Miranda

Revue pluridisciplinaire du monde anglophone /
Multidisciplinary peer-reviewed journal on the English-speaking world

4 | 2011

Samuel Beckett : Drama as philosophical endgame ?

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Electronic version

URL: <http://journals.openedition.org/miranda/1924>

DOI: 10.4000/miranda.1924

ISSN: 2108-6559

Publisher

Université Toulouse - Jean Jaurès

Electronic reference

Lea Sinoimeri, ““Close your eyes and listen to it”: schizophonia and ventriloquism in Beckett’s plays”, *Miranda* [Online], 4 | 2011, Online since 24 June 2011, connection on 16 February 2021. URL: <http://journals.openedition.org/miranda/1924> ; DOI: <https://doi.org/10.4000/miranda.1924>

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"Close your eyes and listen to it": schizophonia and ventriloquism in Beckett's plays

Lea Sinoimeri

- 1 One of the most enigmatic and fascinating innovations of Beckett's theatre is the use of a mediated voice as a character on stage. From *Krapp's Last Tape* to *Rockaby*, Beckett explores radical solutions to sever voices from bodies, challenging the conventions of dramatic genre and reinventing dramatic character. Beckett's characters grow increasingly uncomfortable with their own voices as they split into twin opposites, a hearer and a speaker and voices move away from their bodies into artificial mouthpieces. The tension between aurality and visibility sustains a new dramatic economy in these plays, where the restless movement of voices functions in opposition to the fixity of the actors on stage. The solitary figures to whom recorded voices drone out past stories and forgotten memories appear as fluid and spectral subjectivities, suspended as they are between the airy sounds of the recorded voices and their bodily presence.
- 2 The question of split consciousness thus appears to be reread and reinterpreted through the mediated voice. This invention of duality for the stage—the self divided into a listener and a speaker—has widely been debated in Beckett studies which have often focused on the "disembodied" voice in his work.¹ As Ulrika Maude has argued, Beckett's interest in aurality and radio art is often seen as a reflection of his interest in interiority and labyrinths of the mind.² However, this duality does not simply reflect an inner conflict on stage: it complicates the relationship between interiority and exteriority, presence and absence and shows Beckett's growing interest in technologies of voice reproduction. Thus, the influence of these technologies will here be considered as a change of focus from split interiority to the exteriority of the technological support and the materializing qualities of the recorded voice.
- 3 The tape recorder as technical innovation, which Beckett encounters in his experience with radio-art, provides an appealing means by which to transform voice into both

object and "pure exteriority."³ The magnetic tape is now able to repeatedly reproduce that inner/outer voice which haunts Beckett's characters. Indeed, from *Watt* onwards, all Beckett's characters appear to be struggling with the main paradox of the human voice: that of being, as Maud Ellmann puts it

too inside and too outside: too inside because it erupts out of the viscous depths of corporeality, [...] but also too outside because the voice ventriloquizes the body rather than belonging to it.⁴

- 4 Lying alone in the ditch, "on his face, half buried in the wild long grass", Watt unexpectedly experiences the ventriloquizing power of voice when a mixed choir of voices comes to him "with great distinctness from afar, from without."⁵ Likewise, the protagonist of *How It Is*, "lying panting in the mud and dark murmurs his "life" as he hears it obscurely uttered by a voice inside him".⁶ In *Company*, "a voice tells of a past" to a man lying on his back in the dark.⁷
- 5 Beckett's interest in the question of the voice has led to a wide body of psychoanalytical criticism. Here, his characters are often seen as being afflicted with that "schizoid voice", which Beckett attributes to Mr. Endon, a character from his first novel, *Murphy*.⁸ In a recent essay, Shane Weller offers a rich and compelling reading of the question of the "schizoid voice" in Samuel Beckett's works.⁹ Weller's interesting argument is that the encounter with the work of Friedrich Hölderlin, which Beckett read in German before starting *Watt*, is central to the "writing" of the schizoid voice.¹⁰ Weller convincingly shows that Beckett's interest and understanding of the schizoid voice develops from an appropriation of psychoanalytical concepts to a progressive deconstruction of psychoanalytical language.¹¹ According to Weller, this passage articulates an initial "thematization" of the schizoid voice in *Murphy* (writing about the schizoid voice) and develops into an actualization of it in *L'innommable* and later in *Comment c'est* (writing that voice), then becoming "an attempt to complicate (without simply effacing) the distinction between schizophrenia and hysteria in the later plays".¹²
- 6 This paper aims to build on this argument while looking at the use of recorded voice as another medial "interference" which, joined to the literary ones, sustains Beckett's "syntax of weakness"¹³ and the "voicing" of the schizoid in his canon. What is at stake here is questioning the way in which the mediated voice both complicates and undermines received psychoanalytical knowledge on schizophrenia. Recording technologies may indeed have played a crucial role in the passage from thematization to actualization of the schizoid voice, offering as they do a possibility to sever voice from bodies. In the same way, the refurbishing of the question of the schizoid voice in Beckett's middle and later theatre and the progressive splitting of voices and bodies that it stages can be thought of as directly connected to ventriloquist techniques widely used in radio art since the '20s.¹⁴
- 7 With the advent of sound technology in the mid-fifties, Beckett returned to psychoanalytical concepts which had informed his works in the early thirties, now transforming and reinterpreting them from a medial perspective. Joining the respective functions of radio and telephone on the one hand and the phonograph on the other, audiotape frees sound both in space and in time. As such, it could not but pique the curiosity of an author who had always devoted marked attention to the question of the "schizoid voice". With the audiotape, this voice could now materialize and be reproduced on stage, severed from the bodies of the actors. Indeed, from the

