

## Can we translate the character of a text?

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**Abstract:** In this paper I will initially present an excerpt translated by Brian McGuinness (MS 122, pp. 88r-88v) as a motive for a critical consideration of a Wittgensteinian concept applied to translation processes: the physiognomy of a text. This passage is a codified observation in which Wittgenstein briefly considers the character of all great art as a piece which always has primitive drives of mankind as its ground-bass – something that he thought it was missing in his own work in architecture. McGuinness, commenting from this textual portion on Wittgenstein’s writing style, proposes his own translation as a model that allows us to glimpse the character of Wittgenstein’s texts, which is, according to his view, of an ascetic practice presented as a negative form of ornament. By putting another translation model right beside McGuinness’ proposal, I will discuss strategies adopted for the Portuguese translation of the “Remarks on Frazer’s the Golden Bough” (Wittgenstein, 2011), the new Portuguese translation of the “Philosophical Investigations” (to appear), and the project for a Portuguese translation of the “Remarks on the Foundations of Mathematics” (work in progress) as works carried out according to that second alternative pattern. Both proposals, however, will be treated in this article as “physiognomies”, for the purpose of such a comparison is merely to ask about the adequacy of using that concept to establish prescriptive guidelines in translating Wittgenstein’s texts.

**Key-words:** Wittgenstein, translation theory, writing style, physiognomy.

### 1. Wittgensteinian translation theorists

Wilson’s statement that Wittgenstein is a peripheral figure in translation studies is probably right (cf. 2016, p.5). In fact, a quick and random search in some relevant books and handbooks on translation theory (Bellos, 2011; Bermann & Porter, 2014; Kuhiwczak & Littau, 2007; Pym, 2010; Venuti, 2000) will not reveal any research inspired by Wittgenstein’s concepts or philosophical insights, the only exception being the volume in which Wilson is one of the editors (Boase-Beier, Fawcett & Wilson, 2014). Tymoczko article in Berman & Porter, 2014 (pp. 165-178; cf. specially pp.168-169), for example, just uses the Wittgensteinian notion

of “game” as a paradigm of her own “cluster concept”. So, as far as we know, there are indeed only a few of Wittgensteinian translation theorists around, and their texts have not yet been sufficiently discussed and systematically compared in the field in order that the average reader could know them, their peculiarities and internal differences. They are just like a newly discovered small group of birds about whose behavior we just have a slight acquaintance. Despite that, however, some yet naïve comparisons could be traced. This could be done just in the same way we tend to think that if no two siblings are the same, not even identical twins, so it still seems interesting to make even a clumsy survey to look for possible differences.

Those that I have read so far (Gorlée, 2012; Martins, 2011, 2012a, 2012b, 2016; Oliveira, 2013, 2015a, 2015b, 2016; and Wilson, 2016) do have some unalike features. But of course, taking into account that their source of inspiration is Wittgenstein, it seems natural that each one of them had stressed different details and interconnections on the vast, complex, and unfinished philosophical literature bequeathed by the author. As a matter of fact, it is always difficult to choose the best vantage point within a large forest like the *Nachlass*. The philosopher took many distinct paths to approach the varied situations described in his texts. So, in the absence of something that we could choose as the correct spot, variations are to be presumed. Poorly drawn landscape sketches (cf. PI’s preface) also take their toll.

In this way, Gorlée underscores the expression “language-game of translation” (eighteen mentions in her book), elicited from PI § 23, to be presented as a main operative instrument within a semiotized view of translation processes or “signatures” (cf. 2012, pp. 4, 160ff.). She wants, rather, to harmonize “...the semiotic methodology of Wittgenstein and Peirce” (p. 15). Equipped with this semiotized vision her purpose is to investigate Wittgenstein’s own fragmentary style as a sort of “interpretant” (cf. pp. 26, 43), not only for describing the practice of translation, but in particular for evaluating the various forms in which Wittgenstein’s texts were rendered by some translators. So, her main point of contention is that pragmatics go well beyond linguistics in terms of benefits to understand translation processes. Mainly because it does not lose track of the sociological and pragmatic dimensions of language, of which

Wittgenstein was so cautious to consider. It is for that reason that meaning is to be conceived as a “process of cultural ordering” (p. 174), or as language games containing verbal and non-verbal situations (p. 61), so implying extralinguistic components (p. 160). Thus, for her, “words become deeds” (p. 128), as in Goethe’s *Faust*. In terms of the fragmentary style of Wittgenstein’s writings viewed as an interpretant, Gorlée highlights its similarities with “a postmodern *pout-pourri*” (p. 62), in which the most different themes are gathered in the same musical piece. This so appropriate characteristic for the current hyper-texts, and at the same time so fundamental to understanding actual processes of translation, is an element that most of Wittgenstein’s texts translations, according to her, completely neglect.

