

HISTORY OF THE WRITING  
AND EDITING PROCESS  
OF BALYS SRUOGA'S WORK  
*DIEVŲ MIŠKAS*  
(FOREST OF THE GODS)

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*Summary*

The monograph is an analysis of the history of the work *Forest of the Gods* (*Dievų miškas*) by Balys Sruoga before and after edition. It embraces textological and receptive (functional) aspects. Research related to text genesis was stimulated by a deliberate wish to test the entrenched attitude that all the substantial things have already been said about this most famous work by Sruoga. The author decided to focus on definite documented aspects, i.e., philological research related to primary sources of the work aimed at reconstruction of the process of the work genesis as seen in the context of pre-publication and later evaluations of the work. The draft version of the study planned to be written by the long-time researcher of Sruoga's creative heritage, Algis Samulionis and found by the author of the present monograph at the Manuscript Department at the Library of the Institute of Lithuanian Literature and Folklore contains three kinds of research references to the „file“ of *Forest of the Gods*: editing, criticism related to the book and book reception. With regard to namely the three issues raised by Samulionis whose work was broken by his death in 1994, the author of the monograph analyses and underlines the significance of the textual phenomenon related to *Forest of the Gods*.

The „hermeneutics of jealousy“ that is the parent of textualism raises doubt in every text of a literary work and promotes questioning of source

authority. In the case of *Forest of the Gods* by Sruoga, such issues arise with notable acuteness, due to genesis of the known sources and, in its own turn, the writing and editing process being very complicated, impacted by both inner creative impulses and external social pressure. Thus a question arises whether the published 1957, 1997 and 2005 versions of the *Forest of the Gods* text that have been read by now really match the version written by Sruoga. Which textual layers found in the sources reflect the author's intentions? Is it possible to rely on the formulation repeated stereotypically by the work editors that post-Soviet period publications present the „canonical“ and non-expurgated text of *Forest of the Gods*?

A hypothesis is raised in the monograph that no stable text of Sruoga's work *Forest of the Gods* has been made ready that would convey data from the sources and, simultaneously, the author's creative intentions with at least relative reliability. Meanwhile, a prominent phenomenon of editors' „co-authorship“ is characteristic to different degrees of the group of *Forest of the Gods* texts published by now.

The aim of the monograph is to analyse peculiarities of authored writing and editing of textual sources of Balys Sruoga's work monograph *Forest of the Gods* as well as to analyse the edition process of the literary work.

The following objectives have been raised in order to achieve the aim of the monograph:

1) to overview reception of *Forest of the Gods* as a context interrelating closely with the history of the text;

2) to analyse the process of creating texts of *Forest of the Gods*: the preparatory phase (i.e., the idea and its realisation) and the writing phase (peculiarities of the typescript and specific features of auto-edition);

3) to describe features of preparation for the publishing phase (i.e., to make an overview of non-author corrections contained in typescripts – censored versions, and, when possible, to distinguish edition layers, to identify their features and editor names, supposed chronology of edition-related corrections, as well as to analyse variation of editing and edition types that have shown up);

4) to discuss auto-edition characteristic of the *Forest of the Gods* typescript (Manuscript Department, Library of the Institute of Lithuanian Literature and Folklore) and auto-censorship (problematic aspects of the aforementioned phenomena and possibilities to distinguish them);

5) to overview the post-publishing phase of text history: to present the

most important editions of *Forest of the Gods*, to stress their differences and similarities (i.e., to show expurgations existing in editions significant for the history of the work's text, and to indicate individual efforts of editors to withdraw censored text corrections).

Research activities are aimed at avant-texte of the work *Forest of the Gods* by Sruoga (the manuscript, typescripts, transcripts and editor typescripts) and at texts of editions of *Forest of the Gods* as well as at metatexts manifesting the functioning and reception of the work.

The monograph employs classical philological criticism (detailed structural and content analysis of the character of inscriptions contained in the sources and the linguistic sequence evident from the sources as well as contrasting of the sources on a micro-level), genetic criticism, receptive criticism and the historical descriptive method.

