Textual Offshoots: Glosses of the Modern Drafts

Paulius V. Subačius

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Abstract: Interlinear or marginalia authorial notes as peculiar textual offshoots are particularly characteristic of self-revised holographs. It is not always easy to distinguish this kind of inscriptions from textual additions, expansions, or alternative variants, i.e., "competitive revisions", when the author did not indicate which of the variants should have priority. The discussion of manuscripts by several twentieth-century Lithuanian poets reveals illuminative editorial misapprehensions and brings us to consider the functional variety of authorial notes. When discussing such cases, we face a more general theoretical problem: how do we modernize the arrangement of textual elements in a reading text so that we may stick to the original as much as possible, without sending false signals to the reader about the nature of textual elements?

IN CLASSICAL AND BIBLICAL TEXTUAL STUDIES, instances where a scribe failed to recognize a gloss and its insertion in a body text, resulting in several variants of a work transmitted in copies, have been discussed at length (cf. Renehan 1969, 17, 31–32; Walker 2001, 16–17). It seems that this problem does not pertain to modern manuscripts. It is true that in the modern period, authors, translators, and editors also needed to add an explanation of a rare word, an alternative translation to the body text. However, the above-mentioned confusion is easily avoided by the contemporary practices of the arrangement of text, mainly the use of footnotes and endnotes, the possibilities of a commentary block offered by various word processors, and, in particular, a shorter and more direct way of transmitting works. Yet, curious incidents did occur in the history of holographs, when publishers and scholarly editors erroneously interpreted a modern author who followed ancient-like writing habits. I will give some examples of twentieth-century Lithuanian writers, which are relevant in this respect. These examples will serve to suggest a certain classification of the modern glosses. They will reveal another challenging decision that editors have to make, namely how to transform the positions of handwritten authorial insertions into the different layout of notes typical for print and digital media. I begin with presenting the case of poetic translation that has been the cause of almost a century-long editorial misunderstanding over authorial notes. Next, I try to show that in some published works the graphic form alone allows the textual segments to be considered as paratexts rather than parts of the main text. Since a clear graphic structure of the insertions in the manuscripts may be

absent, the last section of the paper demonstrates several ways for the gloss-like inscriptions to be interpreted.

In the early 1920s, the famous Lithuanian poet Maironis (1862–1932) translated five hymns (*suktas*) of *The Rigveda*, a collection of ancient Vedic Sanskrit hymns, into Lithuanian (Maironis 1923). One of the evident aspirations of this translation was a textbook on world literature that Maironis was writing at the time and published some years later (Maironis 1926). Unlike the first Lithuanian textbooks on foreign literature for university and high school students written by several other authors over the same five-year period, Maironis did not limit himself to Western literature. He was guided by the German tradition of *Geschichte der Weltliteratur* (Baumgartner 1897; Wiegler 1914; Klabund 1922) and started his *history* with a survey of early Oriental literature — Chinese, Japanese, Indian, Persian, and Arab. Maironis did not know Sanskrit and translated the excerpts of the *Rigveda* texts from Polish (Michalski 1912) — the source of translation was reliably established on the basis of textual matches and Polish words found in Maironis' rough copies (Maironis 1922, 9v).

In contemporary editions of Maironis' poetry,[1] which also include his scarce translations, an attentive reader will spot two irregularities in *The Rigveda*'s texts: in the 115th sukta of the first *mandala* (series of hymns into which *The Rigveda* is organized), dedicated to the *Sūrya* [the Sun] (Maironis 1987, 232; Maironis 2012, 235; Maironis 2020a, 308; see Fig. 1), and in the 129th sukta of the tenth mandala, titled "Creation" in English editions (Jamison and Brereton 2014, 1607) and "Daiktų pradžia" [The Beginning of Things] in Maironis's translation (Maironis 1987, 226; Maironis 2012, 230; Maironis 2020a, 300; see Fig. 2). Each of these texts contains a line with a word in brackets, and because of that word, these lines are longer than the others and do not correspond to the metric model. Moreover, in the second example, the word in brackets is added at the end of the line, preceded by a semicolon and a space. It disrupts not only the metre but also the rhyme, which connects the penultimate rather than the last word of the first line to the second line, based on the scheme *aabb*.