Martins’ texts also discuss Wittgenstein’s writing style, but her concern has instead a much more aesthetic accent than the almost purely theoretical reasons usually put forward by most authors. While for Gorlée, for example, the fragmentary character of Wittgenstein’s texts pragmatically corresponds to fragmentary semiotic acts of interpretation and translation (cf. 2012, pp. 64-65), such an unusual writing feature is for Martins part of a number of distinct literary aspects which endow Wittgenstein’s texts with a quality of “uncanniness” (cf. 2012b). It is true that what seems odd, weird, strange, in our habitual use of language and in some literary writings, is associated in Martins’ papers with situations worked through by Stanley Cavell in his lifelong reflections on the ordinary language (cf. 1988). A philosophical reflection, actually. But her own treatment of the uncanny is much less tributary to philosophical arguments than to literary references. To the extent that it is there that she takes the examples of the common fact that unsettling conditions remains largely unnoticed or disguised by language speakers, her more atheoretical perspective maintains. In that vein, it is up to the literature or the poetic use of language, in a certain way, to make clear the apparent ambiguities, paradoxes, dichotomies, riddles to which certain uses of expressions or words could lead us to. It is in this sense that Wittgenstein’s writings are compared with those of Samuel Beckett’s (cf. 2012b), or those of James Joyce’s, or the Brazilian novelist Guimarães Rosa’s (2011, pp. 112-113). This is because such literature “... permeates a language with a kind of foreign language: and that makes the original language tremble, seeking to

conjure up its futures, to release what in it is different from itself, alien to itself.” (2011, p. 121). Martins explores extensively that aesthetic effect of strangeness that in her translation criticisms. Some translations of Wittgenstein’s texts are then evaluated for disregarding the alleged poetic aspects of his writings, their uncanny character, and for this reason to have lost the power of the aesthetic to bring words back from the metaphysical to their ordinary use.

Oliveira’s articles, on the other hand, show a greater concern to elaborate an epistemology of translation in Wittgensteinian lines. However, Oliveira’s main reasons for moving in that direction are actually therapeutic applications regarding textual meaning stability of equivalence, and, on the opposite side, relativism and inaccuracies with respect to deconstructionist theories. This is viewed by him as a “dichotomy between the traditional essentialist perspective and postmodern relativism” (2015a). Another field in which therapeutic preventions apply are on propensities coming from descriptive approaches tributary to some form of constructivism which could easily fall prey to an inversion of the principle of charity over the pragmatic instances of the act of translation. In this fashion, epistemological clarifications should be preventive measures for taking the source text as it presents itself with all its natural difficulties, for actually viewing the process of translation as a human activity in which meaning rationality and interpretation do not precede the act of translation, but come together with it. Prophylactic procedures of a correct epistemology could avoid the interposition of abstract questions in the place of the “actual praxis of translation”, so hindering that “thinking” prevails over “looking at” (cf. 2015b, p. 224). To accomplish this task, says Oliveira, “I have been advocating the thesis that a Wittgensteinian understanding of language and translation can provide an alternative to the first opposition and a philosophical dimension to the third way, filling gaps and establishing relations that the methodologies of the area prevent us from seeing” (2015b, p. 224). For him, translation is construction of comparability (2013, pp. 292-293; 2015a, pp. 114-117) in which some equivalence is naturally presumed, but not assumed as a foundational stability, and in which a mutual comprehension between different cultures is no more than a possibility of viewing certain things as equivalents: “we see certain aspects as relevant on the basis of our

familiarity with similar objects” (2013, p. 293). In this way, his form of epistemological approach is predominantly derived from Wittgenstein's reflections on aspect vision. But a bunch of intertwined concepts proposed in Wittgenstein's later philosophy, like language games, forms of life, family resemblance, are, for Oliveira, tools for achieving the task of proposing a reinforced pragmatic and therapeutic theory of translation.

