

Hannah Arendt. Kritische Gesamtausgabe

Hannah Arendt. *Kritische Gesamtausgabe*. <https://hannah-arendt-edition.net/home> (Last Accessed: 2026-03-10).

Reviewed by  Martina Chiara (University of Bologna), chiara [dot] martina3 [at] studio [dot] unibo [dot] it.

DOI: 10.18716/ride.a.22.1

Abstract

The *Hannah Arendt Kritische Gesamtausgabe* is a critical edition aiming to provide a comprehensive and accurate collection of the works of Hannah Arendt. As an ongoing project, it seeks to give scholars access to both published and unpublished writings, with new materials being made available over time. The project is conceived as a hybrid edition, combining both print and digital publications. It is a fundamental resource for the Arendtiani studies, enriching the corpus with unpublished materials from international archives. The review assesses the project against Scholarly Digital Editions (SDE) criteria, highlighting its academic importance and limitations. The edition represents a significant contribution to the dissemination and understanding of Arendt's thinking, promoting a dialogue between tradition and innovation.

Opening the Review

Who was Hannah Arendt?

“The world of Hannah Arendt, one of the most important and controversial figures in 20th-century thought, a brilliant political thinker who refused to consider herself a philosopher, a woman who never saw being born feminine as an obstacle, a Jew attacked as an anti-Semite, an intellectual famous for her polemical style and admired for the rigor of her arguments.”

Boella 2020, 4

The question may seem simple at first glance, but it is far from obvious. Answering it requires delving into multiple aspects of Arendt's life and thought. Her personal history, especially her experience of exile and the impact of World War II*, played a crucial role in shaping her ideas. Additionally, the question invites reflection on an important distinction Arendt made: the difference between the ‘who’ and the ‘what’ of a person.

Arendt defines the ‘who’ as the unique identity of an individual, shaped by their actions and relationships, while the ‘what’ refers to their objective characteristics, such as their social role or achievements. Reflecting on Arendt through this lens, we see how the philosophical concepts she developed to analyze the human condition also help us understand her identity. The ‘who’ dimension of Arendt is reflected in her life, lived

through teachings, lectures, poems, letters, and friendships, a representation of her way of interacting with others and living the world. At the same time, the 'what' allows us to analyze her works, her role as an intellectual, and the lasting impact of her thought.

It thus becomes evident why the *Hannah Arendt Kritische Gesamtausgabe* (hereafter HA.CW.CE, an abbreviation derived from the project's English title) holds such significance. The HA.CW.CE aims to offer an authoritative and cohesive collection of Arendt's writings in a hybrid edition, making them more accessible and usable for scholars, students, and those engaged with Arendt's philosophy.

This project aims to offer a comprehensive platform to explore both the 'who' and the 'what' of Arendt, her unique personal identity and her intellectual contributions. A critical digital edition allows us to delve into the 'who' of Arendt by providing access to a wide range of materials beyond her published works. These resources offer an intimate glimpse into her life, helping us better understand the personal experiences and relationships that shaped her thinking. At the same time, the edition presents her intellectual legacy, offering a structured and detailed presentation of her ideas (the 'what').

The edition will serve as an invaluable resource, shedding light on the intellectual depth of Arendt's contributions and ensuring that her thought continues to resonate in contemporary debates on politics, ethics, and human freedom.

The editorial team of the HA.CW.CE comprises distinguished scholars and experts dedicated to the comprehensive study of Hannah Arendt's works. Project coordination, handled by Hannah Gerlach and Dr. Ingo Kieslich, involves the overall management and coordination of the initiative. The technical infrastructure and realization are managed by a team including Dr. Jan Brase, Fabian Etling, Dr. Brigitte Grote, Prof. Dr. Wolfram Horstmann, Stefan Hynek, and Dr. des. Christoph Kudella. A substantial number of scholars have contributed significantly to the project.* The HA.CW.CE received long-term funding from the German Research Foundation in 2020, highlighting its significance in scholarly circles. Financial resources have been crucial for sustaining the extensive research infrastructure and ensuring the project's longevity.

Publication Schedule and Editorial Teams

Volume	Title	Editors	Print	Digital
6	The Modern Challenge to Tradition: Fragmente eines Buchs	Barbara Hahn, Vanderbilt University / Freie Universität Berlin James McFarland, Vanderbilt University With the support of: Ingo Kieslich, Freie Universität Berlin, Ingeborg Nordmann, Frankfurt/Main	2018	2023
3	Sechs Essays / Die verborgene Tradition	Barbara Hahn, Vanderbilt University / Freie Universität Berlin With the support of: Barbara Breysach, Europa-Universität Viadrina, Frankfurt/Oder, Christian Pischel, Hochschule für Musik und Theater „Felix Mendelssohn Bartholdy“ Leipzig	2019	2020

Screenshot of the table “Plan of Edition”.

In the section “Editions plan” there is an overview of the thematic organization of the critical edition of Hannah Arendt’s writings, including information on specific volumes, editors and the planned dates for the publication of both print and digital formats of parts of the edition (Fig. 1). The edition is structured into 17 thematic complexes, each focusing on a specific aspect of Arendt’s works.

This is a strong point of this edition as it provides a detailed overview of the release dates for print and digital versions, allows users to plan their reading and keep track of the available parts of the edition.

Subject and Content of the Edition

The HA.CW.CE employs a hybrid approach^{*} that integrates both printed and digital formats, leveraging the strengths of each. The print edition offers a carefully edited, annotated version of Arendt’s works with critical commentary, providing a stable and permanent scholarly resource. In contrast, the digital edition enriches this by offering interactive features, such as diplomatic transcriptions, facsimiles, and XML-TEI documents, with all textual variants and editorial markup visible for direct analysis. This methodology creates a comprehensive environment for studying Arendt’s works, allowing users to explore and analyze texts in multiple formats. The printed edition maintains the tangible dimension of a text, while the digital version offers dynamic features such as advanced search tools, interactive collation, and global access.

HA.CW.CE emerges as a resource of primary importance for Arendtian studies and the humanities in general. The digital edition will include approximately 21,000 pages of material, gathered from archival institutions such as the Library of Congress (Washington, D.C.), the Deutsches Literaturarchiv (Marbach), and Bard College (New York). These holdings comprise both already known documents and a substantial

number of previously unpublished or unstudied materials, such as typescripts, corrected proofs, and handwritten notes, identified within these and other international collections. This archival breadth significantly expands the reference corpus and deepens the potential for scholarly inquiry.

The selection criteria for inclusion in the edition are clearly defined:

1. Works authored by Hannah Arendt, whether published or unpublished;
2. Documents that attest to the multilingual nature of Arendt's production (German, English, French, Yiddish).

