

# Bibliographical Approaches to D.H. Lawrence's "Odour of Chrysanthemums"

Archive Fever for the Text-In-Process

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## ABSTRACT

*This article engages with the theoretical concerns of contemporary textual criticism depicted by Jerome McGann, Peter Shillingsburg, and Paul Eggert through a case study of text-critical approaches to D.H. Lawrence's short story, "Odour of Chrysanthemums". I argue that text-critical readings of Lawrence's tale lend themselves to a Derridean critique of archive fever, where the rigorous archivization of the historical text-document can be read as an unsuccessful attempt to unearth the ontological origins of the text-in-process, a univocal chronology of the author's intentions over time. A Derridean critique of archive fever in Lawrence criticism poses productive questions to the distinctions contemporary textual criticism draws between, first, text and document, and, second, ideal text and the text-in-process. I show that a bibliographical study of the text-in-process — the close tracking of documentary changes over time — does not actually distance textual critics from the false but alluring notion that the document and the author's intentions exist in a single state. The text-document, as I refer to it throughout, exists in multiple states over the span of its composition history, but the textual critic performs such a rigorous mapping of its documentary changes that the text-document, in its very multiplicity, takes on a singular form as historical or bibliographical narrative, where singularity is based not on the author's original or final intentions but on a univocal mapping of the author's intentions over time.*

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IN 1983, JEROME MCGANN CRITICIZED TEXTUAL CRITICS FOR attempting to "place the reader in an unmediated contact with the author" (41). Though critics generally accepted the view that meaning was produced through various forms of mediation (not the least of which was the reader himself, whose interpretive strategies informed and structured the relative meaning of any given text), textual critics, perhaps resistant to the increasing popularity of poststructuralist thought, continued to operate under, what McGann called, an original- or final-intentions ideology,

maintaining that “a regression to authorial manuscripts will by itself serve to reduce textual contamination” (1983, 41). In their attempt to locate a singular, definitive text, textual critics failed to recognize, McGann argued, the full, complex process — the “series of related textual events” — that works of fiction undergo in their lifetime (1983, 93). A “definitive text”, he explained, “like the author’s final intentions, may not exist, may never have existed, and may never exist at any future time” because *the text* — stable, singular, and intended in full by its author — is postulated by readers naively committed to the false but alluring notion that document and authorial intention exist in a single state (1983, 90).

More recently, Paul Eggert has argued that there “is far less allegiance amongst editors [and textual critics] than there used to be as late as the 1980s to the notion of the ideal text of a work as an intended entity that was later corrupted in transmission” (1999, 89). Eggert explains that while “textual authority is often elided with textual ownership” in historical and biographical criticism, contemporary textual studies and editorial practices tend to account for the “alterations made by compositor, printer, and publisher’s reader”, documenting the text-in-process rather than the author’s final or original intentions (1994, 10). Peter Shillingsburg similarly writes that there “was a time when textual criticism devoted its energies almost entirely to the quest for the archetype text. The grounds for editing the documents were that no extant document corresponded exactly with the original” (2006, 63). More recently, however, textual criticism “has abandoned the latter goal and added others. Multiple texts — fulfilling multiple intentions or standing as witnesses to multiple historical moments or to multiple social or commercial agreements — have generally replaced the pursuit of a single best or correct text”, Shillingsburg writes (2006, 63). In this way, textual critics have largely replaced the so-called ideal text with the text-in-process where, according to Eggert, “the questions of agency and chronology — of who created or caused the pattern of images or motifs, and under what material and documentary conditions, and when and in what sequence” are thoroughly accounted for (2011, 93). This methodological shift loosens the bonds to authorial intention and, with it, a focus on meaning to track the life of the document, or textual artifact, the physical inscriptions that are altered, added to, or altogether excised from the document, or set of documents, over time. Here, Eggert distinguishes between the document, or material object, and the text, the meaning that socialized readers *raise* from the document through interpretive practices. “[T]here is”, according to Eggert, “a powerful source of clarification if the two levels are kept notionally distinct: on the one hand, material object — or what I pre-

fer to call document — and, on the other hand, text” (1994, 2). As Eggert notes, the distinction between document and text originally grew out of a need to rebut New Critical objections to the intentional fallacy, but, as I plan to show, the distinction between text and document is problematic for epistemological, not formalistic, reasons.