> Dievų nušvitęs atsidengė veidas:
> Akys Varūno ir Mitro, ir Agnies.
> Savim pripildė dangų, orą, žemę
> Surja, ta siela stingio (mirties) ir judrumo.

Figure 1: The 1st stanza of "Surjai Saulei" [Sun] in Maironis 2020a, 308.

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1. The editions of Maironis' poetry that appeared in the years of Soviet occupation did not include texts with religious motifs, among which translations of *The Rigveda*, because "they contained references to an Unfamiliar God" (Brazaitis 1957, 339).

> Iš to viršum pražydo visupirm geidimas; (kama)
> Paskui jam artimas grynos sielos kvėpimas!..
> Ir štai dabar galvodami išminčiai rado
> Pačioj net nebūtybėje būtybės pradą.

Figure 2: The 4th stanza of "Daiktų pradžia" [The Beginning of Things] in Maironis 2020a, 300.

What are these two words that stand out from the textual structure? In the first case, the word in brackets *mirties* [death] is a simplified explanation of the quite rare, maybe even authorial derivational form *stingio* [~stagnation] used in the verse. In the English prose translation by Stephanie W. Jamison, the line is conveyed thus: "The Sun is the life-breath of both the moving and the still" (Jamison and Brereton 2014, 267). In the second case, next to the Lithuanian translation *geidimas* [desire], the transliterated Hindu concept काम – *kama*, which appears in *The Rigveda* and has the same meaning of *desire*, *longing*, is given in brackets. In the English prose translation by Joel P. Brereton, the line reads: "Then, in the beginning, from thought there evolved desire" (1607). Since the words in brackets perform the function of glosses — they explain a rare form and present an equivalent of the original — by no means they are to be held the integral elements of the body text.

The question arises, why have these glosses been incorporated directly in a line in the reading texts of contemporary editions? Is it a result of the uncritical adoption, or of factual copying of the edition of *Oeuvre* by Maironis, which came out in the poet's lifetime and has been considered the most authoritative source of his works ever since (Maironis 1927a, 182 and 187)? The typesetter of *Oeuvre*, in turn, mechanically rendered what he saw in the holograph, which was the fair copy that was handed to the printing house (Maironis 1927b, 227r and 233r). A comprehensive comparative analysis of the entire text of *Oeuvre* and the holograph, which cannot be presented here in full, shows that the author did not proofread the galleys. He prepared the fair copy for publishing from heavily self-revised rough copies rather automatically, inattentively, weakened by advanced-age fatigue. In the fair copy, the elements that we interpret as glosses are incorporated into the lines and distinguished only by brackets (see Figs. 3 and 4). We do not have any material that would allow us to reliably guess how the writer himself imagined the final presentation of these two notes in the printed publication. Glosses separated by brackets are nowhere to be found in his earlier poetry collections, which were published under his close supervision. On the contrary, these books include several authorial annotations in the form of footnotes, e.g., equivalents of a rare word in other languages and explanations of culture-specific items. Each of these notes consists of several to a dozen words (Maironis 1920, 30, 45–46, 56–58 and 109). Similarly, the trans-

lations of *The Rigveda*'s hymns in the fair copy include as many as four longer author's notes in the form of footnotes (Maironis 1927b, 228r, 231r twice and 233r). Both in *Oeuvre* and in later editions, those authorial notes are graphically conveyed as footnotes.
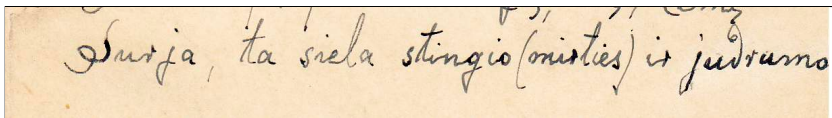

Figure 3: The 4th line of "Surjai Saulei" [Sun] in Maironis 1927b, 233r
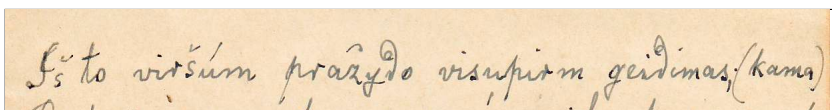