The objective is to provide a representative and comprehensive collection that reflects Arendt's intellectual contributions and the plurality of her linguistic and cultural contexts. The goal is to include a representative set of works and documents covering different aspects of Arendt's thoughts, intellectual productions, and the expansion of the corpus through the discovery and inclusion of new materials. The inclusion of unpublished works is particularly significant for current and future research, offering fresh insights and previously unavailable information.

The texts in HA.CW.CE are presented in the original language, written by Arendt, allowing scholars to examine the material in its original form. In addition, the project provides a range of tools, including navigation tools, full-text searches and visualization tools, which facilitate the discovery and analysis of the contents. The project promises that the various thematic complexes will be initially published in book format by Wallstein Verlag in Göttingen. Then, one year after the print publication, they will be made globally and freely accessible. This will take place through the web portal managed by the Freie University of Berlin. HA.CW.CE aims to publish a wide range of materials such as complete texts, images, facsimiles, diplomatic transcriptions, digital markup, commentaries, bibliographies and metadata. The digital edition offers an in-depth view of Arendt's thinking and writing processes through a variety of sources, allowing scholars to examine her work comprehensively.

Technical Implementation and Infrastructure

The HA.CW.CE employs a well-documented technical infrastructure (see "Technical Documentation" on the website). All edition data, including TEI-encoded transcriptions, editorial annotations, indices, and facsimiles, is stored in the TextGrid Repository, allowing for structured storage and long-term preservation. All data is encoded in XML-TEI according to the Guidelines of the TEI Consortium, ensuring interoperability with established scholarly standards. Editing is carried out using Oxygen XML Editor, enhanced with custom frameworks and the ediarum.jar library for indexing, while client-side editing is facilitated through specialized add-ons.

The web application is built on the eXist-db XML database using the SADE framework, which forms the core of the edition's architecture. In line with principles of sustainability and modularity, the portal is being restructured to ensure a strict separation of backend and frontend and the development of edition-specific front-end components as custom web components based on open standards. A RESTful API is currently under development in accordance with the OpenAPI standard, enabling automated reuse of edition data by third parties. The publication of the project's source code under an open license is also in preparation, according to the information on the website.

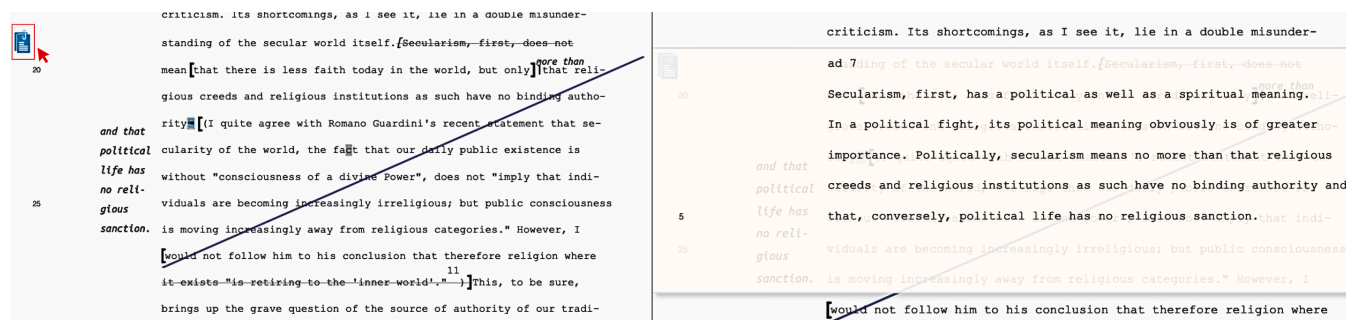
On the user-facing side, the interface combines Bootstrap for layout and design, OpenSeadragon for high-quality facsimile presentation, LERA for text comparison, Voyant Tools for corpus-based text analysis, and Timeline.js for interactive visualizations of events. The timeline displays in chronological order key events in Hannah Arendt's life and work, providing a valuable tool for analyzing the temporal and contextual dimensions of her production.

Authority data in the person index is enriched with GND identifiers, ensuring stable referencing of persons. In accordance with the FAIR principles (Findable, Accessible, Interoperable, Reusable) (Wilkinson et al. 2016), all third-party data is transparently credited, and the use of open licenses (LGPLv3, MIT, BSD, CC-BY, CC0) ensures reusability. At present, explicit information regarding persistent identifiers (PIDs, DOIs) and formal strategies for certified long-term archiving has not yet been provided.* The adoption of persistent identifiers and long-term archiving strategies could be considered to strengthen the citation, interoperability and long-term sustainability of the edition.

Aims and Methods

The HA.CW.CE provides differently edited versions of Hannah Arendt's texts within a single edition, each serving distinct scholarly purposes. A critically edited version presents a single, edited version of the text, accompanied by detailed introductory material, explanatory notes, and textual annotations. On the other hand, the diplomatically edited version preserves the original manuscripts in their authentic form, showcasing features like erasure marks, insertions, and other specific characteristics of the original material. But how does the possibility of comparing the critically edited text and the diplomatically edited text enrich the understanding of the work of Hannah Arendt? How does the perception of the work change through a comparative reading of both versions of the texts?

The tools enrich the perception of the work by providing a balance between the clarity and readability of a critically edited text and the fidelity to the original of a diplomatically edited text. They allow readers to immerse themselves in the author's thinking and creative process in a more complete way, understanding both the result and the intermediate stages of its processing. These tools are particularly useful for tracking the changes the author made over time, offering valuable insight into their process of revising and refining the text.

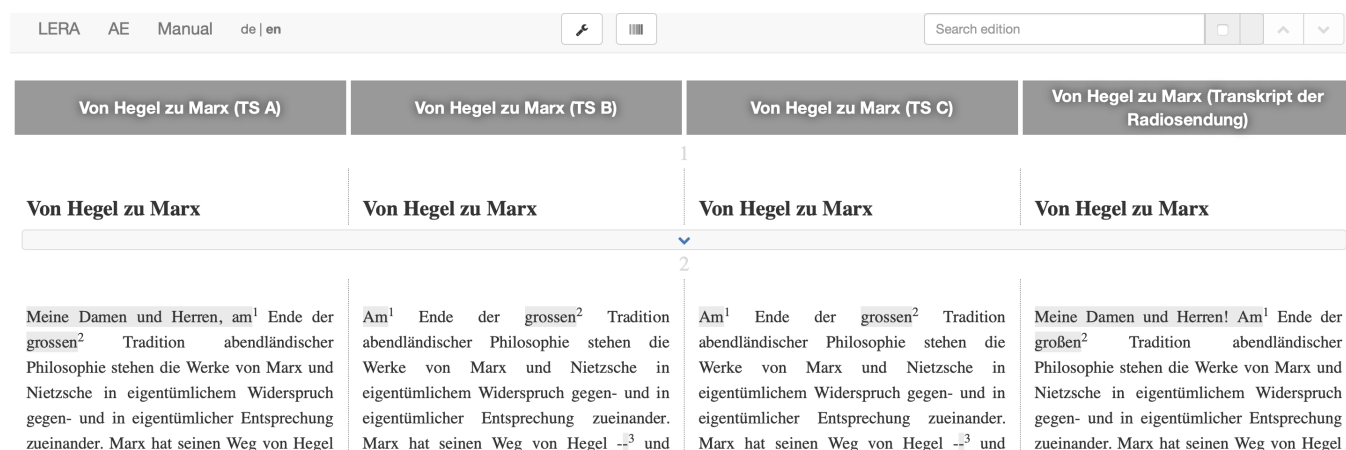


Screenshot of the *Superimpositions* tool in *The Modern Challenge to Tradition: Religion and Politics* [Typescript A].

