 14 per sottolineare lo schema metrico delle strofe”, while also admitting that “di questi, poco visibili ad occhio nudo, tre (non quello davanti al v. 7) sono segnalati da Modigliani [1904] come rasure” (113). The presence of these marks would be worth additional study. For Modigliani's paleographical notes on each of the canzoni, see MODIGLIANI 1904, *ad loc.*, now reprinted in BELLONI, BRUGNOLO, STOREY and ZAMPONI 2004, 256, 258 and 259. For the digital reproduction, see MAGNI, STOREY and WALSH 2014–2020, cc. 15v, 16v and 17r.

34. In BENGHI 2020. On the crucial topic of the “Chigi tradition” see FORESTI 1927/1930, SEREN SCHOEPFLIN 2000, SALVATORE 2014 and STOREY 2015.



## Appendix

### Order of Poems

The poem numbers of the *Rvf* are according to their revised sequence rather than in their physical order as they occur in WILKINS 1951. The poem numbers of the *Disperse* follow SOLERTI 1909.

### Cologny, Fondation Martin Bodmer, Bodmer 131

1-88, 90, 89, 91-111, *Dispersa* CCXIII, 112-120, *Disp.* XXV, *Disp.* CC, *Disp.* CLXXXII, *Disp.* XXVII, *Disp.* XXIX, *Disp.* XIX, 121-122, *Disp.* I, 123-153, 155-158, 154, 159-251, *Disp.* LXIV, 252-339, 342, 340, 351-353, *Disp.* CX, *Disp.* XLVIII, 354, 350, 355, 359, 341, 343, 356, 344-349, 357-358, 360-364, *Disp.* 50, *Disp.* C, *Disp.* CXXIX, 365-366.

### Rimini, Biblioteca Comunale Gambalunga, Sc-Ms. 93

[several chartae missing] 43-50 (vv. 1-6), 61 (vv.13-14)-88, 90, 89, 91-111, *Disp.* CCXIII, 112-120, *Disp.* XXV, *Disp.* CC, *Disp.* CLXXXII, *Disp.* XXVII, *Disp.* XXIX, *Disp.* XIX, 121-122, *Disp.* I, 123-135, [one charta missing], 139-153, 155-158, 154, 159-215, 218, 216-217, 219-237, [one charta missing] 239-242, 121bis, 243-335 [multiple chartae missing].

### Images of SC-Ms. 93:

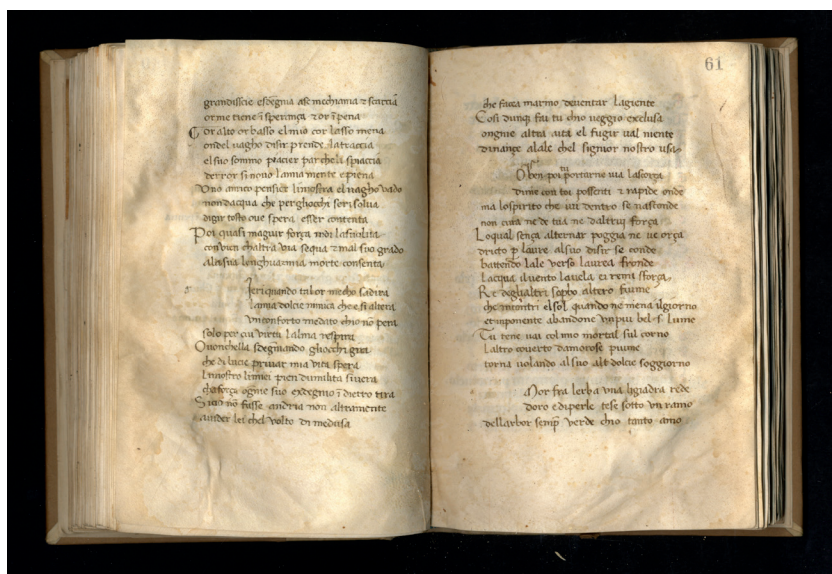


Image 1. Biblioteca civica Gambalunga, SC-MS 93, cc. 60v-61r. With the kind permission of the Biblioteca civic Gambalunga. The last verses on c. 61r are transcribed by copyist 1 (SC(a)) from *Rvf* 181 (*Amor fra l'erba una leggiadra rete*), vv. 1-3.



## Works Cited

### *Manuscript Sources*

- Cologne, Bodmer Library MS 131  
 Firenze, Biblioteca Laurenziana Pluteo 41.10  
 Firenze, Biblioteca Laurenziana Pluteo 41.17  
 Firenze, Biblioteca Laurenziana Segniano 1  
 London British Library, King's MS 321  
 Milano, Biblioteca Trivulziana MS 1015  
 Milano, Biblioteca Trivulziana MS 1091  
 Paris, Bibliothèque nationale de France, Italien 551  
 Rimini, Biblioteca Comunale Gambalunga, Sc–Ms. 93  
 Vatican City, Vatican Library Chigiano L.v.176  
 Vatican City, Vatican Library Latino 3195  
 Vatican City, Vatican Library Latino 3793

### *Printed Sources*

- ALLEGRETTI, Paola. 2003. "Catalogo dei codici italiani, Cod. Bodmer 131". *Corona Nova. Bulletin de la Bibliotheca Bodmeriana* 2: 76–97.
- BELLONI, Gino, Furio BRUGNOLO, H. Wayne STOREY, and Stefano ZAMPONI, eds. 2004. Francesco Petrarca, *Rerum vulgarium fragmenta*. *Codice Vat. Lat. 3195. Commentario all'edizione in fac-simile*. Roma-Padova: Antenore.
- BENGI, Giulia. 2020. "Un' 'edizione integrata' di Petrarca lirico a fine Trecento: I *Fragmenta* e le *Disperse* nel codice Bodmer 131 e in alcuni suoi affini". PhD diss., Indiana University – Bloomington.
- BRUGNOLO, Furio. 1991. "Libro d'autore e forma-canzoniere: implicazioni petrarchesche". *Lectura Petrarce* 11: 259–90.
- . 2004. "Libro d'autore e forma-canzoniere: implicazioni grafico-visive nell'originale dei *Rerum vulgarium fragmenta*", in BELLONI, BRUGNOLO, STOREY, and ZAMPONI 2004, 105–29.
- CAPOVILLA, Guido. 1998. *Sì vario stile. Studi sul Canzoniere del Petrarca*. Modena: Mucchi Editore.
- CURSI, Marco. 2014. "Per la prima circolazione dei *Rerum vulgarium fragmenta*: i manoscritti antiquiores". In *Storia della scrittura e altre storie*, edited by Daniele BIANCONI, 225–61. Roma: Accademia Nazionale dei Lincei.
- DEL PUPPO, Dario, and H. Wayne STOREY. 2003. "Wilkins nella formazione del canzoniere di Petrarca". *Italica* 80: 295–312.
- DEL PUPPO, Dario. 2004. "Remaking Petrarch's *Canzoniere* in the Fifteenth Century". *Medioevo Letterario d'Italia* 1: 115–39.

- . 2007. "Shaping Interpretation: Scribal Practices and Books Formats in Three 'Descripti' Manuscripts of Petrarca's Vernacular Poems". In *Petrarch and the Textual Origins of Interpretation*, edited by Teodolinda BAROLINI and H. Wayne STOREY, 93–129. Leiden — Boston: Brill.
- DE ROBERTIS, DOMENICO. 1974. *Il codice Chigiano L. V. 176 autografo di Giovanni Boccaccio. Introduzione di Domenico De Robertis*. Edizione fototipica. Roma: Archivi edizioni.
- DE ROBERTIS, TERESA. 2016. "I primi anni della scrittura umanistica. Materiali per un aggiornamento". In *Palaeography, Manuscript Illumination and Humanism in Renaissance Italy: Studies in Memory of A. C. de la Mare*, edited by Robert BLACK, Jill KRAYE and Laura NUVOLONI, 55–86. London: The Warburg Institute.
- FORESTI, ARNALDO. 1927/1930. "Per il testo della prima edizione del Petrarca". *La Bibliofilia* 5–6: 157–78; 7–8: 257–85.
- MAGNI, ISABELLA, H. WAYNE STOREY and JOHN WALSH. 2014–2020. *The Petrarchive: A Rich-Text Edition and Commentary of Petrarch's Rerum vulgarium fragmenta*. <http://www.petrarchive.org>
- MODIGLIANI, ETTORE, ed. 1904. *Il canzoniere di Francesco Petrarca riprodotto letteralmente dal codice vat. lat. 3195*. Roma: Società Filologica Romana.
- PACIONI, MARCO. 2004. "Visual Poetics e mise en page nei *Rerum vulgarium fragmenta*". *Letteratura italiana antica* 5: 367–83.
- PANCHERI, ALESSANDRO. 1993. "Col suon chioccio". *Per una frottola dispersa attribuibile a Francesco Petrarca*. Padova: Antenore.
- PULSONI, CARLO and MARCO CURSI. 2010. "Nuove acquisizioni sulla tradizione antica dei *Rerum Vulgarium Fragmenta*". *Medioevo e Rinascimento* 21: 215–76.
- SALVATORE, TOMMASO. 2014. "Sondaggi sulla tradizione manoscritta della 'forma Chigi' (con incursioni pre-chigiane)". *Studi petrarcheschi* 27: 47–106.
- SAVOCA, GIUSEPPE, ed. 2008. *Francesco Petrarca, Rerum Vulgarium Fragmenta. Edizione critica*. Firenze: Leo Olschki Editore.
- SEREN SCHOEPFLIN, LINDA. 2000. "Francesco Petrarca: L'altro 'Canzoniere'". *Atti e Memoria della Accademia Petrarca di Lettere, Arti e Scienze* 62: 133–65.
- SOLERTI, ANGELO, ed. 1909. *Rime disperse di Francesco Petrarca o a lui attribuite*. Firenze: Sansoni.
- STOREY, H. WAYNE. 1989. "Transferring Visual Ambiguity from Manuscript to Modern Edition". *Romance Philology* 43.1: 154–80.
- . 1993. *Transcription and Visual Poetics in the Early Italian Lyric*. New York — London: Garland.
- . 2004. "All'interno della poetica grafico-visiva di Petrarca". In BELLONI, BRUGNOLO, STOREY, and ZAMPONI 2004, 131–71.
- . 2006. "Canzoniere e Petrarchismo: un paradigma di orientamento formale e materiale". In *Il Petrarchismo. Un modello di poesia per l'Europa*, edited by Loredana CHINES, 1: 291–310. Roma: Bulzoni.
- . 2015–2016. "La politica e l'antigrafo del *Fragmentorum liber* (Chigiano Lv 176)". *Heliotropia* 12–13: 305–30.

- . 2017. “Appunti sulla metodologia materiale e sui testi italiani del Medioevo”. *Medioevo Letterario d'Italia* 14: 89–116.
- VECCHI GALLI, Paola, ed. 1997. *Rime disperse di Francesco Petrarca o a lui attribuite, a cura di Angelo Solerti*. Firenze: Le Lettere.
- WILKINS, Ernest Hatch. 1951. *The Making of the “Canzoniere” and Other Petrarchan Studies*. Roma: Edizioni di Storia e Letteratura.



# The Sound of Red Dust

Jean Toomer, Marion Brown, and the  
Sonic Transactions of “Karintha”

*Jürgen E. Grandt*

## ABSTRACT

On his 1973 album *Geechee Recollections*, free jazzer Marion Brown tackles one of the most musical African American narratives, “Karintha” from Jean Toomer’s *Cane*. The velocity of sound Toomer’s text seeks to transcribe in literary form Brown transcribes back into music propelled by what I term Afro-kinesis. Afro-kinesis is a form of motion — a Benjaminian eddy rather than a Derridean trace — that improvises modalities of transaction with and in new-old sonic topographies, and in the process limns an aural modernity that constantly reinvents itself. This kinetic ecology of sound goes beyond acoustic transposition and instead aspires to effect a signifying exchange between the mercurial improvisation of free jazz’s “new thing” and the scripted stasis of literary text, a transaction of meaning across cultural time and physical space.

---

THE TRICKY RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN LITERARY TEXT AND IMPROVISED music has bedeviled even the most formidable of theoreticians. Emblematic of the challenges is the meeting of free jazz pioneer Ornette Coleman with deconstructionist Jacques Derrida in 1997 in France. A few days prior to a public performance, the philosopher sat down to interview the saxophonist, and their conversation predictably revolved also around the storytelling features of music-making. But it augured the ill-fated performance that was to follow in that it seemed as if the two were often talking past, instead of with, each other. When the exchange turned to how Coleman titles his songs, Derrida, with discernible satisfaction, prefaced his next question by relaying his extensive preparations for the encounter. One of the musician’s purported quotes had stuck with Derrida, and he read it back to him: “For reasons that I am not sure of, I am convinced that before becoming music, music was only a word”, and, just to be sure, he added, “Do you recall saying that?” Coleman’s answer was as unequivocal as it was succinct: “No” (2004, 328). The moment presaged what would happen

later under the lights of La Villette: when Coleman brought Derrida to the mic and the latter began to read a prepared text, the audience reacted with such animosity that the philosopher, no longer able to hear himself above the angry clamor, cut his guest performance short and fled the stage after barely fifteen minutes. He would confess later that it had been an excruciatingly “painful experience”.<sup>1</sup> As if discourse itself was teaching Derrida a lesson, it turned out that the transcripts of the earlier interview had been lost together with the tapes, so the signifying “trace” of the original interview that we’re left with is somewhere in the English re-translation of the French translation of the original conversation in English (DERRIDA and COLEMAN 2004, 319).<sup>2</sup>

Coleman’s own notoriously enigmatic expressions — both musical and verbal — and the breakdown of communication they produced in his conversation and performance with Derrida are anticipated by one of the most musical narratives in the African American literary tradition, Jean Toomer’s *Cane* (GRANDT 2009, 36–54). The story is well-known: the fledgling writer had been inspired by his two-month sojourn in Georgia’s Black Belt and set out to “drive straight for [. . .] the spiritual truth of the South” that he had seen and, significantly, heard (quoted in KERMAN and ELDRIDGE 1987, 95). But very quickly, the novelist began to doubt whether he had succeeded: in a poem he included in the cover letter of the manuscript he sent to his publisher, Horace Liveright, Toomer mused, “And when I look for the power and the beauty / I thought I’d caught, they too seem to thin out / and and [sic] elude me” (quoted in TURNER 1988, 154).

One of *Cane*’s aspects that oscillates between powerful beauty and elusive opacity is its relationship to music. The novel is set in land- and cityscapes that are awash in sounds, and central Georgia in particular resonates with Du Boisian sorrow songs. Literary critics have been reading its sonic transactions with two different lenses. One views in *Cane* a musical rescue operation of sorts, the result of a documentarian, ethnomusicologi-

1. Quoted in RAMSHAW 2016, 10; see also DERRIDA 2005, 331–3; WILLS 2008, 158–60, 164–6.
2. A similar over- or misreading of free improvised music was engendered by Sun Ra’s first performance in France: the Paris-based *Jazz Magazine* had called on a gaggle of journalists and intellectuals — Derrida was not among them — to discuss the puzzling multi-media spectacle the Arkestra had staged. One confused critic noted that the dancers “weren’t doing anything at all”, which caused another to muse, “What they were dancing to was the death of the sign” (quoted in SZWED 1998, 289).

cal impulse to preserve a quickly disappearing expression of vernacular folk culture through artistic reimagination.<sup>3</sup> The other gleans from its music a critical counterpoint to the racial and sexual politics of the Jim Crow South in particular, 1920s America in general.<sup>4</sup> What both interpretive schools share is that their readings are efforts to extract musical meaning from the literary text. But what happens when we effect a critical turnaround, as it were, and attempt to read the music back into the text? What transactive processes are at play when static literary script is immersed in fluid, freely improvised sound, and what resonances does musical improvisation in turn amplify in the printed word?

For this, we turn to one of Ornette Coleman's peers, Marion Brown. Brown was a member of the inner core of what fellow saxophonist and friend Archie Shepp called the "avant-gardistas" around John Coltrane and is, unjustly so, remembered mostly as the 'other' saxophonist on Trane's groundbreaking *Ascension* album (quoted in KAHN 2006, 3). A native Atlantan, Brown initially studied music at Clark College, but then transferred to Howard University's law program. Unable to resist the call of "the new thing" in jazz, he dropped out of college and moved to New York City, where he befriended Coleman, Shepp, Sun Ra, and also Amiri Baraka. In fact, Brown played one of the subway train passengers in the premiere of Baraka's *Dutchman*. It was Baraka, too, who introduced the saxophonist to *Cane*, which initiated a lifelong fascination with the novel. But like many African American jazz musicians, Brown was frustrated by the rapidly declining performance opportunities and relocated to Europe in 1967, where he became an integral part of the burgeoning free jazz avant-garde, particularly in his collaborations with German multi-instrumentalist Gunter Hampel. Three years on, however, Brown returned to the U.S. and his native Atlanta. His homecoming spurred a similar spell of inspiration as Toomer's brief sojourn in Sparta, Georgia, half a century earlier. The result was the Georgia trilogy, three albums recorded between 1970 and 1974: *Afternoon of a Georgia Faun* for the German ECM label, and *Geechee Recollections* and *Sweet Earth Flying*, both for Impulse!. Brown went on to have a distinguished career as an educator and musicologist, and in the 1980s began to develop a strong interest in painting as well.<sup>5</sup>

3. See BARLOW 2014, 192–4; HUTCHINSON 2019, XX–I.

4. See NUNN 2015, 133–5; GRAHAM 2013, 119–35.

5. See EDWARDS 2017, 183–6; ENGLISH n.d.; COLTRANE 2009; PORTER 2002, 246–54; SZWED 1998, 194–215.

From almost the beginning of his career, the musician had been fascinated by the intersection of speech and sound, a fascination that, if it wasn't fomented by the playwright Baraka, then was certainly amplified by him. In 1968, for example, a year into his European exile, Brown co-led with Hampel a quintet in Munich's Modern Theatre to record an album entitled *Gesprächsfetzen*. The title track — literally translated “snippets of conversation” and composed by Brown, not Hampel — gave sound to the saxophonist's programmatic approach. As Bertold Hummel tried to explain in the liner notes, this was improvised, instrumental music that conceived of “speech as sound, melody, and rhythm” akin to “overheard words that condense without meaning to impressions” (1976). On 1973's *Geechee Recollections*, Brown for the first time commingled free musical improvisation with literary text, and for that, he chose the book that had preoccupied him for years, Toomer's *Cane*, specifically the opening vignette of the triptych, “Karintha”. That he would be drawn to this particular chapter is no coincidence, for Toomer himself had declared that it expressed a “spirit saturate with folk-song” (quoted in TURNER 1988, 151).

In Brown's rendition, percussionist Bill Hasson faithfully narrates the text of “Karintha” in full, but it is accompanied by the collective free improvisation of the saxophonist's octet. Clocking in at almost ten minutes, the piece furnishes anything but the ‘soundtrack’ to Toomer's text. In fact, the only sonic mimesis occurs at the very beginning with Hasson's wordless humming, joined after a few seconds by a meandering mbira (the African thumb piano), some African percussion, and a few aleatory trumpet spurts. When the sketch first appeared in the January 1923 issue of *Broom* magazine, Toomer proposed to his audience that “Karintha” “*be read, accompanied by the humming of a Negro folk song*” (TOOMER 1923, 83). Yet the music that accompanies the opening words of the text alerts us right away that something other than mere musical replication is afoot: the ode to the protagonist's beauty, “Her skin is like dust on the eastern horizon / O cant you see it, O cant you see it”, is underscored by the cello's arco playing that extends and quickly deconstructs the melody of the ostensible folk song hummed at the outset. The entire piece is played in free time, that is, without a regular pulse or meter. The cello and an array of percussion remain the most prominent instruments for the duration of the song: the trumpet, bass, flute, and Brown's soprano saxophone weave in and out of the musical tapestry, somewhat like young Karintha's “sudden darting past you” that “was a bit of vivid color, like a black bird that flashes in light”. The quivering sonic texture builds to something of a climax with the incineration of the title character's child, but the song lyrics “[s]ome

one made" after Karintha's return to town, Hasson — who, we'll recall, hums a diatonic melody at the very beginning — doesn't in fact put to a tune; he only recites the words (BROWN 2011; TOOMER 1988, 3–4). The only departure from Toomer's script occurs when Hasson interpolates a series of "humphs" after noting that Karintha had perhaps witnessed her parents' lovemaking in their cramped two-room shack. The track ends with Brown playing a bluesy minor pentatonic motif, and the final sounds we hear are those of fading bells.

Brown once remarked of Toomer, "He wrote in two ways, disguised and very open, and used a lot of metaphor" (quoted in ALLEN 2018). With but two brief exceptions that bookend the performance — Hasson's melodic humming in the opening, and the vaguely eastern-sounding bells that close out the tune following the final invocation of Karintha's skin tone as "dusk on the eastern horizon / [ . . . ] When the sun goes down" — the music Brown and his seven cohorts create is almost stubbornly non-referential. Just as the story never explicitly mentions either Karintha's disposal of her baby's body in the smoldering sawdust pile or the identity of the baby's father the townsfolk obsess over, so does the music never 'translate' the singing of Sempter's black women, or the song about the protagonist one Sempterite creates. Toomer's frequent use of ellipses does not result in musical rests here either.

Musically as enigmatic as the text it amplifies, Brown's "Karintha" nevertheless suggests how the oscillation of speech and sound plays into the literary script. The puzzling simile of the epigraph's opening line associates the title character's beauty more with time than with color: what color "dusk on the *eastern* horizon" is supposed to be the text leaves, to use Brown's terminology, at once "disguised and very open". Hasson's repeated incantation, "O cant you see it", reminds us that, of course, we can't *see* Karintha's beauty: literary language cannot make us see, just as it cannot make us hear — other than its own, muted echo as speech, that is (BROWN 2011; TOOMER 1988, 3–4). We can hear it, only figuratively, in the singing that Toomer's literary text both reports and mimics. What Hasson's recitation does remind us of, though, is that dusk is a moment in time — and both musicmaking and storytelling are after all acts that embellish the passage of time.

Thus, from the beginning, Karintha moves within and between competing velocities of time. "Men had always wanted her, this Karintha, even as a child", the narrative begins, and "[t]his interest of the male, who wishes to ripen a growing thing too soon, could mean no good to her" (BROWN 2011; TOOMER 1988, 3). The objectifying male gaze seeks to subject the



young girl to an expediting trajectory of linear, teleological time. When Hasson speaks that sentence, Brown holds a series of long notes on his soprano saxophone, over a rustling and bustling carpet of percussion and cello: thus, the music, not the spoken words, pits an alternate conception of time — that is, free time — against the accelerating timeline of the male Sempterites' sexualizing gaze. The pubescent title character, however, tries to evade the acceleration of chronological time imposed upon her by enacting evasive movements of her own:

Karintha, at age twelve, was a wild flash that told the other folks just what it was to live. At sunset, when there was no wind, and the pine-smoke from over by the sawmill hugged the earth, and you couldnt see more than a few feet in front, her sudden darting past you was a bit of vivid color, like a black bird that flashes in light.

(BROWN 2011; TOOMER 1988, 3)

Once again, sight is circumscribed and superseded by movement through (suspended) time. The three-dimensional kinesis of Karintha's "darting", "wild" flights punctuates an otherwise static landscape where, at dusk, even the inexorably forward-moving vector of time appears momentarily arrested.

Significantly, before we hear the sound of Sempter's black women singing, we hear the sound of Karintha's motion:

With the other children one could hear, some distance off, their feet flopping in the two-inch dust. Karintha's running was a whirl. It had the sound of the red dust that sometimes makes a spiral in the road. At dusk, during the hush just after the sawmill had closed down, and before any of the women had started their supper-getting-ready songs, her voice, high-pitched, shrill, would put one's ears to itching. But no one ever thought to make her stop because of it.

(BROWN 2011; TOOMER 1988, 3–4)

It is the sound of Karintha's evasive kinesis that we hear, before we ever hear her voice. And in Bill Hasson's voice as he narrates this passage, we cannot help but hear — or, rather, listen for — the sonic, Derridean trace of red dust. By the time we listen for it, however, Karintha herself has already disappeared, out of our sight, and the narrative voice's sight. Perpetually just beyond our field of vision because just beyond the reach of literary language, Brown's Karintha actually enacts what it means to

improvise: after all, the etymology of the very verb, from the Latin *improvisus*, means dealing with the unforeseen (NORTON 2016, 263–4). The puffs of red dust the unseen Karintha leaves behind, we are also told, do not travel along a linear trajectory either, but they form a spiral, sounding at once that which is always already no longer here, and that which presages its own eventual return, forward and back, up and down. Toomer's use of ellipses, which increases over the course of the chapter, resonates with a quasi-contrapuntal frequency, for they suggest both temporal acceleration and suspension. Or, as John Coltrane, Brown's erstwhile employer, might play it, the red dust's spiraling kinesis sounds in "both directions at once" (quoted in KAHN 2018).

Karintha's running feet surely must have also touched the red dust of the Dixie Pike, which, as "Carma" famously tells us, "has grown from a goat path in Africa" (TOOMER 1988, 12). For *Geechee Recollections*, Brown secured the talents of master drummer Abraham Kobena Adzenyah, a native of the Fante tribe of coastal Ghana (FIGI 2011). But, neither is Toomer's text anthropological reportage, nor is Adzenyah's drumming simply a replay of Ghanaian polyrhythms. The velocity of sound Toomer attempts to transcribe in literary narrative, Brown *trans*-scribes, over and across the written text, back into music propelled by what might be termed Afro-kinesis. Extemporized as it is, happening in the moment, musical Afro-kinesis remains attuned to both the historicity and futurity of its current trajectory and is therefore antiphonal in nature. To put it differently, particularly in the context of free improvisation, that which is being played at any given instant acquires musical meaning only if it relates to that which has just been played in the previous instant, as well as to that which will have been played in the next. The Afro-kinesis in "Karintha", then, is a form of coiling motion that improvises modalities of transaction with and in new-old sonic topographies, and in the process limns an aural modernity that constantly reinvents itself.<sup>6</sup> This kinetic ecology of sound goes beyond acoustic transposition of written or spoken language, as we have heard,

6. This coiling form of motion is precisely what other genres of (black) music cannot amplify as well as the freely improvised transactions of the "new thing". Compare Brown's take on Toomer with, for example, Gil Scott-Heron's: "Cane", from the 1978 album *Secrets*, is set over a languid, radio-friendly soul-jazz groove and contains very little improvisation, certainly no free collective improvisation. While there is plenty of swirling percussion on the track, rhythmically everything comes back to the steady pulse dictated by co-leader Brian Jackson's drum set, and harmonically everything remains safely tethered to the chord progression of mostly minor and diminished sevenths. Afro-kinetic it certainly

and instead aspires to effect a signifying exchange between the mercurial improvisation of free jazz's "new thing" and the scripted stasis of literary text, a transaction of meaning across cultural time and physical space. The fact that the story of Marion Brown's "Karintha" unfolds in chronological time, but it is rendered in free time, is crucial here. The push-and-pull between Hasson's recitation of text and the free improvisation of sound by his cohorts results not in the unearthing of lost traces — traces of meaning, of sound, of authenticity, of origins — but in the layering of ever proliferating spirals. (And we perhaps remember at this point also that the musicological term for free time is "recitativo" or "parlando", whether sung or strictly instrumental.)

Yet, crucially, none of these layered spirals converges with Karintha's own voice, as she herself remains mute. The only time we read-hear Karintha's voice is when it fills the "hush" right before the "supper-getting-ready-songs", after she has left behind the sounds of spiraling red dust. Mediated through the narrator — Hasson as much as Toomer — it is a doubly disembodied voice, a voice described as "high-pitched, shrill". It is a wordless voice, too, for all we know, and its high-pitched shrillness certainly precludes it as "the humming of a Negro folk-song" that Toomer wanted us to hear while reading his story. It is a voice that, in contrast to the male gaze from which it runs away in a kinetic whirl, is omnidirectional and engulfs, spiral-like, all of Sempter. Likewise, its higher frequencies sound in both directions at once, with Ralph Ellison's invisible man marking black-and-blue time just ahead of and just below Jean Toomer's Dixie Pike: they sound to the future up ahead in that they anticipate what happens after Karintha comes back from the forest, having burned her baby's body, for "[w]eeks after Karintha returned home the smoke was so heavy you tasted it in water. Some one made a song: Smoke is on the hills. Rise up. / Smoke is on the hills, O rise / And take my soul to Jesus" (TOOMER 1988, 4). This, as Toomer emphasizes, is decidedly not a traditional folk song even as it responds to historical exigencies: it is "made up" as a response to the centrifugal pressures — sexual, racial, economic — of ever accelerating modernity. In the pages of the January 1923 issue of *Broom* magazine, the anonymous singer asked that his soul be taken simply "away"; by the time "Karintha" appeared in the pages of *Cane*, the need for spiritual redemption had apparently intensified (1923, 85).

---

is, too, but its coils are not nearly as expansive as Brown's (SCOTT-HERON and JACKSON 1978; see also GRANDT 2018, 12–16).

As such, the ‘made-up’ song points even further ahead. In the text, Sempter’s preacher is not exempt from Karintha’s mesmerizing beauty, but even when he catches her causing one ruckus after another, he “told himself that she was as innocently lovely as a November cotton flower” (TOOMER 1988, 3). “November Cotton Flower” is the title of the second of the two poems interpolated between the opening sketch and “Becky”, a poem that paints the scene of a southern wasteland devastated by the boll-weevil, yet a solitary cotton flower suddenly blooms at the threshold of winter, promising both redemptive “love without fear” and “beauty”. *Cane* itself concludes with “a birth-song” at the end of “Kabnis”, a song that spirals out from there to 1973 and Marion Brown’s recording session (TOOMER 1988, 6, 117). But Karintha’s Afro-kinesis simultaneously points in the other direction, too, back into the past. The shape of the “pyramidal sawdust pile” in which her baby’s body smolders echoes a mythical past, and in her wordlessly shrill voice that fills the interstices between silence and song, issuing forth in a landscape of exploitation and deprivation, resonates perhaps the wordless scream of Frederick Douglass’s Aunt Hester, a muted scream because, as the memoirist notes, its frequencies defied even his considerable abilities to transcribe into literary text and “commit to paper”.<sup>7</sup>

“Where shriek turns speech turns song — remote from the impossible comfort of origin — lies the trace of our descent”, argues Fred Moten (2003, 22), which returns us to the discomfort in the original starting point of my own thinking here, namely the conversation between Ornette Coleman and Jacques Derrida. “Being black and the descendant of slaves, I have no idea what my language of origin was”, the saxophonist told the phi-

7. TOOMER 1988, 4; DOUGLASS 1994, 18. In *My Bondage and My Freedom*, they don’t any longer: “‘Have mercy; Oh! Have mercy’ she cried; ‘I won’t do so no more;’ but her piercing cries seemed only to increase [the old master’s] fury” (1994, 177). However, the early chapters, too, resonate with muted screams, only this time, they belong to Nelly, another slave on the Lloyd plantation, and her children: her shrieks of agony, Douglass writes, “I have no heart to describe. [ . . . ] The cries of the woman, while undergoing the terrible infliction, were mingled with those of the children, sounds which I hope the reader may never be called upon to hear”, and which therefore are withheld (1994, 182). *Life and Times of Frederick Douglass* also transcribes the screams of Hester — now called Esther — but Nelly’s cries remain unscripted (1994, 497, 500; see also BLIGHT 2018, 25). That Nelly’s agony is still soundless in Douglass’s final autobiography, with the failure of Reconstruction painfully evident, is clearly the memoirist’s scripting of what DoVeanna Fulton calls “strategic silence” (2006, 66).

losopher (2004, 325). Instead of some kind of “saxotelephonepiphany” — a transaction of meaning Derrida never got to participate in because that coinage occurs at the very end of his scripted remarks, long after he would be drowned out by the irate audience — instead, therefore, of a Derridean trace, Coleman’s harmolodic Afro-kinesis, as much as Brown’s, spirals around and over a Benjaminian concept of origin (DERRIDA 2005, 340):

Origin does not mean the becoming of that which has arisen, rather it means that which emerges from the process of becoming and vanishing. The origin stands in the stream of becoming like an eddy and sucks into its rhythm the very materials forming the process of origination. That which is original never reveals itself in the naked, manifest existence of the factual; its rhythm opens itself up only to a dual insight. It wants to be recognized as restoration and reconstitution on the one hand, but precisely for that reason as incompleteness, imperfection, on the other.

(BENJAMIN 1996, 28)

An eddy, of course, is a spiral of water in perpetual motion and without a discernible, stable source, whose rhythm asks the eye to look, the ear to listen, in both directions at once. The dialectical, ‘dual outsound’ of the spiraling grooves in the vinyl from which Marion Brown’s “Karintha” emanates, then, amplifies the title character’s un-seen restoration and un-heard incompleteness.<sup>8</sup>

8. That “Karintha” stands in approximately the middle of the “stream” that is Brown’s Georgia trilogy is in all likelihood coincidental. Yes, it is the second track of the middle album, but the first entrance in the series is by far the most experimental one. “The music you’re listening to”, Brown avers in the liner notes to *Afternoon of a Georgia Faun*,

is a collective experience involving six players, two vocalists, and three assistants. Although I am responsible for initiating the music, I take no credit for the results. Whatever they may be, it goes to the musicians collectively. The people that I chose to assist are not actually musicians, but people who have a sense of rhythm and melody. My idea here is that it is possible for non-musicians to participate in a musical experience without being technically proficient in a theoretical sense. In the future, I intend to use some non-musicians for the same reasons. It works. Try it sometimes. (quoted in OFFSTEIN 2008)

One of the “assistants” on the record is William Green, who plays a “top o’lin”, an invention of Brown’s, ever the Ellisonian tinkerer: the top o’lin is a board with cooking pot tops attached, which are then either played like a percus-



At the beginning of Derrida's scripted remarks for his non-dialogue with Coleman, itself incomplete and imperfect, is also a reconstitutive gesture:

I would like for all of you to hear Ornette's mother's voice by calling on her to speak or giving her back her voice [. . .]. *Sa voix a elle*, herself, **her own voice**, that has obsessed me for eight days and eight nights, to the point of hallucination. How to improvise a phrase with Ornette's mother whose first name I don't even know, and then dedicate it to her as a declaration of love, that is the wager, the part or the piece that I am going to play for you — sometimes without an instrument and without accompaniment, sometimes, when he so decides, in the company of Ornette Coleman, superimposed.

