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Reconstructing collaborative (self-)translations from the archive: The case of Samuel Beckett

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Article abstract

When literary authors translate their own work, they sometimes collaborate with other writer-translators. While such "collaboration" is often acknowledged on the title pages of the resulting publications, the nature of each joint venture is typically very different in practice. Surviving archival traces often allow for a more detailed reconstruction of the varying working methods that were adopted for every co-translation, but it would be naïve to assume that even the most completely preserved record will make it possible to conclusively identify the function of every participant in the creative process. In this article, we will combine genetic criticism and genetic translation studies on the one hand, with microhistorical and social approaches to translation on the other, as complementary methodologies to further investigate the understudied notion of collaborative (self-)translation. By using as our test case the extant draft versions and other related materials that document the collaborative relationships between Irish bilingual author Samuel Beckett and his co-translators in French, English and German, the purpose is to show that a process-oriented and interdisciplinary approach to translation can help overcome some of the challenges and limitations presented by digital editions and archives such as the Beckett Digital Manuscript Project (BDMP).

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Reconstructing collaborative (self-)translations from the archive: The case of Samuel Beckett

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RÉSUMÉ

Lorsque les écrivains traduisent leurs propres œuvres, ils collaborent parfois avec d'autres écrivains-traducteurs. Bien que cette « collaboration » soit souvent mentionnée d'une manière uniforme sur les pages de titre des publications qui en résultent, la nature de chaque « co-traduction » est généralement très différente dans la pratique. Les traces archivistiques qui subsistent permettent de reconstituer plus précisément les différentes méthodes de travail adoptées pour chaque co-traduction, ce qui ne signifie pas nécessairement que les documents les mieux conservés permettraient d'identifier de manière concluante la fonction de chaque participant au processus de création. Dans cet article, nous combinerons la critique génétique et les études de traduction génétique, d'une part, et les approches microhistoriques et sociales de la traduction, d'autre part, en tant que méthodologies complémentaires pour approfondir la notion peu étudiée de (auto-)traduction collaborative. Les versions préliminaires existantes et d'autres matériels connexes qui documentent les relations de collaboration entre l'auteur bilingue irlandais Samuel Beckett et ses co-traducteurs en français, anglais et allemand, sont pris en main dans l'objectif de montrer qu'une approche de la traduction interdisciplinaire, orientée vers le processus, peut aider à surmonter certains des défis et des limites présentés par les éditions et les archives numériques telles que le Beckett Digital Manuscript Project (BDMP).

ABSTRACT

When literary authors translate their own work, they sometimes collaborate with other writer-translators. While such "collaboration" is often acknowledged on the title pages of the resulting publications, the nature of each joint venture is typically very different in practice. Surviving archival traces often allow for a more detailed reconstruction of the varying working methods that were adopted for every co-translation, but it would be naïve to assume that even the most completely preserved record will make it possible to conclusively identify the function of every participant in the creative process. In this article, we will combine genetic criticism and genetic translation studies on the one hand, with microhistorical and social approaches to translation on the other, as complementary methodologies to further investigate the understudied notion of collaborative (self-) translation. By using as our test case the extant draft versions and other related materials that document the collaborative relationships between Irish bilingual author Samuel Beckett and his co-translators in French, English and German, the purpose is to show that a process-oriented and interdisciplinary approach to translation can help overcome some of the challenges and limitations presented by digital editions and archives such as the Beckett Digital Manuscript Project (BDMP).

RESUMEN

Cuando los escritores traducen sus propias obras, a veces colaboran con otros escritores-traductores. Aunque esta «colaboración» se mencione a menudo de una manera uniforme en las portadas de las publicaciones, la naturaleza de cada «co-traduction» es generalmente muy diferente en la práctica. Las huellas archivísticas que subsisten permiten reconstruir con mayor precision las diferentes maneras de trabajar adoptadas para cada co-traducción, lo que no significa necesariamente que los documentos major conservados permitirían identificar de manera concluyente la función de cada participante en el proceso de creación. En este artículo, combinaremos por una parte la crítica genética y los estudios de traducción genética, y, por la otra, los enfoques microhistóricos y sociales de la traducción, como metodologías complementarias para profundizar la noción poco estudiada de (auto-)traducción colaborativa. Examinaremos las versions preliminares existentes así como otros materiales conexos que documentan las relaciones de colaboración entre el autor bilingue irlandés Samuel Beckett y sus co-traductores en francés, inglés y alemán. Esto con el objetivo de mostrar que un enfoque de traducción interdisciplinario, orientado hacia el proceso, puede contribuir a enfrentar algunos desafíos y límites presentados por las ediciones y los archivos digitales tales como el Beckett Digital Manuscript Project (BDMP).

MOTS-CLÉS/KEYWORDS/PALABRAS CLAVE

Samuel Beckett, microhistoire, études de traduction génétique, auto-traduction, traduction collaborative
Samuel Beckett, microhistory, genetic translation studies, self-translation, collaborative translation
Samuel Beckett, microhistoria, estudios de traducción genética, auto-traducción, traducción colaborativa

1. Introduction

When literary authors act as the translators of their own work, they sometimes collaborate with other writer-translators. Whereas in many cases, though not all, such collaborations are credited in the published translations, the nature of each joint venture is often significantly different in practice. The surviving archival traces, further supplemented with published resources, allow for a detailed reconstruction of the varying working methods that guided every co-translation. However, even the most completely preserved record will not make it possible to decisively separate the role of allograph translators from that of self-translating authors, nor to conclusively study the role of each participant in the collaborative process.

Regrettable as these circumstances may seem from the viewpoint of genetic criticism and genetic translation studies, it is not the only question worth pursuing. Such instances still leave much potential for research, especially from the perspective of microhistorical and social approaches, which are less concerned with studying the variants of a translation than with understanding the cultural context that formed it. The goal of this article is to illustrate that an interdisciplinary combination of process-oriented methodologies can help overcome the challenges and limitations presented by digital archives and online genetic editions such as the Beckett Digital Manuscript Project (BDMP)[1]. Even if the features or tools they provide allow for a level of detail or scale that is superior to traditional philology methods, they typically offer a selective representation of the physical archives on which they are modelled.

This makes them particularly vulnerable to lacunae that need to be filled in, by means of critical editing or commentary.

The work of Irish author Samuel Beckett is a suitable test case to explore these issues. Although he is widely known as a bilingual author, writing in both French and English, and a self-translator in both directions, less well-known—and less studied—is the fact that he translated a substantial number of works in collaboration with others, ranging from close friends, critics, and editors to fellow writers: Anthony Bonner, Patrick Bowles, John Fletcher, Édith Fournier, Ludovic and Agnès Vaquin-Janvier, Pierre Leyris, Daniel Mauroc, Alfred Péron, Robert Pinget, and Richard Seaver. Alongside his French-English œuvre, Beckett was also involved in the German translations of his work by Elmar and Erika Tophoven. The nature of this collaboration was different, but it is exceptionally well-preserved and documented. Not only has the paratextual recognition of these multilingual joint ventures been subject to change and misrepresentation over the years, the material remnants they left behind are scattered across collections and institutions worldwide, as part of authors', publishers', and translators' archives, both private and public, which affects their preservation in different ways. They encompass a wide range of diverse materials: corrected manuscripts and typescripts, annotated editions, setting copies, proofs, notes, glossaries, letters, unpublished diaries, memoirs, interviews, tape recordings, and computer printouts. Several translators have also published accounts of their work with Beckett, which can thus be assessed in light of the surviving archival remnants.

