Italia, Paola, Giulia Raboni, et al. 2021. *What is authorial philology?* Cambridge, UK: Open Book Publishers. Pp. 214 and 12 illustrations. ISBN 978-1-80064-023-8, Paper £19.95.

This work, whose first Italian edition came out in 2010, provides a synthetic though complete overview of authorial philology, focusing on its history (Chapter 1) and its methods (Chapter 2), in their development in the Italian scholarly tradition, which is a particularly prolific one, stimulated by the very early preservation of autograph materials and encouraged by the attention on the authorial work since the fourteenth century, that is to say, the century of Petrarch. Indeed, Petrarch's *Codice degli abbozzi* is a fundamental witness not only because of the texts it preserves and the key role that his *Canzoniere* plays in Italian literature, but also because the *Codice degli abbozzi* testifies to a fracture between medieval literature and a new, so to say modern, awareness of the authorial work. The attention of the author to his own work, in fact, inspired Bembo's work as his editor, showing once again an early interest in this 'peculiar' approach to the literary text.

An extremely rich theoretical reflection arose around this historical situation of Italian literature, that is, the early preservation of autograph materials, including the revisions made by the authors to their own texts.[1] The effort to clarify the relation between author and text and between material documentation and interpretation of the literary work has been fundamental to scholars like Pasquali, Contini, and, of course, Dante Isella, who first used the expression "authorial philology" to identify the discipline. The book describes in a very clear manner this fruitful history, following the development of authorial philology as an autonomous discipline through different stages of theoretical definition and practical applications.

The completeness of the historical section of the book goes along with the clearness of the truly methodological section and of the examples of critical editions. Both carried out on the basis of strong methodological criteria and didactic approach, the sections *Methods* and *Examples* (this

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1. During the Renaissance, too, there are some famous cases of authorial variants (Ariosto, Machiavelli, Castiglione, Bembo, Tasso) and the eighteenth century presents interesting cases of preserved authorial manuscripts as well (Parini, Alfieri, Monti). However, handwritten witnesses sensibly increase from the nineteenth century onwards, and works by Foscolo, Leopardi, Manzoni, Carducci and others are often testified by authorial documents from the first draft to the printing, giving us the opportunity to follow the entire process of authorial writing and revisioning.

last divided into two chapters centered respectively on Italian examples and European ones) allow us to enter the workshop first of the philologist and then of the author. This gives easy accessibility to philological authorship to non-specialist readers or to philologists from different scholarly approaches. In particular, the sections of examples set out in chronological order (Chapters 3 and 4) provide an overview of some concrete problems related to the treatment of authorial variants in critical editions. The choice of the analyzed editions offers samples of the most common and problematic situations faced by philologists, including the definition of a base-text, the individuation and representation of writing and intermediate versions of a work (an issue typically raised by the *Seconda minuta* of *I promessi sposi*), and so on.[2]

With regard to the Italian version of the book, this chapter is enhanced in the English edition with cases drawn from European literature. Regarding the Italian context, those examples are taken from the already cited Petrarch's *Codice degli abbozzi*, from the *Rime d'amore* by Tasso, from Leopardi's *Canti*, Manzoni's *Fermo e Lucia* and from Gadda's novels and short stories. For the European perspective, instead, Chapter 4 presents cases from Lope de Vega, Shelley, Austen, Proust, and Beckett, provided both by specialists of the authors (Presotto, Boadas, Beloborodova, Van Hulle, and Verhulst) and by Italian scholars (Centenari, Feriozzi, and Marranchino) whose main research interests are Italian literature and philology. This choice promotes a dialogue between Italian philological tradition and experts of foreign literature and gives concrete proof of the applicability of Italian philological methodologies to European literature as well. Moreover, the copresence of authors with different linguistic and cultural backgrounds is a practical application of the spirit which guides the whole book.

In fact, the central aim of this translation is to give a clear overview of authorial philology in other countries. However, I think that it also intends to show a practical possibility of the coexistence of different philological methods and approaches not in the form of conflicting perspectives, but in a dialogical dimension. Indeed, the volume devotes consistent attention to differences and interrelations between specific philological schools,[3] including the digital point of view as well. The natural consequence of this setting is a reflection on how, to cite the book, "thanks to the advan-

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2. Not a secondary aspect considered in the textbook concerns the "untouchability" of the authorial text, a matter which still produces interesting debates.
3. See, above of all, paragraph 1.4, which examines the distinction between *critique génétique* and Italian authorial philology.

tages of the digital medium, the relations between authorial philology and genetic criticism, which in the 1990s had been rather lukewarm, have been strengthened in a common effort to enhance philology in general, by promoting seminars, conferences and specific studies on the genesis of texts" (23).