(2005, 332).

During the interview a week prior, the saxophonist had shared an anecdote from his youth concerning his mother's misgivings about pursuing a music career, and her haunting, "spectral voice" the philosopher now used as the harmolodic cue for his own ostensible improvisations on art and commerce, text and sound, composition and improvisation, race and identity.<sup>9</sup> How much of Derrida's performance would have been 'improvised' is impossible to assess since he got booed off the stage well before Coleman could "send [. . .] to me in music, in saxotelephony, in saxotelephonepiphany", the "**unpredictable gift**, of his mother's first name". Like Karintha's child and

---

sion instrument or like a string instrument, with a bow. With the following two installments in the trilogy, the music becomes progressively more melodic; gone, too, are "assistants". Perhaps this development was in part influenced by a switch in labels: *Afternoon of a Georgia Faun* was only the fourth record released by the fledgling ECM, whose producer, Manfred Eicher, was willing to take extraordinary risks in order to put his new company on the jazz map. *Geechee Recollections* and *Sweet Earth Flying* were both issued by the American Impulse! label, which wasn't quite as welcoming to experimental music anymore as it had been in its earlier days, facing a rapidly shrinking audience for jazz in the U.S. Furthermore, the Georgia trilogy fits neatly into Brown's 1970s work in that he began to flirt with commercially much more viable fusion verging on smooth jazz in the second half of the decade on albums like *Vista* — also on Impulse! — or *Awofofora* — curiously, for the Japanese Discomate label, so named because it secured the distribution rights for the oeuvre of Swedish pop juggernaut ABBA, whose releases comprised the bulk of its catalog (BROWN 1976; 2001).

9. DERRIDA 2005, 334; DERRIDA and COLEMAN 2004, 323; see also FROST FADNESS 2019, 451; SPELLMAN 1985, 83–95.

its father, Coleman's mother remains "firstnameless", a void troubling the French philosopher to the point of obsession, as much as it does the men of Sempster (DERRIDA 2005, 340, 337). Nonetheless, Derrida's aborted performance with Coleman is rich with intimations about the complex interplay between the fixed literary text of Toomer's "Karintha" and the freely improvised sounds of Brown and his seven cohorts, and how this interplay transacts, ironically, in Benjaminian eddies rather than Derridean traces.<sup>10</sup> "Could it be", asks Fumi Okiji, herself drawing on Walter Benjamin, "that jazz takes advantage of the inevitability of failure encoded in artistic pursuit? That it makes a virtue of irresolution and incompletion?" (2018, 68).

The origins of Derrida's "Play — the First Name" lie in a voice that remains nameless. Said voice is a mute(d) one, just like Karintha's, whose voice also stubbornly resists 'naming' — that is, resists capturing it in literary script or on the musical staff. Both are maternal voices, and hence ordinary ones, yet Karintha's defies literary notation in Toomer, just as it defies musical notation with Brown and his seven cohorts, and just as Coleman's mother's defies Derrida's script. Instead, this voice is submerged somewhere in a heady swirl of words, or sounds — 'literary snippets', *Literaturfetzen*, in Toomer's case; 'musical snippets', *Tonfetzen*, in Brown's case, to riff on the latter's 1968 album title. Listening to Toomer's "Karintha" as a literary

10. While there certainly are affinities between Benjaminian eddy and Derridean trace, Gayatri Spivak's comments are instructive here: "Derrida, then, gives the name 'trace' to the part played by the radically other within the structure of difference that is the sign. (I stick to 'trace' in my translation, because it 'looks the same' as Derrida's word; the reader must remind himself of at least the track, even the spoor, contained within the French word.)" (1976, XVII). As Derrida himself puts it, "The trace is not only the disappearance of origin — within the discourse that we sustain and according to the path that we follow it means that the origin did not even disappear, that it was never constituted except reciprocally by a nonorigin, the trace, which thus becomes the origin of the origin". While the trace "belongs to the very movement of signification", it is in and of itself not kinetic (1976, 61, 70). Derrida's trace — track, spoor — *facilitates* motion, but it is part of "a ciphered spacing" and not mobile per se (1978, 201–5). Benjamin's eddy, meanwhile, is in constant, churning motion. Again, the image of Toomer's Dixie Pike comes in handy at this point: it is a Derridean path/track/spoor in that it hearkens back to African (or Africanist) precedents if not origins and simultaneously points in both directions at once, but in and of itself it is a fixed feature of the ciphered spacing of Sempster's topography. It is only the sound of spiraling red dust kicked up by Karintha's running feet amidst the swirling free improvisations of Brown's octet that reveals Toomer's literary language as a series of Afro-kinetic eddies.

swirl stirred by Afro-kinesis also accounts for the author's multiple tracings of *Cane*'s narrative arc. "CANE'S design is a circle", he wrote to his friend Waldo Frank, and "[b]etween each of the three sections, a curve. These, to vaguely indicate the design" (quoted in TURNER 1988, 152). According to Toomer himself, one circle begins in the South, another in the North, yet another in the upper Midwest with "Bona and Paul" — but only in the printed form is one of the three curves in "[b]etween". Were we to visualize these ever-shifting, mobile circular shapes, what we would therefore see is something more akin to an eddy. As perpetually swirling elements of the larger Afro-kinetic eddy that is *Cane*, the three curves — fragments, "Fetzen", snippets — hearken back, perhaps, also to the African ring shout (GRANDT 2009, 35–8).

For all its hypermodernist investment in and reflection of fragmentation, *Cane* nevertheless finds, as per Okiji via Benjamin, virtue in its own irresolute and incomplete nature. In fact, Toomer had first intended what would become the opening sketch in his novel as part of his play *Natalie Mann*. Its titular heroine is a beautiful young woman chafing under the stultifying social and moral codes of black Washington's upper crust. The story of her struggle to escape, a tale frequently halted by lengthy philosophical discussions about art and the New Negro, race and class, sex and politics, family and self-actualization, is underscored from the very beginning by music. While waiting for her fiancé, Nathan Merilh — another one of Toomer's semi-autobiographical artist-figures — to arrive at a tea party, the protagonist is asked to entertain the guests with her skills as a pianist: "*Natalie, with none of the silly modesty of so-called parlor artists, complies. She runs her fingers over the keys, musing. Recalls the presence of the others, and plays a light inconsequential piece, which is obviously quite foreign to her mood. Then, unconcerned as to the consequences or possible inferences, pours her very soul into the Presto agitato of Beethoven's Moonlight Sonata*" (TOOMER 1980, 253). What the Washington elite considers Natalie's romantic recklessness is, at the beginning of the play, still contained by the script of European classical concert music. Indeed, also under pressure from her mother, the protagonist dissolves her engagement to Nathan after the would-be artist is spotted at the Black Bear Cabaret reuniting with a former flame of his, dancer Etty Beal. Succumbing to the "*frankly sensual demands of the place and time*" and "*swing[ing] into the obvious implications of the rhythm*" the jazz quartet performs behind Etty, Nathan joins her in a risqué dance which, Toomer tells us in the stage directions, "*becomes a spontaneous*" — that is, improvised — "*embodiment of the struggle of two souls, against external barriers, for freedom and integrity*" (1980, 276). Natalie's spiritual and artistic liberation over the course of the play takes her from the scripted parlor

music of Beethoven and Wagner that offers only limited space for authentic self-expression to the improvised blues and jazz modalities of ‘authentic’ blackness championed by Nathan and embodied by Etty Beal — named, perhaps, after Memphis’s Beale Street, immortalized by none other than W. C. Handy, the “Father of the Blues”.<sup>11</sup>

Following that scandalous éclat, society gossip links Nathan to a bootlegging operation allegedly run out of the Black Bear; his wealthy father disowns him, and Natalie breaks off their engagement. Consequently, the restless artist decides to leave Washington, and the eve of his departure finds him in his study “*playing on a mandolin and humming Negro spirituals. ‘Deep River’. ‘Roll Jordan Roll’. ‘Steal Away’. And one or two near folk-songs which he and Natalie have written*” (TOOMER 1980, 296.). At this very moment of communion with the source of black musical creativity, Natalie enters, joins him in the singing and, unable to deny her love any longer, decides to elope with him to New York City. It is there that “Karintha” makes its first appearance. At a gathering of bohemian artists in their apartment, Nathan is asked to share one of his manuscripts in progress, and he proceeds to read what would become the opening prose piece in *Cane*, while the guests “*hum an adaptation of a Negro spiritual*” (TOOMER 1980, 310). But *Natalie Mann* was never performed on stage in Toomer’s lifetime. Producers rejected the play because its action, what little there is, is overburdened by much pontification (FOLEY 2014, 150–2). *Cane*, however, restores “Karintha” practically verbatim. In transporting the text from a bohemian apartment in New York City back to its native soil of red dust in Georgia, *Cane* does more than restore it — the novel reconstitutes it in fundamental ways, with Marion Brown’s version in turn irradiating its Afro-kinetic dynamics.

In *Natalie Mann*, on the other hand, black music propels the character development teleologically; it is a linear kinesis that the sonic transactions affect. The same evening in Nathan’s study that sees the two lovers reunited, Natalie bares the nature of her passionate love by telling him the “folk-tale” of Coomba, an African princess. Her father, the king, disapproved of Ali, her lover, and sent him into captivity to the coast, whence he was shipped to the New World. In an act of what Rahsaan Roland Kirk might call “Volunteered Slavery”, Coomba “sold herself that she might

11. After all, Handy’s “Beale Street Blues” also famously contains a paean to sexual shenanigans frowned upon by polite society: “If Beale Street could talk — / If Beale Street could talk, / Married men would have to take their beds and walk” (ARMSTRONG 1997; see also HANDY 1991, 122–7).

accompany Ali to the other shore”.<sup>12</sup> There, the two worked side by side in the cotton and rice fields of the American South as “the real pioneers”, but their relative bliss was short-lived:

One day, in her sight, Ali was killed. Before night-fall, Coomba had been cruelly violated. The story tells of how, that night, America heard the first folk-song. . . . I love with the passion of that woman. My love is the need of working with you day by day. Of planting and harvesting. Of clearing ground. Of seeing the sunset in your eyes at night. Like Coomba, when passion cools, or dies, then, it will be that I will sing my first song.

(TOOMER 1980, 301).

And so, precisely because music pushes the play’s action forward to its inevitable climax, the story of Coomba foreshadows the ending of *Natalie Mann*. Returning to the District when they learn of the terminal illness of a mutual friend, the final scene finds the couple at the Black Bear, which “has been made as respectable as possible” for a charity benefit (TOOMER 1980, 319). Etty is part of the event, and once again she beckons Nathan to join her in her provocative dance. As he does, Toomer’s stage directions have the jazz orchestra stop in awe of the performance they are witnessing, but then, “[a]s if from some indefinite region, a music is evoked, an interpretive music, symbolic of the dance and triumph of souls. Beginning as a medley of national, racial folk-tunes, it spirals into a music that is individual and triumphant. At the very crest of creation, something inside of Merilh gives away, and his limp form is saved from sinking to the floor by the firmness with which Etty holds him”. In the ensuing confusion and chaos, “Natalie seems to [be] growing by inches” and experiences an epiphany — likely the true meaning of the myth of Coomba. As she condemns the society women for their weeping, “Etty springs to her feet before Natalie. They face each other, not in jealousy, but in the glow of an instant mutual recognition” (1980, 324–5).

12. “Volunteered slavery has got me on the run, / Volunteered slavery has got me having fun” (KIRK 1993a). In the liner notes to the album of the same title, Kirk explains, “We are all driven by an invisible whip. Some run, some have fun, some are hip, some tip, some dip, but we all must answer to the invisible whip” (quoted in WILLIAMS 1993). The love story of Coomba and Ali that engendered the first American folk song is propelled by also literal whips, Natalie and Nathan’s by figurative but no less injurious ones. Not quite coincidentally, therefore, “Volunteered Slavery” would often transform, Afro-kinetically, into a rousing rendition of “Hey Jude” — after all, the Beatles exhorted their addressee to “[t]ake a sad song and make it better” (KIRK 1993b).



True, the modernist music that prepares Natalie and Etty each to recognize herself in the other also moves in spirals, we are told — like the red dust kicked up by Karinthä's feet. It is indeed a music of tragedy and triumph both, or, to put it in Benjaminian terms, of imperfection and reconstitution. But in *Natalie Mann*, music is not an eddy. Instead, the play maps a linear trajectory of sound: with the murder of Ali and the violation of Coomba, black music has a concretely identifiable locus of origin and then develops to “grow” into the climactic dance scene. Here, music is merely representational, a sign reflecting the narrative arc and the characters' inner being, as well as the signpost guiding the creation of black art in the Harlem Renaissance, as evidenced by Nathan's reading of his manuscript. The play's sonic transactions begin with Coomba and, with Beethoven and Wagner as a literal counterpoint, end in the Black Bear. In *Cane*, on the other hand, music turns the printed word itself into an Afro-kinetic eddy, a transformation that Marion Brown's freely improvised music churns loose. Once Toomer repurposed his alter-ego's manuscript for his novel and shepherded the title character of “Karintha” from an artist's chambers in the Big Apple back to the dusty goat paths of the Peach State, the return effected at least a partial restoration of *Natalie Mann*, the play that was never produced and would remain unheard and incomplete, unseen and imperfect.

The difference, then, between the text the Toomeresque Nathan reads to his bohemian buddies and the text Bill Hasson recites to the collective improvisation of Marion Brown and the others is subtle, but absolutely crucial. For Moten, “the question ‘What is a language?’ is not eclipsed but illumined by the question of what happens when we hear a sequence of sounds”, and he adds,

there is a certain black study of language (music) that is itself derived from the inaugurative event of Afro-diasporic experience understood precisely as an interplay of disembodiedness and disembeddedness, from which the materials of stolen life, its self-contextualizing, corpulent multiplicity, continually emerge. It's not that syntax just hovers out there, but that there is a serialization of the syntactic moment, at once oblitative and generative, that is materialized by bodies, in context; there is an (ongoing) event out of which language emerges that language sometimes tries to capture.

(2016, 131–2)

Once “Karintha” is ‘disembedded’ from literary text and reimbedded in freely improvised sound — the “corpulent multiplicity” of Brown's octet (as

opposed to the textual multiplicity of the voices surrounding “Karintha” in *Natalie Mann*) — it generates its own Afro-kinesis. And Afro-kinesis is nothing if not a serialized syntactic event become sound, the sound of spiraling red dust. Awash in the sounds of free improvisation, “Karintha” reveals the sonic transactions in Toomer’s novel as discursive eddies. Which is to say that in and as literary text, Coomba’s folksong remains perpetually silent, precisely because she embodies it in and as text. What words Coomba sang in this, the first, original and originary American folksong, we shall never know — but, as Walter Benjamin reminds us, the original changes and renews itself perpetually anyway: “There is a maturing on, even of fixed words” (1977, 53). And so, Coomba’s singing voice assuredly swirls somewhere in the Afro-kinetic eddy of Brown’s “Karintha” along with the sounds of spiraling red dust, precisely because the saxophonist is tuned into how the novelist rearranged the ostensible fixity of the printed word in such a way as to *trans*-scribe *Cane*’s “Karintha” as a sonic Afro-kinetic eddy.

Brown’s trans-scribing of “Karintha” over and across the printed word into freely improvised sound is a process that certainly shares affinities with the critical concepts of transcription, translation, transcoding, or transmediation, but it is also a process that isn’t fully captured by them (TAYLOR 2009, 93–6). It still involves scripting in the conventional sense not just because of Hasson’s recitation of the literary script, but because the means of technological reproducibility have reinscribed the octet’s free improvisations into the spiraling vinyl groove of the LP. Exactly how Brown’s Afro-kinetic trans-scripting differs from other transactions of meaning is captured in a late nineteenth-century account by a Kentucky freedwoman of the origins of the spirituals: “Us ole heads use ter make ‘em up on de spurn of de moment” — that is, improvisationally — “arter we wrassle wid de Sperit and come thoo. But the tunes was brung from Africa by our granddaddies”, she insists. She recalls Sunday services where

de white preacher he’d splain de word and read whar Ezekial done say—“Dry bones gwine ter lib ergin”. And, honey, de Lord would come a-shinin’ thoo dem pages and revive dis ole nigger’s heart, and I’d jump up dar and den and holler and shout and sing and pat, and dey would all cotch de words and I’d sing it to some ole shout song I’d heard ‘em sing from Africa, and dey’d all take it up and keep at it, and keep a-addin’ to it, and den it would be a spiritual. Dese spirituals am de best moanin’ music in de world, case dey is de whole Bible sung out and out. Notes is good enough for you people, but us likes a mixtery.

(quoted in ROBINSON MURPHY 1899, 662)

To “cotch de words” of (white) scripture infused with a quasi-Benjaminian aura “come a-shinin’ thoo dem pages” results in the Afro-kinetic *trans*-scribing into the performance-based, process-oriented musical vernacular of the black congregants, ultimately reproduced — “gwine ter lib ergin” — by moveable type. In spiral-like motion, printed word turns spoken word, turns “some ole shout song [. . .] from Africa”, then turns vernacular discourse and, finally, turns transcript whose phonetic approximations attempt to “cotch” not just the words uttered by the redoubtable ex-slave, but also their *sound*: yet another serialized syntactic event of sonic transactions, as per Moten. Richard Wistreich calls this the “‘quantum’ identity of music”, where sound-turned-script is “both/either *process* and/or *thing*” (2012, 2). The old Kentuckian calls it simply, and most profoundly, “a mixtury”. What the transcript of her account also reveals is that this mixtury is Afro-kinetic, traversing not just over and across the printed word of scripture and the sung word of lyric, but propelled too by corporeal movement of “jump[ing] up dar” and patting.

Mixtury, then, is Afro-kinetic *trans*-script, a sonic modality of semantic transaction, sounded by the unheard song of the mythical Coomba as much as the unheard sound of red dust generated by the elusive Karintha’s running feet. Bill Hasson’s recitation of the printed word “comes thoo” Brown’s collective improvisation and amplifies yet another mixtury. If we think of *script* as also directive — the exhortations of scripture as much as the text of “Karintha” in Hasson’s hands — and of *transcript* as sound turned notation — the spiraling groove in the vinyl of *Geechee Recollections* — then Brown’s Afro-kinetic *trans*-scribing of “Karintha” in the recording studio “keep[s] a-addin’ to it”, coiling “on de spurn of de moment” new eddies of meaning.<sup>13</sup> “I don’t play words”, Marion Brown once declared: “you can’t get to it through words. You have to find your own way” (quoted in EDWARDS 2017, 184–5). Or, as Coleman tried to explain his musical

13. EDWARDS 2017, 80–1; FULTON 2006, 28–30, 40, 105–8. Peter Shillingsburg points out that “transcription always involves the decoding and re-encoding of symbols in a sign system with elements that are frequently invisible or at least transparent to the nonspecialist user of texts” (2006, 15). Textual transcription is closely related to Brown’s *trans*-scription: the re-encoding of Coomba’s folk song from *Natalie Mann* or of the humming that is to accompany one’s perusal of *Broom* remains “invisible” to the nonspecialist listener of *Geechee Recollections*. By foregrounding free improvisation’s Afro-kinetic properties, though, Brown’s *trans*-scribing re-encodes Toomer’s symbols in a *sonic* “system”, and it is only the fluidity of collectively improvised sounds that reveals “Karintha’s” eddies.

improvisations to Derrida, “I’m trying to find the concept according to which sound is renewed every time it’s expressed” (2004, 320). And this, then, is what Toomer and Brown do in concert: to recast the literary form as an Afro-kinetic resource, to find the concept, to circumnavigate the eddy, in and from which literary language is renewed every time it’s read, and to keep a-adding to it.

*University of North Georgia*

## Works Cited

- ALLEN, Clifford. 2018. “Marion Brown (September 8, 1931–October 18, 2010) — Pieces of a Conversation”. *Ni Kantu*. <http://cliffordallen.blogspot.com/2010/10/marion-brown-july-8-1931-october-10.html>.
- ARMSTRONG, Louis. 1997. “Beale Street Blues”. *Louis Armstrong Plays W. C. Handy*. Columbia CK 64925, CD.
- BENJAMIN, Walter. 1977. “Die Aufgabe des Übersetzers”. In *Illuminationen: Ausgewählte Schriften 1*, edited by Siegfried UNSELD, 50–62. Frankfurt am Main: Suhrkamp.
- . 1996. *Ursprung des deutschen Trauerspiels*. Frankfurt am Main: Suhrkamp.
- BARLOW, Daniel. 2014. “Literary Ethnomusicology and the Soundscape of Jean Toomer’s *Cane*”. *MELUS* 39.1: 192–211.
- BLIGHT, David W. 2018. *Frederick Douglass: Prophet of Freedom*. New York: Simon and Schuster.
- BROWN, Marion. 1976. *Awofofora*. Discomate DSP-5502, LP.
- . 2001. *Vista*. Recorded 1975. Impulse!, UCCI-9098, CD.
- . 2008. *Afternoon of a Georgia Faun*. Recorded August 10, 1970. ECM 1004, CD.
- . 2011. *Geechee Recollections / Sweet Earth Flying*. Recorded 1973 and 1974. Impulse! 06051 2780943, CD.
- BROWN, Marion, and Gunter HAMPEL. 1976. *Gesprächsfetzen*. Recorded September 20, 1968. Calig CAL 30 601, LP.
- COLTRANE, John. 2009. *Ascension (Editions I and II)*. Recorded 1965. Impulse! LC 00236, CD.
- DERRIDA, Jacques. 1976. *Of Grammatology*, translated by Gayatri Chakravorty SPIVAK. Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press.
- . 1978. *Writing and Difference*, translated by Alan Bass. Chicago: The University of Chicago Press.
- . 2005. “Play — The First Name: 1 July 1997”. *Genre: Forms of Discourse and Culture* 36.2: 331–40.
- DERRIDA, Jacques, and Ornette COLEMAN. 2004. “The Other’s Language: Jacques Derrida Interviews Ornette Coleman, 23 June 1997”. *Genre: Forms of Discourse and Culture* 37.2: 319–29.

- DOUGLASS, Frederick. 1994. *Autobiographies*, edited by Henry Louis GATES, Jr. New York: Library of America.
- EDWARDS, Brent Hayes. 2017. *Epistrophies: Jazz and the Literary Imagination*. Cambridge: Harvard University Press.
- ENGLISH, Henry H. P. n.d. *You See What I'm Trying to Say? A Study of Marion Brown*. [https://www.youtube.com/watch?feature=player\\_embedded&v=6dRJR5qN79o](https://www.youtube.com/watch?feature=player_embedded&v=6dRJR5qN79o).
- FIGI, J. B. 2011. Liner notes. *Geechee Recollections / Sweet Earth Flying*, Marion BROWN. Recorded 1973 and 1974. Impulse! 06051 2780943, CD.
- FOLEY, Barbara. 2014. *Jean Toomer: Race, Repression, and Revolution*. Urbana: University of Illinois Press.
- FROST FADNESS, Petter. 2019. "Free Spirits: The Performativity of Free Improvisation". In *The Routledge Companion to Jazz Studies*, edited by Nicholas GEBHARDT, Nicole RUSTIN-PASCHAL, and Tony WHYTON, 443–53. New York: Routledge.
- FULTON, DoVeanna S. 2006. *Speaking Power: Black Feminist Orality in Women's Narratives of Slavery*. Albany: State University of New York Press.
- GRAHAM, T. Austin. 2013. *The Great American Songbooks: Musical Texts, Modernism, and the Value of Popular Culture*. New York: Oxford University Press.
- GRANDT, Jürgen E. 2009. *Shaping Words to Fit the Soul: The Southern Ritual Grounds of Afro-Modernism*. Columbus: Ohio State University Press.
- . 2018. *Gettin' Around: Jazz, Script, Transnationalism*. Athens: University of Georgia Press.
- HANDY, W. C. 1991. *Father of the Blues: An Autobiography*, edited by Arna BONTEMPS. New York: Da Capo.
- HUMMEL, Bertold. 1976. Liner notes. *Gesprächsfetzen*, Marion Brown and Gunter Hampel. Calig CAL 30 601, LP.
- HUTCHINSON, George. 2019. Foreword. *Cane*, Jean TOOMER, XIII-XXXII. New York: Penguin Classics.
- KAHN, Ashley. 2006. *The House that Trane Built: The Story of Impulse Records*. New York: Norton.
- . 2018. Liner notes. *Both Directions at Once: The Lost Album (Deluxe Edition)*, John COLTRANE. Impulse! B0028228-02, 2018. 2 CDs.
- KERMAN, Cynthia Earl, and Richard ELDRIDGE. 1987. *The Lives of Jean Toomer: A Hunger for Wholeness*. Baton Rouge: Louisiana State University Press.
- KIRK, Rahsaan Roland. 1993a. *Volunteered Slavery*. Rhino/Atlantic, 8122–71407–2, CD.
- . 1993b. "Volunteered Slavery". (*Eye, I, Aye*): *Live at the Montreux Jazz Festival, Switzerland 1972*. Rhino/Atlantic 8122–72453–2, CD.
- MOTEN, Fred. 2003. *In the Break: The Aesthetics of the Black Radical Tradition*. Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press.
- . 2016. "Jurisgenerative Grammar (for Alto)". *The Oxford Handbook of Critical Improvisation Studies*, edited by George E. LEWIS and Benjamin PIEKUT, vol. 1, 128–42. New York: Oxford University Press.



- NORTON, Glyn P. 2016. "Improvisation, Time, and Opportunity in the Rhetorical Tradition". *The Oxford Handbook of Critical Improvisation Studies*, edited by George E. LEWIS and Benjamin PIEKUT, vol. 1, 262–88. New York: Oxford University Press.
- NUNN, Erich. 2015. *Sounding the Color Line: Music and Race in the Southern Imagination*. Athens: University of Georgia Press.
- OFFSTEIN, Alan. 2008. Liner notes. *Afternoon of a Georgia Faun*, Marion Brown. ECM 1004, CD.
- OKIJI, Fumi. 2018. *Jazz as Critique: Adorno and Black Expression Revisited*. Stanford: Stanford University Press.
- PORTER, Eric. 2002. *What Is this Thing Called Jazz? African American Musicians as Artists, Critics, and Activists*. Berkeley: University of California Press.
- RAMSHAW, Sarah. 2016. "The Paradox of Performative Immediacy: Law, Music, Improvisation". *Law, Culture, and the Humanities* 12.1: 6–16.
- ROBINSON MURPHY, Jeanette. 1899. "The Survival of African Music in America". *Popular Science Monthly* 55: 660–72. [https://en.wikisource.org/wiki/Page:Popular\\_Science\\_Monthly\\_Volume\\_55.djvu/682](https://en.wikisource.org/wiki/Page:Popular_Science_Monthly_Volume_55.djvu/682).
- SCOTT-HERON, Gil, and Brian JACKSON. 1978. "Cane". *Secrets*. Arista, 2 C 070 61647, LP.
- SHILLINGSBURG, Peter L. 2006. *From Gutenberg to Google: Electronic Representations of Literary Text*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- SPELLMAN, A. B. 1985. *Four Lives in the Bebop Business*. New York: Limelight.
- SPIVAK, Gayatri Chakravorty. 1976. "Translator's Preface". *Of Grammatology*, Jacques DERRIDA, IX-LXXXVII. Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press.
- SZWED, John F. 1998. *Space Is the Place: The Lives and Times of Sun Ra*. New York: Da Capo Press.
- TAYLOR, Gary. 2009. "In Medias Res: From Jerome through Greg to Jerome (McGann)". *Textual Cultures* 4.2: 88–101.
- TOOMER, Jean. 1923. "Karintha". *Broom: An International Magazine of the Arts* 4.2: 83–4. [http://bluemountain.princeton.edu/exist/apps/bluemountain/issue.html?titleURN=bmtnaap&issueURN=bmtnaap\\_1923-01\\_01#?c=0&m=0&s=0&cv=0&z=-4221.531%2C-355.6667%2C12828.062%2C7113.3333](http://bluemountain.princeton.edu/exist/apps/bluemountain/issue.html?titleURN=bmtnaap&issueURN=bmtnaap_1923-01_01#?c=0&m=0&s=0&cv=0&z=-4221.531%2C-355.6667%2C12828.062%2C7113.3333).
- . 1980. *Natalie Mann. The Wayward and the Seeking: A Collection of Writings by Jean Toomer*, edited by Darwin T. TURNER, 243–325. Washington: Howard University Press.
- . 1988. *Cane*, edited by Darwin T. TURNER. New York: Norton.
- TURNER, Darwin T., ed. 1988. *Cane*, Jean Toomer. New York: Norton.
- WILLIAMS, Ed. 1993. Liner notes. *Volunteered Slavery*, Rahsaan Roland Kirk. Rhino/Atlantic, 8122–71407–2, CD.
- WILLS, David. 2008. "Notes toward a Requiem, or the Music of Memory". *Discourse* 30.1/2: 157–76.
- WISTREICH, Richard. 2012. "Introduction: Musical Materials and Cultural Spaces". *Renaissance Studies* 26.1: 1–12.

# Rationale for Feminist Bibliography<sup>1</sup>

*Kate Ozment*

## ABSTRACT

*This essay posits a framework of shared identity and practice for feminist bibliographers, book historians, and textual scholars. Feminist bibliography is positioned as the use of bibliographic methodologies to revise how book history and related fields categorize and analyze women's texts and labor. The opening section of the essay quantitatively analyzes book history companions, readers, and introductions to establish a baseline for how the field functions as a practice and discourse. The second section then analyzes the version of bibliography that has been canonized in book history, identifies how book history has explicitly favored a version of bibliography that is antagonistic to feminist work, and proposes a feminist narrative of bibliography that can and should be incorporated as the foundation for studies of the material book. The last section puts a feminist framework into practice and searches for women's contributions to bibliographic labor in the Anglo-American world. It offers a new set of founders in bibliography and challenges contemporary bibliographers and book historians to re-evaluate on whom we place importance, how we define interpretive scholarship, and how we construct our discourse.*

---

IN 1998, LESLIE HOWSAM PUBLISHED AN ARTICLE IN *SHARP NEWS* titled "In My View: Women and Book History" that, perhaps for the first time, began to think about how women's studies and studies of the book engage on a theoretical level. While Howsam elsewhere defines book history as the intersection of bibliography, literary studies, and history (2006,

1. This project was partially funded through the Newberry Library's Charles Montgomery Gray Fellowship and Texas A&M's Beth Qualls Endowed Fellowship. My thanks to Thad Bowerman, Flo Davies, Margaret J.M. Ezell, and Maura Ives for feedback on earlier drafts. An early version of this work was first presented at the American Society for Eighteenth-Century Studies conference, and I am grateful to the audience for insightful comments and to the women's caucus for honoring it with the Catherine Macauley Graduate Student Prize. Research was completed at Princeton Rare Books and Special Collections, the Morgan Library, and the Grolier Club. My particular thanks to Meghan Constantinou, Christine Nelson, and Sal Robinson for their generosity and expertise.

4), this earlier essay offers several points forward and conflicts with a gendered approach to histories of the book. Here, she returns to foundational articles on communication circuits from Robert Darnton (1984) and Thomas R. Adams and Nicolas Barker (2001) to argue that by neglecting to consider gender these models are erroneously defaulted male. In reality “women can be identified at every node in the cycle and at all periods in history”, and assuming men control the production and dissemination of books is both ahistorical and limits the discussion of gender and production (Howsam 1998, 1).

Since the 1990s, scholarship at the intersection of women’s studies and book history has flourished, but the history of the book is still largely defined as a male homosocial environment where female figures are briefly mentioned on the margins of textual production or invisible altogether. When Howsam concluded that “For the most part, what [Lucien] Febvre and [Henri-Jean] Martin called ‘the little world of the book’ has been a male domain” (1998, 1), she was not only describing the state of the field, but also touching on two important values of book history scholarship. First, experiences of book production that are given significance tend to be male. The categories we focus on — booksellers, printers, and public authors — are overwhelmingly, though not exclusively, male at most points in history before the late eighteenth century. Consequently, most prominent histories pull from the types of evidence that are more likely to be preserved for or accessed by male historical subjects: papers in archives, records in institutions, and print publications. Secondly, the way researchers have defined the world of the book builds from a narrow set of scholarly texts that also skew male in their subjects: Darnton (1984), Martin and Febvre (2010), Roger Chartier (1989), and D. F. McKenzie (2002) have contributed significantly to the growth of book history as a distinct field, but their subjects are overwhelmingly white men. While the history of the book is a capacious field in practice, in self-definition it grows from limited source materials and inquiries that impact how non-canonical experiences are analyzed and valued. The “male domain” of the world of the book creates homogeneity where gender is not a factor because there is little sexual difference against which male authorship and production are defined; the same could be said of the whiteness of our core subjects, especially those within the early British tradition from which much book history scholarship grows. This narrowed identity creates a discourse where standards are universally applied that in reality are neither prepared nor equipped to analyze the experiences of historical subjects, books, and texts that fall outside a distinct set of parameters.

This article addresses the gap between practice and identity, between how current book history scholarship embraces diverse methodologies and subjects but must do so by remediating a bibliographical history and an inheritance that limits the efficacy of key philosophies and approaches. I argue that a more intentional remediation is needed, one that explicitly gathers feminist methodologies to intervene in the genderless inheritance of bibliography in book history and revise it to foster rather than inhibit feminist scholarship. I label these practices *feminist bibliography*, defined as the use of bibliographic methodologies to revise how book history and related fields categorize and analyze women's texts and labor. But this article does not position itself as the invention of a discourse. Foundational work from Howsam (1998), Michelle Levy (2014), and Sarah Werner (2018) has already begun to theorize new intersections of feminism and studies of the material book, and as the rich historiography of feminist bibliography in the following pages will indicate, this tradition is long-lived. My argument provides instead the rationale for giving historical and existing practices a name, a "corporeal reality" that also "lends language to the work" many scholars are already doing.<sup>2</sup> Feminist bibliography is philosophy and method. It promotes continuing work on women's lives and labor by providing tools for feminist scholars to use in their work, while simultaneously building a framework that allows such work to flourish.