mid-fifties onwards, performing the schizoid voice increased in importance as Beckett turned to stage and radio theatre.

- 8 Significantly, Beckett's focus seems to shift in these dramatic works from schizophrenia to "schizophrasia", that is, that separation of sound from source which in the late sixties Murray Schaeffer identifies as one of the central innovations of the 20th century and the distinctive feature of the modern soundscape.¹⁵ Schizophrasia appears to be what most affects Beckett's characters: Krapp is an old man who, ear glued to the tape recorder, listens to fragments of his past life as told by his recorded voice. In *Play*, three talking heads, imprisoned in three grey urns, endlessly repeat what would appear to be a pre-recorded speech. In *Eh Joe*, Joe, imprisoned in a sound-proof room, listens to a haunting voice from his past. In *Not I*, at the mercy of an outer voice speaking through it, a mouth spits out a flood of words in the presence of a silent listener. In *That Time*, a ghostly head, three feet above the stage, listens to three sourceless voices. In *Footfalls*, May paces up and down her line of light talking to an offstage voice, coming from dark upstage. In *Rockaby*, a woman in a rocking chair listens to her recorded voice. From *Krapp's Last Tape* to *Rockaby*, Beckett's "post-radiophonic" works could indeed be thought of as staging that cultural and individual trauma which Steven Connor calls the "bloodless surgery", or the painless loss of the human voice which technological developments in telephony and phonography produced.¹⁶
- 9 Interestingly enough, with the introduction of such technologies, it is the English language which comes back in Beckett's work. After a long season of writing in French (1946-1956), *All that Fall* (1956), the first radio play is also the first work to be written in English. So are *Krapp's Last Tape*, *Embers*, and all the other memory plays of the seventies and eighties which Beckett composed in English and translates later in French. Awakened by the sounds of radio, the English language Beckett refused and now accepts anew, returns to his characters in its ghastliest otherness, as an outer, disembodied voice, at once too inside and too outside. Not surprisingly, Mrs. Rooney, the old and talkative protagonist of *All that Fall*, starts hearing her own words resound with all their strangeness and otherness inside her body: "Do you find anything... bizarre about my way of speaking? [...] she asks Christy—I use none but the simplest words, and yet I sometimes find my way of speaking very ...bizarre."¹⁷ In *Krapp's Last Tape* the English language returns after a long exile as a reified and mediated language whose forgotten sonorities the old Krapp has to rediscover.¹⁸ A few years later, other characters will be affected by Mrs Rooney's identical trouble with words. Winnie, for example, buried in her unchanging routine, at the mercy of her uncontrollable speech, feels that something is dangerously changing, and that words might sooner or later fail and end up abandoning her: "Is not that so Willie, that even words fail, at times? What is one to do then, until they come again?" and towards the end of the play she reflects on the fact that: "(I suppose) this—might seem strange—this what shall I say—this what I have said—yes—strange—where it not—that all seems strange. Most strange. Never any change. And more and more strange."¹⁹
- 10 As technology enters more and more preponderantly in Beckett's plays, his bilingual characters start speaking in a language at once strange and familiar, "devoid of significance" and yet "so much Irish"²⁰. Instead of sinking into the abyss of interiority, Beckett's characters seem to be obsessed by a linguistic consciousness pushing them towards the surface of language. This attitude of course explodes in the *Unnameable*, where the only place for the "I" to be is nowhere else but in the language ("I'm in