In doing so, we argue that his work can still be grounds for a dialogue between translation studies and its emerging subdisciplines on the one hand, and genetic criticism and Beckett studies on the other, by highlighting his collaborative (self-) translations. Because he worked with different translators in French and English, as opposed to always working with the same ones in German, our survey of the former is structured case-by-case, whereas the latter follows a series of patterns, each time based on the available material. Yet before we can proceed to the case studies, some terminological clarifications are in order.

2. Genetic criticism and genetic translation studies

The incentive for this article stems from our experience with the Beckett Digital Manuscript Project. The BDMP reunites the extant draft versions of Samuel Beckett's works, from multiple archives worldwide, in an online digital environment that includes facsimiles and transcriptions as well as a digitised version of his personal library (Beckett Digital Library or BDL)[2]. Thanks to recent methodological developments in digital scholarly editing, the BDMP allows users to compare all different versions of a text in an automatic collation engine (*CollateX*[3]). The digital archive and its electronic editions are thus designed to function as a research tool for critique génétique. Genetic criticism approaches literary works not as a product but as a process that evolves and changes over time, through an investigation of private, pre-publication or post-publication documents and the genetic variants they record (see Grésillon 1994; de Biasi 2000; Deppmann, Ferrer, *et al.* 2004; Ferrer 2011; Van Hulle forthcoming b). Since Beckett alternated between French and English as languages of composition, transposing his texts from one to the other in both directions,

the BDMP also contains drafts of his translations, which can be explored using a tool for bilingual version comparison. This equally gears the project for genetic translation studies, which adapt the principles of genetic criticism (see Van Hulle 2015a; Cordingley and Montini 2015; Cordingley 2019a; Hartmann and Hersant 2019).

Genetic criticism has long highlighted its potential for translation studies, but it has not quite adjusted its terminology to that end, which causes some theoretical issues. For example, published self-translations could be categorized under *epigenesis*, meaning the continuation of the writing process after publication (Van Hulle 2014: 97). Not every self-translation is made after the "original" has been published, but they are commonly based on a source text considered ready for printing (bon à tirer). As a result, they could be seen as a part of its epigenesis if we consider the self-translation a continuation of the original's genesis. But if the self-translation is thought of as having a genesis of its own, the categories of *endogenesis* and *exogenesis* could also be brought into play, with the target text even acquiring a separate epigenesis when it is further revised after publication. The term *endogenetic* pertains to the "inside" (see *endo-*) of the self-translation, meaning its successive draft stages. If dictionaries, encyclopaedias, and other external sources are consulted, for example to substitute intertextual references, or if author-translators receive assistance from someone else, these would become part of the *exogenesis* too (see *exo-* or "outside"). Regarding the published "source text" of a translation as an avant-texte, a term that usually applies to pre-publication documents, could create "terminological and theoretical confusion" (Cordingley 2019a: 210), since translations have a genetic history of their own. However, in the case of (collaborative) self-translation, the "original" can be a manuscript or typescript, which is sometimes further revised in light of the target text before it is released in print. Here, the terms avant-texte and source text do overlap.

3. Genetic translation studies and microhistory

More challenging are issues of a material nature. All forms of writing are social, up to a certain point, perhaps more so than is commonly recognized within the field of genetic criticism, since authors interact with publishers, editors, compositors, printers, and even with friends and colleagues (see Van Hulle forthcoming a, b). Similarly, sociological research on translation now "takes it for granted that translation is an inherently social activity that both reflects and shapes social interactions" (Buzelin 2013: 187). This is especially true of collaborative (self-)translation, which would fall under "meso-analyses" that "study interactions between different kinds of agents and practices" (Buzelin 2013: 190). In Beckett's case, there are some typescripts that record his own handwriting in addition to that of a co-translator, so we could identify and distinguish them, at least on a material basis. Theoretically, this would make it possible to also visualise them distinctly in the online genetic edition, but we always have to be conscious that the voice of the author may be hiding behind the hand of the translator and vice versa, especially when they work closely together.

Typically, the archives of translators contain more gaps because their work is perceived as derivative and less creative, unoriginal and thus less "important" by society as well as themselves, or because they set greater store by the published result than the trials and tribulations that led up to it, which prevents them from preserving

their working papers (see Munday 2013: 28; Durand-Bogaert 2014; Cordingley and Montini 2015: 6-7). This material imbalance also affects the study of collaborative (self-)translations. Whereas Beckett's manuscripts have mostly survived, those of his co-translators have not, or only in part, unless they were authors themselves and thereby retain a comparable value or weight in terms of cultural capital. Archival impediments of this kind pose greater methodological challenges for genetic translation studies, which concentrates on the role of the translator, than they do for genetic criticism, which centres around the figure of the author. In the case of collaborative (self-)translation, however, where the focus shifts to the interaction between authors and their allograph translators, the objectives of genetic criticism and genetic translation studies align, so that they are equally affected by missing material. Because multiple parties are joined in these creative endeavours, the draft versions that document their progress are usually scattered across even more archives of varying kinds, often of a personal rather than a public nature, which further increases the risk of loss in addition to the translator's diminished value, as traditionally perceived. Other kinds of documents, more central to the microhistorical approach, can then supplement genetic and digital methodologies for the study of collaborative (self-) translation processes.

The concept of *microhistory*, as employed by Jeremy Munday (2014), builds on the work of Anthony Pym (1998) and takes its cue from historians who have underlined the importance of personal accounts by ordinary people, marginalized groups, and minorities, in order to counter the dominant "grand narratives" constructed around important historical figures and privileged sources. For Munday, (allograph) translators are also marginalized, compared to (self-translating) authors such as Beckett. The aim of microhistory is thus to "shed light on the bigger picture of the history of translation in specific socio-historical and cultural contexts" (Munday 2014: 65), precisely by emphasising those people "who would at most be a footnote in a larger account" (Munday 2014: 67). Since microhistory concerns itself with lesser-known figures, it often relies on less "objective" sources and more readily accepts a "subjective" outlook (Munday 2014: 68). Munday underscores the value of "overtly mediated testimonies" like post-hoc accounts, memoirs or interviews and "less overtly mediated" materials such as diaries or letters (Munday 2014: 68) because they "help interpret documents" (Munday 2014: 70) that are generally considered more reliable, for example draft versions in manuscript or typescript. The principal method of microhistory is thus one of "triangulation" (Munday 2013: 134), which holds that "a range of sources needs to be consulted in order to corroborate or complete an account" (Munday 2014: 73). This also comprises an analysis of the "creative *process* that is literary translation" and the "translator's decision-making" on the basis of drafts (Munday 2013: 126; emphasis in original). However, keeping in mind that "the study of the genesis of texts, of the strategies and creativity of authors and translators" (Cordingley 2019a: 208) is actually the core business of genetic criticism and genetic translation studies, and microhistorical or social approaches are more specialised in analysing "the constraints upon them and how these factors interact with sociocultural dynamics" (Cordingley 2019a: 208), it would be better to present them as "complementary methodologies" (Cordingley 2019a: 212) rather than equivalent or competing ones.

