

## **Looking at Two Continents Or the Advantages of Being a Go-Between in Textual Studies**

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### *1. Introduction*

In the last century, scholarly editing has flourished tremendously. In this blooming period many scholarly editions have been started and finished or are still in progress. Many conferences have been held, many papers have been given, many essays have been written, many journals, periodicals and readers have been published to discuss all kinds of editing problems. New means of research and even new media have been introduced. And, finally, many attempts have been made to design a whole theory of scholarly editing as a serious specialism in the field of Textual Scholarship. The second half of the 20<sup>th</sup> century was also the time that, especially in Germany and the USA, but also in Holland and France, government and private foundations were available to finance editing projects and to subsidize the publication of multi-volume scholarly editions.

At the same time, with a certain regularity, the meaning and function of the big long-term editing projects have been under debate. The multi-volume scholarly editions in particular as *the* symbol of modern textual scholarship have been criticized. The same arguments are mentioned constantly: the enormous size of the projects, caused by an endless striving for completeness, the long-term and therefore extremely costly nature of the work, and the highly sophisticated character of the results, which makes the editions almost inaccessible for a broad audience of scholars and students. As a result, the multi-volume editions stand unused on the shelves of libraries. The investment in terms of time, energy and money which is needed to produce them should be used for other less sophisticated research projects.

In several discussions the German genetic apparatuses have been compared with huge grave-yards in which any visitor would immediately be lost for ever, if there was a visitor at all. In 1979 Winfried Woesler stated: “Rightly, there is the complaint that the apparatus as the

most costly part of the historical critical edition is hardly used by literary critics.”<sup>1</sup> On the other side literary critics are complaining about the inaccessibility of scholarly editions. Ten years later, nothing had been changed. Ulrich Ott wrote “that the historical-critical edition is a tomb rather than a rich resource for scholarly research”.<sup>2</sup> At that time the opponents of Ott, like the famous Siegfried Scheibe, Hans Zeller and Gunter Martens, defended the scholarly edition with editorial and textual arguments;<sup>3</sup> but, remarkable enough, no one answered Ott with convincing examples of interpretative studies based on the genetic apparatus or other data, presented in a specific historical critical edition. More recently, in 1995, there was a colloquium in Marbach, Germany, about genetic editing. The collection of the papers of this colloquium shows that the whole discussion was focussed on the theoretical and practical principles of making an apparatus. The crucial question what to do with all the collected and presented textual material was not even mentioned. And more important, every contributor to the discussion was defending his own apparatus, implicitly advocating it as the best.

To be able to read and to use a scholarly edition requires not only a thorough knowledge of the language which is used, but also of the tradition within which the edition is made. Every editor throughout the world is working within a tradition. Even if he resists that tradition, his work can only be fully understood against the background of the tradition. Let me give an example. To understand the German historical-critical edition as it is, you have to study the so-called “Sophien-” or “Weimar- edition” of Goethe’s works (1887-1919). It is hard to believe, but this is still the only scholarly edition of the complete works of Goethe. The edition of 143 (!) volumes was financed by and made in commission of the grand duchess Sophie of Sachsen-Weimar-Eisenach (1824-1897). After the death of the grandson of Goethe, Walther Wolfgang von Goethe, on April 15, 1885, the legacy of the great poet was left by will to the grand duchess Sophie. During his life, Goethe for many years had been an adviser and friend of Carl August (1757-1828), the duke of Sachsen-Weimar-Eisenach. The grand duchess Sophie, although she originated from Holland and thus had nothing to do with Goethe, took her responsibility very seriously. She not only commissioned an edition of the works, the letters and diaries, but also a biography of Goethe and an inventory of the legacy. The interference of the grand duchess went so far that she commissioned her lady servants to cross out in the manuscripts of Goethe’s Venetian epigrams all the erotic lines. Unfortunately

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<sup>1</sup> Winfried Woesler, “Eröffnung und Begrüßung”, *Edition und Interpretation, Edition et Interprétation des Manuscrits Littéraires*, (eds.) Louis Hay and Winfried Woesler (Bern: Peter Lang, 1981), 11.

<sup>2</sup> Ulrich Ott, “Dichterwerkstatt oder Ehrengrab? Zum Problem der historisch-kritischen Ausgaben: Eine Diskussion,” *Jahrbuch der Deutschen Schillergesellschaft* 33 (1989), 3-6.

