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Patrick Sahle: Digitale Editionsformen, Zum Umgang mit der Überlieferung unter den Bedingungen des Medienwandels, 3 Bände, Norderstedt: Books on Demand 2013. (Schriften des Instituts für Dokumentologie und Editorik; 7-9). Band 1: **Das typografische Erbe**. 356 Seiten, Hardcover, € 49,90 ISBN 978-3-8482-6320-2; Band 2: **Befunde, Theorie und Methodik**. 292 Seiten, Hardcover, € 44,90 ISBN 987-3-8482-5252-7; Band 3: **Textbegriffe und Recodierung**. 556 Seiten, Hardcover, € 49,90 ISBN 978-3-8482-5357-9

At the outset of his new three-volume monograph on scholarly digital editing, Patrick Sahle starts off by declaring what *Digitale Editionsformen* is *not*. The work is not an in-depth analysis of scholarly editing: it is not exhaustive. It does not offer a clear-cut solution as to how sources should be processed and edited: it asks more questions than it can answer. The work is not perfectly balanced: by focussing mainly on the traditional subjects of scholarly editions, it largely ignores some of its more recent developments such as the edition of audio-materials, of musical scores, and of non-textual objects. The work is also burdened by its interdisciplinarity: although it deals with literary texts, it is strictly speaking not a philological work; and although it deals with the editing of historical documents, it does not really belong to the field of History either. Finally, the work is not intended to be read cover to cover: because it was conceived as a reference work, it contains a lot of redundancy. But if it is none of these things, then what exactly *is* *Digitale Editionsformen*? It is a broad historical overview of the development of editorial theory and practice in the print age, and of how these have evolved in the early days of the digital age. It is a close examination of the difference between printed and digital scholarly editions that tries to shed a new light on its recent change of medium. It is a theoretical framework that proposes a new, pluralistic model for the concept of 'text' that aims to include all the different aspects of scholarly editing, and of the decoding and recoding of these texts into Scholarly Editions. And it is a meticulously composed reference work that contains a 150-page bibliography to satisfy the reader's every need for further reading on the subject of the editorial theory and practice of Textual Criticism, be it digital or in print.

Band 1: Das typografische Erbe

In the first volume, Patrick Sahle offers a nuanced overview of the history of Textual Criticism and its 'typographical legacy'. Although certain philological interests and relevant textual critical phenomena already surfaced around the time of the library of Alexandria and have been gradually developing into a scientific methodology of scholarly editing ever since, the first true critical editions of historical works only emerged in the 19th century, in the form of the Lachmanian Historical-Critical Edition. To illustrate the importance of Lachmann's philological methodology outside of Textual Criticism and into neighbouring disciplines of the Humanities, Sahle offers the development of editorial techniques in the field of History as a case study. Nevertheless, although the editorial *theory* of the 19th Century Historical-Critical Edition guaranteed its scientific quality by insisting on the use of an exhaustive apparatus and on an uncompromising transparency with regard to all of the editor's interventions in the text, its editorial *practice* was still often a different story. Furthermore, the Lachmanian methodology has been criticised for almost as long as the Historical-Critical Edition exists: many scholarly editors have disagreed with its strong orientation towards its oversimplified concepts of the 'author' and his 'work', and with its teleological perspective on the writing process for example.

Especially in the second half of the 20th century, these criticisms of the Lachmanian methodology have propelled the development of Textual Criticism forward and given rise to different meta-theoretical perspectives on concepts such as 'text', 'author', and 'work' that resulted in a wide array of editorial theories – each with their own editorial practices. Due to these new perspectives, Textual Criticism no longer exclusively approached the literary work as an indisputable work of art, of which the linguistic code, style or content should under no circumstances be altered. As examples of these 'alternatives' for the Lachmanian methodology, Sahle discusses the editorial practices of Historical Linguistics, Copy-Text Theory, Genetic Criticism, and Documentary Editing. In this respect, Sahle's approach to explain the difference between their various editorial practices is similar to that of Peter Shillingsburg's 'orientations to text' in that it moves away from the traditional model of 'schools' of textual scholarship, and towards a model that focuses more on theoretical differences than on circumstantial

factors such as language, culture, and heritage.¹ Like Shillingsburg, Sahle will propose a new model for analysing different approaches to scholarly editing based on various interpretations of the concept of 'text' in the third volume of *Digitale Editionsformen*.

