

A CRITICAL STUDY OF THE TURKISH TRANSLATIONS OF SAMUEL  
BECKETT'S *KRAPP'S LAST TAPE* AND ITS INTERPRETATIONS WITHIN  
THE TURKISH THEATRICAL SYSTEM

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## Thesis Abstract

Burç İdem Dinçel, “A Critical Study of the Turkish Translations of Samuel Beckett’  
*Krapps’s Last Tape* and Its Interpretations within the Turkish Theatrical System”

This study explores the relationship between theatre criticism and theatre-translation criticism, with the purpose of challenging the tendency of Translation Studies to bypass theatre and that of Theatre Studies to attach little importance to the act of translation in performance. The thesis questions the dynamics of the two disciplines in the light of the research question that it seeks to answer: “when analysing a performance of a translated theatre work, what factors might a theatre-translation critic take into account?” In order to fulfil the needs of this question, moreover, the reasons behind the choice of studying the Turkish translations of Samuel Beckett’s *Krapp’s Last Tape* and its interpretations within the Turkish theatrical system have been elucidated in the introductory part of the thesis. After providing a close look at the author’s *oeuvre* and the position that *Krapp’s Last Tape* holds in the Beckett canon, the study examines the perception of Beckett’s and that of *Krapp’s Last Tape* in Turkey in view of the systemic dynamics of the target culture. Furthermore, in order to move criticism from “page” to “stage” in theatre-translation criticism, the thesis proposes a model for the analysis of the performances of plays in translation that can simultaneously embrace the textual and scenic dimensions of theatre translations. As an application of the model, the Tiyatro-Z production of *Krapp’s Last Tape* has been analysed with the purpose of monitoring the acts of translation undertaken by the actor and director in the course of the performance. The findings of the thesis highlight the necessity of thinking theatre criticism and theatre-

translation criticism in relation to each other in terms of emancipating the act of translation and theatre from the bonds of the mutual neglect between the two disciplines.

## Tez Özeti

Burç İdem Dinçel, “Samuel Beckett’in *Krapp’ın Son Bandı*’nın Türkçe Çevirileri ve Türk Tiyatro Dizgesindeki Yorumlarına İlişkin Eleştirel Bir Çalışma”

Bu çalışma, Çeviribilim’de tiyatroyu gözardı etme eğilimini, Tiyatro Araştırmaları’ alanında da gösterim sırasında gerçekleşen çeviri eylemini dikkate almama anlayışını sorgulamak amacıyla, tiyatro eleştirisi ile tiyatro çevirisi eleştirisi arasındaki ilişkiyi incelemektedir. Tez, her iki bilim dalının dinamiklerini, yanıt aradığı araştırma sorusu bağlamında masaya yatırmaktadır: “Bir tiyatro eleştirmeninin, yabancı bir tiyatro metninin gösterimini çözümlerken göz önünde bulunduracağı etmenler nelerdir?” Bu sorunun gereklerini yerine getirmek amacıyla, çalışmanın giriş bölümünde Samuel Beckett’in *Krapp’ın Son Bandı*’nın Türkçe çevirileri ve oyunun Türk tiyatro dizgesindeki yorumları üzerinde çalışma seçiminin nedenleri açıklanmıştır. Yazarın yapıtlarına ve *Krapp’ın Son Bandı*’nın Beckett’in eserleri içindeki konumuna ilişkin detaylı bir bakış sunduktan sonra tez, erek kültür dinamikleri ışığında Beckett’in ve *Krapp’ın Son Bandı*’nın Türkiye’de nasıl alımlandığını mercek altına almaktadır. Ayrıca, tiyatro çevirisi eleştirisini “kâğıt” üzerinden “sahne” üzerine taşıma gayesiyle çalışma, tiyatro çevirilerinin metinsel ve sahnesel boyutlarını eş zamanlı olarak izleyebilecek bir model önermektedir. Bu modelin uygulaması olarak, Tiyatro-Z’nin *Krapp’ın Son Bandı* prodüksiyonu, gösterim sırasında oyuncu ve yönetmen tarafından gerçekleştirilen çeviri eylemlerini inceleyebilmek maksadıyla çözümlenmiştir. Tezin bulguları, tiyatro eleştirisini tiyatro çevirisi eleştirisi ile bir arada değerlendirme gerekliliğinin, çeviri eylemini ve

tiyatroyu her iki bilim dalında gözlemlenen karşılıklı ilgisizliğin prangalarından kurtaracağını vurgulamaktadır.

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To Angela Göktürk

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## CHAPTER I

### INTRODUCTION

Building a bridge: whether one takes this expression literally or metaphorically, the act itself suggests a painstaking activity. Even under those circumstances in which the gap to be bridged seems small, it goes without saying that in the course of the action, there is always more than meets the eye. More often than not, determining the location of the abutments and establishing the link between them appear to be merely the tip of the iceberg. What actually takes place during the course of the construction, however, remains unknown to the people who make use of that bridge in their daily lives. To a certain extent, the correlation between theatre criticism and translation criticism —precisely speaking, theatre-translation criticism—resembles the one between the substrata of a bridge —extremely close, yet incredibly distant. When this quasi-paradoxical relationship between theatre criticism and theatre-translation criticism is viewed from a scholarly perspective, one possible way of shedding light on the subject emerges: writing a thesis.

The driving force behind this thesis, then, is to build a bridge between theatre criticism and theatre-translation criticism in order to demonstrate how considering these two fields of studies in relation to each other can benefit both theatre criticism and theatre-translation criticism. The root proposition of the thesis is plain enough: theatre-translation criticism and theatre criticism are not a far cry from one another in terms of the emphasis they place on the notion of performance. Without this focus on performance, theatre-translation criticism and theatre criticism would be extremely

abstract and lacking in practical benefit. Conversely, taking into consideration the realities of the stage inevitably enriches the theory of theatre-translation, and by extension, the theory of translation. Thus, following the dictum that “theory without practice is sterile; practice without theory is blind”, this study lays emphasis on the significance of engagement in the practical fields of theatre criticism and theatre-translation criticism. The importance of practice and the basic proposition of this study constitute the bases of the research question that this thesis seeks to answer: when analysing a performance of a translated theatre work, what factors might a theatre-translation critic take into account?

In the light of this question, it becomes possible to start delving into the territories that have been left un(re)marked in Translation Studies and Theatre Studies respectively. A close glance at the dynamics of the two disciplines reveals an inclination to circumvent the key points that can strengthen the bonds between the above-mentioned (applied) subcategories of Translation Studies and Theatre Studies. On the face of it, as a counterpoint to the tendency to exile theatre from the realm of Translation Studies, Theatre Studies seems to attach little importance to the act of translation. And it is this mutual neglect that gives rise to the quasi-paradoxical relationship between theatre criticism and theatre-translation criticism.

The problem is one of hierarchy. From Cicero onwards, poems and fictional prose writings occupied the centre of the theory of literary translation. When scholars of the classics (such as Greek tragedies and comedies, Shakespeare, and the works of French classicism) did turn their attention to the study and practice of translation, they approached such texts as “dramatic poems”, owing to the fact that the majority of these texts were written in verse. One probable explanation for this propensity might be the dominant disparaging conception of spoken conversation “as a debased

and unstable form of language” (Culpeper et al., 1998, p. 3). As a consequence of this conception, the theatrical aspects of play-texts, with all their affiliations with speech, were liable to be neglected by the theory of literary translation. To date, regardless of whether a play-text has been written in verse or prose, this distinction between dramatic texts and theatre texts and, by extension, between drama translation and theatre translation, has prevailed. Whilst the terms “dramatic text” and “drama translation” direct one’s attention to works composed for publication, “theatre text” and “theatre translation” refer to texts produced for performance on stage.

The distinction is a crucial one. On the one hand, it serves as a touchstone for determining whether the translated text under observation pertains to the literary system or the theatrical system of a target culture; and on the other, it discloses how relatively little research has been carried out within the domain of Translation Studies as regards to the function of a translated text in a given stage production. To some extent, these two significant facets stemming from this distinction affect each other. In spite of the fact that performance is one of the most important aspects of dramatic texts in general, the history of theatre is rife with closet dramas (such as *Samson Agonistes* of John Milton, some plays of Lord Byron, Percy Shelley, and so forth) which have never been intended for production. Therefore, determining the location of a translated text according to the systemic dynamics of a target culture is of primary importance. Nonetheless, for whatever reason, within Translation Studies play-texts are commonly studied in terms of their relationship to the literary system in question, but with no or little regard to their theatrical features. Apparently, “page” has an edge over the “stage” in Translation Studies. Thus, it is not surprising to observe how the bulk of scholarly work done on the translations of dramatic texts

focuses on issues such as faithfulness and equivalence. While both of these concepts—despite their notorious reputation within contemporary Translation Studies—they are arguably even less relevant when it comes to work of theatre translation. Clifford E. Landers' book entitled *Literary Translation: A Practical Guide*, in which the scholar devotes just two and half pages out of 214 pages to theatre translation (2001, pp.104-106) illustrates the point well: theatre translation appears to be a controversial footnote to literary translation, and by extension to Translation Studies.

Or so it was. Even though, from the 1980s onwards, “page” enjoyed the lion’s share of research in Translation Studies, “stage” gradually became the centre of attraction for theatre translation scholars. The 1980s is important for Translation Studies since it was in this decade that the cultural turn in the discipline took place. In fact, this was a reflection of the changes in the dynamics of academia as a whole. “The cultural turn in Translation Studies”, writes Susan Bassnett, “can be seen as part of a cultural turn that was taking place in the humanities generally in the late 1980s and early 1990s, and has altered [sic] the shape of many traditional subjects” (2007, p. 16). Bassnett’s observation is noteworthy in the sense that it draws attention to the interdisciplinary nature of the study of translation. An examination of the literature with respect to theatre translation produced in the last three decades indicates how rethinking theatre translation from the perspective/s provided by Theatre Studies has proven to be a vast field of interdisciplinary research. The two volumes of anthologies edited by Ortrun Zuber-Skerrit, namely, *The Languages of Theatre: Problems in the Translation and Transposition of Drama* (1980) and *Page to Stage: Theatre as Translation* (1984); the Jerusalem Theatre Conference (1986) papers edited by Hanna Scolnicov and Peter Holland, and published as *The Play out*

*of Context: Transferring Plays from Culture to Culture* (1989); *Stages of Translation* (1996) edited by David Johnston; *Moving Target: Theatre Translation and Cultural Relocation* (2000) edited by Carole-Anne Upton; the individual studies of Sirkku Aaltonen and Phyllis Zatlin, that is to say, *Time-Sharing on Stage* (2000) and *Theatrical Translation and Film Adaptation* (2005) respectively; not to mention the plenty of articles written by Bassnett since the late 1970s can be shown as representative examples of scholarly work dedicated to the study and practice of theatre translation.

Out of this literature emerged crucial notions such as “performability”, “speakability” and “readability”, which could be used in the analyses of translated theatre texts. While these concepts can provide one with a so-called yardstick during the course of the examination of a translated theatre text, the hypothetical nature of the terms makes the theatre-translation analysis operate on a rather subjective level, depending on the analyst’s individual definition of the said terms, all of which are used synonymously within the field of theatre translation (cf. Espasa, 2000, p. 50). As Bassnett maintains, “attempts to define the ‘performability’ inherent in a text never go further than generalized discussion about the need for fluent speech rhythms in the target text. What this amounts to in practice is that each translator decides on an entirely *ad hoc* basis what constitutes a speakable text for performers” (1991, p. 102). The lack of clarity with respect to how translators and researchers alike might conceive the notion of “performability” can therefore be considered as one problematic aspect of the practice and study of theatre translation. Given the lack of a consensus vis-à-vis the definitions of the terms to be employed both in the translation process and its prospective analyses, the field of theatre-translation turns

out to be a controversial one, liable to be questioned from a “scholarly” perspective.

Within this context, Bassnett takes one step further and posits a critical question:

If the written text is merely a blueprint, a unit in a complex of sign systems including paralinguistic and kinesic signs, and if it contains some secret gestic code that needs to be realised in performance, then how can the translator be expected not only to decode those secret signs in the source language, but also to re-encode them in the target language? Such an expectation does not make sense. To do such a thing a translator would not only have to know both languages and theatrical systems intimately, but would also have to have experience of gestic readings and training as a performer or director in those two systems. (1998, p. 92)

Even though Bassnett considers it nonsensical for a theatre-translation critic to expect a translator to create a performance text, her concluding comments in the above-quoted excerpt do hint at the necessity of the translator being familiar with the actual theatrical practices of the target and source cultures. In fact, requiring the “theatre” translator to have a considerable amount of knowledge on the theatrical habits of the two cultures is not asking the translator to do the “impossible”, as Bassnett would argue. As far as theatre translation is concerned, this (anticipated) familiarity with the practical field of theatre acquires a vital function. According to Patrice Pavis, “The translator is in the position of a reader and a dramaturge (in the technical sense): he [sic] makes choices from among the potential and possible indications in the text-to-be-translated. The translator is a dramaturge who must first of all effect a *macrotextual* translation, that is a dramaturgical analysis of the fiction conveyed by the text” (1992, p. 134, emphasis in the original). Pavis’ comment is significant in that it underscores the need for the translator to identify the specific signs of “performance” inherent in the text. To a considerable degree, the dramaturgical analysis undertaken by the translator prior to the translation process

can prove to be quite fruitful in attaining a certain sense of the “performability” of the play in question and rendering the signs of performance in the target language.

Needless to say, a critical engagement with the practical dimensions of translation and theatre will help in locking horns with this problematic aspect of the study and practice of theatre translation. Thus, the present thesis attempts to employ a contextualised study of a Turkish production of Samuel Beckett’s *Krapp’s Last Tape* in order to develop a descriptive approach to the role that a performance text stemming from a translated theatre text plays in a given stage production. In this particular respect, moving play-texts from “page” to “stage” once again highlights the crucial distinction between dramatic texts and theatre texts. The connotations that the words “page” and “stage” carry arouse interest here. Hypothetically speaking, in the first place, page alludes to reading, whereas stage hints at watching. This distinction can thus be considered as a dividing line between the theoretical and practical fields of translation.

In a similar vein, the position of translation criticism within Translation Studies, and theatre-translation criticism in particular, is not unproblematic, located as these fields are in the grey zone between theory and practice. A brief look at the two major areas of the discipline, that is, pure translation studies and applied translation studies, a distinction introduced by James Holmes in the 1970s (1988, pp. 67-80) and further discussed by Gideon Toury (1985, pp. 34-37; 1995, pp. 17-19), demonstrates that translation criticism falls within the scope of the applied field of Translation Studies. The location of translation criticism within the realm of Translation Studies attracts further attention. According to Theo Hermans, “the study of translation generally had to emancipate itself from its ancillary status with respect to translation criticism and translator training so as to be able to approach translation

as a phenomenon worthy of attention in its own right” (2007, p. 81). It goes without saying that Hermans’ remark not only insinuates the prescriptive implications of translation criticism but also suggests that translation criticism and other fields of applied translation studies may be somewhat less “scholarly” than the pure branch of the discipline. It is therefore imperative to underscore the approach to be developed in the present thesis. Revealing the governing factors in the composition of a performance text derived from a foreign theatre text is crucial for the purposes of this study. For that reason, rather than debating whether a translation is “good”, “bad”, “correct”, or “wrong”, this thesis contends that “to provide answers to such questions it should deal with the ‘hows’, the ‘whys and wherefores’” (van den Broeck, 1985, p. 58) of a translated theatre text. Hence, this study has neither normative nor prescriptive implications. In this regard, so as to avoid any ambiguities, it would be appropriate to call the approach that this thesis seeks to develop “descriptive translation criticism”. Nevertheless, as far as theatre-translation criticism is concerned, criticism on “page” to a considerable degree falls short of doing justice to the text in question unless it takes the staging aspects of the play into consideration. More to the point—and this is the main argument of this thesis—any evaluation of a translated theatre play merely according to the literary values of the target language and source language is bound to overlook the *raison d’être* of the text as a blueprint for production. It is at this point that theatre-translation criticism pleads for the perspectives provided by Theatre Studies.

Be that as it may, Theatre Studies, by its very nature, is a discipline devoted to the study and practice of dramatic genres, theatre movements, dramaturgy, historical and sociological aspects of theatre, acting as well as performance. The role that translation played during the course of the evolution of most of these fields is

unassailable. After all, by dint of the act of translation, Greek tragedies and comedies were revived on the Roman stage; by means of translation, the works of Ibsen, Strindberg, and Chekhov have been rendered into other languages and became the fundamental texts of modern drama. Yet, the extent to which Theatre Studies has honoured and honours its debt to translation is open to debate. In Theatre Studies, issues of theatricality and performance are the main foci of attention.

On the other hand, in theatre criticism, the actual final production of the play on stage is of central importance. Being a sub-discipline of Theatre Studies, theatre criticism concerns itself chiefly with the practical fields of theatre. Still, during the course of analysing a performance, the knowledge of the theatre critic in the aforementioned fields can indeed prove to be an invaluable resource. As Mark Fortier affirms, “theatre, of necessity, involves both doing and seeing, practice and contemplation” (1997, p. 5). In this context, theatre criticism can be regarded as a field of study in which theory and practice join forces to contribute to the analysis of a given performance in its entirety. Despite the fact that translation is one of the key components in the production of foreign theatre texts on stage, theatre criticism has paid only very scant attention to its role in the course of performance. Actually, from a broader perspective, it can be seen that not only in the course of the performance but also in the entire course of moving play-texts from “page” to “stage”, theatre criticism tends to bypass the significance of the act of translation and translators. As Phyllis Zatlin ironically remarks, “even the role of Iago, the villain, is better than being totally out of the script: of being forgotten not only in the process but also in programme credits and play reviews” (2005, p. 4). Although in his seminal work entitled *The Translator’s Invisibility* (1995) Lawrence Venuti does not deal with

theatre translations, the scholar's concept of "invisibility" bears on the subordinate situation of translation and translators in the study and practice of theatre criticism.

What is more, it is startling to observe how Toury's well-known statement which deems translations "facts of real life" (1995, p. 1) appears to be regarded as *a priori* by theatre criticism. Within the field of theatre criticism, translations, by and large, are taken for granted. There are reasons for that. In theatre criticism, as in the case of Translation Studies, the problem is one of hierarchy. Notwithstanding the pivotal position that the notion of "text" acquired within the scope of Theatre Studies throughout history, the attention paid to its function in the course of analysing a performance is on the wane. According to Hasibe Kalkan Kocabay, "the need to shift the theoretical works in theatre from text to staging can be explained by the gradual significance that visuality gained as an outcome of the proliferation of cinema and the emergence of television in the twentieth century, and the increase in the theoretical works on visual arts thereof (2008, p. 10).<sup>\*</sup> In other words, the status of text has been sacrificed in favour of concentration on the visual aspects of the staging activity, and consequently the study of dramatic texts has been relegated to the domain of dramaturgical studies. However, this sacrifice was not in vain; it was a step needed to highlight the importance of studying performances in their own right.

Yet, studying performances in their own right entails one of the primary issues that is an indispensable element in any serious study of a theatrical work: the discussion of the interpretations undertaken in the course of a production. Indeed, whether the text being examined is a classic or contemporary one, the act of interpretation is immanent to any theatre performance. And in this respect, the text can provide a reference point for the theatre critic when examining the director's

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<sup>\*</sup> Unless indicated, all translations are my own.

attempts at breathing (new) life into the work of the dramatist in question. Even though, in the twentieth century, “the staging of plays became elevated to an artistic activity as the literary text of the play ceased to be the sole basis of performance” (Fischer-Lichte, 2008, p. 185), in some cases theatre critics do take particular heed of the interpretations of the text throughout the performance. Under those circumstances in which the performance to be analysed belongs to a playwright who has also been the director of his works, the theatre critic is particularly likely to give priority to the role of the text during the course of *mise en scène*. The reason for this is that, in those kinds of performances, the chief issue is the extent to which the status of the playwright as director resonates in staging approaches of subsequent directors of the same play. Lack of emphasis on the function of text in performance analysis, therefore, can be considered as a shortcoming in contemporary theatre criticism in terms of developing an integrated approach to the study of performances. Furthermore, this diminishing role that the notion of text plays within the domain of Theatre Studies has taken a heavy toll on the perception of the act of translation in a given performance.

Neither Translation Studies nor Theatre Studies is pure as the driven snow when it comes to the quasi-paradoxical relationship between theatre-translation criticism and theatre criticism. On the basis of what has been outlined hitherto, it can be seen that the approach towards theatre translations in Translation Studies is rather constructive and promising when compared to the *a priori* status of translation in Theatre Studies. Even so, the contribution to Theatre Studies of semiotics, with the emphasis it puts on the notion of text and the act of translation in performance, is indisputable. Indeed, in the words of Pavis, “reflection on translation confirms a fact well known to theatre semioticians: the text is only one of the elements of

performance, and here, of *translating* activity, or, put in another way, the text is much more than a series of words: grafted on to it are ideological, ethnological and cultural dimensions” (1992, p. 149, emphasis in the original). In the light of Pavis’ observation, one can infer that theatre semiotics is cognisant of the *raison d’être* of the (translated) text as a blueprint for production. And it is precisely this fundamental characteristic of theatre texts that Translation Studies tended to bypass for so long. Despite the growing body of literature devoted to the study of translated theatre texts in Translation Studies, the repercussions of this tendency can still be observed in theatre-translation criticism.

In order to problematise this aspect of theatre-translation criticism, as well as the *a priori* status of translation in theatre criticism, the present thesis offers a case study of the Turkish translations of Beckett’s one-act play *Krapp’s Last Tape* (1958) and the Tiyatro-Z production (2007) of the work in question. The rationale behind the choice of working on Beckett derives from the playwright’s constant questioning of the constancy of his texts. Stanley Gontarski’s observation regarding the issue is worthy of notice: “As Beckett’s direct work in the theatre increased, he demonstrated a disregard for the sanctity of his plays as published—at least for his own productions. Beckett in the theatre has himself destabilized Beckett on the page” (1995, p. 193). Beckett’s transformation from playwright to theatrical artist not only offered him the chance to rewrite his dramatic works, which had become part of the Western theatrical canon, but also provided him with the opportunity to reinvent himself as a theatre director. This transformation, moreover, is striking in the sense that it indicates how much emphasis Beckett places on the interpretations of his plays on stage. As Michael Worton puts it, “he initially allows total freedom to directors, actors and critics, but then wishes to correct their interpretations. Although Beckett

only once gave an official interview, his many letters and statements to friends and collaborators reveal a wish to control the performance—and therefore the reception—of his plays” (1994, p. 67). Growing less and less satisfied with the productions of his plays, and being totally aware of the *sine qua non* of a given theatre text as a blueprint for production, Beckett took the responsibility of staging his own plays with the purpose of underlining the priority that he himself assigned to “stage” over “page”. In this particular respect, the posthumous publication of *The Theatrical Notebooks of Samuel Beckett* becomes quite important in the sense that they document the emphasis that Beckett lays on performance, as well as his concept of *mise en scène*.

At the same time as concretising his concept of *mise en scène* through rewriting and staging his own plays, Beckett also went to great lengths to monitor interpretations of his work. A striking example is the case of JoAnne Akalaitis’ production of *Endgame* in 1984. Here, Akalaitis chose to incorporate music by Philip Glass and change the setting to a derelict subway tunnel. Beckett himself strictly rejected this adaptation and instituted legal proceedings against the company. Eventually the matter was settled out of court, with the condition being that the following statement by Beckett be inserted into the program: “Any production of *Endgame* which ignores my stage directions is completely unacceptable to me. My play requires an empty room and two small windows. The American Repertory Theater production which dismisses my directions is a complete parody of the play as conceived by me. Anybody who cares for the work couldn't fail to be disgusted by this” (Kalb, 1991, p. 79). Yet, there have been occasions in which Beckett approved minor modifications undertaken by the directors themselves. A case in point is Antoni Libera’s Polish production of *Krapp’s Last Tape* where the playwright

consented to Libera's replacement of the Protestant hymn with a Catholic one. (cf. Libera, 1997, p. 105). No doubt there have been other performances of *Krapp's Last Tape* and other Beckett plays where directors took liberties for aesthetic reasons or in view of local cultural/political considerations, with or without the author's consent. However, Tiyatro-Z could not be said to have engaged in any fundamental culturally-derived interpretations. For one thing, the company purported to base its interpretation of *Krapp's Last Tape* on Beckett's production notes for the play, in which the author himself cuts the hymn that Krapp sings in various parts of the play. As for the few other cultural *realia* of the piece, they are left unchanged.

Within the Beckett canon, *Krapp's Last Tape* acquires a vital position since the composition of this play marks a turning point in the author's career. During the course of Beckett's transformation from playwright to theatrical artist, "*Krapp's Last Tape* seems to have been the watershed, as he realized that the creation of a dramatic text was not a process that could be divorced from performance, and that mounting a production brought to light recesses previously hidden, even from the author himself" (Gontarski, 1998, p. 133). From *Krapp's Last Tape* onwards, Beckett's excessive preoccupation with the notions of theatricality and performance reached a climax, and after eight years of meditation on theatre, and at the same time diligently rewriting himself, he started to direct his own plays. The more Beckett discovered theatre, the more he revised his dramatic texts, most particularly *Krapp's Last Tape*. Ruby Cohn's words regarding Beckett's keenness on the play at issue sustains the point: "Beckett continued to sharpen and simplify the play in other productions—in German, French and English, for he directed or advised *Krapp's Last Tape* more often than any other of his plays" (2001, p. 241). In the present thesis, the leading motive behind working on *Krapp's Last Tape*, as well as the Turkish translations of

the play, derives from the fact that this text in question manifests Beckett as a theatrical director in the strictest sense of the word.

The decision to focus in this thesis on the Tiyatro-Z production of *Krapp's Last Tape* emerges from the intention to study the extent that Beckett's directorial status is appreciated in the Turkish theatrical system. As indicated earlier, the governing factors in the course of the composition of a performance text derived from a foreign theatre text are of central importance for the purposes of the present study. What differentiates the Tiyatro-Z production of the play from the other productions of *Krapp's Last Tape* in Turkey is the fact that the performance text of this production was composed by the actor Beyti Engin, who starred as Krapp in the said production, on the basis of one of the existing translations of the play as well as the revised text that Beckett provides in his *Theatrical Notebooks*. Within this context, the present thesis aspires to provide a critical glance at the Turkish translations of *Krapp's Last Tape*, the translators being Hamdi Koç, Fatih Özgüven, and Uğur Ün respectively,<sup>1</sup> with the purpose of revealing the reasons for the composition of a performance text. One additional and decisive aim of this thesis is to discover the extent to which the performance text in the Tiyatro-Z production of the play resonates with Beckett's revised text in his *Theatrical Notebooks*. In this sense, the present study aims to develop a critical approach to the interpretations undertaken by the director of the play, namely, Cem Kenar.

At this point, it would be appropriate to provide an overview of the thesis so as to give an idea of its theoretical framework and methodology. As indicated

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<sup>1</sup> At this point of discussion, it should be pointed out that *Krapp's Last Tape* was translated as *Son Band* by Feridun Altuna in the early 1960s, and the play was staged by the Istanbul State Theatre in the 1961-1962 season with the performance of Asuman Korad as Krapp (Taşkan, 1983, p. 23). Be that as it may, neither Altuna's translation nor the contact information of the translator can be found in the State Theatre Archive in Ankara. What remains of this very first production of *Krapp's Last Tape* in Turkey is just a photograph which is in the possession of the daughter of the actor, Selen Korad Birkiye.

previously, Beckett's transformation from playwright to theatrical artist provides the rationale for working on the Turkish translations of his one-act play entitled *Krapp's Last Tape* and its interpretations in the Turkish theatrical system. Nevertheless, this transformation, as Gontarski aptly points out, "is one of the seminal developments of late Modernist theatre and yet one slighted in the critical and historical discourse" (1998, p. 131). In order to underscore the significance of this transformation for Theatre Studies, and also to shed light on Beckett's staging approach, Chapter 2 firstly contextualises *Krapp's Last Tape* within the Beckett canon and then discusses the cuts and changes that the author introduced to the revised text of the play in his *Theatrical Notebooks*.

Chapter 3 tackles the interpretations of *Krapp's Last Tape* within the Turkish theatrical system. Prior to the discussion of the productions of the play, however, this chapter examines the history and reception of Beckett's works in Turkey including the notable performances of his plays, with the aim of unearthing what position(s) the *oeuvre* and individual works of the author have occupied within the target theatrical system. This examination is obligatory in terms of shedding light on the evolution of Beckett's theatre in Turkey from the systemic perspectives that Translation Studies provide. As this chapter emphasises, the systemic dynamics of a target culture can provide one with the preliminary information with respect to the translations of a given text. In this particular respect, a general glance at the other interpretations of the play in Turkey can become quite fruitful in terms of finding out which translation has been prioritised by the theatre practitioners who made use of the text in their production. A glance at the other productions of *Krapp's Last Tape* in Turkey, furthermore, enables a more nuanced appreciation of the Tiyatro-Z production of the play in its systemic context.

Chapter 4 strengthens the bonds between theatre criticism and theatre-translation criticism by proposing a model for the analysis of the performances of plays in translation. With respect to the methodology, this chapter makes use of Elaine Aston and George Savona's notion of "radical text" (1991, p. 94), and foregrounds the radical features of *Krapp's Last Tape* with the purpose of laying the groundwork for the comparative analysis of the Turkish translations of the play. Furthermore, the theatricality intrinsic to *Krapp's Last Tape*, as well as the way the play is tailored for a performer to perform on stage, compels one to take the target text as a point of commencement in Raymond van den Broeck's model for translation criticism (1985, pp. 54-62). By developing a critical approach to the Turkish translations of *Krapp's Last Tape*, this chapter reveals the factors that shaped the composition of a particular performance text. As mentioned previously, the performance text of the production at issue was composed on the basis of one of the existing translations of the play, together with the revised text which Beckett provides in his *Theatrical Notebooks*. In this respect, the Tiyatro-Z production of *Krapp's Last Tape* can be considered a significant step taken towards the appreciation of Beckett's directorial status in the Turkish theatrical system. While significant, this step is at the same time a challenging one, since in the case of staging any Beckett play, the task of the director "is to make the plays new for new audiences and yet keep within the austere limits laid down in Beckett's texts and meticulously precise directions" (Worth, 2004, p. 212). The fact that the Tiyatro-Z production of the play claims to take Beckett's revised text and his production notes as the reference point, compels one to analyse the performance at issue in relation to Beckett's conception of *mise en scène*. Hence, this chapter scrutinises primarily the extent to which the staging approach of the director reverberates with that of Beckett.

Moreover, in order to analyse the function of the performance text in the production, this chapter draws on the questions in the Pavis Questionnaire (Pavis, 1985, pp. 208-212) as regards to the notion of text, as well as the main features of the translation. In the course of performance analysis, use has been made of video-technology but only as a memory aid.<sup>2</sup> By incorporating the insights gained from the preceding translation analyses into performance analysis, this chapter aims to substantiate the root proposition of the thesis, namely that theatre-translation criticism are not a far cry from one another in terms of the emphasis they place on the notion of performance.

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<sup>2</sup> At this juncture, it is worth underlining that basing one's analysis entirely on a video-recording would entail being dependent on the interpretation of the person manipulating the camera. Still, video-technology can offer a reasonable degree of information about the most obvious features of a production and has thus been deployed in the discussion of the other productions of *Krapp's Last Tape* in Turkey.

