

## Editing the *Wake*

Review of *Finnegans Wake*. Ed. by Danis Rose and John O’Hanlon. London: The Houyhnhnm Press, 2010.

The Houyhnhnm Press edition of *Finnegans Wake*, edited by Danis Rose and John O’Hanlon, was published with some — but not very much — fanfare in March 2010.<sup>1</sup> A couple of notices appeared in the national press. Dublin and London celebrated with small, private book launches. And the XXII International James Joyce Symposium in Prague put on a panel discussion. Given the nature of the work, the price of this limited edition (£250/€300 for the standard edition of 800 copies, €900 for the special, leather-bound edition of 176 copies), and the lingering memory of controversy over other editions, it is no surprise that the publication of this critical edition of the *Wake* passed by almost unnoticed. A trade edition has been announced by Penguin Books for April 2012.

It’s a shame, I think, for the edition certainly deserves attention. With a design commissioned and printed by the Stamperia Valdonega in Verona, one of the foremost publishing houses of *de luxe* editions in Europe, the Houyhnhnm Press has produced a book that is absolutely beautiful in its own right. Its look alone gives *Finnegans Wake* a new lease on life. The *mise-en-page* is quite luxurious, printed in “Monotype Dante”, a typeface specially designed for the press in 1953/54 by Giovanni Mardersteig which is extremely pleasing on the eye. It is easier to read, though no less beautiful than the Fournier typeface of the first edition from 1939. The way the pages are laid out also gives the work a new feel: more classic in outlook even than the first edition, whose text block is a little unforgiving (and which became down-right ugly when its size was photographically reduced to fit the smaller format of all later editions), yet exceptionally light. The text is also typographically more varied, with certain sections such as the fables appearing in a smaller font, or otherwise made distinct from the main text. Also the standard 36 lines per page has been abandoned for a more impressive 40 lines. Many readers will no

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<sup>1</sup> An expanded version of this review will appear in *Genetic Joyce Studies*, <<http://www.antwerpjamesjoycecenter.com/>>.

doubt regret this change. But it is worth remembering that the substantial changes introduced in the text made retaining the old settings impossible. The “critically emended” text, the labor of love on which Danis Rose, with the help of his brother John O’Hanlon, spent close to three decades, is however without doubt the most important feature of this new edition. While not uniformly faultless, the overall outcome of the textual work needs to be reckoned with. Rose and O’Hanlon must be praised for their work — for their gumption and (in the most positive sense of the word) their hubris — that has resulted in a text of *Finnegans Wake* that incorporates some 9,000 changes.<sup>2</sup>

Editing *Finnegans Wake* is certainly no sinecure. The richness of the work, the longevity of its composition, as well as the relative complexity and the size of its surviving archival record make the task something of a challenge. But that does not make the task impossible. For one, editing Shakespeare—for whom no authorial witnesses have come down to us—or the New Testament—whose textual record consists of about 4,000 manuscripts, not all complete, which has resulted in a colossal number of variants that have not all been collated yet by scholars— is just as difficult, if not more so.

The specific difficulty with the *Wake* of course is that it seems impossible to know where error occurs. In plain, “wideawake” English, no one has difficulty seeing that in the sentence “Father Conmee stropped three little schoolboys” (1922, p. 211) “stropped” is an obvious error for “stopped”. But who is to say that “everglaning” (*FW* 221.19-20) is wrong and “everglading” (*FW* 2010 174.40) is not? Not even the full phrase “everglaning mangrovemazes” would settle the matter, for undoubtedly with some ingenuity one can construct a plausible interpretation. (A possible association might include the verb *to glean*, as in mangroves/mazes that gather up and scrape together whatever is left behind, a form of ingestion which history performs that suggest an action reverse to Kate the Slop’s scavenging.) Plausibility, however, is not a criterion in textual scholarship. Often, and with some ingenuity, critics are able to make sense of

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<sup>2</sup> To put this figure in perspective, Jack Dalton 45 years ago announced up to 7,000 corrections, J. P. Dalton, “Advertisement for the Restoration,” *Twelve and a Tilly*, eds. Jack Dalton and Clive Hart (London: Faber and Faber, 1966), 129. Robert-Jan Henkes and Erik Bindervoet identified 2,228 mistakes, Robert-Jan Henkes and Erik Bindervoet, “*Finnegans Wake*, the Corrected Text”, *Genetic Joyce Studies* 4 (2004): <http://www.geneticjoycestudies.org/GJS4/GJS4%20RJE%20Corrected%20Text.htm> [accessed 10 May 2011].

something that actually is nonsensical. Therefore, meaning in and of itself cannot be a determining factor in scholarly editing. The specific difficulty with *Wake* is only an apparent difficulty. Even in the realistic novel, not all errors are obvious errors.