First, I analyze existing bibliographic and book history scholarship to create an outline of how book history defines itself. In addition to the key texts identified above, most of these meta-level articles are articulated and reproduced in readers, introductions, and companions. Using these materials to take a measure of the field, my survey tracks which articles are anthologized and what subjects are indexed to get a fuller picture of what factors are valued. The results are illustrative: most items are overwhelmingly white and male with a distinct Anglo-American bias. The narrowness of this sample size is contrasted against greater possibilities using data mined from the *Women in Book History Bibliography*, a resource that has tracked more than 1,550 sources on women's engagement with textual production. The second section of my "Rationale" addresses the reasoning for this gap by tracing the historiography of book history as these texts describe it, a significant part of which grows out of Anglo-American bibliography. I provide contextualization for the wider fields from which these narrowed discourses grow and argue that value for and interest in women's

2. See GALLON 2016 for a rationale for black digital humanities; Gallon's essay is philosophically akin to what I propose here.

labor in textual production has been an essential aspect of bibliographic scholarship. It is the canonization of only one part of bibliography that has led to book history's emphasis on genderless analysis. Lastly, I trace a narrative of twentieth-century women bibliographers and their labor as a new version of book history's origins that creates roots and traditions from which a gendered discourse of book history can draw.

Throughout, I argue that a philosophical revision of bibliographic methods promotes continued work on women's writing and labor in book history, my primary interest, and interrelated fields like textual studies and digital humanities. A feminist scholar will place significance on variances, oddities, and norms that another scholar might not, and this article suggests alternatives for how tools, resources, and lists might be designed to specifically promote work on women and other figures in minority categories of identity and production.

## Book History's Values: A Quantitative Analysis

This section opens with a question: *what does book history value?*

There are methodological answers to this question that are relatively uncontroversial. Book history is an object-oriented field which grew out of the analysis of "the material object and its production and reception, rather than solely [of] [ . . . ] its contents" (FINKELSTEIN and McCLEERY 2012, 11). In this focus, book history relies on bibliographic methodologies for the analysis of physical books, as the disciplinary precedent for book history is historical bibliography.<sup>3</sup> The intended result of an object-oriented approach is that it puts the book and its process center stage, and in doing so links the cross-disciplinary interests of history, library sciences, and literary studies that approach the book as a cultural object. Beyond methodology, book history's values can be defined in what *kinds* of books and processes tend to capture our attention and what categories of subjects and experiences drive our analysis and provide our samples. To take a measure of this more subjective value, I turn to texts that attempt to define the field or are representative venues for work in this area. Companions and introductions trace the field's self-definition when the audience is imagined to be new scholars or disciplinary visitors. Readers point to what is considered essential when scholars are forced to distill down to the basics, and they are an effective means of assessing book history's core values and texts.

3. For an outline of historical bibliography, see ABBOTT and WILLIAMS 2009; see also SUAREZ and WOUTHUYSEN 2010.



Book history companions, introductions, and readers comprise 625 sections across 22 volumes, all published in the last 20 years. To account for the 625 sections, all authored sections were counted, including subsections of larger chapters that had individual authors attached. General introductions were omitted along with appendixes and other paratexts. The earliest example is the *Cambridge History of the Book in Britain* published in 1999, and the most recent is the 2017 *Broadview Introduction to Book History*. There has been a substantial increase in these publications, with 17 out of the 22 volumes, or 77%, published from 2007-2017. Ten volumes are general-interest book history texts that span major publishers: Wiley-Blackwell (2009), Oxford (2010; 2013), Cambridge (2014), both editions of the Routledge introductions and readers (2006; 2012), and the Broadview introduction and reader (2014; 2017). These are supplemented by series that focus on America and Britain. The former, from North Carolina, is five volumes (2014), and the latter, from Cambridge, is six volumes (1999–2009).

I first tracked how many women-presenting authors were included in or edited these volumes. Women-presenting authors and editors are globally in the minority, but a few volumes approach gender parity for contributors. Perhaps tellingly, volumes edited by a woman were more likely to have a higher proportion of women-presenting contributors. My content analysis focused initially on surface-reading section titles to look for identifying information about what kinds of subjects the author focused on — subjects that presented as male or female or books and processes where the gender presentation of the creator could be identified. Out of 625 sections, there are a total of 12 where the title indicates that the section explicitly covers women. Indicators included signaling language like “gender” or “women”, a woman’s name, or the title of a book written by a woman.<sup>4</sup> When the historical subject or labor is mentioned, such as the publisher or bookbinder, they are twice as likely to be male: 25 section titles indicate the subject is male or the case study is a man’s labor. From titles alone, then, about 94% of chapters do not indicate the gender of the subject, nor the presence of women’s labor or writing.

On the surface, it is logical that such an overwhelming majority of section titles do not explicitly refer to gender, a result of what David Finkelstein and Alistair McCleery (2012) have articulated about book history’s focus on materials and processes over contents. Metal type and wooden presses tend to not be understood as gendered objects. However, my surface-level

4. The field of gender studies is not synonymous with women, but I found no examples of gendered book history studies that were about men.

study indicates that an emphasis on processes and objects may obscure the human hands that perform and create them.

Behind the 94% of chapters where the gender of the subjects or labor is not marked are several key indications about what book history values. The majority of companions and readers divide their chapters and sections into three approaches: kinds of books, methods of production, and reading and literacy: that is, objects for study, ways of making them, and ways of interacting with them. The massive two-volume Oxford companion (2010) dedicates more than half of its length to term definitions and encyclopedia entries that encompass these three areas. Across all editions, chapters are organized around kinds of books, including legal, liturgical, religious, literary, and medicinal. Sometimes specific parts of the material book are explained, with volumes featuring sections on illustrations, paratexts, bindings, and typefaces. These approaches occasionally interact with the members of the trade who were responsible, blending a study of form with process; almost universally the examples are men. Rarely are there extended case studies of librarians, authors, printers, or other human figures, but they do exist. Most volumes will offer at least one case study of a print shop, collector, or author, using a figure like John Donne to detail manuscript circulation or *Paradise Lost* and Shakespeare's works to explore the machinations of the book trade. Largely, though, content in companions and introductions do not indicate from whom the objects of study originated.

When one skims the tables of contents for these volumes, they seem almost raceless and genderless, and indeed occasionally human-less. Chapters carry titles like "Bookbinding" or "Library Catalogues and Indexes", language that while specific in its focus on process or tool implies a universality in its ability to be applied to large systems or objects. Systematically examining these chapters' content uncovers that the subjects are not, in fact, universal at all but are particular in ways that have not been fully explored and have led to a limited approach to book history scholarship.

To get a more precise account of what actually happens within the chapters, I analyzed the indexes. There are limits to this kind of analysis, as with surface-level reading of section titles, but the results are again illustrative.<sup>5</sup> When human subjects are mentioned in the indexes, they are male

5. Indexing is as human an operation as any other part of the authorship process, and there could be more beneath the surface of these texts than is evident by only looking at paratexts. A future project could include OCR and full-text

with an overwhelming frequency. Several indexes run as low as 1.5–2% for entries that are identifiably female. None exceed 8%. Only a few include an additional entry for “women” or “gender” that allows scholars interested in women’s work to find examples in the volume. In a perhaps not that surprising trend, most index entries on women are within sections explicitly titled as about women, the 12 sections that comprise 1.96% of the total. There are a few exceptions from unsurprising sources, such as scholars who routinely work on women’s writing and labor. Margaret J.M. Ezell’s chapter on “Handwriting and the Book” in the Cambridge handbook (2014) has a generically titled chapter, but Ezell includes multiple women alongside men in her analysis. This choice is atypical.

While titles like “Liturgical Books” intend to convey the history and production of a genre, what is actually being conveyed is the history of men and *their* books. In this example, which is from the first volume of the *Cambridge History of the Book in Britain* (2011), the author limits the discussion to monastic books and their male makers and readers. It is a descriptive and thorough history of *monastic* liturgical books, but because it lacks any mention of convents and the female scribes and illuminators who also worked on and read such books it is not a general history of “Liturgical Books”. As part of an alternative history, Marilyn Dunn (2013) details how women in convents also created books of hours and liturgical books, including acting as scribes and illuminators. And this history has been long-lived. Historians like George Haven Putnam (1896) have long detailed the role of nuns in scriptoriums in England and the relationship of female education and religious life. Despite what the Cambridge chapter suggests, women and nuns certainly did make and consume liturgical books. This chapter is not particularly egregious and far from the only place where monks are featured rather than nuns. I use this as an illuminating example, one chosen from many possibilities, of a trend in the generalized language of 94% of book history companions that normalizes the history of men as a general history. Although issues of race fall outside the scope of the analysis I performed for this article, it is also true that the vast majority of the cited subjects are white. Sources by and about people of color play a much larger role in American book history scholarship than British, which mirrors the gen-

---

searches, which would give a more accurate picture of the subjects and themes encompassed.

eral lack of literary subjects of color before Olaudah Equiano and Phyllis Wheatley.<sup>6</sup>

Even this surface-level analysis reveals several significant trends in book history scholarship as it is defined and anthologized. Unless the title explicitly states that the subject is about women, the contents are overwhelmingly about men. This is challenging for scholars looking for examinations of women's contributions to the world of the book, as we often find our interests are not reflected in most scholarship. Gender can be a significant influence on how historical subjects realize economic opportunities, so male experiences do not always reliably map onto female subjects. While it is true that women are in the minority in some forms such as Stationer's Company records in England, the less than 2% of chapters that do exist on women do not reflect historical reality when one considers the many ways women interacted with the world of books. Looking only at the broad Early Modern period in England, where I specialize, recovery work from Maureen Bell (2014) and Paula McDowell (1998) has brought dozens of examples to light about women's labor in the book trades, and Helen Smith (2012) and Lisa Maruca (2007) have argued persuasively about how book production is itself a gendered process. Beyond the book trade in England, the paucity of chapters from companions on women is in stark contrast to the wealth of information that is actually available, especially when one considers the breadth offered from Colonial America's early presses to the Victorians' mass production to modernist feminist presses.

The *Women in Book History Bibliography* offers a useful foil to the field as generally represented. Launched in 2016, the open-access database is edited by myself and Cait Coker and logs secondary sources as they intersect with women's labor and material culture. Currently, the *WBHB* has 1,550 sources logged that range from antiquity to the present day, covering dozens of countries and languages. The database allows the user to filter by field, and it is easy to see with these tools how much is missing from the general chapter titles listed above. "Book Trades" features about 440 sources, "Reading" another approximately 230 sources, and "Manuscript and Letters" features 110 sources. While the *WBHB* cannot be considered an authoritative account of all work in the field, the large number of available sources for just these three subjects indicates that this work is without question *here*. It is just not being cited, not being considered as a necessary piece of the larger picture when the field is generalized into processes and

6. Necessary complications to this trend in England include work by HALL (1995), ONYEKA (2013), and GIKANDI (2015).

objects. The WBHB has done the initial work of making this scholarship visible, but the theoretical and subjective values that have kept it on the sidelines still must be addressed.

## **Book Historiography: Book History's Bibliographic Inheritance**

It seems clear that the values of bibliographic and book history scholarship do not explicitly align with feminist efforts. The larger question, however, is *why* this is the case. Here I argue that the answer lies in the intertwining of philosophy and bibliography in book history; that is, I suggest that book history inherited a discourse where gender is not central from bibliographers and journals like *Papers of the Bibliographical Society of America* and *The Library*. This discourse is positioned as book history's origin story — the debates among D. F. McKenzie, G. Thomas Tanselle, and Jerome McGann that focused on the bibliographical concerns of textual editing and authorship. Like most stories, however, it is a mixture of fact and the impulses of practitioners that sought to establish their roots in work that represented their interests in a white, male, print history. This section briefly sketches this origin story and then makes space for feminist critique, allowing feminist bibliographers to find roots for their own origins and interests.

Spanning from the 1970s through the 1990s, the important and often generative debates from Tanselle, McGann, and McKenzie continue to influence how critical editions are prepared and are widely cited in book history, literary studies, history, and digital humanities. Tanselle and McGann were examining how to produce an edition of a literary text, and the source of their disagreements was where to place meaning and define authority: on the author's intentions or on the reader's interpretation. Tanselle focused on authorial intent in textual editing, pulling from the Greg-Bowers school of New Bibliography that grew from the early- and mid-twentieth century.<sup>7</sup> Tanselle, a student of Fredson Bowers, argued that the author's intentions were what should be paramount when preparing a scholarly edition of a text. To find an author's intent meant to consider "the intention of the author to have particular words and marks of punctuation constitute his text and the intention that such a text carry a particular

7. For a good overview of New Bibliography and the Greg-Bowers school of thought, see GREETHAM 1994.

meaning or meanings" (1991, 41). When it was not possible for the editor to make these conclusions definitively, "his judgment about each element will ultimately rest on his interpretation of the author's intended meaning as he discovers it in the whole of the text itself" (1991, 44). Through a series of articles and books, Tanselle theorized the minutiae of how this editorial practice would function, at times using his work on Herman Melville as a testing ground.

Tanselle's philosophy of authority was eventually opposed by another philosophy that argued that authority should not rest singularly with the author's intentions but plurally with those who produced the text printed onto the material object. Prompting this theoretical shift was a redefinition of the author proposed by Roland Barthes (1977) and Michel Foucault (1977). Rather than the point of primary authority, the author became a function, the creator of a work that was passed into the hands of readers, who were in turn the producers of meaning. Literary scholars began to focus on interpretation, a reader-centered activity. It was a radical inversion of the existing hierarchy, and editors investigated what was the job of the textual editor when the author is supplanted or challenged by the reader's importance in creating meaning.

McGann's work was foundational in the reimagining the site(s) of textual authority. The singular author, he argued, was an anachronistic figure inherited from the Romantic poets who imagined themselves as solitary geniuses and producers of text (1985). Other forms of authorship, especially those practiced in the Renaissance, were social productions, the result of the input and influence of multiple entities. His "socialized concept of authorship and textual authority" was an attempt to correct these anachronistic definitions of authorship and restore authority to "the dynamic social relations which always exist in literary production" (1983, 8). McGann's contributions expanded beyond textual criticism into other aspects of bibliography, especially historical bibliography. Working within this field, McKenzie furthered the concept of the social text to a discipline: the sociology of the text. He argued that this new discourse

directs us to consider the human motives and interactions which texts involve at every stage of their production, transmission, and consumption. It alerts us to the roles of institutions, and their own complex structures, in affecting the forms of social discourse, past and present. Those are the realities which bibliographers and textual critics as such have, until very recently, either neglected or, by defining them as strictly non-



bibliographical, have felt unable to denominate, logically and coherently, as central to what we do.

(1999, 15)

In prompting a consideration of the social production of texts, McGann and McKenzie played a crucial part, the narrative goes, in articulating what would become book history.

The thread of bibliography established by these three scholars is articulated as part of the “grounding disciplines” that “remain crucial scholarly components” of book history (RAVEN 2018, 15). Book history’s reliance on this thread is abundantly clear in the analysis of companions and readers. Every general book history companion, including Cambridge, Oxford, Wiley-Blackwell, and Routledge, begins at this moment. Both the Broadview and Routledge readers include articles from these scholars. Even other related books follow this pattern, such as Howsam’s *Old Books and New Histories* (2006), aspects of *An Introduction to Bibliographical and Textual Studies*, edited by Craig S. Abbott and William Proctor (2009), and James Raven’s *What is the History of the Book* (2018). It has, effectively, become canon.

Canons help give shape and energy to rapidly establishing fields, which book history no doubt was during the decades in which these articles were written. But canons, as feminist scholars have long argued, also work to limit and distance, especially when they are not fully understood to be constructions but are presented as objective assessments of what is “good” or “valuable” in a discipline. It is not this section’s goal to diminish this debate’s importance and influence, but to analyze how the over-reliance on this one thread of bibliography as the theoretical framework for most of book history has created a field that if it is not openly hostile to gendered work is at best ambivalent about it. Taken out of its initial context and expanded beyond what either Tanselle or McGann initially imagined, this debate has helped to create a set of core values that inhibit the appropriate impact of work within women’s book history that is actively being done and that has been done for decades.

I argue that a key reason why this particular bibliographic thread became canonical in book history when it did is its explicit disengagement from other forms of critical theory. Raven frames scholars who flocked to book history in the 1960s and 1970s as historically minded “refugees” from the wave of critical theory that was engulfing the academy (2018, 4). Critical theory became the dominant methodology that scholars used to make

meaning from literary texts in the latter half of the twentieth century. In response, these scholars made a sanctuary of text, provenance, and material books. In the form of bibliography that has been canonized in book history, it is indeed true that bibliography has been largely impermeable to critical theory; as the rest of this section shows, not all bibliography practices this methodological distancing. But there is an unspoken wariness in the frequent characterization of historicity and theory as antithetical, an ideology that is not limited to Raven's backward gaze but explicitly and implicitly expressed by many scholars who took to bibliography and textual studies in this period. It is not *all* critical theory that was viewed askance; after all, it was work from Barthes and Foucault as part of linguistic structuralism and poststructuralism that prompted many of the discussions of authority in bibliography. It was critical theories that challenged long-held beliefs about aesthetic value and rewrote narratives of literary genealogy and greatness. This dissonance suggests that bibliography and book history were a haven not only for historically minded analysis, but also for work that was free from the messiness of what critical theory introduced to the academy: diversity of subject matter.

We can see this in what subjects these core scholars worked on and how this work has been positioned by contemporary book historians. The scholars that "fled" theory were largely working on white men. Tanselle's primary subject was Herman Melville; McKenzie's famous essay highlights Jacob Tonson and William Congreve; McGann worked on Lord Byron, Dante Rossetti, and William Blake. As only focusing on this category of writer, white men, became less common and open to critique more broadly in literary studies and history, the version of bibliography and book history that we cite and elevate as canon offered a haven of racial and gendered sameness. The impact of this narrative's values and tightly drawn boundaries are still widely and powerfully felt, not only in what journals intersectional book history scholarship appears in (it is rarely found in book history-focused journals, but instead in feminist journals like *Women's Writing* and specialized edited collections), but in the new directions proposed by the field's leaders.

One of the suggested shifts in book history is toward book studies, as proposed by Jonathan Rose (2001). Rose is somewhat anomalous in that he does not explicitly cite McKenzie and McGann; rather, he locates the origin of the field in the historical work of Darnton, Febvre, Martin, and Elizabeth Eisenstein (1979). Rose's term "book studies" correctly attempts to re-situate the name of the field around a culture, intersection, or discourse

rather than a specific field (history), and it also helpfully looks forward rather than re-telling the past. As a product of its lineage, however, Rose's characterization draws the same boundary lines as discussions of social textual criticism, historical bibliography, and sociology of the text. That is, while Rose's term is arguably a better representation of the field, the divide between theory and object-oriented studies is maintained. He argues:

It is perfectly legitimate to ask how literature has shaped history and made revolutions, how it has socially constructed race, class, gender, and so on. But we cannot begin to answer any of these questions until we know how books (not texts) have been created, reproduced, disseminated and read, preserved and suppressed.

(2001)

Rose advocates that the physical transmission of knowledge fundamentally matters and must be considered, but in doing so he also argues that issues such as race, class, and gender are secondary to the study of the book. Or, perhaps more accurately, he implies that *books themselves* cannot be gendered, raced, queered, or made products of class distinctions. By separating process from content, Rose reiterates the common, core thread of book history scholarship and illustrates how in this separation, critical engagements of race, class, gender, etc. are assigned to *contents* rather than *materiality*. The implication is that there is such a thing as objectivity, that it is possible to divorce ideology and identity from ourselves as well as those who created, reproduced, disseminated, read, preserved, and suppressed the objects we study. There is danger in this normative structuring of the field, as even if it is unintentional it not only works to obscure the complex cultural production of materiality but also allows practitioners to escape self-analysis and critical reviews of methodologies.

Book historians must grapple with this genderless and raceless inheritance, just as Amy E. Earhart argues such grappling must occur within digital humanities (2015). Despite McGann's presentation of his textual theory as a "universal condition", Michael K. Young argues that it "operates only within particular histories" (2006, 29); and, specifically, that "[t]hese political and social functions [. . .] are particular to an implicitly unraced society and politics" (2006, 29). Young's methodology includes critical race studies as he is working on black publishing in the United States, and he demonstrates how this transforms our textual categories. In a parallel moment in Ezell's work on editing women writers in England, she observes that,

The challenges faced by the teams of editors producing the definitive multi-volume editions of the works of Mark Twain or Herman Melville, the layers upon layers of cross-checking with multiple sources and versions, were impressive. Given that I was working on early modern women writers for whom in many cases only a single text, either printed or handwritten, was known, such activities also seemed at one level remote and alien.

(2010, 103)

What Ezell and Young gesture toward is the limitations of conclusions and methods from bibliography. That scholars who do not work on white men in print often report feelings of “remoteness” and “alienness” should impact how the field is defined and suggest how to revise it to bring these important and diverse experiences closer to the conceptual center.

One way of addressing this gap is to collapse the perception of book history and critical theory as diametrically opposed. In fact, theoretical discourses focused on the book and historical narratives have been long lived. As Raven acknowledges, the history of the book has enjoyed sustained popularity partially because scholars from theoretical discourses like feminism have found its approaches useful and necessary (2018, 4). The reality of theoretical work is that it is often historical, not incidentally but by design. Theory builds on history to form its narratives. Within feminism, it is what Kate Eicchorn calls “a desire to take control of the present through a reorientation to the past” (2013, 8). Similar moves have been traced in critical race theory by scholars like Simon Gikandi (2015), Imtiaz H. Habib (2016), and Saidiya Hartman (1997). Many theoretical discourses have developed a subfield of book history, represented in pockets: books like Robert Fraser’s *Book History Through Postcolonial Eyes* (2008); the University of Virginia’s Rare Book School-sponsored 2017 conference on “Bibliography Among the Disciplines” that marked a push for a global book history; the London Rare Book School’s 2017 class on “The Queer Book” taught by Brooke Palmieri; thriving fields of black bibliography and African American print culture recently explored at the University of Delaware’s 2019 conference “Black Bibliographia: Print/Culture/Art”.<sup>8</sup> There is also a vibrant cohort of early career scholars who perform this work and ask hard questions in the ephemeral ways that academics debate, at confer-

8. See also JACKSON 2010 for an important contribution to new work on African American print cultures.

ences and on social media. Each discipline emphasizes that objectivity of interpretation is not a second step but woven into the work of the bibliographer and the book historian.

As an example, feminist textual editing provides an alternative bibliographical underpinning that renders both bibliography and its adaptation within book history pointedly gendered. Feminist textual criticism dates back to the McGann-Tanselle debates and continues in contemporary work on scholarly editing from Julia Flanders (1998), Amanda Gailey (2012), and Martha Nell Smith (2007). These editors and scholars have reconsidered the basics of editorial practice to avoid normalizing the voices they are attempting to bring to the scholarly community. It is practicing what Smith encourages: namely, to “take into account the ‘messy’ facts of authorship, production, and reception: race, class, gender, and sexuality” when developing an editorial apparatus (2007, 2). Smith and other feminist textual editors have offered thoughtful critiques of an “objective” editorial apparatus. They argue that editorial practice is inherently subjective and based on the ideology of both editor and reader. Neglecting this reality can reduce diverse experiences into a seemingly objective or scientific methodology that was not designed to accommodate difference. Being wary of the lure of objectivity is not tantamount to avoiding rigor or method. On the contrary, it is, as Smith argues, to imagine how rigor can be adapted based on “principled flexibility” (2007, 2). That is, editors can retain the “rigor and sharp discipline required of principled methodologies” while also exploring areas of subjectivity, underlying ideologies, and the importance of understanding initiatives for diversity more broadly (SMITH 2007, 2).

Gendered philosophies are particularly useful where editors are asked to judge between textual discrepancies and philosophies about what kind of texts one should produce — be it the author-centered “pure” text from Bowers and Tanselle or the reader-focused texts that have grown in popularity over the last thirty years. In these moments, gendered philosophies can and should intervene in the “male editorial tradition”, as Ann Thompson (1997, 85) argues in her approach to Shakespeare:

Editors of Shakespearean texts have always had to choose between possible readings, and it is arguable that a feminist editor might make a different set of choices. In the case of plays that survive in two or more early printed versions, editors have to choose which version they see as more “authoritative”. This choice will depend on a number of factors including of course an argument about the provenance of each text, but

an awareness of gender issues can contribute to such a choice in the present and help explain the reasons behind editorial decisions made in the past.

(1997, 88)

Thompson's work on Shakespeare grapples with an author who has been at the center of bibliographic scholarship for decades. She consequently sees her task as unraveling not only the different iterations of the text but problematic editorial apparatuses that could have framed the author or individual characters or plays through a male-focused ideology. Similarly, feminist book history involves not only the study of women and their work, but also unpacking the male bibliographic tradition that has rendered certain books and authors as marginal.

Thompson's reimagining of Shakespeare is concurrent with the work of a variety of feminist scholars — especially Brenda R. Silver (1991) and Katie King (1991) — as well with the work of other scholars friendly to feminist intervention, such as Morris Eaves (1994), Gerald MacLean (1997), and Jeffrey Masten (1997). Closely following McKenzie's articulation of the *sociology of the text* and its subsequent critiques, Silver and King forwarded an alternative editorial narrative that exploited the concept of a social text to interrogate gendered ideologies and perceptions. Working on Virginia Woolf, Silver studies how feminist editing has revealed to what extent we as editors construct the author, and how unstable our stable text is when we lay bare these ideologies. For her part, King argues that bibliography's shift from "the world in the text to the text in the world" allows feminist recovery to "[open] up enormous questions which explicitly challenge assumptions about literary value and implicitly challenge assumptions about the nature and ontology of the text" (1991, 96). King's construction of an alternative, feminine apparatus for approaching literary texts sits in the gap between the empirical and the abstract, taking a critical philosophy and from it imagining a systemic approach.

Thompson, Silver, and King represent the ways that feminist theories have uncovered the ideologies that govern seemingly neutral textual theories. By representing their work as interventionist, these editors have also uncovered the ways that editing is "a social act with political implications", as Eaves has characterized it (1991, 91). So, too, is the work of book history. These theories of textual studies intervene politically, arguing one cannot have an editorial theory without values and scholarly judgment informing its approach. Taken collectively, this discourse explores "the extent to which those cultural conditions [of textual production] are crosshatched by



the complex articulation of class, gender, sexuality, and national or racial identity” (MacLean, 1997, 35).

When alternatives are paired with more mainstream editorial theory from Tanselle, McGann, and McKenzie, one is able to see to what extent the latter discourse is dependent on valuing white male authors for its methods and philosophical approaches. All three figures used the genderless, general language of masculine bibliography that became canonical in book history scholarship, whereas feminist textual theory explicitly identified itself as interventionist. The dichotomy of feminism as marginal and bibliography as mainstream, but implicitly male-centered, has gone unrevised. Feminist textual editing provides a foil for this implicitly male history that removes the veneer of objectivity and necessitates that editors articulate a transparent response to issues of diversity as much as they carefully construct philosophies of textual authority. No narrative of history is unbiased, and no material object comes forth from a space or process anesthetized of the cultural identities of its creators or modern practitioners. Indeed, as Tanselle himself wrote, “every effort to establish past events — however disciplined by what are taken to be responsible ways of handling evidence — is a creative act, involving judgments at each step” (1988, 33). Book history as it currently defines itself grows from the creative judgment of bibliographers who worked on a narrow set of texts and subjects. No matter how transformative and illuminating their observations are, they cannot be universally applied to the realities, values, and contributions of texts and subjects that deviate from the white, male, print-focused norm. The issue is that the prominence of this central line of genderless and raceless bibliography translates to its suggestion as a universal standard in book history. At best, methods created only from one group of authors serve as inspiration or foundation for how to work on other subjects; at worst, these methods are barriers that create standards against which other authors and texts are disproportionately judged.

## **Building a Feminist Bibliography**

A feminist bibliography revises the way that studies of the material book are practiced and conceptualized. For feminist book history to take hold within the broader field, it needs a framework upon which to graft and a name to give it force and organization. It needs feminist bibliography. We need a list from which to draw women founders that transform the masculine narrative of book history’s origins and roots. Since these roots are in

areas like historical and descriptive bibliography, it is within these spaces that I find a feminist history of the field.

Searching for a feminist bibliographic tradition led me to center first on bodies rather than objects. Specifically, I searched for women who worked within and around the history of the book through a query to the listserv for the Society for the History of Authorship, Reading and Publishing.<sup>9</sup> This initial search yielded more than 90 names, some of which are relatively well known. One of our foundational books is Eisenstein's *The Printing Press as an Agent of Change*. Scholars working in the book trades rely on the work of Mary "Paul" Pollard, Maureen Bell, and Robin Myers. Marie Tremaine and Katharine F. Pantzer are honored with named fellowships from the bibliographical societies of Canada and America, respectively, for their foundational work. Tremaine, who worked at the Toronto Public Library, is remembered as the "doyenne of Canadian bibliographers". Her major publications include *A Bibliography of Canadian Imprints* (1952) and *Arctic Bibliography* (1953–1975), which are still the standard works in the field and represent a career of exhaustive and meticulous research.<sup>10</sup> Pantzer's completion of the revised *Short-Title Catalogue of Books Printed in England, Scotland, and Ireland* (1976) while at the Houghton Library created an indispensable research tool for scholars of the Early Modern English book trade. She was the first woman to be awarded the Bibliographical Society's gold medal.<sup>11</sup> Also among distinguished women bibliographers is Ruth Mortimer, curator of rare books at Smith College, first woman president of the Bibliographical Society of America and longtime editor of its *Papers*. Mortimer published catalogues of Harvard's incunabula in addition to having a storied career as a professor of book history.

Beyond this core sample of women, however, it became clear that the titles "bibliographer" and "book historian" were no longer correctly capturing what I found. These were masculinized terms that had been drawn to value a certain kind of scholar and a certain kind of labor. Bibliography as a

9. A number of the following women in bibliography and book history were suggested by Jessamy Carlson, Patrick Cates, Michelle Chesner, Elizabeth DeBold, Silvia Glick, Jacqui Grainger, Molly Hardy, Emiko Hastings, Laura Helton, Dennis C. Landis, Mary Lu McDonald, Philip Palmer, Christine Pawley, Sal Robinson, Erin Schreiner, Jill Shefrin, Deidre Stam, Christopher Walker, and Kurt Zimmerman.

10. As with most bibliographies, Tremaine's work has been supplemented and critiqued in the decades between now and its publication; see FLEMING (1999) and KENNEDY (1992).

11. My thanks to Leslie Howsam for providing this information.

discipline came of age in the early and mid-twentieth century, and women's participation dramatically changed as their access to education and scholarly spaces in the Western world shifted. Most of the male bibliographers cited in this article have doctoral degrees from elite universities including Cambridge, Oxford, Northwestern, and Yale. They received degrees and were appointed to professorships at a time when women were not even formally admitted to these universities. This changed in the 1960s and 1970s with the influence of second-wave feminism and the Civil Rights movement, which coincides with bibliography's evolution into book history and critical theory's challenging of long-held beliefs about literary greatness. Thus, the fleeing of historically minded "refugees" to book history takes on another layer of the shoring up of masculinized historical research in the face of an increasingly diversifying professoriate.

Before the 1970s, however, women were still contributing to the history of the book, and it is this earlier period that I focus on here. Many women were curators like Mortimer or cataloguers, indexers, archivists, and librarians. They *did* bibliography, but often were not identified as bibliographers professionally. My search thus became a search for women's bibliographic labor, a phrase I owe to Christine Nelson at the Morgan Library, because it resists relabeling women as bibliographers and eliding their ties to fields like librarianship. To label them all "bibliographers" would erase a gendered history of bibliographic labor.

Most women's bibliographic labor is found in libraries. As a feminized profession, librarianship has been historically undervalued since its formal creation in the mid-nineteenth century. Similar to nursing and teaching, librarianship was considered "appropriate" work for women because it was service-oriented (HARRIS 1992). Debates about women in librarianship were immediately sexist and long-lived.<sup>12</sup> The gendering of the field can be found in the kind of work that women librarians perform, which is more likely to be in public rather than academic libraries (TAYLOR 1995, 102 and WEIBEL and HEIM 1979, xiii). It is in how they are compensated, which is less well than their male-identified colleagues, and in the unevenness of their promotion (LYNCH 1999). Adding to this feminization, and consequent devaluation, was professional gatekeeping. In the early twentieth century when Bowers and Greg were publishing in bibliography, librarians

12. For examples of debates in England, see COLEMAN (2014a and 2014b) and KERSLAKE (2006). For examples in America, see MAACK (1998), HANSEN (2017), and WEIBEL and HEIM (1979). For Canada, see HARRIS (1992) and LORNE (2012).

had less formal training than literary doctorates, usually completing only a two-year program.

These factors contribute to the gerrymandering of women's bibliographic labor away from the core of book history scholarship, despite their performance of much of the same labor in a different context. Molly O'Hagan Hardy writes as much of Avis G. Clarke, cataloguer at the American Antiquarian Society. Clarke's output was staggering. She created thousands of cards of the American Antiquarian Society's holdings, and Hardy argues that the cards "write and rewrite the history of early American, Caribbean, Scottish, Irish, and English printing and all of the labors associated with it" (2016, n.p.). Hardy argues that Clarke's labor was not clerical but scholarly; she "writes and rewrites" the history of printing through cataloguing, which then shapes how researchers are prepared to think about these histories. This analysis positions Clarke as an actor, an interpretive force, in the history of the book in the United States and cataloguing as a crucial component of the field's labor.

There seems to be an Avis Clarke at every major literary institution in the Western world whose labor is, for one reason or another, undervalued. Greg and Pantzer are known for working on catalogues of English literature, but cataloguing work within a library is too easily regarded as simple reference work rather than true scholarly labor. This divide obscures the impact that such work has had on the creation of book history and the study of rare books. Among the legion of women cataloguers are Cora Edgerton Sanders of the William Andrews Clark Memorial Library (POWELL 1950), Julia Pettee of the Union Theological Seminary (WALKER and COPELAND 2009), Mary Pollard at Trinity University (BENSON and FITZPATRICK 2005), and Melanie Barber at Lambeth Palace Library (BROWN 2013). These women, as Hardy argues with regard to Clarke, are agents in bibliographical history; they "write and rewrite" the history of the book and thus provide crucial interpretive labor. Considering as a whole their output makes a convincing case that the work of making books visible in catalogues and offering interpretive framing has facilitated every aspect of book history from the physical use of objects in the archive to the circulation of accurate metadata through standardized cataloguing in Machine-Readable Cataloging records (MARC), which, incidentally, was first programmed by a woman, Henriette Avram (RATHER and WIGGINS 1989). Essentially, without this labor, book history would not exist.