CHAPTER II  
THE BECKETT CANON AND *KRAPP'S LAST TAPE*

Samuel Beckett's *Oeuvre*

A scene: a relatively small room with a relatively small bed. Various photographs and crumpled papers are scattered here and there on the floor. Next to the brittle wooden windows, a worn-out easy chair. No light in the room besides the glimmer of the candle on the table next to the easy chair. Night-time. The walls are naked apart from the painting facing the bed. In contrast with the desolation that pervades the room, a cosy atmosphere is depicted in great detail in the painting. A middle-aged man is lying on the bed with his eyes fixed on the painting, as if he is trying to make sense of the warm image evoked by the picture. Then again, it is apparent that he cannot find anything to express; not even with his cold eyes that freeze the warm image can he give voice to the painting. Out of the blue, a ferocious gust of wind lashes the flimsy windows and blows out the candle. Darkness.

Another scene: an empty closet with a chair in its centre. The dim light of the lamp dangling from the ceiling can barely illuminate the chair and its purlieus. At certain points during the movement of the lamp, a human body can be seen, but only fragmentarily. Although the body is seen partially, the dim light falling upon it reveals that the body is bereft of strength. Through a glimpse of the face of the body, it becomes obvious that it has neither the power nor the desire to express itself. The

thin cord cannot carry the weight of the lamp anymore and it falls to the floor. The shattering of the lamp smashes the silence in the closet.

Yet another scene: a wasted man in a waste land. Midday. The weather is boiling hot. The man examines his ragged clothes and his surroundings for some time. After a brief stillness, he first paces back and forth for a while and then begins to walk around in circles. With each turn, he moves faster than the previous one. From the movements of the man, it can be understood that his mind is occupied by something, that is to say, by the obligation to express the void that prevails in the land.

These scenes, each of which is independent of the others, draw attention to a paradoxical situation that overwhelms each and every persona of the tableaux: they are obliged to express yet they cannot express. And this paradoxical situation, in which the concept of silence plays a crucial role, can be the vital starting point when exploring the representative features of Samuel Beckett's *oeuvre* in detail. The selection of the very word *oeuvre* is not an arbitrary one here and deserves a gloss. "*Oeuvre*" is likely to be read as suggesting that the present subsection is an attempt to elucidate the entire writings of Beckett. This, however, is not the case. The ultimate purpose of the subsection is to demonstrate how the notions of theatricality and performance acquire a distinct and decisive meaning when it comes to the works of Beckett. As George Steiner maintains, "[i]n an *œuvre*, different *genres*—fiction, poetry, critical essays—take on a personal unity. The achievement argues as a whole, its sum greater and more coherent than any of the parts" (1998, p. 288, emphasis in the original). Actually, in Beckett's case, all available genres for a given writer come to the fore: poetry, prose, critical essays, translation, *self*-translation, theatre plays, radio plays, television plays, not to mention cinema. Through a brief glance at these

genres, moreover, it can be seen that the notions of theatricality and performance tip the scales of Beckett's *oeuvre*. Indeed, as Katharine Worth observes, "Beckett was a magnet for performers and artists—actors, musicians, painters, dancers—before criticism caught up with the idea of the work's immense capacity for performance (the fiction as well as the plays proper)" (2001, p. 146). Worth's observation is worthy of notice in the sense that it hints at the theatricality inherent even in the prose works of Beckett. Still, this is not an exceptional case since the history of literature is replete with novelists (such as Charles Dickens, Fyodor Dostoyevsky, Franz Kafka, and so on) whose works also possess theatrical qualities. Nevertheless, the majority of these novelists remained novelists throughout their careers. What makes Beckett's case exceptional, in this respect, is the author's skill in transforming the theatricality in his prose works into metatheatricality in his plays. This exceptional case, however, has received only scant attention within the realm of Theatre Studies, which concentrates chiefly on Beckett's theatrical pieces.

In his seminal article on Beckett's prose works, Wolfgang Iser asserts that "[n]egativity is the hallmark of the typical Beckett text. It is produced by a relentless process of negation, which in the novels applies even on the level of the individual sentences themselves, which follow another as a ceaseless rejection and denial of what has just been said" (1985, p. 126). In the light of Iser's remark, one can infer how a given Beckett text first and foremost aims at undermining the act of communication and, by extension, the notion of language. Be that as it may, Beckett's characters are haunted by the commitment to express even if they cannot express. More often than not, the crux of Beckett's prose lies precisely in this paradoxical situation: in order to refrain from expressing themselves within the defective system of language, Beckett's characters turn the tables on language as a

whole by outtalking it, “[a]nd, as the prestige of language falls”, writes Susan Sontag, “that of silence rises” (2009a, p. 21). “That of silence soars,” one finds it tempting to add. To a certain extent, for a Beckett character such as Murphy, Molloy, Moran, Malone and the Unnameable, silence becomes a goal that is beyond reach. Still, Beckett’s characters are aware that the tools of language (the most notable ones being words, speech and discourse) provide them with the ammunition required to wreak havoc on the notion of language in its entirety. The Unnameable, for one, alludes to the necessity of the tools of language during the course of devastating the notion of language: “The search for the means to put an end to things, an end to speech, is what enables the discourse to continue” (Beckett, 1970, p. 15). Beckett’s characters make considerable use of words, speech and discourse, but only in the Wittgensteinian sense of the word *use*: they *use* the tools of language as the steps of a ladder to reach silence.<sup>1</sup>

Furthermore, in Beckett’s novels, the characters’ (futile) efforts at reaching silence constantly play upon the expectations of the reader. Most of the time, the reader of a Beckett novel—in a manner evoking Theseus’ unabated search for the Minotaur in the Labyrinth of Daedalus—unremittingly tries to find a way to grasp the language as it disintegrates. While Theseus prevails over the Minotaur, the Beckett reader succumbs to the so-called “nothingness” inherent in his labyrinthine work. At this point of discussion, one could plausibly argue for the lack of communication between text and reader in Beckett’s prose writings. Nonetheless, the readers’ constant attempts at solving the evolving puzzle of negation inevitably force them to establish a communication that permits them to discover the information that

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<sup>1</sup> Cf. with the penultimate proposition of Wittgenstein’s *Tractatus*: “My propositions serve as elucidations in the following way: anyone who understands me eventually recognizes them as nonsensical, when he [sic] has used them—as steps—to climb up beyond them. (He must, so to speak, throw away the ladder after he has climbed up it.) He must transcend these propositions, and then he will see the world aright” (2001, p. 89).

they are being prevented from acquiring. “Thus”, as Iser affirms, “negativity turns out to be a basic constituent of communication” (1985, p. 126) in Beckett’s prose. This communication between text and reader, however, is ill at ease. Ambiguity preponderates in this communication; even the harmlessness of the words is called into question. Malone warns his readers in advance: “I know those little phrases that seem so innocuous and, once you let them in, pollute the whole of speech. *Nothing is more real than nothing*. They rise up out of the pit and know no rest until they drag you down into its dark” (Beckett, 1956, p. 16, emphasis in the original). Throughout his *oeuvre*, Beckett’s “little phrases” drag readers into the darkness of language bit by bit and eventually prompt them to cast doubt even on the act of reading, and hence on their perception of reality. And when the text evokes a sense of reality in the mind of the reader, the notion of theatricality achieves one of its most essential emotional goals: the feeling of “here and now”.

Still, this feeling of “here and now” does not allow Beckett’s readers to “completely lose themselves in a comfortable imaginary world because that world undergoes eccentric shifts that periodically transfer interest to the tellers of the tales” (Kalb, 1991, p. 142). Indeed, Beckett’s readers do not go entirely astray in the darkness of the protagonists’ never-ending tales. After a certain point, readers become aware that the attempt to grasp the supposedly secret information in the text is in vain and they alter their courses to discover the causes of the characters’ physical deformations, their ceaseless failures, as well as their obsessions with trivial details intrinsic to life. To a considerable degree, in Beckett’s *oeuvre*, every nook and cranny of quasi-“nothingness” is filled with the bleakness of life. Within this context, negativity takes the form of “an important agent of the interaction between text and reader, and at the same time it constitutes the point at which Beckett’s texts sink their

roots into life itself' (Iser, 1985, p. 127). Iser's comment is quite significant in that it draws attention to an issue that preoccupied Beckett: the notion of reality and its representation in art. As Stanley Gontarski opines, "Beckett's search is for a new form of representation, a form to imitate or to reflect or to contain the chaos of reality" (1985, p. 238). Notwithstanding the deliberate complexity inherent in his fiction, in one of the rare interviews that he gave, Beckett declared his aesthetic purposes in a relatively simple manner:

What I am saying does not mean that there will henceforth be no form in art. It only means that there will be new form, and that this form will be of such a type that it admits the chaos and does not try to say that the chaos is really something else. The form and the chaos remain separate. The latter is not reduced to the former. That is why the form itself becomes a preoccupation, because it exists as a problem separate from the material it accommodates. To find a form that accommodates the mess, that is the task of the artist now. (2005, p. 243)

It is interesting to note that Beckett's pursuit of a new form of representation implies the detachability of form from the notion of content, whereas most of the distinguished critics like Sontag (2009b, p. 20) lay emphasis on the harmony of the two. On the other hand, Beckett's permanent search for a form within the range of the available genres, his increasing acquaintance with each and every medium that he treats, gradually takes the edge off the notion of content. "As reflection increases in scope and power", observes Theodor Adorno, "content itself becomes ever more opaque" (2002, p. 27). Throughout his career, Beckett was content with moving content to the "zone of evaporation" (Stewart, 2006, p. 62), and this movement towards ever higher levels of abstraction is, in the words of Gontarski, "his most persistent means of transcending the form/content dichotomy" (1985, p. 241).

A close glance at Beckett's *oeuvre* indicates the pivotal role that theatre acquires during the course of this movement towards the extremes of minimalism. Prior to his engagement in playwriting, however, Beckett had already deployed theatrical means (the most striking ones being the structure of the monologue and of the tale-within-a tale) in his prose works. Juxtaposing his work with Kafka's novels and protagonists, Beckett remarks how "[T]he Kafka hero has a coherence of purpose. He's lost but he's not spiritually precarious, he's not falling to bits. My people seem to be falling to bits" (2005, p. 162). In point of fact, Beckett's protagonists do fall to bits literally. The author's intention to reflect the chaos of reality by means of breaking his protagonists into pieces manifests itself even in the titles of his early and middle prose: from *Murphy* and *Molloy* to *Malone Dies* and *the Unnameable*; from proper nouns to physical deformations, and from physical deformations to ceaseless monologues that ceaselessly erode away the building stones of narration: "It told me to write the report. Does this mean I am freer now than I was? I do not know. I shall learn. Then I went back into the house and wrote, It is midnight. The rain is beating on the windows. It was not midnight. It was not raining" (Beckett, 1966, p. 189).

While Beckett's fiction is laden with passages that have been "carefully calculated to deprave the cultivated reader" (Beckett, 1963a, p. 83), his theatre abounds with scenes that pose serious challenges to the theatrical habits of the audience. In this particular respect, it becomes possible to "describe Beckett's plays as being metatheatrical, in that they simultaneously *are* and *comment upon* theatre" (Worton, 1994, p. 74, emphasis in the original). Even so, through a close look at the *oeuvre*, one can see how Beckett has planted the seeds of this aspect of metatheatricity as early as *Murphy*. Consider, for a moment, Murphy's dying wish:

With regard to the disposal of these my body, mind and soul, I desire that they be burned and placed in a paper bag and brought to the Abbey Theatre, Lr. Abbey Street, Dublin, and without pause into what the great and good Lord Chesterfield calls the necessary house, where the happiest hours have been spent, on the right as one goes down into to the pit, and I desire that the chain be there pulled upon them, if possible during the performance of a piece, the whole to be executed without ceremony or show of grief. (Beckett, 1963a, p. 183)

Murphy's epitaph invites special consideration from certain perspectives. Murphy, in the first place, regards his body, mind and soul as separate entities, which allows him to "bring himself back to an identifiable point" (Iser, 1985, p. 129). What is more, in the course of his "wandering to find home" (Beckett, 1963a, p. 7), Murphy uses his body as a medium; he ties his stark body to a rocking chair and rocks himself into a situation in which he would be "free in his mind" (ibid, p. 6). In this context, Murphy can be considered as one of the harbingers of the striking characters of Beckett's theatre, such as Winnie of *Happy Days*, Nagg and Nell of *Endgame*, all of whom have been either buried to the "waist in exact centre of mound" (Beckett, 1961, p. 7), or planted into "two ashbins" (Beckett, 1963b, p. 11). While traditional theatre makes use of the body as a means to depict the psychological states of the dramatis personae, in Beckett's theatre the body is deprived of movement, thereby giving life to scenic entities.

In addition to demonstrating Beckett's preoccupation with the implications of the body, Murphy's last will is important in the sense that it includes an attack on one of the most influential venues which witnessed one of the most influential theatre movements of the twentieth century: the Abbey Theatre. Despite the fact that Murphy wants his ashes to be flushed down the toilet in the Abbey Theatre during the performance of a piece, his dying wish cannot be fulfilled:

Some hours later Cooper took the packet of ash from his pocket, where earlier in the evening he had put it for greater security, and threw it angrily at a man who had given him great offence. It bounced, burst, off the wall on to the floor, where at once it became the object of much dribbling, passing, trapping, shooting, punching, heading, and even some recognition from the gentleman's code. By closing time the body, mind and soul of Murphy were freely distributed over the floor of the saloon; and before another dayspring greened the earth had been swept away with the sand, the beer, the butts, the glass, the matches, the spits, the vomit. (Beckett, 1963a, p. 187)

Even though Beckett's assault on the theatrical institution remains at the level of language in *Murphy*, in his plays he exploits theatre to transcend the boundaries of the traditional understanding of the art of theatre. In Beckett's plays, as in the case of his fictional works, the "tools" of theatre, such as language, actors, objects, mimes, space, light, and so forth, acquire a decisive role for the author in terms of testing the limits of the conventional conception of theatre. The use of silence in Beckett's plays, for instance, can be regarded as a true and fully symbolic way of "saying" or "expressing" rather than not saying or refusing to say. From this vantage point, it can be seen that, in Beckett's theatre, the lack of words or the omnipresence of silence are not used to signal inexpressiveness but, on the contrary, are means of aesthetic expression. To a considerable degree, Beckett's *oeuvre* alludes to an antinomy which Adorno would capture in his comment: "externally art appears impossible while immanently it must be pursued" (2002, p. 320).

The difference between the acts of looking and staring further intensifies the crucial role that "pauses" and "silences" play in Beckett's theatre. As Sontag puts it, "[T]raditional art invites a look. Art that's silent engenders a stare. In silent art, there is (at least in principle) no release from attention, because there has never, in principle, been any soliciting of it. A stare is perhaps as far from history, as close to

eternity, as contemporary art can get” (2009a, p. 16). Sontag’s observation is quite significant in that it draws attention to another difference: the one between being “audience” and being “spectator” in a theatre performance. While the former word alludes to an individual who merely watches the play, the latter one hints at an active participant with eyes fixed on the scenic entities of the performance in order to acquire a firm grasp of the production. More to the point: being a spectator demands from the individual a critical engagement with the performance. Be that as it may, Beckett’s plays do not serve meaning on a silver platter to the spectator; one has to pursue it in the throes of the pauses, silences and continuous negations that recur in Beckett’s theatre. As Iser maintains, “the spectator at a Beckett play feels for himself [sic] the need for and the consequence of ‘concord-fiction,’ which forms a basis for his act of meaning projection” (1978, p. 272).

Additionally, the fact that Beckett attaches such prominence to the concept of body in his plays makes the spectator’s act of meaning projection hinge on the amount of attention paid to the scenic entities on the stage. Commenting upon Beckett’s cogitation upon the notion of soma, Linda Ben-Zvi highlights the author’s distinctiveness regarding the issue: “It is difficult to think of another modern writer who has so consistently, thoroughly, and relentlessly focused on questions of the body” (2004, p. 136). As stated previously, in Beckett’s theatre, the notion of body works the other way around: it is bereft of mobility in order to embody a histrionic being. At this point of discussion, it is worth recalling how Beckett’s protagonists fall into bits in his prose works in the literal sense of the word. In Beckett’s plays, however, this literal sense transforms itself into the radical sense of the word. Through a close glance at Beckett’s theatrical works, one can descry a progression reminiscent of that manifested in the prose works: from two tramps waiting for

Godot, to three heads emerging from urns; from three heads emerging from urns, to a Mouth that utters words at breakneck speed. According to one of the most acclaimed actors of Beckett, namely, Pierre Chabert, “the purpose of this progressive immobilization is to fix the spectator’s attention not on the whole body, but rather on a part of the body or on a fragment of the body’s language” (1982, p. 27). Within this context, it can be inferred that the body becomes one of the most essential instruments in Beckett’s theatre in terms of surpassing the confines of the traditional understanding of theatre.

With respect to the metatheatrical aspect/s of Beckett’s theatre, the author’s usage of the Italianate stage attracts notice. “While others seek theatricalism in complexity, in the systematic multiplicity of points of view, and in spectacular movement *around* the action”, observes Jacques Guicharnaud, “Beckett is satisfied with the elementary artificiality of a stage frame and exploits to a maximum” (1985, p. 117, emphasis in the original). Hence, for Beckett, the artificiality of the Italianate stage turns out to be the ultimate starting point during the course of creating a commentary upon the art of theatre and, by extension, developing a discourse with regard to theatrical language. Thus, the idea of play together with the act of *playing* it becomes the hallmark of Beckett’s theatre. The fact that the majority of the titles of Beckett’s (meta)theatrical pieces foreground this distinctive feature sustains the point: *Act Without Words I*, *Act Without Words II*, *Endgame*, *Rough for Theatre I*, *Rough for Theatre II*, *A Piece of Monologue*, and last but by no means least *Play*<sup>2</sup>. The spectators in Beckett’s theatre, then, are constantly confronted by pieces of theatre with the potential for altering their perception of theatre. More often than not,

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<sup>2</sup> And *Film*. “Its very title is generic”, writes Jonathan Kalb, “like that of *Play*, indicating that the work will deal with fundamental qualities or principles of its medium rather than simply use film as an unobtrusive story-telling vehicle” (1994, p. 134). In the light of Kalb’s observation, then, one can conclude that creating commentaries upon genres is the distinctive feature of Beckett’s *oeuvre*.

the play characters themselves turn out to be the performers in the pieces. The stage directions in *Happy Days*, for instance, are precisely designed to spotlight the performer in Winnie: “A bell rings piercingly, say ten seconds, stops. She does not move. Pause. Bell more piercingly, say five seconds. She wakes. Bell stops. She raises her head, gazes front. Long pause. She straightens up, lays her hands flat on the ground, throws back her head and gazes at zenith. Long pause” (Beckett, 1961, p. 8). Likewise, in Beckett’s theatre, it is the theatrical language itself that constitutes the core of the interaction between the play characters. When Clov does not take heed of the theatrical tradition of asides and soliloquies, for example, Hamm scolds him furiously: “An aside, ape! Did you never hear an aside before? (*Pause.*) I’m warming up for my last soliloquy” (Beckett, 1963b, p. 49).

In the light of this close examination of Beckett’s *oeuvre*, one can deduce that considering the writer’s prose works in conjunction with his theatrical pieces reveals the author’s transformation of the theatricality in his fiction into metatheatricality in his plays. Within this picture of the author’s *oeuvre*, *Krapp’s Last Tape* calls for particular perusal thanks to the innovative (meta)theatrical style that Beckett develops in the piece.

### *Krapp’s Last Tape*

An old man on the brink of the grave, sorting the wheat from the chaff, in his abode in the still of the night: scrutinising his past before he crosses the Styx, so to speak.

The image described above is a worn-out cliché and it conjures up a dramatisation of a remarkably sentimental state of mind. Nevertheless, in the hands of an incisive stylist, even a hackneyed image can serve a purpose, with its

deployment being an element in “a distinctive manner of expression, through whatever *medium* this expression is given *physical shape*” (Verdonk, 2002, p. 3, emphasis added). When Samuel Beckett’s *Krapp’s Last Tape* is taken into consideration within this context, it can be seen that the author’s utilisation of a tape-recorder on stage has been quite influential in terms of achieving (meta)theatrical effect/s in a play which is monologic *per se*. By confronting “a wearish old man” (Beckett, 1984, p. 55) with his former selves through the use of a tape-recorder, Beckett provides a solution for “the perennial problem of drama based on monologue” (McDonald, 2006, p. 59), that is to say, creating a dramatic conflict. As the medium through which Beckett fashions his distinctive manner of expression, the tape-recorder acquires a physical shape in *Krapp’s Last Tape* since the visual physical relationship that the protagonist establishes with that medium forms the crux of the dramatic tension in the play.

Beckett wrote *Krapp’s Last Tape* in English early in 1958 for one of his favourite actors, namely, Patrick Magee.<sup>3</sup> Beckett’s choice surfaces in the earlier title of the play: *Magee Monologue*. After listening to Magee reading passages from *Molloy* and *From An Abandoned Work* on the BBC’s Third Programme in December 1957, Beckett was alerted to the “cracked voice” (Beckett, 1984, p. 55) of the Irish actor which, in the words of James Knowlson, “seemed to capture a sense of deep world-weariness, sadness, ruination and regret” (1976, p. 50). Therefore, following Rónán McDonald (2006, p. 59), it can be safe to assert that *Krapp’s Last Tape*’s source of inspiration had been auditory right from the start. The year of the composition attracts attention in that it coincides with a period when the author was probing the realm of radio drama. In the late 1950s, moreover, Beckett was working

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<sup>3</sup> In fact, prior to its publication, *Krapp’s Last Tape* had been scrupulously revised by the author. For an illuminating account regarding the composition of the play, see Gontarski, 1977, pp. 61-68.

on his act(s) without words. *Krapp's Last Tape* bears the marks of these experiences. The vital role that mimes play as well as the crucial function that the recorded voice of memory attains in *Krapp's Last Tape* demonstrates how Beckett fused the insights that he had gained from radio drama with acts without words to yield a rather extended play written for stage.

*Krapp's Last Tape* is set in “[a] late evening in the future” (Beckett, 1984, p. 55). The setting of the play has remarkable connotations. On the one hand, it implies that “the play was ahead of its time” (Rodríguez-Gago, 2008, p. 212); on the other, it endows the work with “chronological plausibility—Krapp in 1958 could not be made to listen to tapes from a time when such recording materials were not available” (Lawley, 1994, p. 89). Beckett’s thrust for chronological plausibility goes hand in hand with his pursuit of a new form of representation that “accommodates the mess.” *Krapp's Last Tape* “admits the chaos” and the action of the play proceeds from this postulate. Although the play concentrates on Krapp’s life which is in a mess, the protagonist’s trips to his unseen cubby-hole to knock back a drink or two, or to fetch his ledger and dictionary, provide one with the opportunity to envisage scenes of a daily life. As Andrew Gibson puts it, “Krapp’s shift from generality to his own particular condition, insists on the specificity of difficulty, suffering and waste” (2010, p. 16). Still, at the same time as Krapp endeavours to reflect on his own specific situation, his ordinary life could be said to continue in the darkness of backstage. What makes Krapp’s case extraordinary is the obligation to “perform” his ritualistic act on each and every birthday: listening to passages from the past and recording a new tape (for the future). Krapp, then, is the performer of the piece. At various parts of the play, he interrupts his own show, returns to his storeroom for refreshment, and resumes his performance. Krapp’s performance blurs the

distinctions between art and life, and it evokes a certain sense of reality in the mind of the spectator. Theatricality, as in the case of Beckett's prose works, achieves one of its most essential emotional goals: the feeling of "here and now".

Even so, in *Krapp's Last Tape*, metatheatricality triumphs over theatricality. Through a brief glance at the earlier title—*Magee Monologue*—of the play, one can read *Krapp's Last Tape* as a commentary upon the concept of monologue and, by extension, theatre. As stated previously, by incorporating the tape-recorder in the play, Beckett solves the age-old problem of drama founded on monologue. The utilisation of tape-recorder, however, serves more than the purpose of giving rise to a dramatic conflict: it allows Beckett to create three Krapps at the same time. As Stanley Gontarski maintains, "presenting three stages of Krapp simultaneously, Beckett intensified the dramatization of a central theme: the inability of the self to perceive itself accurately in the present. Krapp-69 sneers at Krapp-39 who in turn laughs at young Krapp. At each stage Krapp sees the fool he was, not the fool he is" (1977, p. 64). Hence, in *Krapp's Last Tape*, it becomes possible for one to encounter three personae of the same protagonist. Thus, during the course of the play, the recorded voice of memory defogs the juxtaposed entries that Krapp reads out from his ledger at the beginning of his monologue, such as "mother at rest at last", "the black ball", "the dark nurse", "memorable equinox" and "farewell to love" (Beckett, 1984, p. 57). In this regard, Beckett's multiplying the voices of Krapp through the use of the tape-recorder can be considered as the novelty which the author introduces to the concept of monologue in theatre.

This novelty, moreover, contributes to the images of contrast that Beckett intersperses throughout *Krapp's Last Tape*. In point of fact, these images are in harmony with the stage directions at the beginning of the play: "*Table and*

*immediately adjacent area in strong white light. Rest of stage in darkness.*” (ibid, p. 55). On the scenic level, Krapp’s “room has shrunk to its most important item of furniture, the table where he plays and records his life” (Worth, 2001, p. 37). The resultant visual distinction between the table and the rest of Krapp’s room provides a foretaste of the contrast between the Krapp-69 listening to the recorder and the Krapp-39 whose pompous voice he hears:

Just been listening to an old year, passages at random. I did not check in the book, but it must be at least ten or twelve years ago. At that time I think I was still living on and off with Bianca in Kedar Street. Well out of that, Jesus yes! Hopeless business. *[Pause.]* Not much about her, apart from a tribute to her eyes. Very warm. I suddenly saw them again. *[Pause.]* Incomparable! *[Pause.]* Ah well...*[Pause.]* These old P.M.s are gruesome, but I often find them —[ KRAPP switches off, broods, switches on] —a help before embarking on a new...*[hesitates]*...retrospect. Hard to believe I was ever that young whelp. The voice! Jesus! And the aspirations! *[Brief laugh in which KRAPP joins.]* And the resolutions! *[Brief laugh in which KRAPP joins.]* To drink less, in particular. *[Brief laugh of KRAPP alone.]* Statistics. Seventeen hundred hours, out of the preceding eight thousand odd, consumed on licensed premises alone. More than 20 per cent, say 40 per cent of his waking life. *[Pause.]* Plans for a less...*[hesitates]*...engrossing sexual life. Last illness of his father. Flagging pursuit of happiness. Unattainable laxation. Sneers at what he calls his youth and thanks to God that it's over. *[Pause.]* False ring there. *[Pause.]* Shadows of the opus...magnum. Closing with a —*[brief laugh]*— yelp to Providence. *[Prolonged laugh in which KRAPP joins.]* What remains of all that misery? A girl in a shabby green coat, on a railway-station platform? No? (Beckett, 1984, p. 58).

Although rather lengthy, this quote amply demonstrates the vital function that Beckett attributes to pauses and interruptions in *Krapp’s Last Tape*. During the pauses and interruptions, Krapp-69 not only visualises “Bianca in Kedar Street” and her “incomparable” eyes but at the same time pays a tribute to Bianca’s eyes by brooding on them. This image is striking in the sense that it echoes—albeit faintly—the contrast between the strong white light and darkness of the stage directions at the beginning of the play owing to the fact that “Bianca means white in Italian and Kedar

black in Hebrew” (Lawley, 1994, p. 92). Nonetheless, the most arresting aspect of the excerpt arguably lies in Beckett’s simultaneous presentation of the three stages of Krapp. The pauses and interruptions, in this respect, play a crucial role for they reveal the protagonist’s progressive alienation from his former selves: Krapp-69 laughs at the “aspirations” and the “resolutions” of Krapp-39, yet when it comes to the resolution “to drink less in particular”, he remains alone; he does not see “the fool he is”, as Gontarski puts it. Additionally, the excerpt signals that Krapp-39 is a writer who is about to create his “magnum opus”. Be that as it may, with his “aspirations”, his “flagging pursuit of happiness” and his “thanks to God”, the young Krapp becomes a laughingstock for the old Krapp.

As John Pilling indicates with respect to Beckett’s imagery, through which the author conveys much of his meaning, “[r]epetition as a device is also of particular importance” (1976, p. 31). Take, for instance, the episode in which the young Krapp narrates his account of the dark nurse:

Hardly a soul, just a few regulars, nursemaids, infants, old men, dogs. I got to know them quite well—oh by appearance of course I mean! One dark young beauty I recollect particularly, all white and starch, incomparable bosom, with a big black hooded perambulator, most funereal thing. Whenever I looked in her direction she had her eyes on me. And yet when I was bold enough to speak to her—not having been introduced—she threatened to call a policeman. As if I had designs on her virtue! [*Laugh. Pause.*] The face she had! The eyes! Like...[*hesitates*]...chrysolite! [*Pause.*] Ah well...[*Pause.*] I was there when—[KRAPP *switches off, broods, switches on again*—the blind went down, one of those dirty brown roller affairs, throwing a ball for a little white dog, as chance would have it. I happened to look up and there it was. All over and done with, at last. I sat on for a few moments with the ball in my hand and the dog yelping and pawing at me. [*Pause.*] Moments. Her moments, my moments. [*Pause.*] The dog’s moments. [*Pause.*] In the end I held it out to him and he took it in his mouth, gently, gently. A small, old, black, hard, solid rubber ball. [*Pause.*] I shall feel it, in my hand, until my dying day. [*Pause.*] I might have kept it. [*Pause.*] But I gave it to the dog. (Beckett, 1984, pp. 59-60).

Observe how Beckett reinforces the pattern of contrasting images through repetition. It is by virtue of repetition that the contrast between white and black perceptible in the preceding excerpt recurs in the young Krapp's narration concerning the dark nurse. The "perfect chrysolite"<sup>4</sup> eyes of the dark nurse evoke the "incomparable" eyes of Bianca. As Antonia Rodríguez-Gago acknowledges, "[f]or young Krapp, women's eyes seem to be only mirrors in which he can see himself, or just beautiful objects of aesthetic contemplation" (2008, p. 211). Furthermore, the "dark young beauty" dressed in "all white and starch" that Krapp-39 recalls wheels an infant with "a big black hooded perambulator, most funereal thing". The contrast between white and dark, then, paves the way for the contrast between birth and death. At this point of the analysis, it is worth pointing out that young Krapp's narration involving the dark nurse is preceded by his account of his mother's death. The dark nurse, therefore, becomes an image in which Beckett weaves various contrasts. In a similar vein, "a little white dog" gently takes the possession of "a small, old, black, hard, solid rubber ball". Yet, the contrast lies not only between the colours black and white but also between the gentle bites of the little dog and the worn out, solidified image of the ball. It goes without saying that the ingenuity of Beckett's repetition is heightened by the subsequent "pauses" that enhance the dramatic tension of the play.