words, made of words, others' words, what others"), but it is in the works for radio that it finds its favourite 'blind' soundscape, where disembodied voices resound with all their strangeness and otherness to the body. Conserving and translating voice from one medium to the other, the techniques of voice recording show their spectral nature of external archives. They operate a radical disjunction between signifier and signified, between bodies and voices signing the beginning of a new relation to interiority.

- 11 Indeed, set against the traditional association of sound with interiority and recorded voice with stream of consciousness, contemporary cultural history of sound emphasizes the nature of sound as exteriority. Jonathan Stern, for example, relates early technology for voice reproduction to embalming practices at the end of the 19th century. As such, and since the very beginning of its history, recorded sound only translates a version of the words, and not the acoustic materiality of the words themselves. It preserves the exteriority of the voice, split from all subjective interiority. "The voices of the dead" become, in Stern's words, real "figures of exteriority":

Because it comes from within the body and extends out into the world, speech is traditionally considered as both, interior and exterior, both "inside" and "outside" the limits of subjectivity. In contrast, the voices of the dead no longer emanate from bodies that serve as containers for self-awareness. *The recording is, therefore, a resonant tomb, offering the exteriority of the voice with none of its interior self-awareness.*²¹

- 12 The English language returns in *All That Fall*, *Embers* and then *Krapp's Last Tape* as an exiled "voice of the dead", impersonal, disembodied and more and more alienated from its content. In the sixties and seventies, the *dramaticules* radicalize the split between recorded voices and mummified bodies of the actors, staging an after-life reality where language returns to the subject as a constitutive alterity. Put at a distance from the subject, the words slip off-stage and resound, overpowering, superfluous and repetitive, in an uncertain, multidirectional, space. The main protagonist on Beckett's stage becomes the Listener or *Le Souveneur*, as French and English metonymically comment each other in *That Time/Cettefois*. Constantly on the edge of language,²² the listener is ventriloquized by the outer voice and endlessly caught in the compulsion to repeat her own falling out of language. The voracious imperative of W in *Rockaby* "More, more" cries out at both the terrorising effect of the outer voice and its vital necessity for the presence of the character on stage.
- 13 As voices move from the medium of body to the medium of tape, Beckett's characters start feeling like strangers to their own voices until they literally fall out of words. Henry, Krapp, Winnie, Joe and Wall fear that very same "loss of words" which affected Watt. They perform the drama of a memory that is transposed and preserved on a technological prosthesis of their bodies. The loss of the "old worlds", "the old credentials" as Watt said, "the old style" as Winnie liked to call it, leaves its mark on their alienating ventriloquism which turns them into the speakers of streaming and mechanic monologues and the listeners of their half true, half invented stories.
- 14 Henry, the protagonist of *Embers*, Beckett's second radioplay, is one of the most representative characters of this new saga of Beckett's figures. If Mrs Rooney felt her way of speaking to be rather bizarre,²³ Henry turns into a real ventriloquist. We hear him create the whole soundscape of his radioplay, calling out sounds as he does at the beginning of the play:

Henry: On. [Sea. Voice louder.] On! [He moves on. Boots on shingle. As he goes.]
Stop. [Boots on shingle as he goes, louder.] Stop! [He halts. Sea a little louder.]

Down. [Sea. Voice louder.] Down! [Slither of shingle as he sits. Sea, still faint, audible throughout what follows whenever pause indicated.]

[...]

That sound you hear is the sea. [Pause. Louder] I say that sound you hear is the sea, we are sitting on the strand. [Pause] I mention it because the sound is so strange, so unlike the sound of the sea, that if you didn't see what it was you couldn't know what it was. [Pause.] Hooves! [Pause. Louder.] Hooves! [Sound of hooves walking on a hard road. They die rapidly away. Pause.] Again! [Hooves as before. Pause. Excitedly.]²⁴

- 15 According to Schafer, recording techniques of sound transmission and preservation give way to new transgressive qualities in sound. Freed from its original source, the sound is object to a virtual dislocation in time and space, thus realizing a total permutability of all acoustical space.²⁵ All soundscapes can now be transformed into another one without any solution of continuity; Henry, who manipulates his multiple sounds at will, appears to be very much aware of this new potentiality of recorded sound.

