Examining Paratextual Theory and its Applications in Digital Culture

Nadine Desrochers
Université de Montréal, Canada

Daniel Apollon
University of Bergen, Norway

Information Science
REFERENCE
An Imprint of IGI Global

Chapter 6
Digital Paratext, Editorialization, and the Very Death of the Author

Marcello Vitali-Rosati
Université de Montréal, Canada

ABSTRACT

As shown by different scholars, the idea of "author" is not absolute or necessary. On the contrary, it came to life as an answer to the very practical needs of an emerging print technology in search of an economic model of its own. In this context, and according to the criticism of the notion of "author" made during the 1960–70s (in particular by Barthes and Foucault), it would only be natural to consider the idea of the author being dead as a global claim accepted by all scholars. Yet this is not the case, because, as Rose suggests, the idea of "author" and the derived notion of copyright are still too important in our culture to be abandoned. But why such an attachment to the idea of "author"? The hypothesis on which this chapter is based is that the theory of the death of the author—developed in texts such as What is an Author? *by Michel Foucault and* The Death of the Author *by Roland Barthes—did not provide the conditions for a shift towards a world without authors because of its inherent lack of concrete editorial practices different from the existing ones. In recent years, the birth and diffusion of the Web have allowed the concrete development of a different way of interpreting the authorial function, thanks to new editorial practices—which will be named "editorialization devices" in this chapter. Thus, what was inconceivable for Rose in 1993 is possible today because of the emergence of digital technology—and in particular, the Web.*

INTRODUCTION

Editorialization[1] is the set of elements that contextualize and give meaning to a particular content in the digital space. In this chapter, "editorialization" will refer to a set of heterogeneous practices consisting in giving a structure to a text, organizing it, legitimating it and making it accessible. These practices do not form an alternative editorial model. The editorial model characterizing paper publications is defined by a clear process, a sort of procedure, starting with the selection of the

content, going through its validation and arriving at its formatting and printing. Editorialization practices are not analyzable as a model because their structure is not fixed as one of a model. The forms of editorialization and their functions in the production of a document's meaning—in particular a text—can be studied and analyzed starting from what Genette called "paratext": "a certain number of verbal or other productions [which] surround [the text] and extend it, precisely in order to present it" (Genette, 1997, p. 1).[2] In this context, this chapter's objective is to show that today, in the case of digital texts, the authorial function is no longer necessary to produce a text's meaning or legitimation, since this function is taken on by the set of editorialization elements.

Many scholars (e.g., Kaplan, 1967; Woodmansee & Jaszi, 1993; Rose, 1993) have pointed out that the idea of "author" (henceforth referred to without quotation marks to alleviate the text) is not absolute or necessary. On the contrary, it came to life because of the very practical needs of an emerging print technology which, at the time, was searching for an economic model of its own. In this context, and according to the criticism of the notion of author made during the 1960–70s (in particular by Barthes and Foucault), it would be only natural to consider the idea of author being dead as a global claim accepted by all scholars and readers. Yet this is not the case. While it is hard to prove that the idea of author remains important to the common reader—and this would be beyond the scope of this chapter—Rose's position is quite accurate for scholars. His book, a synthesis of previous works on the subject and a reference in this field, comes to the conclusion that the idea of author and the derived notion of copyright are still too important in our culture to be abandoned: "We are not ready, I think, to give up the sense of who we are" is the final sentence of his book (Rose, 1993, p. 142).

But why such an attachment to the idea of author? Let us start with the hypothesis that the theory of the death of the author—developed in texts such as *Qu'est-ce qu'un auteur ?* (*What is an Author?*) by Michel Foucault (1969) and *La mort de l'auteur* (*The Death of the Author*) by Roland Barthes (1968)—did not provide the conditions for a shift towards a world without authors because of its inherent lack of concrete editorial practices different from the existing ones. Barthes and Foucault were writing at a time when the only editorial practice that existed was that of the paper edition. Their texts were published using 18th century practices, and there were no other production and circulation practices available for texts. In more recent times, the birth and the diffusion of the Web—which came immediately after the publication of Rose's book—have allowed the concrete development of a different way of interpreting the authorial function, thanks to new editorial practices. Thus, what was inconceivable to Rose in 1993 is possible today, due to the emergence of digital technology, in particular the Web.

What needs to be stressed here is the fact that the Internet and the Web are in no way seen as incarnations of 1960–70s theories as stated by Landow (1992), Bolter (2001) or Sassón-Henry (2007). For these authors, there is a convergence between the ideas of writers such as Barthes, Foucault or Borges and the development of technology, as if these writers, and in general the set of theories which can be reassembled under the name of post-structuralism, had anticipated the Internet and the Web. This approach has been questioned (Cusset, 2008), since the relationship between theory and technology has never actually been proven. While it is true that analogies between some post-structuralist ideas and the Web can be found, for instance, in the need for a reader's active involvement in order to produce a text's meaning, speaking of them in a cause and effect relationship is an abstraction and an idealization of the post-structuralist discourse. Instead, what is of interest here is how the birth of a new economic model and the emergence of new editorial practices imply a change in the central concepts of the theory of literature.[3] The

relationship between post-structuralist thinking and the Web aside, this chapter's aim is to stress how new, concrete forms of content production and diffusion determine the necessity for new concepts, namely how the concept of author is affected by the change of economic model introduced by the Web's presence and development.

The modern idea of author came to life in the early 18th century, as publishing companies needed an economic model to live and thrive upon. However, in the 1960–70s, post-structuralists criticized the idea of author from a theoretical point of view. They argued that the author is dead, because texts do not belong to an individual, but rather develop and circulate in "the anonymity of a murmur" (Foucault, 1969). Yet post-structuralist criticism did not—and could not—have a real impact on the notion of author before the emergence of new media devices, since, at the time, the idea of texts circulating in "the anonymity of a murmur" was too abstract a concept. It needed concrete change in order to be fully grasped and subsequently integrated in the social perception of the world.

New digital forms of editorialization are offering this kind of change. The production and circulation of content are now regulated by a set of editorialization devices which guarantee access and meaning to any document. Only twenty years ago, an authorial function was necessary to give meaning to a document, and the action of buying a book was connected to knowing its author. The author, in this context, is the one responsible for the book's contents and is the authority in which the reader can put his or her trust, as well as the subject defending the perspective and the thesis proposed in the text. However, this function loses its authorial attribution on the Web; when reading a text online, nobody needs an author to understand its meaning. Access to the document and its context depends on the set of editorialization devices, in other words on all that surrounds the text without being an actual part of it; readers can read a text because they are able, in the first place,

to find this text, whether its access is based on an algorithm or on a set of links. The document's reliability is guaranteed by the platform—or the website—where the text is actually found (a review, *Wikipedia*, a blog, etc.), or even by the platform providing the link to it (a search engine, a social network, a friend's recommendation). In other words, the statement "I found it on Google" is not as naive as one may think, or perhaps it is less naive than "it is a text by such and such author."

