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NUMERICAL REFERENCES IN «KRAPP'S LAST TAPE»

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« numero deus impare gaudet »

(PUBLIO VIRGILIO MARONE)

« I always loved arithmetic it has paid me back in full »

(SAMUEL BECKETT)

Numbers occur quite often in Beckett's works. Our aim is to analyse the ones in *Krapp's Last Tape*¹. Even in the detailed introduction we find numerical references, both spatial and temporal. First of all, we have to specify that the action develops substantially in 3 temporal dimensions:

- 5) Krapp at 69 years of age;
- 6) Krapp at 39 years of age;
- 7) Krapp at 27 or 29 years of age;

even if Romana Rutelli examines and distinguishes the aforesaid temporal levels (« though in their complex entanglement » ²) in 5 steps. Let's sum them up:

- 1) Time of the discourse. It concerns Krapp on stage;
- 2) Time of the plot. It involves the present and the past plus a third temporal axis narrated by a 39 aged Krapp – which relates to the 27 or 29 aged Krapp. The view is done. It contains and represents the 3 human being ages (youth, maturity and old age); it seems as if we were (if I'm allowed in comparing) before the mysterious and enigmatic *Three Ages* or the *Three Philosophers* by Giorgione ³;
- 3) Time of the fabula. It is the time of the chronological narration that begins at 27 or 29 aged Krapp up to the present 69 years old Krapp;
- 4) Time of the antecedent. Mrs Rutelli states about the antecedent: « It is a part of the fabula – and of the plot as well – but it is external to the action traditionally conceived. It concerns all that happened in Krapp's life before the action began » ⁴;
- 5) Historical Time: Future, Present, Past time. In short, « The time to be defined both for Krapp and the spectator » ⁵, as Rutelli still observes. And I would add that the time is to be defined not for Krapp and the Spectator only, but above all for the actor.

1.

« A late evening in the future. KRAPP's den. Front centre a small table, the two drawers of which open towards the audience. [...]. Surprising pair of dirty white boots, size ten at least, very narrow and pointed. [...]. Table and immediately adjacent area in a strong white light. Rest of stage in darkness » (K., p. 9).

1. 1

The author specifies and designs geometrically, both horizontally and vertically, the stage space: a foreground and the centre of the scene. Such geometry is aimed by « *The Strong White Light* » (K., p. 9).

The size of the boots (« ten »), boots in a real dandy style, is in the French, German and Spanish translations number 48 (a multiple of 3).

1. 2

First series of gags: Krapp (from his motionless stand to action and back to the motionless stand) completes 33 operations using 9 objects (33 and 9 are multiples of 3): 1 Watch, 1 Envelope, 1 Bunch of Keys, 1 Reel of Tape, 2 Bananas, 1 Skin of Banana, 1 Bottle (« pop of cork »), 1 Ledger (K., pp. 9–10).

1. 3

Besides, we can see 3 different kinds of spotted white:

- 1) « Grimy White Shirt » (K., p. 9);
 - 2) « Dirty White Boots » (K., p. 9);
 - 3) « White Face, Purple Nose » (K., p. 9);
- and 3 sheer whites ... :

- 1) « White Light » (K., p. 9);
- 2) « Young Beauty [...], all White and Starch » (K., p. 14);
- 3) « White Dog » (K., p. 15);

More exactly, we have one more white or, we'd better say, Bianca, the Italian name of the girl with « incomparable Eyes » (K. pp. 12–13).

The black ball is re-named 3 times:

- 1) « The Black Ball ... » (K., p. 11);
- 2) « Black Ball? » (K., p. 11);
- 3) « A Small, Old, Black, Hard, Solid Rubber Ball » (K., p. 15).

In the text we find 9 different colours:

- 1) White (White Face, K., p. 9);
- 2) Black (Black Hooded Perambulator, K., p. 15);
- 3) Rusty (Rusty Black Waistcoat, K., p. 9);
 - 4) Purple (Purple Nose, K., p. 9);
- 5) Grey (Grey Hair, K., 9);
- 6) Green (A Shabby Green Coat, K., p. 13);
- 7) Dark (One Dark Young Beauty, K., p. 14);
- 8) Brown; (The Blind Went Down, One Of Those Dirty Brown Roller Affairs, K., p. 15);
 - 9) Red (Holly, The Red-Berried, K., p. 19).

It is easy to see Beckett's predilection for number 3 and its multiples, as we have already noticed and we will see afterwards.

