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Chapter 22

Textual Scars:

Beckett, Genetic Criticism and Textual Scholarship

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Beckett's works deserve a scholarly bilingual edition. It has long been acknowledged that many of the texts of his works are inaccurate or even 'replete with errors' (Gontarski 2011, 357). Beckett himself told his biographer James Knowlson that his texts were in a terrible mess, and soon after Beckett's death, several critical readers openly called for new editions (Fitch 1990). In 1992, John Banville wrote that 'It is time now for all of Beckett's work to be properly edited and published in definite and accurate editions that future readers be allowed to see them for the unique testaments that they are' (the *New York Review of Books*, 13 August 1992). More than twenty years have passed and in the meantime, quite a few efforts have been made to provide new texts, with notable enterprises such as Charles Krance's bilingual variorum editions of *Company / Compagnie* and *A Piece of Monologue / Solo: A Bilingual Variorum Edition* (1993a) and *Mal vu mal dit / Ill Seen Ill Said* (1996a), Magessa O'Reilly's bilingual genetic edition of *Comment c'est / How It Is* (2001), Ruud Hisgen and Adriaan van der Weel's genetic edition of *WorstwardHo* (1998), and the series of *Theatrical Notebooks of Samuel Beckett* (1993b-99), which contain 'revised texts', based on Beckett's own revisions for the performances of his plays under his own direction. But these volumes are out of print. The momentum created by the Beckett centenary in 2006 resulted notably in a critical edition of *The Collected Poems of Samuel Beckett*, edited by Seán Lawlor and John

¹ The research leading to these results has received funding from the European Research Council under the European Union's Seventh Framework Programme (FP7/2007-2013) / ERC grant agreement n° 31360911.

Pilling (2012), but in general, from a textual scholar's point of view, the situation was dubbed 'a centenary of missed opportunities' (Gontarski 2011).

But perhaps this need for a critical edition is also an opportunity, as it makes itself felt at an exciting moment in textual studies and genetic criticism. When genetic criticism or '*critique génétique*' (the study of modern manuscripts and the process of writing) was establishing itself in the late decades of the twentieth century, it had to try and distinguish itself from traditional philology (Lebrave 1992; Grésillon 1994). In the meantime, genetic criticism has firmly established itself as a discipline in its own right and the time is propitious for a change of outlook, combining the forces of both scholarly editing and genetic criticism. One of the major merits of genetic criticism is its claim that the study of modern manuscripts does not need to be reduced to a subservient role at the service of the establishment of an edited text. The traditional demand for establishing a single, 'stable' reading text and the study of the instabilities of textual composition are hard to reconcile (Gontarski 1995: 196). Nonetheless, although genetic critics have repeatedly drawn attention to the differences between textual scholarship and *critique génétique* (Lebrave 1992; Ferrer 2002; 2010; 2011: 29), both disciplines can benefit from each other's expertise.

The research hypothesis of this essay is that a rapprochement between scholarly editing and genetic criticism can be established by means of an approach to textual 'variants' that values forms of *creative undoing*² (ways of de-composing a text as an integral part of literary invention) more than has hitherto been the case in textual scholarship. Throughout the history of literature, the creative process has been regarded as either a constructive undertaking or as a process of growth, depending on the respectively constructive or organic metaphors that were current or dominant in different periods. But in this process of composition, *decomposition* plays a crucial role that is generally downplayed by authors and

² Within Beckett studies, S. E. Gontarski's *The Intent of Undoing* (1986) gave currency to this term.

scholars alike. Acts of decomposition can range from the selection of reading notes³ to forms of discarding, cutting, deleting, omitting, crossing out and revising in the act of writing.

In terms of 'decomposition', Samuel Beckett's oeuvre is paradigmatic for genetic criticism. His notes and manuscripts raise several challenges, both for scholarly editing and for genetic criticism: the role of the marginalia in the author's personal library, the various types of notetaking, the bilingual geneses of some texts; the continuation of the genesis after publication; the documented activity of the author as self-translator; his role as director of his own plays and its impact on their textual representation and afterlife; the tension between completion and incompleteness, between product and process; and the metafictional thematization of this tension in his works.

This essay focuses on 'sutures' in the published texts, which Beckett has often deliberately left unpolished, showing sometimes slightly unsettling 'textual scars' that remind readers of the text's eventful past and draw attention to its often 'unsettled' nature. This textual situation will serve as a starting point to explore the possibilities of a bilingual edition of Samuel Beckett's works that combines the expertise of genetic criticism and scholarly editing, and that enables readers to explore both the *synchronic* structure of the texts as 'finished products' and the *diachronic* structure of their writing processes, making use of both print and digital media.