But how can editorialization devices be analyzed? How can their role in giving meaning, context and access to a text be understood? Using the notion of paratext as Genette has defined it can help in analyzing the function of editorialization devices and how they are replacing the author's traditional role.

The chapter will be divided into eight parts:

1. **The Invention of the Modern Figure of the Author:** The chapter will start with a brief history of the invention of the modern author in the early 18th century. It will show how this figure was introduced as a way to institute an economic model for the print system to exist and thrive upon. The synthesis given by Mark Rose in 1993 will serve as a basis for this brief history, as it is one of the most recent and best documented studies, and as it also takes into account previous works on the subject.

2. **The Authorial Function:** The second part shows how the notion of author helps understand and interpret a text. The analysis of this function by Genette (1997, pp. 37–54) together with Barthes's (1968) and Foucault's (1969) works, will provide the theoretical framework for this section.

3. **The Structure of Digital Space:** This part describes the characteristics of the digital space, its structure and its architecture. In order to grasp how contents are made accessible and what their context is, the space of the Web, as well as how it links documents and

puts them in a specific media context, will be analyzed. Manovich's (2002), Galloway's (2012) and Vitali-Rosati's (2012) texts will provide the theoretical framework for this analysis.

4. **Writing and Actions in a Digital Space:** The digital space is mostly composed of texts. Everything is code, even a picture. But a digital text's specificity is its dynamism, and, as such, any digital text produces actions (Souchier, 2012; Mathias, 2011; Souchier & Jeanneret, 1999).

5. **Authors and Actors:** This part introduces an analysis of the possible meaning of the authorial function in the digital space. It will delineate the relationship between the idea of author and writing on the Web. If digital text is dynamic and produces actions, should one speak of authors or would it be more appropriate to talk of actors? Guénoun's (2005) work will provide the basis for an explanation of the relationship between actions and actors.

6. **Editorialization and the Production of Meaning:** This part analyzes the role of editorialization in the digital space. Editorialization is the set of devices and practices which makes a text accessible and determines its context. As such, editorialization can be interpreted as the function which gives a text its meaning.

7. **Editorialization as Dynamic Paratext:** Editorialization is the set of devices or elements that exist around the text without being an actual part of it. It is composed of links, URLs, metadata, algorithms, code, etc. This set of devices can be interpreted as a dynamic paratext. This part will adapt Genette's concept of paratext to digital paratexts.

8. **Conclusion: the Actual Death of the Author:** Paratext, as the set of online editorialization devices surrounding a text (without being a part of it) and providing its meaning,

can completely replace the traditional authorial function, which seems obsolete in this context. The idea of the death of the author is thus accurate, thanks to the role of digital paratext.

THE INVENTION OF THE MODERN FIGURE OF THE AUTHOR

Authors have not always existed. This statement may seem ordinary, but it is important to keep it in mind in order to understand that the notion of author is not something absolute or necessary; content can exist—even a literary one—without having an author. In fact, some of the most important works of our culture do not have an author: the Bible, the Iliad, the Odyssey.[4] Mark Rose points out that even the writer considered to be the author par excellence, Shakespeare, cannot actually be defined as an author in the way this concept is intended in our modern culture (Rose, 1993, pp. 25–26, 122–124). Shakespeare was a storyteller who did not invent original tales and stories and would have presented himself as a "reteller of tales" (Rose, 1993, p. 122) rather than an author. Such an idea is a later invention: "Shakespeare was produced in the latter part of the 18th century as an individuated author" (Rose, 1993, p. 122). Not surprisingly, we find that the figure of the author was introduced, or invented, precisely during those years, quite recent ones in the history of literature. This happened for a series of commercial and economic reasons, before any social and ideological ones, the most important one of them being the need to regulate print's economic models, as editors needed to find a way to protect their publications and to justify the fact that these publications were their property. Our modern idea of author is thus closely linked to the idea of copyright.

Ownership of a text and publishing exclusivity are strictly connected to the possibility of justifying this property. The notion of author allows such

thinking: one being the owner of what he or she wrote, then he or she can give his or her property away to an editor—exactly as one could sell an estate. The problem back in the 18th century was to explain ownership of something as immaterial as writing. Being the owner of a book is an easy concept to understand, since one can own a book like any other object. But how can someone own the text itself? And what exactly does this person own? Not the text as a printed entity—because this is what the book buyer owns—but rather the idea expressed by the author in the text. The notion of property is thus related to the notion of originality; one can own an idea, if this idea is new and nobody has expressed it before. And even though this point is difficult to defend, since no idea is completely new, as any idea can be understood as the development or the evolution of another, the notion of individuality brings a new take on the question; a writer owns an idea because it is original, wherein an idea is not original because it is completely new—which is impossible—but because it is expressed in a particular way, in the peculiar work of a particular individual. Thus, the author can be identified as the particular individuality necessary to guarantee the originality of an idea that can justify the concept of property applied to a text. In this context, the author is the sine qua non condition allowing the development of the economic model of the print age.

This should imply that the idea of author could disappear if and when the economic model was to change. Strangely, however, this is not the case; quite the contrary. This is mainly because there is a strong attachment to this idea and, as Rose stated at the end of his book, we are not ready to abandon it. A particularly meaningful example illustrating this attachment, as well as its unique presence in France, is the case of cinematographic authorship. The cinema production system is very different from the print one and does not present the same challenges when it comes to justifying

the property of content. The traditional production system—which has also been changing in recent years—is based on the assumption that producing a movie—or any other cinematographic content—involves some important economic investment. All technical devices—like cameras, films, lights, etc.—and the salaries for the technical staff, as well as for all the people working on the set, are paid by a producer who, at the end, owns the material he has produced. At the same time, the audience only watches the movie, and does not own any specific object. The film and all its copies are owned by the producer and rented to the different cinemas. Thus, it is absolutely clear that the producer is the owner and, since this work is the result of a collaboration among a great number of people and no apparent individual owns the privilege of the creation, there is no need for the idea of author to justify the property.

