When in 1979 Raymonde Debray Genette coined the terms exogenesis and endogenesis,¹ she was well aware of the artificiality of such a division, for – as Pierre-Marc de Biasi later emphasised when he redefined the terms² – it is hard to separate what is external to a writing project from what is internal. According to a recent paradigm in cognitive philosophy, the same goes for the mind. In 1998, Andy Clark and David Chalmers illustrated their “extended mind” theory by means of an example that involved a notebook.³ The gist of the argument is that the mind is constituted in an even-handed way by both the brain and the environment; the brain’s contributions are not prioritized over those of the environment.

Many Joyceans have intuitively been working with this hypothesis long before the extended mind theory was formulated. The *Finnegans Wake* notebooks are an excellent example. To paraphrase Louise Barrett, Joyce could not have written this book had he not borrowed all the brains that he could, distributed in pamphlets, encyclopaedias, newspapers, and books.⁴

But the extended mind theory is not just applicable to the writer at work. My suggestion is that it applies to the three main dimensions of literary investigation: the dimension of the text, the dimension of its production, and the dimension of its reception. The first part of this essay therefore discusses

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³ In *Modern Manuscripts: The Extended Mind and Creative Undoing* (London: Bloomsbury, 2014) I argue that it may be useful to approach genetic criticism from this cognitive perspective.
the mechanics of Joyce's exogenetic enterprise from a theoretical, cognitive point of view and thus provides a theoretical framework for the second part, which investigates how this theory can inform a practical application in a digital tool that will be of use to the entire community of Joyceans – a James Joyce Digital Library.

1 The Extended Mind Theory, “Laden with the Loot of Learning”

Creative processes in literature partly take place in writers’ brains, but to a large extent creation and written invention also happen elsewhere. From the vantage point of cognitive philosophy, Richard Menary has suggested that writing is a form of thinking, drawing attention to the role of a writer’s interaction with the “environmental vehicle” (the medium he writes with) in the process of cognition. An appropriate case study to corroborate this hypothesis is Joyce’s red-backed notebook ms 47471b, preserved at the British Library, which I will refer to as the “Guiltless” copybook, because “Guiltless” is its opening word – and much more than that. The word “Guiltless” arguably indicates a conceptual breakthrough in the genesis of *Finnegans Wake*. It marks the ignition of the engine that made the work ‘progress’. The paradox of drawing attention to someone’s guilt by denying it sets in motion what Joyce claimed he wanted to do after *Ulysses*: write a history of the world. This “Universal history”, as it was still called in an early draft (“Guiltless” copybook; British Library ms 47471b, 50r), became in the published version a “manyvoiced moodmoulded cyclewheeling history” (*FW* 186.2). But it did so only after Joyce had discovered the mechanism behind it. He saw history as a game of Chinese whispers: nobody knows what actually happened; we can only reconstruct it with hindsight, with fragments from hearsay or other traces. In that sense, Joyce’s notion of history is exogenetic in nature.

There is a striking similarity with genetic criticism, which tries to reconstruct the writing history in order to study its dynamics. As a consequence, the following sentence from Chapter 3 not only applies to the narrative situation in *Finnegans Wake*, but is equally applicable to our endeavour to study the text’s genesis: “[T]he unfacts, did we possess them, are too imprecisely few to warrant our certitude” (*FW* 057.17). The opening part of the sentence is based on a note

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6 The word ‘copybook’ is employed to distinguish this type of document (containing drafts) from the ‘notebooks’ containing reading notes and paratactic jottings.