The pre-publication phase texts of *Forest of the Gods* are compared with each other (i.e., manuscript vs. typescript, typescript vs. its transcript etc.) and with published texts (the typescript held at MD ILLF is compared with publications significant for history of the text: 1957, 1997 and 2005) at a precision of every textual character. Such comparison reflects what changes were typical of the early history of the text, i.e., to what extent and why changes occurred in manuscript materials during their typewriting as well as what impact editors performing mainly work of ideological supervision had on the authentic text of the work. A graphological and content-related analysis of edition inscriptions existing in typescripts prepared for publishing allows distinction of textual layers and partial identification of their attribution.

Receptive criticism manifests entrenchment of the written work in the society as well as moments of work reception and reading. A receptive analysis discloses several stereotypes related to thinking about *Forest of the Gods* stating that the work has been fully researched, work interpretation possibilities are totally exhausted, all the available documentary materials on the work have been collected and the history of the work text does not raise any more problematic issues.

The object of genetic criticism is research related to the avant-texte of the work. Genetic criticism helps see definitely how the writer shaped and changed the manuscript and typescript of *Forest of the Gods* himself.

The descriptive method allows overview and evaluation of the whole of *Forest of the Gods* texts.

Classical philological criticism and genetic analysis show definitely what influence the editing procedures had on the texts of *Forest of the Gods* that are read now and have been published. It was determined and named what authentic layers of the work have not yet been „unearthed“ and in what ways editorial dictatorship has been inscribed in the functioning editions. The analysis concerns issues of textual chronology and authorship of *Forest of the Gods* that have not yet been researched at all or touched very little and require clarification. It should be stressed that the research was based solely on philological and historical analysis of textual materials. Professional graphological expertise of the sources using contemporary technological tools (i.e. spectral analysis or digital analysis of recognition processes) whose data would be no less important requires special financial support and involvement of experts of other specialities.

Aspects that have not been researched, described and evaluated by now are the character and consequences of individual editor actions directed at texts of *Forest of the Gods*.

Reliable texts of classical literary works have been the key objective of philologists and philological institutions at all times that is impossible to reach in this case until the process of the genesis process of *Forest of the Gods* is analysed. In order to reconstruct the text of *Forest of the Gods* that would be close to Sruoga's creative act, special comparative research should be performed, aimed at consequent studies of changes in primary authored editions of *Forest of the Gods*. So far, we have only had a concise partial description of *Forest of the Gods* and lacked completeness in a relatively reconstructed view of Sruoga's creative work with texts of *Forest of the Gods*. Without having clarified peculiarities and subtleties of Sruoga's work with primary manuscripts and typescripts (i.e., the process how they were formed and deliberately altered), we cannot imagine what definite changes took place during typewriting of the manuscript and what impact those changes had on the text of the work. The dynamics of the creative process only discloses itself following clear separation of the author's versions of the work and distinction of their interrelations with editor interventions. Correct understanding of Sruoga's personality, development of his self-awareness and feelings during the last stage of his life is still being impeded by wrong impressions on the entirety of the author's intentions when writing *Forest of the Gods* that are not based on reliable textual data. Such entirety can be disclosed only after having conceived the specific character related to

the auto-edition and editing of the work. The study on editing of *Forest of the Gods* is the key support for future publication of a critical (and, maybe, genetic) edition of the work text, lack of which takes away the possibility of its adequate literaturological reception.

The main theses of the monograph:

1) The reception of the work that has significantly impacted the text history of *Forest of the Gods* (except reactions of persons who participated in early author readings) has been subordinated for long years to applied ideological objectives and far from the literary nature of the work. Professional criticism that is sensitive to the distinct character of the work has been still based on versions that are a digression from the author's text. Therefore, the entrenched attitude on interpretative „exhaustedness“ of *Forest of the Gods* is not well-founded.

2) The work was not written at once in the form that we are reading now. The author's intention regarding texts of the work he was shaping was mobile and obviously underwent changes. This dynamics is manifested in the peculiarities of text appearance and materialisation (i.e., handwriting or typewriting) – the nature of notes to self, the strategy of textual development, text structuring and searching for better stylistic authored variants.