'Under the skin': The diachronic structure of texts

³James Joyce referred to his practice of 'notesnatching' as 'decomposition' in a self-referential passage of *Finnegans Wake*: 'Our wholemolemillwheelingvicocicrometer, a tetradomationalgazebocticon (the "Mamma Lujah" known to every schoolboy scandaller, be he Matty, Marky, Lukey or John-a-Donk), autokinatoneticallypreprovided with a clappercouplingsmeltingworksexprogressive process, (for the farmer, his son and their homely codes, known as eggburst, eggblend, eggburial and hatch-as-hatch can) receives through a portal vein the dialyticallyseparated elements of precedent *decomposition* for the verypetpurpose of subsequent recombination' (Joyce 1939, 614, lines 27-35; emphasis added)

In *The Magic Mountain* by Thomas Mann, Hofrat Behrens – a doctor who is not only familiar with medical X-ray techniques but is also an amateur painter – describes his painting technique by taking the underlying layers into account. Michael Maar interprets this moment as a description of Mann's own writing method, more specifically his so-called 'layering technique' ('Schichtentechnik'; Maar 1995, 13). Behrens argues that the 'depth' of a painting is just as important as its surface: 'what a man thinks and imagines, that gets expressed, too. Those things flow into his hand and have their effect. It isn't there and yet it is – and that makes for life-likeness' (Mann 1996, 255).⁴ Having some idea of what is under the skin can be advantageous – 'das kann von Vorteil sein' (Mann 1990, III.361) –, for artists, writers, readers and researchers alike:

It's a good thing – certainly doesn't hurt – if a man knows something about what's what under the epidermis and can paint what cannot be seen. Or in other words, when a man's relationship with nature is something different from the, let us say, purely lyrical. When, for example, he's a part-time physician, physiologist, and anatomist with some intimate knowledge of life's undergarments. It can work to his advantage. Say what you like, it is a certain plus. (Mann 1996: 255)⁵

Applied to literary texts, Behrens's explanation of his painting may serve as a guideline for a method of editing I would like to suggest for a scholarly edition of Samuel Beckett's works.

My point is that it is often useful to know what is 'under the skin' of the text, and that this

⁴ 'Was [...] mitgewusst und mitgedacht ist, das spricht auch mit. Es [...] ist nicht da und irgendwie doch da, und das gibt Anschaulichkeit' ('Fünftes Kapitel', section 6: Humaniora) This extra dimension or 'depth' is expressed in temporal terms: 'es gibt entschieden ein Prä' (Mann 1990, III.361).

⁵ 'Es ist eben gut und kann gar nicht schaden, wenn man auch unter der Epidermis ein bisschen Bescheid weiß und mitmalen kann, was nicht zu sehen ist, – mit anderen Worten: wenn man zur Natur noch in einem andern Verhältnis steht als bloß dem lyrischen, wollen wir mal sagen; wenn man zum Beispiel im Nebenamt Arzt ist, Physiolog, Anatom und von den Dessous auch noch so seine stillen Kenntnisse hat, – das kann von Vorteil sein, sagen Sie, was Sie wollen, es gibt entschieden ein Prä' (Mann 1990, III.361)

knowledge can be made operational in a critical edition that combines scholarly editing and genetic criticism. To illustrate the proposed combined genetic and editorial approach, four examples will be discussed. They are taken from *Molloy*, *En attendant Godot*, *From an Abandoned Work* and *Cascando*.

Example 1: *Molloy*

The first case is the *avant-texte* of *Molloy*. Before Moran sets out to look for Molloy, he describes the Molloy country, referred to as Ballyba. He explains what he knows about its geography and agriculture. In the published version, the description ends with the words:

D'où Ballyba tirait-il donc son opulence ? Je vais vous le dire. Non, je ne dirai rien. Rien. [§] Voilà donc une partie de ce que je croyais savoir sur Ballyba en partant de chez moi. (1996b: 224).