- 16 The materializing qualities of mediated sound favour aural presence over the visual as is suggested by Henry's repeated imperatives to his father and the auditor alike: "Listen to the light now" and later on: "Listen to it. Close your eyes and listen to it, what do you think it was? A drip a drip."²⁶ The dreamlike power of radio art lies in its ability "to open a breach in the reign of the real". It is an effective device for exploring the endless territories of imagination. For Henry it turns into "a machine à rêver"²⁷, similar to the dream Hamm wishes to have in *Endgame*:

Talk softer. [Pause.] If I could sleep I might make love. I'd go into the woods. My eyes would see... the sky, the earth. I'd run, run, they wouldn't catch me. [Pause.]

There's something dripping in my head. [Pause.] A heart, a heart in my head.²⁸

- 17 The rhythmic noise of dripping breaks the homogeneity of the real for both Henry and Hamm. Overcoming the limits of the visible, voice recording opens to the infinite perspective of hyper-reality. But if the cynical Hamm can only imagine how his dreams would be if he could sleep, the radiophonic Henry literally performs this dreamlike condition. If Nagg laughs at Hamm's sonorous hallucinations: "Do you hear him? A heart in his head! [He chuckles cautiously]",²⁹ the audience of *Embers* shares the same auditory experience as the protagonist. Indeed, in *Embers* the dripping goes out of Henry's head, protagonist and audience alike are haunted by the inner rustling of language that the play stages.

- 18 Voices as well as sounds can be summoned and materialize in the play. The voices of Henry's wife Ada, his daughter Addie and the music and riding masters cease to be confined to Henry's head and appear in the play in dialogue with his own voice. The scenes of the past which these voices evoke overlap endlessly and traverse temporal dimensions occasionally melding with the radiophonic presence of Henry's radioplay.³⁰ Being unable to stop speaking to either himself or Ada or his dead father, Henry's world is wrapped in a dense enclosure of sounds. In the course of the play we hear him mimic the voices of Bolton and Holloway and animate whole fragments of dialogues from his unfinished story and then speak with his other voice, the voice of the listener that hankers for other stories and other voices to come keep him company:

Stories, stories, years and years of stories, till the need came on me, for someone, to be with me, anyone, a stranger to talk to, imagine he hears me, years of that, and then, now, for someone who...knew me, in the old days, anyone, to be with me, imagine he hears me, what I am now.³¹