"The dramatic success of *Krapp's Last Tape*", writes Pierre Chabert, "is dependent upon Krapp's position, immobile, tensely listening to his voice" (1982, p. 27). Chabert's observation is remarkable in that it draws attention to another contrast in the play: that of the corporeal discrepancy evident in Krapp. In spite of the fact

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<sup>4</sup> An adroit reader of Shakespeare catches the echoes of *Othello* in this image easily. In his production notebook, Beckett makes the connection explicit by quoting the three lines at issue: "If heaven wd [would] make me such another world / Of one entire and perfect chrysolite / I'd not have sold for it." (1992, p. 30). Actually, this is one of the innumerable intertextual references that can be observed in Beckett's theatrical works. For two comprehensive articles on the notion of intertextuality in Beckett's oeuvre, see Brater 2004, pp. 30-44 and Elam 1994, pp. 145-166.

that the act of listening forms the basis of the action of the piece, Krapp can hardly hear. At the same time, he is “[v]ery near-sighted (but unspectacled)” (Beckett, 1984, p. 55). From this certain lack of bodily functions or “negativity”, as Wolfgang Iser (1985, pp. 125-136) would call it, derives the dramatic force of *Krapp’s Last Tape*. Indeed, the protagonist’s physical limitations contribute greatly to the play’s dramatic tension. As Chabert asserts, “Krapp’s deafness intensifies the tension of listening, because the character is obliged to make a sustained effort not to miss anything said by the voice coming from the tape recorder” (1982, p. 24). The stage directions are meticulously designed to underscore the importance of the immobility of the listening position: “*He raises his head, broods, bends over machine, switches on and assumes listening posture, i.e. leaning forward, elbows on table, hand cupping ear towards machine, face front*” (Beckett, 1984, p. 57). This listening posture, with Krapp almost fixed to the tape-recorder, constitutes the core of the physical relationship that the protagonist establishes with the medium, and it is by means of this tape-recorder that Beckett develops his distinctive manner of (meta)theatrical expression. The dramatic tension of the play stems precisely from this visually established physical relationship.

According to Rodríguez-Gago, “[o]ld Krapp’s musings, exclamations, curses, gestures, movements, and other bodily actions prove how the stage body is visually re-figured by his memory voice, and how the mechanically reproduced memory carries the play’s action forward” (2008, p. 206). Rodríguez-Gago’s remark draws attention to the innovative metatheatrical style that Beckett develops in *Krapp’s Last Tape*. Throughout the play, Beckett not only undermines the concept of monologue but also uses monologue as a theatrical device to foreground Krapp’s alienation from his former selves. The inclusion of a tape-recorder, in this regard, allows Beckett to

present two, even three Krapps, at the same time. In this way, the contrasting images that Beckett projects in every part of the play come into *being* in the physical (re)actions of the protagonist. Thanks to the path-breaking metatheatrical style that Beckett attains in *Krapp's Last Tape*, the highly sentimental image at the beginning of this subsection turns out to be a mere starting point for the author in the course of creating a commentary upon the concept of monologue in theatre.

### Siting *Krapp's Last Tape* in the Beckett Canon

The position of *Krapp's Last Tape* in the Beckett canon invites consideration from different perspectives. Ruby Cohn, for one, highlights the distinctive position that the play acquires in Samuel Beckett's theatrical works: "earlier plays play with the techniques of their genre, *Krapp's Last Tape* plays against its genre by using the techniques of another medium" (1973, p. 165). As the previous analysis demonstrated, the inclusion of a tape-recorder in an essentially monologic play is innovatory in terms of achieving certain metatheatrical effects. While the metatheatrical aspect of earlier plays such as *Waiting for Godot* and *Endgame* surfaces in the various commentaries upon theatrical language between Beckett's well-known pairs of characters (i.e. Didi and Gogo, Hamm and Clov), the metatheatricality of *Krapp's Last Tape* lies in the author's undermining the concept of monologue in theatre by dint of a tape-recorder. Be that as it may, Beckett seems reluctant to give up his theatrical habit of creating character pairs: despite the fact that *Krapp's Last Tape* is comprised of one play character, the addition of the tape-recorder allows Beckett to confront Krapp-69 with Krapp-39, thus achieving a pair of characters through the medium. *Krapp's Last Tape*, moreover, exemplifies "how

Beckett's adventure of writing 'acts without words' and 'radio plays' finds stylistic echoes in his works written for stage" (Yüksel, 2006, pp. 93-94). More to the point: from *Krapp's Last Tape* onwards, Beckett became more and more occupied with the staging aspects of his plays and eventually assumed full responsibility for a number of their productions.<sup>5</sup> Within this context, it becomes possible to discern the remarkable position that *Krapp's Last Tape* attains in the Beckett canon: the play marks a turning point in the author's career. Therefore, a glance at the reverberations of *Krapp's Last Tape* in the Beckett canon can be quite fruitful in understanding the significance of the play.

As Susan Sontag remarks, "every style is a means of insisting on something" (2009b, p. 35). Beckett's *oeuvre* provides ultimate evidence for Sontag's claim. Through a close examination of the author's canon, one can espy how Beckett deploys relatively similar patterns over and over again in his works. This, however, is not *just* repetition. Nor "foregrounding" particular elements, as stylisticians would say. Beckett not only insists on using his patterns "that accommodate[s] the mess", but also insists on using them ingeniously in each of his works by deriving benefit from various theatrical and literary devices. One example: the young Krapp's fondness for his black ball that goes with the little white dog harks back to Hamm's obsession with his toy dog; Murphy's obsession with his biscuits and his rocking chair; Molloy's obsession with his sucking pebbles; Malone's obsession with his stick and his pencil, and so on. The pattern of obsession is static, whereas the genre and the medium through which this pattern is repeated are dynamic. Repetition of this kind can thus be considered as one of the distinctive features of the Beckett canon.

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<sup>5</sup> For a chronological list of the Beckett plays directed by the author himself, see Gontarski 2004, pp. 205-207.

In his career as a playwright, *Krapp's Last Tape* provided Beckett with the acid test for exploring the theatrical impact of a disembodied voice on the Italianate stage. And at one stroke he shook the foundations of the traditional understanding of the concept of monologue in theatre. Notwithstanding the fact that Beckett did have recourse to monologues and soliloquies in *Waiting for Godot*, *Endgame* and *All That Fall*, to a considerable degree these plays hinge on the dialogues between the protagonists. Nevertheless, in *Krapp's Last Tape* the assault is on the concept of monologue itself. As the previous analysis of the play demonstrated, the utilisation of a tape-recorder allowed Beckett to multiply the voices of the protagonist. From *Krapp's Last Tape* onwards, the disembodied voice would be one of the countless theatrical devices that Beckett “insisted” on using in his plays so as to achieve higher levels of abstraction.

The author's utilisation of the disembodied voice merits further attention in order to conceive the trailblazing position that *Krapp's Last Tape* acquires in the Beckett canon. As Antonia Rodríguez-Gago points out, “Beckett's dramatic use of technology in *Krapp's Last Tape* was quite an innovation at the time, as was his creation of a recorded voice as one of the play's two characters” (2008, p. 203). Confronting old Krapp with his former selves is actually a token of the increasing emphasis that Beckett lays on the burden of the past in his works. Time and again, the vital function that Beckett attributes to voices of the past hinges on his use of the disembodied voice and the act of listening. In *Eh Joe* (1965), for instance, the recorded voice of the past becomes an instrument of torture for the protagonist. The female voice torments the protagonist throughout the play yet Joe's face remains “impassive except in so far as it reflects mounting tension of *listening*” (Beckett, 1984, p. 202, emphasis in the original). Joe does not utter a word, not even a syllable;

his face becomes a fragile mirror upon which the disembodied female voice of the past reflects itself.

Beckett's insistent use of the mechanically-reproduced sound surfaces in his last plays as well. *Rockaby* (1981), for one, carries the echoes of *Krapp's Last Tape*. As Katharine Worth puts it, "the separation of the Woman from her recorded voice suggests something completed and authentic in the account of her life" (2001, p. 94). Once again, the worn-out cliché of reviewing an account of a life comes into play. And once again, a distinctive manner of theatrical expression manifests itself through Beckett's exploitation of recorded sound. In *Rockaby*, Beckett not only uses recorded sound as an apparatus for multiplying the voices of the play character, but utilises it in such a way that the rocking movement of the rocking chair in which the "prematurely old" (1984, p. 273) woman (referred to as "W") is positioned is harmonised with the act of listening. At this point of the discussion, it is worth underlining that the rocking is "mechanically controlled *without assistance* from w" (ibid, p. 274, emphasis added) in the entire course of the play. While in *Krapp's Last Tape* the dramatic tension of listening gives rise to the movements and gestures of the protagonist, in *Rockaby* it deprives the character of movement to the extreme. Apart from the slow inclining of her head, w remains motionless and expressionless throughout her act of listening. This minimalist treatment of the gestures of the protagonist relies upon the vital impact that listening creates.

One further—and decisive—echo of *Krapp's Last Tape* can be heard in another late play, *Ohio Impromptu* (1981). Even though Beckett does not have recourse to a recorded voice in *Ohio Impromptu*, he creates "a different kind of monologue, one whose *shape* is as unprecedented as its *structure* is unusual" (Brater, 1987, p. 125, emphasis added). The characters of *Ohio Impromptu*, Reader (R) and Listener (L)

are, “[a]s alike in appearance as possible” (Beckett, 1984, p. 285). Beckett drops the first hint regarding the identicalness of the play characters in the stage directions. And in the course of the play, R recounts a tale from a “[b]ook on table before him open at last pages” (ibid.). In this particular respect, the last pages of the book bring to mind the last tape of Krapp. Another striking resemblance between the two plays in question can be observed in R’s narrative, since through his narration it becomes possible for one to comprehend that the protagonist of (t)his tale is the young L. The old self (once again) is confronted with the young self. Parallel to this similarity between these two plays is Beckett’s repetition of the stage directions that have been dwelled upon in the preceding analysis of *Krapp’s Last Tape*: “*Light on table midstage. Rest of stage in darkness*” (ibid.). The stage directions hark back to the darkness that encircles Krapp’s zone of strong white light. At this point, Paul Lawley’s remark with respect to the gravity of *Ohio Impromptu* in the Beckett canon is worth recalling: “*Ohio Impromptu* is only the most explicit example of the dramatic interaction which forms the basis of the dramaturgy of the late plays” (1994, p. 89). In *Ohio Impromptu*, as in the case of *Eh Joe* and *Rockaby*, the act of listening dominates the play. Listening, as indicated previously, holds the key to the dramatic value of *Krapp’s Last Tape*. From this perspective, one can see how Beckett has continued shaping the patterns of *Krapp’s Last Tape* in his works in order to create his distinctive manner of metatheatrical expression.

On the basis of what has been discussed so far regarding the significant position of *Krapp’s Last Tape* in the Beckett canon, it becomes possible to observe how, in his later works, the author made considerable use of the theatrical devices and patterns particularly intrinsic to the earlier play. Although Beckett’s late style in theatre moved towards ever-higher levels of abstraction, the seeds of this minimalism

can be found in *Krapp's Last Tape*. Therefore, tracing the roots of this abstraction and minimalism in the revised text of *Krapp's Last Tape* can prove quite fruitful for underscoring the importance of Beckett's staging approach as well as his concept of *mise en scène*. This emphasis on the significance of the author's directorial status is beneficial since, within Theatre Studies, it has largely been Beckett scholars that have drawn attention to the author's staging approach, while Beckett's transformation of the theatricality in his prose works into metatheatricality in his plays has been neglected to an even greater extent. As Stanley Gontarski argues, "[a] dearth of theatrical documentation may account for some of the neglect as scholars and critics traditionally privilege print over performance, that is, the apparent stability or consistency of the literary script over its theatrical realization or completion" (1998, p. 131). For Beckett, however, performance took precedence over print during the entire course of his career as a playwright.

#### *Krapp's Last Tape* Revis(it)ed

Referring to the twentieth century as one of the most vigorous periods of theatre history would not be an overstatement. Particularly striking evidence of this is the fact that "system-actors", "biomechanic-actors", "epic-actors" and "holy-actors" emerging from the groundbreaking theories of Constantin Stanislavsky, Vsevolod Meyerhold, Bertolt Brecht and Jerzy Grotowski respectively predominated on the twentieth-century stage. The twentieth century marks indeed an epoch in theatre history: thanks to the revolutionary approaches that these aforementioned theatre theoreticians introduced to the twentieth century stage, the attention paid to the fundamental roles that actors and directors play in the course of a given performance

progressively increased. To a considerable degree, the revolutionary aspect of these theories lies in the challenge they pose to the already established theories and perceptions of theatre. Nonetheless, as Kerem Karaboğa (2005) has amply demonstrated, the starting point of this revolutionary road, through which these theatre theoreticians paved the way for the constitution and formation of contemporary drama, can be traced back to Denis Diderot's *Paradox of Acting*.

The point is decisive. In the light of the preceding examination of Samuel Beckett's *oeuvre*, and *Krapp's Last Tape* in particular, one can plausibly assert that the author's theatrical works represent a radical break with the established theories and perceptions of theatre. Furthermore, a close glance at Beckett's entire career reveals that the author's radical break with the past manifests itself in the raw in the productions of his plays that he himself directed. In spite of the fact that Theatre Studies abounds with research done on Beckett's plays, the discipline, to some extent, has overlooked the author's directorial status and his conception of *mise en scène*. Apparently, within the realm of Theatre Studies, "Beckett the playwright" casts a shadow over "Beckett the director". *The Theatrical Notebooks of Samuel Beckett*, however, provide one with sufficient information in terms of seeing what remains hidden in the shadow cast by "Beckett the playwright". Commenting upon the significance of production books within the context of performance analysis, Patrice Pavis juxtaposes Beckett's production books with those of the most influential theatre theoreticians of the twentieth century and concludes that "the Berliner Ensemble's *Regiebücher* (documentation prepared by Brecht in the wake of each *mise-en-scène* intended for the use of future directors of his plays), the production logs of Stanislavsky, Reinhardt, Copeau, or the notebooks of Beckett, are all brilliant exceptions that prove the rule of production as ephemeral and traceless"

(2003, p. 41). Pavis not only acknowledges the value of Beckett's directorial status but also underscores the valuable hints that his production notes might carry regarding productions.

As emphasised earlier, the notion of body occupies a central position in Beckett's *oeuvre*. In his plays that he directed, moreover, Beckett pushes the limits of this preoccupation with the body to a maximum. The body in Beckett's theatre, in the words of Pierre Chabert, "is *worked*, violated even, much like the raw materials of the painter or sculptor, in the service of a systematic exploration of all possible relationships between the body and movement, the body and space, the body and light and the body and words" (1982, p. 23, emphasis in the original).

Notwithstanding the fact that Beckett does not propose an acting or directing method in the sense of, say, Stanislavsky, Meyerhold, Brecht and Grotowski, his approach in theatre allows one to draw theoretical conclusions with respect to the art of acting. In view of Chabert's comment, as well as the preceding discussion regarding the notion of body in Beckett's theatre, one can plausibly deem the Beckettian actor as what could be termed a "raw-actor". The "raw-actor" in Beckett's theatre is shaped in such a way that it performs only the corporeal "action" in the performance. Deprived of creating an emotional atmosphere for the spectators, the Beckettian actor becomes moulded in the hands of the director. Nevertheless, Beckett's approach, which "bears hard on actors" (Worth, 2001, p. 58), is paradoxical indeed. On the one hand, it runs against the grain of the creativity of the performer during the performance; on the other, once the actors adopt a certain sense of the discipline necessary for regenerating the text on the stage, it coerces them to be interpretive within the constraints that Beckett imposes upon them. One of the most prominent Beckett actresses, Brenda Bynum, places great emphasis on the discipline required in the

author's theatre: "The rules give you the freedom. In the most restricted circumstance, if you accept those restrictions, it is like a world in a grain of sand; you get inside those parameters and you find so much, a new universe" (1990, p. 52). From this perspective, it can be inferred that Beckett's approach traps the actors in a universe, in which the significance of mobility decreases whereas the weight of immobility increases to a considerable degree.

When the revised text of *Krapp's Last Tape* is taken into consideration within this context, one can see how, as the director of the play, Beckett regards the body as the vital means for throwing light upon the essential features of the work: the acts of listening and non-listening, (im)mobility, contrasting images, repetition (with variation), and so on. Krapp's "purple nose" (Beckett, 1984, p. 55) and the other physical elements that overemphasise the protagonist's clownish look are reworked and succeeded by "several pieces of additional action that established an image of Krapp as a weak, tired, failing old man to counterbalance the image of the clown with which the audience had first been presented" (Knowlson, 1976, p. 52). In a similar vein, the opening mime is both simplified and clarified by Beckett with the purpose of exposing the underlying structural and thematic device of the play: repetition. In the revised text, even though Beckett omits the locking and unlocking of the drawers, the protagonist's fumbling with the keys in his pockets, as well as his sexual innuendo with the bananas, the author retains Krapp's consultation of his heavy silver watch (Beckett, 1992, p. 3). By doing so, not only does Beckett highlight the ritualistic act that Krapp has been repeatedly performing for more than forty years but at the same time arouses a sense of curiosity in the spectators through having Krapp wait for the exact moment to start his ceremony. Moreover, the substitution of the locking and unlocking drawers with Krapp's sudden banging them

shut each time he takes out a banana breaks the silence so crucial to the play. In these sudden bursts of sounds, one can see the emphasis that Beckett places on their juxtaposition with longer periods of quietness and immobility.

When the printed text and revised text are compared, one is likely to observe a remarkable change on the scenic level. While the stage directions in the printed text read “[o]n the table a tape-recorder with microphone and a number of cardboard boxes containing reels of recorded tapes” (Beckett, 1984, p. 55), the table in the revised text is bare. What lies behind Beckett’s decision is his intention to reveal Krapp’s unseen “cubby-hole” and attribute a crucial function to it. In the revised text, Krapp has to make three separate trips to his cubby-hole in order to start performing his ritualistic act. There is, however, a specific order for these trips: on the first trip, Krapp fetches the ledger, on the second a pile of tins containing the tapes, and on the third the tape-recorder. Beckett provides the reasons for this order in his production notebook: “to keep the explanatory element until the end; increasing weight so that actor can act fatigue; to ensure that plugging in the tape-recorder does not interrupt his three visits [*to the cubby-hole*]” (1992, p. 61). In the light of the explanation that Beckett provides for the specific order of the three trips, it can be understood that he once again aims at awaking the attention of the spectators. At this point of the discussion, it is also worth pointing out Beckett’s changing the “cardboard boxes” to “tin boxes”, which allows him to derive benefit from the sharp sounds that the boxes can provide in the course of the performance.

An additional—and more significant—adjustment that Beckett undertakes in the revised text is the precise positioning of objects (i.e. ledger, boxes, and tape-recorder) on the table. Beckett proposes two cases: while in the former case, the table is placed off-centre stage right and cubby-hole backstage left; in the latter, the table

is placed off-centre stage left and cubby-hole backstage right. Beckett's choice was to adopt the latter case since, when Krapp swept the ledger and tin boxes off the table, "they would lie in his path from the table to his cubby-hole" (ibid.). In his introduction for Beckett's revised text and the author's production notes, James Knowlson stresses the significance of this choice: "many directors would regard this as a very bad idea indeed: an old man risking stumbling on objects lying in the way, when this could be so easily avoided by having the objects strewn into darkness on the opposite side, stage left, safely out of Krapp's way" (ibid., p. xvii). Yet, the reason for Beckett's choice is not to complicate the already laborious walk of the protagonist even more; instead, the choice is motivated by the author's intention to concretise Krapp's survey of the havoc of his life. As Beckett told Chabert in one rehearsal, Krapp is "treading on his life" (ibid.).

According to Irit Degani-Raz, "[d]eprived of a past to rely on and a future to anticipate, Krapp is trapped in the present, and at this point his situation is brought to its extreme: total solitude" (2008, p. 193). In this particular respect, one can surmise that Beckett attributes such visible significance to the cubby-hole in order to lay the protagonist's presence in the present time before the eyes of the spectators. As indicated in the preceding analysis of the play, Krapp's trips to his cubby-hole for refreshment can be regarded as a token of the performer's continuation to his ordinary life during the course of the performance. At this point, it would be appropriate to recall the stage directions of the printed text, according to which the strong white light of Krapp's table is to be encircled with darkness. Although Beckett retains these directions in the revised text, by introducing the cubby-hole backstage, lit by a white light and separated from the stage with black curtain, Beckett repeats the images of contrast intrinsic to the play in a variation. The contrast between

darkness and light, therefore, not only blunts the distinction between Krapp's performance and his ordinary life but also underscores the contrasts that dominate the play. Thus, Krapp's excursions from darkness to light go hand in hand with the women in his life (i.e. Bianca in Kedar Street, the dark nurse, and so forth) all of whom have been depicted in black and white images. Krapp, to paraphrase the title of Pink Floyd's legendary album, correlates women with the dark side of the moon.

In the strong white light of the table, the dark splashes that the women represent stand out starkly. Even the momentary happiness that Krapp listens to twice in the play is achieved after the young Krapp and the girl in the punt agree that "it was hopeless and no good going on" (Beckett, 1984, p. 61). In the revised text of the play, Beckett is particularly concerned with this momentary harmony, which is jotted down in Krapp's ledger as "farewell to love". In the revised text, as Krapp-39 narrates the brief moment of happiness, Krapp-69 lowers his head bit by bit until it rests on the table beside the tape-recorder. In so doing, Beckett further foregrounds the visually established physical relationship from which the dramatic tension of the play arises. Parallel to this adjustment is Beckett's introduction of two different listening postures in the revised text: "motionless listening" and "agitation listening" (1992, p. 45). In Krapp's absolute solitude, the tape-recorder is his unique companion. It allows Krapp to "be again" (Beckett, 1984, p. 63) in those moments, whether they are good or bad. As regards to the unwanted memories, Krapp adopts a posture of motionless listening, and for the wanted memories he deploys a posture of agitated listening. Hence, through these listening postures Beckett strains the tension of the act of listening in the crucial episodes, such as "memorable equinox" and "farewell to love". Krapp's motionless posture at the end of the play, moreover, draws attention to another important change. As Knowlson observes, "[i]nstead of

the curtain closing on a motionless Krapp, staring in front of him with the tape running on in silence, Beckett had both the stage and the cubby-hole lights fade, leaving only the 'eye' of the tape-recorder illuminated" (1976, p. 54). Such an ending fixes the eyes of the spectators on the "eye" of the tape-recorder, at the same time as making the spectators a part of the act of listening.

All in all, studying *The Theatrical Notebooks of Samuel Beckett* provides one with the opportunity to comprehend the author's staging approach and his concept of *mise en scène*. And also with the chance to observe what lies behind the minimalism in his theatrical pieces. As the analysis of the cuts and changes that Beckett introduced to the revised text of *Krapp's Last Tape* has indicated, these modifications were aimed at highlighting the contrasting images inherent in the play. It is interesting to note that the majority of Beckett's changes are on the scenic level (i.e. mainly in the stage directions), whereas on the textual level the author undertakes minor omissions, like cutting out the hymn which Krapp sings at various parts of the play. In parallel with the movement towards minimalism in his *oeuvre*, Beckett *subtracted* from the text of the play. Furthermore, Beckett's priority of arousing a certain sense in the spectators through these minute changes expands the scope of his minimalism all the more.

CHAPTER III  
INTERPRETATIONS OF *KRAPP'S LAST TAPE* WITHIN THE TURKISH  
THEATRICAL SYSTEM

Beckett in Turkey

In his inspirational work about the “deadly”, “holy”, “rough” and “immediate” aspects of the art of theatre, Peter Brook makes a significant remark concerning the audience of Samuel Beckett’s theatre: “There is after all quite another audience, Beckett’s audience; those in every country who do not set up intellectual barriers, who do not try too hard to analyse the message. This audience laughs and cries out—and in the end celebrates with Beckett; this audience leaves his plays, his black plays, nourished and enriched, with a lighter heart, full of a strange irrational joy” (1996, p. 71). To a certain extent, Brook’s comment draws on Beckett’s theatrical skill in representing his “theatre machines” (ibid. p. 69) to the audience. However mechanical and distant the expression might sound, Beckett’s theatre machines have been welcomed by theatregoers throughout the world with increasing cordiality. What lies behind this warm reception is the peculiar relationship that the author’s stage objects—precisely speaking, Beckett’s pairs of characters who constantly tease out the traditional understanding of theatre—establish with the audiences by dint of the communicative power of theatre.

Yet, this relationship between Beckett’s scenic entities and their audiences did not evolve with ease. Notwithstanding the immediate success of *Waiting for Godot* in

the 1952-1953 season, theatregoers in Europe and across the world have been relatively hesitant towards Beckett's plays. Most of them were going with the theatrical flow of, say, *Waiting for Godot*, *Endgame*, *Krapp's Last Tape*, *Happy Days*; they were not trying "too hard to analyse" the so-called secret messages in Beckett's theatrical pieces, as Brook would put it. At the same time, Beckett's plays were rapidly moving from the periphery to the centre of the Western theatrical system. More than forty years after the first production of *Waiting for Godot*, Michael Worton, for one, would underline the canonical status that *Godot* and *Endgame* achieved in the Western theatrical system: "Beckett's first two published plays constitute a crux, a pivotal moment in the development of modern Western theatre" (1994, p. 68). Needless to say that the swift canonisation of Beckett's plays in the West gave rise to a chain reaction of canonisation in the rest of the world.

In this respect, the perpetual interest in putting on Beckett's plays and publishing the translations of his works in Turkey is not an exception. Due to the worldwide success of *Waiting for Godot*, in the mid-1950s theatre practitioners in Turkey—the most prominent of them then being the Ankara Sanat Tiyatrosu (hereafter Ankara Art Theatre) —took particular heed of Beckett's theatrical pieces. Their goal was straightforward: to introduce Beckett's plays to the Turkish audience. However, a brief glance at the overall productions of Beckett's plays in Turkey in the last fifty years demonstrates how *Godot* resided in the central position in the Turkish theatrical system right from the start. Ever since the first production of the play by Ankara Art Theatre in the 1963-1964 season, (<http://www.ast.com.tr/dundenbugune.php>) *Waiting for Godot* has been "the most debated and most staged play in Turkey" (Özsoysal, 2002, p. 79). Be that as it may, Beckett's theatrical canon is not composed merely of *Godot*. To a considerable

degree, the author's other theatrical pieces, the majority of which still occupy a central position in the Western theatrical system, have been overlooked by the theatre practitioners of Turkey. Within this context, it can be argued that the straightforward goal of the mid-1950s has not been crowned with success. This failure, moreover, is a perilous one. It not only has the potential of reducing the author's *oeuvre* to a single play but also bears the risk of disinclining the audience from Beckett's plays. Theatre is a living organism; so is the spectator who develops a critical engagement with each performance. In the hands of influential directors, each staging of the same play can breathe new life into the work. Still, after a certain point, watching the same play over and over again arguably wears out one's welcome.

As indicated in the previous chapter, the two building stones of Beckett's canon, that is to say, theatricality and metatheatricality, pose serious challenges to the established habits of people who engage with the author's *oeuvre*, regardless of the genre through which the works are presented. Even though this is a challenging experience, it also opens up new dimensions for them. Beckett's transformation of the theatricality in his fiction into metatheatricality in his plays illustrates the point. In contradistinction to the immobility immanent to the plays, their metatheatrical aspects lend a dynamic structure to Beckett's theatrical pieces. Thanks to the author's "commentaries" upon the art of theatre, the spectator of a given Beckett play can never take something for granted. As Jonathan Kalb puts it, "Beckett's stage plays actually changed many people's notions of what can happen, or is supposed to happen, when they enter a theatre" (1994, p. 124). From this vantage point, it can be seen that the dynamic structure of Beckett's plays not only tests the spectators' perception of theatre but at the same time provides them with the opportunity to probe the extremes of performance. Confining the author's *oeuvre* to the productions

of *Waiting for Godot* alone in Turkey, therefore, impedes Turkish spectators from experiencing this fundamental dimension of Beckett's theatre.

This, by no means, is a generalisation; it is a fact. A close examination of the repertoires of the prestigious theatre companies of Turkey such as Ankara Art Theatre and the country's City Theatres testifies to the tendency of staging *Waiting for Godot* in various theatre seasons. Besides putting on *Godot* at various junctures, the State Theatres only staged *Krapp's Last Tape* in the 1961-1962 season as well as *Happy Days* in the 1989-1990 and 1990-1991 seasons.<sup>1</sup> One can continue to problematise this tendency of staging exclusively *Waiting for Godot* through reference to the striking exceptions of the Beckett productions by Studio Oyuncuları (hereafter the Studio Players) and Dostlar Tiyatrosu (hereafter Dostlar Theatre). Instead of choosing to stage *Godot*, the Studio Players and Dostlar Theatre mounted representative pieces from the theatrical treasure of Beckett's *oeuvre*. The case of these companies, furthermore, is extraordinary in that both of them adopt an approach which aims at breathing new life into Beckett's theatre within the austere limits of the author's plays.

No discussion seriously concerned with Beckett in Turkey can overlook the Studio Players' Beckett productions. This is true in two respects: on the one hand, by putting on *Happy Days*, "Five Short Plays" (a production comprised of *Act Without Words I*, *Act Without Words II*, *Breath, Play* as well as *Come and Go*) and *Endgame*, the Studio Players have challenged the tendency in Turkey of reducing Beckett's *oeuvre* to a single play; on the other hand, the founder of the performance group, namely, Şahika Tekand, derived considerable benefit from the theatrical atmosphere of Beckett's *oeuvre* during the course of developing her own method of

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<sup>1</sup> For the repertoires of Ankara Art Theatre, the State Theatres and the City Theatres respectively, see <http://www.ast.com.tr/dundenbugune.php>; <http://www.deviyatiro.gov.tr/web/dramaturgi.html>; <http://www.ibt.gov.tr/sites/sehirtiyatrolari/tr-TR/Sayfalar/Dramaturgi.aspx>

“performative staging and acting”.<sup>2</sup> This second point merits further attention.

Despite the fact that Beckett’s plays, along with the ones of Eugene Ionesco and Arthur Adamov, were “a source of inspiration” (Alpöge, 2007, p. 148) for one of the most important theatre companies in Turkey in the 1960s, that is to say, Genç Oyuncular (hereafter the Young Players), a close examination of the productions of this theatre company indicates that this influence did not bring forth a distinct acting method. The remarkable achievement of the Young Players had been, in the words of Kerem Karaboğa, “their ability to produce innovatory and genuine texts which derive from a detailed, as well as a structural analysis of the plays of the theatre of the absurd” (2002, p. 32). From this perspective, one can see how the Young Players have treated Beckett principally as an absurdist playwright and profited from his approach on the textual level.

The Studio Players, however, approached the issue from the opposite direction. By “deliberately staying away from *Godot*”<sup>3</sup> Tekand tackled Beckett from a broader perspective; a perspective which embraces the metatheatrical dimension immanent to the author’s *oeuvre*. Actually, the fact that Beckett provided Tekand with “the theatrical atmosphere best suited to her staging approach” had been the director’s sole reason for putting on the author’s plays. Tekand’s “game concept”, in which “the actor becomes exposed to the rules of the game with the purpose of attaining the performative” (Karaboğa, 2008, p. 174) constitutes the crux of her theatre. To a certain extent, this performative role that Tekand assigns to the notion of game corresponds to the metatheatrical aspects of Beckett’s plays. As stated in the previous

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<sup>2</sup> A glance at the overall productions of the Studio Performers in the last two decades indicates the crucial function that Tekand attributes to Beckett’s plays. See, <http://www.studiooyunculari.com/default.asp?2,4>

<sup>3</sup> Quotes given with respect to the discussion of the Studio Players’ Beckett productions, as well as Beckett in Turkey without specific source references have been taken from the conversation held with Tekand. The text of this conversation can be found in Appendix A.

chapter, Beckett's plays, with all their metatheatricality, confront spectators with pieces of theatre. In doing so, Beckett challenges the directors as well: he lays down the rules of his games at the outset. After all, these rules allow the director to actualise the metatheatricality on stage before the eyes of the spectators. Hence, breaking the rules of the game stands for transforming metatheatricality into a stereotyped theatricality in the course of the production, whereas the progression in Beckett's *oeuvre* is the other way around, as was argued in the previous chapter. For Tekand, "creating rules as well as calling forth a grammar which expresses the same things for spectators and performers at the same time" is the common ground between her theatre and that of Beckett. Mounting a Beckett production, thus, becomes a game, whose rules consist of "being aware of the responsibility towards the author and having a sense of responsibility for staging Beckett". More to the point: Tekand associates staging the author's plays with the act of *translation* and she spotlights the *raison d'être* of a given Beckett text as a blueprint for production. The task of the Beckett director, therefore, in the words of Tekand, is "to translate what is written on the page into the language of the stage; into the performance according to the rules of the game". It goes without saying that the director of a Beckett text is bound to be creative within the strict rules of the game.