The list of women who fit this general description is vast, and cataloguing is only one aspect of how women have contributed to the history of the book. Another is through collection-building, which includes

library administrators and private collectors. This thread of women's bibliographic labor is similarly gendered by professionalization and cultural gatekeeping. In the same time period before second wave feminism, women library administrators were rare. Joanne E. Passet argues that displaying the male gender trumped all other concerns when it came down to what made someone a good library administrator: "Even after describing men who were lacking in 'initiative and executive work', needful of 'friendly criticism', 'self-distrustful', and 'more or less nervous', directors would conclude: 'He ought to be at the head of his own library'" (1993, 397). Even if women administrators were a numerical minority, their contributions are still significant. They were responsible for building the collection, training and managing staff, and processing dizzying amounts of new material. Columbia University's Butler Library was staffed by a number of remarkable women such as Harriet Beardsley Prescott, head of the cataloguing department. Prescott's tenure included a marked increase in volumes in the library. Jane Siegel writes that "In 1889, when Harriet started working there, the Library contained just under 100,000 volumes; by her retirement in 1939, there were 1,400,000 volumes" (2018, n.p.). Elsewhere in New York, Belle da Costa Greene transformed the Pierpont Morgan Library from "a rich man's casually built collection into one which ranks with the greatest in the world" (ARDIZZONE 2007, 4–5). Greene was the library's director for more than two decades, and her documentation practices are built into its infrastructure. Christine Nelson, Drue Heinz Curator of Literary & Historical Manuscripts, and Sal Robinson, Assistant Curator, report that they refer to Greene's handwritten accession books and card catalogues when locating volumes in the collection. In Washington D.C., the Folger Shakespeare Library boasts Eleanor "Molly" Pitcher who was, according to Elizabeth DeBold, "a seasoned purchaser and nobody's fool" (2018, n.p.). Pitcher was head of acquisitions, and during her career

the Folger succeeded in adding more than 19,000 Sixteenth and Seventeenth Century English titles to its shelves, 22,000 Continental imprints from the same two centuries, and numerous Eighteenth Century books. Considering that Mr. Folger's original bequest of rare books had numbered fewer than 7,000 titles and the Harmsworth purchase of 1938 fewer than 12,000 titles, the magnitude of this accomplishment is evident.

(MASON, FOWLER, and KNACHEL 1969, 364)

Women's role in collection-building is also pointedly linked to feminist activism. Women not only shaped book history, but did so politi-

cally, writing their point of view into the catalogues and scholarship they produced. Dorothy B. Porter, curator at what is now Howard University's Moorland-Spingarn Research Center, changed how library infrastructure handled black authors and their work. Laura E. Helton writes that Porter "decided to dismantle the tools she learned in library school and remake them to capaciously delineate blackness" (2019, 101). Porter rewrote the card catalogue and redefined how the Dewey Decimal System was applied to black literature. The foil in prestige and scope to Howard's collection of black literature was the Division of Negro Literature, History and Prints at the 135<sup>th</sup> Street Branch of the New York Public Library. The division's first African-American librarian was Catherine Allen Latimer, who spent her career cataloguing the collection and working with the community alongside several other women of color including Nella Larsen (ROFFMAN 2007). They worked with library head Ernestine Rose to build a collection that represented the vibrancy of the Harlem Renaissance (HOCHMAN 2014). As head of the West End branch of the Boston Public Library, Fanny Goldstein created programming for immigrant communities that included Negro History Week, Jewish Music Month, Catholic Book Week, and Brotherhood Week (SMITH n.d.). She additionally built the second-largest Judaica collection in the United States. Goldstein's attention to a diverse population of children readers was shared by many women librarians, notably Charlemae Hill Rollins, who was head of children's literature at a branch of the Chicago Public Library. Rollins worked at the George Cleveland Hall Branch Library under director Vivian G. Harsh when it opened in 1932 as the first library in a black neighborhood in Chicago. Confronting a list of children's literature that negatively portrayed black children, Rollins compiled *We Build Together: A Reader's Guide to Negro Life and Literature for Elementary and High School Use* (1967) as a more appropriate reading list. It was one of her many publications that sought to address systemic bias by using bibliography as activist resistance.

Women who were not librarians have also used collection-building to combat silence about women's history in the same activist vein. One remarkable collector was Miriam Young Holden, who amassed a collection in her New York City brownstone of more than 6,000 books on the history of women. Unable to find what they were looking for elsewhere, researchers like Gerda Lerner came to Holden's meticulously organized home where she allowed them access to her private collection. "In this library the history of women was a reality", Lerner writes. "The possibilities of comparative and interdisciplinary approaches were evident" (1980, 164). Holden's collecting was about purpose more than aesthetics, and her archive shows that she



assiduously collected every pamphlet, book, and piece that she could find on women's history and experiences. Addressing the Hroswitha Club, a group of women book collectors, Holden said, "Please remember when you see my books that I do not have them because they are rare or because of their value. I collect them only because I hope they contain within them some significant records of women that will be meaningful to those who are seeking and using them" (1960, 4). When she died, she arranged for her collection to be donated to Princeton, where it sits in open stacks to be used by current students and researchers, continuing her legacy.

Holden's collecting and extensive self-education allowed her to advocate for systemic educational change. Similar to women librarians, she was not able to attend major universities or receive an advanced degree. She attended Simmons College but seems to have left after one year in 1914.<sup>13</sup> Aware of this disparity, Holden spent decades alongside colleagues including Eugenia Leonard and Mary Beard petitioning universities to teach a single course on women's history. They "wrote proposals, curricula, bibliographies, and position papers; they nagged college presidents and alumnae trustees and, for the most part, failed to make a dent, yet they persisted" (LERNER 1980, 165). Their persistence did, eventually, pay off. Through a sustained effort with Radcliffe College faculty like Elizabeth Borden and Beard, her colleague-in-arms, Holden helped foster the Women's Archives and was instrumental in convincing Harriet Beecher Stowe's family to donate her papers.<sup>14</sup> She was a National Consultant for the archive, which she and her colleagues believed was necessary to make the foundation for future curriculum. Beard wrote "the preparation of women to teach courses on women in history can only be tackled when the equipment for this preparation is on hand. Research will have to precede such training" (1944). Holden invariably agreed, writing:

The greatest benefit I have received from my own collection is self-education in the significance of what woman has been able to achieve in

13. Holden, as Miriam Young, is listed in the 1914 Simmons College yearbook *Microcosm* as a student "admitted to pursue irregular or partial programs"; see pages 105–6. She studied social work but did not receive a degree. My thanks to Sara A. Howard, Emma Sarconi, and Jason Wood for their assistance in researching this question.
14. See Box 1, Folder 50, Miriam Y. Holden Collection, Princeton Rare Books. Holden visits Stowe's family several times and writes letters to Radcliffe's administration to petition for a space for the library.

long history as well as what she has not yet achieved. When books are put together with that end in view, they begin to say something, and I believe they can help guide the students to an attitude of mind that will help them to face the future.

(1951)

Holden's activism confronted a gendered social norm that shaped every aspect of her life, including her interaction with the book world. It also confronted the norms of academia that worked to keep women out of male spaces and to delegitimize their histories by refusing to collect or teach them. Collection-building combats women's historical erasure, and other collectors including Lisa Unger Baskin, Anne Lyon Haight, and Marjorie Dana Barlow have used this method to similar effect. Barlow, Haight, Holden, and Greene were also members of Hroswitha Club, which Haight created with a dozen other women in 1944 because women collectors were not admitted to male spaces like Grolier Club.

As this overview indicates, women's history within book history is not only vast but also expands the space we can cite as the field's origins. A feminist approach knits a narrative of book history through librarianship, book collecting, and textual editing alongside the traditional space of bibliography. These choices make disciplinary sense: imagining the modern study of rare books without libraries and archives is next to impossible, nor is it sound to consider studying an object without an awareness of its provenance. While the increased number of women in academia has changed some of the dynamics presented in this narrative, others remain staunchly unchanged. The sedimentation of sexism still permeates the field, which no doubt contributes to the preservation of genderless bibliography as the core of book history's values. Pointedly feminist work is often met with opposition, and even this piece has received its fair share as it progressed through conferences and the peer review process. A feminist book history might also combat women's continued marginalization by writing their labor back into our histories and using the epistemological power of bibliography as activism rather than a conservative influence.

In sum, feminist book history has a rich past on which to draw to reimagine the dynamics of our field and to give scaffolding to current feminist scholarship. Scholars including Maureen Bell, Margaret J.M. Ezell, Leslie Howsam, Michelle Levy, Lisa Maruca, Helen Smith, and Sarah Werner provide theoretical considerations about women's book history, and the *Women in Book History Bibliography* gives a deep citational pool from which to draw. Each of these authors should appear with regularity in companions

and other introductory books (and not only as the editors, which three of them are). Secondly, we can use the critiques of feminist textual editors like Julia Flanders, Amanda Gailey, Katie King, Brenda R. Silver, Martha Nell Smith, and Ann Thompson to challenge the history of textual editing that has been canonized within book history and instead introduce explicitly feminist and political language to our foundations. Third, we should expand our definitions of bibliography and book history to explicitly include the work of librarians, cataloguers, indexers, and archivists who have made the modern study of rare books possible and whose hands “write and rewrite” the history of books. These accounts challenge disciplinary elitism and sexism that have left librarianship on the feminized margins of book history. Lastly, we should look outside the academy for women book collectors like Marjorie Dana Barlow, Lisa Unger Baskin, Anne Lyon Haight, and Miriam Young Holden, whose building of bibliographical narratives has formed the study of women’s history and literature.

The conceptual work of feminist book history is still in flux, and if the pulse of a discourse can be taken by the appearance of conference panels and scholarly work in progress, this field will soon tip into a broader discussion. This means that now is the moment when feminist book history can be formed as a field that is more inclusive than exclusive. Most of the conceptual work on feminist book history, my own included, is from scholars working on white women in England. It is essential that feminist book history make connections with the other pockets of diverse book history scholarship lest we repeat our key faults. It is not enough to simply be a white women’s book history in England. It is only when book history, as a discourse, begins to create space that allows us to value the incredible breadth of studies of the material book that we can start to adapt to our own diversity. If we are able to accomplish this, studies of the material book will be the better for it.

Cal Poly Pomona

## Works Cited

- ABBOTT, Craig S., and William Proctor WILLIAMS, eds. 2009. *An Introduction to Bibliographical and Textual Studies*. 4th ed. New York: Modern Language Association.
- ADAMS, Thomas R. and Nicolas BARKER. 2001. “A New Model for the Study of the Book”. In *A Potencie of Life: Books in Society. The Clark Lectures, 1986–1987*, 5–43. London; New Castle: British Library; Oak Knoll Press.
- ARDIZZONE, Heidi. 2007. *An Illuminated Life: Belle Da Costa Greene’s Journey from Prejudice to Privilege*. New York and London: W. W. Norton and Company.

- BARNARD, John, D. F. McKENZIE, David McKITTERICK, and I. R. WILLISON, eds. 1999–2019. *The Cambridge History of the Book in Britain*. 7 vols. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- BARTHES, Roland. 1977. “Death of the Author”. In *Image, Music, Text*, translated by Stephen HEATH, 142–8. New York: Hill and Wang.
- BEARD, Mary Ritter. 1944. “Letter to Miriam Holden”. Miriam Y. Holden Collection, Princeton Rare Books.
- BELL, Maureen. 2014. “Women and the Production of Texts: The Impact of the History of the Book”. In *The Book Trade in Early Modern England: Practices, Perceptions, Connections*, edited by John HINKS and Victoria GARDINER, 107–31. London: The British Library Publishing Division.
- BENSON, Charles and Siobhan FITZPATRICK, eds. 2005. *That Woman – Studies in Irish Bibliography: A Festschrift for Mary ‘Paul’ Pollard*. Dublin: The Lilliput Press, 2005.
- BOWERS, Fredson. 1949. *Principles of Bibliographic Description*. Princeton: Princeton University Press.
- BROWN, Clare. 2013. “Melanie Barber M.B.E., B.A., M.A., F.S.A. (1943–2012)”. *Archives and Records* 34.2: 263–5.
- BRUCE, Lorne. 2012. “Professionalization, Gender, and Librarianship in Ontario, 1920–75”. *Library & Information History* 28.2: 117–34.
- COLEMAN, Sterling Joseph Jr. 2014a. “‘No Room for Her Here!’ The Numerical Feminization of Public Librarianship in England, 1871–1914”. *Libraries & Culture* 30.2: 90–109.
- . 2014b. “‘Eminently Suited to Girls and Women’: The Numerical Feminization of Public Librarianship in England 1914–31”. *Libraries & Information History* 30.3: 195–209.
- DEBOLD, Elizabeth. 2018. “Under Cover: Forged Bindings on Display at the Folger”. *The Collation: Research and Exploration at the Folger*. <https://collation.folger.edu/2018/07/forged-bindings/>.
- DUNN, Marilyn. 2013. “Convent Creativity”. In *The Ashgate Research Companion to Women and Gender in Early Modern Europe*, edited by Allyson M. POSKA, Jane COUCHMAN, and Katherine A. McIVER, 53–74. New York: Routledge.
- EARHART, Amy E. 2015. *Traces of the Old, Uses of the New: The Emergence of Digital Literary Studies*. Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press.
- EAVES, Morris. 1994. “‘Why Don’t They Leave It Alone?’: Speculations on the Authority of the Audience in Editorial Theory”. In *Cultural Artifacts and the Production of Meaning: The Page, the Images, and the Body*, edited by Margaret J.M. EZELL and Katherine O’BRIEN O’KEEFE, 85–100. Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press.
- EICHHORN, Kate. 2013. *The Archival Turn in Feminism: Outrage in Order*. Philadelphia: American Literatures Initiatives.
- ELIOT, Simon, and Jonathan ROSE, eds. 2009. *A Companion to the History of the Book*. New York: Wiley-Blackwell.

- EZELL, Margaret J.M. 2010. "Editing Early Modern Women's Manuscripts: Theory, Electronic Editions, and the Accidental Copy-Text". *Literature Compass* 7.2: 102–9.
- FINKELSTEIN, David, and Alistair McCLEERY, eds. 2006. *The Book History Reader*. 2nd ed. London: Routledge.
- . 2012. *Introduction to Book History*. 2nd ed. New York: Routledge.
- FLANDERS, Julia. 1998. "The Body Encoded: Questions of Gender and the Electronic Text". In *Electronic Text: Investigations in Method and Theory*, edited by Kathryn SUTHERLAND. Oxford: Clarendon Press.
- FLEMING, Patricia Lockhart. 1999. *Early Canadian Printing: A Supplement to Marie Tremaine's "A Bibliography of Canadian Imprints, 1751-1800"*. Toronto: University of Toronto Press.
- FOUCAULT, Michel. 1977. "What Is an Author?" In *Language, Counter-Memory, Practice*, edited by Donald F. BOUCHARD, translated by Donald F. BOUCHARD and Sherry SIMON, 113–38. Ithaca and New York: Cornell University Press.
- FRASER, Robert. 2008. *Book History Through Postcolonial Eyes: Rewriting the Script*. New York: Routledge.
- GAILEY, Amanda. 2012. "Cold War Legacies in Digital Editing". *Textual Cultures* 7.1: 5–17.
- GALLON, Kim. 2016. "Making a Case for the Black Digital Humanities". In *Debates in the Digital Humanities*. Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press.
- GIKANDI, Simon. 2015. "Rethinking the Archive of Enslavement". *Early American Literature* 50.1: 81–102. <https://doi.org/doi:10.1353/eal.2015.0020>.
- GREETHAM, D. C. 1989. "Textual and Literary Theory: Redrawing the Matrix". *Studies in Bibliography* 42: 1–24.
- . 1994. *Textual Criticism: An Introduction*. New York and London: Garland Publishing.
- HABIB, Imtiaz H. 2016. *Black Lives in the English Archives 1500-1677: Imprints of the Invisible*. Reprint. New York: Routledge.
- HALL, David D., ed. 2014. *A History of the Book in America*. 5 vols. Chapel Hill: The University of North Carolina Press.
- HANSEN, Debra Gold. 2017. "Library Wars: The Making of Librarianship at the Los Angeles Public Library, 1890-1910". *Libraries: Culture, History, and Society* 1.1: 97–125.
- HARDY, Molly O'Hagan. 2016. "'Black Printers' on White Cards: Information Architecture in the Data Structures of the Early American Book Trades". In *Debates in the Digital Humanities*, edited by Matthew K. GOLD and Lauren F. KLEIN, n.p. Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press. <https://dhdebates.gc.cuny.edu/read/untitled/section/3c4a647f-8f61-48b6-ab41-5d6e765ac70f#ch31>
- HALL, Kim F. 1995. *Things of Darkness: Economies of Race and Gender in Early Modern England*. Ithaca: Cornell University Press.
- HARTMAN, Saidiya V. 1997. *Scenes of Subjection: Terror, Slavery, and Self-Making in Nineteenth-Century America*. Oxford and New York: Oxford University Press.

- HELTON, Laura E. 2019. "On Decimals, Catalogs, and Racial Imaginaries of Reading". *PMLA* 134.1: 99–120.
- HOCHMAN, Barbara. 2014. "Investing in Literature: Ernestine Rose and the Harlem Branch Public Library of the 1920s". *Legacy* 31.1: 93–112.
- HOLDEN, Miriam Y. 1951. "Letter to Elizabeth Borden". Miriam Y. Holden Collection, Princeton Rare Books.
- . 1960. "Address to the Hroswitha Club". In *Hroswitha Club Meeting*. New York, Privately Printed, 1–15.
- HOWSAM, Leslie. 1998. "In My View: Women and Book History". *SHARP News* 7.4: 1–2.
- . 2006. *Old Books and New Histories: An Orientation to Studies in Book and Print Culture*. Toronto: University of Toronto Press.
- , ed. 2014. *The Cambridge Companion to the History of the Book*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- JACKSON, Leon. 2010. "The Talking Book and the Talking Book Historian: African American Cultures of Print — The State of the Discipline". *Book History* 13: 251–308. <https://doi.org/10.1353/bh.2010.0014>.
- KENNEDY, Patricia. 1992. "What Marie Tremaine Did Not Find: An Exploration of Archival Back Rooms". *Papers of the Bibliographical Society of Canada/Cahiers de La Société Bibliographique du Canada* 30.1: 27–51.
- KERSLAKE, Evelyn. 2006. "The Feminisation of Librarianship: The Writings of Margaret Reed". In *The Cambridge History of Libraries in Britain and Ireland*, edited by Alistair BLACK and Peter HOARE, 548–55. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- KING, Katie. 1991. "Bibliography and a Feminist Apparatus of Literary Production". *Text* 5: 91–103.
- LERNER, Gerda. 1980. "Miriam Holden — In Remembrance and Friendship". *The Princeton University Library Chronicle* 41.2: 164–8.
- LEVY, Michelle. 2014. "Do Women Have a Book History?" *Studies in Romanticism* 53.3: 297–317.
- LEVY, Michelle, and Tom MOLE, eds. 2014. *The Broadview Reader in Book History*. New York: Broadview.
- . 2017. *The Broadview Introduction to Book History*. New York: Broadview.
- LYNCH, Mary Jo. 1999. "Library Directors: Gender and Salary". American Library Association. <http://www.ala.org/tools/research/librariystaffstats/diversity/libdirectors>.
- MAACK, Mary Niles. 1998. "Gender, Culture, and the Transformation of American Librarianship, 1890–1920". *Libraries & Culture* 33.1: 51–61.
- MACLEAN, Gerald. 1997. "What's Class Got to Do with It?" In *The Margins of the Text*, edited by D.C. GREETHAM, 25–43. Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press.
- MARUCA, Lisa. 2007. *The Work of Print: Authorship and the English Text Trades, 1660–1760*. Seattle: University of Washington Press.



- MASON, Dorothy E., Elaine FOWLER, and Philip KNACHEL. 1969. "The Folger Shakespeare Library in Washington, D. C.: A Brief History". *Records of the Columbia Historical Society, Washington, D.C.* 69/70: 346–70.
- MASTEN, Jeffrey. 1997. *Textual Intercourse: Collaboration, Authorship, and Sexualities in Renaissance Drama*. Cambridge Studies in Renaissance Literature and Culture. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- MCDOWELL, Paula. 1998. *The Women of Grub Street: Press, Politics, and Gender in the London Literary Marketplace, 1678-1730*. Oxford, New York: Clarendon Press.
- MCGANN, Jerome. 1983. *A Critique of Modern Textual Criticism*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press.
- . 1985. *The Romantic Ideology: A Critical Investigation*. Chicago: University Of Chicago Press.
- McKENZIE, D. F. 1999. *Bibliography and the Sociology of Texts*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- ONYEKA. 2013. *Blackamoors: Africans in Tudor England, Their Presence, Status and Origins*. London: Narrative Eye Ltd.
- PASSET, Joanne E. 1993. "Men in a Feminized Profession: The Male Librarian, 1887-1921". *Libraries & Culture* 28.4: 385–402.
- POWELL, Lawrence Clark. 1950. "From Private Collection to Public Institution: The William Andrews Clark Memorial Library". *The Library Quarterly: Information, Community, Policy* 20.2: 101–8.
- RATHER, Lucia J. and Beacher WIGGINS. 1989. "'Mother Avram's Remarkable Contribution': Henriette D. Avram". *American Libraries* 20 (9): 855–61.
- RAVEN, James. 2018. *What Is the History of the Book?* Cambridge: Polity Press.
- ROFFMAN, Karin. 2007. "Nella Larsen, Librarian at 135th Street". *Modern Fiction Studies* 53.4: 752–87.
- ROLLINS, Charlemae Hill. 1967. *We Build Together: A Reader's Guide to Negro Life and Literature for Elementary and High School Use*. Champaign, Ill.: National Council of Teachers of English.
- ROSE, Jonathan. 2001. "From Book History to Book Studies". <https://printinghistory.org/awards/society-history-authorship-reading-publishing-sharp/>.
- SIEGEL, Jane. 2018. "Harriet Beardslee Prescott (1866–1958)". Blog, *Women in the Stacks and Other Aspects of Columbia University Library History*. <https://womenin-thestacks.wordpress.com/>.
- SILVER, Brenda. 1991. "Textual Criticism as Feminist Practice: Or, Who's Afraid of Virginia Woolf Part II". In *Representing Modernist Texts: Editing as Interpretation*, edited by George BORNSTEIN, 193–222. Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press.
- SMITH, Helen. 2012. "Grossly Material Things": *Women and Book Production in Early Modern England*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.
- SMITH, Martha Nell. 2007. "The Human Touch Software of the Highest Order: Revisiting Editing as Interpretation". *Textual Cultures* 1.1: 1–15.
- SMITH, Helen. n.d. "Fanny Goldstein (1895-1961)". In *Jewish Women's Archive Encyclopedia*. <https://jwa.org/encyclopedia/article/goldstein-fanny>.

- SUAREZ, Michael F., and H.R. WOUTHUYSEN, eds. 2010. *The Oxford Companion to the Book*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.
- , eds. 2013. *The Book: A Global History*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.
- TANSELLE, G. Thomas. 1971. "Textual Study and Literary Judgment". *The Papers of the Bibliographical Society of America* 65.2: 109–22.
- . 1988. "Bibliographical History as a Field of Study". *Studies in Bibliography* 41: 33–63.
- TAYLOR, Julia. 1995. "Left on the Shelf? The Issues and Challenges Facing Women Employed in Libraries from the Late Nineteenth Century to the 1950s". *Library History* 11.1: 96–107.
- THOMPSON, Ann. 1997. "Feminist Theory and the Editing of Shakespeare: The Taming of the Shrew Revisited". In *The Margins of the Text*, edited by D.C. GREETHAM, 83–104. Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press.
- WALKER, Christopher and Ann COPELAND. 2009. "The Eye Prophetic: Julia Pettee". *Libraries & the Cultural Record, Women Pioneers in the Information Sciences Part I, 1900–1950*, 44.2: 162–82.
- WEIBEL, Kathleen and Kathleen M. HEIM, eds. 1979. *The Role of Women in Librarianship, 1876–1976: The Entry, Advancement, and Struggle for Equalization in One Profession*. Phoenix: The Oryx Press.
- WERNER, Sarah. 2018. "Weaving a Feminist Book History". 1–8. <https://sarahwerner.net/blog/2018/03/weaving-a-feminist-book-history/>.
- YOUNG, John K. 2006. *Black Writers, White Publishers: Marketplace Politics in Twentieth-Century African-American Literature*. Oxford: University of Mississippi Press.

# Time and the Bibliographer

## A Meditation on the Spirit of Book Studies

*Matt Cohen*

### ABSTRACT

*In light of the global return of tribalism, racism, nationalism, and religious hypocrisy to power's center stage, it is worth returning to the question of the relevance of bibliography. It is a time when, at least at the seats of power in the United States and some other places, books seem to have become almost meaningless. Bibliographic pioneer D.F. McKenzie's strategy was not to constrain bibliography in self-defense, but to expand it, to go on the offense. What is our course? This essay explores bibliography's past in order to suggest ways in which it can gain from an engagement with the methods and motivating concerns of Indigenous studies. The study of books has often functioned within a colonialist set of assumptions about its means and its ends, but at the same time, having been at times in something of a marginalized position themselves in their professions, its practitioners have developed unique tools, passions, and intellectual focuses with decolonial potential. That unusual "spirit", in dialogue with Native people and Indigenous ideas — about media, about what constitutes a "process", and about the historical and political meanings of recorded forms — may be key to transforming the imagination of the study of books and to enriching its place in the world.*

---

The two kinds [of editions, facsimile and critical,] must always coexist, for they represent two indispensable elements in approaching the past: the ordered presentation of artifactual evidence, and the creation, from that evidence, of versions of past moments that are intended to be more comprehensively faithful than the artifacts themselves — random (and perhaps damaged) survivors as they are.

— G. Thomas Tanselle, "Editing without a Copy-Text" (1994)

And then I pack a bag containing all of my baby's books, many of which I've laboriously blotted with Wite-Out, removing the English, and replaced with Ojibwe words written in Magic Marker.

— Louise Erdrich, *Books and Islands in Ojibwe Country* (2003)

Or take the example of the Quatzoli, who found the Caru'ee repurposing one of the lost Quatzoli stone brains as a research complex. The tiny chambers and channels, where ancient, watery thoughts once flowed were now laboratories, libraries, teaching rooms, and lecture halls echoing with new ideas. The Quatzoli delegation had come to recover the mind of their ancestor, but left convinced that all was as it should be.

— Kenneth Liu, “The Bookmaking Habits of Select Species” (2012)

THE TITLE OF MY ESSAY, WITH ITS ALLUSION TO JOHANNES FABIAN’s book *Time and the Other*, positions the bibliographer as the aboriginal Other — stuck in an earlier time, unable fully to engage the present, and destined, if not to disappearance, to irrelevance. It is intended as a double provocation: to center the varieties of media temporalities, but also to spur thought about the dependence of bibliography upon conceptions of time that may in fact be less colonially coordinated than internally inconsistent. My definition of “bibliography” is consequently the very broad one advocated by D. F. McKenzie, embracing textual scholarship and book history, with the presumption that the close material analysis of books developed by bibliographers is a shared basic part of all book studies.

Here I explore the relationship between historicity and desire in the activity of studying books — its emotional animation, as it connects to the feeling of recovering a lost history, something I’m calling the “spirit” of book studies. The overlap of that feeling with the animating force of “salvage ethnography” is patent, but I am not making the case that bibliographers are stuck in a pre-modern, moribund state like anthropologists thought Indians were. Nor am I saying that the spirit of connecting with and recovering the past puts bibliographers at odds with Indigenous studies. There is a seduction, a kind of eternal present, in maintaining a certain relationship to the past, it’s true: that feeling, which Arlette Farge describes so well, of having pulled the thread not just from around a bundle of documents no one has looked at in a century but the thread dangling from a story that will reveal itself, for the first time, to *you*, as you apply your hard-earned bibliographical vision. But I believe that there are several spirits haunting the study of books, several kinds of relationship to time, that allow us to see ways it can respond to the serious political challenges posed by an engagement with indigeneity.

In the mid-1980s, when McKenzie’s Panizzi lectures began to circulate, it was Reagan’s reactive United States and Baroness Thatcher’s Britain that framed their urgent message about cultural preservation and the pivotal

role bibliography could play in that effort.<sup>1</sup> In today's moment, with the global return of tribalism, racism, nationalism, and religious hypocrisy to power's center stage, it is worth returning to the question of the relevance of bibliography. It is a time when, at least at the seats of power in the United States and some other places, books seem to have become almost meaningless. McKenzie's strategy was not to constrain bibliography in self-defense, but to expand it, to go on the offense. What is *our* course? Bibliography will need new allies in order to survive the effects of the current collapse of the old conservative order (and perhaps of the liberal one as well). Indigenous ideas about media, about what constitutes a "process", and about the historical and political meanings of recorded forms, are key not just to transforming the imagination of the study of books, but to growing and enriching its life in, and in relation to, the world.

Bibliography, I will contend, has for the most part functioned within a colonialist set of assumptions about its means and its ends. But at the same time, having been at times in something of a marginalized position themselves in their departments or professions, its practitioners have developed unique tools, passions, and intellectual focuses with decolonial potential. The marginal position not just of the field itself, but also of its methods, and the way it creates space and time for obsessiveness as method, can induce self-indulgence, but it can also create wonders, unprecedented insights, and cultural and professional rapprochement. To imagine a decolonial bibliography isn't to run faster toward the quantifiable in hopes of transcending cultures. It is rather to bring our feelings as bibliographic practitioners into the field's methodological core in hopes of realizing a newly transformative way of doing our work. What I offer today is neither a call nor a prescription for doing more bibliographical work on Indigenous subjects, though under certain conditions that would be beneficial. Nor is it even mostly about the rigorous rethinking of book studies' theories about materiality or form that are entailed by a profound examination of Indigenous media. I will argue that to think about bibliography in relation to Indigenous studies is less about introducing particular *systems of thought or analysis* than it is about *relations and an orientation toward time*. Rather than demanding the assimilation of an unfamiliar episteme or attempting to synthesize

1. McKenzie's "Printers of the Mind" was first aired in 1967 before being published in 1969; the Boston Rare Books and Manuscripts pre-conference on "Books in History and Society" in 1980 heralded, in Michael Winship's words, "the beginnings of book history as a bibliographical endeavor for American scholars" (2007, 6).

intercultural textual theories, this meaning of indigeneity for the practices and the stances of those who study books entails considering many forms of kinship and exchanges of words, resources, and trust that are inflected by a range of conceptions of time and history. I hope that this meditation will be of use to any kind of bibliographer studying any kind of material.

Nicholas Thomas reminds us that “colonial cultures are not simply ideologies that mask, mystify or rationalize forms of oppression that are external to them; they are also expressive and constitutive of colonial relationships in themselves” (1994, 2). The most straightforward definitions of bibliography appear in a new light, considered from the perspective of indigeneity under this view of colonialism. Philip Gaskell describes bibliography as “the study of books as material objects”, including “the science of the transmission of literary documents” (1995, 1). In the move from books to documents, one territorial expansion has occurred. But Gaskell expands further, using an apt metaphor of dominion: “All documents, manuscript and printed, are the bibliographer’s province”, he writes, indeed, more expansively still, any case in which “reproduction is involved and variant versions may result” (1995, 1). A more recent generation has begun to tweak definitions like this one by introducing insights from feminist, Indigenous, and African American studies. Michelle Warren, for example, asks in a recent essay on textual scholarship that we always consider the question, “What does editing have to do with the community, the *polis*?” (2013, 119). A demanding question. Still, the *polis* is not the community; it is greater than some communities, smaller than others, and irrelevant to yet others. The question of the politics of bibliography and textual scholarship cannot be confined to Western definitions of the sites of benefit for philological work.<sup>2</sup>

By way of an introduction to the history of the dialogue between book studies and indigeneity, but also as an acknowledgment of my intellectual ancestors, I begin with bibliographic efforts in relation to American Indians. Then I turn to the more expansive field of the intercultural study of media across Indigenous and colonial societies. Scholars in the last few years have tried to introduce Indigenous epistemes and priorities into this kind of study, and it is in the light of such work that we can turn back to bibliographic theory and its animating desires and historical thinking, looking for places where these two spirits might begin to inform each other. As Fabian so elegantly revealed, underpinning the colonialist mentality toward Indigenous people and their cultural expressions was a certain need

2. On the limitations of the concept of the *polis* as community, see MOUFFE 2000.



to believe in a small set of historical models, premised on linear transformation over time of some societies and practices, held against an unmoving backdrop of primitive frozen development. And so in unearthing the expressions of desire or spirit in bibliographic theory we must attend to the conceptions of time and history that undergird those desires and spirits. The movement in my essay, back and forth in time and across a range of disciplines, is meant to exemplify the heterochronicity and transmedial narration induced by working in both Indigenous studies and book studies, whose different pasts and motivations but shared potential to function against the grain of colonization I hope to dramatize in a small way.