The words 'Non, je ne dirai rien. Rien.' replace a thirteen-page passage in the earliest manuscript version, preserved at the Harry Ransom Humanities Research Center, Austin, TX (HRC). Magessa O'Reilly has described the content of this passage about Ballyba's economy, which is entirely based on the excrements of its citizens.⁶ In 2008, the HRC asked the Centre for Manuscript Genetics (University of Antwerp) to design an electronic infrastructure for the presentation of treasures in the manuscripts for an exhibition called *The Mystique of the Archive* (2 September 2008 – 4 January 2009). We chose these sixteen excised pages on Ballyba as a sample and designed an edition to visualize the textual memory linked to the

⁶For a summary of the passage's content, see O'Reilly 2006. For a discussion of this passage in the context of genetic criticism, see Van Hulle 2008, 169-73. Emilie Morin discusses the passage in the context of the problem of Irishness and 'Beckett's estrangement from the Catholic ideology of the Irish Free Stage' (Morin 2009, 88-90).

'scar' in the text of *Molloy*. For, after having made a typescript⁷ and sent it to Mania Péron for feedback, Beckett eventually cut the whole passage on the excrement-based economy of Ballyba, and the most visible 'scar' in the published text that still testifies to the wound in the published version is this line 'Non, je ne dirai rien. Rien.' But the narrator does not manage to fully undo what he first intended to tell. The digression is not entirely reduced to 'nothing', for later on in Moran's story, one of the main characters in the economy of Ballyba, the so-called 'Obidil', appears out of the blue: 'And with regard to the Obidil, of whom I have refrained from speaking, until now, [...] all I can say with regard to him is this, that I never saw him' (Beckett 2009d, 170). Beckett could easily have removed this narrative and textual disturbance, but he chose not to.

This has consequences for the presentation of the text. The thirteen-page passage has of course enormous hermeneutic potential, and genetic criticism can play a role in the exploration of this potential. But it can also play a role in the presentation of the text. A critically edited text in printed codex format of both the French and the English versions would result in a rather static juxtaposition: 'Je vais vous le dire. Non, je ne dirai rien.' / 'I'll tell you. No, I'll tell you nothing.' In combination with a digital genetic edition of this fragment the reader's attention could be drawn to this textual scar, signalling that something interesting happens in the manuscripts in the area of tension between 'I'll tell you.' and 'No, I'll tell you nothing.' – an area where Belacqua located the reader's experience 'between the phrases, in the silence, communicated by the intervals, not the terms, of the statement' (Beckett 1992, 138). This 'reader's experience', however, may be richer if s/he is enabled to see the diachronic structure of the text. If one regards *Molloy* as a text that is also 'structured by time' (de Biasi 2004, 42), the diachronic structure underneath the textual surface shows an impressive sample of creative undoing. It is not necessary to know the whole story of this

⁷Harry Ransom Center, Carlton Lake Collection, Box 17, Folder 6; abbreviated as HRC MS CL 17.6.

'revision site', to employ the term John Bryant and Haskell Springer use in their edition of Melville's *Moby Dick*). After all, the textual scar may also be seen as a sign that the work has been 'healed'. But the scar is at the same time a reminder of past cuts, a reminder of the fact that this is a text with a past, which only makes it more fascinating. As Daniel Ferrer notes in *Logiques du brouillon: Modèles pour une critique génétique*, the scars left by the writing process are often almost unnoticeable in the published versions. But they remain present for those who can bring them to light. It is worth trying to understand the modalities of this active presence.⁸

Example 2: *En attendant Godot*

Several decades ago, Hersch Zeifman examined the texts of Beckett's most famous play and found numerous variants. Zeifman admitted that perhaps none of them, in itself, was particularly 'earth-shattering': 'Still, there is a kind of cumulative effect when one is dealing with literally hundreds of variations, however minor – their presence *does* ultimately make a difference, if only in terms of a play's texture and rhythm' (Zeifman 1977: 80). Apart from the transmissional variants (see also Hutchings 2005: 13-22), there are also a few remarkable compositional variants that call for textual attention. Beckett wrote the first draft of his play *En attendant Godot* in less than four months' time. In the holograph notebook, donated by Mme Lindon in 2006 to the Bibliothèque Nationale de France in Paris, the first page is dated 9 October 1948, the last one 29 January 1949. The document must have had some special value to Beckett, for he did not sell or donate it to public libraries or university archives in his lifetime, as he did with other manuscripts. Colin Duckworth visited the author in April 1965

⁸En général, les cicatrices laissées par le processus d'écriture sont moins en évidence, elles ont été lissées, plus ou moins maquillées, recouvertes par la dernière couche. Elles sont parfois pratiquement invisibles, mais elles demeurent présentes pour qui sait les mettre en évidence et il s'agit même d'une présence active, dont il faut essayer de comprendre les modalités' (Ferrer 2011, 108)

and only had a few hours to study this document. In his notes he mentions a passage that did not make it into the published version of the play – a long, eight-page dialogue concerning the question ‘Est-ce que c’est la peine’ [Is it worthwhile]. But the circumstances did not allow him to transcribe the whole passage.