Figure 4: The 13th line of "Daiktų Pradžia" [The Beginning of Things] in Maironis 1927b, 227r

Quite possibly it was the presence of glosses and scholia, to use the classical terms,[2] or shorter and longer author's notes, in the same manuscript that caused confusion and misunderstanding about the glosses by the first publisher and, later, by the (scholarly) editors as well. In other words, there might have been some hesitation to transform the glosses into a more modern form of footnotes, as then they would not have been discernible from other notes that the author himself formatted as footnotes. In his turn, Maironis most likely followed the old distinction between glosses and scholia, by which a short note is written right next to the commented place, and a longer commentary is moved farther, to the margins or below a text segment. I assume that the difference between a one-word note and a two or more-word note is significant in this case precisely for graphical reasons.

The fact that the poet actually regarded the words in brackets as notes is testified by rough copies (Maironis 1922, 6v and 9v). They reveal that while translating the hymn dedicated to the Sūrya [Sun], Maironis grappled with the antonymic definition of deity in the fourth line (conveyed in English as "the still" / "the moving"). Thus, the poet left a large empty gap between

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2. The concept of *gloss* is used in reference to authorial notes in the copy of the published poem inscribed next to the body text (as distinguished from authorial paratexts arranged differently and performing other functions) by Thomas Dilworth in his discussion of *The Anathemata* by David Jones (Dilworth 1980), and by Maria Dimitrova writing about William Empson's poetry (Dimitrova 2012).

the first and the last words in the line for the equivalent of "the still". In this gap, he wrote the variant of the Polish translation *bezwład* [inertia] faintly (most likely holding a pen upright to avoid spilling ink), and when he came up with a (rather dubious) Lithuanian equivalent, he wrote *tingio* [laziness] over it in bold letters (see Fig. 5). Later, using another pen, he wrote *mirties* [death] above, between the lines. Even though the latter word was first discussed as an alternative variant that could replace *tingio* [laziness], it remained in the manuscript with the status of an explanatory gloss. The word *tingio* was corrected already in the fair copy into a neologism *stingio* [~stagnation], different by only one letter. At the end of the same line, three variants were tried in search of a proper antonym ("the moving"): *gyvumo* [vitality] → *judrumo* [mobility] → *gaivumo* [dew] (in the fair copy and published version, the variant *judrumo* [mobility] was chosen).
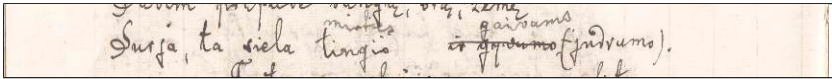

Figure 5: Authorial revisions in the 4th line of "Surjai Saulei" [Sun] in Maironis 1922, 9v.

Another rough copy shows even more clearly that in the hymn "Creation", the authentic transliterated Sanskrit concept *kama* found next to *geidimas* [desire] is a gloss — the word was added later (a different ink hue), above the line, in brackets, and on the side, in letters smaller by one third, though there was more than enough empty space (see Fig. 6). These are typical features of the graphic distinction of glosses. Contemporary editors might be clinging to the latest authorial sources (the fair copy and the *Oeuvre*) as they are mystically faithful to the principle of the final authorial intention (whose authority has been considerably discredited in the community of textual scholars). However, in their entirety, the discussed autographs reveal the misunderstanding about the glosses. In my opinion, the graphic structure of Maironis' fair copy is not a valid motive for a publication that integrates the notes into the body text, as it has been done so far. Therefore, in the last — digital — edition they are untacked and transposed into a separate field like the other authorial notes and commentaries (Maironis 2020b).
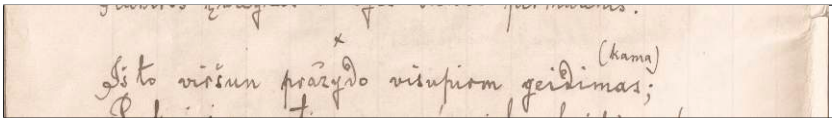

Figure 6: Draft version of the 13th line of "Daiktų Pradžia" [The Beginning of Things] in Maironis 1922, 6v.