It is confirmed more times. Let's read some of them (just 3, but we might as well quote 33 of them) from other works: *The Expelled*:

« I arrived therefore at three totally different figures, without ever knowing which of them was right. And when I say that the figure has gone from my mind, I mean that none of the three figures is with me any more, my mind. It is true that if were to find, in my mind, where it is certainly to be found, one of these figures, I would find it alone, without being able deduce from it the other two. And even were I to recover two, I would not know the third. No, I would have to find all

three, in my mind, in order to know three »⁶;

from *Endgame*: Clov, reminding Macbeth's 3 witches' jingle (« Thrice to thine, and thrice to mine, And thrice again, to make up nine »⁷) He says: « I'll go now to my kitchen, ten feet by ten feet »⁸, obtaining ... 3 cubic metres!

from *How It Is*: « millions millions there are millions of there are three [...] »⁹.

Meanwhile, shortly, I remind what has been written by the numerology expert John King about number 3:

« It is the most sacred of the numbers in a wide range of cultures. [...] Human mind seems to operate an inborn relation between number 3 and the concept of completeness. 3 means yesterday, today and tomorrow, that is past, present and future. It means the positive, the comparative and the superlative. Moreover, the beginning, the half and the end [...] the eternal cycle »¹⁰.

If we wanted to associate the number 3 attribution and correspondence of above to Krapp and to his story they would reveal, no doubt at all, to be perfect.

2.

First Pantomime

« KRAPP [...], unlocks first drawer [...], unlocks second drawer [...], begins pacing to and from at edge of stage, in the light, not more than four or five pages either way [...] » (K., p. 10).

The pantomime finishes with Krapp disappearing in the background « goes backstage into darkness. 10 seconds. Loud pop of cork. 15 seconds » (K., p. 10).

3.

The monologue begins with Krapp:

« [...] Box ... three ... spool ... five. [...] Spool! (*Pause.*) Spooool! [...] Box ... three ... three ... four ... two ... nine! ... seven ... [...] Box three. Spool ... five ... five ... five ... Spool five. Box three, spool five. Spooool! [...] Memorable [...] Equinox, memorable equinox [...] Memorable equinox? » (K., pp. 10–11).

3. 1

« Box ... nine »: all in all, the boxes are 9 (a multiple of 3). Forward on, James Knowlson will disclose also the number of the reels contained within.

3. 2

After the long series of numbers, there is reference to the equinox falling on 3/21 (21 is a multiple of 3) and on 9/23 (23 is not a multiple of 3, but September is the ninth month of the year).

« Memorable equinox » is repeated 3 times.

4.

The TAPE begins this way:

« Thirty-nine today [...]. Have just eaten I regret to say three bananas and only with difficulty refrained from a fourth » (K., pp. 11–12).

4. 1

39 is a multiple of 3; eaten bananas are 3.

5.

TAPE: « Old Miss McGlome always sings [...]. Shall I sing when I am her age, if I ever am? No. (*Pause.*) Did I sing as a boy? No. (*Pause.*) Did I ever sing? No. *Pause* » (K., p. 12).

5. 1

Krapp asks himself 3 questions and answers them with 3 No's broken by 3 *Pauses*.

6.

TAPE: « Just been listening to an old year, passages at random. I did not check in the book, but it must be at least ten or twelve years ago. [...] Hard to believe I was ever that young whelp. The voice! Jesus! And the aspirations! [...] And the resolutions! [...] To drink less, in particular. [...] Statistics. Seventeen hundred hours, out of the preceding eight thousand odd, consumed on licensed premises alone. More than 20 per cent, say 40 per cent of his waking life. [...] » (K., pp. 12-13).

6. 1

Statistically speaking, Krapp has drunk 6.300 hours less ($8.000 - 1.700 = 6.300$, a number multiple of 3) than he did during the recording of 10 or 12 years before. So, he was 29 or 27 years old ($39 - 12 = 27$, a number multiple of 3).

6. 2

Through the whole text God's name is uttered 3 times and Jesus name is uttered 4 times:

- 1) « [...] good God! » (K., 10);
- 2) « Sneers at what he calls his youth and thanks to God that it's over » (K., p. 13);
- 3) « Thanks God that's all done with anyway » (K., p. 17).

- 1) « Well out of that, Jesus yes! » (K., p.12);
- 2) « The voice! Jesus! And the aspirations » (K., p. 13);
- 3) « Let that go! Jesus! » (K., p. 18);
- 4) « Take his mind off his homework! Jesus! » (K., p. 18).

7.

Second Pantomime

« KRAPP switches off, broods, looks at his watch, gets up, goes backstage into darkness. Ten seconds. Pop of cork. Ten seconds. Second cork. Ten seconds. Third cork » (K., p. 13).

7. 1

From the backstage a crack is heard every 10 seconds (10 seconds are the sixth part of a minute, and 6 is a multiple of 3). Totally, 3 are the pops of cork, 3 the pauses, 3 the actions.

8.