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The real difficulty with editing *Finnegans Wake* is that the most widely-accepted method of scholarly-critical editing—so-called copy-text editing—cannot be applied. The principle that W.W. Greg recommended in “The Rationale of Copy-Text” (1950/51), and that was later augmented by Fredson Bowers and G. Thomas Tanselle, is on selecting what is on bibliographical grounds the most reliable text. Depending on the circumstances, this text can be the first edition, if it was seen through the press under the author’s close supervision; the final manuscript as it was submitted to the printer, or any other text or edition that best represents the author’s final intention. This copy-text, then, guides the editor in his editorial choices wherever needed. In the case of “substantives”, the editor will use his knowledge and critical analysis of the textual evidence to select the correct readings from the variants. Where the evidence is indeterminate, which is most often case with “accidentals” such as punctuation, capitalization and so on, he will follow the copy-text, on the grounds that it has already been established that this text is generally more consistent with the author’s wishes.

For *Finnegans Wake*, no complete final authorial manuscript or typescript exist, and so the choice would normally fall on the first edition as the copy-text. The 1939 text, however, as published by Faber and Faber in London and Random House in New York is not suitable for this. We know it too be full of errors to be reliable. None of the later “editions” were seen through the press by Joyce himself, and so cannot be relied on either. Joyce’s feeble attempt to correct the first edition, which resulted in “Corrections of Misprints in *Finnegans Wake*”, provides some textual basis, but the small number of corrections is disproportionate to the number of errors that remain. Moreover, the “Corrections” as printed by Faber in 1945 itself contained errors; they were not incorporated in all subsequent editions; and those editions that did reset the text

managed to include additional errors.<sup>3</sup> The bibliographical situation of *Finnegans Wake*, then, is quite similar to the one for *Ulysses*, which had prompted Hans Walter Gabler to adopt an editorial method based on a genetic approach.

How then did Rose and O’Hanlon edit *Finnegans Wake*? They regrettably do not set out their editorial rationale in the edition. However, we do get some sense of the principles they applied in the booklet that accompanies the edition—which contains a “Note on the New Edition” by Seamus Deane, a Foreword by Hans Walter Gabler, an Introduction by David Greetham and a Preface and Afterword by the editors—and also from the publisher’s website, <http://www.houyhnhnm.com/>, which has a section called “The Editorial Methodology: A Very Brief Overview”. Essentially, the editorial process that Rose and O’Hanlon developed is quite similar to the one used by Gabler for his 1984 *Ulysses: A Critical and Synoptic Edition*. This is one by which the text is rebuilt from the bottom up, as it were, following each paragraph, sentence, word in Work in Progress from its earliest draft through fair copies, typescripts, galley proofs, serialization and pamphlet publication to the galley and proofs for the Faber edition. Wherever “ascertainable textual corruptions” occur that are attributed to agencies other than Joyce, the errors are removed and the last authorial reading reinstated.<sup>4</sup>

The editorial process is remarkably simple and elegant, mainly owing to three factors. First, Joyce was a very methodical writer whose method of composition (which was dubbed the revise-and-expand technique by David Hayman) is quite linear. Second, the archive for *Finnegans Wake* is unusually complete; where there are several, obvious gaps in the draft levels, these are in most cases relatively minor. Third, while errors are introduced at each stage in the writing, the level of error only increases during the later stages of the book’s genesis, as a result of the increased bulk of the writing and the growing gnarliness of the language. (If I am allowed an impressionistic judgment, I would say that the main culprits who introduced the most errors are the printers of *transition* and, even more considerably, R. MacLehose, the

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<sup>3</sup> Clive Hart, *A Concordance to Finnegans Wake* (Minneapolis: University of Minneapolis Press, 1963), iv. See also Finn Fordham, “The Corrections to *Finnegans Wake*: For ‘reading’ Read ‘readings’ (VI.H.4.b-2; JJA 63:352),” *James Joyce: The Study of Languages*, ed. Dirk Van Hulle (Brussels: Peter Lang, 2002), 37-39.

<sup>4</sup> Danis Rose and John O’Hanlon, Afterword, [*Companion Booklet to*] *Finnegans Wake*, by James Joyce, ed. Danis Rose and John O’Hanlon (London: Houyhnhnm, 2010), 35.

printers for Faber. MacLehose not only introduced a lot of printing errors, they were in particular responsible for a lot of normalization, possibly owing to an entrenched house style. For example, they standardized many specific features of the intended *mise-en-page*, such as the extra spacing before “riverrun” to half-way down the line, which they printed with a normal indent.) Furthermore, errors tend to come only once—which may strike one as a peculiar contravention of the old printer’s devil. A word that is mistyped, or a passage that becomes garbled, does not tend to be garbled further. The ones that do (I have not found any, but I am sure there are some) are the exception.