Still, many talk of cinematographic authorship. Where does this notion come from, even if it is not needed at all? Its invention can be attributed to the Nouvelle Vague, more specifically to the very particular interpretation of some movie directors' work by the group of critics of the Cahiers du cinéma. Truffaut, Godard, Resnais, during the 1950s, started to analyze some French and American movies as the work of an author.[5] To do that, they applied the model used in print to cinema. They thus stated that a director can be considered an author exactly because of his or her style, his or her particular, individual way of saying what he or she says. This kind of application of the idea of author to other models, such as production and distribution of contents different from the one of printed editions—in particular to the digital environment—is, conceptually, an inadequate stretch. This issue will be addressed in the following parts, along with how some more efficient categories need to be found in order to understand such content.

THE AUTHORIAL FUNCTION

First, how the idea of author helps with the understanding and interpretation of content should be established. In other words, what is an authorial function? What does an author actually do? What is the author's role in the production of meaning of content—in particular of a text? Why is an author considered to be so important in order to be able to read and grasp what he or she writes? The first step is to break down the different functions of the author figure, starting with Genette's analysis (Genette, 1997, pp. 37–54). The author is the one actually writing the text. He or she is the person acting during the writing, taking pen and paper—or more likely turning on his or her laptop—and moving his or her hands and fingers to write or type. As a matter of fact, there is always somebody doing this. This action, however, which is absolutely necessary for a text to exist, is not normally attributed to the author, or, at least, is not considered the author's prerogative. The one actually writing is obviously an actor—because he or she is the one who acts—but it is not obvious that that person may be considered the author.[6] Then, if the author is not necessarily the one actually writing the text—think of ghostwriters, for instance—it is, however, ascertained that he or she is the one taking responsibility for it. As such, the author is the person responsible for the text itself, as well as for what it states and, therefore, the author is the one legitimating it. As such, the author guarantees the contents.

In this context, the author is a function necessary to the understanding of the text. Often, we read a text by a particular author because we know his or her name and think that what he or she writes is interesting. In our reading method, we always consider the name of the author as if it were the text's brand. So, the author's first function is the legitimation of the text.

The author's name fulfills a contractual function whose importance varies greatly depending on genre: slight or nonexistent in fiction, it is much greater in all kinds of referential writing, where the credibility of the testimony, or of its transmission, rests largely on the identity of the witness or the person reporting it. (Genette, 1997, p. 41)

Let us note that, even in the print model, this function is not always taken on by an author. In the case of some kinds of texts—tourist guides or textbooks, but also sometimes novels—it is often the editor who takes this role. Think about a new, young writer who publishes a first novel: The reader—and the buyer—can trust the book because it is printed in a collection of a prestigious publishing house. In the case of collective books, this is even more evident. Beside these examples, it is undeniable that the role of legitimating a text is a very important characteristic of the authorial function. This first characteristic is *authority*. The name of the author expresses his or her authority; this name has the power of legitimating content. This legitimation also implies responsibility: The authority of an author depends on his or her capacity to take responsibility—and even a legal one—for the contents he or she signs.

The second characteristic of the authorial function is to produce the uniqueness of the text. "[The author's name] is, instead, the way to put an identity, or rather a 'personality,' as the media call it, at the service of the book" (Genette, 1997, p. 40). As previously stated, an author is an author because he or she writes in a particular way. To be an author means to be recognizable. One can tell the difference between a text by Fitzgerald and a text by Hemingway because each writer has his own writing style through which he is identified. The authorial function thus comes to express individuality, which is not as random as it may seem, with the modern idea of author being born at the time of the development of the idea of individuality.

It is from these characteristics of the authorial function—and strangely not from the fact that somebody actually works to write the text—that the notion of property is derived (Rose, 1993, pp. 113–129). The authorial function consists in

having the authority to legitimize and vouch for a text, in being responsible for it and in determining its particularity. For these reasons, this function implies the concept of property, for which the author is considered the owner of his or her texts. Normally, the authorial function is visible through the name of the author, as the author, in the classical print model, exists only through his or her name or signature. All the authorial functions are thus expressed through the name, which is a very important paratextual element.

This last idea leads to the conclusion that the authorial function, acting as guarantee for a text and determining its peculiarity, is a paratext, and, as a matter of fact, the author's own name is the first paratextual element (Genette, 1997). In order to understand how the authorial function in digital documents can be conceived, it must first be established what the digital is, what kind of documents are present in this environment, and finally, what kind of paratext is a digital paratext. What exactly is intended by "digital" should also be clarified. In this chapter, the analysis will be limited to the Web, since this is the one element presenting most of the new practices of text production and circulation, and producing new forms of paratext.

THE STRUCTURE OF DIGITAL SPACE

The Web is not only a set of texts, and this is the main difference between digital and print documents. The Web is a space. The Web is a space of action.[7]

It is a space because it is a peculiar layout of relationships between objects. These relationships exist based only on the actions concretizing them. The space of the Web is concrete; it consists of nothing immaterial or fictitious. The objects—whether they are data, information, documents or identities—entertain material relationships with one another. For instance, there is a precise and distinctive distance between two objects, exactly like in the non-digital space. Between one Facebook profile and another, there is a measurable distance—the quantity of mutual friends as well as set rules of confidentiality. When looking at two profiles, observing how many mutual friends they have and what confidentiality agreement they have set up, a defined spatial relationship is established. In the same way, looking at the *Wikipedia* page about paratext (Paratext, 2014) and Henry Jenkins's personal website, the distance setting them apart can be determined based on the number of links they share, their co-affiliation to a list and their proximity in a search. In this specific example, both elements belong to the list that Google produces when searching the term "paratext." The *Wikipedia* page is the first and Henry Jenkins's website—in particular a page on this site with an interview (Jenkins, 2010)—is the 8th. This means that between these two Web pages, there is a distance determined by the degree of connection between them—a direct link, a search engine, the co-affiliation to a list.[8]

From this point of view, it is essential not to consider the Web merely as a medium. As Alexander Galloway shows:

The main difficulty [with The Language of New Media by Lev Manovich] is the simple premise of the book, that new media may be defined via reference to a foundational set of formal qualities, and that these qualities form a coherent language.... The problem is not formal definition – for after all I am willing to participate in such a project, suggesting for example that with informatic machines we must fundamentally come to terms with the problem of action. (Galloway, 2012, pp. 23–24)

Actions take place in the Web space. And, in this context, it can be seen how the Web is, first and foremost, a matter of action, and not of communication or mediatization. As stressed by many scholars (Mathias, 2011; Souchier & Jeanneret, 1999; Souchier, 2012), the Web can fundamentally

be considered to be the result of writing.[9] Actions on the Web are writing actions: To act on the Web means to write. As a matter of fact, most digital practices are writing in its most direct meaning; a blog post is written, as people write their Facebook "status." A comment on an article is also written, and one writes while chatting with a friend on the chat of some social network. Finally, the words for which we are looking through a search engine are written, in the same way that one writes the URL in the address bar.