TAPE: « –back on the year that is gone [...] mother lay a–dying, in the late autumn (*K.*, p. 14). [...] Whenever I looked in her direction she had her eyes on me » (*K.*, p. 15).

8. 1

With the end of the year, 12 months have passed (12 is a multiple of 3).

8. 2

The mother dies in « the late autumn »: autumn is the third season of the year.

8. 3

As Pierre Chabert writes, « the tape he listens to contains essentially 3 stories. [1] The story of his mother's death, [2] his 'vision' in a night of March (we had better not underrate darkness – Beckett's strong biographical point –), [3] and a heavenly boat trip on the lake, along with a woman, from whom he is going to separate »¹¹.

8. 4

Six are also Krapp's memories of women:

1) Miss McGlome (*K.*, p. 12);

2) Bianca (*The Girl That The Shabby Green*, *K.*, pp. 12–13);

3) The Dark Young Beauty (*K.*, p. 14);

4) The Girl On The Lake (*K.*, p. 16);

5) Fanny The Whore (*K.*, p. 18);

6) His Mother (K., 14).

In no other drama by Beckett are there so many women.

8. 5

In the text, 6 times (6 multiple of 3), he refers to eyes.

Krapp remembers the eyes of a woman 4 times and describes his own 2 (twice):

1) « Sat before the fire with closed eyes, separating the grain from the husks » (K., pp. 11–12);

2) « Scalded the eyes out of me reading *Effie* again, a page a day with tears again » (K., p. 18).

Knowlson comments the line « The eyes! Like ... (*hesitates*) ... chrysolite! » (K., p. 15) with these words:

« Krapp has always been obsessed by the eyes of the women he has known: Bianca, the girl in the park, and the girl on the lake. This recalls the metaphysical poets' concern with eyes as an entry to the soul. The comparison with chrysolite is a quotation from *Othello*, Act. V. Scene 2, 145 »¹².

Let's read the quotation detected by Knowlson. It stresses Othello's anger in the presence of Emilia:

« Emil!. That she was false to wedlock?

Othel. Ay, with Cassio. Nay, had she been true, if heaven would make me such another world of one entire and perfect chrysolite, I'd not have sold her for it »¹³.

In my opinion, since his favourite reading or « re-reading », as Assouline says, were « Dante, Hölderlin, Schopenhauer, Joyce, Jules Renard's diary, some Baudelaire, Apollinaire, classics, *The Bible* and some dictionaries »¹⁴, the quotation is from *The Bible*, a text constantly within the reach of Beckett the « quaker »:

« The bases of the city's wall are adorned with all sorts of precious stones: the first of jasper, the second of sapphire, the third of chalcedony, the fourth of emerald, the fifth of sardonic, the sixth of sardic, the seventh of chrysolite » (*Ap.* 21, 19–21).

Besides, the recalled scene which refers to the young Krapp sitting in front of the fire with « the eyes closed, separating the wheat from the husks », carries a reference with *The New Testament*:

« He has a fan in his hand and cleans with it his threshing-fool then he picks the wheat in the granary; but the husks, he will burn them with an inextinguishable fire » (*Mt.* 3. 12; *Lc.* 3. 17).

9.

TAPE: « Her moments, my moments. (*Pause.*) The dog's moments » (*K.*, p. 15).

9. 1

We can count 3 moments. Moreover, the dog is an animal occurring in all Beckett's works. Dogs of every breed and of various colours, some of them even false and with ... 3 paws.

The anonymous main-voice from *The Image* recites:

« [...] on a fair day I'm able to name dogs belonging to four or five completely different breeds [...] »¹⁵.

Let's see some cues:

« A small dog followed him [...] an orange Pomeranian [...] »¹⁶.

« [...] the dog follows head sunk tail on balls [...] brief black and there we are again on the summit the dog askew on its hunkers in the heather it lowers its snout to its black and pink penis too tired to lick it [...] brief black [...] out of sight first the dog then us the scene is shut of us »¹⁷.

In *Waiting for Godot* Vladimir sings a macabre refrain:

« A dog came in the kitchen
And stole a crust of bread.
Then cook up with a ladle
And beat him till he was dead.

Then all the dogs came running
And dug the dog a tomb –
[...]
Then all the dogs came running
And dug the dog a tomb
And wrote upon the tombstone
For the eyes of dogs to come »¹⁸.

And I see again the other gloomy and sad gag in *Endgame*:

« HAMM: Is my dog ready?
CLOV: He lacks a leg.
HAMM: Is he silky?
CLOV: He's a kind of Pomeranian.
HAMM: Go and get him.

CLOV: He lacks a leg.

HAMM: Go and get him! [...].

(Enter CLOV holding by one of its three legs a black toy dog.) » ¹⁹.

Finally, the farcical to-and-fro and the runaway Og-Keaton's useless attempts to move off the room the timid dog in Beckett's only chilling movie, *Film* ²⁰.