As these competing editorial theories specialized further, and their quest for objectivity² and exhaustivity continued, scholarly editors were more and more frequently faced with the limitations of print, and gratefully turned to new digital media for the publication of their Scholarly Editions. In the final chapter of this first volume, Sahle therefore takes his historical approach to editorial theories one step further, by investigating to what degree our current theories of 'text' have been influenced by print culture, suggesting that an understanding of this process is necessary to formulate a new model for scholarly editing in the digital age.

Band 2: Befunde, Theorie und Methodik

If the first volume of *Digitale Editionsformen* was perhaps not very innovative in that it essentially offered a detailed historical overview of the state of the art on scholarly editing in the print age, the second volume takes its first steps towards the new theoretical framework it proposes in order to classify and evaluate more contemporary scholarly attempts to recode and preserve historical documents in the form of (often digital) Scholarly Editions. Sahle argues that because the digital medium has changed Textual Criticism in such an extensive and fundamental way, a

¹ Shillingsburg, Peter: *Scholarly Editing in the Computer Age*. 3. Aufl. Ann Arbor, 1996. More recently, Shillingsburg and Dirk Van Hulle have reworked Shillingsburg's original orientations from the ground up to include a genetic orientation: *Orientations to Tekst, Revisited*. In: *Studies in Bibliography* (forthcoming).

² As part of an important dilemma for editorial theory, Sahle remarks that this quest for objectivity has resulted in an increasing awareness that complete objectivity can never be achieved in the field of Textual Criticism, because any form of editing always involves some degree of interpretation (Sahle, Patrick: *Digitale Editionsformen*, Bd. 7. Nordstedt (2013), S. 208). Consequently, Scholarly Editions have a rhetorical function: their editor needs to convince the reader of the quality and validity of the edition (S. 209).

new, all-encompassing theory of scholarly editing would need to take a step back from its established practices and methodologies, and to rethink the concept of Scholarly Edition from the ground up. Therefore, Sahle starts by defining the Scholarly Edition as a critical representation of historical documents.³ However, because the individual concepts in this definition have been the subject of significant meta-theoretical discussions in the field of Textual Criticism as well, Sahle proposes to explain them further:

- *Document*: A narrow definition would suggest that a document is the carrier of written information; a broader definition would describe a document as a material-bound information unit that is not necessarily limited to linguistic information. A Scholarly Edition can represent all types of historical documents critically, from musical scores to film.
- *'Historical' document*: There is always some distance between the subject of study and the edition that studies it. This historical distance creates a tension between its pursuit to safeguard the document's authenticity (representation), and the attempt to bridge the distance between document and edition (criticism).
- *Representation*: A critical publication that does not represent the textual transmission in one way or another is not a Scholarly Edition. This representation cannot be reduced to a single, final, reconstructed text without reference to its tradition of textual transmission.
- *'Critical' representation*: This is the systematic, scientific description of the text's tradition; it is the confrontation of textual transmission with the highest level of scientific development; it means adding editorial know-how to the way in which historical documents are presented. Textual Criticism is a subject-specific, broadly developed method of critical representation.

³ Sahle, Patrick: *Digitale Editionsformen*. Bd. 8. Norderstedt (2013), S. 138: 'Edition ist die erschließende Wiedergabe historischer Dokumente'.

In print editions, this critical representation of historical documents is often realized by means of a combination of diacritical signs or footnotes that are connected to the edition's critical apparatus. In digital editions, this concept has been further developed in the form of embedded markup that is directly coded into the text itself. The implication here is that today's markup languages can be considered as the new critical apparatuses of the digital age.