To illustrate the process, let me take again the example of *everglaning vs. everglading*. The phrase “everglading mangrovemazes” (BL Add. 47477-273; *JJA* 51:397) first appeared as part of a longer insertion in the left-hand margin of the first set of galley proofs for *Finnegans Wake*, pulled by the printers on 19 and 29 January 1938. As Joyce was wont to do, he had all his autograph additions retyped and keyed to the galleys by a typist, presumably to avoid the chances that the printers would overlook one of them. In this case, however, the typist typed “everglaning mangrovemazes” (BL Add. 47477-272v; *JJA* 51: 396) and that is how the phrase appears in the published text. Rose and O’Hanlon restore “everglading”.

This error, as it happened, was not the only one the typist committed. On the same page, she (or he, for we haven’t yet got a detailed record of Joyce’s typists) in fact conflated and muddled two separate insertions. It was an easy mistake to make, however. One insertion is tightly crammed into a corner and woven around the other, practically without leaving a gap, so that the flow of the new text from left to right was quite confusing. What Joyce had added was “but throughandthoroughly proconverted,” and “with animal variations amid everglading mangrovemazes and propounded for cyclological beorbtracktors”. What the typist read was “but throughandthoroughly proconverted, and propounded for cyclological beorbtracktors”. Coming to “with animal variations amid everglading mangrovemazes”, she (or he) realized she (or he) had made a mistake. The word “beorbtracktors” appears just a fraction below the words next to it, pushed down ever so slightly by the writing above it. The typist then cancelled “beorbtracktors” in the typed overlay and added the word to “with animal variations amid

everglaning [*sic*] mangrovemazes and beorbtracktors”, thereby creating not one but two errors, which resulted in at least one elliptical clause (*FW* 220.30 and 221.19-20). It takes a keen eye to spot this mistake in the manuscript. Rose and O’Hanlon justifiably reconstruct what Joyce had originally written.

But what if Joyce changed his mind and considered the error to be preferable?

Passive authorization, it needs pointing out, is a notion that crops up only in debates on the editing of Joyce’s texts. I have rarely encountered it anywhere else in editorial theory. The reason for this should be apparent: it can have no place in textual scholarship, for it is not vested in archival evidence. Authorization is either active and present or it is absent. If it is absent, it leaves no trace. That which has left no trace cannot be taken as evidence of anything: “passive authorization is a contradiction”, as Peter Shillingsburg states.<sup>5</sup> Admittedly, one can imagine that an author *silently* accepts alterations in his text. But how do we know? If we *do* know, authorization is not passive but active. If we do not, we have not even got a way of ascertaining where it might occur and where not.

Take for example the lamentation “Úalu Úalu Úalu! Quáouáuh!” (*FW* 2010 003.24-25), which was printed in 1939 without the accents (*FW* 004.02-03). The phrase first entered the text thus on the first complete fair copy (level I§1.\* 2/2.\* 2), dated 29 November 1926 (BL Add. 47472-5; *JJA* 44:106), with the accents; they were left out on the typescript and its carbon copy (prepared by Miss Weaver, who presumably could not do them on her English machine) (I§1.3/2.3 and 1 I§1.3+/2.3+), but were inserted again by hand on “Úalu”, though not on “Quaonauh”, which, incidentally had an additional error, when Joyce’s “u” was mistaken for “n” (Private Collection; *JJA* 44:146). In *transition* 1 (I§1.4/2.4) “Úalu” still appears correct, and one accent has been restored in “Quáonauh” (BL Add. 47472-75; *JJA* 44:205), which suggests an intervention by the author in between the typescript and *transition* page proofs. On the missing second or duplicate proofs also the “u” was corrected, for “Quáouauh” appears correctly in the published issue. In the Galleys (first set, I§1.6/2.6) for *Finnegans Wake*

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<sup>5</sup> Peter Shillingsburg, “A Resistance to Contemporary German Editorial Theory and Practice” in *editio: Internationales Jahrbuch für Editions-wissenschaft* 12 (1998), 144.

“Quáouauh” appears unaltered, but now the three accents on “Úalu” have gone missing again; BL Add. 47476a-1; *JJA* 49:005). The text was published in 1939, with finally only the accent on “Quáouauh”. Now from this one can assume that between 1926 and 1939 Joyce had changed his mind about the accents and that he now intended the phrase to read “Ualu Ualu Ualu! Quaouauh!” Having intervened in “Quáouauh” at least four times, he had had sufficient opportunity to restore all other accents as well. But to deduce Joyce’s intention from possibility does not constitute good editorial practice, particularly when Joyce’s failure to correct can more easily be ascribed to human oversight. Authors (and we ought to know this from our own practice) rarely read proof *against* the earlier copy from which the text was set. Even the most meticulous proofreaders overlook errors.