One example of a helpful tool is when one layer of text is placed on top of another (see Fig. 2). The original text remains visible underneath, and the modified or added text appears on top. The original text is shown with a light gray background to differentiate it from the new content. When you move your mouse pointer

over a blue icon on the left margin of the page, it lets you see the new text that has been added or changed. This feature makes it easy to track revisions and compare the original and updated versions of the document.*

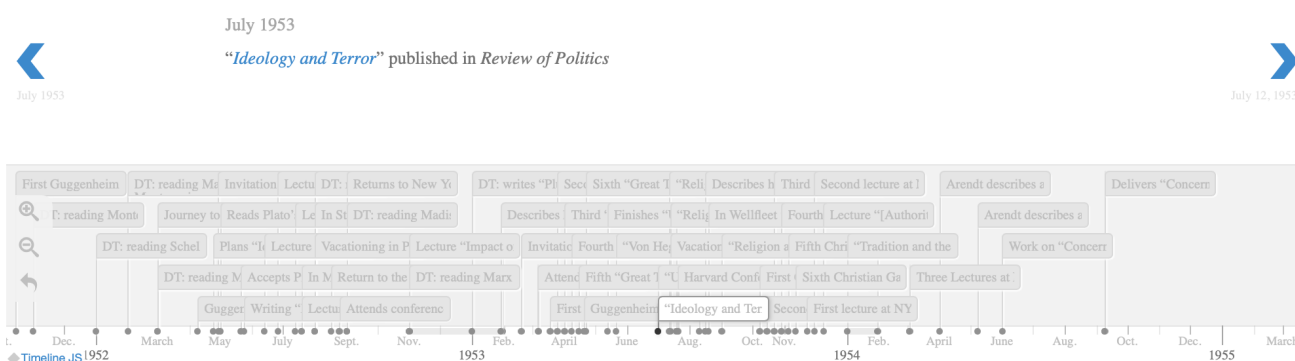
As Wim Van Mierlo observes, “where editing and curating overlap is in the coincidence of their respective creative-critical process” (Van Mierlo 2020). Editorial tools not only preserve the authenticity of the original text but also offer a critical lens through which the reader can engage with the text’s development. By superimposing layers of text and allowing for an interactive examination of the author’s revisions, these tools facilitate a deeper understanding of the creative process, bridging the gap between the final work and its developmental stages. Currently, all manuscripts are available in a critical version but not all of them have yet been completed in a diplomatic version.



Screenshot of a display of multiple versions of a text based on the LERA tool.

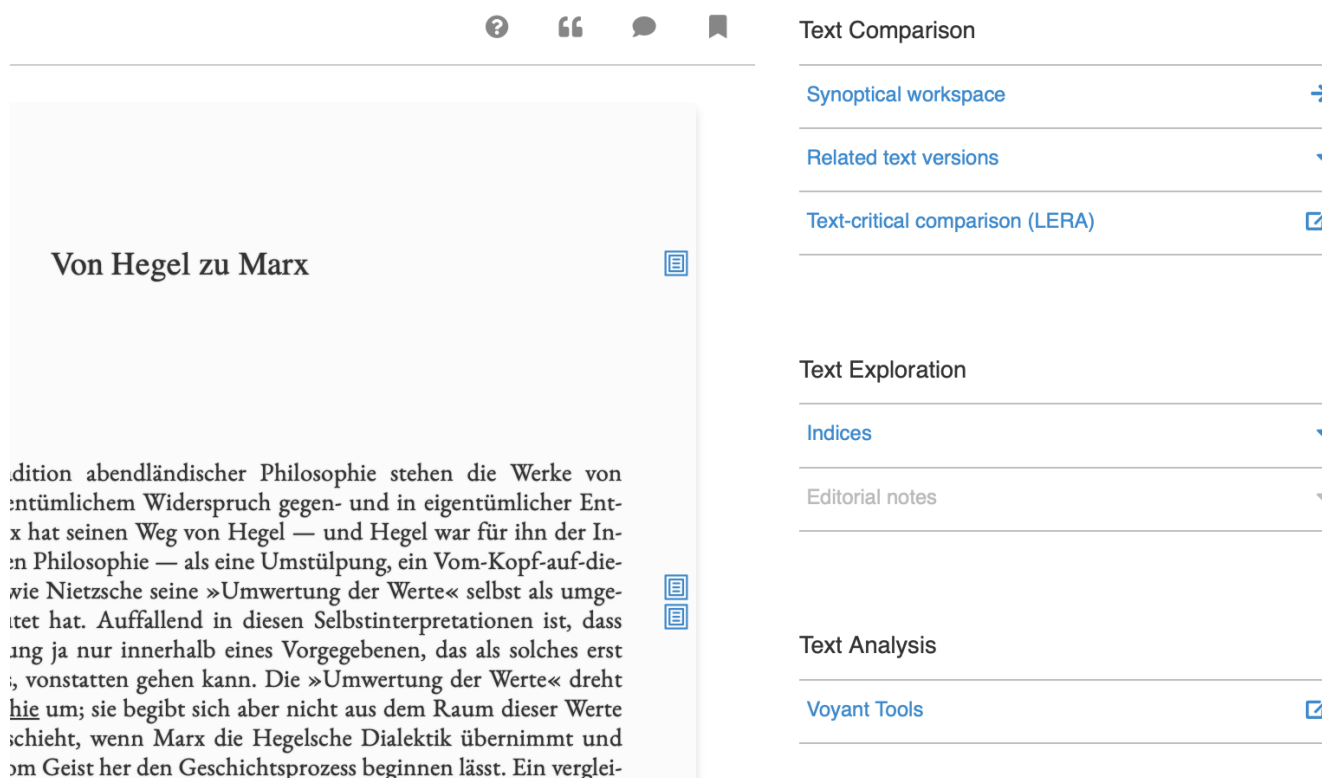
In this edition, multiple sources are provided, offering more than one official version of the text and opening the possibility for critical analysis based on different witnesses.* HA.CW.CE employs the tool LERA (Locate, Explore, Retrace, and Apprehend)* to examine the similarities and differences among various versions of a text (see Fig. 3). Using LERA, the texts are segmented into passages and displayed side by side. I think LERA's use within the DSE is revolutionary because it assists users in understanding the author’s intentions. The edition also incorporates interactive tools such as CATview, a tool designed for visualizing and comparing different versions of a text, as well as word clouds and advanced search functionality. CATview is particularly useful for analyzing textual variants in critical editions, providing a dynamic way to interact with the data.*

Timeline



Screenshot of the *Timeline*.