Amongst the Beckett productions of the Studio Players, "Five Short Plays" (1994) attracts attention due to Tekand's novelty in putting on Beckett's dramaticules. Katharine Worth, for one, alludes to the difficulty in staging the dramaticules: "How best to show these very brief plays has always been a problem" (2001, p. 161). She provides the example of Katie Mitchell's production of "a group of 'shorts'" (ibid.) at The Other Place, Stratford-upon-Avon (22 October 1997) as one possible way of mounting Beckett's dramaticules. Worth's discussion is

important in the sense that it illustrates the central position that Beckett's plays occupy in the Western theatrical system: how to present the author's abstract pieces of theatre is an issue that keeps occupying the theatre practitioners of the West. Three years earlier than Mitchell's production, however, the Studio Players had already provided a similar solution for staging a group of plays which can be considered as the representative examples of Beckett's movement towards the extremes of minimalism and abstraction: his dramaticules. Within this context, Tekand's production of Beckett's dramaticules can be regarded as a significant step taken towards introducing the author's short pieces and his other extended stage plays to the Turkish audience. The Studio Players' staging of their Beckett productions at international theatre festivals has added an extra dimension to the group's aim of putting on Beckett as much as possible. From a systemic perspective, one can plausibly grant the Studio Players the pioneering role in broadening the perception of Beckett in Turkey.

In addition to the Studio Players' Beckett productions, Dostlar Theatre's production of *Endgame* (2006) for the 15<sup>th</sup> International Istanbul Theatre Festival and International Paris-Beckett Festival deserves mentioning. The director of this joint project of the Istanbul Foundation for Culture and Arts and the International Paris-Beckett Festival was the late Pierre Chabert. Chabert's immense knowledge of Beckett's theatre derives from his collaborations with the author first as an actor, then as a director. Although Chabert has been chiefly associated with his part as Krapp in Beckett's own productions of *Krapp's Last Tape*, the author directed him in most of his plays, including the dramaticules. In this particular respect, Chabert's role as the director of *Endgame* made the project a sensational theatrical event. At this point of the discussion, it is worth noting Chabert's staging approach during the

course of the rehearsals. As Genco Erkal (formerly of the Young Players and Ankara Art Theatre) points out in the introduction to his Turkish translation of *Endgame*, “Chabert’s approach demanded first and foremost absolute fidelity to the author’s text, including the stage directions. At first, the troupe found this discipline restrictive. But after learning the rules of the game thoroughly, we were to recognise what kind of freedom this discipline would bring and at the same time acknowledge that it would raise the creativity of the play to an even higher plane” (2007, p. 16). Erkal’s words hark back to Brenda Bynum’s remarks quoted in the previous chapter. Both of the actors highlight the discipline required in performing Beckett’s plays. Furthermore, Chabert’s underscoring the necessity of the rules laid down in Beckett’s text goes very much hand in hand with Tekand’s staging approach in which the “game concept” plays the decisive role. The act of translation comes into play in Chabert’s staging approach as well. To a certain extent, the national and international success that Dostlar Theatre’s production of *Endgame* achieved<sup>4</sup> contributed greatly to challenging the inclination within the Turkish theatrical system of reducing Beckett’s *oeuvre* to *Godot*.

As a consequence of the Beckett productions by the Studio Players and Dostlar Theatre, the theatre practitioners of Turkey have been alerted to the author’s other theatrical pieces. Nihal Koldaş’s collage *Beckett GriMavi / Beckett BlueGray* (2006) comprised of Beckett’s poems and short prose as well as dramaticules can be considered as a representative example of this rising interest in introducing the author’s *oeuvre* to the Turkish audience. *Waiting for Godot* still occupies the central position within the Turkish theatrical system but with one significant difference: the

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<sup>4</sup> For the reviews of the production, see [http://www.dostlartiyatrosu.com/tiyatro\\_oyunlar\\_oyun\\_sonu.html](http://www.dostlartiyatrosu.com/tiyatro_oyunlar_oyun_sonu.html)

other pieces of Beckett's *oeuvre* are at least trying to keep in "company" with the play.

### Locating *Krapp's Last Tape* in the Target System

Staring at the above snapshot of the position of Samuel Beckett's works within the Turkish theatrical system, one can draw several conclusions. In the first place, the snapshot gives an idea of the current state of research in Theatre Studies—precisely speaking, in theatre criticism—regarding the perception of a given foreign author in the target system. Most of the research done within the realm of theatre criticism, more or less proceeds from this general picture of Beckett in Turkey, to the interpretations of *Krapp's Last Tape* on Turkish stages, without taking into account the crucial role that the existing translations of the work can play in productions, not to mention problematising them. The act of translation, by and large, has an *a priori* status in theatre criticism, and this fact alone raises question marks about any case of comprehensive theatre criticism concerned with the productions of foreign dramatists, let alone the productions of a playwright who places momentous emphasis on the performances of his plays like Beckett.

In the second place, the snapshot that the previous subsection represents reveals one critical point in terms of defining whether Beckett's works belong primarily to the literary system or the theatrical system of the target culture. Even though Beckett tried his hand at all the genres available for a writer, the notions of (meta)theatricality and performance lie at the core of the author's *oeuvre*. Now, these concepts blur the distinctions between literary systems and theatrical systems. Taking into consideration the literary merits of Beckett's prose, one can plausibly study the

translations of his works within the boundaries of the Turkish literary system. Yet, the issues of (meta)theatricality and performance immanent to the *oeuvre*, along with the surge of interest in terms of moving the author's prose from "page" to "stage", compel one to assert that Beckett's works pertain chiefly to the Turkish theatrical system. A historical fact fortifies the credibility of this argument: the first two Beckett translations published in Turkish were Berent Enç and Herman Sarıyan's translation of *Endgame* and *Act Without Words I* (1959), and Ferit Edgü's translation of *Waiting for Godot* (1963). The former translations have been consulted by the Studio Players in their Beckett productions, while Edgü's *Godot* was used by Ankara Art Theatre in their production of the play in the 1963-1964 season. In view of these examples, it might appear as if the translations of Beckett's works—his plays in particular—have been intended for performance. Theatre translations are by nature blueprints for prospective productions and they are bound to be used by directors and actors during the course of moving translated theatre texts from "page" to "stage". Nevertheless, locating the translations of Beckett's works in the target theatrical system does not necessarily vouch for their speakability, performability and "playability" (Espasa, 2000, p. 61, emphasis in the original) on stage in the course of the performance.

From the perspective of the systemic approaches developed in Translation Studies, the position of Beckett within the target theatrical system deserves attention. The binary oppositions intrinsic to Itamar Even-Zohar's Polysystem Theory (1978, pp. 117-127; 1979, pp. 287-310), such as centre/periphery, primary/secondary, canonised/non-canonised, could have been easily employed to explain the position of Beckett's works within the Turkish theatrical system. However, in the foregoing discussion such oppositions have been deliberately avoided since they operate on

abstract levels and are vaguely defined. One term emphatically used in the previous subsection was “centre” with the purpose of concretising the fact that the number of productions of a play can give rise to its canonisation in a given theatrical system. Another point that stands out as an important factor in affecting the position of the works of a foreign playwright in a given theatrical system is the national and international festivals in which the productions of the plays appear.

According to Theo Hermans, “[f]or all its emphasis on models and repertoires, polysystem theory remains thoroughly text-bound” (1999, p. 118). Hermans’ remark reveals how little emphasis has been placed on the human factor in Even-Zohar’s approach.<sup>5</sup> This lack of human agency in Even-Zohar’s Polysystem Theory, as Şehnaz Tahir-Gürçağlar maintains, “makes it difficult to inquire into who actually *performs*, or induces the performance of, the movement of the different items that brings about change in the system” (2008a, p. 41, emphasis added). Although Tahir-Gürçağlar calls Even-Zohar’s approach into question with regards to the cultural and literary fields, her observation applies also to the theatrical system of a given target culture, in which the act of performing is of primary interest. As emphasised in the preceding subsection, the Beckett productions *by* the Studio Players and Dostlar Theatre allowed Turkish spectators to experience *many* of the theatrical treasures that Beckett’s plays offer, and not just *Waiting for Godot*. The human element behind the rising interest in putting on Beckett’s plays in Turkey is unquestionable.

Within the systems, the notion of patronage attains a vital function. The concept was brought to the notice of Translation Studies by André Lefevere, and it

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<sup>5</sup> At this point of the discussion, it is worth acknowledging that Even-Zohar has responded to the objections raised against his approach by compensating for his alleged neglect of human agency. His research concentrated on “the making of culture repertoire” and “the role of transfer” (2002, pp. 166-174) testifies to the scholar’s inclusion of human agency within the context of the cultural field. Even so, Even-Zohar’s revisions shed little light on how the agents of the theatrical system of a given target culture interpret the translated theatre texts on stage, and thus are of little help in a discussion such as the present.

stands for “the powers (persons, institutions) that can further or hinder the reading, writing and rewriting of literature” (1992, p. 15). It goes without saying that the theatre practitioners of Turkey in the second half of the 1950s were not the only agents who took particular heed of Beckett’s theatre. Owing to the international success of *Waiting for Godot*, the publishing houses of the country were alerted to Beckett’s works as well. While the goal of the theatre practitioners was to introduce Beckett’s theatre to the Turkish spectators through performances, the purpose of the publishing houses was to present the author’s *oeuvre* to the Turkish readers. Be that as it may, with the exception of Berent Enç and Herman Sarıyan’s translation of *Endgame* and *Act Without Words I* and Bertan Onaran’s translation of the first novel of Beckett’s trilogy, namely, *Molloy* (1967), the publishing houses in Turkey neglected the author’s *oeuvre* for decades. On the face of it, the publishing houses in Turkey, as in the case of the theatre practitioners of the country, have fallen short of fulfilling their purpose of presenting Beckett’s *oeuvre* to the Turkish readers. It was not until 1989 that publishing houses devoted themselves to Beckett’s works, leading on to the multiple productions of his plays in the 1990s which established Beckett’s central position in the Turkish system. This phenomenon concurs with Even-Zohar’s highlighting of the impact of “major events in literary history” (1978, p. 120): 1989 was the year when Beckett died.

With the help of the theoretical perspectives that Translation Studies provide, the above-mentioned snapshot can be turned into a proper photograph. The State Theatres’ *Happy Days* production in the 1989-1990 and the 1990-1991 seasons exemplifies how institutions of a given theatrical system can fillip the publication of the translations of a foreign playwright, not to mention their subsequent productions. This claim, however, does not essentially entail linking the Beckett productions of

the Studio Players to those of the State Theatres. After all, as indicated previously, for Şahika Tekand, the rationale behind staging Beckett was to find a starting point in the course of developing her individual method of “performative staging and acting”. Still, in the light of this claim, it can be seen that the publishing houses’ interest towards Beckett’s *oeuvre* coincides with the State Theatres’ production of *Happy Days* in the afore-mentioned theatre seasons. The concurrent publications in 1993 of the translations of Beckett’s plays under titles like “Collected Shorter Plays” sustain the point.

On the basis of what has been discussed hitherto, it becomes possible for one to approach the Turkish translations of *Krapp’s Last Tape* within their systemic context. According to Sirkku Aaltonen, “retranslation is an inherent part of text production in the Western text-based theatre, where texts are constantly being rewritten for new performances” (2003, p. 141). Aaltonen’s observation is remarkable in the sense that it highlights how, to some degree, the production of a given translated play can stimulate the publication of the text. Nonetheless, a glance at the Turkish translations of *Krapp’s Last Tape* demonstrates that it was the interests of the publishing houses which brought about the concomitant publications of the play in 1993, rather than the productions. As was mentioned in the introductory part of this study, there exist three translations of *Krapp’s Last Tape* in the Turkish system and they were done by Hamdi Koç, Fatih Özgüven and Uğur Ün respectively. The translations of Koç and Özgüven were published by two of the most prestigious publishing companies of Turkey, that is to say, Yapı Kredi Publishing House (in July) and İletişim Publishing House (in September), whereas Ün’s translation was published in October by Mitos Boyut Publishing House, a publishing firm which resides relatively at the margins of the Turkish publishing sector. As Tahir-Gürçağlar

puts it, “lack of coordination and communication among publishers may result in the simultaneous publication of two different translations, in which case each translation can be considered ‘initial’ and ‘retranslation’ at the same time” (2008b, pp. 234-235). Within this context, one probable explanation for the concurrent publications of the three Turkish translations of *Krapp’s Last Tape* in 1993 can be the absence of communication between the three publishing houses in question.

Another possible explanation for the situation can be the loose implementation of the copyright legislation in the Turkish publishing sector in the first half of the 1990s. Anna McMullan draws attention to the fact that “Beckett’s resistance to productions of his plays which depart from the precise stage directions indicated in the texts has attracted public and critical attention through a number of legal disputes between Beckett and a director or company who has flouted the author’s directions” (1994, p. 196). In Turkey, however, the publishers of his plays have taken little notice of the author’s ultra-sensitivity regarding the interpretations of his work. Even though the Beckett Estate continued to monitor the interpretations of Beckett’s theatrical pieces on stage after the author’s death in 1989, when it comes to the translations of the writer’s plays into other languages, the Estate can only rely on the good will of the publishing houses, in the hope that they will publish translations that resonate with the (meta)theatricality of the pieces. The loose enforcement of the copyright law amongst the publishers of the country in the first half of the 1990s, for instance, limited the capacity of the Beckett Estate to monitor the “performability” of the Turkish translations of Beckett’s plays and, by extension, their interpretations on stage. Hence, it is not surprising to encounter several translations of Beckett’s plays, most of which have been translated more or less according to the publishing policies of the houses. Even so, a brief look at the Turkish translations of *Krapp’s Last Tape*

indicates that Yapı Kredi and Mitos Boyut paid regard to the copyright legislation. İletişim, however, does not mention the copyright issue at all in their Turkish translation of the play.

“Translation policy,” writes Gideon Toury, “refers to those factors that govern the choice of text-types, or even of individual texts, to be imported through translation into a particular culture/language at a particular point in time” (1995, p. 58). In the light of Toury’s remark, one can take the translation and publishing policies of the houses in question as a starting point in terms of acquiring preliminary information about the Turkish translations of *Krapp’s Last Tape*. Of the publishing policies of the three houses under observation, that of Mitos Boyut merits particular attention since the company seems to fit into the type identified by Aaltonen, which “prefers from ‘stage’ to ‘page’ translations, that is, where the focus is on the expectations of the receiving stage rather than on the careful repetition of the details of the source text” (2000, p. 39). That Mitos Boyut only publishes theatrical works, such as plays by foreign and domestic dramatists and theoretical studies on the art of theatre, distinguishes it from Yapı Kredi and İletişim, both of which offer a wide range of published materials, including magazines and journals devoted to literature and philosophy and fictional and theoretical books. Within this whole slew of published products offered by Yapı Kredi and İletişim, theatre plays are presented to the readers either under the title of “Klasikler” (classics) or as the representative works of a given playwright. To a certain extent, this publishing policy associates the translations of theatre plays with those of literary works. İletişim, for instance, published Özgüven’s translation of *Krapp’s Last Tape* as a pocketbook, together with another Beckett play, that is to say, *Rough for Radio*. Yapı Kredi published Koç’s translation of the play in the volume entitled “Toplu Kısa Oyunlar” (Collected

Short Plays), a title that reminds one of Mitos Boyut's "Bütün Kısa Oyunları" (All Short Plays). It is highly likely that these different publishing policies have given rise to different translation strategies followed by the translators of *Krapp's Last Tape*, a play which can be deemed as one of the most demanding texts of Beckett, and which is bound to remain incomplete unless it is moved from "page" to "stage".

### The "Tape" in Turkey

The play has been moved from "page" to "stage". To be precise, apart from the Istanbul State Theatre production in the 1961-1962 season, and the Tiyatro-Z production of Samuel Beckett's *Krapp's Last Tape* in the 2005-2006 and 2006-2007 seasons,<sup>6</sup> the play has been staged three times in various theatre seasons by different theatre companies. A brief look at these interpretations of *Krapp's Last Tape* within the Turkish theatrical system can thus be quite fruitful when it comes to dwelling upon the Tiyatro-Z production of the play in its systemic context. Needless to say, through this glance one can discover which of the existing translations have been used by the theatre companies.

*Krapp's Last Tape* was staged by Istanbul University Students' Cultural Centre in the 1995-1996 season.<sup>7</sup> The performance text used in this production was derived from the three Turkish translations of the play. The close reading of the existing translations, as well as the composition of a performance text through the selection of the "speakable" and "performable" elements of the translations hint at the diligent dramaturgy work undertaken in the course of the production. Yet, through an examination of the video recording of the performance, it can be understood that

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<sup>6</sup> See, <http://www.tiyatro-z.com/krapp.aspx>

<sup>7</sup> See, [http://www.okmsahnesi.org/okm/index.php?option=com\\_content&view=article&id=36&Itemid=8](http://www.okmsahnesi.org/okm/index.php?option=com_content&view=article&id=36&Itemid=8)

Uğur Ün's translation has been prioritised in the production. The most striking aspect of this performance is the human actor playing Krapp-39. The inclusion of a human actor in a play that is essentially monologic inevitably distorts that fundamental structure of the work. What is at stake in such a production is the vital part that the "recorded" voice of memory attains in the entire course of the play. Daniel Albright, for one, problematises this kind of interpretation within the context of performance: "Imagine for a moment a production of *Krapp's Last Tape* in which the tape recorder were played by a man on stage, perhaps enclosed in a box; a human actor could never reproduce *exactly* the cadence and spacing of the words, from one repetition to the next. This sense of slippage, defective reproduction, would create a certain anxiety in the audience, in the same way that you can't help watching an actor playing a corpse, just because you hope you won't see him breathing, fidgeting" (2003, p. 91, emphasis in the original). In Istanbul University Students' Cultural Centre production, the actors playing Krapp-39 and Krapp-69 respectively dance to the rhythm of the music used and laugh at each other in turn in various parts of the performance. In contrast to the immobility central to the play, moreover, the actors are constantly on the move. Even though this staging approach can be considered as an attempt to breathe (new) life into *Krapp's Last Tape*, the extent to which the performance resonates with that of Beckett's theatre is open to debate.

Almost a decade later than Istanbul University Students' Cultural Centre production of *Krapp's Last Tape*, the play was put on by Çağdaş Oluşum Oyuncuları (hereafter the Contemporary Formation Players) in the 2003-2004 season.<sup>8</sup> The fact that Hamdi Koç's translation was used as a performance text in this production, with the troupe being seemingly unaware of the existence of the other two translations,

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<sup>8</sup> See, <http://www.cagdasolusumoyunculari.8m.com/oyunlar.html>

exemplifies how theatre practitioners by and large can be satisfied with any given translated text in the course of a production. In the Contemporary Formation Players' interpretation of the play, Krapp's opening mime was accompanied by music. While the inclusion of music can arguably diminish the crucial function of silence immanent to the work, the tapes scattered here and there on the stage highlight Krapp's life, which is, in fact, made of tapes. The remains of a life gone by, therefore, have been visualised before the eyes of the spectators. The bodily movements of the actor do comply with the physical limitations of Krapp throughout the performance. Nonetheless, the placing of an oil lamp as a stage prop on the table, and the actor's use of it at the beginning of the monologue, in which an almost blind play character tries to read the juxtaposed entries in his ledger, reduces the dramatic tension to which the protagonist's corporeal conflict gives rise. In a similar vein, the actor's frequent interruption of the act of listening diminishes the significance of the immobile listening posture that is central to the performance.

The last production of *Krapp's Last Tape* to be briefly discussed in this subsection was undertaken by Akdeniz University Theatre Troupe in the 2005-2006 season.<sup>9</sup> Of the three existing translations of the play, that of Ün was employed as a performance text in this production. As in the case of the performances by Istanbul University Students' Cultural Centre and the Contemporary Formation Players, music was used in this production as an accompanying element for the opening mime. Even so, the most interesting aspect of the production lies in its changing of the medium through which the metatheatrical expression of the play is distinctively manifested. One likely outcome of the substitution of the reel-to-reel with a cassette-recorder can be observed through the words that the actor enunciates. For example, it

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<sup>9</sup> See, <http://www1.akdeniz.edu.tr/idari/sks/kulup/tiyatro/anasayfa.htm>

is most probable for the spectators to get puzzled each time Krapp utters the word “spool” with relish. In doing so, Krapp is referring specifically to the reel-to-reel. Still, when the medium is changed from the reel-to-reel to the cassette-recorder, this specific reference to the medium produces a bizarre meaning on stage. The visually established corporeal relationship between Krapp and the sizeable tape-recorder, through which the dramatic tension of the play is generated, vanishes into thin air. What is more, the actor’s constant movements like a cat on hot bricks during the performance run against the grain of immobility intrinsic to the piece. While this way of acting highlights Krapp’s uneasiness, it does so at the expense of pulling down the crux of the play, that is to say, immobility.

In the light of this general discussion of the interpretations of *Krapp’s Last Tape* in Turkey, one can deduce that the play resides at the periphery of the Turkish theatrical system. The complete absence of production reviews regarding the three performances under observation illustrates the point. Furthermore, the fact that *Krapp’s Last Tape* has been mostly put on by university troupes or circumferential theatre companies, most of which rarely appear in the national and the international theatre festivals, fortifies the credibility of this observation. Note that the critical remarks made in the ongoing discussion are derived from the video-recordings of the performances, all of which have been obtained through personal communication. It goes without saying that these remarks fall short of doing justice to the productions. What this discussion provides, however, is an overview of the most obvious features of the performances. Apparently, the inclusion of music is common to the three productions. It is interesting to underline that the silence and immobility central to Beckett’s theatre turn out to be the first two features that these productions have jettisoned to a considerable degree. Another point that deserves mentioning is the

theatre companies' tendency of changing the medium: Istanbul University Students' Cultural Centre production replaced the reel-to-reel recorder with a human actor, whereas the one of Akdeniz University Theatre Troupe substituted it with a cassette-recorder. In so doing, both of the theatre companies opted for an interpretation which is liable to be called into question from the vantage point of the essential dynamics of the play, such as the importance of the visual relationship that the protagonist establishes with the medium, and the monologic structure of the piece that hinges on the vital function that the disembodied voice attains on stage.

As regards to the translations employed in these three productions, it can be seen that Ün's translation has been prioritised by the theatre practitioners who stage the play. Out of the three productions that have been discussed above, two of them made use of Ün's translation. The theatre companies' approach towards the translations of the play merits further attention. While Istanbul University Students' Cultural Centre performance and that of Akdeniz University Theatre Troupe went through the existing translations of the play prior to their productions, the Contemporary Formation Players production relied on one translation without taking into consideration the options that the other two translations might have provided. At this point, it is worth mentioning that none of the posters, or other promotional materials used in these productions, bears the name of the translators. The "invisibility" of the translators manifests itself in the raw in the interpretations of *Krapp's Last Tape* within the Turkish theatrical system. In point of fact, this situation provides a paramount case for Susan Bassnett's observation: "Translation has been perceived as a secondary activity, as a 'mechanical' rather than a 'creative' process, within the competence of anyone with a basic grounding in a language other than their own; in short, as a *low status occupation*" (2004, p. 12, emphasis added). The

Tiyatro-Z performance of *Krapp's Last Tape*, in this particular respect, is by no means an exception in the sense that the theatre company makes no specific reference to the name of the translator in the posters of the production, despite the fact that it makes considerable use of Ün's translation.

### The Production in Question

Alongside the three productions discussed in the preceding subsection, Samuel Beckett's *Krapp's Last Tape* was put on by Tiyatro-Z in the 2005-2006 and 2006-2007 seasons with Beyti Engin performing in the role of Krapp. The director of this debut project of the theatre company was Cem Kenar, who is actually one of the founders of Tiyatro-Z with Bengi Heval Öz. In the course of the two theatre seasons, Tiyatro-Z participated in the second Visibility Project organised by Galata Perform in 2006 with its *Krapp's Last Tape* production. Be that as it may, the absence of reviews concerned with this performance testifies to the peripheral position that the Tiyatro-Z production of the play occupies within the Turkish theatrical system.

Even so, the production invites special treatment for various reasons. To start with, the Tiyatro-Z production of *Krapp's Last Tape* differed from that of the other three in the way that its performance text was composed. The production used Uğur Ün's translation, but with one significant difference: it also consulted the revised text of the play and the production notes that Beckett provided in his *Theatrical Notebooks*. From this vantage point, one can see how Tiyatro-Z approached Beckett within a broader context, in which the directorial status of the author comes into play as well. And this fact alone makes the theatre company's production an important theatrical event in the sense that it attempts to introduce Beckett's re-visions of the

play, together with his concept of *mise en scène*, to the Turkish spectators. As a matter of fact, the staging approach adopted in the Tiyatro-Z production of the play distinguishes itself from the other interpretations of the piece within the Turkish theatrical system regardless of its utilisation of music at the beginning of the play. Therefore, before analysing the Tiyatro-Z performance of *Krapp's Last Tape* in the next chapter, it would be appropriate to look briefly at the cuts and changes introduced to Ün's translation, in order to obtain initial information regarding the production.

After a close investigation of the existing translations of *Krapp's Last Tape*, Ün's translation was selected by Engin as one of the building stones of the performance text to be used in the production. The other building stones of the performance text were the revised text and production notes of Beckett, both of which are reprinted in the *Theatrical Notebooks*. Consequently, in accordance with the revised text of *Krapp's Last Tape*, various parts of the opening mime, such as the omission of the locking and unlocking of the drawers, the play character's fumbling with the keys, his sexual innuendo with the bananas, and the like have been cut from Ün's translation. In a similar vein, the hymn that Krapp sings at several stages of the play was omitted from the translated text and the "cubby-hole" of the protagonist was introduced into Ün's translation. Needless to say, these textual changes are highly likely to attain certain functions on the scenic level in the course of the performance that will be analysed in detail in the next chapter.

In view of this survey of the interpretations of *Krapp's Last Tape* within the Turkish theatrical system, it can be seen that out of the four productions that have been referred to, three of them had made use of Ün's translation of the play. While this observation provides one with preliminary knowledge with respect to the

Turkish translations of the play, it throws little light upon the actual nature of the translated texts, let alone the strategies employed by the translators. In this particular respect, a critical examination of the existing translations of *Krapp's Last Tape* is vital for testing the validity of the points raised concerning the publications of the Turkish translations and the choices of the theatre companies, points that have been derived so far from the dynamics of the target theatrical system.

## CHAPTER IV

### INTEGRATING THEORY INTO PRACTICE

#### The Radical Features of *Krapp's Last Tape*

From the perspective of the conventional understanding of theatre texts, Samuel Beckett's *Krapp's Last Tape* resists classification. As has been emphasised throughout this study, metatheatricality constitutes the crux of Beckett's plays. In this sense, *Krapp's Last Tape* is not an exception. Although the piece is comprised of one play character, and is in fact monologic, Beckett's inclusion of the recorded voice of memory allows him to confront the protagonist with his former selves. In so doing, Beckett undermines the traditional perception of the concept of monologue in theatre. Furthermore, throughout the play, the tape-recorder becomes the medium that brings forth the corporeal (re)actions of the protagonist whose "gestures and movements must always be seen to arise out of immobility and to return to it" (Chabert, 1982, p. 25). Within this context, the stage directions of the text acquire a definitive role in stimulating the (limited) physical actions of the protagonist. The stage directions, therefore, can be considered as meticulous and exact moves for the performer during the course of bringing the scenic entity of the play into life on stage. In *Krapp's Last Tape*, as in the case of Beckett's other plays, the stage directions are scrupulously designed for performance. In the words of Elaine Aston and George Savona, "[n]o indication is given here of character psychology or background" (1991, p. 163), whereas the stage directions in the traditional

understanding of theatre texts draw heavily on the descriptions of the dramatis personae. The beginning of Krapp's monologue, in this respect, can illustrate the vital function that the stage directions attain throughout the play:

KRAPP: *[Briskly]. Ah! [He bends over ledger, turns the pages, finds the entry he wants, reads.]* Box... three...spool...five. *[He raises his head and stares front. With relish.]* Spool! *[Pause.]* Spoooo! *[Happy smile. Pause. He bends over table, starts peering and poking at the boxes.]* Box... three...three...four...two...*[with surprise]* nine! good God!...seven...ah! the little rascal! *[He takes up the box, peers at it.]* Box three. *[He lays it on table, opens it and peers at spools inside.]* Spool...*[he peers at the ledger]*...five...*[he peers at spools]*...five...five...ah! the little scoundrel! *[He takes out a spool, peers at it.]* Spool five. *[He lays it on table, closes box three, puts it back with the others, takes up the spool.]* Box three, spool five. *[He bends over the machine, looks up. With relish.]* Spoooo! *[Happy smile. He bends, loads spool on machine, rubs his hands.]* Ah! *[He peers at ledger, reads entry at foot of page.]* Mother at rest at last...Hm...The black ball...*[He raises his head, stares blankly front. Puzzled.]* Black ball?...*[He peers again at ledger, reads.]* The dark nurse...*[He raises his head, broods, peers again at ledger, reads.]* Slight improvement in bowel condition...Hm...Memorable...what? *[He peers closer.]* Equinox, memorable equinox. *[He raises his head, stares blankly front. Puzzled.]* Memorable equinox?...*[Pause. He shrugs his head shoulders, peers again at ledger, reads.]* Farewell to—*[he turns page]*--love. (Beckett, 1984, pp. 56-57).

Notice how the stage directions prompt the physical actions of the protagonist throughout the excerpt. Needless to say, all of them have direct relevance to a manner of performance that hinges on the immobility of the actor. Indeed, the stage directions of the quote serve to spotlight the physical limitations of the play character. The crucial verb is “to peer” here. Even if Krapp is extremely near-sighted, he wears no glasses. Thus, each time “he peers at the ledger”, Krapp has to make a double effort in order to read the entries juxtaposed in his ledger. Additionally—and more significantly—the beginning of the monologue portends the fundamental features of the piece: the confrontation of Krapp with his former selves; the alienation of the play character from his past; Beckett's multiplying the voices of

Krapp through the inclusion of a tape-recorder; the tension between immobility and mobility; Krapp's physical limitations, and so forth. The entries juxtaposed in the ledger are so remote from Krapp that they puzzle him. Even so, Krapp can still recognise his former selves and personalises his tapes by calling them "the little rascal", as well as "the little scoundrel". Krapp's personification of his tapes is in tune with his derisive behaviour towards his former selves. During the course of the play, the tapes turn out to be incorporeal play characters of a piece which is monologic *per se*. As Kathryn White remarks, "These tapes provide escapism for Krapp and yet they also reinforce the horror of his current situation, as the voices from the dark provide the only source of company" (2009, p. 24).

Through a close reading of *Krapp's Last Tape*, moreover, it can be seen that the stage directions take the form of mimes that interrupt and alter the pace of the play. As indicated previously, *Krapp's Last Tape* bears the traces of Beckett's forays into radio drama and his act(s) without words. One decisive echo of Beckett's *Act Without Words I* and *Act Without Words II* can be heard at the beginning of *Krapp's Last Tape*: the play "opens with an extended sequence of mime which establishes the terms of the game to be played" (Aston & Savona, 1991, p. 162). In this particular respect, one can infer how the stage directions of *Krapp's Last Tape* depart from those of conventional theatre texts as they acquire an ancillary function that supplements the interaction between the play characters.