10.

TAPE: « Spiritually a year of profound gloom and indigence until that memorable night in March [...] » (K., p. 15).

10. 1

Night in March: third month of the year.

11.

TAPE: « Past midnight. Never knew such silence » (K., p. 16).

11. 1

Past midnight: 24 hours have passed (24 multiple of 3).

12.

Third Pantomime

« KRAPP [...] fumbles in his pockets, encounters the banana, takes it out, peers at it, puts it back, fumbles, brings out envelope, fumbles, puts back envelope, looks at his watch, gets up and goes backstage into darkness. Ten seconds. Sound of bottle against glass, then brief siphon. Ten seconds. Bottle

against glass alone. Ten seconds. He comes back a little unsteadily into light » (K., p. 17).

12. 1

Krapp searches his pocket 3 times and pulls out 3 objects: 1 banana, 1 envelope, 1 watch. In the pantomime there are 3 breaks of 10 seconds.

13.

KRAPP: « Just been listening to that stupid bastard I took myself for thirty years ago, hard to believe I was ever as bad as that » (K., p. 17).

13. 1

Krapp saying: « I took myself for thirty years ago » he specifies he is 69 years old (69 a multiple of 3). As a matter of fact, listening to the previous tape he informed us he was to be 39 years old (see notes 4. and 4. 1).

14.

KRAPP: « Seventeen copies sold, of which eleven at trade price [...] One pound six and something, eight I have little doubt » (K., p. 18).

14. 1

Let's see: one pound, six shillings, eight pence. Now let's try to write them in figures (1. 6. 8.) and add one to another, we get 15 which is a multiple of 3.

15.

KRAPP: « Crawled out once or twice, before the summer was cold » (K., p. 18).

15. 1

« Before the summer was cold » : the summer finishes on September 21st (ninth month) and both are multiples of 3.

16.

KRAPP: « Sat shivering in the park, drowned in dreams and burning to be gone » (K., p. 18).

16. 1

Krapp feels 3 sensations at the same time.

17.

KRAPP: « Scaled the eyes out of me reading *Effie* again, a page a day, with tears again. Effie [...] » (K., p. 18).

17. 1

Effi, assimilated to the consonant F, corresponds to the sixth letter of the alphabet.

17. 2

It is to be observed that *Effi* is the same novel read by the Rooneys in *All That Fall*:

« Let us hasten home and sit before the fire. We shall draw the blinds. You will read to me. I think Effie is going to commit adultery with the Major [...] » ²¹.

18.

KRAPP: « Went to Vespers once [...]. (*Pause. Sings.*)

Now the day is over,

Night is drawing nigh-igh,

Shadows – (*coughing, then almost inaudible*) –

of the evening

Steal across the sky » (K., pp. 18–19).

18. 1

The Vesper, the eventide time, Dictionary defines:

« 1) Time of the day when the sun goes declining, late afternoon.

2) In Catholic liturgy, canonical hour, the penultimate one between the ninth and the compline, corresponding to six p. m. ».

We can easily check that the ninth and the six p. m. hours, are multiples of 3.

19.

KRAPP: « Be again in the dingle on a Christmas Eve [...] » (K., p. 19).

19.1

« A Christmas Eve »: 24 (day) and 12 (month), both multiples of 3.

20.

KRAPP: « Be again in the dingle on Christmas Eve, gathering holly, the red-berried.(Pause.) Be again on Croghan on a Sunday morning, in the haze, with the bitch, stop and listen to the bells. (Pause.) And so on. (Pause.) Be again, be again [...] » (K. p. 19).

20. 1

Krapp aims the willing of being 4 times.

20. 2

Once more we observe the presence of a dog. Rather a bitch. On 3 circumstances Krapp meets dogs (K., pp. 14–15, 19).

21.

TAPE: « [...] I said again I thought it was hopeless and no good going on and she agreed, without opening her eyes.[...].

Here I end this reel. Box – (*pause*) – three, spool – (*pause*) – five. (Pause.) Perhaps my best years are gone. When there was a chance of happiness. But I wouldn't want them back. Not with the fire in me now. No, I wouldn't want back » (K., pp. 19–20).

21. 1

1) « It was hopeless »;

2) « No good going on »;

3) « Without opening the eyes ».

3 negations.

21. 2

The monologue ends with the listening of the tape n. 5. More precisely much care is given to the love scene with the girl on the lake. Than we can count, by chance, 3 times the recorder is activated by Krapp since that moment.

Numbers 3 and 5 ... comment themselves and combine each other ...