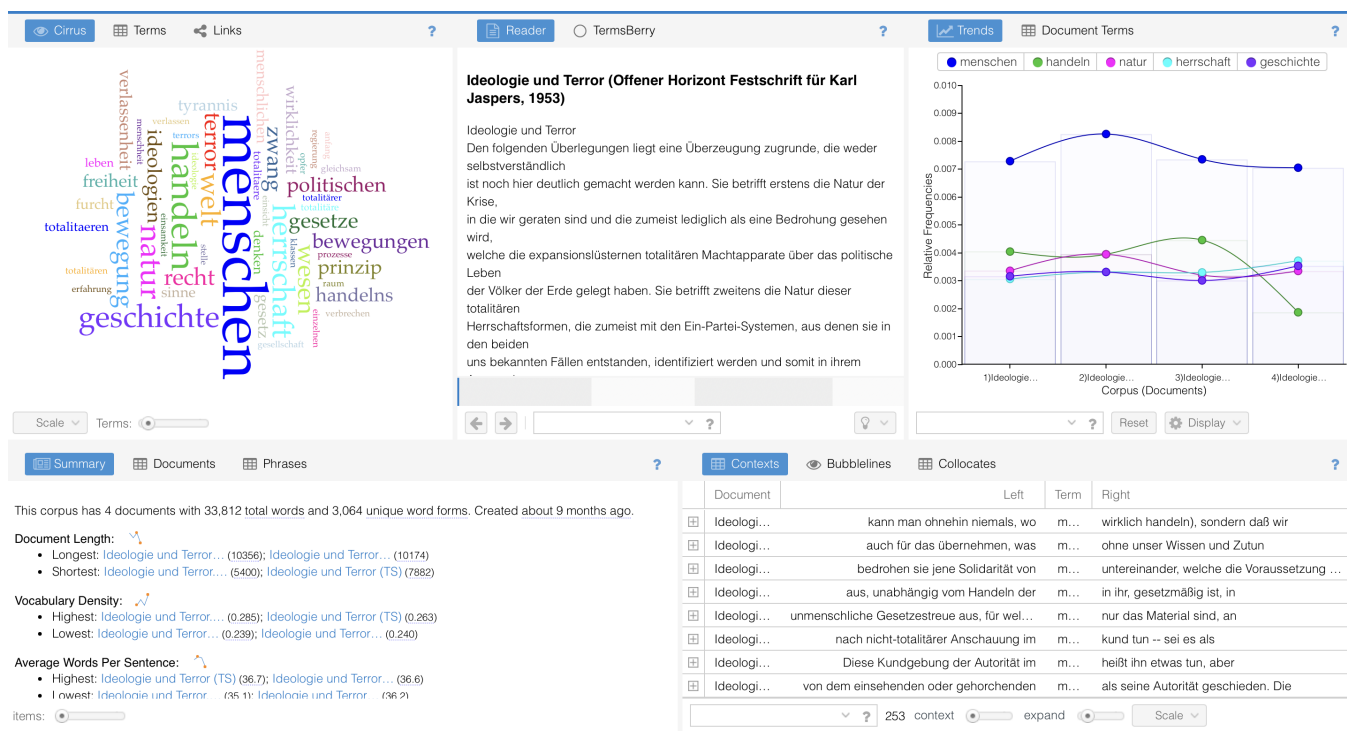
The critical edition aims to present all the published and unpublished works of Hannah Arendt, including thousands of pages of previously unknown documents from various archival sources.* The main page of each work is divided into three sections: the Title, “Content”, and “Sections”. The introduction outlines the historical context of the works or documents and explains their intended content and objectives. “Sections” indicates the temporal or thematic subdivisions present in the work. In some cases this refers to different categories or types of materials within the work, such as books or typescripts. At the end of the page, an overall timeline offers an overview of the editorial process behind the edition (see Fig. 4). The timeline provides valuable insights into the origins and development of Arendt’s work by presenting, in chronological order, key information such as the publication dates of texts, lectures, and conferences, as well as datable readings, correspondence, travels, and periods of work. This tool is useful because it shows how Arendt’s texts evolved over time in response to historical events, helping scholars connect her editorial choices with broader intellectual and political contexts.



Screenshot of the section “Texts”.

When accessing texts, users can select from several text views, including diplomatic representation, constituted text, facsimile, or XML code. Interactive tools are available to allow users to work with the text. To the right of the text, additional tools are provided (Fig. 5):

- Text Comparison, with “Synoptical Workspace”, “Related text versions” and “Text-critical comparison (LERA)”
- Text Exploration, with “Indices” and “Editorial notes” (the latter are not available).
- Text Analysis, with “Voyant Tools“.*.



Screenshot of the Voyant Tools applied to *Ideologie und Terror*

The use of Voyant Tools in the HA.CW.CE edition represents a significant added value, as it allows for a detailed analysis of crucial concepts in Hannah Arendt's philosophy. For instance, the high frequency of the words “menschen” (people), “handeln” (act), and “natur” (nature) in the corpus of *Ideologie und Terror*^{*} (Fig. 6) reflects the central themes of the work. Arendt examines how ideologies impact individuals and how they respond to them, exploring human action as a reaction to ideological violence. She also analyzes how these ideologies define the possibilities for resistance or submission. The concept of nature is linked to the examination of social and political structures that shape human behavior. These key terms highlight Arendt's critical analysis of the mechanisms of totalitarianism and their consequences on both individuals and society.