Having in mind this curious case study, let us move on to the bigger picture of gloss-induced complications. Despite the efforts not to interrupt the purity of aesthetic reception in a contemporary reading text edition, it is difficult to avoid explanatory notes in translations of complicated poetic texts. And, truth be told, not only in the case of ancient literature.[3] It is not extremely rare for poets to supplement the texts of their own works with commentaries. Such cases have been known since the times of Dante and Petrarch and the copious endnotes in T.S. Eliot's *The Waste Land* (Grafton 1997, 28). However, it is one thing when an author's commentary is both graphically and functionally dissociated from the body text, when it is read separately and tells the genesis of the work, or allows to understand, analyse, and rethink the details. In that case, a commentary functions as an important, but still partly autonomous supplement. Another thing is when a note is seen next to the body text; moreover, in the author's opinion, the textual segments of the work are not clear enough to the reader without such a note. In the unsophisticated press (in the case of Lithuania, 19th and early 20th-century literature), the absolute majority of the author's notes can be qualified as a double crutch for a poetically immature text and an uneducated reader. These are explanations of either archaisms and newly-coined words that caused doubts to the writers themselves (Maironis 1905, 25 and 60), or culture-specific items mentioned in rhymed historical narratives (Maironis 1913, 30–31).

However, in more modern literature, quite different kinds of authorial annotations emerged. For example, in the works by the Lithuanian poet Sigitas Geda (1943–2008). Especially in his poetry collection with the memorable title *Babilono atstatymas* [The Rebuilding of Babylon], the author's scholia are paratexts whose mutual dialogue with the "body" of the poem is not less intense than that of the titles or epigraphs. Presented at the bottom of the page, in the place of footnotes, in a smaller font, sometimes clearly linked to the body text by an asterisk, and sometimes without a reference sign, are phrases rich in poetic expression, imbued with paradoxes (Geda 1994, 5 and 8; see Fig. 7). The visual rhetoric, the blank space functioning as "overt or implicit invitations to the reader to fill in gaps" (Maguire 2020, 18) transforms the semantically homogeneous, yet separated, lines into a metatextual commentary when returning to the already read poem. In their description of this particular structure of the poetic text (incidentally, Geda's poems are on historical themes), Claudia Clar-

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3. Recently, a student of mine asked me for advice regarding the publication of poems by the Estonian poet Ene Mihkelson (1944–2017), which she translated into Lithuanian. In Mihkelson's poetry, one frequently comes across personal names and other culture-specific items that are completely unknown outside Estonia, but without recognizing and understanding them the text remains incomprehensible. Thus, the translator was concerned about the arrangement of a factual commentary, which, in her opinion, absolutely needed to be placed next to the poems. I proposed to situate the notes in the very bottom-right corner of the pages and to choose a twice smaller font than that of the poems, which were graphically oriented to the upper-left side of the pages, so that the interference with the body text would be as slight as possible (Mihkelson 2022).

idge and Sebastian Wagner's insight on Late Modern English historiography is befitting:

> Looking at authorial notes through the lenses of paratext and metadiscourse, one reaches a somewhat paradoxical conclusion. Notes are positionally and visually clearly metadiscoursal and paratextual, whereas linguistically and content-wise they exhibit close similarities to functions and realisations found in the main text. The decision to separate them from the main text is clearly significant, reflecting some kind of authorial prioritising.
>
> (Claridge and Wagner 2020, 69)

It would be extremely difficult — in fact, impossible — to separate phrases at the bottom from the lines of Geda's poem if such a textual segment were not in isolating graphic interplay with the main textual block. Which is exactly the case with manuscripts, in particular, self-revised rough copies: unlike strophic, metric, and rhymed poetry, the *vers libres* text structure does not allow to make a substantial assumption about heterogeneous elements on a formal linguistic basis.