- 19 We learn in the play that everything started for him with restless talking, a murmur akin to roaring prayer. He turns the need to tell stories into the urge to have somebody listen to his words which are otherwise impossible to utter. Henry prays for his "old, blind and foolish" father to listen to him; he implores Ada not to leave, but stay with him: "You needn't speak – he tells her – Just listen. Not even. Be with me."³² Similarly, Bolton, Henry's alter ego in the "play within the play", is always on the point of being abandoned by Holloway, his repeated and piercing prayers for his visitor to remain are the last sounds we hear before the dead silence of the coal burning out. As Winnie says: "merely talking to themselves with not a soul to hear, is talking in the wilderness"³³ and Henry musters all his radiophonic abilities to escape the darkness of his silent solitude.
- 20 Listeners are also mouthpieces, narrators who hand down forgotten stories to other generations of listeners. Coming back to life thanks to the wireless sounds of radio, memories gain a spectral presence: they talk with real voices in the same way real characters do, but their bodies are absent. Contrary what happens with Henry, we do not hear the sound of boots on shingle as Ada moves around, nor the slither of shingle as she sits. We can only hear her voice coming back to retell fragments of Henry's past life. Listening to Ada's flux of memories helps Henry in his ever-lasting search for lost time: "Keep on, keep on!—he implores her—Keep it going Ada, every syllable is a second gained."³⁴ But as Ada goes backwards in that "rubbish", as she calls it, of memories and past impressions, Henry hastens to finish his own invented stories, at once repeating and remaking anew the narrative of his memories. We listen to him taking notes of Ada's recollection of Henry's father "sitting on a rock looking out to sea" and the passage unveils the written nature of a mechanically reproduced and disembodied memory:
- Left soon afterwards, passed you on the road, didn't see her, looking out to ...
[Pause] Can't have been looking out to sea. [Pause] Unless you had gone round the other side. (pause) Had you gone round the cliff side? [Pause] Father! [Pause] Must have I suppose. Stands watching you a moment, then on down path to tram, up on open top and sits down in front.³⁵
- 21 As Ada's voice fades, Henry's stories come to a halt. He desperately tries to animate Bolton and Holloway; he cries, begging for Ada and his father to come back, but they appear to have been "worn out" as Ada's threatening words anticipate earlier in the play, consumed by that very same phonographic device created by Henry. The inner voice which Henry has rejected and transformed into an outer voice has animated the characters of his stories during the whole play. Without this dramatic alterity, Henry loses all his powers and we leave him in the dark counting the empty days of his life:
- This evening [Pause.] Nothing this evening. [Pause.] Tomorrow ... tomorrow ... plumber at nine, then nothing. [Pause. Puzzled.] Plumber at nine? [Pause.] Ah, yes, the waste. [Pause.] Words. [Pause.] Saturday ... nothing. Sunday ... Sunday ... nothing all day. [Pause.] Nothing, nothing all day nothing. [Pause.] All day all night nothing. [Pause.] Not a sound.³⁶
- 22 Starting from Krapp, the characters of Beckett's post-radiophonic period share with Henry a deep need for narratives together with the consciousness of the dramatic quality of the outer voice. The ventriloquism that animates the radiophonic machine of *Embers* constitutes the core of Beckett's memory plays. It is transposed under the form of a split between the postures and voices of the characters on stage, literally performing the play of the "act of listening to a play". *Krapp's Last Tape* which opens a

new phase in Beckett's theatre is the best example of how radiophonic strategies have entered his later production. The play stages the drama of voice and listener: in a late evening in the future, the old Krapp listens to recordings of his own voice from different periods of his life. The play itself is split into two distinct parts: first, the initial pantomime of Krapp pacing in and out of his cone of light and performing his banana gag, second the radioplay of his recorded memories jealously guarded in his loved spools. The notebooks of the play confirm this firm opposition between aurality and visuality as Knowlson notes:

In the production notebook of the play Beckett turns his attention to the non-listening sections of the play. He does an approximate timing of all the non-listening parts of the play and discovers that the play is fairly evenly divided between listening and non listening sections, and consequently between immobility and movement.³⁷

- 23 As Katherine Hayles has argued: "The immobility of Krapp as he listens establishes a powerful tension between the aural and the visible, between presence as technologically mediated voice and presence as embodiment."³⁸ In the closed, solitary space of Krapp's room, aurality opposes spectral spatiality. Here the memorial process is shown as an echo: the old Krapp listens to an adult Krapp who is listening to the young Krapp, each of them handing down their memories through a vertiginous chain of listeners and auditors. Like Henry, Krapp produces his own radio set: he handles his spools, moving back and forth in time, recreating his own "radiophonic" programme. From one spool to the other, as Krapp's voice is "once, twice, thrice removed",³⁹ and memories come back as strange, unknown stories, the old Krapp conducts his quest for the "grain" of life, progressively dispossessing himself of all the previous Krapps who inhabited him.
- 24 We know that this quest has started early in his life. The thirty-nine-year-old Krapp, sitting alone before a fire, says he wants to separate the "grain from the husks", meaning by "grain" "those things worth having when all the dust has settled."⁴⁰ This is why he confesses, he has said farewell to love to fully devote his life to writing. The recorded archives of his voice are, to the young and ambitious Krapp, storage of his memory, raw material for his future creative works: "These old PMs are gruesome, but I often find them a help before embarking on a new retrospect."⁴¹
- 25 By contrast, the old Krapp, who has not written a word for more than a year, deeply loves his spools. He handles them with care and calls them by their name—Spool! Spooooo!—he repeats, savouring each letter of the word. Listening to his previous self, the old Krapp separates the grain from the husks too, but this time his quest inverts that of the other Krapp: he nervously winds his tapes back and forth, cutting off and brooding on the parts where the pompous voice of the young Krapp speaks of his ambitions and intellectual visions. Only when he has found the passage he was searching for, does Krapp stop and listen. Instead of finishing by recording his voice on his present birthday, Krapp again turns his ear to the machine, abandoning speaking in favour of listening, as one of the last stage directions of the play reads:

[Long pause. He suddenly bends over machine, switches off, wrenches off tape, throws it away, puts on the other, winds it forward to the passage he wants, switches on, listens staring front.]⁴²
- 26 Cut away from all the rubbish, to use Ada's words, from all the previous Krapps, the description of the love scene captures Krapp's attention and affects his memory as he listens to it again and again. In the same way as lovers are rocked on the stuck punt, the

old Krapp is carried away by the sounds of the memorial voice and we leave him motionless, staring toward the audience. The "grain" of his life, is indeed for the old Krapp, the grain of the voice; all that sound and breath and colour which make human utterance alive: the event of the spoken word that gives life to new and sensible images.

- 27 A modern King Lear in the epoch of the technical reproducibility of sound, Krapp has lost all his possessions, his body has been stripped of all past identities, emptied of words and memories and turned into a puppet-like figure, restlessly performing the same comically mechanic actions. Still, reduced to such extreme poverty, Krapp rediscovers the importance of the physicality of sounds. He handles with extreme care the tapes containing the sounds of his life, cutting, recording, fast forwarding or rewinding, behaving like a real sound engineer, not far away from those who, in the same years when *Krapp's Last Tape* was written, were discovering the concrete sonorities of electronic music.⁴³
- 28 *How It is*, *Play*, *Not I* and then *Company*, *Worstward Ho* and *Rockaby* further develop Krapp's quest for the grain of sounds. In these later works, Beckett's characters become sheer listeners and their bodies resound in the concrete materiality of words. The writing of the schizoid voice, which Weller detects between *L'innommable* and *Comment c'est* is thus articulated through the intermediate passage of the radiophonic and dramatic season (*All that Fall*, *Krapp's Last Tape* and *Embers*), where the inner conflict of the schizophrenic condition is transposed onto the exteriority of the tape recorder which the schizophrénic condition brings to the fore. Freed from the bizarre parasites which inhabit them, Beckett's later dramatic figures become pure listeners, engaging in new practices of embodiment. Beckett explores the virtual and labyrinthine spatio-temporal dimensions which sound recording permits; in his plays he exploits the power of aurality to dissolve the established boundaries of bodily presence, as well as theatrical genre. Beckett's post-radiophonic plays perform the making and unmaking of a "schizophrénic" subjectivity, while at the same time exploring the alienating condition where rampant schizophrénia throws his characters.⁴⁴

NOTES

1. See: S. E. Gontarski. "The Body in the Body of Beckett's Theatre." In Samuel Beckett Today/Aujourd'hui, n. 11, (2000): 169-177; Levy, Shimon. *Samuel Beckett's self-referential drama: The Three I's*. Basingstoke/ Macmillan, 1990; Brater, Enoch. *Beyond minimalism: Beckett's late style in the theater*. New York: Oxford University Press, 1987.
2. In her *Beckett, Technology and the Body*, Ulrika Maude contests this view arguing that Beckett's special attention to aurality and the acoustic responds to an interest in materiality and exteriority. See Maude, Ulrika. *Beckett, Technology and the Body*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2009. 47-69.
3. Allen S. Weiss. "Radio Icons, Short Circuits, Deep Schisms." Allen S. Weiss (ed.), *Experimental Sound & Radio*. Cambridge (Mass.): MIT Press, 2001. For a short story of audiotape and its consequences on the work of authors such as Beckett and Burroughs

see also: Hayles, Katherine. "Voices out of Bodies, Bodies out of Voices: Audiotape and the Production of Subjectivity." In Adelaide Morris (ed.), *Sound States. Innovative Poetics and Acoustical Technologies*. Chapel Hill and London: The University of North Carolina Press, 1998.

4. Maud Ellman, "Joyce's Noises." *Modernism/modernity*. Volume 16, Number 2 (April 2009): 383-390. 387.

5. Beckett, Samuel. *Watt*, New York: Grove Press, 1953, 33.

6. Samuel Beckett quoted in Knowlson, James. *Damned to Fame. The Life of Samuel Beckett*. London: Bloomsbury, 1996. 461-462.