Lastly, Wilson's book is pretty much a manual of translation practice developed exclusively with Wittgensteinian concepts. Rather than offering a “Wittgensteinian theory of translation”, his aim is just “to show how a reading of Wittgenstein may be of benefit to the translation theorist and to the practicing translator” (2016, p. 7), even though he does not shy away from discussing a number of theories of translation (cf. pp. 75-100). In such a way, he has a vision on how the work has to be done, a theory of his own without adhering to any paradigm (p. 100), or “a practical philosophising of translation” (p. 107). He does not think that Wittgenstein addressed “all the philosophical issues that face a translator” nor that his answers could be read off “as if from an almanac” (p. 106). Wittgenstein is not assumed to be right *tout court*, but the point is just that Wilson gives “extended examples from the *Investigations*” and works “through them to show why [he holds] Wittgenstein to be right in his vision of language” (p. 106). The main bulk of his work is thus dedicated on how to read a source text, and, shortly thereafter, on writing and theorising about a target text. Several examples from the literature and the New Testament are mobilized through the chapters to demonstrate in a practical way how Wittgensteinian concepts such as language-game, forms of life or family resemblances could be applied in each case and in each step of the process of translation. I believe it must be for those reasons that Wilson has put as the main point of his book the physiognomic treatment that Wittgenstein gave to language (cf. pp. 17-23). Wilson's contention is that the translator must deal with language as it is found in a source text, not as an ideal language (p. 6) in which translation would become just a question of substitution or a pure and simple calculus (p. 42). In his book, seeing a physiognomy means accounting for the phenomenon as a “surveyable representation” (p. 21). This procedure would avoid oscillations and confusion between form and content or between style and substance (p. 17), and would be cautious enough to pick

up the source text within an anthropological approach, or, as he says, “appreciating a form of life as a necessary condition for meaning to function as a physiognomy” (p. 33). This matter seems so important for him that “successful translation” depends on “a feel” for the physiognomy of the source text (cf. p. 22).

So, what could we awkwardly say about differences among these four proposals in translation theory inspired by Wittgensteinian concepts? For me, what stands out in the first place is the large amount of agreement on descriptions of translation processes. Critical notes on essentialist, relativist, empiricist, and formalist perspectives on translation theory seems also to be a common ground. But, after that, what draws me most attention is the fact that all that congruity is made up on different platforms, because, as expected by Wittgenstein’s writing style, their visions of the author are not really the same (cf. Stern, 2005)

In the face of such presumed inescapable differences, in what follows I will pick up only the concept of “physiognomy” for the argument I want to hold in this article. That word operates for me as a network in which it should be possible to set and extend multiple comparison threads with regard to meanings, expletive signs, linguistic formalisms, spacements, distribution and arrangement of paragraphs, conception of writing style, biographical, sociological, historical, literary and cultural informations, and the varied and complex interlacing of all those elements to conform a determined expression and a certain spirit, something which is accountable on how some text “appear” to us. An eyesight that is not easily achievable by anyone because it is not a question of interpretation but as how we see the matter (LWL, p. 51). Despite that, I do not have any theory of translation, more than a mere vision on how I did the work I was faced with. So, my insights are closer to Martins’ and Wilson’s than to Gorlée’s and Oliveira’s, although I also agree in general with all the theoretical and philosophical arguments they all maintain. But at the end maybe I also have some differences as regards reading and interpreting Wittgenstein. This is what I’ll try to make clear now.

## **2. Who can provide the right key?**

In the year 1930, in the first of many attempts to come at composing a preface to the new book he always intended to publish in his lifetime, Wittgenstein concluded that he could only be understood by those readers who shared the same spirit in which the text was written. But the book itself would automatically separate those who would understand it from those who would not (MS 109, pp. 206, 208-209; see also CV2, pp. 8-10). In other words, the book would work as a key to its worldview. So far so good, but how could someone particularly understand (or misunderstand) what the spirit of a book is, and, therefore, to have or not to have the key to open it?

Let's take a very specific example and try to get into the problem: Brian McGuinness published an article about Wittgenstein's writing style (2002), in which he presented a translation of an excerpt from the MS 122, pp. 88r-88v (p. 22) as a practical way to endorse his argument.<sup>1</sup> In that passage Wittgenstein considers some features which would grant the character that any great work of art should have. This is McGuinness proposed translation:

In all great art there is a wild beast – tamed. In Mendelssohn, for example, there is none. All great art has as its ground-bass the primitive drives of mankind. These are not the melody (as they are, perhaps, with Wagner) but they are what gives the melody its depth and power.

This is the sense in which Mendelssohn can be called a 'reproductive' artist.

In this sense too the house I built for Gretl is the product of an extremely sensitive ear, of good manners: it is the expression of a great understanding of a culture etc. But life, primitive, wild life with its tumultuous desires, is missing. One could also say, health is missing (Kierkegaard). (A hothouse plant.)