To decide if an inscription belongs to the text or the paratext — and to which type of paratext — is close to impossible if we look at some segments of an unpublished poem by the Lithuanian poet Judita Vaičiūnaitė (1937–2001) on the motifs of the Spanish Civil War. I have in mind the two last lines at the bottom of the *recto* page (Vaičiūnaitė 1961, 1r; see Fig. 8). The phrases: "Lithuanian internationalists / Compatriots in the international brigades" can be either two variants of explanation of a poetic motif, or two versions of the poem's title, or — bearing in mind the poem's rhetoric style and broken strophic system — alternative variants of continuing the support the assumption that the inscription that it separates does not body text.[4] Similarly, even the customary entitling practice cannot be applied to the poem: on the one hand, the status of the quoted phrases is unclear, and on the other, if we discard the supposition that these are versions of the title, it remains unclear which line comes first (quoted in contents and bibliographies as a conventional reference to the work). As a matter of fact, the three top lines ("...was killed in the Aragon Offensive... [...]") can be considered both a pseudo-epigraph and an asymmetrical strophe, as they are repeated with some variations at the end of the manuscript (1v). However, let us return to the main subject of our discussion: the recognition of authorial notes and their status in an edition.

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4. There runs a horizontal line above these specific lines in Vaičiūnaitė's manuscripts, which doesn't necessarily support the assumption that these lines do not belong to the body text: elsewhere, identical graphical signs serve to separate strophe from strophe, a zone of corrections from another zone of corrections, etc.
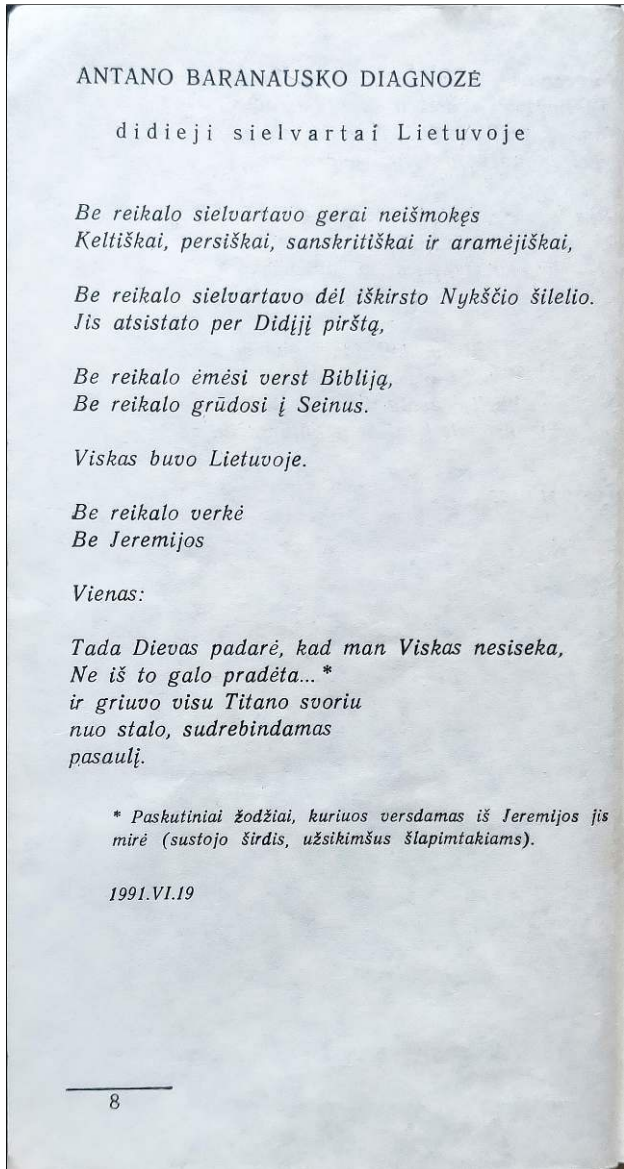
ANTANO BARANAUSKO DIAGNOZĖ

didieji sielvartai Lietuvoje

Be reikalo sielvartavo gerai neišmokęs
Keltiškai, persiškai, sanskritiškai ir aramėjiškai,

Be reikalo sielvartavo dėl iškirsto Nykščio šilelio.
Jis atsistato per Didįjį pirštą,

Be reikalo ėmėsi verst Bibliją,
Be reikalo grūdosi į Seinus.

Viskas buvo Lietuvoje.

Be reikalo verkė
Be Jeremijos

Vienas:

Tada Dievas padarė, kad man Viskas nesiseka,
Ne iš to galo pradėta... *
ir griuvo visu Titano svoriu
nuo stalo, sudrebindamas
pasaulį.

* Paskutiniai žodžiai, kuriuos versdamas iš Jeremijos jis
mirė (sustojo širdis, užsikimšus šlapimtakiams).