7. Beckett, Samuel. *Company* (1980). In *Nowhow On*, New York: Grove Press, 1996. 4.

8. Beckett, Samuel. *Murphy* (1938). New York: Grove Press, 1957. 185.

For some readings of schizophrenia in Beckett's works see: Ackerley, Chris. "The Uncertainty of the Self. Samuel Beckett and the Location of the Voice." *Samuel Beckett Today/Aujourd'hui*, n. 14 (2004): 39-52; Bryden, Mary. "The Schizoid Space: Beckett, Deleuze, and l'Éprouvé." *Samuel Beckett Today/Aujourd'hui*, No 5 (1996): 85-93; Winer, Robert. "The Whole Story." In Smith, Joseph H. (ed.), *The World of Samuel Beckett*. Baltimore: John Hopkins UP, 1991; Watts, Eileen H., "Beckett's Unnameables: Schizophrenia, Rationalism, and the Novel." *American Imago: Studies in Psychoanalysis and Culture*. 1988, Spring 45 (1): 85-106; Brink, Andrew. "SB's Endgame and Schizoid Ego." *The Sphinx: A Magazine of Literature and Society*. 1982, 4. 87-100.

9. Weller, Shane. "Some Experience of the Schizoid Voice": Samuel Beckett and the Language of Derangement." *Forum for Modern Language Studies*. 45 (1), 2009. 32-50.

10. Weller 40 sg.

11. Weller 46.

12. Weller.

13. Beckett quoted in Harvey, L. *Samuel Beckett: Poet and Critic*. Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1970, 249.

14. See: Frasca, Gabriele. "Prima o poi tutti i pupazzi piangono." In Fernando Marchiori (ed.), *Beckett & Puppet: Studi e scene tra Samuel Beckett e il teatro di figura*. Pisa: Titivillus, 2007, 72.

15. Murray Schafer, R. *The Soundscape: Our Sonic Environment and the Tuning of the World*. New York: Knopf, Toronto, McClelland and Stewart Ltd., 1977, 90.

16. Connor, Steven. *Dumbstruck. A Cultural History of Ventriloquism*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2000, 411.

17. Beckett, Samuel. *All that Fall. The Complete Dramatic Works*. London: Faber and Faber, 1986, 173.

18. On the question of language in Krapp's *Last Tape* see: Katz, Daniel. "Les archives de Krapp: enregistrement, traduction, langue." *Samuel Beckett Today/Aujourd'hui*, 17 (2006) 145-156. Katz interestingly argues that: "Krapp's *Last Tape* représente le retour vers une langue 'primaire', une langue d'archive personnelle, désormais rendue non-originale par un travail d'écriture et d'auto-traduction, tandis qu'au niveau textuel, le pièce met en scène l'extériorisation et la mécanisation les plus littérales de souvenirs, de la langue, et de la voix." 147.

