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Genetic Translation Studies

Anthony Cordingley

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Introduction and definitions

In *genetic translation studies* (GTS) the methodology of genetic criticism from literary studies is used to study the composition of translated texts. Researchers analyze documentary evidence (intermediary translation products) from different stages of the genesis of a translation and formulate hypotheses about the translator's decision making (the translation process). If the study of a published translation captures the outcome of a translator's method of writing, the genetic approach offers a frame by frame representation of its dynamic process. GTS provides an insight into the mechanisms that translators use to balance their own creativity with the inherent constraints of literary translation, into the influence of co-translators and other collaborators, and it can show how translators manage these interactions on a professional and personal level, as well as a textual one.

In genetic criticism the collection of documents generated by an author writing a work is termed the 'genetic dossier'. This dossier may include planning and research notes, letters, drafts, manuscripts, typescripts, galley proofs, computer files and any pre-publication variants of the published text. These documents are often in a chaotic and near illegible state when the researcher encounters them, and once they are organised into an order that best represents the chronological process of composition they constitute the work's *avant-texte* (in the singular; although in practice each document is often also referred to as an *avant-texte*). A key concept in genetic criticism, the *avant-texte* is the result of the researcher's interpretation of the work's composition, and thus it does not indicate the actual manuscript material

but rather the critical discourse by which the geneticist, having established the objective results of their analysis (transcriptions, relative dating, classification, etc.), reads them as successive moments of a process. (de Biasi 1996: 38)

This distinction acknowledges that the avant-texte is a necessarily subjective reconstruction of the writing process from its material evidence. Documents are inscribed with multiple dimensions to their composition, which may be exogenetic (external influences, often revealed in notebooks, letters, contracts, emails), endogenetic (authorial writing, corrections, additions and deletions), epigenetic (pertaining to transformations of the text after the author first declares it ready to pass for press), paratextual (relating to the form and materiality of the page and book) and the post-textual (relating to its circulation and reception).

To date, most GTS research has been conducted upon translators' papers found in the archives of translators, writers or publishers. Durand-Bogaert (2014c) and Cordingley and Montini (2015b) discuss historical, institutional and cultural reasons for the poor levels of translation manuscript preservation, which has limited the number and kind of literary translation materials available for research. Historically, the perception that the intermediary phases of translation are without value has meant that little interest has been shown in translators' papers and much material has been lost, while on the contrary, in accordance with the Romantic models of authorship, the avant-textes of literary authors are sought after because they are thought to reveal the emergent, unadulterated genius of creativity. Thus, not only have translators tended not to keep or want to share their working papers, but socio-economic factors that value most the genesis of high-brow literary texts have meant that the GTS research has focused mainly on the manuscripts and papers of (usually male) translators who are also authors. As discussed below, this situation is nonetheless changing as the emergence of GTS has encouraged researchers to be more tenacious in their search for these materials, and because new avenues are opening up with the establishment of translation archives and the more frequent archiving of the digital documents produced during the translation process. Furthermore, by supplying the evidence of translators' creativity and their complex decision making, GTS helps to break down the perception that translation is an inherently derivative or subservient form of writing, a stereotype that perpetuates the cycle of translation's devaluation and the destruction of its documentary evidence.

Relevant epistemological consideration

GTS responds to the fact that because 'acts of translation do not lend themselves to direct observation [...] some *indirect* means of approaching them will always have to be used' (Toury 2012: 213). Cognition happens within the translator's mind—the infamous 'black box' problem (Holmes 2000/1972: 185; Jones 2006)—so researchers turn to externalised, intermediate signs of a translator's decision making. In cognitive translation studies, live translators are observed and hypotheses made about their mental processes, which are derived using techniques such as think-aloud protocols, collaborative-translation protocols, video recording, key-stroke logging, eye-tracking software etc. Participating in the research can nonetheless jeopardise the integrity of

the results (translators may change their behaviour if they know they are being observed) and the relevance of the data for literary translation studies can be limited if the sample group is comprised of students, novices or less experienced translators (which has often been the case because professional translators typically resist being monitored). Also, a researcher may be less interested in discerning the generalizable habits or norms of literary translation than in identifying instances when a translator surpasses them, displaying particularly unique forms of creativity.¹ Such cases can be impossible to predict. Success in literary translation can be as random and historically contingent as success in ‘original’ authorship, and there is no guarantee that a source text esteemed to be of great literary value will become a target text that is, at any given time, of interest because of the creativity or ingenuity demonstrated by its translator, the literary strategies used or the quality of the language. It may be valuable for a host of other reasons, such as its relationship to translation norms in a particular target culture or literary field, its relationship to past translations of that same source text, or the history of translation in the target culture. However, a published translation, even of a great work of literature, may be unremarkable or simply conventional. By the time a translation is recognised as being of literary interest on its own terms it is almost invariably too late to observe the text’s coming into being. The careers of translators take years to build and are often appreciated retrospectively. Indeed, the very notion of literary value is highly subjective, unstable and culturally bound. Thus, a translation deemed uninteresting today may be recognised as important or inventive only decades later, and translators who are marginalized today, for such reasons as gender, class, language, politics, popularity, genre, may become the focus of interest in years to come. For such reasons, literary researchers will be drawn to translation archives to rediscover translation processes that have escaped the eye.