These methodologies could also benefit from terminological exchange. While in more traditional, descriptive translation studies, as defined by Gideon Toury (1995),

research is founded on published "source texts" and "target texts" or "textual sources," the microhistorical approach advocated by Munday (2014: 65) is based on "pre-textual material (i.e. drafts)" on the one hand, and "extra-textual material (e.g. interviews or paratextual commentary)" on the other. Their distinction is not always clear-cut, since "manuscripts" are at times also presented as examples of "extra-textual material," alongside "archives" and "translator working papers" (Munday 2014: 66). The confusion mainly arises from the fact that Munday conflates types of sources with types of documents and the repositories or collections that safeguard them, in the case of unpublished material, which results in terminological fuzziness. A memoir, a diary or a letter (source) could be a holograph or a typescript (document) as part of authors', publishers' or translators' papers (archive). These are all examples of extra-textual material, as they do not belong to the avant-texte of the translation (endogenesis or exogenesis), which would include pre-textual material like draft versions and notes or books that were consulted, with or without marginalia. In much the same way, authors' or translators' accounts and interviews (source) that were published as an article, a chapter or a book (document) are extra-textual and non-archival. Microhistory, in turn, supplies genetic criticism and genetic translation studies with a more precise vocabulary to designate documents that do not fall under the rubric of either endogenesis, exogenesis or epigenesis, but can nevertheless be archival in nature and bear on creative processes, especially those of collaborative (self-)translation, where genetic material is often fragmentary or lost.

4. Collaborative (self-)translation and closelaboration

Two last concepts that require clarification are *collaborative (self-)translation* and the related notion of *closelaboration*. As Rainier Grutman (2013: 203, note 2) points out, the former sounds contradictory: "Whether teamwork of that sort should also be considered self-translation, is a worthwhile but complex question." Collaborative translation (Cordingley and Manning 2017; Huss 2019; Neather 2019) and self-translation (Cordingley 2013, 2019b; Grutman 2019) are well on their way towards becoming established themes in translation studies, but their hybrid form is indeed a relatively new one.

Elizabete Manterola Agirrezabalaga (2017) has recently explored this phenomenon in more detail. With due reference to Xosé Manuel Dasilva (2015)[4], she outlines a continuum of authorial collaboration that ranges from "allograph translation with collaboration of the author" to "self-translation with allograph collaboration," also called "semi-self-translation" (Manterola Agirrezabalaga 2017: 194). The latter category is subdivided into five modalities, two of which are particularly relevant for our discussion: "self-translation in collaboration with an allograph translator" and "allograph translation revised by the author" (Manterola Agirrezabalaga 2017: 195). Beckett's collaborative self-translations in French and English often start out as the one, but then gradually evolve into the other, so that both modalities may operate within the genesis of a single text. The "blurred boundaries" between an allograph translation done with the collaboration of the author—much like Beckett's German translations—and an allograph translation revised by the author "give rise to great variety when ascribing a translation" (Manterola Agirrezabalaga 2017: 209) in its paratext. One means of distinguishing the two is by looking into what Manterola

Agirrezabalaga (2017: 191) calls the "power implications" that determine the documented translation process, a key notion in her approach. These are determined by the "professional status" and the "personal relationship" (Manterola Agirrezabalaga 2017: 211) of the parties involved, but also by the languages they navigate. As Grutman (2013: 203, note 2) duly notes, the main drawback in doing so is "the varying degrees of authorial involvement, and the difficulty of measuring them," which is both a terminological and a material issue.

Patrick Hersant (2017, 2020) has made a very useful typology reflecting the precarious equilibrium between *authority* and *agency*, which is quite similar to Manterola Agirrezabalaga's notion of *power*. These forces are crucial to understanding the relationships that can exist between the parties involved in the production of a shared target text. The typology ranges "from informal discussions to a text's author taking control, from general recommendations, co-translations, revisions, questions and answers, back-and-forth exchanges, to giving a translator *carte blanche*" (Hersant 2017: 91). When collaboration is intense, it assumes the form of a "close-laboration," which Hersant (Hersant 2017: 95) describes as "a particular form of mediated self-translation, or of four-handed translation, in which the final text sometimes appears as the joint work of the author and his or her translator." Yet if we look at the origin of the term, it does not appear to be synonymous with collaborative self-translation. It was first used by Cuban writer Guillermo Cabrera Infante for his collaboration with Suzanne Jill Levine on the English translation of the experimental novel *Tres tristes tigres*[5] (see Levine 1991). According to Anne Milano Appel (2013: 620), it was a "clearly dysfunctional relationship," more "one of master and apprentice" that "bears no resemblance whatsoever" to her experience with Claudio Magris on the English translation of the novel *Alla cieca*[6]. For Milano Appel, the main difference resides in how much freedom an author grants the translator. It is evident that Magris went to enormous lengths to prepare his translator for the task ahead, assisting her along the way as much as he could, but Milano Appel (2013: 624) insists: "the choice was always left up to me."

As authors appear to sacrifice more authority, agency, and power over the final product in the case of *closelaboration*, we favour that term for Beckett's relationship with his German translators, whereas *collaborative self-translation* better captures the dynamics that shaped his French and English texts, for which the author maintained a greater measure of control. When authors become involved in multiple language versions of their own work, as was Beckett, it is possible to speak of "author-multitranslator collaboration," which is marked by "two distinct modalities of collaboration: informative and interventionist" (Huss 2019: 457). Both are types of assistance, but intervention limits freedom severely and occurs more often in the context of Beckett's collaborative self-translations.

5. Samuel Beckett's collaborative self-translations

Within the limited space of this article, it is not possible to treat all of Beckett's collaborative self-translations in great detail. For the following overview, we have selected four case studies from different genres (radio, novel, theatre, story) that move in both directions (French-English and English-French) and feature a wide variety of pre-textual as well extra-textual sources. We will begin with the best documented

examples, gradually moving on to instances for which no or hardly any drafts exist. Our purpose is to show how letters, memoirs, accounts or interviews, both published and unpublished, enable us to: 1) better understand paratextual information and the surviving exogenetic, endogenetic or epigenetic traces (notes, drafts, revised editions, etc.); and 2) make up for, and in some cases even account for, their absence.

5.1 Cendres *(Robert Pinget)*

In the late 1950s, Beckett translated two of his English radio plays—*All That Fall* (1957) and *Embers* (1959a)—into French, as *Tous ceux qui tombent* (1957/1957) and *Cendres* (1959/1960a), with the help of the Swiss-born nouveau romancier and avant-garde writer Robert Pinget. Perhaps due to the fact that Pinget was also a figure of literary repute, both collaborations are extremely well-preserved, but because *Cendres* signifies the more complex case of the two, we will concentrate on this one.