<sup>3</sup> Siegfried Scheibe, “Plädoyer für historisch-kritische Editionen,” *Jahrbuch der Deutschen Schillergesellschaft* 34 (1990), 406-415.

for Sophie, Goethe has copied many of the epigrams in letters to his friend Schiller, so we can reconstruct to a certain extent what Sophie wanted to withhold from the German public.

The monumental Weimar-edition of Goethe's works is one of the most important achievements of modern German scholarly editing. It strongly influenced not only the philology and research relating to Goethe, but also German scholarly editing in general. The development and the theoretical discussions within German scholarly editing of the twentieth century can be understood better, seen from the perspective of the Goethe philology and the Weimar-edition as its centre. Conceived in a time of strong positivists scholarly conceptions, the Weimar-edition was focussed on the text and its history. It contained no commentary. This has led to a very persistent view amongst German editors on commentary as a secondary and "subjective" addition to an edition, to be presented in other volumes, separated from the "objective" text and apparatus.

Changes and new standards in the field of scholarly editing are only new from the perspective of what is traditional. The innovative importance of the Samuel Taylor Coleridge edition by Jim Mays for Anglo-American editing and the Gorge Büchner edition by Burghardt Dedner for German editing is only understandable for those who know the history and actual situation in both movements. The same is true for all the theoretical essays on scholarly editing. The problem however is that not many editors are prepared to study the history of their own tradition, not to mention that from another. They are locked up in their own conceptions, their own rules and their own apparatus. This narrow perspective, and *not* the language barrier, is, in my opinion, the main obstacle for a real open and deep discussion between German and Anglo-American editors.

## 2. *History*

Born in a small country like The Netherlands, with mighty neighbours, the Dutch people have developed a natural tendency to look abroad and to take advantage of all that is offered there. The history of scholarly editing in the Netherlands is no exception to this rule; and my own work as editor, for more than 25 years now, also fits in this national practice. Let me give you a short history of scholarly editing in the Netherlands which in the end will coincide with my own.

Traditionally, textual scholarship in the Netherlands has been dominated by classical philology. Especially at Leiden University, founded in 1575, classical philology flourished. Numerous editions compiled by the professors in Leiden were published by the famous publishing house Elzevier, which was located in Leiden. It launched a series of publications

of the Latin and Greek classics in 1629 consisting of small, inexpensive books. This series in duodecimo grew rapidly, and was so popular both in the Dutch Republic and elsewhere that it was imitated on a grand scale.<sup>4</sup> But it all started with the humanists in the 15<sup>th</sup> and 16<sup>th</sup> century. Amongst them was Erasmus (1466?-1536) one of the greatest. As known, the humanists worked in an international context. So Erasmus not only knew the work of the great Italian humanist Angelo Poliziano (1454-1494), he also respected him highly. Since Erasmus in his turn was highly admired by the philologists of the Leiden University in the 17<sup>th</sup> century, there is a clear link from Poliziano, through Erasmus, to Leiden.

Besides the many editions of the church fathers, Erasmus made more than 40 editions of Greek and Roman authors. And of course in 1516 he published the *editio princeps* of the Greek New Testament with a Latin translation. After his death this edition became an almost holy textus receptus. For many centuries, variants from other, more valuable, manuscripts, could only be presented at the foot of the pages; changes in the text were not accepted. However, many editions of Erasmus were made in a great hurry; often in difficult circumstances. He writes about that in the *Praefationes* of some of his editions. These *Praefationes* were originally letters to famous contemporaries. In those letters Erasmus discussed specific philological problems in a surprising vivid and metaphoric way. A wonderful example is the letter of March 7, 1515 to Thomas Ruthall, the bishop of Durham, who as the secretary of the King of England just had been in war with France and Scotland. Erasmus compared the war of the bishop with the struggle he has had to put up as the editor of Seneca and St Jerome: ‘By a curious coincidence, my lord Bishop, both you and I have been engaged at the same time in warfare, not of the same sort, it is true, but yet there is a kind of resemblance between them. You, under the prospering banner of a truly invincible king, have first put the French to flight and then, returning from one warlike field to another, have found the king of Scots invading the boundaries of your land with large forces, well equipped, and thrown him back, routed him, cut him to pieces; I have taken two authors, the best of all but the least well preserved, St Jerome and Seneca, and with great efforts have rescued them from the corruptions, those most savage enemies of good literature, by which they had been hitherto not so much defiled as completely destroyed. Like you I had two enemies to fight, and I doubt whether at any point in your campaign you had more difficulty and more toil to face than I had in this business of mine. But there is one point in which my record is even better than yours: all by myself I was both general and private soldier, and engaged those