But this is not the only type of writing. Other practices are less easily identifiable as writing: clicks and reading. Clicking is one of the most common actions on the Web: clicking a link, going onto another page, or clicking "Like" on Facebook. Clicks also produce writing; traces of code are written in databases—in the case of "Like," for instance—or in the caches of certain servers—in the case of the click on a link. Even a reading path creates writing. To read one page then another is to create a link between those two pages, a link that is recorded as a set of characters in a database. For instance, each Internet provider is obligated to record the entire reading path of its clients; each click creates a material link between the pages and the objects. Consider now the very simple and frequent experience of looking for a book on Amazon. The user arrives on the main page—or directly on the page of a particular book, say, Genette's *Paratexts: Thresholds of Interpretation*, if the user has generically searched for it on an engine like Google. The user then clicks on a link, maybe the editor's, or the author's, or maybe he or she looks for Galloway's *The Interface Effect* using the Amazon search engine. In this way, the user arrives on Galloway's book page. In doing that, the user is creating a link between the two pages at which he or she has looked. The clicks are recorded in the Amazon database and they create a relationship between two or more objects. Other users who look for Genette's *Paratexts: Thresholds of Interpretation* after the first user will see at the bottom of the page a list of others

books entitled "Customers Who Bought This Item Also Bought." Among these items, they will see Galloway's *The Interface Effect*. This means that the two books will be considered as linked and that this information will structure the digital space. Subsequent users will be able to see this relationship, since the Amazon algorithm will recommend Galloway's book to the users who are buying Genette's. Thus, by clicking on a link, the original user is reducing the distance between two things, just as if he or she were taking two books in a library and putting them on the same shelf. In other words, the idea that the Web is a space is not a metaphor. The Web is an actual space, a concrete and material one, because it is the structure of the relationships between objects. This space is inhabited, built and structured through everyday actions, which basically are writing.

WRITING AND ACTIONS IN A DIGITAL SPACE

We act on the Web. But who acts? Who performs the action? And if the actions take the form of writing, who writes? Can these writers be considered authors? Behind each action, there is an actor, someone performing this action. This someone—or something—is there as long as the action is happening and, once it is over, disappears. This is the fundamental characteristic of actors; they are actors as long as they act, but do not remain actors once the action is completed. The Web is a place in real time; actions have a meaning only in the continuous flow in which they happen. Actions on the Web happen in movement. Therefore the Web is the actual instant—the now—of the movement of the action and not—at least not chiefly—the crystallization of a series of actions.

A couple of examples will be helpful to better understand what has just been explained. When someone writes on a *Wikipedia* page, he or she is the actor of that writing. He or she is acting while writing. This action has meaning only in the

moment in which it happens. It is an action because the person in question is writing in that moment. He or she is the actor of this action because he or she is writing in that moment. Once the action is finished, this writing person disappears. The text remains in movement and the person who has been an actor, as soon as he or she does not participate in that movement, is not an actor anymore.

The same thing happens when we write a message on a chat, or a Facebook status, or a comment. We can be actors only in the precise moment in which the action is happening. Like in theatre, actors are actors as long as they perform.[10] The moment that the show is over, that they come on stage to take a bow, they are not actors anymore. The question that needs to be asked now is: what happens afterwards?

AUTHORS AND ACTORS

If actors disappear in the moment that they are no longer acting, who is responsible for their actions? This is perhaps the only way to formulate the question leading to an investigation of the notion of author in contrast with the notion of actor as it has just been explained. "Author" is a word whose etymological origin is hazy and elusive. It could derive from the Latin *augere*, to augment.[11] The hypothesis put forth here is to interpret this augmentation operated by the author as an extension of the presence of the action. Authors extend the permanence of their actions and declare themselves responsible. Authors, by definition absent, leave with their signature a persistence of the agent behind the action once it is finished. As such, they remain present afterwards, although in fact they are not there. Thus, what had earlier been introduced as the first characteristic of the authorial function is now clear.

Authority, as shown above, exists when somebody takes responsibility for the content forever, meaning any time after it has been written. To take this responsibility implies that the text has

already been written and that it is presumed the text will not change. Thus, authority implies that there is no more action or actors: The action is finished. Yet, while the action is performed, it is impossible for the actor to take responsibility for it, since at that time it is an action in progress. Consequently, the actor cannot be considered responsible. Yet the actor's lack of responsibility can become the basis of a reversal; since the actor is there only when he or she acts, the author takes his or her place before and after the action. The actor is thus squashed into an instant of time which is the present instant. There is no more space for the permanence of the actor. The author has taken his or her place.

Because of this reversal, a paradox is introduced; the actor does not act (Guénoun, 2005, pp. 121–149). The actions of the actor are false, artificial, since they are only the representation or the reproduction of the actions commissioned by the author. The actor disappears, benefiting the author. This inversion is possible because of a specific conception of time in which reality is thought of as a succession of motionless instants rather than an instant in perpetual movement. If reality were instead considered an instant within constant movement, it would be clear that actions are indeed produced by actors. If reality is a succession of motionless instants—like a series of film frames—then the actor is never there; it is the author who produces the actions and takes responsibility for them. But does this make sense on the Web? Can one really talk of authors on the Web? To answer this question, a number of examples must be taken into consideration.

EDITORIALIZATION AND THE PRODUCTION OF MEANING

The first aspect to take into account is a differentiation of the actions taking place on the Web on the basis of their intention of permanence. In other words, it needs to be understood whether

the person acting wants a trace of his or her actions to permanently remain on the Web. Most of what is done on the Web is not characterized by permanence. What is called "navigation" is the entire series of actions that make sense only to their actor, in the moment in which they happen. This is how reading on the Web can be interpreted: passing from one link to the next, performing research on a search engine or on a specific platform, and actions such as "Like," comments, or chats.