The published versions of *En attendant Godot* and Beckett's own translation, *Waiting for Godot*, show only a small trace of this passage. In the second act, Vladimir (Didi) and Estragon (Gogo) first abuse each other and then make it up again. They call each other moron, vermin, abortion, morpion, sewer-rat, curate, cretin, and finally ‘Crritic!’ In the French text the stage directions simply read ‘*Échangé injures. Silence*’ (Beckett 2003, 186). This flood of abuse is occasioned by an unfinished question. Gogo suddenly announces ‘They’re coming!’ Yet nobody comes. The two men start watching, but they do not see anything, so Didi assumes: ‘You must have had a vision.’ They resume their watch in silence, until they suddenly ask each other a question, both starting with the words: ‘Do you –’ (‘Est-ce...’ in the French version). They mutually apologize for having interrupted each other, each of them urging the other to carry on, and each of them insisting on the other going first. What ensues in the manuscript is a nonsensical exchange of what Theodor Adorno called ‘protocol sentences’ (Adorno 2001: 164). This nonsensical nature is emphasized by the scene's excessive length, which turns out to have a special function and therefore deserves to be recounted in detail.⁹

Est-ce (MS 109r-111r)

Didi insists that Gogo should finish his sentence, which he would not mind doing if Didi promises to do the same in his turn. Gogo claims to have said ‘Est-ce’, to which Didi replies with astonishment that he employed exactly the same words. It is Didi's turn to reveal the

⁹ For an analysis of this cut in the French manuscript, see Van Hulle 2011b.

next word, but he would prefer not to. After some to and fro, they decide it might be more amusing to finish the sentence simultaneously. Didi proposes he will count. On the third count they will reveal the next word of their original question, one word at a time. They agree and start anew – *one two three*: 'Est-ce'.

que (112r)

They count to three again, then say in unison: 'que'. Vladimir interrupts the scansion and asks politely if he understood Gogo correctly. Gogo confirms that, indeed, they both said 'que'. After their mutual expression of bafflement they continue – *one two* – but before Didi can count to three, Gogo interrupts him again to ask him where they were. Didi kindly reminds him that they had just revealed the first three syllables: 'Est-ceque'.

c'est (113r-114r)

When Gogo is ready, Didi resumes the scansion and the next syllable turns out to be 'c'est'. Again, bewilderment on both sides. Did Didi really say C apostrophe E S T? Indeed he did, and so did Gogo. They are dumbfounded and Didi starts to suspect Gogo of cheating. Duly indignant at this insinuation, Gogo wishes to quit. If they cannot trust each other any longer, it is not worth going on ("pas la peine de continuer"). Whether it is worth going on or not, that is indeed the question. Didi immediately tries to mollify his companion, asserting that he was just joking.

la (114r)

With a magnanimous gesture, he generously offers Gogo the chance to lead the scansion from now on – an opportunity the latter immediately avails himself of. He counts to three and they both say: 'la'.

peine (115r)

A short silence of utter consternation is followed by an increased eagerness to reveal the rest, but not before another interruption of the scansion. Didi wants them to come closer together and not to speak too loudly. Gogo counts to three again, *one two three*, and they finally say the long-awaited word, in unison: 'peine'. They grant each other an encore and repeat the same word. When Didi inquires after the rest, Gogo can barely hide his amazement, but he allows Didi to count – *one two three*: (silence).

What follows is a thrilling pause. Neither of them had anything else to say; that was it. They look at each other, embrace, and scan the sentence in its entirety: 'Est-cequec'est la peine' – without a question mark. According to Didi the whole situation is so remarkable that he concludes it is unheard of ('inouï').

Comme le temps passe, quand on s'amuse! (116r; Beckett 2010a: 270)

That is indeed what this passage has remained, literally unheard of and largely unknown, since Beckett eventually decided to omit the scene. But the subsequent silence did make it into the published text, as did the concluding axiom: 'How time flies when one has fun!' After yet another silence, Didi and Gogo ask themselves what they should do next, while waiting:

VLADIMIR: How time flies when one has fun!

[*Silence.*]

ESTRAGON: What do we do now?