In the 1960s-70s context of post-structuralist definitions of text as an open, synchronic ‘web’ of intertextual signification (Barthes 1971), genetic critics were anxious to defend their concern for the diachronic nature of textual evolution from the charge that they were reinstating the kind of traditional philology—with its search for textual origins, certainties and authorial intentions—that French theory rejected (Lebrave 1992, Ferrer 2010). For this reason, they developed their method for studying the diachronic motion of textual creation in opposition to both traditional philology and Anglo-American textual scholarship. Broadly speaking, in textual criticism, a text emerges out of repeated elements that outlast the chaos of their accidental creation, whereas genetic criticism chooses to destabilise the notion of text by confronting it with that accidental material (Ferrer 2010). Each approach is associated with an ideological position: American textual scholarship, which emerged from a Cold War context, originally focused on providing definitive editions of nationally identified classics (Gailey 2012). French genetic criticism, on the other hand, emerged from the context of 1960s post-structuralism and therefore challenges assumptions of textual stability (de Biasi 2011).

Genetic critics conceive of literature as dynamic movement (Grésillon 1994: 7) and conceptualize the *œuvre* in terms of its becoming as opposed to its telos, the published text (Hay 2002: x). In other words, they emphasize that their object of study is not the text that the writer considers to be finished but the continuum of writing within which the published text represents a final phase. The earliest writers on translation genetics in French, collected in the Bourjea's 1995 volume, *Génétiq̃ue & Traduction*, found inspiration in the comments of the famous French poet Paul Valéry on his translation of Virgil's *Eclogues*.

After a while, as I went on with my translation—making, unmaking, remaking, sacrificing here and there, restoring as best I could what I had first rejected—this labor of approximation with its little successes, its regrets, its conquests, and its resignations, produced in me an interesting feeling [...].

Faced with my Virgil, I had the sensation (well known to me) of a poet at work [...] with as much freedom as if it had been a poem of my own [...] as I fiddled with my translation, I caught myself wanting to change something in the venerable text. It was a naïve and unconscious identification with the imagined state of mind of a writer in the Augustan age [...] At bottom there are always the same problems—that is, the same attitudes: the 'inner' ear alert for the possible, for what will murmur 'of itself' and, once murmured, will return to the condition of desire; the same suspense and the same verbal crystallizations; the same oriented sensitivity of the *subjective* vocabulary, as though all the words in the memory were watching their chance to try their luck in reaching the voice. I was not afraid to reject this epithet, to dislike that word. Why not? (Valéry 1985/1958, 302-3)

Valéry finds a common epistemology in poetic composition and poetry translation. His description of the cognitive process of translation during which the writer's inner ear listens for the words to murmur forth, while the words, animated by their own desire to live and be heard, strive to reach a voice, aptly conveys the intense verve of creative writing and the sense of *freedom* within the process of literary translation. Valéry's claim that he feels able to reject a Virgilian epithet or dislike a certain word resembles an author testing and revising their own composition: the writer's smithy also involves the *labor* of drafting and redrafting (*making, unmaking, remaking, sacrificing here and there, restoring*). Indeed, as a translation moves from the projective nature of exogenetic research (anticipating terminology, context, perspective, style) to the these experimental endogenetics, from one draft to the next, sentences take on a life of their own, only to backtrack towards the source, and perhaps depart from it again, or not. This ebb and flow in the drafting and revising process of translation has been more recently discussed by the translators Tim Gutteridge and Tim Parks (Gutteridge 2019). A genetic approach is

suitable for studying these written forms of bilingual creativity because it favours the interpretation and contextualisation of all stages without assuming a teleological hierarchy that reduces meaning to an anterior, posterior or published form. In GTS each phase of the translation process should be evaluated within the context of the translation's textual continuum and its conditions of bilingual cognition, rather than the degree to which it advances towards a final point or target text.