While Eggert’s distinction between text and document, meaning and artifact is useful, as is McGann and Shillingsburg’s distinction between ideal text and the text-in-process, I wonder if, in practice, the former posits a false dichotomy while the latter, despite the efforts of contemporary textual critics, encourages a more rigorous mapping of the author’s intentions. It is true that not every change to a document will alter its meaning, but all such changes nevertheless modify, if only slightly, how the text is received. Furthermore, how one distinguishes between text and document, phenomenon and noumenon is theoretically problematic when *the thing itself* must first be interpreted in order to be identified as such. As Eggert himself notes, “the physical marks on the page inevitably convert into textual signs; even in bibliography there is no getting away from textuality” (1994, 2). Getting around this problem, I suspect, would require a change in our epistemological paradigms, not simply a change in critical methodology.

Similarly, though the process of writing is a documentary practice, all who contribute to the document’s composition are specifying, attempting to maintain, or seeking to alter what the text means, even if indirectly. According to Eggert, “both writing and printing are *documentary* activities — physical translations of mental processes that were going on within the heads of the author or of the compositor”, but how one separates these mental processes from textuality is slippery ground, as compositor and author are no doubt aware that documentary changes inevitably modify how a text *means*” (1994, 2). For this reason, a bibliographical study of the text-in-process — the close tracking of documentary changes over time — does not actually distance textual critics from, what I earlier called, the false but alluring notion that the document and the author’s intentions exist in a single state. The *text-document*, as I will refer to it throughout, exists in multiple states over the span of its composition history, but the textual critic performs such a rigorous mapping of its documentary changes that the text-document, in its very multiplicity, takes on a singular form as historical or bibliographical narrative, where *singularity* is based not on the author’s original or final intentions but on a univocal mapping of the author’s intentions over time (which includes, I should add, how the author’s intentions are shaped by the intentions of editor, printer, and anyone else involved in the composition process). In this manner, contem-

porary textual criticism ostensibly reinscribes the ideal-text ideology first criticized by McGann in 1983 through its rigorous mapping of the historical text-document.

This article engages with the theoretical concerns of contemporary textual criticism (as depicted by McGann, Shillingsburg, and Eggert) through a case study of text-critical approaches to D.H. Lawrence's short story "Odour of Chrysanthemums". Text-critical readings of Lawrence's tale lend themselves, I argue, to a Derridean critique of archive fever, where the rigorous archivization of the historical text-document can be read as an unsuccessful attempt to unearth the ontological origins of the text-in-process, a univocal chronology of the author's intentions over time. The risk, of course, in broaching a poststructural, or deconstructive, critique of this kind is that it might be viewed as an unproductive reversion to thoroughly exhausted ideas at a time when "[t]heory in its various forms has come to seem to many students simply the established and accredited way of producing knowledge rather than", as Eggert notes, "the force that liberated its teachers from an earlier, restrictive form of literary criticism" (1999, 88). While I agree that poststructural theory as an institutional practice can be stultifying, a Derridean critique of archive fever in Lawrence criticism may nevertheless pose productive questions to the distinctions contemporary textual criticism draws between, first, text and document, and, second, ideal text and the text-in-process. That said, I do not wish to frame my argument as committed to poststructural theory, for, as the following analysis should help illustrate, a Derridean critique tacitly maintains, against its own better judgement, a text-critical distinction between text and document, phenomenon and noumenon. It would seem that physical inscriptions must first undergo discursive translation in order to be identified as non-discursive realities, but, at the same time, the interpreting subject, in order to translate non-discursive realities, must first have unmediated access to *the thing itself*, that is to say, to documentary conditions, or physical inscriptions, outside of the interpretive matrix. A close look at the archive fever surrounding much of the story's critical reception is, therefore, meant to shed light on what might be an irresolvable paradox. How we move beyond the paradox — a topic I plan to revisit in the conclusion of this article — will require a drastic revision of the poststructural epistemic worldview that continues to dominate the academy and not simply a change in methodology.