Starting from this definition of the Scholarly Edition, Sahle then goes on to define the Scholarly *Digital* Edition (SDE) as an edition that complies with the general requirements of the Scholarly Edition, while taking into account its current technical possibilities and methodological implications, following a digital paradigm.⁴ In other words: an SDE should not only represent the fruits of Textual Criticism in a digital format, it should also be aware of the possibilities and limitations this change in medium brings along with it. As Sahle proposes, this means that an SDE cannot be transformed into a printed edition without substantial loss of information and functionality. In this sense, the SDE goes beyond the capacities of traditional printed Scholarly Editions.⁵ This implies that an SDE is a Scholarly Edition that offers the results of or functionalities for Textual Scholarship that would have been difficult or even impossible to achieve without the use of digital technologies. Therefore, Sahle's definition excludes digitized versions of printed Scholarly Editions, or digital archives that offer nothing more than a series of facsimile images of manuscripts or other documents.

As such, the SDE is characterized by the fact that its basic data is made available in an electronic format, and that its informative potential exceeds that of a single book, and can only be exhausted by means of a digital medium. The SDE's added value can be of a technical nature (e.g. by

⁴ Sahle (Anm. 3) S. 148: 'Eine digitale Edition ist dadurch bestimmt, dass sie die allgemeinen Anforderungen an eine wissenschaftliche Edition durch die Berücksichtigung der gegenwärtigen technischen Möglichkeiten und ihrer methodischen Implikationen erfüllt. Sie folgen einem "digitalen Paradigma".'

⁵ Sahle (Anm. 3) S. 149: 'Eine digitale Edition ist dadurch bestimmt, dass sie nicht ohne wesentliche Informations- und Funktionsverluste in eine typografische Form gebracht werden kann – und in diesem Sinne über die druckbare Edition hinausgeht'.

embedding audio-visual documents into the edition, or by supporting the dynamic generation of textual versions), of an economical nature (e.g. when the edition's corpus is so large that a complete printed publication is no longer feasible), or of a functional nature (e.g. by adding functionalities to the edition that allow for a type of interaction with the materials that would not be possible in print). Furthermore, this definition of the SDE also has important implications for the concept of Hybrid Editions. Just like the Scholarly Digital Edition is not merely defined by the fact that the Scholarly Edition is published in a digital medium, so is the Hybrid Edition not merely defined by the fact that it is published in two (or more) different media. To qualify as a Hybrid Edition, the Scholarly Edition's different components must complement one another, each being fully aware of the possibilities and limitations of their medium.⁶

According to Sahle, the core of the paradigm shift that the digital turn has introduced to the theory of Textual Criticism can be located in the fact that in contrast to the print medium, the digital medium allows for a clearer separation between 'content' and 'appearance'.⁷ In this dichotomy, 'content' refers to the text's 'data' – the transcription of the historical document's text that may include structural or visual information alongside its linguistic code. 'Appearance', on the other hand, refers to the edition's medium-dependent format, which includes its layout as well as textual and typographical structures – the way in which the text's content is presented.

⁶ A good example of a Hybrid Edition that complies to Sahle's definition is the *Samuel Beckett Digital Manuscript Project* that combines a digital archive of Samuel Beckett's manuscripts (www.beckettarchive.org) with a series of accompanying print volumes that analyse their genesis (e.g. Dirk Van Hulle: *The Making of Samuel Beckett's Stirrings Still / Soubresauts and Comment Dire / what is the word*. Brussels, 2011).

⁷ Sahle (Anm. 3) S. 159-160: Die Kern des Wandels liegt in einer Trennung von Inhalt und Form. A little further on, Sahle explains why in English he would prefer to use the term 'appearance' rather than form: 'Schon die englische Terminologie "content – appearance" ist etwas präziser: 'Form' meint die mediale Ausformung bzw. Erscheinung, in Bezug auf Texte also z.B. Formatierungseigenschaften, dann aber auch das Layout und Textstrukturen und typografische Hilfssysteme wie Seitenzählung, Zeilennummerierung oder die spezifische Ordnung und Formatierung von Apparaten' Sahle (Anm 3) S. 162.