For Valéry translating involves retracing step by step the making of the work, to reach not a text that will be comparable to its source but rather to discover the virtual time and space of the work's genesis, to find the state of imaginative identification from which one continues the writing anew in another language. An affinity between Valéry's description of the process of translation and the aspirations of genetic research was affirmed by the first generation of genetic critics, many of whom were Valéry scholars. This sentiment was echoed in the first major contribution to GTS that looked beyond author-translators (like Paul Valéry or the self-translator Samuel Beckett): in the 2014 issue of *Genesis*, Durand-Bogaert affirms, 'Translation puts genetic procedures into action at every moment, its being is already performative' (2014b: 7; my translation). In the same issue, Samoyault (2014) proposes that the translated text can be thought of as a subsequent draft of the source's avant-text, which she argues accounts for the fact that translations are eternally imperfect (always a product of their time and forever needing to be remade), just as the oeuvre itself is rendered vulnerable by translation, exposed to its multiplicity, its loss of singular authority. She thus echoes Scott (2006), who was one of the earliest to introduce *critique génétique* to Anglophone translation studies; in an essay published in Bassnet and Bush's *The Translator as Writer*, a volume which argues strongly for translatorship to be equated with original authorship, Scott maintained that translation not only reactivates the continuum of textual genesis, rendering the original unfinished, but it relegates the original to the status of the avant-texte of the translation. This theoretically stimulating notion is however contestable, for it equates the textual ontology of original writing with that of translation, overriding the specificities of author and translator, not to mention the ethical regime that defines the translation (if it is to remain a translation).

These various genetic paradigms resist the notion that translation will reveal a unique and unified text; rather they situate the work within both the contingency and the continuity of the writing and translating processes that continue to define it. They emphasize that their object of study is not the text that the writer considers to be finished but the continuum of writing within which the published text images the last phase.

Literature overview in translation studies

The study of translation drafts is not new; Biblical scholars, for instance, have long used manuscripts of the translation of the King James Bible in English to determine the translators'

working methods (see Feingold 2018). This evidence, dating from the late sixteenth century to early seventeenth century, includes records of the committee that supervised the translation teams and three manuscripts of the text itself; Oxford's Bodleian Library holds complete drafts of the Old Testament and the Gospels, in the form of a marked-up version of the Bishops' Bible, a 16th-century translation used by the King James translators as a base text; and a partial draft of the New Testament epistles survives at Lambeth Palace Library in London. Jeffrey Alan Miller's (2018) discovery in 2015 of the earliest known draft of any part of the King James Bible demonstrates that precious new evidence can emerge unexpectedly, although manuscripts from this and earlier periods are extremely rare. To date, their study has been framed within the philological traditions of the disciplines devoted to them, as in the case of Biblical scholarship. GTS can be applied to such texts, yet the genetic dossier in these cases will seldom, if ever, contain multiple versions of translations penned by the same hand or hands. If such aporias are common for translation dossiers in general, more complete sets of manuscripts and drafts tend to date from the twentieth century, which has oriented the focus of GTS. The methodology of genetic criticism emerged in the 1970s (Bellemin-Noël 1972) and was consolidated through the work of researchers associated with the Institut des Textes et Manuscrits Modernes (ITEM) in Paris, such as, Pierre-Marc de Biasi (1996, 2004, 2011), Daniel Ferrer (2002, 2004, 2010, 2011), Almuth Grésillon (1992, 1994, 2008), Louis Hay (1984, 2002) and Jean-Louis Lebrave (1992, 2010). Their methods continue to be developed elsewhere; for instance, Geert Lernout and Dirk Van Hulle have led research projects at the Centre for Manuscript Genetics at the University of Antwerp focused on multilingual modernist writers, such as James Joyce and Samuel Beckett, that propelled thinking about translation processes within genetic criticism, albeit through the prism of original authorship. GTS research published in French has explored both prose, poetry and theatrical texts within the edited collections *Génétiq̃ue et traduction* (Bourjea 1995) and *Traduire: genèse du choix* (Montini 2016), as well as the special issues of *Genesis* (Durand-Bogaert 2014a) and *Transalpina* (Agostini-Ouafi and Lavieri 2015). GTS monographs have been restricted to poet-translators, such as Saint-John Perse (Hartmann 2007) and Paul Celan (Dueck 2014). Many parts of novels or shorter prose texts have been analysed to date, though the only systematic genetic studies of entire novels in translation are those in *The Making of...* series devoted to the works of Samuel Beckett, where self-translation is integral to a continuum of bilingual writing (Van Hulle and Weller 2014, O'Reilly, Van Hulle and Verhulst 2017, Van Hulle and Verhulst 2017). The longstanding interest in genetic criticism of scholars working in Brazil shifted to translated texts when monographs by Paret-Passos (2011) and Romanelli (2013), and a special issue of *Manuscrita* (Gama and Amigo Pino 2011), engaged wholeheartedly with genetic approaches to translation. GTS was a resource for scholars who found that the archives of Brazil's last emperor Dom Pedro II contained, most surprisingly, manuscripts of his private translation practice (Romanelli, Soares and Souza 2013).