3) The following pre-publication editions of *Forest of the gods* significant for the work text history differ from each other: the typescript stored at home-museum of the Balys and Vanda Sruoga family (HMBVS, 1945), the typescript held at the Manuscript Department of the Institute of Lithuanian Literature and Folklore (MD ILLF, 1945), as well as those kept at the Archive of Lithuanian Literature and Art (ALLA VD, 1948; ALLA VR, 1957). All of the said typescripts of *Forest of the Gods* are related by the distinguished repeated corrections by the author as a result of the writer following examples imposed by editors, as well as editorial corrections, and acceptance or rejection of text versions that he had presented earlier.

4) Three published editions of the work are important for the text history: The 1957 version (*Writings*, Vol. 5, edited by Vytautas Rudokas, the editorial commission consisting of Juozas Baltušis, Eugenijus Matuzevičius, Vanda Zaborskaitė and Juozas Žiugžda), the 1997 version (*Writings*, Vol. 4, prepared by Algis Samulionis, edited by Donata Linčiuviėnė) and the 2005 version (the *Treasures of Lithuanian Literature* series, 20<sup>th</sup> century, Vol. 3, edited by Donata Linčiuviėnė). All of them manifest editor efforts to reconstruct

authentic text of the work according to historical period circumstances and possibilities on the basis of sources conveying consequences of editing and auto-edition in 1945–1947 (i.e., typescripts). They reflect the society's needs for having a „canonical“ edition of the work.

5) The texts of *Forest of the Gods* published in 1957, 1997 and 2005 and prepared without consistent and purposeful studies in text history should be understood as constructs of editorial work. On the one hand, they disclose conscious intentions of the author; on the other hand, they are characterised by hiding or even denial of such intentions that is (not) conceived well. During publication of *Forest of the Gods* texts, primary attention was paid to manufacturing of a product typical of a certain historical period. Even the latest versions of *Forest of the Gods* published in 1997 and 2005 and prepared without sight of all the surviving documents manifesting processuality of the work and authentic text recognition arguments based on internal data making the fabric of the text cannot be estimated, from the viewpoint of contemporary text studies, as reliable editions having maximal proximity to the author's version.

The first chapter of the monograph called „Reception of *Forest of the Gods*“ is a discussion on how the work was evaluated during different historical periods. An important issue regarding the level to which the text has been investigated is raised: has the work received proper attention from literary researchers, what scale of variety the spectrum of analysis covers and what kind of investigations is lacking? A mosaic of the whole of *Forest of the Gods* criticism related to a certain period is attempted to be constructed out of insights induced by reports and reviews. The author of the monograph attempts to conceive a generalised view of the work in Lithuanian literary science.

Different methodologies have been applied to *Forest of the Gods*. The most entrenched ones are thematic, stylistic and comparative interpretations of the work. History of the work has not yet been analysed thoroughly by now, and possibilities provided by genetic criticism had not been tried and tested. It is paradoxical that one of the most famous works belonging to the treasury of classical Lithuanian literature is still being characterised by the phenomenon of editor „co-authorship“. Although as many as twelve editions of *Forest of the Gods* have already come into being in the society, the readership cannot develop acquaintance with a version of the text of the work that would be the closest to the one written by Sruoga.

Chapter 2 of the monograph called „Auto-edition of *Forest of the Gods*” is an attempt to overview the process of the work’s auto-edition. The following documents are compared in this chapter: the manuscript of *Forest of the Gods* (MD ILLF (M) (i.e., a text handwritten by the author himself) and the typescript (MD ILLF (T) (i.e., a text retyped by the author himself). Only the layer of the creative process is separated where no external persons (ideological supervisors, censors, editors advising friends and colleagues) took part. The following questions are attempted to answer: how the author shaped the text deliberately by himself; what nature the said changes possess; what relationship exists between the work poetics and genesis model; what specific and exceptional features the auto-edited version of the work possesses; why it is significant in assessing the work as an artistic whole. The author of the research tries to find out the chronological sequence of primary authored texts and to present the general reconstruction of the logic of text creation process. The research work also includes verifying of variant validity of commenting statements on the manuscript and typescripts of *Forest of the Gods* published in academic *Writings* (1997, Vol. 4). A genetic motivation of research on work stylistics is also performed.