21. 3

The word « Fire » is repeated with definitely positive value 4 times (K., pp. 11, 16, 20). 3 others main, primordial, cathartic elements of life positive valued as well, can be checked: Earth « I suppose I mean those things worth having when all the dust has–when all my dust has settled » (K., p. 12): the body, « the dust », belong and come back to Mother–Earth; Air « [...] great granite rocks the foam flying up in the light of the lighthouse and the wind–gauge spinning like a propeller [...] » (K., p.16): the wind–gauge is propelled by Air; Water « Sun blazing down, bit of breeze, water nice and lively » (K., p. 16).

In addition with the numerical subject it is to be said that Knowlson (in his above mentioned work *Notes on the Text*, pp. 24–25) according to the numbers 9 (box 9) and 39 (years), states:

« nine. There are, then, logically 45 recordings, since there are five spools for box. As each spool represents a birthday, he began recording at the age of twenty–four (69 – 45);

Thirty–nine today. This is not an arbitrary figure, since it is a multiple of 13 (a favourite number with Beckett). Krapp remembers the year of the girl in the

punt thanks to this fact »²².

Also Ruby Cohn draws attention on the playwright's fondness for number 13. Such preference, pointed out by the same authoress, is due to the attention paid by our « Greatest Poet » to that number²³.

Also the numbers discovered by Knowlson 24 and 45 are multiples of 3. This encourages my opinion. It is true that all the suppositions to *Numerical References* and neither, might be purely casual. But let's listen to what Avigdor Arikha, an Israeli painter, an old friend of the writer who had been living in the same district as Beckett since 1954 says:

« [...] Musical attention is to be found in the choice of the names of the characters as well as in the number of the syllables that make them up. As if he has tried to make truthful his writing through mathematics, in order to give everything a sense »²⁴.

The same is stated by Al Alvarez:

« His work was utterly pure and concentrated, there is not a comma out of a place anywhere »²⁵.

Gianni Manzella confirms it:

« In fact Beckett's personal and rigorous universe is dominated by mathematical precision [...] »²⁶.

Pierre Marcabru wittily follows him up in « Le Figaro »:

« Everything is detailed, valued, weighed, as a result of mathematical asceticism, at any rate in the middle of this blankness, of this mineral, abstract universe, wherein all obeys the rules of choreography, almost a rite with pre-arranged steps [...] »²⁷.

Besides, Beckett was a distinguished chess-player: almost surely the title *Endgame* sprang from this interest or perhaps from the marvellous Bruegel-like images of *Det sjunde inseglet* (*The Seventh Seal*), a 1956 film directed by Bergman, regarded as « Beckett's Northern brother »²⁸. Due to the fact that, he drew order out of chaos. Giuliano Gramigna observes that « one of the most meaningful features of Beckett's work is its apparent – and shown off – coincidence. Richard Ellman – Gramigna continues – touches this aspect very closely when he observes that Beckett 'ran into the results of his own being'. In a matter of speaking, literature to him was no longer the hunting of a prey, though excellent. Although in Beckett's work nothing is left to chance (be it enough to think of the symmetries of structures, situations, figures going across his stories, novels and pièces), the main point, what really matters and gives importance to the work, is brought by the case »²⁹.

« Case or not », it is my intention to open up a road not yet trodden by the so many authoritative essayists of the Beckettian work, and particularly to try a new unprecedented meanings of *Krapp's Last Tape*³⁰.

Getting back to the numerical analysis, it is good to remember what the young Beckett wrote on Joyce's *Finnegans Wake*:

« Another point of comparison is the preoccupation with the significance of numbers. The death of Beatrice inspired nothing less than a highly complicated poem dealing with the importance of the number 3 in her life. Dante never ceased to be obsessed by this number. Thus the poem is divided into three Cantiche, each composed by 33 Canti, and written in terza rima. Why, Mr Joyce seems to say, should there be four legs to a table, and four to a horse, and four seasons and four Gospels and four Provinces in Ireland? Why twelve Tables of the Law, and twelve Apostles and twelve months and twelve Napoleonic marshals and twelve men in Florence called Ottolenghi? Why should the Armistice be celebrated at the eleventh hour of the eleventh day of the eleventh month? He cannot tell you because he is not God Almighty, but in a thousand years he will tell you, and in

the meantime must be content to know why horses have not five legs, nor three. He is conscious that things with a common numerical characteristic tend towards a very significant interrelationship »³¹.

