

BOOK REVIEW

Ariadne Nunes, Joana Moura, and Marta Pacheco Pinto (eds.).
Genetic Translation Studies. Conflict and Collaboration in Liminal Spaces. London: Bloomsbury Academic, 2020. xii, 242 pp.

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Though both genetic criticism¹ and translation studies emerged as independent disciplines in the 1970s, it is only in the past decade that their trajectories have intersected, and mutual interests have developed, leading to the rise of genetic translation studies. Conceiving a text as a work in progress, genetic criticism offers a theoretical framework and methodology which can be particularly productive for translation studies. By looking at the translated text in its evolution, instead of considering it as an end product, genetic translation studies paves the way for greater use of archival (genetic) material in translation studies, e.g., the translators' manuscripts, and other working papers (Cordingley and Montini 2015). As a result, genetic translation studies gives a two-fold contribution to translation studies, depending on the research perspective adopted: it can unveil new aspects of translation as a process or yield insight into the translator and the other "agents involved" (Chesterman 2009, 20) opening new avenues for Translator Studies. In light of this, genetic translation studies is also particularly productive in pursuing "a 'microhistory' of translation and translators" (Munday 2014, 64).

The originality of *Genetic Translation Studies. Conflict and Collaboration in Liminal Spaces* edited by Ariadne Nunes, Joana Moura, and Marta Pacheco Pinto consists in a particular emphasis on how genetic material, and therefore genetic translation studies, can be utilized to increase the visibility of the agents involved in translation to stimulate further research in this direction. To this day, there has been a slight increase in publications concerned with genetic translation studies, as evidenced by special issues, projects, and research groups. Most initiatives, however, have been launched within genetic criticism rather than translation studies (8–9).

As the first book in English on this subject, the edited volume under review is a welcome collection of contributions by scholars with different backgrounds showcasing a wide range of applications of this new research methodology. Structurally, the volume consists of thirteen chapters divided into three thematical

1. The word genetic in this context goes back to the Greek *genesis* i.e., the origin of a text, not to the modern sense of genetics as pertaining to genes in the natural sciences.

parts: Genetic approaches to translation and collaboration (Part 1), Translators' stories and testimonies (Part 2), and Translators at work (Part 3). These are completed with an introductory and a conclusive section.

The introduction by the editors, with the provocative title "What is genetic translation studies good for?" (1–23), sets the stage by tracing the origins of genetic criticism and translation studies with their points of intersection and collocates genetic translation studies at their crossing. It is an informative contribution, useful to refresh the memory of those already familiar with the subject, and helpful for newcomers to get acquainted with it. The red thread recognizable throughout the book is the application of genetic approaches to archive and textual material to highlight different aspects of translation with abundant case studies. Part 1 is dedicated to studies on collaboration. João Dionísio reflects on the latency of genetic translation studies in Portugal and encourages an approach based on inference and interaction, considering both individual and contextual influences. With a genetic, semantic, and poetic approach, Esa Hartmann unveils the collaborative translation between the French poet Perse and his American translator. Ewa Kolodziejczyk examines the Polish translation of some African American spirituals by the Nobel laureate Czesław Miłosz through a genetic and complementary empirical dossier, highlighting how the translating process was instrumental in his resistance against the communist regime in Poland. Laura Ivaska explores a compilative translation into Finnish based on the original Greek text, the French, and the English translation, challenging the concept of text as a fixed entity. Elsa Pereira deals with a critic-genetic digital edition of the authorial work of the poet Homem de Mello, integrating translations and self-translations in it and showcasing how this can be achieved with a combination of two digital tools.

Part 2 deals with translators' stories and testimonies. Joana Moura investigates how physical, emotional, and phenomenological aspects influenced Peter Handke's work as a translator. Barbara Ivancic and Alexandra Zepter call for integrating embodiment theory into translation studies, drawing on the increase in translator self-representation through body metaphors. Dominique Faria examines eight translators' articles that contributed to the profession's visibility when translation studies was still emerging in Portugal. Marisa Mourinha explores how epitexts reveal the attitude of the American translator Rabassa towards his profession, focusing on his relationship with the Portuguese author Lobo Antunes.

Part 3 centers on translators at work. Patrick Hersant offers a new perspective on the French translator Coindreau thanks to a genetic approach applied to many drafts preserved in the archives. With a Portugal-centered study on the role of self-translation in English-dominated scholar publications, Karen Bennett advocates for a genetic approach to shed light on this phenomenon, consequent collab-

orations, and the integration of self-translated texts in the academic discourse. Carlota Pimenta reflects on the writing procedures of the novelist Castelo Branco as an author and a translator with a genetic study of a translation compared to authorial material showing his different attitudes and revealing more about the translator's writing process. Marta Pacheco Pinto and Ariadne Nunes conduct a comparative genetic analysis of a Portuguese scholar's unfinished nineteenth-century translation from Sanskrit to unveil the role of translation in his work. In the conclusive section, the editors again state the goals of the publication, foregrounding the strengths of every part, and conclude with an open call for further research in genetic translation studies with an eloquent "TO BE CONTINUED..." (234).

In 2015, Anthony Cordingley and Chiara Montini (2015, 15) pointed out the gaps to be filled in the traditional methodology of genetic criticism for it to be suitable for collaborative and machine translation, translation memories, and other digital tools. Five years later, the volume under review can be considered a step forward in establishing genetic translation studies' own research methods, terminology, and metalanguage with a shift towards agent orientation. That said, the contributions in this volume seem to be still far from a consistent theorization, with a great variety of concepts proposed by the researchers. However, this is not surprising for an emerging discipline, and it can indicate the productive potential of this new framework and methodology.

The variety and richness of the case studies deserve to be praised for raising attention to previously under-researched or marginalized aspects and under-utilized sources. Nevertheless, the majority of the contributions in this publication are concerned with translators who have already been the focus of research, predominantly as authors. It would have been valuable not only to get new insights on already investigated subjects but also to have more studies on less-known translators. Yet, this absence is understandable due to the difficulties in finding archival material.

The translational documents used in the different contributions witness great variety, ranging from a late medieval text through papers from the nineteenth to the twentieth century, and encompass countries usually shadowed by English-centered publications. Thus, they broaden both the historical and geographical horizons of translation studies. In fact, while maintaining a Eurocentric perspective, the volume sheds light on non-anglophone countries, which tend to be overlooked.

Although the chapters are organized in three parts, the structure is not a strong suit of this volume. The choice of referring to genetic approaches in the name of the first part appears redundant in a collection where all contributions resort to them. At the same time, it is unclear why the Chapter on the Polish

Nobel prize laureate Miłosz is listed under collaborations. It would probably have been a better fit in one of the following sections. However, these do not present a very sharp distinction either, containing a certain degree of thematic overlap. As a result, the book would have benefited from a more clearly organized structure to promote even better the views it represents and to avoid potential confusion for the readers.

Despite some shortcomings, this volume has a thought-provoking collection of material that merits further discussion. It convincingly presents the advantages of an exchange between genetic criticism and translation studies. Moreover, it represents an important milestone for the discipline of genetic translation studies and outlines the potential of exploring a new methodology. It is a highly informative, instructive, and mind-opening resource with an insightful theoretical framework and in-depth case studies. It will be useful for scholars in translation studies, genetic criticism, and other research fields.

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