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<sup>4</sup> J.H. Waszink: „Classical Philology“. In: Leiden University in the Seventeenth Century. An Exchange of Learning. Ed. Th.H. Lunsingh Scheurleer and G.H.M. Posthumus Meyjes. Leiden 1975, p. 162-175.

thousands of enemies single-handed. Nor was the carnage in my conflict any less than on your fields of battle. For when you fought the French, a bloody battle was ruled out by the courtesy [...] of your enemies, who yielded at the first brush to better men than themselves in a way that suggested they had only come in order to contribute to your haul of booty. Apart from them, the Scots did indeed provide you with a glorious victory, their king himself and countless nobles falling on the field — and such a king as in the spirit of a gladiator [...] planned complete destruction for the whole of Britain; but that victory cost you many lives. I however in a single engagement slew, cut in pieces, and destroyed over four thousand foemen (monsters, rather); for such, I suppose, was the total number of corruptions I removed from Seneca alone. One may add that the Scottish troops had scarcely crossed the English frontier, and had seized only one fortress, from which they were soon driven out. But the whole of Jerome and the whole of Seneca had been occupied for many centuries by an infinite army of corruptions, so that nothing was left anywhere that was not held by the enemy.

And in this business I had my pen for a sword, the Muses, not Mars, to inspire me, and my battalions were my brains. Nor had I any outside help in all these difficulties except two ancient manuscripts, one of which was provided from his own library by the chief patron of my researches, that incomparable glory of our generation, William, archbishop of Canterbury, and the other was sent to my assistance by King's College, Cambridge; but these were imperfect and even more full of error than the current copies, so that less confidence could be placed in one's auxiliary troops than in the enemy. One thing however helped me: they did not agree in error, as is bound to happen in printed texts set up from the same printer's copy; and thus, just as it sometimes happens that an experienced and attentive judge pieces together what really took place from the statements of many witnesses, none of whom is telling the truth, so I conjectured the true reading on the basis of their differing mistakes. Besides which, I tracked down many things as it were by scent, following the trail of actual letters and strokes of the pen. In some places I had to guess; although I did that sparingly, knowing that the surviving works of such great men are sacred heritage, in which one should move not merely with caution but with proper reverence.

And so I have left much for other men to unravel. The pieces which had wrongly acquired the name of Seneca I have not thrown out, for fear the reader might need something and not find it, but I have relegated them to the end; the rest I have arranged in a more convenient order. I have added that very entertaining and very accomplished little work on the death of Claudius, recently discovered in my native Germany and expounded in very scholarly notes by Beatus Rhenanus. [...] It did not escape my notice that no kind of literary

work brings an author more tedium and less reputation; for while the reader gets all the benefit, he does not realise what he owes to the textual critic.’<sup>5</sup>

When Leiden University started in February 1575, there was the great example of Erasmus and the other humanists, there was money, but no famous philologist to teach and study. So the curators of the University tried to find someone from abroad. The first one was Justus Lipsius, the famous humanist from Flanders. He stands at the beginning of the golden age of the classical philology at Leiden. The fame of this period in Leiden was mostly owing to the efforts of foreigners from Flanders, France and Germany. It seems that Lipsius had never felt at home in Leiden. Already in September 1586 he gave his notice which was not accepted by the curators. However, when he received permission to go to Spa for his health, he never returned. In Leiden the disappointment was very great. One tried to get Lipsius back with new financial promises, but the professor refused to return. Thereupon the curators of the university decided to try to get the best candidate of all: Joseph Justus Scaliger (1540-1609). The story of his appointment and his work at the university of Leiden is just as remarkable as typical for the Dutch Republic at that time.

Scaliger was born on August 5, 1540 in the South of France. He studied for some years at a Latin school in Bordeaux; but, after the death of his father he went to Paris. There he studied Greek, Hebrew, Arabic and several Oriental languages. In 1565 he visited Italy, England and Scotland. From 1574 on he lived in France, in the Touraine where he spent all his time in the study of the classics. When the curators in Leiden decided to invited Scaliger to become professor at their university, he was already a famous scholar.