1991.VI.19

8

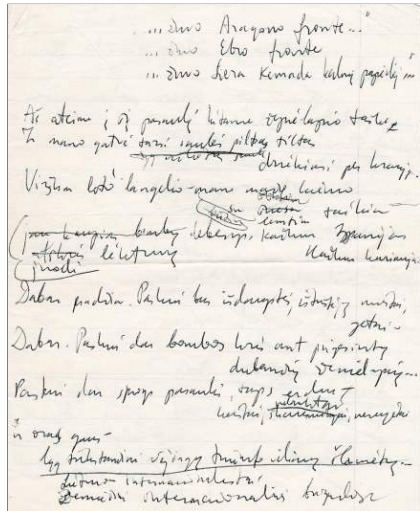Figure 7: Poem "Antano Baranausko diagnozė" [Diagnosis of Antanas Baranauskas's] in Geda 1994, 8.

Figure 8: The first page of the draft version of the unpublished untitled [?] poem in Vaičiūnaitė 1961, 1r.

As we have seen, even a phrase- or sentence-long interlinear and marginalia addition, or simply a line below the textual element, may confuse an editor about its function: is it a part of the body text, an author's commentary, or some different paratext? After all, while reconsidering Gérard Genette's efforts to define and classify contextualizing elements, his followers emphasize "the fluidity of the notions of paratext and (main) text" (Bös and Peikola 2020, 21). When discussing "entextualisation processes by which text becomes paratext, and [...] the reverse process of paratext becoming part of text [...], for example, when marginal glosses or comments are visually and linguistically amalgamated with the body text" (21), ancient or early modern examples are more frequently brought up, but it can also be found in modern holographs, albeit in a subtler form. A complication to qualify insertions is even more valid in the case of a word-long text element that looks like a gloss in the manuscript. After all, supposedly, it is more convenient for the author to put a note in the manuscript in the same place where variants are usually written than to anchor a note with an asterisk or other mark and to move the annotation to the bottom of the page or the end of the draft notebook. Paola Italia and Giulia Raboni following Dante Isella offer the definition of *authorial philology*, whose task, among others, is identifying metatextual notes in holographs and differentiating them from alternative variants (cf. Italia and Raboni 2021, 57–58). Having in mind the distinction made between authorial and traditional philology — the latter of which is the philology of the copy — we can make a pun of the former term and turn it around, for the discipline refers to the cases when the author handles

his manuscript like a philologist himself and arranges glosses. Functionally, at least four types of authorial inscriptions that look similar to glosses could be distinguished. In what follows, I will present an example of each type from Lithuanian holographs, although a lingering shadow of doubt remains around their interpretation.

First, an alternative variant resulting from the failure to decisively choose between two or more revisional possibilities. The presumably latest of three rough copies of Vaičiūnaitė's unpublished poem "Šerkšnas" [Hoarfrost] contains seven pairs of variants (one pair is phrase-long, and the other six are word-long) (Vaičiūnaitė 1967, 11r; see Fig. 9). Alternatives are written above or below a line, and the length of the variant is marked by a broken line. In only one of these cases the author made her choice: she discarded the inscription and stayed with the original form. Writers have left numerous similar documents in which the choice between textual alternatives in the form of glosses is not expressed graphically, i.e., when the discarded variant is crossed out, and so on. There are few places in such holographs, particularly in the case of unpublished works, where an editor may be puzzled if it is an addition or an annotational insert rather than an alternative variant.
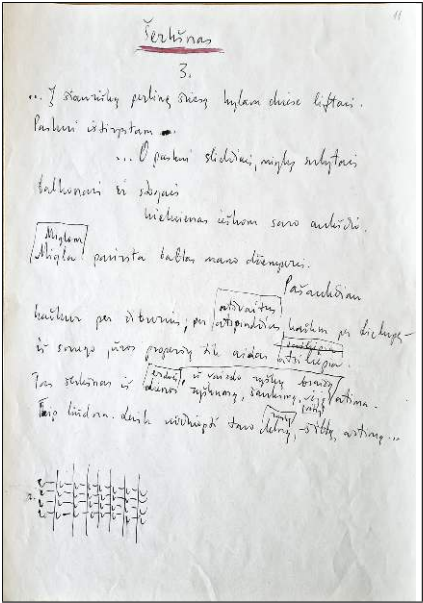

Figure 9: The 3rd draft version of the unpublished poem "Šerkšnas" [Hoarfrost] in Vaičiū-
naitė 1967, 11r.