These actions are the result of an interaction with the reality of the Web. Yet, such interaction is not intended to produce permanence for the writing, even though that is what happens. Of course, these actions have effects and generate something. But it is evidently not in order to produce these effects that they happen. This type of action can be compared to oral words, which are created one word after another, in the precise instant, not planned or destined to be crystallized into a coherent whole. When a link is clicked, a reading path is produced, even though the person clicking has no intention of transforming this path into a coherent whole. What matters is the page the person is on, in the moment in which he or she is on it; said person can forget the previous page and not know to which page he or she will be moving later. It is the same when chatting—for instance, on Facebook—or when a comment is inserted on a blog, or when a message is sent on a forum.

Since there is no will of unity, there is no intention to give a sense to one's actions in the future either. There is no need to know, once the action is complete, who is responsible for it. When the actor is not there anymore, the action does not have any more meaning as such. According to the definition given earlier, there is in fact no need to ask about the author. We are simply in front of an actor, someone performing an action.

It could be argued here that, in fact, traces of these actions remain and are crystallized on the Web. Another example linked to navigating on Amazon's catalogue can be taken into consideration. This action could appear as abso-

lutely fleeting; a person clicks on the page of one book—let us say Genette's *Paratexts: Thresholds of Interpretation*—then another—let us say Galloway's *The Interface Effect*—then on the page of a DVD—Kubrick's *2001: A Space Odyssey*. These clicks can be considered actions having a meaning only in the moment in which said person performs them. What matters is the page he or she is on in the moment in which he or she is on it. The series of actions is not organized and is not destined to produce a coherent unity. It is the result of a desire to obtain information on these two titles, and then on Kubrick's movie. The user can follow his or her desire in this precise moment, without establishing any relationship between these three items. Still, a path is produced which crystallizes the relationship as such; the path undertaken—the series of three visited pages—is, like in the above-mentioned example, recorded by Amazon which creates a connection between them. Suddenly, Genette's and Galloway's publications are connected to Kubrick's movie, exactly as they would have been if put on the same shelf in an apartment. Amazon's algorithm can, again, use this person's path to create a link between the three products, which can later be offered to another client. When someone else clicks on one of the three products consulted, Amazon will suggest the other two. But it is not the person who has transformed these three actions into a coherent and permanent unity: it is Amazon. The person is without a doubt the actor of these actions but cannot be considered the author of this path, the existence of which the person is—sometimes—unaware. The function of author, if it exists, would be in this case connected to a regrouping of actions rather than their production. Can the authority producing this regrouping—often the product of a purely algorithmic work—be considered an author?

This question will be left unanswered for the moment, as the analysis of the actions which, on the contrary, are supported by a desire of permanence, is first taken into account. This is the case with those forms of writing organized in a

coherent whole and destined to remain on the Web as they have been produced, and therefore to be seen and considered by other people as a single object. Below is an example characterized by the highest degree of intention of permanence: the writing of an article in an online publication. It is probably one of the writing actions—with other forms of production of completed work, such as videos or sound—for which the greatest need to connect the traditional notion of author is felt. It is, in fact, an organized, planned action, destined to remain the same across time, and, for the same reasons, signed. Someone takes responsibility for its content, even—and most often—after one has finished producing it. The signature, the name associated with the content, is the function granting its permanence across time. And yet, when analyzing the conditions of existence of this content, the signer cannot be considered the author, as it was, maybe, still the case for a printed journal. Actually, an article cannot be considered an independent and coherent whole; it is not, in other words, a separate and single object. It resembles more a click on a link than an article in a journal's printed edition; and finally, as with a "Like" or with passing from one page to the next, he or she who writes the article is only the actor of that writing.

To prove this, it is only necessary to think of the way in which an article is presented. It is to be found within a website, on a browser. It is not a static page, but a code closely connected to a series of other pages. What matters on the page is not only the content, but also the ensemble of dynamic relationships entertained with other pages. It is impossible to determine where the content produced by the writer ends and where the other contents begin. Users' new reading practices support this thesis; they move from one article to the next, from one page to another, from one piece of research to another and very rarely do they stop to consider who produced what they are looking at. The name of the person signing erases itself to the benefit of the path and of the

devices present on the page that enable the user to walk the path: links, tags, address bar and search engines. Of particular significance is the answer that many students provide to the question: "Where did you find this information?" "On the Internet." Or "On Google."

What becomes important is not the unity of a text produced by one person but the ensemble of relationships that this content maintains with other contents. And these relationships are, at the same time, what determines the existence of a piece of content. It is the whole series of relationships and links that make the content accessible, visible and therefore actually existing. Completely independent content would be absolutely inaccessible, invisible and thus non-existing.

In other words, an article cannot be considered an independent and coherent unit and, in this context, the person signing is not its author. The unit, rather, is constituted by the relationships which make said content accessible. But these relationships are not determined by the person signing an article. The question of authorship is thus destined to transform itself; it now must include the layout of the connections constituting the space of the Web. These connections can derive from the actions of a person reading and moving from one page to the next, or from a series of devices put in place within the Web in order to create relationships, starting from simple links all the way up to algorithms of search engines or commercial platforms like Amazon. In this sense, the answer "I have found this information on Google" is not false. The author is in fact Google, the algorithm of the search engine determining a unity of meaning connected to the search of a word or expression. The function of author is thus progressively replaced by the function of the layout of the relationships between objects on the Web: a function of editorialization. This editorialization can be produced by different authorities, such as Google and Amazon, but also the platform of an electronic journal or a social network.

On the Web, there are therefore actors producing actions and editorialization functions, making permanent connections between actions and thus transforming them into units of meaning. This is why the question of authorship becomes secondary, maybe even incongruous, and is eclipsed by the question of editorialization. How do we create forms and devices laying out objects on the Web in order to produce meaning?

EDITORIALIZATION AS DYNAMIC PARATEXT

If the process of meaning production on the Web is to be understood, the forms of editorialization, that is, the set of elements which surround a text and contextualize it, must first be analyzed. This set of elements can be interpreted as paratext, and it is in fact constituted by text sitting next to the main text and giving the possibility of understanding and actually reading the main text.

Genette's definition of paratext leads to an analysis of how this notion can be applied to the digital space; paratext is "a certain number of verbal or other productions such as an author's name, a title, a preface, illustrations" which surround the text and extend it, "precisely in order to preset it, in the usual sense of this verb, but also in the strongest sense: to make present, to ensure the text's presence in the world, its reception and consumption in the form (nowadays, at least) of a book" (Genette, 1997, p. 1).