Embers had not yet been published, so the source text for the French translation was in fact an avant-texte, a BBC broadcasting script as aired on June 24, 1959. It is riddled with grey pencil marginalia, all made by Pinget, mostly to gloss difficult words or phrases with French equivalents. While no manuscript has been found, three typescript copies of Pinget's translation do exist. Identical in typography, one is lightly revised, the other two more extensively in blue and black ink, again in Pinget's hand. The most advanced of these typescripts was used for the bilingual script (English-French) that the BBC submitted for the Italia Prize. These materials are all preserved in the Fonds Robert Pinget (Bibliothèque littéraire Jacques Doucet, Paris). There are two more typescripts. One has a ream of blue ink, red ballpoint, and grey pencil corrections, several of which have been erased, in the hands of Pinget and the author (Harry Ransom Center, Austin, Texas). The second was clearly typed up on Beckett's own machine and has minor corrections in his hand alone (University of Reading). This version is very close to the one that appeared in *Les Lettres Nouvelles* (Beckett 1959/1960a) and with Minuit (Beckett 1959/1960b), both presenting the text as translated from the English by Robert Pinget and the author.

The bilingual Italia Prize script, referred to before, mentions another paratext of sorts on the title page of the French text: "trad. littérale par Robert Pinget." By comparing Pinget's attempt to the one in which Beckett was involved, taking into account their drafts, it is possible to analyse the differences between a *literal translation* on the one hand, and a more *literary translation* on the other. One thing that immediately stands out is that Pinget's rendition is at least a quarter longer than Beckett's original on nearly every page of the bilingual script, which conveniently lays out the two language texts in a parallel presentation. The decision-making strategies of the allograph translator and the self-translating author are also markedly different. Whereas Pinget is mostly aiming to capture sense, often by paraphrasing compact wordings in a somewhat long-winded way, Beckett is more attentive to the radio play's medium-specificity, intertextual references, and style, while exercising linguistic restraint (see Verhulst 2021).

The shared handwriting on some of the surviving draft versions is significant because it nuances what is sometimes misleading information in Beckett's letters. When he complains to Barbara Bray on November 5, 1959 that he has "so much work (including Embers in French)" (Beckett 2014: 250), or, on November 14 of the same

year, that he should get "on with [the] Embers translation" (Beckett 2014: 255), these phrasings suggest that the author was responsible for it. This would cast doubt on the paratext of the published translation, which explicitly markets it as a collaborative effort. However, as his letter of November 30 to Pinget confirms, he only did the final overhaul by himself, which is indeed in accord with Beckett's handwriting alone featuring on the last typescript, and it also shows that correspondence can be useful in dating drafts: "I've been to see [Maurice] Nadeau. I gave him *Cendres*, which I have just finished revising" (Beckett 2014: 257). Even more helpful is Pinget's unpublished memoir *Notre ami Sam*, which is also among his papers (see Mégevand 2010). It details their work on the radio play, clarifying that they went over the original text together at the Gare des Invalides before Beckett left for Trinity College Dublin to receive an honorary degree (see Beckett 2014: 235, note 3). This accounts for the annotated BBC script, but Pinget's memoir should also be read with caution. In his admiration for Beckett, he downplays his role in the translation, stating that the author revised it entirely. This claim is contradicted by the surviving typescripts, which reveal that Pinget's efforts account for at least fifty percent of the published text.

Of course, we must also bear in mind that the earliest typescript of *Cendres* had been mediated by the author through his glosses, which already makes the first draft a little less Pinget's own. And although we can distinguish their hands in the later typescripts, their actual voices remain elusive, making those documents even more like a palimpsest than their material appearance would lead us to believe. Still, as far as Beckett's collaborative self-translations go, *Cendres* is the closest we get to *transparency* in Elmar Tophoven's (1995: 19) use of the term to describe his own working and preservation methods in the German language (see below).

5.2 English Molloy *(Richard Seaver and Patrick Bowles)*

From 1953 to 1955, Beckett teamed up with the South-African writer Patrick Bowles, who was also an editor for the Paris-based literary magazine *Merlin*, for an English translation of *Molloy* (1951/1955), a novel originally published in French (1951). Their joint venture is acknowledged on the title page of the publication as "translated from the French by Patrick Bowles, in collaboration with the author," but the term *collaboration* captures different *modi operandi* and omits the efforts of other parties involved in the process. The surviving draft versions are relatively scarce. In addition to a heavily revised manuscript fragment in a notebook (Ohio State University) and a few sentences scribbled on the front and back covers of another notebook (Trinity College Dublin), there are three short typescript specimens of the opening few pages, a partial typescript of Part I, and a complete typescript of Parts I and II, both annotated (Washington University, St Louis), as well as some material relating to pre-book publications—in *Merlin* (Beckett 1951/1953), *The Paris Review* (Beckett 1951/1954a), and *New World Writing* (Beckett 1951/1954b) (Morgan Library, New York)—which are very close to the typescripts. Apart from the holograph material, all typescripts are later versions of the translation, not very different from the published text, and none of them contain any handwriting by Bowles.

Letters, both published and unpublished, play an invaluable role in better understanding the precise nature of these documents, but nothing of the exchange between

author and translator survives. On the one hand, there is correspondence from Beckett and the other members of *Merlin*, Austryn Wainhouse, Richard Seaver, Christopher Logue, and Alexander Trocchi, who also sent letters to one another. These have been scattered across collections at McMaster University (Ontario), Washington University (St Louis), and Syracuse University (New York). From them, we learn that the notebook fragment of *Molloy* is the author's abandoned revision of an early translation by Seaver, which clearly influenced the published result, but goes uncredited in its paratext. On the other hand, there is correspondence between Beckett and his publishers, Jérôme Lindon at Les Éditions de Minuit in Paris, but especially Barney Rosset at Grove Press, who was bringing out the translation in the United States. From these letters, we gather that Beckett and Bowles collaborated for the first four months, from July to November 1953, but then took a long break, as appears from the author's comment to Pamela Mitchell on November 25, 1953: "I was kilt entirely co-translating in Paris" (Beckett 2011: 420). It would never become a true "collaboration" again. From that point on, Bowles just mailed in batches of typescript, which Beckett duly annotated and returned by post. They came in very irregularly, over the course of almost a year, often from abroad, which became a source of constant anxiety and frustration for the author, as we can judge from a letter to Rosset (18 October, 1954): "Bowles too is hopeless. No acknowledgement of my last corrections and no sign of the concluding pages. I do not even know where he is" (Beckett 2011: 507).

In the absence of early draft material, correspondence is one of the few sources we have to gain insight into the author-translator decision-making process. Beckett's letter (August 24, 1954) to his painter friend Henri Hayden is a good example of the issues he faced: "I'm trying to push ahead with the revision of the English *Molloy*. Terrible trouble. The translator gets more and more sublime. 'Un parapluie à manche massif' becomes in English 'Un trench-coat à manches massives'" (Beckett 2016: 743). Bowles misunderstood *massive-handled winter umbrella*—Beckett's emendation—to mean a *trench-coat with massive sleeves* instead of an *umbrella with a solid wooden shaft*, as the editors of the author's correspondence explain (Beckett 2016: 743). The loose sentences that appear on the covers of a notebook probably relate to instances such as these, where Beckett tried out an alternative for Bowles' rendition on a separate document before transferring it to the typescript. As Bowles details in his account "Notes on Talks with Samuel Beckett," which appeared in the literary magazine *PN Review*, a sublimely comical addition of his own was to have Lousse's parrot belong to a French sailor before it passed on to an American one, which accounts for its bilingual cursing in the translation: "Putain de merde!" and "Fuck the son of a bitch!" (Bowles 1994: 33). While this is a clever reflection on the fact that the novel was originally written in French before being rendered into English, it may also have been a witty way of humouring Beckett's American publisher, who expressed his concern that the translation sounded too "British" in a letter dated August 4, 1953 (Rosset 2016: 68). As this example shows, multiple forces, both internal and external to the translation process, shape it.