Bryan Rivers argues in a 2014 article that the influence of Hans Christian Andersen on the works of D.H. Lawrence has been largely ignored as a result of the story's 1911 and 1914 revisions. Rivers grounds his argu-

ment in documentary changes. He notes that in "March 1910 the original, uncorrected proofs of *Odour of Chrysanthemums* [. . .] were sent to D.H. Lawrence for his approval by Ballantyne & Co. Ltd, printers for the *English Review* magazine", but that, in July, the magazine's editor, Ford Madox Ford, asked Lawrence to cut five pages from the document, "almost 20 per cent of the entire work" (2014, 114). Rivers notes that Lawrence struggled with the revisions but argues that, "[i]n retrospect, this was a wise editorial decision" because, in his opinion, most of the material relating to the children is fascinating but distracts from the main focus of the narrative (2104, 114). Rivers considers Ford's decision to excise five pages of the document a smart editorial move but never actually comments, in this regard, on Ford's or Lawrence's esthetic reasons behind the decision. We are told nothing about how the changes impacted Lawrence's evaluation of the story and whether or not, like Rivers, he viewed the editorial decision in a positive light. In other words, Lawrence revised the story because Ford asked him to — no other explanation is offered. Thus, in line with Eggert's advice, Rivers asks not "What was the intended meaning? but, rather, What was the intended physical inscription?" (EGGERT 1999, 92). The changes, regardless of their semantic consequences, were the result of editorial pressures. By focusing on the documentary rather than the textual reasons behind the changes, Rivers is able to make seemingly definitive statements about the archive, or bibliographical narrative, which, as a series of physical inscriptions, "assures", Derrida writes, "the possibility of memorization, of repetition, of reproduction, or of reimpression" (1995, 11). Reproducibility — the re-presentation of the noumenal archive, in other words — matters for the archivist, or textual critic, because it ensures the unmediated self-articulation of the author's intentions, which the archivist consigns to physical inscriptions on a page.

The difficulty, of course, is in keeping documentary changes distinct from textual changes, the archive as somehow distinct from, or operating outside of, our interpretive frameworks, for, as Derrida explains, the "archivist institutes the archive as it should be, that is to say, not only in exhibiting the document but in *establishing* it. He reads it, interprets it, classes it", and, in the process of doing so, he erases the need for an archivist (1995, 55). In other words, if the purpose of bibliographical accounts of the text-document-in-process is simply to establish the documentary life of the text, asking *why* revisions were made becomes irrelevant to an archival analysis of the historical text-document. Documentary inscriptions present themselves, according to the archivist and contemporary textual critic, in noumenal, objective form. Why certain changes were made to

a document is irrelevant if our concern is the various states of the document over time, not the meaning readers glean from the bibliographical narrative, or set of documents, through interpretive practices. The “very success of the dig must sign the effacement of the archivist: *the origin then speaks by itself*. [. . .] It presents itself and comments on itself by itself. [. . .] The archeologist has succeeded in making the archive no longer serve any function”, Derrida writes; “it becomes transparent or unessential so as to let the *origin* present itself in person. Live, without mediation and without delay. Without even the memory of translation, once the intense work of translation has succeeded” (1995, 92–3). Even in the case of a typo, or some other ambiguous marking, editors must take textuality into account. To prescribe a documentary change is to form a semantic, or literary critical, judgement of what the text should mean. In other words, the textual critic must make interpretive decisions because documentary inscriptions are, by nature, textual signs. The noumenon must undergo translation because the archivization of documentary inscriptions is accomplished through interpretive acts.