In 1995, the same year that saw the publication of the first GTS collection *Génétiq̃ue & Traduction* (Bourjea 1995), Gideon Toury published his seminal *Descriptive Translation Studies and Beyond*, which includes two chapters that extend his DTS methodology to the analysis of translation manuscripts. Like the French *génétiq̃iens*, he asserts that manuscript study helps us to understand translation decision making, though his focus on understanding the translation in terms of the target culture norms sets it apart from GTS (see below). With a similar proximity to GTS, Munday (2012, ch. 4; 2013, 2014) has studied translators' manuscripts, and situated this within the methodology of microhistory (also discussed below), an approach followed by Paloposki (2017). Guzmán (2010, 2014), on the other hand, locates her analyses of the Gregory Rabassa archives within the nexus of Latin American studies and translation studies.

GTS was brought to the attention of international (Anglophone) translation studies in 2015 with the special issue of *Linguistica Antverpiensia*, where the field was defined (Cordingley and Montini 2015b) and its scope broadened through studies of cinematic and audio-visual translation geneses, texts mediated through internet forums, and new perspectives from revision studies. Momentum has continued to build with a steady stream of articles in TS journals (too many to list here), as well as edited volumes such as *Genetic Translation Studies* (Nunes, Mura and Pinto 2019), *Traduire avec l'auteur* (Hersant 2020a) and *Au miroir de la traduction : avant-texte, intratexte, paratexte* (Hartmann and Hersant 2019), *Archéologie(s) de la traduction* (Henrot Sostero 2020), as well as special journal issues of *Carnets* (Sântos and Amarante 2018), *Palimpsestes* (Hersant 2020b) and *Meta* (Cordingley and Hersant 2021).

Main research methods

In his genetic schema of the genesis of literary texts De Biasi (1996, 2011) divides the *avant-texte* phase into seven stages: the provisional, the exploratory, the preparatory, the structuring, the research, the compositional and the postcompositional. Incorporating Debray-Genette's terms, he argues that documents within these phases may be exogenetic, that is, derived from external sources: 'any writing process devoted to research, selection, and incorporation, focused on information stemming from a source exterior to the writing' (de Biasi 1996: 43); or endogenetic, resulting from the writer's own reformulating: 'the process by which the writer conceives of, elaborates, and transfigures pre-textual material, without recourse to outside documents or information, through simple reformulation or internal transformation of previous pre-textual data' (de Biasi 1996: 42). These categories are nonetheless to varying degrees imbricated and porous: 'Logically speaking, there is no such thing as a purely exogenetic element: every exogenetic fragment bears the primitive seal of endogenetics, and the opposition of the two concepts is only relative' (De Biasi 1996: 47).

In genetic criticism *texte* is traditionally distinguished from *avant-texte* by the author's decision that the work is *bon à tirer*, it can be 'passed for press'; at this point it is fixed on the

page and the book materializes. The work then transitions into its *après-texte* or post-text stage, which is for de Biasi ‘the publishing future of the work (its various editions)’ (1996: 41). Into this tight schedule, Van Hulle introduces the *epigenetic* phase to give space to authorial writing of the text that continues after both the moment it is passed for press and the moment the text is published, a phase which he identifies in many modernist writers such as James Joyce and Samuel Beckett. Indeed, a self-translated text arguably falls into the epigenetic category within a single genetic continuum, yet Eva Gentes (2017) demonstrates the perils of such an assumption by revealing how different self-translators begin to translate at different stages of the composition of the source text, even in some cases producing bilingual writing that confounds all notion of source and target texts. Whether or not one can consider the source text to be part of the genesis of an allograph (non-authorial) translation is a contentious question that generates different visions of the ontology of the translated text. Epigenesis is nonetheless a pertinent category for the translated text, which in professional contexts prototypically has phases, that are quite often institutionalized, of revision and correction performed by experts in these domains; the translator’s greater or lesser control over this process and their capacity to accept or reject changes is often dependent upon their status or power, which is typically a function of professional standing, of cultural capital (e.g., Solum 2018).

A genetic approach to translation can complicate many assumptions about a translator that would be made if one had access to the published text only. As a methodological principle GTS researchers aim to study each available phase of a translation process without being influenced by the published version: each translation decision is assessed on its own terms, in the context of its own opportunities and constraints, as the translation moves from the private space of the *avant-texte* to the public realm of the published work. This responds to the way that translators exercise creativity and self-restraint, how they balance their personal freedom as reauthors of a text with their own commitment to a professional ethics of translation, their sense of a responsibility to represent the source text accurately (or not), which is balanced with varying degrees of concern for making the text conform to the conventions of the target culture.