The information contained in these various letters, however, also sheds a different light on Bowles's published account of the collaboration. Although it offers unrivalled insight into their working habit on the novel's first part—they met up in Paris cafés almost daily, for several hours on end, to translate a couple of pages together, which

Bowles then took home to type up, at which point they would be revised again at the start of their next session and retyped once more (Bowles 1994: 24-25)—it remains silent about the troublesome second part, for which they parted ways. It thus turns out to be a highly selective account, all the more if we compare it to Bowles' original notes, which have also survived (see Dillen and Verhulst 2014). These still mention the reason for his halfway abandoning of the *Molloy* translation: it left him with too little time for his own writing, on top of his teaching job, and the influence of Beckett's style became too great. This information was omitted from the published account, but it is indirectly corroborated by the memoirs of two *Merlin* members, Christopher Logue (1999: 123-124) and Richard Seaver (2012: 213). The latter also confirms he was responsible for the early specimen that Beckett reworked in a notebook (Seaver 2012: 211-212), but Seaver's claim that he then assisted Bowles with the translation of Part II (Seaver 2012: 213) is not supported by any documentary evidence.

Bowles also did an unpublished interview with Martha Fehsenfeld in which he explains what became of the early draft material. Because he travelled around so much, he left all of the annotated manuscripts and typescripts, including the author's letters, in a suitcase with a friend, stored away in a Paris basement. When it flooded, all papers were destroyed and thrown away, so nothing remains but fragmentary notes, possibly remembered later, and drafts that document only Beckett's side of the collaboration (see O'Reilly, Van Hulle, *et al.* 2017: 308-337).

5.3 La Dernière bande *(Pierre Leyris)*

The French translation of Beckett's stage play *Krapp's Last Tape* (1959b), *La Dernière bande* (1959/1959), presents something of a paratextual enigma. Its very first publication in the literary magazine *Les Lettres Nouvelles* does not even mention Beckett as co-translator. In the first edition and the second printing of the book by Minuit (Beckett 1959/1960c), Beckett was added. Next, in the joint edition by Théâtre National Populaire (TNP)/Minuit (in Beckett and Pinget 1960), and in the magazine publication by *L'Avant-scène* (Beckett 1960c), Leyris was dropped as a collaborator, which is also how the translation has been presented in later Minuit editions until now. So, in the course of just a few months, *La Dernière bande* evolved from an allograph translation, via a collaborative self-translation, into an authorial self-translation with no trace of Leyris' involvement. This dramatic shift in paratext cannot be explained by heavy revision. All printed versions are nearly identical to each other, and to the sole surviving draft in French, a typescript carrying only minor corrections in Beckett's hand (Harry Ransom Center, Austin, Texas). Earlier attempts by Leyris have not survived. His heir, Etienne Leyris, even admitted in a personal message that he had no knowledge of the matter.[7] Despite Leyris's reputation as a renowned translator of Shakespeare and Melville (see Steiner 1975/1998), he did not keep his drafts, like so many of his colleagues.

Beckett's letters again help us make sense of these enigmatic circumstances. On April 27, 1958, he wrote to Mary Hutchinson, the friend who introduced him to Leyris: "He is an excellent translator and I hope he won't mind if I have suggestions to make" (cited in Van Hulle 2015b: 229). When the translation was finished by the end of the summer, the author was disappointed. In a letter to Ethna McCarthy dated September 29, 1958, he called the result "very mediocre," and feared he would "have

to change half of it" (cited in Van Hulle 2015b: 230). On October 11, 1958, he told Alan Schneider that he had been "sweating on the French text of Krapp," resulting in a "more or less tolerable version at last—and agreeable to the translator!" (Beckett 1998: 49). Apparently, he had altered the text so drastically that, on September 9, 1963, he assured Ruby Cohn: "'La dernière Bande' is my translation" (Beckett 2014: 570). And to Alan Clodd (June 25, 1971), Beckett clarified why Leyris was no longer mentioned in the later editions: "in view of the small part he had in the translation, [he] preferred to withdraw his name" (25 June 1971, cited in Van Hulle 2015b: 125).

This version of events is confirmed by Raymond Federman and John Fletcher in their bibliography of Beckett's works, by way of Jérôme Lindon: "Beckett entirely reworked his translation but nevertheless insisted on Leyris receiving royalty payments for it" (Federman and Fletcher 1970: 42). The translator, too, has commented on the matter, when asked about it by critic Pascale Sardin-Damestoy (20 May 1998):

> A common friend had asked me, undoubtedly with Beckett's consent, to translate *Krapp's Last Tape*. I accepted without much thought, then realized along the way that I was not sure I fully understood certain passages. Nonetheless, I continued since I had promised to do so and came back to Paris, uncertain and dissatisfied with my work—which I asked to communicate to Beckett. He then contacted me. I bought a stock of Guinness. He came over… A few hours later, the floor of my room was littered with empty bottles and not much was left of my bad text. (in Sardin-Damestoy 2002: 231; our translation).

Beckett's comments and Leyris' paratextual disappearance notwithstanding, it seems there was still enough of him left in the published version for the author to conclude in a letter to Robert Pinget (December 21, 1959) that *Cendres* did not "stink of translation" as much as *La Dernière bande*: "Celui-là pue de traduction, l'autre moins" (Beckett 2014: 268-269). Just three months later, Beckett made extensive notes for the French production of the play at the Théâtre Récamier, including corrections to the text. Several were emended in the French versions of Suhrkamp's trilingual editions (Beckett 1959/1964, 1959/1974). This continued revision suggests that *La Dernière bande* is still more the product of Leyris than the paratext admits (see Van Hulle 2015b: 234-248).

5.4 "Text for Nothing III" (Anthony Bonner)

Beckett's own translation of his thirteen *Textes pour rien* (1955) was a long-term project that kept him occupied, on and off, from the late 1950s until their publication in 1967 as *Texts for Nothing* (Beckett 1955/1967a). The endogenesis of these short texts in English is amply, though again dispersedly, preserved in a notebook, manuscripts, and typescripts at Trinity College Dublin, the University of Reading, and Washington University, St Louis. Some of them also appeared in magazines—*Evergreen Review* ("I"; Beckett 1959c), *The London Magazine* ("VI"; Beckett 1955/1967b), and *The Transatlantic Review* ("XII"; Beckett 1955/1967c), but the inclusion of "Text for Nothing III" (Beckett 1955/1960) in the anthology *Great French Short Stories*, selected and introduced by French-American critic-activist Germaine Brée, demands special attention. The volume's table of contents reads "Translated by Anthony Bonner and the author," which carefully avoids the word *collaboration*—for good reason it seems.