„External” history of writing *Forest of the Gods* is known from memoirs, letters and speeches by Sruoga himself and reconstructed by biographers. Except for testifying of the intensity and expressiveness of the creative process, no other data on the specific character of text creation or peculiarities of the author’s work with the text is present. Sruoga has not spoken at all how the text creation process developed and how the already-finished text was corrected. The writer has left no reflections concerning his method of creation. The laboratory of the writer’s work only discloses itself through comparison of the manuscript and typewritten texts of *Forest of the Gods*.

Several parts of the text presented with the manuscript of *Forest of the Gods* belonging to the beginning of the work were typewritten using another typewriter, i.e., not the one personally belonging to Sruoga: „I. We Are Leaving”; „II. The First Little Night”; „III. A Seaside Resort” etc.). The said chapters make a typewritten insertion in the manuscript text. The said typewritten insert used to function as a separate independent representation of the work. Corrections in the typewritten insert using black ink (a clear feature of Sruoga’s work) allow drawing a conclusion that it was later inserted in the text by the author himself. The author’s corrections in the typewritten insert (i.e., additions, deletions and insertions) are close in

their stylistic character and features of auto-correction to those present in the manuscript text, during retyping. Several black-ink correction types should be distinguished: refusal of particularities and their replacement with more abstract expressions as well as stylistic abbreviation of text in order to avoid repeating. We guess that the typewritten insert is the part of the text that was written prior to other parts. It is believable that Sruoga started his narration with a particular situation of arresting (chapter „I. We Are Leaving”). The goal of typewriting the said several parts of the text could be related to the author’s plans to publish the work being written at that moment in parts (excerpts) or to publicise it in periodical literature as a part and annotation of the work.

On the ground of the text contained in the typewritten insert, the narration was developed further on. Returning to the typewritten insert once again took place only after having written a manuscript of the first (introductory) chapter of *Forest of the Gods*. With regard to it, corrections were performed in black ink. When retyping the text of the entire manuscript, the points of correction found in the typewritten insert were also reflected in the text of the new resulting typescript (MD ILLF). Research of the manuscript structure discloses what incorrect the statement published under „Explanations“ in Sruoga’s *Writings* (1997) was, stating that some of the chapters (e.g., „II. Culture of Barracks”, „X. A Shower for Body and Soul”, „XX. In the Shadow of a Chimney”, „XXI. All the Day around a Stump“ or „LX. Along the Kashubian Land“) found their place as late as in the typewritten version. They already existed in the manuscript, only were attached to other parts and not distinguished as independent ones. Only their titles were created and added during retyping of the manuscript.

The text of the manuscript is close to the final version (the number of deletions and corrections is low, and they are of an elementary, stylistic and corrective level having no impact on the work as an artistic whole). This makes researchers wonder what and how many (if any) earlier sketch texts (drafts, plans or notes) existed. Yet hardly shall we get to know this.

A feature characteristic of Sruoga’s manuscript is minimal notes next to texts already written. They do not belong to the very text as a cohesive whole, i.e., they exist next to it and are understood as references to further narration. They reflect that the author himself did not treat the manuscript text as a stable and invariable construct. Notes were added in the places that needed, in the author’s opinion, revision or comments. Insights having

a spontaneous nature were later expanded or, with just small corrections, included in the typescript during the typewriting process. The position and graphical features of the notes (they were in blue ink and red pencil) as if show that they were added several times while revising the entire text of the manuscript or its longer extracts. Some notes found their place in the typescript in the form they had been in the manuscript, or their nuances were small and complemented the typewritten text minimally. The following features are typical of all the notes added to the manuscript and expanded in the typescript: short expressions, statements having an ironic character, factual information, subjective statements and evaluations. Notes that finished in creation of separate finished episodes have much greater importance.

Some episodes exist in the text of *Forest of the Gods* that did not result from primary notes by the author in the manuscript. Rather, they were inserted during retyping of the manuscript text. Such episodes would not normally become prominent without accurate examination of the sources. Their appearance was not fixed in any additional notes meaning that they have an exceptionally mental nature. They could be treated as instances of consciousness enlightenment transferred to the almost shaped yet still dynamic fabric of the author's text. The majority of original and stylistically significant textual fragments would not have been born without this stage of creation characterised by extraordinary intensity of consciousness.