### (Kind of) Like a Book

Bibliography, like other metrical tools of colonization, has long both been trained on Indigenous people and appropriated by them. Extensive efforts at bibliographies of publications by and about American Indians began in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, as Anglo-Americans trying to establish a “native” cultural past on the continent sought out and republished early colonial documents by the hundreds. Henry Rowe Schoolcraft’s 1849 *Bibliographical Catalogue* and Thomas Field’s 1873 *Essay towards an Indian Bibliography* exemplify this endeavor, gathering a list of publications about and sometimes by Indians; others include Samuel Drake’s 1833 *Book of the Indians* and the prolific Daniel Brinton’s 1883 *Aboriginal American Authors and Their Productions*. Recent decades have seen an explosion of Indian bibliography, including more Indigenous-centric versions of it in electronic formats. Notable are Francis Paul Prucha’s foundational lists relating to Indian law and history, including *A Bibliographical Guide to the History of Indian-White Relations in the United States* (1977; 1982), Phillip M. White’s *Bibliography of Native American Bibliographies* (2004), and the massive bibliographic series by the Newberry Library’s Center for History of the American Indian, which published 30 bibliographies from 1976 to 1987, and which, from 1988, was published as the D’Arcy McNickle Center bibliographic series. There is the rich multi-volume *Ethnographic Bibliography of North America* edited by Timothy O’Leary and George Peter Murdock in the 1970s, and hundreds of specialized bibliographies are available as well.<sup>3</sup>

3. There are also the editions in the Scarecrow Press’s Native American Bibliography Series, and for periodicals, see LITTLEFIELD and PARIN, 1984. Specialized bibliographies relating to Indigenous issues are appearing at a rapid rate online. See, among many others, JUSTICE, ET AL, 2004–2016; HERBERT 2017; and

Long predating these more recognizably bibliographical texts were hundreds of attempts, across the Americas, to catalog, describe, and decipher the recording devices of Indigenous groups. These descriptions mapped such media in accordance with competing historical frameworks of the evolution of human language (usually a falling away from the unitary, pre-Babel godly tongue) and technological capacity, yielding, most of the time, a judgment that European communication systems were superior — even when, as in the case of the khipu, Europeans were utterly baffled about how the machine worked.<sup>4</sup>

After centuries of stadialist thinking about the march of human progress past hieroglyphics and fetishes and painted codices and wampum toward alphabetic literacy, and significantly in the wake of the rise of comparativist anthropology and global decolonization and Indigenous people's movements, the analytical tide began to turn. The post-progressivist conversation began with folks comparing Indigenous media to the book or writing in well-wished hopes of raising Native systems to equivalence with Western ones. It helped break down, and usefully, the trans-cultural utility of Western terms for media forms. This kind of scholarship taught us lessons, but ultimately failed to bear lasting fruit. The Comanche art critic and curator Paul Chaat Smith explains why:

Let me crudely characterize the existing discourse. The winter count calendar is (kind of) like a book. The quipu is (kind of) like a computer. The petroglyph is (kind of) like words. The subtext is not so buried; what we're really talking about is this: Indians are, on a good day, (kind of) like Europeans. Just as the structure of these sentences about books and computers embeds a clear point of view on what is understood to be superior, the underlying assumption applies to the users of these things as well.

(2014, xi)

Analogy has its drawbacks, in short. “An unbroken, centuries-long written history [. . .] is difficult to find north of the Rio Grande”, writes Germaine Warkentin, “where the many Native systems of knowledge transfer vary so

---

WHYTE 2019. See COHEN 2014 for an overview of North American Native book history.

4. The “khipu” or “quipu” is a record-keeping system invented by the Inca, using bundles of knotted, colored strings. For studies of their function — about which we are still learning — see SALOMON 2004, BROKAW 2010, and URTON 2017.

greatly in their symbolic expression, easily degradable materials, and social functions that, taken as a group, they make an explanatory theory based on traditional concepts of ‘the book’ almost useless” (2014, 55–6). “It is indeed important to ‘recognize supralinguistic ways of presenting knowledge’”, writes Andrew Newman, “but why must that recognition entail a designation as writing?” (2014, 83).

Galen Brokaw, considering the Inca Empire, takes that question a step farther. For the Inca, “the norm [. . .] seems to have been a multimedia context in which the secondary semioses of social, economic, and political interaction took place through various media: architecture, sculpture, ceramic painting, and textiles” (2014, 168). Brokaw takes as his example the Quechua term *quilca*, often translated as *writing* but which seems to have referred to symbolic color patterning more broadly. Its use among Incas “corresponded to an organic conceptualization of Andean media that calls into question the very distinction between semiotic or what we might call ‘rational’ or ‘conceptual’, and nonsemiotic or ‘aesthetic’ media” (2014, 168). Instead we are asked to think in terms of “a continuum in which different media occupy unique positions indicating a particular relationship between, or configuration of, rational/conceptual and aesthetic thought” (2014, 169). Happily, in the wake of such studies, scholars no longer have to compare Indigenous media to books or writing in order to argue for the meaningfulness of Native societies.<sup>5</sup> As barbarous a civilization as the West had best cast no stones.

So what, then, *do* books have to do with Indigenous media? The resonance for analytical purposes may have less to do with media continuities, and more to do with the concepts of time and the kinds of deep attentiveness and passion required both to preserve and make sense of records of various kinds. Brokaw’s research signals the benefits to the textual-scholarly field of attending to the work that has already been done by those studying the relationships between Indigenous people and book cultures. Consider a recent high-visibility experiment in doing book history collectively, *Interacting with Print*, the product of an extensively iterative compositional process involving 22 author/editors who call themselves the Multigraph Collective. The contributors are mostly British or continental Romantics. Their claim is that “a nuanced and historicized concept of interactivity is key to developing a deeper understanding of print” (2017, 1). This would not come as a surprise to scholars of Indigenous media. From Martin

5. For a recent reconsideration of the question of media in Indigenous studies, see MT. PLEASANT, WIGGINTON, and WISECUP 2018.

Lienhard, Walter Mignolo, and Brokaw in the Latin American context to North American Indigenous thinkers like Christopher Teuton and Lisa Brooks, a whole subfield of media history has taken as its basic assumption that Indigenous American signifying occurred across media, was interactive at its core, and evolved in complex ways in relation to emergent — or invading — media.<sup>6</sup> Frank Salomon's work traces the social uses of the khipu and painted staffs out of a time when they were encoding devices into the present, in which in certain Andean villages they serve a symbolic function in local governance rituals. This kind of work has a structural affinity with leading modes of book history, and it is particularly reminiscent of recent studies of the "uses" of books in the nineteenth century Anglo-American context. Matthew Brown wrote a magisterial study of the interactivity of printed texts in the American nonconforming Protestant context, and in it demonstrates the significance of the fact that Indigenous people not only printed but helped translate some of the earliest printed texts in North America, including the first Bible imprint, undertaken by the missionary John Eliot.<sup>7</sup> Lisa Brooks has taken that work even farther in her devastating recent revision of the story of King Philip's War, *Our Beloved Kin*.<sup>8</sup>

Many other scholars' work could be cited here as exemplary, but it is also worth observing that bibliography itself has vanished from *Interacting with Print*: it's not a term in the index, despite the facts that the book covers a crucial period in bibliography's development; that the evidence on which the contributors draw is in many cases discoverable or extant as a result of bibliographic work; and that there's a chapter on catalogs. Moreover, in their enthusiasm about their compositional process *as exemplary of, or a herald of, the new way in which research will proceed in the future*, the contributors to this volume neglect the fact that it has been done before — in 2008, for example, by a group of twelve Indigenous scholars called the Native Critics Collective, in a book called *Reasoning Together*. There are plenty of earlier examples, too, from the Latin American and Caribbean Women's Collective's book *Slaves of Slaves* to the Bay Area's Mission Collective, the Clio Collective, and many others. From the perspectives of Indigenous studies *and* of bibliography, the Multigraph Collective's breath-

6. See LIENHARD 1994–1995, MIGNOLO 1995, BROKAW 2010, TEUTON 2010, and BROOKS 2008; see also SCHRÖTER 2011.

7. See BROWN 2007.

8. See also TONEY 2018.

less proclamations of novelty and well-intentioned anti-establishmentarianism represent a colonial persistence.

Andrew Newman, in a thoughtful book on the relationship between media and history among the Delaware tribe, points to the heart of the methodological tension between bibliographic mood and method and the imperatives that drive Indigenous studies: “The field of ethnohistory, conceived in the mid-twentieth-century judicial context of the Indian Claims Commission, both expanded the archive for the study of Native American cultures and developed a pragmatic skepticism toward documents” (2012, 5). The tools and approaches for that skepticism are of course also the tools of the bibliographer — some of them in fact *developed* by bibliographers, not least because so-called authentic Indigenous texts are extremely valuable in the marketplace and key exhibits in the construction of national histories. You can use these tools to prevent fraud and to assist Indigenous people in their efforts to protect cultural heritage. But they have also been used to deprecate documents that would have provided a measure of self-government to Indigenous tribes in legal battles for recognition and land claims. That “pragmatic skepticism” is more than a method, though: it is, or with time comes to be, a *mood*, an *emotion*. It is an attitude toward history that seeks reassurance, like the New Bibliographers’ notion of authorial intention, in the convergence of evidence with truth about the past.

It is that feeling, that spirit, that keeps the fallacy in place that Newman describes so well: “On the one hand”, he writes, “the fallacy is that an interpretation that excludes unverifiable but possibly significant evidence is less speculative than one that does not. On the other, it is that a representation’s basis in fact is less than crucial to understanding its meaning” (2012, 7).<sup>9</sup> Consider an often-cited example of this problem in the study of Indigenous texts: the book *Black Elk Speaks*, in which John Neihardt recorded the words of the Oglala Lakota leader Black Elk. A lot of ink and strong feelings have gone into the debate over the “authenticity” of this text. Pointing out that Neihardt was a poet, N. Scott Momaday writes:

The transformation of speech into writing — *this* speech into *this* writing — is a matter of great importance, I believe. And Neihardt believed it, too. He brought extraordinary sympathy and dedication to his task.

9. Newman’s suggestion is to embrace *possible truths* as we generate interpretations of Indigenous materials from the past — not far afield from the suggestion Momaday makes about understanding Black Elk through Neihardt.

There are the elements of risk and responsibility here; such is the nature of language. And in the oral tradition these factors are crucial and pervasive. It is a principle of oral tradition that words and the things that are made of words are tentative. A song, or a prayer, or a story, is always but one generation removed from extinction. The risk of loss is constant, therefore, and language is never to be taken for granted. By the same token the storyteller, the man who takes it upon himself to speak, assumes the responsibility of speaking well, of making his words count. The spoken word is the means by which he must keep alive his way of life. There is no other possibility of cultural survival.

I am making the case that a certain spirit of language informs the oral tradition.

(1997, 28–9)

The risk of loss is a creative force. *Responsibility, dedication, sympathy and spirit* are the keywords, not accuracy, authenticity, history, or even truth. Counting, making words count, is a metaphor. It is not collation; it is *keeping alive*. Preservation, the task of the storyteller, the textual editor, and the bibliographer, is based in shared principles here in some ways, but with an orientation unfamiliar to us from the writings of many great bibliographers. Mohegan, Nipmuc, and Wampanoag language revivers today are using the translations made by their ancestors and John Eliot to bring back spoken Algonquian languages and to create stronger tribal communities; colonialist preservation is turned to cultural restoration.<sup>10</sup>

Newman's work is part of a wave of new scholarship on the techniques of textual transmission that focuses on the mechanisms and social institutions of documentary reproduction in order to tell new stories: about early modern English texts in Whitney Trettien's work; or the desires of bibliographer Charles Evans, erased by digital transcription, illuminated by Molly Hardy; or Indigenous aural worlds in reprints of Roger Williams's books, in an essay by Nicole Gray; or colonial Spanish texts in Indigenous languages in the case of Hannah Alpert-Abrams's many projects. Alpert-Abrams's study "Unreadable Books" began with a careful attention to the case of so-called "dirty OCR" in attempts to transcribe seventeenth-century printed works automatically. She writes, of her moment of inspiration:

10. See for example the *Wôpanâak Language Reclamation Project* and *Nipmuc Unnontoowaonk*.



In my work developing tools for the automatic transcription of books from early colonial New Spain, it has become clear that the Anglophone tools of automatic transcription are biased toward English, monolingual, and orthographically regular texts. When faced with Spanish, Latin, and indigenous-language texts from the early modern period, the result was unreadable. In the case of British writers such as Shakespeare, whose work has driven much recent digital scholarship of the early modern period, we might find these errors comical, or irritating, or even expensive. In colonial contexts, however, the naming of an indigenous language “dirty” and the distortion of indigenous discourse is viscerally unacceptable. When an apparently neutral technology of textual reproduction was applied to colonial texts, the ongoing colonial assumptions that informed it were made visible. So was the influence of these assumptions on the ways we access and read the historical record. (2017, 4)

For Alpert-Abrams, those assumptions, out of which many bibliographical desires are woven, remain among the most difficult to transform.<sup>11</sup>

The dynamics of the encounter between the conditions of dispossession with disciplinary research and traditional historical chronicities have been intensely engaged by African Americanist scholars. A lack of bibliographical evidence haunts this field — haunts not least because of the violence that enforced that lack — as it does that of the genocidal archive of colonial relations with Indigenous people. It would be a mistake to think that even the most basic shapes our book studies stories take — like that of the list, the enumerative bibliographer’s non-narrative form — help us evade the act of re-depicting the violence that characterizes the archives of slavery, racism, and genocide. Lois Brown, writing about the lists she consulted to try to reconstruct the life of leading African American author Pauline Elizabeth Hopkins, stops short at her probate records: the cost of clothing Hopkins’s corpse is listed; her “library, letters, scrapbooks and typewriter” are nowhere detailed in the record of the sale of her effects (2010, 138). A quotidian omission, from one perspective; but in the context of a major literary figure in the United States under Jim Crow, also a violent one. Bibliographers are in a unique position to theorize about what kinds of histories are made, or are even made imaginable, by the generation or the analysis of lists.

11. ALPERT-ABRAMS 2017; see also SMITH and CORDELL 2018. See TRETTIEN Forthcoming; HARDY 2017; GRAY 2016.

“Loss gives rise to longing”, writes Saidiya Hartman of our encounters as historians with these records, “and in these circumstances, it would not be far-fetched to consider stories as a form of compensation or even as reparations, perhaps the only kind we will ever receive” (2008, 4). Hartman’s agonistic confrontation with that longing — the desire to tell a fuller story of the lives of the past through books and records, and the impossibility of doing so under the disciplinary rules of historicism — reminds us why those who study books, even enumerative bibliographers, ought to consider carefully how our work tells its stories. Storytelling about books and their production and circulation might begin to redress or repair both history and the relationships that have been built on hitherto absent or incorrect histories. To write bibliography as “a history of the present”, as Hartman puts it, as imagining “a *free state*, not as the time before captivity or slavery, but rather as the anticipated future of this writing” (2008, 4), is one approach — bibliography in the subjunctive mode, you might say. There are other modes, including the speculative (think of Borges, Thomas Ligotti, Kenneth Liu, Henry James). But they all involve rethinking how history works, how time flows, or can be understood to flow, or *could* flow.<sup>12</sup>

To reimagine bibliography’s relation to indigeneity is to be asked to turn to book study’s animating spirits: its attentiveness to the relationship between a desired past and the processes by which accounts of the past were generated; to information production processes that are both material and immaterial — McKenzie’s “printers of the mind”, if you will — and to the desire to preserve, to extend the voices or the labors of the past into the present and future. This may mean doing bibliography with different chronicities and evidentiary standards in mind; with different communities’ protocols and well-being as guides; with different collaborators than customary; and with a more explicit political awareness than has often attended bibliographical work.

12. See MCKENZIE 1961, 1974 and 1978; see also BERGEL, et. al., 2020, and ARBER 1875–1894. Consider, as an example of the potential for list- or catalog-based bibliographical work to enhance our understanding of power in history, McKenzie’s *Stationers’ Company Apprenticeship Directory*, digitized as part of *The London Book Trades* ([http://lbt.bodleian.ox.ac.uk/mediawiki/index.php/History\\_of\\_the\\_Project](http://lbt.bodleian.ox.ac.uk/mediawiki/index.php/History_of_the_Project)), where it joined information on the Stationers’ Company Register gathered by Michael Turner, Edward Arber, and J.A. Lavin in BERGEL et. al. 2020; see <http://stationersregister.online>. As opportunities arise to connect this resource with other digital bibliographical and book-historical enterprises, our ability to make printing’s labor history a fundamental lens for the larger story of English print during this period grows.

## The Spirit of Bibliography

It would seem that McKenzie, in his landmark essay on the Treaty of Waitangi between the English and the Maori in New Zealand, addressed back in the 1980s the concerns I have been describing about bibliography's modes of complicity with colonialism. McKenzie's account was a tour de force of how to take the bibliography of his time into a new frame of mind, exemplifying what in the mid-1970s he had termed the "sociology of the text".<sup>13</sup> It applied bibliographical attentiveness to a history of dispossession and injustice effected by power created through the social uses of Western-style records. At the same time, however, the essay was premised on basic assumptions about the nature of Indigenous preservation that are both mistaken and products of the same Western notions beyond which McKenzie was trying to envision. One of the reasons for the power inequality that resulted from the 1840 Treaty of Waitangi was, McKenzie argued, the difference between the properties of the mediums involved. "Manuscript and print", he wrote, "the tools of the Pakeha [the English], persist, but words which are spoken fade as they fall" (1986, 125). Oral communication in McKenzie's vision was always "flexible", not "binding" — an assumption that is not only inaccurate, as J.L. Austin might point out, but dangerous. Simply put, even when the words of the Maori — their accounts of the matrix of local native sovereignty over the land — *were taken down in written depositions* in the Compensation Courts of the 1860s, those written words were largely ignored in the disposition of terrain. The referential integrity of any communication — inscribed, uttered, or otherwise — is a function of its social enactment or enforcement, not merely its material affordances.<sup>14</sup>

But the kernel of a productive shift away from such thinking was provided by McKenzie himself in his use of forms of the term "record" in his foundational redefinition of bibliography. "Bibliography", he declared, "is

13. See the second of the Sandars Lectures, MCKENZIE 1976, 16–34; esp. 16–20. McKenzie first presented his work on the Treaty of Waitangi in 1983 and published a version of it in *The Library* in 1984; a revised version appeared as "The Sociology of a Text: Oral Culture, Literacy, and Print in Early New Zealand", in MCKENZIE 1986.

14. As Andrew Jackson wrote to Brigadier General John Coffee respecting the 1832 case of *Worcester v. Georgia*, in which federal enforcement would have been required to support the court's determination of Cherokee sovereignty, "The decision of the supreme court has fell still born, and they find that it cannot coerce Georgia to yield to its mandate". See GARRISON 2002, 193–4.

the discipline that studies texts as recorded forms, and the processes of their transmission, including their production and reception” (1986, 12). McKenzie thus expanded the usual restrictions on inscription techniques (writing, printing, engraving) to all of “recording”. And he widened the hermeneutic parameters from the static products of those techniques to “processes” of transcription, transfer, and encounter. McKenzie’s insistence that bibliography is a lens applicable to any kind of recording helps shake the obsession with writing as evidence of culture and resists the gravitational pull of Western categories of recording, the book, documents, writing. In the arguments of Indigenous intellectuals, or of performance theorists like Diana Taylor and Joseph Roach, or archival theorists like Kimberly Anderson, it is clear that aural and gestural transmissions are *records*; they are transmitted, verified, and modified in a range of ways that require attentiveness to different histories of preservation and different conceptions of utility.<sup>15</sup> These records are preserved in the way you dance, move, dress, gesture, and speak. Moreover, McKenzie’s declaration that bibliography can “show the human presence in any recorded text” (1986, 29) sings to those systematically suppressed by Western colonialism — but not because of a simple rejection of the Western scholarly commonplace of the irrecoverable past, or a fetishization of material objects over the abstraction of the text, as has been the stereotype. It is because of a history of complicity that bibliography and its practitioners have instantiated mostly at the level of method, of evidentiary selection, and of historiographical practice. To re-admit the human story is to open the door for presences about which McKenzie and his audience weren’t even thinking.<sup>16</sup>

But McKenzie’s is only one of many axial essays on the practice of studying books that features this give-and-take, this mixture of colonizing and potentially decolonizing gestures. So I want to work through a couple of the most well-known of these formulations, to suggest that an all-or-nothing judgment of bibliography as a colonial force may obscure the degree to which its own position as an often-embattled field, together with the peculiar desires that motivate its practitioners and the aptitudes to which its methods give rise, have yielded something a bit more complex than the

15. See ANDERSON 2013; ROACH 1996; and TAYLOR 2003.

16. What’s more, McKenzie’s essay became part of a burgeoning conversation in New Zealand about colonial injustices that, in the 1990s, resulted in both enhanced formal recognition of and real-world improvements in Maori sovereignty. For a discussion of McKenzie’s argument in light of the Compensation Courts, see KEENAN 2002.

“colonial culture” that I summoned earlier in Nicholas Thomas’s formulation.

G. Thomas Tanselle begins his 1994 essay “Editing without a Copy-Text” with an insight about the historiographical nature of bibliography and textual criticism: that time and the bibliographer are related “in cyclical fashion”, with governing ideas “losing favor temporarily in one area or another and then returning to prominence in an altered form” (1). That is to say, analytical tendencies have a transtemporal, almost spiritual quality, fluctuating but never entirely disappearing, animating the course of disciplinary change. Thus Tanselle is able to see, for example, the ways in which his predecessor W.W. Greg’s ideas about copy-text were a half-century-delayed resurgence of A. E. Housman’s. In turn, Tanselle situates his own suggestion for editing without a copy-text as a slight recovery of the Lachmannian process of recension (1994, 2).

This spirit, which at first appears as a merely empirical, historical observation, possesses a definably Christian eschatology, one that frames both Tanselle’s sense of the history to be recovered in a bibliographical analysis and the status of the product of that analysis, the authoritative edition, which is never quite finished, still awaiting its millennium. We are told that “the process of critical editing is the ineluctable, if unending, effort to surmount the limitations of artifacts in the pursuit of works from the past” (1994, 6). The spirit here, as it had been in Greg, has a Protestant feel: irresistible, eternal, an agonistic grappling with the fallenness of the material world in pursuit of something never quite recoverable. Greg, like almost all those who followed him, insisted that it would be “impossible to exclude individual judgement from editorial procedure” (1950–1951, 26). Yet this judgment was to be in service to a spiritual ideal: “the judgement of an editor, fallible as it must necessarily be, is likely to bring us closer to what the author wrote than the enforcement of an arbitrary rule”.<sup>17</sup>

And yet, for Tanselle, it is not getting closer to God the author but man’s temporality under Christianity that is at the heart of the discipline — not a spiritual exercise, an Ignatian dissolving of the gap in time between Christ the author and the pious imager of his pain, but a temporal one in the fallen sense. “Some kind of guideline is required”, Tanselle insists, “if the operation is to be disciplined and historically oriented” (1994, 6). We might

17. The other evidence of *spirit* in Greg’s text — notably, written for performance — is his use of, and then calling attention to, a line about farting from a Johnson masque. This may represent spirit in its basest sense literally, but it was at the same time a way of creating camaraderie from the pulpit, as it were.

ask, though: Need the discipline of history be the authority or atmosphere out of which such an operational benchmark must emerge? Is *judgment*, in fact, the only thing either forged of or exceeding discipline and empiricism on which we can rely, as Tanselle implies? May we not mistake one editor's eclecticism for another's catechism — and vice-versa?

It would seem at the least that between Greg and Tanselle, in the soul of the canonical bibliographico-theoretical conversation, there are multiple chronicities and orientations toward inspiration. Greg too had referenced the tribal ancestor Karl Lachmann in the essay to which Tanselle was responding, his 1949 “The Rationale of Copy-Text”. The nineteenth-century genealogical fundaments of scientific bibliography were coincident with the increasing tendency to use archival citation in history, and on the same principle: the establishment of linear chronology. While Greg's notion of the copy-text drew upon the historian's toolkit to establish manuscript precedence and order, clarifications of production context, and so on, such work nonetheless served the end of creating a suspended present of authorial intention, a sort of agential histology whose parameters were an imagined, unified, seldom-ever materially achieved work. The same complex situation of the bibliographer as temporal crux held, in Greg, with respect to the future. The emotional orientation to the future, to the creation of a new story, shared by many bibliographers is salutary, and a form of it is uttered in the concluding sentence of Greg's essay: “My desire is rather to provoke discussion than to lay down the law” (1950–1951, 36).<sup>18</sup>

Let us loop forward again to 1985, the year that brought us McKenzie's Panizzi lectures (and, of course, the movie *Back to the Future*). Jerome McGann, in *The Textual Condition*, argued memorably that we should pay attention to the physical properties of texts, because they are inextricable from their linguistic modes of meaning-making. His emphasis on creativity or uniqueness — on generating “ever more rich and strange forms” (1991, 76) — is characteristically Western, as are the categories of “literary” and “poetic” as opposed to “historical” writing central to the claims in *The Textual Condition*. But I want to linger on a moment in McGann's 1985 address to the Society for Textual Scholarship, a virtuosic demonstration in miniature of the pillars of his claims about the nature of textuality, because in it are competing and potentially generative elements of an approach to textual scholarship through the lens of Indigenous studies. “I am not ‘free’ with respect to this text I am writing”, McGann tells us, “Even as I write it I

18. On the mutually enfolded passions of past-recovery and future-making, particularly as they affected the image of antiquarian collectors during the professionalization of historianship and librarianship, see DINSHAW 2009.



am reading it as if I were in another time and place — as if I were here and now, in fact — and my text [. . .] is constrained and determined by a future which at all points impinges upon my present text. This is to be in the textual condition”.<sup>19</sup> The incantatory “I” and the persistence of the future in this formulation point to the orientations I am trying to complicate: freedom and unfreedom need not be the principal dyad; the future and past need not be two parts of a principal triad; textuality need not have a condition, however many conditions it comes with. I do not think, for all that, that this kind of utterance is on the other side of an epistemic wall from Indigenous record-making, or that it need be considered so. Rather, its spirited leap into the stream of time and recording, signaled at the book’s structural level by McGann’s references to Jorge Luis Borges’s short story “The Garden of Forking Paths”, open the potential for negotiating a new means of enacting textual theory. The vaunted immortality desired by the historiographical impulse will be achieved, if it is achieved at all, McGann reminds us, in “the continuous socialization of the texts” (1991, 83). And there are many kinds of socialization — Indigenous, diasporic, and so on — that may be added to, or drawn into conflict with, the Western forms that give shape to the desire for literature.

So in considering bibliography’s future through its potential within the decolonial project, it is less a matter of learning new *textual* concepts by exploring other cultures. That might still be a colonial project. It may instead be a matter of considering basic professional, social, and methodological assumptions of the field on one hand, and on the other, of considering how these have sustained a certain technical and emotional orientation of the field that is in keeping with its animating spirits of humanism, of preservation, and of maintaining a community of fellow-feeling around the material legacies of textuality.

## **What Can Bibliography Do?**

The monotheistic conception of authorship, that idea of the monadic writer giving us access to eternal truths, has broken down to an extent in book studies. It tended to obscure our understanding of the historically specific conjunctions of technology, genre, and human invention that have constituted past modes of reading and writing, of distribution and the cir-

19. McGann’s 1985 address to the Society for Textual Scholarship was published in 1991 in *The Textual Condition*; the passage above appears on page 95 of that work.

cultation of literature and other texts. Other animating spirits for doing bibliographic work are becoming more visible. What is academic book study doing in our culture right now, and what might it do? Given bibliography's longstanding connections with regimes of ownership, access, and monetary recompense whose grounding premise is the individual, what other modes of approaching its work might be available?

Whatever the intellectual-methodological advances against the force of the Romantic authorship model, many of us in literary studies, history, and their related fields are working under a professional regime heavily dominated by that model. This often offers a stark contrast with the unsung experience of rare books cataloguers and archivists composing metadata for libraries and archives. Even at resource-strapped land grant universities, if research is an institutional priority, you don't get tenure and you don't get promoted for writing co-authored books — and the occasional exceptions only prove the rule. Most book-writing fellowships are for individuals, not for collaborations like the Multigraph Collective or the Native Critics Collective. You write your own narrative; if you seem sufficiently like an author or author-to-be to the National Endowment for the Humanities, say, or the Huntington Library, you get a fellowship. If you don't seem like an author, you do not usually get the fellowship. Either way, in the eventual acknowledgments may be found the colleague who asked the question that started it all, the seminar that enriched the idea, the communities that made the writing possible, the graduate student who performed the revelatory collation.

All this would be one thing if it were not happening in an institutional context in which, in many other fields, collaboration — publishing with other faculty, postdocs, and students — is normal and even necessary to the same promotion. But book studies and its related humanistic disciplines remain dependent upon this Romantic vision. Bookselling as a profession, the publishing industry — these are also dependent upon the idea of the inspired and inspirational individual author. To challenge this idea may require being more explicit about what we lose when we displace the unitary notion of the author, not just what we gain in realizing that, for example, the history of minority resistance movements is a history of necessarily collaborative authorship, even in the most separatist circumstances. At stake seems to be the degree to which book studies, as currently conceived, can or should continue to articulate itself as a function of the coherence of a profit-driven commodity system, in which books constitute a powerfully flexible kind of capital (new, used, and rare).

And yet we might also ask, What is a thriving bibliographic enterprise in a world that increasingly involves distributed creativity in many forms —

massive-multiplayer online gaming, crowdsourcing, activism, social media reporting? Ownership in all of these activities has to do with participation, endurance, cleverness, intervention, and protocol acquisition, all in a sustained way, rather than merely high scores or named authorship. If a world that isn't just about authors is one we already understand, what might book studies look like in that world? Altering the traditional formal properties of a research or historiographical project, understanding it as fundamentally the outgrowth of shared desires — even if it's not a collaboratively created project — could help make the study of books a different kind of activity. An engagement with indigeneity and its histories under colonialism is one source not just of inspiration to that end but also of mutually beneficial partnerships.

The Mellon Foundation's award of millions of dollars in the past few years to the Rare Book School (RBS) offers an on-the-ground example of both new partnerships and persistent challenges. The purpose of the Andrew W. Mellon Fellowship of Scholars in Critical Bibliography, an early award program, was "to reinvigorate bibliographical studies within the humanities by introducing doctoral candidates, postdoctoral fellows, and junior faculty to specialized skills, methods, and professional networks for conducting advanced research with material texts" (RARE BOOK SCHOOL 2020). The composition of the Fellows for the most part reflected this stated purpose's tight parameters ("within the humanities" and "advanced research"), being drawn mostly from top-20 institutions, and performing and publishing largely for an academic audience. Within the award's remit, the Fellows are doing great work, from conference organizing to raising difficult questions and amplifying voices not often enough heard in book studies. But conceived as a proselytizing body — missionaries to a rapidly changing, mostly public-funded academy under heavy attack — the body's transformational power seems tenuous to me. The RBS Senior Fellows laudably established a diversity and outreach committee and amended the application process — the 2018–2020 Fellows' cohort shows more racial diversity than previous ones. But among them are only one person working in a non-academic position, and if anything fewer fellows by percentage from other-than-leading institutions than previously.<sup>20</sup> Still more encouraging is another \$1.5 million in support from Mellon in 2019, establishing a "Fellowship

20. Based on data from the Mellon Fellows website (RARE BOOK SCHOOL 2020), out of 70 total, as of fall 2018, 40 were from Ivy League or equivalent institutions, 30 from others; 41 were from private institutions, and 29 from public institutions. Among these were no scholars identifying as Indigenous, by my estimate. Of the ten 2018–2020 Fellows, one is a librarian.

for Diversity, Inclusion & Cultural Heritage”, a six-year program with an unprecedentedly broad definition of applicant eligibility that builds on an earlier, smaller fellowship collaboration with the American Library Association (RARE BOOK SCHOOL 2020). The traditional profile of the bibliographical scholar may be a difficult nut to crack, however, because we know from past diversity enhancement attempts that the composition of the existing admitted group with respect to elite institutional status can be a deterrent to applicants from lower-ranked and lower-resourced institutions. And while resources are of course good, they do not guarantee the long-term structural transformation of their allocation — especially given, to take just one example, the extremely uneven, often politically contentious resourcing of Native American libraries and other cultural institutions. The experiment is a crucial one, though, because the question of how RBS reckons with a fundamental shift in its role as an institutional authority in light of the changing audiences, imperatives, and working conditions of librarians, other information professionals, and book-interested publics is one of interest to many book- and manuscript-centric organizations. How should such institutions function at the intersection of book studies and the public in an age when non-STEM academic positions are drying up and, at the same time, distributed custodianship and expertise are catalyzed by minimal computing and world-wide electronic networking?

In an eloquent essay on the spirit of Donald McKenzie, Michael Suarez observed that there was, in McKenzie’s insistence on both deductive scrutiny and a deeply human *love* of the pursuit of bibliographical knowledge, “an ethical dimension that is counter cultural and far-reaching indeed” (2002, 53). In the context of an increasingly instrumentalist academy, Suarez warned, it would be all too easy to mechanize, to quantify, to externalize, to nominalize in the name of preferment within a shrinking professional sphere. So what if in shaping the next emergence of book studies we look beyond the academy? Could we — like McKenzie summoning Karl Popper’s humane deductivism, a new philosophy for his moment — bring the new perspectives of ecocriticism, an Anthropocenic framework, and post-custodial approaches to cultural preservation into the heart of bibliography and textual analysis, into the very structure of its real-world, social endeavors, not just to our methods or attitudes as researchers and writers? If any field could help render a humane post-humanism, it’s book studies.

In the process, bibliography could reach audiences with whom the academy is increasingly losing its social authority. What if some Mellon funds were put toward vernacular bibliographers? These might include filmmakers or dramaturgs who share the passion about books that is the prime

mover of bibliographic work, or the many sculptors that have recently been repurposing books into three-dimensional art. Could public-facing collaborations between bibliographers and neighborhoods, tribal communities, the American Indian Libraries Association, the Black Caucus of the American Library Association, or smaller and local libraries become funding and effort priorities? Rather than assuming that the academy is the generator of book studies, perhaps the effort to nurture our shared passion might begin by asking, Where is the most creative and inspirational work with books happening right now, work that might energize bibliography in the near future?

To effect this, I suspect that the relationship between book studies and the rare book market might need rethinking. The regimes of property in which rare books obtain value both monetary and cultural are coextensive with the dispossession of whole populations not just of land and sovereignty, but of cultural self-determination as well. There is of course the parasitical set of practices by which many individuals profit from Indigenous artists and well-meaning publishers or galleries alike. But even conventionally, the practice of research bibliography, when it involves tracking down and buying minority-generated materials, tends to increase the value of the objects remaining in the market. In the book world, it is seldom Black or Indigenous people who hold such materials, or most of such materials, and so the profit from the increased value of minority-authored or minority-generated materials tends to bypass those communities and individuals. With an Internet-delivered marketplace, this happens more rapidly than ever before; it is hard to “get ahead” of a book valuation curve. Legislation has been passed, in various places including the U.S. (NAGPRA), to control the circulation and marketing of Indigenous-generated artworks or cultural heritage objects — but *texts* remain in a kind of liminal state between conceptual, intellectual property and material remains. For people coming from ancestral backgrounds of Indigenous and African slavery, cultural erasure, and legalized inequality, in which human beings were made to circulate in a marketplace as commodities (new, used, and rare), the connections between bibliography and the book trades are not ancillary or mutually beneficial: they glow with a radioactive historical menace.