In the autumn of 1591 a delegation, led by the Leiden professor Tuning, went to Scaliger with letters from the curators. To persuade Scaliger also the French king Henry the Fourth was asked to write a letter of recommendation. After an adventurous journey of several months – France was at that time in a civil war – Tuning met Scaliger in Preuilly, a small place south of Tours. Along the way, Tuning had lost the letters, but he could deliver the invitation in person. Scaliger felt honored by the invitation, but in a letter to the curators he wondered how he could get to Holland. Without a group of armed guardians it was impossible for him to travel to Holland. However, to send a group of armed soldiers was very expensive. While the curators were deliberating, Scaliger began to hesitate. He was already fifty years old and he did not have much experience in teaching. In this respect the curators could

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<sup>5</sup> Erasmus: The correspondence. Letters 298 to 445, 1514 to 1516. Translated by R.A.B. Mynors and D.F.S. Thomson, annotated by James K. McConica. Toronto/Buffalo 1976. The Collected Works of Erasmus Vol. 3, p. 64-66.

reassure him: he would be free from any obligation to give seminars. At the same time, the curators urged the French ambassador to write a letter to Scaliger, explaining the intellectual life and tolerant climate in the Dutch Republic. In March 1593 Scaliger agreed to come to Leiden and on August 26 of that year he finally arrived.

There was a lot of speculation about why Scaliger at the end had accepted the nomination. Certainly, financial motives played an important role, but also the presence in Leiden of Janus Dousa was significant. Dousa was one of the Curators and at the same time the librarian of the university. His motto was: 'Ante omnia Musae' ('Literature above all'). He collected for the Leiden library many manuscripts, including a lot of fragments. The unique combination of a famous philologist and a outstanding collection of old manuscripts made Leiden into a centre of classical philology.

Scaliger stayed in Leiden till the end of his life and he gave the university immortal fame. Thanks to him classical philology made an striking progress. Scaliger had an enormous knowledge of languages and manuscripts, and he was an expert in the field of palaeography. This made him one of the greatest philologists of his time. According to Scaliger, the time of the endless series of little essays on philological details should be over. Instead, critical editions of complete texts with explanatory notes were needed. The editions Scaliger made are better than most of the editions made by his predecessors and contemporaries. He was capable of making a very good estimation of the relations between the extant manuscripts. In this he was far ahead of his time. He was the first philologist to consider the possibility of a lost manuscript from which all others derive in a certain relation.

So with Scaliger and Dousa, Leiden university had created a solid basis for a rich and strong tradition of classical philology in the Netherlands. In the first half of the 19<sup>th</sup> century Dutch philologists studied with great interest the publications of Karl Lachmann (1793-1851). This German philologist gave the classical philology its theoretical basis. He considered his critical method suitable for all kinds of texts, classical and modern. He himself gave the example by making editions of medieval German texts like *Nibelungenlied* and an edition the complete works of Lessing (1729-1781), a German author of the 18<sup>th</sup> century. At the beginning the influence of Lachmann in Holland remained confined to the classical philology. It was in the second half of the 19<sup>th</sup> century and under the influence of another German that medieval Dutch texts were published. Starting in this period, Dutch mediaevalists produced an impressive series of scholarly editions. They continued their work in the 20<sup>th</sup> century, and numerous editions for schoolchildren and students were made based on their texts.

After the example of Lachmann the 19<sup>th</sup> century saw the development of modern philology in Germany and France. The methods of classical philology were adapted and totally new methods and techniques were later developed for more modern literature. This trend was not followed in the Netherlands. Having missed this connection, all the later academic discussions were lost to the Netherlands. There was no academic interest in editions of modern literature. They were almost entirely left to publishers or compiled by editors who did not work according to a scholarly method, but who made their own decisions in ways that seemed best to them. Extensive bibliographic and text-critical research was not carried out. This resulted in unreliable editions of modern Dutch literature.