Another feature of auto-edition that gains prominence in the typescript is addition of endings to separate chapters that actualise the material through subjective-character comments, explanations or spiteful insights. It is namely such sections that allow best hearing of the author's pure voice (absurdity providing critical evaluations and ironic statements, and resulting in paradoxical conclusions), as well as feeling of the manner of intonation (as if the reader could hear pronunciation and speaking intensity). Totally laconic notes exist, as well, including the rhetoric conclusions that finish the narration. Additions to the manuscript found in the typescript manifest that it was important for the author to sustain his subjective opinion by way of expressing meta-relationship with his own narration in a minimal form.

During the period of comparison of the manuscript and typescript texts of *Forest of the Gods*, the most surprising phenomenon was the stylistic jewellery. In order to achieve narration having a greater effect, even the smallest segments underwent thorough changes. Scrupulously regarded

were almost all the linguistic levels, i.e., the phonetic level (change of intonation, rhythmic and stressing); the morphological level (search for compositional variants); the lexical level (choice of more accurate and picturesque words); the syntactic level (segmentation of sentences aimed at achieving a more dynamic rhythmic). The typescript of *Forest of the Gods* clearly manifests a leap in stylistic quality, i.e., a progressive movement that essentially surpasses changes in the „extent“ of the text content.

The primary edition of the manuscript was not abbreviated by the author to a great extent. Only a small number of some redundant phrases were dismissed. They were dismissed, as seen from comparison of the texts, due to their repeating, extensively high abstractness, as well as presentation and stating of things that are naturally understood from the context, banal or simply digress from the essence of the narration. More straightforward comments were abandoned in the cases when the very situation depicted in the novel did not require any additional explanations. Deletion of phrases from the manuscript was based not only on requirements for laconic expression or conciseness. A clear wish of Sruoga can be seen to leave space for the very readers' thoughts or play of imagination. The writer was especially inclined to constructing of situations whose conclusions were to be drawn by the very reader. Therefore, he attempted to avoid imposed evaluations or comments. In the process of change of the author's text, no cases of high-extent rejection took place. Neither did entirely new compositional elements – no additional separate chapters appear in the typescript, i.e., the author did not envisage a need for conceptual structural changes.

The manuscript text has a special feature of transcribing spontaneity. The following features manifest such a profile of writing: potential rewritings, merged parts of different chapters, free flow of compound sentences resulting from free streaming of consciousness embodied in the form of notes on text margins. If the literary work had reached us in this form, we would have lesser ground for about Sruoga as a master of irony, initiator of comic situations and play of misunderstandings, as well as an aesthete of details and an ascetic of narration. The spontaneous sally of memoirs was harnessed in the typescript by way of conscious correction (suffixing) and literary expurgation. Writing of Sruoga is special due to its spontaneity (outbursts of imagination and energy) and well thought-of auto-edition tactic. The logic and rational character of auto-edition (especially that related to comic dialogues, misunderstanding scenes, sudden, emotional and

highly laconic characteristics), jewellery-like correction of stylistics (i.e., attention paid to every word, punctuation mark or a composition device) has deepened the paradoxical impression of completed work spontaneity to a still greater extent. Thus, the genesis model did not match the vision of thoroughly mastered poetics of a work.

*Forest of the Gods* is characterised by a several-stage procedure of auto-edition (i.e., one having four stages): the corrected typewritten insert in the manuscript, the minimal corrections in the manuscript, and a typescript made during re-creation and addition (which was also corrected). Such a structure of the writer's textual laboratory was compatible with the author's intentions changing in the creative process.

The third chapter of the monograph called „Edition of *Forest of the Gods*” is an overview of the early versions of Sruoga's work. A comparison is performed on pre-publication typescripts that have survived (HMBVS, MD ILLF (M), ALLA VD, ALLA VR, and DRBM LNL). The author presents how the first editors used to change or delete individual fragments of text and what motives were characteristic of the alterations performed.

Two copies typewritten simultaneously are known. They are contained at MD ILLF and HMBVS.