A letter from Beckett to Richard Seaver (January 30, 1960), now working at Grove Press, sheds more light on the matter:

> Bless you for having [Richard B.] Fisher send me the translation of Text III. It was grim, unrevisable. I had to do it myself in a rush. Result far from satisfactory. But at least possible. I have written to Fisher explaining-apologizing and suggesting that my text appear as 'translated by A. Bonner and the author.' (Beckett 2014: 286)

He had told Barbara Bray exactly the same only a day before (Beckett 2014: 284). As it turns out, the paratext was merely a courtesy, the two parties having never actually met in person or corresponded directly. Yet the generally negative and obliterating tone of the letters to Seaver and Bray contrasts with the more positive or constructive message that Fisher (April 4, 1960), of Dell Publishing, sent to Bonner: "You will be interested to know that Beckett, although he was complimentary about your translation, made some further revisions in it" (cited in Beckett 2014: 287, note 2). The author's private correspondence with two close friends is probably the most reliable source of information in this case.

However, perhaps we should not take Beckett's letters at face value all too readily when he claims the translation was entirely his own, for we cannot be absolutely certain without any draft material. Even though Bonner never published an official account, he did tell the editors of Beckett's letters that the author's "corrections involved mostly decolloquializing" (Beckett 2014: 285, note 3). Some traces of this may still be visible if we compare the text, as printed in the anthology, to the one that Beckett published later on. Despite being quite close to it in general, there are subtle differences when it comes to expressions. The last words of the text, which state that the voices are bien mortes (Beckett 1955: 137), were altered from being *stone dead* (Beckett 1955/1960: 317) to having *no life in them* (Beckett 2010: 15). This "pejoration," through the addition of a negative determiner (*no*), is a recurring pattern in the drafts of the author's original works as well as in those of his self-translations (see Van Hulle and Weller 2014). Regardless of who is responsible for it, "Text for Nothing III" is a pertinent example of how epigenetic material may offer a different perspective on extra-textual documents such as letters, especially when pre-textual evidence like manuscripts or typescripts is lacking.

6. Samuel Beckett's German translations

Beckett's long-term collaboration with Elmar and Erika Tophoven started in 1953—after the author assisted Erich Franzen with the German *Molloy* (see Van Hulle and Verhulst 2018: 27-29)—and it continued until Elmar Tophoven's death in April 1989. Different from all the other examples discussed so far, it would be difficult to classify Beckett's involvement in his German texts as a typical case of collaborative self-translation. When Grutman (2013: 203n2) hesitates to assign the concept of collaborative self-translation validity, he calls the Beckett-Tophoven partnership a borderline example: "Where […] should we situate German versions of Beckett, considering the latter's habit of going over Tophoven's translations with a fine-tooth comb?" One crucial difference is that Beckett never assumed complete control of the translation process as he had done for his collaborative self-translations into French and English. He was regularly consulted as an authority by the Tophovens, but he granted them much more agency and power to make decisions on their own

as allograph translators, so it would be more accurate to regard their relationship as a form of *closelaboration*. Although Beckett clearly fulfils the function of author here, the fact that he is a collaborator does not necessarily make him a translator as well. As Joanna Trzeciak Huss (2019: 448) reminds us: "Even in clear cases of collaboration, it may be that only one party […] is translating in the strict sense of the word." With regard to the Beckett-Tophoven collaboration, the question that might be raised is whether the author should be seen as a fully-fledged co-translator of the German texts or rather as a consultant. This is a nuance that a term such as *closelaboration* allows for, unlike *collaborative self-translation*.

Beckett's working relationship with the Tophovens has not attracted much scholarly attention. One reason, at least from the perspective of Beckett studies, is the fact that he was never adequately credited in the paratexts of the published versions for having assisted in their translations. Another might be the relative scarcity of archival remnants that visibly point to the author's share in the translation process, compared to the abundant versions that meticulously document the efforts of the Tophovens. The many surviving drafts of the translations do not always reflect the actual scale of the author's involvement because of the manner in which the collaborative process proceeded. The resulting situation is thus the opposite of the cases discussed above, where the visibility of allograph translators was obscured. This makes the Tophovens an extraordinarily interesting case for translation studies, but genetic approaches that focus on Beckett's creative input, or the exact nature of his relationship with the translators, are faced with lacunae in the archival record. Again, the microhistorical approach, with its strong reliance on ancillary material, can help to overcome this methodological obstacle.

In what follows, we will discuss a few examples of the ways in which the collaborative translation process can still be reconstructed in part, starting out with pre-textual and other genetic documents (manuscripts, typescripts, revised or annotated editions) and supplementing them with extra-textual materials (correspondence, tape recordings, accounts, and memoirs that recall personal meetings). Covering a wide selection of Beckett works in various genres from prose to theatre, television, and radio, published sources will be triangulated with information from the Tophoven Archive in Straelen—a personal collection preserved by Erika and Jonas Tophoven, but recently opened up to scholars—and the Deutsches Literaturarchiv (DLA) in Marbach, which houses the papers of Beckett's German publisher, Suhrkamp Verlag.

6.1. Types of Tophoven-Beckett closelaboration

6.1.1. Typescripts revised by Beckett

Even though it is a rare occurrence in both the Tophoven Archive and the DLA, occasionally, after typing up his manuscript draft, Tophoven would send his working translation to Beckett, and the author would send back a revised version, thus leaving a clear material trace in his own handwriting. For instance, in the translation of the television play *Eh Joe* (1967), Beckett amended Tophoven's German text by "changing an intertextual allusion to a quotation" (Van Hulle and Nixon 2013: 89). In the English version, the female figure is *sitting on the edge of her bed in her lavender slip…* (Beckett 1967: 20), which is rendered in the German version as *Sitzt auf ihrer*

Bettkante in ihrem lila Unterrock…. In his marginal note, Beckett replaced *ihrer Bettkante* [the edge of her bed] with the words *ihrem Bette*, adding the original lines from Goethe's poem "Wer nie sein Brot mit Tränen aß" in the top margin of the page: *Auf seinem Bette weinend sass*.[8] Similarly, the German translation of *heavenly powers* as *himmlische Mächte* is corrected with the handwritten addition of *ihr* and an *n* in order to replicate Goethe's *ihr himmlischen Mächte* (Van Hulle and Nixon 2013: 89). As this example confirms, more than just belonging to the epigenesis of the original, translations can have an exogenetic dimension of their own, alongside an endogenetic history.

A good example of a more systematic *closelaboration* in the Tophoven Archive is a typescript of *Glückliche Tage*, the German version of the play *Happy Days* (Beckett 1961b), heavily revised by Beckett. As Elmar Tophoven (1988: 32) recalls, the typescript was sent to the author's Ussy address in August 1961. Beckett annotated it throughout (in pencil) on almost every page. The edits include not only translation variants, but suggestions to cut away superfluous text, such as definite and indefinite articles in stage directions (Tophoven 1988: 32). On page 4 of the typescript, Beckett wrote the word *shorten* in the left margin, referring to the following passage: *so vieles, wofür ich dankbar sein muß* [so much to be thankful for]. Tophoven's solution was *soviel Grund, dankbar zu sein* (Tophoven 1988: 32). In this case, the process is fully collaborative and traceable, since Tophoven's revision of the original translation was prompted by Beckett's request to shorten it, even if the author does not make any explicit suggestion as to the actual wording.

An example of Beckett's own intervention can be found on page 20 of the typescript, when Winnie utters the following: "Na ja, was für eine Freude jedenfalls, dich wieder lachen zu hören, Willie, ich war davon überzeugt, daß ich es nie wieder tun würde, daß du es nie wieder tun würdest."[9] Beckett highlighted these lines with a vertical bar in the left margin and wrote *ich tue es nie wieder | du [tust es nie wieder]* next to them. Even though Tophoven's translation is perfectly correct, Beckett turns a rather cumbersome subclause in the subjunctive mood (Konjunktiv II) into a much more natural way of speaking in the simple present tense.