The relation between this essay’s first two epigraphs hinges on the definition of the artifact — the metaphor of the survivor opens up the personification of the artifact in Tanselle’s quotation, and I think many bibliographers do feel the difficulty of treating a textual artifact fully as a *thing*. In the Indigenous case, the damaged survivors are people: so what might it mean, as in the case of Erdrich damaging her book in order to

preserve her language, to convey it to the next generation? and what might it mean for these damaged survivors of colonialism to be thought of as the source of a bibliographical authority equivalent to the scientized, analyzed artifact of Tanselle's imagination?

Each act of textual recovery can be made a social act in connection with an Indigenous community, but as I have been suggesting, it is not just about Indigenous communities. The collaborations with communities more broadly speaking that have always characterized the careful study of books can be increased in number and in breadth of outreach — can become an explicit value, not just a gesture, like the final sentence in Greg's theorization of copy-text. In the era of alternative facts it can be tempting to double down on empiricism — to summon the most powerful forms of fact-based authority and detail work. But it is not clear to me that such an approach will work against this regime, nor, with a longer view in sight, that it will answer to the spirit of an age of reconfigured attention and electronically induced isolation.

This brings us back to McKenzie. For most radical in some ways, among his insights in “Bibliography and the Sociology of Texts”, was his insistence that the reason to rethink the practice was not just that the old definitions of terms were changing or that the disconnection from history that scientific bibliography required meant telling bad or false stories. It was political. “The politics of survival, if nothing else”, he wrote, “require a more comprehensive justification of the discipline's function in promoting new knowledge” (1986, 12). A sociology of the text would salvage bibliography. This subtle double-action of situated awareness of the place of bibliography in the knowledge economy and the expansion of its purview has been powerful medicine for the field, as McKenzie humbly predicted when he refused to be so bold as to “speak of paradigm shifts” (1986, 11). And as Indigenous thinkers keep telling us, reckoning with the ways sovereignty, cultural preservation, and survival are woven together is a basic concern of wise intellectual and cultural work: we are all in this together.

## **Conclusion: Perhaps Damaged Survivors**

In 1970, the Sioux intellectual Vine Deloria, Jr. published a book titled *We Talk, You Listen*. The first half of this book is, in effect, a critical media studies analysis of Marshall McLuhan's work. Deloria is inspired by McLuhan, but also pushes back:



Indian people are just as subject to the deluge of information as are other people. In the last decade most reservations have come within the reach of televisions and computers. In many ways Indian people are just as directed by the electric nature of our universe as any other group. But the tribal viewpoint simply absorbs what is reported to it and immediately integrates it into the experience of the group. In many areas whites are regarded as a temporary aspect of tribal life and there is unshakeable belief that the tribe will survive the domination of the white man and once again rule the continent. Indians soak up the world like a blotter and continue almost untouched by events. The more that happens, the better the tribe seems to function and the stronger it appears to get. Of all the groups in the modern world Indians are best able to cope with the modern situation.

(1970, 10)

The blotter — an old technology of textual production, a means simultaneously of fixing text and controlling excess — turns attention beyond McLuhan's media-tech evolutionary frame. But the key to Deloria's argument, with its last sentence's spectacular refusal of the colonial model of ethnic temporality described by Fabian, is Indigenous time. If you think bibliographers have patience, are seeing things in detail and over a long time span, just imagine: Native Americans are outwaiting the bibliographers.

So what is next for book studies, for those of us raised in the wake of McKenzie's scholarship? What does bibliography do, mean, or look like in a world of digital archives and libraries; the Internet of things; portable computing in the form of the smart phone; a move to the post-critical in humanistic work; and rising contests over globalism, populism, and fundamentalism? In one guise or another, these questions are preoccupying scholars of the book and of the screen, but their very form — their grasping for novelty, evolution, technological transformation, and a sense of location within a historical arc — suggests that McKenzie's criticism of what we might call colonial bibliography has not yet fully registered in bibliographic thinking.

I have tried to re-frame these questions as a provocation about the relationships among bibliographical method, desire, and historical narration. If it helped save book studies on one hand, the spread of digital bibliographical mediation may have impeded the uptake of the most radical

implications of McKenzie's ideas about bibliography's inclusiveness. It made possible heterogeneous cataloging or indexing schema that, despite a few extraordinary exceptions in New Zealand, Australia, and Canada, often share a Western orientation. The algorithmic turn has stoked fantasies of a self-curating catalog — in a world persistently filled with erasures, silenced voices, and self-defensively obscured relations. The same may be said for automated systems of text processing and, as I have suggested, even for the latest efforts to renew the social-intellectual community of book studies itself. Yet bibliography engenders a sensibility about the materiality of records, the vagaries of categorization, and the palette of desires that have motivated enthusiasts of the wide range of media forms of different times and places. That sensibility is generative, humane in its own right, not least because of its respect for the give-and-take between historical persistence and the alienness of the past. In spite (or perhaps as a function) of its colonial entanglements, bibliography might give the lie to simple accounts of how colonialism functions, by taking firmer hold of how temporalities proliferate in the varieties of bibliographic desire.

## Acknowledgments

My thanks to Johanna Drucker for inviting me to offer a Breslauer Lecture at UCLA in 2018, on which this essay is based; to Nicole Gray, Molly Hardy, Caroline Wigginton, Phillip Round, Marta Werner, and Hannah Alpert-Abrams for conversations that brought it into focus; and to Michael Winship for his sharp eye and humanistic example, as well as for sharing the text of his Breslauer Lecture with me.

## Works Cited

- ACOOSE, Janice, et. al. 2008. *Reasoning Together: The Native Critics Collective*. Norman: University of Oklahoma Press.
- ALPERT-ABRAMS, Hannah. 2017. *Unreadable Books: Early Colonial Mexican Documents in Circulation*. PhD dissertation, University of Texas at Austin.
- ANDERSON, Kimberly. 2013. "The Footprint and the Stepping Foot: Archival Records, Evidence, and Time". *Archival Science* 13.4: 349–71.
- ARBER, Edward, ed. 1875–1894. *A Transcript of the Registers of the Company of Stationers 1554–1640 AD*. London and Birmingham: privately printed.
- AUSTIN, J.L. 1962. *How to Do Things with Words*, edited by J. O. URMSON. London: Oxford University Press.

- BERGEL, Giles, et. al., eds. 2020. *The Stationers' Company Register* (Beta). @ <http://stationersregister.online/>
- BRINTON, Daniel. 1883. *Aboriginal American Authors and Their Productions*. Philadelphia: For D. G. Brinton.
- BROKAW, Galen. 2010. *A History of the Khipu*. New York: Cambridge University Press.
- . 2014. "Semiotics, Aesthetics, and the Quechua Concept of *Quilca*". In COHEN and GLOVER, 2014, 166–202.
- BROOKS, Lisa. 2008. *The Common Pot: The Recovery of Native Space in the Northeast*. Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press.
- . 2018. *Our Beloved Kin: A New History of King Philip's War*. New Haven: Yale University Press.
- BROWN, Lois. 2010. "Death-Defying Testimony: Women's Private Lives and the Politics of Public Documents". *Legacy* 27.1: 130–39.
- BROWN, Matthew P. 2007. *The Pilgrim and the Bee: Reading Rituals and Book Culture in Early New England*. Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press.
- COHEN, Matt. 2014. "A History of Books in the Indigenous Americas". In *The World of Indigenous North America*, edited by Robert WARRIOR, 308–29. New York: Routledge.
- COHEN, Matt and Jeffrey GLOVER, eds. 2014. *Colonial Mediascapes: Sensory Works of the Early Americas*, with a Foreword by Paul Chaat SMITH. Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press.
- DELORIA, JR., Vine. 2007. *We Talk, You Listen: New Tribes, New Turf*. Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press.
- DINSHAW, Carolyn. 2009. *How Soon is Now? Medieval Texts, Amateur Readers, and the Queerness of Time*. Durham: Duke University Press.
- DRAKE, Samuel. 1832. *Indian Biography, Containing the Lives of More Than Two Hundred Indian Chiefs*. Boston: J. Drake.
- ERDRICH, Louise. 2006. *Books and Islands in Ojibwe Country: Travelling through the Land of my Ancestors*. Washington, D.C.: National Geographic Books.
- FABIAN, Johannes. 1983. *Time and the Other: How Anthropology Makes Its Object*. New York: Columbia University Press.
- FARGE, Arlette. 2013. *The Allure of the Archives*, translated by Thomas SCOTT-RAILTON. New Haven: Yale University Press.
- FIELD, Thomas. 1873. *Essay towards an Indian Bibliography*. New York: Scribner, Armstrong.
- GARRISON, Tim Alan. 2002. *The Legal Ideology of Removal: The Southern Judiciary and the Sovereignty of Native American Nations*. Athens: University of Georgia Press.
- GASKELL, Phillip. 1995. *A New Introduction to Bibliography*. New Castle, Delaware: Oak Knoll Press.
- GRAY, Nicole. 2016. "Aurality in Print: Revisiting Roger Williams's *A Key into the Language of America*". *PMLA* 131.2: 64–83.
- GREG, W. W. 1950–1951. "The Rationale of Copy-Text". *Studies in Bibliography* 3: 19–36.

- HARDY, Molly O'Hagan. "Bibliographic Enterprise and the Digital Age: Charles Evans and the Making of Early American Literature". *American Literary History* 29.2: 331–51.
- HARTMAN, Saidiya. 2008. "Venus in Two Acts". *Small Axe* 26: 1–14.
- HERBERT, Jason W. 2017. "Native American Revolutions Bibliography". @ <https://ageofrevolutions.com/2017/11/30/native-american-revolutions-bibliography/>.
- JUSTICE, Daniel Heath, et al. 2004–2016. "Two-Spirit/Queer Resources Bibliography". @ [http://danielheathjustice.com/publications/#reviews\\_section](http://danielheathjustice.com/publications/#reviews_section).
- KEENAN, Danny. 2002. "'Hear the Word, See the Word': A Comment on *Oral Culture, Literacy & Print in Early New Zealand: The Treaty of Waitangi*". In *Books & Bibliography: Essays in Commemoration of Don McKenzie*, edited by John THOMSON, 57–68. Wellington: Victoria University Press.
- LATIN AMERICAN AND CARIBBEAN WOMEN'S COLLECTIVE. 1981. *Slaves of Slaves: The Challenge of Latin American Women*. London: Zed Press.
- LIENHARD, Martin. 1994–1995. "Las prácticas textuales indígenas: aproximaciones a un nuevo objeto de investigación". *Nuevo Texto Crítico* 7.14–15: 77–88.
- LITTLEFIELD, Daniel Jr. and James PARIN, eds. 1984. *American Indian and Alaska Native Newspapers and Periodicals, 1826–1924*. Westport: Greenwood Press.
- LIU, Kenneth. 2012. "The Bookmaking Habits of Select Species". *Lightspeed Magazine* 27 @ <http://www.lightspeedmagazine.com/issues/august-2012-issue-27/>.
- London Book Trades, The. 2009–2020. Bodleian Library. @ [http://lbt.bodleian.ox.ac.uk/mediawiki/index.php/History\\_of\\_the\\_Project](http://lbt.bodleian.ox.ac.uk/mediawiki/index.php/History_of_the_Project)
- MCGANN, Jerome. 1991. *The Textual Condition*. Princeton: Princeton University Press.
- McKENZIE, D[onald]. F[rancis]. 1961. *Stationers' Company Apprentices, 1605–1640*. Charlottesville: Bibliographical Society of the University of Virginia.
- . 1969. "Printers of the Mind: Some Notes on Bibliographical Theories and Printing-House Practices". *Studies in Bibliography* 22: 1–75.
- . 1974. *Stationers' Company Apprentices, 1641–1700*. Oxford: Oxford Bibliographical Society.
- . 1976. "The London Book Trade in the Later Seventeenth Century". The Sanders Lectures. Unpublished manuscript, from the copy held by the Oxford Faculty Club.
- . 1978. *Stationers' Company Apprentices, 1701–1800*. Oxford: Oxford Bibliographical Society.
- . 1986. *Bibliography and the Sociology of Texts*. The Panizzi Lectures, 1985. London: The British Library.
- MIGNOLO, Walter. 1995. *The Darker Side of the Renaissance: Literacy, Territoriality, and Colonization*. Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press.
- MOMADAY, N. Scott. 1997. *The Man Made of Words: Essays, Stories, Passages*. New York: St. Martin's Press.
- MOUFFE, Chantal. 2000. *The Democratic Paradox*. New York: Verso.

- MT. PLEASANT, Alyssa, Caroline WIGGINTON, and Kelly WISECUP, eds. 2018. "Materials and Methods in Native American and Indigenous Studies: Completing the Turn". Special issue of *William and Mary Quarterly* 3<sup>rd</sup> ser., 75.2, and *Early American Literature* 53.2.
- MULTIGRAPH COLLECTIVE. 2017. *Interacting with Print: Elements of Reading in the Era of Print Saturation*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press.
- NEWMAN, Andrew. 2012. *On Records: Delaware Indians, Colonists, and the Media of History and Memory*. Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press.
- . 2014. "Early Americanist Grammatology: Definitions of Writing and Literacy". In COHEN and GLOVER, 2014, 76–98.
- Nipmuc Unnontoowaonk. 2019. @ <https://www.nipmuclanguage.org>
- O'LEARY, Timothy, and George Peter MURDOCK, eds. 1975. *Ethnographic Bibliography of North America*. 4d. 5 vols. New Haven: Human Relations Area Files.
- PRUCHA, Francis Paul. 1977. *A Bibliographical Guide to the History of Indian-White Relations in the United States*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press.
- . 1982. *Bibliographical Guide to the History of Indian-White Relations in the United States: A Bibliography of Works Published 1975–1980*. Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press.
- RARE BOOK SCHOOL. 2020. "Fellowships". @ <https://rarebookschool.org/admissions-awards/fellowships/>
- ROACH, Joseph. 1996. *Cities of the Dead: Circum-Atlantic Performance*. New York: Columbia University Press.
- SALOMON, Frank. 2004. *The Cord Keepers: Whipus and Cultural Life in a Peruvian Village*. Durham: Duke University Press.
- SCHOOLCRAFT, Henry Rowe. 1849. *A Bibliographical Catalogue of Books, Translations of the Scriptures, and Other Publications in the Indian Tongues of the United States, with Brief Critical Notices*. Washington: C. Alexander.
- SCHRÖTER, Jens. 2011. "Discourses and Models of Intermediality". *CLCWeb: Comparative Literature and Culture* 13.3. @ <http://docs.lib.purdue.edu/clcweb/vol13/iss3/3>
- SMITH, David A. and Ryan CORDELL. 2018. "A Research Agenda for Historical and Multilingual Optical Character Recognition". NULab, Northeastern University. @ <https://ocr.northeastern.edu/report/>
- SMITH, Paul Chaat. 2014. "Foreword". In COHEN and GLOVER, 2014, xi–xii.
- SUAREZ, Michael F., S.J. 2002. "Extended Evidence: D. F. McKenzie and the Forms of Bibliographical Knowledge". In *Books & Bibliography: Essays in Commemoration of Don McKenzie*, edited by John THOMSON, 36–56. Wellington: Victoria University Press.
- TANSELLE, G. Thomas. 1994. "Editing without a Copy-Text". *Studies in Bibliography* 47: 1–22.
- . 1998. *Literature and Artifacts*. Charlottesville: Bibliographical Society of the University of Virginia.
- TAYLOR, Diana. 2003. *The Archive and the Repertoire: Performing Cultural Memory in the Americas*. Durham: Duke University Press.

- TEUTON, Christopher. 2010. *Deep Waters: The Textual Continuum in American Indian Literature*. Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press.
- THOMAS, Nicholas. 1994. *Colonialism's Culture: Anthropology, Travel, and Government*. Princeton: Princeton University Press.
- TONEY, Kimberly, curator. 2018. *From English to Algonquian: Early New England Translations*. American Antiquarian Society. Worcester, Mass. @ <http://americanantiquarian.org/EnglishtoAlgonquian/>.
- TRETTIEN, Whitney. Forthcoming. *Cut/Copy/Paste: Fragments of History*. Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press. @ <https://manifold.umn.edu/projects/cut-copy-paste>
- URTON, Gary. 2017. *Inka History in Knots: Reading Khipus as Primary Sources*. Austin: University of Texas Press.
- WARKENTIN, Germaine. 2014. "Dead Metaphor or Working Model? 'The Book' in Native America." In COHEN and GLOVER, 2014, 47–75.
- WARREN, Michelle. 2013. "The Politics of Textual Scholarship". In *The Cambridge Companion to Textual Scholarship*, edited by Neil FRAISTAT and Julia FLANDERS, 119–34. New York: Cambridge University Press.
- WHITE, Phillip M. 2004. *Bibliography of Native American Bibliographies*. Westport: Praeger.
- WHYTE, Kyle. 2019. "Indigenous Climate Change Bibliography". @ <http://kylewhyte.cal.msu.edu/climate-justice>.
- WINSHIP, Michael. 2007. "Pitching Theoretical Tents: Camping out with John Greenleaf Whittier". Unpublished ms. Breslauer Lecture, University of California at Los Angeles.
- Wópanâak Language Reclamation Project. 2014–2019. @ <http://www.wlrp.org/>.



# EEBO and Me

## An Autobiographical Response to Michael Gavin, “How to Think About EEBO”

*Peter C. Herman*

### ABSTRACT

*In this article, Peter C. Herman responds to Michael Gavin's history of EEBO by arguing that EEBO leads to greater historical specificity, to reading the books themselves, rather than dissolving the boundaries between texts and “the death of the document”. Herman also suggests that we should pay greater attention to the corporate origins of EEBO-TCP.*

---

MICHAEL GAVIN HAS WRITTEN AN EXCELLENT HISTORY OF HOW EEBO, and its successor, EEBO-TCP, came into existence, and what the future may hold.<sup>1</sup> With impressive detail and narrative scope, he gives us the background of the two short-title catalogues the entire system relies on (Pollard and Redgrave for the sixteenth century; Wing for the seventeenth), and how books were subsumed by microfilm, microfilm by pdfs, and now, pdfs by marked-up files allowing us to research the entire corpus.<sup>2</sup>

While I learned a great deal from Gavin's article, I admit that I can't go along with his sense that technological change has led to “The Death of the Document”. In Gavin's telling, with each iteration, early modern texts shed more and more of their physical encumbrances:

Catalogues took books off the shelves. Microfilm took pages out of books. Transcription and markup freed words from the page. Collection and standardization dissolved those words into data. Early print's realization as data opened a new horizon of study that we're still just beginning to survey.

(2017, 102)

1. Gavin's “How to Think About EEBO” was published in *Textual Cultures* 11.1–2 (2017): 70–105. Although the date of the issue is 2017, it was not printed until 2019. All further references will be parenthetical.
2. See POLLARD and REDGRAVE 1926; see also WING 1945 [1994].

With more than a touch of techno-utopianism, Gavin proposes that with EEBO-TCP, we have finally reached the promised land where “everything [. . .] is connected to everything else” (2017, 101).

But that is not how I experienced these changes. I started graduate school in 1983, and so my career has covered the shift from microfilm to EEBO to EEBO-TCP. (As a side note, I also remember when the MLA Bibliography first came out on compact disc, and how we all crowded around a single computer station in Butler Library’s reference section, oohing and ahing as our searches yielded results. No more flipping through large blue and grey volumes!) Gavin sees these developments as a teleological movement toward the bliss of pure textuality, where the “boundaries” separating books (2017, 101) are dissolved, and “each item in the collection exists in relation to every other and is therefore available for re-formulation as data” (2017, 101). But where Gavin sees progress toward greater and greater abstraction, in my experience, the movement from print to catalogue to microfilm to EEBO and now to EEBO-TCP has allowed for greater and greater concreteness and historical specificity. So much so that professional expectations have changed, and the Renaissance Society of America now offers access to EEBO as a member benefit.

When I first started researching my dissertation on Renaissance attacks on poetry, I needed to go beyond the one or two that were available in contemporary editions to get a sense of just how wide and deep the hostility toward poetry had spread. I needed, in other words, to read as many comments about poetry as I could that were printed in the early modern period. My dissertation advisor, Anne Lake Prescott, gave me a long list of references, and told me to look them up. The list consisted of a name, a title, and an STC number. So, off I went to Butler Library’s microfilm room, where a copy of Pollard and Redgrave resided with the microfilm numbers manually inserted, exactly like the example Gavin reproduces from Wing (1945 [1994], 75). Then, I had to fill out a slip, give it to the attendant, who trudged into a backroom where the microfilms were stored, and who returned bearing the relevant boxes. Sometimes this happened quickly, sometimes not. Next, I threaded the microfilm into the reader (which often resisted me) and started scrolling until I found what I was looking for.

On the one hand, this experience was about as far from the actual texts as one could imagine. But it didn’t matter. As a poor graduate student, I could not afford to spend weeks, if not months, at a library where I could read all these texts. I was in New York City, not Oxford or Cambridge. While Columbia had an excellent library, it was not the Folger, let alone the British Library. And yet, using microfilms, I could read as many early

books as I needed. Consequently, I could demonstrate that an animus toward poetry was much more widespread than previously understood, and I could back up my argument with quotes from primary sources, the gold standard for evidence when making arguments about the early modern period.<sup>3</sup>

Using the microfilms, I read such varied and totally uncanonical books (meaning, unavailable elsewhere) as Arthur Dent, *The Plain Mans Path-way to Heaven* (1607), Sir John Ferne, *The Blazon of Gentrie* (1586), and Peter Merlin, *A Most Plaine and Profitable Exposition of ESTER* (1599), which begins by announcing that the Devil “hath not any more gainfull unto himself, hurtful unto man, than the writing publishing, and reading of idle, fruitlesse, filthie, and wicked books” (sig. A4r–A5v), by which he means Arthurian romances in particular and fictions in general. On the other hand, one Robert Gomersall starts *The Levites Revenge* (1627) by forthrightly stating that “The purpose of this poem is religious delight” (sig. A5r), thus distinguishing his work from idle, fruitless, and filthy secular literature.

So while Gavin is surely right when he claims that the short-title catalogues offered “a compilation of metadata already powerfully abstracted from the paper, cardboard and leather on the shelves” (2017, 75), my experience is the opposite. The microfilms, whatever their limitations, *substituted* for the shelves in two ways. First, I could read the works themselves, even though I was nowhere near where the physical objects were housed. Second, I could, and did, look at all the other books on the microfilm, and some of my best pieces of evidence came from serendipity. Plus, I got a sense of the wide range of books published in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries. I saw sermons, poems, plays, cookbooks, more sermons, biblical commentaries, and government announcements. In addition, while looking for attacks on poetry, I was schooled in the extraordinary range of the early modern book trade, including the extraordinary range of publishing styles and fonts. Again, rather than abstraction, reading the STC microfilms gave me a vastly more concrete sense of my topic.

But as essential as they were for giving my argument a historical foundation, the microfilms were hardly perfect. Gavin notes that “microfilm reading machines developed a reputation for being difficult to learn and straining to use” (2017, 84), a reputation more than justly earned. I cannot tell you how much time I wasted fighting with the machines, and making

3. My dissertation was eventually published as *Squitter-Wits and Muse-Haters: Sidney, Spenser, Milton And Renaissance Antipoetic Sentiment*; see HERMAN 1996.

copies was a long, laborious process. You had to bring rolls of dimes, then the machine took its sweet time processing the copy, which inevitably covered only half a page, so you had to spend more time adjusting the focus, making another copy, slowly advancing the microfilm to the next page, and then repeating the process until you were done. Also, relatively few libraries in the United States owned the STC microfilms, and so, only a small number of people working in the field had immediate access to them. As a graduate student at Columbia University, I was one of them. But when I moved on to my various positions in Williamsburg, Atlanta, and finally, San Diego, I had to drive to the local research library to use the microfilms. Marvelous as they were, owning the STC microfilms required a significant outlay of funds, they were difficult to use, and they were restricted in their reach. In other words, for all their virtues, the STC microfilms were also massively inconvenient, which is why most people at the time either relied on printed editions or turned to theory, an approach that did not require deep reading in primary sources. A few lucky souls had access to the Folger, the Huntington, or the Newberry libraries, and their scholarship relied on extensive reading in early modern books. But they were rare, and looked at from afar with a combination of wonder and envy.

Then, EEBO arrived and everything changed. Just to be clear, EEBO stands for “Early English Books Online”, and the database consists of pdf files of the STC microfilms. So in one sense, the faults and limitations of the microfilms are carried over to the EEBO files (more on this below). The reader is equally distant from the physical object, and for the most part, only a small number of printings of each book is reproduced.

But all that pales against the four major advantages that EEBO has over the microfilms. First, the database is now searchable (e.g., title, author, subject, printer, year). Second, we can access the files within seconds, as opposed to waiting for someone to deliver the microfilm box, or pawing through a giant file cabinet to find it yourself, and then scrolling through until you finally reach the book you want. Third, the files are all downloadable, so now, we can develop our own library of primary sources. Finally, *you can do all of this from your desktop at home! You don't have to be in a library!* I can't exaggerate how EEBO has changed my life, but let me give you an example of how EEBO has altered scholarship by allowing easy and nearly immediate access to early modern books.

While I was researching my chapter on Milton's God for *Destabilizing Milton: "Paradise Lost" and the Poetics of Incertitude*, I decided to look at how the Book of Job was interpreted in the early modern period.<sup>4</sup> So I did an

4. See HERMAN 2005.

EEBO subject search that very quickly revealed how Job was not particularly popular among exegetes in the sixteenth century, but very popular over the course of the English Civil War. Not an insignificant fact. Then I noticed that one Joseph Caryl published a huge, twelve volume commentary on Job between 1643 and 1666. Obviously, this was something I should look at. Reading the books *in situ* was out of the question because no library in the United States had all of them, and, to state the obvious, I had neither the time nor the funds to travel from place to place. Using the microfilms would be time consuming and endlessly awkward. But with the magic of EEBO, I read and downloaded the introductions to each volume *in one hour!*

And what I found amazed me. In the introduction to the first volume (1643), Caryl begins by explicitly paralleling the state of England with Job's trials: "The Book of Job bears the image of these times, and presents us with a resemblance of the past, present and (much hoped for) future condition on this *Nation*. As the personal prosperity of Job, so his troubles looke like our *Nationall* troubles" (A1r). By the time he reached the final volume in 1666, even though Caryl supported Cromwell and "and was one of the delegates sent to deliver a letter from the congregational churches urging General Monk to use his powers to protect liberty of conscience and the godly in 1659", he nonetheless seemed to accommodate himself to the new regime.<sup>5</sup> In Caryl's telling, Job realizes that God "might do with him what he pleased; and, that God, being his absolute Sovereign, could not wrong him, whatever he was pleased to do with him" (1666, sig. B1r). An "absolute Sovereign" is a king who thinks he is above the law, and that's a novel concept for England, which has a "mixed" monarchy, one in which the monarch is subject to the law. Charles I was the first English monarch to try to rule as an absolute monarch (his father, James VI/I had the theory down, but never tried to actually put into practice), and he lost his head as a result. So for Caryl to use this phrase in relation to God indicates a 180 degree turn in his politics. It also put into stark relief what's at stake with Milton's depiction of God as a monarch and Hell as a republic.

But to bring the discussion back to EEBO, once more, the effect is not greater abstraction, but greater specificity. By making access to early modern books much easier, EEBO allows for greater and greater historical grounding in our scholarship. So much so that EEBO changed the protocols of peer review: people are now *expected* to use EEBO. Relying on contemporary editions, let alone snippets of quotations from other critical

5. See "Caryl, Joseph", *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography* @ <https://doi-org.libproxy.sdsu.edu/10.1093/ref:odnb/4846>.

works, is no longer sufficient. Speaking strictly for myself, I've dinged more than a few articles and book manuscripts for not using EEBO to substantiate the contextual sections of the argument. True, EEBO is not cheap, and it's not meant for individual subscriptions, only institutions. Independent scholars, and people working at institutions without a research library, are now at significant professional disadvantage. To remedy that, the Renaissance Society of America now offers access to EEBO as a member benefit.

In his article, Gavin poo-poops exactly why EEBO has made such a difference in scholarship: "If information technology just winds up in your hands as a printed book — if we have merely 'gone full circle' to where we started — something hasn't gone right" (2017, 85). But in my experience, something has gone exactly right when this happens. Information technology has put into our hands, and on our desktop or laptop screens, the collected holdings of the Bodleian, the Folger, the Huntington, and the Newbery libraries (to choose but a few). That is not small, and it doesn't deserve to be denigrated (as Gavin does with a little rhetorical overkill) as placing "human-shaped protein bags in direct physical contact with book-shaped rag pulp" (2017, 86).

Let me give two further, non-EEBO examples of how digital technology puts us "protein bags in direct physical contact" with books. The first remedies one of EEBO's few major drawbacks. EEBO files and the microfilms work best with smaller texts, both physically and in terms of length. Large, folio volumes can be very difficult to work through. One such volume would be *Holinshed's Chronicles*, first published in 1577, then in a revised version in 1587. These are massive books. The latter edition has 1592 pages of text, exclusive of the end matter. So working one's way through all that in microfilm would be, shall we say, a chore, and comparing the two editions a Herculean task. So, when Annabel Patterson wrote *Reading Holinshed's "Chronicles"*, she turned to the nineteenth century edition edited by Sir Henry Ellis not as the best, but as the most practical solution:

Although the Ellis edition, which was based on 1587, gives warning of additions by paragraph markers or square brackets, it does not *always* do so, nor do such markers always indicate new material. And neither the 1587 edition nor the 1807–[18]08 edition give any indication of material deleted or rewritten in complicated ways. Yet in order to retain a system of citation that best serves the needs of today's readers, I shall continue to refer to the Ellis edition as a good *enough* source of the text of the 1587 edition.

(1994, 58)



However, digital technology has made possible an edition of *Holinshed's "Chronicles"* that renders Patterson's compromises unnecessary. Oxford University hosts *The Holinshed Project*, a digital edition that allows the reader to not only easily read the *Chronicles'* contents from the comfort of their home, but to compare 1577 and 1587 with the touch of a button.<sup>6</sup> We can now see *exactly* what was deleted or rewritten at a glance. And, thanks to the project's underwriters, it is available for free to anyone with a web connection. Far from dissolving the boundaries between books, the *Holinshed Project* affirms the importance of reading the *Chronicles* and comparing the two editions as individual units.<sup>7</sup>

Second, the *British Newspaper Archive*.<sup>8</sup> This astonishing database collects over 32 million newspaper articles from the 1700s through to the present, and, through the magic of optical recognition software, allows the reader to search the articles themselves (not just title, subject, and year) for keywords. Then, the reader can call up a digital photograph of the newspaper itself. And the British Library charges only a nominal fee to use it. How does this advance in the digitization of an archive work in practice?

When I was researching the nineteenth century chapter of my book on the literature of terrorism, I wanted to see how the popular press responded to the various bombings around London.<sup>9</sup> The thesis of the book is that terrorism is defined by a paradox. On the one hand, it's violence for a particular purpose or meant to carry a particular message. It's never merely senseless carnage. But because the terrorist act often breaks all the unspoken rules limiting the scope and range of political violence, the victims don't have the language to talk about it. Terrorism thus becomes quite literally unspeakable. You find this rhetoric first used after the Gunpowder Plot, and I wanted to see if it returned with the Fenian bombing campaign of the late nineteenth century. Thanks to the *British Newspaper Archive*, I could definitively say yes! It did return! For example, an editorial in the *Shields Daily Gazette* denounced "The Outrages in London" as senseless ("the object of the perpetrators — if they have any object"), and called on Ireland's leaders to dissociate themselves from "a course of scoundrelism for which barbarism has no parallel, and the English tongue no words strong enough to describe. This is no ordinary sort of criminality" (26 January

6. See <http://www.cems.ox.ac.uk/holinshed/index.shtml>.

7. For an example of how *The Holinshed Project* can be used in teaching, see HERMAN 2017, 42–8.

8. See <https://www.britishnewspaperarchive.co.uk/>.

9. See HERMAN 2019.

1885, 2). I cannot imagine that I would have found this wondrous quote on my own, as it would have required paging through hundreds of newspapers. It would have been like searching for a miniscule needle in a field of hay. But thanks to advances in digital searching, I found multiple examples from contemporary newspapers proving my point. Again, the effect is the opposite of the one Gavin proposes: in place of dissolving the boundaries between discrete texts, the *British Newspaper Archive* allows for a finer-grained understanding of the past by allowing me to find phrases used in newspaper articles long buried in obscurity. But I'm not looking at the entire corpus. Instead, what's important is *this* phrase from *this* newspaper published on *this* date.

None of which is to denigrate EEBO-TCP. A searchable database encompassing marked up early modern texts will allow us, for example, to trace the development of words or phrases over time as well as allowing for new avenues of research that, due to "age and sullens" (as Shakespeare's Richard II puts it) are beyond my capabilities. But EEBO-TCP will not *supplant* EEBO any more than the rise of music streaming services has supplanted CDs and vinyl. Rather, EEBO-TCP will take its place *beside* EEBO and the other digital archives, offering its own unique opportunities alongside its own unique drawbacks.

What are they? There are three. First, there's the question of just how complete the EEBO-TCP corpus will be. Gavin writes that "the goal was to provide as comprehensive a sample of EEBO as possible, covering all major periods and genres" (2017, 99), yet he also admits that since "the vendors charged by the page, not by the title, there was a consistent bias towards documents that were comparatively short, as well as toward documents that were in English" (2017, 99n56). I'm not sure that length is the best criterion for inclusion, especially since the example Gavin gives for "very long books with less obvious research value to historians — like long legal dictionaries" (2017, 99n56) happen to be something that I've used in my own research, and found extremely useful.<sup>10</sup> Second, you are not looking at an early modern page, but a transcription of an early modern page in which the different elements of the page are marked by symbols (e.g., "Major division in the text would be marked with numbered <div> elements" [GAVIN

10. When I was trying to understand the resonances of Egeus claiming the "ancient privilege of Athens", I looked up "privilege" in John Rastell's *An Exposition of Certain Difficult and Obscure Words, and Terms of the Lawe* (1579 edition); for further commentary on these resonances, see HERMAN 2014, 10.