### 3. *New editions*

A change for the better only occurred in 1975, when an editing project was started at Utrecht University, following the German example of what is known as the historical-critical edition. Here begins my personal involvement, since my former professor of Literature, Guus Sötemann, asked me to join him in making the first historical critical edition of a modern Dutch author, the poetry of J.C. Bloem. At that time I knew nothing about scholarly editing of modern texts. My professor recommended me to read the collection *Texte und Varianten* (1972) and to study some German historical critical editions. From the beginning the choice was made to follow the German example. I think a combination of reasons had led to that choice. In general, German literary criticism, especially German structuralism, was very influential in Holland. So there was a strong tendency to look to the east. Moreover, we had planned a scholarly edition of poetry of which many examples were available in Germany. It is not very likely that someone who wants to make an edition of poetry, begins with reading the essays of Fredson Bowers.

My first introduction to German textual scholarship were the essays of Siegfried Scheibe and Hans Zeller which open the collection *Texte und Varianten*. As I remember, they were difficult to read. Both were written in a tradition I did not know then, so many more or less hidden polemics or allusions were not clear to me. On the other hand, the essays were very convincing and very useful by giving rules about what to do and what to refrain from. This kind of clarity was welcome to a young academic who wanted to be an editor. It was clear that these two German editors had strong convictions and strong ideas about all aspects of a scholarly edition. There was no doubt. It seemed that they had lost all doubt, all hesitation and all inclination or willingness to compromise in the years before. Their essays were the result of many years of editing practice and discussions. Scheibe's essay originated from the

rules which were set for the Goethe and Wieland editions at the Academy in Berlin (East Germany). And the conceptions of Zeller were formed on the basis of his experience of many years as editor of the poetry of Conrad Ferdinand Meyer.

As known, these two essays have become well-known classics of the German editing theory. They were written in a time when everything looked possible. There was a lot of money, especially in Germany, to start new projects; there were many young academics who wanted to be editors, working on one of the projects; and scholarly editing was considered as a serious and valuable specialism. This historical situation can explain the optimism, the great expectations, and the high demands which are so characteristic for the two essays. And one should constantly bear in mind that they deeply influenced German scholarly editing for decades.

Scheibe's contribution to the famous collection *Texte und Varianten* is a detailed definition and description of the historical critical edition. His demands for completeness are in themselves as complete as possible. Scheibe describes the elements of the historical critical edition in sixteen little paragraphs. It starts with the rule that the historical critical edition should present all the extant material of the author. Scheibe explains this in five subsequent points of the first paragraph: all the works, the letters, the diaries, the essays, the notes, etc by the author; all the texts which the author has made in cooperation with others; all the texts in which the author was involved by corrections and revisions; all the notes and lines in books which the author has read; and finally all the texts which the author has translated. Obviously, the historical critical edition presents all the drafts and all the variants from all the versions, written and printed, and all the sources which the author has used. Moreover, the edition should also contain annotations to make the text understandable. And then there are some more demands like, a description of the reception of the works, facsimile's of the most important manuscripts, a catalogue of the manuscripts and printed versions of the author; the collection and publication of the interviews with the author and finally, the presentation of the biography of the author and – I quote – 'vieles andere', 'many other things'. Scheibe admits that such a scholarly edition would be a very costly and lengthy project. So he suggests to make limited editions, depending on the literary historical meaning of an author and/or his works. Scheibe's long list of makes it understandable why the DDR, the workers paradise, launched the plan for a historical critical edition of the works of Bertold Brecht in 150 volumes. By a lack of finances the project was never even started.

Reading Scheibe's conception of completeness I praised myself for living in a small country. I knew immediately that a project of this kind and seize would be totally impossible

in the Dutch context. Besides, some of the demands in my opinion did not belong to the task of an editor and would find no place in a scholarly edition. So from the beginning, I had some distance from and reserve toward German editing theory.