As a result of editorial pressures, Lawrence eliminates the children’s playtime and, with it, a reference to Andersen’s own story, “The Fir Tree”. The reference is important, for Rivers, because “Elizabeth’s reading of the story provides an excellent example of social realism since it is precisely the type of moralizing tale that one would expect her to read to her children” (2014, 115). Rivers goes on to say that the story “reflects [Elizabeth’s] education, [. . .] her sense of motherly duty”, and might even “have been her own childhood copy of *Stories for the Household*, the very title of which proffers a vision of the family as a cohesive unit which, from her perspective, her husband Walter has failed to embrace” (2014, 115). That audiences would have expected Elizabeth to read from Andersen’s book is certainly possible, but in making the comment, Rivers attempts to archive external, documentary evidence of Lawrence’s internal process, consigning what Lawrence might have intended to a singular, permanent site. Rivers assumes that Lawrence had a conception of social realism and sought, for various reasons, to achieve its effects in his work. Externalizing what might have been Lawrence’s internal process, Rivers implicitly maps the complex discursive networks informing Lawrence’s intentional, creative decisions and reduces them to a single literary reference, the archive, or documentary inscription, which, traditionally conceived, exists autonomously, outside of our interpretive schemas. This is important for the archivist because, as Derrida explains, there “is *no archive without a place of consignment, without a technique of repetition, and without a certain exteriority*” (1995, 11). Indeed,

the archive, in order to distinguish itself from private memory, must exist as a reproducible inscription that, outliving the archivist, "leaves a mark at the surface or in the thickness of a substrate" — a mark which, the archivist believes, is indelible and, therefore, ontologically self-present (Derrida, 1995, 26). Thus, the archive, traditionally conceived, is a singular, autonomous unit.

But as the previous analysis has helped demonstrate, even Rivers, who grounds his argument in documentary changes, must revert to questions of textuality. "Because of the required deletions th[e] section [containing the Andersen reference] did not figure in either the 1911 *English Review* or 1914 *Prussian Officer* versions of the story, and was only made available to readers, albeit to a limited extent, in 1969. Unfortunately, even today", Rivers continues, "its existence is not well-known despite its greater accessibility. This is particularly regrettable since the episode illuminates several interesting aspects of D.H. Lawrence's early literary development" (2014, 114). Rivers stages a bibliographic analysis in order to say something about the author's original intentions. As he states, "a deeper critical exploration of the influence of Hans Christian Andersen on D.H. Lawrence has yet to be undertaken" (2014, 116). Thus, by establishing the archive, or bibliographical narrative — in this case, the documentary changes that occurred between the 1910 proofs and their subsequent revision in 1911 and 1914 — Rivers implicitly maps Lawrence's intentions as they existed at different moments over a four-year period. It appears safe to assume, by his account, that Lawrence was influenced by Andersen's "The Fir Tree" and only removed the reference to help meet the length requirements imposed by editors. No matter how the analysis is spun, textual critics must engage documentary inscriptions as textual signs in order to hypothesize about the author's, typesetter's, or editor's intentions, which, in turn, must be commented upon to demonstrate the value of bibliographical criticism.

Volker Schulz's bibliographical study is no different, in this regard, though he reaches very different conclusions than Rivers. For Schulz, a biographical reading of Lawrence's marriage to Frieda Weekley explains the variations in the historical text-document. The story's protagonist, Mrs. Bates, was "the fictive counterpart of Lawrence's mother" in the 1910 and 1911 versions, Schulz argues, but, in 1914, Lawrence revised the story to reflect a "critical distance from the character of Mrs. Bates, perhaps in part due to the author's relationship with Frieda Weekley [. . .], with whom he had eloped in 1912 and whom he had married in July 1914" (1991, 363). The relationship, Schulz argues, "liberated Lawrence from the overpowering influence of his possessive mother", which consequently changed the

focus of Lawrence's fiction from highly personal matters to metaphysical matters (1991, 363). Schulz maps the composition history of the text-document and, like Rivers, he explains documentary changes in terms of the author's intentions.

