Lokalbericht

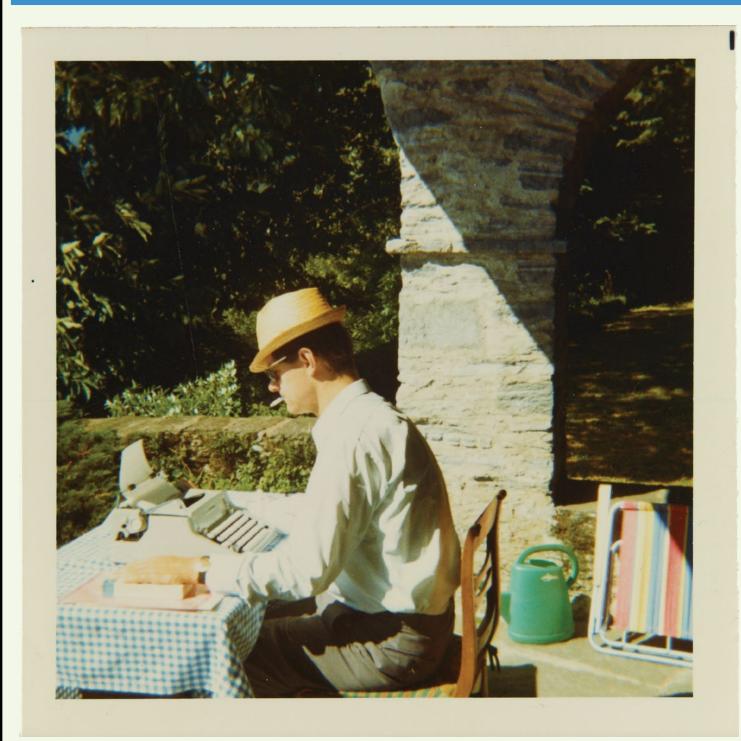## Hermann Burger's Unpublished First Novel as a Process of Gradual Production

Project Essentials

Hermann Burger in Calascino sopra Brissago, August 1970.
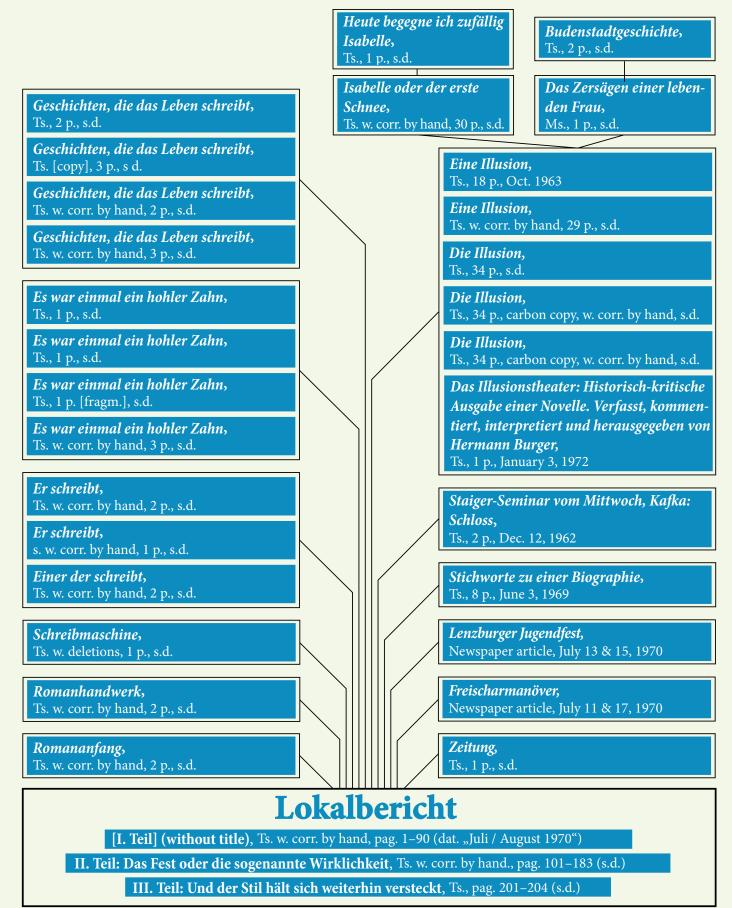Private photograph, held in Swiss Literary Archives, Berne.