GTS challenges the customary view that translators adopt either a source- or target-oriented approach, with foreignizing or domesticating results, by showing how translators’ strategies evolve over the course of writing without necessarily adhering consistently to one side of such a binary. Indeed, it is not unusual to see a translator begin with a highly literal translation that is then reworked over successive revisions into a freer, more independent text. Hersant’s (2020c) study of Maurice Coindreau’s French translations of twentieth-century American literary prose shows how the translator followed such a strategy; furthermore, the earliest draft of Coindreau’s translation of Truman Capote’s *The Grass Harp* reveals that he translated specific ornithological, botanical, or other specialized terms with a less specific (inaccurate) vocabulary, achieving the more precise (correct) translation only when revising his own work. This allows Hersant to argue

that Coindreau did not to consult a dictionary initially, preferring to maintain the flow of writing. With each revision, Coindreau's lexis becomes more precise and more allusive, the literary or poetic qualities of the sentence structure and register are heightened. In subsequent phases, as a reviser or editor of his own work, Coindreau is at one remove, or more, from the initial experience of discovering a text in his own tongue, or rather as Hersant suggests, drawing on Ladmiral (Ladmiral 2005: 474), a 'no man's langue'. From this we may infer that genetic research complicates the seemingly natural assumption—Benjaminian speculations aside—that literal translation is a less *writerly* form of translating (hence the common notion that translationese cannot be creative translation). Yet, the translator who chooses not to interrupt the phenomenology of creation with the demands of a more rigorous translation is one who knowingly suspends, or brackets, their translatorship in order to inhabit the text and share with its author the experience of the work's creation. In this way, and according to the particularities of each case, as revealed in its genetic dossier, fine-grained genetic analysis can prove that the degree of sophistication in published translation is only one gauge of the translator's 'creativity'. Indeed, through its critique of the Romantic model of authorship as inspired creation, genetic criticism puts GTS research on guard against assuming any one phase of the text's genesis is inherently more 'creative' than the next; for just as it has shown that the most 'original' of creative works are rarely the product of a single author's unmediated inspiration, when texts emerge in their rewriting and very often with the influence of collaborators, so too the genetic approach to translation reveals how each phase of writing (from first composition, to revising, to checking against the source text, further editing, etc.) confronts the creative capacities of the translator with different challenges (Cordingley and Frigau 2017; Hersant 2020a; Jansen and Wegener 2013).

Genetic materials can be approached with different methodologies. Munday (2012, ch. 4) uses archival research in combination with his own method for studying decision-making and translation appraisal. His articles of 2013 and 2014 set out the case for using microhistory in combination with the study of translators' drafts, papers and archives. Microhistory is a way of doing social history that seeks to understand the lives of figures or groups that are neglected in macrohistorical narratives, those often ignored because they are 'ordinary' people or workers. It focuses on the micro scale of individual cases or small communities from which it makes generalizable claims, and it is particularly useful for studying subjects—like translators—for which little documentary/archival evidence remains. By examining the drafts of Bellos's translation of Perec's *Les choses*, Munday demonstrates that manuscripts can 'reveal some of the normally hidden traces of translatorial activity and are a real-time record of some of the translator's decision-making processes' (2013: 126). While neither Perec nor Bellos are by any stretch of the imagination figures that history has ignored, this technique can be applied to any translator's work, and there is substantial opportunity for combining or comparing Munday's

method of evaluation and microhistory with genetic research techniques. As a newly emerging subdiscipline of translation studies, GTS is still defining its methods and limits—by comparison, only after four decades of research by many different teams of genetic critics did Ferrer (2011) model some thirty-eight strategies in his genetic typology of literary authorship.

Toury's seminal study of 1995 (revised in 2012) acknowledged the paucity of translation research into the drafts and pre-publication materials. He offers a provisional, experimental methodology for genetic research within the context of his norms-based DTS approach (without reference to the French tradition of *critique génétique*). He affirms that this cross-pollination of methods can 'enhance our understanding of the constraints to which translators choose to subject themselves' (2012: 218). He aims to supersede paradigms of 'equivalence' in translation by situating the genesis of the target text within the context of its target culture and analyzing its textual features from the perspective of target culture norms, from which he then draws generalizable conclusions. For Romanelli (2015), this descriptive approach and genetic criticism share 'the same paradigm', and their 'theoretical principles' work together in 'perfect harmony' (2015: 90). There is, however, resistance in the theory of GTS to the teleological orientation that underlies Toury's method. His comparison of manuscript research with the 'archaeologist's attempt to reconstruct the original course of an ancient road which had almost completely disappeared' (2012: 219) evokes the philological paradigm rejected by genetic critics: they do not believe that manuscript genetics should focus primarily on this linear path to the published text but to the process at each moment, including all that was lost along the way; furthermore, in the Valeryian model of certain genetic critics, the path leads not from the author at one end to the text at the other but to the source and dynamics of creativity that animate the writing.