As this examination of the prominent features of *Krapp's Last Tape* demonstrates, the play resists classification according to the traditional conception of theatre texts. Nevertheless, defining the text type of the piece can still be useful prior to the analyses of the Turkish translations of the play. In her study entitled *Translation Criticism – The Potentials & Limitations*, German translation scholar

Katharina Reiss points out that “the evaluation of a translation should not focus on some particular aspect or section of it, as is so often done, but it should begin rather with a definition of its text type” (2000a, p. 47). Notwithstanding the didactic tone of the quote, this observation is quite fruitful in the sense that it provides the theatre-translation critic with a starting point prior to the comparative analysis of the target text (hereafter TT) with the source text (hereafter ST). To this end, following Aston and Savona, one can define *Krapp’s Last Tape* as a “radical text” where, “in contradistinction to the ‘bourgeois’ text, the directions work to inscribe a form of theatricality which calls attention to its status *as* theatricality” (1991, p. 94, emphasis in the original). Owing to the radical components of *Krapp’s Last Tape*, the text functions essentially on a metatheatrical level, which “bring attention to bear on the theatrical and dramatic realities in play, on the fictional status of the characters, on the very theatrical transaction (in soliciting the audience’s indulgence, for instance), and so on” (Elam, 1980, p. 90). In this particular respect, the above-mentioned features of the play can plausibly be deemed as the radical features of the play, all of which are fundamental to the performance of the piece on stage. Therefore, the representative passages that are to be tackled in the analyses of the Turkish translations of *Krapp’s Last Tape* in the next subsection will be selected in line with the radical features of the play: the opening mime, the beginning of Krapp-39’s account of his past, the passage demonstrating Krapp-69’s alienation from Krapp-39, as well as Krapp-69’s recording of his “last tape” in the present time. These passages are not simply what Reiss would term “some particular aspect[s] or section[s]” of *Krapp’s Last Tape*; rather, they stand for the (radical) text type as a whole.

“The great contention of criticism”, observes Samuel Johnson in his monumental *Preface to Shakespeare* (1765) is, “to find the faults of the moderns, and the beauties of the ancients” (1986, p. 221), and offers an exhaustive analysis of Shakespeare’s plays in view of the various works of the English neo-classical authors such as Alexander Pope, John Dryden, William Congreve, and so forth. Throughout his study, however, Johnson by no means presents a black and white picture of the preceding works done on Shakespeare, as the very word “fault” might seem to connote. Instead, Johnson provides a firm criticism of the previous studies on Shakespeare by means of describing, explaining and analysing the essential features of them. Nonetheless, in the course of time, “finding the faults of the moderns” became the maxim of criticism; and excluding the comprehensive critical studies devoted to the study of art, rather than relying on description, explanation and analysis, the practice of criticism came to be a means for representing what is good or what is bad, what counts or does not count as an artwork. The gap between the theoretical and practical fields of criticism is so wide that even this attitude of “error hunting” continues to be broadly “accepted” by the public as a whole.

The same remains true for the practice of translation criticism as well. Notwithstanding the diverse perspectives that Translation Studies provides, most of the time the practice of translation criticism is exercised by people who are relatively alien to the descriptive tools of the discipline. By and large, the practice of translation criticism becomes, in the words of Raymond van den Broeck, “amateurish. The amateurism shows itself in various ways. In many cases reviewers treat the translated work as if they were dealing with an original written in their

mother tongue, without betraying even by a single remark that it is in fact a translation. Others spend most of their time and energy on the original author and his work, disposing of the translator's part with commonplace statements" (1985, p. 55). Even though van den Broeck's observation dates back to 1985, a close look at the practices of translation criticism in the first decade of the millennium indicates that the scholar has still a valid point. Lack of clarity on value judgments, sanctifying the ST in the strictest sense of the word together with developing a hostile attitude towards translators because of their "errors" can be considered as some of the repercussions of this tendency of presenting a black and white image of a translated text in the practice of translation criticism.<sup>1</sup>

This observation applies even more drastically to the practice of theatre-translation criticism, where even amongst translation scholars there is no certain consensus regarding the nomenclature of the texts at issue. Consider, for instance, Mary Snell-Hornby's observation: "In traditional translation theory, the discussion on drama translation revolved round the question of the faithful 'scholarly' translation on the one hand, and the 'actable' or 'performable' stage text on the other" (2006, p. 86). Notice the term that Snell-Hornby deploys: "drama translation". Even so, a year later, Snell-Hornby discusses more or less the same issues in an article entitled "Theatre and Opera Translation" (2007, pp. 106-119), and employs the term "stage translation" when commenting upon the distinctive characteristic of theatre texts: "One striking feature is that the stage text as such consists of two clearly separate components: the stage directions on the one hand and the spoken dialogue on the other. It is above all this latter component that is meant when the

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<sup>1</sup> Apparently, this is a chronic situation. A glance at the practices of translation criticism in the last three decades in Turkey indicates the legitimacy of this point. Kasap, 1988, pp. 176-180; Kırkoğlu, 1992, pp. 123-126; Üster, 2003 can be shown as representative examples of this kind of translation criticism.

term ‘stage translation’ is used” (ibid. p. 107). Snell-Hornby’s concept of “stage translation”, thus, covers principally the rendering of “spoken dialogue” and excludes the stage directions from the analysis of a given translated theatre text. This unequal treatment of the stage directions and the spoken dialogue, however, runs against the grain of the notion of *mise en scène* which, “is the speaking of the text in a given staging, the way in which its presuppositions, its *unspoken elements* and its enunciations are brought out that will confer on it a particular meaning” (Pavis, 1982, p. 18, emphasis added). The term stage translation, moreover, proves to be problematic in the broad sense that it evokes. In Snell-Hornby’s use of it, stage translation could equally include song translations, renderings of television scripts, subtitling, and so on, whereas the term theatre translation nails the notion of performance down by being “confined to the theatrical system alone” (Aaltonen, 2000, p. 33). Hence, the distinction between “drama translation” and “theatre translation” can turn out to be the decisive factor in terms of developing a critical approach to the translation/s of a particular foreign play.

Once the distinction is set, it becomes possible to embark on a comparative analysis of the TT with the ST. As regards to the methodology, one can plausibly derive benefit from the model proposed by van den Broeck; with one significant difference though: by taking the TT as a starting point. Although van den Broeck advocates a target-oriented approach to the practice of translation criticism throughout his article, the comparative analysis of his model is source-oriented: “Since the comparison must be source-oriented and irreversible (the TT derives from the ST and not vice versa), it follows that the invariant serving as a *tertium comparationis* in a comparison of this type should be ST-based” (1985, p. 57). The notion of *tertium comparationis* that van den Broeck refers to is a term used (and

later on abandoned) by Gideon Toury, which has been deemed as problematic by various translation scholars like Theo Hermans (1999, pp. 56-57) on account of its hypothetical nature. Still, van den Broeck is on safe grounds when he states that “the TT derives from the ST and not vice versa”. Then again, translated theatre texts are, in essence, blueprints for productions. And since their initial readers are actors and directors, one would probably be on safer grounds to take the TT as a point of commencement in the comparative analysis of theatre-translation criticism. Indeed, the ground would be safer still if the comparative analysis in theatre-translation criticism were to prioritise the fundamental features of the text that have direct relevance to the performance, instead of yielding precedence to the linguistic elements of the ST.

According to Carole-Anne Upton, “in its formal mutability, in its constantly shifting ideals, in its consideration of target audience over source text, and in its frequently ad hoc methodology, (not to mention the vexed questions of subtext and non-verbal or paralinguistic signifiers) theatre translation defies any ambition to define prescriptive norms” (2000, p. 12). The radical status of Samuel Beckett’s *Krapp’s Last Tape* fortifies Upton’s argument all the more. As the discussion in the previous subsection regarding the essential features of the play has demonstrated, the text suggests itself as a “radical text” which resists classification and, by extension, prescriptive implications that the very word “criticism” still carries in certain quarters within Translation Studies. “Descriptive translation criticism”, on the other hand, can serve as an appropriate approach to be developed in the course of studying the extent to which the Turkish translations of *Krapp’s Last Tape* resonate with the “performative” aspects of the play. These include the monologic structure, the crucial function that the stage directions attain throughout the work, the protagonist’s

alienation from his former selves, and so on. It is within this context that one can highlight the lexical choices and syntactical constructions of the translators of the play, namely, Hamdi Koç, Fatih Özgüven and Uğur Ün respectively and evaluate the extent to which these translatorial decisions provide the actor with a performable, and at the same time comprehensible theatre text. After all, the actors cannot perform a text that they cannot perceive with ease. As Steve Gooch maintains, “[T]he real point is that actors must be able to wear the language of the play like clothes. They must be able to put the text on and feel they can breathe in it, move around freely and find its physical expression from within themselves” (1996, pp. 17-18). In this respect, the Turkish translations of the opening mime of *Krapp’s Last Tape*, in which the “raw-actor” of the play is bound to enact physical expressions within the austere bodily limitations, can give an idea of the strategies employed by the translators of the play. It goes without saying that providing the “raw-actor” of the play with the precise movements is of central importance in this opening mime.

*Krapp bir an hareketsiz durur, kocaman iç çeker, saatine bakar, ceplerinde aranır, bir zarf çıkarır, geri koyar, aranır, ufak bir anahtar destesi çıkarır, gözlerine kaldırır, bir anahtar seçer, kalkıp masanın önüne ilerler. Eğilir, ilk çekmecenin kilidini açar, içine göz atar, içini yoklar, bir bant makarası çıkarır, ona göz atar, geri koyar, çekmeceyi kilitler, ikinci çekmecenin kilidini açar, içine göz atar, içini yoklar, iri bir muz çıkarır, ona göz atar, çekmeceyi kilitler, anahtarları cebine geri koyar. Döner, sahnenin kenarına ilerler, durur, muzu okşar, soyar, kabuğunu ayaklarının dibine atar, muzun ucunu ağzına sokar ve hareketsiz kalır, boş boş önüne bakarak. Sonunda ucunu ısırır, yana döner ve sahnenin kenarında, ışığın içinde bir aşağı bir yukarı yürümeye başlar, yani her iki yöne de dört beş adımdan daha fazla değil, düşünceli düşünceli muz yiyerek. Kabuğun üstüne basar, kayar, neredeyse düşer, kendini toparlar, eğilip kabuğa göz atar ve sonunda onu, hâlâ eğik durumda ayağıyla, sahnenin kenarından orkestra çukuruna iner. Yürüyüşüne tekrar başlar, muzu bitirir, masaya döner, oturur, bir süre hareketsiz kalır, kocaman iç çeker, ceplerinden anahtarları çıkarır, gözlerine kaldırır, anahtarı seçer, kalkıp masanın önüne gider, ikinci çekmecenin kilidini açar, ikinci bir iri muz alır, göz atar, çekmeceyi kilitler, anahtarları cebine geri koyar, döner, sahnenin kenarına ilerler,*

*durur, muzu okşar, soyar, kabuğu orkestra çukuruna atar, muzun ucunu ağzına sokar ve hareketsiz kalır, boş boş önüne bakarak. Sonunda aklına bir fikir gelir, muza yeleşinin cebine koyar, ucu dışarıda, ve olanca hızıyla sahne gerisinin karanlığına gider. On saniye. Yüksek tıpa patlaması. Onbeş saniye. Eski bir büyük defter taşıyarak ışığa geri gelip masaya oturur. Defteri masaya koyar, ağzını siler, ellerini yeleşinin önüne siler, ellerini hızla bitıştırıp ovuşturur. (Koç, 1993, pp. 87-89, emphasis added)*

*Krapp bir an hiç yerinden kıpırdamaz, derin derin iç geçirir, saatine bakar, ceplerini karıştırır, bir zarf çıkarır, zarfı geri koyar, karıştırır, küçük bir anahtar tomarı çıkarır, havaya kaldırıp bakar, kalkar ve masanın önüne doğru yürür. Eğilir, anahtarıyla ilk çekmeceyi açar, yaklaşıp içine bakar, eliyle içini yoklar, bir teyp makarası çıkarır, gözlerine yaklaştırarak bakar, eliyle içini yoklar, içinden büyük bir muz çıkarır, gözlerine yaklaştırarak bakar, çekmeceyi kilitler, anahtarları yeniden cebine koyar. Döner, sahnenin kenarına doğru yaklaşır, muz okşar, soyar, kabuğunu ayaklarının dibine atar, muzun ucunu ağzına sokar, hiç kıpırdamadan durur, boş gözlerle ileriye bakar. Nihayet muzun ucunu ısırır, yanına döner ve sahnenin kenarında bir aşağı bir yukarı yürümeye başlar, ışıktadır, yani her iki yana doğru da dört, beş adımdan fazla atmaz, düşüncelere dalarak muz yer. Kabuğa basar, kayar, düşmesine ramak kalır, toparlanır, eğilir, kabuğa bakar, sonunda hâlâ ikibüklüm, kabuğu ayağıyla sahneden orkestra çukuruna iter. Gidip gelmeyi sürdürür, muz bitirir, masaya döner, oturur, bir an hiç kıpırdamadan durur, derin derin iç geçirir, cebinden anahtarları çıkarır, gözlerine yaklaştırıp bakar, anahtar seçer, ayağa kalkar ve masanın önüne doğru ilerler, ikinci çekmeceyi açar, bir büyük muz daha çıkarır, gözlerini kısarak bakar, çekmeceyi kilitler, anahtarları geriye cebine koyar, döner, sahnenin kenarına yaklaşır, durur, muz okşar, soyar, kabuğu orkestra çukuruna atar, muzun ucunu ağzına sokar, hiç kıpırdamadan durur, boş gözlerle ileriye bakar. Sonunda aklına bir fikir gelir, muza yelek cebine sokar, muzun ucu dışarı çıkar, son hız yürüyerek sahne gerisine, karanlığa dalar. On saniye. Gürültüyle açılan şişe mantarı. Onbeş saniye. Koltuğunun altında eski bir kayıt defteri ışığa geri döner, masanın başına oturur. Kayıt defterini masaya koyar; ağzını siler, ellerini yeleşinin önüne siler, ellerini afili bir hareketle bitıştırır ve birbirine sürter. (Özgüven, 1993, pp. 10-12, emphasis added).*

*Krapp bir süre devinimsiz kalır, derin bir iç çeker, saatine bakar, ceplerini karıştırır, bir zarf çıkarır, yerine sokar, yeniden aranır, küçük bir anahtar destesi çıkarır, gözüne yakınlaştırır, bir anahtar seçer, kalkar ve masanın önüne geçer. Eğilir, birinci çekmecenin kilidini açar, içine bakar, elini gezdirir, bir teyp makarası çıkarır, yakından bakar, yerine koyar, çekmeceyi kilitler, ikinci çekmecenin kilidini açar, içine bakar, elini gezdirir, büyük bir muz çıkarır, yakından bakar, çekmeceyi kilitler, anahtarları cebine koyar. Döner, sahnenin kenarına kadar ilerler, durur, muz okşar, soyar, kabuğunu ayaklarının dibine atar, muzun ucunu ağzına alarak önüne, boşluğa bakar, kıpırtısız durur. Sonunda muzun ucunu ısırır, döner ve sahnenin kenarında, ışıktadır volta atmaya koyulur;*

*düşüncelere dalmış muzunu yerken, her iki yönde de en fazla dört ya da beş adım atacaktır. Kabuğa basar, kayar, neredeyse düşecektir, kendini toparlar, eğilir, kabuğa bakar ve hep eğilmiş durarak ayağıyla sahnenin kenarından boşluğa iter. Yeniden volta atmaya başlar, muzu bitirir, masaya döner, oturur, bir an devinimsiz durur, derin bir iç çeker, cebinden anahtarları alır, gözlerine yaklaştırır, anahtarı seçer, kalkar ve masanın önüne gider, ikinci çekmecenin kilidini açar, bir büyük muz daha çıkarır, yakından bakar, çekmeceyi kilitler, anahtarları yeniden cebine koyar, döner, sahnenin kenarına ilerler, durur, muzu okşar, soyar, kabuğunu sahnenin önündeki boşluğa fırlatır, muzun ucunu ağzına alır, önüne, boşluğa bakarak kıpırtısız durur. Sonunda aklına bir şeyler gelir, muzu ucu gözükecek bir biçimde yelek cebine sokar, hızla sahnenin arkasına karanlığa gider. On saniye geçer. Açılan şişe mantarının gürültüsü. Onbeş saniye geçer. Elinde eski bir defteri kebir ışıklı bölgeye döner, masaya oturur. Defteri masaya bırakır, ağzını siler, ellerini yeleşinin önüne siler ve düzgün bir biçimde birleştirip, birbirine sürter. (Ün, 1993, pp. 52-53, emphasis added).*

A close examination of the Turkish translations of the opening mime of the play indicates how each text provides the body of the performer with various physical actions, all of which are directly related to the performance. To begin with, due to the word choices, such as “kocaman” and “derin derin” in the translations of Hamdi Koç (hereafter TT<sub>1</sub>) and Fatih Özgüven (hereafter TT<sub>2</sub>) respectively, Krapp is portrayed as an even more blighted and miserable man than he initially appears to be. Uğur Ün’s translation (hereafter TT<sub>3</sub>), however, uses the most economical word choice—“derin”—and presents a plainer image of the protagonist for the actor. The differences in the translations invite special consideration from the perspective of the corporeal discrepancy that Krapp embodies. For example, “gözlerine kaldırır, bir anahtar seçer, kalkıp” in TT<sub>1</sub> and “gözüne yaklaştırır, bir anahtar seçer, kalkar” in TT<sub>3</sub> draw attention in a subtle way to the lack of bodily functions in the play character. Since he is very near-sighted yet unspectacled, the keys need to be raised with some effort right up to his eyes, with no explicit indication of the act of seeing. On the other hand, the same phrase in TT<sub>2</sub> reads “havaya kaldırıp bakar, kalkar”, which to a certain extent downplays that crucial aspect of Krapp’s bodily, and

especially *optical*, incapacity since it stands for “raises it up, *looks*, gets up”.

Furthermore, in this sentence of TT<sub>2</sub>, Krapp does not choose a key at all, and as a matter of fact the sentences following that part create ambiguity for the actor.

While TT<sub>2</sub> does not highlight Krapp’s incapacity here, later on it foregrounds the “negativity” in Krapp’s bodily functions by opting to use “gözlerine yaklaştırarak bakar” in the part that depicts the first banana business of the mime. In TT<sub>1</sub> and TT<sub>3</sub>, the same part reads, “ona göz atar” and “yakından bakar”. Even though the action has not been emphasised in TT<sub>3</sub>, it conveys the negativity in Krapp, whereas in TT<sub>1</sub> “ona göz atmak” associates the movement with merely “looking and/or glancing at”.

Parallel to that issue is the motionless position that Krapp adopts in the first banana business. In TT<sub>1</sub> and TT<sub>2</sub>, Krapp looks blankly ahead without moving: “hareketsiz kalır, boş boş önüne bakarak” and “hiç kıpırdamadan durur, boş gözlerle ileriye bakar”. In TT<sub>2</sub>, the translator’s choice of “hiç” emphasises the already implied immobility. In TT<sub>3</sub>, that part of the mime is depicted as “önüne boşluğa bakar, kıpırtısız durur”. Even if the immobility has been presented in a very economical way, the gaze of the performer is described differently here since Krapp looks at the blank space before him, not blankly before him. In addition, by presenting Krapp’s walking back and forth in the light as “ışığın içinde bir aşağı bir yukarı yürümeye başlar” and “bir aşağı bir yukarı yürümeye başlar, ışıktadır”, TT<sub>1</sub> and TT<sub>2</sub> confine the already limited movements of the actor. “Işıktadır volta atmaya koyulur” of TT<sub>3</sub>, on the other hand, underscores the corporeal discrepancy that contributes greatly to the dramatic tension of the play; “volta atmak” implies a wide area to move in, yet Krapp is a protagonist who cannot move with ease. At the same time, “volta atmak” is associated with the actions of a prisoner in a prison yard, thereby rendering Krapp’s confinement in his abode even more manifest.

The second banana business of the mime merits attention owing to the fact that there lies behind it one of the metatheatrical aspects of *Krapp's Last Tape*. After slipping on the banana skin in tune with “the good circus and pantomime tradition” (Knowlson, 1976, p. 51), in the second banana business Krapp hurls the skin into the pit as a gesture of assault on the afore-mentioned theatre tradition. In TT<sub>1</sub> and TT<sub>2</sub>, this movement reads “kabuğu orkestra çukuruna atar” and suggests an act of simple throwing. “Kabuğunu sahnenin önündeki boşluğa fırlatır” of TT<sub>3</sub>, however, implies the gesture of hurling. The rest of the second banana business complies with the circus and pantomime convention. In TT<sub>3</sub>, “muz ucu gözükecek bir biçimde yelek cebine sokar” clearly depicts the deliberate manner in which the protagonist places the banana in his waistcoat pocket, thus reinforcing Krapp’s clownish appearance. “Muzu yeleğinin cebine koyar, ucu dışarıda” of TT<sub>1</sub> and “muz ucu dışarı çıkar” of TT<sub>2</sub> provide the actor with much less “performable” instructions: how, for example, does the tip of the banana suddenly emerge from the pocket? Moreover, “düzgün bir biçimde birleştirip” of TT<sub>3</sub> at the end of the opening mime offers a plain action for the actor; “hızla birleştirip” of TT<sub>1</sub> and “afili bir hareketle birleştirir” of TT<sub>2</sub> highlight Krapp’s desire to start his ritualistic act immediately.

At this point of the analysis, sounding out Beckett’s text might drop more hints with respect to the opening mime of the play and the lexical choices of the translators:

*Krapp remains a moment motionless, heaves a great sigh, looks at his watch, fumbles in his pockets, takes out an envelope, puts it back, fumbles, takes out a small bunch of keys, raises it to his eyes, chooses a key, gets up and moves to front of table. He stoops, unlocks first drawer, peers into it, feels about inside it, takes out a reel of tape, peers at it, puts it back, locks drawer, unlocks second drawer peers into it, feels about*

*inside it, takes out a large banana, peers at it, locks drawer, puts keys back in his pocket. He turns, advances to edge of stage, halts, strokes banana, peels it, drops skin at his feet, puts end of banana in his mouth and remains motionless, staring vacuously before him. Finally he bites off the end, turns aside and begins pacing to and fro at edge of stage, in the light, i.e. not more than four or five paces either way, meditatively eating banana. He treads on skin, slips, nearly falls, recovers himself, stoops and peers at skin and finally pushes it, still stooping, with his foot over the edge of the stage into pit. He resumes his pacing, finishes banana, returns to table, sits down, remains a moment motionless, heaves a great sigh, takes keys from his pockets, raises them to his eyes, chooses key, gets up and moves to front of table, unlocks second drawer, takes out a second large banana, peers at it, locks drawer, puts back his keys in his pocket, turns, advances to the edge of stage, halts, strokes banana, peels it, tosses skin into pit, puts an end of banana in his mouth and remains motionless, staring vacuously before him. Finally he has an idea, puts banana in his waistcoat pocket, the end emerging, and goes with all the speed he can muster backstage into darkness. Ten seconds. Loud pop of cork. Fifteen seconds. He comes back into light carrying an old ledger and sits down at table. He lays ledger on table, wipes his mouth, wipes his hands on the front of his waistcoat, brings them smartly together and rubs them. (Beckett, 1984, pp. 55-56, emphasis added).*

When the Turkish translations of the opening mime are reread in view of Beckett's text, it becomes possible to have an idea of the translation strategies employed by Koç, Özgüven and Ün respectively. The psychological effect added to the depiction of Krapp at the beginning of the mime in TT<sub>2</sub>, for instance, surfaces itself later on in the translator's choice of overstressing the already implied immobility of the text by adding "hiç" which stands for "not at all", an expression that Beckett does not have recourse to. In this respect, the overemphasis in the rendering of "peers at it" as "gözlerine yaklaştırarak bakar" can be taken as a consequence of Özgüven's translation strategy. Furthermore, through a close glance at Beckett's text, one can see how the author uses direct and clear-cut sentences, all of which underline the movements economically. Within this context, the simplicity adopted by Ün to indicate the actions of the actor in the course of the mime makes TT<sub>3</sub> resonate with the plainness of Beckett's text. With the exception of Ün's choice of rendering

“staring vacuously before him” as “önüne boşluğa bakar”, the directions given in TT<sub>3</sub> could be said to concur with those in Beckett’s text. The metatheatrical gesture of Krapp in the second banana business, as well as the clear depictions of the movements of the actor in TT<sub>3</sub> that have been discussed in the preceding analysis, illustrate the point. Be that as it may, the usages of “yani” in TT<sub>1</sub> and TT<sub>2</sub> make the texts sound explanatory, rather than instructions for a performer performing a short mime. In contrast, the use of semicolon in TT<sub>3</sub> offers the actor a clear text to act. Furthermore, the omission of “chooses a key” in TT<sub>2</sub> and the typo in TT<sub>1</sub> that makes Krapp go down into the pit instead of pushing the banana skin there (‘*sahnenin kenarından orkestra çukuruna iner*’), both of which could have been easily spotted by an editorial glance or the translators’ re-examining their texts, prevent the actor from comprehending the opening mime in its entirety.

The syntactical constructions of the translations arguably play the crucial part in providing the actor with a comprehensible play text. Consider, for a moment, the beginning of Krapp-39’s narration of his past:

BANT: (*Güçlü ses, azametlicene, açıkça Krapp’ın çok daha genç dönemindeki sesi.*) Bugün otuz dokuz, demir gibi- (*Kendini daha rahatça yerleştirirken kutulardan birine çarpıp masalardan düşürür, küfür eder, makineyi kapatır, kutuları ve defteri şiddetle yere iteler, bantı başa sarar, çalıştırır, dinleme konumunu alır.*) Bugün otuzdokuz, demir gibi sağlam, eski zayıflığım dışında, ve düşünsel açıdan şimdi kuşkulananmak için çok nedenim var... (*Duraksar.*)... dalganın tepesinde – ya da oralarda. Berbat olayı son yıllarda olduğu gibi Şaraphanede sessizce kutladım. Tek canlı yoktu. Kapalı gözlerle ateşin önüne oturdum, taneleri kabuklardan ayırarak. Birkaç not aldım, bir zarfın arkasına. Odama dönmüş olmak iyi, eski paçavralarım içinde. Az önce söylemesi ayıp üç muz yedim ve bir dördüncüden zorlukla alıkoydum kendimi. Benim durumumdaki bir adam için ölümcül şeyler. (*Hiddetle.*) Vazgeç şunlardan! (*Duraklama.*) Masamın üstündeki yeni ışık büyük ilerleme. Çevremdeki bütün bu karanlıkla kendimi daha az yalnız hissediyorum. (*Duraklama.*) Bir şekilde. (*Duraklama.*) Kalkıp içinde dolaşmayı seviyorum, sonra buraya geri dönmeyi... (*Duraksar.*) ... bana. (*Duraklama.*) Krapp. (Koç, 1993, pp. 90-91, emphasis added)

TEYP: [*Güçlü bir ses, oldukça tumturaklı, Krapp'ın çok daha eski zamanlardaki sesi olduğu açıkça belli.*] Otuzdokuzuma bastım bugün, demir- [*yerine daha iyi bir yerleşirken kutulardan birini masadan yere düşürür, küfreder, cihazı kapatır, kutuları ve kayıt defterini elinin tersiyle iterek yere fırlatır, teybi başa getirir, baştaki oturuşuna geri döner*] Otuzdokuzuma bastım bugün, demir gibiyim, bir tek o eski zaafım hariç, ve büyük bir gönül rahatlığıyla söyleyebilirim ki, entellektüel [*sic*] hayatımın da... [*duralar*] ...zirve noktasındayım – ya da oralarda bir yerde. Bu dehşetengiz olayı, son yıllarda olduğu gibi sessiz sedasız kutladım Şarapevinde. Tek Allahın kulu yok. Ateşin önünde gözlerim kapalı oturdum, sapı samandan ayırarak. Bir kaç not aldım, bir zarfın arkasına. İnime dönmek ne iyi, üzerime eskilerimi geçirmek. Demin üç muz yedim maalesef, ve kendimi zor alakoydum bir dördüncüyü yemekten. Benim durumumdaki bir adam için çok zararlı şeyler. [*tepesi atarak*] At şunları! [*Durur*] Masamın üzerindeki yeni ışık çok iyi oldu. Böyle çepçevre zifiri karanlık içindeyken kendimi daha az yalnız hissediyorum [*durur*] Bir bakıma. [*Durur*] ... ayağa kalkıp ışığın altında gezinmeyi seviyorum, sonra gene geriye, buraya ... [*duralar*] ...bana. [*durur*] Krapp'a. (Özgüven, 1993, pp. 14-15, emphasis added)

BANT: (*Güçlü, oldukça tumturaklı bir ses, KRAPP'ın çok daha genç dönemine ait olduğu iyice belirgindir.*) Bugün otuzdokuzuma girdim, dipdiri – (*Daha rahat bir biçimde yerleşmeye çalışırken kutulardan birini düşürür, küfreder, aleti durdurur, kutuları ve kayıt defterini sert bir hareketle yere savurur, bandı başa alır, çalıştırır, dinleme konumuna geçer.*) Bugün otuzdokuzuma girdim, dipdiri hissediyorum kendimi, şu zayıf yanımlı saymazsak, entelektüel yaşamım da ... (*Duraksar.*) ... en üst noktasına ya da buna yakın bir yere ulaştı anladığım kadarıyla. Şu berbat olayı geçmiş yıllardaki gibi bir meyhanede sakın sakın kutladım. Kimsecikler yoktu. Gözlerimi kapatıp, ateşin önünde oturarak sapı samandan ayıkladım. Bir zarfın arkasına bir şeyler çiziktirdim. İnime dönmekten, eski püskü giysilerime kavuşmaktan hoşnuttum. Biraz önce üzülerek söylüyorum üç muz yedim ve bir dördüncüsünü yemekten zor alıkoydum kendimi. Benim durumumdaki biri için zehirden farksız bunlar. (*Telaşlı bir biçimde.*) Bırak şunları yemeyi artık! (*Susar.*) Masamın üzerindeki ışık olumlu bir değişiklik. Çevremdeki tüm bu karanlığın içinde kendimi daha az yalnız hissediyorum. (*Susar.*) Bir bakıma. (*Susar.*) Kalkıp inimde şöyle bir dolaşmayı ve sonra buraya... (*Duraksar.*) ... kendime dönmeyi seviyorum. (*Susar.*) Krapp'a. (Ün, 1993, pp. 54-55, emphasis added)

The excerpts taken from Krapp-39's examination of the year gone by give further clues with respect to the Turkish translations of the play. Even though the stage directions of all three translations depict the young Krapp's voice as being remarkably ostentatious, the odd- sounding "azametlicene" in TT<sub>1</sub> tells the actor

relatively little about the voice of Krapp-39. Additionally, “dinleme konumunu alır” in TT<sub>1</sub> and “dinleme konumuna geçer” in TT<sub>3</sub> prompt the performer to return to the listening position after the stage business. In contrast, “baştaki oturuşuna geri döner” in TT<sub>2</sub> carries no implication of the immobile listening position that is central to the play. Furthermore, due to its syntactical construction, “dalğanın tepesinde – ya da oralarda” at the end of the first sentence following the stage directions in TT<sub>1</sub> will probably make little sense for the actor. Even the context surrounding that part does not defog the vagueness in the sentence. The same part in TT<sub>2</sub> and TT<sub>3</sub>, however, reads as “zirve noktası” and “en üst noktası”, both of which imply that Krapp-39 is at the pinnacle of his intellectual life. Likewise, “taneleri kabuklardan ayırarak” in TT<sub>1</sub> carries the same sort of ambiguity. Nevertheless, “sapı samandan ayırarak” and “sapı samandan ayıkladım” of TT<sub>2</sub> and TT<sub>3</sub> provide the actor with an idiom that is in tune with the context of the sentence. The vagueness in TT<sub>1</sub> appears again towards the end of the excerpt and as a consequence of that one can barely comprehend where the young Krapp enjoys walking: in the new light above his table, or in his dwelling place? TT<sub>2</sub> and TT<sub>3</sub> propose two separate answers for that question: while the former hints at the new light, the latter alludes to Krapp’s dwelling place. In addition to these aspects, “ne iyi” in TT<sub>2</sub> once again adds a stronger emotional dimension to the text, whereas “iyi” and “hoşnuttum” of TT<sub>1</sub> and TT<sub>2</sub> signal in more sober tones the young Krapp’s satisfaction at being in his abode. One further point that deserves mentioning here are the stage directions in the translations. The lexical choices like “duraklama”, “duraksar”, “durur” and “duralar” in TT<sub>1</sub> and TT<sub>2</sub> indicate the same action to be performed. Still, in TT<sub>3</sub> “susar” and “duraksar” imply different yet specific movements for the performer.