The Author

The Swiss German Hermann Burger (1942–1989), winner of awards such as the Friedrich Hölderlin Prize (1983) or the Ingeborg Bachmann Prize (1985).

The Text

Lokalbericht (*Local Report*), Burger's unpublished first novel, written between 1970 and 1972 in Calascino (Ticino) and Aarau.

The Corpus

The *Lokalbericht* itself, a typescript of 177 pages, and its *avant textes*, stored in Burger's literary estate in the Swiss Literary Archives, Berne (SLA). Or, to put it stematically:

A stemmatological perspective on Burger's *Lokalbericht* (slightly simplified)

The Specialty

The novel was evolved by a mosaic technique of sorts, i.e. it is composed out of a number of *tesserae*, which Burger worked over repeatedly and afterwards fitted together like a jigsaw puzzle.

The Aim

To provide insight into Burger's way of writing, respectively—in accordance with the Kleistian title of his Frankfurt Poetry Lectures *Die allmähliche Verfertigung der Idee beim Schreiben* (1986)—to visualize the *Lokalbericht* as a process of gradual production.

A Textgenetic *editio princeps* of Hermann Burger's First Novel

The research project (2013-2016), a joint endeavour of the Swiss Literary Archives and the Cologne Center for eHumanities, aims to deliver a scholarly digital edition of *Lokalbericht* that includes all extant precursory stages of the novel, accompanied by an edition in print that is based on Burger's final revision, i. e. the *Lokalbericht* typescript.

Newspaper Paradigm

Reporting, quoting, treating words and topics as a textual construction kit—Burger's way of writing has much in common with the tessellated textual structure of a newspaper. *Lokalbericht*—or more precisely its evidence in the archive—sheds a particularly illuminating light on this aspect of Burger's poetology.

Archive Paradigm

In order to reveal the dynamic process that is the gradual production, the digital edition will include the *dossier génétique* of *Lokalbericht* in its entirety. The reason why: an adequate reception and interpretation of the novel requires the inclusion of all relating archival evidence; the metafictional and metatextual dimensions of *Lokalbericht* risk to be forfeited without a visualization of the genetic constitution.

Encoding Approach

While Burger meticulously preserved all writings, his writing technique may be characterised as mental rather than material. Relatively few subsequent alterations are manifest on the typescripts, yet different versions of the same text often differ considerably. Genetical variance is thus not immediately visible on a given typescript page.

The chosen encoding method takes this into account by adopting a model that has the primacy of the physical object at its core, from which the text (as a literary object) is derived through different renderings. Owing much to the work of the Genetic Edition Working Group in the Manuscript SIG of the TEI, the TEI guidelines (P5 v. 2.0 and above) provide the *<sourceDoc>* element, a suitable high-level container for this kind of markup.

Whereas the *<sourceDoc>* element allows for a largely non-interpretative encoding of the physical appearance and some microgenetic variance, many other aspects of the encoding need to be stored elsewhere. For the encoding of all relations that go beyond a single source page we consider the use of typed link groups within *sourceDoc*. This is however methodically not rigorous (relations should not be part of the physical description), thus we support the introduction of a designated *standoff* container as it is currently discussed in the TEI community.

Isabelle oder der erste Schnee, Ts. w. corr. by hand, 30 p., s.d.

Die Illusion, Ts., 34 p., s.d.

transcription

carbon copy (montage)

editorial comment "the title indicates an intended standalone publication"

iteration

location comment "this refers to Argovia (student association)"

Lokalbericht II. Teil, Das Fest oder die sogenannte Wirklichkeit, Ts. w. corr. by hand., pag. 101–183 (s.d.)

Textual components are identifiable by four-part signatures

A sample typescript page of *Lokalbericht* **and its relation to different** *avant textes*. This example shows the transfer of a passage of a draft titled *Isabelle oder der erste Schnee* by way of another draft (*Die Illusion*) to the second part of the *Lokalbericht* typescript. Note how the second step of this transfer was accomplished by integrating a physical copy of the *avant texte*.

Some examples of typed link groups:
- page order
- editorial comments
- location comments
- montage / decontextualisation
- copy
- transcription
- thematic relationship
- iteration
- adaption
- general (semantically unspecified relationship)

The *<domain>* attribute may be used to define the scope (text, chapter, paragraph, sentence).

Using typed link groups for the encoding of macro relationships

Makeshift encoding of the sample page relying on the high-level *<sourceDoc>* element