Below are identified paratextual elements in a digital text, focusing on some literary examples, in particular on some literary blogs by writers working in the Publie.net network (Publie.net, 2013), a digital publishing house founded by François Bon, but also and most importantly a network of writers. This example has been chosen for the following three reasons. First, Publie.net can be considered more of a network than a simple website or a publishing house. While it

is true that Publie.net is primarily a publishing house, and also a website, it must be stressed that, thanks to Publie.net, a large network of writers find themselves working together. Publie.net is a space where writers can meet one another, write together, exchange texts, and quote each other. It is thus a large framework of active writers in the field of digital writing. The network's most prolific writers, Portier (2013), Beauchesne (2013), Ménard (2013) and Bon (2013), will provide the framework for the following analysis. The second reason behind this choice is that Publie.net is one of the first networks of digital writers. The publishing house was founded in 2008, but the network of persons previously existed, as they worked on the magazine *remue.net*, founded in 1997. The third and last reason is that the writers on this network are mostly not hypermedia writers. Their writing is quite "traditional" in the sense that it is homothetic to paper writing. This allows us to make an *a fortiori* argument: if on the Web, the notion of author is not needed for some forms of writing very much resembling forms of writing on paper, then, it will not be needed for other forms of writing unlike any on paper.

The first paratextual element identified by Genette regarding books is the publisher's peritext (the format of the book, the series, the cover, the typesetting, etc.). Something similar can also be identified in the case of a digital text: CMS (Content Management System). A CMS determines the website's structure, the relationships and the hierarchy of its contents. For instance, the use of Wordpress implies a particular text organization: It favors the anti-chronological order, and readers consult the last text when they arrive on the website. Quite differently, if a site is on Spip—a very popular CMS in the francophone community—texts are structured in directories, *rubriques,* and readers first choose the subject that interests them, often ignoring the date of publication. Therefore, a CMS gives the key for reading texts on a website, and writers, when they choose

a CMS, are implicitly choosing their style or, at the very least, the structure and the hierarchy of their texts.

Going back to the case of Publie.net's writers, who either use Wordpress (Portier, 2013; Beauchesne, 2013) or, more frequently, Spip (Ménard, 2013; Bon, 2013), one notices that the use of Spip strongly characterizes their style. Most of the contents are structured like in a writer's office, an *atelier littéraire*, a space in which texts are deposited and organized without a linear hierarchy. The use of Spip thus determines a particular idea of what writing is; uttering "this is a Spip site" has partially the same consequences as uttering "this is a Fitzgerald's short novel." This shows how CMS has acquired a role that was traditionally owned by the authorial function: the characterization of the style of the writing. CMS can be considered paratext because it is the code surrounding the main text. The first difference between digital and printed paratext appears here, since the former is brought to life by a code, whose visible part is only the tip of an iceberg. This is clear, for instance, in the names of some websites' directories, even though the contents are not visible because they are embedded in a particular directory, thanks to an algorithm which was associated with some database fields. In this sense, digital paratext is dynamic: It never stops and continually changes. And it keeps changing without the intervention of a writer, which is the first reason why the idea of an author, who guarantees the permanence of a stable and never-changing content, cannot work for digital contents.

The author's name, according to Genette, is one of the most important paratextual elements. As previously stated, this name expresses the authorial function: It is the signature vouching for the text and underlining the responsibility of a known person for its contents. At the same time, the author's name is the element characterizing the style of the text, and in this way, is a marketing argument. Genette, citing Lejeune, notices that, for this reason, an author is an author only starting

with his or her second publication (Genette, 1997, p. 45). In the case of a digital paratext, however, the author's name can be a paratextual element, but it often holds a different function, and it does not own the whole set of characteristics of the authorial function. Below is an explanation of the reasons behind this.

First of all, the author's name does not hold the same place or the same importance in digital paratext as it does in printed books. The name of the author is one of the first printed elements seen while looking at a book. It is visible precisely because it is one of the reasons for buying a book. In the case of digital texts, however, the author's name is always in a particular section of the website, and it is left up to the individual to look for it or not. In the case of Publie.net writers, the name can often be found in a section named "À propos de ce blog," or "L'auteur," or "Info," or "Contacts." Sometimes the author's name is in the URL of the blog, as for Maisetti (n.d.) or Lepage (n.d.), but even in this case, the name is not really visible, because the reader rarely accesses the website writing the URL, but rather clicks on it following a search.

Another important element to note is that, in the case of Publie.net writers, the author's name is often confused with the name of the main character of the blog. Some blogs, such as lesfourchettes.net or mahigan.ca, are autofictions. The reader does not know if the name appearing on the website is the author's or the main character's name. The writers actually play with this confusion; they work to build a complex character, uploading photos, animating their social network profiles—mostly Twitter and Facebook. Therefore, in such a context, the author's name no longer holds an authorial function, as it is not the authority vouching for contents, but the actual person providing some interest to the character.

But if the author's name is no longer able to perform the authorial function, which paratextual elements are to pursue this function? It has been shown that, although the idea of the modern au-

thor can be abandoned, there is still the need for a structure vouching for the contents and characterizing their style, since without this structure, there would be a general lack of text differentiation and it would thus be impossible to choose anything to read. In this abundance of Web content, it would become impossible to find any meaning. Therefore, the lack of a quality guarantor, a text's interest and elements characterizing and differentiating it from other texts would imply the end of the possibility of reading.

This function is partially taken over by CMS, which implies a particular content structure and thus a particular style. However, there are some other paratextual forms taking over the guarantor and characterizing functions: the metadata and the complex sets of epitexts embedding a particular content—or a particular website—in a larger network.

To be noted here is how digital content needs to be vouched for and characterized differently than printed content is. In the case of a book, the object itself allows the clear identification of a text, since the text is isolated because of its presentation. The book is a unique and identifiable object allowing the differentiation from other books. In the case of a digital text, however, it is less evident how it can be separated from other texts. CMS certainly has the capacity to achieve this, and some other paratextual elements (like the URL) can help in this sense. Yet our practices show that not much attention is paid to either URLs or CMS. Graphic design is another aspect which could potentially help individuate a particular content and distinguish it from others, but again, many websites actually use the same CMS and the same templates, thus making this individuation much more complicated.

In this context, the accessibility of digital content (how one finds the content, how it is made visible) becomes paramount. Accessibility is the key to content's readability, and as such it is the key to its quality guarantee. For instance, a particular page is read because it has been found thanks to one or more editorialization devices trusted by

the readers, most commonly a search engine or a social network. In this sense, search engines and social networks are the devices vouching for the content's quality and interest, as well as the elements characterizing and distinguishing it from other content.