The essay by Zeller focuses on the two aspects ‘record and interpretation’. Zeller asks from the editor a clear distinction in his edition between the presentation of factual material (record) and the interpretation of it. In this conception, record is linked with objectivity and interpretation with subjectivity. In a scholarly edition the editor should aim at an objectivity as great as possible. Of course, Zeller admits ‘that the editor inevitably interprets, even during the process of deciphering manuscripts.’ And he adds: ‘The subjectivity of the editor is not undesirable. Recognized or not, it is the prerequisite for understanding and insight. But it should be articulated.’ According to Zeller, especially in the apparatus more objectivity is possible by presenting also detailed information about the graphic aspects of the extant manuscripts. By using different kinds of symbols and signs the editor indicates not only *what* the author has changed in his text, but also *how* he did it: so all the deletions and additions are presented as well as the place of the wording in the manuscripts: under, above or between the lines or in the margins. By providing this kind of information the reader/user of the edition can understand better the interpretation of the editor. In the words of Zeller himself: ‘The representation of the manuscripts [...] by no means aims at “the reproduction of the graphical record” or “the reconstruction of the manuscript” for its own sake, but rather does so first for the sake of interpreting the manuscript, and secondly to create the possibility of control by means of the descriptive statements. Under favorable circumstances, that representation permits editorial decisions to be checked, but above all it allows the user to some extent to think about the constitution of the text independently of the editor, to consider ideas and questions, and to clarify, substantiate, or reject assumptions, at once. Descriptive information shows critical users the way to making their own judgments [...].’

Reading Zeller's essay and studying his edition of the poetry of Conrad Ferdinand Meyer I came to another conclusion. Of course, to observe a complex presentation in a scholarly edition is in itself not to condemn it. But here we have a complexity which is caused by the editor himself because he wants to provide two kinds of information at the same time in one apparatus: the *what* and *how*? However, I have never met anyone who has used the descriptive information to reconstruct the original manuscript of a poem of Conrad Ferdinand Meyer in order to evaluate the genetic reconstruction by Zeller. I have tried it once and it took me hours. I had to write it all down on paper, line by line, and it brought me nothing, that is to say, I found no places to disagree with Zeller's reconstruction. It is my conviction that the

users of a genetic edition are only interested in the wordings of the process, that's to say in the variant readings and their chronological order. And they are not interested in how these variants have been put to paper, even if this information would allow him to check the editor. So, from the beginning, there is a fundamental difference in the apparatus of many German historical critical editions and that of the Dutch.

#### 4. *Prose*

After finishing the edition of the poetry of Bloem and Leopold, I was involved for many years in making a critical edition of the complete works of Louis Couperus. This was a prose edition in 50 volumes. In the discussions about the principles of the edition I felt it necessary to study the essays of Fredson Bowers to learn more about the copy text theory and to decide whether or not this was a scholarly method suitable for the Couperus-edition. At that time, in 1987, the work of Greg, Bowers and Gaskell was known in Holland only by book historians and bibliographers. In my rationale of the Couperus' edition I defended the decision not to follow the copy text theory on four grounds. Now, almost twenty years later, I have to conclude that two are really valid; the other two only repeat the objections of Zeller and others against combining two or more versions in one new text. The two valid arguments have to do with a fundamental difference between the customs in Anglo-American and in Dutch printing houses. Moreover, all the complications of sending proofs and sheets to America and Australia and vice versa with all the textual consequences, are unknown in Holland. In this respect the situation in the Dutch East Indies differs from that in for instance Australia. From Holland finished books were sent to the East Indies or they were made in the colony itself.

Although I did not follow the copy text theory in practice, I gratefully used the principles of bibliographical research as described by Bowers and Gaskell. Driven by curiosity and the wish to learn more about the latest developments in Anglo-American editing I decided to go to the 1997 conference of STS. In the years before I had participated in a lot of German conferences. On one of these I attended a meeting of the committee for the editions of modern texts. The chair, the very nice professor Koopman, suggested that we study more carefully the copy text theory and that we invite some Anglo-American editors for a discussion. For a while there was a complete silence. Then a middle aged German editor stood up and said: I thought we had dealt with this already in the past; it is no use to do it again. He was referring to the article by Hans Zeller in *Studies in bibliography* of 1975, in which Zeller described the theory of Bowers as the most consistent and succesful in the history of modern scholarly editing. But at the same time he gave his fundamental objections, especially against

ecting editing. I was not satisfied with the reaction of that German editor. On the contrary, I agreed with professor Koopman that an international discussion was needed urgently. I had to wait for my chance.