The second type of authorial inscription is an expansion of the text. In an early draft of the much-revised poem "Sniego balandžiai" [Snow Doves] by Henrikas Nagys (1920–1996), in the second line above the phrase "gėralo žalio" [green booze], another epithet "keisto" [strange] is written as a gloss (Nagys 1951, 33v; see Fig. 10). Since in almost all drafts the poet would either graphically discard one of the alternative variants or would write them in a different pen or pencil (as can be seen in the third line of the facsimile), the second epithet might be considered as an expansion of the text rather than a replacement of words with one another. The free rhythmical structure of the poem does not exclude such a supposition.
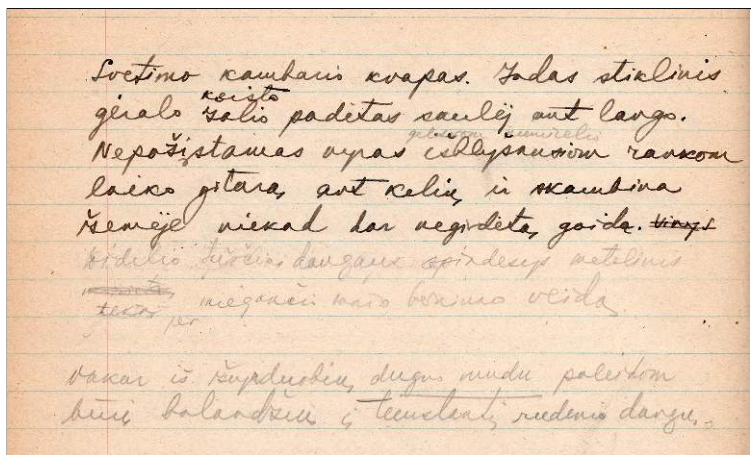

Figure 10: Fragment of the 5th draft version of the poem "Sniego balandžiai" [Snow Dowes] in Nagys 1951, 33v.

Thirdly, a note, i.e., a gloss in the traditional sense. I already presented obvious cases from Maironis' manuscripts, so now I will discuss a rather peculiar case: the rough copy of Nagys' poem "Memento (Mariui)" [Memento (to Marius)], dedicated to the deceased husband of his sister, a fellow writer Marius Katiliškis (1914–1980) (Nagys 1980, 20v; see Fig. 11). In the last line, the poet adds a vocative addressed to the deceased, "Mariau", written in a red pen, with which the text was revised. In a dedicational text, this kind of addition should not look surprising, were it not for the fact that it disrupts the poem's rhythmical structure and rhyme (the rhyme was: [at]neš | tavęs, i.e., the word of the last line before the addition). Thus, we could consider this inscription as the author's note to himself, as he might have thought about a cadence at a public reading during a memorial event or a church service.

The fourth and final type of authorial inscription is a note that is totally unrelated to the work and accidentally written on the same page. This is easy in

Figure 11: The end of draft version of the poem "Memento (Mariui)" [Memento (to Marius)] in Nagys 1980, 20v.