6.1.2. Annotated editions and revisions of published texts

Beckett and Tophoven also frequently revised published German translations before or after a new performance, in the case of plays, or when preparing a new edition. Here, too, authorship attribution on the basis of archival material can be tricky. For instance, the revised bilingual edition of the play *That Time/Damals* (Beckett 1975/1976), preserved at the DLA, contains a handwritten change of the name *Foley* to *Tuohy*, but not in Beckett's hand. Fortunately, Tophoven's account of the revision points clearly to the author's direct intervention. Because Tophoven suggested *Foley's Tuskulum* as a translation of *Foley's Folly*, Beckett insisted on the name change in order to maintain the alliteration and assonance. He came up with *Tuohy* as an alternative, another Irish name to replace Foley, which yielded *Tuohy's Tuskulum* (Tophoven 1988: 33). Indeed, the first German translation published in the bilingual edition of *That Time/Damals* by Suhrkamp still reads *Foley's Tuskulum* (Beckett 1975/1976: 21), but in the collected and trilingual edition of *Stücke und Bruchstücke* this was revised to *Tuohy's Tuskulum* (Beckett 1975/1978: 47), fully in accordance with the surviving documentary evidence.

A less straightforward case is the revision of *Wie es ist* (Beckett 1961/1961), the German translation of the novel *Comment c'est*, first released as a bilingual edition. The emendation took place in 1975, in preparation of Beckett's collected *Werke*, published by Suhrkamp in 1976. The Tophoven Archive holds three annotated copies of the novel that were used for this undertaking: one of the first French edition (Beckett 1961a; Minuit), one of the American edition of *How It Is* (Beckett 1961/1964; Grove Press), and one of the monolingual *Wie es ist* in the Bibliothek Suhrkamp (Beckett 1961/1963), which has the date "5.2.75" in pencil at the back. All heavily marked by the Tophovens, the annotations mostly pertain to phrases that posed difficulties for translation, as certain words are encircled or underlined in pencil. On occasion, the capital letter "B" can be found written next to passages in either purple or red felt tip. In a personal communication,[10] Erika Tophoven was unsure if this letter referred to Beckett or (Klaus) Birkenhauer, who was also involved as an editor in the collected *Werke*, but she believed the former to be more likely and that they consulted Beckett himself when revising those marked up passages. Impossible to verify, this method is consistent with Elmar Tophoven's record-keeping of the author's own suggestions for translations as "S.B." (see below).

Sometimes, Hersant (2017: 96) notes, closelaborations such as this may even lead to "modifying the original according to its translation, in changing the source text in the light of the target text." The radio play *All That Fall* is a case in point. When Erika Tophoven revisited her original translation of the text from English into German, *Alle die da fallen* (Beckett 1957/1959), she realized that *Illustrierten* [periodicals] were a strange item for a blind man like Dan Rooney to spend his money on (Tophoven 2011: 101-102). Beckett admitted his mistake and *Illustrierten* (Beckett 1957/1959: 109) was subsequently removed from the revised translation (Beckett 1957/1964: 65). However, in the English and French texts that accompanied the German translation for this trilingual edition, *periodicals* was replaced with *aspirin* (Beckett 1957/1964: 64) and aspirine (Beckett 1957/1964: 321), changes that Beckett made in his own handwriting on the setting copies that survive in his publisher's archive (DLA). Not only does this create an imbalance between the different language versions of the text, these unique variants were never adopted in any other French or English publication of the radio play. Collating the various editions of Beckett's works in multiple languages thus reveals substantial variants, some of which can be traced back to the author himself by way of the Tophovens as intermediaries, aided by their well-preserved archive and the DLA holdings, or personal accounts and interviews.

6.1.3. Author, translator, and publisher correspondence

The previous two sections have made it clear that genetic documents of various kinds usually require additional, extra-textual material to be properly contextualized or understood. Letters can be rich sources of information in this respect. From time to time, Beckett would send the Tophovens a few ideas about translating a turn of phrase by post. In a letter dated March 2, 1963, he elaborates on the impending German translation of his new play *Play* (Beckett 1964), which would become *Spiel* (Beckett 1964/1964):

> Dear Top and Kiki, Would you have a look, in Play, at the line: "At home all heart to heart, new leaf and bygones bygones." I wonder if you have translated "new leaf" right. The English expression is "to turn over a new leaf," that is, turn the page, mend one's

> ways, change behaviour, make a fresh start, etc. Nothing to do with the leaf on the tree! (Beckett 2014: 532)

Beckett admits he does not have the translation at hand to actually double-check the text, but his intuition was proven right: Tophoven did indeed translate *new leaf* as *junges Grün*, just as the author suspected. What makes this case doubly interesting is that the unsolicited comment was most probably triggered by Beckett's self-translation of *Play* into French (as *Comédie*; Beckett 1964/1966), which he had begun in the same month. Besides, the English original was far from being finished at this time. The genesis of *Play*/*Spiel*/*Comédie* thus represents a remarkable instance of trilingual cross-pollination, in which writing, self-translation, and closelaboration exerted a mutual influence onto each other (see Beloborodova 2019).

The translators' own correspondence with the author often needs to be read in the context of letters contained in the publishers' archives in order to obtain a full picture. For example, on February 17, 1953, Beckett's French publisher, Jérôme Lindon at Les Éditions de Minuit in Paris, received a German translation of *En attendant Godot* (1952). Tophoven appended a list of questions about difficult passages, so Lindon advised Beckett to go over them in person with the translator. The author was not impressed by the text, telling Lindon on February 19, 1953 that there were "a fair number of blunders" and "not much style" (Beckett 2011: 368). One thing he drew the translator's attention to were repetitions or "echoes" in the play (Tophoven 2011: 96). When Tophoven sent his revised draft to Peter Suhrkamp, the publisher admitted the translation was quite accomplished overall, but that it lacked the lightness and transparency of the original (July 15, 1953, DLA). Tophoven did not fail to point out that his translation had been approved by Beckett, explaining that it was not easy to reconcile the author's wishes with the needs of the actors, not to mention the publisher's desires. *Godot* being his first translation of Beckett, none of the early drafts or queries survive. This makes Tophoven's correspondence with Suhrkamp, in which he recreates many of the discussions he had with the author, all the more helpful. One tip the publisher gave him was to listen closely and hear how his text sounded, a point of advice the translator took to heart.

6.1.4. Personal meetings, tape recordings, accounts, and memoirs

In their published accounts and memoirs, the Tophovens allude to recurrent meetings at the author's Paris apartment, which often entailed lengthy reading sessions in which Elmar would read his translation out loud while Beckett followed in the original text, only interrupting the declamation when he thought the rendering was off or inadequate. The first time they met in this way was to revise the German translation of *Godot*, which took them "two long afternoons" (Tophoven 1988: 26). From the 1960s onwards, Tophoven began to record the readings of his translations on tape, "in order to test their tone, rhythm, and ease of enunciation, resulting eventually in more than seventy hours of Beckett on tape" (Tophoven 2016: 13). He played the recordings for Beckett during his many visits to the author's apartment. Typically, they listened to the tapes together, with Beckett consulting the English or French version as he had done before, and Tophoven would pause and rewind if the author had a comment on the translation (Tophoven 2016: 14). These tapes are still preserved at the DLA in Marbach. Personal meetings fast became the most popular working method in the Beckett-Tophoven closelaboration, due to the proximity of author and

translator (both residing in Paris). Yet even though Tophoven took copious notes, by annotating the typescripts on the spot or afterwards, a correct ascertainment of Beckett's involvement remains difficult.