Toury (2012: 221) emphasises that the translator's revisions and reformulations operate typically at the phrasal rather than textual level, and these 'textual-linguistic *units*' (author's emphasis) are 'interim outputs [that] represent phases in the emergence of a single text rather than a series of textual segments having a degree of independent status'; for him the draft contains a multitude of such units, each a 'multilayered version' that cannot be reduced to 'a number of self-contained texts'. Genetic critics would generally agree that writing at the *avant-texte* phase is not already text, yet they are inclined to search for unifying traits within these interim phases; in their tradition of analyzing autograph (non-translational) writing they often use the French term *campagne* (campaign) to give the sense of a thrust of sustained writing with a cohesive strategy that is more than just a phase. Whether or not this is a difference between the writing of original authorship and the writing of translatorship is a question that remains to be answered. The writing of translation occurs, naturally, within constraints that are absent from original writing, and with a source text whose global structure is already mapped out. Arber's (2020) study of the drafts of Elmar Tophoven's German translation of Alain Robbe-Grillet's novel *Djinn* affirms that the translator's choices were not determined by any advance strategy but constitute rather 'a

great number of little decisions determined at different levels', which render the translation 'an open text that cannot be modelled or recreated, carried by the movement of its writing'. Toury might have reproached this study for not framing the translation in the context of the target culture norms, which might have influenced its capacity to 'model' the translation, yet both critics affirm that translatorship proceeds with inherent unpredictability.

Toury articulates one of the singularly most important benefits from genetic research; namely, its ability to generate new research questions: 'Thus, uncovering translational replacements whose adoption was only temporary gives rise to questions which would not even have been asked under other kinds of observation conditions' (2012: 218). When unable to ask or observe the actual translator (and especially when retrospection is known to be unreliable), verifiable knowledge of what solutions the translator proposed and tested, rejected or retained is invaluable. Toury analyses, firstly, manuscript, typescript, page proof and pre-print versions of just one sentence of A. Wesley Wheen's English rendition of Erich Maria Remarque's novel *Im Westen nichts Neues*, and then, Avraham Shlonsky's manuscript revisions of his 1946 Hebrew translation of Hamlet's 'To Be or Not to Be' monologue in Shakespeare's *Hamlet* (III:1). Like a genetic scholar he begins by acknowledging lacunae in his genetic dossier and affirming that ordering the 'layers' of text 'is a precondition for any justification of observations in terms of a reconstructed translation process' (2012: 229). Only then does he venture into the translator's 'laboratory' (2012: 229) and perceive, in Shlonsky's case, six formal, poetic *constraints* (line length, metre, structure of the line, the nature of the voice, stylistic richness or elevation, sonority), each of which is derived from recipient cultural norms; hence the translation is target oriented. Toury notes that these constraints could have been deduced from a study of the published text, but the advantage of manuscript analysis is that it supplies proof of the translator's deliberate work and reasoned strategy to achieve the result. His conclusion that Shlonsky 'subjected himself' (2012: 237) to these constraints, exercising his agency as translator, is a valid deduction from the evidence, yet it points to the potential for blind spots in any genetic analysis. A translator may, for instance, be working under direction from an editor or a theatre director to produce a translation in accord with the wishes of the publishing house or the theatre company. GTS can increase the reliability of its conclusions when the study of the avant-texte is combined (or 'triangulated') with one or more other translation methodologies (sociological, micro/historical, linguistic etc). Indeed, Toury's own descriptive approach takes a wider view on how translation norms are formed and applied. When he questions how such conventions come into being, and where their negotiation takes place, and who participates in their creation, he asks, 'Would the group consist of acting translators only, who will actually implement the norms, or would it include persons who play other roles as well, be it in the production of the texts themselves (editors, revisers, teachers, especially of translation, critics, censors, publishers, etc.) or around it (language teachers?)?' (2012: 75). This group is heterogeneous and norms

evolve dynamically; members may have different roles simultaneously; they are influenced also by consumers of translations, who might also play a role in the negotiations (for instance, in a commissioned translation). Sociological translation studies (see chapter 16 of this volume) attends to how such group dynamics interact with social factors and individual agency. Using this approach, scholars regularly employ Latour's actor-network theory and/or Bourdieu's notions of habitus, field and symbolic capital to analyse the translator's capacity as an actor or agent (see Wolf and Fukari 2007).