That said, instances occur in Joyce’s archive that show him deliberately adopting error. When Joyce hired Madame France Raphael in 1933 to transcribe all unused items from his notebooks, she made, not surprisingly given Joyce’s sloppy handwriting and the fact that she had little or no English, a considerable mess of it. Joyce was well aware of this when he began using the new notebooks, and in most instances corrected her mistranscriptions, sometimes remembering what he had originally written, sometimes changing his note into something different. In some cases—though only in very few—did he accept his secretary’s version, realizing the comic possibilities of her fabrications. So, for example, “/\c on vibrating bed” (VI.B.22.160) was transcribed by Raphael as “/\ convibrating bed” (VI.C.13.239), and which was retained thus in *Finnegans Wake*: “convibrational bed” (*FW2010* 305.31). This is an example from the notebooks, however. I have not yet found a similar instance where Joyce unequivocally accepts a transmissional departure caused by a typist or printer.

This is not to say that such example might not exist. But surmising (or even knowing) there *are* errors Joyce accepted should not lead to the assumption that *all* errors must be left standing. On the whole, for an editor to err on the side of error is better than to slide into unwarranted speculation.

Related to passive authorization is another argument that is sometimes made against editing *Finnegans Wake*, and that is that Joyce constantly revised his text. What happens if Joyce

changed a word or phrase that actually contained an error? Or what if an editor restores an earlier reading for a corrupted passage? Doesn't this preclude the possibility that Joyce might have revised that part of the text? These are reasonable questions. But neither argument fully holds. In the first scenario, whether a revision is based on an error or on an authorial reading is not relevant: Joyce's intervention, as with any revision, supplants what was there in the first place and thus represents a final intention. The second scenario is again purely hypothetical, and thus it cannot sensibly inform editorial decisions. What has no evidential base cannot be used to arbitrate the validity of the text. Even so, the possibility is real, but if the logic of the argument in effect says that a passage that is corrupted by textual error but not revised by Joyce might have been revised if the error had not occurred, the probability of this happening seems on the whole rather small. Given that omissions, though substantial in number, are only one type of error, and given that only a fraction of these omissions consists of passages of any significant length (most are individual words and phrases), the impact on the text remains limited.

Interestingly, the problem of revision poses itself in reverse. One important difference that distinguishes the *Ulysses* archive from that of *Wake*—and thus also what distinguishes Gabler's editorial practice from that of Rose and O'Hanlon—is that for *Ulysses* we have the Rosenbach manuscript, which, though a composite document, comes as close as anything to an act of contingent completion.<sup>6</sup> The existence of this manuscript prompted Gabler to differentiate between documents of creation—all drafts prior to Rosenbach—and documents of transmission—all documents after Rosenbach. The distinction is a theoretical as well as a pragmatic one, for it provided a fixed point before which variant readings ought not to be considered final. For *Finnegans Wake*, no such document or point exists, which raises the question: how far back can or should one go to retrieve authorial readings?

For their edition, Rose and O'Hanlon appear to go back as far as is necessary to retrieve authorial readings—to the earliest extant draft, even to the notebooks where these appear to corroborate doubtful readings. Their reasoning may well have been motivated by the desire to

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<sup>6</sup> I borrow this term from Sally Bushell, *Text as Process: Creative Composition in Wordsworth, Tennyson, and Dickinson* (Charlottesville and London: University of Virginia Press, 2009), 73.

find an “original” text. Yet the nature of the composition history is such that choosing any other point in the timeline of Work in Progress one cannot go beyond is tantamount to arbitrariness.

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It goes without saying that the surviving evidence does not always offer straightforward solutions for straightforward problems. Apart from the big methodological questions, specific problems of emendation will occur where the archival record is incomplete or convoluted. One instance where there is a substantial lacunae is in chapter II.1. Between an incomplete typescript (probably dating 1932) and revised pages from *The Mime of Mick, Nick and the Maggie* (the revisions dating from late 1937) no draft materials exist, with the exception of a relatively small set of autograph sheets with extradraft materials, which Joyce first collected from his notebooks and then distributed over—presumably—*transition* pages and the proofs of *The Mime*. With such a large gap, the earliest extant witnesses for large parts of that chapter are already likely to contain a substantial number of errors introduced by the typesetters. However, elsewhere in the book I have found only relatively few instances where there are truly problematic cruxes. My sampling has been necessarily incomplete, but given the nature of the work I had expected more problems. For each instance that I discuss, I will give my sense of whether Rose and O’Hanlon’s emendations are justified or not.