It is highly possible that two copies of the author's typescript were presented for edition to two different people. Both the typescripts contain merged versions of several different editors' textual corrections. In the majority of cases, distinction of editor identities is impossible.

The fourth chapter („Editions of *Forest of the Gods*: Comments and Corrections“) is a description of correction works performed in 1957–2005. The publications that are crucial to the *Forest of the Gods* text history (i.e., the 1957, 1997 and 2005 versions of the work) are overviewed in this chapter, as well. The author tries to find out why traces of the first editions of *Forest of the Gods* can also be seen in later editions of the book.

## CONCLUSIONS

1) The analysis related to reception of Sruoga's work manifests the fact of relativity of literary criticism reactivity towards *Forest of the Gods*. The prevailing opinion is that all the key details have been already presented regarding this most famous work by Sruoga, i.e., it has been thoroughly researched and described. Yet this stereotype of thinking is debunked by

several obvious facts. Actually, several different methodologies have been selected for analysis of the work text, yet the majority of them were only applied fragmentally. No underlying genetic issues had been raised in relation with how the work text was written and what impact the distinctive character of the author's work had on the artistic whole of the work. No critical considerations have been made on how and to what extent the texts of *Forest of the Gods* that we read presently reflect the original data of the sources (the manuscript and the typescript). A tendency that is gradually entrenching itself is clear in the sphere of publishing (mechanical reprinting of a previously published „reliable“ work with no repeated turning around and looking at the sources). The said tendency manifests a paradox related to work reception: postulation of work value and importance that is either denied or not matched by the quality of the works published.

2) No documentary facts proving the primary (draft) phase of writing have remained. We can only rely on a manuscript that resembles the final version of the text. The entire text of the work was written in the manuscript. It had not yet acquired the final structure in the manuscript version. The author only cared about recording of his narration. It was corrected, enhanced and structured during a later stage.

3) When retyping the manuscript text, Sruoga would further intensely create and scrupulously decorate the text written previously. The result of auto-edition only discloses itself through thorough comparison of the manuscript and pre-edition / pre-censorship typewritten texts of *Forest of the Gods*. The majority of scenes important for stylistic understanding of the work and not yet fixed in the manuscript stage appeared as late as during the stage of typewriting. They reflect that the text is clearly comiced (due to deliberate wish to achieve a best-seller effect), made more objective and also enhanced with numerous personal insights, notes, comments and evaluations by the author. Although no conceptual changes (predetermining the character of the text and the main idea) took place, the major part of the live stylistic arrangement appeared during this phase. Textual changes would manifest a flexible character of the author's thinking. The initial texts of *Forest of the Gods* (the manuscript and the typescript) could also be viewed as a single text written in one instance characterised by retrospective changes.

4) A comparative analysis of the manuscript and typescript texts allows definite indication of what essential authored changes were made Sruoga

himself, i.e., how the text was extended and which text places were omitted. Other textual changes, amendments and deletions present in the typescript (except for the editorial level changes) were provoked by editors. Sruoga's deletions in the typescript text (MD ILLF) in brown and red ink or additions in blue ink appeared in order to achieve compromise with editors from the museum-home of the Balys and Vanda Sruoga family and MD ILLF. In order to preserve more important ideas, the writer rejected less important ones. Yet the compromise deletions of the typescript (MD ILLF) could not be regarded as the final decision of the author. Deletions performed by the author used to be interpreted in all the editions of *Forest of the Gods* as an unarguable result of the auto-edition process. Such a decision is controversial to inner logic of text development as a fact of passive authorisation.

5) Both in writing the manuscript text of *Forest of the Gods* and the typescript, Sruoga would not limit himself to any requirements characteristic of the social realism methodology. The phenomenon of auto-censorship (inner censorship) usually characterised by exceptional actions of self-repression, deliberate suppression of words and ideological adaptation was totally alien to the initial phase of writing. Auto-edition of *Forest of the Gods* by Sruoga had an exceptionally stylistic character with no indulgence to the ideology of the period. The auto-censorship stage started at already the post-edition phase of *Forest of the Gods* when the writer had to make a deliberate decision regarding textual places corrected by editors. The auto-censorship actions were not activated by the author himself. They were provoked by the circumstances.