To explain some options for his version, McGuinness gives the following reasons that I'm going to sever from his text for didactic purposes:

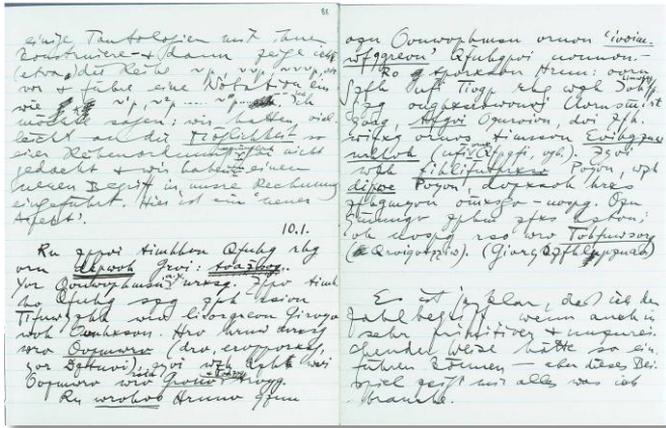
- (a) "In this quotation I have omitted all the signs of emphasis...";
- (b) "Wittgenstein's so frequent use of them distorts his text. (...)";

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<sup>1</sup> This case is referred by Martins (cf. 2011).

- (c) "...the attempt to reproduce this form of emphasis in translation invites distortion";
- (d) "Anyone who has tried to translate Wittgenstein will admit as much."

It is quite useful to show the original manuscript from which McGuinness translation was ultimately extracted:



MS 122, pp. 88r-88v

This textual portion was composed in January 10, 1940. It was written, as we can see, in the famous Wittgenstein code. The code, roughly, consists in the reversal of the alphabet in the following correlations: read "a as z", "b as y", etc. It would be a good idea to start by asking why that passage was codified by Wittgenstein in the context of the MS 122, a volume largely devoted to mathematics and philosophical logic. But McGuinness passed over that question, what already shows that some hard work had yet to be made in the source text before rendering it in the target language. In fact, McGuinness' footnote 6 on p. 22 (2002) hints that he could have worked out his translation using a ready-made source already published in the 1984's CV1 edition. Peter Winch's translation was there just beside the German face. If that was really so, this also suggests that the resolution to correct what he called distortions of the text could

have been addressed to the kind of translation presented by Winch. In this case, McGuinness' attitude would be more an expression of discontent than a simple alternative view of the text.

As "signs of emphasis" do not count as stylistic features for McGuinness, and, conversely, do count for Winch, it could also be quite useful to show both results side by side. But this time with a radicalized Winch's version, closer to the MS 122 itself:

<p>In all great art there is a wild beast – tamed. In Mendelssohn, for example, there is none. All great art has as its ground-bass the primitive drives of mankind. These are not the melody (as they are, perhaps, with Wagner) but they are what gives the melody its depth and power.</p> <p>This is the sense in which Mendelssohn can be called a 'reproductive' artist.</p> <p>In this sense too the house I built for Gretl is the product of an extremely sensitive ear, of good manners: it is the expression of a great understanding of a culture etc. But life, primitive, wild life with its tumultuous desires, is missing. One could also say, health is missing (Kierkegaard). (A hothouse plant.)</p>	<p>In all great art there is a WILD beast: TAMED.</p> <p>In Mendelssohn, <i>for example</i>, there is none. All great art has as its ground-bass the primitive drives of mankind. These are not the <i>melody</i> (as they are, perhaps, with Wagner), but they are what gives the melody its <i>depth</i> and <i>power</i>.</p> <p><i>This</i> is the sense in which Mendelssohn can be called a '<i>reproductive</i>' artist. –</p> <p>In this sense too: the house I built for Gretl is the product of an extremely sensitive ear, of <i>good</i> manners, it is the expression of a great <i>understanding</i> (for a culture, etc.). But life, <i>primitive, wild</i> life with its tumultuous desires – is missing. One could also say: <i>health</i> is missing (Kierkegaard). (A hothouse plant.)</p>
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For didactic purposes again, I will call the kind of translation on the left column as "B-McGuinness", and the kind of translation on the right

column as “McGuinness-B”, personalizing which are but mere procedures. In this way, we have got two “physiognomies”, or two ways to get a text by its character, according to question of this article.

How is that so? How could we say that we have got two physiognomies? Let’s take B-McGuinness, for example. For B-McGuinness, Wittgenstein’s writing style shows the real man to whom those expressions are to be associated. Or rather, this amounts to saying, into a much more elaborated version, that Wittgenstein’s writing is pretty much like his own body. That would exactly be the sense of the De Buffon’s aphorism mentioned by Wittgenstein in the MS 137 (pp. 140a-140b; CV2, p. 89), and faithfully reproduced by McGuinness in the previous paragraph of his translation: “Le style c’est l’homme même” (the style is the man himself). For this reason, B-McGuinness could be a supporter of the “signature thesis”, which says that “every handling by the man (of an impulse or of a circumstance) is a signature, or a sketch that needs no signature for its attribution” (Cavell, 2004, p. 32). In another version of the same idea, Wittgenstein has a “work of exile” (Klagge, 2011; 2016). After all, for the text to produce the communicative results expected by B-McGuinness, it is necessary that the reader should recognize the author who gives the text its life. Without the man *himself*, how could we expect to understand Wittgenstein’s texts? So, I would say that B-McGuinness’ conception of style is *personalist*: the “subject’s subjectivity”, or “the image of the body as a picture of the human soul” (Cavell, 2004, p. 32) would then be the key to open the book’s door.