In both cases, the archive is intelligible because its interpretation entails the interpretation of a whole network of spatially-deferred relations, which is precisely why, in Derrida's account, the archive fails to achieve the autonomous self-presence, or exteriority, the archivist seeks to establish for it. According to Derrida, the "structure of the archive is *spectral*. It is spectral *a priori*: neither present nor absent 'in the flesh', neither visible nor invisible, a trace always referring to another whose eyes can never be met" (1995, 84). Indeed, the archive, though a physical inscription, is, like all representational canons, subject to deconstruction, the weak messianic force, or play of difference, that destabilizes its differential boundaries from within. As both Rivers and Schulz help demonstrate, the archive is, by nature, spectral, or structurally contingent, which is to say that documentary inscriptions must first be contextualized in a network of differential relations in order to gain intelligibility. Without the contextualization, or, more precisely, the interpellation, of the archive, the interpreting subject has no access to archival inscriptions, the bibliographical narrative which textual critics wrongly view as separable from textuality. As the previous analysis shows, neither Rivers nor Schulz can discuss documentary changes without locating those changes via larger discursive networks. The archive, in other words, must first be interpreted to gain its "objective" status, but interpretation is a structurally open process, which is why Rivers and Schulz are able to reach such radically different conclusions about the same bibliographical narrative. "By incorporating the knowledge deployed in reference to it, the archive augments itself", Derrida writes; "But in the same stroke it loses the absolute and meta-textual authority it might claim to have. One will never be able to objectivize it with no remainder. The archivist produces more archive, and that is why the archive is never closed. It opens out of the future" (1995, 68). In other words, the ontological states of the historical text-document are themselves discursive constructions. As before, bibliography necessarily bleeds into textuality; document and text are inextricable.

But the bibliographical work of Rivers and Schulz is, in their own admission, partial. As Schulz writes and Rivers acknowledges, the "composition history of 'Odour of Chrysanthemums' [. . .] has already been thoroughly treated by [Keith] Cushman" (1991, 114). Rather than rehearse Cushman's rigorous delineation of the story's bibliographical history, both Rivers and

Schulz refer the reader to Cushman's 1971–1972 article. There is little point in rehearsing Cushman's argument, after all, if the archive is reproducible and, therefore, capable of unmediated self-articulation. Nevertheless, Mara Kalnins, ostensibly unaware of Cushman's work, makes what, in my judgment, appears to be an identical argument just four years later. Kalnins writes in 1976 that a "comparative study of the original and revised versions of the tales offers insight into the development of Lawrence's writing at this time and yields important critical information about that development" (471), echoing, it seems to me, Cushman's claim in 1971–1972 that a "study of the successive revisions of the original story, in connection with Lawrence's biography, allow us to date with some precision the moment a central Lawrentian belief assumed its mature form" (392). In other words, both Cushman and Kalnins, operating under what appears to be a final-intentions ideology, argue that a bibliographical study of "Odour of Chrysanthemums" and Lawrence's biography reveal his development and maturation over a four-year period. Cushman and Kalnins carefully map the author's intentions as they believe them to have existed at different junctures in his literary career. Thus, both attempt to establish a causal link between biographical details and the fictional content of Lawrence's work. As Cushman notes, "[a] scholar lacking the biographical background of 'Odour of Chrysanthemums' would be hard-pressed to discover the author's deep personal involvement with its materials" (1971–1972, 367).