The neglect of translators' drafts 'can hardly be justified any longer', Toury (2012: 216) claimed, for '[i]f dubious statements on translational procedures or strategies are to be avoided, ways should be sought to break down both fictitious constructs, both the 'translator' and the 'translation process', into their components and start relating them to each other'. Despite being in 'swaddling clothes' (2012: 239) Toury believed that his method of manuscript study should be brought to bear on other empirical approaches. TS still awaits this rapprochement between empirical or cognitive methods and genetic research. There are many reasons for this, some of which are epistemological and some practical (as discussed above), some due to the fact that GTS has a history that is independent of mainstream (Anglophone) translation studies, and from which it has only recently emerged (Cordingley and Montini 2015b), while cognitive TS in Francophone contexts is a tiny field. Also, genetic researchers have been drawn to the translation of literary texts with an established degree of cultural capital—partly because these are the kinds of materials that have been preserved and partly, I suspect, because the laborious nature of the research makes researchers reluctant to embark on studies of work that may be of little cultural significance—while empirical or cognitive translation research tends to work on the emergence of translations before they even enter the market. Confronted with translators' archives that are often incomplete and raise more questions than they resolve, when researchers supplement a genetic dossier with evidence that is external to it there is no reason why any appropriate TS technique should be excluded from the genetic approach. Too young to have refined its own methodology for the evaluation of translated texts, GTS research needs to situate its discussion of translator decision-making within the breadth of existing TS methodologies (to which the chapters of this book testify). Logically, it should seek opportunities to cross-pollinate with the similarly emerging and cognate subfield of TS known as 'translator studies' (Chesterman 2006, 2009), and by combining its methods with those of neighbouring disciplines, such as comparative literature, book history, archival studies, micro/history, sociology, psychology and linguistics, it may come to penetrate further into the mysteries of the translation process.

Critical issues and topics

The aging T.S. Eliot believed, 'as a general rule, to which I cannot perceive my own work to provide any exception, it seems to me that posterity should be left with the product, and not be

encumbered with a record of the process, of such compositions as these' (quoted in Gardner 1978: v). His view is shared by many translators, who prefer not to jeopardize the integrity of their reputation and that of their work by revealing their less polished attempts. Yet Eliot claimed that offering his manuscript of *The Dry Salvages* to the archivist of Magdalene College, Cambridge was a way of 'showing his gratitude and appreciation' (quoted in Gardner 1978: v) to the college. In reality, his gift was a way of securing a precious source of income, an option denied to translators whose working papers have almost always been deemed to be worthless. But today, some of the highest profile stars of the profession buck the trend—typically those that translate the most acclaimed international authors into English. In 2012, for example, the British Library purchased the papers of Michael Meyer, English translator of Norwegian, Swedish and Danish authors, particularly Ibsen, for the princely sum of 120,000 pounds (although their value is significantly enhanced by the letters they include written by 'real authors' such as Graham Greene and George Orwell). Specialist collections of translators' papers have been developed by the Lilly Library at Indiana University Bloomington and the British Centre for Literary translation. Wealthy institutions such as the Harry Ransom Center for the Humanities at the University of Austin, Texas, or Yale's Beinecke Library have the resources to acquire and maintain collections of translators' papers, and the slow but steady growth of translation archives is opening up the possibility for GTS researchers to do more work at this elite end of the spectrum. On the other hand, as Munday (2014) has pointed out, publishers' archives—such as the Archive of British Publishing and Printing at the University of Reading, or in France the Institut Mémoires de l'édition contemporaine—are an often-ignored source of materials related to translation genesis. Engaging more with such collections will democratize GTS to the extent that such archives offer a more representative view of translated literature, not just of its more prestigious or high-brow end.

Access to the evidence of the translation process still remains one of the most critical issues for genetic criticism. Researchers that approach translators to gain access to their drafts and papers may encounter the reluctance of professionals to share their avant-textes. Durand-Bogaert (2014b: 14), for instance, solicited five high profile French translators with whom she was on good professional terms and who were each supportive of her genetic research, but who all declined to share their materials, apparently reluctant to expose their perceived imperfections. There are counter examples, however. Solum (2018), for instance, successfully enlisted 13 translators in her study of the interactions between translators and copy-editors, as documented by their correction and revision practices. She attributes her success in securing these materials to her reputation and professional standing; she writes, 'I am myself an established translator, I had a network of translator colleagues who trusted me to collect and handle such material properly, and I had also worked with or previously been in contact with several of the publishing editors' (2018: 548.) As both a translation scholar and award-winning translator into Norwegian