But for McGuinness-B, on the other side, the conditions are entirely the opposite, since the so-called “distortions” are to be considered effective, by themselves alone, in breaking expected rules, certain cooperative principles, and producing the necessary communicative results through previous transactions between narrator and reader (cf. Brown & Yule, 1983, pp. 4-19; Black, 2006, p. 27). The intention of the text could only be recognized if its marks had effects of displacement of expected senses of reading. McGuinness-B finds support in some Wittgenstein’s references like “A kind of writing in which the crossed-out word, the crossed-out sentence, is a sign” (LWPP I § 54); or “I ought always to hope only for the most indirect of influences” (MS 134, p. 148; CV2, p. 71); or yet “My sentences are all to be read slowly” (MS 134, p.

77; CV2, p. 65). In this case, I would say that McGuinness-B has a *pragmatic* conception of style, as no “man” is actually necessary, but certain empirical features of distortions in the text for the communicative action to begin to gradually unlock the book’s door.

In this way, we can see that, between B-McGuinness and McGuinness-B, what is decisively different is a definite conception of language, or a set of characteristics which would count as language in such cases, one might say. This is not simply a question of how one can edit a text by Wittgenstein. Before deciding edition, or while editing some Wittgenstein’s text, one should have parameters. So, if the meaning of the words is exactly the same in both versions of the MS 122, pp. 88r-88v, then it is easier to see that the question of translation is not merely restricted to the semantic field, but also reaches characteristics that are in the particular history of the author of the text, for B-McGuinness, or in the distortions of writing, for McGuinness-B. It is in this sense that I would say that, in our case, two different grammars resulted in two physiognomies.

The issue, however, is to know which of the two kinds of translation or physiognomies should give to the reader the correct key: how could we decide? The understanding reader is the one who has the key to unlock the room, but who is she? According to the text mentioned above, she has the opposite spirit of the typical Western scientist. Certainly this is someone who is not sympathetic to the idea of technological progress and primacy of rationality over religious or ethical feelings. But how would Wittgenstein’s book automatically separate those two types of readers, the understanding from the non-understanding? Probably we would say: “through its writing style”.

And again, B-McGuinness is pretty sure that he has provided the effective means of distinguishing both kinds of reader, redeeming the correct soul as if he was separating the wheat from the chaff. But why not McGuinness-B should not be so confident? After all, exclusively from a pragmatic conception, that writing style is in complete disagreement with any rules adopted by the “typical Western scientist”. As it seems, no partisan of the faith in technological and scientific progress could stand such “distortions of good writing”. So, as far as I can see, we do not yet have a clear parameter to choose between the two kinds of translation.

As a last resort, we could check how Wittgenstein himself practiced translation in his own and other texts, trying to find some definitive clue. This seems to be not only a reasonable and sensible procedure, but also a realistic one, apparently devoid of any preconceived ideas. We could get, for example, several interesting recommendations Wittgenstein gave to Ogden, one of the first translators of the TLP along with Ramsey and Russell, to leave indentations, unexpected punctuations, italics, and layouts as they were originally designed (cf. LO, p. 47; facsimiles on pp. 54-55; pp. 57, 62). Apparently, those suggestions favor McGuinness-B. But B-McGuinness could still retort that the TLP had no such strange writing distortions as we find in the later manuscripts, and that TLP § 6.54, which is a very clear advice that the reader should understand the author, seems to offer an irrefutable evidence for the personalist hypothesis.

Regarding other examples taken from the later manuscripts and typescripts to overcome that situation, we fare no better. These are:

(a) the MS 115, pp. 118-292, which is an attempt to rework into German the English version of the Brown Book (D 310); - it is a translation just up to p. 205 (Part I of the Brown Book), but from that point up to p. 292 it is all fresh material;

(b) the TS 226, which is a translation into English of the beginning of the prewar version of PI (TS 220, pp. 1-77);

(c) and the translation from Latin into German from a passage of Augustine's *Confessions* in the TS 227, p. 5.