My first example continues from my earlier discussion of accents in “Ualu Ualu Ualu! Quáouauh!” (FW 004.02-03). Rose and O’Hanlon are confident in their restitution of the accents, since their editorial principle points them back to the earliest, uncorrupted reading. There is a further piece of evidence, however, which complicates the matter. Joyce in the “Corrections of Misprints in *Finnegans Wake*”, which he prepared with the help of Paul Léon in the summer of 1940, made a further alteration and removed also the accent in “Quaouauh!” (VI.H.4.b-1; JJA 63:352). On the face of it, the accent-less reading represents Joyce’s final intention. Yet one needs to ask what motivated Joyce to make this correction. Was it really a new intention? In that case one must take Joyce’s correction as another intervention that actually undoes an error, as I have argued above. Or was it simply the most economical

manner of restoring balance? In which case one may be inclined to see Joyce's correction not as a new intention but as quick way to patch up a fault. Joyce's correction in other words would be rejected and the text reverted to its original authorial reading. As a document produced after publication, the "Corrections of Misprints" may warrant different treatment and the evidence provided in it given different weight.<sup>7</sup> As an editor, one is forced to choose in such matters between alternatives that each may be perfectly viable. Either way, all words in the phrase must have accents or none at all; not just the one as in the 1939 text. Rose and O'Hanlon, as I indicated above, opt to restore all accents.

My second, more complex example is taken from chapter III.3 and pertains to a duplicate set of marked pages from *transition* 15, revised by Joyce some time in the summer of 1929 (III§3B.10 and III§3B.10') in preparation for the Babou and Kahane edition of *Haveth Childers Everywhere* (1930). On one set Joyce noted the following two additions in the left margin, one slightly below the other: "blueeyed man in the lowbelt suit" and ", my nomesuch," (BL Add. 47484b-347v; *JJA* 59:056). Some confusion arises from the fact that the central text has a few insertion marks which do not have any overlay associated with them. The first insertion, moreover, appears to read "A blueeyed man" etc., but the capital "A" is not a indefinite article, but a siglum which connects ", my nomesuch," to "blueeyed man". The likely intended reading, therefore, is this: "The caca cad ^, my nomesuch, ^blueeyed man in the lowbelt suit^^! I protest it that he is by my wipehalf!"<sup>8</sup> On the second set, however, in a hand other than Joyce's different insertions are added to the same location that are incompatible with the instructions on the first set: "The caca cad! ^The snakeeye! ^Strangler of green parrots!^^ (BL Add. 47484b-351v; *JJA* 59:064). Although these duplicates are consecutively ordered in the *James Joyce Archive*, the actual sequence of revision is now impossible to determine. The typist instructed to make a new copy apparently faced the same problem. She resolved the issue creatively, it

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<sup>7</sup> Finn Fordham in his conscientious deliberation of this question comes down in favor of invention ("Corrections to *Finnegans Wake*," 48-50). Rose and O'Hanlon appear consistently to have opted to overrule Joyce's late corrections. See, for example, "Irenews" (*FW* 254.10) versus "Ireneus" (*FW*2010 200.30), which Fordham discusses in his essay.

<sup>8</sup> To represent Joyce's revisions linearly, I use a simplified system of diacritics adopted from the Critical and Synoptic Edition of *Ulysses*. Insertions appear between carets (text ^inserted text^ text); cancelations appear between pointed brackets (text <cancelled text>); substitutions appear as a combination of both "(text ^<cancelled text> revised text^ text).

seems, and seeking to make sense of the confused overlay, placed the apposition “a blueeyed man” next to the nearest possible subject. The resulting passage runs thus: “the pupup publication of libel by any Ticks Typsyloon a blueeyed man in the lowbelt suit to my nomesuch that highest personage at moments holding down the throne. So to speak of beauty scouts, and the celluloid art! The caca cad! Snakeeye! Strangler of green parrots. I protest it that he is by my wipehalf!” (VI.E.13; *JJA* 59:073). This is clearly a non-authorial intervention which Rose and O’Hanlon’s editorial principles will want to undo. However, the difficulty is that both revisions on the marked pages from *transition* are authorial and carry in fact equal weight. There could be a clue in the various stray insertion marks which might indicate that Joyce was not entirely certain where to place his additions, and which therefore might be argument for following the second reading. Even so, this does not bypass the amalgamation created by the typist. There appears little alternative for the editor but to accept the variant reading introduced by the typist, for in any case Joyce subsequently made several alterations to the passage, which have enshrined it in its current location.