19. Samuel Beckett, *Happy Days, The Complete Dramatic Works*, 158.

20. Samuel Beckett, *Watt*, 169.
21. Sterne, Jonathan. *The Audible Past: Cultural Origins of Sound Reproduction*. Durham: Duke University Press, 2003, 290. Emphasis added.
22. For Jean-Luc Nancy, the proper condition of the listening subject is that of being on the edge of sense: "Sonner, c'est vibrer en soi ou de soi : ce n'est pas seulement, pour le corps sonore, émettre un son, mais c'est belle et bien s'étendre, se porter et se résoudre en vibrations qui tout à la fois le rapportent à soi et le mettent hors de soi." Nancy, Jean-Luc. *Al'écoute*. Paris: Galilée, 2002, 22.
23. Beckett, Samuel. *All that Fall*. 173.
24. Beckett, Samuel. *Embers, The Complete Dramatic Works*. 253.
25. Cf. Schafer, R. Murray. *The Soundscape: Our Sonic Environment and the Tuning of the World*. 94.
26. Beckett, Samuel. *Embers*. 253; 255.
27. I borrow the term from Pierre Schaeffer: "Un microphone peut explorer pour vous le monde, et vous informer de ce qui s'y passe; il peut explorer le temps, et recréer le passé perdu; mais il peut aussi explorer l'imaginaire, il peut être une machine à rêver. N'est-ce pas parce qu'il est aveugle qu'il a tant de pouvoir? Qu'une brèche s'ouvre dans le réel, que le contexte visible manque tout à coup à une phrase, que le décor soit partout et nulle part, et voilà les rêves qui accourent au moindre appel de l'insolite, qui se glissent dans le noir, qui bâtissent sur les silences." *Dix ans d'essais radiophoniques, du Studio au Club d'essai, 1942/1952*. 2ème éd., nouvelle éd., Arles: Phonurgia nova, 1994, Disque C, 25.
28. Beckett, Samuel. *Endgame. The Complete Dramatic Works*. London: Faber and Faber, 1986, 100. I am grateful to one of the two anonymous readers of this paper for having pointed my attention to this interesting intertextual reference in *Endgame*.
29. *Endgame* 101.
30. On Beckett's use of the transgressing qualities of sound in *Embers* see: Maude, Ulrika Beckett, *Technology and the Body*. 56-60.
31. Beckett, Samuel *Embers*.. 255.
32. Beckett, Samuel. *Embers*. 263.
33. Beckett, Samuel. *Happy Days*. 145.
34. Beckett, Samuel. *Embers*. 262.
35. *Ibidem*, 263.
36. *Ibidem*, p. 264.
37. Knowlson, James. In Samuel Beckett, *Krapp's Last Tape. (The Theatrical Notebooks)*. London, Faber and Faber, 1992, 273.
38. Hayles, Katherine. "Voices out of Bodies, Bodies out of Voices: Audiotape and the Production of Subjectivity." 82.
39. I borrow the expression from Charles Krance who argues that the voice speaking in *Company* is "that of selfhood—once, twice, thrice removed". See: Krance, Charles. *Samuel Beckett's Company/Compagnie and A Piece of Monologue/Solo. A bilingual Variorum Edition*. New York and London: Garland Publishing, Inc, 1993, 189.
40. Beckett, Samuel. *Krapp's Last Tape*. In *The Complete Dramatic Works*. 217.

41. *Krapp's Last Tape*. 218.

42. *Krapp's Last Tape*. 223.

43. See: Frasca, Gabriele. "Prima o poi tutti i pupazzi piangono." 95.

44. I am thankful to Shimon Levy who has given me much precious advice on an earlier version of this paper and to the two anonymous readers for their insightful remarks.

ABSTRACTS

This paper addresses the question of the recorded voice in Beckett's drama, and more specifically in his second and later theatre, after the mid-fifties. It investigates Beckett's use of recorded voice technologies as a technique to materialise the characters' split consciousness and schizoid voice. With the advent of sound technology in the mid-fifties, Beckett appears to return to psychoanalytical concepts which had informed his works in the early thirties, now transforming and reinterpreting them from a medial perspective. Notably, the paper argues that Beckett replaces the psychoanalytical approach of the schizoid voice by a concrete illustration, materialized in the form of the "mediated voice", via the technologies of recording tape and the radio. To do this, the paper focuses on Beckett's shifting interest from schizophrenia to "schizophonia", a concept coined by R. Murray Schafer to denote the split between the sound and its source. It thus analyses the "ventriloquism" that animates Beckett's dramatic characters arguing for a growing interest in exteriority and alterity.

Cet article considère la question de la voix enregistrée dans le théâtre de Beckett, et plus spécifiquement dans la deuxième partie de son oeuvre, écrite à partir du milieu des années cinquante. On y observera l'usage que fait Beckett des voix enregistrées comme techniques matérialisant la conscience divisée des personnages et leur parole schizoïde. Avec l'avènement des technologies du son dans les années cinquante, Beckett semble en revenir à des concepts psychanalytiques qui avaient inspiré son oeuvre au début des années trente, mais celles-ci sont transformées et réinterprétées dans la perspective nouvelle de la médiatisation technologique. Nous arguerons notamment que Beckett remplace l'approche psychanalytique de la voix schizoïde par une illustration concrète, matérialisée sous la forme d'une "voix médiatisée", grâce aux technologies de la bande magnétiques et de la radio. Afin de le démontrer nous nous concentrerons sur le déplacement des centres d'intérêt de Beckett de la schizophrénie à la "schizophonie", un concept introduit par R. Murray Schafer pour désigner la césure entre le son et sa source. Nous analyserons ainsi le "ventriloquisme" des personnages de Beckett, lequel témoigne d'un intérêt grandissant pour l'extériorité et l'altérité.

INDEX

Keywords: mediated voice, schizophonia, ventriloquism, technology, alterity, exteriority, psychoanalysis

Mots-clés: voix médiatisée, schizophonie, ventriloquisme, technologie, altérité, extériorité, psychanalyse

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