Considering that all his work is full of numerical combinations, perhaps what Beckett detected out of Dante and Joyce (his beloved masters)³², namely « that all the things with a common numerical characteristic tend to a highly significant connection », is valid for him too. Aldo Tagliaferri suggests that the interests for the numbers in Beckett are originated from the « Joyce's numerical passion ». Then, he advises:

« [...] In the interpretation of the esoteric value of numbers in Beckett it would be opportune to bear in mind not only the Pythagorean Tetractis, the numerical theories of Bruno, those of Hermes Trimegistus and the *Kabbalah* (theories well handled and stirred by Madame Blavatsky in her syncretic *The Secret Doctrine*) but also what comes from Jung, who in his work *Transfert* often hints at the doctrines of the ancient cultures and interprets them in a psychological key. The Louis, for example, in the story told by Malone, are four (MM, 222), and the explicitly incestuous relations between the four of them take over the Jungian structure, above all at p. 229. In *Myths and Mysteries* (Torino, 1950), Kerényi explains that 'ancient people regarded quaternity as one of the most concrete basic elements of Hermes', but between three and four, as the quoted axiom specifies, a kind of magic relationship does exist [...] »³³.

Let's hear two big actors, Vittorio Gassman and Leo De Bernardinis.

Gassman writes:

« [...] The importance of the 'number' in Beckett's world: the symbolic irreducibility of the decimal, the mystery of the zero and of the series. The number and the 'names'. Beckett's nomenclature is symbolical as well as clownish; there is in it an outspoken and troublesome code that covers the cold

atrociousness of words with an eternal disguise of mask and cabaret »³⁴.

De Bernardinis says:

« *Krapp's Last Tape* is a relationship between technology, mathematics, arithmetic [...] »³⁵.

Finally let's read some lines from ... *Exactness* by Tom McGurk:

« In the days I spent in the auditorium watching him in rehearsal, one learned the extraordinary exactness and precision with he approached his work. He spent hours with the actors getting the tone of the voices exact, the length of the pauses, the movements, the gestures. In watching one became aware of his obsessions with precision and it seemed to him that his plays were artefacts of exactitude [...] »³⁶.

In order to come to a conclusion of the ... « amusing investigation », we can confirm that numbers or arithmetical references and combinations, « simple sums you find a help in times of trouble »³⁷, appearing in the text, can be divided into 3 groups: Recurrent Numbers (as well as their multiples) A – B, Occasional Numbers (Prime numbers and their multiples) C:

A) 2 and its multiples: 4; 10; 12; 20; 24; 30; 40; 48; 1.700; 3.600; 8.000;

B) 3 and its multiples: 6; 9; 12; 24; 27; 30; 39; 45; 48; 69; 3.600;

C) 5 and its multiples: 20; 40; 1.700; 3.600; 8.000; 7; 11; 17 and its multiple: 1.700.

« Even still in the timeless dark you find figures a comfort »³⁸.

Notes

1. *Krapp's Last Tape*, written in February 1958, published in the « *Evergreen Review* », vol. II, no. 5, Summer 1958, pp. 13–24. More ahead I indicate the pièce belonging to the typical Faber and Faber Edition, with the sign K.. About the work genesis see: GONTARSKI STAN E., *Crapp's First Tapes: Beckett's Manuscript Revision of « Krapp's Last Tape »*, « *Journal of Modern Literature*», vol. VI, no. 1 February 1977, pp. 61–68; KNOWLSON JAMES (edited by), *The Theatrical Notebooks of Samuel Beckett, « Krapp's Last Tape »*, London, Faber and Faber, 1992; About the equipment see: CHABERT PIERRE, *Samuel Beckett metteur en scène ou répéter « La dernière bande » avec l'auteur*, « *Revue d'Esthétique* », fascicle 2–3, October 1976, pp.224–248; KNOWLSON JAMES (edited by), *Samuel Beckett: « Krapp's Last Tape »*, London, Brutus Books Limited, 1980; McMILLAN DOUGALD and FEHSENFELD MARTHA, *Krapp's Last Tape*, in *Beckett in the Theatre*, London, John Calder, 1988, pp. 241–311; For a complete Beckett's bibliography and specially the pièce, see: BORRIELLO ANTONIO, *Samuel Beckett, « Krapp's Last Tape »: dalla Pagina alla Messinscena*, Napoli, Edizioni Scientifiche Italiane, 1992, the essay is enriched by scene pictures, scenographyc scale models, costumes , interviews e curiosities.

2. RUTELLI ROMANA, *Strutture temporali e rapporto enunciato/enunciazione nella logica drammatica*, in *Dialoghi con il testo*, Napoli, Liguori, 1985, pp. 112–113 (translated from Italian).

3. GIORGIONE (Giorgio Zorzi, Castelfranco Veneto, 1477?; Venezia 1510); *The Three Ages or The Three Philosophers* (cm 121 x 141) at the Kunsthistorisches Vienna Museum.

4. *Strutture temporali e rapporto enunciato/enunciazione nella logica drammatica*, in *Dialoghi con il testo*, p. 113.

5. *Ibid.*, pp. 113–114.

