

Analysis of forms

As Gaston [Paris](#) stated for the first time, in textual criticism a clear distinction should be made between "the analysis of [readings](#)" (i.e. the substance of the text, in [Contini's](#) terminology) and the "analysis of forms" (i.e. the linguistic features of the text): "Les leçons sont établies sur la classification des manuscrits, les formes sont restituées d'après l'appréciation critique de la langue du poète" (1872: VII, "The readings are established based on the classification of the manuscripts, the forms are restituted according to a critical appreciation of the poet's language").

If [Lachmann's method](#) often allows to reconstruct, with various degrees of certainty, the [original](#) readings of a given text, it is much more difficult, and to a large extent even impossible, to reconstruct its original "form" (i.e. orthography, punctuation..., see: [normalisation](#)). For an adaptation of this principle to texts written in Middle Arabic, see [La Spisa 2012](#).

A further distinction should be made, within the analysis of forms, between what [Trovato](#) calls "core" ("the original language of a text") and "patina" ("the linguistic sedimentation that is certainly due to the copyists") ([Trovato 2014](#), 231; see also [Leonardi 2014](#), 45-52). Cf. [vulgarisation](#).

References

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- [Leonardi, Lino](#) (ed.). 2014. *Gianfranco Contini. Filologia*. Bologna: il Mulino.
- [Paris, Gaston](#). 1872. *La vie de saint Alexis. Poème du XIe siècle et renouvellements des XIIe, XIIIe et XIVe siècles*. Paris: Franck.
- [Trovato, Paolo](#). 2014. *Everything You Always Wanted to Know about Lachmann's Method: A Non-Standard Handbook of Genealogical Textual Criticism in the Age of Post-Structuralism, Cladistics, and Copy-Text*. Foreword by Michael D. Reeve. Firenze: Libreriauniversitaria.it edizioni.

In other languages

DE: Analyse der Formen
FR: analyse des formes
IT: analisi delle forme

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