VLADIMIR: While waiting.

ESTRAGON: While waiting.

[*Silence.*] (Beckett 2010a: 271)

In the manuscript, however, the scene ends with an extra coda. Whether 'it' is worthwhile or not, they have not told each other what they mean by 'it', so Gogo wishes to know what Didi wanted to say when he asked the question. When they come to think of it, they both have to admit they have forgotten. They can only draw one conclusion: what they said to each other in unison was a question.

Evidently, this is not just any question. According to Albert Camus, it is the only serious problem in philosophy. Six years before Beckett wrote *En attendant Godot*, Camus opened his essay *Le Mythe de Sisyphe* with the subheading 'Absurdity and Suicide'. According to Camus, there is only one truly serious philosophical problem and that is suicide. Judging whether life is or is not worth living ('*la peine d'être vécue*') amounts to answering the fundamental question of philosophy (Camus 1974 [1942]; 1975). But Beckett was not a philosopher and no matter how fundamental the question was, he would not answer it.

Now that we know how the question was completed in the manuscript, the omitted content can resonate as well, as a *basso continuo* accompanying a major theme: the pressing question why – in spite of their misery – Beckett's characters rarely commit suicide. The *Godot* manuscript reveals the problem of suicide as a compositional starting point of Beckett's works. The 'fundamental question' seems to function as a creative impulse for Beckett, but it does not imply the answer Camus suggested: revolt. The only recognizable 'revolt' in *Waiting for Godot* is Gogo's remark 'It's revolting' (Beckett 2010a, 297), in reaction to a 'fundamental sound' ('Who farted?'). From Beckett's point of view, the question 'Est-ce que c'est la peine' is not just fundamental, but fundamentally unanswerable. In order to appreciate this unanswerability, one needs to know what the question is. And to that end the manuscript turns out to be a great help.

In the manuscript, the slapstick version of Camus' fundamental philosophical question is so overarticulated that the protagonists eventually forget why they asked it in the first place. The length of the eight-page exchange about one single question is part of Beckett's dramatic strategy, which Theodor Adorno defined with reference to Beckett's next great play, *Endgame*: a completely harmless scene in normal life (an old man pulling a handkerchief over his eyes and taking a nap) can suddenly cause dread when isolated in a *tableau vivant* (Adorno 2010: 159). Similarly, in the manuscript of *En attendant Godot*, Beckett isolated a harmless sentence and turned it into an existential question. Yet, precisely this – possibly too – overt reference to existentialism may have been a reason for Beckett to omit the eight-page scene. Neither Didi nor Gogo would ever be able to judge whether life – 'yes, life I suppose, there is no other word'¹⁰ – is worth living, since there is no way of finding out if the alternative is any better. And as long as they cannot find an answer to the question, the 'syndrome known as life' (Beckett 2009e: 38) has the benefit of the doubt.

Instead of asking the fundamental question, let alone answering it, Beckett eventually chose to interrupt it and to make it unrecognizable: 'Est-ce...' / 'Do you –' (Beckett 2010a: 266/267). The interruption is marked by means of an ellipsis in the Minuit edition, and by a hyphen in the editions of the English text. In the manuscript of his last work, *Comment dire / what is the word*, Beckett called these hyphens 'traits de désunion', instead of the standard phrase 'traits d'union'.¹¹ In the case of *Waiting for Godot*, the hyphen indeed marks a form of disunion. The opening words of the question are disunited from the rest of the slapstick scene that ends with the line 'How time flies when one has fun!' In the published version of the French text, the slapstick scene is replaced by an '*Echanged'injures*' (Beckett 2010a: 268). Because of the cut, the line 'Comme le temps passe quand on s'amuse!' (Beckett 2010a: 270)

¹⁰As Winnie puts it in *Happy Days* (2010b: 16).

¹¹The Beckett Digital Manuscript Project, module 1 (BDMP1), edited by Dirk Van Hulle and Vincent Neyt (Brussels: University Press Antwerp), www.beckettarchive.org; Van Hulle 2011a, 102.

gets an extra ironic twist. Time flies in the published version, simply because the fun part has been cut. In the English version, the resulting wound between 'Est-ce...' and 'Comme le temps passe quand on s'amuse!' closed with more textual scar tissue. The simple stage direction '*Echanged*' *injures*' is replaced by the small scene of abuse ('That's the idea, let's abuse each other'; 269). In combination with a digital genetic edition that draws attention to this passage's temporal dimension, the scene of abuse can also be read as a reminder of the painful question whether 'it' is worthwhile, the 'peine' question that could not be asked and had to be cut. This undoing created a meaningful gap of indeterminacy or '*Leerstelle*' in Wolfgang Iser's terms (1971: 15). One of the features of a scholarly edition could be that it signals the resulting textual scar and that it invites and enables readers to investigate its modalities.