In their edition, Rose and O’Hanlon on the evidence that was available to them follow a different course. In a way their decision to emend the passage follows both the principle of returning to the earliest, non-corrupted version while taking into account that both Joyce’s authorial revisions were retained in the text, albeit in that they introduce some transpositions of their own. In the quotation (as emended by Rose and O’Hanlon), I have tried to separate the relevant layers of the text typographically; bold type represents those parts of the text as it appeared in *transition* 15 and which Joyce subsequently marked up; italic type represents the two contradictory revisions which Joyce added on the duplicate set; roman type represents all subsequent additions to the text until publication:

**into my preprotestant *Caveat* against the pupup publication of libel by any tixtim tipsyloom** or tobtom towley of Keisserse Lean **to that highest personage at moments holding down the throne. So to speak of beauty scouts** in elegant pursuits of flowers, searchers for tabernacles **and the celluloid art!** Happen seen sore eynes belived? **The caca cad!** *A bloweyed lanejoynt, waring lowbelt suit,* with knockbrecky kenees and

bullfist rings round him and a false roude axehand (he is cunvesser to Saunter's Nocelettres and the Poe's Toffee's Directory in his pisness), the best begrudged man in Belgradia, who doth not belease to our paviour, he walked by North Strand with his Thom's towel in hand. *Snakeeye! Strangler of soffiacated green parrots! I protest it that he is, by my wipehalf, my nomesuch!* He was leaving out of my double inns while he was all teppling over my single ixits. So was keshaned on for his recent behaviour. Sherlock is lorking for him. Allare beltspanners! Hourspringlike his joussture, immitiate my chry! As urs now, so yous then! Get your air curt! **Shame upon pipip Private M—! Shames on his fouslomeness!** (FW2010 415-26-416.02)

On the one hand, their intervention is a near-successful attempt to mitigate the textual difficulties. The whole section from “into my preprotestant” to “The caca cad!” removes the typist's chance placement of “a blueeyed man in the lowbelt suit to my nomesuch”. The correction is in part predicated on their interpretation of the location of “, to my nomesuch,”, which the typist also adapted to fit her interpretation of the context, and which Rose and O'Hanlon place at the unallocated caret after “wipehalf”. On the other hand, they choose the “first” insertion, now altered to “A bloweyed lanejoynt, waring lowbelt suit, with knockbrecky” etc., as the appropriate description for the Cad, and simply leave the “second” insertion, which now reads “Snakeeye! Strangler of soffiacated green parrots!”, in the same position as it appears in the 1939 text after “Thom's towel in hand” (see FW 534.27). (Strangely, they do not restore the article from what Joyce had originally written in the margin: “The snakeeye”.) The solution is ingenious, but I am not sure if it completely follows the edition's implied principles. Access to a full collation or the isotext would no doubt have clarified their reasoning, although I cannot see how the surmised linearity of the process, which as they strongly imply in their “Editorial Methodology” is what drives the conversion from isotext to edited text, actually works in this instance. Moreover, the whole emendation rests on the apparent primacy of “blueeyed man” over “snakeeye”, of level III§3B.10 over III§3B.10'. The arrangement in the *James Joyce Archive* was, of course, done by Rose and O'Hanlon; I do not, however, see what evidence they used as a basis in determining their preferred order.

Unknown to them, the reality behind the revision of this passage was different. A new document which forms part of the Jahnke bequest at the Zurich James Joyce Foundation, now classified as MS *Finnegans Wake* 12, vindicates the typist.<sup>9</sup> A third set of marked *transition* 15 pages, keyed to notes on extradraft sheets (some of which are in Lucia's hand), provides a missing link between the duplicate set and the typescript. On this third set, Joyce clearly and carefully marked the position of the overlay, which were (barring a few typos) faithfully followed by the typist. This goes to show how possible new discoveries in future will also make new emendations, and new editions, necessary. It seems unlikely that Rose and O'Hanlon saw this document. The larger point remains, however: the evidence that was available to them should have warranted a more conservative approach.