2017, 99]). That may be easier to read, but I think most early modern scholars would want to check the original.

The third is a much larger issue, and I freely admit I don't quite know how to respond. Toward the essay's end, Gavin tells us how EEBO-TCP came into existence. Starting in 2000, "EEBO files were sent in monthly batches to two third-party vendors, Apex CoVantage and SPi Global, whose employees performed the actual transcription and markup" (2017, 99). Although both multinational companies have offices in the United States (Apex has its headquarters in a Virginia suburb just outside Washington, D.C. SPi Global's head office is in the Philippines), the actual work is done elsewhere, as Gavin admits when he drops this bomb: "Transcriptions were performed by anonymous coders *working in India*" (2017, 99n54; my emphasis). And not only India. On their website, SPi Global proudly announces that it has employees China, Nicaragua, Vietnam, and of course, Philippines. These are not countries known for high wages and worker benefits. EEBO-TCP, in other words, is made possible by the same global economy that grants the first world cheap clothing and affordable electronics. We rely, in other words, on outsourced, cheap labor for our comforts and now, it seems, for our sometimes recondite scholarship. I'm not suggesting that we boycott EEBO-TCP (although some hard data about the labor conditions and wages of those "anonymous coders" would be nice). But we ought to keep in mind that EEBO-TCP does not magically appear on our screens fully formed, like Venus arising from the ocean. EEBO-TCP is implicated in the world, with all that implies, and we should never forget that.

San Diego State University

## Works Cited

British Newspaper Archive @ <https://www.britishnewspaperarchive.co.uk/>

CARYL, Joseph. 1643. *An exposition with practical observations upon the three first chapters of the book of Job delivered in XXI lectures at Magnus neare the bridge, London*. London: Printed by G. Miller for Henry Overton . . . and Luke Fawne and John Rothwell.

CARYL, Joseph. 1666. *An exposition with practical observations continued upon the thirty-eighth, thirty-ninth, fortieth, forty-first, and forty-second, being the five last, chapters of the book of Job: being the substance of fifty-two lectures or meditations*. London: Printed by M. and S. Simmons.

GAVIN, Michael. 2017. "How to Think About EEBO", *Textual Cultures* 11.1-2: 70–105.

HERMAN, Peter C. 1996. *Squitter-Wits and Muse-Haters: Sidney, Spenser, Milton And Renaissance Antipoetic Sentiment*. Detroit: Wayne State University Press.

- . 2005. *Destabilizing Milton: "Paradise Lost" and the Poetics of Incertitude*. New York and Houndmills, Basingstoke, and Hampshire, England: Palgrave Macmillan.
- . 2014. "Equity and the Problem of Theseus in *A Midsummer Night's Dream*", *Journal for Early Modern Cultural Studies* 14.1: 4–31.
- . 2017. "Teaching *Richard II* and its Sources: The Ancient Constitution in the Digital Archive". In *Approaches to Teaching Shakespeare's English History Plays*, edited by Laurie ELLINGHAUSEN, 42–8. New York: MLA.
- . 2019. *Unspeakable: Literature and Terrorism from the Gunpowder Plot to 9/11*. New York: Routledge.
- Holinshed Project, The. @ <http://www.cems.ox.ac.uk/holinshed/index.shtml>.
- OXFORD DICTIONARY OF NATIONAL BIOGRAPHY @ <https://www.oxforddnb.com/>.
- PATTERSON, Annabel. 1994. *Reading Holinshed's "Chronicles"*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press.
- POLLARD, A. W. and G. R. REDGRAVE. 1926. *A Short-Title Catalogue of Books Printed in England, Scotland, and Ireland*. London: The Bibliographical Society.
- RASSELL, John. 1579. *An exposition of certaine difficult and obscure words, and termes of the lawes of this Realme, newly set foorth & augmented, both in french and English, for the helpe of such younge students as are desirous to attaine the knowledge of yee same. whereunto are also added the olde Tenures*. London: Richarde Tottell.
- The Shields Daily Gazette*. 1885. @ <https://www.britishnewspaperarchive.co.uk/titles/shields-daily-gazette>.
- WING, Donald. 1945 [1994]. *Short Title Catalogue of Books Printed in England, Scotland, Ireland, Wales, and British American and of English Books Printed in Other Countries, 1641-1700*. New York: Columbia University Press; New York: MLA.

# Anglo-American Reviews

CLOUTIER, Jean-Christophe. 2019. *Shadow Archives: The Life-cycles of African American Literature*. New York: Columbia University Press. ISBN 9780231193306, Hardback \$105.00. ISBN 9780231193313, Paper \$35.00. ISBN 9780231550246, eBook \$34.99.

In 1990 Fisk University's Dean of the Library Jessie Smith cautioned against histories of black archives that focus on loss. "Some uninitiated Americans have assumed", she wrote, "that black studies and supporting collections began with the advent of the civil rights movement in the 1960s" (SMITH 1990, 59). She continued, "That is a 'civil wrong', for as long as black people have lived they have preserved their history and culture" (59). Indeed, black archives were built, and primarily by black bibliophiles and librarians and at historically black colleges and universities. Early organized efforts include the 1911 founding of the Negro Society for Historical Research, whose constitution called for collecting books "written by Negroes", and the 1915 creation of the Negro Book Collectors Exchange, dedicated to contacting "all Negro Book Collectors" across five continents, by John Wesley Cromwell, Sr., Henry Proctor Slaughter, and Arthur Alonso Schomburg while attending the American Negro Academy (SINNETTE 1989, 43; WESLEY 1990, 10). The year before, Howard University's Dean of the College of Arts and Sciences Kelly Miller persuaded alumnus and trustee Reverend Jesse Moorland to give his alma mater his six-thousand-item collection, and ten years later, Schomburg sold his to the 135th Street Branch of the New York Public Library. Twenty years after that, Howard University purchased, at the behest of head librarian Dorothy Porter Wesley, Arthur B. Spingarn's private library, and Atlanta University acquired Slaughter's.

Though Jean-Christophe Cloutier does not cover this early history in detail, he recognizes that it was foundational to the mid-century rise in building repositories of contemporary black writers' papers. A master at archival sleuthing, Cloutier has two interests: (1) how twentieth-century black writers' collections came into being; and (2) an "archival impulse" he calls the "invisible hallmark of twentieth-century African American literary practice", and, in particular, the "underappreciated archival sensibility" in the writing practice and fiction of Claude McKay, Richard Wright, Ralph Ellison, and Ann Petry (2, 12).

Devoting his first chapter to chronicling the fate of a wide range of writers' papers, Cloutier gives pride of place to Yale University's James Weldon Johnson Memorial Collection (JWJ), founded in 1941, and underscores that its founder Carl Van Vechten was assisted by many, including Harold Jackman, Dorothy Peterson, and Walter White. He recognizes that not everyone was enamored with Van Vechten's outsized role. Early on Ellison contributed a few items to the JWJ Collection, but ultimately chose the Library of Congress, believing the nation's library was the right place for his papers. McKay also contributed to the JWJ Collection, upon its founding, but three months later wrote to Van Vechten that both Slaughter and Schomburg were also interested, and coyly wondered what the "Negro intelligentsia" would think if he were to give "two or three manuscripts to a white person and none to colored collectors" (quoted in CLOUTIER, 48). Meanwhile, HBCUs were also collecting contemporary black writers' papers. Atlanta University received three hundred titles from Jackman's private library. Fisk University librarian Arna Bontemps secured the Jean Toomer Papers (later moved to the Amistad Center at Tulane University, and then to Yale) and Charles W. Chesnutt's papers (beating out Van Vechten, who five years earlier claimed they were coming to the JWJ Collection).

For context, Cloutier reviews the aggressive mid-century acquisition efforts of the Harry Ransom Center at the University of Texas, Austin. Though famous for paying top price for the papers of twentieth-century writers, the Ransom Center rarely used its ample funds to purchase the papers of black writers. In a 1964 celebratory exhibition of one hundred writers in the collection, James Baldwin was the only black author represented. Yale, despite its commitment to the JWJ Collection, also seems to have been reluctant to dedicate much of the library's sizable annual budget to acquiring the papers of black writers. In 1964, when Yale purchased more than a dozen boxes of McKay's papers for \$2000, a librarian apologized to his daughter for having to make payments in installments. By contrast, in 1960 the Ransom Center was willing to pay \$18,200 for a single E. M. Forster manuscript.

Working across a wide range of twentieth-century black writers' papers, Cloutier considers acquisition and processing history, split collections, cataloging schema, and original order vagaries. The obvious point is that it behooves scholars to know an archive's history, and, of course, to pay attention to details and discrepancies. For example, he determined that the date for Ellison's gift to the JWJ Collection of the "The King of the Bingo Game" manuscript was not 1943, as marked on the file, but 1944. A close



reading of letters made Cloutier doubt the file date, which then led to further searching and ultimately the discovery of a dated receipt. But Cloutier is also making an argument about literary history. In this fevered acquisition context, writers developed distinct and sometimes self-conscious archival practices, giving thought to what they kept, threw out, reused, donated, or sold. And their interest in documents, their own and others — saved, repurposed, discarded, lost, and found — shows up in their writing. For Cloutier, close study of the idiosyncratic collecting of individual African American authors reveals a broader archival sensibility linked “to both politics and aesthetics, to both group survival and individual legacy” (9).

A researcher and reporter by nature, McKay honed his archival skills during his three years (1936–1939) at the Federal Writers Project. He imported some of his FWP work directly into his last published work, the non-fiction *Harlem: Negro Metropolis* (1941), and, according to Cloutier, indirectly into his last novel, *Amiable With Big Teeth*. Submitted to Dutton in 1941 but unpublished in his lifetime, *Amiable* centers on the tensions in Harlem between Communist Party organizers and pan-African black nationalists fundraising for Ethiopia after Mussolini’s 1935 brutal invasion. The novel is a satirical roman à clef, and historical accuracy was important to McKay. As he was conceptualizing the novel, he explained to Max Eastman that he was reading “newspaper stories of the period”, and as he was finishing he asked Simon Williamson, a former FWP colleague, to confirm “whether the Spanish Civil War broke out in June or July of 1936” (quoted in CLOUTIER, 104, 108). Through good detective work, Cloutier identifies correspondences to real events and people, and offers a persuasive reading of the thematic centrality of documents — their authenticity, reuse, and lifecycles — in the novel. In the final plot twist, for example, a letter from the Emperor of Ethiopia authorizing aid efforts in the U.S. is revealed to be a repurposed letter from twelve years earlier for a planned but never executed Ethiopian mission to Harlem. McKay was dedicated in these years to building strong, self-sufficient black communities, and in Cloutier’s reading of *Amiable*, McKay redeploys “carefully compiled records” and “appropriates for himself and in the service of his community the strategies usually reserved for institutional or imperial governance” (142).

Cloutier grounds his discussion of Wright and Ellison in a study of the essay each wrote about the Lafargue Clinic shortly after it opened in 1946. Staffed by volunteers, the Lafargue Clinic provided low-cost mental health services to Harlem residents for twelve years, defying skeptics who doubted its approach and viability. Perhaps because visual evidence seemed necessary to prove the existence of what Ellison called “an underground

extension of democracy”, both Wright and Ellison wanted photographs to accompany their essays. In “Psychiatry Comes to Harlem” (1946) Wright documents resistance to the clinic, offering a “list of medical objections to establishing a mental hygiene clinic in Harlem” (quoted in CLOUTIER, 165). To demonstrate the need, he draws on “official psychiatric court reports”. Complementing what Cloutier argues is Wright’s distinctly “documentary aesthetic”, Richard Saunders’s accompanying photographs are sedate, undramatic images that claim scientific legitimacy for the clinic.

Attentive to Wright’s interest in documenting what other records miss, Cloutier identifies a similar inclination in two earlier works — Wright’s introduction to St. Clair Drake and Horace Cayton’s sociological treatise *Black Metropolis: A Study of Negro Life in a Northern City* (1945) and his novel *Native Son* (1940). Drake and Clayton’s scientific work, Wright insists, presents “the facts of urban Negro life” in “their starkest form”, making visible “what whites do not see and not want to see”, and revealing what “courts, prisons, clinics, hospitals, newspapers, and bureaus of vital statistics” records do not (quoted in CLOUTIER, 159, 155, 160). In *Native Son*, Mary’s Communist boyfriend Jan tells Bigger that he wants to “see how your people live”, and Bigger’s transformation after murdering Mary is largely the ability to see visual facts more clearly, such as the squalor of his own apartment, as well as economic facts such as who owns and controls Chicago’s slums and the willful blindness of those around him (quoted in CLOUTIER, 160). In Cloutier’s reading, Wright’s social realism is crafted from “a counterarchive of social facts” found in sociological and psychological reports (149).

If Wright’s goal was to emphasize the Lafargue Clinic’s very existence, Ellison’s was to capture “the unreality that haunts Harlem” and the surreal truths about black life that the clinic must address. The point, he wrote in his notes for the photo-essay, is to “disturb the reader through the same channel that he receives his visual information” (quoted in CLOUTIER, 189). Ellison’s essay about the clinic, “Harlem Is Nowhere”, was to appear, but did not, in ‘48: *The Magazine of the Year*. Scholars have long assumed that the essay remained unfinished until 1964, when Ellison included it in his first collection of essays, and that the photographs by Gordon Parks that were to accompany the essay were lost. Indeed, in 1964 when Ellison published the essay in his collection, he also placed a condensed version in *Harper’s*, where it was accompanied by four photographs by Roy DeCarava. But, as it turns out, Ellison completed the essay in 1948 and Parks’ photographs exist, misplaced in a file labeled “Harlem Gang Leader” in the Gordon Parks Foundation holdings. Thanks to Cloutier’s superb detective work

and a careful reading of Ellison's photoshoot script and draft photo captions, we now have a window onto one of the most important mid-century collaborations. Indeed, with the help of others, Cloutier curated a 2016 Art Institute of Chicago exhibition and catalog, *Invisible Man: Gordon Parks and Ralph Ellison in Harlem*.

Undertaken as Ellison was also beginning to write *Invisible Man*, the collaboration with Parks on "Harlem Is Nowhere" was, Ellison noted, "quite a time consuming project" (quoted in CLOUTIER, 178). The materials documenting their work include entries in Ellison's calendar scheduling photoshoots (Ellison also took photographs), negatives, contact sheets, layout notes, and captions. In a letter to Wright about the project, Ellison reports that he has been visiting the clinic and reading case files, and he believes that the clinic is starting to have an impact in court hearings. He was ambitious: if Parks is able to "capture those elements of Harlem reality which are so real to me", the project will be "something new in photo-journalism" (quoted in CLOUTIER, 181). And he was focused on his desire for dreamlike images, writing in one note for a photograph, "figure running through it so as to smear movement across negative", and in another that he wants "scenes that are at once both document and symbol" (quoted in CLOUTIER, 193).

For Cloutier the phrase "both document and symbol" is also an apt description of the guiding aesthetic behind *Invisible Man*. From identifying language in *Invisible Man* that comes directly from the essay's draft to limning the "overwhelming photographic motif" in the novel, Cloutier offers a fresh reading of Ellison's masterpiece and an analysis of Ellison's archival practice (199). He considers not only both 1964 versions of the essay, and the Parks images, but also drafts of the novel, Ellison's essay "Harlem's America", which was based on his testimony to the U.S. Senate on the Harlem riots of 1966, and his eulogy for Romare Bearden. Cloutier's claim, both in this case and more generally, echoes Antoinette Burton's argument that novels often serve as counterarchives, forcing us to "confront the limits of the official archive by acknowledging the power of literature to materialize those countless historical subjects who may never have come under the archival gaze" (quoted in CLOUTIER, 244).

The great strength of *Shadow Archives* is Cloutier's sleuthing, and he devotes two short chapters to accounts of his detective work: his discovery in 2007 of McKay's *Amiable With Big Teeth* in the uncatalogued papers of Samuel Roth, publisher of erotica and unauthorized excerpts of James Joyce's *Ulysses*, and his more recent discovery at Yale of a manuscript for Ann Petry's 1946 novel *The Street*. Keen to explain his forensic process,

Cloutier walks us through the challenges and small advances, the puzzles that arise and lead to further research, the hypotheses that are proven wrong and those that yield answers.

These stories underscore what researchers know: comprehensive searching, meticulous attention to detail, an eye for discrepancies and incongruities, and an abiding awareness of the complex and often ragged history of collections, are all essential to good archival work. But Cloutier not only demonstrates what this level of archival work looks like. He is also arguing that the archival turn in literary studies must nurture new scholarly habits and a readiness to set aside disciplinary orthodoxies. He calls for deep immersion in the “scenario of the text”, and he assiduously practices what he preaches.

*Shadow Archives* is an impressive book. One scholar has taken exception to Cloutier’s “dematerialized” concept of the archive, suggesting that not every novelist’s use or reuse of documents from their own archives and from their research is proof of an archival sensibility (NISHIKAWA 2015, 197). And at times, “archival” seems to mean anything at all having to do with documents collected over time. But Cloutier situates his work in the larger context of archival studies and theories, makes important discoveries, and by immersing himself in the “scenario” of many texts comes to fresh insights about writers, works well known and newly discovered, as well as their notes, drafts, letters, lives, writing practices, politics, and aesthetics.

Stephanie Browner

Eugene Lang College–The New School

## Works Cited

- NISHIKAWA, Kinohi. 2015, Fall. “The Archive on Its Own: Black Politics, Independent Publishing, and *The Negotiations*”. *MELUS* 40.3: 176–201.
- SINNETTE, Elinor Des Verney. 1989. *Arthur Alfonso Schomburg: Black Bibliophile and Collector*. Detroit: The New York Public Library and Wayne State University Press.
- SMITH, Jessie Carney. 1990. “An Overview, Including the Special Collections at Fisk University”. In *Black Bibliophiles and Collectors: Preservers of Black History*, edited by Elinor Des Verney SINNETTE, W. Paul COATES, and Thomas C. BATTLE, 59–68. Washington: Howard University Press.
- WESLEY, Dorothy Porter. 1990. “Black Antiquarians and Bibliophiles”. In *Black Bibliophiles and Collectors: Preservers of Black History*, edited by Elinor Des Verney SINNETTE, W. Paul COATES, and Thomas C. BATTLE, 3–22. Washington: Howard University Press.

EGGERT, Paul. 2019. *The Work and the Reader in Literary Studies: Scholarly Editing and Book History*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press. Pp. x + 242. ISBN 9781108485746, Hardback \$99.99. ISBN 9781108621922, eBook \$80.00.

Are scholarly editions of literary texts arguments addressed to readers, as Paul Eggert proposes? Or — Samuel Johnson’s “Let us now be told no more of the dull duty of an editor” ringing in their ears — do editors aspire to be more like window washers whose meticulous labors leave no trace (EGGERT 2019, v)? Both, of course, depending on the text, context, occasion, and readership on behalf of whom the edition is undertaken. But in this critical moment for literary studies, with library budgets slashed, scholarly presses under severe economic constraint, and few new positions to replenish the ranks of literary scholars and critics, the legacy of modern textual criticism seems at some risk of being buried, even as the massive shift from print to digital media presents new challenges. After a golden age of modern scholarly print editions fostered in large part by the establishment of the MLA Center for Editions of American Authors (CEAA) and Center for Scholarly Editions (CSE) in the 1960s and 1970s, textual editors confront the expansive possibilities, challenges, limitations, effects, and implications of digital editions.

In a 2012 article in this journal, Amy E. Earhart surveys the uneven borderlands between the Greg-Bowers-Tanselle editing methodology (see BOYDSTON 1991, 141n67) and the digital medium, from editorial skepticism towards the consequences of reducing literary treasures embodied in material artifacts to ephemeral ones and zeros to the groundbreaking brilliance of the *Electronic Beowulf*, the prizewinning *Blake Archive*, and the superb *Lili Elbe Digital Archive*. “Textual studies theories, forms, practices, and methodologies have been and are interwoven into the digital humanities”, Earhart writes; indeed, “There is good reason to consider textual studies a central pillar of digital humanities work” (EARHART 2012, 24–5). Yet, while scholarly editors engage in intensive, fine-grained debate on how best to conceive and enact “best practices” for presenting reliable texts in the digital environment, to exploit the medium’s potential for “value added”, “better-than-print editions”, and to relate to the new reading-effects that the digital medium makes possible, “many practitioners of digital humanities lack an understanding of the theories, methodologies, and history of textual studies” (EARHART 2012, 20, 24, 22, 24). On the cusp between print and digital media, one pressing question for the future of literary studies and its textual objects is how to foster mutual appreciation and fertile

common ground between scholarly editing and the “relatively unregulated life of literary criticism and theory” (EARHART 2012, 25, quoting Leroy Searle). It is high time for scholarly editors to emerge from the basement of literary studies to proclaim the fundamental importance of their work for literary studies and its future.

In *The Work and the Reader in Literary Studies: Scholarly Editing and Book History*, Paul Eggert draws on editorial theory and practice over the past several decades to argue for closer commerce and greater mutual awareness and exchange between scholarly editors and readers. For Eggert, the limitation of the Bowers-Greg-Tanselle approach to scholarly editing “is that it consigns the work to a category of its own, over and apart from readings of it, despite the fact that, empirically and historically, reading is part of every phase and stage of a work’s creation, production and reception” (32). Notwithstanding W. W. Greg’s description, back in 1932, of the *text* as “not a fixed and formal thing [ . . . ] but a living organism which in its descent through the ages, while it departs more and more from the form impressed upon it by its original author, exerts, through its imperfections as much as through its perfections, its own influence upon its surroundings”, Eggert argues that Greg’s definition of *textual criticism* as the analysis of transmission failures explicitly excludes reading from the scholarly editor’s evidence-based labor; in theory, an editor ignorant of its language could edit a document devoid of meaning (EGGERT 167–9, quoting Greg). On the other hand, what limits the close-reading paradigm that René Wellek and Austin Warren made fundamental to postwar literary studies is that “the object of literary study” is “‘the concrete work of art’, not the biographical or contextual considerations routinely invoked by the belles-lettristic critics of the previous generation” (EGGERT 168, quoting Wellek and Warren). To encourage interchange between the rigorous, evidence-based analytic methods of scholarly editing and acts of reading in the era of digital media, Eggert proposes a “new literary studies” modeled on the concept not of the “text” but of the living, organic “work”, broadly conceived as all the documents, texts, variants, and agents comprised in its “production-consumption continuum”, from genetic texts tracing the work’s creation to its ongoing reception in facsimiles, versions, editions, translations, and adaptations in cinematic, graphic, musical, digital and other media (178).

Eggert’s elastic, open-ended concept of the living work as a “regulative idea” that functions to “contain and police the boundaries of relevance” (33) embraces Foucauldian “discourse and other kinds of analysis, including any that may emerge in the future [ . . . ] to fertilise and generate new perspectives and fresh thinking” (178). The digital medium especially invites



the building of bridges between bibliography, book history, textual editing, and literary studies; unlimited cyberpages permit ongoing collocation of scholarship, criticism, and interpretation produced by any and all methods and approaches. Such a “work-oriented book history” or “book-historically oriented literary studies”, Eggert urges,

is the most obvious way forward if we are to unlock the history of meanings, including, importantly, our own. Each embodied work attracts and absorbs them [meanings?], a fact that in turn positions the work to be studied as an index of broader social and cultural change. But the embodied work concept equally legitimates *our* acts of reading, and hence close reading [. . .]. Reoriented in this way, the exclusions of Greg’s conception of bibliography and Wellek and Warren’s idea of the literary work may be overcome at last.

(178–9)

While scholarly editors will agree that readers may — and should — “legitimate” acts of reading by the use of reliable editions, it is less clear that non-specialist readers can be expected to assume the burden of making comparative evaluations of the editions-as-arguments that Eggert envisions co-existing on the digital platform. Moreover, in a cultural moment when the internet offers every user a “Google-fueled, Wikipedia-based, blog-sodden” mirage of knowledge” along with “an inexhaustible supply of ‘facts’ to feed any confirmation bias” (GIBSON; see NICHOLS), Eggert’s messianic fervor to “unlock the history of meanings” through the “work concept” may raise eyebrows among scholars trained in exacting editorial principles and procedures and strike others as almost blindly idealistic, not to say utopian. Would not Eggert’s digitally-mediated “work” still require skilled readers to articulate focused and limited contexts within which to evaluate and choose among the possible edited texts, arguments, and interpretations that it comprises?

Overstatement aside, Eggert’s promotion of an expansive work-concept that would relate editions, whether of genetic texts, facsimiles, versions, or critical texts, to other modes of literary study on a digital platform is a serious and valuable response to the problem Earhart highlights. Eggert envisions the aesthetic work as the center of a microcosm that would document its ongoing historical life in the hands of every kind of agent — author, printers, editors, readers of all stripes and persuasions. Here, his framing of editions as arguments addressed to readers (chapter 5) comes into play. To imagine editors emerging from their secure library burrows to present argu-

ments about texts to invisible readers in the wilds of cyberspace is to picture the internet as a virtual agora where readers might routinely encounter editorial theories, principles, procedures practices, and histories as central pillars of any digitally-mediated work. By integrating textual studies within “the work” in this way, Eggert’s model invites readers, and especially Earhart’s “practitioners of digital humanities” who may be unfamiliar with textual studies, into a dialogue that would not only cultivate appreciation of the editor’s task but inspire debates, experiments, and creative thinking on how best to adapt editorial standards, principles, and procedures to serve “the work” and “the reader” in the digital medium. With its central textual-studies pillar in prominent view, the work-concept itself might function, in a way at once modest and ambitious, as a bulwark amid electronic seas of “likes”, fake “facts”, and unmoderated opinion that now threaten to erode the very basis of functional citizenship.

In Eggert’s model, the literary text remains substantially, though not solely, grounded in the Bowers-Greg-Tanselle editorial tradition even as his work-concept assimilates book-historical social contexts. Eggert notes Peter Shillingsburg’s argument that, “in practice, *the sociology of texts*” as defined by Jerome J. McGann and D. F. McKenzie “*has no editorial consequences*” (4). Rather, the de-idealizing epistemological move from the editor’s aim to produce a “definitive” text to the recognition that the editor’s task is to analyze the archive of the text and its transmission shifts the ontology of the literary work from a transcendent ideal to the phenomenological realm of its open-ended material embodiment in documents, editions, and readers. Editors must still argue the principles and analyses on which they base their editions, and an archive might support different editions based on differing analyses.<sup>1</sup>

1. My dissertation, “Groundwork for an Edition of *The Cantos* of Ezra Pound” (University of Chicago, 1977), suggests that Shillingsburg’s rule must be tested case by case. My prototype genetic and editorial texts for Pound’s epic poem, which appeared in segments and individual cantos in four countries over some fifty years, follow CEAA guidelines, which anticipate the CSE’s broadly formulated editorial standards: no “detailed step-by-step editorial procedure” but the requirement that editors possess thorough knowledge of the applicable editorial scholarship, relevant documentary texts, and “circumstances attending the composition and production of all forms of the text” so as to design, justify, and execute appropriate editorial procedures (BOYDSTON 1991, 143n73, quoting the MLA’s “Aims and Services of the Committee on Scholarly Editions” [1991]). Yet even guidelines deliberately elastic enough to accommodate specific problems posed by any given case are pressed to the limit by Pound’s documented approval

In this light, another aspect of Eggert's vision of the work-concept comes to the fore. In "Why Has Critique Run Out of Steam? From Matters of Fact to Matters of Concern", to which Eggert briefly alludes, Bruno Latour — noting, after Martin Heidegger, the etymology that links the words for *thing* and for "a quasi-judiciary assembly" in "all the European languages" — challenges critics to move beyond iconoclasm and to reorient the critical mind and spirit toward creative community (LATOUR 232–3). Bringing Latour's proposal to bear on the matter at hand: What if we were to conceive the literary text as a Thing, a gathering, an assembly, and the critic as not "the one who debunks but the one who assembles" — who summons a social world, a gathering, to debate its common purpose, use, form, meaning, value (246)? We can imagine Eggert's digitally deployed work-concept as such a Thing: an assembly in cyberspace-time, a gathering of minds around a matter of common concern. Wouldn't it make all the sense in the world for scholarly editors to take a leading role in such a transformative reorientation of literary studies, for who better than laborers in this "unfashionable" (EGGERT ix) vineyard to attest that, "if something is constructed", it means not that belief in it must be blasted to smithereens but that "it is fragile and thus in great need of care and caution" (LATOUR 246)?

Christine Froula  
Northwestern University

## Works Cited

- BOYDSTON, Jo Ann. 1991, June. "The Collected Works of John Dewey and the CEAA/CSE: A Case History". *The Papers of the Bibliographical Society of America*, 85.2: 119–44.
- EARHART, Amy E. 2012, Spring. "Digital Editions and the Digital Humanities". *Textual Cultures*, 7.1: 18–28.
- FROULA, Christine. 1984. *To Write Paradise: Style and Error in Pound's Cantos*. New Haven: Yale University Press.

---

of certain kinds of error introduced by printers, other social actors, and not least himself. My *To Write Paradise: Style and Error in Ezra Pound's Cantos* (1984) frames this editorial conundrum surrounding error within the errant wandering (*errare*, to wander) intrinsic both to the epic genre and to the ever-contingent textual condition, thus integrating the critical text, the work, and interpretive "reading" in a print exemplar of the shift from a transcendent to a phenomenological textual ontology that grounds Eggert's digitally mediated work-concept.

GIBSON, Lydialyle. 2018, March–April. “The Mirage of Knowledge”. *Harvard Magazine*, 32–5. @ <https://harvardmagazine.com/2018/03/death-of-expertise-by-tom-nichols>

LATOUR, Bruno. 2004, Winter. “Why Has Critique Run out of Steam? From Matters of Fact to Matters of Concern”. *Critical Inquiry*, 30.2: 225–48.

NICHOLS, Tom. 2017. *The Death of Expertise: The Campaign against Established Knowledge and Why It Matters*. New York: Oxford University Press.

FUENTES, Marisa J. 2016. *Dispossessed Lives: Enslaved Women, Violence, and the Archive*. Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press. Pp. 232. ISBN 9780812248227, Hardback \$55.00. ISBN 9780812224184, Paper \$24.95.

*Dispossessed Lives* is an impassioned and meticulously researched call to rethink how history, as a discipline, can approach the absence of archival evidence concerning enslaved women’s lives in the Americas. Fuentes goes beyond theorizing “silence” and uses geographic, demographic, literary, and legal methods to flesh out a historiography of women’s lives in eighteenth-century Barbados. She does not attempt to recover the wholeness of these lives in the archive but instead points to the violence the archive does to enslaved women by enforcing their historical silence, leaving virtually no trace of enslaved voices and emphasizing either their status as commodified objects through the chattel slave trade or their status as criminalized and then brutalized bodies through logs of their punishments. “Violence”, Fuentes argues, “is the historical material that animates this book in its subtle and excessive modes — on the body of the archive, the body in the archive and the material body” (7). In *Dispossessed Lives*, then, she makes a compelling argument about the practice of history as a discipline itself, in addition to mapping new archival territory.

In addition to challenging the mythic status of silence and recovery in black feminist archival methods, Fuentes also debunks historical conventional wisdom on urban enslavement as compared to plantation systems of slavery. Even as she documents the seeming mobility of enslaved women in the heavily populated port of Bridgetown, she uncovers the very public means by which the urban enslaved were placed in check. Such methods included laws regarding the marketplaces where they did business and also public spaces of torture and punishment, including “The Cage”, a carceral apparatus that was part of the architecture both of the town itself (in the center square) and of intentional terror in its publicness. In this way, Fuentes argues, “[t]he control wielded by slave owners, overseers, and

drivers on plantations was shared with constables, magistrates, jumpers, and executioners in urban areas" (37). She explores how the colonial state stepped in to enact violence on enslaved women found culpable of numerous "offenses" that included running away or poisoning a white resident, while it maintained laws that prohibited enslaved persons in court itself — offering them no ability to testify, and no compensation for harm besides the sum paid to their owners for lost property.

Joining scholars such as Saidiya Hartman, Jenny Sharpe, Emily Owens, and Walter Johnson, among others, Fuentes documents the undocumentability of black women's experiences under slavery in Barbados. *Dispossessed Lives* claims the impossibility of agency under the conditions of enslavement — and, in fact, argues that the very terms of agency and resistance are misplaced in their application to scholarship on slavery. In addition to calling out the hunt for resistance in the archive as the remnant of a masculinist methodology, Fuentes is most concerned with a trend she sees in feminist scholarship to valorize the sexual agency of some enslaved women. By reading the archives to show the deep vulnerability of urban enslaved women hired out by their owners for sexual labor, Fuentes complicates readings of redress through sexuality that she sees in emerging historical work on black women in the Caribbean of the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries (though, of course, many of the articulations of agency through sexuality in enslaved women's history are not purely celebratory or uncomplicated themselves).

Fuentes works heavily from the paradigm shifting scholarship of Hartman — and, more occasionally, Hortense Spillers, though I think following her claim of "ungendering" does not serve the book's powerful and particular re-mapping of black women's enslaved bodies and sexualities onto urban eighteenth-century space as well as Hartman's *Scenes of Subjection* (1997). Fuentes' work is indeed a challenge to historians of the Caribbean, and of slavery. Here, she joins her fellow historians Jennifer Morgan, Daina Berry, Deborah Gray White, Stephanie Camp, and others, as well as a host of cultural studies scholars like Hartman and Sharpe, in their deep and dark dives into the historical record to question claims of agency or resistance as the desired endpoint of scholarship on enslaved women. But, like Fuentes' own paradigm shift away from the plantation and toward urban space, some of the historical work on black women being done, even under the banner of "agency", is not usually seen or known as common history, and that documentation is also significant to broadening the base of representational (and methodological) possibilities for black women in the early Americas. And there are points where Fuentes' own push against

agency as an analytical imperative breaks down — especially in the chapter on Agatha, a white woman caught in an adulterous affair, whom Fuentes uses agentic terms to describe and compare her relative protection and freedom against those of the enslaved (76–7). It is not that the claims are false or incorrect — white women surely had more mobility and leniency in Bridgetown and faced only a fraction of the vulnerability and violence that black women did; it is that Fuentes cannot completely rid the work of a comparative scale of agency. It is difficult to work on enslavement, race, and the archive and not occasionally fall back on these polarities, but the powerful meta-question Fuentes is asking, and pushing toward in her methodology, is: can we find a new language, a new conceptual terrain, to lay out these extremely important “along the bias grain” readings of the archive? This methodology is one Fuentes returns to throughout and is an archival practice that merges the “mutilated historicity” she assigns to enslaved women’s bodies in the archive and her attempt not to restore but to reckon with such historical lacunae.