This is where the spectral nature of the archive becomes especially problematic, for, as the previous analysis has helped demonstrate, documentary inscriptions are not ontologically autonomous but structurally contingent linguistic signs. A bibliographical attempt to objectify the author's intentions fails because the archive is polysemic, subject to different readings of the same biographical information. Indeed, when it comes to biographical readings of the historical text-document, the story's perceived meaning either results from a prior interpretation of the author's biography, which itself must be constructed from a variety of documentary sources, or it culminates as an attempt to reconcile one's interpretation of the author's biography with one's prior interpretation of the author's fiction. In either case, story and biography — and the broader discursive structures informing an interpretation of those materials — when brought together, are believed to present the author's intentions, which, in turn, are consigned by textual critics to the archive, or physical inscriptions on a page. A bibliographical tracing of the text-document-in-process therefore becomes a rigorous mapping and archivization of the author's perceived intentions over a given period. Operating under the perhaps fallacious assumption that life experi-

ences directly translate into literary content, the textual critic collates a variety of documentary materials to form a univocal historical narrative, or bibliographical account, an objective portrayal, or archivization, of the author's intentions over time. This "compulsive, repetitive, and nostalgic desire for the archive, [. . .] for the return to the most archaic place of absolute commencement" is, for Derrida, symptomatic of Western metaphysics (1995, 91). Textual critics attempt to stabilize the literary text by unearthing its ontological origins — the author's intentions-in-process, which are then stabilized in the mind of textual critics through a collation of archival, documentary inscriptions. By this logic, however, the bibliographical narrative — composed of text-documents that are thought to map and substantiate a univocal chronology of the author's intentions — must refer to its various parts in order to validate its other parts, which, similarly, are thought to authorize the parts from which they first gained authorization. Thus, the historical text-document and, with it, a univocal mapping of the author's intentions-in-process, is a mere trace of itself, forever chasing its own deferred presence.

Though Cushman and Kalnins argue for the superiority of Lawrence's 1914 publication, modeling what McGann called a final-intentions ideology, their work nevertheless exemplifies a text-critical mapping of the author's intentions-in-process. Both critics argue that the original 1910 proofs of the story (later made available to the public by *Renaissance and Modern Studies* in 1969) focus, thematically, on maternal love, which is demonstrated by Elizabeth's extended interaction with her children and the strange, motherly affection she feels for her husband's corpse. Cushman notes that Lawrence's uncle "had been killed in a mining accident", that Lawrence's parents were the "prototypes of Walter and Elizabeth Bates", and that, when Lawrence's older brother, Ernest, died of pneumonia in 1901, his "huge coffin was placed across some chairs in the parlor" — a scene that found its way into Lawrence's novel *Sons and Lovers* in 1913 but that, in Cushman's opinion, was first modeled in "Odour of Chrysanthemums" three years before (1971–1972, 368–69).

Furthermore, Cushman and Kalnins agree that the story's 1911 appearance in the *English Review* reflects changes in Lawrence's personal life. Kalnins quotes two letters that reflect Lawrence's growing interest in male-female relationships — one written to Edward Garnett in 1913 and the other written to Lourie Burrows, with whom Lawrence had become engaged in 1910, six days before his mother's death and shortly after his previous relationship to Jessie Chambers had ended. According to Cush-

man and Kalnins, the loss of his mother, accompanied by a drastic change in Lawrence's romantic relationships, impacted the focus of his writing. "Although the corresponding passage in the 1911 version is virtually identical" to the ending of the 1910 version, Kalnins writes, "the element of maternal love in the story is much diminished [. . .]. The focus has shifted to the wife in Lawrence's analysis of Elizabeth's marriage" (1976, 473). Cushman similarly argues that "Lawrence's archetype of maternity did not change [in the subsequent 1911 and 1914 versions of the story], but his archetype of wifehood did. It is the recasting of Mrs. Bates' response to the tragedy and of her inner monologue that gives the story its changing meaning" (1971–1972, 378). The thematic shifts that accompany successive versions of "Odour of Chrysanthemums", for Kalnins and Cushman, result from changing circumstances in Lawrence's life. By 1914, Lawrence is thought to have matured; rather than focusing on familial ties, the author shifts his focus to metaphysical matters.