In traditional forms of scholarly editing, appearance was content: the technology of the book dictated that once an edition was published, its appearance and content had become intimately intertwined. In digital editions appearance and content are distinct from one another: because the SDE is no longer limited to a single publication format, this has given the editor the possibility to present the data in complex, dynamic, interactive and variable formats across different media. This leads Sahle to conclude that the effect of the digital turn on Textual Criticism is not merely that Scholarly Editions have moved from one medium to another, but rather that they have become 'transmedial'.⁸

As Sahle suggest, this separation of content and appearance has undoubtedly increased the editor's workload, as well as the complexity of his or her tasks. On the other hand, the use of generic markup also allows the editor to encode structural, visual, and content-related interpretations in a much more accurate and powerful way than ever before. This means that while SDEs are more extensive and demanding than print editions, they are also potentially of a higher quality. However, as of yet there is still much uncertainty regarding the quality of SDEs because the old systems of evaluation no longer apply, while a new system has not yet been fully developed. Obviously, the Scholarly Digital Edition must hold up to the same standards as the printed Scholarly Edition: its methodology must be carefully considered and selected, consistently applied, and comprehensively documented. In addition, the editor is obliged to describe which historical documents were consulted for what reason, how they are presented and edited, and to give a detailed account and justification of all the instances where he or she has intervened in the original text. To assess these aspects of the SDE, a more traditional evaluation system that checks whether or not it upholds the 'general standards' of the Scholarly Edition could be applied. However, Sahle indicates that a new system must be developed that assesses whether or not the SDE meets the currently required 'technical standards' as well, such as certain standards for the format and quality of images, or for the vocabulary and data models used in the edited text's encoding.

⁸ Sahle (Anm. 3) S. 161: 'Das Kennzeichen des gegenwärtigen Medienwandels ist nicht so sehr ein Wechsel der Medien, sondern vielmehr eine Transmedialisierung!'

Band 3: Textbegriffe und Recodierung

In order to develop an advanced model for scholarly editing that takes advantage of the new, digital medium that it tries to embrace, Sahle uses the last volume of *Digitale Editionsformen* to take step back from the product of Textual Criticism, and focus on its subject instead. Text is what lies at the heart of scholarly editing: as scholarly editors, we want to critically present a tradition of textual transmission, to make texts available for future research, and to process and preserve the information they carry. The problem is, however, that scholarly editors tend to disagree on what this concept of 'text' exactly entails, and what kind information is relevant enough to preserve. Moreover, if scholarly editors want their editions to remain relevant over time, they will not only have to take into account a variety of possible contemporary uses of the edition, but to anticipate the future needs of Textual Criticism as well. Therefore, Sahle posits that it is necessary to start from a comprehensive interdisciplinary point of view, and to aim for a more pluralistic understanding of 'text'.

To construct this new model, Sahle starts from the observation that even a pre-scientific concept of text already distinguishes three main constitutive aspects: *thoughts are expressed* through a *medium*. As such, this minimal description allows for three different perspectives on text: text as 'content', text as 'expression', and text as 'document'. Moreover, by trying to connect these three aspects to one another, we can find three more intermediary positions: text as 'work' (combining *content* with *expression*), text as 'version' (combining *document* with *expression*), and text as 'sign' (combining *document* with *content*). This way, Sahle's concept of 'text' is different from most definitions of text in that it makes no attempt to distinguish text from other core concepts of Textual Criticism, such as 'work', 'version', and 'document'.⁹ Rather, these concepts become key aspects of Sahle's six distinct understandings of 'text':

⁹ See for instance the glossary in the back of Peter Schillingsburg's *Scholarly Editing in the Computer Age* (Anm. 1) S. 173-176. For a more recent example, see Elena Pierazzo's preliminary model for 'text', 'document' and 'work' (<http://epierazzo.blogspot.be/2013/08/a-conceptual-model-of-text-documents.html>).