Fuentes’ point that we should not let these historical recoveries linger in the discourse of resistance is well and truly taken as a necessary if difficult shift for the field of feminist histories of enslavement. In fact, the methodology she lays out here — following Walter Johnson, one that shifts “resistance” and “agency” onto historians themselves, asking that they approach the archive differently, and without these categories as their ultimate search terms and hence interpretive bias — is one that could and already has enriched a range of feminist and historical scholarship. What if the liberal humanist paradigm of the agentic, willful subject was not our base for discerning the “success” of a given text or figure, especially those who serve as the photo-negative of those very concepts — the unfree against whom one can define individual freedom and rights? *Dispossessed Lives* gives us a rich counter-reading of the archive to map just such an endeavor, a methodological move toward “reckoning”, rather than resistance.

Samantha Pinto  
*University of Texas at Austin*



HOFFER, Matthew, and Michael GOLSTON, eds. 2019. *The L=A=N=G=U=A=G=E Letters: Selected 1970s Correspondence of Bruce Andrews, Charles Bernstein, and Ron Silliman*. Albuquerque: University of New Mexico Press. Pp. xiv + 426. ISBN 9780826360656, Hardback \$75.

One of the many aspects of the influential group of North American writers known as the Language poets that expands in captivating detail from reading *The L=A=N=G=U=A=G=E Letters: Selected 1970s Correspondence of Bruce Andrews, Charles Bernstein, and Ron Silliman* is their approach to group formation. In these letters, the correspondents are casting the contours of a “language-centered” poetics that is cut loose from the self-invested sincerity of the individual poet and dependent on the strong poetic community that gradually takes shape as the correspondents tune into each other’s vibe and as the shared quantity of their respective poetics grows letter by letter. But crucially the developing community also resists setting up a “conspiracy of us” (BERNSTEIN 1979), as the implied writers insist on the poetic, political, and personal differences and the vast geographical distance between its members rather than on a unified group identity. In a famous line by Gertrude Stein, repeatedly called upon by the trio as a shared literary ancestor, they consciously try to “act so that there is no use in center”. The fruits of this attitude reveal themselves on practically every other page, in the wide horizon and extreme curiosity of the young poets, i.e. in the electric enthusiasm with which Charles Bernstein describes a letter he has received from fellow poet Barrett Watten containing critical, even “ungenerous”, readings of his own poetry. Bernstein’s unmistakable excitement over the prospect of this correspondence, potentially leading to a “clash of aesthetics” (260), is representative of the inclusive, curious, and generous sense of a poetic community that rises from these letters, to an extent that may surprise readers familiar with some of the movement’s subsequent critics who in later years have depicted it as somewhat monolithic and tending to marginalize women and queers and to exclude non-white writers (VICKERY 2000; YU 2009). Yet, as I shall return to, the center also has its own ways of settling and of sneaking up on the group, especially when it comes to the poets’ sustained preoccupation with — but also their palpable practical difficulties with — including into their poetic community the poetry of individuals (i.e. women, male homosexuals, non-whites, non-Americans) who in concrete ways challenge the figure of the self-sustained male white genius that they were very much

united in wanting to overthrow as the illegitimate center of “official verse culture” (BERNSTEIN 1992, 248).

From what appears to be an enormous archive of material, the editors Matthew Hofer and Michael Golston have made an informed selection focused on the formation of a shared sense of poetics and on the urge to establish a common infrastructure and critical forum for this geographically scattered and poetically fairly diverse, although demographically strikingly uniform, community. The letters cover almost the entire decade of the 1970s, as the involved poets first met and got acquainted with each other, something that to a large extent took place in correspondence since they were divided between east and west coasts. The collection documents their formative years, not primarily as individual poets but first and foremost as a unique cross-coast grouping in American poetry. This was more than forty years ago, when the internet was nothing but a delirious late night fantasy of Ron Silliman’s — in a letter from 1977 he fantasizes of the day “when we will have computer terminals in every home [ . . . ] [w]henever I had an idea, I’d just send it” (225) — and the postal system was the infrastructure utilized, both for community formation and for the distribution of a poetry and poetics not aligning with the conventions dictated by official literary institutions of the time. As indicated by the title, the correspondence culminates — after starting a cross-coast xerox distribution service for small press poetry books, chapbooks, and out-of-print poetry journals — with the launch of *L=A=N=G=U=A=G=E*. Co-edited by Andrews and Bernstein, it came out in thirteen numbers and three supplements from 1978 to 1981 and has retrospectively become almost synonymous with the movement as a whole.

As stressed in both of the editors’ engaging and insightful prefaces, the letters consistently refer to *L=A=N=G=U=A=G=E* not as a journal or a magazine, as it is commonly referred to in later accounts of the publication, but as a *newsletter*. This name forwards the epistolary aspects of this stapled pamphlet series, which is repeatedly envisioned by the poets as an immediate extension of their private correspondence towards a larger public. From this perspective, the Language community emerges not just as a group formed *by writers* but furthermore as a group formed *in writing* — letter writing, specifically. The letters’ informal style, including a deliberate deviation from strict conventions of orthography and formalized reference systems, the (aspiration towards) relative brevity, and the sense of urgency and direct address are all aspects of the correspondence that are cultivated as ideals for group formation in and beyond the private letters. As such, the *L=A=N=G=U=A=G=E* newsletter interestingly anticipates the mix-

ing of epistolary and public writing that since has become a characteristic of many internet genres and, accordingly, the cohesive group not based on physical proximity but on written communication makes the Language poets predecessors of online community formation.

If the figure of the corresponding poet is a classic — Emily Dickinson, for instance — what appears new here is the strong impulse to democratize this practice, to make it not about and for themselves as individuals and friends but rather to turn it into a public matter. Already before conceiving of the newsletter, the correspondents practice an extensive xeroxing and passing on of letters and parts of letters beyond their original addressees whenever the content appears relevant (forecasting the forwarding and copy-and-pasting of email). The two-way correspondence becomes a conversation open for a whole community of peers, and the newsletter is thus conceived as an *Open Letter*, as the fellow Canadian periodical (1965–2013) was appropriately called. And as with every self-confident avant-garde, the radical generosity of this gesture goes hand in hand with the touch of megalomania always implied in a movement craving to impose its own agendas upon the whole world, or at least the parts of it that show any interest. What is also pointing forward into digital culture is the *prosumerist* aspect of this open-peer orientation. Neither the newsletter nor the distribution service is in a traditional sense audience-oriented — they are about maintaining a community of writers who need to be able to read and communicate with each other — but crucially this collegial infrastructure is extended to readers as well. Rather than addressing any version of a mass audience, all three poets speak of seeking readers one at a time, with the same dedication with which they look for other writers to read, print, discuss and collaborate with. If Roland Barthes — also a household name in these letters — had recently announced the birth of the reader, then *The L=A=N=G=U=A=G=E Letters* show this claim taken dead seriously in the immense interest these poets take in their readers. This is also where the collective foundation of the movement becomes clearest, in the literal acknowledgement of the audience, the community, the sharedness of art and poetry being an integral part of its aesthetic quality. Thus, many of the letters argue the importance of a mailing list supplying the writing with the right readers, “wch in fact is the context wch gives [it] great meaning” as Silliman puts it (220). An interested reader ready to collaborate with the writing is an equal member of the community, which disturbs the age-old hierarchy between readers and writers in a way that obviously points towards the internet’s more recent breaking down of the clear borders between producers and consumers.

As I have suggested, the letters often revolve around lists of names, not only for the crucial mailing lists but also in naming modernists like Stein, Ezra Pound and Louis Zukofsky, the immediately preceding generation of poets, including Clark Coolidge, Robert Duncan, John Ashbery and Jerome Rothenberg, and in naming their contemporaries. These lists define the borderlines of the project that the poets are carving out. Occasionally the naming moves towards blaming and excluding, and concerns who is in and who is out, at which points the negative potential in group dynamics springs to the fore. If the strong, affective cohesion in the community in part arises from the intense commitment to the recipient that the epistolary form stirs up, it also in part springs from a shared set of dislikes (ostensibly related to “official verse culture”) that stand out as the initial glue in the letters as well as the movement at large. Shared antagonism breeds stickiness and makes partners in crime, and as Andrews suggests in a retrospective interview conducted by the editors, and supplied as one of the edition’s several useful appendices, the members of the community were united by their dedication to “jettison all these people who we found outrageously overrated and not interesting and holding everything back and not articulating why they thought they were better than other people” (389).

In this light, it seems overt that the mechanics of group dynamics in the Language community can advantageously be seen in the context of the sticky tightness of today’s online communities, and the violent antagonisms they can also breed from — and towards — outsiders. Studying the mechanics of the sometimes aggressive antagonisms towards the Language community in what is casually referred to as “the poetry wars” in the notes and prefaces — but never really explained for the non-insider — could teach us something about the agitated dynamics of many social media debates, and the affective technologies at play in various cliques on and beyond the web. All of which brings us back to the point of the center sneaking up on the community as a bias excluding certain points from view. In the end, some women but very few non-white writers manage to get included in the most engaged poetic conversations unfolding in the letters. That this bias was clearly not a product of ill-will, of knowingly excluding anyone, does not, however, make its consequences less real. The point is finally highlighted when Andrews concludes the contemporary interview by pronouncing *L=A=N=G=U=A=G=E* magazine “a broad snapshot of the scene [. . .] of the poetry world” of the 1970s and embraces the limited outlook of the community: “When we were in the midst of it, we thought

that there's going to be a number of competing, fascinating tendencies in the American poetry world that, in retrospect, will be talked about, will be really valuable. And then it turned out that that just wasn't true. It turns out there was nothing, there was nothing, we were it. It's like all there fucking was" (391). Obviously, the so-called "poetry wars" were also about this misconception. As has been shown by Timothy Yu, Aldon Nielsen, Ann Vickery, Juliana Spahr and others, America in the 1970s certainly had other poetry communities, even avant-garde ones, worth mentioning than those represented in the pages of *L=A=N=G=U=A=G=E*. When Andrews in 2019 is still free to ignore this and claim that the Language poets "were it", he also testifies to their own path from "outlaw to classic", as Alan Golding once called it, a path giving entry into various literary institutions capable of supporting such as narrative.

*The L=A=N=G=U=A=G=E Letters* is published in the University of New Mexico Press' Recencies series dedicated to "research and recovery in twentieth-century American poetics". Whereas the selection of letters is truly first class, the prefaces are intellectually compelling, and the supplied contextual material is all relevant and well made, the basic contextualization and framing of the letters is surprisingly sparse for a scholarly collection of letters. Also, it seems to me, it offers an esoteric air not entirely helpful when it comes to including new readers. For instance, applying a simple practice — like the one used by Edward Burns in his editions of the correspondence of Gertrude Stein — of always adding the family or given name of a mentioned person in brackets when either one or the other is omitted would make a world of difference for the graduate student not on first-name terms with every friend of the correspondents and not immediately catching every inside reference. Frankly, it is not easy to keep track of which Bob, Barbara or Robin is being discussed now, or to decipher the frequently appearing internal acronyms for writers, organizations and works of poetry. Giving the full name would also support the practice suggested in the "Note on the Text", that the index of names be used in lieu of more expansive notes; as it is, looking up a Bob or Robin in the index is futile. Moreover, the font used for the letters, IBM Courier, does not effectively support more extensive metatext and scholarly contextualization, as its readability is relatively low. This typeface may resemble that of (some of) the actual letters (although this is not something that is directly stated) and it certainly resembles the typeface used in the *L=A=N=G=U=A=G=E* newsletter, which provides it with a distinct retro-ambience, but it also makes skimming close to impossible and it graphically complicates the use

of additional notation. Since the letters are transcriptions and not facsimiles, the typeface appears a nostalgically-informed choice, and nostalgia, to me, seems an editorial principle that divides a lot more than it includes.

Such issues are of some importance in a publication for research purposes such as this one. Although the engaging, dedicated address of the private letter does not deny itself — the collection makes a surprisingly compelling read from cover to cover — a vast majority of potential readers of this volume are likely to be interested in retrieving specific letters or in reading about specific authors, works or issues for research purposes, and such an approach is not well supported by the edition as whole. In spite of the epistolary intentions behind the *L=A=N=G=U=A=G=E* newsletter, the essays and reviews found there do not always exhibit an intensity of persuasion equal to the one that comes across in the letters. In that sense, the letters — next to the actual poetry, of course — are a perfect place for new readers to meet the Language community, and that makes the esoteric attitude infusing their graphic presentation, notation, and contextualization all the more regrettable.

Solveig Daugaard  
Malmö University  
University of Copenhagen

## Works Cited

- BERNSTEIN, Charles. 1979, June. "The Conspiracy of Us". *L=A=N=G=U=A=G=E*, 8.  
<http://eclipsearchive.org/projects/LANGUAGEN8/>
- BERNSTEIN, Charles. 1992. *A Poetics*. Cambridge: University of Harvard Press.
- GOLDING, Alan. 1995. *From Outlaw to Classic: Canons in American Poetry*. Madison: University of Wisconsin Press.
- NIELSEN, Aldon Lynn. 1997. *Black Chant: Languages of African-American Postmodernism*. New York: Cambridge University Press.
- SPAHR, Juliana. 2018. *Du Bois' Telegram. Literary Resistance and State Containment*. Cambridge: Harvard University Press.
- VICKERY, Ann. 2000. *Leaving Lines of Gender: A Feminist Genealogy of Language Writing*. Hanover, N.H.: University Press of New England.
- YU, Timothy. 2009. *Race and the Avant-Garde, Experimental and Asian American Poetry Since 1965*. Stanford: Stanford University Press.



JENSTAD, Janelle, Mark KAETHLER, and Jennifer ROBERTS-SMITH, eds. 2018. *Shakespeare's Language in Digital Media: Old Words, New Tools*. New York: Routledge. Pp. 204. ISBN 9781472427977, Hardback \$155. ISBN 9781315608747, eBook \$57.95.

In their 2017 article on “Digital Modeling and the Infrastructures of Shakespeare Editing”, Alan Galey and Rebecca Niles describe Shakespeare’s “mechanical mediation” as existing “on a continuum reaching into the present age of digital editing” (23). Drawing on the work of Willard McCarty (2004) and Julia Flanders and Fotis Jannidis (2015), Galey and Niles propose modeling — a conceptual mapping of “the relationships between texts, machines and humans” (23) — as “a promising foundation for forms of humanities computing that do not merely apply digital tools to humanities research questions unidirectionally but also apply humanistic ways of thinking within computing practices” (25). In their new collection on *Shakespeare's Language in Digital Media*, Janelle Jenstad, Mark Kaethler and Jennifer Roberts-Smith bring together essays that attempt similarly to stretch from old to new, from traditional print editing of Shakespeare to digital analysis and electronic editing. Usefully, the essays describe and explain some of the digital tools developed and used by language historians and linguistic scholars in constructing the new models.

The book is divided into three sections: “Old Words through New Tools: Re-Reading Shakespeare with EEBO-TCP and LEME”; “Old Words, New Worlds: Shakespeare's Language in Digital Editions”; and “Old Words, New Codes: Shakespeare and the Languages of Markup”. The emphatic repetition of the words “old” and “new” reveals a challenge of the collection: the essays vary widely in their approach to a readership that will have different levels of experience with either Shakespearean textual scholarship or digital linguistic analysis. The authors recognize that for some potential readers, Shakespeare is a known quantity and digital technology is less familiar, but the contributors give various levels of attention to this difference. For example, some readers will be rebuffed by the free use of acronyms. On page 7 we are informed that “when referring to electronic databases, online projects, or digital tools [. . .] each essay presumes that the reader is aware” of what the acronyms stand for. Consequently, in the essays the “abbreviations are not accompanied by the full title”, but acronyms are listed as “new tools” in the back of the book. However, the reader has already been faced with a page (5) which included more than a dozen of these abbreviations.

viations, only one of which this primarily non-digital scholar immediately recognized. It would have been much better to allot the minimal amount of space required to give the full forms at the beginning of each essay. It is annoying to lose track of an argument while leafing through the book for an explanation of TaPoR3, for example.

The first section of the book is the one that most clearly focuses on Shakespeare. Here Valerie Wayne's essay offers a model methodology for using both print and digital resources to explore the full significance of Shakespearean words. Working "beyond the OED loop" and using LEME (Lexicon of Early Modern English) and EEBO-TCP (Early English Books Online-Text Creation Partnership), Wayne explores words sometimes previously treated as compositorial errors ("solicity") or spelling variants ("imperseverant") and, strikingly, finds evidence for her controversial choice of Innogen rather than Imogen as the name of *Cymbeline*'s heroine.

The remaining three essays in the first section also concentrate on what digital resources can do to expand our understanding of the building blocks of Shakespeare's works, his words. Along the way, the authors employ both new tools, especially LEME, and old-fashioned close reading. Ian Lancashire and Elisa Tersigni describe their creation of a "hard word annotator", based in LEME, where the hard words are not those unfamiliar to a modern reader but those that would have seemed difficult to Shakespeare's contemporaries. The authors illustrate the methods Shakespeare used to help his audience understand an unfamiliar term: either by content, or by adding a better-known synonym, or by repeating the word in an explanatory context. Inputting the text of a speech from *The Tempest* in which the Folio has Miranda address Caliban as "Abhorred Slave / Which any print of goodness wilt not take", they show that the percentage of hard words matches the language of the father rather than of the young girl, confirming the desire of critics to reassign the speech to Prospero. Daniel Aureliano Newman similarly shows how the "special discourses" of law and botanical science illuminate the issue of bastardy in *King John* and *The Winter's Tale*. Finally, Elizabeth Bernath demonstrates how a corpus-linguistic analysis of period glossaries traces the progress of such hard words into the "mother tongue".

Unfortunately, one of Bernath's examples demonstrates what happens when linguistic analysis is not combined with traditional text-critical methods or "humanistic ways of thinking". In showing how Shakespeare "clarifies meaning with indirect contextual signifiers", she uses the word "wary", writing:

when Hamlet describes “all the uses of this world” with the unfamiliar lexeme “wary”, he follows with three contextualizing nouns, “stale, flat, and unprofitable” [. . .] connoting a sense compatible with the sense in Timothy Bright’s definition, “ware and care” (1588, EEBO, H3v), and Claude Hollyband’s synonyms, “craftie” and “deceitful” (1593, LEME, 205-3165). The lexeme “wary” was enfranchised by 1656. (71)

Here Bernath startles the Shakespearean. Hamlet describes the uses of the world as “wary” only in the second quarto (Q2); the word is “weary” in the Folio (F). All editors treat “wary” as a spelling variant, and all major modern editions (New Oxford, Arden, Norton 3, etc.), whether based on Q2 or, like the separate volume of the Arden three edition, on F, have “weary” without even a commentary note. Harold Jenkins’s magisterial Arden two edition (text based on Q2) has “weary” and cites La Primaudaye, *The French Academy*, for grief causing “a man to hate and be weary of all things”. That “wary” was enfranchised by 1656 is thus not sufficient to explain why the “uses of the world” are “wary” for Hamlet. Bernath does not explain the textual history, or why the word suits the context, or why its inferred meaning in 1.2 differs from that in *Hamlet* 1.3, “Be wary then, best safety lies in fear”. Even the best linguistic tools still need to be combined with textual history and critical literary analysis.

In the book’s second section Andrew Griffin and Toby Malone take different approaches to the question of how digital editions can incorporate performance history. For Griffin the advantage of the method of the Queen’s Men Editions (QME), which record both “the concrete facts of a single, specific performance” as well as notes discussing alternative performance choices, is that it presents major ways of confronting the “singular characteristics of ‘the play’ as an ideal poetic object, as a material textual object, and as a transient performance” (102). Indeed, Griffin parallels the differences in these two ways of treating performance with those of editors divided between idealist and materialist practice, the first looking to present the “best” version of a work and the other acknowledging the physical history of a text through time. (Other Shakespeare editions, such as the Norton 3 electronic edition, now also have pop-up comments on productions, so QME is no longer as unique in this as Griffin claims.) Malone’s contribution instead demonstrates the use of a spreadsheet platform to incorporate a wide range of performance-based playhouse materials. Both approaches raise questions about how to handle a substantial amount of material. Griffin writes that QME offers a “comprehensive and diplomatic transcription

of all early texts” (92), but admits that for his example, the anonymous sixteenth-century play *King Leir*, “all” is a single surviving quarto. The challenge is greater for Norton and Oxford, which are now publishing “all” the early witnesses for the Shakespeare plays on their respective websites. In such cases one wonders just how many sources will prove manageable. Malone’s spread sheet includes two “early print witnesses”, Q1 and F, for *Richard III*, along with ten promptbooks and performance editions; he claims his program could accommodate “a virtually unlimited number of incrementally collated texts” (115). In that case, perhaps the limitation is not on the digital platform but on the user’s patience and ability to absorb and integrate so much material.

The book’s third section argues that “encoding and programming are critical acts” (125), and its purpose is to help scholars understand and evaluate key digital tools (127). Arguably, the first essay in the section, on “Digital tools for the study of early modern drama”, should have been the first in the volume. Laura Estill and Andie Silva define and explain the uses of seven digital tools, including the English Short Title Catalogue (ESTC), Database of Early English Playbooks (DEEP), Early English Books Online (EEBO), British Library Manuscripts Online (BLMO), Early Modern London Theatres (EMLoT) and Patrons and Performances (both REED or Records of Early English Drama sites), and the World Shakespeare Bibliography (WSB). For these authors such digital tools “both inform and shape our research questions” (141). The authors recognize “the tension between pre- and post-digital approaches to information design” (139) and have high praise for those databases that make connections between previously separate databases (e.g. DEEP), enable easy access to knowledge (WSB), or reconfigure existing data, like the REED projects.

Both of the remaining essays give examples of such new work and alert the reader to its potential difficulties. Diane Jakacki is both an editor of *Henry VIII* and the editor of a digital interface, TEI compliant XML. Even those who do not work in digital humanities and are unfamiliar with the terms she uses (Voyant, Juxta Commons, Gephi, Bubblelines) will recognize that her overarching question, how much and how deeply to tag, is a digital version of the question about annotation facing every print editor — a tag, like a note, indicates what matters and what needs to be explained in a text. So what to do if, as in the case of the Internet Shakespeare Editions (ISE), the tagset becomes so dense that it ceases to be readable by the latest web browsers, and yet it is the development of “ever more sophisticated structures for capturing and rendering diplomatic transcriptions of early witnesses and modern-spelling texts” (159) that makes an electronic edition so attractive?

Similarly, Michael Ulliot and Adam Bradley describe the uses of a tool they built to gather examples of a rhetorical scheme (*gradatio*), but, as they evaluated the list of examples the machine generated, they discovered that “only a text-analysis tool that integrates seamlessly with timeless critical habits, and that is coextensive with our editions of the texts we are criticizing, will make future literary criticism both definite and natural” (146). In their view, a digital tool like theirs can only “change our experience of Shakespeare’s words” when it operates “alongside future critics’ current reading habits” and is “embedded into texts as subtly as a footnote” (152–3). Their proposal to integrate digital tools with traditional methods of literary criticism, rather than requiring critics to adapt their habits to the limitations of those tools, would certainly make the transition to digital media easier for many Shakespeare scholars.

Unfortunately, the book would have benefited from more professional treatment by Routledge’s editors. Some of the illustrations, especially of LEME, are so small and blurry as to be useless. What appears to be the caption for Illustration 2.5 is misplaced. And most oddly, although the three editors are identified on the back cover, the other contributors of the individual essays are nowhere identified. Nevertheless, this collection takes its place alongside the work of Flanders and Jannidis and McCarty, as well as such collections as *Shakespeare and the Digital World* (2014), edited by Christie Carson and Peter Kirwan, in preparing the reader to enter the brave new world of digital editing.

Suzanne Gossett  
Loyola University Chicago

## Works Cited

- FLANDERS, Julia, and Fotis JANNIDIS. 2015. “Knowledge Organization and Data Modeling in the Humanities”. [https://www.wwp.northeastern.edu/outreach/conference/kodm2012/flanders\\_jannidis\\_datamodeling.pdf](https://www.wwp.northeastern.edu/outreach/conference/kodm2012/flanders_jannidis_datamodeling.pdf).
- GALEY, Alan, and Rebecca NILES. 2017, Spring. “Moving Parts: Digital Modeling and the Infrastructures of Shakespeare Editing”. *Shakespeare Quarterly*, 68.1: 21–55.
- MCCARTY, Willard. 2004. “Modeling: A Study in Words and Meanings”. In *A Companion to Digital Humanities*, edited by Susan SCHREIBMAN, Ray SIEMENS, and John UNSWORTH, 254–70. Malden, MA: Blackwell.

## Contributors

ROLENA ADORNO is Sterling Professor of Spanish at Yale University. Her books include *The Polemics of Possession in Spanish American Narrative*, *Colonial Latin American Literature: A Very Short Introduction*, *De Guancane a Macondo: estudios de literatura hispanoamericana*, and *Guaman Poma: Writing and Resistance in Colonial Peru*. Adorno is an Honorary Professor at La Pontificia Universidad Católica del Perú, Lima, and she served for ten years (2009-19) on the National Council on the Humanities, to which she was appointed by President Barack Obama. She is a recipient of the Modern Language Association's Lifetime Scholarly Achievement Award and a recent occupant of the Kluge Chair in Countries and Cultures of the South at the Library of Congress. Adorno is a Fellow of the American Academy of Arts and Sciences.

GIULIA BENGHI received her Ph.D. in Italian and Manuscript Studies at Indiana University in 2020. Her main research interests include manuscript tradition and literature in fourteenth- and fifteenth-century Italy, material philology, codicology, and textual editing. She presented on "Boccaccio's Scholarship and His Copy Method" at the 2013 Medieval Studies Conference in Kalamazoo and on the codex Cologny Bodmer 131 at the 2015 Binghamton Conference on Italian Songbooks. She lives in Brooklyn, NY, with her husband and four children.

RONALD BROUDE is the principal of the music publisher Broude Brothers Limited and the Founding Trustee of The Broude Trust for the Publication of Musicological Editions. He has recently published articles in *Early Music*, *The Musical Times*, and *Notes, the Journal of the Music Library Association*. His paper on the Gilbert & Sullivan critical edition, which appeared in Volume 3 of *Textual Cultures*, was awarded the Association for Documentary Editing's Boydston Prize. He is a member of the STS Executive Board and from 2004 to 2005 served as STS's Executive Director.



STEPHANIE BROWNER is the founder and co-editor of *The Charles Chesnutt Digital Archive* and the General Editor of *The Complete Writings of Charles W. Chesnutt*, a print series with Oxford University Press. Both are currently supported by NEH grants. Recently, she co-authored, with Kenneth M. Price, “The Case for Hybrid Editing”, for the *International Journal of Digital Humanities*. Her work has also appeared in *The American Literature Scholar in the Digital Age*, and in such journals as *J19*, *PMLA*, and *American Quarterly*. She currently serves as the Dean of Eugene Lang College, The New School.

MATT COHEN teaches English at the University of Nebraska-Lincoln and is a Fellow at the Center for Digital Research in the Humanities there. He is the author or editor of six books, including most recently *The New Walt Whitman Studies* (Cambridge University Press, 2020). Cohen is also a contributing editor at the *Walt Whitman Archive* and co-editor, with Stephanie Browner and Kenneth M. Price, of the *Charles Chesnutt Digital Archive*.

SOLVEIG DAUGAARD’S research field is modernist and contemporary American poetry and contemporary Scandinavian literature and media theory. Her criticism has appeared in *Jacket2* and in a number of journals and papers in Denmark and Sweden, and her dissertation “Collaborating with Gertrude Stein” is under revision and forthcoming from the University of Alabama Press. She is currently a teacher and a postdoctoral researcher affiliated with the School of Arts and Communications, Malmö University, and the Department of Arts and Cultural Studies, University of Copenhagen. Her PhD in Literature, Media History and Information Cultures is from Linköping University.

CHRISTINE FROULA, Professor of English, Comparative Literary Studies, and Gender Studies at Northwestern University and Life Member of Clare Hall, Cambridge University, has published widely on modernism, textual studies, genetic criticism, and feminist theory. Her books include *Virginia Woolf and the Bloomsbury Avant-Garde: War, Civilization, Modernity* (Columbia University Press, 2005), *Modernism’s Body: Sex, Culture, and Joyce* (Columbia University Press, 1996), and *To Write Paradise: Style and Error in Ezra Pound’s Cantos* (Yale University Press, 1984).

SUZANNE GOSSETT is Professor Emerita of English at Loyola University Chicago. She writes frequently on textual matters and is a General Textual Editor of the *Norton Shakespeare*, third edition, and General Editor of *Arden Early Modern Drama*. Her recent editions include *All's Well That Ends Well* and *Pericles* (Arden 3), *Eastward Ho!* (*Cambridge Works of Ben Jonson*), and plays by Middleton and Beaumont and Fletcher. She is a past president of the Shakespeare Association of America.

JÜRGEN E. GRANDT is Associate Professor of English at the University of North Georgia. He is the author of numerous articles in African American and American Studies and has also penned *Kinds of Blue: The Jazz Aesthetic in African American Narrative* (The Ohio State University Press, 2004) and *Shaping Words to Fit the Soul: The Southern Ritual Grounds of Afro-Modernism* (The Ohio State University Press, 2009). His most recent book is *Gettin' Around: Jazz, Script, Transnationalism* (University of Georgia Press, 2018).

PETER C. HERMAN has written or edited numerous books, including *Unspeakable: Literature and Terrorism from the Gunpowder Plot to 9/11* (Routledge, 2019), *Critical Concepts: Terrorism and Literature* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2018), *The New Milton Criticism and "Paradise Lost"*, co-editor Elizabeth Saur (Cambridge University Press, 2012), and *Destabilizing Milton: Paradise Lost and the Poetics of Incertitude* (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2005; pbk. 2008). His essays have appeared in such journals as *Renaissance Quarterly*, *SEL*, and *Modern Philology*. He is currently working on Shakespeare and the Crisis of the 1590s.

KATE OZMENT is assistant professor of English at California State Polytechnic University Pomona. Her work focuses on digital approaches to feminist bibliography and textual history, including editorial positions with the *Women in Book History Bibliography* and the *Stainforth Library of Women's Writing*. She is currently working on a monograph on Hroswitha Club, a women's bibliophile group, that positions women's book collecting and librarianship as central within the history of rare book study in the Anglo-American world.

SAMANTHA PINTO is Associate Professor of English at the University of Texas at Austin. She is the author of *Difficult Diasporas* (New York University Press, 2013) and *Infamous Bodies* (Duke University Press, 2020), and she is currently at work on a third book, "Under the Skin", about black internal embodiment.

H. WAYNE STOREY is emeritus professor of Italian & Medieval Studies, Indiana University, the Founding Editor of *Textual Cultures* and now the president of the Society for Textual Scholarship (2019–2021). One of the principal proponents of material philology, Storey is a specialist of medieval manuscripts and early printed editions, and has written extensively about the manuscripts and works of Dante, Petrarch, and Boccaccio. He is the author, co-author or editor of seven volumes, including *Transcription and Visual Poetics in the Early Italian Lyric* (1993), *Dante for the New Millennium* (2003 with Teodolinda Barolini), and the two-volume facsimile edition/commentary on Petrarch's partial autograph of the *Rerum vulgarium fragmenta*: Vat. Lat. 3195 (Antenore 2003–2004). He is currently completing the commentary for his “rich-text”, digital edition of Petrarch's *Fragmenta* (<http://petrarche.org>) on which he collaborates with Isabella Magni and John Walsh. His works on editorial theory and practice have appeared in *Textual Cultures* (2009), *Ecdotica* (2014), *Neo-Latin Philology, Old Tradition, New Approaches* (2014), *Zeitschrift für romanische Philologie* (2016), *Medioevo letterario d'Italia* 14 (2017) and *Teoria e forme del testo digitale* (2019).

# The Society for Textual Scholarship

<https://textualsociety.org/>

FOUNDED IN 1979, THE SOCIETY FOR TEXTUAL SCHOLARSHIP IS AN international organization of scholars working in textual studies, editing and editorial theory, electronic textualities, and issues of textual culture across a wide variety of disciplines. The Society welcomes scholars from literature (in all languages), history, musicology, classical and biblical studies, philosophy, art history, legal history, history of science and technology, computer science, library science, digital humanities, lexicography, epigraphy, paleography, codicology, cinema studies, theatre, linguistics, and textual and literary theory whose work explores the ideological structures and material processes that shape the transmission, reception, production, and interpretation of texts.

The STS is devoted to providing a forum, in its conferences and its journal, for the discussion of the interdisciplinary implications of current textual research.

The Society's peer-reviewed journal *Textual Cultures* is published twice a year. *Textual Cultures* invites essays from scholars around the world in English, French, German, Spanish and Italian. All articles will appear also with abstracts in English. The submission process is now electronic; for submission instructions, visit the journal's information page @ <http://www.textual-cultures.org/>.

The Society's annual conferences encourage the exchange of ideas across disciplinary boundaries. An Affiliated Member of the Modern Language Association, the STS also hosts a session at the MLA's annual conference in January. For calls for papers and future conference information, please see the Society's website @ <http://textualsociety.org>.

Three prizes given by the STS recognize outstanding work in the field:

The Fredson Bowers Prize is awarded for a distinguished essay in textual scholarship published in the previous two calendar years.

The Finneran Award recognizes the best edition or book about editorial theory and/or practice published in the English language during the preceding two calendar years.

The David C. Greetham Essay Prize is awarded to the best article published in the Society's journal during the two calendar years prior to the conference.

For general information regarding the Society for Textual Scholarship, please visit the Society's website ([www.textual.org](http://www.textual.org)) or write to:

John Young Executive Director, STS  
Department of English | Marshall University | Huntington, WV 25755  
USA  
[youngj@marshall.edu](mailto:youngj@marshall.edu)

H. Wayne Storey, President, STS  
Department of French and Italian, *Emeritus* | [hstorey@indiana.edu](mailto:hstorey@indiana.edu)