In addition to the various influences Lawrence's mother had on his fiction, Lawrence's father — a coal miner named Arthur John — is thought to have played a significant role as well. According to Cushman, Lawrence had a strained relationship to his father that made itself apparent in largely biographical works like his 1908 publication, *The White Peacock*. "Cyril Beardsall, the priggish young narrator, is an obvious self-projection", Cushman writes; "Lawrence's attitude at this time to the continuing battle between his parents is made clear when one realizes that his protagonist bears his mother's maiden name. Cyril's father [, by contrast,] had deserted the family long ago and taken to drink" (1971–1972, 372). Cushman goes on to cite various passages from the novel that illustrate Lawrence's ill feelings toward his father, which Cushman suggests also influenced the 1910 and 1911 versions of "Odour of Chrysanthemums". The irony, of course, as suggested above, is that Cushman performs a reading of *The White Peacock*, a work of fiction, to substantiate a biographical reading of yet another work of fiction. It is certainly possible that Lawrence's strained relationship to his father informed these works but to present one fictional piece as biographical evidence for how we should read another fictional piece is circular logic. The same, I would argue, is true when textual critics attempt to substantiate an author's intentions by judging the biographical details gleaned from one of Lawrence's letters against the biographical details gleaned from his other letters. No one text-document offers unmediated access to the author's intentions and, therefore, no one text-document can be thought of as authorizing another. Intentionality — traditionally con-

ceived as the unmediated expression of the (Cartesian) ego — is, in these bibliographical accounts, the deferred presence of a self-referring system. Thus, the archivist can never actually move past interpretation, or matters of textuality, to perceive Lawrence’s intentions as originary, unmediated self-expression — what Derrida calls “the most archaic place of absolute commencement” (1995, 91).

When Lawrence “returned to ‘Odour of Chrysanthemums’ in the early summer of 1914, he was able to go beyond the autobiographical mother-father aspect of the materials”, Cushman argues; “He transcended the earlier terms of the story as he transformed the final confrontation scene one last time. In the *Prussian Officer* version of the story Lawrence has passed beyond the personal question [ . . . ] to express an insight into man’s fate” (1971–1972, 386). A little farther down the page, Cushman notes that what was originally “a lesson in personal guilt, in the summer of 1913 has now become a lesson in human isolation” (1971–1972, 386). Why a metaphysical concern with “human isolation” should be read as any less biographical than a concern with Lawrence’s parents is unclear, but the critical focus for Cushman continues to be a bibliographical mapping of Lawrence’s intentions-in-process. Ostensibly, Kalnins agrees with Cushman’s biographical reading, arguing that “the disintegration of Elizabeth’s normal consciousness in a moment of crisis exemplifies Lawrence’s changing notions of ‘character’ and his fascination with unexplored states of being” (1976, 477). As Lawrence explained in a letter to Edward Garnett in the summer of 1914, “I only care about what the woman is [ . . . ] inhumanly, physiologically, materially” (MOORE 1965, 288). Lawrence makes a similar statement when writing to Ernest Collings in 1913: “My great religion is a belief in the blood, the flesh, as being wiser than the intellect” (MOORE 1965, 180). Drawing from these letters, Kalnins argues that the “notion of separateness, what Lawrence called each person’s ‘intrinsic otherness’, [ . . . ] are [sic] ideas that he first explored in *The Rainbow*”, his 1915 novel (1976, 478). Kalnins then quotes several more passages from *The Rainbow* and compares them against statements from *The Prussian Officer* stories, quoting from both “The Thorn in the Flesh” and “Daughters of the Vicar” to substantiate her claim. The problem, of course, is that this bibliographical practice doesn’t actually establish Lawrence’s intentions as an ontological presence that can then be consigned to physical inscriptions on a page. If archivists, or textual critics, perceive in other documentary materials (additional works of fiction, personal correspondences, autobiographical essays, etc.) the same meaning they perceive in “Odour of Chrysanthemums”, the conclu-

sion follows that they have similar readings of various text-documents, not that their interpretation of other text-documents somehow authorizes their reading of Lawrence's intended meaning for "Odour of Chrysanthemums". The bibliographical narrative, like the archive, is spectral, and the textual critic, in the end, is unable to establish the authority of any one text-document over the others. As a result, the pure presentation of the archive — the author's consigned intentions — and, with it, a prescriptive reading of the bibliographical narrative, remains impossible, the archivist, or textual critic, forced to operate within spatially-deferred, interpretive schemas. A bibliographical approach is, no doubt, better informed than an ideal-text approach, but both are unable to authorize a prescriptive reading.