Again, the Tophovens' published accounts of their work shed more light on the matter. For example, Elmar clarifies that it was Beckett who decided to translate the title of his novel *L'Innommable* (1953a) as *Der Namenlose*, during Tophoven's visit to Ussy in 1959 (Tophoven 1988: 31). The typescript of the translation at the DLA features a number of handwritten revisions (some in blue ballpoint and others in pencil), but none appear in Beckett's hand. The question remains to what extent these corrections, though noted down by Tophoven, were dictated or in any other way suggested by the author himself during their meeting to discuss the translation. In some cases, it is possible to pinpoint Beckett as the source with a greater degree of certainty because Tophoven tried to highlight the author's contributions by using the initials "S.B.." In his translation of Beckett's late prose text *Company* (1980), Tophoven rendered the relatively straightforward *What does this mean?* (Beckett 1980: 29) into the literal *… was bedeutet das?* (cited in Cordingley 2020: np). As it happened so often, Beckett stepped in to infuse the translation with a layer of intertextuality, suggesting a veiled reference to Heinrich Heine's poem *Die Loreley* (1824) (Tophoven 1984: 289). Tophoven made the following record of Beckett's emendation: "S.B.: Was soll das bedeuten? (H.H.)…" (cited in Cordingley 2020: np)—another exogenetic example.

By this time, Tophoven had already begun using the computer for his translations, so the entry was made electronically. As Cordingley notes, Tophoven's principle of "transparent translation" and its genetic orientation are beneficial to determining the stages of the translation process and their chronology: "Tophoven was perhaps the first to intuit the scientific value of recording not just the *outcome* but also the *processes* of author-translator collaboration" (Cordingley 2020: np; our emphasis).

6.2. The genetic orientation of Tophoven's "transparent translation"

The survey above outlines the most important ways in which Becket and the Tophoven' closelaboration took form over the years. Despite this variety, it is clear that the extent of the author's involvement is difficult to determine for nearly every type, as opposed to that of the translators. The archive does contain tangible evidence of Beckett's interventions, but the prevalence of face-to-face meetings and discussions entails, of course, the possibility that a subtler exchange of ideas took place, one that may have, on occasion, eluded Tophoven's diligent note-taking. The notes do not all survive in the translators' papers, which further complicates matters. That having been said, Tophoven's keen and meticulous logging of all the stages in the translation process is invaluable to reconstructing the genesis of each collaborative venture. Following the principle of "transparent translation," the technique he advocated throughout his career as a translator, Tophoven employed colour-coded cards (*Zettel*) to record translation variants for a given sentence or expression in the original (Tophoven 2011: 111-113), a practice that originated during his translation of Beckett's novel *Watt* (1953b) in 1968 (Tophoven 1988: 35).

Later in his career, Tophoven switched from handwritten or typewritten translations to a word processor. He embraced the new technology as a superior means to realise the principle of "transparent translation," feeding into the computer not only

the end result, but also the many different variants that formed it (Tophoven 1988: 38). His innovative use of the computer also signified a change in the *closelaboration* with Beckett: for instance, the translation of *Company* he received for revision was a printout containing not just the one "final" German text, but also all translation variants that preceded the text, including the English original and the French translation (Tophoven 1988: 39). Tophoven referred to the printout as an *Arbeitsprotokoll* [working protocol], which he then supplemented with the author's own comments (using his initials) after their meetings. These complete protocols (*lückenlose*) for Beckett's later prose works were also passed on to his German publisher (Suhrkamp), to preclude their questioning of, at times, unorthodox translation solutions. This "mix of hard copy and digital holdings" in the Tophoven archive makes it more "hybrid" (Munday 2014: 75) than Beckett's or that of their publishers, which poses challenges to both conservation and research.

7. Conclusion

If Tophoven's aim in embracing computers was to render his working methods more transparent, then we should take special care to ensure that digital scholarly editions of material traces documenting collaborative translation do not make that process seem more opaque. In this sense, the BDMP, which seeks to strike the middle ground between a digital genetic edition that facilitates in-depth study of variants in manuscripts, typescripts or editions on the one hand, and a digital archive that reunites dispersed archival materials such as notebooks and a personal library on the other, still leaves room for improvement. It does not yet encompass reading notes, letters or diaries, for example. Matters become even more complicated if we factor in Beckett's collaborative (self-)translations, which, in addition to shared copyrights, introduce other types of documents (memoirs, accounts, interviews) that would need to be incorporated in the digital architecture.

At present, we do consult these materials for our analyses of the surviving draft versions in the *Making of* monograph series that accompanies the online genetic editions in the BDMP (currently nine volumes; see Appendix 3). Much more so than for his solo translations, the genetic discussions of Beckett's collaborative self-translations that feature in the project have taken the form of socio-cultural histories, in an attempt to compensate for missing or incomplete draft versions, so that different methodologies synergise in the digital and print components of the BDMP. Although the project does not yet accommodate the German translations of Beckett's works, there is no reason why genetic variants in that language should not be treated in the same way as the English and French ones at some future point.

Even then, digital projects of this kind will always require some layer of critical editing or commentary, in whatever guise, bolstered by additional archival materials, if our aim is to grasp the socio-historical and cultural context that shaped the process to which the surviving variants and versions bear testimony. Although Elmar Tophoven's dream of full transparency may never be achieved, the still vibrant field of translation studies, with its recent embrace of genetic, microhistorical, and social approaches, can take advantage of rapidly developing digital tools to increase the visibility of authors as well as translators and demystify the often obscured process of collaborative (self-)translation.

NOTES

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3. *CollateX* is a collation software tool. See Dekker, Ronald Haentjes and Middell, Gregor (2011): *CollateX*. Version 1.7.1. The Interedition Development Group. Consulted on 1 March 2021, <https://collatex.net/>.
4. Dasilva, Xosé Manuel (2015): El fenómeno de la autotraducción. La tipologia de la autotraducción, unpublished. *Self-Translation: Global and Local*. Vitoria-Gasteiz, 26-27 February 2015.
5. Infante, Guillermo Cabrera (1967): *Tres tristes tigres*. Barcelona: Seix Barral.
6. Magris, Claudio (2005): *Alla cieca*. Milano: Garzanti.
7. Leyris, Etienne (May 2014): personal communication, by phone.
8. This poem appears in a series of songs (*Gesänge*) in Goethe's novel *Wilhelm Meisters Lehrjahre* [Wilhelm Meister's apprenticeship] (1795/1796).
9. Original: "Ah well what a joy in any case to hear you laugh again, Willie, I was convinced I never would, you never would" (Beckett 1961b: 31).
10. Tophoven, Erika (4 September 2019): personal communication, Straelen (Germany).

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APPENDICES

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