Through these exercises we could at most learn about some better words and phrases that would be just more proficient choices when translating Wittgenstein. At the same time, nonetheless, we would be very far in them from those "distortions of writing" that we generally find in the later manuscripts. The situation here is almost similar to what we have already observed in LO, nothing more than simple meaning corrections. In fact, there are some details that could even be detrimental to McGuinness-B, because not every emphasis found in the original typescript are strictly reproduced in the English version supervised by Wittgenstein. Even the slightest comparison between TS 226, p. 2 and TS 220, pp. i-ii, can easily show that. Just take, for example, "every word has a meaning" (in TS 226, p. 2), and notice that the italics in "*Bedeutung*" is missing (cf. TS 220, p. i); or before "I send someone shopping" (in TS

226, p. 2), a dash is also missing (cf. TS 220, p. ii).

So, for the lack of a decisive factor to decide between B-McGuinness and McGuinness-B types of translation, I have to restrict myself to show how I have been developing translations of Wittgenstein's texts within a McGuinness-B paradigm without being able take such a physiognomy as a criterion by which an unbiased judgement between the parties could be advanced. Let us look at these descriptions then, and I will evaluate how, under such conditions, such a view could benefit translations from Wittgenstein's texts or theories of translation in general.

### 3. Three Translations of the Same Kind

The three translations I have been working so far are from the manuscripts and typescripts that match with which was published as GB2, PI (Part I), and RFM.

#### 3.1. *Remarks on Frazer's Golden Bough*

The first work developed within those parameters was “Observações Sobre ‘O Ramo Dourado’ de Frazer/Bemerkungen über Frazers ‘Golden Bough’” (GB1). This project begun in 2007 and had at least three different phases. The earliest stage consisted in preparing a critical edition according to the analysis proposed in Orzechowski & Pichler’s “A Critical Note on the Editions of Wittgenstein’s Remarks on Frazer’s Golden Bough” (1995). After that, the translation was discussed, still in 2007, in the Study Group on Knowledge and Philosophy of Language from the Center of Logic and Epistemology at the State University of Campinas, with Wittgensteinian scholars like Arley Moreno, Cristiane Gottschalk, and Paulo de Oliveira. After that period, the third stage only happened between 2010 and 2011, on the occasion of its publication. At this time, the text was revised by Nuno Venturinha, under the coordination of Bruno Monteiro, in Portugal (respectively in Lisbon and Porto).

The main characteristics of the text are:

- (a) a German-Portuguese *en face* presentation;

- (b) any block of text shows its roots in the *Nachlass* through indications of its sources (MS 110, TS 211, and MS 143);
- (c) variants and notes on the margin of the originals were all included as integral parts of the text;
- (d) the text was provided with an introductory explanation of its origins, purposes, and philosophical relevance;
- (e) there are also 178 endnotes related to translation difficulties, connections between portions of other texts and other developments as well in the *Nachlass*, clarifications of the most hermetic references, and several correlations with the secondary literature.

### 3.2. *Philosophical Investigations*

The second work developed within the McGuinness-B paradigm was “Investigações Filosóficas/Philosophische Untersuchungen” (to appear by the State University of Campinas Publishing House in joint edition with Vozes Publishing House). Initially, this project consisted in preparing a first draft and researching for the multitude of details that I had yet to overcome. Beasts and devil live on details and technicalities, so people say, and it was really a hard work. Three books and one article were fundamental at this point: respectively, Pichler (2004), Paul (2007), and Venturinha (2010, 2013), because they all gave me not only a better sense of what could be Wittgenstein’s writing style and the character of an unfinished work. At that point these were the parameters I chose to look at the text. But, perhaps more importantly, those literature were persuasive in considering Wittgenstein’s entire 1929–1951 *corpus* as a “one composite work of art” (Paul, 2007, p. 23). Through this way of looking at the matter, a lot of minute and complex features of the text got other forms of resolution, and that perspective made it easier to find better ways out of practical embarrassments. Equipped with those guidelines I could revisit virtually all the secondary literature discussions involved and could get my own resolutions to the singularities presented by PI, independently from all the information that I had been collecting so far. So, in 2015 I published a book about the physiognomy of PI (Almeida, 2015), and felt more confident to get to the final stage of the work.

The last phase was a preliminary research on translation theories that seemed appropriate to the kind of work a translator of a Wittgensteinian text normally had to face. So, I went through researching translation of philosophy, rather than philosophy of translation, and learned a lot of good things in Venuti (1998), especially its chapter 6 on Elizabeth Anscombe as a translator (pp. 106-123), Pym (2007 and 2010), and Bellos (2011) as well. After that, in 2016 PI Portuguese translation was submitted to the State University of Campinas Publishing House, and promptly accepted. Ultimately, Vozes Publishing House agreed to make a joint edition of the text.