6. BECKETT SAMUEL, *The Expelled*, in *The Complete Short Prose, 1929-1989*, Edited and with an Introduction and Notes by S. E. Gontarski, New York, Grove Press, 1995, p. 46.

7. SHAKESPEARE WILLIAM, *Macbeth*, in *The Complete Works of Shakespeare* (edited by George Lyman Kittredge), London, Ginn and Company, 1936, pp. 1116–1117.

8. BECKETT SAMUEL, *Endgame*, in *The Complete Dramatic Works*, London, Faber and Faber, 1986, p. 93.
9. BECKETT SAMUEL, *How It Is*, London, John Calder, 1964, p. 123. A text shared into 3 parts and full of numbers: units, tens, hundreds, thousands, millions figures! The title itself repeats the last 3 words of the story!
10. KING JOHN, *The Modern Numerology – A Practical Guide to the Meaning and Influence of Numbers*, London, Blandford, 1996, p. 67. King, the gives the granted value to number 3, after studies on the language of numbers starting from the *Kabbalah* to the Pythagorean *Tetraktys* to the ancient Chinese mathematicians, to the different alphabetic traditions, from the ancient religions to the Mythology, from numerology and the magic of numbers to modern mathematics.
11. CHABERT PIERRE, *La dernière bande*, « Primer Acto », no. 206, November–December 1984, p. 43 (translated from Spanish).
12. *Notes on the text*, in *Samuel Beckett: « Krapp's Last Tape »*, p. 27.
13. *Othello*, in *The Complete Works of Shakespeare*, p. 1281.
14. ASSOULINE PIERRE, *Enquête sur un écrivain secret*, « Lire », April 1986, p. 28 (translated from French).
15. *The Image*, in *The Complete Short Prose, 1929-1989*, p. 166.
16. BECKETT SAMUEL, *Molloy, Malone Dies, The Unnamable*, London, Calder, 1958, p. 14.
17. *How It Is*, p. 33–34.
18. BECKETT SAMUEL, *Waiting for Godot*, in *The Complete Dramatic Works*, pp. 52–53.
19. *Endgame*, in *The Complete Dramatic Works*, p. 111.
20. BECKETT SAMUEL, *Film*, New York, Grove Press, 1967. *Film* is divided into 3 parts: The street, the stains, the room. For the fantastic short (featuring the great Buster Keaton), see: SCHNEIDER ALAN, *On Directing « Film »*, New York, Grover Press, 1969. Witt regard to *Film*,

in 1984 Beckett himself suggested that Vittorio Gassman should direct a remake (GASSMAN VITTORIO, *Il mio Beckett*, « L'Espresso », no. 14, 13 April 1986, p. 116, translated from Italian).

21. *All That Fall*, in *The Complete Dramatic Works*, p. 189. Effi, as Knowlson remind, is « the heroine of Theodor Fontane's late nineteenth-century novel, *Effi Briest*, a favourite novel of Beckett » (*Notes on the Text*, in *Samuel Beckett: « Krapp's Last Tape »*, p. 28).

22. *Notes on the Text*, in *Samuel Beckett: « Krapp's Last Tape »*, p. 24.

23. COHN RUBY, *Samuel Beckett, the Comic Gamut*, New Brunswick, Rutgers University Press, 1962, pp. 45, 322. Cohn precise that « *Murphy*, like *Echo's Bones*, is divided into 13 parts and M, the thirteenth letter of the English Alphabet, has a prominent role in the novel ». Tagliaferri, adds « Also the *Textes pour rien* are 13 » (TAGLIAFERRI ALDO, *Beckett e l'iperdeterminazione letteraria*, Milano, Feltrinelli, 1967, p. 38, translated from Italian).

24. *Enquete sur un écrivain secret*, p. 26.

25. ALVAREZ AL., *Tributes to Samuel Beckett*, « The Daily Telegraph », 27 December 1989.

26. MANZELLA GIANNI, *Samuel Beckett una felice solitudine*, « Il Manifesto », 27 December 1989 (translated from Italian).

27. MARCABRU PIERRE, *Play it again, Sam ...*, « Le Figaro », 27 December 1989 (translated from French).

28. USCATESCU GEORGE, *il teatro e le sue ombre (intorno al teatro occidentale contemporaneo)*, Bari, Editoriale Universitaria, 1968, pp. 22-23. The *Preface* to the by Ettore Paratore places without possibility of comparison on the top of all the contemporary playwrights, Samuel Beckett », p. 7 (translated from Italian).

29. GRAMIGNA GIULIANO, *Beckett all'ombra dell'inesistente*, « Corriere della Sera », 27 December 1989 (translated from Italian).