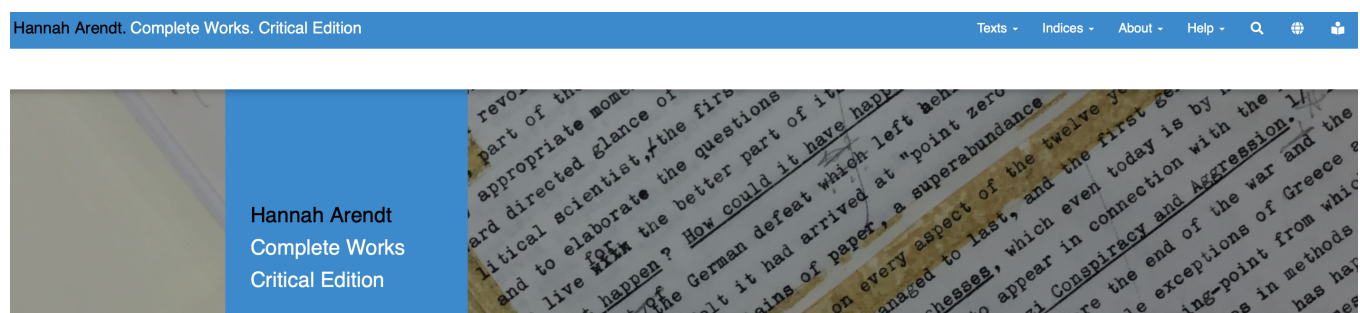
Among the advantages, Voyant Tools allows for the analysis of words in their context through concordances and collocations, for comparing the frequency and usage of certain terms in her essays, and for exploring the evolution of Arendt's writing style over time. Additionally, identifying co-occurrences of terms and concepts can reveal interesting semantic and thematic relationships within her works, providing numerous perspectives. Although Voyant Tools have been partially integrated into the HA.CW.CE digital platform, their application is limited^{*} and inconsistently documented. In addition, the website offers no clear explanation or mapping of which texts are actually available for analysis through Voyant. To enhance the user experience and usability of Voyant Tools, it would be beneficial to create a dedicated documentation section on the website. This section should provide a comprehensive list of all the digitized texts available for analysis with Voyant, along with clear indications of their availability. This would help users better understand the resources available to them and make the most of the analytical capabilities offered.

We find supportive elements, marked with icons, such as the “Reading Aid”, which offers guides to understanding the texts and diplomatic representations, explaining the visual conventions and editorial devices used, along with citation recommendations and an editorial introduction that help guide the reader through the analysis. These features enhance the reader's engagement with the text.

The XML-TEI markup language allows for a detailed transcription of textual sources enriched with metadata. It would be advisable for the digital edition to ensure that XML-TEI data is easily accessible and downloadable for researchers. Currently, the digital edition only allows access but not the download of XML-TEI documents, thus representing a limitation.* Allowing the download of XML-TEI documents would give researchers the ability to use their own software and tools to analyze and manipulate the data. For example, researchers could download the XML-TEI files and run custom scripts to extract specific information, such as tracking the frequency of particular terms across multiple texts or integrating the data with other research projects. This flexibility would allow for more advanced analysis, fostering deeper insights. Additionally, enabling downloads ensures that researchers retain control over their work, making it possible to continue their studies even if the original platform were to be discontinued or become obsolete. The edition applies a CC BY-NC-SA license, which explicitly permits sharing and adaptation under non-commercial terms. Therefore, this restriction may not be due to copyright issues alone, but could reflect an editorial decision aimed at preserving the integrity of the edition or guiding its usage within a controlled environment. The ongoing development of a public RESTful API suggests that broader reusability will be supported in the near future.

Interface, Sustainability and Usability

The general parameters of the website are readily accessible and compiled within the “About” and “Help” sections on the main page. In particular, the subsections “Navigation” and “About this Edition” provide useful information regarding the site's navigational structure and user flow. It is essential to read them before exploring the website to have more clarity and take full advantage of the features offered by the site.



Screenshot of the homepage.

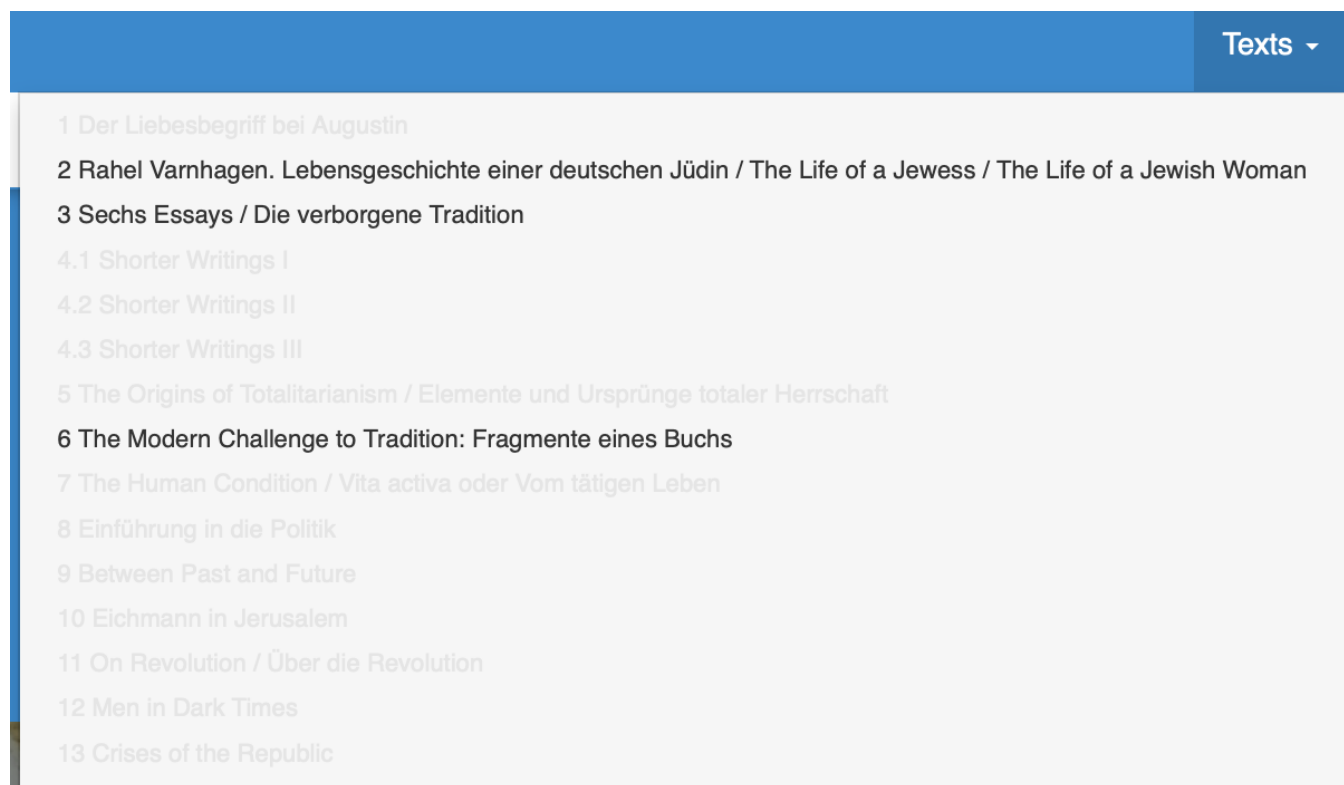
The homepage (Fig. 7) is well-structured and intuitive, providing a clear overview of the critical edition. However, it does not effectively capture the user's attention; it appears somewhat static and lacks an engaging visual dynamic. Furthermore, there is no dedicated section presenting a biographical overview of Hannah Arendt, which would help the user's understanding of her intellectual background and historical significance. A more dynamic and visually compelling homepage design would significantly improve user engagement and overall accessibility. Introducing elements or a more structured layout could enhance the platform's appeal. Incorporating a dedicated biography section about the philosopher would offer users a valuable resource to understand her life, intellectual journey, and major influences. Such an addition would provide deeper insights into the historical context shaping her thought and contributions, thereby enriching the platform's academic and educational value. Additionally, since this digital edition provides access to tools such as Voyant Tools and others, adding a brief section on the homepage featuring icons representing these tools would be beneficial. This would allow users to immediately see the resources available to them, making navigation more intuitive and optimizing their research experience.