of the Chilean literary superstar, Roberto Bolaño, Solum brings to her research a significant share of cultural capital. Her experience suggests that if emerging GTS students and researchers have trouble in securing access to materials, one strategy may be to enlist a senior colleague or translator to endorse, co-author or otherwise support or sponsor the project and provide the cultural capital needed to overcome the reluctance of translators. However, direct dealing with translators raises the risk that the materials obtained will be self-curated or self-censored to the extent that they exclude or occlude aspects or phases of the translation process. Solum's study demonstrates this risk, for, by her own admission, her subjects supplied her with materials generated from translation projects in which translator and copy-editor each found the work of the other to be of high quality. Her results show relatively little conflict and high to very high acceptance rates by translators of the changes suggested by their copy-editor, and Solum (2018: 554) admits that her study may demonstrate a somewhat restricted and homogenous experience. This kind of problem is not, however, restricted to interactions with living translators: collections of translators' papers are often bequeathed, gifted or sold by translators, their heirs or estates, who may also wish to curate, censor or edit the materials. Therefore, as a rule, any study of a translator's papers must take into consideration the provenance of the materials and critically evaluate their potential to document the translation process.

Furthermore, the facility with which digital technologies allow literary translators to save and store their drafts, notes and project files or to modify their texts and interact with readers on websites and electronic forums is generating a superabundance of materials that will not only filter through to genetic research but also present it with new problems in terms of how to select and analyse vast quantities of data. To cope with burgeoning digital archives, GTS will need new to develop new interdisciplinary connections with fields such as digital forensics, digital information management and digital intellectual property, which will in turn generate a fresh set of epistemological questions for GTS research. The increasing number and size of translation archives and collections, as well as the capacity for digital technologies to archive versions and track the composition of a translation has provoked reflection on the very definition of a 'translation archive,' the nature of its formation, the reasons for its survival or loss, and the epistemological and ontological particularities of different kinds of translation archives (Cordingley and Hersant 2021b).

GTS can offer collaborative translation research with ways of measuring the impact of different actors or agents upon the text. This can be particularly interesting in cases of co-translation, and even more so when translators have uneven source and target language competency. Richard Pevear and Larissa Volokhonsky, translators into English of Russian classics, divide their labour over the course of the translation: the native Russian speaker first produces a literal translation from the source, which is then rewritten by the native English speaker who consults the source text rarely and when he does so it is invariably mediated by discussion with the co-translator

(Pevear and Volokhonsky 2014). Studying their manuscript composition and revisions could reveal how different levels of linguistic competence influence the nature and dynamics of the creative process, and hence the nature of the translation. Genetic readings of author-translation interactions have, on the other hand, attracted more attention (e.g. Bollettieri and Zanotti 2017, Hartmann and Hersant 2019, Hersant 2020a). Such work has the capacity to challenge received beliefs. For instance, Hersant's study of the collaboration between the Italian poet Giuseppe Ungaretti and his French translator Philippe Jaccottet questions the notion that Ungaretti revised his Italian texts in light of Jaccottet's French translation. Hersant (2018: 8) finds evidence that the collaborative translation provoked such revision, yet his evidence points to Ungaretti as the source for the changes introduced into the French text that were subsequently incorporated into the Italian 'original'. In another example, using newly discovered archival evidence, Cordingley (2017) challenges Beckett's claims regarding his inability to translate into French his penultimate piece of prose, the intractable *Worstward Ho*. This mythical text is thought to be the only one of his texts that Beckett, one the greatest self-translators of the twentieth century, claimed to be untranslatable. Yet by comparing Beckett's unusual translation strategies in a recently discovered fragment of a draft translation of *Worstward Ho* with the equally unusual strategies encountered throughout Édith Fournier's allograph translation, there is compelling evidence that the published French translation is in fact indebted to a more complete draft by Beckett, one probably now lost.

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Further reading

Deppman, Jed, Daniel Ferrer and Michael Groden (eds) (2004) *Genetic Criticism: Texts and Avant-textes*. Philadelphia, University of Pennsylvania Press.

The most accessible and representative introduction to literary genetic criticism in English, explains key concepts and includes seminal French texts in English.

Durand-Bogaert, Fabienne (ed) (2014) *Traduire*. Special Issue of *Genesis* 38.

A landmark collection of articles in French that engage theoretically with researching literary translation using the techniques of genetic criticism. It offers many case studies and examples drawn from different European languages.

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A special issue that focuses on translation archives. It contains several articles that show how to engage with archives to discover translation histories, gain new insights into the translation process and challenge assumptions.

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A founding text of genetic criticism; it offers a comprehensive overview of the theoretical and methodological issues.

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¹ See Toury’s distinction between the two senses of literary translation—the translation of literary texts versus translation that is itself “literary” (2012: 197–211).