6) Three texts of the work are the most significant for the text history. They are three „authoritative forms“ closely interrelated with each other: the manuscript and two typescripts stored at MD ILLF and HMBVS. A sole comparison of these texts already allows comparative critical distinction what kind of text Sruoga wanted to present to the readership himself and wanted to see as a published version.

7) All the basic editions of *Forest of the Gods* (1957, 1997 and 2005) would mark movement towards a more authentic text. They were connected by a common goal of editors to make the society acquainted with as authentic text of *Forest of the Gods* as possible (it is an indicator of breaking free from ideological ties). The character of editors' work was close to the position of researchers representing the Russian school of textual criticism. Attempts were made to manifest a totally authentic text based on the undeniable

argument of the author's intentions. The 2005 version of the *Forest of the Gods* text is regarded as a „canonical“ product that was also related to the epoch of its publishing – a product to be read and relied upon without doubt by future generations.

8) All the published texts of *Forest of the Gods*, despite more or less successful procedures of text reconstruction still contain quite a number of expurgations and textual changes imposed by editors. They were born as a result of the editors' unconditional reliance upon „the final intention of the author“. While deleting or adding text in certain places using red or blue ink, the author would usually correct on the basis of analogy imposed prior to corrections rather than express his own opinion. It is only genetic comparative analysis of all the initial pre-publication copies of *Forest of the Gods* that discloses reasons of the author's intentional instability and allows approaching the author's relatively foreseen intentions.

9) Mistakes made by editors who worked with the text of *Forest of the Gods* should be evaluated as relative errors. They appeared due to the complicated historical period, ideological restrictions, repressions applied to editors, huge loads related to editorial works or simply due to elementary impediment to work with the initial materials. When editing texts of *Forest of the Gods* editors had no sight of all the authentic primary texts that had remained and on whose basis they could have been able to check unclear fragments, especially those related to issues of auto-edition and auto-censorship. Therefore, the following aspects are still merged in all of the published texts of Sruoga's work: the author's intentions, earlier voices of editors having worked for the sake of censorship and those imprisoned by censorship that are still clearly heard, as well as individual decisions made by later editors and contemporary publishers.

10) The 1957 reconstruction of *Forest of the Gods* performed by the editorial board had special significance for history of the text. For the first time, the major part of the original text written by the author was reconstructed with jeweller precision; yet it was unconditionally and deliberately rejected in the final edition by Valys Drazdauskas (ALLA VD, 1948) in the form of expurgation. Editing of the work involved Eugenijus Matuzevičius, Vytautas Rudokas and Aleksandras Žirgulys. The latter one performed the most complicated work of comparing the original typescript by the author (MD LLLF, 1945) and its transcripts (ALLA, DRBM LNL, 1946). Comparisons performed by Žirgulys had a microtextological character and

were entirely finished. He is the first editor who made attempts to display the authentic *Forest of the Gods* through practical edition. It was only on the basis of practical comparison between the Žirgulyš' typescript version (MD LLLF) and transcripts (ALLA and DRBM LNL), that Matuzevičius could express his opinion on original text fragments expurgated by Drazdauskas. On the basis of Matuzevičius' notes, Rudokas prepared a pre-publication text of *Forest of the Gods* (ALLA VR, 1957). The first editors who prepared for publication of the literary work in 1957 relied on the authenticity and stability criteria. They sought correction of digressions that had appeared in the original text due to the peculiarities of the historical period and to reconstruct the expurgations that had remained. The editors were especially interested in the „event“ dominant.

11) The 1997 and 2005 editorial works related to *Forest of the Gods* resulted in correction of the 1957 textual reconstruction. Donata Linčiuvienė was the only editor to work with *Forest of the Gods* texts. Editorial empathy played special role here. For the first time, logical explanation was complemented with intuitive decisions in the text history. Due to them, several fragments of authentic text attributed to auto-censorship corrections beforehand were clarified. It is important that the work was tried to bring closer to the readership of our time and, simultaneously, faith to the initial version of the text was fostered. The editor only concentrated on immanent comparison of texts. Editorial works of *Forest of the Gods* performed by Linčiuvienė reflect a large part of text history despite not embracing it all.

