

## **The Text of the Document. Image-Text linking in the Beckett Digital Manuscript Project**

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In the age of print, the theory and practice of scholarly editing was almost exclusively text-oriented. Textual Scholars collected all the extant materials pertaining to a literary work, compared the texts on these documents to investigate how they were interrelated, and to construct an improved, critical edition of the work for a future generation of scholars. In this paradigm, the material documents were mostly regarded as ‘text-carriers’: vessels of textual transmission that might be replaced by less corrupted and more complete models. In the twentieth century, Textual Criticism’s attitude towards the document slowly started to change, first with the rise of bibliographical studies, and later with the rise of Genetic Criticism – a branch of literary criticism that investigates the dynamics of the writing process through the study of modern manuscripts. In the last decades, the introduction of the digital medium into the field of scholarly editing has accelerated this movement to such a degree that the pendulum has almost completely swung to the other side (Gabler 2007; Robinson 2013). While some early Scholarly Digital Editions may still have been mainly text oriented (e.g. the Whitman Archive, which is primarily an archive of ‘texts’ with links to facsimile images), today most of them are mainly document oriented. Even the recent trend of placing the scanned images and their (often topographical) transcriptions side by side (e.g. Jane Austen’s Fiction Manuscripts or, more recently, the Shelley-Godwin Archive) cannot hide a strong document orientation: in most cases their texts are presented in function of the accompanying facsimile images. Usually, these editions do not offer the possibility to read the text as a whole, nor to follow the textual transmission of a particular textual segment as it evolves throughout the writing and publication processes. In this paper, I will demonstrate how we deal with the problem of document versus text and image-text linking in the Beckett Digital Manuscript Project ([www.beckettarchive.org](http://www.beckettarchive.org)).