HA.CW.CE is accessible in both English and German. To change the language there is a button located in the upper right of the navbar with the titles “English/Deutsch”. In terms of aesthetics, the design maintains consistency and harmony, emphasizing simplicity to facilitate website navigation and enhance the understanding of its content. Users remain well-oriented, with a clear understanding of their position within the site’s structure. The strategic use of colors, predominantly blue and white, contributes to this clarity.

The critical edition is organized into four main navigation subsections: “Text”, “Indices”, “About”, and “Help”. These sections allow users to explore the project from different perspectives:

1. Text: Provides a chronological display of documents.
2. Indices: Includes the “Persons” section, an alphabetical index of individuals mentioned in or linked to specific documents, and “Events”. The “Works” and “Subjects” subsections are currently incomplete.
3. About: Divided into six subsections, it offers the following information: “About this edition”, “Hybrid edition”, “Publication schedule”, “Editorial guidelines”, “Technical Documentation” and “Team”.
4. Help: Provides support in navigating through sections like “Navigation”, “How to cite”, “Versioning”, “Copyright”, and “Contact”.

The “Text” section currently lists 17 edited volumes, but only three are available up to now (see Fig. 8). Titles and sections related to volumes not yet accessible are displayed in gray, aligning with the planned future “Publication Schedule”. However, it might be more effective to make only the completed documents visible, temporarily removing the grayed-out display for incomplete ones. This could enhance the user experience by avoiding a sense of incompleteness and potential disorientation.



Screenshot of the thematic complexes.

The critical edition features high-quality images of the documents, enabling users to scrutinize them carefully and verify the accuracy of the transcription in detail without compromising quality. However, it is not always possible to access the facsimile of the original document. This is a critical aspect because the handwriting,

marginal notes, and original marks of the author are valuable elements for study. While the content is provided under the CC BY-NC-SA 4.0 license, which allows for non-commercial sharing and adaptation, the absence of an explanation regarding the availability of facsimiles could leave users questioning the editorial choices or technical limitations behind this decision. A strong point of the project concerns the tools for analyzing the facsimile of original documents, such as the ability to zoom in and out of images or scroll quickly. However, to further enhance interaction, it would be advisable to introduce additional features, such as text search or the inclusion of contextual information, for example, the historical origin of the document, for example in a *Complete Corpus of Sechs Essays*. Integrating such elements would significantly enhance the overall accessibility and utility of the facsimile within the site. For instance, a text search feature would allow users to quickly locate specific information within a document, making the research process more efficient. This would be particularly valuable for scholars conducting detailed studies, as it saves time. Additionally, including contextual information about the historical origin of each document would provide users with a richer understanding of the material.

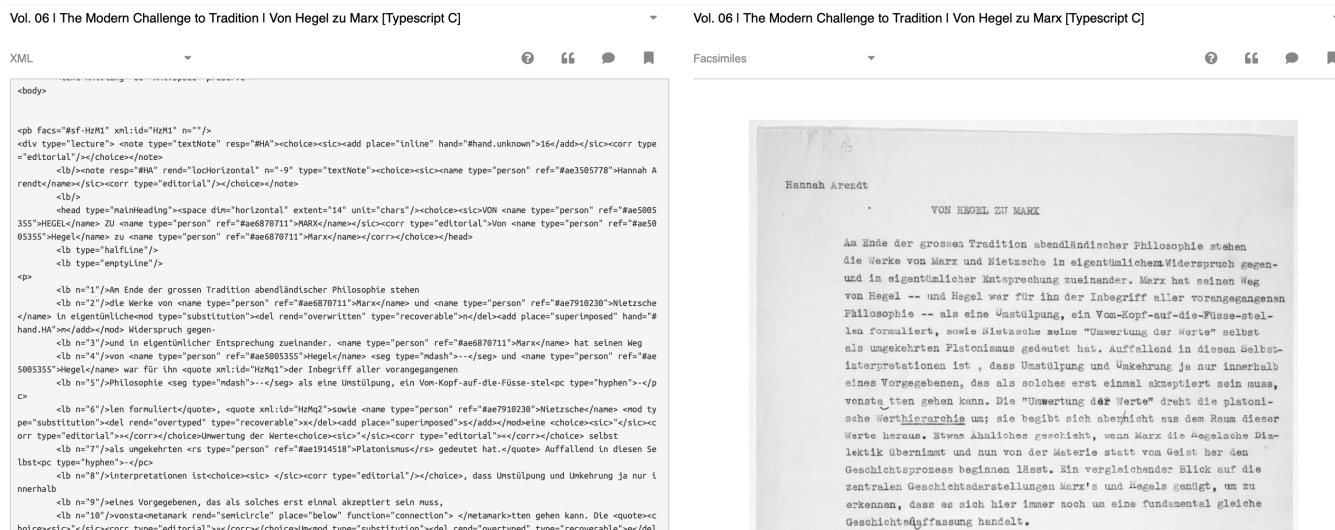
Your Bookmarks

Title	Vol.	Timestamp	
Zionism Reconsidered [Typescript]	3	16/09/2025, 15:17:17	

Screenshot of the “Personal Library” section.

Another key advantage of this digital edition is the ability to create a personal library (see Fig. 9), which enhances the reading experience by allowing users to easily store and access their saved texts. To use this feature, users can set or remove bookmarks via the respective button in the text viewer's header. Once saved, bookmarks are stored internally in the browser, and they persist even when the website is closed, or the device is powered off. This feature provides a smooth and personalized reading experience, allowing users to quickly return to previously marked texts at any time.

Links are present everywhere in this SDE. Each page allows the user to move smoothly to another section of the site. The accurate use of color, as already shown, facilitates the understanding of how the links are presented and what to expect from them. A negative aspect concerns the inaccessibility of some links highlighted in gray. The items within the website are easily distinguishable based on their type, such as the dates and archival reference for a specific document, registered persons or search entries, etc. A critical point concerns the lack of integration with social media, which reduces the potential for dissemination, interaction, and public discussion of the materials presented in the edition. It is possible to view the XML-TEI documents that form the basis of the text presentation. The XML format is used to represent data in a clear and structured manner. In addition, a very important aspect is the “Synoptical Workspace” that allows comparing multiple versions or representations of a text simultaneously (see Fig. 10). This is a significant feature of this SDE as it provides scholars with the opportunity to explore in detail the relationships between the text marked up in the XML format and its visual representation.