the case of a telephone number or an address, but sometimes highly myste-
rious inscriptions can be found. In the rough copy of the poem "Prieš lietų"
[Before the Rain] by Marcelijus Martinaitis (1936–2013) (two versions on the
same page), we find segments written in five different pens (Martinaitis 1967;
see Fig. 12). Some of the marginalia can be considered additions and alter-
native variants, and some of them can be seen as rudimental lines of two other
poems. Yet, the function of the inserted phrase written in a blue pen "Kas paims
mane ar seserį?" [Who will pick me or my sister up?] is unclear. It is likely a
self-reflection or a matter-of-fact daily reminder, but solid arguments to support
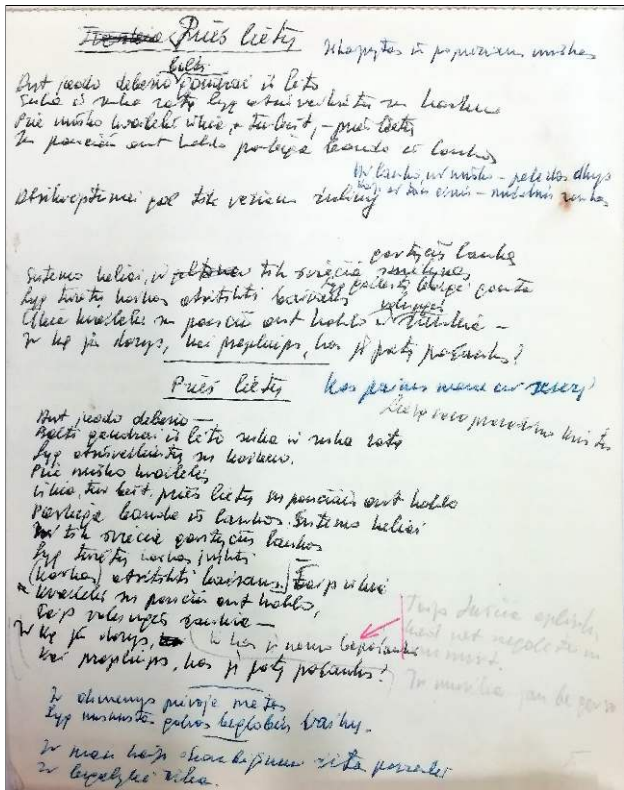the latter interpretation are lacking.

Figure 12: Draft versions of the poem "Prieš lietų" [Before the Rain] in Martinaitis 1967;
17r.

From the perspective of the variorum edition, parallel edition, or other edit-
ing models seeking to convey textual fluidity, the presentation of a gloss both as
an alternative variant and as an addition will be implemented similarly. How-

ever, the possibility of a holograph containing segments that function as authorial notes implies a threefold challenge for an editor. Firstly, it is difficult to distinguish a gloss-commentary from the above-mentioned inserts and additions of another function. Second, a theoretical alternative exists: is it just the author's note to himself, to the typist, to the publisher, or is it addressed to the readers? Here we may get involved in what looks like an eternal discussion about the intention and the possibilities of its reconstruction, thus I will not elaborate on it further. I will only note that a proposal to reconceptualize authorial and sociological orientations to the text as *causal* orientation allows, in the case of modern holographs, to reformulate the not necessarily complicated question "who did the gloss" (cf. Shillingsburg and Van Hulle 2015, 31), into "what is the cause of the gloss", which implies not only the addresser but also the addressee. Still, even after deciding that it is an author's note to himself, the editor of a scholarly edition should convey or discuss the inscription in some way, while a presumption that it is an author's note to the readers, on the contrary, compels the editor to present it along with the (reading) text. Thus, the third task is to find the best way to present a gloss, which means to modernize the arrangement of textual elements so that we stick to the original as much as possible, but do not send false signals about the nature of textual elements.

Susan L. Greenberg, while discussing the changes in the formal arrangement of texts and, alongside, the nature of editorial activity in the process of switching from manuscripts to the printed medium, emphasizes that "the purpose of editorial intervention has always been more about sense-making than making rules" (Greenberg 2018, 84). A contemporary reader could recognize the heterogeneity of the gloss regarding the body text of a literary work if it were an interlinear or marginalia written in a smaller font. However, such graphic representation — especially brackets in the line itself — is not an adequate solution for an authorial note, in view of the aesthetic perception of poetic texts. Editors can have several reasons to avoid transforming manuscript glosses into footnotes/endnotes in a printed publication, for example because they wish to retain a merely graphic alternative of short, one-word and longer notes known from the case of Maironis' translations or functional "heterogeneity of Empson's notes, which freely combine glosses and comments on disparate levels" (Dimitrova 2012, 212). In those cases, probably the most neutral solution from the viewpoint of reading habits is arranging authorial notes as marginalia next to the corresponding lines, as is often done with the presentation of modern equivalents in the editions of texts containing numerous lexical and orthographic archaisms. More generally, the challenge of editorial *pruning* of glosses reveals that the notion of relative textual (in)stability also encompasses the tension caused by the longstanding graphic patterns of the creative writing, which hardly fits in with the print culture.

Acknowledgements

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