The third example, too, is a case that requires in my view an error to be left standing, but Rose and O'Hanlon again opted to amalgamate readings from different levels. On the first typescript for Chapter II.1, the Costumers are described like this: "a bundle of representatives who are sloppily served by" etc. To this simple phrase Joyce makes these additions and alterations: he turns "a bundle" into "a draughthorse bundle"; he revises "representatives" to "representative civics, each of whom is a jactitator" (BL Add. 47477-25; *JJA* 51:009). But another typescript that follows it soon after omits some of the changes: "a bundle of representative civics who are sloppily [*sic*] served by" (BL Add. 47477-48; *JJA* 51:011). The typist committed many other similar omissions so that one cannot infer Joyce's presence in these changes. When Joyce returned to the passage after publication of *The Mime*, he evidently was trying to fix the phrase that was wrongly typed up five years prior. Now the phrase, with Joyce's insertions, reads: "a bundle of a dozen of representative locomotive civics ^, each^ inn quest of outings, who are ^still more^ sloppily served by" (BL Add. 47477-150v; *JJA* 51:204). It survives as such in the published text of *Finnegans Wake* (*FW* 221.04). Too much of the record is missing (as I explained earlier) to know exactly what happened with "jactitator"—i.e., whether it ever returned; whether "outings" was a creative intervention on Joyce's part to get closer to the original; whether " , each" was being reinserted because it had dropped out once

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<sup>9</sup> I am enormously grateful to Nicholas Morris who provided me with a detailed commentary on this intervening stage in the revision of the *transition* 15 page.

again before “inn quest of outings” or simply used with this phrase for the first time. In their edition, Rose and O’Hanlon amalgamate this reading with the lost reading from the earliest typescript, which results in: “representative civics inn quest of outings, each of whom is a jactitator, who are still more sloppily served by” (*FW2010* 174.26-27). But for this to work they actually *undo* what is undeniably an authorial revision that superseded what was there at the earlier stage.

The fourth and last example is not so much a crux, rather than an instance where Rose and O’Hanlon introduce a correction which simply seems wrong-headed. On one of the sets of marked-up pages from *transition* 15, Joyce adds the following: “under the advicies from Messires Norris, Sotheby[, ] Yates and Weston, inc.” (BL Add. 47484b-347v; *JJA* 59:056, slightly simplified). In the typescript that follows this level, the typist appears to corrupt the name of the famous London auction house to “Softheby” (VI.E.1-3; *JJA* 59:073). Joyce does not pick up on the error, although (presumably) he restores the period after “inc”, which had gone missing. On the following typescript, “Softheby” is revised to “Southby” (BL Add. 47484b-387; *JJA* 59:089); the typescript contains several holograph revision in different hands, but the present change is almost certainly in Joyce’s hand. On the same folio, but in a different hand, “Messires” is also changed to “Misrs”. Curiously, Rose and O’Hanlon accept this reading in their edition, but they reinstate the original reading of “Sotheby”, for reasons that – as far as I can see – do not appear consistent with the editorial rationale as I understand it.

The words “as far as I can see” and “as I understand it” are important. Since Rose and O’Hanlon have only provided the broadest descriptions of their editorial principles, I cannot even be sure that the examples I have been giving and the objections I have been raising are at all valid. Not having the rationale set out in detail, and complemented by collations in a full *apparatus criticus*, is obviously a flaw. But there is a more serious problem too.

Despite Rose and O’Hanlon’s claim that the emendations they admitted to the text follow the logic of the work’s composition, they have introduced changes which vitiate that logic. They feel justified to do this in order to clarify the sense rather than following textual evidence. But this is where they stray outside of the domain of textual scholarship and into the domain of

editing to taste. In their Afterword they make the following questionable claim. “Correcting the many manifest errors” which occurred in the text’s transmission was, they write, only “*the less important* of the editorial tasks”.

The greater task lay in the restoration through emendation of the *syntactical coherence* of individual sentences as they underwent periodic amplification under the writer’s revising hand. What is important is that the root sentence, considered as a logical linguistic structure expressed through syntax, retains its essential structure irrespective of its often complex expansion. In practice, yet not invariably, damage to this coherence was corrected by Joyce or one of his helpers. Otherwise it is visible in collation as a simple error. In other instances the loss or part-absence of the syntactical structure was not noticed and, as the sentence was further amplified, the damage intensified, often to the extent that its original and essential coherence is irrecoverable short of a full genetic analysis. (p. 36)

In more than one respect this is rather an unfortunate statement. Rose and O’Hanlon’s direct admission that they are willing to go beyond tangible evidence to correct the text of *Finnegans Wake* is simply indefensible in scholarly terms. What is also unfortunate, therefore, is that it will remind readers of similar statements that Rose made about his “Reader’s Edition” of *Ulysses*. The decision to correct what is “not noticed” is essentially a decision to assume an authorial, rather than an editorial, role. It sounds similar to the distinction Rose makes in the Reader’s Edition between “error” and “fault”; the semantics are very clumsy, yet at its root lies an actual difference: errors are caused by typists and typesetters; faults are caused by Joyce himself in the process of composition or during self-copying. (I am very much in favor of the German position on this—which is also the position adopted by Gabler—that editors do correct texts; they do not correct authors, even when the author makes a blatant mistake.) As a result, many will now feel even more reluctant to engage with the edition. Nonetheless, I believe Rose and O’Hanlon to be over-stating their case, caused no doubt by their own prose which suffers a little too from damage to its coherence. Two points are important to note. The first is that syntactical consistency is a feature of *Finnegans Wake*, but it is one that is hampered by

persistent revision and corruption.<sup>10</sup> The second point is that damage to the coherence will show up in the collations of variant readings. So only “in other instances” and what follows in the editor’s statement is suspect from a bibliographical point of view. As I have shown, instances of Rose and O’Hanlon’s creative interventions in the text can easily be found, but the majority of their emendations can be defended on purely textual grounds.