TAPE: [Strong voice, rather *pompous*, clearly KRAPP's at a much earlier time.] Thirty-nine today, sound as a—[Settling himself more comfortable he knocks one of the boxes off the table, curses, switches off, sweeps boxes and ledger violently to the ground, winds tape back to the beginning, switches on, *resumes posture*.] Thirty-nine today, sound as a bell, apart from my old weakness, and intellectually I have now every reason to suspect at the... [*hesitates*]...crest of the wave—or thereabouts. Celebrated the awful occasion, as in recent years, quietly at the Winehouse. Not a soul. Sat before the fire with closed eyes, separating the grain from the husks. Jotted down a few notes, on the back of an envelope. Good to be back in my den in my old rags. Have just eaten I regret to say three bananas and only with difficulty refrained from a fourth. Fatal things for a man with my condition. [*Vehemently*.] Cut 'em out! [*Pause*.] The new light above my table is a great improvement. With all this darkness around me I feel less alone. [*Pause*.] In a way. [*Pause*.] I love to get up and move about in it, then back here to... [*hesitates*]...me. [*Pause*.] Krapp. (Beckett, 1984, p. 57, emphasis added).

When taking Beckett's text into account, one can deduce that the ambiguity of TT<sub>1</sub> stems from the translator's shallow loyalty to the ST elements. The first sentence following the old Krapp's burst of anger in TT<sub>1</sub> is actually the literal translation of Beckett's text which renders the sentence practically impossible to understand. On the other hand, in TT<sub>2</sub> and TT<sub>3</sub>, the translators use their rights "to differ organically, to be independent, as long as that independence is pursued for the sake of the original, a technique applied in order to reproduce it as a living work" (Popović, 1970, p. 80), and depict the young as well as ambitious Krapp in such a way that the actor is bound to listen to that recorded voice almost motionless on stage. The lexical choices ("sessizce", "sessiz sedasız" and "sakin sakin") of the translators for the adjective "quietly" are in line with the significance of the silence that lies at the core of Beckett's *oeuvre*. Still, by rendering "not a soul" as "tek Allahın kulu yok" TT<sub>2</sub> opts for domestication. "Tek canlı yoktu" and "kimsecikler yoktu" of TT<sub>1</sub> and TT<sub>3</sub> convey the same meaning of the ST without having recourse to domestication. A glance at Beckett's text discloses the reason for the second ambiguity of TT<sub>1</sub>: the literal translation of "separating the grain from the husks" gives rise to the

incomprehensible expression “taneleri kabuklardan ayırarak”. As mentioned previously, in TT<sub>2</sub> and TT<sub>3</sub> the translators have opted to provide a common Turkish idiom to convey this phrase. The lexical choices of the translations with respect to Krapp’s dwelling place arouse attention. While in TT<sub>1</sub> Krapp’s “den” has been interpreted as “oda” (“room”), in TT<sub>2</sub> and TT<sub>3</sub> it has been rendered as “in” (“den”) which foregrounds the “mess” in protagonist’s abode. Glancing at Beckett’s text, moreover, it can be seen that Krapp likes to get up and move about in “the new light” above his table.

In *Krapp’s Last Tape*, one of the most striking examples of the protagonist’s self-alienation can be discerned when Krapp-69 can no longer remember the words used by Krapp-39. The Turkish translations of the play offer the actor three interpretations of this vital moment of the piece:

BANT: -baktığım zaman geçen yıla, belki eski bakışın parıltısı gelir umuduyla, tabii kanaldaki ev var annemin ölüm döşeğinde yattığı, güz sonlarında, uzun kukumavlığından sonra (*KRAPP irkilir.*) ve – (*KRAPP makineyi kapatır, bandı biraz geri sarar, kulağını makineye daha yakın eğer, makineyi çalıştırır*) – ölüm döşeğinde, uzun kukumavlığından sonra ve- (*KRAPP makineyi kapatır, başını kaldırır, boş boş önüne bakar. Dudakları “kukumav” sözcüğünü heceler. Ses yok. Kalkar, sahne gerisinin karanlığına gider, iri bir sözlükle geri döner, sözlüğü masaya koyar, oturup sözcüğe bakar.*)

KRAPP: (*Sözlükten okuyarak.*) Birbaşına olma - ya da kalma - hali - ya da durumu. (*Gözlerini kaldırır. Şaşırır.*) Olma - ya da kalma? ... (*Duraklama. Tekrar sözlüğe bakar. Okuyarak.*) “Derin kukumav karaları.” ... Aynı zamanda bir hayvan, bilhassa bir kuş ... kukumav ya da dokumacı kuşu ... Erkeğin siyah tüyleri ... (*Gözlerini kaldırır. İştahla.*) Kukumav kuşu! (Koç, 1993, p. 93, emphasis added)

TEYP: -tığımda, geçen yıla yani, gözümün eski feri yerine gelir belki diye umarak, tabii kanaldaki ev var, annemin ölüm döşeğinde yatarolduğu ev, sonbahar sonlarında, uzun müddet remile [sic] olarak yaşadıktan sonra, [*KRAPP şöyle bir irkilir*] bir de- [*KRAPP teybi kapar, biraz başa alır, kulağını yaklaştırır, teybi açar*] –uzun müddet ermile olarak yaşadıktan sonra bir de- [*KRAPP teybi kapar, başını kaldırır, boş gözlerle ileriye bakar. Sadece dudaklarını kıpırdatarak “ermile” kelimesini heceler. Sessizce. Kalkar,*

*sahne gerisine karanlığa gider, dev bir sözlükle geri gelir, sözlüğü masanın üzerine koyar, oturur ve kelimeyi arar]*

KRAPP: [*Sözlükten okur*] Ermilelik; dul olma – ya da kalma – hali ya da durumu. [*Başını kaldırır, anlam veremez*] ‘Olma mı- kalma mı?’ [*Durur. Yeniden yaklaşıp sözlüğe bakar*] ‘Ermile kıyafeti’... Aynı zamanda hayvanlar için de söylenir, özellikle bir kuşun adı... ermile kuşu ya da dokumacı kuşu... erkeğinin kara tüyleri... [*Başını kaldırır. Tadını çıkararak*] Ermile kuşu! (Özgüven, 1993, pp. 18-19, emphasis added)

BANT: —yıla geleceğe yönelmiş, pırıltılı olduğunu umduğum bir bakışla baktığımda, annemin, güz sonunda, uzun dulluğunun ardından (KRAPP irkilir.) dünyaya veda ettiği kanaldaki evden de söz etmem gerek elbette ve– (*Aleti durdurur, bandı biraz geri alır, kulağını alete yaklaştırır, teybi çalıştırır.*) dünyaya veda ediyordu, uzun bir dulluk sonrasında, ve– (*Aleti durdurur, kafasını kaldırır, önüne boş gözlerle bakar. Dudakları “dulluk” sözcüğünün hecelerini mırıldanır. Ses duyulmaz. Kalkar, sahne arkasındaki karanlığa gider, kocaman bir sözlükle döner, masaya oturur ve sözcüğü arar.*)

KRAPP: (*Sözlükten okur.*) Bir erkek –ya da kadının–dul olma–ya da kalma– durumu. (*Başını kaldırır. Afallamış.*) Olma ya da kalma mı?... (*Susar. Sözlüğe yeniden bakar. Okur.*) “Dulluğun koyu matem elbiseleri.” ... Aynı zamanda bir kuş cinsine verilen addır ... dulluk kuşu ya da çuha kuşu, erkeğinin siyah tüyleri ... (*Başının kaldırır. Neşeyle.*) Dulluk kuşu! (Ün, 1993, pp. 57-58, emphasis added)

As the protagonist’s immediate reaction to the words “kukumavlık”, “ermile” and “dulluk” in the translations demonstrates, the bottom line in the above-quoted passages lies in the translators’ interpretations of the widowhood of Krapp’s mother. This part, actually, is a case of the concept “shift of expression” introduced by Anton Popović and defined thus: “All that appears as new with respect to the original, or fails to appear where it might have been expected, may be interpreted as a shift” (1970, p. 79). In the light of Popović’s definition, one can see how Özgüven and Ün deal with the widowhood of Krapp’s mother within the linguistic parameters of the word and render it as “ermile” and “dulluk”, both of which connote the idea of widowhood. Yet, by tackling the word within the precise context, which necessitates him finding an expression related to both a type of bird and loneliness, Koç arrives at a solution that is already existent in the Turkish language: “kukumav kuşu”. In spite

of the fact that “ermile” is an archaic word, and as such highlights the distance between Krapp-69 and Krapp-39, it barely strikes a comparable note of mockery to “kukumav kuşu”. To a certain extent, the same holds true for “dulluk kuşu” as well. After all, the only things that Krapp-69 can enjoy are the odd relationships that he establishes with words, and the protagonist’s enjoyment of the phrase “vidua-bird” harks back to the delight that he receives from “spool”.

TAPE: --back on the year that is gone, with what I hope is perhaps a glint of the old eye to come, there is of course the house on the canal where mother lay a-dying, in the late autumn, after her long viduity [*KRAPP gives a start*] and the—[*KRAPP switches off, winds back tape a little, bends his ear closer to the machine, switches on*]-a-dying, after her long viduity, and the —  
[*KRAPP switches off, raises his head, stares blankly before him. His lips move in the syllables of “viduity.” No sound. He gets up, goes back stage into darkness, comes back with an enormous dictionary, lays it on table, sits down and looks up the word.*]  
KRAPP: [*Reading from dictionary.*] State--or condition--of being--or remaining--a widow--or widower. [*Looks up. Puzzled.*] Being--or remaining? . . . [*Pause. He peers again at dictionary. Reading.*] “Deep weeds of viduity” . . . Also of an animal, especially a bird . . . the vidua or weaver bird . . . Black plumage of male . . . [*He looks up. With relish.*] The vidua-bird! (Beckett, 1984, p. 59, emphasis added).

Consulting the ST, it becomes possible for one to acquire deeper insight into the Turkish translations of the play. In TT<sub>1</sub>, the rhyming parts at the beginning of the excerpt derive from the translator’s intention of resonating with the poetic language that Beckett deploys in his text. It is interesting to note that neither TT<sub>2</sub> nor TT<sub>3</sub> has taken particular heed of that aspect of the rhyming pairs that Beckett creates with “gone” and “come” in this part of his text. As far as the simplicity required for the gestures of the performer is concerned, the inclusion of “şöyle” in TT<sub>2</sub> adds another component to the bodily movements of the actor, whereas “ırkılır” of TT<sub>1</sub> and TT<sub>3</sub> provides the performer with the necessary simple movement that is of central

importance in the play. Parallel to that issue is the notion of silence, that is, another crucial feature of the piece. While “sessizce” in TT<sub>2</sub> depicts the protagonist as acting in a silent “manner”, “ses yok” and “ses duyulmaz” in TT<sub>1</sub> and TT<sub>3</sub> stress the complete absence of sound when Krapp’s “lips move in the syllables of ‘viduity’”. In a similar vein, “şaşırmış” and “afallamış” in TT<sub>1</sub> and TT<sub>3</sub> respectively lay emphasis on Krapp’s facial expressions, whereas “anlam veremez” in TT<sub>2</sub> does not foreground the gesture as the above-mentioned word choices do, since it stands chiefly for “he cannot make sense” instead of portraying the state of “puzzlement”.

One final example from the Turkish translations of the play is the part when Krapp records his “last tape”. Towards the end of the recording, Krapp mentions how he has scalded his eyes out of himself by reading Theodor Fontane’s *Effie Briest* and fantasises himself with the heroine of the novel, “up there on the Baltic, and the pines, and the dunes” (Beckett, 1984, p. 62). Then, he jettisons the idea and continues the recording by speaking of his relationships with women. Since this part of the play accentuates Krapp-69’s pathetic condition, an examination of the Turkish translations of it is of great importance:

KRAPP: ... Fanny birkaç kez geldi. Kemikli kocamış orospu, hayalet gibi. Fazla yapamadım, ama sanırım apış arasına tekme atmaktan daha iyiydı. Son sefer o kadar kötü olmadı. Nasıl başarıyorsun, dedi, bu yaşında? Ona hayatım boyunca onun için biriktirdiğimi söyledim. (Duraklama.) Bir keresinde Akşam Duasına gittim, kısa pantolonlu olduğum zamanlardaki gibi. ... (Soluk soluğa.) Uyuyakaldım ve sıradan düştüm. (Duraklama.) Bazen merak ederdim geceleyin acaba son bir çaba – (Duraklama.) Of bitir şu içkini de git yat. Bu saçmalığa sabahleyin devam edersin. Ya da burada bırak. (Duraklama.) Burada bırak. (Duraklama.) Karanlıkta yatağında dikil – ve dalıp git. Dereye in yine bir Noel Akşamı, çobanpüskülü toplayarak, kırmızı yemişli. (Duraklama.) Croghan’da ol yine bir Pazar sabahı, pusun içinde, kaltakla durup çanları dinle. (Duraklama.) Ve öyle devam et. (Duraklama.) Ol yine, ol yine. (Duraklama.) Bütün o eski sefalet. (Koç, 1993, pp. 98-99, emphasis added)

KRAPP: ... Fanny geldi bir iki defa. Kemik torbası, hortlak gibi ihtiyar orospu. Pek bir şey beceremedim, gene de bacakarasına bir tekmeden hallice herhalde. Son keresi fena değildi. Nasıl beceriyorsun, dedi, bu yaşta? Hepsini ömrüm boyunca senin için biriktirdim de ondan, dedim. [Durur] Kiliseye duaya gittim bir kere, kısa pantolonluyken daha. ... [Soluk alır] Uyuyakaldım ve oturduğum sıradan düştüm. [Duralar] Bazen geceleyin sorarım kendi kendime, acaba son bir çabayla – [Duralar] Amaan, bitir içkini de yallah yatağa. Yarın devam edersin gevezeliğe. Ya da bırak yeter bu kadar. [Duralar] Bırak yeter bu kadar. [Duralar] Sırtını yastıklarına ver, yat karanlıkta – sonra al başını git. O dereciğin içinde ol gene bir Noel arefesi, çoban püskülü topla, kırmızı meyveli. [Duralar] Ol gene, ol gene. Bütün o bildik perişanlık. (Özgüven, 1993, pp. 26-27, emphasis added).

KRAPP: ... Fanny geldi bir iki kez. Bir fahişe kalıntısı, kemik yığını. Pek bir şey yapamasam da, otuzbirden iyi olduğunu sanıyorum. Sonuncusunda hiç de kötü değildi. Bu yaşta nasıl beceriyorsun, hayret doğrusu demişti bana. Bedenimi tüm yaşantım boyunca ona sakladığımı söylemişim. (Sessizlik.) Bir kere kısa pantolonlu dolaştığım günlerdeki gibi, akşam duasına kiliseye gittim. ... (Soluyarak.) Uyumuşum, oturduğum sıradan düştüm. (Susar.) Bazı geceler kendime sormuşumdur, son bir gayret sarf etsem belki de— (Susar.) Hadi bitir içkini de, git yatağına zıbar. Bu zırvaları sabah sürdürürsün. Ya da burada kes artık. (Susar.) Burada kes artık. (Susar.) Karanlıkta iyice yerleş, sırtını yastığına daya — ve dolaş bakalım. Bir Noel arifesinde yeniden gezin vadide, kırmızı meyveli çobanpüsküllerinden toplamak için. (Susar.) Bir Pazar sabahı yeniden uğra Croghan’a, sisin içinde köpeklerle birlikte dur ve dinle çan seslerini. (Susar.) Ve böylece sürsün. (Susar.) Yeniden yeniden. (Susar.) Tüm bu bildik sefalet. (Ün, 1993, pp. 62-63, emphasis added)

Set side by side, the three translations explain each other. In TT<sub>1</sub> and TT<sub>2</sub>, the expressions “apış arasına tekme atmak” and “bacakarasına bir tekme” do not make sense at all, unless one glances at TT<sub>3</sub> in which the same expression reads “otuzbir” and reveals the fact that the sexual life of Krapp-69 is mostly comprised of masturbating. Additionally, the last sentences of both TT<sub>1</sub> and TT<sub>2</sub> before the first pause hardly supply one with the meaning. What Krapp has “saved up” for his entire life, therefore, remains unclear for the actor who will enunciate the sentence on stage. In TT<sub>3</sub>, on the other hand, it can be understood that Krapp has saved up his body for Fanny. Afterwards, there comes the part in which Krapp yearns to live his childhood again and the rest of the passages concentrate on this desire of the

protagonist. Then again, in TT<sub>1</sub>, as a consequence of “pusun içinde kaltakla durup, çanları dinle”, this yearning to live childhood again vanishes into thin air since “kaltak” stands for “whore”. Apparently, at this point in TT<sub>1</sub>, the translator’s mind was still occupied by the context of Krapp’s sexual encounter with Fanny as well as the sexual connotations that the name “Fanny” evokes. In TT<sub>3</sub>, however, the translator opts to use “sisin içinde köpeklerle birlikte dur ve dinle çan seslerini” and conveys the protagonist’s desire to live his life again by evoking the childhood image of “dog”. It goes without saying that the difference between the two interpretations in the translations potentially has a direct effect on the performance. On the one hand, the selection of “kaltak” depicts Krapp-69 as a womaniser; on the other, the usage of “köpek” portrays Krapp-69’s tragic condition in which the protagonist yearns to relive a life that is already coming to an end. While TT<sub>1</sub> and TT<sub>3</sub> offer two interpretations of this tragic part of the play, in TT<sub>2</sub> this part is missing, either as a consequence of a probable omission, or an absence of an editorial glance, or the translator’s revision of his translation.

KRAPP: ... Fanny came in a couple of times. Bony old ghost of a whore. Couldn't do much, but I suppose better than a kick in the crutch. The last time wasn't so bad. How do you manage it, she said, at your age? I told her I'd been saving up for her all my life. [*Pause.*] Went to Vespers once, like when I was in short trousers. ... [*Gasping.*] Went to sleep and fell off the pew. [*Pause.*] Sometimes wondered in the night if a last effort mightn't—[*Pause.*] Ah finish your booze now and get to your bed. Go on with this drivel in the morning. Or leave it at that. [*Pause.*] Leave it at that. [*Pause.*] Lie propped up in the dark--and wander. Be again in the dingle on a Christmas Eve, gathering holly, the red-berried. [*Pause.*] Be again on Croghan on a Sunday morning, in the haze, with the bitch, stop and listen to the bells. [*Pause.*] And so on. [*Pause.*] Be again, be again. [*Pause.*] All that old misery. (Beckett, 1984, pp. 62-63, emphasis added)

Returning to Beckett’s text, one can observe how the literal translations of “kick in the crutch” have produced the awkward expressions that have been discussed above

in TT<sub>1</sub> and TT<sub>2</sub>. In TT<sub>3</sub>, owing to the “shift of expression” employed by the translator, it becomes possible for one to comprehend that Krapp masturbates at the age of sixty-nine and philanders with Fanny, the “bony old ghost of a whore” by saving up his body for her all his life. Through a glance at Beckett’s text, moreover, Krapp’s desire to “be again in the dingle on a Christmas Eve” and “on Croghan on a Sunday morning” surfaces. At this point of the discussion, it is worth pointing out that the context around which Beckett builds the passage leaves little room for associating “bitch” with a whore. What lurks in the quoted passage is a forlorn wish to “be again”.

On the whole, the act of translation is a “decision process” (Levý, 2000, p. 148) and each translator’s “‘decisive battle’ is fought on the level of the text individual, where strategy and tactics are directed by type and variety” (Reiss, 2000b, p. 166). As this in-depth analysis with respect to the Turkish translations of the radical features of *Krapp’s Last Tape* has demonstrated, each translation provides the actor with a different text. Yet, as argued earlier in this study, the performer in Beckett’s theatre is a “raw-actor” who is bound to be shaped by the text and in the position of “acting” precisely the movements as well as the gestures dictated by the text, without having recourse to extraneous elements. Within this context, it can be seen that many of the word choices of Koç and Özgüven were in the form of what Jiří Levý would call “unmotivated surplus decisions” (2000, p. 151), most of which have given rise to the indication of psychological dimensions for the supposed benefit of the performer, or the construction of a bizarre play text in which one can hardly make sense of its elements. Then again, through a close examination of Ün’s translation of *Krapp’s Last Tape*, one can infer how the translator has tackled the play within a broader context in which the notion of “performability” plays the decisive role. The

simplicity and economy adopted by Ün in the opening mime and the stage directions exemplify how he has paid close attention to the “performability” of the text on stage.

Nevertheless, as far as theatre-translation criticism is concerned, this observation is bound to remain incomplete unless it is combined with theatre criticism, where the focus lies on the role of the text and on the actor’s and director’s use of it in the production of the play.

### The Pavis Questionnaire

The preceding discussion of the Turkish translations of Samuel Beckett’s *Krapp’s Last Tape* underlines the validity of the conclusion drawn in the previous chapter. As demonstrated in Chapter 3, three of the four productions of *Krapp’s Last Tape* within the Turkish theatrical system made use of Uğur Ün’s translation during the performance, whereas only one of them employed Hamdi Koç’s text. This finding throws considerable light upon the governing factors in the composition of a performance text derived from a foreign theatre text. It is highly likely that the “performable”, “speakable”, “simple”, as well as “economical” aspects of Ün’s translation had an influence on the theatre companies’ choices of using it in their productions of *Krapp’s Last Tape*. Be that as it may, the analysis undertaken in the preceding subsection has said next to nothing about the function of the translated text during the course of a given performance. According to Elaine Aston and George Savona, “productions of plays in translation are often good examples of whether the theatrical sign-system has been carefully considered for clarity of meaning, because decisions have to be made about how to cross the sign-systems of two societies,

languages, cultures and theatrical traditions” (1991, p. 100). The scholars’ remark is noteworthy in that it highlights the necessity of scrutinising the interpretations of the actors and directors in performances.

In order to fulfil the needs of such an examination, this subsection aims to propose a model for the analysis of the performances of plays in translation. In this respect, the Pavis Questionnaire (Pavis, 1985, pp. 209-210), which dismantles the elements of a given performance to furnish a sound basis for an in-depth analysis, suggests itself as quite suitable for the purpose in that it allots a subcategory to the function of the text in performance.<sup>2</sup> The significance of the questionnaire lies in its reflection on the act of translation in performance. As opposed to the other questionnaires that have been proposed by various theatre scholars, such as Anne Ubersfeld and André Helbo, both of whom exclude the notion of text from performance analysis,<sup>3</sup> the widely-known Pavis Questionnaire considers text as one of the elements of performance. This enables the scholar to make room for a discussion of the characteristics of translated theatre texts.

The first question in section ten of the Pavis Questionnaire concerns the main features of the translated text, while the second one is related to the role given to the (translated) text in performance, and finally the last question pertains to the relationship between the (translated) text and the image in the course of the production. Nevertheless, Pavis is cautious of the delimitative implications that this subcategory might evoke, and by no means advocates establishing a hierarchy between text and performance. *Mise en scène*, maintains Pavis, “is the *performing* of a text that provides initial indications as to the text’s meaning, and in particular the

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<sup>2</sup> Since the questionnaire addresses systemically and comprehensively each and every element of performances, it has been appended in its entirety at the end of the thesis. See Appendix B.

<sup>3</sup> These two questionnaires and a critical examination of their essential features are available in Pavis, 2003, pp. 34-37.

status one should accord it within the analyzed performance” (2003, p. 206, emphasis added). Needless to say, Pavis’ observation draws attention to the actors’ and directors’ use of the (translated) texts in productions.

A close inspection of the literature dedicated to theatre translation within the realm of Translation Studies reveals the absence of a model that can allow one to monitor the function of translated texts in performances. Despite their critical engagements with the practical fields of translation and theatre, these scholarly works fall short of proposing a model that can aspire to embrace the textual and scenic dimensions of translations at once. Thus, it is not surprising to observe that the majority of research concerned with theatre translations either focuses on individual productions of plays or provides accounts of the scholars’ personal experiences on stage, or ceaselessly debate the notions of “performability”, “speakability”, “readability”, and so on. This is precisely the case with the literature that has been referred to in the introductory part of the thesis. Even though one can derive considerable benefit from, say, the two anthologies edited by Ortrun Zuber-Skerrit (1980; 1984) and the individual studies of Sirkku Aaltonen (2000) and Phyllis Zatlin (2005), it becomes rather hard to apply the scholars’ personal observations to performance analysis. Nonetheless, the tools that Translation Studies provides are diverse enough to be of help when embarking on constructing a model to study the function of translated texts in productions.

In point of fact, the hints of a model have been dropped during the course of this chapter. And now, it would be appropriate to flesh out its essential components. The first step of the model is the identification of the features of the given play that have particular relevance to performance, as was done with respect to the radical features of *Krapp’s Last Tape*. The second step includes a critical engagement with

Raymond van den Broeck's method for comparative analysis in translation criticism. Thus, the model gives priority to the notion of *mise en scène* by pinpointing first and foremost the features of the text that have direct relevance to the performance. In order to scrutinise how these features have been rendered in translation/s, the model moves on to the second step, that is to say, the examination of the TT(s) from the vantage point of the performer who will perform the text on stage. Hence, the comparative analysis of the model takes the TT(s) as a point of departure, and later on returns to the ST so as to be able to describe the translations and shed light on the strategies followed by the translator/s. At this point of the discussion, it is worth taking particular heed of the warning that Susan Bassnett gave as early as the mid-1980s: "Claims for 'performability' are widely made, although the concept is never defined" (1985, p. 90). Bassnett's caution is fair enough in the sense that it alludes to the futility of finding a universal definition of the notion of "performability" based on the linguistic aspects of the text alone. Yet, when one sets linguistic concerns aside and treats the TT in its own right in relation to the particular signs of "performance" that are central to the ST, it becomes possible to attain a certain sense of the "performability" of the translated text. After all, all theatre plays—even the ones that reject the concept of convention—bear the marks of a theatrical tradition which leaves its specific traces of "performance" in the written text. The performance of a Racine play differs from that of an Ibsen in the way that two dramatists compose their texts and, by extension, in the way that actors and directors interpret them on stage. In this particular respect, the notion of "performability" in translated theatre texts turns out to be a criterion that leads to the bottom line in any analysis of the TT(s): the ways in which the translation relates to the "performative" aspects of the ST.

This criterion, however, says nothing about the actual performances of translated theatre plays. What it provides is basically an opinion with respect to the *mise en scène* prior to the performance. It is precisely at this point that the model benefits from the Pavis Questionnaire. After acquiring the preliminary idea from the critical examination of the translation/s, the model moves on to its third and final step, namely, the observation of the relationship between the translated text and the image during the course of the performance. Although the model draws mainly on the tenth article of the questionnaire, in which Pavis deals with the function of the text in production, it does make use of the sections addressed to the actors' performances, scenography, function of music and sound effects, and the like, with the purpose of capturing the most fundamental elements of performance. Still, the model diverges from the Pavis Questionnaire in the momentous emphasis that it places on the relationship between the translated text and the body of the actor. Now, this relationship deserves a gloss. As Pavis himself points out in one of his studies published after the questionnaire, "in theatre, the translation reaches the audience by way of the actors' bodies" (1992, p. 131). Pavis' comment underlines the act of translation undertaken by the actors in performance. Within this context, the actor in performance assumes a vital responsibility: s/he actually *translates* what is written on the page into the *language* of the stage throughout the performance. From this vantage point, it can be seen that the model by no means reduces the performance to the notion of text alone. Instead, the model uses it as a reference point for investigating first and foremost the fundamental translational relationship between the text and the body of the performer in the course of the production.

In analysing the performance, the model can plausibly make use of a video recording of the production as a memory aid. Still, it is likely for the analysis to be

on safer grounds if it takes on board the issue that Walter Benjamin raised back in 1935 with respect to the mechanical reproduction of theatre performances by means of the camera: “It comprises certain factors of movement which are in reality those of the camera, not to mention special camera angles, close-ups, etc. Hence, the performance of the actor is subjected to a series of optical tests” (2007, p. 228). Therefore, rather than relying merely on the video recording of the performances, it would be plausible for the model to adopt the specific function that Pavis attributes to the use of video-technology: “a video recording is a testimony that effectively restores the thickness of signs; it allows an observer to grasp a sense of performance style, and to keep sequences and the use of different materials fresh in the memory” (2003, p. 43).

On the basis of what has been discussed hitherto as regards to the way that the model operates, one can see how it simultaneously embraces the textual and scenic dimensions of theatre-translations. Furthermore, by integrating into performance analysis the insights that have been attained from the comparative analysis of translations, the model aims at expanding the scope of the first question in the tenth section of the Pavis Questionnaire, in which the main features of the translated text/s are addressed. In spite of the fact that the attention paid to the function of text in performance is on the wane in contemporary practices of theatre criticism, the model takes cognisance of the way that the text is “performed” in productions. There are two reasons for that: on the one hand, the significant role that the model ascribes to the function of text in performance analysis provides a basis for monitoring the above-mentioned translational relationship between the text and the body of the actor; on the other, the inclusion of text in such a way in performance analysis can prove to be a fruitful choice when scrutinising the productions of works that belong

to playwrights who attach particular importance to the interpretations of their texts on stage. As Pavis puts it, “authors such as Peter Handke, Michel Vinaver, Samuel Beckett and Heiner Müller no longer attempt to imitate speakers in the act of communicating, nor do they lock themselves into indecipherable words. They present a text which—even if it still takes the form of words alternately expressed by different speakers—can no longer be recapitulated or resolved or lead to action. Their sort of text addresses itself as a whole to the audience, like a global poem tossed in the hearers’ laps to be taken or left as they please” (1992, p. 55). Pavis’ observation makes even more sense when it comes to Beckett productions, in which the performance of the text plays the decisive role.