Example 3: *From an Abandoned Work*

This story – as the narrator keeps reminding himself – ultimately is of how he killed his mother (Tara MacGowran Notebook, 70v; see Pilling 2007, 178). This is how the manuscript of *From an Abandoned Work* opens, or at least how the first page relating to this work opens. John Pilling calls it a 'summary' (178). The passage is on page 70v of the Tara MacGowran notebook, held at The Ohio State University's Rare Books and Manuscripts Library.¹² The notebook, which also contains other fragments (notably from the English *Molloy* (77v-86r), partial drafts of *Fin de partie* (18r-48r), and the fizzle 'Il est tête nue' (76v-70v)) has been turned upside down and the text of *From an Abandoned Work* is written from back to front (70v-48v). After the passage on 'how I killed my mother', the next page (70r) opens with the words 'Up bright and early that day, I was young at the time, feeling awful' (Beckett 2010c:

¹² I wish to thank Geoffrey Smith and the staff at the Rare Books and Manuscripts Library for enabling me to consult the document at Columbus, Ohio.

57), which is the opening line of the published version of the text. The passage on how the narrator killed his mother, possibly – as he supposes – for having brought him into the world, recurs on page 69r. Again, he reminds himself that this story is [1] of how he killed his mother for her having brought him into this world, where I never should have been, and [2] of how he wandered there unpunished (69r). Eventually, both the passage on 70v and the passage on 69r were cut. And so are numerous other passages. The published version is only half as long as the text in the manuscript. It is remarkable that the passages that are cut are simply omitted and the remaining passages have simply been joined together, usually without any new text to smoothen the transition.¹³

As for the omitted passages on the narrator's mother and the alleged matricide, the published version shows again a textual scar, when his father is mentioned: 'My father, did I kill him too as well as my mother' (Beckett 2010c, 61). In the published text, this is the first mention of his mother being killed. As a consequence, it has a surprise effect. What Mark Nixon, in the preface to the Faber edition, calls 'an atmosphere of narrative incoherence' (Beckett 2010c: xi) may have been caused by the omission of numerous blocks of text that were still present in the manuscript. Still, the knowledge that so many passages at so many places in the original narrative have simply been removed does not fully explain the narrative incoherence, for a reading of the manuscript version leaves one with a similar sense of narrative incoherence. The manuscript likewise contains numerous '*Leerstellen*', eliciting the reader's response. All the more reason, therefore, to devise an editorial solution that enables readers to examine this gap of indeterminacy.

¹³ For instance, the published text reads: 'enough of my mother for the *moment*. *Well* then for a time all well, no trouble' (Beckett 2010c: 58; emphasis added). In the manuscript, there is a passage of an entire page between '*moment*' and '*Well*' (starting with 'I didn't of course know where I was going' and ending with 'I just stopped and stood, leaning on my stick perhaps if you like, until the urge came to go on. But let me get on with this first day and get it out of my way and get on to the next, at a somewhat later time I imagine'). The cut passage has hermeneutic potential in that it illustrates the urge to go on in combination with the general sense of dysteleology in Beckett's works.

Example 4: *Cascando*

With regard to the first publication of *From an Abandoned Work* in *Trinity News* (7 June 1956), Beckett said that 'They made a balls of the text' (Letter to Barney Rosset, 30 August [1956], Beckett 2011b: 646). This could also serve as a summary of what happened with the various editions of Beckett's radio play *Cascando*. D. K. Alsop recently wrote an article for the *Journal of Beckett Studies*, arguing for a critical edition that would correct the many mistakes in the texts of *Cascando*. The most remarkable 'mistake', according to Alsop, is the Faber edition's 'apparent misprint' 'God God' (for 'Good God good God'). As PimVerhulst indicated in a 2012 article in *Variants: The Journal of the European Society for Textual Scholarship*, the variance is more systematic than it may seem at first sight. The adjective 'good' is removed systematically between Opener's exclamations 'Good God' and 'Good God good God' in the *Evergreen Review* (Beckett 1963: 55) and 'God' and 'God God' in the first Faber edition (Beckett 1964: 47). In 1998, Stan Gontarski suggested that Beckett may not have received proofs for the first Faber edition, which contains several transmissional variants, some of which are obvious errors (1998: 136). In the BBC broadcast, Opener's exclamations are also 'God' and 'God God', which according to Enoch Brater was the result of a change, made at the request of the BBC, 'determined by no less prosaic a force than the Postal Service': 'Because radio broadcast fell under this domain in Britain, a domain that banned blasphemy, "Good God" sounded risky. Beckett's producers at the BBC were reluctant to test the case (and thereby delay broadcast) so soon after the controversy surrounding *Endgame* at the Royal Court Theatre' (Brater 1994: 38).