That was already true in 2010 and it is even more true and relevant today, given the widespread dissemination of scholarly digital editions. In fact, to date, the consistent application of digital tools and methodologies to critical editions makes even more imperative the interchanges among philological paradigms. It is crucial to improve the accuracy of their respective comprehension; it would be crucial as well to concretely support the development of digital editions which actually face and solve issues of representability and interpretations of authorial variants and corrections. In other words: since the digital medium presents itself as the perfect environment to support and show the process of the literary work, a strong and broad philological competence is required to make these opportunities productive. This book helps to counter the still deep miscomprehension about authorial philology[4] and prompts the necessary dialogue between philological schools, to guide the creation of digital editions and tools.

Speaking in a more practical way, this publication could have two desirable consequences, reachable also thanks to the availability of the publication in open access (https://www.openbookpublishers.com/product/1231), a not neutral and particularly fruitful choice. First of all, it could stimulate networking, despite the plurality of methodologies of representing corrections and authorial elaborations, in order to establish a common system of representation for similar textual phenomena: an old problem which has not been solved yet and which significantly affects the usability of editions and apparatuses for critical consideration of the authors. Second, and following these good collaborative practices, this volume could help scholars

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4. It is of some importance to underline that authorial philology itself is not a monolithic discipline and collects different opinions and points of view. This in terms of general theoretical approach (I am thinking, for example, of the proposal of Isabella Becherucci about the possibility of changing the name of the discipline, see Becherucci 2017) and, more practically, on the editorial praxis. *What is authorial philology?* precisely underlines this latter aspect and examines its consequences both in terms of readability of the editions and also regarding the even more crucial issue of the use of critical apparatuses in order to detect the author's *modus operandi* and the creative mechanisms behind the text.

to avoid an overrepresentation on the digital medium of a restricted philo-logical perspective (frequently partial).[5]

As a further point of reflection, it could be useful to note that paragraph 1.7 (*Authorial philology in the latest decade*) specifically takes into account the importance of the digital medium for philology, frequently mentioned in this review section because of the increasing role the digital environ-ment is playing in editorial praxis and textuality in a broader sense. This section, prepared for the new edition, provides an updated bibliography regarding critical editions and theoretical studies on the topic, for example the series of books *Filologia d'autore*, launched in 2017 and dedicated to the working methods of ancient and modern authors.[6] More than this, these pages cite significant digital tools like the website www.filologiadautore.it and the Grata Franzini's Catalogue of Digital Edition (https://dig-ed-cat.acdh.oeaw.ac.at/) together with samples of international collaborations and innovative projects[7] which testify to the network among scholars, methods and digital technologies mentioned above.

All these examples of integration of different media and perspectives are also presented as a necessary condition to reflect on aspects of authorial work not yet investigated — aspects that encourage ambitious challenges for authorial philology like the possibility of identifying writing com-mon to different authors or the chance of investigating creative thinking through the study of variants. Furthermore, the application of the methods of authorial philology to works of foreign literatures is seen as a new basis to understand whether the methodology of correction depends on the lan-guage used or on the genre chosen by the authors.

To conclude, this book will play a key role in the next years for two primary reasons. At a "basic level", as I have already pointed out, it will

5. Even if Mancinelli and Pierazzo (2020) partially disagree, it is difficult to ignore the sensitive preponderance of documentary editions, which *What is authorial philology?* rightly described as "hyper-diplomatic transcriptions, despite being often presented as critical editions" (25).

6. See Raboni 2017, Italia 2017, Montagnani and De Lorenzo 2018, Moreno 2019, Caruso and Casari 2020, and also forthcoming works on Boccaccio (Fiorilla) and Machiavelli (Stoppelli).

7. See, for instance, the mention of *Philoeditor* (http://projects.dharc.unibo.it/philoeditor/), the publication of the monographic issue of *Genesis* focused on Italian manuscripts (Del Vento and Musitelli 2019) and the THESMA PROJECT, an example of the new application of technologies to analyze manu-scripts, specifically using imaging techniques like spectrometric analysis and terahertz waves (23–6).

improve the dissemination and comprehension of authorial philology abroad, on a theoretical and practical plane. That will give the necessary basis to an actual collaboration between different philological schools. Linked to that, the book offers the basic skills to investigate non-Italian literary works with Italian authorial philology methods, which I think still may be the best option for representing the revision process in a diachronic form, providing the necessary knowledge to stimulate the interaction between philology and criticism. It is a crucial point, since this interaction is actually the base and the final objective of philological work, regardless of the language or the material situation of the texts. But also, in a more general dimension, the book (and I am now specifically referring to the English edition) is guided by a truly open methodological approach which highlights the importance of a new dialogical perspective among philologists and the value of spreading concrete applications of authorial philology and textual criticism.

Seen through this double lens, the volume offers itself as a useful and stimulating instrument for non-specialistic readers and for expert scholars too, who could benefit from the general setting of the manual and especially from discussions regarding the application of authorial philology to English, French and Spanish authors.

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