### Performance Analysis

According to Reba Gostand, “every stage and feature of the dramatic production has and/or will involve processes of translation. Everything the audience sees or hears is a symbol of some reality being conveyed by the play” (1980, p. 2). Gostand’s comment is very much to the point in the sense that it underscores the necessity of reflecting on translation within a broader context; a context which unshackles the act of translation from the confines of linguistic concerns. The performances of Samuel Beckett’s works reinforce the credibility of this point all the more. As was demonstrated in the preceding chapter, theatre practitioners such as Şahika Tekand and Pierre Chabert, both of whom have astutely engaged with moving the author’s works from “page” to “stage” during their careers, associated staging Beckett’s plays with the act of translation. The conceptual connection that Tekand and Chabert draw between staging Beckett and the act of translation might be taken as highly abstract

and with little concrete and practical implication. However, when one takes a step beyond the linguistic connotations of the word and meditates on the author's texts, as well as the way that they are composed, it becomes possible to comprehend what Beckett actually does: creating (meta)theatrical scores for the performers, or texts, which Kerem Karaboğa would call "scores" (2005, p. 166). As such, it can be claimed that each and every Beckett text is composed in a special theatrical language. Just like a musical score, Beckett's texts demand to be performed using a certain aesthetic language. *Krapp's Last Tape*, in this particular respect, is by no means an exception. James Knowlson, for one, emphasises how the text is conceived as a score by the author: "In *Krapp's Last Tape* even the non-verbal sounds that Krapp uttered and the noises that he made with objects were all orchestrated by Beckett into a kind of musical score complementary to the verbal text" (2003, p. 134). In the light of Knowlson's comment, one can infer how the "music" is, in fact, composed in the text in a certain theatrical language. The stage directions, which can plausibly be considered as the "syntax" of this theatrical language, constitute the crux of a given Beckett text. Staging Beckett, therefore, inevitably entails the act of translation: translation from the distinctive theatrical language of the author into the language of performance through the body of the performer/s and the interpretations of the director.

The act of translation, when understood from the above-provided perspective, can thus be the keynote for an analysis of the Tiyatro-Z production of *Krapp's Last Tape*. As stated earlier in this study, the performance text employed in this production (Engin, 2005, pp. 1-6) was based on Uğur Ün's translation and composed in accordance with the revised text of the play and the author's production notes, both of which are reproduced in the *Theatrical Notebooks of Samuel Beckett*. In this

particular respect, the fact that the Tiyatro-Z production of the play claims to base its interpretation on Beckett's staging approach compels the analyst to examine the performance in connection with the author's concept of *mise en scène*. In the Tiyatro-Z production of *Krapp's Last Tape*, the textual adjustments in the opening mime, the omission of the hymn that Krapp sings at various parts of the play, as well as the introduction of the protagonist's "cubby-hole" to the performance text bear the marks of Beckett's staging approach. Even so, as one would wholeheartedly concede, the ultimate goal of a given contemporary performance can hardly be the mere reproduction of the work of a playwright on stage. Due to the interpretations undertaken by the director, a contemporary performance aims at breathing new life into the play. The adjustments made on the scenic level in the Tiyatro-Z production of *Krapp's Last Tape*, such as the addition of an armchair, the scattering of reels on the stage and the usage of light, can be regarded as examples of this attempt. As the composition of the performance text as well as the director's use of it in the production imply, the act of translation on "stage" is practiced by two agents: the actor's translation of the text into performance and the director's translation of the text into *mise en scène*; in other words, the translations exercised by Beyti Engin and Cem Kenar respectively account for the Tiyatro-Z production of the play as a whole.

*Krapp's Last Tape* is first and foremost a solo performance. This fact alone bestows upon the bodily movements and the semblance of the actor a pivotal role in the course of the performance. The physical appearance of Engin, in this respect, attracts attention owing to the fact that it not only concretises but also enriches the image depicted in Ün's translation. Even though Ün's text provides the actor with the required information with respect to the appearance of the protagonist, the features that Engin lends to the role of Krapp lead to a distinct presentation of Beckett's play

character before the eyes of the audience. The round, unshaven face of Engin, with his bleared eyes, his “mass” of disorderly blond hair, as well as his nicotine-stained fingers, accentuates the image of a drunkard.<sup>4</sup> Throughout the production, this image is further reinforced with Engin occasionally taking shots of Scotch and smoking. While the actor’s physical appearance bears the traces of the ageing, dilapidation, and self-neglect of Krapp, the inclusion of the drinks and cigarettes in Engin’s performance supplements these dimensions with the image of a tippler. At this point of the discussion, it is worth pointing out that the production does not have recourse to the use of make-up to create that semblance in the performer. Hence, Engin appears in front of the spectators in his most “simple” look, which is very much in tune with Beckett’s theatre.

As far as the relationship between the text and the body of the performer is concerned, Engin’s particular contributions to the role of Krapp can plausibly be considered as the actor’s translation of what is written on the page into the language of the performance. Still, this is just a preliminary sign of the act of translation in the performance. The physical limitations of Krapp, for instance, are translated by Engin into sequences of corporeal and gestural expressions. Krapp’s near-sightedness, which compels him to make sustained efforts in reading the entries juxtaposed in his ledger, is rendered manifest by the actor without him taking advantage of any kind of stage prop. Thus, each time Engin peers at the entries, or boxes of reels, his body becomes curved around the ledger. This image resembling almost a knuckle glued to the ledger not only foregrounds the decrepitude of Krapp but at the same time brings the immobility of the protagonist to the fore. In a similar vein, Engin’s “agitated” way of walking at various parts of the performance, his body trembling, adds another

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<sup>4</sup> See Appendix C.

dimension to the “laborious walk” of Krapp; a dimension in which the dilapidation of the protagonist is highlighted.

Additional acts of translation in Engin’s performance can be observed through a glance at his presentation of Krapp’s alienation from his former selves. During the course of listening to Krapp-39’s account of his past, Engin reacts to Krapp-69’s former self by adopting a series of gestural expressions such as raising his eyebrows, opening his eyes particularly wide, turning his hands outwards, covering his face with his hands, and so forth. These specific reflections of emotional responses, all of which are prompted by the voice of the recorded memory, operate as attitudinal signs that enable the actor to establish a communicative relationship with the spectators throughout the performance. In fact, Engin builds this relationship as early as the opening mime where he stands like a sculpture with a banana in his mouth and gazes expressionlessly at the spectators. When listening to Krapp-39, Engin adds the vacuous stare of the opening mime as a gestural sign to accompany the above-mentioned emotional reactions, which he enacts at several points when brooding about the memories of a life gone by. In so doing, he strengthens the bonds of the relationship established already between himself and the spectators. Thanks to these series of gestural codes, Engin translates the emotional condition of Krapp-69, his disappointments, his mockery of Krapp-39, and the like, from the page into the language of performance.

Complementary to Engin’s corporeal and gestural expressions is the way he uses one of his most crucial instruments, which is of central importance for the play: his voice. Commenting upon the significance of the vocal partitions of the protagonist in a given production of the play, Elaine Aston and George Savona point out that “The use of a speaking voice in the present and the pre-recorded voice of the

past suggests that the performance offers a dual set of auditive signs generated by the actor, which replaces the traditional convention of the two-way, speaker-listener/listener-speaker interchange” (1991, pp. 167-168). The sharp contrast between Engin’s recorded voice and that of the present is noteworthy here since it concurs with the musicality of the play to a certain extent. In his production notes, Beckett describes the vocal principle of *Krapp’s Last Tape* as “a slide from the major key of assurance into the minor key which betrays its artificiality. Problem: how to locate and differentiate the latter. The initial tone more or less broken by the impact of 3 themes (which are often associated): solitude, light-darkness, Woman” (1992, p. 153). In Engin’s performance of Krapp, the tone that the actor assumes in the recorded voice of the past strives to recover the assurance of the “pompous” voice with which Krapp-39’s account of his past opens. Thus, whenever the initial tone gets disrupted by the effects of the said themes, the shift from the major key into the minor key becomes rendered in Engin’s voice even more sharply. During the performance, the tonal differences between Engin’s voicing of Krapp-69 and Krapp-39, or to put it in Knowlson’s words, “the deep bass of the older Krapp and the lighter tones of the 39-year-old” (2003, p. 134) translates the counterpoints that Beckett intersperses within the play.

The relationship between the text and image on stage leads on to a discussion of the other—and final—act of translation undertaken in the production: that by the director. After all, Kenar’s decisions as regards to the adjustments to be made on the scenic level, as well as the use of music and sound effects in the production, all have direct relevance to a manner of performance that depends entirely on the immobile listening posture of the actor. The addition of an armchair on stage, in this respect, invites special consideration. At various parts of the performance, Engin gets up

from his chair behind the table and, without stopping the tape, walks over to the armchair, where he sits and adopts the listening posture. It is highly likely that these interruptions to the immobile listening posture will diminish the function of the visual relationship between the actor and the reel-to-reel, which is so crucial to the play. As indicated previously, when directing the play, Beckett took particular heed of the episode with the girl in the punt, to which Krapp listens twice in the play. When listening to this recounting of momentary happiness, “old Krapp’s body starts bending over the tape recorder, and he ends this movement by almost embracing the machine, in a posture of ‘motionlessness listening,’ as if wanting to relive this moment and be again with the girl in the punt ‘drifting among the flags.’ Memory, experience, and desire are aurally and visually mingled at this point” (Rodríguez-Gago, 2008, p. 211). In the Tiyatro-Z production, however, at this climactic part of the play a silhouette of a girl appears behind the white curtains on stage, thereby distorting that abstract yet extremely striking feature of *Krapp’s Last Tape*.

This is the dividing line between Kenar’s staging approach and that of Beckett. While Kenar attempts to throw new light on the text by translating the abstract features of the play into concrete ones, Beckett has his text reborn on stage by subtracting more and more from the play, thereby moving towards even higher levels of abstraction. Kenar’s decision to include music in the production illustrates the point. The use of Erik Satie’s bleak instrumental “Buddha Bar” at the beginning of the play, as an element to accompany Engin’s entrance to the stage with a laborious walk, for instance, prevents the spectators from hearing the *actual* music that Beckett creates within the text. Beckett’s “sonic score”, comprised of “the shuffle of Krapp’s shoes on the wooden stage during the banana business and his fast, squeaky footsteps as he walked excitedly to and from his den” (2003, p. 134) vanishes into thin air in

the Tiyatro-Z production of the play. What is more, Kenar's deployment of introductory music starts the performance *ab ovo*, namely, from the beginning. Yet, as Beckett himself explicitly describes in his production notes, the play starts *in media res*, that is to say, in the middle of things: "39 choice and not chance. At curtain up he is thinking of the story of the boat and trying to remember which year it was (how old he was). Doesn't succeed. Tries again during banana 1. (Reseated at table still tries to remember.) Remembers all of a sudden as he starts banana 2 (thanks to  $39 = 13 \times 3$  which had struck him at the time) and hastens away to fetch the ledger that will allow him to identify box and tape" (1992, p. 49). By withholding the explanatory element until the end of the opening mime, therefore, Beckett arouses the dramatic interest of the spectators. Furthermore, the chiming sound effects added towards the end of the Tiyatro-Z production, where Krapp yearns to "be again on Croghan on a Sunday morning, in the haze, with the bitch, stop and listen to the bells", run against the grain of "silence" immanent to the piece.

In the light of this close examination of the Tiyatro-Z production of *Krapp's Last Tape*, one can see how separate acts of translation undertaken by the actor and director respectively account for the performance in its entirety. Engin's translation of Ün's text into performance by means of the series of corporeal and gestural expressions that he adopts demonstrates the capability of the actor in conveying the gist of Beckett's play to the spectators. Yet, Engin is not the only agent involved in the production. As a consequence of the adjustments Kenar makes on the scenic level, the motionless listening posture is subjected to sporadic interruptions, thus reducing the dramatic tension that the act of intensified listening acquires in the piece. Within this context, it can be argued that Kenar's translation of the immobility into mobility, as well as his translation of abstractness into concreteness, impede the

actor from rendering the core of Beckett's play. Even if the Tiyatro-Z production of *Krapp's Last Tape* bears the traces of Beckett's staging approach, Kenar's interpretations play the definitive role, leading to a performance in which the director's readings into the play and Beckett's revisions of the text intertwine with each other.

## CHAPTER V

### CONCLUSION

In the 1992-1993 season, Turkish theatregoers had the opportunity to witness an exhilarating production by one of the prominent troupes of the country, that is to say, Ortaoyuncular: *Güle Güle Godot* (Bye Bye Godot). Initially written in French in the 1970s, and rewritten in Turkish in the 1990s by Ferhan Şensoy, *Bye Bye Godot* was a significant attempt at throwing new light upon Samuel Beckett's *Waiting for Godot*. Thanks to Şensoy's style, which "yields precedence to the humorous elements" (Pekman, 2002, p. 157), most of which derive from the forms of the Turkish theatrical tradition, *Bye Bye Godot* turned out to be a highly personal production, in which the individual approach of the dramatist played the decisive role. After all, that was Şensoy's Godot. In spite of the fact that the driving force behind the play was Beckett's Godot, Şensoy exposed his aim of bidding farewell to Godot even in the title that he gave to his adaptation: *Bye Bye Godot*.

To a certain extent, the motivational starting point of this thesis was the intention to also bid farewell to *Waiting for Godot* with the purpose of tackling the author's *oeuvre* within a broader context, a context enriched by the perspectives that Translation Studies and Theatre Studies provide in their own right yet also together. In point of fact, the decision to work on Beckett with such an intention brought along a fundamental question: how to contextualise the author's *oeuvre* in such a way that can make sense for both of the disciplines and at the same time offer a new insight to his works, all of which have already been the subject of numerous scholarly studies.

This thesis argued that Beckett's transformation of the theatricality in his fiction into metatheatricality in his plays could be taken as one probable answer to that question.

The second possible answer to that question, which is related to the first, lies in the conceptual starting point of this thesis, namely, the intention to build a bridge between theatre criticism and theatre-translation criticism in order to demonstrate how considering these two fields of studies in relation to each other can benefit both of them. This conceptual point of commencement gave rise to the root proposition of the study: "theatre-translation criticism and theatre criticism are not a far cry from one another in terms of the emphasis they place on the notion of performance." This proposition, moreover, has been supplemented by the research question that the thesis has sought to answer: "when analysing a performance of a translated theatre work, what factors might a theatre-translation critic take into account?" The proposition and the research question of the study draw attention to the quasi-paradoxical relationship between Translation Studies and Theatre Studies in terms of the inclination of the former to overlook theatre and that of the latter to attach little importance to the act of translation in performance. In this particular respect, by providing a close examination of the dynamics of Translation Studies and Theatre Studies, the introductory part of the thesis attempted to shed light on the reasons for this mutual neglect between the two disciplines. In order to meet the needs of the research question, furthermore, the introductory part of the thesis explained the rationale behind the choice of working on Beckett's *Krapp's Last Tape* and its Turkish translations, as well as on the interpretations of the play on the Turkish stage. Indeed, Beckett's transformation from playwright to theatre director allows one to approach him from a broader perspective, in which the directorial status of the

author and the extent to which Beckett's concept of *mise en scène* is appreciated in the Turkish theatrical system come into play as well.

Even though the material about Beckett's theatre is thick on the ground, the author's transformation from playwright to theatrical artist has received only scant attention within Theatre Studies. While the illuminating studies by Beckett scholars such as Stanley Gontarski and James Knowlson might compensate for this scarce amount of interest in Theatre Studies, a close examination of the author's *oeuvre* compels one to speak of another transformation, that is, Beckett's individual transformation of the theatricality of his prose into metatheatricality in his plays. Chapter 2 aimed at demonstrating the significance of this point for Theatre Studies by underscoring that Beckett's meditation on the questions of the body, as well as the monologic structures of his plays, had their roots in his prose works. Within this context, this chapter provided an analysis of *Krapp's Last Tape* and a discussion of the position that the play acquires within the Beckett canon, in order to underscore the significance of *Krapp's Last Tape* within the framework of his *oeuvre*. After considering Beckett's revisions of *Krapp's Last Tape* against the background of his production notes, an additional point was made about the Beckettian actor. Although Beckett himself did not propose an acting or directing method in his career, either as a playwright or a director, in view of his approach to theatre this chapter proposed a term for the Beckettian actor—"raw-actor"—, a term defined to suggest an actor who can be shaped on stage through the minute and precise reactions triggered by the text; an actor who actually becomes the instrument of the director in the performance of a piece.

Chapter 3 provided an overview of the interpretations of *Krapp's Last Tape* within the Turkish theatrical system. Prior to this survey, however, this chapter

highlighted the necessity of bidding farewell to *Waiting for Godot* so as to be able to appreciate the theatrical treasure that the rest of Beckett's theatre offers. Hence, the first subsection of the chapter drew attention to the potential risks that Turkish theatre practitioners' tendency of staging merely *Godot* might carry: on the one hand, this inclination reduces Beckett's *oeuvre* to a single play, thus preventing the Turkish audience from experiencing the metatheatrical dimension of Beckett's plays; on the other, this tendency bears the risk of disinclining the Turkish spectators from Beckett's theatre. In order to problematise further this tendency of putting on solely *Waiting for Godot*, this chapter cast an eye over the Beckett productions by the Studio Players and Dostlar Theatre, the two theatre companies in the country that paved the way for expanding the perception of Beckett in Turkey. After acquiring an initial picture through a look at the perception of Beckett in Turkey, the chapter aimed at describing this image from the systemic perspectives provided by Translation Studies. The purpose of doing so was to make use of the vaguely-defined binary oppositions (centre/periphery, primary/secondary, and canonised/non-canonised) in Itamar Even-Zohar's Polysystem Theory, albeit with a critical awareness. As this chapter argued, the number of performances of a foreign play, as well as the national and international festivals in which the productions of that play appear, can be considered as the factors that lead to its canonisation in a given target theatrical system and to its occupation of the centre thereof. Additionally, thanks to the examination of the dynamics of the target system, two possible explanations with respect to the concurrent publications of the Turkish translations of *Krapp's Last Tape* emerged: the absence of communication between Yapı Kredi, İletişim and Mitos, and the loose implementation of the copyright legislation in the Turkish publishing sector in the first half of the 1990s. With the aim of finding out which of

the existing translations of *Krapp's Last Tape* had been prioritised by theatre companies in Turkey, this chapter examined four productions of the play. This examination revealed that three of the theatre companies had made use of Uğur Ün's translation of *Krapp's Last Tape*. The fact that Ün's translation has been prioritised by the theatre practitioners who staged *Krapp's Last Tape* in Turkey suggests that the “speakable”, “readable”, “performable” and “economical” characteristics of a translated theatre text can play the decisive role during the course of moving play texts from “page” to “stage”. Even so, as another striking finding of this chapter indicated, none of the theatre companies that have been referred to mentioned the name of the translator in their posters or in the other promotional materials used in their productions.

Chapter 4 was an acid test for gauging the validity of the points that had been arrived at concerning the dynamics of the target theatrical system. In order to describe the actual nature of the Turkish translations of *Krapp's Last Tape* and the strategies followed by Hamdi Koç, Fatih Özgüven and Ün respectively, this chapter provided comparative analyses of the translated texts. Anterior to the comparative analyses, drawing on the work of Elaine Aston and George Savona, this chapter first identified *Krapp's Last Tape* as a representative example of a “radical text” in order to furnish a point of commencement for the examination of the texts. In the light of the radical features of the text, the chapter embarked on the comparative analyses of the translations of the play, taking the TT(s) as starting point, following the model proposed by Raymond van den Broeck. As argued in this chapter, rather than yielding precedence to the linguistic elements of the ST, a firm step to be taken in such a comparative analysis is to prioritise the fundamental features of the text that have direct relevance to performance. By deriving benefit from the Pavis

Questionnaire, Chapter 4, moreover, proposed a model for the analysis of the performances of plays in translation, with the purpose of embracing the textual and scenic dimensions of translations at once. As an application of the model, this chapter provided an analysis of the Tiyatro-Z production of *Krapp's Last Tape*, a production which employed Ün's translation as a performance text, as well as having recourse to Beckett's revised text of the play and his production notes.

As stated previously, the research question of this study inquired as to the factors that a theatre-translation critic may take into account when analysing a performance of a translated theatre work. The thesis argued that the answer to that question can be found through a close examination of the relationship between the text and the body of the actor, as well as the relationship between the text and image of the production. Such an examination inevitably entails an analysis of the acts of translation undertaken by the actor/s and director in the course of the performance. Dwelling upon the translational aspect of Beckett performances in particular, Mark Batty maintains that "where form is so artfully integrated into content, where italicized description sits so earnestly alongside the text to be recited in a written work, the place of the director can, arguably, only be one parallel to that of the translator whose function s/he anyway parallels; a sharply receptive artist, a communicator, a transmitter and renderer of thought" (2000, p. 71).

Batty's comment makes even more sense when it is considered in connection with the staging approach that Şahika Tekand adopted for her Beckett productions. As was mentioned earlier, this study argued that the Beckettian actor can be deemed as a "raw-actor" who can come into being by dint of the act of translation undertaken by the director in the course of the performance. Being entirely cognisant of the distinctive aesthetic language that Beckett creates in his texts, Tekand comments

upon the term “raw-actor” in view of her conception of staging Beckett: “Look into all his literary texts; read the sentences by themselves and you’ll see that they are not dependent on one another, yet meaning emerges when they come together. As such, he produces an atmosphere, a literary condition for you. I tried exactly to take this literary attitude, and *translate* it into the language of performance. In that sense, ‘raw-actor’ can be a relevant definition of the actor who acts only as much as the text obliges him to act. He will not feel for us, will not get sentimental for us, will not try to reveal the story for us; he will just perform the act, the action, as someone who performs the movement.” This observation can be taken as a concluding remark which responds to the issues raised in this study from a theatre practitioner’s point of view. It goes without saying that in theatre the act of translation acquires a vital dual role in the course of moving play-texts from “page” to “stage”. The task of the theatre-translation critic, therefore, lies in the close examination of the TT(s) on “page”, as well as the way that actors and directors translate the text during the performance on “stage”.

All aspects considered, it can be claimed that considering theatre criticism and theatre-translation criticism in relation to each other can enrich both Translation Studies and Theatre Studies. The interdisciplinary approach adopted in this thesis has aimed to cast light on the quasi-paradoxical relationship between theatre criticism and theatre-translation criticism. Within this context, the notion of performance and the co-existence of multiple acts of translation became the key elements. By moving criticism from “page” to “stage”, this thesis has attempted to underscore the *raison d’être* of translated theatre texts, namely that they are blueprints for prospective productions. Once this main reason for the existence of theatre texts is more widely acknowledged within the realm of Translation Studies, the stage will be set for

further research that focuses on the acts of translation undertaken by actors and directors during the course of performance. This thesis is an attempt to trigger such a shift from “page” to “stage” in terms of theatre-translation criticism.

## APPENDIX A

### CONVERSATION WITH ŞAHİKA TEKAND<sup>1</sup>

Burç İdem Dinçel: I would like to start with a remark you made in your conversation with Kerem Karaboğa, where you mention your “game concept”. There you state that, “the actor becomes exposed to the rules of the game with the purpose of attaining the performative.” So, can the actor’s being exposed to the rules of the game, in a way be seen in relation to, what Beckett aimed at and what, you put into practice in profound ways?

Şahika Tekand: Of course it is related, but I should say that my reason for putting on Beckett is the result of a search for a playwright who provides the theatrical atmosphere best suited to my staging approach. That is, apart from the fact that I like Beckett, when I was working with the game concept, the one who offered the most suitable literary and theatrical context for me turned out to be Beckett. That’s why I chose to stage his works. After all, I don’t think that Beckett proposes a method for acting or staging. When looking at his own practices, it can be seen that he acts in accordance with different means, a different knowledge about staging. But if we think of Beckett as a playwright, a method in his texts can be found; a circumstance, not only an atmosphere, but a circumstance that reveals a grammar which expresses the same things for spectators and performers at the same time.

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<sup>1</sup> This conversation was held on April 6, 2010.

B.İ.D.: And the stage directions function as the syntax of this grammar. Every single element of the text comes into play. Nothing superfluous, everything plays a role.

Ş.T.: Definitely. For instance, what interests me in Beckett, in this sense, is what I just mentioned regarding the textual level: he puts forth something, then an ellipsis, then two lines of space, and *then* keeps on with the dialogue, which I think is not a mere coincidence, and this is something that tightens my relationship to Beckett. The moment I realised that the line of space on print, or two lines of space for that matter, should correspond or should *translate* into the language of performance, a difficulty emerged for me, since Beckett drew me to relate to form only in abstract terms, beyond what is related to plot. And that is what Beckett brings forth to us: this pure form, the form of the text. When you start to translate that form into the form of a performance, you face a real challenge and an exploration process; a reversed exploration back to the text itself begins. In fact, the text presents itself as a game. You, as the one who stages the play considering it your duty to be aware of the responsibility towards the author, I mean, having a sense of responsibility for staging Beckett and realising at all times that you will be held responsible for staging Beckett, and act accordingly, look for a proper movement and a proper voice, not the word, the meaning, or the plot, only those things as abstract, as movement and voice.

B.İ.D.: This reminds me of Billie Whitelaw, for whom Beckett wrote *Not I*. She emphasises the significance of finding the precise voice. This relates directly to what you just stated.

Ş.T.: Sure, since this is the only way you can establish a true relation between the text and the movement. Otherwise, Beckett's plays, if you take away the aspect of form, can be staged just like any classic work. That is, after all, the common practice exercised throughout the world, which leads to a performance almost impossible to watch, boring productions. In fact, Beckett's texts are incredibly amusing.

B.İ.D.: Absolutely. Even in the bleak atmosphere of *Krapp's Last Tape* you can find a certain sense of amusement.

Ş.T.: It is so and the texts always carry something to discover in the present time, or propose an amusing challenge. You are amused while dealing with it. I mean, the fun aspect in "game" is already present in the text and can be detected by the reader. Trying to translate that aspect you have found as a reader, into the language of performance is what forces you into that exploration that goes on during the performance itself. You reach at the fun, the amusing aspect always through that challenge. The reason why I mentioned that I did not create the "game" to stage Beckett but arrived at Beckett as a result of the game concept is this: even if the author is Beckett, the text is for performance, it cannot be vice versa. Beckett must have thought the same for his own plays as well.

B.İ.D.: This is a crucial point and it relates to what you mentioned before, that he does not propose an acting or directing method. I can take a step further and say that he doesn't have such concerns; he even avoids getting into contact with the actors and actresses. But I still think that his approach in theatre forces us to think of Beckett in relation to the twentieth century theatre theoreticians. Where can we site

Beckett-actor within the context of the theories developed by, say, Stanislavski, Brecht, Meyerhold, Artaud, and Grotowski? The roots of their approaches can be found in Diderot, or even in earlier acting practices. For example, I think of an article by Pierre Chabert, where he underlines that the actor is actually a raw material for Beckett, to be carved like a sculpture on stage. In this particular respect, in my study, I propose a term for Beckett actor: “raw actor”. Can we say that? What would you make of this term?

Ş.T.: Beckett does not actually propose anything that definite on acting.

B.İ.D.: There is no method for sure. But what can we think about this actor as a raw material, when it comes to the other approaches developed in the twentieth century?

Ş.T.: I think Beckett embodies the beginning of the twentieth century avant-garde inclination to bring out the actor as an abstract entity. By that I mean the anti-realist movements, since some others still had Naturalist and Realist tendencies. But the abstract... well Beckett embodies Dadaism and he embodies the abstraction of the Expressionists. Even though he seems to contradict all that exuberance, he is related to the abstraction or else with the occasional exaggeration and occasional derogation. That is how he is in line with Expressionism and the like. Then he embodies Surrealism and the behavioural characteristics that come with these. Yet, when we look into the texts we see that they can at the same time be staged in a Naturalistic way nonetheless. For instance, I can accept that we can situate Beckett among other Absurd writers with regard to the abstract elements, but if we take “nonsense” as our criteria, I wouldn’t think it is possible to place him side by side with Ionesco. I think

of them as two playwrights who are totally different from each other. In relation to what I practice as “game”, I find it hard to call Beckett, who creates “game” as a playwright, absurd in the sense of “nonsense” when I see that the very first sentence of a play is tied to the last one in such a logical way that generates a strong meaning for the physically present, here and now. But of course, absurd as abstract is another issue. Yet, does this generate an acting method, for, as you just mentioned, the actor as a raw material? Well, I think it does not in any sense provide a clue for how to act so that it would create a potential for a raw actor. If we look at his own practices, I don’t recall that he applied any principle.

B.I.D.: Yes, you’re right.

Ş.T.: How should we take this concept of “raw-actor”, it is a powerful image. Shall we take it as an actor who does not act at all?

B.I.D.: My definition of the “raw-actor” suggests that the actor will take shape on the stage...

Ş.T.: Can we not say this for all methods?

B.I.D.: Can we?

Ş.T.: I think yes. At least they claim to be, even if they don’t turn out to be so.

Grotowski is the one to pursue such a goal.

B.İ.D.: Can we say it relates to being totally deprived of movement, as Nell and Nagg of *Endgame*, or Krapp's being motionless most of the time, directed solely by the reel-to-reel, the reactions given by stage elements? I basically take this notion on such a basis.

Ş.T.: I think this may be right. I never thought about this before in this sense. Let's think about this. This is a very important point.

B.İ.D.: The concept evokes that of Grotowski; still it is different.

Ş.T.: I don't see any such ritualistic elements in Beckett, on the contrary, I see in his works a drive towards directing the actor to make use of his logic at all times.

B.İ.D.: It is exactly the point that differentiates Beckett from Grotowski. Yet what do we make of the thing that triggers such a reaction?

Ş.T.: I always take it to be like this: he creates a literary environment for us where the actor can put forth his talent in the here and now, the present. Is that a formative environment? Well if the director interprets Beckett's literary attitude as it is, yes, but in Beckett's texts there is no obvious instruction to guide you accordingly. You would have to approach Beckett with such intensions.

B.İ.D.: I argue that the "raw-actor", in the way I take it, to be in relation to the immobility and the like, can come into being through the translation of the director.

Ş.T.: Right. I agree in those terms, since, for instance, if we look at one of Beckett's texts that taught me a lot, that is, *Act Without Words I*, it reads: "Whistle from right wing," end of sentence... "Immediately flung back on stage he falls, gets up immediately, dusts himself, turns aside, reflects," and so on. Now in all the realistic or non-realistic formal acting methods, the way to rationalise these sentences, is to establish the connection between them, for the actor. For example, I made my actor play just as the sentence states, "flung back on stage," be flung only as being flung is; "gets up," get up as much as getting up is; "dusts himself," dust yourself as much as dusting yourself is... I mean he doesn't dust himself because he is flung or because he gets up.

B.İ.D.: There is no causality.

Ş.T.: For that reason I did not make causality the actor's duty. He acted in single units of sentence. The causality of these, the "as if", happens for the audience, not the actor.

B.İ.D.: Exactly.

Ş.T.: So, each sentence is complete within itself, each literary sentence is a movement. When you take the "as if" away from the stage, you lend it to the audience. Then you have a chance to create an illusion of some kind, but you do not complete the illusion on stage, you just create all the elements of the illusion on stage and the "as if" is realised by the audience. If I had seen this as what Beckett practiced as well, I could say that he proposed it for staging, but this is what he accomplishes

on a literary level. Look into all his literary texts; read the sentences by themselves and you'll see that they are not dependent on one another, yet meaning emerges when they come together. As such, he produces an atmosphere, a literary condition for you. I tried exactly to take this literary attitude, and translate it into the language of performance. In that sense, "raw-actor" can be a relevant definition of the actor who acts only as much as the text obliges him to act. He will not feel for us, will not get sentimental for us, will not try to reveal the story for us; he will just perform the act, the action, as someone who performs the movement. This is one of the most difficult things in acting, because, for instance, if you give any actor the direction to "think", the first question will be on what to think. However you want the "what" to be out of question and that he finds a way to act thinking only. This, as a result, challenges the actor. This is where the "game" factor comes into play for the actor. The element of "how" is also present here, because the feelings, which he tackled to express before, are now involved in a struggle for erasure. This struggle creates a certain emotional condition in the actor. That emotion is parallel with what the man in *Act without Words I* experiences. That man is flung into somewhere he does not know. There is a torn up desert illustration behind, but "there" is not a desert. There is no cover up for the stage; the branch sticking out into the stage is just a branch, not a tree; lighting is artificial, there is no sunshine effect... Yet, if you look at all the performances of this play performed throughout the world, you see either an incredible stage design...