Two kinds of paratextual elements, which are key to the understanding of the text's authority, can be identified: social networks' recommendations (Merzeau, 2013)—which can be interpreted as epitexts—and metadata—allowing the reader to find and trust the text and eventually to read and understand it. Metadata are paratextual elements designed for search engines. They are verbal productions surrounding the text. They can hold functions similar to those of some paratextual elements identified and analyzed by Genette; for example, the titles, the intertitles or the please-insert. In metadata, we find the author's name—sometimes, although it is not the case for most literary blogs—a publication date, some keywords, a description or an abstract of the page, the URL, the format of the page, as can be observed in the following example. There are, however, two main differences to be noted between this kind of paratext and the one analyzed by Genette in the case of a printed book. First, this paratext is not visible, and second, it is not intended for the reader, meaning that an interpretation is needed for it to be used by the reader. Metadata are text, but they are codified and not under the page format used by the reader. This code is written in order to be developed by algorithms able to interpret and use it. So, in the end, this paratext is visualized by the reader according to the interpretation made by some other platform. This can be taken into further consideration in the following example, which presents metadata from the header of the home page of the blog liminaire.fr:

```
<meta name="generator" content="SPIP
2.0" />
<meta name="Keywords" content="pierre
menard litterature site litteraire
contemporaine ecriture poesie poete
```

```
philippe diaz
ateliers d'ecriture actu livre
edition librairie bibliotheque
Internet
french contemporary poetry prosa" />
<meta name="Description"
content="Pierre Ménard, littérature &
Internet,
ateliers d'écriture, poésie, édition
numérique, photographie. " />
(Ménard, 2013)
```

Spip's CMS, some keywords, and a description of the website can be identified. These pieces of information are not visible to the reader. But search engines like Google will read them and use them to index the blog; for instance, this is how the website's description is able to appear right under the link when performing a Google search. Similarly, the keywords will be used to rank the site, while many other algorithms will use these data to index pages talking about the blog, as it happens when a page is posted onto someone's Facebook wall, or in a tweet, or using an RSS feed. This means that these metadata are not static; they are used in order to produce something else, something that will change in time and according to the platform that hosts them. Metadata are visualized elsewhere; they do not statically remain on the page on which they are produced.

In this sense, digital paratext is not only a way to identify a text, but mostly a way to open it, to project it elsewhere, to link it to other pages and other platforms. Thus, the unity and the individuality of a text is questioned and undergoes a crisis, since metadata vouching for a content's visibility actually makes it difficult to isolate and separate it from other content. This structure is even more evident when taking into consideration the effect of social networks. Taking the Publie.net network as an example, it can be seen how any reader of this group of writers knows the publishing house Publie.net. Hence, he or she follows the very active Twitter accounts of both Publie.net and its founder

François Bon, in which can be found a vast number of recommendations of texts by writers who are in the Publie.net network or its nearest ramifications. Therefore, readers will read a particular text, not because they know the author, but because this text is quoted within the network. The tweets can thus be considered epitexts, as texts which are not a part of the main text, but nonetheless are necessary to have access to this main text.

Therefore, a reader gets to a page, a text acquires its accessibility and consequently, its reliability and its authority, not because an author guarantees its individuality, but because a set of editorialization devices such as metadata places it in a more complex network of texts and makes it lose its individuality. In fact, it so happens that a reader reads a text by Pierre Ménard not because he or she knows that it is a text by Pierre Ménard, but because he or she knows that it is a text which is part of a larger network of writers. The role of the authorial function is thus no longer played by the author but by a set of editorialization devices external to the main text and often even external to the website on which the text is to be found.

CONCLUSION: THE ACTUAL DEATH OF THE AUTHOR

The digital space presents a new set of writing/ reading practices in which the author is increasingly less central. While this does not imply that some forms of authorship cannot continue to exist—academic online journals are certainly important examples of this—it can be stated that the first steps of the reception of a text are no longer linked to an author's name. Even in the case of academic articles, editorialization is that function making a text accessible and trustworthy and thus allowing its readability. Our perception of texts, as a result, has become progressively affected by this evolution. And, quite naturally in this context, the author has increasingly become an abstraction, a leftover piece from an ancient

model of production and circulation of contents. This is why, nowadays, editorialization is substituting the authorial function, thus leading to the actual death of the author figure. This is true not only for content that is produced in a collaborative way or by algorithms, as shown by many scholars (e.g., Goriunova, 2011; Koehler, 2013), but for all content. Thus, the Web and the forms of circulation of that knowledge produced by the Web itself lead to the progressive weakening of the authorial function.

When Foucault (1969) spoke of the "anonymity of a murmur", he did not have in mind a concrete model of content circulation. In the digital space, however, we can observe many writing/reading practices which are based on anonymity. Therefore, in a context in which digital editorialization introduces the crisis of content imagined as units and individualities, it can be concluded that the way in which content is editorialized on the Web implies the lack of isolation of such content. And, consequently, it makes it impossible to consider it a single unit. The fact that content is not isolated is the condition of its meaning in the digital space. The guarantee of its meaning and of its quality is actually produced by some paratext which is external to it. The role of the authorial function is thus taken on by something very different: a set of editorialization's devices which could be interpreted as paratexts and which are not managed inside the website where the text is, but elsewhere and by some other platforms or algorithms.

Although, throughout history, the authorial function has played the role of producing the authority vouching for content and characterizing its individuality, thus implying property, in the digital space this role can no longer support an authorial function. The guarantee of a text's interest mostly becomes its accessibility, guaranteed in turn by the content's indexation by search engines using metadata or by the content's connection with other content in a network. In this context, content loses its individuality: Its style and characteristics now depend on other aspects, for example the use of a

particular CMS or the association with a network. As such, it is only thanks to the author's transparency that a group of texts can be linked and can provide their own accessibility, authority and characteristics. And so, the death of the author is not a side effect of the digital space, but rather it is the sine qua non condition allowing the possibility of the existence/development of meaning of digital content.

REFERENCES

Aigrain, P. (2012). *Sharing: Culture and the economy in the Internet age*. Amsterdam: Amsterdam University Press.

Bachimont, B. (2007a). *Ingénierie des connaissances et des contenus: le numérique entre ontologies et documents*. Paris: Hermès.