The main characteristics of the text are:

- (a) a German-Portuguese *en face* presentation;
- (b) PI is presented only as the previous “Part I”, just like Schulte’s German edition from 2003;
- (c) variants and notes on the margin in the originals (*Randbemerkungen*) were all commented on endnotes;
- (d) slips of paper introduced in the typescript were printed as separated boxes, just like in the Hacker & Schulte edition from 2009;
- (e) the text was provided with an introductory explanation of its origins, purposes, development, and philosophical relevance;
- (f) there are 172 endnotes related to translation difficulties, connections between portions of previous texts and other sprawlings into the *Nachlass*, clarifications of the most hermetic references, clarification of cultural references (allusions and quotations), several correlations with the secondary literature as well;
- (g) indexes in German and Portuguese;
- (h) an exhaustive table of comparison among sections from BM I (TS 228), BM II (TS 230) and PI (TS 227).

### 3.3. *Remarks on the Foundations of Mathematics*

Two hypotheses were crucial to form the vision I have from RFM and plan its process of translation. The first is that PI’s remaking into an album was set when Wittgenstein gave up translating the Brown Book. Pichler remarked that we begin to have voices bursting into Wittgenstein’s

writings exactly when he engaged into considerations about the grammar of reading (cf. 2004, pp. 143ff.). Actually, those erratic pages from the MS 115 (pp.195-298) happened to become part of the PI's first version (MS 142). The second is that the later discussions on mathematics should also be included as part of PI (cf. Venturinha, 2010, pp. 143-156). This is mainly because TS 220, the MS 142's immediate surrogate, was sent to publication in 1938 together with TS 221, a collection of remarks on that matter composed in 1937 in the MSS 117, 118, and 119.

Considering such assumptions, I began to prepare a first draft on TSS 221, 222, 223, and 224 (RFM Part I and Appendices I, II, and III) in 2016, and submitted a research project to the São Paulo Research Foundation (Fapesp) for the preparation of a bilingual translation of RFM, and had the grant approved. As a natural sequel to PI, we will have with RFM a complete first series of McGuinness-B's translations around that book finished by 2019. As main sources of information about the nature of Wittgenstein's philosophical discussion on mathematics, I have been following some secondary literature in the area like Maury (2013), Floyd (1995, 2000, 2001, 2005, 2010), Mühlhölzer (2006, 2010), and Maddy (2014), with which I hope to have a fruitful dialogue.

The principal characteristics of the text will be:

- (a) a German-Portuguese *en face* presentation;
- (b) the text was provided with an introductory explanation of its origins, purposes, development, and philosophical relevance;
- (c) variants and notes on the margin in the originals were all commented on endnotes;
- (d) Up to now the text has 87 endnotes to translation difficulties, connections between portions of previous texts and other sprawlings into the *Nachlass*, clarifications of the most hermetic references, clarification of cultural references (allusions and quotations), several correlations with the secondary literature as well.

#### 4. Physiognomy of the text

There is indeed good literature coming from the conception of style supported by McGuinness-B, the model that I have been following. Stern

(2005, 2017) and Pichler (2004, pp. 199-263) are among the most remarkable so far. But even though I know my proposals are in agreement with those perspectives, I have been working from a physiognomic standpoint about which those works make no mention.

What then could possibly be a physiognomic standpoint in the McGuinness-B model? There are plenty of references on physiognomy throughout Wittgenstein's literary legacy, from 1916 up to 1948. Since the first interrelations established among character, ethics, will, spirit, work of art, artistic way of looking at things, art as complete expression, object seen *sub specie aeternitatis*, that we can read in NB (pp. 83-88), until the final remarks written in the MS 137 (pp. 4b, 31b, 53a). This means a great variety of connections and approaches, including associations in later discussions with aspect perception, language-games and family resemblances. The most notable are the connection among physiognomy, morphology, synoptic view, and philosophical method that can be viewed in the MS 110 (pp. 256-258) as well as in TS 211 (pp. 281-282, 321-322; cf. GB2, pp. 130-133). A particular correlation between physiognomy and family resemblances when Wittgenstein said that by enumerating a number of synonymous expressions on ethics he wanted to produce a particular impression can be viewed as early as 1929:

... the same sort of effect which Galton produced when he took a number of photos of different faces on the same photographic plate in order to get the picture of the typical features they all had in common (LE, p. 38).

What is remarkable, in my view, about these last elaborations, is that they could be considered as suggestions about Wittgenstein's disposition to turn out his own work into a sort of physiognomy.