Screenshot of the section “Text”, comparison between XML document and a facsimile.

Alternative formats such as a printable version or formats compatible with specific reading devices (such as e-Book readers or other mobile devices) are not available, and downloading a document is not possible. This limitation is not explicitly explained on the website and it constitutes a disadvantageous point because it limits the accessibility and usability of the content for users who prefer to read offline. To address this issue, the platform could introduce features that allow users to download documents in multiple formats, such as PDF for printing, ePub for e-Readers, and mobile-friendly formats for smartphones and tablets. The advantages of offering alternative formats are considerable. Firstly, they would significantly improve user accessibility by allowing individuals to access the content in their preferred format and on their preferred device. This would cater to a broader audience, including those with limited internet access or a preference for offline reading. Additionally, it could contribute to environmental sustainability by reducing the need for continuous internet connectivity and its associated energy consumption. Overall, this approach would make the critical edition more accessible, versatile, and environmentally conscious.

HA.CW.CE has a dedicated page addressing rights and licenses, with detailed information available in the “Help” section, particularly on the “Copyright” page. The archive has chosen to implement the CC BY-NC-SA license. This implies that users:

- are permitted to freely share, copy, and redistribute all content on the website, provided they give credit to the authors (BY);
- are restricted from using the material for commercial purposes (NC);
- any adaptation must be shared under the same or a similar license, ensuring a continuous open access for subsequent works (SA).

This choice of license promotes openness and scholarly reuse, while also safeguarding the edition from commercial exploitation.

The documentation of the project sources is detailed in the “About” section, and the original sources of the documents within the database are always cited with their archival reference. Additionally, in the “Publication Schedule” section, there is a tab available to view the schedule of the 17 thematic complexes with dates. One drawback I encountered is the difficulty of navigating through the content without a clear reference index. When a user searches for a specific chapter, they are forced to scroll manually until they find it, which

can be frustrating and inefficient, especially in such a large work. This manual search process can slow down the reading experience and reduce the accessibility of the work, creating a barrier for those who need to easily consult specific sections.

Text Exploration

Indices

Editorial notes

Table of contents

Prototype. On the right, you can see the addition of the “Table of Contents” section.

Constituted text

Jewess and Shlemihl
(1771-1795)

“What a history!—A fugitive from Egypt and Palestine, here I am and find help, love, fostering in you people. With real rapture I think of these origins of mine and this whole nexus of destiny, through which the oldest memories of the human race stand by side with the latest developments. The greatest distances in time and space are bridged. The thing which all my life seemed to me the greatest shame, which was the misery and misfortune of my life—having been born a Jewess—this I should on no account now wish to have missed.” These are the words Karl August Varnhagen von Ense reports Rahel to have said on her deathbed. It had taken her sixty-three years to come to terms with a problem which had its beginnings seventeen hundred years before her birth, which underwent a crucial upheaval during her life, and which one hundred years after her death—she died on March 7, 1833—was slated to come to an end.

It may well be difficult for us to understand our own history when we are born in 1771 in Berlin and that history has already begun seventeen hundred years earlier in Jerusalem. But if we do not understand it, and if we are not outright opportunists who always accept the here-and-now, who circumvent unpleasantness by lies and forget the good, our history will take its revenge, will exert its superiority and become our personal destiny. And that is never any pleasure for the person affected. Rahel’s history would not be curtailed because she had forgotten it, nor would it turn out to be any more original because she, in utter innocence, experienced the whole of it as if it were happening for the first time. But history becomes more definitive when (and how rarely this happens) it concentrates its whole force upon an individual’s destiny; when it encounters a person who has no way of barri-

Text Comparison

Synoptical workspace

Related text versions

Text-critical comparison (LERA)

Text Exploration

Indices

Editorial notes

Table of contents

1. Preface
2. Preface to the Revised Edition
3. Jewess and Shlemihl (1771–1795)
4. Into the World: By Marriage Through Love (1795–1799)
5. All Over: How Can One Go on Living? (1799–1800)
6. Flight Abroad: The Beautiful World (1800–1801)
7. Magic, Beauty, Folly (1802–1804)
8. Answers: The Great Good Fortune (1805–1807)
9. Assimilation (1807–1808)
10. Day and Night
11. The Beggar by the Wayside (1808–1809)
12. Bankruptcy of a Friendship (1809–1811)
13. Civil Betterment: Story of a Career (1811–1814)
14. Between Pariah and Parvenu (1815–1819)
15. One Does Not Escape Jewishness (1820–1833)
16. Chronology
17. Bibliography

Prototype. In the “Table of Contents”, when the user clicks on the arrow, a dropdown panel opens with the corresponding chapter (highlighted in blue) and the related text next to it.

Take, for example, the work *Rahel Varnhagen. The Life of a Jewess*. *Rahel Varnhagen: The Life of a Jewish Woman* (1957) is a biography by Hannah Arendt that intertwines with her intellectual and personal journey.* Arendt explores the conflict between identity and social integration.* However, navigating such substantial

texts can be difficult without an efficient search tool. A possible way to address this issue would be to add an interactive index, such as a Table of Contents with a dropdown menu (see Fig. 11).^{*} Each time a user searches for a specific chapter title, they could click on it to open a dropdown menu with related sections from the book's index (see Fig. 12). This would quickly redirect them to the desired part, improving the reading experience and making it easier to consult the texts. Such a feature would enhance the edition's usability, especially for study, by streamlining navigation.

Conclusion

HA.CW.CE can be considered a SDE, if we stick to its definition given by Patrick Sahle in the Criteria for Reviewing SDE (Sahle 2024):

- The critical edition aims to include a complete set of works by Hannah Arendt to ensure accurate representation of works and documents;
- Attention to textual criticism, the integration of facsimiles, diplomatic transcriptions and metadata, together with the use of digital technologies, contributes to creating a critical and accurate representation of writings;
- The edition presents a well-justified editorial approach and sets forth its own rules, which are consistently adhered to.