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Do I believe that Danis Rose and John O’Hanlon have created a good edition? Despite the problems and issues I have noted, I think the answer is still yes.

Despite Joyce’s obduracy that every word in his texts should be printed as he wrote it, he was unable to control his handiwork. His temperament, on the one hand, prompted him to devise an elaborate system whereby the successive cycle of notetaking, drafting, revising, and expanding was intended to manage the rich materials of the work. That same temperament, however, also worked against him. His mind focused on creation, he easily overlooked the increasing number of errors that came with repeated copying necessary to satisfy his constant need for clean fair copies, typescripts and galleys. While Joyce does habitually catch and correct errors, their number is disproportionate to the ones he misses. With a work like *Finnegans Wake*, whose chapters were often revised only at long intervals, it is not so outlandish to think that at times Joyce himself was tripped up by what he had written. This makes editing *Finnegans Wake* no easy undertaking. It also makes it necessary.

The ethos of modern scholarly editing is to mediate between the work and its various textual emanations. This is no easy a task which carries great responsibility. What lies at the basis of it is an understanding and appreciation for the history of the text. This understanding goes hand in hand with an acknowledgment that textual pluralism is part of the textual condition. Particularly with a work like *Finnegans Wake* whose text is composed over such a long period of time the idea of textual mutability is ever-present. The creation of *Finnegans Wake* happened quite organically, though not without direction, and resulted from different, perhaps even

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<sup>10</sup> *Wake* criticism has only recently begun to recognize that the unit of meaning in the book is not limited to the level of the word, but also the sentence and the paragraph. The point was recently made by Michael Wood

contradictory intentional moments. Accepting such a position has a considerable impact on editorial theory, and thus on the way we edit. However, it does not make the task of editing futile, impossible or unnecessarily intrusive. Perhaps one can draw a parallel with the notion of restoration in art history and architecture. On the face of it, restoration is the reverting of a damaged object to its original, pristine state, but in fact it is a process that mediates between the object in its original state and the object its current state, in the course of which scholars gather further knowledge about the place and the time in which object existed and exists. (There certainly has been a movement away from restoration to conservation: the prevention of further deterioration.) Scholarly editing is an activity that has a lot in common with restoration.<sup>11</sup> While it creates to all intents and purposes a new text, it also mediates between the various textual emanations — its different versions and variants — of the work and creates an awareness of its textual history. This is how textual editing is inextricably linked with reception history.

A “Critical” edition should therefore not be taken to mean a “definitive” edition. That specter has been laid to rest a long time ago in textual scholarship. Nor do critical editions *replace* the original edition; they complement it. While critical editions may strive towards an “ideal” text, finality is not in their purview (even Rose did not consider his Reader’s Edition the ultimate and final edition [Introduction, xi]), nor are they as a result merely conjectural or, as some naively believe, meddling in the text. The edited text, rather, is mediated through the editorial rationales that are applied. What makes critical editions valuable — reliable even — is precisely the application of rigorous methodologies which safeguard editors from making arbitrary, subjective interventions, as well as the inclusion of the complete textual evidence. The clear-reading text, it is important to remember, is always only a part of the scholarly edition. In the words of Peter Shillingsburg, “knowing who was responsible for each specific thing in a text affects how we understand it”, and so our research demands that editions teach us about “the history of the composition, revision, production and distribution of texts.”<sup>12</sup> For this reason, the

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<sup>11</sup> See, for example, Paul Eggert, *Securing the Past: Conservation in Art, Architecture and Literature* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2009).

<sup>12</sup> Peter I. Shillingsburg, *From Gutenberg to Google: Electronic Representations of Literary Texts* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2006), 31-32.

absence of a critical apparatus and unavailability of the isotext in the Rose/O'Hanlon edition is a serious impediment. But even despite the edition's shortcomings, critics of *Finnegans Wake* are the poorer if they choose to ignore the 2010 edition. For much that is wrong in the edition, more things are right. And if nothing else, it teaches readers that there is no such thing as *the text of Finnegans Wake*.

Wim Van Mierlo, Institute of English Studies, University of London