But even if we accept such an argument we cannot solve with it the issue of the choice between B-McGuinness and McGuinness-B visions of Wittgenstein's writing style. And this is solely by virtue of the fact that viewing writing style as a "physiognomy" could be either interpreted as the picture of the man himself (the personalist conception), or as empirical features on the textual corpus which trigger reader's transactions to understand the text (the pragmatic conception). Here we have a clear case of underdetermination of the assumption by the evidence. As for any observationally based hypothesis there will always be at least one rival

hypothesis that is also supported by the evidence given, and hence that hypothesis can also be logically maintained in the face of any new evidence.

However, even though “any course of action can be brought either into accord or in conflict with a rule” (PI § 201), I still would like to pick one of the latest Wittgenstein’s ruminations on the subject. This passage seems relevant, in my view, to clarify what is the responsibility of the translator, since he cannot put together a set of prescriptions for a successful work in translation:

‘The concept is not only a technique, but also a physiognomy’.

‘Physiognomy’ here means: ‘something appealing’? Something that can be very well-known? The *center* of a number of associations? – (MS 137, p. 4b)

According to this text, attribution of physiognomic characteristics to a psychological concept is not an uncompromised utterance. So, when the first voice utters his conception, the second voice immediately replies by offering three different options, bringing the attention to the kind of interest a definition would be tied to. For the sake of the argument, I will shift the issue from the plane of psychological concepts to that of concepts of style. So, those three options would then be the *expressive*, the *personalist*, and the *pragmatic physiognomist*. For the first, writing style convey aesthetic values attached to its form of expression; for the second, writing style is an image of her author’s moral values; and for the third, characteristic traits of writing style communicate by themselves aesthetic and moral values. Nevertheless, successful translation, in any one of those versions, provides no key in the text to open its door. That key is in the reader hands, naturally, and our own standards will not tell us how. For no interpretation at all could prescribe conditions that are to be left solely to the reader. The version we have adopted so far will at best be the witness of our own interests.

Let us try to clarify this last point a little bit more in terms of the insights we use when doing translations of Wittgenstein’s texts. For this, I would like to borrow another two images, mobilized this time by Pichler to describe two distinct kinds of narrator in Wittgenstein’s writings of 1936 (cf. 2004, pp. 145-148). In this book, Pichler accounts for a dramatic change which completely transformed the character of Wittgenstein’s

texts. That happened in the sections about the grammar of reading from the MS 115 (pp. 195-222), as already mentioned. On the page 292 of MS 115, as we know, Wittgenstein recorded that “This whole ‘attempt at a reworking’ from page 118 until here is worthless”. But surprisingly enough, the whole section on reading was transferred to the first version of PI the next months (cf. MS 142, pp. 138-160). Here’s a report Wittgenstein gave to Moore in November 20, 1936:

...When about a fortnight ago, I read through what I had done so far I found it all, or nearly all, boring and artificial. For having the english version before me had cramped my thinking, I therefore decided to start all over again and not to let my thoughts be guided by anything but themselves. – I found it difficult the first day or two but then it became easy. And so I’m writing now a new version and I hope I’m not wrong in saying that it’s somewhat better than the last. – Besides this all sorts of things have been happening inside me (I mean in my mind). (McGuinness, 2008, p. 257)

So, Pichler describes in the “guided writing” an *olympic narrator*, and in the “free writing” a *partaker* in the dialogue. The former narrator was omniscient and predominant in the text, while the latter was but one of the voices, just a participant in the narrative.

And now, with the new character of Wittgenstein's texts in mind, let us enlarge one of his texts already quoted in this article:

It is not by any means clear to me, that I wish for a continuation of my work by others, more than a change in the way we live, making all these questions superfluous. (For this reason I could never found a school.)

(...) Nothing seems to me more unlikely than a scientist or mathematician, who reads me, should be seriously influenced thereby in the way he works. (...) I ought always to hope only for the most indirect of influences. (CV2, pp. 70-71).

Along these lines, it seems to me that, at least in terms of translation of Wittgenstein’s texts in the McGuinness-B paradigm, prescriptions are precluded. If we are in consonance with the olympic account, we should have B-McGuinness *or* McGuinness-B, only one of the two, for a third party would be definitely excluded. But, in line with the dialogical account, on the other side, we should have B-McGuinness *and* McGuinness-B, and

a third party would also be welcomed. What would be the consequences? Well, like anything else in life, a translator work would be what she has made of it, something for which there is a responsibility in cause. And life, full of primitive, tumultuous desires, gives us olympic as well as dialogical accounts. The side effects of those practices are entirely out of our control. The only component that seems to be within our control is the possibility of taming the wild beast, but that, again, depends on courage and talent – and a lot of self-reflection, for which translation theories are always welcome and from which translation theories could benefit as long as descriptions are deemed to be useful.

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