Genetic research confirms Brater's explanation. On a carbon copy of the typescript, used for the BBC recording, containing several other autograph corrections by Beckett, the adjective 'good' was crossed out in Opener's exclamations '~~Good~~ God' and '~~Good~~ God ~~Good~~'

God' (Washington University, BBC typescript, 7r).¹⁴ So, the exclamation 'God God' can be regarded as a textual scar of a cut in the radio play's epigenesis (the continuation of the genesis after the first publication).

To enable readers and researchers to understand the modalities of these textual scars and their 'contextual memory' ('mémoire du contexte', Ferrer 1994; 2011, 109), it is necessary to devise editorial solutions that combine genetic criticism and scholarly editing.

Toward a Bilingual Edition of Beckett's Works

From the perspective of editorial theory, it is possible to bridge the gap between scholarly editing and genetic criticism. One of the results of the cooperation between the STS (Society for Textual Scholarship) and the ESTS (European Society for Textual Scholarship) to explore the exchange of ideas between various editorial traditions is the addition of an extra – 'genetic' – orientation¹⁵ to Peter Shillingsburg's scheme of five 'orientations to text', originally presented in *Scholarly Editing in the Computer Age* ('documentary', 'sociological', 'authorial', 'aesthetic', and 'bibliographical'). There are some resemblances between a genetic and a documentary orientation, but a major difference is the genetic orientation's focus on 'invention'. The notion of 'invention' is a central concept in Daniel Ferrer's *Logiques du brouillon: Modèles pour une critique génétique* (2011). Ferrer makes a clear distinction between 'philologie' (textual criticism and scholarly editing) and 'critique génétique'. Whereas – according to Ferrer – the former focuses on 'repetition', the latter concentrates on 'invention'¹⁶ (Ferrer 2011: 29). My suggestion is that the relationship between scholarly

¹⁴I owe a debt of gratitude to PimVerhulst for his help with this archival search.

¹⁵ This sixth, genetic 'orientation to texts' (in addition to Peter Shillingsburg's five orientations) was elaborated in collaboration with Peter Shillingsburg in a co-authored article, called 'Orientations to Text Revisited', for *Studies in Bibliography*.

¹⁶ In the context of textual genesis, both the concept of 'invention' and the concept of 'intention' are related to the notion of a creative agent. In *La Littérature des écrivains* (2002), Louis Hay notes that, in the past few decades, literary criticism has focused mainly on reception, but that this laudable revaluation of the reader does

editing and genetic criticism need not be presented as a dichotomy if the notion of 'invention', consisting of a dialectics between composition and decomposition (185), can be taken into consideration in the rationale behind a scholarly edition. This 'invention' is part of the diachronic structure of the text. The theorists of genetic criticism have always recognized its link to structuralism (Grésillon 1994, 7; de Biasi 2004, 41), but they have also clearly indicated a crucial difference: whereas structuralist research tended to focus on the 'synchronic' structure of the text as a finished (published) product, genetic criticism studies its diachrony, i.e. the literary work is regarded as what Pierre-Marc de Biasi has called an 'object structured by time' (de Biasi 2004, 42). A particular word¹⁷ can be compared with other words in the published texts, but also with all the alternatives for this word, which the author considered and subsequently dismissed during the process of composition and decomposition. The Beckett Digital Manuscript Project¹⁸ (BDMP) tries to enable this kind of comparison for Beckett studies, exploring the possibility of computer-supported collation.¹⁹ The BDMP is explicitly called a 'project' rather than a digital 'archive' or an 'edition' because its aim is to

not alter the fact that literature is also a matter of writers. And as John Bryant points out in *The Fluid Text* (2002), the 'intentional fallacy' should not become a doctrine, which he calls 'the Intentional Fallacy Fallacy'. It comes down to the idea that because intentions have no critical relevance they are not even discussable (8).