The critical edition serves as an invaluable source of information about the writer and her work, possessing the necessary credentials in terms of authority and materials. However, to enhance and evolve into a complete and exemplary SDE, several innovations are needed:

- Add a connection to social media for information sharing: Integrating social media allows sharing updates, new discoveries, and developments with a broader community. This not only increases the project's visibility but also creates a dynamic communication channel with the audience, fostering interaction and participation.
- Improve homepage design: A more dynamic and visually compelling design would significantly improve user engagement and overall accessibility. Introducing a more structured layout could enhance the platform's appeal.
- Add bibliographic information on Hannah Arendt: Providing an overview of the biography can help users better understand the philosopher's thought and influences. This adds depth to the critical edition, making it a more comprehensive resource for scholars and enthusiasts.
- Complete missing translation: Ensuring that all sections of the site are fully translated facilitates access to a wider audience. This makes the resource more inclusive and accessible.
- Added Voyant Tools documentation: To improve accessibility and effectiveness, it is crucial to provide detailed documentation on texts that can be analyzed with Voyant Tools (since they are limited). Creating a dedicated section on the edition's website, with a comprehensive list of titles analyzable with Voyant Tools, would help users better understand which ones are available.
- Allow download of XML-TEI documents: Allowing the download of XML-TEI documents would enable researchers to use their own tools for data analysis and manipulation, ensuring research continuity and preventing data loss in case of platform closure.
- Possible implementation of a notification system for new texts: A notification system would keep users up to date on newly published text in the edition, ensuring a more dynamic experience.

Two key considerations arise from the evaluation of the digital edition. First, while the edition is currently in its BETA phase, this status does not seem to pose an obstacle to the successful completion of the project. Given the robust foundation and organizational framework in place, it remains reasonable to expect that the edition will be finalized within the projected timeline. Second, the long-term sustainability of the platform and the preservation of the data present critical concerns. The project's website does not offer clear information regarding the future management of the platform once the editorial work is completed, nor does it address the archiving and long-term preservation of the data. This lack of transparency could undermine the continued accessibility of the edition. Therefore, it would be advantageous for the project to provide more comprehensive information about its strategies for data preservation and the platform's future maintenance, ensuring ongoing access to the edition after its completion.

In conclusion, the integration of a printed and digital edition represents a unique opportunity to expand our capabilities. As Leonardo da Vinci wrote:

Oh wonderful science that can preserve the transient beauty of mortals and endow it with a greater permanence than the works of nature; for these are subject to the continuous changes of time leading them towards the inevitable old age! And such a science is in the same relationship with divine nature as its works are with works of nature, and for this it must be worshipped.

da Vinci 2008, 187

As we face the transformation of traditional reading into a digital age, it is essential to recognize that this evolution offers new possibilities for exploration and expression. The synergy between printed books and digital formats not only enriches our relationship with literature, but also opens the way to innovations that can broaden our textual understanding. Embracing this duality means not only preserving the richness of the past, but also embracing the potential of the future, creating a dynamic and lasting cultural heritage.

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Figures

Screenshot of the table "Plan of Edition".

Screenshot of the *Superimpositions* tool in *The Modern Challenge to Tradition: Religion and Politics* [Typescript A].

Screenshot of a display of multiple versions of a text based on the LERA tool.

Screenshot of the *Timeline*.

Screenshot of the section "Texts".

Screenshot of the Voyant Tools applied to *Ideologie und Terror*

Screenshot of the homepage.

Screenshot of the thematic complexes.

Screenshot of the "Personal Library" section.

Screenshot of the section "Text", comparison between XML document and a facsimile.

Prototype. On the right, you can see the addition of the "Table of Contents" section.

Prototype. In the "Table of Contents", when the user clicks on the arrow, a dropdown panel opens with the corresponding chapter (highlighted in blue) and the related text next to it.

Notes

Her biography was marked by exile from Nazi Germany and the laborious reconstruction of her life in the United States, and her intellectual production that continues to maintain a surprising topicality.

For more information about the team see the "About" section with its subsection "Team". In addition, institutions with a central role, such as Freie Universität Berlin, Center für Digitale Systeme, and Universität Göttingen, are consistently listed at the bottom of all pages.

For more information see the "About" section and the subsection "Hybrid Edition" on the website of the digital edition.

Internal identifiers and authority identifiers (e.g., GND for people) are used within the edition, but no externally registered persistent identifiers such as DOIs are currently assigned.

In the original version (right), Arendt says that secularism does not mean less faith in the world, but that religious institutions no longer have authority over politics and that politics is no longer legitimized by religion. In the superimposed version (left), Arendt expands the concept by saying that secularism has two meanings: a political and a spiritual one. In particular, she emphasizes that politically secularism means that religions have no binding authority over politics, and that politics is no longer dependent on religion.

For example, in the biography of Rahel Varnhagen. The edition mentions the presence of several versions, including the 1933 Berliner Fassung, the 1957 New Yorker Version and others. In addition, the annotations and references in Arendt's personal copies, kept at the library of Bard College and the Leo Baeck Institute, are mentioned.

LERA is a web-based collation tool designed to support critical editions by visualizing the evolution of a text over time. For more information, you can access the LERA tool at <https://lera.uzi.uni-halle.de/> and read a detailed review of the tool in the RIDE Journal, Issue 11, at <https://ride.i-d-e.de/issues/issue-11/web-based-collation-tools/>.

For more information, you can visit <https://catview.uzi.uni-halle.de/>.

The Library of Congress in Washington, D.C.; the Deutsches Literaturarchiv in Marbach; Bard College in New York.

An open-source web-based platform for textual analysis that allows users to generate visualizations such as word frequency, keyword trends, and co-occurrence patterns. More information and access at: <https://voyant-tools.org>

Ideologie und Terror is an essay written by Hannah Arendt in which the author analyzes the ideological mechanisms and political violence that characterize totalitarian regimes, particularly those of the 20th century. Arendt focuses on how ideologies, serving a totalitarian power, transform and manipulate reality and how terror is used to maintain control over the population.

Currently a Voyant Tools view is only available for the following texts: *Rahel Varnhagen. The Life of a Jewess*, *The Life of a Jewish Woman*; *Zionism Reconsidered* [Typoskript], [Menorah Journal, 1945]; *Von Hegel zu Marx* [Typoskript A, B, C], [Transkript der Radiosendung].

For more information, refer to the "Copyright" section.

It explores the life of Rahel Varnhagen, a German Jewish woman from the 18th century, who, despite her bourgeois background, faces the conflict between her Jewish identity and her desire for social integration. Arendt uses Rahel's story to reflect on themes of identity, social rejection, and the quest for belonging, which resonate with Arendt's broader reflections on totalitarianism and exile. The work transcends biography, becoming an exploration of the individual's relationship with society.

A significant citation from the book is: "Not rich, not cultivated and not beautiful that meant that she was entirely without weapons with which to begin the great struggle for recognition in society, for social existence, for a morsel of happiness, for security and an established position in the bourgeois world." This citation highlights the difficulties of inclusion and the struggle for happiness and security in a world that values and privileges specific traits, shedding light on themes of social exclusion and the search for identity. Themes such as estrangement, marginalization, and the human condition in general are of great importance to Arendt, topics also addressed in works such as *The Origins of Totalitarianism* and *The Human Condition*.

I believe it would be helpful to have a graphical representation of the potential solution. For this reason, I have decided to create a prototype.

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Published: 2026-03 · build cb141fb (2026-08-23T11:45:27+02:00)