- *Text_i – Text as ‘content’*: Text_i is a coded message that is subjected to complex methods of information coding and placement. When texts are purely perceived as the content, ideas, and intention they represent, we identify a text texts by recognizing its core ideas, content structures, key images, or key sentences – in some cases we can even refer to Text_i by using phrases that were never used in the original. This means that Text_i is independent of its material manifestation (Text_D) or its linguistic formulation (Text_S). For Text_i, all appearances of a single work are equal.
- *Text_W – Text as ‘work’*: Text_W is the imagined work that an author tries to express in a series of versions (Text_F). Therefore, the Text_W is not considered to be a stabilized speech, but rather a complex expression that has been realized dynamically over time. As such, Text_W can be regarded as a creative process that can be found in the variance between its different versions. From an editorial perspective, this can result into two opposing strategies: (1) to select a single Text_S and modify it to represent the author’s intentions, or (2) to publish all of Text_W’s extant versions, accompanied with a synoptic overview of its variants.¹⁰ For Text_W, all versions of the work are equal – even translated ones.
- *Text_S – Text as ‘expression’*: Text_S is a linguistic code based on the principles of speech that is used to communicate Text_i. This concept of ‘text’ regards all versions of a work equal that are identical on the word level – bibliographical codes or characters that are part of the conventions of written language are accidental and may be corrected silently.
- *Text_F – Text as ‘version’*: When an editor is convinced that a work’s ‘best version’ will provide the ‘best text’ for the edition, this implies that every version of that work contains a different

¹⁰ This is a good example to illustrate that Sahle’s ‘concepts of texts’ are quite different from Shillingsburg’s ‘orientations to text’. In their forthcoming article (Anm. 1), Shillingsburg and Van Hulle would classify this first approach under the ‘authorial orientation’, while the second approach would belong to the ‘genetic orientation’.

$Text_f$. Only exact copies share the same $Text_f$: interpunction, paragraph structure, typographical errors etc. are part of $Text_f$'s written language and should therefore be respected.

- $Text_D$ – *Text as 'document'*: A message is always inherently linked to its medium. The reader does not only construct meaning on the basis of linguistic codes, but uses bibliographical codes as well. A complete recoding of $Text_D$ into abstract symbols can never be achieved. Therefore, for $Text_D$, no two copies are the same – even when they are different copies of the same edition.
- $Text_z$ – *Text as 'sign'*: $Text_z$ is that which is readable. This does not only include linguistic code, but may include pictograms, diagrams, symbols etc. as well. As such, $Text_z$ links $Text_D$ back to $Text_i$, because it refers to the signs themselves, rather than to the documents that carry them, or the meaning the author instilled in them.

Sahle organizes his new model for Textual Criticism in the form of a so-called 'text wheel' that has three poles (idea – language – medium) and three intermediary positions. As Sahle argues, this model cannot only be used to explain the difference between various editorial theories (e.g. while Genetic Criticism will focus more on $Text_w$, Copy-Text Theory will focus more on $Text_s$) or editorial practices (e.g. while the Variorum Edition can best be used to present $Text_v$, the Facsimile Edition works better to present $Text_D$), but also to investigate the limitations and possibilities of the technologies that can be used to critically represent the historical documents that lie at the heart of Textual Criticism. In the last chapter of this final volume of *Digitale Editionsformen*, Sahle illustrates this point by investigating how the technology of markup languages (and more specifically that of its authoritative standard set by the Text Encoding Initiative) may influence which information can be recoded in the form of SDEs: while the TEI's tagset easily lends itself to the recoding of $Text_w$, $Text_s$ or $Text_f$, it is less supportive of $Text_i$ and $Text_D$, and offers no possibilities of encoding $Text_z$. As Sahle suggests, these limitations may well have an important influence on our current understanding of text, and on the Scholarly Editions we produce.

In conclusion, *Digitale Editionsformen* can be described as an extraordinary attempt to encompass the whole of scholarly digital editing. If it does not succeed in answering all the questions Textual Criticism currently faces, it nevertheless ventures to tackle the right problems. Taking the typographical legacy into account, Patrick Sahle sets out to construct a new model for scholarly editing that is divorced from the limitations of print, and ready for the possibilities of the digital medium. By offering a clear-cut definition of the Scholarly Digital Edition, and by designing a new, pluralistic model for his extended concept of 'text', Sahle succeeds in analysing a myriad of different approaches to text, and the various editorial practices and new technologies that come along with them.

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