¹⁷This includes so-called 'paralipomena', to which the 'genetic orientation' calls special attention. Etymologically, the term paralipomena means 'what is left out' (Gr. *para-* 'to one side' + *leipein* 'to leave'), and indeed these notes, doodles, and other jottings that were 'undone' have all too often literally been left out of scholarly editions because they did not strictly speaking belong to a version of 'the' text.

¹⁸The BDMP (www.beckettarchive.org) is a collaboration between the Centre for Manuscript Genetics in Antwerp, the Beckett International Foundation in Reading and the Harry Ransom Humanities Center in Austin. It is supported by the Estate of Samuel Beckett and other institutions such as the Bibliothèque Nationale in Paris, Trinity College Dublin, Washington University, St Louis, the John J. Burns Library at Boston College, the Houghton Library at Harvard, Dartmouth College, Hanover, and the Ohio State University's Rare Books and Manuscripts Library. The project presents the manuscripts of Beckett's published texts in facsimile and transcription (encoded in XML according to the TEI [Text Encoding Initiative] guidelines) in an electronic environment, organized in 26 modules. Each module is accompanied by a monograph analyzing the textual genesis. The Centre for Manuscript Genetics (University of Antwerp) has recently received an ERC Starting Grant from the European Research Council to develop the BDMP modules of *Molloy*, *Malone meurt / Malone Dies*, *L'Innommable/The Unnamable* and the plays *En attendant Godot/Waiting for Godot*, *Fin de partie/Endgame* and *Krapp's Last Tape/La dernière bande*.

¹⁹Within the framework of the European COST Action 'Interedition' (<http://www.interedition.eu/>; http://www.cost.esf.org/domains_actions/isch/Actions), the Centre for Manuscript Genetics collaborates with the Huygens ING Institute and the University of Würzburg to investigate this possibility. The Beckett Digital Manuscript Project was chosen as a test case because the large amount of editorial challenges Beckett's manuscripts pose. We tested the possibilities of digitally supported collation by means of the CollateX algorithm.

keep serving as a test ground for editorial innovation.

The BDMP could function as an alternative to an apparatus variorum for a critical edition of Beckett's works, reflecting a natural division between the 'private' and the 'public' sides of the writing and publication process. In Pierre-Marc de Biasi's typology of genetic documentation (1996), this division is marked by the so-called 'bon à tirer' moment ('all set for printing' or 'pass for press'). While the BDMP makes Beckett's work *before* the 'bon à tirer' available for research, a critical edition concentrates on the work *after* the 'bon à tirer' moment, noting the variants between various editions in a critical apparatus. It seems important that, if the production of a critical edition is being considered in *printed* format, the precious paper space be devoted mainly to the bilingual texts (in parallel presentation). The apparatus variorum can easily be made accessible online, and would function as a more flexible research instrument in a digital environment (for instance the BDMP) than on paper. In Daniel Ferrer's dichotomy, such an apparatus would represent 'philologie' (textual criticism and scholarly editing). But if this online apparatus is part of the BDMP, it is directly relatable to the 'invention' in the manuscripts, including such genetic 'variants' as the 13-page passage on Ballyba's excrement-based economy in *Molloy* or the 8-page 'peine' passage in *En attendant Godot*.

On the one hand, from the perspective of genetic criticism, one could argue that these are more than just regular textual 'variants'; that they are 'rewritings'. Pierre-Marc de Biasi advocates the use of the term 'réécritures' (de Biasi 2000, 20) instead of variants, arguing that one cannot speak of a variant if there is no 'invariant' to compare it with. But the rejection of the term 'variants' is also a remnant of the early days of genetic criticism, when it was compelled to establish itself as a separate area of research by distinguishing itself clearly from textual criticism and scholarly editing. In the meantime, times have changed and a rapprochement between genetic criticism and scholarly editing may be mutually beneficial.

On the other hand, from the perspective of textual criticism, scholarly editors may frown at de Biasi's objections against the term 'variants'. Nonetheless, reconsidering 'variants' as forms of 'rewriting' (*réécritures*) can also be an incentive to regard variants not only in terms of deviations from a copy-text, but as forms of creative undoing and inventive development. By creating a continuum between compositional and transmissional variants, a combination of a genetic edition and a critical edition can draw attention to the textual scars and the modalities of their contextual memories, enabling readers to study both the synchronic and the diachronic structure of Beckett's texts.

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