Contemporary textual criticism, in its search for the ontological origins of the text-document, reinscribes the ideal-text ideology McGann first challenged in 1983 through its rigorous mapping of the historical text-document and, consequently, its univocal construction of the author's intentions-in-process. Ironically, textual critics recognize that a single work like "Odour of Chrysanthemums" exists in multiple versions, but, in their biographical explanation of the author's intentions-in-process, they impose a singular reading and archivization of the bibliographical narrative. The *ideal text* may not exist as a single document, intended in full by its author, but it does exist, in the mind of the archivist, or textual critic, as a single historical narrative where the author's intentions-in-process are rigorously mapped and archived through a collation of corresponding documentary materials. The problem with this approach, however, lies specifically in its inability to gain unmediated access to the author's intentions-in-process and thereby unearth the historical text-document's ontological origins. As the previous analysis demonstrates, textual critics attempt to authorize their reading of a particular text-document by appealing to their reading of additional text-documents, which, in turn, must refer back to the original text-document (and each other) for authorization. The circular logic at play here underscores the spectral nature of the archive, whose documentary presence, or reproducibility, is structurally contingent and, therefore, subject to reinterpretation. Indeed, it is the very polysemy of the text-document — the variant readings of not only fictional narrative but of the author's biography and of the documentary conditions of the story's composition — that challenges an ideal text ideology, but contemporary textual criticism undermines the polysemy of individual versions through its univocal mapping of the author's intentions-in-process. Thus, the result of bibliographical accounts is actually a prescriptive, singular reading of

each individual version that, as McGann stated decades ago, “place[s] the reader in an unmediated contact with the author” (1983, 41).

Text-critical explanations of the text-document-in-process ought not take priority over other interpretations, in my view, because they attempt to authorize, through a rigorous (though impossible) archivization of the author’s intentions, a single, prescriptive reading of each version of the historical text-document. When readers accept the polysemy of individual versions and, concomitantly, the mediated nature of authorial intent, the value of contemporary textual criticism remains (as yet another way to explore *potential* readings) but the practice fails to establish its authority over other interpretive approaches. To deploy this bibliographical search for authority is “to suffer from a sickness”, Derrida writes; “It is to burn with a passion. It is never to rest, interminably, from searching for the archive right where it slips away” (1995, 91). But poststructuralism tacitly maintains, against its own better judgment, a text-critical distinction between text and document, for, according to poststructural theory, the noumenon, though epistemologically inaccessible, is, nevertheless, ontologically autonomous, anterior to our interpretive practices (EGGERT 1999, 102). Thus, however convincing one finds a poststructural critique of the archive fever fueling text-critical distinctions between text and document or ideal text and the text-in-process, there are theoretical problems that must be acknowledged. By claiming that documentary inscriptions must first undergo discursive translation in order to gain their purported status as non-discursive realities, poststructural theory maintains a distinction between text and document, phenomenon and noumenon, though the latter exists purely as an abstraction. Thus, if the noumenon, or documentary inscription, is inaccessible then the distinction poststructural theory draws between discursive phenomena and the world *as it actually exists* is theoretically misguided. How we overcome this theoretical impasse is too large a question for the current article, but, like many contemporary textual critics, I believe we must arrive at a better explanation of the relationship between text and document before we can move forward with productive, more incisive hermeneutical practices. Unravelling the paradoxical relationship between text and document, phenomenon and noumenon, however, should first be accomplished in metaphysical terms, as our current epistemological frameworks fail to account, in full, for the material reality of our discursive experiences.

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