My visit to the States in 1997 had also to do with my experience in that German committee. I wanted to invite some Anglo-American editors to come to Holland, since I had promised to organize the next conference of the German Arbeitsgemeinschaft. It was my intention to bring together editors from the two major traditions. I hoped that such a meeting would lead to interesting and deep discussions. Before I went to New York I already had invited David Greetham to give the openings lecture of the conference in The Hague. Then came the big surprise. We were all sitting in the Pierpont Morgan Library on a Saturday morning. And David Greetham gave his paper, or better he gave a performance with dance and music. I sat there, thinking how this kind of performance would be in a library filled with more than 150 serious German editors who wanted to hear about 'autorisation', genetic editing and rules and standards. Nevertheless, one year later David was in The Hague at the beginning of the conference. I introduced him as the man who had showed me that editing could also be great fun. Unfortunately, David had prepared a paper on the theme: the editor as a tragic hero. So my introduction was totally wrong. Besides that, David's performance with music, singing and morfing caused a lot of amazement. Most of the German editors tried to follow and understand him, but they didn't. It was then that I realized how great the gap was between the two traditions and how difficult it would be to bring the two closer to each other.

At the very end of the conference in The Hague Peter Shillingsburg gave his paper and he politely but mercilessly hit the audience in the heart. The paper of David Greetham they could ignore as something strange, harmless. But here was someone who openly questioned the claims and principles of German scholarly editing and defended an alternative, new and bold. Shillingsburg's challenging paper was not followed by a real discussion. For the most important protagonists the English language was an insurmountable barrier. Nevertheless, after the conference in The Hague the German Arbeitsgemeinschaft has never been the same as before. It seemed that a spell was broken. Especially, the young colleagues had the feeling a new generation could step forward.

Two years later, in December 2000, Peter Shillingsburg stated: 'Still, after two years of regular exchanges in The Hague, in Lingen, Germany, in New York and in the pages of Editio and Text, there remain misunderstandings (which is unfortunate) and disagreements (which may in the end be inevitable) between Anglo-American editors and German (and other European) editors about certain key issues in the production of Historical-Critical Editions, or

Scholarly Editions, as they are known in the United States. In general terms the misunderstandings and disagreements seem to focus on the goals of scholarly editing and the concepts of authorization.’ I think Peter Shillingsburg is right, and for a long time I wondered what was hidden behind it all. In the past, trying to explain the great differences, I have referred to the two major authors with their totally different textual situations: Shakespeare and Goethe. I still believe that these two figures with their specific editorial problems have caused different perspectives and in connection with this a different editorial theory and practice. And, as I have said at the beginning, we have to look at the two traditions and the history of them.

In the history of modern textual scholarship we can see three different types of theory and practice: *author*-oriented editing, *text*-oriented editing and *reader*-oriented editing. In German editing of the 20th century there is a clear movement from *author*- to *text*-oriented. In the beginning, editors defended their editorial decisions by referring to their special knowledge of the intentions or the inner motives of the author. For instance, Carl Helbing, the editor of the Gottfried Keller edition, found ‘the inner legitimation for the textual critical activity’ in ‘empathy,’ in a ‘maximal amount of like knowledge and like feeling with the poet.’ Helbing confessed that he reached textual decisions out of the ‘curious intimacy’ which came out of ‘continued togetherness with the poet,’ so that he, as editor ‘sometimes believed he was hearing his (the poet’s) actual voice’; ‘and when an uncertainty arose and pestered, I yearned for the voice, and it, so clearly not a ghostly voice, often divulged a solution.’ In this way editing practice freed itself from scholarly methods, as Zeller rightly stated. And it was in reaction to this kind unscholarly editing practice, that the orientation shifted from the author to the text. Referring to the author and his intentions to explain and to defend editorial decisions was immediately condemned as a dangerous subjectivism that reminded at the dark days of author-oriented editing. In this climate it was inevitable that Bowers, and in his wake the whole of Anglo-American editing as author-oriented, was rejected. Unfortunately, the two main editorial traditions met again on a point about which they had a different orientation. Perhaps they can meet more fruitfully in the reader-oriented electronic edition of today and the future.

Looking at the two traditions and trying to play the role of a go-between for ten years now, I have learned a lot. Sometimes it is an advantage to come too late and to live in a small country. Since The Netherlands just in 1975 participated in the field of modern editing and since we are accustomed to learn foreign languages and to look outside the borders, we could study all the different options and choose what seems the best for us. Besides this practical

eclecticism, I have always been curious to know the ideas and opinions from others about mutual editorial questions. An editor without this kind of curiosity is like a believer locked up in his cathedral of traditions and dogma's. I prefer the open fields with the dangerous and adventurous pitfalls and the surprising unexpected encounters.

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