Bachimont, B. (2007b). Nouvelles tendances applicatives: de l'indexation à l'éditorialisation. In *L'indexation multimédia: description et recherche automatiques*. Paris: Lavoisier.

Barthes, R. (1968). La mort de l'auteur. [The Death of the Author]. *Manteia,* (5), 12–17.

Beauchesne, S. M. (2013). *Les fourchettes.* Retrieved January 8, 2014, from http://www.lesfourchettes.net/

Bolter, J. D. (2001). *Writing space: Computers, hypertext, and the remediation of print*. Mahwah, NJ: Lawrence Erlbaum Associates.

Bon, F. (2013). *Le tiers livre.* Retrieved January 8, 2014, from http://www.tierslivre.net/

Brunn, A. (2001). *L'auteur*. Paris: Flammarion.

Compagnon, A. (2000). Un monde sans auteurs. In *Où va le livre? Sous la direction de J.-Y. Mollier*. Paris: La Dispute.

Couturier, M. (1995). *La figure de l'auteur*. Paris: Seuil.

Cusset, F. (2008). *French theory: How Foucault, Derrida, Deleuze, & co. transformed the intellectual life of the United States*. Minneapolis, MN: University of Minnesota Press.

Écritures Numériques et Éditorialisation. (2013). Retrieved January 8, 2014, http://seminaire.sens-public.org/

Foucault, M. (1969). Qu'est-ce qu'un auteur? [What is an Author?]. *Bulletin de la Société française de Philosophie, 63*(3), 73–104.

Galloway, A. R. (2012). *The interface effect*. Cambridge, UK: Polity Press.

Genette, G. (1987). *Seuils*. Paris: Seuil.

Genette, G. (1997). *Paratexts: Thresholds of interpretation*. New York: Cambridge University Press.

Goriunova, O. (2011). FCJ-115 autocreativity and organisational aesthetics in art platforms. *The Fibreculture Journal,* (17). Retrieved January 8, 2014, from http://seventeen.fibreculturejournal.org/fcj-115-autocreativity-and-organisational-aesthetics-in-art-platforms/

Guénoun, D. (2005). *Actions et acteurs.* Paris: Belin.

Jenkins, H. (2010, March 8). *On anti-fans and paratexts: An interview with Jonathan Gray (part two)* [Weblog]. Retreived January 8, 2014, from http://henryjenkins.org/2010/03/on_anti-fans_and_paratexts_an_1.html

Kaplan, B. (1967). *An unhurried view of copyright*. New York: Columbia University Press.

Koehler, A. (2013). Digitizing craft: Creative writing studies and new media: A proposal. *College English,* (4). Retrieved January 8, 2014, from http://www.ncte.org/library/NCTEFiles/Resources/Journals/CE/0754-mar2013/CE0754Digitizing.pdf

La Politique des Auteurs: Entretiens avec dix cinéastes. (1972). Paris: Champ libre.

Landow, G. P. (1992). *Hypertext: The convergence of contemporary critical theory and technology*. Baltimore, MD: Johns Hopkins University Press.

Lepage, M. (n.d.). *Le dernier des mahigan.* Retrieved January 8, 2014, from http://www.mahigan.ca

Maisetti, A. (n.d.). *Arnaud Maisetti: Carnets*. Retrieved January 8, 2014, from http://www.arnaudmaisetti.net

Manovich, L. (2002). *The language of new media*. Cambridge, MA: The MIT Press.

Mathias, P. (2011). De la dychtologie. In E. Guichard (Ed.), *Regards croisés sur l'internet* (pp. 55–67). Villeurbanne: ENSSIB.

Ménard, P. (2013). *Liminaires.* Retrieved January 8, 2014, from http://www.liminaire.fr/

Merzeau, L. (2013). Twitter: Une machine à fabriquer de l'autorité. In *Twitter, un monde tout petit?* Paris: Gabriel Gallezot, Nicolas Pélissier.

Paratext. (n.d.). In *Wikipedia*. Retrieved January 8, 2014, from http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Paratext

Portier, C. (2013). *Petiteracine*. Retrieved January 8, 2014, from http://www.petiteracine.net/wordpress

Publie.net. (2013). Retrieved January 8, 2014, from http://www.publie.net/

Rose, M. (1993). *Authors and owners: The invention of copyright*. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press.

Sassón-Henry, P. (2007). *Borges 2.0: From text to virtual worlds*. New York: Peter Lang.

Souchier, E. (2012). De la "lettrure" à l'écran: Vers une lecture sans mémoire? *Communication et Langages,* (174), 85–108.

Souchier, E., & Jeanneret, Y. (1999). Pour une poétique de l'écrit d'écran. *Xoana,* (6), 97–107.

Truffaut, F. (1954, January). Une certaine tendance du cinéma français. *Cahiers du Cinéma,* (31), 15–28.

Vitali-Rosati, M. (2012). *S'orienter dans le virtuel.* Paris: Hermann.

Woodmansee, M., & Jaszi, P. (1993). *The construction of authorship: Textual appropriation in law and literature*. Durham, NC: Duke University Press.

ENDNOTES

[1] This chapter will use the concept of "editorialization" as defined by the research group on "New forms of editorialisations" directed by Marcello Vitali-Rosati during the seminar "Écritures numériques et éditorialisation" (*Écritures numériques et éditorialisation*, 2013). This concept is also defined by Bachimont (2007b) and Bachimont (2007a).

[2] We will cite the English translation (Genette, 1997) of Genette (1987).

[3] For an in-depth analysis of the economic model of the digital space, please see Aigrain (2012).

[4] For a history of authorship, please see Compagnon (2000), Couturier (1995) and Brunn (2001).

[5] See Truffaut (1954) and *La Politique des auteurs* (1972).

[6] Genette points out how several writers are not considered authors. In particular, he brings forward the example of ghostwriters (1997, p. 40).

[7] For this analysis, we start with the idea of interface, as defined by Galloway (2012), and with his criticism of the interpretations of Manovich (2002).

[8] For a more thorough explanation of this thesis, see Vitali-Rosati (2012).

[9] Yves Jeanneret and Emmanuël Souchier analyze the relationship between different forms of writing using the notion of architext. Architext is the text inside a computer; in other words, the code. Architext is that element enabling users to write. In this sense, writing on the Web is a *mise en abîme* of writing, writing of writing (*écriture d'écriture*) (Souchier, 2012, p. 90).

[10] A thorough analysis of the actor's action is provided in Guénoun (2005).

[11] Please see Compagnon (2000).