B.I.D.: Or exaggeration...

Ş.T.: Yes. Because the effort to rationalise the absurd, the absurd as abstract not as nonsense, the effort to bring that absurd even closer to life, results on stage in either exaggerations, or obvious dramatic cause and effect relations. For example, he sits under the tree because he sweats even though there is sun. If you do that, the “as if” becomes realised totally on stage, and there’s no better way to betray a text by Beckett, since he does not realise the “as if” thoroughly on the paper either. It is you who realise that “as if”.

B.İ.D.: Because all of these texts are blueprints.

Ş.T.: Incomplete.

B.İ.D.: Right, they’re not finished; they’re to be completed on the stage.

Ş.T.: That is the most important aspect for a piece of art. All works of art should be incomplete. From the last century onwards that is what we are dwelling on. I mean a work that ends the “as if” within the work, puts the receiver in a situation. The contrary is pursued from the beginning of the twentieth century until perhaps the 1960s, but with the 1980s we see something else, where the distinction between art and life is totally abandoned. Actually, this is a move towards the aesthetics of life itself where art becomes a subdivision.

B.İ.D.: How can we think of this in connection with a Beckett performance, in which the actor is merely an executer of a certain movement? I think of Winnie in *Happy Days*, there for instance, the bell rings and after ten seconds she looks down and

stands up... The bell is in fact like a command for her to start. When this happens in front of the audience, I think, it strikes a different note of reality, the feeling of here and now.

Ş.T.: Right, this is not the experience of a daily reality; it is the experience of the reality of the stage, which draws a line between life and art. The fact that she looks down after exactly ten seconds is what differentiates art from life.

B.İ.D.: It is very tempting to think about those seconds, they remind me of *Breath...*

Ş.T.: It's at the same time composed like a musical score, where when there is a  $\frac{3}{4}$  time signature it is played accordingly. In Beckett too you get the right tune by following such instructions. If you should prefer another time signature, it turns out to be a different piece.

B.İ.D.: I would like to return to the notion of translation. Staging Beckett relates to a translational activity, especially when you consider how creativity and restrictions go hand in hand. Beckett is, in a sense, very normative about his plays, outlining rules, suggesting his own way of directing, yet creativity is still generated by these rules and regulations.

Ş.T.: Creativity is ever more stimulated by those restrictions. By that I mean artistic creation, since the freedom from regulations in that sense is similar to real life situations. In real life there are no restrictions as such. If you can steal you do, but on stage you cannot do anything because just you can; you have to comply with the

rules of the stage. When this is the case, artistic creativity is activated, for you have to create a solution within a given, to come to a solution expected by a given. That is what excites me about art; that it presents a way to think which you cannot find in real life. In real life you have options to consider, for instance, whether to walk this, or that way and to wear shoes or not according to your benefit. On the stage, however, if you have to, you have to walk in a certain direction and you will walk barefoot even if your feet get burned. Only *then* you try out every way of walking, because you are not free to wear shoes. Probabilities are sought initiated by such restrictions. In other words, you begin to get results just because your feet are burning. Life, on the contrary, is led to arrive at logical solutions. Art is irrational. It is irrational by existence. For that reason, what you can propose to those people deeming Beckett as a normative director or playwright with regard to such timing directions, is that they play a musical score by ignoring all the pauses and the meter; they will see that a totally different piece will come out. If we think of the text only as meaning, a totality of the meanings of word, if we restrict the text to that, then yes, Beckett is normative. But he writes *plays*.

B.İ.D.: All of which can be realised thorough performance. The act of translation is also a performance if you consider how one struggles with the text. The number of restrictions multiplies the drive to be creative.

Ş.T.: There is also the fact that there is infinite number of possibilities to express a certain thing in any language. You can put together words in any order you like to express yourself and this creates a voice and a rhythm; a metre emerges. In such a way that with different rhythms, meters, pauses the same set of words, or a variation

of words can come to mean different things. Imagine how intonation creates a difference in meaning. Beckett's greatest accomplishment, in this sense, is that he presents you a text like a musical score in which there is guidance for how you can turn the written into voice, not word or meaning, but voice. The rules that exist are the lines in between measures, key, or time signatures. You cannot look at a single note, which is an abstract sign, on a musical notation and think that it restricts your freedom and decide to play it as if it is a different note. It would make it something else with a different meaning. For that reason, what you have is a musical score in Beckett, there is nothing surprising in that. It would be unjust to take only the meaning of the words to make up a Beckett text, since if you look at his works as a whole, you will see that it is always the same story he narrates. He was not such a restricted and lacking person for sure.

B.I.D.: No doubt the repetition is one of the most striking aspects in Beckett's works. Everything is in repetition though he realises the repletion in diverse, varying structures.

Ş.T.: Now, the relationship between Clov and Hamm in *Endgame*, the relationship between Winnie and Willie in *Happy Days*, and the relationship between Vladimir and Estragon in *Godot* is almost exactly the same. In what sense? Well, one opens and the other closes the play. Take, for instance, the dialogue of the women in *Come and Go*: "Vi: When did we three last meet?" ellipsis, "Ru: Let us not speak." The question is asked and then silence, a request is made which then is not fulfilled. All the interactions between the pairs of characters have this element in all the plays. They all cover the same subject matter anyway. There aren't any varieties of subject;

there is only one. It is the fact that he was able to write so many works based on a single subject that amazes and allures one after all.

B.I.D.: And that he could do so in such variation, especially theatrical variation.

From the vantage point of the idea of variation, I would like to dwell on his narratives a little. What I argue, and what I think is a mostly ignored dimension of his narratives, is that his novels carry in them a great number of theatrical elements and that this theatricality gains a metatheatrical quality in his plays. It is in a way a process that Beckett goes through. How would you comment on that? For instance, as the most obvious example, *Murphy* can be said to have such elements. Murphy wants his ashes to be scattered to the toilet in the Abbey Theatre during the performance of a piece, but the person who is supposed to take the ashes to the theatre, cannot even get there, instead gets involved in a fight at a bar, and the ashes spill to the ground, covered with dirt, butts, vomit, and so on. Metatheatrical aspects seem to be present in the novels in a sense as well, but when we look into the plays, it is most obvious considering the comments made on theatre; each play is like a comment on theatre.

Ş.T.: Very true, and in *Endgame* this is most obvious. Hamm starts by “removing the handkerchief from his face,” exclaiming “Me – to play.” And it is always only about the present time. For example, one of the things that strikes me most in *Endgame* is something you would think to be an absurd sentence in the first place: “Hamm: Go and get two bicycle-wheels,” and the answer is, “Clov: There are no more bicycle-wheels.” Now, why does he need bicycle-wheels at all? There is no clue in the text as to why. You, as the performer, are obliged to discover what that means. It must be

something that should open the play and the negative answer should be one that closes it. If you have small wheels for the actor's chair instead of big, bicycle-like wheels, the helplessness that is experienced in the present is revealed. If he has big wheels, he can move by himself. So this signifies the contrast between mobility and immobility.

B.I.D.: The contrast, the tension between mobility and immobility is the source of it.

Ş.T.: All of his plays are about this. His tools are voice versus silence and mobility versus immobility, but this in the end is life versus death. This duality is what all works of art are based on. We all are struggling between life and death, thus all works of art have this as a subject matter, and I mean *all*. A love story is about this as well: will I be able to reproduce or not? If you boil them down to the most basic, purest level, you find the basic conflict of life. Death, the end, is ever present at the beginning, yet we keep on. It's in Hamm's soliloquy. He says this from the start in the most obvious fashion. He tells the audience that they know the play will end yet they keep on sitting there. He talks exactly about the present. He is saying you will die and yet you still live. It is precisely the way you put it above, and I believe that it is in the novels and in all his narratives too. I mentioned *Company* before, there a "voice that comes to one in the dark" and a directive to "imagine" is presented to the reader; that is how I start to read the text. I'm face to face with an author who does not try to create images for me at all. The things that follow one another does so in such a way that I see, I have no change but to imagine, because *this* is a time span through which there are things to be carried out. The time span that covers the period

I am reading the text. I can only do the things that I can do in that certain span, nothing more.

B.İ.D.: Concerning the theatricality present in the novels; specifically in the trilogy, the continuous spelling out of things followed by their immediate rejection, which in the end, drives you, as the reader, to question your own reading activity so you start perceiving your reality, not your artistic, but your own physical reality, relates as well to theatricality, in that it creates a theatrical here and now effect for the reader.

Ş.T.: Absolutely right. I will give another example from *Company* regarding this issue: you catch yourself in a position where you realise that you tend to read certain paragraphs slowly and others faster even though you are not reading aloud. There is a paragraph where there is reasoning about what would happen if it was the first person singular, second person singular, or the third person singular being spoken to. However hard you try, you cannot read that paragraph slowly. There is no way. I made my students read these texts aloud in order to see if I was the only one experiencing it as such. Without any incentive, they started reading faster when they came to that particular paragraph. It is structurally so and it, without a doubt, produces a certain emotion. While the struggle between the first person and the second person goes on, you find yourself under an extreme pressure and the emotion, the pressure residing within the text as meaning reflects on you physically.

B.İ.D.: It creates a physical impact, narrative as it is...

Ş.T.: Other novels bear the same quality too; like *Malone...*

B.İ.D.: In *The Unnameable* especially the speeding up towards the end that goes “in the silence you don’t know...” leaves you short of breath in that endless monologue. As you put it, the text is structured in such a way that it comes to exist in the present. It is the same situation for the actor.

Ş.T.: But if you dwell merely on the meaning of words you can’t go anywhere...

B.İ.D.: Nowhere... The audience should let themselves go with the theatrical flow. I think, this can be counted as the factor behind the worldwide success of *Waiting for Godot*. If you start thinking on religion, the philosophy behind it, etc. you would miss the play.

Ş.T.: Beckett mocks those who see Christ and God behind the characters of *Endgame*. The thing is I also thought there were such allusions when I first read the play, but when you read Beckett’s reaction to such criticism in interviews and the like, you start looking at things from a different perspective. Again in relation with theatricality and how the texts capture the present, think about *Happy Days* for instance, it is the first play that I directed professionally and the first time I directed myself. I rehearsed for one and a half years. I came across something in the play while rehearsing. I deem this is a relevant anecdote. There is this thing in Turkish theatre tradition; there are several plays about the sentimentality of mothers whose children don’t come to visit them at holidays. If you read *Happy Days* on the wrong track, there appears to be a similar sentimental condition. Something cheesy. Now they have commercials of candy producers in the same cheesy sentimental manner.

*Happy Days* stands on such a threshold. If you put it on the wrong track you get that sort of cheesiness. However, the play is not about women in particular, but people in general and starts by “Hail, holy light,” since the stage light is then cast on the woman. She addresses *that* light with that expression. Or, the powder compact she takes out of her bag and smashes to the decor—it is possible to think about this in relation to her being upset because there is no response from Willie, but it is also possible to analyse it independently—will be there tomorrow as she pronounces it, because the play will be staged the next day at the same hour and the same powder compact will be smashed again. A reading of Beckett based on what takes place at the present is probable. Isn’t there a second meaning inherent? Of course there is; and this is his great achievement. With these, he creates meaning, immense and hard to deal with, but you cannot get to that following only the traits that the “words” offer. You have to take into account the inherent action, the action inherent in the language. When you discover the action in language, finding the action for performance becomes an easy task. Beckett produces the action through language.

B.I.D.: Then it becomes crucial to think how the action in language can be translated and how to look into theatre-translation with regard to the dynamics within language. The bottom line is: to what extent have the translators taken notice of these (meta)theatrical elements.

Ş.T.: The translator should find the action in language, in the target language. I have to admit that for all Beckett productions I had to retranslate all the texts for performance, to get that action, although competent translators had translated the plays. I know that those translators who were still alive were offended somehow, but

this is theatre after all. I cannot sacrifice theatrical elements for the sake of literary translation.

B.İ.D.: The translation should not be seen as an end in itself, complete and done with, once it is published and sold.

Ş.T.: Never. For instance there is a line “Something is taking its course.”

B.İ.D.: In *Endgame*.

Ş.T.: And this has been translated into Turkish as, “her şey hükmünü sürdürüyor,” or as “her şey olacağına varır.”

B.İ.D.: It is a key sentence.

Ş.T.: Yes, it says “olması gerekenler oluyor,” in fact, at that exact moment.

B.İ.D.: We see the present here as well.

Ş.T.: It’s 9:20 pm and every day at 9:20 pm I take up the telescope and “see... a multitude...” He says, “That’s what I call a magnifier,” because there is no multitude of people. You see, it is possible to read *everything* in relation to the present.

B.İ.D.: Talking about translators of Beckett, what do you think about Akşit Göktürk’s translation of Beckett?

Ş.T.: The translation of *Happy Days* is perfect regardless of its two innocent shortcomings.

B.İ.D.: Is it the “dread to kill,” part?

Ş.T.: No, no. It’s “Neydi o çizgi?” for “line” which also means the actor’s line in the dialogue. If you put it only as “çizgi” we have to look for a long, narrow mark. She’s looking at the mirror at that moment. It is necessary to find a word that would convey both meanings. And that line is followed by a line from T.S. Eliot; well you have another line then. Beckett is very difficult to translate.

B.İ.D.: The translation process can take you to very different places. The line you speak of becomes something important in relation to metatheatricality.

Ş.T.: Akşit Göktürk’s translation can be regarded as the most successful among all Beckett translations into Turkish. No one has ever captured the score as he did. He was an amazing person. There’s no doubt about it. He takes *Happy Days* and finds a way to make it work in Turkish. Of course there are flaws in the translation when it comes to performance.

B.İ.D.: The case is true for all translations. On the performance level, translations don’t stand as an end in themselves and they shouldn’t be regarded as such.

Ş.T.: Sure and there is no single word that can cover all the meanings of “line” in Turkish. There are three words: “çizgi”, “dize”, “replik”. I thought about this a lot and came up with a solution to leave it blank and gesture the line with the hand, so that it would at the same look like the actress had forgotten her line, to continue with the line from T.S. Eliot.

B.İ.D.: I see that you have used Hamdi Koç’s translation of short plays.

Ş.T.: Yes, but I changed a lot and he was offended.

B.İ.D.: For my study I’m looking into three translations of *Krapp’s Last Tape*, by Fatih Özgüven, Uğur Ün, and Hamdi Koç respectively. Among these the most interesting strategy is employed by Koç. He has translated word for word. I think, that’s how one can present Beckett as an “absurd” playwright.

Ş.T.: You are right. It wouldn’t mean anything since it totally corresponds to “nonsense”.

B.İ.D.: The problem is that: absurd theatre is conceived as the theatre of “nonsense” in Turkey, so that whatever you do in translation or in performance can be justified. In fact, it is something totally different. I’m thinking about a certain five words in a play by Stoppard, I’m not sure about the exact name, but it might be from *Travesties*. These words sound nonsense in English, but if you look at their French equivalents, you come up with different meanings that make sense on a different level.

Ş.T.: As in Beckett, we tried to understand the underlying meanings of Hamm and Clov, in association with words in English like “hammer” and “glove”. But when you look into French connections you get amazing results. I think, in this respect, Koç presents Beckett as absurd in the sense of “nonsense”.

B.İ.D.: I will give an example from *Krapp’s Last Tape*. Towards the end, Krapp starts recording his “last tape”. Yet, he does not have much to say. He talks about the women he’s been with and says, “Fanny came in a couple of times,” and calls her a “bonny old ghost of a whore.” He goes on, “Couldn’t do much, but I suppose better than a kick in the crutch.” Both Koç and Özgüven translate this last sentence similarly, as, “bacak arasına tekme atmaktan iyidir,” in the most literal sense of the word. Ün, however, translates it as, “ama otuzbirden iyidir,” which reveals that there is nothing absurd in it, but a real situation.

Ş.T.: It’s extremely tragic.

B.İ.D.: And when you cannot see this in translation...

Ş.T.: It’s terribly tragic. The word itself does not expose it. The expression “it’s better than...” carries in itself the tragedy of the play. If you cannot make something out of this, you eliminate the reason the play was written.

B.İ.D.: What can a real kick, which is the only thing “bacak arasına tekme atmak” can come to mean, indicate? It makes no sense.

Ş.T.: It's absolutely word for word. Furthermore, wouldn't one think this should mean something else?

B.İ.D.: There's another example from the same section where he wants to "be again." He's talking about the days when he was wearing "short trousers," going to church, gathering holly, the red-berried, and so forth. Now, here there is a sentence where he says, "with the bitch." Özgüven just omits this, I don't know why, but Koç translates it as "kaltak", meaning "bitch" as it is used in slang. The "bitch" here, however, is a female dog and Krapp was just a kid then, so there is no womanising here; he wants to be that child again. Such a translation creates a big difference. Here, the translator should consider the consequences of the text being taken by a performer who will then translate it into voice and action.

Ş.T.: It's not related directly to our subject, but we had an incident here once about a certain typing mistake in translation. Back then, it was difficult to get hold of originals and we didn't have the resources and a production of a play by Jean Genet was being held. They rehearsed for almost a year with the translation and we couldn't find the French text. There was a dialogue between two prostitutes, with a direction that the actress changes her pants ("don" in Turkish) so she did change her panties on stage. When the French text was finally available we saw that it was "tone" ("ton" in Turkish). So you see how crucial the mistakes in translation can be. We can experience such tragic events. You can call it just a typo, but in theatre it becomes a vital mistake. That is why I take all the punctuations so seriously. They are the only grounds beneath my feet. The ellipsis, the three seconds stage direction

in between brackets, these are the only signs that direct me towards the way I pronounce those words. To call them limiting would be wrong.

B.I.D.: Stage directions are where everything resides in theatre texts and those of Beckett in particular...

Ş.T.: If they were to disappear from beneath my feet I would confuse which note to play, since I'm an instrument, for Beckett as well. If this is what you mean by "raw-actor", in this sense, I see Beckett also relates to Edward Gordon Craig and for instance to Adolphe Appia, well mostly to Craig.

B.I.D.: Craig's "marionette"...

Ş.T.: Yes, the "über-marionette", an expression that gives goose bumps to people, but if you think about it you see what kind of an acting achievement it is for an actor to reduce himself to a mere instrument.

B.I.D.: In point of fact, this is precisely what I want to express with the term "raw".

Ş.T.: Indeed, what comes out from the action of the actor is an object of art. It's not a reflection, a repetition of anything that exists in life, nor an amazing reproduction of a human being. The actor acts to become an object of art. We should not speak of theatre if an actor or a director cannot accept becoming a plastic artefact, it would be life itself. You use a kind expression indeed, it can as well be plastic artefact, and that is where the actor's achievement lies.

B.İ.D.: I'm glad we agreed on this matter. Perhaps I couldn't express it as it was before. I reflected upon this term for a long time, thinking about Grotowski, and the rest, and I was unable to associate it properly.

Ş.T.: I don't think Grotowski's approach amounts to that either.

B.İ.D.: In Grotowski there is something entirely different and I felt it necessary to come up with a new term and that is why I'm relieved you agree.

Ş.T.: It's surprising that he gets such emotional results with such logical directions. I've been embarrassed for so long thinking like this. It is true that I read, for instance, *Company*, as if I'm reading a mathematical formula, but it makes me cry as well. It comes to this: if you create an effect on the people so that they cry when they read a statistics report, it means that you accomplished something good with art. Art should be in a form as distant and alien as a statistics report is. It doesn't mean, well people get upset when you say art should be distant from life; for me art is where there is no life. By its nature, it is that that has no life. That's what I mean, otherwise the departure point of everyone is life; after all, we cannot create something we have no idea of. The product would inevitably have allusions to life, but in the end art is more akin to thought than life, and thought is not life.

B.İ.D.: What you're doing is different in the sense that you have focused on the dramaticules, while everyone in Turkey was staging *Waiting for Godot* almost without exception over and over again. Don't you think the fact that it is only

*Waiting for Godot* that is being staged creates an overall idea of Beckett in Turkey, as if Beckett is reduced to this particular play? There are all those other plays and dramaticules, and especially *Breath*, in which there is only an image.

Ş.T.: Sure. When I staged *Breath* as a part of “Five Short Plays” people thought it didn’t fit into a theatre production. However, it is an amazing confrontation for the present. Imagine you are the audience, sitting and watching something that is devoured of words that relates the meaning, the lights turn on and off; now if you don’t understand anything from this and you don’t feel pain, okay then, because *Breath* is extremely tragic.

B.İ.D.: The thing in *Breath* is overpowering. Even when you read it, it transforms you into a different dimension.

Ş.T.: It is even so when it takes place.

B.İ.D.: Considering the point where Beckett reached such extreme minimalism in this piece, it is important that you have reintroduced the playwright who is almost known only for *Waiting for Godot* in Turkey.

Ş.T.: I deliberately stayed away from *Godot*, and I still avoid it.

B.İ.D.: That was what I wanted to ask.

Ş.T.: I avoided it on purpose. It's something like that: I restrained myself from seeing *La Joconde* until the end of my visit to the Louvre Museum, because everyone wanted to see that, all the arrows were pointed at that, and all the tourists were crowding in front of it. Solely for that same reason, I avoided staging *Waiting for Godot*. I think it was in Beckett's memoirs or related in a biography of his, after a *Godot* performance, Beckett runs to the backstage after hearing people applauding so loud, asking what they did wrong, because something must have gone wrong. It gives such a feeling. I have witnessed, not only in Turkey but around the globe, so many aesthetically spoiled performances of this play, since in my youth when *Waiting for Godot* was extremely popular and seen as a saviour that I didn't want to get involved with it. The second reason is that now it is difficult for me to work on that play because all the others provide such insight and opportunities that it would be hard for me to think about working on *Godot*. Like I said, I did not find Beckett through *Waiting for Godot*, I found him through his narratives.

B.İ.D.: This is an important point. What I problematise in my study, is the neglect of Beckett's prose.

Ş.T.: I first loved those works. I don't remember the year but I wasn't studying theatre then; I was either studying law or maybe I was still in high school. I came across the short stories of Beckett. They were the first things I read by him and it was a little volume. In one story, there was a man cutting bread and collecting the crumbs in his hands. There was nothing about the mood, no action of the mind, but only physical movement. I remember being extremely impressed. Of course, it is much

later that I got seriously interested in Beckett, after I graduated from theatre, but it was the narratives that directed me towards Beckett's theatre.

B.İ.D.: So it is clearly intentional that you stayed away from *Waiting for Godot*. I think staging only *Godot* has the potential of reducing Beckett's *oeuvre* to a single play. And it's quite problematic in this respect.

Ş.T.: I also believe that *Endgame* is a much better work than *Waiting for Godot*. Among all the pair of characters, I find Clov and Hamm rather amusing. They are tragic at the same time.

B.İ.D.: Don't you find it interesting, that in Beckett there is always repetition, but with variation for sure, in the plays there is the repetitive pattern of pairs like Didi and Gogo, Ham and Clov, Winnie and Willie, but in *Krapp's Last Tape* there appears a single character on stage.

Ş.T.: But there is still a pair.

B.İ.D.: It looks like there is only one character, yet there are two or even three... I find this very interesting. The play is actually a monologue, but there is Krapp at the age of twenty-four, Krapp at the age of thirty-nine, and Krapp at the age of sixty-nine. He follows the repetitive pattern, as his theatrical habit is; even though he employs a single character, he manages to come up with duality.

Ş.T.: The way he employs duality at a structural level maintains that the fractures in meaning are rationalised, which I think provides a ground for discussing against him being positioned as the grounding writer of post-modernism or that he is a post-modern writer. Deprived of those dualities the texts could have been far-gone, but those pairs help the meaning to emerge; this stands against the idea that no meaning can be derived from these texts.

B.İ.D.: All the elements are, as you said, set like a musical score.

Ş.T.: In such a context, I always wonder why he is considered among the absurd playwrights.

B.İ.D.: It's a problematic situation. Martin Esslin situated him thus and he is known as such.

Ş.T.: On the contrary he is very rational.

B.İ.D.: I can't see anything absurd because of the rationality of structures, because of the mathematical quality that presents itself to us.

Ş.T.: There is exactly a mathematic rationalisation so that nothing in the texts are there by chance and what I find tempting is that among all this mathematical rationality, you can find many things that are very personally related to his own life. He puts little elements from his life to work on a universal basis in his plays.

B.İ.D.: Krapp's memories are rife with Beckett's childhood experiences.

Ş.T.: It is incredible that he managed to do that.

B.İ.D.: What do you think of the fact that Beckett in Turkey, besides the common tendency towards *Waiting for Godot*, is staged only as experimental?

Ş.T.: Well, it is because, the other approach is harder and it requires a certain amount of responsibility to be taken. You cannot get rapid results when you work on Beckett. It really gets on my nerves to think about, for instance some of the experimental approaches. You cannot experiment on the audience, and I don't think Beckett experimented on the readers. As we discussed, it is extremely rational, more rational than any other text that I have read and I get them and I get great pleasure in reading them. When these texts are put on stage as incomprehensible delusions, it really gets on my nerves. What is more, I consider such approaches as contrary to what Beckett have tried so hard to achieve all through his life.

B.İ.D.: Such practices do get on one's nerves, but is it possible to obviate such practices?

Ş.T.: If you think about it, the inheritors of Beckett are trying to do that. I paid copyright per minute... But no, I don't think it can be prevented, because...

B.İ.D.: ...because there is freedom of artistic expression. It may be seen as restricting people's artistic choices.

Ş.T.: Definitely. For that reason, although I don't like to reduce my own approach to a set of rules, I'm not scared to talk about rules either. "Game" comes with its rules. That is why I employed the "game" concept as the basis of my work, because, well, when did "game" as a concept emerged? It had started before the dream of "dolce vita" was openly pronounced, before "the wall" was torn down in 1989. It was stated that there is no room for grand ideologies, grand narratives, and there is no hope for the world to change, we tried and couldn't succeed and now we shall put off the burden. So come and let's play! Since there's no way to create an alternative to the system, we can only play games within the system. When this argumentation took hold both on theoretical and practical levels along with the implementation of the aesthetics of life supported by claims of democratising art, I was still against this idea, since when the urge to play a game is presented in this way, it comes to mean that the game itself should be deprived of ideology. Thus, I situated the "game" at the centre of my work and tried to express myself through the zones of responsibility within. What we call "game" cannot be played without rules. There's no "game" when you abolish the rules.

B.İ.D.: The same goes for the games one plays a child.

Ş.T.: Of course. Even in games without any inherent challenge a certain ethics should be maintained. Say we're setting up the table as if it was a game and one is the mother and the other is the child. We cannot switch places so that the child becomes mother, and vice versa, at will, because there is a consensus between us, a zone of responsibility is predefined. Like if we establish that I am Jane and you are

Tarzan and now we're going to rescue captive animals from the bad guys, you cannot claim being Jane right in the middle of the game. That either ends the game or restarts it. It will be a new one when it restarts. I made use of the "game" concept as such, since in theory and practice, it provided me with the tools to reformulate a language on the stage. Beckett on the other hand, was one of the writers that rendered the potential suitable to this pursuit. That's why I set off with him, because then I didn't even know if I could write or not, in fact, I had no intention of becoming a writer. I saw that Beckett's literature supported what I had in mind. I perceived that what he had accomplished on paper had certain rationality to it, akin to what I wanted to realise on stage. There is nothing nonsensical in these texts; the limits of responsibility clearly defined the grammar to it apparent, each level obvious. That's why I find it rather hard to think Beckett as a field of experimentation. I want to state this in relation to what I said at the beginning: you should have the responsibility that you are experimenting on that certain text. Why are you making use of Beckett then, and not Shakespeare or Racine or why don't you just write your own text, if you're going to make something totally different out of it in the end? The fact that the author is dead does not rid us from all responsibility to the text, does it? Furthermore, it doesn't save us from such responsibility if we are staging it without the knowledge of the Beckett Estate. What counts is being able to stand responsible to it artistically. One should stop and think if one's staging Beckett and Sophocles and the result turns out to be the same. One should be able to answer for it. If these two gives the same result, then why one is Beckett and the other Sophocles? You could as well pick up words from a dictionary, if the question is finding words to perform; there are loads of words. The one who puts a play on stage should have such responsibility. Unfortunately, neither for *Waiting for Godot* nor for the other plays of Beckett it is

possible to see that. For instance, a *Happy Days* production that was on last year in Epidaurus was truly disappointing. I'm not interested with how well it was acted out, that the actress was outstanding and such; I'm interested in, in what context that acting takes place. What I saw had nothing to do with Beckett.

B.İ.D.: When something else is performed at such length nothing of Beckett remains.

Ş.T.: Surely and if you think about it the most effective uses of Beckett can be seen in the commercials now.

B.İ.D.: Ah, the Şekerbank commercial...

Ş.T.: That's it, but you see, this is a striking example of the system taking something and making use of it by robbing it out of its meaning. To take responsibility of Beckett would be to act against what the system practices and to try and reveal it for what it really is.

B.İ.D.: When you do so it would make an impact.

Ş.T.: Think of the way you can make fun of that bank commercial but you feel knocked down when you are presented the same by Beckett. That is what we should be thinking about. I think what you're dealing with is exciting in these terms and it made me want to work on Beckett again.

B.İ.D.: That would be really nice, if you do.

Ş.T.: I wish we had time for that.

B.İ.D.: Thank you very much for your time.

Ş.T.: You're welcome.

## APPENDIX B

### THE PAVIS QUESTIONNAIRE

#### *1. General discussion of performance*

- (a) what holds elements of performance together?
- (b) relationship between systems of staging
- (c) coherence or incoherence?
- (d) aesthetic principles of the production
- (e) what do you find disturbing about the production; strong moments or weak, boring moments?

#### *2. Scenography*

- (a) spatial forms: urban, architectural, scenic, gestural, etc.
- (b) relationship between audience space and acting space
- (c) system of colours and their connotations
- (d) principles of organization of space
- relationship between off-stage and on-stage
- links between space utilized and fiction of the staged dramatic text

#### *3. Lighting system*

#### *4. Stage properties*

- type, function, relationship to space and actors' bodies

#### *5. Costumes*

- how they work; relationship to actors' bodies

#### *6. Actors' performances*

- (a) individual or conventional style of acting?
- (b) relation between actor and group
- (c) relationship between text and body, between actor and role
- (d) quality of gestures and mime
- (e) quality of voices
- (f) how dialogues develop

#### *7. Function of music and sound effects*

#### *8. Pace of performance*

- (a) overall pace

- (b) pace of certain signifying systems (lighting, costumes, gestures, etc.)

- (c) steady or broken pace?

#### *9. Interpretation of story-line in performance*

- (a) what story is being told?
- (b) what kind of dramaturgical choices have been made?
- (c) what are ambiguities in performance and what are points of explanation?
- (d) how is plot structured?
- (e) how is story constructed by actors and staging?
- (f) what is genre of dramatic text?

#### *10. Text in performance*

- (a) main features of translation (if applicable)
- (b) what role is given to dramatic text in production?
- (c) relationship between text and image

#### *11. Audience*

- (a) where does performance take place?
- (b) what expectations did you have of performance?
- (c) how did audience react?
- (d) role of spectator in production of meaning

#### *12. How to notate (photograph and film) this production*

- (a) how to notate performance technically
- (b) which images have you retained?

#### *13. What cannot be put into signs*

- (a) what did not make sense in your interpretation of the production?
- (b) what was not reducible to signs and meaning (and why)?

#### *14.*

- (a) are there any special problems that need examining?
- (b) any comments, suggestions for further categories for the questionnaire and the production

APPENDIX C



Beyti Engin, in *Krapp's Last Tape*, 2007

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