12) The text of the work has been reconstructed only partially so far. We cannot state that either expurgations or other inaccuracies exist in it. All of the text reconstructions have an eclectic character: they are based on a postulated unconditional argument of author will and, simultaneously, on conscious and unconscious authority and autonomy of the editor. No text of a literary work exists whose publication would be based on a detailed and documentally argued research of text history. The fact of work reconstruction and additional restorations that followed indicates that editors have broken the key principle of textualism – firstly, to investigate the text history and, then, to publish it yet not to publish it for the sake of textological investigation alone.

A usual and, seemingly, entrenching norm is as follows: obligatory publication or re-publication of a classical literary text but, afterwards,

not touching it in the textual aspect, i.e., relying on the work performed by the editors.

13) In the future, an inevitable need for complementing and correction of *Forest of the Gods* restoration work performed by earlier editors is going to arise. A renewed edition of the *Forest of the Gods* text should be based on detailed research of text history and consequent investigation of source analysis. Up to the present, the view of text history of *Forest of the Gods* was fragmentary, i.e., resulting from comparison of groups of separate texts. The comparison has not been consequent, systematic and based on the interrelations and sources of texts. For this reason, earlier claims of a „canonical“ text expressed by editors were not well-grounded.

The ever-growing disbelief of *Forest of the Gods* editors in auto-correction by Sruoga made in red ink in the MD ILLF typescript as well as gradual „uncovering“ of the deleted fragments is a testimony that the text of *Forest of the Gods* published in 2005 can already be treated as a relatively reliable reconstruction. Substitution of certain textual fragments not yet clearly distinguished by now with other, more exact, ones leaves the very essence and core of the narration unchanged. Anyway, this text of *Forest of the Gods* that is already called „canonical“ (2005) compiled on the bases of not all the surviving sources and lacking their detailed and consequent analyses could not, for sure, be treated as a critically estimated one. It has been the best and exemplary text by now but it could not in any way be evaluated as a stable norm. It still contains numerous editorial subjectivities, decisions that have not undergone critical testing and corrective inaccuracies.

14) The editors of *Forest of the Gods* used to edit not only less significant formal textual elements (*accidentals*), especially punctuation and spelling, but also performed important corrections on the notional level (*substantives*) – the author's words, phrases and paragraphs. Both the accidental and substantive elements have been infringed in *Forest of the Gods*, so it is obligatory to make the necessary resolutions and restore the literary work anew. The present research provides a solid basis for a text of the work determined by use of contemporary methods of academic edition that would be significantly and systematically closer to the author's creative intention in comparison with the publications presented officially so far. In preparation to embody this new prospect, it is also important to think about more modern representation of *Forest of the Gods* texts. Next to ordinary publication forms, possibilities of the digital dimension should

also be employed. They can be related to creation of open reception of *Forest of the Gods*. A reader having sight of all the text groups of the work would be able to construct an independent vision of the text history and to decide freely which text could be regarded as main. A textualist and archivist is and will remain only a filter providing information and creating the initial documentary picture related to a definite history of a definite text. Contemporary textualism regards an „ideal“ text of a literary work namely as a digital collection of the entire material that has survived. An electronic archive would be compatible with an „ideal“ editorial purpose: every historical document is presented in a complete and unedited form and contains no cases of external interference.

When the full or ever-filled electronic database–archive of the *Forest of the Gods* is published (including digitised texts and diplomatic transcripts of the manuscript and tapescripts), we will be really able to think of an electronic critical publication of the work based (in our opinion) on matching of three theories of three different editorial schools, i.e., German, French and Anglo-American as well as related editorial practices. The closest digital editions to the author of the book are the databases related to the creative heritage by the American writer Herman Melville (*Billy Bud, Typee, Moby Dick*) prepared by John Bryant as well as digital and printed editions of texts presented by the Belgian researcher Edward Vanhoutte.

We have quite a number of syntagmatic publications of *Forest of the Gods*, polished by different generations of editors, presented on paper or, like a single edition, in a digital form. Paradigmatic editions of *Forest of the Gods* based on diplomatic, linear or temporal transcriptions that could indicate the variance of texts are currently absent in Lithuania.