30. Obviously, this work is not to be considered exhaustive. More over, it is opened to new analysis and reflections. For example , might be interesting the numerations from the

Beckett's notebook as director, see: *Samuel Beckett's Production notebook for « Das letzte Band »*

(« *Krapp's Last Tape* ») at the Shiller-Theater Werkstatt, Berlin in *The Theatrical Notebook of Samuel Beckett « Krapp's Last Tape »*, pp. 38–248.

31. BECKETT SAMUEL, *Dante ... Bruno. Vico .. Joyce*, in *Disjecta. Miscellaneous Writings and a Dramatic Fragment*, Edited by Ruby Cohn, London, Calder, 1983, p. 32.

32. With regard to the « Complicities between Dante and Beckett, Biagio Scognamiglio points explorative itineraries in the at western culture, all orientated toward the reflection on man's problems (for example the relationship Dante - Beckett, seen in the light of masterly work such as *The Mitografy of character*, by Salvatore Battaglia; or of specialistic texts on theatre such as *Theorie des modernen Dramas* by Peter Zondi » (from the report on the staging of *Krapp's Last Tape*, Assembly hall « Antonio Bava », Grammar School «G. De Bottis », Torre Del Greco, 2 June 1982). On Dante - Beckett we examine: STRAUS WALTER A., *Dante's Belacqua and Beckett's Tramps*, « Comparative Literature », vol. XI, no. 3, June - September, 1959, pp. 250–261; COHN RUBY, *A Note on Beckett, Dante, Geulincx*, « Comparative Literature », vol. XII, no. 4, Winter 1960, pp. 93–94; HAIMAN DAVID, *Quest for Meaninglessness: Six Contemporary Novels: Six Introductory Essay in Modern Fiction*, Austin, University of Texas, 1962, pp. 90–112; included essay also in FRIEDMAN MELVIN J. (edited by), *Samuel Beckett Now*, Chicago, The University of Chicago, 1970, pp. 129–156; FLETCHER JOHN, *Beckett's Debt to Dante*, « Nottingham French Studies », vol. IV, no. 1, May 1965, pp. 41–52 (reprinted in FLETCHER JOHN, *Samuel Beckett's Art*, London, Chatto and Windus, 1967, p. 106–121); HARVEY LAWRENCE, *Samuel Beckett Poet and Critic*, Princeton University Press, 1970, GILLIGAN P. *Beckett and Dante*, Dublin, University College, 1983, pp. 18–20; FRASCA GABRIELE, *Dante in Beckett*, in *Cascando*, Napoli, Liguori, 1988, pp. 11–39; BRUZZO FRANÇOIS, ... *Et Dante et le verbe et toutes les sphères et tous les mystères*, in *Samuel Beckett*, Paris, Henri Veyrier, 1991, pp. 75–77.

33. *Beckett e l'iperdeterminazione letteraria*, pp. 46–47 (translated from Italian).

34. *Il mio Beckett*, p. 116. I would like to remember that Gassman, Peter O' Toole, Joseph Chaikin and Jean Louis Barrault are the only movie stars that have interpreted Beckett. I underline strongly this point because none of the various, Peter Stein, Orson Welles, Alec Guinness, Carmelo Bene or Lawrence Oliver have ever tested themselves out with his works. The dramatist himself preferred, for his staging, actors less famous: the example of Cluchey is valid for all. Even if in Hollywood ... «There was the time when Steve McQueen contacted Rosset, saying he would pay Beckett anything he wanted for the movie rights to *Waiting for*

Godot. After consultation, Rosset decided to ask for half a million dollars, if Beckett agreed. When Rosset brought up the matter, Beckett asked: 'Who's Steve McQueen? What does he look like? Rosset described him. Before Beckett made up his mind, word came that Marlon Brando was interested as well. Think of it: McQueen and Brando playing Beckett's tramps. There may have been odder casting choices in recent memory, but not many. Again Beckett asked: 'What does Marlon Brando look like?' And once again, Rosset tried to describe the actor. After a while, Beckett decided that these Hollywood stars could not portray his characters, no matter how much they paid him. By way of explanation, he remarked: 'My characters are only shadows'. » (BERGREEN LAURENCE, *Beckett's Last Act*, « Esquire », vol. 113, no. 5, May 1990, pp. 87–98).

35. From my interview with Leo De Berardinis on Samuel Beckett, Napoli, March 1988.

36. MCGURG TOM, *Exactness*, « The Irish Independent », 25–27 December 1989. The above quoted article deserves reproach because it mistook the scene of *Endgame* with *Krapp's Last Tape*: « The stepladder in *Krapp's Last Tape* had to have eight rungs, the actor had to stand on the fourth rung to gaze out of the window and he even counted out their steps around the stage like some demonic surveyor » [sic].

37. BECKETT SAMUEL, *Company*, London, John Calder, 1996, p. 54. The text is full of geometric and arithmetical operations.

38. *Ibid.*, p. 55.